

Food Secure Canada

Bi-Annual Report

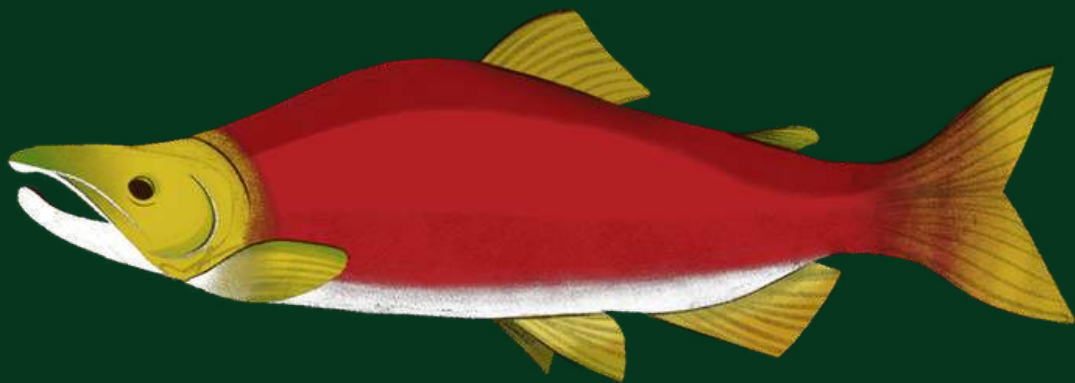
2023-2025



FSC
Food Secure Canada

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Land Acknowledgment

We would like to begin by acknowledging that the office of Food Secure Canada is located on the traditional territory of the Kanien'kehá:ka (Mohawk) Nation. This land has also been historically inhabited by the Huron-Wendat, Abenaki, and Anishinaabeg peoples. Food Secure Canada also has staff living and working all across Turtle Island on the traditional territories of many Indigenous peoples.

We recognize and honour the enduring connection that Indigenous peoples have to this land and express our gratitude for their stewardship over generations. We acknowledge the harms and injustices of colonialism, including the impact of residential schools, and the ongoing challenges faced by Indigenous communities.

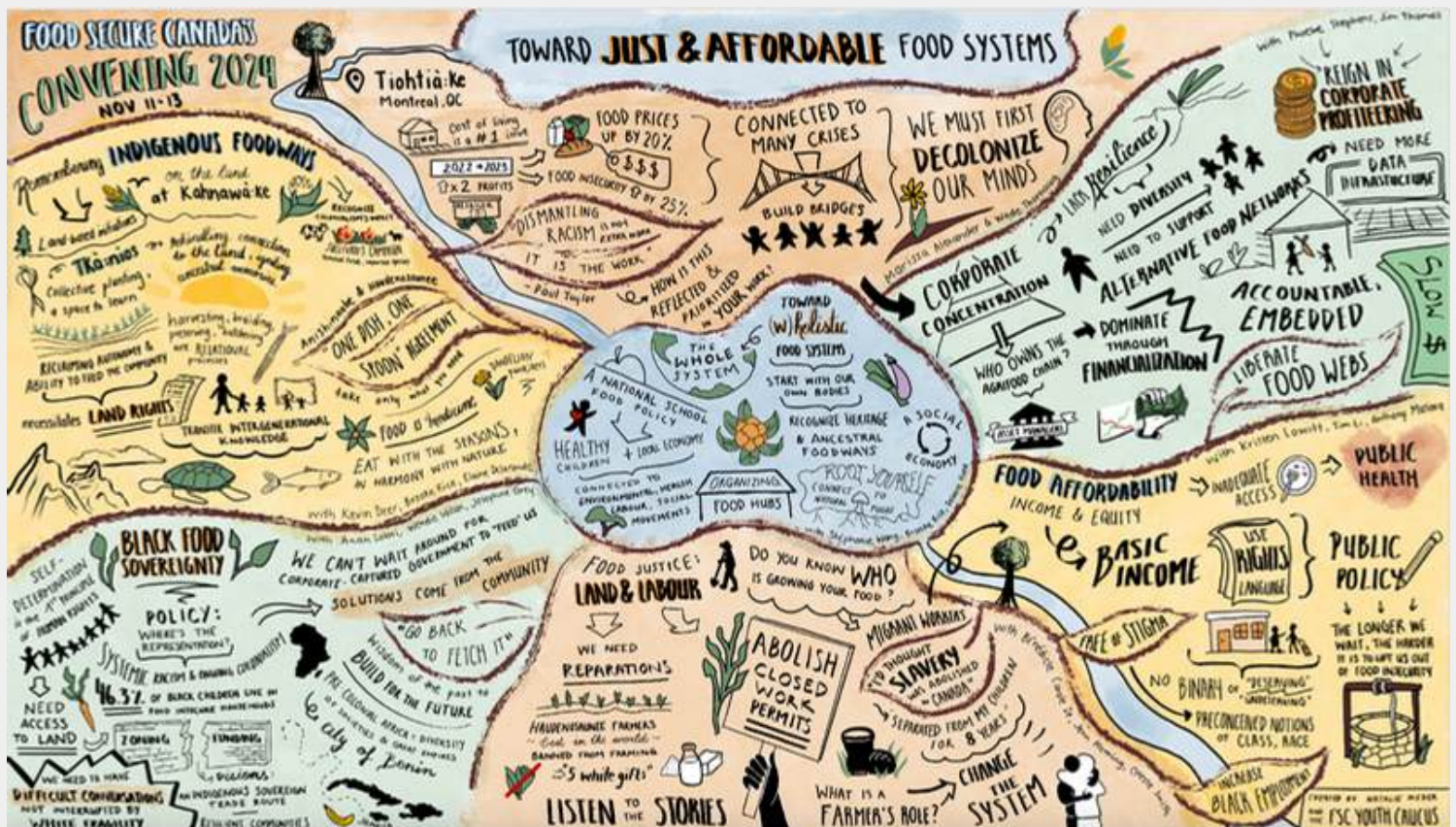
As we engage in the work of advancing food security and food sovereignty, we commit to fostering respectful relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities. We strive to centre Indigenous voices, knowledge, and perspectives in our efforts to create a more just and equitable food system for all.

