

# **MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION**

## **MEETING INFORMATION NOTE**

**DATE:** November 16, 2018

**PREPARED FOR:** Honourable Shane Simpson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction

**MEETING DETAILS:** Glen Clark, President & COO, Jim Pattison Group  
Re: Food Security

### **BACKGROUND:**

Glen Clark has been the President and COO of the Jim Pattison Group since 2001. Clark was the Premier of British Columbia from 1996 – 1999, and was first elected to the Legislative Assembly in 1986. Clark has served as the Minister of Finance and Corporate Relations (1991- 93), Minister of Employment and Investment (1993-96), and Minister Responsible for Youth (1996-99).

The Jim Pattison Group (JPG) is a Vancouver-based corporation with interests in media, automotive dealerships, grocery store chains, magazine distribution, food service specialty packaging, advertising, real estate development, fishing, forest products, financial services, and entertainment. The company is Canada's second largest privately held company, with over 45,000 employees and \$10 billion in annual sales. Jim Pattison, a Vancouver-based entrepreneur, is the Chairman, CEO, and sole owner of the company.

JPG has been involved with the food industry in Canada since 1968. The JPG food portfolio includes Buy-Low Foods, Ocean Brands, Save-On-Foods, Canadian Fishing Company, Choices Market, Quality Foods, and Sun-Rype Products Ltd.

JPG and its companies have made multiple large donations to various causes over the years. In 2016, JPG donated over \$181,000 to Food Banks Canada, and in 2017, Jim Pattison made history by donating \$75 million to build the Jim Pattison Medical Centre, the largest ever private citizen donation in Canada.

### **ISSUES:**

#### **Food Security**

Food security and how it will be addressed within the poverty reduction strategy is anticipated to be the main issue raised.

Household food insecurity ranges from worrying about running out of food (marginal food insecurity), to not being able to afford healthy food (moderate food insecurity) and to

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Page 1

Version #:

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## MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

### MEETING INFORMATION NOTE

missing meals or going hungry (severe food insecurity). According to the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) in 2012, 12.7% of the BC population was food insecure: 3.2%, 5.7% and 3.8% experiencing severe, moderate and marginal food insecurity respectively (See Appendix A for full report). Higher rates of food insecurity are found in lower income households and among: families headed by single females, Indigenous Peoples, marginally housed and homeless people, and new immigrants.

#### Save-On-Foods Initiatives

Each year, Save-On-Foods donates food and consumer goods worth more than \$3 million to local food banks in Western Canada, along with hundreds of thousands of dollars in cash raised through community and store initiatives and fundraisers.

In June 2018, Save-On-Foods and Western Family launched the inaugural event of the Share It Forward campaign. Share It Forward is a three-day campaign that contributes 25% of net proceeds of every Western family product sold, up to \$250,000, directly to local food banks throughout Western Canada.

#### BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program

The BC School Fruit & Vegetable Nutritional Program (BCSFVNP) has been overseen by the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation (BCAIFC) since 2004, starting with just 10 schools throughout the province. In the 2018/19 school year, the program will serve 1,443 K-12 public schools and K-12 First Nations schools in BC.

Save-On-Foods is a founding partner of BCSFVNP, alongside the BC Government and the BCAIFC, and is the primary distributor for the program. The BCSFVNP distributes locally-produced fruits and vegetables every other week to over 530,000 school-aged children in the province.

#### **Poverty Reduction**

People throughout BC spoke about food security during the poverty reduction consultations. Nine main themes were echoed throughout the province:

1. Make nutritious food more available, affordable, and accessible
2. Implement a provincial school lunch program for all K-12 students
3. Increase access to and service hours for food banks and soup kitchens
4. Provide funding for more affordable grocery store options
5. Ensure access to traditional food sources for Indigenous and Metis people
6. Increase community supports for food security, such as community gardens and shared kitchens
7. Improve transportation options to grocery stores in Northern and remote areas
8. Create opportunities for learning about nutrition, cooking, and food-related services
9. Ensure that food available at food banks is nutritious and not spoiled

# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

## MEETING INFORMATION NOTE

See Appendix B for a full list of policy brief recommendations related to food security in BC that were submitted by organizations during the poverty reduction consultation.

