

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:
Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada
National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

Location: Margaret Laurence Room, Oakham House, Ryerson Student Centre - 55 Gould Street, Toronto, ON

Date: October 13th 12:00 – 5:00pm EST (lunch included)

Co-Chairs: Norma Kassi & Jody Butler Walker, Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research

DRAFT MINUTES

Attendees

Inuit Regions:

Gioia Montevechhi, Food First Newfoundland & Labrador, Nikigijavut Nunatiavutinni

Leesee Papatsie, Feeding My Family

Taye Newman, Feeding Nunavut

Northwest Territories:

Craig Scott, Ecology North

Elsie DeRoose, Northern Nutrition Association

Tracey Williams, Yellowknife Food Charter

Andrew Spring, Wilfred Laurier University

Yukon:

Sandra Johnson, Kluane First Nation

Mary Jan Johnson, Kluane First Nation

Helen Stappers, Council of Yukon First Nations

Kristina Craig, Yukon Anti Poverty Coalition

Kim Hickman, Yukon Government-Health Promotion

Larissa Lychenko, Student, City of Whitehorse

Norma Kassi, Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research

Jody Butler Walker, Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research

Katelyn Friendship, Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research

Molly Pratt, Arctic Institute of Community-Based Research

Other:

Eric Chaurette, Inter Pares

Reggie Tika, Lush Cosmetics

Judy Halladay, Health Canada First Nations & Inuit Health Branch

Kelli Deering-Ebbs, Breakfast Club of Canada

Chantal Vinet L., Cree Board of Health & Social Services of James Bay

Dave Colemire

Brewster Kneen

Aart Schuurman Hess, Greater Vancouver Food Bank, Food Secure Canada Chair

Pierre Audette, Fundraising and Development Advisor, Food Secure Canada

Daniel Kanu, Food Matters Manitoba

Anelyse Weiler Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North: Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

Crystal Sinclair, FSC Indigenous Circle, OPSEU

Zora Igyatovic, Food Share Toronto

Uma Sebastianpillai, Halton Region

Tirso Gonzales, BC Working Group on Indigenous Sovereignty

Emily Mann, Student/Volunteer

Brianna Sands, Student/Volunteer

Kristen Howe, Volunteer

1. Opening & Introduction – Setting the Stage

Norma Kassi, Co-founder and Director of Indigenous Collaboration at AICBR welcomed the meeting participants and acknowledged the traditional territory of the Mississauga First Nations. Norma outlined the complexities of Arctic food insecurity and why the group was gathered, to engage in dialogue on how to move forward in addressing the complex issue. Norma Kassi gave a brief history of herself and the impacts climate change is having on her community of Old Crow. She spoke about the importance of focusing on the youth and educating people about food insecurity for the future generations. AICBR is working with others to move towards bringing that education and awareness of the changes to the forefront.

Jody Butler Walker, Co-founder and Co-director of AICBR also welcomed the group. She acknowledged Food Secure Canada and Diana Bronson, Anelyse Weiler Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation, and Public Health Agency of Canada for their funding and support to have the meeting. Jody described AICBR and the construct of community-based research (participatory action research focus). AICBR focuses on health and wellbeing and works to facilitate opportunities to work together with stronger outcomes. The meeting is an opportunity to share work and fledge partnerships.

2. Roundtable Sharing (What are we working on re: food security?)

Katelyn Friendship, Co-director AICBR

-Yukon Food Security Roundtable in May 2016

-Community food security strategies

-Visit www.aicbr.ca for more details!

Molly Pratt, Research & Communications Coordinator AICBR

-From BC and relatively new to AICBR

-Yukon Food Security Roundtable, Community reports, and the planning and organizing of a Northern Food Summit, develops website and social media for AICBR.

Sandy Johnson, Burwash Landing

-Has lived in Yukon for 40+ years, and is an honorary Elder of the Kluane First Nation.

-Active gardener, knows how to grow food. Works with kids, the daycare, afterschool and summer programming, started a kids greenhouse.

