



SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS: CENTERING FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

Situated in Treaty 6, 8 & 10 Territory & the homeland of the Métis (Saskatchewan)

BACKGROUND

- X Canada is one of few rich countries without a national school food policy or program
- X The school-day diets of Canadian children are poor
- X Globally, school food programs are important for health, education and economic reasons

Tugault-Lafleur, Black & Barr, 2017



BACKGROUND

- X Food can be used for education on environment, social and political systems, agriculture (relationship with land).
- X Children can be involved in growing, preparing food, along with a meal program.
- X Students learn appreciation for food (especially food they have grown or prepared themselves), willingness to try new foods.



HISTORY OF SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS GLOBALLY

(OOSTINDJER ET AL. 2016)

X Phase 1:
1850 to
1970s,
primarily to
reduce
hunger.
Minimal
focus on food
quality.

X Phase 2:
1970s in
some parts
of Europe,
and in 1990s
and 2000s,
in the US and
UK,
improving
food quality.

X Phase 3: in
infancy in most
countries,
incorporate
food-system
and society,
integration with
curricula and
school
environment.



HISTORY OF SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAMS IN CANADA

X Existed for more than 100 years, funded by charities, municipal and provincial governments

X Major push for a national program during World War II

X Rejected by federal government after war – they said that ignorance was the problem



The Current

Advocates urge federal government to commit to a national school lunch program



Kids shouldn't have to worry about their next meal, community leaders say

CBC Radio · Posted: Jan 21, 2022 10:11 AM ET | Last Updated: January 21

THE COALITION FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD IS CALLING ON PROVINCIAL AND FEDERAL LEADERS TO WORK TOGETHER TO FEED SCHOOL CHILDREN



Education Ministers meet in Toronto on July 7 & 8, the Coalition for Healthy School Food is calling on provincial and federal leaders to work together to feed school children.

Canada / News

UNICEF report ranks Canada 37th out of 41 wealthy nations in access to nutritious food for children

Camille Bains · THE CANADIAN PRESS
Jun 14, 2017 · June 15, 2017 · 3 minute read



Growing resilience and equity: A food policy action plan in the context of Covid-19



Canada's National Observer

Finally, Liberals are putting school food programs on the menu

Healthy, delicious school food could soon be on the plates of millions of Canadian children after the federal government recently committed...

Jan 19, 2022

FEDERAL BUDGET PLEDGES A CANADIAN SCHOOL FOOD PROGRAM BUT RECIPE REQUIRES FUNDING

Amberley Ruetz and Sara Kirk · March 25, 2019



Canada is ranked 37th of the 41 most wealthy nations in regards to child well-being and access to healthy food, according to UNICEF. (Shutterstock)

