

Burnaby Community Food Charter

A strong community includes a sustainable and just food system and food security for all people. This Burnaby Community Food Charter shares a vision of that future. It includes the values and commitment to get us there. We believe that food is a universal human right.

All community organizations, private businesses, educational institutions, or government can sign the Burnaby Community Food Charter. Those who sign this charter commit to creating sustainable food systems and food security in Burnaby.

Our Food Vision

What does food security look like? When a community is food secure, everybody has two things: 1) They have food choice, and 2) They have access to culturally appropriate food. Also, food is grown and made in ways that:

- ✓ Puts local production first
- ✓ Are affordable to produce and purchase
- ✓ Are connected to businesses in Burnaby
- ✓ Are sustainable and resilient
- ✓ Are ethical and socially just

Our Food Values

Six values that guide our behaviour and decision-making around food systems and security are:

- ✓ Food is culture and connection
- ✓ Everybody has choice of food and access to food they want
- ✓ Food places and people are important to the economy
- ✓ The larger causes of inequity in food security and unsustainable food systems help to guide our work.
- ✓ Respecting Indigenous values and knowledge is important
- ✓ Connection and working together is key



1. Food is culture and connection

Food connects us all to one another. Food connects us all to the land and water. We want to protect different ways of growing and producing food, cooking, and celebrating with food. These all teach culture and belonging.



2. Everybody has choice of and access to food they want

Everybody's food choice is respected and treated fairly. People can get the food they want through businesses and in the community. People can also keep gardens and grow their own food.



3. Food places and people are important to the economy

People who grow, harvest, and distribute food are respected and paid fairly. The environments that support food production are preserved and protected.



4. Strengthening food systems involves acknowledging the causes of food insecurity

The broader factors that impact how, when, and where people can access food such as the high cost-of-living, poverty, racism, good jobs, experiences of marginalization, and climate change are acknowledged and addressed.



5. Respecting Indigenous values and knowledge is important

Indigenous food systems and knowledge of these lands and waters are vital. They are integral to Indigenous cultural practice, expression, and the well-being of Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. These ways of knowing are an important part of the sustainability of our food system and food security.



6. Connection and working together is key

Food unites us. By working together, and across sectors, we can find creative solutions to minimize food waste, improve food system sustainability, resiliency, and security in Burnaby.

Our Commitment to Sustainable Food Systems and Food Security

THEREFORE, I/WE THE UNDERSIGNED are committed to promote and support these values in moving towards food security in Burnaby. We will demonstrate this commitment in ways that reflect the roles and scope of our respective organizations.

Core Concepts of the Burnaby Community Food Charter

Burnaby Community Food Charter

Community Food Security¹

When everyone in a community has the ability to obtain a safe, culturally acceptable variety of foods to eat. Community food security comes from a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice.

Cultural food assets²

Cultural food assets are businesses and services that provide a similar, if not identical function as food assets. Cultural food assets extend beyond the role of food assets identified by City of Burnaby by providing spaces that support the maintenance and transmission of culture. Cultural food assets are not limited to a particular cultural group, they include: farms, salmon bearing streams, green grocers, fishmongers, butchers (e.g. Halal), barbecue meat stores, dry goods stores, as well as traditional bakeries and restaurants, among many others.

Cultural food districts

Cultural food districts are clusters of cultural food assets that attract a critical mass of people and other businesses. In Burnaby these include but are not limited to: Crystal Mall, Hastings, North Road, Sixth Street, parts of Kingsway, and Metrotown.

It should be noted that entities (e.g. businesses) that may be identified as cultural food assets may or may not identify themselves as such. While language is evolving and this working definition is likely to change, it is offered here to build understanding of what cultural food assets are.

Equity Lens

Applying an equity lens to a food systems strategy includes:

- Fair labour practices
- Connections with Indigenous food systems
- Examining the core role that poverty plays in access to food
- Connections of food systems to cultural well-being and learning
- Investigating gendered, gender-diverse, ability-diverse, and racialized experiences of accessing food and participating in the food economy

¹ Derived from: Hamm, M., & Bellows, A. (2003). Community Food Security and Nutrition Educators. *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior*, 35(1), 37-43.

² Derived from Vancouver Chinatown Food Security Report (2017). Hua Foundation.

³ Derived from City of Vancouver Food Strategy (2012).

Food assets³

Food Assets are defined in this Food System Strategy as the tangible and intangible resources, facilities, services, spaces, or ways of knowing (etc.) that are available to Burnaby residents and visitors, and which are used to support the local food system. Examples of food assets include farms, community gardens, neighbourhood houses, social services and food security programs, farmers markets, food processing infrastructure, community composting facilities, local food knowledge, local food policies, relationship networks, cultural food districts and local food businesses.

Household Food Insecurity⁴

Household food insecurity is the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints

Food System

A food system is all the steps of growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, distributing, preparing, marketing, and consuming food.

Indigenous Food Systems⁵

The vast myriad of rivers, watersheds, landforms, vegetation and climatic zones have worked together for thousands of years to shape and form Indigenous land and food systems. Consisting of a multitude of natural communities, Indigenous food systems include all of the land, air, water, soil and culturally important plant, animal and fungi species that have sustained Indigenous peoples over thousands of years. All parts of Indigenous food systems are inseparable and ideally function in healthy interdependent relationships to transfer energy through the present day agriculture based economy that has been developed and industrialized through the process of colonization.

⁴ <https://proof.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/Household-Food-Insecurity-in-Canada-2017-2018-Full-Reportpdf.pdf>

⁵ Indigenous Food System Network. <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org>
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