-Next year, hoping to have a community greenhouse and garden that will help the community be more food secure and to be able to eat more healthy.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

Dave Colemire

- Specialty is gardening in southern Ontario. Has been growing things in the South that have been told he couldn't.
- When learnt about how expensive and difficult it is to get decent food in the North, found it painful to hear.
- Interested in helping to grow appropriate foods for the North and helping with techniques, etc.
- A lot of it is getting the right seeds.
- Dave encouraged everyone to reach out to work together to come up with new ideas to produce food in the North.

Brewster Kneen

- Cathleen Kneen's husband.
- Acknowledged the many seed varieties Dave uses.
- Brewster acknowledged that this meeting is a manifestation of Cathleen's work.
- Brewster is a writer and encouraged people if they had topic ideas to let him know.

Gioia Montevechhi, Food First Newfoundland & Labrador

- Food First is a provincial organization with a purpose to improve access to healthy, safe food.
- Have a PHAC funded project: Our Food in Nunatsiavut-aimed to improving access to healthy culturally appropriate foods in northern Labrador. Currently working with Nain, Hopedale and Rigolet.
- Inuit-based model, community-led food assessments –broad assessments looking at unique challenges of food security in communities, and strengths and opportunities.
- After assessments, communities define locally tailored food programs to address some of the challenges (i.e. community freezer, hunter support, food box, skill building programs) –run by Inuit Food Security Coordinators.
- Food First hosted a Nunatsiavut food security summit (33 stakeholders) in January.
- Working to bring Inuit food security to a national level.
- Have five action plans to sustain work through the project, as well as other food security work in Nunatsiavut.

Helen Stappers, Council of Yukon First Nations

- Nutritionist
- Spoke about how everything is resolved with food.
- CYFN does survey work in Yukon communities where they ask a lot of questions related to food security (Yukon First Nation Health Status Report).
- In 2014, did a survey on early childhood development and education, and the surveys included lots of questions related to food security.
- Helen spoke about OCAP and how all the data belongs to communities.

Crystal Sinclair, Indigenous Circle

- Work in Toronto, is a mental health addictions coordinator, activist.
- Member of the Indigenous Circle (FSC), partnership with Food Share, where they have subsidiary money to send food to northern communities.
- Happy to hear about the partnerships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- Crystal reminded everyone to not forget about water and the importance of water protection. Water is life. Many communities are at the forefront of that issue, and face the extraction of resources and water without consultation. There are many water issues, poisoned water.
- Water is essential and needs to be protected for future generations.

Kristina Craig, Yukon Anti Poverty Coalition

- Coordinator for YAPC, for 8 years.
- Coalition who facilitates the elimination of poverty through education, access, and has a focus on food access, housing shortages and affordability issues. YAPC has spent a lot of focus on affordable housing, and income.
- Three years ago on World Food Day, "Let's Talk about Food" gathering started. Now have Food Network Yukon who meets bi-monthly.
- Food security in the North, income is a huge piece of that, growing, etc. In Yukon, food comes predominately from the highway. They are many issues related to Indigenous, food sovereignty, security, etc.
- Kristina also works with the Recycling Society-ZeroWaste Yukon. Looking into food waste and distribution in the community.

Eric Chaurette, Inter Pares

- Social justice organization based in Ottawa. Has 15 co-managers, and focuses on equality.
- Food sovereignty, economic justice, agro-ecology, critiques around technology "quick fixes" i.e. GMOs
- Eric spoke to how the Kneens continue to influence his life, and spoke about working with Food Secure Canada on the People's Food Policy. He was on the Board of FSC for the last 6 years.
- Strong recommendation that we work together to have a gathering up North and that we continue to build on the conversations. Inter Pares recognizes the urgency to act.

Kim Hickman, Territorial Dietitian, Yukon Government

- Yukon Nutrition Framework
- Focus on improving cooking and food skills with vulnerable populations; collective kitchens.
- From the Ground Up- school and daycare fundraiser. Customers can donate boxes (this year about 16 different organizations and over 400 boxes were donated). The program uses Yukon grown fresh vegetables to support vulnerable populations.

Andrew Spring, Wilfred Laurier University

- Centre of Sustainable Food Systems
- Works in the Northwest Territories using Participatory Action Research, where communities define their own food system.
- Started off in food security and now more into food sustainability in the North. Work with communities, NGO's, government to develop food systems.

