



People's Food  
Policy Project

Pour une **politique**  
**alimentaire** populaire

## 10 Reasons Why Canada Needs a Food Policy

1. Although Canada is one of the wealthiest countries in the world, almost one million households (close to 2.5 million Canadians) regularly don't have enough to eat.
2. Canada is the only G8 country without a nationally-funded school meal program.
3. Over a quarter of Canadians are considered obese, and the rate continues to rise, particularly among children.
4. Canada's healthcare system is being strained by food-related disease.
5. Food bank use has increased by 28 per cent in the past two years. In March 2010 alone, over 867, 948 people visited one of Canada's 900 food banks - the highest number ever recorded<sup>1</sup>.
6. Canadian farmers' reliance on export markets is on the rise. Canada's food exports have increased 400 per cent since the late 80s. This means much of our food is shipped offshore and processed before it makes its way back to the dinner plates of Canadian families.
7. The food and agriculture system is a leading contributor to climate change, responsible for between 30% and 57% of total greenhouse gas emissions (estimates vary).<sup>2 3</sup>
8. Regulation of farmland ownership is being relaxed, allowing land in Canada to be bought up by foreign investors, corporations and states<sup>4</sup>.
9. Net farm income from market sales alone for the period 2003-2010 is at its lowest in history – below depression-era levels – to well under zero dollars per year, per farm.
10. In Northern communities like Nunavut, food insecurity affects one third of the population.

*Note: Unless stated otherwise, statistics are based on data from Statistics Canada.*

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<sup>1</sup> Hunger Count 2010, Food Banks Canada, available at :

[http://www.foodbankscanada.ca/documents/HungerCount2010\\_web.pdf](http://www.foodbankscanada.ca/documents/HungerCount2010_web.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> "Global Report," International Assessment of Agricultural Knowledge, Science and Technology for Development, 2009.

Available online at:

[http://www.agassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture%20at%20a%20Crossroads\\_Global%20Report%20\(English\).pdf](http://www.agassessment.org/reports/IAASTD/EN/Agriculture%20at%20a%20Crossroads_Global%20Report%20(English).pdf)

<sup>3</sup> "The climate crisis is a food crisis: Small farmers can cool the planet," GRAIN, November 2009. Available online at:

<http://www.grain.org/m/?id=275>

<sup>4</sup> <http://farmlandgrab.org/post/view/18316>