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Food Security in Public Health and other Government
Programs in British Columbia, Canada:
A Policy Analysis

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Abstract

Food Security in Public Health and other Government Programs in British Columbia, Canada: A Policy Analysis

Public Health has re-emerged as a driver of food security in British Columbia. Food security policy, programs and infrastructure have been integrated into the Public Health sector and other areas of government, including the adoption of food security as a Core Public Health program. This policy analysis of the integration merges findings from forty-eight key informant interviews conducted with government, Civil Society, and food supply representatives involved in the initiatives, along with relevant documents and participant/direct observations. Findings were analyzed according to “contextual”, “diagnostic”, “evaluative” and “strategic” categories from the Ritchie and Spencer framework for Applied Policy Research.

While Civil Society was the driver for food security in British Columbia, Public Health was the driver for the integration of food security into the government. Public Health held most of the power, and often determined the agenda and the players involved. While many interviewees heralded the accomplishments of the incorporation of food security into Public Health, stakeholders also acknowledged the relative insignificance of the food security agenda in relation to other “weightier”, competing agendas. Conflict between stakeholders over approaches to food insecurity/hunger existed, and it was only weakly included in the agenda.

Looking to consequences of the integration, food security increased in legitimacy within the Public Health sector over the research period. Interviewees described a clash of cultures between Public Health and Civil Society occurring partly as a result of Public Health’s limited food security mandate and inherent top down approach. Marginalization of the Civil Society voice at the provincial level was one of the negative consequences resulting from this integration. A social policy movement toward a new political paradigm - “regulatory pluralism” - calls for greater engagement of Civil Society, and for all sectors to work together toward common goals. This integration of food security into the government exemplifies an undertaking on the cutting edge in progress toward this shift.

Recommendations for stakeholders in furthering food security within the government were identified. These include the development of food security policy alternatives for current government agendas in British Columbia, with a focus on health care funding, Aboriginal health and climate change.

Acknowledgements

This work is dedicated to those who taught me about food security – colleagues, academics, activists, and most of all those experiencing a lack of food security. I also dedicate this to my brothers, living and in spirit, who continue to inspire me in life.

I was awed by the wisdom of the forty-eight interviewees who provided their insights on the situation in BC and I thank them for this.

Thank you to advisors Professor Dr. Tim Lang, Professor Dr. Martin Caraher and Professor Dr. Aleck Ostry for their guidance and assistance throughout this process.

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Finally, I am indebted to my family for their unending support and especially to Adam for his patience and consistent encouragement throughout this PhD process.

Any remaining errors are my responsibility.

Declaration

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List of Abbreviations

ALR	Agricultural Land Reserve (BC)
BC	British Columbia
DASH	Directorate of Agencies for School Health (BC)
DC	Dietitians of Canada
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
GATT	General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade
IMF	International Monetary Fund
Min	Ministry
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
NGO	non-government organization
OPHA	Ontario Public Health Association
pgm	program
PH	Public Health
TILMA	Trade, Investment and Labour Mobility Agreement (Interprovincial trade agreement)
UN	United Nations
WHO	World Health Organization
WTO	World Trade Organization

Foreword

My journey in food security originated long before I began this thesis. In the early 1990s, I was exposed to some influential and compelling Civil Society (CS) thinkers and champions in food security in British Columbia (BC) – focusing on the areas of local foods, food biotechnology and the right to food. Concurrently, while working as a Public Health (PH) Nutritionist in schools, I was challenged to “do something” about students coming to school hungry. This led me into a process of working in partnership with folks experiencing low income. The education they gave me profoundly influenced me in many ways, not the least of which was to move me beyond a naïve question of “why don’t people care [about hunger and poverty]?”

I developed a deeper understanding of the politics of poverty, and the ineffectiveness of the use of alleviation as an approach to hunger became even more pronounced to me. But as a PH Nutritionist, what was in the realm of possibilities for our role? The enigma of how food insecurity relates to the broader themes of food security such as a sustainable local food supply became paramount to me – particularly in “developed” countries”, where the association seems more difficult to make.

Building on years of advocacy by CS and PH stakeholders, an opportunity for a greater integration of food security into PH began in the early 2000’s. Like other Nutritionists and CS stakeholders, I was thrilled. However, beginning the formal process of becoming a PhD student led me to challenge my assumptions, and to stand back and understand the broader meaning and nuances of this integration, and its relationship to the larger socio-political context.

Completion of this dissertation at the time of escalating food and health care costs and increasing attention to the relationship of food to climate change is both timely and salient. I look forward to continuing to contribute to food security and food policy in the future. And, I will nonetheless always remain a student in this evolving narrative.

Chapter One. Introduction

1.1 Background

Food Security¹ has been a focus of Civil Society² (CS) - and to a lesser extent government - in British Columbia (BC) since the early 1990s; stakeholders in both sectors have developed initiatives to improve food security, both independently and in coordination. Food security activities are escalating at the grassroots and community levels in the form of food policy councils, food charters, food networks, movements, innovative programming and research. The historic roles of stakeholders in food security in BC are outlined in Chapter 6. In recognition of CS interest, and the increasing understanding of the relationship between food security and health, BC is one of first provinces in Canada that has integrated food security into Public Health (PH)³ and other government programming. These initiatives include provincial and health authority level food security initiatives and are outlined in Figure 1.1. They can be considered under two categories. First are the food security initiatives instigated by PH (Community Food Action Initiative; Food Security Core Programs; and the Provincial Health Officer's Report on Food). Second are the initiatives where PH partners with other lead Ministries and sectors (School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program; Cooking and Skill Building Program; Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Program).

As the government became more receptive to incorporating food security into PH in the early 2000s, CS food security activists worked together with PH employees to lobby for this integration. The researcher was involved in this process as a PH/Community Nutritionist (see Appendix 3 for details). Having also worked with

¹ See Definition of Food Security under Heading 1.3.2

² Although many definitions of civil society exist, Civil Society International (2003) suggests that "the simplest way to see civil society is as a "third sector," distinct from government and business. In this view, civil society refers essentially to the so-called "intermediary institutions" such as professional associations, religious groups, labor unions, citizen advocacy organizations, that give voice to various sectors of society and enrich public participation in democracies".

³ See Definition of Public Health under Heading 1.3.1

activists, the researcher, like many other PH Nutritionists, found herself straddling the PH and food activist worlds – in both her paid and volunteer work. This viewpoint helped her to understand both the strengths and challenges of the situation in BC.

As first seen in the 1930s world food movement (Boudreau, 1947; Hambidge, 1955), PH is re-emerging as a driver in food security and food policy⁴ in the “developed” world. On the surface, this re-emergence in BC can be heralded as a success. However, this research provides an opportunity for a more critical analysis. This new wave of health promotion food security initiatives across numerous government Ministries in BC was launched in 2002, but they were not initiated within a guiding framework or overall vision. And, while individual program evaluations have been completed, there is a need for a greater understanding of the meaning and nuances of this integration, as well as how occurrences in BC related to the larger socio-political context.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

This research is a policy analysis of the integration of food security into PH policy⁵ and programs (and other partner state or government initiatives) in the province of British Columbia, Canada. It asks “how has food security been operationalized and translated into practice in PH and other provincial government programs in British Columbia”? The grouping of initiatives is analyzed from a broad perspective, examining questions such as: What and who set the stage for the integration? What is the overall picture of food security initiatives in the province? Who is involved, and what relationship do stakeholders have with each other? What are the consequences of these initiatives and processes? What role does and should

⁴ Food Policy is defined under 2.5.1.

⁵ Policy in this instance, refers to Public Policy. In reference to Public Policy, Brooks and Miljan (2003) state that “policy involves, then, conscious choice that leads to deliberate action – the passage of a law, the spending of money, an official speech or gesture, or some other observable act – or inaction”.

PH play? And how can food security move forward on the BC government agenda?

As food security efforts to date in BC have been grounded in the grassroots/CS sector, the integration into PH may impact how the objective of food security is pursued. Examining if and how a shift in discourse, practice and power between government and CS groups occurred is a central research objective. In addition, in parallel with international events, the thesis tackles the question of power and control, in balancing the “top-down, institutionalization” of food security, with the existing, potent force of “bottom-up”, grassroots democracy in the BC food security “movement”. To this end, the evolving role of PH and its potential to facilitate CS engagement, as well as CS’s capacity to participate, will also be explored. And as food insecurity/ hunger is central to original definitions of food security (von Braun et al in M. Anderson & Cook, 1999), but appears to be only minimally addressed in the integration, the presence of food insecurity as part of the initiatives will be examined.

This research will focus primarily on a snapshot in time, between 2002-2008, but will extend back into the 1990s in analyzing the historical context. Unless otherwise indicated, contextual information given which is subject to frequent change (such as names of government departments or stakeholders) will be presented as what was current during the research time period.

As this research is conducted from a policy perspective, the choice of the Department of Food Policy at City University for the PhD is salient. This research draws on the foundational theories of “developed world” food policy of Lang, Caraher, Heasman and colleagues.

1.3 Scope of Research

1.3.1 Definition of Public Health Practice in British Columbia

Roles and responsibilities of governments in Canada's health care system are defined through federal legislation such as the "Canada Health Act" and the "Food and Drug Act". The federal government provides funding, regulates the safety of food, drugs, medical devices and other health products and has some responsibility in health surveillance and PH. Provinces have the responsibility for funding and providing health care services (Government of British Columbia, 2000).

Although the public, and in some cases the health care system, tend refer to the entire health system as "Public Health", in this instance it is defined as:

"the organized effort of society to protect and improve the health and well-being of the population through: health monitoring, assessment and surveillance; health promotion; reducing inequities in health status, prevention of disease, injury, disability and premature death, and protection from environmental hazards to health" (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2004).

The Canadian Institutes of Health Research working group (2003) recommended the following essential functions of PH: population health assessment; health surveillance; health promotion; disease and injury prevention and health protection. PH in this context refers to the system which houses the following disciplines: PH Nursing; Environmental Health Protection; Medical Health Officers; Community Nutrition; Dental, Speech, and Audiology services.

In the province of BC, PH functions are carried out at three levels – the Provincial Ministry of Health, the Provincial Health Services Authority and the Regional Health Authorities, of which there are five. In this study "Public Health" will be referred to as a "stakeholder"; the term "Health" will be used when referring to broader health care system. The Ministry of Health had several reorganizations and subsequent name changes during the research period. For simplicity, it will be referred to as "Ministry of Health". The use of "health" (without quotations) will refer

to the outcome or status of health. Finally, the terms PH Nutrition(ist) and Community Nutrition(ist) will be used interchangeably.

Two delimitations exist in the definition of PH in this study. First, this study will primarily focus on the food security programs and policies within the health promotion sector of PH, versus those of Food Protection (i.e. food safety). Food Protection employs Environmental Health Officers (also known as Health Inspectors) who monitor and regulate food safety standards. While Food Protection has a vast role in the broad scope of food security, it is not a health promotion food security program. Thus it is not included to significant degree as part of PH in this study, except where it has influenced the health promotion initiatives (or the perception of them). Second, PH Nutrition initiatives – all of which are relevant to food security – will not be included in this analysis except where they overlap with food security (e.g. institutional food policy). While PH Nutrition and Food Security programming are inextricably linked, Food Security in BC PH has evolved both as a distinct program within Nutrition, and also outside of the Nutrition programs. Nutrition programming within PH has a much longer history and greater status than the newly emerging Food Security programming. These delimitations are congruent with the approach in the BC “Model Core Program Paper for Food Security” (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006), where the focus of food security is on “health promotion” versus “health protection”, and where nutrition is only included in the form of food policy.

1.3.2 Understanding of Food Security in British Columbia Public Health

The concept of community food security was chosen by PH and CS representatives to operationalize food security in BC PH programs. It was first used in BC in the Community Nutritionists’ Council paper - Making the Connection⁶ (2004). The key food security initiatives in PH - Food Security Core

⁶ “Making the Connection - Food Security and Public Health” was developed to advocate for the inclusion of food security into BC Core Programs in PH.

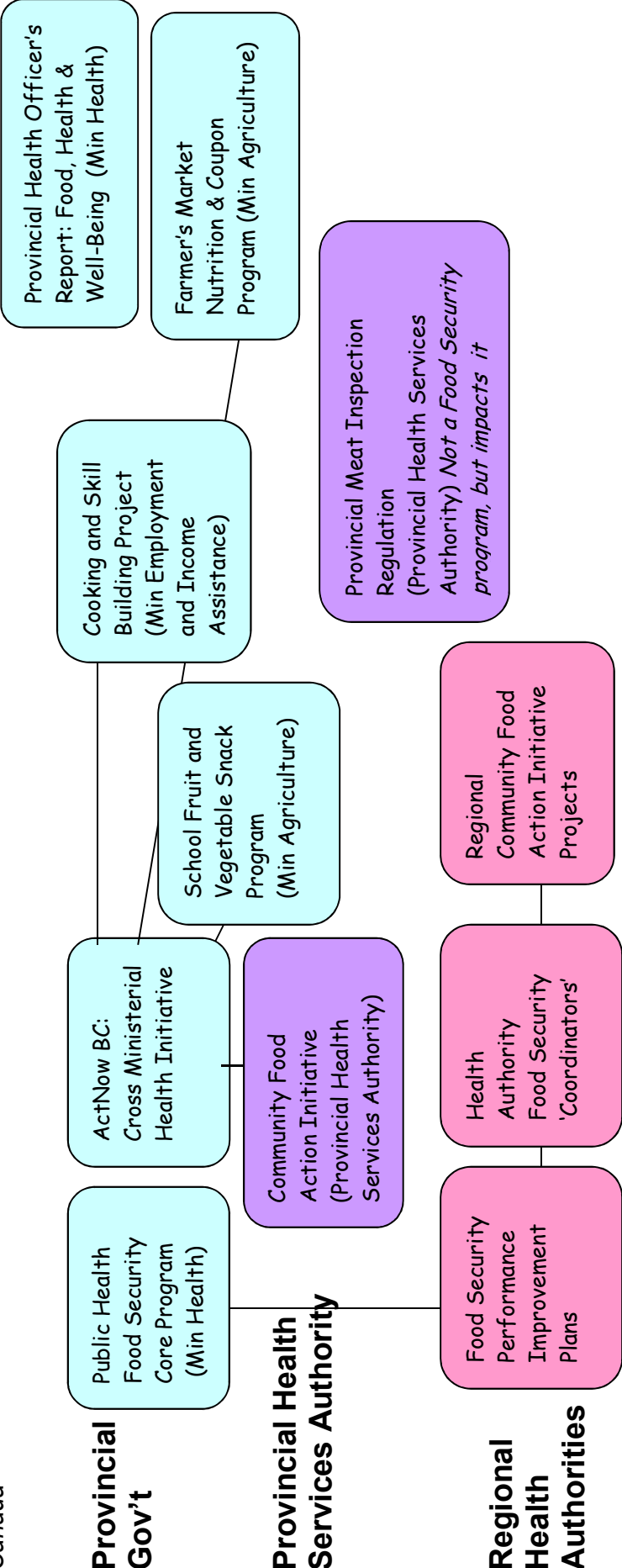
Programs and Community Food Action Initiative - subsequently adopted the definition: “Community food security exists when all citizens obtain a safe, personally acceptable, nutritious diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes healthy choices, community self-reliance and equal access for everyone” (adapted from Bellows and Hamm (2003). An adaptation of this definition (Hamm & Bellows, 2003) was also noted in the Provincial Health Officer’s report.