This land acknowledgement serves as a reminder of our collective responsibility to acknowledge, respect, and support the rights and aspirations of Indigenous peoples. May we work together towards reconciliation, understanding, and building a future rooted in justice, equity, and solidarity.



A just, healthy, and sustainable food system: it takes all of us to make it happen.

Food Secure Canada is a pan-Canadian alliance of organizations and individuals working together to advance food security and food sovereignty through three interlocking goals: zero hunger, healthy and safe food, and sustainable food systems. We believe deep and lasting change can occur by facilitating accessible dialogue to foster participation of civil society in food policy; supporting dynamic networks to facilitate research and enhance learning and collaboration on food system projects and campaigns; and advocating for food policies at the federal level that reflect the priorities of Canada's food movement.





A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

As we reflect on the past two years, we're filled with gratitude and determination for the transformative work that lies ahead. This period has been one of profound evolution for Food Secure Canada—from launching groundbreaking initiatives to building a stronger coalition that spans coast to coast to coast.

Major Policy Victories

The 2024-2026 period brought extraordinary validation of our movement's work through significant federal policy wins.

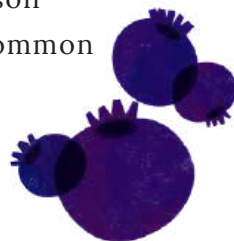
In Budget 2024, the federal government announced the National School Food Program, a transformative achievement that Food Secure Canada helped incubate through our work with the Coalition for Healthy School Food. After years of sustained advocacy, this program represents a major milestone in ensuring children across Canada have access to nutritious meals at school. The 2026 federal budget confirmed funding for the program, cementing this victory and demonstrating the power of long-term coalition building and strategic advocacy.

January 2026 brought additional breakthroughs with the federal government's announcement of the Canada Groceries and Essentials Benefit and National Food Security Strategy. Following our Eat Think Vote campaign, which presented 10 policy recommendations to the incoming government, we've now seen significant progress on 5 of them—including the Groceries and Essentials Benefit (which will improve the lives of 12 million Canadians), the \$150 million Food Security Fund, \$20 million for the Local Food Infrastructure Fund, strengthened Competition Bureau powers, and unit price labelling.