### RECOMMENDED RESPONSE:

#### **Food Security**

- The ministry recognizes the challenges facing British Columbians when it comes to providing nutritious food for themselves and their families.
- The ministry values the work of organizations like Save-On-Foods in their efforts to ensure access to nutritional foods for British Columbians.
- The ministry held a comprehensive consultation process between October 2017 and March 2018 to inform BC's first poverty reduction strategy.
- The government sought out and received input from over 8,500 individuals, including meetings with the First Nations Leadership Council and First Nations Health Council, community meetings in rural and remote Indigenous communities, 27 meetings organized by the BC Association of Aboriginal Friendship Centres, and seven meetings organized by Metis Nation BC.
- Food security is one of the 12 key themes in the *What We Heard About Poverty in BC* report.
- During the consultation process, we heard about the lack of access to quality, affordable and healthy food for many British Columbians, and how it negatively impacted their lives.
- We heard that income assistance and wages are not high enough to cover the increasing cost of food and people are forced to rely on food banks.

#### **Poverty Reduction Strategy**

- The *Poverty Reduction Strategy Act* passed into law on November 8, 2018.
- This historic milestone commits the government to reducing the poverty rate by 25 percent for all persons living in poverty and 50 percent for children by 2024.
- The targets are based on the 2016 Market Basket Measure, which was recently adopted by the federal government as Canada's official poverty line.
- This is a cross-ministry commitment, and the plan will address broad services and supports to help reduce the poverty rate and create opportunities for people and families throughout our province.
- The plan will be built on the guiding principles of affordability, opportunity, social inclusion and reconciliation. It will seek to improve people's lives by addressing both the breadth and depth of poverty and will have a focus on breaking the cycle of poverty.
- The Poverty Reduction Strategy Act commits the government to developing and implementing the poverty reduction strategy by March 31, 2019.

# MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND POVERTY REDUCTION

## MEETING INFORMATION NOTE

### Enclosures/Attachments

Appendix A – BCCDC Food Costing in BC 2017

Appendix B – Policy Brief Recommendations from Poverty Reduction Consultation

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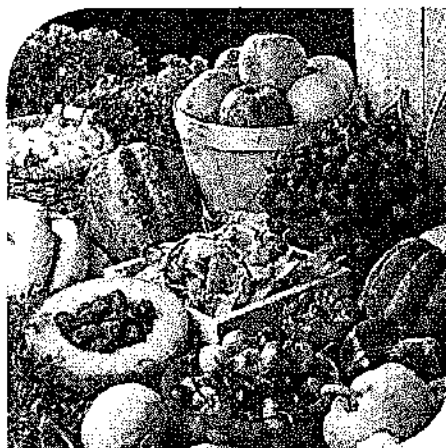
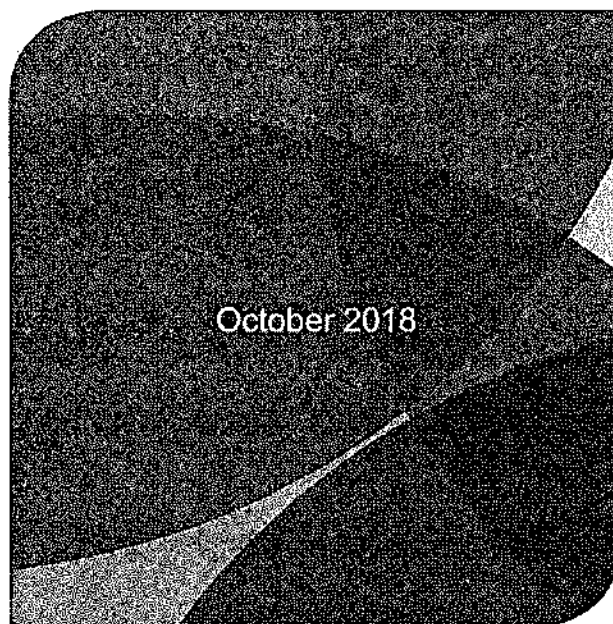
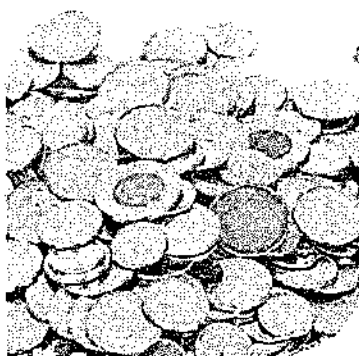
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# Food Costing in BC 2017:

Assessing the affordability of healthy eating



BC Centre for Disease Control  
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority

Page 06 to/à Page 31

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## POVERTY REDUCTION STRATEGY – POLICY BRIEF RECOMMENDATIONS RELATED TO FOOD SECURITY

### Introduction

- The table below presents a summary of policy brief recommendations related to food security in BC.
- The policy briefs were submitted to the poverty reduction consultations between October 30, 2017 and March 31, 2018.

