

# The Indigenous Circle Phase I Update Report March 2018

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Lakehead  
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FLEdGE  
*Food: Locally Embedded, Globally Engaged*



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## I. Introduction and Background

The food we eat provides nourishment for our bodies and our minds. More than just fuel, food is a part of our identities, cultures and connects us to the natural world. When we think about our food, we also need to consider who has access, ownership and rights to the land and water. The idea of a food system describes these relationships between social, political and economic systems that bring food to our plates – from harvesting, foraging and growing food to processing, retail, consumption and waste. The Pan-Canadian Indigenous Food Systems Network describes food systems as follows:

The vast myriad of rivers, watersheds, landforms, vegetation and climatic zones have worked together for thousands of years to shape and form Indigenous land and food systems. Consisting of a multitude of natural communities, Indigenous food systems include all of the land, air, water, soil and culturally important plant, animal and fungi species that have sustained Indigenous peoples over thousands of years. All parts of Indigenous food systems are inseparable and ideally function in healthy interdependent relationships to transfer energy through the present day agriculture based economy that has been developed and industrialized through the process of colonization.<sup>1</sup>

Contrary to this interdependent systems-based approach, the dominant corporate-led, industrial system treats food primarily as a commodity to be bought and sold with a focus on increasing production by manipulating nature. The introduction of highly technological and chemical intensive methods has contributed to the seemingly intractable challenges concerning health and wellbeing, ecosystem integrity, waste and pollution, and social inequality and poverty.<sup>2</sup> Current policy frameworks, with few exceptions, consider these as collateral problems and respond to them through fragmented approaches that treat symptoms rather than responding to structural issues. Top-down policies tend to privilege those in power along with settler-colonial ways of knowing. According to Wawakapewin First Nation Elder Simon Frogg, “As a result of these treaty relations, Aboriginal peoples have been taken advantage of and have not been given what the government promised them. This has led to us losing our way of life and our land.”<sup>3</sup>

Dominant approaches overlook peoples’ lived experiences and ignore the needs and priorities of communities. This has led to a legitimacy crisis – the widespread public distrust of the ability of governments and industry to resolve these interconnected challenges. In response to these discontents, communities have mobilized at multiple scales to develop viable solutions to transform food systems. Instead of treating the symptoms and addressing issues in isolation, there has been widespread interest in addressing food as an interconnected system where everyone has the right to healthy, culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically and sustainable method. Further, global food sovereignty movements rooted in Indigenous ways of

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<sup>1</sup> Indigenous Land and Food Systems. (n.d.). Indigenous Food Systems. Available at <https://www.indigenousfoodsystems.org/>

<sup>2</sup> IPES-Food. (2017). Unravelling the Food-Health Nexus: Addressing practices, political economy and power relations to build healthier food systems. Available at: <http://www.ipes-food.org/health>

<sup>3</sup> Robidoux, M., LeBlanc, J., and Mason, C. (2017). Conversations with Wawakapewin Elder Simon Frogg. In: M. Robidoux and C. Mason (Eds.). *A Land Not Forgotten: Indigenous Food Security and Land-based Practices in Northern Ontario*, pp. ix-xvi. Univ. of Manitoba Press.

knowing assert that people, not corporations or governments, have the right to make decisions about their own food systems. According to the Pan-Canadian Indigenous Circle that guided the People's Food Policy project,

As a result of harmony in our food systems, Indigenous peoples exemplified food sovereignty. Thus, the current efforts within the rapidly expanding Indigenous food sovereignty movement to restore and enhance access to traditional Indigenous foods in the forests, fields and waterways continue to be linked to the historic claims to the hunting, fishing and gathering grounds in their respective traditional territories. . . . the trends occurring amongst Indigenous peoples are the beginnings of a new Indigenous food sovereignty. By establishing their own projects under their own leadership, Indigenous peoples are determining what should be grown, cooked, taught, and shared. In time, these decisions will pave the way for greater food security. The larger Indigenous land struggles and food sovereignty issues are not mutually exclusive even when the struggle remains centred in an urban setting. Food sovereignty links traditional Indigenous knowledge with contemporary urban realities, which in turn contributes to new forms of knowledge and action. Food sovereignty fosters the on-going interplay of actions and understanding that continues to flow between the traditional and the contemporary, the urban and rural.<sup>4</sup>

While there are many examples of community-led projects that are creating on-the-ground change, there is a recognition that to impact the dominant food system, it is vital that these initiatives work together to share experiences and target policies that maintain unjust structures.

### ***The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy***

A prominent approach to the social, ecological and economic problems in the food system has come in the form of municipal and regional food policy councils that aim to provide a forum to address food systems issues and a platform for coordinated action among multi-sectoral stakeholders.<sup>5</sup> While diverse in structure, most aim to develop democratic and inclusive processes to evaluate, influence and establish integrated policy and programs for healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems, for the local municipality or region they are representing. This work focuses on public engagement in policy making processes, often emphasizing opportunities for more participatory forms of democracy and engagement. As an approach to food policy development, these processes are rooted in systems thinking which recognize the interconnections between environmental, social, and economic factors, and a whole of government approach through mechanisms that provide opportunities for meaningful social participation.

Food policy councils provide a valuable forum to address food systems issues and a platform for coordinated action among multi-sectoral stakeholders at the local level by focusing on the diversity of each geographic catchment area. The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (TBAFS) is one such example that promotes regional food self-reliance, healthy environments, and

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<sup>4</sup> Indigenous Food Circle. (2011). Indigenous Food Sovereignty. Peoples Food Policy. Available at: [https://foodsecurecanada.org/sites/foodsecurecanada.org/files/DP1\\_Indigenous\\_Food\\_Sovereignty.pdf](https://foodsecurecanada.org/sites/foodsecurecanada.org/files/DP1_Indigenous_Food_Sovereignty.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Harper, A., Alkon, A., Shattuck, A., Holt-Giménez, E., and Lambrick, F. (2009). Food Policy Councils: Lessons Learned. Food First. Available at: <https://foodfirst.org/publication/food-policy-councils-lessons-learned/>

thriving economies through the coordination and implementation of research, planning, policy, and program development. Following extensive public consultations and ongoing collaboration, a food charter was developed in 2008 identifying a common vision, and in 2014 a strategic action plan was endorsed by seven municipalities in the Thunder Bay region. Today, the TBAFS is an active organization, made up of over 40 organizational representatives, ten executive council members and seven regional municipalities.<sup>6</sup>

The TBAFS brings together local food stakeholders to take a coordinated approach to building healthy, sustainable, and equitable food systems through research, planning, policy, and program development. Members represent farmers, public institutions, small businesses and non-profit organizations, the council members are conveners and activators who collaboratively implement the priorities of the Thunder Bay Food Charter to develop and monitor a healthy, equitable and sustainable food system. The Food Charter presents a vision of the values, principles, and priorities of a sustainable food system for the region and has been endorsed by the City of Thunder Bay and 33 local governments, businesses and organizations. Ultimately, the Strategy was fostered from the food charter and came to be built upon seven pillars of a sustainable food system (as identified by portion of the community food access):



The TBAFS Executive undertakes the coordination and support of pertinent research, projects, and events to address gaps in the current food system. Recent examples include a partnership with the City to increase their local food procurement with a food and agriculture market study to determine local food demand. The TBAFS is also largely involved in influencing food-related policy at local and regional levels. Despite its many successes, the TBAFS had no formal engagement from Indigenous peoples or organizations.

Thunder Bay is located on the traditional land of the Fort William First Nation, signatory to the Robinson Superior Treaty of 1850 and is home to many Indigenous people. According to the 2016 Statistics Canada census, Indigenous people make up almost 13% of the City's population, the highest proportion of urban Indigenous population in Canada. Besides the historical and present-day connections to the land, Indigenous populations have an important economic and social impact within the region. As one of the largest cities in Northern Ontario, Thunder Bay acts as a central hub for transportation, shopping and access to a wide range of services. Considering the history of strained Indigenous-settler relationships and the significant population, there is a unique opportunity to demonstrate how food can be a tool for reconciliation and resurgence.