The utility of the definition of community food security has been heavily critiqued (see Chapter 2) and some of these criticisms are salient in BC. However, many PH and CS players in BC view community food security broadly, encompassing the concepts of healthy food policy, food sovereignty, food sustainability, farm worker safety - beyond the traditional definition of food insecurity or hunger. This comprehensive understanding of the definition is reflected in seminal BC documents. The Community Food Action Initiative proposal (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005, p. 6) states “community food security is understood to be developed over time by using a sustainable food systems approach and evidence-based strategies that address broad systemic and ecological issues affecting food availability, affordability, accessibility and quality”. “Making the Connection” (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004, p. 4), calls for “coherent food policy ... integrating health, agriculture, social, educational, trade, economic and communication policies [and that it is ensured that] the food system is financially and environmentally sustainable”. The terms community food security and food security are often used interchangeably by those involved in food security in BC. Congruent with the BC discourse, this research uses the definition of community food security to define food security. Thus, the term “food security” will be used throughout this thesis and will encompass the broad definition of community food security. It is also important to distinguish between food security and food insecurity; the latter relates to, and is used interchangeably with the concept of hunger throughout the thesis.

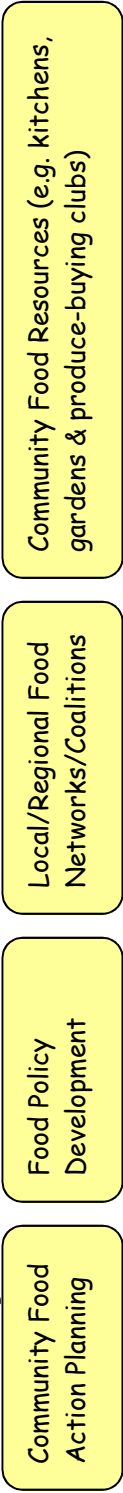
Another framework, “The Continuum of Strategies in Addressing Food Security”, as outlined in Table 2.1 is also central to the understanding of food security in BC. Its emphasis is on moving beyond emergency and capacity building programs toward food policy and system re-design. This continuum is used in PH Core Programs and the Community Food Action Initiative and is also alluded to in the Provincial Health Officer’s report (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006; Provincial Health Officer, 2006; Provincial Health Services Authority & Ministry of Health, 2007).

While this very broad definition opens the possibilities for a wide scope for both content and approaches to food security in BC, in practice, PH has limitations in utilizing these options. These limitations will be explored in the research. Community food security and its relationship to health is examined more thoroughly in Chapters 2 and 3.

Figure 1.1: Key Provincial Government and Health Authority Food Security Initiatives (and Lead Departments) in British Columbia, Canada



Regional and Local Initiatives supported by Public Health Core Programs and the Community Food Action Initiative*:



*Initiatives are supported by PH programs, but may have been in existence through CS or other means prior to emergence of food security in PH Programs

1.3.3 Identification of Initiatives within Context of Research

First, it is important to note that this is not an evaluation of the initiatives reviewed. Most initiatives have been individually evaluated. Rather, this investigation examines the grouping of initiatives - their evolution, the relationship between the stakeholders involved, and their connection to the larger socio-political context.

As outlined in Figure 1.1 above, while the scope of food security in BC is broad, this study focuses on government health promotion food security programs and policies. The following section introduces these initiatives, while their history, drivers and context are examined in more detail in Chapter 5. The decision to expand the study to include partner initiatives outside of PH was made because these programs include the food supply sector, whereas PH led food security initiatives do not. Further, these other initiatives were part of the food security health promotion thrust under ActNow BC. They also exemplify the broad perspectives of food security in BC that collaborate with PH. One of three sectors identified in Lang's triangle of food policy players (Figure 2.1), the inclusion of the food supply sector is also important in providing a holistic perspective for the research, and in gauging consequences of provincial food security programs. While numerous food security initiatives emerged under the BC Healthy Living Alliance, they are not included as they were initiated after the research period.

1.3.3.i Food Security Initiatives in Public Health

While many initiatives are important, there are two PH initiatives that are key in advancing food security in BC PH and thus are examined in greater detail: PH Food Security Core Programs, and the Community Food Action Initiative.

Public Health Food Security Core Programs

PH Core Programs were phased in as provincial performance standards were developed for the over 20 core programs identified. One of the first set of standards developed was for food security, in 2006. In 2007, each Regional Health

Authority created a food security performance improvement plan, outlining plans under each of the 4 program elements:

- A comprehensive **food policy framework** that supports strategic planning
- **Promotion and awareness** initiatives targeted to staff and public
- An appropriate array of food security **programs and services**
- **Surveillance, monitoring and evaluation** of food security programs

(Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006, p. 2).

In the development of the performance improvement plans, it was the intent of many of the Regional Health Authorities to involve departments from across the health authorities in implementing the food security plans, both at the community level (e.g. communications departments) and internally (e.g. purchasing departments). The provincial government requires ongoing progress reports on these performance improvement plans.

Community Food Action Initiative

The second significant initiative falls under the ActNow BC initiative. ActNow BC is a cross-ministerial initiative to promote health and support BC in being the healthiest jurisdiction ever to host the Olympics. The ActNow BC goals that relate to Healthy Eating have the objectives of: increasing by 20 per cent BC's population who eat recommended daily servings of fruit and vegetables, and decreasing obesity and overweight by 20% (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005a). The Community Food Action Initiative aims to increase food security for all British Columbians, particularly for those living with limited incomes. The initial discussion paper for this program consulted broadly with those across the spectrum of food security (including CS) and reflected the broad views put forth. Consequently, the Community Food Action Initiative takes a fairly wide view of food security, as illustrated by their objectives:

“CFAI [Community Food Action Initiative] works to increase: awareness about food security; access to local healthy food; food knowledge and skills; community capacity to address local food security; development and use of policy to support community food security” (Provincial Health Services Authority & Ministry of Health, 2007, p. 2).

The Community Food Action Initiative is coordinated by the Provincial Health Services Authority and is implemented by the five Regional Health Authorities. These health authorities provide funding, support and expert advice to communities to support their food actions and are guided provincially by a multi-sectoral advisory committee (Province of BC & Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008). During its first two years (2005-2006), the Community Food Action Initiative funded 155 community projects and involved over 14,000 people across the province (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

The Community Food Action Initiative has designated significant funding to food security initiatives via the Regional Health Authorities (see Chapter 6 for program funding estimates). These initiatives are operationalized differently in each Regional Health Authority. An extensive evaluation of the Community Food Action Initiative was completed in 2008 (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

Two staff members from the Provincial Health Services Authority, the Director and Coordinator, oversee the Community Food Action Initiative with significant input from the Ministry of Health Nutrition Department. A Provincial Advisory Committee directs the initiative; representatives as of 2008 (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008a) are outlined in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1: Community Food Action Initiative Provincial Advisory Committee

Institution	Representatives (<i>One from each unless otherwise indicated</i>)
Regional Health Authorities	One from each of the 5 Regional Health Authorities
Provincial Health Services Authority	Population Health Strategic Planning Provincial Coordinator as secretariat Food Protection Services – BC Centre for Disease Control
Government Ministries	Ministry of Health Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance Ministry of Agriculture and Land Ministry of Education Public Health Agency of Canada
Provincial Organizations and Academic Institutions	BC Public Health Alliance for Food Security BC Food Systems Network BC Healthy Living Alliance Academic Representation Union of BC Municipalities Aboriginal Voice – to be determined

An Operations committee consisting of the Provincial Health Services Authority, Ministry of Health and Regional Health Authority food security representatives (all PH) conducts the implementation of the initiative. Regional Health Authorities are required to set up, or work with regional Community Food Action Initiative food security committees within their regions. PH staff involved include Food Security Coordinators and their managers, in some cases PH “community development workers” with some mandate for food security, and to a lesser degree PH Nutritionists (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

Provincial Health Officer’s Annual Report

A third, albeit somewhat less significant PH initiative, was the Provincial Health Officer’s Annual Report 2005: Food, Health and Well-Being (Provincial Health Officer, 2006). This brought together the areas of food insecurity, food sustainability and health in one document. The document also outlines recommendations for individuals, communities, industry and governments in the

area of obesity, food safety, Aboriginal food security, “steps to make BC more food independent”, and food insecurity/ hunger.

1.3.3.ii Associated Food Security Programs

The School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program

The School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program is a partnership of four ministries with the Ministry of Agriculture as the lead ministry. The program provides two servings of BC fruit or vegetables to school children every second week for 18 weeks (BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, 2007). Ten schools were piloted the first year (2005/2006). Evaluation of the 10 pilot schools showed: 100% of the teachers, administrators and in-school coordinators interviewed favoured continuing the program; 65% of the students reported changes ((eating more fruit and vegetables (Grade 4 students from 2.93 servings per day to 5.12 per day; Grade 6 students increased consumption by 2.29 servings), washing hands more, and knowing more about fruit and vegetables)); and 58% of the parents said the program influenced family members and their buying habits (Naylor & Bridgewater, undated). However, these evaluation results were based on the weekly provision of the program (versus every second week). While political pressure existed to expand the program without increased funding (Warner, 2007), beginning early in 2007, it was offered in 51 schools around the province. This increased to 164 schools in September 2007 (Government of British Columbia, 2007), with 1171 schools involved as of January 2011 (BC Agriculture in the Classroom, 2008). With initial aims of involving 1600 schools in the province, organizers suggested the program had the potential to revitalize and reform farming in BC.

Fridges in Schools Program (associated with Fruit and Vegetable Program)

The Fridges in Schools program was launched in August 2006. It was funded through the Ministry of Agriculture, in partnership with the BC Dairy Foundation and the BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation. The program enables the Elementary School Milk Program and the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Snack

Program to purchase fridges for schools in BC that do not have access to refrigeration. At the time of the research, over 70 fridges had been delivered to schools registered in the Elementary School Milk program throughout BC (BC Dairy Foundation).

Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project

The Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project was led by the Ministry of Agriculture in partnership with the BC Farmer's Market Association. The purpose of the project was to: "increase access to fresh BC produced farm products to low income pregnant women and low income families with children ... [and] to expand the awareness, use of and sales at farmers' markets" (BC Association of Farmer's Markets, 2007). The program was offered from July - October 2007 in one site in each of the five Regional Health Authorities, and works with existing cooking and skill building projects to distribute the coupons and provide learning opportunities. It was also funded for 2008-2009, but was scheduled for cancellation in 2010 (BC Association of Farmers' Markets, 2010; Luther, 2010). Coupons valued at fifteen dollars were offered to each participant per week for redemption at farmers' markets for fresh BC vegetables, fruit, nuts, dairy, meat, fish, and other "fresh unprepared BC farm products" (BC Association of Farmer's Markets, 2007).

Cooking and Skill Building Project

The Cooking and Skill Building Funding project provided one-time dollars to not-for-profit community agencies throughout BC that provide hands-on cooking and nutritional skill-building programs for those living with limited incomes. Funding (between \$500-\$1000) was provided for equipment (fridges, freezers, storage bins or pots/pans) and/or teaching and learning resources (but not for food). The program was provided through a partnership between the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and Directorate of Agencies for School Health BC (DASH BC, 2006).

School Meal Programs

While school meal programs are a significant government funded food security undertaking, they did not receive additional funding or operational attention as part of the new complement of government food security initiatives. Thus, they were not identified as part of the study. However, interviewees were asked about the exclusion of these programs from the new thrust of initiatives.

The provincial school meal program is supported under a portfolio of funding provided by the Ministry of Education. They deliver CommunityLINK funding to all 60 school boards in the province “to support vulnerable students in academic achievement and social functioning” (BC Ministry of Education). However school districts have the authority to distribute funds within this portfolio according to their discretion. The number of schools and children requiring this program far exceeds what is available, and the funding provided to this program has grown only minimally since its inception. It is interesting to note that little current information on the school meal program is available on provincial government websites outside of those sites that partner with the Directorate of Agencies for School Health BC.

1.3.3.iii External Programs Impacting Food Security Initiatives in BC

BC Meat Inspection Regulation

This research will in no way try to assess or evaluate this regulation. It is included as it was frequently referred to by interviewees as having impact on food security health promotion initiatives. This regulation was announced in 2004 and made effective province-wide in 2007. According to the Ministry of Health,

“the Meat Inspection Regulation ... will ensure that all British Columbians have access to meat and meat products that are properly inspected and safe [where] all meats, including poultry, sold to consumers must be inspected ... Prior to the regulation, there were parts of the province where uninspected meat from unlicensed slaughter establishments was available for sale [accounting for] about five per cent of all meat sales within the province” (BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, undated).

The consequences of this regulation are explored in Chapter 8.

Identification of stakeholders⁷ within the scope of the research is examined in Chapter 6.

1.4 Thesis Overview

Chapter one of this thesis introduces the research problem. It outlines the background and purpose of the study, and defines terms and initiatives within the research context. Chapter two reviews the changing discourse of food security at the international level, with attention to the socio-political context and centralizing and decentralizing trends in food security. Current approaches or strategies toward advancing food security are then examined. Chapter three centres on the scope and functions of a PH role in food security. Roles are presented within the context of existing Canadian PH frameworks, and the potential for a PH role in facilitating CS engagement is examined. PH theory and food security strategies are then compared and contrasted. Chapters two and three conclude with emerging research issues from the review of literature.

Methodology is reviewed in Chapter four. Ritchie and Spencer's categories of Applied Policy Research (1994) are outlined as central under the methodological framework. Research objectives and questions are then articulated, followed by data collection and analysis.

Research findings are presented in Chapters five through eight. Chapter five lays the foundation and background to the integration; it examines the historical and socio-political context, as well as the macro and micro levels key drivers of the integration.

⁷ The term "stakeholders" will be used interchangeably with the term "players".

Chapters six and seven delve into interviewee perspectives of stakeholder roles and functions and their relationships to each other. Chapter six begins with an overview of stakeholders involved in the initiatives. It then turns to a focus on PH, examining its mandate in food security. Resources and funding and related limitations are then reviewed. The rest of the chapter is devoted to the stakeholder agendas and their involvement in the initiatives.

Chapter seven continues the stakeholder analysis, with the purpose of examining the relationships between stakeholders. It first examines the functional roles in food security of the lead stakeholder, PH. Its limitations in these roles and the resultant tensions with other stakeholders are then reviewed. This includes an examination of the extent to which PH is able to facilitate the engagement of CS in initiatives under investigation. Chapter eight outlines the consequences of the integration, focusing on the impact on issues and stakeholders. Supporting factors/mediators and strategic recommendations on forwarding the integration of food security into the government agenda are then elucidated.

