

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOURTH WORKING SESSION TO DESIGN NUNAVIK FOOD-SECURITY POLICY

Kuujuaq, January 18, 2019 – On December 5th and 6th, 2018, in Kuujuaaraapik, the [fourth working session](#) toward the design of a Nunavik food-security policy was held.

The four sessions were organized and held by the Nunavik Regional Working Group on Food Security (NRWGFS) and coordinated by the Department of Public Health of the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS).

The objective of this fourth working session was to reinforce the existing initiatives and create new opportunities for Nunavimmiut to produce and process more food products locally. This is an important element in improving food security in Nunavik.

The participants at this session consisted of local entrepreneurs in the food sector, coordinators of community-garden projects, youths, elders and representatives of organizations such as the Nunavik Landholding Corporations, the municipalities, the Federation of Cooperatives of New-Québec, the provincial government, the Kativik Regional Government (KRG) and Makivik Corporation. Their recommendations after the session are as follows:

- enhance technical assistance for the development of initiatives for local food production;
- ensure the sustainability and integration of food-related initiatives in the communities by relying on the existing local committees;
- develop a network of local food-related initiatives in Nunavik and with other Arctic regions to share and consolidate knowledge and expertise;
- strengthen support for communities that wish to build greenhouses;
- develop training programs and workshops for tomorrow's leaders in the Nunavik food sector.

Roughly 150 people from Nunavik have attended these four working sessions, contributing to the design of a regional food-security policy. The participants' recommendations will be examined by the NRWGFS and integrated into the Nunavik food-security policy and into its plan of action. An initial version should be ready in the spring of 2019.

This most recent session on food security coincides with the federal government's announcement of amendments made to the Nutrition North Canada (NNC) program.

The amendments include an updated list of subsidized foods, an increase in subsidy rates and the introduction of a subsidy to support hunters. In light of the recommendations from the four sessions on food security, the NRBHSS is enthused to find how the new list of subsidies may reduce the gap between disposable income and the price of nutritional foods purchased by families.

The NRBHSS also emphasizes the increased recognition of traditional foods and the support provided for hunters under the revised program. Traditional foods that are harvested, hunted and fished locally are not only fresh and nutritious, they are also integral parts of Inuit culture and social fabric.

The NRBHSS hopes that future improvements to the NNC program will support other initiatives for local food production. Food insecurity affects the health and well-being of too many families in Nunavik. Better cohesion between the actions and processes that give Inuit greater decision-making power over the programs relevant to them will lead to a significantly improved situation.

The Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services is a public agency created in 1978 under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. It is responsible for nearly the entire territory located north of the 55th parallel in terms of the provision of health and social services for the inhabitants of the 14 communities.

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Source: Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services

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