Provincial Approaches to Food Security

A Scan of Food Security Related Policies in Canada

Manitoba Food Charter

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Executive Summary

In recent years, provincial and territorial governments across Canada have begun to develop programs and policies to address the issue of food security. These programs have the potential to play a role in reducing acute health care costs through preventative measures, support economic development and create jobs by developing local agri-food industries, raise the quality of life of residents by increasing access to safe, nutritious food, and promote environmental wellbeing through sustainable agriculture techniques or the promotion of local food. Clearly, there are many benefits for provincial governments that develop food security programs and policies.

Food security is a holistic concept that includes ensuring that all people can access and afford healthy, nutritious food and that agricultural producers, harvesters, and food processors are able to make an adequate livelihood and be environmentally sustainable. People living with low incomes are at particular risk of food insecurity, but food issues affect people of all income brackets. Parents are concerned about finding safe, nutritious food for their families. Rural areas in many parts of Canada are experiencing low farm incomes and the resulting depopulation. Remote and northern regions face high food prices, particularly for perishable, nutritious items. Thus, all Canadians are affected in some way by food security issues.

This report, a first for food security in Canada, scans policies, programs, and government reports from provincial and territorial governments across the country. While achieving food security requires diverse partnerships across and between multiple levels of government, individuals, farmers, fishers, traditional harvesters, service providers, the corporate sector, non-profit community organizations etc, this paper is focussed exclusively on provincial level programs. By compiling examples of programs and policies from across Canada, this report offers a unique perspective on governmental food security work. While some programs have undoubtedly been omitted, as is to be expected in a project of this scope and scale, this report highlights innovative examples of policy development across the country as well as general trends in food security policy development. This report is a valuable guide for anyone interested in comparing provincial food policies across the country, developing policy with an interest in precedent from other jurisdictions, or promoting policy change.

Introduction

Provincial Approaches to Food Security: A Scan of Food Security Related Policies in Canada outlines examples of the programs and policies that provincial and territorial governments have introduced to meet the challenges of food security. Given the immense variety of food security work, this scan can only provide examples of the policies, programs, and reports that provincial governments have produced. Information has been compiled from available government internet sources. It is beyond the scope of this project to develop an exhaustive list of all food security related policies and programs. Nevertheless, trends are evident and innovative ideas from across the country are highlighted.

Community food security can be defined as "a situation in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritiously adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice."[1] Food security includes issues of the economy, agriculture, health, social equity, and the environment. A food secure society is one in which: all people are able to access healthy, nutritious foods, farmers, harvesters, and fishers are economically prosperous and environmentally sustainable, and in which safe and healthy food is available in all communities. Therefore, all Canadians are affected by food security, making it essential for provincial governments across Canada to address food policy.

Numerous scientific studies have demonstrated the negative impacts of food insecurity. Research has demonstrated that people who are food insecure consume significantly fewer nutrients than those who are food secure.[2,3,4,5] Despite a lack of food, food insecure people are actually more susceptible to obesity than the general population.[6] Not surprisingly, studies have shown that people in food insecure households are more than twice as likely to report poor health as those who are food secure.[7] Children from food insecure households miss more school days than average and perform poorly on psychosocial and behavioural testing.[8] These consequences impose great physical costs on food insecure individuals and have a significant financial cost for our health care system.

While access to healthy foods is compromised for some because of geography or income, Canadians with enough income often do not use it to acquire healthy foods. Less than half of Canadians eat the recommended number of servings of vegetables and fruit.[9] The number of overweight or obese people in Canada continues to increase. Diet related diseases such as heart disease, some types of cancer, and diabetes are on the rise throughout the country. Medical professionals are recognizing the importance of marketing healthy eating to the public rather than dealing with resultant chronic diseases.

Those who produce food are also facing a wide variety of challenges. When adjusted for inflation, Canadian farm income fell by 24% between 1988 and 2002.[10] Consequently, farming is not seen as an attractive option for young people. While there were 77,910 farmers under the age of 35 in Canada in 1991 there are now fewer than thirty thousand.[11] Although profits in the agri-food industry have increased, farmers struggle to keep their farms afloat. On average, farmers only receive 27% of the price of a week's groceries.[12] Some farmers have begun developing alternative production and distribution channels in an effort to increase their profitability, although they remain a small minority.

Several studies have shown the decrease in greenhouse gas emissions and benefits associated with eating sustainably produced local foods. For example, a study in Waterloo, Ontario suggested that greenhouse gas emissions could be reduced by 49,485 tonnes annually if food that could be grown in Waterloo Region or Southwestern Ontario was sold in Waterloo rather than being imported.[13] Similarly, research in Iowa determined that if the state grew 10% more of its own food, 280,000 to 346,000 gallons (1,059,800 to 1,309,610 litres) of fuel would be saved annually.[14] People are increasingly interested in the source of their food as they become aware of the idea of food miles.

Food security is a holistic issue that provides significant opportunities to provincial governments. Health care costs can be reduced by increasing the consumption of healthy foods, thus reducing the risk of some chronic diseases. Social equity can be promoted by ensuring that all people have enough healthy food, which addresses a major issue faced by people living with low incomes. Food policy can provide the opportunity to reduce greenhouse

gas emissions and other pollution by promoting sustainable agricultural techniques and reducing the distance that food travels. It also provides opportunities to create jobs and promote economic development because food requires processing, distribution, and retailing.

The vast majority of policies, programs, and reports included in this paper are no more than five years old. Food security is a relatively new issue for Canadian provincial and territorial governments, where policy development is only beginning to take place. Since many of the documented policies are recent initiatives, it remains to be seen how effective they are in addressing food security. Evaluation has yet to be done on many of the programs. This report does not aim, therefore, to evaluate the efficacy of the programs and policies it outlines. Rather, the programs are described with as recent information as possible, including evaluation reports where available. Should you be interested in conducting further research into a particular program, website links have been provided to ease your search.

Provincial governments do not deal with food security in isolation. Food policy involves issues ranging from food waste disposal to international trade agreements and, therefore, also involves municipal, First Nation, and federal governments. While this scan has focused on provincial governments, other levels of government and the non-governmental sectors play important roles as well. Nevertheless, given that provinces deliver agricultural and health services they are in a unique position to address food policy and are able to develop policy to meet the particular needs of their province. Provincial and territorial governments have an important role to play in creating food security in their jurisdictions, and the programs and policies that they introduce can play a vital role in building food security.

Provincial governments are increasingly interested in addressing food security concerns, and using food security programs as opportunities for preventative healthcare, economic development, or environmental conservation. By providing examples of current policies and programs from across the country, this report serves as a resource to share knowledge from other regions during a time of rapid food security policy development.

British Columbia

British Columbia has taken significant strides towards addressing food security. Its implementation of several innovative programs to assist the food security of people living with low incomes and local food promotion makes British Columbia a provincial leader in Canadian food security policy development.

The Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) has played a central role in the development of food security programming in BC. The Community Food Action Initiative is an innovative program that supports grassroots food security programs. The PHSA has also published several reports on food security in BC, including *A Seat at the Table: Resource Guide for Local Governments to Promote Food Secure Communities,* a valuable reference guide for municipal governments interested in developing food security policies. One reason for this plethora of health initiatives is the Olympic Winter Games of 2010. The government intends to make British Columbia the healthiest jurisdiction to ever host the Olympics. This effort has meant funding for numerous programs through the Act Now campaign.

British Columbia also has a well-established emphasis on promoting local food products. The *BC Agricultural Plan*, for example, foresees a future in which local food plays a prominent role. BC is also home to a longstanding Buy BC initiative to promote local products. The government of British Columbia also provides funding to raise awareness about food miles, demonstrating that it is aware of the environmental benefits of eating locally.

Food, Health, and Well-Being in British Columbia

Learn More: http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/pho/pdf/phoannual2005.pdf

British Columbia has made one of the most publicized efforts to address the problem of food insecurity in Canada. In 2005, the Provincial Health Officer's Report, *Food, Health, and Well-Being in British Columbia,* focused entirely on food security and nutrition. The recommendations ranged from basing the food allowance for people on Income Assistance on the cost of the nutritious food basket to supporting local farmers' markets to working with Aboriginal communities interested in re-introducing traditional diets.[15] This served as a clear recognition by a significant figure within the province's health establishment that food security was an important issue for the province to deal with.

Core Public Health Programs: Air Quality, Food Safety, Health Emergency Management, and Food Security

Learn More: http://www.phsa.ca/NR/rdonlyres/76D687CF-6596-46FE-AA9A-A536D61FB038/22663/200607CorePublicHealthProgramsPublicDocumentforPos.pdf

British Columbia has recognized food security as one of the core programs that health authorities must provide. Food security, for the purposes of the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA), is defined as existing when "all citizens obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance, and equal access for everyone."[16] The PHSA acts as the coordinator for the Community Food Action Initiative (CFAI), serves as a link between Regional Health Authorities (RHAs), provides funding, and shares best practice information. It has also developed Food Sales Guidelines to make healthy choices easier for consumers.[17]

Community Food Action Initiative

Learn More:
http://food.cimnet.ca/cim/dbf/communityfoodactioninitiativeproposaljune05.pdf?im_id=190&si_id=43; http://www.vch.ca/population/docs/VCH_CFAI_Brochure.pdf

The goal of the CFAI, launched in 2005, is to "increase food security for the BC population." This includes increasing awareness about food security, access to healthy local foods, food knowledge and skills, community capacity to address food security in local contexts, and the development and use of policies to facilitate community food security.[18] The provincial government distributes $1.5 million annually to RHAs for CFAI. Plans are implemented by community groups, agencies, and individuals who apply for funding from their local RHA. These local programs are supposed to demonstrate community capacity building and CFAI emphasizes grassroots decision making.[19]

Since its introduction, the CFAI has been quite successful in providing resources for community organizations that address food insecurity in British Columbia. In 2006-2007, the CFAI funded 73 community-based projects and 54 food security networks in over 100 communities.[20] According to Cathryn Wellner, the Food and Health Project Leader for the Interior Health Authority, "(the) CFAI provided the spark that started the whole thing off for the North Thompson community…and once the fire was lit the community found other resources to tackle food security in a much broader way."[21] Thus, CFAI funding has served as an impetus to develop larger projects and to generate funds from alternative sources.