Chapter nine, the discussion, begins by highlighting key themes from chapters five through eight. Research findings are then examined through the lens of the research objectives: if and how the integration of food security has shifted discourses⁸, practice and power; and implications for stakeholders, including implications for facilitating CS engagement. The discussion also describes how the BC findings support, refute and contribute to academic research and how they relate to the broader socio-political context.

The text of the thesis concludes with Chapter ten, Reflections. It summarizes the value of the research, outlines limitations of the study and articulates recommendations for future research. The thesis closes with the researcher's

⁸ Lupton (1992, p. 145) defines discourse as "a group of ideas or patterned way of thinking which can be identified in textual and verbal communications, and can also be located in wider social structures".

planned journal submissions and final reflections. An overview of the thesis chapters is outlined in Table 1.2.

Table 1.2: Chapter Overview

Chapter Overview
<i>Chapter 1: Introduction</i>
Review of Literature
<i>Chapter 2: The Shifting Discourse of Food Security</i>
<i>Chapter 3: Concepts of Food Security and Public Health Theory in Canada and British Columbia</i>
Chapter 4: Methodology
Findings
<i>Chapter 5. Findings I. Historical and Socio-Political Context and Drivers of the Integration of Food Security into BC PH and Government</i>
<i>Chapter 6. Findings II. Stakeholder Analysis: Mandate, Resources and Agendas</i>
<i>Chapter 7. Findings III. Stakeholder Analysis: Public Health and other Stakeholder Limitations and Resultant Tensions</i>
<i>Chapter 8. Findings IV. Consequences, Mediators and Strategic Recommendations</i>
Chapter 9: Discussion
Chapter 10: Reflections
Appendices

Chapter Two. **The Shifting Discourse of Food Security**

2.1 Introduction

This chapter will outline the changing discourse of food security over time from an international perspective. It will begin with a historic review of food security over the last century, then review trends toward decentralization and centralization in food security. Food security, and current concerns related to it are then outlined under the themes of hunger, food sustainability and health. Finally, current approaches to food security - comprehensive food policy; community food security; food democracy; and food sovereignty – are examined.

“Food security” as a term originated in international development work in the 1960’s and 1970’s” (von Braun et al in M. Anderson & Cook, 1999); “first world” definitions borrow and evolve from this sophisticated discourse. The United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) defines food security as existing when “all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life” (FAO, 1996b). While the FAO definition of food security is commonly used, food security is an evolving term, with different meanings depending on the context used. Maxwell (1996) reported that close to 200 definitions of food security have been developed since the World Food Conference of 1974. This definition has been built upon in the “developed” world to now include both human and ecological health (Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Lang & Heasman, 2004), to focus on social justice issues in both the production of and access to food (Lang, Barling, & Caraher, 2001; Wekerle, 2004), and to integrate the concept of agency (the policies and processes that enable or disable the achievement of food security) (M. Koc & MacRae, 2003). As noted in Chapter 1, while food security incorporates these broad themes, it is distinguished from the term “food insecurity” which is often used synonymously with hunger, or food

poverty, reflecting only one component of the broad frame of food security. A broad lack of food security results in hunger or reduced access; in malnutrition or ill health; in compromised quality or quantity of food supply; in environmental damage; and in restricted ability to control one's own food security. In the "developed" world, these impacts can be felt broadly across the mainstream population, but are felt most deeply by the poor who suffer more hunger and ill health; further, they cannot overcome issues such as pesticide residue by purchasing more costly organic foods or choose more pricey, yet healthier restaurants over fast food. If the current trend continues, impacts will continue to reach more broadly to the mainstream population. Moreover, health care costs associated with a lack of food security are currently borne across income levels. Those involved in the current "grassroots" food security movement in North America differentiate between the mere existence and accessibility of a food supply, and access and availability to a quality, nutritious, sustainable food supply. The current food system is designed to produce and market large amounts of food for maximum profit; it is not designed to promote human and ecological health. Food security - in the developed or the developing world - cannot be achieved by the expansion of the dominant food paradigm (De Schutter, 2009; Lang & Heasman, 2004).

More on the current food security discourse will be outlined later in the chapter, but for now, it will turn to the changing discourse over the last century and the socio-political context that brought us to our current understandings.

2.2 Historical Review

The definition and discourse of food security have changed over time. Definition is important as it frames how we understand, analyze and respond to issues.

Lezberg describes "framing" as the "conscious construction of shared meanings and definitions to describe social problems", arguing that "defining a problem is of

particular importance. [And] For policy makers, definition may determine choices” (Lezberg, 1999, p.1).

Food security was an issue before the term “food security” evolved. The next section elucidates the socio-political backdrop and context within which international food security developed in order to enhance understanding of current approaches; this begins with the historical review of food security at the international level during the 1930’s.

By the time of the global economic crisis of the Great Depression, food was the most important single trade commodity (S. J. B. Orr, 1943). Despite international agricultural surpluses - which were often dumped or destroyed (Boudreau, 1947; United Nations, undated) - farmers and agriculture suffered as prices of food and other commodities fell to a point at which there was little profit in production (Akroyd in Passmore, 1980). Moreover, vast numbers suffered from hunger or malnutrition; “hunger in the midst of plenty” became a contemporary phrase (Akroyd in Boudreau, 1947; Passmore, 1980; Turnell, 2000). When at the 1933 World Monetary and Economic conference, the restriction of world food production was proposed as a solution (Cepede; Passmore, 1980), Lord Stanley Bruce (Australian High Commissioner in London and representative on the Council of the League of Nations) turned toward the idea of a “nutrition approach” (Turnell, 2000). Bruce met with Frank McDougall (economic advisor to the Australian government) and Sir John Boyd Orr (Director of the Rowett Research Institute) “in order to arrive at a new way in which to approach questions of trade and international economic policy” (Turnell, 2000, p. 7).

Bruce and McDougall were heavily influenced by the work of British physician and scholar, Boyd Orr (Cepede, undated; Diouf). Orr’s work, combined with the new “science of nutrition”⁹, increased the political profile of this issue (Hambidge,

⁹ The “new science of nutrition developed between 1890 and 1939, which built up an integrated body of knowledge of animal and human nutrition; the identification and role of minerals and

1955). Orr built on this new science through the publication of his 1936 British study “Food, Health and Income”. By surveying family budgets in Britain, he found that only those at income levels above that of 50% of the population had optimal, health promoting diets (J. B. Orr, 1936). Orr (p.13) described this as the “first attempt to get a picture of the food position of the country showing the relationship of income, food and health”. He also posited a link between deficiencies in diet – such as stunted growth, rickets, bad teeth and anemia – and suggested that some evidence was seen regarding increased susceptibility to certain infectious diseases. Boyd Orr highlighted the importance of foods that were seen at this time to be “protective” foods for health, such as vegetables, milk, meat and eggs. While he did not specifically use the concept of “access” - a concept credited in a shift in food security discourse in the 1970s - Orr clearly made the connection between income and malnutrition. Together, Orr, Bruce and McDougall proposed a “nutrition approach” to world agriculture. They sought economic recovery from the depression through the stimulation of world agricultural production; increase in production was proposed to meet the nutritional needs of people. Orr, Bruce and McDougall’s proposal was adopted by the League of Nations¹⁰ when Bruce brought the issue of food forward to the League Assembly in 1934.¹¹ The League, with these key influencers, began to play a significant role in international food, health and agriculture. Frank Boudreau (Director of the Health Organization of the League of Nations), Frank McDougall and Boyd Orr were instrumental in advising Bruce (Boudreau, 1947).

The 1934 assembly of the League of Nations appointed an international committee of nutritional physiologists to establish the international dietary standards built on dietary standards that had been developed by some individual nations in the early 1930’s (Jahn, 1949; S. J. B. Orr, 1943; Ostry, 2006). The findings of this report

vitamins; and the understanding of energy needs of the body for good health” (United Nations, undated)

¹⁰The League of Nations was formed in 1919; it was the first form of “world government” to promote international cooperation and to achieve peace and security (Nations 2000).

¹¹Turnell (2000) suggests that this campaign was adopted by the League in their search for legitimacy

formed the scientific basis for the League's work (League of Nations, 1937). Also influential was the 1935 report on "Nutrition and Public Health" by Burnet and Akroyd, which concluded that nutrition – more than just a physiological problem - was also a concern of health officers and economists (League of Nations, 1937; Passmore, 1980).

At a full assembly of the League of Nations in 1935, a landmark in the history of nutrition occurred, with the passing of the resolution that "the relation of nutrition to the health of the people has become a social and economic problem of widely accepted significance and ... that this subject has an important bearing on world agricultural problems" (Passmore, 1980, p. 246; United Nations). These League efforts focused mainly in Europe, the British Dominions, South America and the USA (League of Nations, 1937). It was at this assembly that Bruce proposed the "marriage of health and agriculture" – a link between nutrition and PH (consumption) and the food supply (production). The maintenance of healthy agriculture was becoming increasingly recognized as a public concern, harming both agriculture and the public (who could not afford to buy), despite a food surplus (Hambidge, 1955; United Nations, undated). This was a concern for the League both on humanitarian grounds, but also because of the potential effect upon the social structure and internal peace of concerned countries (League of Nations, 1937). This assembly set up a committee of agriculture, economic and medical experts who submitted a report to the next session of the Mixed Committee of the League of Nations, entitled, "The Relation of Nutrition to Health, Agriculture and Economic Policy" (1937); this report, when published, became the League's largest selling publication (Turnell, 2000). The Mixed Committee Report also recommended the establishment of national nutrition committees to work in coordination with the League in improving nutrition status world-wide. The League of Nations (1937, p. 34) saw the establishment of "nutrition policy"¹² as having two "distinct, but mutually dependent aims ... its primary concern is with consumption

¹² In the sense, "nutrition policy" had a broad scope, more reflective of today's concept of "food policy". Nutrition policy is currently considered a sub-set food policy, focusing on food policy related to human health.

... but in addition it must also concern itself with supply". In regards to supply, they sought international trade expansion of goods such as cereals and sugar as well as an increased consumption of the "so-called 'protective foods'" (Turnell, 2000), articulated as "milk and its derivatives, green vegetables; fruit, eggs, glandular tissues, fat fish and for certain sections of the community, muscle meat" (League of Nations, 1937, p. 98). The Mixed Committee Report stated "the malnutrition which exists in all countries is at once a challenge and an opportunity: a challenge to men's consciences and an opportunity to eradicate a social evil by methods which will increase economic prosperity" (League of Nations, 1937, p. 53). By 1938 over 30 national nutrition committees had been established world-wide (Turnell, 2000). These actions of the League were also bolstered by the International Labour Organization which saw nutritional science as a supporting argument in their claims to increase minimum purchasing power; this was reflected in their 1936 report "Workers' Nutrition and Social Policy (Boudreau, 1947; Cepede, undated; League of Nations, 1937; Turnell, 2000). In fact, Turnell suggests that McDougall and Bruce persuaded the International Labour Organization to take on this issue (Turnell, 2000).

The Second World War broke out soon after, bringing these efforts of the League of Nations to an end¹³ (Hambidge, 1955; S. J. B. Orr, 1943). However, the League was later credited as launching a "world food movement" (Boudreau, 1947; Hambidge, 1955); albeit it is important to note that this "movement" occurred at an international institutional level, not at a CS level. In Canada, as in many western nations, the social security system developed following the Great Depression. Many suggest it was created as a response to the unemployment and social disintegration in Canada and Great Britain (G. Riches, 1997). Lightman concurs that this may be the case, but also offers an argument of the development out of self-interest. Building on the Marxist concept that capitalism on its own widens the gap between the rich and the poor, Lightman (2002, p.18) suggests that social

¹³The League of Nations was founded in 1919 and dissolved in 1946, its real estate and remaining services being transferred to the United Nations.

programs were created as a way to “buy off” workers ... at a minimum level needed to maintain social stability”; Coburn (2000) also corroborates this latter contention. Regardless, the post-war consensus resulted in a state interventionist model of economic development, and provided infrastructure to support, subsidize and regulate markets (M. Koc & MacRae, 2003). The focus on providing adequate quantities of food to feed the world population and on increasing the food supply is seen to have further “paved” the way for the productionist paradigm. Lang and Heasman (2004, p. 19) proposed that the productionist paradigm arose as “the food supply chain became production-led in order to increase the quantity of food over other priorities”.

Near the end of WWII, US president Roosevelt became interested in the nutrition approach and invited McDougall to discuss with him McDougall’s memorandum “the United Nations programme for freedom from want of food” building on the 1941 Atlantic charter “Freedom from Want”, one of the four freedoms promised to the peoples of the world (Cepede, undated; Diouf; Turnell, 2000). McDougall proposed that food be the first economic problem tackled by the UN, arguing that an international organization on food and agriculture would be the first step in creating an agency for the preservation of peace, the attainment of full employment and raising the standards of living (United Nations, undated). The US President then called the 1943 Hot Springs Conference, attended by forty-four governments; here they committed themselves to founding a permanent organization for food and agriculture. The conference drew up a report for the proposed Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), limiting its activities to collecting statistics on food production and distribution, promoting research, and giving technical assistance to food deficit countries. Orr saw this as a profound disappointment, seeing no intention to free the world from hunger; however, Orr’s views (as described in the following paragraph) were seen as radical by many (Cepede, undated). The UN Interim commission on food and agriculture (1943-45) was established to formulate a specific plan for establishment of the FAO, and was formally established in Quebec in 1945. Boyd Orr was appointed as the first

Director-General, which he held for two years (1946-47). The FAO was the first of the UN specialized agencies.

One of the first tasks of the FAO was to set up the International Emergency Food Council. It was designed to ensure an equitable distribution among the nations of the world for food products which were in short supply, as a kind of international rationing directorate; its operations continued for three years until the summer of 1949. This rationing arrangement was credited as responsible for preventing the famine which threatened many countries in the post-war period. Building on the success of this council, the FAO proposed a change in constitution to give it authority and funds to initiate a world food policy. According to Jahn (1949), Boyd Orr's idea of a world food council was revolutionary; it would promote intervention through control of the world food supply by a world food council that would be under nation state, versus private control.

"He [Orr] proposed the creation of a World Food Board which would assume wide responsibilities. It was to stabilize food prices on the world markets, to create reserves of food to meet shortages and to counteract increases in price in the event that harvests should fail, to raise capital to finance the sale of surpluses to countries with the greatest need, and finally to cooperate with organizations such as the World Bank, which could provide credit for the development of agriculture, industry, and the economy as a whole, with a view to more rapid progress toward the appointed goal" (Jahn, 1949, p. 5).

The proposal failed to get support from Britain and US. In its stead the World Food Council, an advisory body with no executive authority, was established within the framework of FAO (Jahn, 1949). Orr resigned in 1948 when his ideas regarding a broader role of the FAO were not accepted (Passmore, 1980). This broader vision of food policy lost ground after WWII, particularly as the productionist paradigm took hold, and the FAO operated primarily as a production-oriented body (Lang & Heasman, 2004).

