

## Food sovereignty requires that policies and programs support food providers who supply local and domestic markets.

FRED SAURIOL, ST-ANDRÉ-D'ARGENTEUIL, QUÉBEC



Frédéric Sauriol has been farming for 14 years, producing over fifty varieties of organic fruits and vegetables on his farm just north of Montreal near St-André-d'Argenteuil. Since 1995, Fred has been selling organic baskets to families in Montreal through the Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program run by Equiterre. "The CSA program has allowed me to make a living from organic agriculture, and to stay in the agricultural market, which is the most limiting factor for me. Customers pay for their baskets at the beginning of the growing season, so I can cover my costs and have some stable income." However, despite the years of hard work and long hours that have led to a solid business, Fred continues to go in debt a little more every year in order to continue doing the work that he is deeply committed to.

- For at least the past 40 years, agriculture policy in Canada has supported industrial, large-scale production and export markets. Transporting food thousands of kilometers has been subsidized by the keeping oil cheap.
- In the last 40 years, more than 60,000 farms have disappeared in Québec alone, presenting a huge challenge to the growing market for 'local' food.
- The average Canadian farmer is 52 years old.

## Food Sovereignty encourages the infrastructure for localized food systems.

DAVID GILBERT, BC (this fictitious character is an amalgamation of several individuals)

David Gilbert began by processing his own animals for his family's table. "People started asking me to butcher their animals as well," David says, "and so I had to learn how to handle the whole range of species raised in my community. Most of this was custom killing (not for sale, although of course families would exchange from farm to farm). Pretty soon I figured I needed to expand my small building and got a second cooler and species-specific kill floors for food safety. It was all fine until the new regulations which made my whole operation illegal, and there was no way I could meet the cost of the new government requirements." David had to close his abattoir after 40 years of serving the local farming community, leaving his neighbours with no alternative within their region. To avoid the stress on their animals, and the expense, many small farmers have simply stopped keeping animals.

- Regulations, «economies of scale», and waste disposal costs are shutting down small-scale processing across Canada. More than 80% of BC's small local abattoirs have closed.
- Large plants are rarely willing to «custom kill» – so either people simply cannot get their animals killed or risk getting the carcass from a completely different animal.
- Documented cases of food-borne illness from slaughter are almost exclusively from large plants, not from small-scale or farm-killed slaughtering.





# STORIES OF FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

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The People's Food Policy Project links people from across Canada to find ways that ordinary people can reclaim decision-making power in our food system. This is the core of food sovereignty, and the base of our project to create Canada's first comprehensive federal food policy. The People's Food Policy will reflect and support the work of Canadians to create a food system based on care and respect for humans and the natural world.

This pamphlet is one in a series from the People's Food Policy Project. It illustrates one of the interlinked principles of food sovereignty.

# LOCALIZING THE FOOD SYSTEM



Photo by Damon Hart-Davis

Please share your food stories of hope and struggle with us at: [www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca](http://www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca) as well as your policy recommendations for a food sovereign Canada.



Pour une politique alimentaire populaire

People's Food Policy Project

T +1 514 342-5291  
E [peoplesfoodpolicy@gmail.com](mailto:peoplesfoodpolicy@gmail.com)  
W [www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca](http://www.peoplesfoodpolicy.ca)