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<sup>6</sup> Details about the TBAFS can be found at <http://tbfoodstrategy.com>

## II. The Emerging Indigenous Circle

With a unique opportunity to explore food as a tool for reconciliation and resurgence, the TBAFS has come to understand the Indigenous engagement gap and that Indigenous perspectives are an essential element in the future of Thunder Bay's food system. However, a meaningful partnership must be built upon support for Indigenous peoples' self-determination and significant efforts to strengthen the strained Indigenous-settler relations in the city. In 2016, the Executive of the TBAFS began to focus more directly on developing partnerships with Indigenous leaders and organizations to better understand the needs of Indigenous peoples along with the barriers and opportunities to engagement.



The manifestation of these efforts was support for the development of the Indigenous Circle. Led by TBAFS Executive member Jessica McLaughlin, the process involved many one-on-one meetings with organizational representatives to assess interest in the initiative, as well as two meetings of the larger group to establish a basis for cooperation.

The initial aim of the Indigenous Circle is to reduce Indigenous food insecurity, increase food self-determination and establish meaningful relationships with the settler population through food. To do this, it is vital that we better understand food-related needs and issues that impact Indigenous peoples and settler relations. The Indigenous Circle was given a mandate to establish a collaborative platform to support food related initiatives developed by and for Indigenous organizations in the Thunder Bay region. This vision speaks to one developed by the Pan-Canadian Indigenous Circle through the People's Food Policy that stated:

We believe that traditional knowledge, as well as addressing the social determinants of health, should be at the heart of food policies and practices of governments. Indigenous peoples in different areas have sustained themselves on the wildlife and plants that their areas have produced. Various forms of agriculture have been practiced by Indigenous peoples in order to sustain the soil and land. This knowledge has been used by Indigenous peoples and in many cases shared with their non-native brothers and sisters. The uses of plants and animals as medicines and foods were common among Indigenous peoples. This unique knowledge belonging to Indigenous peoples has also assisted the Canadian people to live on the land and to prosper.<sup>7</sup>

To build healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems in the Thunder Bay region, it is essential to make space for people to speak for themselves. Drawing on concepts of Indigenous food sovereignty that emphasizes a re-connection to land-based food and political systems, the Indigenous Circle aims to support and develop the capacity of Indigenous peoples to articulate and respond to relevant challenges and opportunities and to improve programming and policy. Based on initial consultations and meetings with Indigenous-led organizations in the Thunder Bay region, the following six objectives have emerged:

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<sup>7</sup> Indigenous Food Circle. (2011). Indigenous Food Sovereignty. Peoples Food Policy. Available at: [https://foodsecurecanada.org/sites/foodsecurecanada.org/files/DP1\\_Indigenous\\_Food\\_Sovereignty.pdf](https://foodsecurecanada.org/sites/foodsecurecanada.org/files/DP1_Indigenous_Food_Sovereignty.pdf)

1. To build meaningful relationships among Indigenous led food organizations in the Thunder Bay region;
2. To support, connect and coordinate Indigenous Circle members with food related initiatives and opportunities;
3. To establish a space for Indigenous people to share information and develop solutions to address immediate needs and decolonize the food system;
4. To bring awareness to Indigenous Organizations and the food related work they are involved with;
5. To build relationships between Indigenous-led organizations and settler-led organizations; and,
6. To support an inclusive process and supportive network to guarantee Indigenous engagement and decolonization work happens effectively in the city of Thunder Bay.

### ***Work to Date***

The initial phase of the Indigenous Circle's development has involved reaching out to Indigenous-led organizations and specific employees within the organizations who were already administering or developing food related programs and initiatives. In addition, the TBAFS also reached out to organizations that support Indigenous peoples such as Lakehead University, Thunder Bay Regional Health Unit, the Regional Food Distribution Association, District Social Services Administration Board and The Boys and Girls Club Thunder Bay. As of March 2018, representatives from 16 organizations have committed to participate in the Indigenous Circle development. In addition, 40 initial meetings have been held with other Indigenous and/or supporting organizations that have expressed interest but are in need of a clearer mandate before proceeding with full commitment. (See Appendix A - Indigenous Circle Participants)

All of the initial meetings that have taken place have been strongly focused on relationship building rather than information gathering. To build sustainable food systems in the Thunder Bay region that are rooted in social and ecological justice, it is imperative that Indigenous peoples are positioned to take a leadership role and that engagement be nurtured appropriately. Each meeting was conducted according to the needs of the particular organization and provided space for learning and getting to know each individual involved. For example, some meetings involved a lunch or a coffee, while others involved a walk or a formal meeting in an office. Some organizations scheduled follow up meetings to include other employees in the conversation to discuss food work that the particular organization was administering. A number of small pilot projects have been developed between the Indigenous Circle and the TBAFS which are set to begin early 2018 and aim to support member organizations. For example, the Thunder Bay Country Market and the Indigenous Circle are hosting the clients of the Indigenous Friendship Centre's Family Well-Being program at the market for a cooking, learning and sharing workshop to build familiarity with locally grown foods and means of obtaining them.

The TBAFS has hosted two larger collaborative meetings where all interested organizations were invited to attend. Presentations were given by the TBAFS and staff from Sustain Ontario: The Alliance for Healthy Food and Farming. TBAFS is a member of Sustain Ontario which is a province-wide, cross-sectoral alliance that promotes healthy food and farming through

coordinated support and collaborative action.<sup>8</sup> Sustain has committed to supporting the Indigenous Circle and its members throughout the establishment process. During the second meeting, members shared early motivations and future possibilities. The organizations in attendance encouraged further exploration of funding to support future gatherings, initiatives and research (See Appendix B - September 22, 2017 Meeting Minutes). The group also discussed the option to apply for a small grant from the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) through the Partnership Exchange stream to support the second phase of development. The application was collaboratively written as a partnership between the Indigenous Circle, the TBAFS and Lakehead University. The one-year grant was awarded in March 2018 (See Appendix C - Partnership Engage Grant Application).

Throughout Phase I of development, the Indigenous Circle began to generate great interest, specifically for those conducting food systems related work. As a result, the Indigenous Circle has been invited to bring an Indigenous perspective to food systems work at the TBAFS Council. These have included regular updates to the TBAFS Executive and presentations to the TBAFS Council Members at the Annual General Meeting. In October 2017 the Indigenous Circle and TBAFS were invited to present at the provincial Bring Food Home Conference in Ottawa, Ontario. These presentations focused on issues surrounding reconciliation and resurgence through food in Northwestern Ontario. The Indigenous Circle hopes to facilitate more discussions around the topic of decolonization and has partnered with the TBAFS to develop and deliver an anti-racism and anti-oppression Training in Thunder Bay.

### **III. Next Steps and Recommendations**

The successful establishment of the Indigenous Circle demands confronting our shared histories, learning from Indigenous food sovereignty efforts, and engaging in action that transforms current relationships. In the next stage of work, the aim should be to provide enhanced capacity to reflect on the challenges and opportunities to improve programming and policy that embodies principles of Indigenous food sovereignty (i.e. self-determination, re-connection to land-based food, cultural and political systems). We suggest further engagement with the different Indigenous-led organizations involved in food systems initiatives in the Thunder Bay region. We also suggest further exploration of ways that the TBAFS can better support initiatives and partnerships that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples. For many Indigenous cultures, this engagement is part of a necessary process of trust and relationship building.

The following are some specific recommendations for Phase II of the Indigenous Circle's development.

