



The Manitoba Food Charter emerged from Manitobans' common vision for a just and sustainable food system. The Charter provides vision and principles that will guide and inform all levels of government, businesses, non-profit organizations, communities, families and individuals in planning, policy development, programs and practice in mutual effort toward food security and community development. It was drafted through broad public consultation and is to be endorsed by Manitoba food system stakeholders.

CURRENT SITUATION

Manitoba's food system has both strengths and weaknesses. Our province has a significant and diverse agricultural sector and many Manitobans can access the food that they want. However, agricultural communities are challenged by an increasingly urban and globalized economy. Many northern, inner-city, and low income women, children and men have difficulty accessing quality food. The nationally ratified Human Right to Adequate Food has not been realized. Rural, urban and northern communities are disconnected. Not all of our food is necessarily nutritious, not all information about our food is complete or accurate; and much of our food travels long distances. There has been a loss in food knowledge and skills and an increased reliance on fast and highly processed foods. There is growing interest in and widespread concern about Manitoba's food system and a desire for increased coordination and leadership on the issues facing it. The Manitoba Food Charter is testimony to Manitobans' willingness to collectively and constructively engage in meeting these challenges.

VISION

A just and sustainable food system in Manitoba is rooted in healthy communities, where no one is hungry and everyone has access to nutritious food. It is an economically viable, diverse and ecologically sustainable system to grow, harvest, process, transport, and distribute food while minimizing waste.

A just and sustainable food system in Manitoba means:

- ❖ Farmers, fishers, harvesters, processors and distributors can generate adequate incomes and use ecologically sustainable practices.
- ❖ Respect for the traditional hunting, fishing, trapping, gathering, and conservation practices of First Nations, Inuit and Metis peoples within sustainable limits;
- ❖ A sustainable balance between fair international agricultural trade and diverse vibrant production for the local market;
- ❖ Healthy relationships between producers and consumers in urban, rural and northern Manitoba communities;
- ❖ Province-wide availability of a variety of nutritious and affordable food through accessible retail outlets and food service operations and the economic means to obtain sufficient daily food for health and dignity;
- ❖ Well grounded confidence in the quality and safety of our food; and
- ❖ Easy access to understandable accurate information about nutrition, food composition, the ways food is grown, preserved, processed, purchased, and cooked, and how to minimize waste.

WE, THEREFORE, DECLARE our commitment and intent to work in partnership towards achieving a just and sustainable food system in the province of Manitoba. We recognize that this commitment has real implications for our policies, programs and practice. Our willingness to make this commitment indicates our sense of collective and personal responsibility for the present and future ecological, economic and social well-being of Manitoba.

Signature _____

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