CANADA'S NEW FOOD GUIDE

Eat a variety of healthy foods each day

**Have plenty of
vegetables and fruits**

Eat protein foods

**Make water
your drink
of choice**



**Choose
whole grain
foods**

Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat



Be mindful of your eating habits



Cook more often



Enjoy your food



Eat meals with others



Use food labels



Limit foods high in sodium, sugars or saturated fat



Be aware of food marketing

Vol. 5 No. 3, pp. 208–229

September 2018

Canadian Food Studies



La Revue canadienne des
études sur l'alimentation

Perspective

The case for a Canadian national school food program

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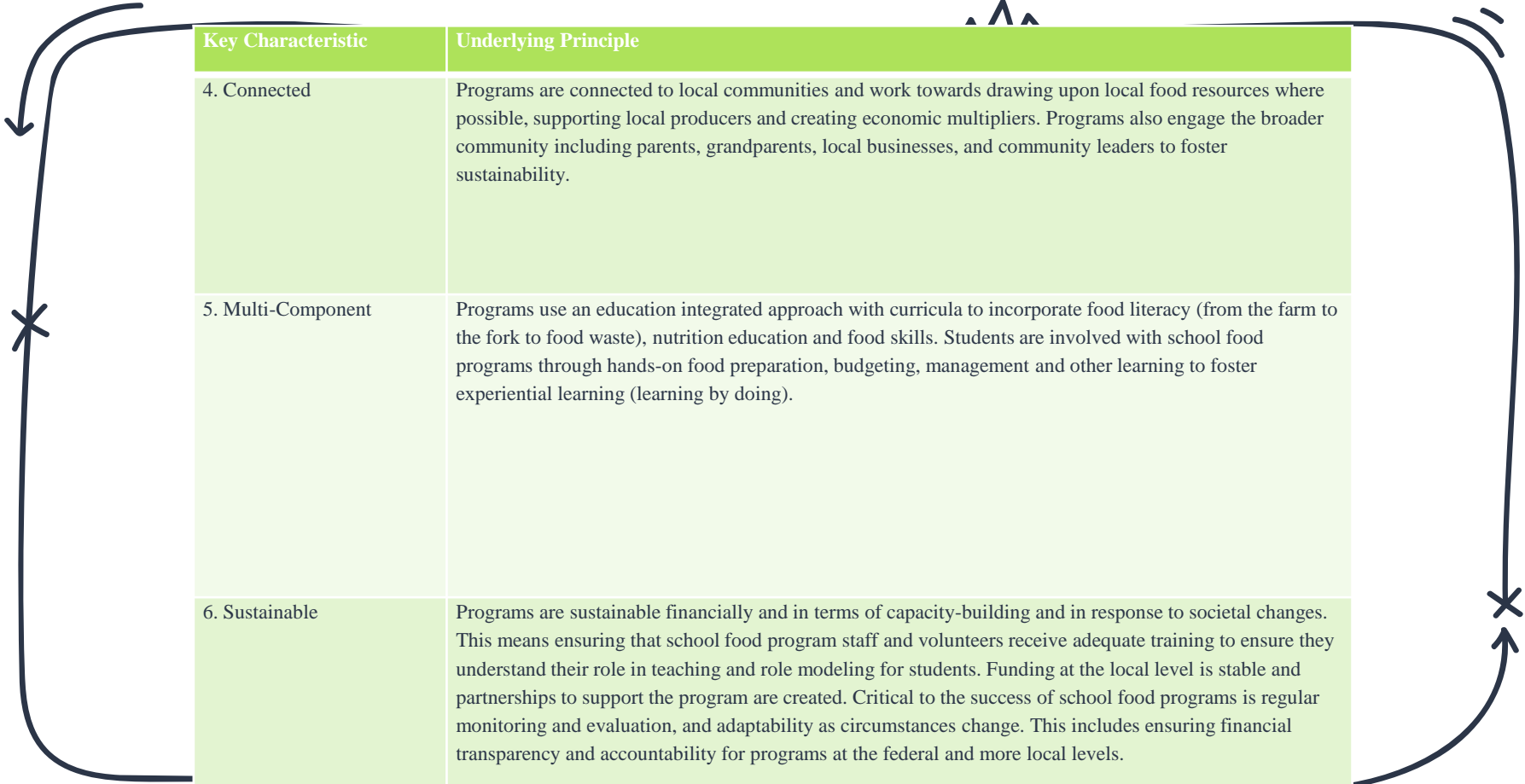
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Key Characteristic	Underlying Principle
1. Universal	School food programs welcome all students in a school community. They are offered at no cost or subsidized cost to families, and administered in a non-stigmatizing manner. In a shared cost model, payment is made in a way that ensures privacy. ¹ Programs are promoted to ensure that all students have access to healthy food in school daily.
2. Health Promoting	School food programs are consistent with nutrition policies that focus on the provision of whole foods, and in particular vegetables and fruit. Nutrition policies that mandate the provision of a variety of vegetables and fruit (such as requiring lunches to include a minimum of two servings daily with variation) help to simplify the task for schools and districts. Focusing on the foods that fit within a healthy diet also provides an important modelling opportunity.
3. Respectful	Programs respect local conditions and needs so as to be culturally appropriate and locally adapted. Programs in diverse inner cities will look different from those in remote Northern communities, for example, and involvement by stakeholders with local experience is critical to success.