#### ***Resources***

- Create a mandate, governance structure and Terms of Reference
- Determine which organizations can take the lead on the next phase of this project
- Continue to engage additional members (e.g. Indigenous led organizations, Elders and youth; Thunder Bay Aboriginal Liaison Unit; Lakehead University, Fort William First Nation; Tribal Councils and political Territorial Organizations, etc.)
- Hire a part time coordinator

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<sup>8</sup> For more information about Sustain Ontario see <https://sustainontario.com/>

- Hire a part time researcher
- Apply for additional grants

### ***Research, Listening and Learning***

- Develop a comprehensive database of Indigenous organizations involved in food related work in the Thunder Bay region and create a set of profiles of each organization
  - Learn more about Indigenous organizations and how they connect with food and clients
  - Determine which food related services Indigenous people are accessing
- Develop a clearinghouse of relevant resources for members (See Appendix D – Indigenous Circle Resources)
- Determine what kinds of resources and support structures are needed
- Determine what additional research is required and questions that members want answered
- Determine how the TBAFS can better support initiatives and partnerships that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples

### ***Relationship Building***

- Continue to build the membership of the Indigenous Circle
- Determine how the Indigenous Circle will work with the TBAFS
- Build connections with Indigenous-led organizations across northwestern Ontario and beyond that are involved in food related work
- Build connections with food related networks (e.g. Sustain Ontario, Food Secure Canada, the Indigenous Food Systems Network, the National Farmers Union, etc.)
- Build connections with other research and action projects involved with Indigenous food self-determination/food sovereignty

### ***Knowledge Sharing***

- All research and information collected should be owned and controlled collectively by the Indigenous Circle



## Appendix A - Indigenous Circle Participants

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact Person(s)</b>
Anishnawbe Mushkiki	Jennifer Bean/Martha Mawakeesic
Anishinabek Nation	
Beendigen	
Denis Franklin Cromarty	
Ka-Na-Chi-Hih	Kent Dickson
Fort William First Nation	Michele Solomon
Métis Nation of Ontario	Shelly Chabot Madison Rahal
Northern Nishnawbe Education Council	
Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan	Carmen Michon
Ontario Native Women's Association	
Shelter House	Martha Ledger
Thunder Bay Indigenous Friendship Centre	Kelsie Pagacz
Wequedong Lodge	
Windsor/Blucher Unit 16	Samara Patayash
Thunder Bay District Health Unit	Vincent Ng Silva Sawula
Lakehead University	Lana Ray Charles Levkoe
Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy	Karen Kerk
Northwestern Ontario Women's Centre	Gwen O'Rilly
Eco Superior	Ellen Mortfield
Regional Food Distribution	Kelsey Agnew
Confederation College	Emily Wilson
Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre	Mary Ann Porter

## **Appendix B - September 22, 2017 Meeting Minutes**

**Present:** Cheryl Suggashie; Charles Levkoe; Amy Bumbacco; Shawna Moore; Phil Groff; Carmen Michon; Marilyn Junnila; Catherine Schwartz-Mendez; Kelsie Pagacz; Lisa Lester; Phebe-Ann Wolframe; Kelsey Agnew; Lana Ray; Gwen O'Reilly; Martha Mawkeesic;

**Regrets:** Ann Magiskan; Jennifer Bean; Shelley Chabot; Wendy Trylinski; Rachel Seguin

### **1. Introductions**

- Everyone introduced themselves with their name, associated organization, and passion for food

### **2. Food Strategy History**

- The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy brings local food players to the table to take a coordinated approach to building a healthy, sustainable, and equitable food system.
- The Food Charter was created in 2007 by an earlier group called the Food Action Network. The Charter is a vision of the values, principles, and priorities of a sustainable food system for the area.
- The City's strategic action plan recommended the development of a strategy to take a more coordinated approach to food-related work.
- The Food Strategy came to be built upon 7 pillars of a sustainable food system as selected by the community.
- The Food Strategy undertakes pertinent research, projects, and events to react to gaps in the current food system. Examples include a partnership with the City to increase their local food spend and the Thunder Bay and Area Food and Agriculture Market Study to determine the demand for local food. The Food Strategy is also largely involved in influencing food-related policy.
- The Food Strategy Council has over 30 members who elected 10 Executive Committee members from various sectors to oversee the implementation of the Strategy.
- Part of moving forward includes engaging with the Indigenous Food Circle and learning how this group would like to move forward together.

### **3. The Indigenous Food Circle: Why, What, and How?**

- Jessica McLaughlin is an Executive Committee member who has been facilitating the Indigenous Food Circle since she was appointed in October 2016.
- Indigenous organizations were not largely included in the development of the Food Strategy. Efforts were made to engage Indigenous populations but typical engagement strategies were used such as surveys and emails which were mostly unsuccessful.
- Over the past year, Jessica has reached out to Indigenous organizations in a different way than what was employed in the past. She connected with people through conversational meetings and participatory engagement to build trusting relationships. Several organizations were interested in connecting with the Food Strategy through the Indigenous Food Circle.
- There is still a question around what the Indigenous Food Circle would like to do and how the Food Strategy can help support their goals.

- The Indigenous Food Circle can gain support from one another and the broader Food Strategy members. For example, Anishnawbe Mushkiki used the verbiage of the Food Strategy when applying for a grant of which the Executive Committee provided a letter of support. Also, Indigenous Food Circle members could collaborate on their kitchen programming to coordinate overflow. Getting involved with the Food Strategy also opens up connections to community leaders who can share and pool resources.
- A goal of the meeting today is to consider how the Indigenous Food Circle can move forward together. Some suggestions include identifying gaps and meaningful ways to address them, creating a Terms of Reference, creating connections with regional and provincial partners, and deciding on time commitments of the group.
- There is an opportunity for funding through Lakehead University to support the work of the Indigenous Food Circle.

#### **4. Sustain Ontario Presentation**

- Sustain Ontario offered their support of the Indigenous Food Circle in whatever way makes the most sense to the group.
- Sustain Ontario is a province-wide, cross-sectoral alliance that promotes healthy food and farming. The organization is driven through collaboration and membership with six working networks focusing on topics such as food justice, farmland, and education.
- The Food Initiatives Greenhouse offers a space to submit and access vetted research projects.
- Every two years, Sustain Ontario hosts a conference called Bring Food Home and they are interested in hosting it in Northwestern Ontario in the future.

#### **5. Questions**

##### Should there be an Indigenous Food Circle?

- Yes, but the goals and path of the group need to be clearer
- Goals can be developed through consultations with community members, elders, hunters, etc.

##### What are the main functions of the Indigenous Food Circle?

- Identifying gaps such as the barriers preventing wild game from being prepared in community kitchens
- Jess's point (from our last meeting) on Food Procurement?

##### Should we apply for research-based funding to support the work of the Indigenous Food Circle?

- The SSHRC grant would support engagement activities and research
- The work of the Circle would also fit with the OTF Collective Impact grant
- Yes, we should apply for both the SSHRC and Collective Impact grant at the same time. The SSHRC grant is more research-based and the Collective Impact is more about action.
- Sustain Ontario has offered to review grant proposals

##### Who should be at this table?

- There is uncertainty about who should be at the table, i.e. organizational representatives or community members or both? Should Food Strategy Council members be at the table?



Family name, Given name

Levkoe, Charles

### Summary of Proposal

The summary of your research proposal should indicate clearly the problem or issue to be addressed, the potential contribution of the research both in terms of the advancement of knowledge and of the wider social benefit, etc.

Food policy councils provide a forum to address food systems issues and a platform for coordinated action among multi-sectoral stakeholders. While diverse in structure, most aim to develop democratic and inclusive processes to evaluate, influence and establish integrated policy and programs for healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems. The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (TBAFS) is one such example that promotes regional food self-reliance, healthy environments, and thriving economies through the implementation of research, planning, policy, and program development. Following extensive public consultations and ongoing collaboration, a food charter was developed in 2008 identifying a common vision, and in 2014 a strategic action plan was endorsed by seven municipalities in the region. Today, the TBAFS is made up of over 40 organizational representatives, ten executive council members and seven regional municipalities.

Despite its many successes, the TBAFS had no formal engagement from Indigenous peoples, who comprise almost 13% of the City's population (the highest proportion of urban Indigenous population in Canada). Recognizing this gap in 2016, members of the TBAFS began to develop partnerships with Indigenous organizations to better understand the food-related needs of Indigenous peoples along with the barriers and opportunities to engagement. The culmination of these efforts was a proposal to establish an Indigenous Circle. The Circle would aim to reduce Indigenous food insecurity, increase food self-determination and establish meaningful relationships with the settler population through food. The Circle would establish a collaborative platform to support food related initiatives developed by and for Indigenous organizations in the Thunder Bay region.

This proposed project will build upon existing partnerships between faculty and students at Lakehead University and members of the TBAFS to conduct critical research to support the early phase development of the Indigenous Circle. Using Indigenous methodologies, Indigenous researchers (e.g., the co-PI, Master's students and a community researcher) and members of the Indigenous Circle (a subgroup of the TBAFS) will play a leadership role in this project. This research will provide enhanced capacity to reflect on the challenges and opportunities to improve programming and policy that embodies principles of Indigenous food sovereignty (i.e. self-determination, re-connection to land-based food, cultural and political systems).