Craig Scott, Ecology North

- Executive Director, has a background in climate change. Many roads lead to food security and agriculture.
- Work in the NWT small communities. Help to develop compost programs. Soil is a big issue in NWT (on Canadian Shield).

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- Develop plain language guides for agriculture practices and focus on education and awareness.
- Work in schools, develop curriculum re: growing and food systems.

Elsie De Roose, Northern Nutrition Association

- Has lived in Yellowknife about 28 years. Works for the Government of Northwest Territories, as well as with the Northern Nutrition Association.
- Focuses on the health of northerners through nutrition. Many people cannot afford to buy healthy foods.
- Online inventory map of healthy eating programs, which includes gardening (<http://www.aicbr.ca/healthy-living-inventory/>)

Diana Bronson, Food Secure Canada

- Executive Director. Acknowledged AICBR for hosting the meeting.
- Food insecurity and food sovereignty questions in northern Canada.
- FSC used to have an informal northern network but there was a lack of staff capacity to keep it going.
- Paying for Nutrition project, which focused on the cost of food in 3 northern communities.
- Excited to work with AICBR to try to pull together a northern gathering.
- Acknowledged funding from Sprott Foundation, Trudeau Foundation, Martha Stegman (SSHRC), which has given us the ability to work on northern issues and for many to be able to attend the meeting.
- The FSC Assembly is not a conference but an assembly-where people assemble for a purpose.

Judy Halladay, Health Canada (FNIHB Alberta)

- Food security working group that includes nine Elders representing 3 treaty areas in Alberta. Have a couple of projects looking at how to get wild game into community programs and facilities; bulk food buying for isolated communities (healthy market foods).
- In northern Alberta most communities do not have grocery stores. There is a focus on education of healthy foods, yet cannot access in the community.

Tracey Williams, Yellowknife Food Charter

- Has worked with Yellowknife Farmers Market since 2013.
- The market brings about \$1million to the community through close to 55 vendors. The market has two goals: 1) to create a physical space for the exchange of locally grown produce and food (value-added products), 2) to do something about food security.
- Tracey moved to Lutsel K'e in 2000, where she founded a community garden with the community and started working with the Territorial Farmers Association. This group envisioned the Northern Farm Training Institute (NFTI).
- Tracey's background has been working with Elders and communities to develop First Nation designed and created protected areas/land use planning models.
- Yellowknife Farmers Market spearheaded a Yellowknife Food Charter. They researched what they are all about in 2014 and people started to work together from different sectors and interest levels about food in Yellowknife to develop a Charter.
- Focus on social justice, access to foods, local foods.
- Food Charter draft was endorsed by the City and includes all parts of the food system.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

-Yellowknife Farmers Market is interested in bringing more local food into Yellowknife. They are working with the City. GNWT is currently developing an agricultural strategy for Yellowknife. There is also policy work, work into soil access, etc. Many things are happening simultaneously.

-25% food insecurity rate in NWT (2nd highest in Canada).

Kristen Howe, volunteer

-Attended the FSC gathering in Halifax

Brianna Sands, volunteer

Emily Mann, volunteer, student

-Spent a summer in Nunavut, which inspired her to be at the meeting.

Zora Ignajotovic, FoodShare

-Agriculture engineer, homestead in Yugoslavia.

-Always had food and food to share. Her passion is focused on how to make food available to everyone and to make more than she needs. We live in abundance and need to change our attitude. Toronto has 4 days of a food supply.

-Need more public education on eating wild foods.

-It is so important to know how to produce food for survival and to have that knowledge.

-How to grow without land. Need to work together with Indigenous people who have land and regain trust to work together.

Mary Jane Johnson, Kluane First Nation

-Acknowledged the work of her community. They have already done so much and do not even realize it.

-Mary Jane spoke about the importance of traditional foods. Farming from seed to table is important, but for her, food is grouse, rabbits, whitefish, etc.

-Mary Jane spoke about the effects of climate change on their food sources.