The key drivers of this movement are still relevant today: agricultural surplus and farm failure; and hunger and malnutrition (resulting from either "under" or "over"

nutrition). Illustrating the relevance of hunger amidst agricultural surplus, Special Rapporteur on the right to food, Olivier De Schutter (2009, p. 3) suggests “We see hunger as a problem of supply and demand, when it is primarily a problem of unscrupulous employers and traders, of an increasingly concentrated input providers sector, or of insufficient safety nets to support the poor”. This also highlights the current relevance to a reference in the League of Nations report (1937, p. 50) to the issue of reducing overhead costs (in sale of food) and “excessive middlemen’s profits”; this was further supported by a statement from Orr that “‘large profits’ [were] made by the ‘great distributing and processing firms’ during even the worst years of the Depression as evidence of exploitation or at least inefficiency”; he also suggested the potential of distribution becoming a public function (Turnell, 2000, p. 9). The international recognition of the interconnectedness of health, agriculture and economics was also first brought forward at this time. Again, the solution of comprehensive, “joined-up” food and nutrition policy – and thus including both consumption and production - is one currently promoted at international, national and local levels. And finally, as the League of Nations argued, this requires involvement of the state, including a role for PH ((albeit Lang and Heasman (2004, p. 107-108) argue that Orr’s views would likely be seen today as “top-down ... managerialist and northern-led”)). That this combination of issues had such an elevated status on the international agenda is a situation that many food security advocates argue for today, albeit the current discourse around these issues undoubtedly differs. Many food security advocates today would argue that nutrition and ecology should drive the food supply, rather than the current and past reality of the food supply driving our nutrition. Further, the historic, narrow understanding of nutrition has also broadened (M. Beaudry, Hamelin, Anne-Marie, Delisle, Helene, 2004), as has the simplified concept of “comparative advantage”¹⁴ in food production purported by this group.

¹⁴ Comparative advantage is a “concept in economics that a country should specialize in producing and exporting only those goods and services which it can produce more efficiently (at lower opportunity cost) than other goods and services (which it should import) ... It is founded on the work of the UK economist David Ricardo (1772-1823) on comparative cost”. (Business Dictionary.Com, undated)

Following WWII, and within the context of the social welfare state paradigm, the United Nations chartered the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Bellows & Hamm, 2003); this declaration recognized freedom from hunger and malnutrition as a basic human right in 1948. “Right to food” has been further enshrined in other international agreements – The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (legally binding, but difficult to enforce), and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Graham Riches, 1999b):

“[The right to adequate food] is realized when every man, woman or child, alone or in community with others, has physical and economic access at all times to adequate food or its procurement ... and the availability of food in a quantity and quality sufficient to satisfy the dietary needs of individuals, free from adverse substances, and acceptable within a given culture; the accessibility of such food in ways that are sustainable and that do not interfere with the enjoyment of other human rights” (General Comment 12 in G. B. Riches, Don; MacRae, Rod; Ostry, Aleck, 2004).

While right to food advocates such as Riches work tenaciously toward its adherence, others reject it, arguing that it is not justiciable (Power, 1999), or that it bestows too much power to the state (who are invariably influenced by corporations), and that the “concept and language of rights imposes the individualistic and legalistic approach on other civilizations and ways of thinking” (Kneen, 2009). The researcher sees most promise for success of right to food when it is framed beyond that of an individual entitlement issue, but as a societal or nation right, as reflected in the 2003 UN Special Rapporteur definition on the Right to Food (United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2003).

Shortly after the formation of the FAO in 1945, the World Health Organization (WHO) was formed in 1948; it was formed as a PH arm of the United Nations (MacRae, 1997; MSN Encarta Online Encyclopedia; United Nations Economic and Social Council, 2003). With one of their mandates being to collaborate with national governments and other international aid agencies to improve nutrition, the FAO and WHO began to work together on FAO/WHO Expert Committees

(Passmore, 1980); one key joint function is the Codex Alimentarius Commission, established in 1962 to set international food standards. The FAO established the World Food Program in 1963 with a mission to “eradicate global hunger and poverty”.

“As the food aid arm of the UN [World Food Program] uses its food to: meet emergency needs; support economic & social development ... [and] works to put hunger at the centre of the international agenda, promoting policies, strategies and operations that directly benefit the poor and hungry” (United Nations, 2006).

The post-war establishment of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund occurred partly to secure peace through economic improvement (Bellows & Hamm, 2003).

2.3 Decentralizing and Centralizing Forces in Food Security

This historic analysis of the changing discourse of food security will continue by expanding upon Bellows and Hamm’s proposition of two opposing international trends of decentralizing and centralizing in food security since WWII. A centralizing trend toward global consolidation in food and agricultural trade is occurring (Bellows & Hamm, 2003). In opposition, a decentralizing trend has occurred at the international level in the definition and address of food security as it has moved from a global, supply approach to the household, access level (Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Maxwell, 1996). The movement toward decentralizing trends will be reviewed first.

Prior to the focus on food security, international discourse centred on food policy (Maxwell & Slater, 2003). Thus, when food security first came to the fore, it was primarily referred to as the ability to consistently meet aggregate food needs (M. Anderson & Cook, 1999; Maxwell, 1996). Bellows and Hamm suggest that in the 1960’s and 1970’s, the international term food security was “a way to describe and measure the UN mandate to safeguard the human right to food” (Bellows &

Hamm, 2003, p. 110). In fact, the 1974 World Food Conference focused on production and aggregate supply and demand as indicators of global food security (M. Anderson & Cook, 1999; Bellows & Hamm, 2003). However, the disparity between national and international food supply and people's access became evident, where widespread hunger co-existed in the presence of adequate food supplies (Maxwell, 1996). Further, at this point in time, expansion of world food supplies as a result of the green revolution fell under criticism due to the facts that: food access by poor people was not necessarily improved; destructive impacts on human and ecological health occurred; and it created economic dependency on the "developed" world for agricultural inputs (M. Anderson & Cook, 1999; Bellows & Hamm, 2003). Bellows and Hamm (p. 111) state that this criticism "growing out of earlier colonial independence and non-alignment movements, began to influence the international-scale food security goals and strategies" in the 1980s and 1990s. Environmental impact was further brought to light with the publication of Rachel Carson's book "Silent Spring" in 1962. Maxwell and Frankenberger (in Bellows & Hamm, 2003) suggest that food security began to be defined less by trade and more in terms of access and autonomy in world regions, world states, localities, and finally households. While Maxwell (1996) describes the concept of "access" to food as "commonplace in nutrition planning, and had been amply demonstrated in field studies", he suggests "access" was "codified and theorized" by Amartya Sen, under the name of "food entitlement" (p. 157). In the words of Bellows and Hamm, Sen concluded that "'capability' – an empowered ability to assert and claim one's needs in society – is a more critical measure of economic autonomy and security than of international human rights treaties alone" (Bellows & Hamm, 2003, p. 110; Sen, 1981). The concept of entitlement contributed to the shift in focus of food security to individual and household access, rather than solely on food supply, or on international/national establishment of right to food. This decentralizing trend was reflected in international policy initiatives in the late 1970's and early 1980's through the inclusion of "access" to food as a defining characteristic of food security in FAO and the WHO (Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Maxwell, 1996). Bellows and Hamm further suggest that the trend toward

decentralization was spurred on by “international conferences begun in the 1970s that addressed the needs of some of the world’s marginalized populations [where] regional and local knowledge and experience began to vie with international experts”; they refer to the new phenomena in the 1990’s “shaking international politics where NGOs and non-profit organizations began playing a key role at international conferences” (Bellows & Hamm, 2003, p. 111). The 1979 UN Plan of Action for World Food Security reflected greater participation of member states in establishing their food security goals and strategies (Escobar and Smillie in Bellows & Hamm, 2003). “Increased autonomy in food production was hailed as an antidote for trade dependency” (Bellows & Hamm, 2003, p. 111). “In 1982 and 1983 respectively, the World Food Council and the UN Food and Agriculture Organization formally recognized the importance of securing access to food ‘at country and at household level[s]’” (Bellows & Hamm, 2003, p. 111).

Before moving on to outline centralizing trends, a review of the social context and other related events in this time period is warranted. The World Food Conference was held in Rome by the FAO in 1974, in the wake of famines in Bangladesh. Governments attending the World Food Conference proclaimed that “every man, woman and child has the inalienable right to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop their physical and mental faculties”, setting the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition within a decade as a goal. The World Food Council that was set up after the conference to coordinate the food security work of the UN (Shaw, 2007). The goal of the UN World Food Council was to coordinate national ministries of agriculture to help reduce malnutrition and hunger. The World Food Council was suspended in 1993; responsibilities were transferred to the Department for Policy Coordination and Sustainable Development in New York (Overseas Development Institute, 1997). The Overseas Development Institute (1997) cites key successes that emerged from the conference. First, the decrease in the proportion of undernourished people from 38% in 1969/71 to 20% in 1990/92, and second, that world food production has outpaced population growth (while qualifying “that per capita food production has

not increased in most highly-indebted, low-income countries, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa"). Third, they suggest that famine became virtually confined to conflict situations after 1974.

Looking to the broader socio-political context of that time, in concurrence with many scholars, Lightman (2002) relates the end of the post-war [social welfare] consensus in the early 1970's to increased world oil prices, and thus, increased economic scarcity. Eide (2005) corroborates this, suggesting that this sparked a debt crisis, further rendering developing countries powerless. He also notes that this occurred at the same time as neoliberal governments came to power in both the UK and the USA, at the beginning of the 1980's. Coburn (2000) describes neoliberalism as referring to the dominance of markets and the market model, with limited state intervention, and involving the re-commodification of aspects of society. He suggests that the welfare state, in the neoliberal view, interferes with the normal functioning of the market (invisible hand) and critically ties neoliberalism to inequity and the decline of the welfare state. However, Rice and Prince (2000) suggest that writers from both the Left and the Right have developed critical reviews of the welfare system.

In opposition to decentralizing trends, a centralizing trend has occurred since World War II. This is exemplified by the de-regulation of international trade in food and agriculture (Bellows & Hamm, 2003). The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), established in 1947 was a set of rules on trade agreed upon by nations. Bellows and Hamm (2003, p. 111) state that Nader, Shiva and Lang argued that the 1994 round of GATT "eroded the already weak legal identity of food as a human right". Further, before 1994, nations had authority to control food imports and subsidize farmers and exporters as they wished; following the 1994 GATT negotiation, agricultural products were categorized in the same way as products such as automobiles. The World Trade Organization (WTO) replaced GATT in 1995, and is now an institutional body (World Trade Organization, undated). Bellows and Hamm cite the European Commission as charging that food security is incompatible with WTO rules, and suggest that WTO rulings are

not transparent or democratic, further alienating the public from control over their food supply and consequently, their health (Bellows & Hamm, 2003).

Globalization¹⁵ is a centralizing feature at the international level. Koc and Dahlberg (1999) summarize the origins of the current global food system as the: green revolution, growth of transnational corporations, expansion of global financial capital, and expansion of international organizations and agreements. They also categorize the impacts of globalization into the following three categories:

“1) an increasing exploitation of large segments of society as manifested in increasing inequalities, poverty, hunger poor health and cultural diversity; 2) increasing exploitation of the natural environment, which is manifested in increasing pollution, resources losses and degradation, and loss of biodiversity; 3) an increasing loss of national, state and local political power as concentrations of economic and corporate power increase, with corresponding reduction of democratic power and social controls” (Mustafa Koc & Dahlberg, 1999, p. 112).

These impacts are corroborated by others (Dahlberg, 2001; Lang, 1999a; Graham Riches, 1999b). Further, these threats are not confined to the population (i.e. the ‘developed’ countries) who generate the problem. Threats are transferred to the ‘developing’ world through contamination of local ecosystems by bioengineered crops; pesticide poisoning of agricultural workers growing ‘cash’ crops; trade policies which threaten local food sovereignty and the nutrition transition¹⁶. De Shutter (2009, p. 13) concurs, suggesting that “policies that are aimed at increasing production may at the same time lead to increased inequality, poverty and marginalization in the rural areas”. Finally, the Toronto Food Policy Council

¹⁵ Globalization is often understood as a synonym for: the pursuit of “free market” policies in the world economy (“economic liberalization”), the growing dominance of western forms of political, economic, and cultural life, the proliferation of new information technologies, as well as the notion that humanity stands at the threshold of realizing one single unified community in which major sources of social conflict have vanished. However, “most contemporary social theorists endorse the view that globalization refers to fundamental changes in the spatial and temporal contours of social existence, according to which the significance of space or territory undergoes shifts in the face of a no less dramatic acceleration in the temporal structure of crucial forms of human activity”. This distinction is expanded upon by Scholte later in this section (see 2.3) (Scheuerman, 2010).

¹⁶ The nutrition transition refers to the transfer of poor nutrition practices from the ‘West’ to ‘developing’ countries, mostly in relation to the cheap source of food energy from fats and sugars. (Drewnowski, 2003)

(1994) argues that our food and agriculture economy (consistent with the workings of the broader economy) produces wealth in a manner that favours a small group of powerful economic players at the expense of the majority; consequently, the food and agriculture system itself is a contributor to job loss, unemployment and poverty.

In addition to economic, political and cultural issues described above, Lang (1999a) also offers that “ideological processes” impact globalization, where political and corporate leaders sell the idea that there is no alternative to their proposed methods of reform. In support of this notion, Hassanein (2003) quotes numerous authors as submitting that the current processes of the dominant food paradigm are not immutable, and do not have foregone outcomes. One of the models supporting the dominant paradigm is the traditional economic argument of supply and demand in the food system. However, this argument fails to achieve social efficiency, and instead results in market failure. Market failure occurs due to a lack of competition, information asymmetry and a lack of recognition of negative and positive externalities; it provides an explanation as to why free markets fail to achieve social efficiency (Rocha & MacRae, 2003). Negative impacts of globalization “revolve around the high political, social, and environmental costs of current industrial trends and the shrinking role of government in regulating the economy and shaping social programs” (Mustafa. Koc & Dahlberg, 1999). Dahlberg (2001) suggests that this has resulted in the weakening of democracy. Coburn (2000) echoes this, connecting the shrinking role of government to a lack of social cohesion (which he describes akin to social trust and social disorganization). Lang and Heasman (2004) argue that “internationalist” trends (characterized by “views from below”) have risen in opposition to globalization (associated with the “power elite”). Within the food system, this has resulted in a struggle between two paradigms to replace the dominant productionist paradigm – these are the centralized, globalized approach of the “Life Sciences Integrated Paradigm” and the “internationalist” or decentralized trend of the “Ecologically Integrated Paradigm” (Lang & Heasman, 2004). These paradigms are further explored later in the chapter. However, it is important to note that neoliberalism is

only one policy approach toward globalization. The UN Research Institute for Social Development (Scholte, 2005) argue:

“globalization involves the growth of transplanetary—and in particular supraterritorial—connections between people. Hence, globality is in the first place a feature of social geography. A distinction therefore needs to be rigorously maintained between globalization as a reconfiguration of social space and neoliberalism as a particular—and contestable—policy approach to this trend” (p. 2).

While globalization is inescapable, alternative approaches to working toward food security outside of neoliberalism need to be articulated. Scholte (2005) outlines ways of moving beyond a neoliberal approach to globalization, including documenting and publicizing limitations and failures of neoliberal policies toward globalization, and developing alternatives to a neoliberal approach.

