



**COMMUNITY
FOOD
CHARTER
FOR DELTA**

2025 EDITION



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COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IT IS

A Community Food Charter is a short, non-binding document that outlines a shared vision, values, and principles for a community food system. The Community Food Charter for Delta (the Charter) is meant to help align actions and improve collaborations between businesses, non-profits, institutions and decision makers around food programs, services, initiatives and policies related to food security.



HOW IT WAS CREATED

The Charter was created with partial funding from the PlanH program. The PlanH program supports local government engagement and partnerships across sectors for creating healthier communities. An independent consultant was hired to lead the work in 2024. A Project Working Group was formed with 17 community partners. The development process included a review of the City of Delta's plans and 21 food charters from other communities. Additionally, 14 consultation activities took place, including interviews, focus groups and an online session to collect input from 83 residents and community partners and inform the vision and values of the Charter.



VISION

We envision a fair, resilient, and inclusive food system that supports local ecosystems and ensures everyone has dignified access to the foods they want to eat.



AS SIGNATORIES TO THE COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA, WE VALUE:

- Collaboration
- Food as a Basic Human Right
- Accessibility and Choice
- Food Education and Culture
- Local Food Economy
- Indigenous Knowledge
- Regenerative Food System
- Health and Wellbeing
- Equity and Dignity

CALL TO ACTION: ENDORSEMENT

By endorsing the Delta Food Charter, together we can commit to integrating these values into our community programs and policies. Join us in building a more food-secure and just Delta. An individual, an organization, a business or a municipality can endorse and sign the Food Charter for Delta and commit to adhering to the values outlined in the Charter.

For more information and to endorse the Charter, please contact the Delta Food Coalition at info@earthwisesociety.bc.ca and become a community food security champion.

COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

BACKGROUND

Food security means that everyone has equitable access to food that is affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious and safe; everyone has the agency to participate in, and influence food systems; and that food systems are resilient, ecologically sustainable, socially just, and honour Indigenous food sovereignty.

Food charter is a short, non-binding document that outlines a shared vision, values, and principles for a community food system to guide a community's food policy. It can be used as a tool to achieve food security by:

- Acting as a guide to policy and planning.
- Raising awareness about food insecurity in the community.
- Fostering multi-sector collaboration and aligning actions among businesses, agencies, institutions, decision-makers, and community groups.

Developing a Food Charter was identified as one of the actions in Delta's Poverty Reduction Strategy. In 2023, the City of Delta secured funding from the PlanH program under the Healthy Public Policy stream to act as a convener to support community partners in developing a Community Food Charter for Delta. A consultant was secured to help support the development process which has been informed through a scan of existing city plans and various public consultation activities to capture the perspectives of equity deserving groups. A Project Working Group with 17 community partners was formed to guide the work. In 2024, a total of 83 individuals and organizations offered input to help inform the Community Food Charter for Delta.

VISION

We envision a fair, resilient, and inclusive food system that supports local ecosystems and ensures everyone has dignified access to the foods they want to eat.

VALUES

Many of the values outlined in this Food Charter are already being brought to life through the incredible work happening in our community. This section explains each value in detail, identifies how the value can be applied in action and highlights ongoing actions that embody a few of these values, showcasing the foundation we can continue to build upon. By recognizing and amplifying these efforts, we can strengthen our collective impact and inspire further collaboration toward a more food-secure future.



COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

VALUES



COLLABORATION

Identifying and supporting opportunities for partnerships between businesses, community groups, decision-makers and individuals is essential to sound food systems planning, policies and practices.

Examples of potential actions:

- Local grocery stores can partner with emergency food service providers to explore how they may help fill gaps they may be facing in food procurement.

What we can build on:

- The Delta Food Coalition (DFC) is a network of community groups addressing food security in Delta. Acting as a food hub, DFC sources and distributes fresh, local food to those in need and connects individuals with community food programs. By leveraging resources and coordinating initiatives, DFC strengthens the local food system by helping to deliver emergency food relief.

FOOD IS A BASIC HUMAN RIGHT:

Addressing structural barriers to food (ex. housing affordability, income inequality, access to transportation, etc.) is essential for achieving individual food security.

Examples of potential actions:

- Partners can connect their stakeholders (clients, staff, customers, etc.) with organizations that offer supportive services, such as housing, to address structural barriers to food access.
- Advocate for policies to improve income supports.

What we can build on:

- In 2024, TransLink announced that significant funding issues could result in the loss of many Delta bus routes, starting in 2026. The City of Delta launched a public awareness campaign – Save Our Transit – calling on the province to step in and ensure the continued viability of transit across Delta and Metro Vancouver.

COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

VALUES



ACCESSIBILITY AND CHOICE

Working towards having food that is affordable, reflective of diverse cultural and dietary preferences, and physically accessible to all community members in dignified ways is essential to achieving food security.

Examples of potential actions:

- Explore multi-sector partnerships to invest in “pay what you can” mobile produce markets.
- Support the development of a Food Co-op or non-profit grocery market to offer more affordable choices.
- Consider adopting policies on urban farming and supporting or providing incentives for developers to consider food assets in new development.
- Develop partnerships between local food producers and businesses with emergency food services to engage in food recovery efforts.

What we can build on:

- A Taste of Home Picnic was organized by the City of Delta’s Community Voices Table (CVT). Food security was identified as a key priority by eight members of the CVT. They organized a multicultural picnic featuring local vendors to raise awareness about the importance of having access to culturally familiar foods in food banks. 50 community members attended.
- Local churches offer free meals and emergency hampers to those in need.

FOOD EDUCATION AND CULTURE

Fostering intergenerational and intercultural learning about food—such as growing, preserving, preparing, and other food skills—and celebrating the rich history of local farming and diverse food cultures in the City helps build a stronger community.