-She spoke about moose and how conservation policies have affected their access to food. Her community, Burwash Landing is on the Alaska Highway Corridor and on protected areas (Kluane National Park, territorial park, game sanctuary). Only through their land claim agreement (12 years ago) were they able to retain their Aboriginal rights to hunt, fish, trap, and gather on their traditional territory.

-Moose are protected only on one side of the road. They typically do not start breeding until 3-5 years old and have a lifespan of 14-15 years. They need to plan for moose and sheep populations in the future.

-There are traumatic changes to the land: melting ice fields and glaciers, shifting in water and river flows, dust storms. Mary Jane expressed her concern on how the changing landscape will affect the animal populations.

While they know their fish are safe to eat for example, they do not know what will happen with the 8-foot drop in water levels in Kluane Lake. Caribou populations have drastically declined over time, smaller alpine animals, etc.

-Mary Jane spoke about a school salmon project. Kids take care of salmon eggs and raise the salmon at the school. The fry are released in the spring. This project has been happening for 21 years. Every community that wants to keep wild salmon, needs to start this type of program.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- Mary Jane spoke about the community food security strategy project that Kluane First Nation did in partnership with AICBR.
- Food security is more than the seeds on the ground...it is the land, water.
- “Part of the Land, Part of the Water”, Virginia Smarch, Teslin Tlingit

Reggie Tika, Lush Cosmetics Charity Team

- Support Grassroots organizations and helping to provide grants.
- Reggie acknowledged that he was in a room filled with superheroes and offered his help in anything that he could.

Kelli Deering-Ebbs, Breakfast Club of Canada

- Charitable organization that funds breakfast programs.
- Advisor for northern Ontario and Manitoba, ~ 75 communities.
- Works in communities, hands-on, breakfast programs, procurement and logistic projects, helping to source different outlets for communities to access their foods that are outside of the monopolies. She is working with food distributors in Winnipeg (Nutrition North) and has transformed school nutrition programs without increasing the funding.
- The importance of making own food from scratch and education related to serving country foods in schools. Changing the breakfast paradigm and what is considered “breakfast food”.
- Building partnerships to leverage more funding and product to the North.
- Neechi Commons (Indigenous-owned food co-op in Winnipeg, that just got their Nutrition North subsidy certification) can now distribute locally grown foods to the North. Breakfast Club of Canada is now working to translate that model into Ontario schools (40 communities in the North). Researching distributors to provide higher quality foods.

Chantal Vinet L., Cree Board of Health & Social Services of James Bay

- Nutritionist. Health promotion programming.
- Working with store managers and leaders of the region to improve access to nutritious food and promote healthy foods in the region.
- Promoting access to healthy commercial and traditional foods.

Uma Sebastiampillai, Dietitian, Halton Region

- Work in diabetes, Aboriginal communities, and interested in the links between food insecurity and prevention and management with diabetes.
- At the meeting to listen.

Daniel Kanu, Food Matters Manitoba

- Coordinates the northern Indigenous program. Food Matters Manitoba is part of the northern healthy food initiative with Manitoba Government.
- They support communities (i.e gardens, and greenhouses, as well as land-based education, country food processing centres, working more in schools, cooking classes, etc).

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

-There is more networking happening across northern Manitoba for communities to learn from each other. This is very empowering, encouraging, and relevant.

Taye Newman, Feeding Nunavut

- Purpose of Feeding Nunavut is to create awareness and advocate for change.
- Focusing on support for food banks, school meal programs, Elders soup kitchen programs, etc.
- Recently started a hunter-fisher program, where hunters and fishers are outfitted to bring country foods back to the community.

Leesee Papatsie, Feeding My Family, Nunavut

- Everyone here all has an understanding of the issues in the North and all speak the same language and all understand how things work in the North.
- Leesee expressed how glad she was to be there and to hear what everyone else is doing.

Anelyse Weiler, Pierre Elliott Trudeau Foundation

- Justice for Migrant Workers volunteer (activist).
- U of Toronto doctorate: Migrant Farm Workers and land-based knowledge (Indigenous knowledge).
- Fortunate through the Trudeau Foundation to visit the Yukon. Developed a proposal to bring some northern partners to the Assembly, to have a voice here and to participate.