Koc and Dahlberg (1999) also argue that localist trends have risen as a response to globalization. However, Allen (1999) - albeit somewhat supportive of localism - warns of the potential of localism leading to a loss of sight of the larger global situation (where she argues many problems with lack of food security originate). Tensions between “centralization” and “decentralization” are experienced at both the broader global context and at the local level (P. Allen, 1999; Dahlberg, 2001; Hassanein, 2003; Lang, 1999a; Wekerle, 2004). This tension will be explored further as a central theme in this thesis.

The 1996 World Food Summit and the World Food Summit: five years later (2002), reflect both positive and negative aspects of centralization and decentralization. The World Food Summit was called by the United Nation’s Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) in 1996 to renew international commitment to end hunger and toward a universal right to food. The FAO called the Summit in response to widespread under-nutrition and growing concern about the capacity of agriculture to meet future food needs” (FAO, 1996a). This summit produced two reports - the Rome Declaration on Food Security, and the World Food Summit Plan of Action. According to the FAO, “The Rome Declaration called for the members of the

United Nations to work to halve the number of chronically undernourished people on the Earth by the year 2015". The Plan of Action sets a number of targets for government and non-governmental organizations for achieving food security, at the individual, household, national, regional and global levels" (FAO, 1996a). According to Anderson and Cook (1999, pp. 142,143), the 1996 World Food Summit declaration "described multidimensional aspects of treating food insecurity ... [and] emphasized the role of sustainable management of natural resources, elimination of unsustainable patterns of consumption and production, need to ensure equality between men and woman and revitalization of rural areas". Three "parallel" events to the Summit were held, including: a NGO forum; an International Youth Forum and a Parliamentarian's Day (FAO, 1996a). Bellows and Hamm (2003, p. 111) suggest that NGO input influenced the "ground breaking" re-definition of food security in Rome to include "environmental sustainability and access to productive resources such as land for household food production and domestic use". However, a 2002 Canadian NGO document "World Food Summit – Which Way Forward?", reflected back on their perspective of the Summit, describing the focus as increasing agricultural productivity (with the help of genetic engineering), and increasing trade in foodstuffs (Weibe, Pederson, & Beveridge, 2002). The NGO Forum at the Summit, outlined an alternative model for achieving food security "based on decentralization and a break-up of the present concentration of wealth and power. The collective statement: 'Profit for the Few or Food for All' highlighted six key elements:

"strengthening the capacity of family farmers and local and regional food systems; reversing the concentration of wealth and power; changing farming systems towards agro-ecological principles; recognizing that primary responsibility for ensuring food security lies with national and local governments, whose capacity must be strengthened and accountability enhanced; strengthening and deepening the participation of people's organizations and NGOs at all levels; and guaranteeing in international law the basic human right to food" (Overseas Development Institute, 1997).

The Overseas Development Institute further comments:

“The most obvious differences in emphasis between the governments' and the NGOs' statements concern the role of trade and markets and the right to food. The former sees market globalization and liberalization ... as largely positive in effect at a national level. The NGOs, however, are critical of the effects of both trade liberalization, particularly because of the lack of accountability of transnational corporations operating within the global economy, and of structural adjustment programs on the poor and food-insecure. Hunger and malnutrition were regarded by the NGO Forum as fundamentally questions of justice. The right to the sustenance of life should come before the quest for profit. The Summit Plan committed the UN only to exploring the legal ramifications of a universal right to food which, in a dissenting note, the US representative interpreted as an objective or aspiration and not a binding commitment or obligation” (Overseas Development Institute, 1997).

Again, this split emphasizes tensions between top-down/centralized, versus bottom-up/grassroots/decentralized approaches.

The World Food Summit: five years later, “called for an international alliance to accelerate action to reduce world hunger” describing progress toward the 1996 declaration as “disappointingly slow”. It also called for:

“an intergovernmental working group to develop voluntary guidelines to achieve the progressive realisation of the right to food; reversing the overall decline of agriculture and rural development in the national budgets of developing countries, in assistance provided by developed countries, and in lending by the international financing institutions; and considering voluntary contributions to the FAO Trust Fund on Food Safety and food security” (FAO, 2002).

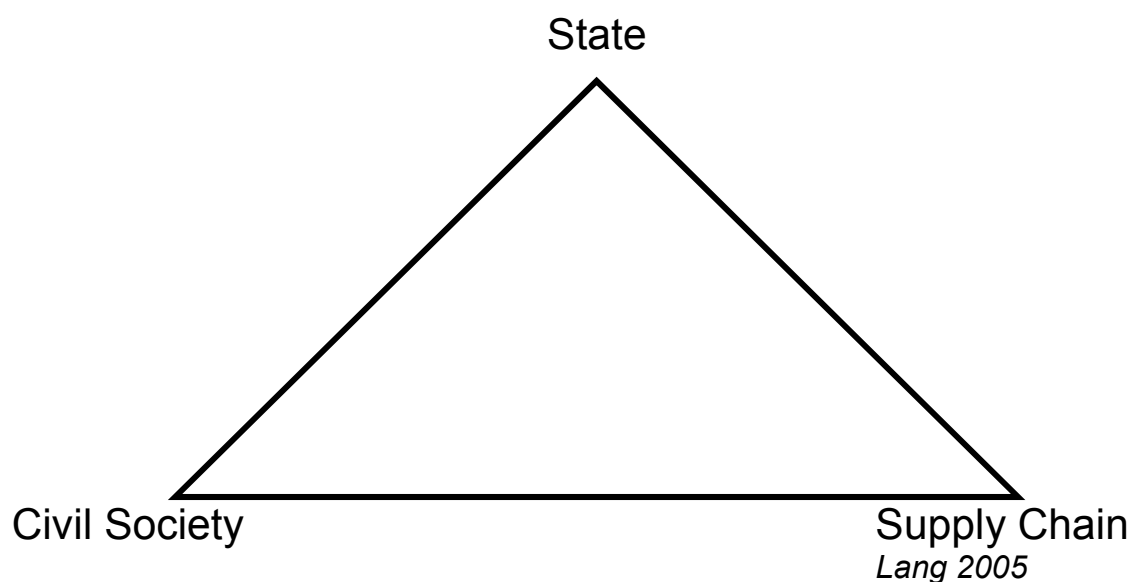
A parallel NGO forum was again held independent of the Summit. “Food sovereignty” – the idea that nations and peoples should be able to define and control their own food systems - arose as the dominant theme and response to the Summit plans. The FAO comments that the NGO forum expressed:

“alarm at the privatization and commodification of communal and public land, water, fishing grounds and forests; they called for an international convention on food sovereignty, emphasizing the right to food; access to land, water, forests and fisheries; and the protection of local seeds ... [and] a moratorium on genetically modified organisms” (FAO, 2002).

The Canadian NGO document - “World Food Summit – Which Way Forward?” paints a bleak picture of the 2002 Summit, declaring the lack of success of the 1996 strategies. Further, they noted that this did not deter the Summit from committing to even broader liberalization of trade, as reflected in the WTO Doha negotiations. They also noted that the obligatory “right to food” was reduced to voluntary guidelines “apparently due to strong lobbying by the industrialized countries” (Weibe, et al., 2002).

Although the above illustrates centralizing factors as primarily negative, right to food provides an example where centralization is not inherently a negative force. As described earlier in the chapter, centralization as related to the World Food Movement illustrates another example of both positive and negative aspects of centralization. As will be examined later under community food security, the broad frame of food security itself is argued for at both centralized (anti-hunger/state) and decentralized (local food system) levels. This thesis contends that in order to achieve food security, aspects of centralization/top-down/state intervention and decentralization/bottom-up/grassroots are both required. This is consistent with Lang’s model of food policy (2005a) which outlines state, CS and food supply as all central to food policy (see Figure 2.1).

Figure 2.1: Food Policy - Key Players



2.4 Key Themes of Food Security

For decades, food security has been analyzed under the themes of hunger and agricultural/ food sustainability (P. Allen, 2004). More recently, health has been incorporated into the frame in North America (P. Allen, 2004; Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Food Secure Canada, 2006; Ontario Public Health Association, 2002). While the issue of hunger and food insecurity centres on those living in low income, food security issues in the categories of food sustainability and health cut across all socio-economic levels. These three themes are further examined below.

2.4.1 Hunger/ Food Insecurity

As illustrated in the historical analysis above, and as many scholars currently agree, the origins of hunger are political - both in the “developing” and “developed” world (De Schutter, 2009; Vernon, 2007). Koc et al (1999) state that “Despite technological advances that have modernized the conditions of production and distribution of food, hunger and malnutrition still threaten the health and well-being of millions of people around the world”. Moreover, De Schutter (2009, p.7) cites the “failure of the Green Revolution to decisively tackle hunger”, which in many cases was “effectively a substitute for agrarian reform: instead of encouraging increases in food production by redistributing land to the rural poor, it did so by technology”. He suggests that we need to ask the distributional questions of who gains and who loses in increasing agricultural production, suggesting that politics and distribution are at least as important to food security as production. This reflects lessons learned in the 1930’s world food movement, which first illuminated the concept of hunger amidst food surplus (and also encourages us to question the use technology as a future solution to hunger).

“First World Hunger” has been recognized in many Western Countries such as Canada, US, Australia, Britain and New Zealand (G. Riches, 1997). Hunger in the West has been linked to poor academic performance in children, low birth weight,

behavioural and emotional problems and chronic disease (Alimo, Olson, & Frongillo, 2002; McIntyre, Connor, & Warren, 1998; McIntyre, Walsh, & Connor, 2001). Riches attributes the roots of hunger in Canada to the structural preconditions of poverty, inequality and powerlessness. He outlines the culprits of hunger, stating that:

“economic and labour market restructuring precipitated by the demands of economic globalization, and spurred on by the federal government’s neo-conservative agenda of deficit reduction, free trade, increased international competitiveness, high interest rates and faith in trickle-down economics, has resulted in jobless growth, persistently high unemployment rates, significant underemployment and the emergence of insecure and low wage employment, largely at the expense of women” (G. Riches, 1997, p. 54).

Understandings of hunger are varied and have shifted over time (Vernon, 2007). Lezberg (1999) differentiates the anti-hunger approach in “developing” versus “developed” countries - the former focusing on entitlement and right to food efforts and the latter on people’s ability to participate in the market economy. However, Riches (1999a) argues that hunger in the West is also an outcome of the failure to recognize and implement the human right to food. He contends that food banks, NGOs and lobby groups have failed in their attempts to hold governments accountable to their legislated and moral responsibilities to food security (G. Riches, 1997). Sen’s (1981) concept of entitlement also remains salient to the first world. Dowler and Caraher (2003) invoke Sen’s notion of food and citizenship “whereas citizens, people and communities have a right to an adequate amount of safe and wholesome food, and at the same time [food] is also a consumer good, where the entitlement may be dictated by trade and financial rights”. Nonetheless, Allen (2004, p. 124) suggests that “in the 1990’s, discourses of rights and entitlements were replaced by neoliberal arguments about individual responsibility”. She quotes Dowler and Caraher (2003) in suggesting that “the rhetoric of dignity and self-help is used to cover up the lack of fundamental change and to locate both the ‘problem’ and the ‘solution’ as belonging to those labelled – and living – as ‘poor’”. Poppendieck (1992, p. 10S) echoes this, suggesting that “cheese handouts and soup kitchens are not an adequate response to the huge

economic forces that destroyed the livelihoods ... nor to the increasing inequality that have left so many so far from the mainstream”. This perspective is consistent with numerous North American scholars, as will be further reviewed under “Criticisms of Community Food Security” later in the chapter.

2.4.2 Food Sustainability

Sustainability is an ubiquitous term, and exploring its origins and definitions are beyond the scope of this thesis. However, a brief review of sustainability in relation to food is relevant. Allen (2004) proposes that environmental degradation in agriculture was a concern as early as the 1700s. She suggests that agriculture emerged as a predominant theme in the contemporary environmental movement with the 1962 publication of Rachel Carson’s “Silent Spring”, which outlined the detrimental effects of pesticides. Finally, Allen submits that the contemporary concept of agricultural sustainability first emerged in the 1970s.

It seems that the emergence of food sustainability is more recent. In his website and report: “Sustainable Food Reports: 5 Years, 2006-2010” (2009, p. 2), Clutterbuck suggests that “Over the five years it is clear that many more now take the issues of food sustainability more seriously ... The latest direction – and long overdue – is the linking of environmental concerns with health concerns”. While these links were in fact made in 1986 by Gussow and Clancy in their “Dietary Guidelines for Sustainability” (1986), nonetheless, much attention is now given to food sustainability, with frequent reports generated from international, regional and national levels. One such recent report from a collaboration of American professional organizations outlined “Principles of a Healthy, Sustainable Food System” (American Dietetic Association, American Nurses Association, American Planning Association, & American Public Health Association, 2010). These principles emphasize “socially, economically, and ecologically sustainable food systems that promote health ... of individuals, communities and the natural environment”. Food Secure Canada, a CS organization focused on food security

outlines sustainable food systems as one of their commitments within their vision and defines them as follows:

A Sustainable Food System: Food in Canada must be produced, harvested (including fishing and other wild food harvest), processed, distributed and consumed in a manner which maintains and enhances the quality of land, air and water for future generations, and in which people are able to earn a living wage in a safe and healthy working environment by harvesting, growing, producing, processing, handling, retailing and serving food (Food Secure Canada, 2006).

The promotion of local food consumption as part of the solution to food sustainability issues and as a booster of local economies is also central to the discourse (P. Allen, 2004; City of Vancouver Community Services Social Planning, 2006; Gussow, 2000).

So, while the anti-hunger movement focuses on individual and household “access” to food, sustainable food systems focus on current and future “availability” of a safe and healthy food supply. It focuses on the food system, rather than the social system, and labels the dominant food system¹⁷ as dysfunctional and unsustainable. As evidence, it points to issues of food safety (e.g. e. coli, BSE, Avian Flu); food contamination (e.g. pesticides, hormones); loss of farmland; ecological concerns (e.g. soil loss and degradation); loss of biodiversity; threats from technology misuse (e.g. genetically modified foods); environmental pollution (e.g. agricultural runoff into water supplies, CO2 emissions from extended transportation of food); destruction of rural communities, both in the South and the North; animal welfare (e.g. factory farming); and human health concerns of agricultural workers (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Gussow, 2000, 2006; Lang, 2005b; Lang & Heasman, 2004; Lezberg, 1999; Nestle, 2002; Pothukuchi, 2004; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994).

¹⁷ Lang and Heasman describe the dominant food system as the “productionist paradigm”, characterized by concentrated production and mass distribution of foodstuff.

Negative aspects of the dominant food system include (but are not limited to): negative impacts of globalization; the misuse of advances in chemical, transport, agricultural, biological, and food processing technologies; concentration of power; and lack of coordinated food policy (Lezberg, 1999; Rod MacRae, 1999). Lack of control over the food supply, a distancing of the food supply, and a disconnect between the consumer and their food supply are also key concerns (P. Allen, 1999). Lang and Heasman (2004) argue that it is the productionist paradigm that severs this connection. Consistent with a sustainable agriculture, Lang and Heasman (2004) describe an “ecologically integrated paradigm” approach to food systems – one of two approaches they see as emerging possibilities to the current productionist paradigm. The ecologically integrated paradigm builds on agroecology, with an integrative approach to nature, preserving ecological health and diversity.

