



## What are Neighbourhood Food Networks?

Neighbourhood Food Networks are coalitions of grassroots organizations working together to advance food security at the community level.

*'Food security means that everybody has access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food for an active and healthy life.'*

Through food skills initiatives and other network activities, participants contribute energy and imagination to change their own communities for the better.

Neighbourhood Food Networks support initiatives such as community gardens, pocket markets, food skills workshops, meal programs, food celebrations, community kitchens and potlucks.

Whether the focus is on health and nutrition, food justice or the environment, the richness of the NFN movement demonstrates the incredible energy and passion fuelling the Vancouver food movement.

## Right to Food

Neighbourhood Food Networks support a 'right to food' philosophy, meaning that everyone has the right to food that is healthy and nutritious, affordable, culturally appropriate and sustainably produced.

Neighbourhood Food Networks advocate a shift from the traditional charity model which fosters dependence, toward food justice which supports social equality and empowerment.

## Community Impact

Neighbourhood Food Networks provide opportunities for positive community engagement:

- Increase food security among underserved community members
- Increase the number of community food assets, such as community gardens, urban orchards, farmers markets, community grocery stores and community kitchens
- Advocate for policy change in the interest of more just, sustainable, and healthy local food systems
- Focus on food as a way to bring people together and develop community, promoting inclusion and a sense of belonging
- Build partnerships with other community coalitions, non-profits, governments and businesses
- Develop the capacity of community volunteers and leaders

## Community Advocates

Network Coordinators are skilled in building community relationships, drawing out the tremendous skills and assets of neighbourhood residents, and applying this knowledge in proposing solutions to identified challenges. They help align policy and practice as they champion the food and food justice agenda in a way that reflects the diverse experience of residents.

The Neighbourhood Food Networks are affecting systems change that meets the needs of local communities and individuals. This practical experience is then communicated back to policy makers and informs future food systems planning and helps to remove political or procedural barriers to effective programming.



## Improved Health and Social Outcomes

Community food initiatives improve community health, liveability and sustainability. Neighbourhood Food Networks support and reinforce the goals of local government food strategies and food-related public health outcomes. Neighbourhood Food Networks are considered valued and trusted partners by funders, service providers and community members.

## Contact

Neighbourhood Food Networks depend on community support and practical problem solving in order to get things done. In addition to financial resources, Neighbourhood Food Networks seek community partners, volunteers, project ideas and in-kind support.

To learn more about opportunities to become involved or to provide financial or in-kind support to Vancouver Neighbourhood Food Networks, please contact us.

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