3. Scoping the North

Jody Butler Walker reflected that the title of the meeting is *How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?* and the importance of scoping what the “North” is. The North is vast and there are many things going on that we can learn and share about. We want to establish a common understanding of considerations of food security in the North. There is no single solution to food insecurity. It is a very complex issue and we all need to work together across disciplines and break down silos. Through sharing what we each do, we are now a community of practice related to food security in the North. This is an important step forward in how the North can contribute meaningfully to a National Food Policy.

4. Breakout Session – Where are we now and where do we need to go?

What is going on in your territory/region/community in terms of food security planning?

Northwest Territories

- The territory only recently entered devolution, so there are few policies in existence in terms of how they can develop the land.
- It is a confusing place to work with 5 regions, Aboriginal regional governments, co-management boards, and lack of clarity with land ownership. Complex political system.
- GNWT is currently developing an Agriculture Strategy and a Country Food Strategy.
- There are not many agriculture/food agencies in the NWT. The Territorial Farmers Association used to be active but has been replaced with the Northern Farm Training Institute. This is a farm training campus in Hay River (Hay River is the only community with land set aside for agriculture and with an agriculture strategy).
- All communities have community gardens with different levels of success.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- Other examples of programs: community gardens; 'take your kid trapping'; poverty elimination programs; greenhouse in Inuvik; school food programs; education awareness; NWT Common Front (a coalition engaged in socio-ecological resiliency); Yellowknife Farmers Market and Food Charter.
- Lots of money going towards infrastructure, but there is a lack of funding for education and awareness. Northern Food Development Program (GNWT), GNWT-ITI, Growing Forward 2.
- Biggest issue is access to land.

Inuit Region Inuit Nuunat (4 regions)

- Acknowledged that there were only representatives from Nunavut and Nunatsiavut at the meeting. Would be great to have representation from the other regions (Inuvialuit, Nunavik).
- Nunatsiavut government is hiring a Food Strategy Coordinator.
- Since 2012, there has been a caribou ban in Nunatsiavut; as a solution, hunters are brought to Gros Morne Newfoundland to hunt moose and then the meat is distributed in Nunatsiavut.
- Food First works in close partnership with the Nunatsiavut government.
- Run community freezer expansion programs; do assessments of Inuit concepts of food security, looking at many elements of food security and more than a households ability to afford food; look at wild foods, factors that impact distribution, etc.
- Nunavut has the Nunavut Food Security Coalition. This is chaired by the Government of Nunavut and Nunavut Tunngavik Incorporated (NTI), with representatives from different government departments.
- NTI used to have a hunter support program and they are bringing it back. The Government of Nunavut has a country food program to support community hunts, subsidize fuel, etc. Iqaluit has a food center with programming in addition to a food bank.
- There are an increasing number of food banks in Nunavut.
- There are school breakfast programs in all schools; some do lunches as well.

Northern Provinces

- Pikangikum (northern Ontario), a woman's group founded a food co-op, a new model of social enterprise.
- Sioux Lookout (northwest Ontario) will be having a roundtable of 31 Chiefs about food security. To look at making Sioux Lookout a centralized food hub and distribution centre. It is the largest urban centre in proximity of northern regions for food access in Ontario. *Many participants asked for Daniel/Kelli Deering-Ebbs to share the outcomes of this meeting*
- Community greenhouses; food literacy programs.
- Indigenous food sovereignty summit through Food Matters Manitoba.
- Re-purposing old mining railways and using them to ship food into remote communities. Some communities without stores are doing wholesale buying and using the railway.
- Some groups are using the Nutrition North program to help them subsidize bringing healthy and affordable foods to the North (by working with distributors who are certified by Nutrition North).
- Mary Jane asked if anyone is using hydroponics or geothermal to grow food. Enactus Canada are a group of students who use business to address social issues. I.e. greenhouse engineering, waste management, etc. (<http://enactus.ca/project/growing-north/>). Enactus, Engineers without Borders: super keen students to assist communities with designing and building. Andrew Spring has more details for those who are interested.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

-It was noted that for northerners, there is more of a desire to eat more root vegetables that compliment wild foods than leafy foods from hydroponics. The Korean government and a First Nation community in Northern Manitoba are developing an LED growing system. There is also a Korean partnership in four First Nation communities in Alberta, where they are provided with equipment and infrastructure for growing.