What we're doing is working.

Building Movement Capacity

The period from 2024 to 2026 has been marked by decisive action on food affordability and food justice. Our "How Will We Shop?" project catalyzed national conversations about shrinkflation, corporate concentration, and the need for systemic transformation. With over 1,000 participants engaged through webinars and our flagship 2024 convening in Montreal—our first in-person gathering since 2018—we demonstrated the power of bringing people together to build common ground and collective solutions.



In October 2025, we launched the Food Systems Learning Circle, a new education platform offering accessible, justice-centered training for those working to transform our food systems. From workshops on food policy to global food sovereignty movements, we're investing in knowledge mobilization as a core part of our work. We look forward to expanding the Food Systems Learning Circle throughout 2026, and are excited about the potential it offers and the interest we've received so far.

Strengthening Democratic Foundations

At our 2025 Annual General Meeting, we transitioned our Board structure to better represent our key membership demographics: farmers, youth advocates, Black food advocates, Indigenous food sovereignty leaders, and academics. This shift has brought renewed energy and clearer direction as we build toward becoming a coalition of organizations working together for food sovereignty.

Advancing Our Strategic Plan

Throughout this period, our work has been guided by our 2021-2024 Strategic Plan (extended through 2027), advancing all five strategic objectives: enhancing dialogue and shared governance through our Board transformation and centering Indigenous and Black food sovereignty voices; reinforcing our role as a hub through stakeholder engagement and knowledge mobilization; strengthening civil society capacity through our Learning Circle, webinars, and convenings; advancing federal policy through Eat Think Vote and direct advocacy that achieved concrete wins; and building organizational resilience through our coalition transition and diversified funding. Every initiative detailed in this report connects directly to these strategic commitments.

Mobilizing for Change

The launch of our Eat Think Vote 2025 campaign during a federal election year demonstrated our capacity to mobilize grassroots engagement across the country. With 12 community-led events, 585 participants, and dialogue with over 25 federal candidates, we brought food sovereignty to the forefront of national political conversations.

Looking ahead to our June 2026 convening in Orelia, Ontario—planned in partnership with Common Ground Network, Food Communities Network, and the Canadian Association for Food Studies—we see tremendous opportunity to continue building bridges between food movements, government, and academic networks.

Thank you for being part of this journey with us. Together, we're building a healthier, more resilient, and more just food future for everyone.

With appreciation and solidarity,
Marissa Alexander & Wade Thorhaug
Co-Executive Directors
Food Secure Canada



Governance, Leadership, & Movement Convening

Coalition Building & Strategic Direction

Due to priorities identified by the new board and an ad-hoc strategy committee, Food Secure Canada shifted from an organizational retreat and instead prioritized staff to engage in coalition building and interviews with key partners and allies to identify paths forward for the organization, mapping of current context and key opportunities, revising membership structure, and coalition governance models. The interviews also identified knowledge mobilization as a key value for partners and priority for FSC. In October 2025 these findings were presented to the board. The board agreed to go forward with a coalition structure and a knowledge mobilization series and fundraise on this basis.

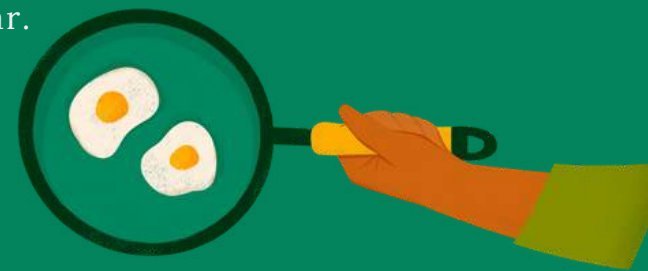
FSC proposed revised membership and governance structure includes a coalition of organizations sharing the goals of food sovereignty in Canada and support FSC's role as secretariat, knowledge mobilizer, and political liaison. Organizational members include provincial and territorial network members and regional organizations representing networks of local organizations, making FSC a "network of networks." The governance structure is led by FSC's board of directors and staff, who function as secretariat. There will be a listserv, managed by FSC staff, for engagement and communication between the coalition, as well as regular online meetings to engage and share movement updates. This is seen as an intermediate structure while the coalition develops its terms of reference and mandate.

