On May 19, 2016 Gordon Neighbourhood House proudly welcomed over 150 attendees to the city’s first Vancouver Food Summit, held on the unceded, occupied, ancestral and traditional lands of the Musqueam, Skxwú7mesh, and Tsleil-Waututh nations. Gordon Neighbourhood House encouraged attendees to think about the historical and ongoing colonial genocide against indigenous people.

The Vancouver Food Summit was an incredible and rare opportunity for individuals, community food practitioners, farmers, community leaders, academics, funders and activists and stakeholders to spend a day sharing experience and expertise, challenging assumptions, having difficult conversations and exploring how to deepen our collective impact.

The interest in food in our city has gained significant momentum, in fact this year Vancouver celebrates the third anniversary of the Vancouver Food Strategy. A key aspect of this work has to be focused on a critical analysis of who is typically left out of conversation around our food system and why? The Vancouver Food Summit allowed us to collectively push ourselves to think about what an inclusive food movement looks like.

Attendees choose between eight different panels throughout the day, involving discussions on eight topics central to Vancouver’s food movement. Topics included: the advancement of indigenous food sovereignty, a critical look at food banks, the efficacy of food policy at challenging poverty, the question of whether local food is inherently more just, accessibility as more than a ramp, and whether food waste is an opportunity or a curse.

Using food to animate important conversations has been a significant part of our work for the last several years. The Vancouver Food Summit and Gordon Neighbourhood House’s community food work would not be possible without the support of our funders and supporters. In fact, Gordon Neighbourhood House was honoured to have been awarded one of five $50,000 grants made available across the country by Community Food Centres Canada to grow our food programs.
Gordon Neighbourhood House’s community food programs are also supported by the good folks at the Central City Foundation, Vancouver Foundation, the City of Vancouver, the United Way of the Lower Mainland, Vancity Credit Union, Whole Foods Market Vancouver and members of the community.

Thank you to everyone who made the first Vancouver Food Summit the wonderful success that it was. A special thank you to Diana Bronson, the executive director of Food Secure Canada, who joined us from Montreal to deliver the keynote presentation (in conversation with Lily Grewal).

See you next year!

- Paul (Executive Director) and Matt (Chair, Community Advisory Board)
What We Heard

Do you think Canada needs a national food policy?

Number of Surveys Completed 78

- Yes 71
- No 1
- Not Sure 3
- No Answer 3
Do you think BC needs a poverty reduction strategy?

Number of Surveys Completed 78

- Yes 77
- No 0
- Maybe 1
Do you think income assistance in BC should be increased?

Number of Surveys Completed: 78

- Yes: 77
- No: 0
- Maybe: 1
Did you connect with any individuals or organizations that you intend to learn more about or get involved with?

Number of Surveys Completed  78

- Yes: 73
- No: 3
- Not Sure: 1
- No Answer: 1
Session Details

Indigenous Food Sovereignty

Moderator Diana Guenther guided the panel through issues of First Nations control over food systems. Community-building, accessing indigenous food knowledge and self-sufficiency. Moderator and community development worker Guenther was joined by Dawn Morrison, founder of the B.C. Food Systems Network Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, East Vancouver social worker Sharnelle Jenkins-Thompson and ethno-botanist Cease Wyss.

In Foodline Radio’s interview with Sharnelle Jenkins-Thompson about the Vancouver Food Summit, she frames indigenous food sovereignty as ‘being able to practice our traditional relationships with food.’ She explains that while ‘sovereignty’ is sometimes seen as control over the food system, from an indigenous perspective, it’s really more about enacting our reciprocal relationships with food that have been disrupted. It’s a process of decolonizing ourselves, both as settlers and as indigenous people, and working towards a more just, more accessible, more sustainable food system for indigenous people.

Inglorious Produce

Ugly fruits and vegetables — those that fail to meet the cosmetic standards of grocery stores — are a big part of the food waste problem. Local programs aimed at reducing food waste take that produce and try to use it in programs. Panelist Erin Nichols of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank specializes in recovering perishable foods from businesses. She was joined by Doris Chow of the DTES Kitchen Tables Project, Rubina Jamal of the Table Matters Network and Food Lens Consulting, and moderator Ian Marcuse of the Grandview-Woodland Neighbourhood Food Connection.

In Foodline Radio’s interview with Doris Chow on the Vancouver Food Summit, she argues that we take for granted that we should rescue wasted food and use it to feed hungry folks. Instead, we need to focus on ensuring that people can afford to buy the food they choose for themselves, rather than rely on charitable donations. Also, we must ask: Why is so much of the food that is grown destined to be rejected by retailers and then dumped back on producers, or ‘rescued’ and dumped onto non-profits? And why are we as a society paying the costs of this wasteful food system?

“Food Waste Campaigns Conflate two separate issues of food waste and food access.”

- Trish Garner

“People say you are what you eat so if we give expired food to low income people what does that say to them?”

- Doris Chow
Poverty: What Can Food Policy Do?