We will begin by engaging Indigenous organizations in the Thunder Bay region and take a regional approach, which will involve all of Northwestern Ontario (e.g., the Anishinabek Nation, Grand Council Treaty #3, Nishnawbe Aski Nation, Independent First Nations and Métis peoples). Key questions this research will explore include: What Indigenous organizations are involved in food systems initiatives in the Thunder Bay region? How can the TBAFS support initiatives and partnerships that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples?

This project is crucial, now more than ever. The successful establishment of the Indigenous Circle requires more than simply good will from TBAFS members. It demands confronting our shared histories, learning from Indigenous food sovereignty efforts, and engaging in action that transforms current relationships. It means embracing the discomfort that comes with confronting colonial laws and legacies and developing respectful and just relationships. Considering the history of strained Indigenous-settler relationships and the significant population of Indigenous peoples in the Thunder Bay region, there is a unique opportunity to demonstrate how food can facilitate reconciliation and resurgence.

## **The Indigenous Circle: Reconciliation and Resurgence through Food in Northwestern Ontario Goal and Project Description**

### ***Relevance and significance of these objectives for the partner organization***

The Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (TBAFS) brings together local food stakeholders to take a coordinated approach to building healthy, sustainable, and equitable food systems through research, planning, policy, and program development (TBAFS n.d.). With over 40 members representing farmers, public institutions, small businesses and non-profit organizations, they are conveners and activators who collaboratively implement the priorities of the Thunder Bay Food Charter (see <http://tbfoodstrategy.com>) to cook up a healthy equitable and sustainable food system. The Food Charter was created in 2007 as a vision of the values, principles, and priorities of a sustainable food system for the region. It was endorsed by the City of Thunder Bay and 33 other local governments, businesses and organizations in 2008. Ultimately, the Strategy came to be built upon seven pillars of a sustainable food system as identified by the community: food access, forest and freshwater food, food infrastructure, food procurement, food production, school food environments, and urban agriculture. The Food Strategy undertakes pertinent research, projects, and events to address gaps in the current food system. Recent examples include a partnership with the City to increase their local food procurement and a food and agriculture market study to determine local food demand. The Food Strategy is also largely involved in influencing food-related policy. Despite its many successes, the TBAFS had no formal engagement from the Indigenous peoples that make up almost 13% of the City's population (according to the 2016 Statistics Canada census, the highest proportion of urban Indigenous population in Canada).

Recognizing this gap, in 2016, members of the TBAFS began to develop partnerships with regional Indigenous leaders and organizations to better understand the barriers and opportunities to engagement. The result was a consensus to develop an Indigenous Circle with an aim to reduce Indigenous food insecurity, increase food self-determination and establish meaningful relationships with the settler population through food. The ultimate goal of the Indigenous Circle is to establish a collaborative platform to support food related initiatives developed by and for Indigenous organizations. To build healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems in the Thunder Bay region, it is essential to make space for people to speak for themselves. Drawing on concepts of Indigenous food sovereignty that emphasizes a re-connection to land-based food and political systems (Morrison 2011; Rudolph and McLachlan 2013), the Indigenous Circle aims to support and develop the capacity of Indigenous peoples to articulate and respond to relevant challenges and opportunities and to improve programming and policy. Considering the history of strained Indigenous-settler relationships and the significant population of Indigenous peoples in the Thunder Bay Region, there is a unique opportunity to demonstrate how food can be a tool for reconciliation and resurgence.

### ***Originality, significance and expected contribution to knowledge***

In considering food systems, it is impossible to talk about agriculture and fisheries (including social, ecological and economic sustainability) without considering the unresolved land claims, broken treaties and the relationships between settler and Indigenous communities. Since the arrival of European settlers, Indigenous peoples have been violently removed from their lands and forced to assimilate. Indigenous traditions around food have been treated with contempt by settler governments and viewed as detrimental to colonial notions of progress and development. The perpetuation of colonial structures has resulted in a loss of access to Traditional territories and with that a deliberate attempt at erasure of Indigenous identity and culture (Daschuk 2013). Today, many face challenges that include extremely high rates of poverty, poor health, lack of education, and limited access to public services (Power 2008; Council of Canadian Academies 2014). However, through ongoing resistance efforts, many Indigenous peoples have been involved in the protection and revitalization of land waters and Traditional food

systems including cultivation, fishing, hunting and foraging (Morrison 2011; Rudolph and McLachlan 2013). While there are clearly opportunities to bring Indigenous communities into existing collaborative food networks, deeper engagement must begin with settler food movements fundamentally altering dominant perceptions of food activism and learning from Indigenous food sovereignty efforts (Kepkiewicz et al. 2015; Matties 2016). While the field of sustainable food systems studies has expanded dramatically over the past decade, there remains a major gap in research and practice surrounding Indigenous food sovereignty in the context of Indigenous and settler relations, and especially within an urban context. Whereas the vast majority of literature is concentrated on Indigenous peoples' responsibilities and roles in Indigenous food sovereignty, this project emphasizes the shared responsibilities of settlers.

### ***Appropriateness of the theoretical and methodological approaches***

This project is based on three key approaches that bring together the guiding theory and methodology that will be used to meet the stated objectives: democratic/civic engagement in food systems, Indigenous food sovereignty, and decolonizing/Indigenous methodologies.

The dominant approaches to food systems have focused on increasing profit through processes of neoliberalization (Lawrence et al. 2013; Pechlaner and Otero 2010) and productivism (Rosin 2013). This emphasis has been widely criticized as contributing to the seemingly intractable challenges concerning health and wellbeing, ecosystem integrity, waste and pollution, and social inequality and poverty (Lang and Heasman 2004; IAASTD, 2009; IPES 2016). Current policy frameworks in the global north, with few exceptions, consider these as collateral problems and respond to them through fragmented approaches that treat symptoms rather than analyzing and responding to structural issues (Rideout et al. 2007; MacRae 2011; Dowler and O'Connor 2012). Top-down policy approaches tend to overlook on-the-ground realities and ignore the needs and priorities of people and communities in favor of broader economic development plans and processes. This has led to a legitimacy crisis – the widespread public distrust of the ability of governments, industry and academics to resolve these interconnected challenges (Renting et al. 2012).

In response to these discontents, researchers, civil society organizations, and social movements have mobilized at multiple scales to develop viable solutions to transform food systems (Holt Gimenez and Shattuck 2011; Levkoe 2014). A prominent solution has come in the form of food policy councils that provide a forum to address food systems issues and a platform for coordinated action among multi-sectoral stakeholders (Blay-Palmer 2009; Scherb 2012). While diverse in structure, most aim to develop democratic and inclusive processes to evaluate, influence and establish integrated policy and programs for healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems. This work focuses on public engagement in policy making processes, often emphasizing opportunities for more participatory forms of democracy and engagement (Koc et al. 2008). As an approach to food policy development, these processes are rooted in systems thinking which recognize the interconnections between environmental, social, and economic factors (Lang 2009), and a whole of government approach (i.e. a joined-up food policy) through mechanisms that provide opportunities for meaningful social participation (Barling et al. 2002; MacRae 2011). The TBAFS is an example of a food policy council that promotes regional food self-reliance, healthy environments, and thriving economies through the implementation of research, planning, policy, and program development (TBAFS n.d.).

Drawing on ideals of civic and democratic engagement in policy making the research project will be rooted in the concept of Indigenous food sovereignty that emphasizes a re-connection to land-based food and political systems (Morrison 2011; Rudolph and McLachlan 2013). Our research methodology aims to begin from a decolonizing approach that is led by, and responsive to the values and worldviews of

Indigenous peoples and action based (Chilsa 2011; Grey and Patel 2015; Martens et al. 2015). In addition, this project also employs Indigenous pedagogical practice through a process of learning while doing, allowing for knowledge to freely emerge in an ethical process of embodied and relational knowledge production (Ray, 2012).