Perspectives on Community Based Food Security Projects: A Discussion Paper

Learn More: http://www.phsa.ca/NR/rdonlyres/76D687CF-6596-46FE-AA9A-A536D61FB038/16876/PHSA002reportWEB.pdf

A discussion paper published by the PHSA and ActNow BC, describes the goals of the CFAI and the challenges associated with it. Several types of projects are listed as potential recipients of CFAI funds: Charitable Food Activities (such as food banks), Community Development Activities (Good Food Box programs, community gardens, and community kitchens), Nutrition Activities (improving people's ability to make healthy food choices), School Based Activities (supported through ActNow), Community Economic Development Activities, and Healthy Policy Development.[22] Food security programs, it proposes, should alleviate hunger, offer nutritious foods, promote human dignity, utilize local resources, be community-based, support social capital development, be sustainable, and offer an education component.[23]

Implementing Community Food Action in British Columbia: Criteria for Success and the Role of the Health Sector

Learn More: http://www.phsa.ca/NR/rdonlyres/76D687CF-6596-46FE-AA9A-A536D61FB038/18906/PHSAreportCFAICFSreport.pdf

In 2006, *Implementing Community Food Action in British Columbia: Criteria for Success and the Role of the Health Sector* was published. This paper described the origins of food security policy in British Columbia and the role that the health sector could play in promoting food security. Given the ongoing need for evaluation to encourage government funding and to provide examples of best practices, the health sector can provide valuable assistance in the way of evaluation. The health sector can also facilitate community partnerships, provide funding and infrastructural support, and act as a capacity builder.[24] Nevertheless, it was proposed that successful community food security programs should be driven by community members, run by the communities, and their success should be evaluated by community-generated "success indicators."[25] The report concludes that while Health Authorities should provide practical support and funding they should not actually run projects.

A Review of Policy Options for Increasing Food Security and Income Security in British Columbia

Learn More: http://www.phsa.ca/NR/rdonlyres/76D687CF-6596-46FE-AA9A-A536D61FB038/24932/PHSAreportfoodinsecurityfinal.pdf

In 2007, *A Review of Policy Options for Increasing Food Security and Income Security in British Columbia*, was published by the PHSA. It suggests that alleviating poverty would go a long way towards addressing food insecurity.[26] Measures such

as a $10 minimum wage, affordable child care, an Earned Income Benefit (for people underpaid but in the work force), improving federal child benefits, and increasing Income Assistance rates by 50% were proposed as methods by which both poverty and food insecurity could be addressed.[27] Statistics were used to demonstrate the relationship between the affordability of food, low income rates, and the benefits of increasing incomes. The paper proposes that an increase in income would almost certainly result in better nutrition for poor families.[28]

A Seat at the Table: Resource Guide for Local Governments to Promote Food Secure Communities

Learn More:
http://www.llbc.leg.bc.ca/public/PubDocs/bcdocs/441047/PHSAreportaseatatthetable4.pdf

In 2008, the PHSA provided guidance for local governments interested in promoting food security. Local governments, it suggests, can act as a catalyst within their communities and serve an important role in promoting and educating their citizenry.[29] The paper is divided into several themes, each of which identifies the rationale for developing policy on particular topics and what local governments could do to address them. Community gardens, farmers' markets, neighbourhood planning, local food production, healthy food in public buildings, creating community capacity, and conducting food assessments or adopting food charters were highlighted as ways that municipalities could address food security in their communities.

ActNow BC

Learn More: http://www.actnowbc.ca; http://www.healthyeatingatschool.ca

Much of the push for food security in British Columbia has come under the umbrella of ActNow BC, a healthy living initiative launched in 2005. ActNow's goal is to make British Columbia the healthiest jurisdiction ever to host an Olympic Winter Games.[30] Through the website www.actnowbc.ca, British Columbians can access information on healthy living for their homes, schools, workplaces, and communities. This strategy, which focuses on healthy eating, physical activity, and reducing tobacco use, aims to give British Columbians the information that they need to make healthy choices.

ActNow offers resources and information to schools related to healthy living. One such resource is www.healthyeatingatschool.ca which provides nutritional information for popular foods, provides ideas for healthy fundraising activities, and outlines guidelines for food and beverage sales within British Columbia. ActNow places an emphasis on teaching healthy living in schools (including healthy eating, physical exercise, and not using tobacco products). By targeting children through the education system, ActNow hopes to establish life patterns that encourage healthy eating and living.

Another ActNow program that addresses school nutrition is the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program. Its goals are to increase the consumption and awareness of fruit and vegetables by students, promote provincially grown fruits, and teach how to safely handle fruits and vegetables.[31] The program provides snacks for students in participating schools using locally grown produce wherever possible. By highlighting the value of locally produced food and supporting increased access to nutritious food for children, this program is an example of an attempt to improve nutrition and food security.

Community LINK

Learn More: http://www.bced.gov.bc.ca/policy/policies/community_link.htm

Community LINK addresses more than just food security, including a wide range of community-based school programming. Funding is provided for breakfast and lunch programs, school support workers, community school programs, and counseling for at-risk children.[32] In 2005-2006, the funding for meal programs was estimated at $14 million, approximately one-third of the Community LINK budget.[33]

Food Miles

Learn More: http://www.bcbudget.gov.bc.ca/2008/bfp/default/aspx?hash=7

Environmental issues regarding local food are also being discussed in British Columbia. In 2008, $3 million was provided over three years to educate the public about "food miles" as a means of reducing British Columbia's environmental impact.[34] The funding is provided through the Climate Action Secretariat. Such a program, in addition to the other work done through CFAI and ActNow BC seems to suggest that the awareness of food security issues within the minds of BC policy makers appears to be very high.

British Columbia Agricultural Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for BC Families

Learn More: http://www.al.gov.bc.ca/agriculture_plan/

The *British Columbia Agriculture Plan: Growing a Healthy Future for B.C. Families* was written by a committee of five Members of the Legislative Assembly to establish a focus for the future of agriculture in BC. It emphasizes the importance of local food and community food systems. It proposes that "all British Columbians should have access to safe, locally produced food."[35] The report includes sections on Local Food and Health, Community Food Systems, and promoting local food. It also highlights the importance of meeting environmental and climate challenges through agricultural activity, supporting family farm businesses, and increasing First Nations agricultural capacity.

Interestingly, the report addresses the importance of bridging the divisions between urban areas and agriculture. For example, it discusses increasing awareness and interest in agriculture among BC youth, preserving agricultural land, and minimizing land use conflict between rural and urban residents. By targeting these topics, the *BC Agriculture Plan* proposes that contributions will be made to health, climate change mitigation, environmental sustainability, and the economy.[36]

Buy BC

Learn More: http://www.bcac.bc.ca/buybc/

The Buy BC program was launched in 1993 as a joint initiative between the Province of British Columbia and the private sector to promote the consumption of locally grown produce. It is currently managed by the British Columbia Agriculture Council, a farm organization in the province and is used by over 1,200 companies and associations to market food that is grown or produced in British Columbia. The Buy BC initiative has been quite successful, and consumer recognition of the logo has reached 75%.[37] Through marketing efforts such as Buy BC, consumers have become increasingly aware of locally produced food and have supported BC's agricultural and food processing sector.

Organic Sector Development Program

Learn More: http://www.certifiedorganic.bc.ca/programs/osdp.htm

An agricultural initiative in BC that promotes sustainable agriculture is the Organic Sector Initiative Strategic Plan. This plan identifies priorities which are addressed through the Organic Sector Development Program and is funded with $1 million from the Agri-Food Futures Fund. The program provides 45-65% of its funds to projects increasing production capacity, 30-50% to marketplace development and promotion of organic products, and 5-10% to environmental stewardship.[38] Any applicant receiving a grant from the program is expected to provide at least half of the costs for the funded project.

Agricultural Land Reserve

Learn More: http://www.alc.gov.bc.ca/

Since some of the finest agricultural lands in British Columbia are threatened by urban sprawl, the provincial government established an Agricultural Land Reserve. This area is managed by the Agricultural Land Commission to protect an agricultural land base in the Fraser Valley. Consequently, while the City of Vancouver has grown in population, it has done so by increasing urban density, rather than by consuming valuable agricultural land. Through

the retention of agricultural land, facilitating the possibility of producing significant amounts of food near British Columbia's largest urban centres, and by supporting environmental practices, the Agricultural Land Reserve is an example of a food security initiative in British Columbia.

Yukon Territory

While this scan found few programs in the Yukon to address food security from a public health perspective, the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources has several programs that promote local agriculture. The *Vision for Agriculture* report, outlined below, emphasizes the importance of local food for local consumption. In some ways, this focus comes out of necessity. Yukon farms are far from large markets for their products, meaning that the cost of exporting food would be high. Similarly, the cost of importing foods from outside the territory means that local food can play an important role in Yukon's food economy.

Vision for Agriculture

Learn More: http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/agriculture/pdf/ag_policy_2006.pdf

In 2006, Yukon's *Vision for Agriculture* was published by the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources. The goal of this policy document was to find ways for Yukon's agricultural industry to promote growing food for local consumption in an economically viable and environmentally sustainable way.[39] Yukon's agricultural sector produces food primarily for local consumption because of its distance from larger markets.[40] The government committed itself to assisting Yukon producers with marketing their products. It will also maintain the Business Incentive Policy for Goods and Services. This policy provides rebates to Yukon-based providers of goods and services, which makes them more competitive with imports. This creates opportunities for Yukon agricultural producers to have access to government procurement contracts.

