

food security

in British Columbia's Capital Region

food decisions shape our community

planning for healthy food, healthy citizens, a healthy region

What is food security? In a food secure community, the growing, processing and distribution of healthy, safe food is economically viable, socially just, environmentally friendly, and regionally based. A food system brings food from farms to your table.

Food impacts our community. We have hundreds of farms and about 80 processors in the region. Food accounts for 20% of retail sales, 20% of service jobs, 20% of car trips, 40% of our garbage, and 80% of our sewage. Food needs to be a major factor in municipal and regional planning.

Local food production matters. Fifty years ago, about 85% of the region's food supply was locally produced. Today it is less than 10%. Consumers' food choices – based on such factors as price

and preference for organic or local – influence our food system. Most food travels about 1,500 miles to our plate. Locally produced food is fresher, more flavourful and costs less in transportation and air pollution.

Farmland and farmers are important. Though economic pressures are forcing arable land in the Capital Region out of production, farmers are finding new ways to connect with consumers, such as farmers' markets. One farm job can create 10 other local food jobs.

People in our community are hungry. More than 50,000 people in the Capital Region live in poverty, including 9,000 children. Food system planning can help connect people to innovative food programs and agencies – and jobs.

feeding our future: it's in your hands

Local and regional governments impact the region's food system through municipal planning and decision making. CR-FAIR suggests that municipal decision makers can make a positive difference by:

- ▶ Understanding how the regional food system works and why food security is important to the health of your community. You can read CR-FAIR's **Baseline Assessment of Food Security in the Capital Region** and request a presentation by CR-FAIR to your Council.
- ▶ Acknowledging the importance of food in municipal planning by developing ways to include it in your decisions: zoning for agri-tourism; agricultural area plans; incentives for community gardens.
- ▶ Participating in the development of a food council that supports planning for food and the health of the community from a regional perspective.

CR-FAIR can help

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Community Council

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