We know that when a person experiences food insecurity and is deprived of adequate nutrition, that person will be much less likely to focus on goals other than survival. Developing human, economic, and social capital take a backseat to scraping by. What, then, can food policy do to challenge poverty? Moderator Vanessa Bui, community organizer, led the discussion. Panelists included Dr. Tara Moreau, the Associate Director of Sustainability and Community Programs at UBC Botanical Garden and Co-Chair of Vancouver’s Food Policy Council, Bill Hopwood of Raise the Rates, an anti-poverty coalition, and Trish Garner, the community organizer of the BC Poverty Reduction Coalition.

Is Local Food More Just?

Vancouver’s Food Strategy calls for the creation of a “just and sustainable food system.” What does that mean and how does it help the city achieve its social, economic and health goals? Moderator Jason Hsieh is an advocate for local food systems and is helping the City implement its Greenest City 2020 Action Plan. Panelists included Rebecca Cuttler, author of the urban food gardening blog Abundant City, Alexandra Henao-Castrillon, who works with migrant workers here and in Central America. Tara McDonald, executive director of Vancouver Farmers Markets was under the weather and had to send her regrets.

Alexandra Henao-Castrillon was interviewed by Foodline Radio on the Vancouver Food Summit. She explains how through the Seasonal Agricultural Workers Program, Canada brings 30,000 workers from Guatemala, the Philippines, Mexico, Indonesia, China, and Jamaica to BC and other provinces for 2 to 8 months each year to work on farms. These workers are in Richmond, Langley and even in Burnaby. They’re in the Okanagan picking peaches, apples, and cherries that we enjoy in Vancouver. They work in greenhouses to care for bell peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes, working 12 to 14 hours a day, 6 or 7 days a week, on their knees growing lettuce and other vegetables in Langley. They should be part of any discussion about the Canadian food system, and they have a lot to say and to contribute.

“There’re still many people who don’t know anything about migrant agricultural workers and their role in the food system in Canada!”

- Food Summit Participant
Are rights-based arguments effective?

Are food and housing fundamental human rights? If so, why do 1.7 million households in Canada experience food insecurity? In British Columbia alone, the number of people who access food banks has grown by 25% since 2008. Our default seems to be to address social inequality through charity, but what is the role of our governments? Brent Mansfield, Director of the BC Food Systems Network led the discussion. Brent moderated a conversation between Ted Bruce, former interim executive director of PHS Community Services, lawyers Margot Young and Laura Track, and Graham Riches, emeritus professor and former director of the UBC School of Social Work, and a founder member of the Vancouver Food Policy Council.

Graham Riches argues that we've socially constructed the issue of food insecurity as a matter for charity to deal with; We feel we can look the other way once we've made a donation, even though the International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights says that food is a right for all. Thus, we as a society, and our government, neglect public policy. We have hunger in Canada because of poverty, unemployment, and most fundamentally public policy neglect.

Keynote: In Conversation with Diana Bronson

In addition to the eight topics/panels, the keynote by Diana Bronson, the executive director of Food Secure Canada, initiated a great deal of conversation on the need for a National Food Policy. Lily Grewal (Vancity, Board of Directors) moderated the conversation with our special guest. Diana spoke about the unique opportunity as a result of the interest and commitments of the current federal government to develop a national food policy. While attendees overwhelmingly agreed that Canada needs a National Food Strategy, some were reluctant to support the development of a national policy, based on a system that currently excludes indigenous voices and meaningful indigenous involvement.

“How we can try to move away from the charity model & towards a social justice model in food security?”

- Food Summit Participant
Why is the Food Movement So White?
Moderator and city planner Thien Phan has explored the Asian supply chain network in Vancouver and currently works to develop policies that foster participation with a wide range of groups throughout the city. Many feel that the mainstream food movement in both the for-profit and non-profit sectors is dominated by Caucasians. Why does that happen? Chinese-Canadian youth organizer Kevin Huang, Musqueam First Nation activist Audrey Siegl, indigenous law specialist Niki Sharma and Zsuzsi Fodor of the Vancouver Food Policy Council helped answer the question “Why is green so white?” A follow up conversation is scheduled for June 30, 2016 as the launch of the Vancouver Food Conversations, a series of conversations aimed at continuing the dialogue and action initiated at the Vancouver Food Summit.

“Why is green so white?”
- Food Summit Participant

Accessibility: More Than Just a Ramp
Almost 100,000 people with disabilities receive provincial disability assistance in BC. Many live well below the poverty line and are particularly vulnerable to food insecurity. When we think of barriers to accessibility, several of us think of a physical barrier, like not having a ramp for someone to access a building. But most barriers to food accessibility are not always obvious. What can we do to make sure that community food programs are accessible to people with disabilities? Moderating this discussion was Ross Moster, the executive director of Village Vancouver Transition Society. Ross was joined by Karen Martin, who has worked with Disability Alliance B.C. in the area of disability rights and Jane Cloud, a long term resident of Vancouver’s West End who receives disability benefits.