Key Characteristic	Underlying Principle
4. Connected	Programs are connected to local communities and work towards drawing upon local food resources where possible, supporting local producers and creating economic multipliers. Programs also engage the broader community including parents, grandparents, local businesses, and community leaders to foster sustainability.
5. Multi-Component	Programs use an education integrated approach with curricula to incorporate food literacy (from the farm to the fork to food waste), nutrition education and food skills. Students are involved with school food programs through hands-on food preparation, budgeting, management and other learning to foster experiential learning (learning by doing).
6. Sustainable	Programs are sustainable financially and in terms of capacity-building and in response to societal changes. This means ensuring that school food program staff and volunteers receive adequate training to ensure they understand their role in teaching and role modeling for students. Funding at the local level is stable and partnerships to support the program are created. Critical to the success of school food programs is regular monitoring and evaluation, and adaptability as circumstances change. This includes ensuring financial transparency and accountability for programs at the federal and more local levels.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

- X “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.” (Nyeleni Declaration, 2007)
- X “the right to food sovereignty requires transformation in four interrelated areas: the political, the economic, the social and the ecological.” (Pimbert, 2008)

PRINCIPLES OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY (NYELENI DECLARATION)


- X Focus on food for people (not just a commodity)
- X Value food providers
- X Localize food systems
- X Make decisions locally
- X Builds knowledge and skills
- X Works with nature



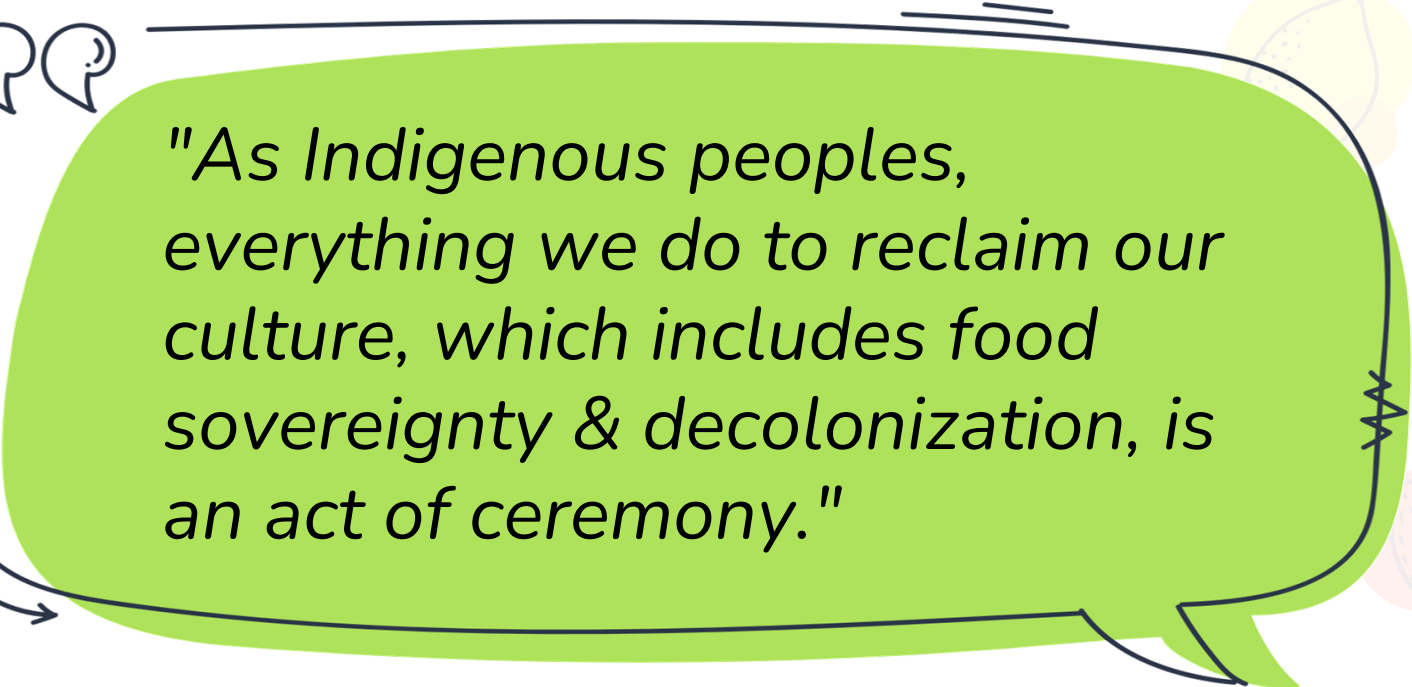
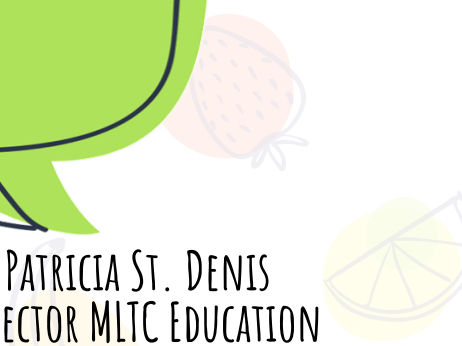