Examples of potential actions:

- Identify underused resources and re-tool for education opportunities, e.g. Kitchens for community teachings, lawns for urban gardening.
- Establish farm tours for urban residents to learn about where their food comes from.
- Consider establishing a free teaching garden in under-resourced communities in Delta.

What we can build on:

- City of Delta’s Kennedy Seniors Centre piloted a 6-week, fully funded food skills program for 12 seniors. The program, run through the BC Centre for Disease Control, was a great success. As a result, more food skills programs are being planned at Kennedy Centre.
- Three community gardens and sustainability workshops by the City of Delta.

COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

VALUES



LOCAL FOOD ECONOMY

Using innovative ways that balance economic success and protect the environment will help create a successful food economy.

Examples of potential actions:

- Promote farming as a more appealing and accessible career choice for younger generations.
- Invest in grants for small-scale farmers adopting regenerative agricultural practices, or neighbourhoods establishing urban gardening.

What we can build on:

- In 2023, the City of Delta developed an Agricultural Plan that highlights the demand for local food and the importance of public investments.

INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE

Honouring Indigenous food sovereignty and Indigenous knowledge about food systems, which is rooted in reciprocity to the land and water, is essential for healing relationships, advancing social justice and preserving Indigenous culture.

Examples of potential actions:

- Develop Indigenous food practices videos to share online with the wider community.
- Incorporate workshops on foraging and traditional preservation techniques in schools and community spaces.

What we can build on:

- In 2023 and 2024, the City of Delta, Tsawwassen First Nation and Delta School District collaborated on two cultural exchange events for younger teens. One of the activities focused on the importance of traditional foods from different cultures.

COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

VALUES



REGENERATIVE FOOD SYSTEM

Promoting regenerative food production that reduces food waste, protects biodiversity, and uses climate adaptation and mitigation strategies is key to ensuring food security now and for future generations.

Value in action:

- Work towards zero-waste practices by donating surplus food to charities and/or composting food scraps to local farms.

What we can build on:

- Through Delta Food Coalition, community partners and residents participate in the Harvest Box, Shared Harvest, and the Victory Garden Programs which pool community resources to deliver action-oriented projects that reduce food waste and support those in need.
- Delta's Agricultural Plan promotes sustainable and regenerative agricultural practices

HEALTH AND WELL-BEING:

Understanding that food nourishes us physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually will help us to enhance our communities' holistic well-being.

Examples of potential actions:

- Provide more food events and festivals that offer various nutritious food options.
- Establish workshops and resources for residents to learn about balanced eating and cooking on a budget.

What we can build on:

- Fraser Health Authority (FHA) recognizes that food security is a critical element of community well-being. FHA employs staff who provide their expertise to local community food security and well-being initiatives.

COMMUNITY FOOD CHARTER FOR DELTA

VALUES

EQUITY AND DIGNITY

Respecting the rights of all workers in the food chain, including migrant workers, and valuing their contributions, well-being, and dignity where they live and work, helps to make our food system and community stronger.

Examples of potential actions:

- Design programs to ensure migrant workers can access supportive food services.
- Advocate for stronger provincial and federal protections for food chain workers, including healthcare access and residency pathways.

What we can build on:

- Working together with MOSAIC, PICS, Options Community Services, and the BC Federation of Labour to further offer services such as workplace rights education, settlement support, language training, advocacy for fair treatment, and access to community resources. Collectively, these organizations empower migrant workers to navigate challenges, enhance their quality of life, and contribute to their communities.



KEY TERMS

Food Literacy is knowledge, attitudes and skills about food. This includes understanding the connections between food, health and wellbeing; knowing how to select nutritious foods; and understanding what constitutes a healthy diet.

Food Recovery is a practice of preventing surplus food from being discarded, through various methods and techniques that offer social, economic, and environmental benefits.

Food Security means that everyone has equitable access to food that is affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious and safe; everyone has the agency to participate in, and influence food systems; and that food systems are resilient, ecologically sustainable, socially just, and honour Indigenous food sovereignty.

Food insecurity exists when factors outside an individual's control negatively impact their access to enough foods that promote wellbeing. Economic, social, environmental, and geographical factors influence this access. Food insecurity is most acutely felt by those who experience the negative impacts of structural inequities, such as discrimination and on-going colonial practices.

Indigenous Food Sovereignty is a specific policy approach to addressing the underlying issues impacting Indigenous peoples and our ability to respond to our own needs for healthy, culturally adapted Indigenous foods.

Regenerative Food System is an approach to producing, distributing, and consuming food that prioritizes restoring and enhancing the health of ecosystems, communities, and economies. It focuses on practices that rebuild soil health, increase biodiversity, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen local food networks. Unlike extractive systems, regenerative systems aim to create long-term sustainability by giving back more to the environment and society than they take.

Zero Waste is the conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The City of Delta extends its heartfelt gratitude to everyone who contributed to the development of the Food Charter. This includes the Food Charter Working Group made up of dedicated community partners, the organizations who participated in one-on-one interviews, consultation participants, and the equity-deserving groups who shared their valuable perspectives.

BC Healthy Communities

BCFED (Migrant Workers Advocate)

City of Delta Agricultural Advisory Committee

City of Delta Community Planning

City of Delta Parks Recreation & Culture

Delta Chamber of Commerce

Delta Community Literacy

Delta School District

Earthwise Society

Fraser Health Authority

Guru Nanak Food Bank Delta

New Hope Church

Pacific Intercultural Community Services

South Delta Food Bank

Surrey Food Bank

Tsawwassen First Nation

Windset Farms



CALL TO ACTION: ENDORSEMENT

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