2.4.3 Health

The Community Nutritionists Council of BC (2004, p. vii) defines food security as a “prerequisite for healthy eating”, stating that “if people don’t have access to a sustainable supply of appropriate foods, their health will be compromised”. In fact, food security is recognized as a determinant of health (Dietitians of Canada, 2005; McIntyre, 2003). In “The Solid Facts, 2nd edition”, the World Health Organization (2003, p. 26) identifies “Food” as one of 10 determinants of health, stating “a good diet and adequate food supply are central for promoting health and well-being, focusing on the issues of both excess intake and food poverty”.

Food security issues are well documented to have the potential to threaten health and advance human disease through:

- inadequate amount of food (hunger), malnutrition or overnutrition (Alimo, et al., 2002; McIntyre, et al., 1998; McIntyre, et al., 2001);
- the consumption of contaminated food (e.g. antibiotic and pesticide use in production of food (Buffin, 2009); food-borne microbial illness (World Health Organization, 2007);

- the compromise of socio-cultural aspects of food (e.g. value of family mealtime (Neumark-Sztainer D, 2003);
- pesticide poisoning of agricultural workers (Buffin, 2009);
- contamination or deterioration of ecosystem, land, water and air through poor production and distribution practices (P. Allen, 2004).

Again, the causes of negative health impacts of a lack of food security point to politics. Congruent with the anti-hunger movement and Social Determinants of Health research, many view social inequity as a key cause of food insecurity and consequently, ill health in North America (Dietitians of Canada, 2005; McIntyre & Tarasuk, 2002). Others look to the food system and who controls and drives it. In the Solid Facts, 2nd edition, the WHO (2003, p. 26) argues “because global market forces control the food supply, healthy food is a political issue”. Nestle concurs. In her book, “Food Politics: How the Food Industry Influences Nutrition and Health” (Nestle, 2002), she demonstrates the extent to which diet is a political issue, where government balances corporate against public interests. She points to the influence of corporate lobbying on government nutrition policy and aggressive marketing and serving size sprawl as some of the tactics used by the fast food industry to encourage us to eat more “processed” foods.

In relation to mal or over-nutrition, despite decades of research on the determinants of health, the health care system focuses solutions on the individual - both in philosophy and in dollars spent (where health education is proposed as the solution). And while some suggest that the Canadian health care system should be committed to optimal nutrition, unfortunately, the provision of a nourishing affordable diet as a health promotion measure is not seen as a mandate of the health care system. Nonetheless, as the Toronto Food Policy Council argues,

“Canada is left with the paradoxical situation of a private-sector driven food production and consumption system and a publicly funded health care system. The consequence is that all Canadians end up paying for health care expenses associated with malnutrition, such as hunger, poor food choices, and poor food quality” (Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994, p. 26)

The integration of food policy¹⁸ into the food security dialogue in North America has highlighted the importance of health as a key component of food security. For example, North Americans are well versed and engaged in the policy issue of vending machines in schools. Food policy analysts such as MacRae further the discourse. MacRae (1999, p. 182) argues that the absence of food policy is a cause of lack of food security in Canada, and ideally sees a coherent food policy having “optimal nourishment of the population as its highest purpose, making agricultural production and distribution a servant of that purpose, and ensuring the food system is financially and environmentally sustainable”.

Food-borne illness is a key component of food security and health. Lang and Heasman (2004) argue that food safety from this aspect is often addressed through government/private partnership, where food enforcement occurs at the local level, and increasingly, legislation standards are set at international levels. Like other areas of health, the focus on food-borne illness is often on the outcome rather than on the root causes. Consequently, the focus tends to be on the post-production treatment methods by the consumer or the producer (e.g. home storage and cooking; irradiation), as opposed to production methods (e.g. production of chickens in a way that minimizes salmonella contamination). This view frequently comes to conflict with that of sustainable agriculture, or with those health workers (e.g. PH Nutritionists) that look to the productionist paradigm as a cause (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

Lang and Heasman (2004) argue that the outcome of “Food Wars” (in the battle of who controls the food system) is of immense significance for human health. As alluded to previously, they outline the Life Sciences paradigm as the second of the two approaches they see as emerging possibilities to the current productionist

¹⁸Food policy is defined later in the chapter under 2.5.1 Food Policy

paradigm. Life Sciences is described in some manner, as an extension of productionism, with chemical science being replaced by biological science. Genetic modification is one defining feature of Life Sciences. Although there are many differences in the pace and impact of these two technologies, the key similarity is control by transnational corporations. Life Sciences claims to address some of the limitations of the productionist paradigm, including environmental impact and human health. Individual approaches are another cornerstone of Life Sciences. The researcher notes that for decades, individual health approaches have triumphed over population health approaches in the North American health system. This favours the potential for Life Sciences to overtake the “Ecologically Integrated Paradigm” focusing on human and environmental health in what Lang and Heasman (2004) see as the two oppositional forces battling for first place in the post-productionism food system. A much broader view of health needs to be embraced if the Ecologically Integrated Paradigm is to succeed.

Chapter 3 delves more deeply into the role of PH in food security, and compares and contrasts food security approaches with PH theories and models. For now, this chapter will turn to contemporary systems approaches to food security.

2.5 Approaches to Food Security

Maxwell (1996) outlines a view of food security through a post-modernism framework. He argues that this framework is useful for understanding food security, and characterizes post-modernism as complex and diverse, holistic, interactive and enabling, decentralized, flexible and innovative, and focusing on bottom-up (vs. top down) planning; the post-modern framework also allows for more fluidity in the boundaries of the interpretation of definitions. The researcher concurs, suggesting that the post-modern view of food security involves aspects outlined in this chapter, including approaches outlined below of: comprehensive food policy, community food security, food democracy and food sovereignty, as are outlined below.

2.5.1 Food Policy

The need for comprehensive food policy was first articulated by the League of Nations in the 1930's who looked at food policy through the lens of health, economics and agriculture. However, as discussed previously, post war food policy primarily focused on increasing food supply. While Maxwell and Slater (2003) suggest there was a shift in emphasis from food policy to food security when discourse moved from food supply toward food demand (e.g. entitlement), they argue for a new policy agenda. Indeed, a more holistic concept of, and increasing attention to food policy is burgeoning at International, Regional and National levels (FAO, 1996a; Norum, Johansson, Botten, Bjorneboe, & Oshaug, 1997; World Health Organization, 2001, 2004; World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, 2000a).

Lang (2004) references the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (1981) in defining food policies, as “those which govern the food economy, defined as ‘the set of activities and relationships that interact to determine what, how much, by what method and for whom food is produced’”. He furthers this by suggesting that food policy is “a strategy that views the food economy and policies relating to it in an integrated way and in a broad economic and political context” (Lang, 2004). “The Impact of Food and Nutrition on Public Health: The Case for a Food and Nutrition Policy and Action Plan for the European Region of WHO” outlines a model of “food and nutrition policy” including “food safety, sustainable food supply and nutrition” (World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, 2000b). Lang et al. (2001) build on this model, presenting a more complex model including many other factors, not the least of which includes social justice. And in 2004, The World Health Organization: “Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity and Health” (2004, pp. 7,8) suggested strategies for lowering the burden of noncommunicable diseases. This focuses first on providing accurate and balanced information. In addition to education and awareness, it includes marketing, advertising and promotion (in particular marketing to children), labelling and health claims. Second, it states that “National and agricultural food

policies should be consistent with the protection and promotion of public health”. This includes: promotion of food products consistent with a healthy diet (including measures to reduce sale content of processed foods, use of hydrogenated oils, sugar content of beverages and snacks); fiscal policies (such as taxation and subsidies); food programmes (for vulnerable populations); and agricultural policies. More attention has been turned of late in the US to the examination of agricultural subsidies and how they influence the food supply and nutrition (Fields, 2004).

Policy has traditionally been situated as a “top down”, centralized function. While attributing many benefits to post-modernist views, Maxwell (1996) suggests that due to the deconstructionist outlook of post-modernists, they are poor at policy. On the other hand, he offers that this view provides a more holistic point of entry to policy. In relating post-modernism to policy, some argue that post-modernism would be in agreement with the neoliberal concept of a diminished role of state and priority to the market. However, Maxwell (1996) cites Lipton and Maxwell in arguing that the state has a “key, enabling role to play”, and that a post-modern framework can help to inform the type of role the state can take. In fact, many local food policy councils use comprehensive food policy as a tool to move communities toward food security, and attempt to incorporate “bottom-up” input into their approaches and policies (City of Vancouver Community Services Social Planning, 2006; Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Nova Scotia Nutrition Council & Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre, 2005; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994; Yeatman, 2003). Academic discourse also recognizes this (Lang & Heasman, 2004; Wekerle, 2004). Wekerle (2004, p. 385) proposes the concept of “policy from the ground up”, asking “if new food policy initiatives come from CS, in an environment of downsizing, what is the role of the local state in this transformation of governance?” The role of the state in food security and in food democracy is a central theme of this thesis.

2.5.2 Community Food Security

Anderson and Cook (1999) suggest that community food security emerged from the 'post-modern' view of food security. In North America, community food security has become a key working model for addressing food security. It implies work at a regional level, and a wide scope of food security, encompassing health, hunger and food sustainability. Because of the wide scope, and the subsequent plethora of frameworks that come with it, community food security is fraught with a lack of clarity, and tensions emerge as a result. Nonetheless, many organizations have embraced the concept of community food security precisely because of its holistic definition. In this section, community food security and strategies to forward it will be defined and critiqued. The following section will relate it to the concept of "food democracy".

The term community food security gained wide recognition in the US during the 1990s, evolving from international and national debates on food security (Hamm & Bellows, 2003). Allen (2004) further traces its US origins to efforts instigated by Gottlieb, Winne and Fisher in the development of the 1995 Community Food Security Empowerment Act which eventually led to the inclusion of community food security initiatives in the 1995 farm bill. The 2003 definition proposed by Bellows and Hamm (2003, p. 107) is widely used across North America:

"Community food security exists when all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice". The US based Community Food Security Coalition outlines six principles of community food security:

"1. Low Income Food Needs: Like the anti-hunger movement, community food security is focused on meeting the food needs of low income communities, reducing hunger and improving individual health.

2. Broad Goals: community food security addresses a broad range of problems affecting the food system, community development, and the environment such as increasing poverty and hunger, disappearing farmland and family farms, inner city supermarket redlining, rural community

disintegration, rampant suburban sprawl, and air and water pollution from unsustainable food production and distribution patterns.

3. Community focus: A community food security approach seeks to build up a community's food resources to meet its own needs. These resources may include supermarkets, farmers' markets, gardens, transportation, community-based food processing ventures, and urban farms to name a few.

4. Self-reliance/empowerment: community food security projects emphasize the need to build individuals' abilities to provide for their food needs. Community Food Security seeks to build upon community and individual assets, rather than focus on their deficiencies. Community Food Security projects seek to engage community residents in all phases of project planning, implementation, and evaluation.

5. Local agriculture: A stable local agricultural base is key to a community responsive food system. Farmers need increased access to markets that pay them a decent wage for their labour, and farmland needs planning protection from suburban development. By building stronger ties between farmers and consumers, consumers gain a greater knowledge and appreciation for their food source.

6. Systems-oriented: Community Food Security projects typically are 'inter-disciplinary', crossing many boundaries and incorporating collaborations with multiple agencies" (Community Food Security Coalition).

The traditional definition of food security has expanded in community food security to incorporate a holistic, systems approach to food security; it brings together the themes of anti-hunger and sustainable agriculture, uniting availability and production with access and consumption (P. Allen, 1999; Dietitians of Canada, 2005; Lezberg, 1999). Community food security also views the food system through a community lens, focusing on community engagement and self-reliance (P. Allen, 1999; Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Community Food Security Coalition; Pothukuchi, 2004). In addition, Health has been included in community food security discourse (Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Ontario Public Health Association, 2002). Allen (1999) and Pothukuchi (2004) suggest that community food security also arose as a critique of food security, by those seeking more coherent, comprehensive approaches to food security (P. Allen, 1999; Pothukuchi, 2004). While community food security

has a stated focus on people living with low income (P. Allen, 1999; Lezberg, 1999; Winne, 2004), it also extends universally across all socio-economic levels through themes such as genetically modified foods, food safety and urban agriculture (Dietitians of Canada, 2005).

2.5.2.i Community Food Security Movement Strategies

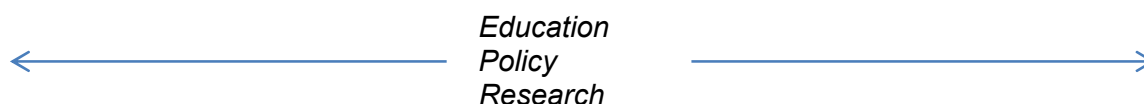
Community food security is defined by some as both an outcome and a process (Ontario Public Health Association, 2002; Winne, 2004). As a process, community food security offers concrete ways for people to engage in food projects, in ways that they can see will make a difference (P. Allen, 1999).

Common approaches include community food planning and assessment, community gardens and kitchens, urban agriculture, farm land protection, community economic development, community education (Fisher & Gottlieb, 1995), advocating for right to food and strengthening social welfare and food policy development and councils (City of Vancouver Community Services Social Planning, 2006; Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Food Secure Canada, 2006; Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006; Maunders & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007; Graham Riches, 1999b; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994). Institutional food buying, community supported agriculture and farmers markets also provide ways to link consumers to producers. While the Toronto Food Policy Council (1994) suggests that community food security efforts appear to centre more on the consumer or citizenship, rather than on government change, this thesis will explore whether this is the case in BC. Food democracy and food citizenship will be explored later in the chapter. The researcher also suggests that for many in Canada, community food security strategies also include advocating for right to food and strengthening social welfare (City of Vancouver Community Services Social Planning, 2006; Graham Riches, 1999b; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994).

Again, with the lack of common understanding and agreement on community food security, proposed strategies and solutions are limited. However, Table 2.1 outlines a broad scope of food security strategies, which has been used to frame Community Food Security in both Canada and the United States (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; C. McCullum, Pelletier, Barr, Wilkins, & Habicht, 2004).

