

North Shore Food Charter

This Charter outlines a vision and principles around an integrated food system for the North Shore. It articulates shared community principles related to food production, distribution, access, consumption, processing and waste handling.

Vision:

The North Shore will be a place where::

- food is considered as a valuable resource at every stage of the food system continuum
- all people are able to access food, in a dignified manner, that is nutritious, safe and personally acceptable
- the environment is valued and protected from adverse impacts of the food system; and
- food and food cultures are celebrated.

Principles:

The North Shore Food Charter identifies five (5) principles generated through community consultation, which capture the values held by communities around the role of food. As signatories to this Food Charter we; citizens, community based organizations, local businesses and government bodies, commit to engaging in ongoing dialogue leading to action based on the following principles:

1. Health, Access and Equity
2. Environmental Responsibility
3. Government Leadership and Collaboration
4. Economic Vitality
5. Community Culture and Education

1. Health, Access and Equity

Health is vitally connected to the food we consume. Healthy communities are built, in part, when healthy choices are available and everyone has access to a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet that maximizes healthy choices and prevents disease.

We strive for everyone to have access to food choices that are:

- Safe, whole, fresh, minimally processed
- Of high quality across all North Shore jurisdictions

- Affordable for everyone
- Available with dignity and without barriers in all North Shore jurisdictions

2. Environmental Responsibility

The “food system” comprises a complex continuum from seed to plate and back to the earth that has a significant impact on the environment. We have a responsibility to reduce the collective environmental footprint of the food system while promoting community self-reliance.

We strive to:

- Support practices that protect or enhance natural ecosystems (land and water) through all stages of the food system
- Reclaim, recycle and repurpose food to the greatest extent possible
Minimize the harmful environmental impact of food production and consumption (including transportation, packaging, processing etc.) whenever possible

3. Government Leadership and Collaboration

Food security is an issue that crosses jurisdictional boundaries and cannot be addressed by a single governing entity on its own. North Shore communities will collaborate with regional, provincial and national governments in advocating on issues that affect community food security.

We strive to:

- Inform the public about food security issues and support initiatives being pursued in other jurisdictions
- Advocate around food system issues regionally, provincially and nationally
- Consider and promote food security in the development of regulations and policies

4. Economic Vitality

Local food enterprises enhance the local economy. Every step of the food system from food production to processing, retail, preparation, consumption, composting and repurposing presents opportunities to strengthen the economy.

We strive to:

- Strengthen the local food sector’s growth and development
- Attract and promote innovative and viable food-centered enterprises
- Create jobs in our community by encouraging local food enterprise.

5. Community Culture and Education

Food brings people together and creates opportunities for people to share their food skills, traditions and knowledge contributing to a vibrant community.

We strive to:

- Promote the connection between food and mental, physical and spiritual health
- Celebrate and support food cultures
- Support information sharing, education and training for children and adults that builds awareness, skills and capacity for food literacy

The North Shore Food Charter has been developed by the Table Matters Committee through public consultation. It has not yet been officially endorsed or passed by any municipality on the North Shore.