Yukon

- School food programs, community gardens, Yukon has a local food strategy, Whitehorse is working on a local food strategy, AICBR hosted Yukon Food Security Roundtable in May 2016 in Whitehorse.
- Food is holistic and connected to so many health-related issues. Solutions have to also be holistic-not only one solution...about working outside of silos and working with each other.
- Change has occurred very quickly in terms of food culture: hunter support programs and harvest camps must have more support in order to nourish youth.
- Burwash Landing: food storage and preservation techniques-dehydrate bulk veggies and fruit, have smokehouses. Most community members do not have diabetes-no one is hungry in Burwash because they are dependent on the land. They are possibly so healthy because they do live 3 hours away from a grocery store! The community has community hunts (supported by the Renewable Resource Council and Yukon Government) and gets confiscated meat. It is not uncommon for trucks to spill on the highway near Burwash because of frost heaves-potential to get food from spills (i.e. salmon destined to Washington from Alaska). Building relationships with outfitters and getting extra/unused meat to the community.
- Look at job creation, training (i.e. designated hunters, food preservation, growing, etc.).
- Some communities are doing a lot (i.e. Kluane First Nation), but even within thriving communities there are always people who are left out-how to target the most vulnerable?
- Solutions need to come from within the community and supporting community champions, community leaders. Need strong leadership within a community (i.e. KFN government, funding for harvest camps etc). Community leaders-how to support those individuals?
- Important to have more opportunities for sharing and learning from each other.
- Norma Kassi discussed high rates of food insecurity in the North, and how there are a tremendous amount of things happening on the ground, but still, there are kids going hungry, people who are not doing well. We will continue to have hungry people, even when working so hard. It is important to feed kids first (not Elders). Norma discussed the changes in practices over time. In the past, leaders were chosen based on their ability to feed a community. Need to bring resources to programs, support social enterprises re: food security. Need to revitalize deep cultural traditions.
- Norma also expressed the importance of hearing about the outcomes of the Chief's Summit and to bring it to the AFN level, in order to teach and raising awareness across Canada. Interested in learning more and bringing it to the Yukon. Need to make food security a priority in Indigenous governance...need to take care of the ones who are food insecure (i.e. the 17% in YT).

What does your community/region need to reduce food insecurity?

- Focus on future generations and their ability to be good decision-makers, sovereign decision-makers.
- Build capacity and skills within the local communities (e.g., amongst Inuit themselves)
- Increased infrastructure (more community centre infrastructure, such as community freezers, kitchens).

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- We should be bringing our young leaders to these assemblies to represent themselves. They are the future decision-makers.
- Policies and government leadership need to more adequately address food issues.
- Host a Chief's Summit –platform for people to be heard and which will lead to action.
- We are talking about survival...bigger than food security. Decision-makers that we elect, have to reflect what is happening across the country.

5. History on the Northern Food Summit

Norma Kassi gave a brief overview on the history of the Northern Food Summit idea. In 2012 (FSC Edmonton), Indigenous Circle met and started talking about the need to bring northerners together; this came up again in 2014 in Halifax, the need for northerners to meet together to discuss food insecurity on a national scale. AICBR and FSC started working together with a Steering Committee to discuss developing a Northern Food Summit and how it can come to be. It was realized that important work needs to be done in the territories/regions to support the development of the pan-Northern Food Summit to be regionally relevant and northern-based. Leadership and Indigenous governments need to be coming together to work on the issues. How are we going to get there, if we want to seriously look at those who are food insecure?

We need to work together towards strengthening partnerships to be as inclusive as possible. In Yukon, we had a Roundtable in May, at which AICBR facilitated discussions about food security and what Yukon residents want. This was our part of leading up to the national scale. We need guidance, money, capacity. What do people want to do and how to do it? We need to get farther to reach northern leadership at national scale, how do we get there? When? We want to have an impact on the national food policy.