Grown in the Yukon

Learn More: http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/agriculture/pdf/inFARMationsummer2008-web.pdf; http://www.gov.yk.ca/news/2006/06-206.html

Several initiatives help promote local food in the Yukon. Local products are promoted with a "Grown in the Yukon" or "Yukon Grown" label, which is regulated by the Department of Energy, Mines, and Resources.[41] To facilitate local food production, for example, the government invested $175,000 in a mobile abattoir with slaughter and chilling capacity to assist local farmers, retailers, and consumers who want to acquire local meat products.[42] The government budgeted up to $30,000 annually to support the operation of the abattoir, ensuring that Yukon-raised meat is competitively priced.

Master Gardener Program

Learn More: http://www.emr.gov.yk.ca/agriculture/pdf/inFARMation_fall2003.pdf

The Master Gardener Program utilizes trained volunteers to assist home gardeners throughout the territory by providing them with information and technical advice. The program has been in place since 1997. Each volunteer is given 40 hours of instruction to prepare them for their position.[43] In this way, the government assists gardeners producing their own food throughout the territory.

Northwest Territories

The isolation of many parts of the Northwest Territories, and the cost of transporting food to remote communities, means that food insecurity is high and perishable, nutritious products are not always available. Efforts to address these problems have recently begun with the Healthy Foods North initiative that promotes the consumption of healthy food. It is surprising, however, that more food security initiatives do not exist in NWT. The NWT is different than its southern neighbours because it has little conventional agriculture. Rather, much of the local food economy is based on traditional harvesting. The Government of NWT has several programs that assist the development of hunting and trapping in the territory and support the teaching of this knowledge to the next generation.

Healthy Foods North

Learn More:

http://www.hlthss.gov.nt.ca/sites/healthy_foods_north/pdf/publications/healthy_foods_north_detailed_project_description.pdf

The Northwest Territories Department of Health and Social Services has cooperated with the Canadian Public Health Association on such projects as the Healthy Foods North initiative. This program attempts to make nutritious food more affordable for people in northern communities by working with stores, workplaces, and community partners. The pilot project was first run in Inuvik and Tuktoyaktuk in 2008. As part of the program, labels and posters in stores promote healthier options, recipes are available to take home, and there are cooking demonstrations. Radio and television advertise nutritional information and promote the importance of making healthy choices and there are activities in workplaces, schools, and throughout the community. If this program is deemed to have been successful, it will be phased into other communities throughout the North.[44]

NWT Agriculture

Learn More:

http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/publications/2007/fursfishingagriculture/apf_guide.pdf

While the conventional agriculture industry in NWT is small, it is a valuable source of food for the territory. The industry uses a "NWT Grown" label to promote local foods in grocery stores. Government support for agriculture is provided through the federal-territorial Agricultural Policy Framework. This provides funding of up to $435,000 annually for five years for NWT farms, 60% of which comes from the federal government. In the NWT, this money

includes funding for a Northern Agri-Foods Initiative to encourage diversification and commercialization of northern agriculture and encouraging northern-based agri-foods industries to develop processing capacity.[45]

NWT Harvesting Programs

Learn More:

http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/fursagriculturefisheries/kidtrapping.shtml;
http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/fursagriculturefisheries/westernharvestersassistance.shtml;
http://www.iti.gov.nt.ca/fursagriculturefisheries/communityharvestersassistance.shtml

The bulk of the agri-food industry in the NWT lies outside the realm of agriculture. There are significant hunting, trapping, and fishing industries in the province. The "Take a Kid Trapping Program," run by the Departments of Municipal and Community Affairs and Environment and Natural Resources, encourages youth to learn traditional skills such as hunting, fishing, and trapping.[46] The Government of the NWT supports traditional food acquisition through the Western Harvesters Assistance Program which provides grants to Aboriginal organizations that promote renewable resource harvesting.[47] Similarly, the Community Harvesters Assistance Program provides funding to Local Wildlife Committees to distribute to members to defray the operating costs of harvesting (such as tools and equipment necessary for traditional hunting and trapping).[48]

Nunavut

Nunavut's remote location means that food security is a significant issue for the territory. Nunavut households are seven times more likely than the average Canadian household to be food insecure.[49] A recent government framework aims to address some of these nutrition challenges. Nunavut's food security policies are based on its unique cultural heritage. The importance of traditional Inuit lifestyles has been recognized by the government through its support of a variety of hunting, trapping, and fishing programs. In no other province or territory is the Aboriginal perspective of food security the central feature of the food security strategy. This is borne out through traditional Aboriginal approaches to healthy eating as well as an emphasis on assisting hunting and trapping as a solution to local food concerns.

Nutrition in Nunavut: A Framework for Action

Learn More: http://www.gov.nu.ca/healthylivinginnunavut/nfe.pdf

In response to this challenge, the Government of Nunavut's Department of Nutrition and Social Services prepared a report entitled, *Nutrition in Nunavut: A Framework for Action*. The vision set forth in this document is that all Nunavummiut will enjoy *niqittiavaknik nirinasuaqniq* (healthy eating), defined as being that people will have "food that is safe, nutritious, and culturally valued and will not experience hunger or worry about hunger."[50] Some of the main recommendations in the framework include: increasing professional nutrition services and nutrition education, improving school food programs, increasing the food skills of Nunavummiut, improving access to healthy foods, and determining sustainable ways of reducing the cost of nutritious food.

Nunavut Harvesting Programs

Learn More: http://www.gov.nu.ca/policies/sh.pdf

The Government of Nunavut recognizes that harvesting is a "critical element of the long-term sustainability of Nunavut communities, and sustainable wildlife populations and an active community of harvesters are at the heart of the Inuit vision for Nunavut."[51] Government programs that support harvesting include: the Community Harvesters Assistance Program (which provides funds to assist with the cost of fuel, supplies, and equipment), the Community Organized Hunt (which assists in the purchase of fuel and transportation for those dependent on caribou but unable to access big game close to their place of residence), compensation for hunters' and trappers' who lose equipment due to unavoidable natural disasters, Workers Compensation for hunters and trappers injured on the job, and funding for

local and regional hunter and trapper organizations.[52] Through this diverse array of programming, Nunavummiut harvesters are recognized as an important part of the community and can play a significant role in improving food security for communities in the far north.

Nunavut Fisheries Strategy

Learn More:
http://www.edt.gov.nu.ca/lookupnunavut/strats/nunavut%20fisheries%20strategy%20final.pdf

The *Nunavut Fisheries Strategy* promotes the sustainable use of marine resources for both local, community-based consumption and large scale, export-oriented fishing. To develop the local fishing sector, improved infrastructure (such as harbours, processing facilities, and cold storage equipment) was highlighted as the most pressing concern.[53] The growth of fishing in Nunavut is cited as a potential way to improve the territory's economic standing, provide jobs for residents, and utilize an abundant natural resource.

Alberta

In Alberta, most of the food security work found by this scan has been done by Alberta Agriculture, Food, and Rural Development rather than by the health department. While there are arguably shortcomings in its food security policies relating to health and poverty, a lot of work has been done to promote local food through information and resources. The Albertan government can be seen as one of the Canadian leaders in this regard. Few other provinces have such a diversity of programs promoting local foods.

Healthy U and Healthy Schools

Learn More: http://www.healthyalberta.com

A government program called Healthy U has a website, www.healthyalberta.com, that provides information for Albertans on numerous aspects of healthy living, including healthy eating. The website provides menu ideas, advice on how to shop healthily, links, and nutrition information. One component of Healthy U is a Wellness Fund for Healthy School Communities. Grants of up to $10,000 are provided for school community activities that promote health and wellness while up to $50,000 is available to maintain successful projects for three years. Healthy eating activities are eligible for funding. The fund aims to "promote healthy school communities and … improve the health and wellness of school-aged children and youth."[54] Healthy School Community Awards are distributed to individuals or groups that promote healthy schools.

Nutritious Food Basket Costing

Learn More: http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/sdd5225

Similar to several other provinces, the price of the Nutritious Food Basket is monitored in Alberta. It is done by Alberta Agriculture Food and Rural Development (AAFRD). The survey is taken on an annual basis and studies the cost of food in Edmonton.[55] It has been completed since 1995. Costing does not appear to be done by AAFRD in other large urban centres, rural regions, or the North.

Dine Alberta

Learn More: http://www.dinealberta.com; http://www.chomparoundalberta.com

The Dine Alberta program offers consumers an opportunity to enjoy Alberta-grown food at participating restaurants during the month of September each year. Its main goals are encouraging chefs to feature local ingredients, increasing consumer awareness about local foods, and assisting small and diversified agri-food producers with marketing their food. AAFRD estimates that $3 million was injected into the Alberta economy as a result of the program during its first three years and that local producers and processors had realized $1 million in sales.[56] There are other also other efforts to persuade Albertans to purchase food from local producers. Travel Alberta has a website (www.chomparoundalberta.com) that encourages people to explore the province's local food options and includes information on farmers' markets, buy direct locations, and what crops are in season.

Resources on Direct Marketing and Farmers' Markets

Learn More: http://www.exploredirect.ca; http://www.agtourism.ca; http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/deptdocs.nsf/All/apa6620?opendocument

AAFRD also provides advice and resources to producers looking to diversify their operations and partake in direct marketing or farmers' markets. For example, the website www.exploredirect.ca provides advice for farmers from AAFRD about becoming a direct marketing or community supported agriculture (CSA) operation. Similarly, www.agtourism.ca promotes agricultural tourism and provides resources for people interested in starting an agricultural tourism venture. Finally, although each farmers' market is independent, there is support for the Alberta Approved Farmers' Market Program from the Business Diversification Branch of AAFRD.[57]

Local Market Expansion Program

Learn More: http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$Department/newslett.nsf/all/rnw14391

The Local Market Expansion Program is an amalgamation of the programs supporting direct marketing, farmers' markets, agricultural tourism, and regional cuisine projects. The goal of the plan is to increase the demand within Alberta for products from local markets. The program is composed of four strategies: attracting new entrants to the industry and working with those within it to enhance business skills, building alliances so that smaller farms can work together to be successful, facilitating programs to drive consumer awareness, and identifying and remedying regulatory barriers that could impede this sector.[58] This program is intended to improve business skills amongst farmers, build consumer demand, facilitate alliances between farmers, and, hopefully, increase profits for local producers.

