

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TRADITIONAL-FOOD ACCESS: FIRST REGIONAL WORKING SESSION TOWARD THE DEVELOPMENT OF A POLICY ON FOOD SECURITY IN NUNAVIK



Kuujuaq, November 27, 2017 - On behalf of the Nunavik Regional Working Group on Food Security (NRWGFS), the Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services (NRBHSS) is proud to announce the development of a regional policy on food security.

The NRWGFS, coordinated by the NRBHSS Department of Public Health, organized the first regional working session toward the development of this policy. Eighty (80) people from various backgrounds across Nunavik gathered in Kuujuaq to create a common plan to improve access to traditional food and better support harvesters. Participants included local coordinators of the Hunter Support Program, mayors, health workers, hunters, youth, elders, representatives of regional organizations and associations, as well as FCNQ and Air Inuit representatives.

Food from the land is central to *Nunavimmiut* way of life, identity and food security. This is why the NRWGFS decided that traditional-food access would be the focus of the conversation for this regional working session. Over the two-day event, workshops, panels and testimonies covered many issues such as wildlife health and management, transmission of knowledge and practices of harvesting and

traditional food preparation to future generations, and access to traditional food for specific populations (e.g., pregnant women, elders, hospitalized individuals).

Three other working sessions will be organized by the NRWGFS in the next year on the following topics:

- Supporting healthy eating practices and initiatives for food/meal donations;
- Improving access to and availability of store-bought food;
- Enhancing local food production.

The recommendations for actions which will result from each of the working sessions will be reviewed by the working group and brought up at *Parnasimautilirijiit*, the committee of regional leaders in charge of following up on the Parnasimuaq report. They will then be included in a coherent policy that is planned for release in the fall of 2018.

Nunavik's current process to improve food security is part of a broader movement across Inuit Nunangat, where food-insecurity rates are significantly higher than the rest of Canada.

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

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Source: Nunavik Regional Board of Health and Social Services

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