The food banks are working to move away from charity model style of operation.”
- Food Summit Participant

What Do We Do About Food Banks?
Food banks have been with us for 30 years and have become a fixture in our food system. The number of people who depend on food donations to get by does not appear to be waning, despite the province’s strong economy. Do we still need food banks? What has to change? Moderator Bev Pitman of the United Way of the Lower Mainland was joined by Aart Schuurman Hess. Hess is the CEO of the Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society. Other panelists included public health nutritionist Gerry Kasten and Peggy Wilmot, who runs a Food Bank in Victoria.
“But of course!!! I see now that we don’t just need a grassroots movement but policy changes too.”

“I need to educate myself (& all those I influence) about the national food policy and advocacy strategies”

“The movement isn’t as white as it seems”

“It’s necessary to critique how [a National Food Policy] would fit within the varying contexts of food insecurity in different regions.”

“Rights are not expensive entitlements, but are simple actions that will allow all people to flourish (ultimately cost our systems less)”

“There’re still many people who don’t know anything about migrant agricultural workers and their role in the food system in Canada!”

“I’m also inspired to work towards making programming at my organization more accessible”

“Food is powerful and is a right for all people.”
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Feminist approaches to food justice organizing.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cultural attitudes/disconnections around food, eating disorders, food and morality, the cult of health!</td>
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<td>More focused conversations on income and related social policies (joined up food policy).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Advocating for living wage and paying people to do this work (vs. volunteering or &quot;interns&quot;).</td>
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<td>A solutions round table where we can share programs/idea that are being used to cross pollinate positive movement.</td>
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<td>Exploitative migrant labour in local agriculture, workers rights.</td>
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<td>Municipal levels for change. Role of and support to neighbourhood houses as sites of change.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Racism and the food movement.</td>
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<tr>
<td>More on the indigenous issues. It was thought honouring &amp; informative.</td>
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<td>Panel of local farmers - what are their struggles, how can local consumers support them.</td>
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<td>Youth based food focus on how youth can become educators.</td>
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#VanFoodSummit on Social Media

BC Poverty Reduction @PovReductionBC · May 19
Miss this morning’s panel @GordonNHouse Vancouver Food Summit? Trish Garner shares her perspective on @Roundhouse983 cirm.streamon.fm/listen-pi-2933

PovFree Action Team @PovFreeTeam · May 19
You can follow @GordonNHouse’s Vancouver Food Summit live on Youtube: youtube.com/watch?v=10oNx... #RethinkFood #RethinkPoverty #bcpoli #YVR

Catherine Evans @catherineevans · May 19
A Natl Food Policy is a way to address issues of hunger, cost of northern food, support for new farmers & school programs. #vanfoodsummit

brent granby @brentgranby · May 19
How do you impact policy? Eat Think Vote: let’s make healthy food an election issue in Canada ow.ly/UpvT300mWFN #vanfoodsummit #cdnpol

Sauder S3I @SauderS3I · May 19
@FoodSecureCAN “It is up to us to take hold of the conversation on Nat Food Policy and provide meaningful input” #VanFoodSummit

allthepiecesmatter @allthepiecesmatter · May 19
“how can a national food strategy adequately address cultural & biological diversity…” #VanFoodSummit

VUFS @VUFS · May 19
from an indigenous perspective Canada is a colonial country, can promoting one national policy support cultural diversity? #vanfoodsummit

Chantille Vialaud @chantillev · May 19
They [policy makers] need to hear loud and clear that we need a human rights framework for our food policy. @DianaBronsonFSC #VanFoodSummit

VUFS @VUFS · May 19
Our key voices have to come together if we want change in @vanfoodbank #vanfoodsummit we need the public to echo loudly.

Paul M. Taylor @paulm_taylor · May 19
@DianaBronsonFSC thank you for your thoughtful insights. "We need to move beyond voting with our forks - we have ballots too" #VanFoodSummit

VUFS @VUFS · May 19
#PennyForPolicy- let’s take a penny for every dollar donated to food banks, and put it towards policy change. #vanfoodsummit

Chantille Vialaud @chantillev · May 19
On Foodbanks: I don’t go to my grocery store and get given a bag and told ‘this is what you get for the week’ Peggy Wilmot #vanfoodsummit
# VanFoodSummit in the Media

Five things to hash over at the Vancouver Food Summit

Randy Sharma
Menu from Randy’s Table

Published on: April 27, 2016 | Last Updated: April 27, 2016 5:01 PM PDT

## Five things to hash over at the Vancouver Food Summit

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<td>April 26</td>
<td>The Valley Voice</td>
<td><a href="http://www.thevalleyvoice.ca/Voice%20Stories/april%202016/first%20annual%20vancouver%20food%20summit%20may-19-2016.htm">http://www.thevalleyvoice.ca/Voice%20Stories/april%202016/first%20annual%20vancouver%20food%20summit%20may-19-2016.htm</a></td>
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<td>The Georgia Straight</td>
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<td>604 Now</td>
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<td>Mid-June</td>
<td>Foodline-Co-op Radio</td>
<td><a href="http://www.coopradio.org/content/foodline">http://www.coopradio.org/content/foodline</a></td>
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<td>May 17</td>
<td>Roundhouse Radio</td>
<td><strong>Kevin Huang Interview:</strong> <a href="http://cirh.streamon.fm/listen-pl-2919">http://cirh.streamon.fm/listen-pl-2919</a></td>
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