Alternative Agricultural Markets in Alberta: An Overview

Learn More:
http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/apa547/$FILE/m_q_report_final.pdf

To assess the success of these efforts and to gather data with which to develop further programs, AAFRD prepared a survey entitled *Alternative Agricultural Markets in Alberta: An Overview* in 2004. It was reported that the annual domestic expenditure in Alberta on alternative agriculture products in 2003-2004 was $963.6 million and led to the creation of 24,091 jobs.[59] At the current growth rate of 8%, expenditure was expected to increase to $1.7 billion by 2010. Alternative agriculture was recognized as an important component within the government's plan to increase its value-added processing to $20 billion by 2010.[60]

Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Program

Learn More: http://www1.agric.gov.ab.ca/$department/deptdocs.nsf/all/aesa6427

AAFRD has paid some attention to increasing the environmental sustainability of agriculture in Alberta. The Alberta Environmentally Sustainable Agriculture Program (AESA) was developed out of consultations that were held in 1995 and 1996. Its priorities include maintaining and improving soil and water quality and biodiversity. There are three components to the AESA. First, information, resources, and grants are available to assist farmers acquire technology and improve planning to support sustainable agriculture.[61] Secondly, AESA funds can be used to help food processors conserve resources, reduce packaging and waste, and manage their environmental impact.[62] Finally, soil and water quality are monitored throughout the province.

Saskatchewan

Despite being at the heart of Canada's bread basket, Saskatchewan is among the provinces with the fewest food security policies in Canada. The Department of Social Services does provide some food security programming, most notably its Child Nutrition and Development Program. On the agricultural side, however, the provincial government has done very little to promote food security. Indeed, the only agricultural item outlined in this report is a report on the opportunities for organic agriculture. Saskatchewan remains focused on large-scale industrial agriculture aimed at export markets, although it should be noted that it has the highest rate of organic farming in Canada (albeit mostly for export).

Department of Social Services

Learn More: http://www.socialservices.gov.sk.ca/Default.aspx?DN=a20f8458-4d5e-472d-8980-3f64fac7b295

Food security in Saskatchewan is the responsibility of the Department of Social Services. Its website explains that the department is "committed to finding long-term food security solutions by cooperating with many sectors and community partners so that accessible, affordable and adequately nutritious food is available for all citizens."[63] It outlines three food security initiatives within the province: food banks, Food Secure Saskatchewan (a non-governmental organization dedicated to the issue of food security) and the Child Nutrition and Development Program (CNDP). In Saskatchewan, the CNDP provides grant funding to over 70 community groups who provide a wide variety of food security initiatives. These include community kitchens, food box programs, and school and community nutrition education programs.[64] The provincial government also provides $1.5 million annually to support meal programs and food security initiatives in schools.[65]

Population Health Promotion Strategy

Learn More: http://www.health.gov.sk.ca/population-health-strategy

Access to nutritious food is one of four priority areas outlined in Saskatchewan's *Population Health Promotion Strategy*. Health regions were charged with the responsibility of carrying out work on priority areas by partnering with other organizations, coordinating efforts, advocating for policy change, and supporting those involved in food security work.[66] Several goals were established to help the province prioritize nutritious food. These included increasing opportunities for people to enjoy more nutritious food in homes and community settings, reducing economic,

geographic, social, and cultural barriers that limit healthy eating habits, and advocating for policies that promote and protect the health of Saskatchewan residents.[67] The *Population Health Promotion Strategy* suggested that it is important to think of community rather than individual food security and that the community food security model is one through which community development can be achieved.[68]

Going Organic: A Report on the Opportunities for Organic Agriculture in Saskatchewan

Learn More:
http://www.gov.sk.ca/adx/aspx/adxGetMedia.aspx?mediaId=299&PN=Shared

In 2007, Lon Borgerson, the Legislative Secretary for Organic Farming in 200 wrote *Going Organic: A Report on the Opportunities for Organic Agriculture in Saskatchewan.* This report recommended ways that the province could expand organic agriculture. Borgerson suggested that the province's goal should be that 10% of farms should be organic by 2015.[69] To do this, a wide variety of methods were proposed including funding for conventional farmers transitioning to organic agriculture, increased information and personnel available from Saskatchewan Agriculture and Food (SAF) to assist organic farmers, funding for research, marketing, and the development of organic foods, increased educational opportunities for those interested in studying organic farming, and an effort by the Government of Saskatchewan to promote local food. The report calls for significant financial and human resources to be used to aid the development of Saskatchewan's organic industry.

Manitoba

The impetus for much of Manitoba's work on food security seems to focus on two main concerns: the North and children. Northern Manitoba faces significant food security issues. The cost of food is high and there are very high rates of chronic diseases such as diabetes. Since the *Northern Food Prices Report* of 2003, the government has developed programs to address northern issues, most notably the Northern Healthy Foods Initiative. The provincial government has also emphasized children through the development of Healthy Child Manitoba and various programs and policies that promote healthy foods in schools. Agriculturally, the government has mostly focused on large-scale agriculture aimed at export markets, although there has been some promotion of local food products, organic farming, and sustainable agriculture.

Northern Food Prices Report

Learn More:
http://www.gov.mb.ca/ana/food_prices/2003_northern_food_prices_report.pdf

Policy work done by the provincial government in Manitoba on the relationship between public health and food security has often focussed on northern Manitoba. In 2003, the *Northern Food Prices Report* investigated the high cost of food in northern Manitoba. Several policy recommendations came out of the report including a Northern Foods Self-Sufficiency Initiative to increase food production in the North, efforts to encourage gardening and greenhouses in northern communities, encouraging the development of agri-food businesses in the North, a review of milk prices (to result in caps on the maximum fair market price of milk), and an ongoing Food Price Survey Program in the North to assist with policy making.

Northern Healthy Foods Initiative

Learn More: http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=week&item=4604; http://news.gov.mb.ca/news/index.html?archive=2007-10-01&item=2359

The Northern Healthy Foods Initiative (NHFI) was developed to address food issues faced in the North. NHFI began as a pilot project in a few northern communities but has since expanded to 28 communities.[70] As of 2008-2009, annual funding has reached $600,000. Four hundred vegetable gardens now dot northern communities and eight greenhouses have been built. Remote communities have received assistance to buy freezers to help with food preservation, enabling residents to buy food in bulk quantities or store food that they harvested. Poultry and goat

production have even started on a small scale.[71] The program attempts to incorporate traditional Aboriginal knowledge by encouraging people to learn how to prepare traditional foods such as smoked fish, moose, and pemmican.[72]

Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/health/chronicdisease/cdpi/index.html

The Chronic Disease Prevention Initiative (CDPI) is a five year demonstration project (ending in 2010) funded by Manitoba Health and Healthy Living (MHHL) and the Public Health Agency of Canada. Funding is provided to regional health authorities to promote healthy eating, physical activity, and tobacco cessation. The RHA then distributes funds to community organizations wishing to work on any of the three core CDPI components. Grassroots involvement is intended to create supportive communities for healthy living and increase community capacity while at the same time targeting key risk factors for chronic disease. The program currently runs in approximately 83 Manitoban communities.[73]

Healthy Child Manitoba

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/

The Government of Manitoba also has paid significant attention to the needs of children. Healthy Child Manitoba (HCM) provides numerous services for parents and children. While food security is not recognized explicitly, several programs help promote the consumption of healthy foods. For example, Prenatal Benefits are provided to pregnant mothers with a net family income lower than $32,000. This money is meant to ensure that pregnant women have proper nutrition during their pregnancy.[74] After the child is born, there are community programs funded by Healthy Baby throughout the province that include information about nutrition and health, cooking skills development, and nutritious snacks.[75]

Healthy Schools

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/healthychild/healthyschools/index.html

Healthy Schools stresses the importance of nutrition in schools. Since 2002, Regional Health Authorities and School Divisions have received funding to work together on health-related projects. These have often included healthy eating and nutrition.[76] Additionally, a School Nutrition Survey was completed and guidelines developed. All schools in Manitoba are now responsible for developing a school nutrition policy. The types of foods that are available for

sale in schools are now regulated. A School Nourishment Grant provided to the Child Nutrition Council will be used to provide breakfast clubs, snack programs, or healthy food promotion to up to 8,000 Manitoban children.[77]

Environmental Programs in Manitoba

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/beyond_kyoto/index.html; http://www.gov.mb.ca/stem/climate/mb_doing/action_fund.html; http://www.gov.mb.ca/conservation/pollutionprevention/sdif/

According to Manitoba's action plan on climate change, *Beyond Kyoto: Manitoba's Green Future*, the province should become more food self-sufficient to benefit the environment. The Climate Change Action Fund can be used to support and expand local food programs.[78] As part of this focus on the environment, the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund provides grants to projects that focus on innovation, conservation, community development, northern development, sustainable agriculture, eco-tourism, climate change, water quality, youth involvement, and natural resource conservation.[79] In 2006-2007, $3.2 million was distributed to institutions and organizations throughout the province. Several of these projects had a food component, including support for community gardening, school garden programs, university research, organic food for child care facilities, compost education, and greenhouse development.[80]

Local Food Promotion

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/consumer/buymanitoba.html

Numerous initiatives have been developed in Manitoba to support local food production, processing, and consumption. Although the province is yet to introduce a widespread marketing campaign to highlight Manitoba produce, Manitoba Agriculture, Food, and Rural Initiatives (MAFRI) has a website outlining where Manitoban consumers can go to buy locally grown and processed foods. Additionally, the province publishes and distributes brochures to assist people who want to buy local produce.[81]

Manitoba Organic Transition Program

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/programs/pdf/otp_brochure.pdf

The province provides a variety of supports for farmers who want to engage in sustainable practices. For example, the Manitoba Organic Transition Program reimburses up to two-thirds of the cost of certification fees paid by Manitoba farmers or processors to obtain full organic status to a maximum of $800 per year for two years. This assists farmers during transition years when yields are lower but they are unable to charge organic premium prices.

