

**GENERAL FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION TO IMPROVE ACCESS TO NUTRITIOUS
FOOD IN EYYOU ISTCHEE**

I. **SIGNATORIES**

The signatories of the present Framework for Action shall be any Cree entity or corporation that adopts and commits to it through a resolution of its authorizing body.

II. **OBJECTIVES**

This Framework for Action aims to improve access to nutritious food and acknowledges the essential role that it plays in the promotion of health, food security and prevention of chronic diseases.

The main objectives pursued by this Framework for Action are to:

- Ensure access to affordable nutritious food for all;
- Promote healthy food choices;
- Ensure adequate management practices at all levels of the food system to support healthy food choices;
- Ensure collaboration between the different stakeholders.

III. **GENERAL COMMITMENTS:**

The signatories of the present Framework for Action acknowledge and agree to the following general commitments:

1. We will work to develop a sustainable food system that is inclusive, resilient, safe and diverse, that provides healthy and affordable foods to all people;
2. We will encourage collaboration and coordination at regional and community levels, working to integrate food policy considerations into social, economic and environmental policies, programs and initiatives;
3. We will seek coherence between local and regional food-related policies, programs and initiatives;
4. We will engage all sectors within the food system in the assessment, development, implementation and evaluation of food-related policies, programs and initiatives;
5. We will review and amend existing policies, plans and regulations in order to encourage the establishment of an equitable, resilient and sustainable food system;
6. We will use this Framework for Action as a starting point to improve our food system and share developments with local and regional governments when appropriate.

IV. IMPLEMENTATION:

1. Supportive Governance for Effective Actions

- 1.1 Facilitate collaboration within the region, across communities and organizations, and seek alignment of policies, programs and initiatives related to the food system;
- 1.2 Enhance stakeholders' participation at regional and community levels;
- 1.3 Identify, map and evaluate local initiatives in order to transform best practices into relevant programs and policies;
- 1.4 Revise, develop and implement community food policies and plans, and ensure allocation of appropriate resources;
- 1.5 Review, harmonize and strengthen local and regional by-laws;
- 1.6 Build strategic capacities for a healthier, more sustainable and equitable food system.

2. Healthy Eating and Nutrition

- 2.1 Promote healthy eating and nutrition through access to affordable nutritious food, education, health promotion and prevention programs, with a special attention to daycares, schools, public buildings, local and regional meetings and events, health care centres, elders' homes, catering businesses, stores and restaurants.
- 2.2 Prevent chronic diseases associated with poor diets and obesity by improving food environments and enabling healthy food choices in the different community settings.
- 2.3 Develop and implement healthy eating and nutrition guidelines for daycares, schools, public buildings, local and regional meetings and events, health care centres, elders' homes, catering businesses, stores and restaurants.
- 2.4 Adopt and implement standards and regulations to support healthy diets.

3. Traditional Food

- 3.1 Ensure access to locally harvested foods.
- 3.2 Strengthen or develop knowledge and skills to harvest and prepare traditional food.
- 3.3 Support local and regional initiatives aiming to improve access to traditional food.
- 3.4 Enable use of traditional food in public establishments, through development and implementation of programs, policies and by-laws.
- 3.5 Offer support and training to implement programs and protocols aiming to improve access to traditional food in public establishments.

4. Social and Economic Equity

- 4.1 Ensure access to nutritious food for all.
- 4.2 Support local initiatives which promote social inclusion and ensure access to nutritious food for families in need.
- 4.3 Develop social economy through local food harvesting and production, and increase local employment opportunities.
- 4.4 Develop knowledge and skills related to food budgeting and management.

5. Food Production

- 5.1 Protect and enable secure access to land to harvest or produce food.
- 5.2 Develop and enable local food production and harvesting.
- 5.3 Strengthen or develop knowledge and skills related to food production.
- 5.4 Provide assistance to food producers, including expertise, training and financial support.

6. Food Supply, Transportation and Distribution

- 6.1 Assess supply, transportation, distribution, quality and prices of food to ensure access to affordable nutritious food for all.
- 6.2 Engage food suppliers, transportation companies and food retail businesses in improving availability, quality and prices of food.
- 6.3 Ensure adequate transportation to guarantee freshness of food upon delivery.
- 6.4 Ensure adequate infrastructures, layout and equipment in public establishments and food retail businesses, in order to promote healthy food choices, ensure access to nutritious food and guarantee freshness of food.
- 6.5 Ensure public food procurement sustain healthy diets in public establishments.
- 6.6 Strengthen management practices in public establishments and food retail businesses, by offering support, expertise and training.
- 6.7 Reduce availability of low nutritious food in the different community settings, as well as in local and regional events.
- 6.8 Ensure availability of nutritious food in public establishments by adopting and implementing programs and policies.
- 6.9 Ensure availability of nutritious food in food retail businesses, by requesting presence of minimum supply.

