



Making Food Matter

Putting Food and Food Policy On the Table

Backgrounder on Regional Planning and Policy Work in the CRD

Putting Food and Food Policy on the Table: Building Foundations for Food Security in the CRD!

Objectives:

1. To continue to build a wider circle of community voices and decision makers into all aspects of a Food and Health Action Plan
2. To support and interconnect related community based initiatives through the process
3. To better link community needs and initiatives with local decision making and build supportive governance frameworks.

Activities:

1. Series of Strategic Working Sessions

With input from key advisors, CR-FAIR and RTE HCSC will plan strategic working sessions that provide a forum for various organizations, government bodies and representatives, individuals, the private sector, institutions and community groups to meet, further explore and prioritize actions related to:

- a) Maintaining and expanding food producing land, farming and infrastructure.
- b) Increasing urban food production.
- c) Increasing access to and affordability of healthy foods.
- d) Increasing awareness and knowledge about our local food system and methods to grow and prepare healthy diets.
- e) Advocating for the development of institutional procurement policies for local food (institutional and local government policies that give preference to buying local product where and when available).

The information gleaned from the strategic working sessions will be used to formulate needs, assets and actions for the Food and Health Action Plan.

2. Food Charter for the CRD

Over the past two years CR-FAIR has developed a proposed “Capital Region Food Charter.” This has been done through public consultation as well as meetings with local groups, networks and government representatives and bodies. The purpose of the Food Charter is to provide an overall vision to guide work done in food security at the community, institutional and government levels.

CR-FAIR and the RTE HCSC will work in conjunction to finalize and promote the Capital Region Food Charter to local governments. We will conduct research to assist in targeting the Food Charter to meet the needs of diverse backgrounds, build consensus and gain written support for the Charter through presentations to regional governments.

3. Strengthen food systems network in BC’s Capital region

CR-FAIR will, through a series of meetings, conduct internal strategic work to identify how best to support and advocate for the wide range of community food security groups and projects working in the Capital Region.

4. Regional Celebration Forum

Food Matters is an Annual Forum to be held in the spring to report back on progress, celebrate accomplishments, and to continue to jointly develop an implementation plan for the region.

5. Regional Food Policy Council

CR-FAIR and the RTE HCSC will work together to research and explore structural arrangements for a regional food policy advisory or council.

Through this work we hope to involve as many citizens, organizations, and institutions in the Capital Region as possible.

Getting Down to Action: Strategic Working Sessions 2006/2007

Many positive ideas and actions were identified through the community forum this year. In order to deepen our understanding of the issues, reach out to bring in more expertise and participation, and move some of these ideas and actions forward, we have chosen to hold a series of working sessions over the next year.

The working sessions that will be taking place are:

1. Increasing Food Access: Neighbourhood Food Action Planning as a way to increase access to healthy and adequate food and neighbourhood food resources for individuals and families.
2. Strengthening Local Agriculture: Food Production and Preservation of Farm Land and Farmers
3. Advancement of Institutional Policies to Purchase Local Food
4. Supporting the Expansion of Local Neighbourhood Markets
5. Food Processing-Building and Maintaining Infrastructure
6. Building Capacity for Urban Agriculture
7. Food Education-Mapping and Networking Our Resources
8. Advancement of Food Charter, Food and Health Plan, and Food Policy Council