

Making nutritious and locally produced food easily accessible is a hallmark of an inclusive community.



### WHY DO WE NEED A STRATEGY?

The ways that we produce, access, prepare, eat and dispose of food is directly linked to the sustainability of our city and the vibrancy of our neighbourhoods.

A food strategy will build on the work already underway to improve our food system, integrate new ideas, and create a vision for the future.

It will look at all aspects of the food system from field to table and back again. The system covers everything from growing, to the manufacturing and packaging of food. It also includes the transportation, sale and distribution of food, and the waste it generates.

Making nutritious and locally produced food easily accessible is a hallmark of an inclusive community. A vital food system needs strong links between food policy, planning, and on-the-ground activities.

### WHAT DOES THIS MEAN TO ME?

We all have a stake in our food system, whether it's having more opportunities to grow our own food; having a local food market within walking or cycling distance; helping improve access to affordable food; participating in community composting programs; or taking part in community food celebrations.

### HOW DO I GET INVOLVED?

Talk food with us! Tell us what you think. What are your favourite food sources in your community? What's missing? Do you have local food stories, memories or experiences to share? How should Vancouver's food future evolve?

- Attend City of Vancouver food strategy events in your community, or invite us to an event that you're holding.
- Attend a Vancouver Food Policy Council meeting.
- E-mail us your ideas and feedback on your food system priorities.
- Ask us about our Food Engagement Toolkit to start conversations with your neighbours, friends, family or community.

Visit: [vancouver.ca/foodpolicy](http://vancouver.ca/foodpolicy)

Contact us at: [foodpolicy@vancouver.ca](mailto:foodpolicy@vancouver.ca)

Twitter: [twitter.com/CoVFoodPolicy](https://twitter.com/CoVFoodPolicy)

Blog: [vancouverfoodpolicy.tumblr.com](http://vancouverfoodpolicy.tumblr.com)

### FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit: [vancouver.ca/foodpolicy](http://vancouver.ca/foodpolicy)

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# TALK FOOD WITH US

## Vancouver's Food Strategy

### TALK FOOD WITH US

In cities around the world, millions of people depend on food that has often travelled thousands of kilometres to reach our supermarket shelves. Yet, many of us are unaware of how this happens. Until recently, few of us questioned how food is grown, processed and transported in and out of our cities, let alone the impacts on our communities and our planet.

Today, food is reappearing on the agenda of a growing number of city governments including Vancouver's. Our residents are embracing community gardens, attending farmers markets, planting urban orchards, and educating themselves about where their food comes from.

Help create a healthy, sustainable food system that benefits people, the local economy, environment and development of our city.

We all have a role in creating and supporting a healthy, sustainable food system for Vancouver.



A food strategy will build on the work already underway to improve our food system, integrate new ideas and create a vision for the future.



### WHAT'S A FOOD STRATEGY?

A food strategy is an official plan that will help Vancouver focus on specific goals and actions to improve our food system. It will look at policies that affect how food is produced, processed, distributed, accessed, consumed and recycled. The strategy will build on policies that already exist and address gaps where needed. Goals of the Vancouver Food Strategy could include:

- ensuring that neighbourhoods have grocery stores or farmers markets within walking or cycling distance
- improving access to nutritious, local and affordable food (e.g. through community kitchens, fresh produce stands)
- creating more opportunities to grow food in the city (e.g. community or rooftop gardens, urban farms, community orchards)
- reducing the distance between food production and consumption (e.g. policies supporting farmers markets, “buying local” campaigns)
- nurturing citizen-based groups to advise on food policy issues (e.g. Food Policy Council and Neighbourhood Food Networks)
- supporting food celebrations that reflect the diversity of our city
- improving the ways that we manage our food waste (e.g. medium and large-scale food composting, community composting programs)
- integrating food policies into city-wide and neighbourhood plans

### WHY IS CITY GOVERNMENT INVOLVED IN FOOD?

The City can support and change our food system for the better through many activities where we have responsibility and leadership including: zoning or by-law changes; updating land regulation policies; grant programs; public outreach; and partnerships with other levels of government and community organizations.

Dozens of city governments across Canada and the United States have become directly involved with food issues over the past two decades. The City, the Vancouver Food Policy Council\* and community organizations have been working together since 2003 on food issues.

This collaborative approach has produced some important outcomes such as more community gardens and farmers markets, support for Neighbourhood Food Networks, and the creation of a Vancouver Food Charter.

## Growth of our food policies

Food assets can include: community food hubs and kitchens, farmers markets, food composting facilities, community garden plots and orchards, and urban farms.

Approximately 95 street food vendors in Vancouver represent a wide range of countries and cultures.

Vancouver's first farmers market took place at Trout Lake Community Centre in 1995.

Neighbourhood Food Networks spearhead community kitchens and gardens, pocket markets and food composting.

Victoria, New York, Seattle, Chicago and Los Angeles also allow the small-scale raising of hens.

Phase 1 of the program is estimated to divert 6,100 tonnes of food waste per year from the landfill.

There are now 3,260 garden plots in Vancouver, exceeding the goal for 2,010 new plots by 2010.

The guidelines are applied to the design of new developments in Vancouver to encourage gardens and edible landscaping.

The Charter's five key principles for a just and sustainable food system are community economic development; ecological health; social justice; collaboration and participation; and celebration.

Approximately one-third of our all our food depends on pollinators such as honeybees.

There are over 100 food policy councils operating across Canada and the United States.

A food system includes growing, harvesting, processing, packaging, transporting, marketing, consumption and disposal of food and food-related items.

\*The Food Policy Council (FPC) is a citizen advisory group that examines how our local food system operates and provides ideas and policy recommendations to City Council on possible improvements.

**JULY 2011** The Greenest City Action Plan calls for Vancouver to increase local food assets by 50% or more over 2010 levels.

**JANUARY 2011** The City's street food program expands to include more vendors and a greater variety of nutritious, diverse food.

**JULY 2010** City Council updates farmers market policy to encourage and facilitate the creation of more local markets.

**JUNE 2010** Greenest City grants provide funding to five Neighbourhood Food Networks to advance grassroots food systems goals.

**APRIL 2010** Guidelines for keeping backyard hens are approved.

**FEBRUARY 2010** Implementation begins on the first phase of a food waste collection and composting program.

**FEBRUARY 2010** The challenge to create 2,010 new food producing garden plots by 2010 is met and exceeded.

**JANUARY 2009** Council adopts urban agriculture design guidelines for the private realm.

**FEBRUARY 2007** Council adopts the Vancouver Food Charter.

**JULY 2005** Guidelines are created to promote safe and responsible keeping of honeybees.

**SEPTEMBER 2004** Vancouver's first Food Policy Council\* is established.

**JULY 2003** Vancouver City Council approves a motion calling for the development of a “just and sustainable food system” for the City of Vancouver.

