

2021

# Sunshine Coast Food Charter

UPDATED June 14, 2021

## VISION

We nurture a thriving, just and resilient local food system, where everyone has dignified access to nutritious and culturally preferred food. The food system contributes to cultural and social well-being and the economy of the Sunshine Coast.

## PRINCIPLES

In the development of a resilient and thriving local food system, the following five principles are supported and upheld by two of our local governments, 11 of our local organizations, and a host of concerned and committed citizens. These principles should guide all food systems planning and any decision making that impacts the food system at the present time and when planning for the years ahead.



### Collaboration and Participation

Community food security improves when local government collaborates with community groups, individuals, businesses, and other levels of government on sound food system planning, policies and practices. Sustainable food systems encourage civic engagement, promote responsibility, and strengthen communities.



### Health and Wellbeing

of people are enhanced through connection, access to nutritious food, knowledge, diversity, fair living wages, and safe, respectful work environments



### Cultural Vitality

exists when creating, sharing, celebrating and supporting arts, food, history and culture is a part of everyday life in our communities. We thrive when we learn, respect, and celebrate the unique traditions, history, culture and foods of our neighbours.



### Environmental Stewardship

is the recognition of our collective responsibility to protect the quality and abundance of our land, air, water and biodiversity, and to manage this natural capital in a way that conserves all of its values.



### Economic Vitality

Local farms and food businesses are a fundamental element of and strengthen the local economy and enhance all components of the food system.

These five principles also support the global efforts towards some of the United Nations: Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 2,3,8,12 and 14)

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## **In collaboration with and support from:**

Roberts Creek Community Farm Market  
Sechelt Farmers' and Artisans' Market  
Southern Sunshine Coast Farmers' Institute  
Sunshine Coast Botanical Society  
Sunshine Coast Community Services Society  
Sunshine Coast Conservation Association  
Sunshine Coast Regional Economic Development Organization  
Sunshine Coast Seed Saving Collective  
Sunshine Coast Tourism  
Vancouver Coastal Health Sunshine Coast

## **Adopted by local Governments on the Sunshine Coast:**

District of Sechelt (approved 2020)  
Town of Gibsons (approved 2020)  
Sunshine Coast Regional District (pending)  
Shíshálh Nation (pending)

## **Guided by key strategic resource documents:**

Sechelt Nation Strategic Land Use Policy 2007  
Sunshine Coast Regional District Agricultural Area Plan 2014  
Sunshine Coast Regional District 2019-2023 Strategic Plan  
Town of Gibsons 2019-2022 Strategic Plan  
District of Sechelt 2019-2022 Strategic Plan  
United Nations "Report of the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Food"  
United Nations "Principles for Responsible Investment in Agriculture"  
People's Food Policy Project, "Resetting the Table" 2011  
Food Policy for Canada 2019

## **and Existing Food Charters for the regions and communities of:**

Squamish, Cowichan, Vancouver, Richmond, Kaslo, Central Okanagan, Vancouver Island  
Region, Toronto, Manitoba, Sudbury, and North Vancouver

# Why a Sunshine Coast Food Charter?

Governments at all levels are responding to the growing need for strategic and integrated food policy to build and nurture just and sustainable food systems. One way this is happening is through the adoption of regional Food Charters that bring together a common vision, principles, and broad goals pointing to a coordinated regional food strategy, creating cultural, social, economic, environmental, health, and educational benefits for all of society.

Canada has signed international agreements related to the human right to food – The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Child Rights Convention. Both Riches (1995) and the UN recommend the promotion of a greater understanding of the human “right to food” (see definitions). Canada also launched its first ever Food Policy for Canada in June, 2019.

## VISION

We nurture a thriving, just and resilient local food system, where everyone has dignified access to nutritious and culturally preferred food. The food system contributes to cultural and social well-being and the economy of the Sunshine Coast.



## PRINCIPLES

In the development of a resilient and thriving local food system, the following principles are supported and upheld by local governments, citizens and organizations.



### Collaboration and Participation

Community food security improves when local government collaborates with community groups, individuals, businesses, and other levels of government on sound food system planning, policies and practices. Sustainable food systems encourage civic engagement, promote responsibility, and strengthen communities.



### Cultural Vitality

exists when creating, sharing, celebrating and supporting arts, food, history and culture is a part of everyday life in our communities. We thrive when we learn, respect, and celebrate the unique traditions, history, culture and foods of our neighbours.



### Health and Wellbeing

of people are enhanced through connection, access to nutritious food, knowledge, diversity, fair living wages, and safe, respectful work environments



### Environmental Stewardship

is the recognition of our collective responsibility to protect the quality and abundance of our land, air, water and biodiversity, and to manage this natural capital in a way that conserves all of its values.



