



## Comox Valley Food Policy Council 2023–24 Annual Report

2023-24 was a year of growth and big wins for the CVFPC. We stepped into cross-jurisdictional work, connecting members across municipalities and silos, and celebrated federal funding for national school food programs. Emergency planning and drought preparedness became clear focus areas after yet another summer of forest fires and heat domes.

### Ongoing Priorities:

1. Supporting the development and implementation of a regional Agricultural and Food Security Area Plan.
2. Supporting other Official City Plans, the Regional Growth Strategy, and municipal and regional planning processes.
3. Acting as an advisory board for local government and others seeking information and support on food policy development, engagement, and implementation.

In 2023-24, the CVFPC:

- Supported the CVRD in developing the Agriculture Area Plan.
- Developed a food policy recommendation package to inform Cumberland and Comox OCP updates, which will also serve as a cross-jurisdictional tool with best practice recommendations for other municipalities to incorporate strong food policy into OCPs.
- Consulted for the Town of Comox Planning department, providing best-practice recommendations on a development application through a food security lens.
- Supported the Village of Cumberland to sign the Island Food Charter and provided the Charter to Town of Comox OCP consultants.
- Supported SD 71 to develop school food policies and provided resources and feedback on SD 71's development and implementation of Feeding Futures Recommendations.

- Joined the many voices advocating for School Food program funding in Budget 2024, resulting in a federal commitment of \$1 billion over 5 years to fund National School Food Programs.
- Coached 5 other Food Policy Councils to get started using the CVFPC's Food Policy Council hybrid model.

### Strategic Priorities for 2023-24:

1. Emergency planning and preparedness in relation to food security, the local food economy, and climate change mitigation/adaptation.
2. Advocating for and developing policy related to healthy school food access and food-systems education.
3. Supporting and advocating for policy development relating to food access and poverty.
4. Developing local food procurement policy for institutions.

### Actions — Emergency Planning:

1. Presented to the 2023 Provincial Committee of Finance regarding the need for mapping food flows and storage assets in the case of emergency. Developed emergency mapping project plan.
2. Presented to the North Island Regional Emergency Planners and Managers about the importance of mapping food assets and flows on Vancouver Island should ports or main transportation routes be damaged.
3. Advocated for the CVRD Agricultural Plan (CVAP) 2024 update to include Emergency Planning as one of 4 main topics.
4. Became an official stakeholder in an Emergency Mapping Project to map food flows and community food storage assets on northern Vancouver Island.



Comox Valley  
**FOOD POLICY  
COUNCIL**

Actions — School Food:

1. Sent letters to MPs & MLAs regarding school food and requested that these representatives tour local school food programs.
2. Joined school food advocacy efforts across the province, resulting in a windfall of provincial funding for long-term school food programs, including nearly \$1.2 million for SD 71.
3. Shared best practice resources to SD 71 BOE to support development of Draft Feeding Futures recommendations.
4. Provided feedback on Draft Feeding Futures recommendations to SD 71 BOE, who then passed a motion to hire a FTE Food Services Coordinator as well as establish a Feeding Futures Advisory Board. The CVFPC Plans to express interest in joining the Advisory Board.
5. Submitted federal petitions to local MPs, resulting in NDPs calling for federal school food funding in Budget 2024 in a press conference at LUSH HQ.
6. Joined school food advocacy efforts across Canada, resulting in the federal government announcement that Budget 2024 will include funding for a new National School Food Program, with an investment of \$1 billion over five years.

Actions — Poverty Reduction:

1. Became an official partner of the Community Health Network
2. Participated in the advocacy circle for the CVRD Poverty Reduction Strategy
3. Joined Tamarack's Western Canada Leads project, sitting on the Community of Practice and Leadership Roundtable.
4. Recruited members from the social health sector to bring a poverty reduction perspective to the group.

Actions — Local Food Procurement:

1. Compiled local Food procurement policies and resources, and drafted policy recommendations.
2. Assisted the Town of Comox to explore incorporating local food procurement policies.