The exploratory phase of this project has been led by an Indigenous member of the TBAFS Executive Committee reaching out to Indigenous organizations, with the support of Dr. Levkoe and an Indigenous Lakehead University student. We have held twenty initial meetings with Indigenous led organizations that have expressed interest in participating in the Indigenous Circle. Through this project we will further explore what Indigenous organizations are involved in food systems initiatives in the Thunder Bay region and how the TBAFS can better support initiatives and partnerships that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples. The research will involve non-traditional means of engagement (i.e., different than meetings and engagement sessions that established the TBAFS) including a series of participatory conversations to build trusting relationships. For many Indigenous cultures, this engagement is part of a necessary process of trust and relationship building. A summary of the information gathered will be presented back to participants through one-on-one meetings and at a meeting of the Indigenous Circle, mid-way through the project, to determine next steps. The results will be presented through a series of articles in the TBAFS newsletters and publications of member organizations, a final report, a peer reviewed publication, conference presentations and at a final event launching the Indigenous Circle.

#### ***Plan for knowledge uptake by target audiences, and anticipated outputs, outcomes and/or impacts***

The primary goal of this project is to enhance relationships between Indigenous communities, the TBAFS and faculty and students at Lakehead University. As discussed in the Outputs section, we will produce an internal report for the TBAFS and the Indigenous Circle documenting our work and recommendations for moving forward, knowledge dissemination activities including peer reviewed publications, public outreach and informational materials, conference presentations and a major public event and the formal establishment of the Indigenous Circle. This will all be accomplished by developing a team of community engaged researchers (e.g., faculty, students and community practitioners) and the network of TBAFS members that includes over 40 organizational members, ten executive members and seven municipalities. Once the project is complete, the TBAFS has committed to supporting the establishment and future development of the Indigenous Circle. What this looks like will be determined by the research from this project. Beyond the Thunder Bay Region, we will draw on our existing relationships with regional food systems organizations involved in similar initiatives that will support knowledge uptake. These will include provincial and national networks facilitated by Sustain Ontario: The Alliance for Health Food and Farming (<https://sustainontario.com/>) and Food Secure Canada (<https://foodsecurecanada.org/>) two food movement organizations that bring together multi-stakeholder groups (including Indigenous communities and policy makers) to build an equitable, healthy and sustainable food system for all.

#### ***Participation of partner organization***

The TBFS Coordinator, Executive Committee and Council will play a central role supporting the overall project (including supporting the intellectual leadership and decision-making processes of the Indigenous Circle). Currently, the TBAFS Executive Committee is made of representatives from key sectors of the Thunder Bay community including the municipal government, farming, small businesses, academia, non-profit, social services and public health. The TBAFS Council represents a much broader network of over forty public, private and nonprofit organizations that will also play a significant role in supporting this project. These groups have committed to supporting the coordination and analysis of research, as well as the knowledge mobilization process and supporting the Indigenous Circle beyond the completion

of the research project. Most importantly, the experiences and expertise of the Indigenous organizations will play a key role in guiding the direction of the project.

***Roles, responsibilities and contributions of the applicant and co- applicants/collaborators***

Dr. Charles Levkoe (Principal Investigator) and Dr. Lana Ray (Co-Investigator, also an emerging scholar) will work closely with the TBAFS Coordinator (Amy Bumbacco) to direct the research project. Dr. Levkoe and Dr. Ray both have extensive experience with community-based research and with the theory and practice of democratic food policy and Indigenous food sovereignty. Dr. Levkoe is the Canada Research Chair in Sustainable Food Systems and brings substantial expertise in the field of sustainable food systems and community campus engagement. Over the past 20 years, he has worked as a practitioner and researcher, with food movements across North America, including policy oriented initiatives. Dr. Ray brings over ten years of experience working with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous methodologies in the fields of health and education at both a grassroots and systems level. She is also a member of Red Rock First Nation. Together they will guide the project and take a leadership role in coordinating and implementing key aspects of the research, data analysis and knowledge dissemination. The TBAFS Coordinator will support the processes by facilitating relationships with the TBAFS Executive and Council members along with the leaders of the Indigenous Circle and Indigenous organizations. She will also participate in periodic meetings as part of the intellectual leadership and ongoing decision making.

***Roles and responsibilities of students, emerging scholars and/or other highly qualified personnel***

Using Indigenous Methodologies, Indigenous researchers (e.g., the co-Pi, two students and a community researcher) and preliminary members of the Indigenous Circle (a subgroup of the TBAFS) will play a leadership role in this project. Key to success will be two Indigenous Master's students at Lakehead University that have already been engaged in the initial phase of the Indigenous Circle. These students will be hired as research assistants and play a leadership role in the research and knowledge dissemination. One student will be funded through the SSHRC Partnership Engage Grant to focus directly on the project outcomes, while the second student will receive funding through a Lakehead University Faculty Research Award to conduct their own research related to (and in support of) the project. Both students have a connection with the TBAFS, Indigenous people living in Thunder Bay, and many of the organizations interested in participating in the Indigenous Circle. They have already established trust that will be a vital element of the project. In addition, we will hire a community researcher that has experience working in Indigenous food sovereignty and has ties to Indigenous organizations in the region. These three individuals will conduct a substantial part of the research. Dr. Levkoe and Dr. Ray will provide ongoing training and support to these three individuals throughout the research project. As part of the research team, the two students and the community researcher will also play a role in analyzing the research data and participating in ongoing meetings to make decisions about the direction and outcomes of the project. Specifically, they will build skills in new research methods and theories, consultation and community engagement and leadership and teamwork. They will also be a part of knowledge mobilization and dissemination through contributing to publications and participating in academic and community-level conferences. The skills and networking opportunities developed through the project will be an asset to help students and highly qualified personnel to access future employment and continuing education opportunities.

***Confirmed or proposed contributions of the applicant's institution, the partner organization and/or other sources***

Lakehead University will administer the funds for the project and provide additional support to hire a student Research Assistant through a Faculty Research Award. They will also provide space to host the project's research staff at the Centre for Sustainable Food Systems, Research and Engagement. The



TBAFS will provide in-kind support for the project. The TBAFS Coordinator will provide administrative support and be an active member of the research team. Members of the Executive Committee and Council will support the project as needed, and serve on the Indigenous Circle to offer their strategic advice and provide connections to regional networks and leaders where appropriate. The Executive Committee will also provide organizational and logistical support for meetings, events, initiatives. As well, they will assist in knowledge dissemination and ongoing communication about the research in our growing network of stakeholders through social media, a monthly newsletter, and in-person meetings. In addition, organizational members of the Indigenous Circle (e.g., Thunder Bay Indian Friendship Centre, Fort William First Nations, the Metis National of Ontario, Shkoday Abinojiiwak Obimiwedoan Aboriginal Head Start, and Mushkiki) have committed in-kind contributions that include the use of organizational space, supporting recruiting and supervision of the community researcher, general administration, and staff time.

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Family name, Given name  
Levkoe, Charles

### Funds Requested from SSHRC

Estimate as accurately as possible the research costs that you are asking SSHRC to fund through a grant. For each Personnel costs category, enter the number of individuals to be hired and specify the total amount required. For each of the other categories, enter the total amount required.

	Year 1	
	No.	Amount
<b>Personnel costs</b>		
<b>Student salaries and benefits/Stipends</b>		
Undergraduate		
Masters	1	10,000
Doctorate		
<b>Non-student salaries and benefits/Stipends</b>		
Postdoctoral		
Other	1	10,000
<b>Travel and subsistence costs</b>		
<b>Applicant/Team member(s)</b>		
Canadian travel		2,600
Foreign travel		
<b>Students</b>		
Canadian travel		
Foreign travel		
<b>Other expenses</b>		
<b>Professional/Technical services</b>		
<b>Supplies</b>		
<b>Non-disposable equipment</b>		
Computer hardware		
Other		
<b>Other expenses (specify)</b>		
		0
Honorariums for participants		1,000
Speakers (travel costs and sti		600
<b>Total</b>		24,200



Family name, Given name

Levkoe, Charles

### Expected Outcomes Summary

Describe the potential benefits/outcomes (e.g., evolution, effects, potential learning, implications) that could emerge from the proposed research and/or other partnership activities.