The goal of this program, which began in September of 2008, is to increase the number of organic producers and processors in the province.[82] MAFRI has published an organic food directory to promote local organic products.

Agricultural Sustainability Initiative

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/research/asi/index.html

The province assists conventional farmers who want to carry out sustainable agriculture projects. The Agricultural Sustainability Initiative (known before 1998 as Covering New Ground) works to improve the agricultural industry's environmental performance by funding several types of projects to improve sustainability. The priority areas for 2008-2009 include: water quality, agri-energy (promoting alternative energy sources), biological cropping systems, ecological goods and services, northern foods and new production systems in the North.[83] In this way, the province attempts to encourage sustainable environmental practices within the agricultural sector.

Manitoba Agri-Innovation Suite

Learn More: http://www.gov.mb.ca/agriculture/programs/pdf/mais_brochure.pdf

A final program of note is the Manitoba Agri-Innovation Suite (MAIS) which works to develop products from concept to market and increases diversity within the agri-food industry in Manitoba. The program favours projects that use Manitoba-based commodities and research facilities. Funding can be provided for marketing, certification, product development, and commercialization (developing an inventory and production costs). MAIS has the potential to help local producers and processors develop new products and increase sales of local products to Manitobans.

Ontario

Ontario has several progressive food security policies. Food security is a mandatory service for regional health authorities, and has been for more than a decade. This has sparked regional support of food security programming throughout the province. Through its Ministry of Health Promotion, further steps have been taken to promote healthy eating. Schools have been a particular focus in Ontario, through a variety of programs that promote healthy eating and local purchasing. Ontario also has long-standing programs to promote the consumption of local food such as Foodland Ontario and the more recent Pick Ontario Freshness campaign. Thus, Ontario has been an innovator in several components of food security policy including both health and agriculture.

Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guideline

Learn More: http://www.ontla.on.ca/library/repository/mon/6000/10270964.pdf

Ontario considers food security to be one of the core services that health boards must address. According to the Ministry of Health's "Mandatory Health Programs and Services Guidelines," boards of health in the province are required to: monitor the cost of the nutritious food basket, develop and distribute a list of local programs and services providing access to healthy foods, work with community agencies to improve access to healthy foods, and provide consultation and training to community groups that want to increase access to healthy foods.[84] Additionally, boards are instructed to work with school boards in their regions to provide information on healthy eating and work with local retailers to promote healthy choices in local restaurants, grocery stores, and workplaces.[85]

Ministry of Health Promotion

Learn More: http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/health/HEAL/actionplan-EN.pdf

Recognizing the importance of preventative health measures, Ontario created a Ministry of Health Promotion in 2005. As part of its *Ontario Action Plan for Healthy Eating and Active Living*, the new ministry targeted four priorities: growing healthy children and youth, building healthy communities, championing healthy public policy, and promoting public awareness.[86] It was recommended that the government work to improve access to healthy foods for people and support the promotion of healthy eating in schools. To build healthy communities, it was suggested that the government should work with Aboriginal communities to develop Healthy Eating strategies and that the Eat Smart! Program should be expanded.[87]

Eat Smart!

Learn More: http://www.eatsmartontario.ca

Eat Smart! is a voluntary program set up by the Ontario government to encourage food retailers to provide healthy menu options to customers. Qualifying restaurants can display an Eat Smart! logo and are promoted on the program's website (www.eatsmartontario.ca). For a restaurant to qualify, it must offer healthy food choices, have an excellent food safety record, and be entirely smoke free.[88] The program has been expanded to include schools, workplaces, and recreation centres. It is hoped that facilities will provide healthier options in order to gain Eat Smart certification while consumers can use certification to find healthy alternatives in their communities.

Real Food For Real Kids and Foodland Ontario Pilot Project

Learn More:
http://www.premier.gov.on.ca/news/Product.asp?ProductID=2456&Lang=EN

The Ministry of Education has worked to improve nutrition within Ontario schools. One example is a recent pilot project, launched in September 2008, which involves four high schools throughout the province (Brampton, Kingston, North Bay, and Guelph). Students are taught how to prepare nutritious meals from fresh, locally grown foods. The project works in partnership with Real Food for Real Kids and Foodland Ontario. The former will provide cooking experience while the latter will work to identify and provide local foods.[89]

Food in Schools

Learn More: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/135.html; http://www.breakfastforlearning.ca/english/images/provincial_territorial_gov-supp_may_2006.pdf

This is not the first food security initiative launched by the Ministry of Education. For example, in 2004, it developed nutritional standards for elementary school vending machines and banned foods or beverages that did not meet nutrition requirements.[90] It should be noted that Ontario is a major supporter of school meal programs. The provincial government provides $8.5 million annually through the Ministry of Children and Youth Services to breakfast programs throughout the province.[91] Funds are distributed by the ministry's regional offices.

Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program

Learn More: http://www.mhp.gov.on.ca/english/health/NFVP/default.asp

Another school project developed in Ontario is the Northern Fruit and Vegetable Program (NFVP). It began as a pilot project in 2006-2007 and has since continued. The goal of this program is to increase the consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables by children and youth in northern Ontario. It was initially run as a partnership between the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food, and Rural Affairs (OMAFRA), Porcupine Public Health Unit, schools and local school boards, and the Ministry of Health Promotion. By its second year, 12,000 children in 60 elementary schools were being provided with three servings of fruit and vegetables per week along with education on the benefits of fruit and vegetable consumption. The program cost of $900,000.[92]

At the end of the pilot project stage of the NFVP, the Ministry of Health Promotion conducted an evaluation to see if any improvements could be made to the program. It found that the provision of fruits and vegetables in combination with education about their benefits, led to significant increases in the consumption of fruits and vegetables by children.[93] As kids were exposed to vegetables, they liked them more and were more willing to try healthy foods they had not previously tasted.[94] There were some difficulties with the program, most notably that the produce that arrived at schools was often of poor quality which resulted in wasting. Nevertheless, the Ministry was pleased enough with the program to continue and expand its operation for a second year.

Pick Ontario Freshness and Foodland Ontario

Learn More: http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/pickontario/; http://www.foodland.gov.on.ca

Ontario has put significant effort into encouraging people to buy locally grown foods. The "Pick Ontario Freshness" program developed by OMAFRA attempts to build awareness of and demand for food that is grown or produced in Ontario. It is an expansion of the Foodland Ontario program (which labelled Ontario grown fruits and vegetables) to include deli items, fresh meats, dairy products, and baked goods. To fund the program, the Ontario government has provided $12 million over four years through the Ontario Market Investment Fund. This money will be used to promote Ontarian foods at trade events, advertise throughout the province, and sponsor research initiatives.[95]

Foodland Ontario has existed since 1977 to increase Ontario farmers' share of the Ontario food market. Marketing is an important aspect of Foodland Ontario's work and it also provides services to grocers and producers. Consumer research is completed in association with producer organizations and industry stakeholders. Publications, advertisements, in-store promotions, and a website are used to promote Ontario foods. There is significant brand recognition for the Foodland Ontario logo. A 2007 survey said that brand recognition was 94%.[96]

Savour Ontario

Learn More: http://www.savourontario.ca

Savour Ontario was developed by OMAFRA as part of Pick Ontario Freshness to promote restaurants that use local and promote food products. The Ontario Ministry of Tourism and the Ontario Tourism Marketing Partnership Corporation are involved in planning the program as well.[97] Savour Ontario currently has over seventy participating restaurants, which are advertised through a website and other promotional materials.

Ontario Farmers' Market Strategy

Learn More:
http://www.omafra.gov.on.ca/english/about/farmersmarket/strategy.htm

The Ontario Farmers' Market Strategy is an attempt to promote local food and support farmers' markets. The strategy provides $4 million over four years, which will be split between Farmers' Markets Ontario and the Ontario Farm Fresh Marketing Association. The Strategy includes funding for OMAFRA to provide business information and marketing analysis to farmers interested in direct marketing. The funding will support promotional and marketing efforts, undertake consumer research, and develop farmer and market capacity to deliver a wider range of products to consumers.[98]

Ontario Agri-Food Education

Learn More: http://www.oafe.org/

Ontario Agri-Food Education (OAFE) was created by OMAFRA in 1991 and attempts to build an awareness and understanding of the role played by agriculture in the food system. OAFE prepares educational resources for schools to teach children about Ontario's agricultural sector and its importance. It also provides professional development opportunities for teachers to help them use the OAFE-developed curriculum materials. This creates opportunities for children who might otherwise be disconnected from agriculture and rural communities to learn about the agricultural industry and the food that it produces.

The Greenbelt Act

Learn More: http://www.mah.gov.on.ca/Page634.aspx

Another piece of provincial-level legislation that is important to mention in terms of food security in Ontario is the *Greenbelt Act* of 2005. This Act protects prime agricultural land in southern Ontario from being swallowed up by urban sprawl. Land is protected so it can provide "fresh produce, a secure food supply, and residual health benefits" to Ontario.[99] Greenbelt protection is the responsibility of the Ministry of Municipal Affairs and Housing and a non-profit organization called Friends of the Greenbelt works to support the region's environmental and agricultural integrity.

Quebec

Perhaps the most notable contribution that Quebec has made to food security policy discussions in Canada was its landmark *Act to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion*. This Act, which includes food security, made Quebec one of the Canadian leaders in addressing food security for low income people, particularly with the support which has since been provided as part of the resulting Government Action Plan. Innovative work has also occurred on the agricultural side of food security. In addition to a large buy local campaign and an agricultural land reserve to preserve agricultural land from urban development, a recent report by the Commission sur l'avenir d'agriculture et de l'agroalimentaire quebecois outlined possible future directions for Quebec agriculture emphasizing a spirit of openness and innovation, concern for healthy foods, and adoption of sustainable environmental methods. This report has served as the basis for many discussions on the future of agricultural policy in Canada.

