

Food Secure Canada
Sécurité alimentaire Canada

Constitution

Mission Statement:

FSC/SAC is a Canada-wide alliance of civil society organizations and individuals collaborating to advance dialogue and cooperation for policies and programs that improve food security in Canada and globally.

Background:

As one of the vital elements of human existence, from production to consumption, food involves many of the most important cultural, social, and economic activities of human societies.

The Rome Declaration on World Food Security and the World Food Summit Plan of Action in 1996 called for each nation to develop and implement a national plan of action to achieve food security domestically and internationally. The Action Plan for Food Security is Canada's response to the World Food Summit (WFS). The Plan recognized the important role played by civil society "in social, political and economic reform, through public education, advocacy and participation in public policy formulation." The Action Plan also recognized that food security implied access to adequate food and sufficient food supplies and that poverty reduction, social justice and sustainable food (and wild food) systems are essential conditions for a food secure Canada.

Food insecurity presents itself in many different forms in Canada. The problems are evident in the number of people using food banks, the financial problems of farmers and fishers and their communities, chronic disease rates among aboriginal people, widespread obesity in children and adults, and pollution and habitat destruction associated with the food system. FSC/SAC helps create opportunities for its members to address these challenges in local, national and international arenas. For more background leading up to the formation of FSC/SAC, see appendix 1.

Food Secure Canada/Sécurité Alimentaire Canada recognizes that food security requires that adequate amounts of safe, healthy, nutritious, culturally appropriate food be accessible to all in a dignified manner; that food producers earn a fair return on their labour, and that food production, harvesting and distribution methods sustain the environment. In a society in which most people purchase their food, they must have adequate funds to do so, and full information about what they buy.

Food security includes many evolving concepts that require on-going discussion and development. This is particularly so regarding rights and entitlements, social justice and respect

for the sovereignty of Canadians in relation to the food system (e.g., aboriginal relations to traditional lands, farmers' maintenance of biodiversity through breeding and seed saving, workers' authority in relation to their working conditions and remuneration).

These basic elements of food security require a fundamentally new direction for Canadian and international food and health promotion systems. We endeavor to work in solidarity with communities throughout the world who are striving for justice, equity and environmental sustainability in the production, processing and consumption of food.

We believe that there is an increasing need for informed citizen participation in important decisions dealing with food policy, food safety, health and poverty reduction.

Goals

FSC/ACSA works towards food security in Canada (and globally as it relates to Canadian activity) to ensure that the following interconnected goals are achieved:

(1) Zero Hunger: All people at all times must be able to acquire, in a dignified manner, adequate quantity and quality of culturally and personally acceptable food. This is essential to the health of our population, and requires cooperation among many different sectors, including housing, social policy, transportation, agriculture, education, and community, cultural, voluntary and charitable groups, and businesses.

(2) A sustainable food system: Food in Canada must be produced, harvested (including fishing and other wild food harvest), processed, distributed and consumed in a manner which maintains and enhances the quality of land, air and water for future generations, and in which people are able to earn a living wage in a safe and healthy working environment by harvesting, growing, producing, processing, handling, retailing and serving food.

(3) Healthy and safe food: Safe and nourishing foods must be readily at hand (and less nourishing ones restricted); food (including wild foods) must not be contaminated with pathogens or industrial chemicals; and no novel food can be allowed to enter the environment or food chain without rigorous independent testing and the existence of an on-going tracking and surveillance system, to ensure its safety for human consumption.

Organizational objectives:

1. To identify at the annual conference of FSC/SAC a set of projects of Canada-wide importance (involving research and data collection, campaigns, education, programming

- and policy making) that FSC/SAC helps members carry out;
2. To provide support to members (strategic planning, training, tools, programme design advice, services, information, fundraising support) that increases the capacity of civil society to be an effective voice for food security in Canada;
 3. To create a space for debate, exchange, help, coordination of efforts, and pooling of resources.

Operating principles

1. Within our organization we have varying perspectives on ways to achieve food security. We are united on the critical importance of food security and are committed to working together, in our different ways, to achieve it;
2. Food Secure Canada/Alliance canadienne pour la sécurité alimentaire works for its members. It facilitates collaborative activities by members to advance food security. FSC/SAC has a distinct voice only when its members so decide through formal approval mechanisms;
3. Projects emerge from the members and, once agreement in principle has been reached, are advanced by FSC/SAC with the involvement of those members participating in the initiative. Members of the FSC/SAC may opt to disassociate from any campaign that is not in accord with their organization's goals, beliefs and or methods of operation. A key role of the Steering Committee is to ensure that projects are consistent with the FSC/SAC's mission; and
4. Steering committee members do not directly represent their organizations, as they must act in the interests of the broad food security movement. Steering committee members may support a project because it is strategically important and consistent with the mission of the FSC/SAC while knowing that their organization may not participate.