### Economic Vitality

Local farms and food businesses are a fundamental element of and strengthen the local economy and enhance all components of the food system.



# Goals achieved by the implementation and upholding of the Sunshine Coast Food Charter:

## Health and Wellbeing:

- The food system promotes overall good animal and human health and wellbeing.
- All residents have the knowledge and feel empowered to engage in and impact the food system.
- The food system respectfully and fairly honours diversity, and all residents have equal, dignified access to healthy, affordable food, regardless of race, wealth, ability or otherwise.
- Fair living wages and safe, respectful and meaningful work environments are provided for all people at all levels of the food system.

## Cultural Vitality:

- All levels of government, the public, and community groups and organizations work collaboratively toward an enhanced understanding of and relationship with Shíshálh and Skwxwú7mesh nations and culture.
- The Sunshine Coast protects and celebrates its natural resources, culture and indigenous heritage in order to maintain and encourage local traditions and practices of food harvesting and production.
- The diverse world cultures and traditional foods of community members are honoured, taught and celebrated.

## Environmental Stewardship:

- Forests, marine and freshwater resources, and agricultural lands are protected, thriving, and biodiverse.
- Local residents, farmers, and businesses are using ethical, sustainable and regenerative practices (land, soil, seed, plant and pest control, water, and waste).
- Food waste is first minimized, then reclaimed or disposed of sustainably.

## Economic Vitality:

- The Sunshine Coast has a diverse and thriving food economy in which all residents can participate, including farmers, food gardeners, producers and distributors.
- Local, diversified farms and food production businesses are economically viable through having access to land and resources; reliable means of labour, distribution and sale; and zoning, bylaws and policy that is supportive of farming and food businesses.
- Institutions have enough options and incentive to enter into long term food purchase agreements.
- The Sunshine Coast is a food, agricultural, and culinary destination.

# Definitions

For the purposes of clearly defining all information contained within this document, and supporting documents, policy and resources that may pertain to the Food Charter:

**“CULTURAL VITALITY”** means creating, disseminating, validating, and supporting arts and culture as a dimension of everyday life in communities, including the cultural practices of the shíshálh and sḵwx̱wú7mesh Nations.

**“CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD”** is understood as food that corresponds to individual and collective consumer demand and preferences, in line with national and international law.

- 2015 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

**“FAIR” and “FAIRNESS”** within food systems relates to the quality of life of all people within the food system, and the right to equitable and just opportunities, access, treatment, support, wages, and working conditions.

**“FOOD”** means local, sustainable, culturally appropriate, safe, high quality, fresh, and minimally processed foods.

**“FOOD SECURE”** means all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

**“FOOD SOVEREIGN”** means people have the right to access healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and the right to define their own food and agriculture systems.

**“FOOD SYSTEM”** is the path that food travels from seed to soil, field to fork and back again. It includes the growing, harvesting, seed-saving, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consuming, and disposing of food. It also includes the inputs needed and outputs generated at each step. A food system operates within and is influenced by social, political, economic and environmental contexts. It also requires human resources that provide labor, research and education.

**“RESILIENCE”** means the capacity to recover quickly and remain food secure during times of disturbance.

# Definitions

**“RIGHT TO FOOD”** means that Governments must respect, protect and fulfil the right to food.

1. The obligations to respect means that Governments must not violate the right to food (e.g. evict people from their land, destroy crops).
2. The obligation to protect means that Governments must protect their citizens against violations by other actors (e.g. by instituting regulations on food safety).
3. The obligation to fulfil the right to food means that the Government must first facilitate the right to food by providing an enabling environment for people to feed themselves (e.g. engage in land reform, stimulate employment), and secondly, the Government must be the provider of last resort in cases where people cannot feed themselves for reasons beyond their control (e.g. social safety net programs, food stamps, food in prison).

- United Nations Economic and Social Council. January 2003. Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: The Right to Food, Article #18

**“SOCIAL WELLBEING”** means the extent to which you feel a sense of belonging and social inclusion; a connected person is a supported person in society. Lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs are all important to our social well being and quality of life.

**“SUSTAINABLE”** means meeting the needs of the earth, our natural environment and human population while conserving or creating resources for future generations.

**“SUSTAINABLE DIET”** means diets with low environmental impacts which contribute to food and nutrition security and to healthy life for present and future generations. Sustainable diets are protective and respectful of biodiversity and ecosystems, culturally acceptable, accessible, economically fair and affordable; nutritionally adequate, safe and healthy; while optimizing natural and human resources.

- 2010 FAO International Scientific Symposium on Biodiversity and Sustainable Diets

**“SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY”** means economic development that attempts to satisfy the needs of humans but in a manner that sustains natural resources and the environment for future generations.