Act to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion

Learn More:
http://www2.publicationsduquebec.gouv.qc.ca/dynamicSearch/telecharge.php?type=5&file=2002C61A.PDF; http://www.mess.gouv.qc.ca/grands-dossiers/lutte-contre-la-pauvrete/plan_en.asp

In 2002 the Government of Quebec passed a landmark piece of legislation, an *Act to Combat Poverty and Social Exclusion*. This pioneering piece of anti-poverty legislation recognizes food security as one of the many components of poverty that the government should address. It states that the province must "facilitate dignified access, for persons and families living in poverty, to a food supply that is both sufficient and nutritious, at reasonable costs, and to simple and reliable information enabling those persons and families to make enlightened dietary choices."[100] The resulting Government Action Plan suggested that there are two complementary methods for tackling food insecurity: a short-term approach that addresses immediate needs along with medium- and long-term interventions to empower people.[101] The Action Plan calls on the government to "continue to support community food security projects in communities and underprivileged areas" and to "continue to support contingency food aid projects, particularly for children."[102]

The first annual report of the Government Action Plan outlines the steps taken to address food security in Quebec. Over three years between 2002-2003 and 2004-2005, $10 million was provided to fund projects such as cooking workshops, buyers' groups, workshops on thrifty cuisine and budgeting, publication of a directory of food resources, community kitchens, and community gardens.[103] Over these three years, over 250 projects were carried

out across the province.[104] Investments in food security projects are described as being "investments against poverty."[105] An additional $2 million in separate funding is provided annually to *Club des petit dejeuners du Quebec* which provides breakfasts for children. [106]

Food for the Future

Learn More:
http://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/acrobat/f/documentation/2006/06-289-01.pdf

Food For the Future, published by Quebec's Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries, and Food recommended that the government establish an integrated food security policy.[107] To do this the government was called upon to ensure that the economically disadvantaged have increased accessibility to food and that healthy food is available to the entire population.[108] Initiatives such as growing local food, promoting food self-sufficiency, developing culinary skills, and monitoring the cost of a nutritious food basket were seen as tools whereby accessibility and availability could be improved.[109]

Public Health Strategy

Quebec's public health strategy was established in 2003. It recognizes food security and poor nutrition as key issues to be targeted. Two key goals in this campaign are increasing to 80% the number of Quebecers who ate five or more servings of vegetables and fruit per day and reducing the food insecurity rate to 8% of the population. An education campaign highlighting the importance of vegetables and fruit in a healthy lifestyle was launched. Funding was also provided for local and regional food security initiatives to ensure the survival and success of grassroots approaches to tackling the problem. Finally, the education system is involved through vegetable and fruit education programs in primary and secondary school classes.[110]

Kativik Regional Government

Learn More:
http://www.krg.ca/pdf/press_08/Cost%20of%20living%20reduction.pdf

In northern Quebec, the Kativik Regional Government has recently announced that it is beginning a food subsidy program to reduce the cost of nutritious foods. Each year, $1 million in funding will be provided to reduce the price of selected foods by 20%. The funding comes as part of a broader project to reduce the cost of living in northern Quebec.[111]

Mettez le Quebec Dans Votre Assiette!

Learn More: http://www.mapaq.gouv.qc.ca/assiette/accueil.html

The main government program in Quebec to encourage the consumption of local foods is called *Mettez le Quebec dans votre assiette!* (Put Quebec on your plate). It was launched in 2007 and provides $14 million over three years to promote Quebec products and support local farmers. The majority of this money ($9.115 million over three years) is to be spent on marketing Quebec produce within the province. Other funds are to be used for product labelling, and assisting entrepreneurs and farmers to get products to market. Its goal is to encourage more people to buy locally, enable farmers to meet the diversity of demand for local products, and help them find access to distribution markets.[112]

Act to Preserve Agricultural Land

Learn More: http://www.cptaq.gouv.qc.ca/index.php?id=27&MP=74-147

Similar to British Columbia and Ontario, Quebec protects agricultural land from urban development. The Act to Preserve Agricultural Land (APALAA) identified and preserved a permanent agricultural zone in nearly all Quebec municipalities. This land is monitored by the Commission for the Protection of Agricultural Land in Quebec (CPTAQ). This commission rules on applications for use of agricultural land within the protected areas and advises the provincial government about farmland protection.[113] Through these protected "green zones" agricultural activities and farmland are protected from urban expansion, ensuring that Quebec's most fertile agricultural lands continue to be used for food production.

Commission sur l'avenir d'agriculture et de l'agroalimentaire quebecois

Learn More:
http://www.caaaq.gouv.qc.ca/userfiles/File/Dossiers%2012%20fevrier/Rapport%20CAAAQ%20anglais.pdf

In 2006, Quebec constituted the *Commission sur l'avenir d'agriculture et de l'agroalimentaire quebecois* to examine the future of the agricultural and agrifood industries in the province. The commission's report, "Agriculture and Agrifood: Securing and Building the Future," was released in 2008. It proposed that the industry's primary mission should be feeding Quebecers, it should see itself as more than a source of food (agriculture is an occupation, lifestyle, and a business), grow a diverse number of crops, develop a highly professional farm workforce, and embrace sustainable development techniques.[114] The report went on to make recommendations to reform provincial financial

support for farmers, the collective marketing system, food distribution channels, farmer training, agricultural land protection, research, and the environment. It concluded by arguing that "the agriculture and agrifood sector has a system of laws, regulations, structures, and modes of operation that are so closed they are in danger of literally suffocating it" and that a new openness, innovative spirit, concern for healthy foods, and adoption of sustainable environmental methods was a necessity for farming's long term survival.[115]

Hunting and Trapping Support Programs

Learn More:

http://www.fr.osrcpc.com/pdf/Cree%20Hunter%20and%20Trapper%20Magazine%20Vol%201%20No%201%20January%202007%20(Caribou).pdf

Two programs were established as part of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement to facilitate a sustainable harvesting sector. The Inuit Hunting, Fishing, and Trapping Support Program provides funds to local communities to purchase large or small equipment, develop community harvesting infrastructure, replace key equipment, or improve the marketing and production of products. The program's focus is on the community rather than supporting individual harvesters.[116] The province also funds the Cree Hunters and Trappers Income Support Program. This program, which is administered by a Cree Hunters and Trappers Income Support Board, provides a guaranteed income, benefits, and incentives to Cree hunters who engage in traditional activities for at least one-third of the year.[117] In this way, those wishing to hunt and live a more traditional lifestyle are able to do so, thus preserving local culture and skills and maintaining a valuable source of local food.

New Brunswick

Similar to several other provinces, much food security related work in New Brunswick has focused on schools, both through grants to promote fruits and vegetables and by establishing policies prohibiting unhealthy foods in schools. New Brunswick is a Canadian leader in establishing supports for local producers to provide food to local markets. While other provinces have established marketing supports, New Brunswick is one of the only provinces to help fund the infrastructure necessary to sell food to the local market through its Agri-Food Market Development Program. This commitment to local food is reiterated in other government programs and documents including a discussion paper published by the Ministry of Agriculture and Aquaculture entitled *Transforming Agriculture Together* and a provincial action plan to be self-sufficient.

School Fruit and Vegetable Grants

Learn More:
http://app.infoaa.7700.gnb.ca/gnb/Pub/EServices/ListServiceDetails.asp?ServiceID1=17696&ReportType1=ALL

New Brunswick provides School Fruit and Vegetable Grants to increase the consumption of fruits and vegetables by students in grades six to eight. Public schools can apply for grants to assist programs that raise awareness of the importance of fruit and vegetables and provide opportunities for students to eat them. Locally grown produce is highlighted. It is hoped that by creating opportunities for students to enjoy fruits and vegetables in school they will consume more of them outside of school and will appreciate eating healthy foods.[118]

Healthy Food in Schools

Learn More: http://www.gnb.ca/0000/pol/e/711A.pdf

In March 2008, the Department of Education revised its standards for food and nutrition in New Brunswick schools. The new policy set minimum standards for healthy foods in school settings. The policy requires that schools sell foods with a maximum or moderate nutritional value as close to cost as feasible to ensure that they are accessible to as many students as possible. When making contracts with outside food providers, it was suggested that providers should be evaluated based on their provision of nutritionally sound options. Only foods containing moderate or maximum nutritional values can be sold in school vending machines or may be used for school fundraisers.[119] The

Government of New Brunswick also provides $1.25 million in funding annually for the Healthy Minds Nutritional Partnership to provide basic breakfasts to school children.[120]

Wellness Strategy Action Plan

Learn More: http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/he/2006e0050hw.htm

The Government of New Brunswick launched a *Wellness Strategy Action Plan* in January 2006. Included in the Plan was a call for the government to develop a New Brunswick Nutritious Food Basket based on Health Canada's recommended dietary intakes. It was estimated that this would require an investment of $25,000. Food costing is now a systematized aspect of New Brunswick's Wellness Strategy and costing work is funded by the provincial government.[121]

Our Action Plan to be Self-Sufficient in New Brunswick

Learn More: http://www.gnb.ca/cnb/news/pre/2007e1522pr.htm

The Government of New Brunswick has developed several programs to encourage consumers to purchase locally grown or raised food and to assist farmers increase the sales of their food locally. Self-sufficiency has been an objective of the Government of New Brunswick since the 2007 publication of *Our Action Plan to be Self-Sufficient in New Brunswick*. This plan includes strategies to transform the economy, workforce, relationships, and government within the province.[122] Since agricultural and agri-food strategies that promote local consumption helps create a self-sufficient food system they fit within the government's policy framework.

