



Food Sovereignty

Food Advisory Committee Meeting
March 10, 2020

"Food Sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems."

- La Via Campesina



The background of the slide is a close-up photograph of several green avocados. The avocados are in various stages of ripeness, with some showing a more yellowish-green hue. The lighting is soft, highlighting the bumpy texture of the avocados' skin. The image is cropped to frame the central text area.

Food Sovereignty

- The way we reach food security
- Grassroots movement, call for democratic food system
- 2007: Pillars of Food Sovereignty developed at International Forum for Food Sovereignty in Mali
- A 7th pillar was developed in Canada during People's Food Policy Process, by the Indigenous Circle

1. Food for People

- Need for food at the centre of policies
- Food is more than just a commodity

The right to sufficient, healthy and culturally appropriate food for all individuals, peoples and communities.

Inclusion for marginalized folks at the centre of food systems.



2. Builds Knowledge and Skills

- Builds on traditional knowledge
- Users research to support and pass knowledge to future generations
- Rejects technologies that undermine or contaminate local food systems

Conserve, develop and manage localized food production systems.



3. Works with Nature

- Optimizes the contributions of ecosystems
- Improves resilience

Diverse, low external input agro-ecological production and harvesting that supports climate change mitigation and adaptation.



4. Values Food Providers

- Supports sustainable livelihoods
- Respects the work of all providers

Women, men, peasants, small scale family farmers, pastoralists, artisanal fisherfolk, forest dwellers, indigenous peoples and agricultural and fisheries workers, including migrants.

Rejects policies that undervalue them or threaten their livelihoods.



5. Localizes Food Systems

- Reduces distance between food providers and consumers
- Rejects dumping and inappropriate food aid
- Resists dependency on remote and unaccountable corporations

Rejects GMOs and inequitable international trade.



6. Puts Control Locally

- Places control in the hands of local food providers
- Recognizes the need to inhabit and to share territories
- Rejects the privatization of natural resources

Local control over territory, grazing, water, seeds, livestock, fish populations.



7. Food is Sacred

- Recognizes that food is a gift of life, and not to be squandered
- Asserts that food cannot be commodified

Canada home to more than 600 aboriginal Nations. Using traditional foodways and language for empowerment.

Essential relationships between humans, the environment, and all other creatures.



Example: “Negotiating the Voluntary Guidelines on Food Systems and Nutrition: Our concerns and proposals”, La Via Campesina

- Jan 2020: Global Council for Food Security, negotiations conclude in July
- Advice on focus: marginalized people, root causes of hunger/malnutrition, human rights approach, systems approach, etc.
- Proposed additions: identify impact of power imbalances, reasons for unsustainable diets, safeguards against humanitarian aid
- “Reminder” Right to Food Guidelines Paragraph 16.1 - food should never be used as a means of political and economic pressure
- Stance on biofortification

Example: U.S. Food Sovereignty Alliance: 5 Collectives

- Youth Process, Platform: peer-to-peer learning, leadership, political analysis, strengthening skills
- Narrative Strategy: coordinates content (blogs, videos, etc.)
- Political Education: Creation of educational materials, host webinars, and national course to help build movement
- Agroecology, Land, and Water: seeks to create a land trust in accordance with food sovereignty, demand justice for immigrant families, and solidarity with indigenous communities
- International relations: establish a well-informed participants to speak on behalf of USFSA

<http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/teams/>

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Example: Tackling the Farm Crisis & the Climate Crisis: A Transformative Strategy for Canadian Farmers and Food Systems

- The National Farmers Union report
- Agriculture in Canada: Impacts of climate change
- Key conclusions include:
 - Threat and opportunity
 - Become more integrated and sustainable
 - Farm crisis and climate crisis share many similar causes and solutions
 - If we fail to plan, we plan to fail
 - Priority: incentivize low-input, low-emission agricultural approaches

<https://viacampesina.org/en/nfu-announces-new-report-tackling-the-farm-crisis-and-the-climate-crisis/>

Example: Resetting the Table

- Context: ~2.5M Canadians food insecure; farmers going out of business, environmental degradation, 1/4 Canadians obese, and only G8 country without nationally-funded school meal program
- 3500 Canadians participated; 10 detailed discussion papers, policy recommendations and guidelines
- Rooted in food sovereignty. Key elements:
 - Food is eaten close to where its produced
 - Support ecological production
 - Federal poverty elimination and prevention program
 - Nationally funded Children and Food strategy
 - Ensure public is actively involved in decisions about the food system



Possible Steps toward Food Sovereignty

Hannah Wittman, Faculty of Land and Food Systems and the Institute for Resources, Environment, and Sustainability at the University of British Columbia

- Organizing consumers: e.g. public food procurement, farm-to-school programs
- Training new generation of farmers
- Securing the land: protecting from urban sprawl
- Demanding fair trade
- <https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/monitor/food-sovereignty-canada>

Pillars of Food Sovereignty, Summary

1. Food for People: Food at centre of policy; more than a commodity
2. Builds Knowledge & Skills: builds on tradition; research and future generations; rejects technologies that undermine or contaminate local food systems
3. Works with Nature: Optimizes contributions to ecosystems; improve resilience
4. Values Food Providers: Supports sustainable livelihoods, respects work of all providers
5. Localizes Food Systems: Reduces distance between farm to plate; rejects dumping and inappropriate food aid; resists dependency on remote and unaccountable corporations
6. Puts Control Locally: In the hands of food providers; need to inhabit/share territories; rejects privatization of natural resources
7. Food is Sacred: Food is gift of life and not to be squandered; food cannot be commodified

Resources

- <https://viacampesina.org/en/>
- [The People's Food Policy Project- Introducing Food Sovereignty in Canada 2012](#)
- Food Sovereignty stories: <http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/food-sovereignty-stories-video/>
- Food Sovereignty in the Golden Horseshoe Region of Ontario:
<https://tfpc.to/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2012/09/Friedmann-2011-Food-Sovereignty-in-Ontario.pdf>
- Food Sovereignty in Canada: Movement to control our own food and agriculture
<https://www.policyalternatives.ca/publications/monitor/food-sovereignty-canada>