Work remains to formalize the coalition, bring more organizations on board, and identify programmatic political campaigns to bring forward through the coalition structure.



Board Transformation

At the Annual General Meeting held in early 2025, the FSC Board transitioned from individuals representing themselves to individuals who are part of FSC's key membership demographics. This includes farmers, youth advocates, Black food advocates, Indigenous food sovereignty advocates, and academics. This transition ensures the FSC Board is more informed about FSC's strategic direction, challenges, and long-term goals. While also creating the blueprint for FSC's transition to a coalition structure with representatives from membership engaged in the decision-making process at a higher level. The incoming board members brought with them renewed energy and leadership that has supported FSC's growth and transformation over the last year.

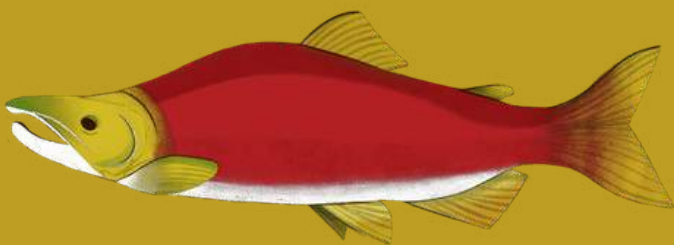


Provincial and Territorial Network Reinvigoration

This year, we renewed and revitalized our Provincial and Territorial Network, reinforcing our collective commitment to collaboration and shared learning from coast to coast to coast. Through quarterly meetings, we maintained national connections and strengthened relationships with umbrella organizations across all provinces and territories. This renewed momentum sparked inspiring conversations and is laying the groundwork for deeper, lasting change.

Future Convening

FSC has confirmed June 15-19, 2026 as the date for the next convening, which is planned together with Common Ground Network, Food Communities Network, and the Canadian Association for Food Studies in Orillia, Ontario. The thematic scope is "building a bigger table" and it is conceived as a relationship-building conference between food movements, government, and academic networks.



Events, Gatherings, & Conferences

Food Secure Canada spent these years participating in, attending, and supporting a variety of events, gatherings, and conferences. Here are some of the key events we attended:

Convening 2024 - Montreal

Our flagship Convening 2024 in Montreal brought together 240 in-person participants from coast to coast to coast for the first time since 2018. This transformative gathering featured:

- 25+ partner organizations actively involved
- 15 expert speakers representing diverse communities and expertise
- 35+ volunteers
- Question Period with MPs Yves Perron and candidate Nimâ Machouf, where concrete commitments were made to reduce food insecurity by 50% and eliminate severe food insecurity by 2030
- Evening event hosted by the Coalition for Healthy School Food, building relationships with Quebec networks
- Revenue generated from ticket sales: \$40,679

Participant feedback revealed the transformative power of in-person gatherings, with 78% rating the experience as excellent and 19% as good. The most valued aspects included practical solutions focus, networking opportunities with like-minded organizations, and the innovative Question Period that demonstrated real political engagement.

Food for Health Symposium

FSC's Co-Executive Director was thrilled to attend Nourish's symposium in Saskatoon, focused on grounded discussions that support leaders, within and beyond the walls of health care, to leverage the power of food, so health and food systems become more preventative, equitable, and sustainable. Punctuated with keynotes by Dr. Elisa Levi and Dr. Steven Chen and delicious food, the symposium left attendees with full hearts and stomachs.



Seeding Transformation - Global Forum on Food Systems & Agroecology

Food Secure Canada had the opportunity to learn from international scholars, activists, organizers, and partners from around the world, as they explored agroecology as a transformative solution to regenerating the environment, cooling the planet, and providing good, healthy food for all.

North American Digital Agriculture Gathering

FSC had the privilege of joining this working group at the Paicines Ranch in California to explore the state of digital technologies and its impact on food systems and food sovereignty through various sectors. These discussions took place over 3 days and allowed for diverse perspectives and planning regarding opportunities for action and future work, such as developing a Canadian focused subgroup tasked with addressing the Canadian food sector needs.



