

Indigenous Food Security

CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACTS
North / Central Region



National Collaborating Centre
for Infectious Diseases
Centre de collaboration nationale
des maladies infectieuses



CIER
Centre for Indigenous
Environmental Resources

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Key Findings

- Climate change is causing not only changes to the movement/ migration of the animals (Caribou) because of weather/ temperature changes, it is also affecting sea ice in the North. It now takes longer for sea ice to form in the fall, which affects the seal hunt.
- Gas is so expensive it is hard to even get out onto the land to hunt now/have to go farther and farther out. The cost of gas also results in very high prices for store-bought food.
- Climate change affects ice roads, which then affect food prices and availability, as well as gas prices (which affects the ability to get out on the land to hunt/ out on the water to fish). The muskeg is also softening now, so it is harder to get out there on your snow mobile, you can get stuck easily.



Priorities

- Addressing the barriers to accessing traditional/country foods. One of the barriers is the limits on harvesting for different groups ie: Caribou- traditionally people followed the caribou and they have always migrated. Caribou don't recognize jurisdiction/boundaries.
- Helping groups (hunter's groups, community groups) ship and share their food to community members that have a great want/need for traditional foods but no ability to access them. Elders in particular require traditional foods to stay healthy, especially if they grew up eating them.

Best practices

- Subsidies for food access provides immediate and necessary relief. Longer term programming such as Breakfast Programs for school children address a critical need.
- Support for land-based Traditional Knowledge programs which can help pass on important skills to the next generation of hunters and harvesters.
- Many colonial practices disrupted the transmission of food knowledge: not just hunting and harvesting, but also nutrition, food storage, food preparation and safety, and meal planning. There is a need for more programming for Indigenous people to re-learn these skills. (This can range from cooking classes in urban areas to more land-based programming).
- Community gardens and greenhouses address the lack of fresh produce that is prevalent in Northern and remote communities.



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