



## A FOOD POLICY FOR CANADA

# Consulting Canadians on *A Food Policy for Canada*

## Consultation Toolkit

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## Message from Minister MacAulay

*I want to personally thank you for leading a consultation to help develop **A Food Policy for Canada**. The food policy will set a long-term vision for the health, environmental, social, and economic goals related to food, including identifying actions we can take in the short-term. This is a first for the Government of Canada, and if we are to capture new opportunities and address food challenges, we need to work with Canadians to gather their ideas. We want to build a food policy together that explores four themes:*

- *Increasing access to affordable food;*
- *Improving health and food safety;*
- *Conserving our soil, water, and air; and*
- *Growing more high-quality food.*

*This Tool Kit is designed to assist you in engaging with your community or members of your organization on what matters most to them when it comes to food. This feedback will be used to inform the development of **A Food Policy for Canada**. I look forward to hearing from you in the weeks and months to come. The voices of Canadians across the country will be vital to shaping a successful food policy.*

*Lawrence MacAulay, P.C., M.P.*

*Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food*

# Introduction

The Government of Canada has launched consultations on *A Food Policy for Canada*. A food policy will set a long-term vision for the health, environmental, social, and economic goals related to food, including identifying actions we can take in the short-term. This is a first for the Government of Canada, and if we are to capture new opportunities and address food challenges, we need to work with Canadians and stakeholders to gather their ideas. Canadians depend on sufficient access to affordable, nutritious, and safe food, and require information to make healthy food choices. In turn, having a reliable supply of affordable, nutritious, and safe food depends on maintaining Canada's natural resources in a way that supports growth, which in turn allows the agricultural and food sectors to grow.

The Government of Canada is currently engaging Canadians on the development of *A Food Policy for Canada*. We want to build a food policy together that explores four themes:

- Increasing access to affordable food;
- Improving health and food safety;
- Conserving our soil, water, and air; and
- Growing more high-quality food.

To help you host your own discussion and gather feedback from your community or organization on what matters most to them when it comes to food issues and opportunities, the Government of Canada has developed this toolkit with materials to help guide your discussion as well as to collect and submit the results. The deadline for submitting feedback is September 30<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

The toolkit includes:

- Consultation Script and Questions
- Sample Agenda
- Frequently Asked Questions
- *A Food Policy for Canada* – Consulting with Canadians
- Reporting Back Form (separate PDF form)

The Government of Canada is also encouraging Canadians to participate in the development of *A Food Policy for Canada* by completing the food policy [survey](#) and joining the discussion on Twitter (#FoodPolicy4Canada).

# Consultation Script and Questions

## **GUIDELINES**

*Below, you will find a proposed script for you to use while hosting your consultation event.*

*Feel free to tailor it to fit your community's or organizations specific needs. You may also add your own questions. In addition to capturing views on food policy issues, we are asking for some information on who was engaged and where. This will help us track the reach and representativeness of engagement. Government of Canada requests that the users of this kit:*

- *Complete the Reporting Back PDF included as part of this consultations package. The PDF form is intended to facilitate post-session reporting;*
- *Indicate any additional questions beyond those provided in this kit which you posed to the discussion group;*
- *Provide a summary of views rather than a word-for-word account;*
- *Do **not identify** which participants made the comments (i.e. names or organizations); and,*

*After your discussion, please send the results to [FoodPolicy-PolitiqueAlimentaire@Canada.ca](mailto:FoodPolicy-PolitiqueAlimentaire@Canada.ca).*

## **OPENING REMARKS**

Today we are here to discuss your views and experience as it relates to food. This will be used to inform the development of *A Food Policy for Canada*.

This policy will set a long-term vision for the health, environmental, social, and economic goals related to food, including identifying actions we can take in the short-term. It can be a means to address issues related to the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food.

The following questions will help the Government of Canada develop a food policy that reflects the priorities of Canadians.

The Government of Canada is consulting Canadians on four closely connected themes:

- increasing access to affordable food;
- improving health and food safety;
- conserving our soil, water, and air; and,
- growing more high-quality food.

Canadians depend on sufficient access to affordable, nutritious, and safe food, and require information to make healthy food choices. In turn, having a reliable supply of affordable, nutritious, and safe food depends on maintaining Canada's natural resources in a way that supports growth and conservation of the land, which in turn allows the agricultural and food sectors to grow.

## **GENERAL QUESTION**

I am going to begin by asking a general question about how food affects: first, you and your family; second, this community; and third, our country as a whole. Afterwards, we are going to discuss and brainstorm some solutions.

***Q: What issues concern you most when it comes to thinking about food? What are the opportunities?***

Discussion Prompts:

- When it comes to you and your family, what comes to mind when you think about food?
- What are the biggest food challenges in this community (thinking about your neighbours, friends, co-workers)? What are the opportunities?
- What are the most important food challenges facing Canada as a whole?

## **THEMATIC QUESTIONS**

The questions today explore four themes:

- Increasing access to affordable food
- Improving health and food safety
- Conserving our soil, water, and air
- Growing more high-quality food

### ***1) How do you think the federal government could help increase access to affordable, nutritious and safe food?***

Not all Canadians have sufficient access to affordable, nutritious and safe food. The affordability and availability of food, particularly among more vulnerable groups, such as children, Canadians living in poverty, Indigenous peoples, and those in remote and Northern communities are issues that affect people across the country.