"Indigenous food sovereignty is fundamentally achieved by upholding our sacred responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, plants and animals that provide us with our food."

- Indigenous Food Systems Network

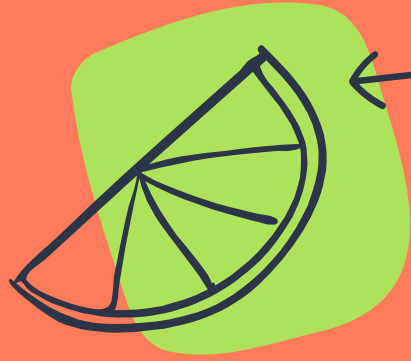
The background is white and decorated with various colorful icons of fruits and vegetables. At the top left, there are blue bubbles. To the right of the bubbles are an orange slice, a green avocado, and a slice of watermelon. On the left side, there is a yellow lemon, a green leaf, and a strawberry. At the bottom, there is a banana, a green leaf, a green lime slice, a whole orange, and a red cherry. On the right side, there is a green lime, a yellow lemon slice, and another green leaf.

The goal of this project has been to improve **community food security, well-being** and **self-determination** by supporting the development of culturally-appropriate, Indigenous-led School Food Programs that are essential to the reclamation of food sovereignty.



*"As Indigenous peoples,
everything we do to reclaim our
culture, which includes food
sovereignty & decolonization, is
an act of ceremony."*

PATRICIA ST. DENIS
DIRECTOR MLTC EDUCATION



HOW CAN SCHOOL FOOD
CONTRIBUTE TO INDIGENOUS
FOOD SOVEREIGNTY?

PUTTING PEOPLE FIRST

- Involve Elders, community & leaders
- Pay school food workers a living wage
- Provide training for school cooks and value their roles and skills
- Provide opportunities for summer employment to community members (gardens, harvesting, food prep programs)



LOCAL CONTROL

- Build school food infrastructure, including commercial kitchens that can prepare food for whole school and for larger community
- Develop food systems on school grounds - gardens food forests, greenhouses, meat drying/smoking infrastructure
- Develop food storage and distribution systems that are community-owned and operated
- Shorten the food chain: use local food sources, focus on nearby sources, collaborate with other nearby communities



LOCAL & TRADITIONAL FOOD

- Offer traditional foods on school menus
- Build food-based skills into Land Language Relationship and Culture programming
- Build relationships between school and local hunters & foragers
- Safely store traditional food for use (fridges, freezers...)



Gardening & Growing

- Build growing infrastructure
 - indoor and outdoor growing (Growcer, Towers, Fenced Gardens, Raised Beds, Orchards, Food Forests)
- Involve students
 - in all aspects of the process
 - Try foods early and often to build acceptance (tasting celebrations)
- Build curriculum around growing, harvesting, preparing, cleaning up and tasting food
- When over-producing single items
 - Use what you grow in school food programming
 - Trade with other schools
 - Donate to Elders and others in need



PROJECT PARTNERS



Saskatoon
Public
Schools



Meadow Lake
TRIBAL COUNCIL



THE COALITION
FOR HEALTHY SCHOOL FOOD

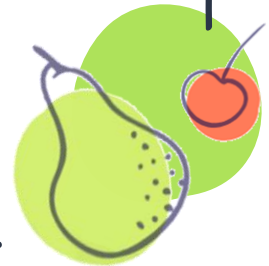


Public Health
Agency of Canada

Agence de la santé
publique du Canada



SHRF
SASKATCHEWAN
HEALTH RESEARCH
FOUNDATION



QUESTIONS?