Agri-Food Market Development Program

Learn More: http://www.gnb.ca/0027/MArketGuide.pdf

The Agri-Food Market Development Program is intended to build domestic New Brunswick market channels to increase the sale and consumption of New Brunswick produced agri-food products within the province. Individuals, organizations, and businesses are eligible to apply for grants of up to $10,000. Five different elements can be sponsored under the plan: road signs to promote direct farm marketing or farmers' markets, assistance for the development of promotional materials, facilitating the diversification of farms into agri-tourism destinations, new product development, and assisting marketing groups or associations develop their capacity as an organization.[123]

Organic Development Initiative

Learn More: http://www.gnb.ca/0027/OrganicGuide.pdf

The New Brunswick Organic Development Initiative supports the establishment of new organic operations for both producers and processors. It helps those transitioning, or thinking of transitioning, into organic agriculture. Additionally, support is provided to current organic farmers to help cover the costs of organic training and advice, provide soil improvements, support on-farm infrastructure to improve farm safety, help meeting organic certification requirements, and assistance with providing minor infrastructure that is necessary for the organic industry.[124]

Transforming Agriculture Together

Learn More: http://www.gnb.ca/0027/discussionE.pdf

In 2008, the Department of Agriculture and Aquaculture organized the New Brunswick Agriculture Summit to examine the challenges facing the agricultural industry in the province. Eight regional stakeholder consultations were held and the testimony presented at these sessions was drafted as a discussion document entitled, *Transforming Agriculture Together*. The most common issue discussed during the consultation process was the importance of promoting locally grown and produced foods for consumption in New Brunswick. Many producers said that they were frustrated that they did not have more access to the local market, particularly through the retail sector.[125] Others highlighted the need for agricultural producers to make a profit and the importance of educating New Brunswick children about nutrition and food production.

Prince Edward Island

Other than work done by the Prince Edward Island Healthy Eating Alliance, an organization made up in-part by government representation, almost no work was readily identifiable on food security and health issues or for people with low incomes. There have, however, been several programs developed to promote sustainable agriculture and, more recently, local food. Perhaps these efforts are best summarized in the mandate of the recently formed Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-Food. Given the Island's natural limitations, it is unable to compete on a global market with large-scale industrial agriculture. Therefore, the government has been attempting to develop alternative market opportunities for agriculture in Prince Edward Island through a variety of programs supporting sustainable agriculture, organic farming and processing, and local food.

Prince Edward Island Healthy Eating Alliance

Learn More: http://www.healthyeatingpei.ca/

Food security work in Prince Edward Island has been done primarily by the PEI Healthy Eating Alliance, an organization with representation from governmental departments and non-governmental stakeholders. This group has produced numerous documents and studies related to public health in the province. Among these is the *Prince Edward Island Healthy Eating Strategy, 2007-2010*. The goals laid out in this document include: increasing nutrition education, promoting healthy eating, increasing access to safe and healthy foods, developing and implementing healthy eating policies to improve nutritional health of children and partnering on research initiatives.[126] The Department of Health also provided $200,000 in funding for the Healthy Eating Alliance to develop and implement school nutrition policies.[127]

PEI Healthy Eating Alliance Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Project

Learn More:
http://www.healthyeatingpei.ca/pdf/F&V_Evaluation_October_2003.pdf

In 2003, the Healthy Eating Alliance undertook a Fruit and Vegetable Pilot Project. The program ran for six weeks and each participating classroom was provided with a tray of fruits and vegetables weekly.[128] The Healthy Eating Alliance found that there was a significant increase in appreciation for all fruits and vegetables offered during the snack time and children were more willing to try new vegetables after involvement in the program.[129] Even this very moderate intervention seemed to have a beneficial impact on children's enjoyment of healthy foods.

Sustainable Resource Policy

Learn More: http://www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3?number=72033

During the Throne Speech of 2002, the Government of Prince Edward Island announced that it was launching a Sustainable Resource Policy. At stake, the government argued, was the province's health, environmental quality, economy, and way of life. Although all provincial departments will be involved in the Sustainable Resource Policy eventually, Agriculture was selected to go first.[130] Cross-compliance was introduced, meaning that farmers can only access government funding and programs if they meet environmental standards. Additionally, some benefits require that a farmer enact an Enhanced Environmental Farm Plan on their farm.[131]

Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-Food

Learn More: http://www.peiag.com/

In May 2008, the Government of Prince Edward Island established a Commission on the Future of Agriculture and Agri-Food. It issued its final report in January 2009. The report, *Growing the Island Way: The Next Chapter in the Agriculture and Agri-Food Economy on Prince Edward Island,* emphasized the need for an agricultural system based on high-value supply chains rather than pursuing commodity prices.[135] Since, the Commission argued, PEI cannot compete in price-driven commodity agriculture, it must seek niche markets and emphasize quality and safety.[136] It also stressed the importance of sustainable agriculture, proposing that the "PEI agri-food industry must become a centre of knowledge in sustainable agriculture, emphasizing soil health, nutrient cycling, systems thinking, and environmental protection."[137]

Agri-Food Market Development Program

Learn More:
http://www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3?number=1022347&lang=E

The Agri-Food Market Development Program is one component of Prince Edward Island's Buy PEI Initiative. The program is intended to increase the market for PEI foods within the Island. Funds may be used for signage, promotion, training, or new product development. Depending on the type of project being undertaken, funding limits range between $1,000 and $6,000 and an applicant can receive no more than $10,000 per year in total funding. Farmers, farmers' markets, agricultural organizations, and marketing boards are eligible funding recipients.

Agri-Food Promotion Program

Learn More:
http://www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3?number=1022346&lang=E

The Agri-Food Promotion Program is the second component of Buy PEI Initiative. Its goal is to increase awareness of and demand for Prince Edward Island grown and produced foods. Community groups, institutions, or municipalities are eligible for funding to develop programs that increase knowledge about PEI foods, create an awareness of the importance of agri-food in PEI, and encourage the importance of using PEI foods as part of healthy diets. Each project can receive up to $1,000 and an applicant can receive a maximum of $2,000 per year.

Organic Industry Development Program

Learn More:
http://www.gov.pe.ca/af/agweb/index.php3?number=1015980&lang=E

The Organic Industry Development Program aims to encourage more farmers to adopt certified organic practices, encourage growth and market development for organic products, and introduce competitive weed and pest management solutions for organic farmers. Projects are divided into three categories for the purposes of the program. Value Chain Development funding is provided to increase markets for organic products and to create linkages between farmers and the market. The Farm Advance Program is intended to improve farms' economic viability and environmental sustainability. Finally, the Agro-environmental Program helps organic farmers deal with weeds and pests.[138]

Nova Scotia

Nova Scotia is one of few provinces to explicitly target food security by name. This is important because Nova Scotia has the highest household food insecurity rate in Canada. The Ministry of Health Promotion and Protection has been the leader of food security policy development in Nova Scotia and has engaged in very systematic thinking about the necessary changes needed to address food security. The province has developed several school-related policies to promote healthy eating. Recently, Nova Scotia has also developed several programs to promote local foods.

Ministry of Health Promotion and Protection and Healthy Eating Nova Scotia

Learn More:
http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/publications/HealthyEatingNovaScotia2005.pdf;
http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/

The Ministry of Health Promotion and Protection has four priority areas regarding food: breastfeeding, children and youth, fruit and vegetable consumption, and food security. Food security is recognized as an environmental, social justice, and chronic disease prevention issue.[139] The Ministry's goal is to increase the proportion of Nova Scotians with access to nutritious foods and to increase the availability of nutritious, locally produced foods throughout the province.[140] The problems with previous healthy eating initiatives, it says, was that they focused on individual choice while many people, particularly those with low incomes, did not have the resources to make the recommended decisions.[141]

Several policies to address the issue of food security in Nova Scotia are suggested within *Healthy Eating Nova Scotia*. Since poverty is a large contributing factor to food insecurity, it proposes that an increase in wages and income assistance is a necessity. Additionally it is recommended that the reliance on imported foods should be reduced and that local food production should be promoted. As part of this strategy, it was suggested that provincial and municipal lands be made available for community gardening and that public institutions source their food locally as much as possible.[142]

Nutritious Food Basket Costing

Learn More: http://www.gov.ns.ca/hpp/publications/food_costing_study2007.pdf

The Department of Health Promotion and Protection committed itself to fund sustainable participatory food costing to help monitor income-related food insecurity.[143] In partnership with the Nova Scotia Food Security Network and Mount Saint Vincent University, food costing data is investigated for the province. In 2007, their report analyzed the cost of food in various regions of Nova Scotia and compared that to different income levels to demonstrate if food was affordable to a variety of groups in the province.

School Nutrition Policy

Learn More:
http://www.ednet.ns.ca/healthy_eating/pdf/school_food_consultation_draft.pdf;
http://www.ednet.ns.ca/pdfdocs/learning_for_life_II/2007-08_LFLII_Rep_E.pdf

Nova Scotia has developed a detailed food and nutrition policy for its school system. The new policy, introduced in 2006, forbids schools from selling beverages other than milk, 100% fruit juice and water. Additionally, school fund raising activities are not allowed to involve foods that do not have moderate or maximum nutritionally value. Eventually, all foods that are on the minimum nutrition list will have to be removed from schools.[144] The Ministry of Health Promotion and Protection has also provided $750,000 to support and expand breakfast programs, $20,000 to fund a breakfast program coordinator, and $250,000 to help school boards implement the School Food and Nutrition Policy.[145,146] These policies have been set out to ensure that students in Nova Scotian schools are receiving nutritious foods while preventing exposure to unhealthy items.

Select Nova Scotia

Learn More: http://www.selectnovascotia.ca

A significant program that encourages consumers to purchase local products is Select Nova Scotia. It is a marketing endeavour that promotes buying locally, highlights local products, and lists markets and farmers where people can acquire local produce. The Select Nova Scotia website (www.selectnovascotia.ca) includes, among other things, reasons why people should purchase from local producers. This outlines the economic, health, environmental, and community benefits to purchasing locally.