Jody Butler Walker added that the Northern Food Summit idea was to bring key leadership together (pan-northern), but the leadership would be informed by preparatory work in each region to assess what is already going on, what is needed, etc. Bringing the grassroots and grass-tips together. We would appreciate feedback on a process by which each region does its own piece of work (i.e. identify strengths and opportunities, policies, etc.), to inform regional leadership, who could then come together. This would make it easier to identify common themes, low hanging fruit, etc. Jody acknowledged that some regions have already started/done this work (i.e. Food First Newfoundland & Labrador, Nunavut Food Security Coalition). How does the North contribute to the national food policy? How do we unpack who the North is? Is a northern food summit desirable? And if so, what outcomes do we want? Do we want specific actions, resources, policy? Kids are going to bed hungry. The North needs to represent the North. How do we represent ourselves, to say what we need, how can we make a difference, and lead to action?

6. National Food Policy

Diana Bronson, Food Secure Canada provided background on the national food policy. Last November, The Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada was mandated to develop a national food policy. This is the key agenda of the conference-what will the policy look like and how can we make it meaningful? Diana explained that Greg Meredith, ADM Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada would be laying out the plan at the opening plenary. There is a need to convince the department that "consultations" are not enough. Innovations are happening all over communities, but amongst all, they are lacking resources to scale-up, be sustainable,

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North: Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

etc. These are the issues we want to raise in the national food policy; we want a policy that fosters sovereignty not charity and that recognizes the fundamental human right to food. Diana spoke to the Peoples Food Policy, which is a vision for Canada's food system. We need to try to convince the government that we have great wisdom and we have things to teach the government on what we need. Grassroots to the Grass-tips. There is opportunity at this assembly to reach leadership- we know that they do not really know what they mean for a national food policy. We are not just resetting the table but also need to restore our lands, waters, and relationship with the Earth.

Norma echoed, that we have to keep climate change at the forefront; food and water at the forefront of developing the national food policy. We need to educate the leaders.

Zora Igyatovic added that they need to define what is nutrition. Is it having the food or knowing what feeds us? i.e. GMO's and the right to know. Diana Bronson noted that transparency is a key demand for a national policy.

Jody Butler Walker spoke to the report by the Council of Canadian Academies –Aboriginal Food Security in Northern Canada (2014), which was contracted by Health Canada. The report informs the need for further action in the North (meaningful northern engagement) –this could be the Northern Food Summit. Eric Chaurette added that the report talks about food sovereignty not just food security, and protecting the resource base. The language of food sovereignty important. Food security can be reached if you have food sovereignty.

How can the North contribute to the National Food Policy?

Kristina Craig spoke to the definition of North. Solutions must be community-based and community-specific. Do not want to have a blanket "North". Have to have conversations of respecting knowledge where it is. Kristina cautioned that when defining the North, we have to be careful that it isn't interpreted to be uniform. Jody explained that one approach would be to characterize activities that are going on regionally, so each region can bring forward information specific for each context. Then there will be a higher chance that outcomes will be regionally relevant, sustainable and useful.

Elsie De Roose asked about the timeline for the national food policy and that it is important to have the Summit before that. The Feds are aiming to have the policy finished by 2018. Jody discussed how the summit needs to be relevant and useful. It will be an expensive endeavor and so we have to be clear on outcomes and what we want to get out of it. From each region there are different lessons to learn.

How do we have a common umbrella of the North while acknowledging the regional differences?

Mary Jane Johnson, spoke about her community and how they made a decision to keep Elders in their community as long as possible. Food is essential for communities; need to look at sustaining community in the North. When Elders and young people are taken away, then we lose community and communities start collapsing. Food is essential in building web of support to keep all levels of community (ages) and to keep it a vibrant community. Have to feed your community if you want them to stay.

The group discussed how it is not just about food, but is much broader (climate change, environment, health, etc). Diana Bronson said that food is a way to solve environmental crisis, food is a way to heal the earth, food is

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

a way the government can achieve many of its other objectives. The beauty of using food is that it is much easier to engage people on food than biodiversity, human rights, contaminants, etc. Everybody eats.