The research will explore ways that the Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy (TBAFS) can better support initiatives and partnerships that are meaningful and relevant to Indigenous peoples in the Thunder Bay region. The primary outcome of the Indigenous Circle project will be an enhanced relationship between Indigenous peoples, the TBAFS (including over 40 organizational members, ten executive members and seven municipalities) and faculty and students at Lakehead University. Through a deeper engagement and research partnership with Indigenous organizations involved in sustainable food systems work, we aim to better understand the existing efforts, challenges and opportunities to support greater collaboration around food sovereignty, reconciliation and resurgence in the Thunder Bay region.

This project will result in three tangible outputs. First, results will be documented in an internal report for the TBAFS and the Indigenous Circle. This report will include documentation of the research conducted, a description of the opportunities and challenges for the development of the Indigenous Circle, and a set of recommendations for moving forward. The report will also include reference to existing resources and new resources developed during the project. Second, the project aims to formally establish the Indigenous Circle through creating a mandate, governance structure and Terms of Reference. At this point it is unknown what this will look like (e.g., whether it will be a working group of the TBAFS or become an independent entity), which is precisely why this research is required. A major element of this effort will be training students, community researchers and Indigenous organizations to play a leadership role in research and this new initiative. Third, the research will result in knowledge dissemination activities that document the learnings and respond to the key questions presented above. These will include at least one peer reviewed publication, public outreach and informational materials (newspaper, magazine, newsletter, and radio), conference presentations (academic, practitioner and public) and a major public event sharing the research and celebrating the establishment of the Indigenous Circle.

Beyond these tangible outputs, there are a series of overarching outcomes that will emerge from the enhanced relationships between the TBAFS, Lakehead and Indigenous peoples. We anticipate that the research will help the TBAFS to better understand food-related needs and issues that impact Indigenous peoples and settler relations. It will also provide insight into mechanisms that have worked elsewhere and might be adapted to the context of the Thunder Bay region. Training and supporting Indigenous students as well as community practitioners to engage in research using a decolonizing approach will be essential to support this project and build longer-term leadership capacity. Furthermore, the research will identify additional questions to be explored and opportunities for future collaborations and project development. Social benefits will include a stronger and more receptive TBAFS able to support Indigenous food sovereignty efforts. By developing meaningful relationships between Indigenous and settler communities around food, the capacity of Indigenous organizations, non-Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous organizations to address critical issues will be greatly enhanced. Through this project we also aim to bring our learnings to the broader Thunder Bay community (and eventually to Northwestern Ontario) as an example of reconciliation and resurgence through food. The Indigenous Circle will work closely with the TBAFS to address policy and governance that support healthy, equitable and sustainable food systems in the region.



### Funds from Other Sources

You must include all other sources of funding for the proposed research. Indicate whether these funds have been confirmed or not.

Full organization name Contribution type	Confirmed	Year 1	
Indigenous Circle Organizational Contributions  In Kind	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5,000	
Lakehead University  Cash	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5,000	
Sustain Ontario  Cash	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	1,000	
Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy  In Kind	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	5,000	
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
	<input type="checkbox"/>		
<b>Total funds from other sources</b>		16,000	



Family name, Given name

Levkoe, Charles

### Contributions from Partner Organizations

A partner is an organization that participates actively in a formal partnership and contributes in a meaningful way to the success of the endeavour.

	Cash	In-kind
<b>Confirmed</b>	0	5,000
<b>Unconfirmed</b>		
<b>Total of all partner organizations' contributions</b>		
<b>A. Total of all partner organizations' contributions (cash + in-kind)</b>		5,000
<b>B. Total funds from other sources</b>		16,000
<b>C. Total funds requested from SSHRC</b>		24,200
<b>Total cost of project (A + B + C)</b>		45,200



## Appendix D – Indigenous Circle Resources

### *Selected Journals Articles*

1. Cidro, Jaime, Bamidele Adekunle, Evelyn Peters, and Tabitha Martens. “Beyond Food Security: Understanding Access to Cultural Food for Urban Indigenous people in Winnipeg as Indigenous Food Sovereignty.” *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 24/1 (2015): 24-43.

The article highlights Food Security and Cultural Values in relation to Urban Indigenous people, exploring meanings of Cultural Values. It examines certain goals of Indigenous Food Sovereignty, which should lead to positive benefits and economic well being. Results included three themes: Cultural Food as ceremony, cultural food in connecting with land and reciprocity and re- learning Indigenous Food Sovereignty to address food insecurity.

2. Cote, Charlotte. “Indigenizing Food Sovereignty. Revitalizing Indigenous Food Practices and Ecological Knowledges in Canada and the United States.” *Humanities* 5/57 (July 15 2016): 1- 14.

An Indigenous group that started a “Food Sovereignty Movement” that is now on a global scale. The article summarizes the Groups potential to revitalize Indigenous Food practice and ecological knowledge, specifically through self determination and decolonization. They group challenge’s corporate and industrial model of Agriculture, with through Cultural responsibilities and relationships with the land, thus everyone has the right to culturally healthy food.

3. Elliott, Bethany, Depthi Jayatilaka, Contessa Brown, Leslie Varley, and Kitty K. Corbett. “We are not being heard: Aboriginal perspectives on traditional foods access and food security.” *Journal of Environmental and Public Health* (2012): 1–9.

An examination on access to Traditional Foods in the city, outlining. It outlines the process where Non Aboriginal people and Aboriginal people can engage, in a culturally appropriate and respectful manner, to assess barriers and challenges faced. They conclude with Conclusions include actions at the local, national and international level, and portray their interconnectedness, with substantial challenges and positive solutions for better Food Security.

4. Gendron, Fidji, Anna Hancherow, and Ashley Norton. “Exploring and revitalizing Indigenous food networks in Saskatchewan, Canada, as a way to Improve Food Security.” *Health Promotion International* 32/5 (October 2016): 808- 817.

The project in the article explains the revitalization of Indigenous Food networks via local food networks, volunteer opportunities, social media, workshop in relation to knowledge and interest to Indigenous Foods. Through sSurveys and activities are they used for

statistical and qualitative analyses. Results Common themes suggest learning more, and having access to Traditional Foods, and that any Indigenous Food Networks should be supported by Elders and Community Members.

5. Grey, Sam, and Raj Patel. "Food Sovereignty as Decolonization: Some contributions from Indigenous Movements to Food System and Development Politics." *Agriculture and Human Values*, 32/3,(2015): 431- 444.

The articles states that Food Sovereignty is about people making their own decisions about their own Food Systems, and because people are diverse different results will have a different context, including with core principles. The article illustrates Indigenous Context, and because of anti- colonial struggles and post colonial contexts, Food sovereignty will look different. The information can benefit Scholars in Food Sovereignty and those in Indigenous politics, to find proper solutions. The articles stresses Gender roles (cosmologies/ philosophies) in Indigenous struggles.

6. Kepkiewicz, Lauren, and Bryan Dale. "Keeping 'our' land: property, agriculture and tensions between Indigenous and settler visions of food sovereignty in Canada." *Journal of Peasant Studies* (2018): online.

Abstract: This paper situates literature on food sovereignty and land reforms in relation to academic and popular writings about land issues in Canada. We argue that settler Canadian food sovereignty scholarship and activism has yet to sufficiently grapple with the implications of private property ownership in relation to ongoing processes of settler colonialism. We also argue that efforts to advance ecologically sustainable farming practices in Canada need to confront private property ownership in terms of its contribution to both capitalist and colonial violence.

7. Kerpan, Serene T, M. Louise Humbert and Carol J Henry. "Determinants of diet for urban Aboriginal youth: Implications for health promotion." *Sage Journals Health Promotion Practice*, 16/3 (2015): 392–400.

The articles highlights urban Aboriginal youth, one of the highest groups experiencing obesity, Type 2 Diabetes and cardiovascular disease, with diet being the main contributor. An Ethnographic study is done, two common themes emerge 1.) Traditions and Sharing; food networks used to get Traditional foods, more desired by participants. 2.) Struggle; daily challenges with food security. The article focus on Health Professionals to promote healthy food, living and programs.

8. Martens, Tabitha, Jaime Cidro, Michael Anthony Hart and Stephane Machlan. "Understanding Indigenous Food Sovereignty through an Indigenous Research Paradigm" *Journal of Indigenous Social Development* 5/1 (2016): 18- 37.