Direct Marketing Community Development Trust

Learn More: http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/prm/programs/dmcdtf.shtml

The Direct Marketing Community Development Trust is a $2.3 million program (over three years) to make it easier for Nova Scotian consumers to access local food. The fund encourages farmers and farmers' markets to come up with creative ways to sell directly to consumers. For example, funding has supported infrastructure development at farmers' markets, expanding value added processing and improving the marketing of local products, and launching a community-shared agriculture venture.[147]

Agri-Food Industry Development Program

Learn More: http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/prm/programs/afidf.shtml

The Agri-Food Industry Development Program is intended to help grow Nova Scotia's agri-food industry through developing markets both locally and abroad, introducing new technologies or systems to the industry, enhancing management and leadership capacity, creating an awareness of the value of the agri-food industry to the Nova Scotia economy, and support innovation through agricultural organizations. While it is not aimed exclusively at the promotion of local products, it does help support the local agri-food industry. Applicants are eligible for up to $20,000 in funding per year.

Farm Investment Fund

Learn More: http://www.gov.ns.ca/agri/prm/programs/fifguide.shtml

The Farm Investment Fund aims to sustainably develop Nova Scotia's agricultural industry by helping farmers increase their business skills, develop market or value-added opportunities, increase awareness and compliance in farm and public protection, and improving environmental farm management. There are seven different funding categories that support topics such as biodiversity, agro-environmental programming, water management, land protection, business management, and human resource development. Applicants can receive up to $10,000 per year in funding. To be eligible to apply for the Farm Investment Fund, a farm must have an Environmental Farm Plan.

Hunters Helping the Hungry

Learn More: http://www.gov.ns.ca/news/details.asp?id=20090302001

Hunters Helping the Hungry is a program in Nova Scotia that was initiated by the Nova Scotia Federation of Anglers and Hunters to distribute moose and deer meet to Feed Nova Scotia, a network of food banks. It has been in

operation for three years. The Department of Natural Resources plays a facilitation role by marketing the program and working with participating meat shops. Hunters are responsible for paying the costs of meat processing. The program only accepts to donations processed at licensed meat cutting facilities. Food banks are provided with stewing meat or ground meat. The Department of Natural Resources donates meat confiscated by enforcement staff to the program as well.

Newfoundland and Labrador

Newfoundland and Labrador has developed a policy framework that emphasizes the importance of wellness and aims to increase the public presence of the issue of food security. Much of the impetus for this approach is coming from the health sector, which includes healthy eating and food security as a major component of healthy living. The most innovative food security solution in Newfoundland and Labrador, however, is likely the Air Foodlift Subsidy Program, which subsidizes retailers for the cost of transporting nutritious foods to isolated Labrador communities. Newfoundland and Labrador was the first province (as found in this scan) to have a subsidy program in place to reduce the cost of healthy foods in northern regions. An interesting report that was completed, also to promote healthy foods in Labrador, was a feasibility study into the possibility of establishing a dairy in central Labrador. While the notion was deemed to be unfeasible, it demonstrates a level of creativeness and innovative approaches to northern and remote food security issues.

Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador

Learn More: http://www.health.gov.nl.ca/health/publications/2006/wellness-document.pdf

Newfoundland and Labrador's work on food security related issues began with *Achieving Health and Wellness: Provincial Wellness Plan for Newfoundland and Labrador* which was developed in 2005. This $2.4 million strategy targeted four priority areas for its first phase: healthy eating, physical activity, tobacco control, and injury prevention.[148] Initial work done as part of the *Wellness Plan* includes a Healthy Eating in School Program. Provincial guidelines for foods served and sold in schools were established. The related School Food Program was set up to provide ongoing support for healthy eating opportunities through school food programs and school food preparers were to be trained on the preparation of nutritious foods.[149]

Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan

Learn More: http://www.gohealthy.ca/public/files/Eating%20Healthier%20in.pdf

A *Provincial Food and Nutrition Framework and Action Plan* was developed as a result of the *Wellness Plan*. It calls on the government to promote the development and marketing of local foods that support healthy eating practices.[150] At the community level, the Framework recommends that the government support initiatives such as community kitchens which foster local knowledge and build capacity for healthy living.[151] Finally, the Framework proposes that poverty

reduction strategies must be integrated with other food security approaches. To assist with this, the province will track the cost of a nutritious food basket to assess income inadequacy.[152]

Air Foodlift Subsidy Program

Learn More: http://www.laa.gov.nl.ca/laa/foodlift.htm

A key component to Newfoundland and Labrador's food security strategy is the Air Foodlift Subsidy Program. It was established in 1997 to ensure that nutritious, perishable items are available in communities along the coast of Labrador when they are inaccessible by boat during the winter. Retail stores voluntarily register to participate in the program and then receive a subsidy to offset the cost of flying goods into their communities.[153] In recent years there have been dramatic funding increases to the Air Foodlift Subsidy. In 2008, $600,000 was budgeted for the subsidy, double what it was in 2005.[154] As a result northern communities have increased access to affordable nutritious foods year round.

School Nutrition

Learn More: http://www.kidseatsmart.ca/about.php

The Government of Newfoundland and Labrador provides grants to the Kids Eat Smart Foundation, which operates school nutrition clubs throughout the province. The other major supporters of Kids Eat Smart are Breakfast for Learning and Petro Canada. In 2005-2006, the province provided $500,000 for school food programs. Currently there are nearly 200 school nutrition clubs that involve over 17,000 children.[155]

Fruit and Vegetable Storage Assistance Program

Learn More: http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/agric/pdf/fvsap2007.pdf

The Fruit and Vegetable Storage Assistance Program is intended to increase the economic viability of horticultural producers by expanding, upgrading, and constructing storage, cleaning, and grading facilities for fruits and vegetables. Up to $20,000 to a maximum of 50% of the project cost is provided to farmers to support their infrastructural efforts and improve their farm operation.[156] Whereas other provinces have developed programs focusing on marketing or product development, this program addresses infrastructural questions, an issue often raised as a barrier to local fruit and vegetable production.

Central Labrador Dairy Economic Feasibility Study

Learn More: http://www.nr.gov.nl.ca/agric/pdf/labrador_dairy_feasibility_tor.pdf

One interesting study to note is the *Central Labrador Milk Feasibility Study* commissioned by the Department of Natural Resources in 2008. The idea was to establish a dairy in central Labrador to supply fresh milk and dairy products to the region, thus improving the food security of Labradorians and creating a profitable enterprise. It was determined that the cost of establishing and maintaining such an operation would make it unfeasible. After thirteen years of operation it was estimated that there would be a negative return on investment of 11.9%.[157] Nevertheless, this research explored a creative means of addressing food insecurity in the remote communities of Labrador.

Conclusion

Based on publically available, internet-based information, this report has outlined a wide range of policies, programs, and government reports dealing with issues associated with food security in Canada. Some Canadian provinces and territories have developed innovative solutions to improve food security for people with low incomes, to support healthy eating initiatives and to promote local agriculture. Taking inspiration from some of the precedent-setting programs outlined in this report, a province could make large strides towards increasing food security. Nevertheless, there remains significant room for improvement across Canada.

While all provinces and territories have programs addressing one aspect of food security, few, if any, have programs that address multiple components of food security. Many provinces have engaged in strong food security policy development in agriculture or health, but not both. Furthermore, even those provinces that have invested significantly in food security programs have not gone as far as to develop a larger overarching food policy that brings together agricultural and health concerns.

British Columbia, perhaps, is the province that has best been able to develop approaches that take into account food security, poverty, health, agriculture, and the environment. Others such as Ontario, Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland and Labrador have explicitly recognized and targeted food security, although it is yet to be seen if the programs that have been developed will reduce household food insecurity, let alone create food secure provinces.

This report demonstrates that some aspects of food security policy are far more developed than others. School food policy, for example, has been addressed by almost every province. Funding is available in several provinces for fruit and vegetable programs, school nutrition policies have been developed, and most provinces provide funding for school meal programs. Children, it appears, are a high priority for policy makers. By promoting healthy habits at a young age, it is hoped that children will continue these habits as adults.

Considering the size of the Canada's North and the scale of food security concerns in many northern regions, there is significant work yet to be done to meet the needs of northern residents. Manitoba has begun to address northern issues through its Northern Healthy Foods Initiative. Newfoundland and Labrador and Kativik Regional Government (Quebec) both subsidize the cost of nutritious foods in northern communities. Surprisingly, this scan did not reveal significant health related food programs in Canadian territories. The Northwest Territories' Healthy Foods North program is still a pilot project. Nunavut has adopted a *Nutrition Framework* but has no other programs listed in this report that address food security. In northern regions across Canada, nutritious foods are expensive or difficult to access. Thus, there remains a considerable need for food security policy development in northern regions of Canada.

While many provinces have established programs to market local food, financial support for local food programming is also in its infancy. The growth of markets for local food, and consumer knowledge about the benefits of buying locally certainly is an important component of developing a vibrant and sustainable local food system, but there are several challenges that have not been addressed. Few provinces have invested in the infrastructure necessary for local food production and consumption such as storage and distribution. Grant programs for local foods generally are small in scale, particularly in comparison to those offered for industrial agriculture. There remains opportunity for provincial governments to promote the development of local agri-food industries, a process that would result in local job creation and rural development.

In the last several years, provinces have introduced policies and programs to address access to nutritious food, food affordability (particularly for those in remote regions), promoted locally produced food, and encouraged sustainable agricultural practices. Despite the successes and increased attention, however, food insecurity remains a pressing issue in Canada. Provincial governments have numerous opportunities to develop policies and programs that enable all people to access local, nutritious food, teach people the benefits of nutritious foods and how to prepare them, provide an environment that enables liveable incomes for farmers, promote sustainable environmental practices, and support food access in remote regions. Addressing food security holds tremendous opportunities for

economic, environmental, and health benefits and long term savings through prevention making food security a prime area for both short term and long term provincial investment.

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