



Indigenous Community Food Security in Yukon Territory

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**Arctic Institute of
Community-Based Research**
For Northern Health and Well-Being

About Us

- AICBR is an independent, non-profit research organization
- Established in 2007
- Our **mission** is:

To facilitate, promote and conduct community-based, Northern-led research aimed at improving the lives of Indigenous and Non-Indigenous Northerners and the health of Northern environments.

- Our **priorities** are: Food Security, Healthy Lifestyles, Chronic Disease Prevention, Injury Prevention, Climate Change Adaptation.



Community Food Security Strategies



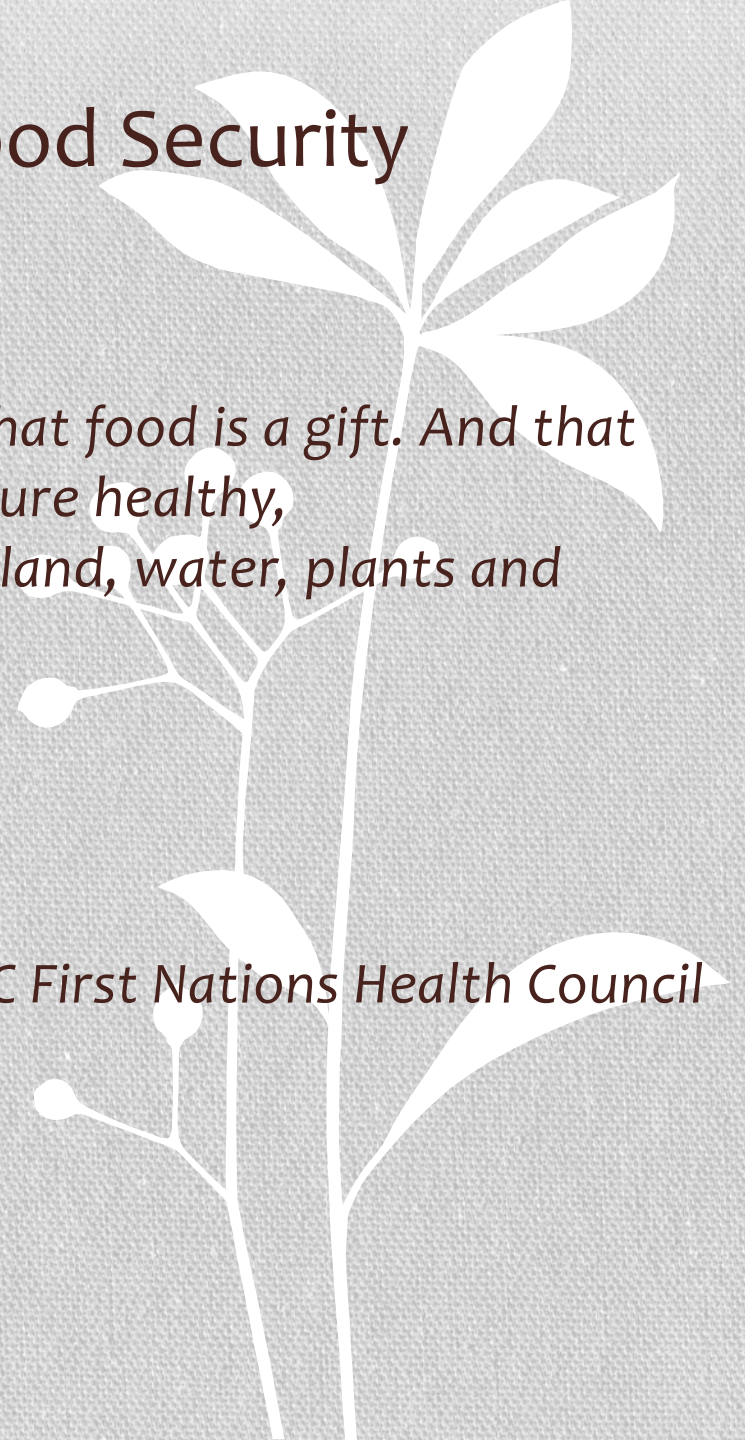
Why are community food security strategies important?