7. Food Quality and Hygiene

- 7.1 Ensure quality of food from supply to distribution, by enforcing food safety and hygiene standards applicable in Quebec.
- 7.2 Ensure compliance with food safety and hygiene standards applicable in Quebec in public establishments and food retail businesses.
- 7.3 Provide mandatory food safety and hygiene training.
- 7.4 Ensure availability of training opportunities in food business management.

8. Water

- 8.1 Ensure safety and quality of water in the communities, through regular testing.
- 8.2 Ensure quality of tap water in homes, public areas, public establishments and food retail businesses.
- 8.3 Promote use of tap water in homes, public establishments and food retail businesses.
- 8.4 Ensure access to functional water fountains and dispensers in public buildings.
- 8.5 Adopt and implement standards and regulations to ensure access to safe drinking water.

9. Environment

- 9.1 Protect the land and reduce impact of the food system on the environment.
- 9.2 Optimize food system logistics to reduce cost and impact on the environment.
- 9.3 Support initiatives aiming to minimize food waste in homes, public establishments and food retail businesses.
- 9.4 Offer training in food waste management, recycling and deposit of bottles and cans.
- 9.5 Ensure adequate disposal of food waste and rubbish, by ensuring availability of compost, recycling and rubbish bins in homes, public areas, public establishments and food retail businesses.
- 9.6 Promote use of reusable bags, bottles, containers, dishes and utensils.
- 9.7 Limit availability of disposable bags, containers, dishes and utensils in food retail businesses.
- 9.8 Ensure availability and use of reusable bags, bottles, containers, dishes and utensils in public establishments and food retail businesses.

V. DEFINITIONS

Within the context of this Framework for Action, the following words and phrases shall mean:

“Access to Nutritious Food”: means having healthy affordable food available in the community or in the region. The expression refers both to the availability and affordability of food of high nutritional quality.

“Food Environment”: also known as the “community food environment”, represents all the food that is available around us in the different community settings, and which influences what we eat. In Eeyou Istchee, the food environment includes the land and water, which provides traditional food, as well as the community stores, restaurants, sports centers, daycares, schools, elders’ homes, healthcare centers, workplaces, events, traditional camps, etc., where a variety of foods is available.

“Food System”: consists of all activities and infrastructures aiming to provide food to the communities; from the land to plate. The local food system include hunting, fishing, gathering, food preparation and consumption, whereas the commercial food system is more complex and includes food production, transformation, supply, transportation, distribution, preparation, consumption and disposal of food-related products.

“Food Retail Businesses”: refers to businesses where foods are sold to consumers. In Eeyou Istchee, food retail businesses include grocery stores, convenience stores, restaurants, canteens, coffee shops, catering businesses, etc.

“Healthy Diet”: A healthy diet can include a wide variety of foods, but is generally based on foods of high nutritional value. In Eeyou Istchee, a healthy diet would mostly be composed of traditional foods and/or commercial foods which are little processed or unprocessed (see also “Healthy and/or Nutritious Foods”).

“Healthy and/or Nutritious Foods”: Foods of high nutritional value, that provides a variety of nutrients which are essential to health, and generally low in saturated/trans fats, sugar and salt. Healthy or nutritious foods include locally harvested traditional foods, as well as commercial foods which are little processed or unprocessed, such as plants, berries, fruits, vegetables, fish, meat, nuts, eggs, grain products, and dairy products.

“Public areas”: are community spaces that are accessible to all, such as streets, parks, walking or biking trails, and beaches.

“Public establishments”: Any building owned by the government or the band office and used by all community members. In Eeyou Istchee, public establishments include daycares, schools, healthcare centers, elders’ homes, band offices, sports centres, arenas, youth centres, community hall/centers, justice departments, post office, etc.

“Public buildings”: Any building owned by the government, the band office, or a private entity, and used by all community members. This includes all public establishments, plus all local or regional businesses, stores, restaurants, etc.

“Public Food Procurement”: consist in the purchasing of food by public establishments. The selection of suppliers, the establishments of purchasing specifications, and the negotiation of food prices can allow organizations to manage food costs and improve availability of nutritious foods in public establishments.

“Sustainable Diet”: is respectful of the environment and aim to preserve the land and the animal for the future generations.

“Traditional Food”: are locally harvested foods, acquired in Eeyou Istchee through hunting, fishing and gathering, and which possess cultural meaning for the Crees. Traditional foods include bear, moose, caribou, hare, goose, fish, berries, Labrador tea, etc.