Additional Events & Engagement

Over the past two years, Food Secure Canada was proud to engage in various other events and initiatives that brought together diverse voices and strengthened collective action across food movements. We participated in the Coalition Nourrir l'humanité durablement, contributed to the momentum around food justice with the Black Food Sovereignty Working Group's Report Launch, and took part in the Local Solutions Food Security Forum, highlighting community-led strategies for resilience.

We also joined timely national conversations at events such as "An All-In Approach to Solving Canada's Affordability and Climate Challenges" hosted by the Institute for Research on Public Policy (IRPP), and the Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) Forum, where we emphasized the importance of income security on food access. Our team also participated in key sector gatherings including the Canadian Association for Food Studies (CAFS) conference, the Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) Rassemblement Québécois and CFCC Summit, further strengthening relationships and shared learning coast to coast to coast.

Additional events included:

- Canadian Association for Food and Land Pedagogy (CAFLP) conference
- Maple Leaf Summit
- Arrell Food Summit
- Yukon food systems gathering
- Agri-Food Innovation Council Meet the MPs sessions
- Food Banks Canada Convening
- Alimentation, logement et territoire pour Une seule santé / Conference: Food, Home and Land for One Health

Projects & Programs

Food Affordability and Alternative Markets: "How Will We Shop?"

FSC completed a transformative 16-month project on food justice and affordability, funded by the Office of Consumer Affairs. The project addressed shrinkflation, skimpflation, and broader food system challenges through three interconnected pillars: addressing poverty as the root cause (income), reining in corporate profiteering, and investing in (w)holistic approaches to food system change.

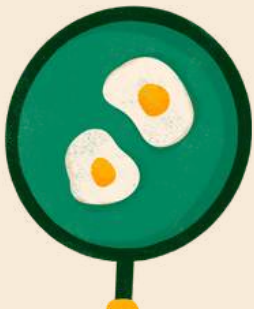
Webinar Series

The project included five bilingual webinars that engaged over 1,000 participants:

- Agroecology in Canada: 104 live participants, 158 recording views
- Public Markets: 27 live participants, 161 recording views
- Greedflation: 203 live participants, 575 recording views
- Solidarity Grocery Stores & Co-ops: 223 live participants, 363 recording views
- Indigenous Foodways: 250 live participants, 297 recording views

Digital Engagement & Communications

- 18 blog articles published (12 English, 6 French)
- 1,629+ YouTube views across all OCA webinars
- Newsletter growth from ~4,000 to 5,759 subscribers (44% increase)
- Cross-platform social media reach: ~20,000 followers
- 25+ organizational partnerships established



Key Publications

- Hill Times: "Budget 2024: A missed opportunity to address food affordability" (May 2024)
- Hill Times: "MPs unite against greedflation and monopoly power in Canada's food systems" (July 2024)
- National Observer: "An oligopoly is driving up grocery prices. What can we do?" (May 2024)
- Hill Times: "To fight market failure in the food supply chain, support zero-profit grocery stores" (September 2024)
- Final Report: "How will we shop? Shrinkflation, skimpflation and affordability challenges in the food system" (October 20, 2025)

The project successfully shifted the narrative from individual consumer choice to systemic food systems transformation, influenced parliamentary discourse through direct engagement with MPs, and established lasting research collaborations with academic institutions across the country.

Eat Think Vote 2025

The Eat Think Vote 2025 campaign successfully brought food sovereignty to the forefront of election conversations across Canada during the federal election announced in March 2025. The campaign engaged:

- 12 community-led events with 585 participants from coast to coast to coast
- 50 volunteers supporting grassroots engagement
- 26 partner organizations
- Dialogue with over 25 federal candidates from all major political parties
- Development of a comprehensive campaign toolkit for future national campaigns

Drawing on coalition-building efforts and our 2024 convening, Food Secure Canada produced a guide of 10 key policies for food sovereignty, used by participating organizations. The campaign demonstrated that food sovereignty remains a major political issue to which communities are demanding solutions.

Campaign Publications

- "Liberals Miss The Big Picture On Canada's Food Crisis" in Canada's National Observer, analyzing promising aspects of the Liberal platform and identifying gaps
- "The Missing Ingredient in Canada's Economic Independence" in The Vancouver Sun, arguing that Canada cannot achieve true economic sovereignty without building food sovereignty through local food systems



Alternative Federal Budget (2024 & 2025)

Food Secure Canada contributed to the Alternative Federal Budget, an annual initiative led by the Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives that demonstrates what is possible when the public good is at the heart of budgetary planning. FSC helped develop the chapters on Agriculture and Food Security for both the 2024 and 2025 editions, ensuring that food sovereignty principles and civil society perspectives were embedded in this important policy document.