- In the face of a rapidly changing environment, northerner's health and well-being are at risk.
- For Indigenous peoples, traditional foods are central to cultural health and well-being.
- Climate change, overharvesting and other factors have impacted the traditional food systems of northern Indigenous peoples across Canada.
- In Yukon, over 6000 people are food insecure (17%), the majority of which are Yukon First Nations.
- Clear evidence exists that food insecurity has negative implications for human health, including increased risk for chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease and diabetes, and mental health.
- ***Communities need to develop their own strategies, which are relevant, empower, and lead to action to be more food secure.***

Indigenous Perspective of Food Security

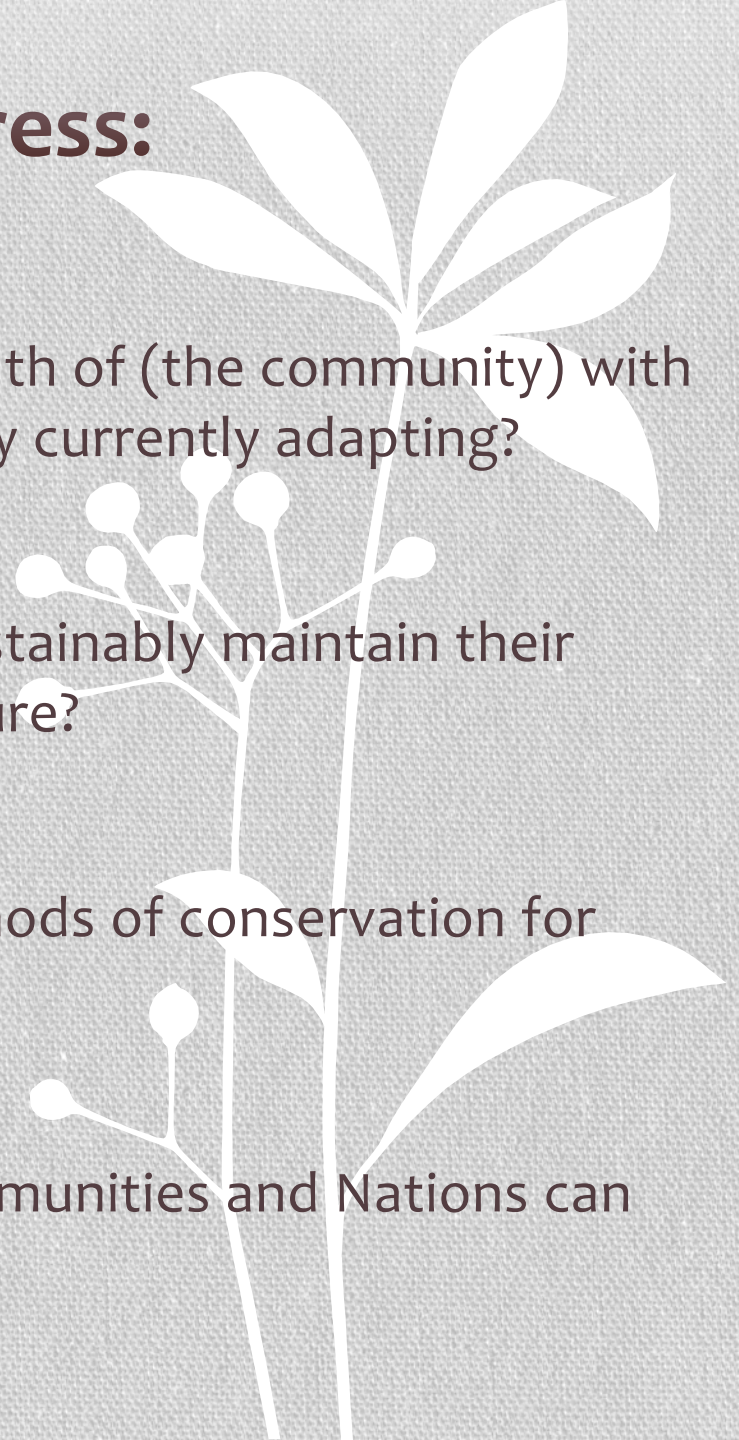
As Indigenous People we understand that food is a gift. And that we have a sacred responsibility to nurture healthy, interdependent relationships with the land, water, plants and animals that provide us food.

BC First Nations Health Council



*Types of questions we address:

- How has climate change affected the health of (the community) with respect to food security, and how are they currently adapting?
- How can (the community) continue to sustainably maintain their traditional food sources long into the future?
- What are ancient and contemporary methods of conservation for important traditional food species?
- What are ways that trading between communities and Nations can support a local food system?