Represents and expresses their Indigenous Food Sovereignty movement. It's holistic in nature; mental, intellectual, spiritual and emotional. Reports on 32 interviews performed

in Western Canada, that produced a better understanding of IFS practices and indigenous research methodologies. Other values include metaphors (stories and legends) as a tool, and acknowledging harmony that exists between food and nature.

9. Morrison, Dawn. Indigenous food sovereignty: a model for social learning. In H. Wittman, A. Desmarais, and N. Wiebe (eds.). *Food sovereignty in Canada: creating just and sustainable food systems*, pp. 97-13. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing. (2011).

This chapter discusses what food sovereignty means from an Indigenous perspective.

10. Rotz, Sarah. ‘They took our beads, it was a fair trade, get over it’: Settler colonial logics, racial hierarchies and material dominance in Canadian agriculture. *Geoforum*, 82 (2017): 158-169.

Abstract: Canada is in a liminal space, with renewed struggles for and commitments to indigenous land and food sovereignty on one hand, and growing capital interest in land governance and agriculture on the other. While neoliberal capital increasingly accumulates land-based control, settler-farming communities still manage much of Canada’s arable land. This research draws on studies of settler colonialism, racial hierarchy and othering to connect the ideological with the material forces of settler colonialism and show how material dominance is maintained through colonial logics and racially ordered narratives. Through in-depth interviews, I investigate how white settler farmers perceive and construct two distinctly ‘othered’ groups: Indigenous peoples and migrant farmers and farm workers. Further, I show the disparate role of land and labour in constructing each group, and specifically, the cultural and material benefits of these constructions for land-based settler populations. At the same time, settler colonial structures and logics remain reciprocally coupled to political conditions. For instance, contemporary neoliberalism in Canadian agriculture modifies settler colonial structures to be sure. I argue, however, that political economic analyses of land and food production in Canada (such as corporate concentration, land grabbing and farm consolidation) ought to better integrate the systemic forces of settler colonialism that have conditioned land access in the first place. Of course, determining who is able to access land—and thus, who is able to grow food—continues to be a territorial struggle. Thus, in order to shift these conditions we ought to examine how those with access and control have acquired and maintained it.

11. Skinner, Kelly, Erin Pratley, and Kristin Burnett. “Eating in the City: A Review of the Literature of Food Insecurity and Indigenous People Living in Urban spaces.” *Societies* 6/7 (2016): 1- 17.

Reviews overlapping and co existing food environments, market based food and land and water-based foods, that are complicated by geography, effects of colonialism, static and forced reservations and Indigenous people moving to urban settings. The article also inspects the scoping study of food insecurity in urban spaces, particularly in Canada, US and Australia. It speaks to the variety and commonalities of Indigenous people’s experiences.

12. Socha, Teresa, Mehdi Zahaf, Lori Chambers, Rawnda Abraham, and Teri Fiddler. "Food security in a northern First Nations community: An exploratory study on food availability and accessibility." *Journal of Aboriginal Health*, 8/2 (2012): 5–14.

This article declares social and health detriments, the lack of healthy nutritious foods, in northern remote communities, with little to no attention. The authors argue that community members suggestion are vital, and stress that food will not solve all problems but it will produce a healthier social change. A talking circle was achieved, embracing traditional sharing and storytelling. Everyone acknowledged the need for Food Sovereignty, food security, solutions to ill health, and highlighted the importance of traditional knowledge and values.

### ***Selected Reports***

1. Cidro, Jaime et al. "Final Report: Defining Food Security for Urban Aboriginal People." Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network website.  
<http://uakn.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/UAKN-PRC-Final-Report-Defining-Food-Security-for-Urban-Aboriginal-People-Cidro-Peters-Sinclair-FINAL-Spring-2014-1.pdf>

Food Security seen as an issue with unique elements associated to cultural values such as; the importance of future generations to re learn their Traditional foods; explores the definition of Food Security by the United Nations; interprets the four pillars of Food Security in detail. Explains what Food Security means to Aboriginal People, to create policy and programming recommendations. Review of their challenges of maintaining and accessing culturally valued food, and to meet the needs of their households.

2. Building a Healthy, Just and Sustainable Food System: Food Secure Canada's Recommendations for A Food Policy for Canada. Food Secure Canada, September 2017.  
[https://foodsecurecanada.org/sites/foodsecurecanada.org/files/attached\\_files/policy\\_brief\\_a\\_food\\_policy\\_for\\_canada\\_sept\\_28\\_by\\_fsc.pdf](https://foodsecurecanada.org/sites/foodsecurecanada.org/files/attached_files/policy_brief_a_food_policy_for_canada_sept_28_by_fsc.pdf)

This Report focuses positive social outcomes, how to increase safe and healthy food access, achieve collaborative governance, and sustain economic development, to ensure everyone's right to food. It advises ways to conserve air, water and soil, to grow high quality food, through guiding principles, constructed in a way to respond to Government(s), and presents Budget allocations.

3. Resetting the Table: A People's Food Policy for Canada. The Peoples Food Policy Project, 2011. <https://foodsecurecanada.org/people-food-policy>

This report outlines what a people's food policy for Canada might look like. It include recommendations from thousands of people across Canada and was led by an Indigenous Circle that helped to shape the direction and process of the consultations and writing.

4. Expert Panel on the State of Knowledge of Food Security in Northern Canada. *Aboriginal food security in Northern Canada: an assessment of the state of knowledge*. Council of Canadian Academies, 2014.

<http://www.scienceadvice.ca/en/assessments/completed/food-security.aspx>

Abstract: Food insecurity presents a serious and growing challenge in Canada's northern and remote Aboriginal communities. In 2011, off-reserve Aboriginal households in Canada were about twice as likely as other Canadian households to be food insecure. Finding lasting solutions will require the involvement not just of policy-makers but of those most affected by food insecurity: people living in the North. In recognition of this problem, the Minister of Health, on behalf of Health Canada, asked the Council of Canadian Academies to appoint an expert panel to assess the knowledge of the factors influencing food security in the Canadian North and of the health implications of food insecurity for northern Aboriginal populations. The Expert Panel on the State of Knowledge of Food Security in Northern Canada found that food insecurity among northern Aboriginal peoples requires urgent attention in order to mitigate impacts on health and well-being. *Aboriginal Food Security in Northern Canada: An Assessment of the State of Knowledge* offers policy-makers a holistic starting-point for discussion and problem-solving. It also provides evidence and options to researchers and communities engaging in local responses.

5. First Nations Food, Nutrition and Environment Study (FNFNES): Results from Ontario (2011/2012). Laurie Chan, Olivier Receveur, Malek Batal, William David, Harold Schwartz, Amy Ing, Karen Fediuk, Andrew Black and Constantine Tikhonov. Ottawa: University of Ottawa, 2014.

Abstract: First Nations have expressed concerns about the impacts of environmental pollution on the quality and safety of traditionally-harvested foods. However, very little is known about the composition of First Nations' diets, or about the level of contaminants in traditional foods. The goal of this study is to fill this gap in knowledge about the diet of First Nations peoples living on-reserve, south of the 60th parallel. In addition, baseline information on human and veterinary pharmaceuticals in surface waters are being collected, especially where fish are being harvested or where water is being taken for drinking purposes

### ***Tools, Case Studies***

1. Moving the NAN Strategy Forward, Community People making a Difference  
<http://nada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/pdfs/Food%20Security%20&%20Nutrition/Moving%20the%20NAN%20Food%20Strategy%20Forward.pdf>

A Power Point presentations on NAN's resolutions, Economic priorities and Food Strategy. It describes their Vision and Food Model: approach, belief, focus and Objectives. It contains tool kit, web portal, traditional and cultural land based food

access, and ultimately how to gain control of their own food access (sovereignty). It concludes with further research, challenges, opportunities and working as a community.

2. Nakodan- Answering the Call, 1st Indigenous Knowledge Conference 2017  
Keynote Speaker; Dr. Leroy Little Bear, University of Lethbridge.  
“Presentation: Metaphysics: Intersecting Western and Native Ideas”  
(downloaded document)

Little Bear speaks of the importance and relationship with the land, the cosmos, animate and inanimate objects (trees to rocks) and compares it to western science; the bigger the better the faster. That time is not something indigenous people wouldn't worry about. Through oral traditions and histories indigenous philosophy has been around for thousands of years. Little Bear compares paradigms, the age of reason, space/ place, natural law, language and manifestations.