It was decided to continue the meeting during the “Open Space” session at the Assembly on Saturday morning (15 Oct. 2016).

Summary of Evaluations from Northern Networking Gathering

1). What was your experience of the Gathering?

- Thanks for inviting us. It's great to get the national perspective
- Good facilitation, ambitious agenda
- Very interesting, engaging, uplifting
- Too short
- Great opportunity to network/follow-up with those with similar interests
- Meeting for the afternoon was great to hear the wide variety of projects/programs happening in all the Northern areas of our country. This was the most significant contribution for me to attend this session and hear about some of the themes that run concurrent across the Northern space of this country;
- Great! Good to hear and share ideas and meet new people;
- Enjoyed the sharing
- Didn't get through the agenda
- Great to have FSC people here to give perspective;
- Would have like to have gone through agenda at the front end;
- Positive, giving me a better understanding how the problems are global and everything
- What is seen in the Northern Territories replicate or already happen in the world as a whole;
- Lovely - hearing from others;
- Great! Good to hear and share ideas and meet new people;
- Excellent experience! Amazing to hear projects and experiences from other Northern communities;
- It is always worthwhile to hear other perspectives and experiences re: food security;
- Food security is complex and there are so many prongs. So many great things are happening!
- People sharing what they are/have done in their regions;
- Very good
- Northern Forum will be key to building the change we need;
- NWT is ripe for a major transition, but we need a push/pull to make it happen!
- I think this was a great session. It is nice to see that people from other regions are sharing similar concerns, and that there are solutions and opportunities to improve community food security that have been implemented in other contexts, and we should take examples on or connect with.

2) What would have made it better?

- Hard to have all people speak – takes time
- More time!

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:

Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- Have more community leaders of all ages (young and political leaders)
- Full day session to accomplish agenda
- Maybe a longer day's session to get further down the agenda;
- Agenda was too rushed;
- More directive and more time on Northern Food Summit
- More time
- Agenda was rushed. Discussion and collaboration could have been more organic;
- More small group discussion/sharing. I'm shy and have a hard time sharing in big groups;
- We need to be asking the question of why programs/communities are successful and focus on the bright spots versus what's wrong/not happening;
- Harder questions or more focus questions on "how to make it better"
- As Norma says – need aboriginal leadership there. If we don't have food sovereignty we will not have a country (how in past history – civilizations die because of oversalinization , etc)

3) What are next steps?

- Food/Water/Environment Summit
- Defining the needs of each region (Northern region) and come together to see how we can work together to improve the situation;
- Open space opportunity to allow follow up
- I agree that convening an open space on the Northern Summit next steps would be a good idea;
- Next step for the NWT is to have a 'roundtable' within/for the NWT programs and projects;
- Regional summits and roundtables that can speak to issues with federal government but also share with each other. Possible not even a summit but through network calls or smaller meetings though a summit would be great;
- Sign us up to do stuff....email us! Capitalize on the momentum!!
- More communication between Northerners!
- How to make it better for Northerners
- FSC website to continue these discussions
- Where is AFN in the picture? They can champion food policy best (government to government)
- How does it fit with commercial enterprise? These people have to be there too (commercial farming, not necessarily industry).

4) Other comments?

- Great session – really appreciated it
- Thanks!
- Overall good session and much needed one.
- North contributing to policy recommendations for national food policy – related goals but different perspectives.
- Thank you for opening the conversation and allowing me to be included in this;
- Engaging and animating more people comes from empowering young and elders, interview people and make it accessible to all to be empowered and heard.

Advancing Food Security Planning across the North:
Northern Networking and Information Sharing Gathering at Food Secure Canada
National Assembly

How can the North contribute to a Federal Food Policy?

- We need 'low key wisdom' instead of high pay consultants – self determination, self reliance, local control;
- The gatherings could be organized on line as virtual conferences. The whole village can be part or listen, participate.
- We are all the table and under the table audience
- Good to see some Southern people participating and hopefully learning as well but not taking over the discussion (at least not too much);
- Disappointed there wasn't more time for # 6 on the agenda
- Thank you for doing what you do!

DRAFT