*Types of questions we address:

- What are ways that we can we continue to support our youth to be culturally engaged and prepared for changes to the environment and Indigenous ways of life?
- How can we plan and implement a community garden/greenhouse in an engaging and sustainable way with the community?
- What opportunities are there for animal husbandry?
- How can we revitalize the concept of kids eating first?
- Can we help create microenterprises to support youth?



* Principles of Community-Based Research

- Community members are actively involved in all stages of the research project.
- The relationship between researchers and community members is built on respect, trust and learning with and from each other.
- Research benefits and serves the community directly, including capacity building and education, addresses their priorities and interests, and adheres to local research protocols.
- Research builds on and contributes to the strengths, skills, and resources of the community.



How do we do our research?

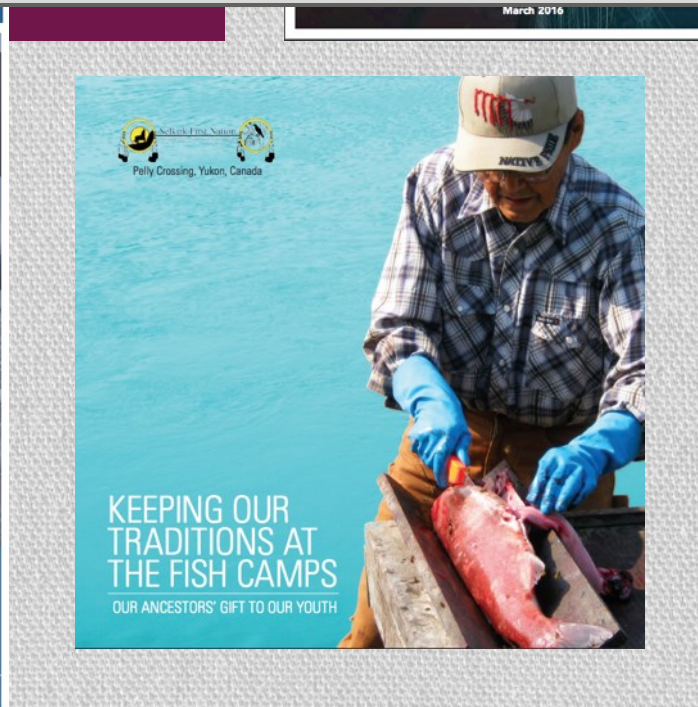
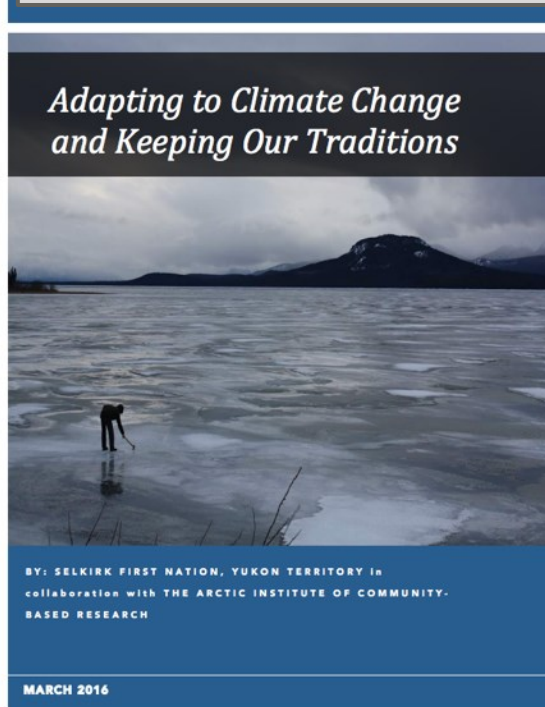
- Community-based approach
 - Follow local and cultural research protocols when approaching a community
- Process of Engagement:
 - Collaborative proposal development
 - Community Steering Committee and local coordinator
 - Elder Guidance
 - Participation in community events
 - Ongoing communications

How do we do our research? (cont.)

- Youth are the future-they will be responsible for adapting to changes.
 - Youth are hired and trained to do the research (i.e. interviewing, traditional knowledge protocols, photography, writing skills, communication skills, data analysis skills)
- Photovoice and Film projects
- Outcomes include locally-based, culturally relevant, long-term community food security and adaptation strategies and action plans for Yukon communities.



Community-Based Food Security and Climate Change Adaptation Strategies



Vuntut Gwitchin Climate Change and Health Research in Northern Yukon:

What do our Changing Homelands mean for our Health?
Phase 2: Knowledge into Action



*Mahsi Cho! Thank You!

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