Table 2.1 The Continuum of Food Security Strategies

	<i>Stage 1</i>	<i>Stage 2</i>	<i>Stage 3</i>
	<i>Efficiency Strategies (Individual)</i>	<i>Participatory/ Transitional Strategies (Community)</i>	<i>System Redesign Strategies (Government & Society)</i>
<i>Hunger</i>	<i>Food Banks Soup Kitchens</i>	<i>Community Kitchens Community Gardens Food Boxes & co-ops</i>	<i>Full employment strategy; Health care covers food staples for vulnerable population</i>
<i>Obesity</i>	<i>Diet therapy Medication Surgery</i>	<i>Community health promoting projects</i>	<i>Coherent food policy in public institutions (e.g. schools)</i>
<i>Food Borne Illness</i>	<i>Food safe education Medication</i>	<i>Work with individual producers, processors and distributors</i>	<i>Full information for consumers Green taxes Systems level change to food production, processing and distribution</i>



Adapted from: (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994)

Efficiency strategies involve making minor changes to existing practices. They are the fastest to implement. Transitional or capacity building strategies focus on the

replacement of one practice by another, or the development of a parallel process; they also suggest greater involvement of citizens in the process. System redesign strategies are based on restructuring of both the roots and solutions of the problem, with a focus on integrating food, health and agriculture systems. The Toronto Food Policy Council (1994) argues that due to the incremental nature of most policy and program development, redesign is unlikely to be achieved until efficiency and substitution strategies have been attempted and have been unsuccessful. They suggest that efficiency and transitional strategies should be selected to inform the community and decision-makers about redesign, in order to create an environment more conducive to systems change.

Anderson and Cook (1999, p. 149) argue that “doers have dominated community food security work”, and that conceptual development of community food security will help the “doers’ to be more effective. Through practice, the researcher has observed that stakeholders’ desires for tangible outcomes also vary. While some are interested in spending time dissecting and understanding systemic issues, others have a need for concrete action. She also suggests that the focus on action for some is a result of pressure from funders, institutions and movement members to demonstrate tangible outcomes; tangible outcomes are less likely to be immediately demonstrable in longer-term system re-design efforts.

2.5.2.ii Criticisms of Community Food Security

The definition of community food security is wide in scope, and considered by many to be lacking in a conceptual framework (M. Anderson & Cook, 1999; Dietitians of Canada, 2005; Lezberg, 1999). Bringing together the divergent movements within community food security has proven difficult in both concept and in practice. Solutions are viewed differently due to diverse diagnosis of issues (Lezberg, 1999), due to the strength of dominant ideologies (Lang, 1999a), and due to limited understandings of potential solutions (Poppendieck in Dietitians of Canada, 2005). Some community food security activists dispute the idea of right to food or food entitlements, stressing instead community food self-reliance and

market-based solutions. They view hunger and under-nutrition as one of the outcomes of people's lack of control over the food system (P. Allen, 1999) and thus focus on food related local strategies. On the other hand, anti-hunger advocates who stress social system changes argue that local food projects such as community kitchens and gardens further victimize the poor, where project motives seem to suggest that if they only knew how to cook better, they would not be food insecure (Food for Kidz, 2001; Tarasuk & Davis, 1996). Dowler and Caraher (2003) support this perspective, suggesting, "the problems of inequality are on such a scale, and their health and food dimensions so structurally based, that one could question the likelihood of food projects achieving positive outcomes, particularly those located in the realm of individual behaviour".

And while some community food security activists may see both emergency food programs and government social programs as "charity", anti-hunger activists view them as distinct. The latter are related to the state obligation to the right to food for all, and are more guaranteed than charity-based programs (P. Allen, 1999; Rocha & MacRae, 2003). Some food security models stress the importance of the elimination of hunger as a key objective and illustrate strategies in hunger elimination that also support local food sustainability (Belo Horizonte, Brazil, Rocha, 2003; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994). However, these two approaches are not simple to bring together in the "developed" world; a lack of association between the hunger and food sustainability aspects of community food security is often evident. In fact, Allen (1999) argues that community food security goals of both focusing on people living with low income and on local and regional food systems are in some cases contradictory. She contends that urban agriculture and community supported agriculture are not accessible to the poor, and ultimately do little to help them. For example, community gardens are often situated on municipal or privately owned lands and do not provide guaranteed access, as the land may be reclaimed. She poses that the community food security movement may be "unwittingly recreating a two-tiered food system differentiated by class", noting ironically that "it is the industrialized food system

has reduced class differences in food consumption” (p. 126). In fact, although many argue against cheap food policies, Lezberg (1999) suggests that if food prices increased, the burden would fall on the poor, who pay a higher percentage of their earnings for food. Further, where community food security focuses on local decision making, the anti-hunger movement focuses on decisions at higher levels (P. Allen, 1999). Allen (1999) contends that working at the local level can be counterproductive, as: a) historically marginalized people have turned federally because local elites have persisted in denying them rights; b) the only substantial gains in hunger (in the US) are due to gains made at the federal level; c) localism has been intentionally used to devolve and abdicate responsibility by higher levels of government, and d) it may pit local communities against one another, where it “reduces the lens of who we care about”. She rightly asks “is globalization as a concept and practice the problem or is the problem the specific economic forms embedded in the global economy? Is it possible to protect ourselves from food insecurity without protecting everyone? Would we want to?” (p. 121-122). Further to this, she argues that community food security is a neoliberal construct, as related to emphasis on individual, community and food system (versus societal responsibility). Community food security exemplifies the ongoing tension between anti-hunger/social system versus market/food system approaches to food security.

Community food security cannot necessarily solve problems that are caused at a greater, or global scale (P. Allen, 1999; Pothukuchi, 2004). Community-based solutions work best in conjunction with policy initiatives at other levels (Pothukuchi, 2004; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994). And contrary to current trends in participatory methods, Allen (1999) warns of a danger with community food security in assuming that problems can best be solved by those experiencing them. She argues that while local knowledge is important, it must be combined with total knowledge. Her observation is consistent with the researcher’s observations in BC, in both working in the area of child hunger and in farmland preservation. For example, the devolution of the Agricultural Land reserve in BC from the provincial to lower levels in BC has had a devastating effect in terms of

land loss, as local decision makers seem most interested in potential revenue from this land, rather than its preservation. Allen's (1999, p. 122) observation that participatory democracy at local levels "must be in addition to, not instead of national and international politics" is illustrated as paramount in this example. Community food security also highlights an ambiguity of the concept of community. Even if place-based, the concept of community can vary widely - from a neighbourhood to a watershed. Anderson and Cook (1999) suggest concrete definitions (e.g. a neighbourhood or unit of governance) may be more effective if tackling policy and practice issues, as opposed to conceptual definitions of community based on abstract terms such as shared values. The recent addition of municipal planners to the community food security landscape in North America can be attributed to the growing interest in local food councils and food charters, and to the trend toward decentralization and localism (Caton Campbell, 2004; Pothukuchi & Kaufman, 1999). Planners may offer potential in organizing the disparate approach to community food security.

While ideally the concept of local control sounds appealing, the varied interests of the diversity of stakeholders brought together in community food security can make decision making difficult (P. Allen, 1999; Pelletier, McCullum, Kraak, & Asher, 2003; Pothukuchi, 2004). For example, whereas some anti-hunger activists rely on the industrial food system for food donations, many in community food security are reluctant to work with producers who promote highly processed food, arguing that companies are working in self-interest rather than for social welfare (DeLorme in P. Allen, 1999). As mentioned previously, right to food approaches are also contentious with some (Kneen, 2005, 2009). Further, there is a need to focus both on change and action at the local scale, while at the same time working nationally and internationally to influence food systems and food policy. And, as Lang and Heasman (2004) suggest, while leadership is clearly required in moving toward food security goals, Houghton (2003) points to tension between grassroots food democracy versus centralizing of policy and decision making. Assuring power balance is difficult to achieve, particularly when involving those living with low

income (Food for Kidz, 2001; C. D. McCullum, Ellen; Kraak, Vivica; Ladipo, Patricia; Costello, Helen, 2005; Pelletier, et al., 2003; Pothukuchi, 2004).

2.5.3 Food Democracy and Food Citizenship

Despite her criticisms, Allen (1999, p. 120) views community food security as offering “the possibility of developing a deep and democratic understanding of and action around issues of food access, quality and control”, with the possibility of bringing together disparate groups that otherwise might be opposed to each other. This theme of democracy is well supported. Riches (1999a, p. 206) describes community food security as “the key to a new politics of hunger”, and contends that food needs to be subject to democratic debate and control. Lang (1999b, p. 218) expounds on the issue of control, suggesting that the dynamics of the food system can be viewed as “a titanic struggle between the forces of control and the pressure to democratise”. Lang popularized the term food democracy, which Riches (2001) defines as “the rights of peoples everywhere, as producers, consumers and citizens, and in their local communities, to control the production and sustainable supply of food, ensure its adequacy, nutritional quality and safety and its equitable (normal) distribution”. Lang and Heasman (2004, p. 290) argue that “the core assumption is that the public good – in this case the ecological and PH – will be improved by the democratic process”. Bellows and Hamm (2003, p. 107) support the concept of food democracy by arguing that “the potential to improve food security policy and practice lies in foremost in the capacity of a populace to define and demand change rather than in a bureaucracy’s readiness to change”. Riches (1999a) further argues that “it is through decentralization, more extensive community control and the promotion of local education, debate, and advocacy that food democracy will over time be regained”. Like community food security, food democracy is described both as a method and as an objective, where the establishment of a strong food democracy will transform societal values and practices (Hassanein, 2003). She further suggests that “food democracy seeks to expose and challenge the anti-democratic forces of control and claims the rights and responsibilities of citizens to participate in decision-making” (p. 10).

She also adds that as many of these food-related issues are about values, no independent authority - including experts - can decide on solutions (Hassanein, 2003). However, food democracy remains a challenge in the context where “we are in a political struggle, where those who have power and influence in the realms of science, technology, and economics, all claim exemption on the basis of expertise, knowledge, rationality, superiority, etc. from being fully a part of democratic politics and responsibility” Dahlberg (2001, p. 144).

Welsh and MacRae (1998, pp 238, 239) argue that “community food security needs to be focused on the concept of food citizenship or food democracy, which requires that we move beyond the notions of food as a commodity and people as consumers”. They define food citizenship as emerging “from people’s active participation in shaping the food system, rather than accepting the system as passive consumers”. Welsh and MacRae further suggest that “the language of citizen implies a complex membership in a society, with both rights and responsibilities” (p. 240) and distinguish between “civil rights”, which increase one’s economic and social power, and “social rights”, which are simply consumer rights and bestow no power on the individual. They refer also to the Berne Declaration Group in Switzerland, which suggested that consumer interest be reframed to include a) health of the producer and the consumer, b) environmental sustainability, and c) fair pay and treatment of workers involved in the production of goods and services (Bennett in Welsh & MacRae, 1998, p. 240).

The continuum of strategies in addressing food security Table 2.1 implies an incremental approach to food security (Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994). Like many, Hassanein (2003) questions whether incrementalism will work; however, she supports it partly because there are no clear alternatives, and also because within the context of food democracy, it could result in transformative change. Wekerle (2004, p. 381) also supports the idea of the evolution of ideas through “alternative practices and experiments ... validating local knowledge and the active participation of marginalized communities”. Both Wekerle and Dahlberg (2001)

suggest that community food security processes may act as instruments to allow the reformation toward a deeper societal democracy - both within the food system, and in society at large. Dahlberg also suggests that:

“the reforms needed to democratize society and to democratize food systems are parallel and reinforcing, it is crucial that each of us thinks through the linkages and the potential synergies and acts constructively in each realm...what we really need to do is start thinking how food system transformation should inform our acting democratically as citizens at the same time that we are thinking how democratic transformation should inform our acting as food system citizens” (Dahlberg, 2001, p. 146).

Despite criticisms of community food security, there is wide agreement on the import of increasing food democracy; community food security appears to be one method to actively engage people in the food system and move toward food democracy.

2.5.4 Food Sovereignty

The concept is attributed to Via Campesina, who brought it forward at the World Food Summit in 1996 (Via Campesina, 2011). They define food sovereignty as: “the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through sustainable methods and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems”. They further state that “It puts the aspirations, needs and livelihoods of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations”. Patel (2009, p. 665) suggests that it was “specifically intended as a foil to the prevailing notions of food security”, which when used in a traditional sense, could theoretically be accomplished with a “top down” approach; he also states that “food security avoided discussing the social control of the food system”.

A global CS forum for food sovereignty was held in parallel to the 2002 World Food Summit (NGO/CSO Forum on Food Sovereignty, 2002). It adopted a declaration and an action agenda and mandated the International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty to implement them (International Planning

Committee for Food Sovereignty, 2009). An international forum held in 2007 in Mali further articulated principles for achieving food sovereignty (International Planning Committee for Food Sovereignty, 2009).

Food Secure Canada, and the BC Food systems network (including the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty) utilize the concept of food sovereignty in their work (BC Food Systems Network - Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, undated; BC Food Systems Network Society, undated; Food Secure Canada, 2006).

2.6 Summary and Conclusions

The discourse of food security has shifted over the last century – sometimes directing the course (e.g. the world food movement), and other times in response to a broader context (the emergence of neoliberalism). Figure 2.2 below provides an overview of “The Evolution of the International Discourse of Food Security.” Food security was introduced in the 1930’s as a determinant of health; health has now re-emerged as key issue within food security. Centralizing trends in international institutions, regulation of food supply, trade policy and the food supply are occurring; these are occurring in parallel to decentralizing forces such as rise of NGOs, definitions of food security, food democracy and the practice of community food security. A tension between decentralizing and centralizing forces is evident; the conflict between state/social system/anti-poverty/market and local food system approaches to food security is illustrative of this tension. However, this thesis argues that these perspectives are not mutually exclusive and are both central in effecting food security. Community food security has recently emerged as a concept and strategy toward food security in North America. Albeit not without criticism, it offers the potential to engage CS and to practice food democracy; food democracy is critical in balancing “bottom-up” with traditional “top down” approaches to food security. Current, post-modern discourses of food security -

comprehensive food policy; community food security; food democracy; and food sovereignty - offer systemic views of approaching food security.

Definitions and agendas used by stakeholders in British Columbia (BC) will be investigated in the research. Figure 2.2 outlines research issues arising from Chapter 2.

Figure 2.2: Research Issues Arising from Chapter 2

- What are the various definitions and agendas of food security used in BC? How is the issue of food insecurity/hunger addressed in BC?
- What is the socio-political context in which the integration has evolved? Does, and if so how has it influenced the situation in BC?
- How are decentralizing and centralizing forces impacting the BC situation?
- What are the key drivers that have led to the BC situation?
- What is the relationship between the 3 key players in the BC situation: state; Civil Society; food supply chain? What is the distribution of power between the players?
- What are the strengths and limitations of stakeholders? What are the tensions between various perspectives?
- What were the facilitators and barriers of the integration?
- Does food democracy exist within the food security initiatives?