3. Food Sovereignty Assessment Tool, 2nd Edition 2014  
<https://firstnations.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/FSAT/mobile/index.html>

Written by “First Nations Development Institution” that educate Grassroots practitioners, advocate for systemic change and capitalize Indian Communities. The Assessment Tool was created to revive disrupted Indigenous Food Systems. Indigenous people had a rich history of healthy food systems and agriculture, until the newcomers arrived. The Tool is designed to gain back control of indigenous assets; food systems through past and current success stories and initiatives. It discusses diet, other Food Projects, wholistic views, policies and offers sample exercises.

4. Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study: Thunder Bay Report 2011  
<http://www.uaps.ca/wp-content/uploads/2010/02/UAPS-Thunder-Bay-report.pdf>

Written by Environics Institute's Circle, steering committee and staff. The report shows statistics and findings of Aboriginal people and different institutes, and their interaction with non Aboriginal people, in the Thunder Bay area. It reveals that Aboriginal people are still connected with their home communities, and are proud of being Indigenous, who have a very high tolerance of other people. It reviews treatment, cultural arts, successes, identity, services and organizations, etc. It has both positive and negative views and perspectives from Aboriginal and non Aboriginal people.

5. CASE STUDY: Tait Neufeld, Hannah and Chantelle A. M. Richmond. “Impacts of Place and Social Spaces on Traditional Food Systems in Southwestern Ontario.” *International Journal of Indigenous Health* 12/1 (2017): 93- 115.

There is a tremendous amount of undocumented Traditional Food Systems among the Indigenous people, referring to oral histories. The articles probes how much knowledge Indigenous mothers have on access to Food. Through sharing and personal knowledge of Traditional food, results indicate that Indigenous mother, on reserve, rely on Traditional

Foods (land, family, permitted knowledge) while urban mothers are faced with much more challenges, including loss of Traditional knowledge.

6. CBC Radio Podcast: UnReserved with Rosanna Deerchild  
<http://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/results?q=foods%26site%3Dwww.cbc.ca%2Fradio%2Funreserved&searchquery=foods>

Food being used as a weapon: The lasting effects of colonialism on Indigenous food  
Historically traditional cuisines was used to tell stories, a method of how it was one of the way's Indigenous people gathered, prepared and ate food to socialize and bined relationships. It This was drastically affected by colonialism. Indigenous Food was used to feed the Settlers which sadly backfired: food was then used to starve out the First Nations. Over time there has 's been major positive changes in Indigenous Food Cuisines, for example the Indian Taco.

#### Bannock, Wild Meat and Indigenous Food Sovereignty

The hosts investigate where Bannock came omes from by visiting an Indigenous Restaurant called "Feast Cafe." The hosts also speak to Althea Guiboche who volunteers her time to make bannock and chili, feeding the Indigenous homeless people in Winnipeg. There are many new, modern day other creative initiatives, described in this story here, by Indigenous people for Indigenous people, that . These new modern day initiatives pave new paths ways to Indigenous Food Sovereignty, in an urban setting.

7. Podcast: Red Man Laughing. <https://www.redmanlaughing.com/>  
Red Man Laughing is the podcast of Ojibway/Metis Comedian – Ryan McMahon. The show features rants & comedic monologues from McMahon himself and also features new music from Indigenous musicians from around the world as well as featured interviews with some of the worlds leading Indigenous thinkers.
8. Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty on Decolonizing Research and Relationships (Soundcloud)  
<https://soundcloud.com/tammyleameyer/wgifs-decolonizing-research-and-relationships>

The Group generates space and knowledge about within Foods systems discourse, focusing on hunting, fishing and Gatherings. This group has the most sustainable adaptations/ strategies of humanity, but they are not seen in agri- food system and research and development. Thise conversation speaks into ways to better understand decolonizing research and relationships, for truth and reconciliation among indigenous people in food systems.

### *Selected Initiatives*

1. **Kiitigaan Aski: Good Things Grow On the Land.** Nishnawbe Aski Nation Food Strategy. <http://kiitigaanaskihub.ca/introduction-to-nan-food-strategy/>

2. **Eat Right Ontario: Traditional Food for Aboriginal People:** An article, that is part of a much larger site, that describes what is Traditional Foods that is available in Ontario, what their Health Benefits are, and gives information tips on Healthy eating. Focus is on Fish and Wild Game, recipes and links to more information and social media.

<https://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Aboriginal-Health/Traditional-Food-for-Aboriginal-People.aspx>

3. **Urban Aboriginal Knowledge Network:** A research network of Urban Aboriginal Communities. Under research > News and Resources, type in “Food” and it gives a large list of journal articles, events, research projects and workshops, across Turtle Island  
<http://uakn.org/>
4. **First Nations Health Authority:** Under Traditional Wellness and click on “Traditional Foods” there are links/ files to articles/ stories.

#### Traditional Foods Fact sheets

A 31 page document describing Traditional Foods, the historic significance, the traditional use, harvesting, tools and message. Examples include fish, moose, deer, small mammals, birds, seaweed, roots, berries, plants, and it also shares recipes.

#### Setting the Table for Healthy Food Conversation

A Report done by Elders, in regards to sugary drinks that children consume today. Through historic oral Teachings the Elders share their course of Actions for families, individuals and within the community. They also share their historic knowledge and modern day health concerns.

<http://www.fnha.ca/wellness/wellness-for-first-nations/traditional-wellness/traditional-foods>

5. **Great Lakes Region IAC:** under “Great Lakes Intertribal Food summit 2018.” The website has information on Indigenous Agriculture, surrounding the Great Lakes, specifically Lake Superior’s Michigan, Minnesota and Wisconsin. This year the group is preparing for the “Great Lakes Intertribal Food Summit.” There are links to Grants, Scholarships, events, medicines, farming etc.  
<https://iacgreatlakes.com/>
6. **Indigenous Food Systems Network:** A resource directory for everyone interested in Indigenous Food Relation action and research. Based out of B.C. the website encompasses information on Legends, stories, events, gathering, tools and skill building. It discusses unique ways of Policy Reform, networking and information gathering. It also goes into detail about land management, bio regional economics, community mobilization and millennial cultural harvesting strategies.  
<http://indigenousfoodsystems.org/>



7. **The Nourish Movement:** This specific website was mentioned at a previous “Indigenous circle” meetings. It is a more of a contemporary website, discussion on farm to table foods, more respectively on women in control of their bodies. They sell food packages (day, weekly, monthly) that is all organic and free from preservatives, gluten etc. There is a Blog and it is supported by a Corporate Sponsor.

<https://www.thenourishmovement.com/>

**Food Secure Canada, Indigenous Circle:** A nation wide website that has tremendous material. Under “Indigenous circle” you have access to Indigenous news, events, discussions and resources. The main focus is It is mainly about Food security in institutions, schools and s well as remote communities. There are reports available on provincial, and national networks, and new laws, and updates on Fishers and Farmers, academia and social media links.

<https://foodsecurecanada.org/community-networks/indigenous-circle>

8. **Dietitians of Canada:** This is a professional association at a National level. Their objective is to promote health through nutrition and diet, with easier access to healthy food, and advocate for better practices and dieticians. The Website holds vital information on health, nutrition, breastfeeding, diet, recipes and offers their views on Aboriginal population. It is a well maintained portal, to other links and resources

<https://www.dietitians.ca/>

9. **Thunder Bay and Area Food Strategy:** A group of local food players that implement research, planning, policy and program development on healthy, sustainable food security in Thunder Bay. This is where the notion for more Indigenous input and perspectives was noted. The website consists of their governance structure, the organizations and people involved, their pillars and community projects. It features urban agriculture, infrastructure and contains important strategy documents.

<http://tbfoodstrategy.com/>

10. **First Nations Development Institute; Nourishing Native Foods and Health:** A very large website based in the US. It has descriptive information on housing, financial empowerment, strengthening tribal and community institutions etc. Under “Programs” click “Nourishing Native Foods and Health.” It has relevant bulletins, reports and resources. It advertises current campaigns and projects that strengthen communities and their economies.

<https://firstnations.org/programs/foods-health>