

Building a Movement from the Ground up

Indigenous Food Systems Network
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Introduction



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Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty

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Comprehensive Community Planning

Coordinator, 1st and 2nd Annual Interior of B.C.
Indigenous Food Sovereignty Conference



Setting the context



Indigenous peoples in B.C.

What do we know about Indigenous land and food systems?

Why we must work towards food sovereignty in Indigenous communities?

What do we know about Indigenous food sovereignty?



Wisdom of the Elders



“We (the Secwepemc) were not hungry, because we knew how to grow, gather, hunt and fish to put food on the table and we knew how to work together as a community to make it happen. It was the non-native people from across town who were knocking on our doors asking for food because they were hungry and lacked the knowledge and skills necessary to feed themselves by living on the land”. *Secwepemc Elder, Irene Billy*



References



1st & 2nd Annual Interior of B.C. Indigenous Food Sovereignty Conference Final Reports. (2006 & 2007). Unpublished reports.

B.C. Food Systems Network – Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty Final Activity Report (2008). Unpublished.

<http://indigenousfoodsystems.org/resources/all-resources?page=3>

Building a movement – social networking

- Community, regional, provincial, federal, international
- B.C. Food Systems Network – towards bioregionalism
- Vancouver Island Coastal Communities Indigenous Food Network
- http://feastingforchangevi.blogspot.com/2010_05_01_archive.html
- Shuswap Regional Food Network

BC Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty

- Designated in March 2006 at BCFSN Board of Director's Strategic Planning Meeting
- Working across cultures
- Raise awareness of unique issues, concerns and strategies relevant to achieving Indigenous food sovereignty
- Form and influence policies
- Advocating for ecologically and culturally sustainable Indigenous land and food system



WGIFS – Who are we?



- Traditional harvesters (including hunters, fishers, and gatherers)
- Sustainable Farmers/Organic gardeners
- Aboriginal (urban and rural)
- Researchers/Academics
- Non-Government Organizations (environmental, social, cultural and health related)
- Policy and government advocates (tribal and non-tribal)



WGIFS Objective



Provide direction for the development of a strategic action plan for influencing policies impacting the ability of Indigenous peoples in B.C. to respond to their own needs for healthy Indigenous foods.



WGIFS Objective



Provide input on the development of shared knowledge, educational materials, and tools that increase awareness of the issues, concerns and strategies related to Indigenous food sovereignty and its history in the province of B.C.



WGIFS Objective



Identify, recruit and mobilize key Indigenous leaders or “community champions in each Indigenous nation or health region around the province.

Identify and acquire human, financial and technical resource needs.



WGIFS Objective



Develop and deliver related presentations at various food security forums, meetings, conferences, events and policy discussions.

Share relevant articles and print based materials through email listserve and beyond.

Gatherings and meetings

- 12th Annual BCFSN Gathering (2011) Theme: Resilience and Diversity 100 Mile House
- <http://www.fooddemocracy.org/>
- Conference Calls
- Various regional, provincial, and international food security forums and conferences



Building community capacity online

Indigenous Food Systems Network Website

Indigenous Food Sovereignty email listserve



Indigenous Food Systems Network Website



- Developed by the WGIFS
- Designed to allow individuals and groups involved with Indigenous food related action, research, and policy reform to network and share relevant resources and information.
- <http://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/>

Indigenous Food Sovereignty Email Listserve

- Purpose: receive and share relevant articles, resources and information and provide a forum for dialogue and networking around the topic of Indigenous food sovereignty.
- Open subscriptions and moderation
- Automatic subscriptions and unsubscriptions through IFSN website

Peoples Food Policy Project

- Federal Food Sovereignty Policy
- First Principles Protocol
- PFPP - Chapter 1 Indigenous Food Sovereignty Policy Discussion paper
- <http://peoplesfoodpolicy.ca/policy/peoples-food-policy-discussion-papers>

International networks

- U.S. Community Food Security Coalition – Honorable Mention Food Sovereignty Award
- <http://www.foodsecurity.org/FoodSovPrize.htm>
- South African Exchange Visit
- <http://sites.google.com/site/coastallearningcommunities/international-linkages/coastal-links-and-masifundise>



International networks cont'd...

- Terra Madre – Slow Food Movement, Torino, Italy (2010)
- 1st Annual Terra Madre Indigenous Peoples, Norway (June, 2010)
- <http://www.terramadre.info/pagine/incontri/welcome.lasso?id=C2744B8802e8719C9DgYMtAF19DE&tp=3>



Issues



Neoliberalization – trade policies, corporate control.

Cultural erosion – loss of intergenerational transmission of Indigenous food

Declining health – food related illnesses

Techno beurocratic approach – industrial agriculture

Contradicting worldviews, economic values, and scientific paradigms – Cartesian vs. Indigenous eco-philosophy

Concerns

Health – high rate of diabetes and other food related illnesses

Health – sedentary lifestyle vs. nomadic

Environmental – declining health and abundance of traditional food sources in forests and waterways.

Socio-economic marginalization – poverty, housing, transportation, commodification

Political – exclusion of Indigenous food and cultural values in land and resource management

Strategies



Education and skill building

Individuals and families

School and community programs

Media campaigns

Research and mapping

Strategies cont'd...

Policy and advocacy
Cross cultural coalition building
interministerial approach
Sustainable funding strategy
Paid position – IFSN Coordinator



Framework for Strategizing 5 Central Themes

- Food, land and culture
- Health and nutritional values of Indigenous foods
- Gender, generations and youth perspectives
- Indigenous food economies
- Protection, conservation and restoration of Indigenous land and food systems.

Actions

Mobilize and organize within communities, nations and regions

Discuss issues and concerns related to 5 central themes.

Identify and record specific strategies and actions for each theme.

Communicate with WGIFS @ BCFSN @ 10th Annual Gathering to be held at Chehalis Healing Centre September 24, 25 & 26, 2009

Networking, networking, networking...

Wisdom of the Elders

- “Food will be what brings the people together”.
Secwepemc Elder, Jones Ignace
- Only when the last fish has been caught, the last tree has been cut, and the last river poisoned will he realize that money cannot be eaten. *19th Century Cree Prophecy*