Recommendation	Organization(s)
The 411 Seniors Centre strongly recommends that the provincial government provide core and ongoing funding for a wide variety of nutritional support programs at community based seniors programs.	411 Seniors Centre Society
A BC-wide school meal program should be implemented to ensure that children living in poverty, seniors, people with disabilities get adequate nutrition. We also advocate for extension of programs such as Farm to School; Farm to School programs bring healthy, local and sustainable food into schools and provide students with hands-on learning opportunities that foster food literacy, all while strengthening the local food system and enhancing school and community connectedness. This should be further enhanced by a BC food security strategy with particular attention paid to Northern and Indigenous communities	Public Health Association of BC
Provide core funding to community based seniors' centres and programs, such as the 411 Seniors Centre.	411 Seniors Centre Society
Provide subsidies for a regular meal program at [independent, community-based seniors centres].	Council of Senior Citizens' Organizations of BC
[W]e recommend that household food insecurity be addressed in BC's first poverty reduction strategy.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Expand, implement and/or pilot policy responses that ensure all households have consistent and sufficient income to pay for basic needs, including food.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Commit to mandatory annual data collection using standardized tools. Monitor marginal, moderate and severe food insecurity and include sufficient sample size, geographic representation and inclusion of vulnerable populations. Ensure household food insecurity is used as an indicator for the poverty reduction strategy.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Address the additional challenges related to household food insecurity among Indigenous Peoples.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Ensure fair resolution of disputes over access to lands and resources recognized by Indigenous and Treaty rights, to ensure food sovereignty and access to traditional foods by Indigenous Peoples.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Ensure sufficient supports and removal of barriers to include traditional foods in facilities such as hospitals, childcare centres and schools.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Evaluate the impact of poverty reduction and other strategies to reduce household food insecurity and improve selected population health indicators, with adjustments in policy to maximize reach and impact.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Identify factors contributing to increased vulnerability amongst populations experiencing disproportionately more food insecurity within their households.	Dieticians of Canada BC

Provide sufficient supports and remove barriers for hunting, fishing or gathering/cultivating traditional foods. This includes support for Elders and knowledge keepers who are integral to Indigenous culture.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Provide the opportunity to participate in and to influence policies and practices that affect [Indigenous peoples'] access to, and availability of cultural foods and traditions.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Support "Food Costing in BC", which monitors the cost of a National Nutritious Food Basket as a proportion of household income. Use the finding to help ensure food insecure households have enough money to afford a healthy diet after meeting basic needs such as housing.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Support research to address gaps in knowledge about the prevalence and severity of household food insecurity to inform the implementation and evaluation of strategies and policies that will eliminate household food insecurity in BC.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Use screening protocols across the full continuum of the healthcare system to identify household food insecurity, poverty and malnutrition among individual health system users.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Establish a universal school meal program.	First Call
Address food poverty: school food programs such as 'Farm to School' have been shown to be effective in meeting children's nutrition needs and should be expanded with a vision of access to quality food as an expectation.	Health Officers Council of BC
Basic foods are accessible to everyone (subsidized); National Food Program	North Okanagan Early Years Council/ City of Vernon - Partners in Action Committee
Funded school breakfast/lunch programs (only G7 that doesn't have one)	North Okanagan Early Years Council/ City of Vernon - Partners in Action Committee
[E]nsure food security for all British Columbians and eliminate the need for food banks by implementing measures that provide adequate and accessible income support for the non-employed and improve the earnings of those in the low-wage workforce.	Union of BC Municipalities
control gentrification and provide more affordable services, especially food grocers, in poor neighbourhoods	Raise the Rates
Coordinate a school lunch program in the schools to ensure that children have at least one hot, nutritional meal per day.	Bulkley Valley Social Planning Council
Undertake a Basic Income Guarantee (BIG) pilot - Dietitians of Canada and academics recognize that a comprehensive basic income initiative in conjunction with supportive social policies and programs can improve household food insecurity. A BIG initiative needs to be developed in partnership with academics and experts in the field.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Complete outcome evaluation following implementation of public policy and poverty reduction strategies in BC, especially the measured impacts on household food insecurity and health of individuals within the population.	Dieticians of Canada BC
Commit to annual monitoring and reporting of the prevalence and severity of household food insecurity in BC.	Dieticians of Canada BC