Additional Publications & Media

Beyond our major op-eds and reports, FSC's expertise was featured across numerous media platforms, amongst many others:

Print and Online Media:

- Globe and Mail op-ed: "A quarter of Canadians are food insecure—addressing this must be a national priority" (co-authored with Right to Food and Food Banks Canada)
- Analysis on public grocery stores published by CCPA and IRIS (authored by Raj Patel, Aaron Vansintjan, Anna Paskal, and Errol Schweizer), demonstrating potential savings of 30-45% and \$2,500-10,000 annually for Canadian families
- Future of Good: "Canada's escalating food prices: the obvious solution and the systemic one"

Podcast and Radio Appearances:

- Executive Director Marissa Alexander on Zero Hunger Project Podcast, discussing the lack of government action since the 2019 Food Policy For Canada
- Do Not Pass Go podcast: "Can public grocery stores finally happen?"
- CBC Saskatoon Blue Sky Radio: "What would help make groceries more affordable?"
- CHED Edmonton: Interview with Shaye Ganam on food affordability

Television:

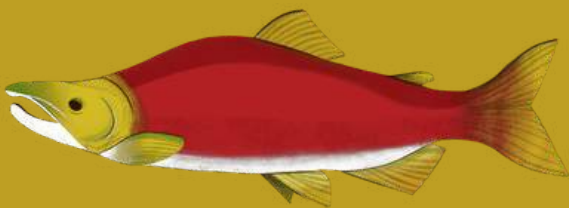
- CTV National: "What's behind high grocery prices in Canada"

The Coalition for Healthy School Food

FSC has continued to collaborate with and promote the work of the Coalition for Healthy School Food. After years of advocacy, the Coalition achieved a major victory with the inclusion of the National School Food Program in Budget 2024. FSC supported this work by:

- Hosting the CHSF for an evening event at our 2024 convening in Montreal, bringing public and media attention to the coalition's recent policy victories
- Including CHSF policy recommendations in our Eat Think Vote key policy list and campaign toolkit
- Promoting the need for public procurement of local food in our July 2025 pre-budget submission, signed by over 80 partners
- Continuing to push for an understanding of school food as a food sovereignty approach, rather than solely a food security solution

The Coalition for Healthy School Food is generously funded by The People's Food Institute, The Arrell Family Foundation, The Schad Foundation, Mazon Canada and a number of other donors and supporters.



Federal Food Policy

Following consultations with partners and allies in 2025, and as a result of the Eat Think Vote campaign, Food Secure Canada launched a pre-budget submission for the new government, with 4 key policy recommendations:

1. Invest in local food infrastructure and food hubs
2. Support local procurement by public institutions
3. Reduce inter-provincial regulatory burdens to support small and medium-sized producers
4. Reform the Canada Child Benefit to better address food insecurity by increasing benefits and creating a Northern supplement

This submission was signed by over 80 partners. Following the submission, we were invited to present it to 20 staff at the AAFC Food Policy Division, who were very receptive to the proposals and asked for follow-up contributions, such as costing of benefits to Canadian producers due to development and funding of local food infrastructure. We will be collaborating with Food Communities Network and the National Farmers Union on a research report.

In the meeting, we asked the AAFC for follow up information on the Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council (last convened September 2023) and details about the Food Policy For Canada. We were informed that these continued to be on standby. We expect that our work on coalition-building and knowledge mobilization will help put pressure on the AAFC and Carney government to restart the Food Policy and renew the Advisory Council.

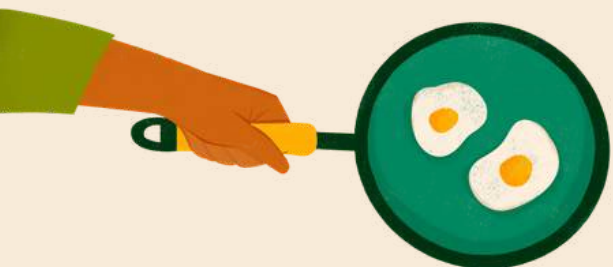


Public Grocery Stores Research

We have seen tremendous interest in our recent work on public grocery stores. A recent video collaboration with The Breach saw national interest and coverage and, as a follow up, we published an analysis with industry experts on potential public grocery store costs and savings in Canada. We will continue this work through a research program carried out through 2026-2027.