Discussion Prompts:

- If you think about what you eat every day, what would help you to eat more nutritious food (e.g., affordability, access, time, information/knowledge)?
- Can people in this community afford healthy food?

### ***2) What health and food safety issues concern you the most when it comes to the food you eat?***

Canada's food safety system is a model to the world and it continues to provide safe and nutritious food to Canadians and consumers all around the world. Additional efforts to promote healthy living through nutritious and safe food choices, can improve the overall health of Canadians, while lowering health care costs.

Discussion Prompts:

- What information do you need to trust that the food you are eating is safe?
- How do you think the food system could help you make healthier food choices?

### 3) *What concerns, if any, do you have about the environmental impact of the production of food, including farming, fishing, aquaculture, and food processing?*

The way our food is produced, processed, distributed, and consumed - including the losses and waste of food - can have environmental implications, such as greenhouse gas emissions, soil degradation, water quality and availability, and wildlife loss. While much is being done to conserve our natural resources, further opportunities exist to do more.

Discussion Prompts:

- Are you aware of any local environmental or food waste initiatives in Canada that you think should be adopted more widely, or initiatives outside Canada that could be adopted in Canada?
- In what ways do you think food production could better conserve the soil, water, and air it depends on?

### 4) *When it comes to growing more high-quality food in Canada, what initiatives do you think would help?*

Enabling farmers and food processors, large and small, across the country, to succeed, will make more high-quality Canadian food available domestically and internationally.

Discussion Prompt:

- What do you think the best opportunities are for growth in the agriculture and food industry in Canada?
- How can we best support farms and fisheries so that they can continue to thrive and put more high-quality food on the tables of Canadians?

## **THANK YOU AND NEXT STEPS**

I want to thank you for participating in this consultation. These comments will be used to inform development of *A Food Policy for Canada*. In the autumn of 2017, a “What We Heard” report will be published, capturing what was raised in food policy consultations with Canadians across the country.

There are other ways in which you can get involved in contributing to *A Food Policy for Canada*. You are encouraged to have ongoing discussions about food issues and opportunities, at dinner tables, community events, and other places where food is central. You may also want to become more involved through the many non-governmental groups that take an active role in food issues, whether they are food banks, municipal food policy councils, or advocacy groups.

I want to encourage you to take part in the food policy online survey which is being run by the Government of Canada. It will run until August 31, and can be found at [www.Canada.ca/food-policy](http://www.Canada.ca/food-policy).



## Sample Agenda

# Discussion on *A Food Policy for Canada*

Day, Month, Year

Start time – End time

1. Welcome and introductory remarks
2. Participant introductions
3. Discussion
  - **General Question**  
What issues concern you most when it comes to thinking about food? What are the opportunities?
  - **Theme #1 – Increasing access to affordable food**  
How do you think the federal government could help increase access to affordable, nutritious and safe food?
  - **Theme #2 – Improving health and food safety**  
What health and food safety issues concern you the most when it comes to the food you eat?
  - **Theme #3 – Conserving our soil, water, and air**  
What concerns, if any, do you have about the environmental impact of the production of food, including farming, fishing, aquaculture, and food processing?
  - **Theme #4 – Growing more high-quality food**  
When it comes to growing more high-quality food in Canada, what initiatives do you think would help?
4. Closing remarks

Note: Your input will be shared with the Government of Canada and will be used to help shape *A Food Policy for Canada*.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## 1. What is a food policy?

*A Food Policy for Canada* will set a long-term vision for the health, environmental, social, and economic goals related to food, including identifying actions we can take in the short-term.

A food policy is a way to address issues and opportunities related to the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food.

## 2. What areas could the food policy cover?

The Government of Canada is consulting Canadians on four closely connected themes that have a direct impact on the food they eat:

- increasing access to affordable food;
- improving health and food safety;
- conserving our soil, water, and air; and,
- growing more high-quality food.

## 3. Why is collaboration important?

Many people are involved in Canada's food system, including farmers, fishers, processors, retailers, consumers, academia, non-government organizations, indigenous peoples, and other levels of government.

Collaboration that draws from a variety of experiences and perspectives among Canadians and stakeholders will be critical to the success of developing and implementing *A Food Policy for Canada*.

## 4. Who is being consulted on A Food Policy for Canada?

In addition to consulting Canadians through an online survey, engagement is taking place with:

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| • Indigenous peoples                               | • Farmers, food processors, retailers, fisheries, and consumers |
| • Designated minority groups                       | • Non-governmental organisations                                |
| • Municipal, provincial and territorial government | • Academics   |

## 5. Where can I get more information on A Food Policy for Canada?

More information can be found at: [www.canada.ca/food-policy](http://www.canada.ca/food-policy) or by contacting [FoodPolicy-PolitiqueAlimentaire@Canada.ca](mailto:FoodPolicy-PolitiqueAlimentaire@Canada.ca)

## 6. Can I see what is being discussed through these consultations?

Consultations results will be summarized in a *What We Heard* report in the fall of 2017. Background documents being discussed are available at [www.canada.ca/food-policy](http://www.canada.ca/food-policy)

## 7. How else can I share my views on a food policy?

There is an online survey, available through the [www.canada.ca/food-policy](http://www.canada.ca/food-policy) website, which provides Canadians and opportunity to share what is important for a food policy and indicate which areas require immediate action.