Work with Équiterre and Option Consommateurs

We also worked closely with Équiterre and Option Consommateurs, two organizations also tasked with engaging on the issue of shrinkflation and skimpflation, by holding regular meetings and sharing lessons learned about our campaigns. This collaboration strengthened our collective impact on consumer protection issues.



Food Systems Learning Circle

In October 2025, we launched the Food Systems Learning Circle, a new education platform from Food Secure Canada offering accessible, justice-centered training for those working to transform our food systems. Whether activist, professional, or researcher, the Learning Circle equips participants with the knowledge and tools to challenge systemic inequities, strengthen food sovereignty, and build a just, sustainable future for all. This initiative directly responds to our partners' identification of knowledge mobilization as a key priority for FSC.

Workshops and Webinars (2025-2026):

- **Food Policy Deep Dive** (October 30, 2025): Our inaugural Learning Circle workshop brought together leading experts to examine what's worked in Canada's food policy, what hasn't, and what's coming next. Participants brainstormed concrete ways to act on food policy solutions in their communities.
- **How the Nyéléni Global Food Sovereignty Movement Can Change the World** (November 27, 2025): This webinar shared insights from the 3rd Nyéléni Global Forum in Kandy, Sri Lanka (September 6, 2025), which brought together thousands of grassroots movements—Indigenous Peoples, peasants, fishers, workers, feminists, migrants—to renew the global call for Food Sovereignty and systemic change.
- **Building an Appetite for Advocacy: Strategizing for Food Movements Under A New Government** (September 2025): With a new Liberal government promising to "spend less, invest more," this webinar examined how to tailor food movement campaigns to the new political landscape, turning public appetite for solutions into policy wins.



Learning & Professional Development

Throughout this period, Food Secure Canada invested in organizational capacity building and professional development:

- Racial Equity Action Plan development with FoodShare
- Innoweave capacity building program
- Leadership fund support from MapleLeaf
- Inclusion Calendar implementation
- Staff Retreat and team building activities
- Dashboard development in collaboration with PROOF
- Team workflow improvements through Slack and Asana
- Participation in Continuing Committee of FPT Officials on Human Rights (CCOHR)



Policy Impact

- Direct input to House Agriculture and Agri-Food Committee recommendations
- Concrete political commitments from MPs on food insecurity reduction targets
- Pre-budget submission signed by over 80 partner organizations
- Influenced parliamentary discourse on food affordability and market concentration
- Contributed to all-party committee recommendations on food price volatility

With Gratitude

We extend profound gratitude to our vibrant community for their unwavering support and dedication to a just, healthy, and sustainable food system.

Special thanks to our funders, including:

- Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada (ISED) - Office of Consumer Affairs
- Inter Pares
- The People's Food Institute
- Clif Family Foundation
- Mazon Canada
- Innoweave
- Canada Summer Jobs
- Heritage Canada
- Public Service Alliance of Canada (PSAC)
- MapleLeaf Leadership Fund
- All of our many individual and organizational members
- AgriCommunication Initiative
- Unesco
- Healthy School Food Coalition
- Rialto Theatre
- Camino
- Nature's Path
- Carrefour Solidaire
- Citizens for Public Justice
- PBX Engineering
- Wilfred Laurier University
- North American Digital Agriculture Working Group



Their support has empowered transformative initiatives and amplified underrepresented voices. Heartfelt appreciation goes to our event hosts and collaborators for shaping perspectives, fostering connections, and advancing shared goals.

A sincere acknowledgement to the Indigenous Food Sovereignty networks and the African-Canadian Food Sovereignty Network for steering our initiatives toward a more inclusive and equitable future. In recognizing both challenges and lessons learned, we value the collective strength of our community and partners that propels us forward. Committed to justice, equity, and solidarity, we express our deepest thanks to everyone who contributes to our journey.