Table 2.2 The Evolution of the International Discourse of Food Security

	1930's – early 1940's Depression - WWII	Late 1940's- 50's Post WWII	1960-70's	1980's	1990's	2000's
Key Concepts	- "Hunger in the Midst of Plenty" (hunger during international food surplus) - Inter-connectedness of health, agriculture and economics - Food security as a determinant of health - Link of income to nutrition & health	- Increase production via "Green Revolution" in both "industrialized" & "developing" countries - Right to Food	- Term "food security" originated in international development work - Focus remains on food supply - Right to Food - Sustainability begins to enter discourse	- Sen introduces "entitlement"; access becomes key issue and food security definition focuses on individual and household - Income added to food security discourse - FAO broadens food security definition 1984 - Organics begins as movement	- Food Policy re-emerges as a way to address systems issues - Income key to food security - Community food security emerges as US strategy - Sustainable agriculture emerges as key issue (by NGOs) - Health emerges in discourse - Hunger remains key issue; World Food Summit pledges to half rates by 2015 - Issues of health & ecological "externalities" recognized - Terms "food democracy", "food citizenship" & "food sovereignty" emerge	- Right to Food becomes voluntary - Health as key theme in food security - Tension between "anti-poverty/income" and "food systems" approach - Urban planners join N. America community food security movement - Local food movement - Local food policy councils & food charters - Mainstream recognition that productionist paradigm cannot continue due to oil, water and environmental concerns - "Technological" versus "ecological" paradigms - Books & media focusing attention on detrimental health and ecological effects of current food system

	1930's – early 1940's Depression - WWII	Late 1940's- 50's Post WWII	1960-70's	1980's	1990's	2000's
Proposed Solutions	- Increase production & trade - Nutrition propagated as a rationale to support agricultural production - Minimum wage incorporates dietary standards	- Increase production & trade - UN Emergency Food Council to address post-war famine	- "Green Revolution" continues to increase production; albeit beginning to be criticized for issues of ecological & human health & economic dependence - Right to Food - Food policy - FAO establishes World Food Program for food aid - UN Plan of Action for World food security (1979)	- Focus in "developing" & "industrialized" world on access - Food banks begin in "industrialized" world - Emergence of environment as component of solutions & alternative solutions arise - Emergence of neoliberal solutions (e.g. removal of trade barriers)	- Charitable food system criticized - World Food Summit calls for renewed commitment to right to food - Control of food safety systems centralizing - Technical solutions to socio-political problems (e.g. GMOs)	- Comprehensive food policy; municipal food policy councils - Food sovereignty; food democracy - Community food security intensifies tension between "anti-poverty/income" and "food systems" approach - Local food systems - Technical, profit-oriented vs. ecological approaches

	1930's - early 1940's Depression - WWII	Late 1940's- 50's Post WWII	1960-70's	1980's	1990's	2000's
Socio-Political Context	- Increase state involvement in hunger relief & control of agric production - WWII (trade is limited)	- WWII ends - Many Western nations adopt "social welfare state" - high interest in international collaboration toward peace - Establishmt of : - UN 1945 - FAO 1945 - GATT 1947 - WHO 1948 - World Bank 1945 - IMF 1946	- Western "Social Welfare state" continues - Late 70's NGOs begin to play part in international conferences; signifies movement to decentralization - Environmentalism wave in CS - Debt crisis - World food crisis	- Neoliberal agendas into western governments (Washington Consensus) - Food system increasingly centralized	- Neoliberal gov't agendas continue - WTO replaces GATT (1995) - Food system becoming increasingly centralized - Multilateral Agreement on Investment (1997) - NAFTA 1994	- Neoliberal gov't agendas continue - Food system increasingly centralized - Globalization increases - Decreasing social cohesion - Health key expenditure for governments; recognition of need for prevention of chronic disease and obesity - Global food crisis
Key Events	- League of Nations sets international groundwork for FAO formation - Hot Springs Conference on Food & Ag 1943	- Right to Food first entrenched in Universal Declaration of Human Rights 1948	- Right to Food becomes legally binding in UN Covenant (1966) - World Food crisis in early 1970s - World Food Conference (1974)	- Uruguay Round GATT initiates requirement for agriculture to follow uniform world trade rules	- World Food Summit 1996 produces Plan of Action and Rome Declaration on Food Security	- World Food Summit: five years later (2002) - Voluntary Guidelines on Right to Food (2004) - UN Millennium Development Goals (2000) (eradicate extreme poverty and hunger) - FAO High Level Conference on Food Security: The Challenges of Climate Change and Bio-Energy (2008)

	1930's – early 1940's Depression – WWII	Late 1940's- 50's Post WWII	1960-70's	1980's	1990's	2000's
Nutrition & Health Paradigm	- Increased understanding of role of diet in health - National & international dietary standards developed - Food safety regulations key - Focus on quantity & nutrition deficiencies	- Focus on quantity & nutrition deficiencies - Focus on “protective” foods (milk and meat) in “developed” countries	- “Health promotion” movement beginning, with focus on individual	- Health promotion continues; focus on population health (upstream) - Interest in vegetarianism & animal rights	- “New” Public Health discourse emerging; focus on systems & ecological approach - Food Safety concerns escalate (BSE, GMOs, antibiotic resistance) - Increasing interest in food policy - Nutrition transition	- Recognition of determinants of health incl. poverty as key - Some shift to systems & policy approach - Focus in nutrition shifting to profit & individual focused nutrigenomics; alternative focus on ecological approach - Obesity & diabetes key drivers in shifting food system (& gov't spending)

Chapter Three. **Concepts of Public Health and Food Security Theory in Canada and British Columbia**

3.1 Introduction

Food security in its broad definition is a foundation for human and ecological health. Bellows and Hamm (2003, p. 108) identify that food insecurity in the US may be experienced “as a function of diet and exercise behaviours, marketing and public policy”, in addition to being viewed as a function of poverty and as and outcome of agricultural, land use and foreign policy. Health has now been incorporated as a component of food security at local (City of Toronto Public Health, 2011; City of Vancouver Community Services Social Planning, 2006); state or provincial (Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Ontario Public Health Association, 2002); national (Food Secure Canada, 2006) and international levels (World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe). This links in decades of work in food policy and health to food security.

Public Health (PH) has emerged as a key “state” player in food security in the “developed” world; lack of food security impacts population health through variety of means, as outlined in Chapter 2. This is of further consequence, as health budgets increasingly consume a significant portion of government spending. Lang and Heasman (2004) argue, in fact, that health may be the key to the solution our food crisis. Chapter 2 reviewed the emergence of food security as a health issue in the 1930’s/40’s. In sum, historically, Boyd Orr and the League of Nations first established food security as a determinant of health by linking nutrition and income; this work also set the foundation for state involvement, including PH. The policy solution of a “marriage of health and agriculture” linked consumption and production and further strengthened the argument for food security as a determinant of health. Health and nutrition was used to inform and promote trade policy. It also drove the establishment of international dietary guidelines (and standards linked to labour wages) and the development of national nutrition councils. However, many argue that while the

nutrition argument informed policy, not surprisingly, nutrition was more strongly impacted as a result of trade and agricultural policy. Nonetheless, the role of the state, and of PH in food security was clearly established at this time.

While a national PH Agency of Canada was formed in 2004, PH functions are primarily carried out under Provincial Ministries of Health. And as noted in Chapter 1, food security is becoming increasingly embedded in PH in the Province of BC. The definition of PH practice, stakeholders and initiatives within the scope of this research is also outlined in Chapter 1. This chapter centres on PH concepts and discourse at the national (Canadian) level, as this has most determined the evolution of PH in BC. It begins with a review of the scope and functions of the PH role in food security. Roles will be presented within the context of existing Canadian PH frameworks. Next, the potential for a PH role in facilitating CS engagement will be examined. Finally, PH theory and food security strategies will be compared and contrasted.

3.2 Role of Public Health in Food Security

Although understandings vary, PH practitioners in Canada view PH as distinct from health care systems, whilst sharing the same goal of maximizing the health of Canadians. “Public Health is the science and art of promoting health, preventing disease and prolonging life through the organized efforts of society” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2003, Executive Summary).

PH has a role in food security, however due to shifting discourses and practices, and gaps between the expectations and limitations of the PH role - the role of PH is not clear. The researcher has observed that this lack of role clarity leads to ineffectiveness of PH policy and practices (B. Seed, 2004-2007). A systematic articulation of roles will allow stakeholders to more effectively work together by: establishing the rationale and mandate for PH involvement; educating stakeholders on the wide scope of content and process required; articulating strengths and limitations of a PH role; and identifying gaps within the PH role and thus complementary roles for other stakeholders.

The emergence of food security within the PH agenda may influence the evolution of food security. To date, the food security movement in BC has been grassroots, led by CS activists. They have advanced the concepts of food democracy and food sovereignty, and have been primarily focused on food sustainability. Across Canada, many health professionals have worked within this grassroots context of food security. Food security movements have advocated for the integration of food security and food policy into the government agenda (Food Secure Canada, 2006). If control of the food security agenda moves away from the grassroots, the question of how this will impact the food security movement is at stake. The foundation for further examination of this question will begin by reviewing the role of PH in food security. “Role” in this study, is defined as both the “what” (the scope of focus) and the “how” (functions/process/strategies); the scope is first outlined below. The history and context of PH in BC is examined in detail in Chapter 5; this includes a review of PH renewal in Canada and BC in the early 2000s.

3.2.1 Scope of Public Health Role in Food Security

The interconnectedness of food and health – in terms of both food safety (i.e. pathogens) and nutrition – has long ensured a role for PH in food and nutrition. In Canada, food safety (e.g. milk pasteurization and meat inspection programs) was a key focus in the mid-19th century (Ostry, 2006). And while the first half of the 20th century centred on nutrition deficiencies, it shifted to health promotion and a “lifestyle” focus by the second half of the 20th century (Dubois, 2006). About the time of this latter shift (concurrent with reductions in federal and provincial social assistance programs), the first food bank opened in Canada (Ontario Public Health Association, 2002); hunger and food insecurity became increasingly recognized as a PH concern (Dubois, 2006).

The population health approach (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001) and the “New Public Health” (Baum, 2002) adopted since the mid-nineties, focus on a systemic approach to health (Dubois, 2006; Ontario Public Health Association, 2002). This systemic view parallels that of an increased food security focus on “systems” approaches in the late 1990s – toward community food security, comprehensive food policy the adoption of food policy councils.

“Health promotion” functions of food security were initially undertaken in PH in Canada by PH Dietitians and Nutritionists; roles of the Dietitian/PH Nutritionist in Canada have been articulated since the early 1990s. In the Canadian Dietetic Association keynote address in 1990, Campbell outlined four challenges for nutrition professionals in tackling food security, reflecting issues that still comprise the backbone of a broader understanding of food security today:

“maintaining the health of our environment while ensuring ready availability of quality food; assuring the legitimacy of our confidence in the safety and quality of our food supply; guaranteeing each person’s ability to acquire adequate personally acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways; and empowering individuals to choose food for optimal health – to exercise their freedom of choice widely” (Campbell, 1991, p. 83).

However, the focus was limited solely to food insecurity/hunger when in 1991 the Canadian Dietetic Association published “Nutrition and Food Security: A Role for The Canadian Dietetic Association” (Davis, Katamay, Dejardins, Sterken, & Pattillo, 1991) and “Hunger and Food Security in Canada: Official Position of The Canadian Dietetic Association” (Canadian Dietetic Association, 1991). This is illustrative of the ongoing tension between those framing food security broadly or exclusively through the food insecurity lens. Anti-hunger proponents argue - with cause - that shifting the socio-economic system is the only way to address food insecurity, particularly in developed countries. However, as established in Chapter 2, with the inclusion of issues beyond malnutrition, most PH approaches to food security now include both over and malnutrition and the link to sustainable agriculture. First, healthy eating and nutrition issues are brought forward primarily related to escalating issues of obesity and chronic disease and associated health care costs. Second, the increasing acceptance of the environmental movement, strengthening interest in the “ecological PH” model¹⁹, and escalating food safety problems associated with agricultural methods have brought issues of food sustainability to the fore. This multi-faceted approach to food security makes both analyzing and

¹⁹The ecological model of PH acknowledges the link between the environment and human health (Chu & Simpson, 1994)

addressing the situation complicated, yet provides the potential for broad entry by PH into food security. While food security impacts human health, impacts are also beyond human health. Further, as causes do not lie within the control of the health system, this suggests that while PH has a role in food security, it is not the domain of PH. Food security requires a multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-dimensional approach.

The researcher suggests that acceptance of and focus on broad causes and consequences of food security by PH is predicated on the acceptance of “ecological PH” and “determinants of health” models. A brief review of this latter term is relevant here, as the “Determinants of health” and “social determinants of health” seem to be used interchangeably in some literature. The Canadian Nurses Association Position Statement on Determinants of Health acknowledges this, intentionally not using “‘Social Determinants of Health’ because this phrase is used with different meanings, and in some instances does not refer to the full range of health determinants” (Canadian Nurses Association, undated, p. 1). They chose instead, “determinants of health”, and further suggest that this is consistent with the approach taken by the Public Health Agency of Canada, the World Health Organization (WHO) and the (Canadian) Standing Senate Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology. This thesis also employs this broader term, except when referring to literature that specifically uses the term “social determinants of health”.

The “determinants” which influence population health continue to evolve. Twelve currently defined in Canada include: income and social status; social support networks (and social capital); education; employment /working conditions; social environments; physical environments; personal health practices and coping skills; healthy child development; biology and genetic endowment; health services; gender and culture (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2002b). It is evident that almost all of these determinants impact food security; at least in theory, the determinants of health and ecological PH articulate a potential role of PH in food security. The WHO (2011) outlines the determinants of health as: “the social and economic environment; the physical environment; and the person’s individual characteristics and behaviours”. In an

earlier document, “Social Determinants of Health: Solid Facts, 2nd Edition”, the WHO (2003) identifies “Food” as one of ten “Social Determinants of Health”. It states that “a good diet and adequate food supply are central for promoting health and well-being”, focusing on the issues of both excess intake and food poverty. They further state that “Because global market forces control the food supply, healthy food is a political issue” (p. 26). Policy implications focus on food systems, and are outlined as follows:

“the integration of public health perspectives into the food system to provide affordable and nutritious fresh food for all, especially the most vulnerable; democratic, transparent decision-making and accountability in all food regulation matters, with participation by all stakeholders, including consumers; support for sustainable agriculture and food production methods that conserve natural resources and the environment; a stronger food culture for health, especially through school education, to foster people’s knowledge of food and nutrition, cooking skills, growing food and the social value of preparing food and eating together; the availability of useful information about food, diet and health, especially aimed at children; and the use of scientifically based nutrient reference values and food-based dietary guidelines to facilitate the development and implementation of policies on food and nutrition” (World Health Organization, 2003, p. 27).

The WHO (2003) suggests that health policy is moving toward including the social determinants of health, with a recognition that these determinants are key to health outcomes. In reality, however, while the evidence for a determinants of health approach are significant in academic literature and in Canadian health documents and discourse, Raphael (2003) suggests that the social determinants approach is not reflected in policy and practice. Further, the determinants of health model also conflicts with the neoliberal agenda of individual focus in health (Raphael, 2003) and the diminished role of the state. The “health promotion” movement which emerged in the 1970’s, brought a discourse of preventive health to the fore. However it occurred within with the neoliberal context of a focus on the individual. This shift in responsibility from the state to the individual remains today. The researcher suggests that for PH to be effectively involved in food security, the health system must see the importance of structural and economic factors rather than solely individual factors such as behaviour. For now, Dowler (2003, p. 569) argues that “the

dominant policy framework remain[s] consumer and individual choice, rather than public health and citizenship, which militates against the realisation of true food security”.

The focus on acute care health persists in Canada, despite years of rhetoric of the importance of preventive health; the researcher also sees part of the problem as society’s inability to prioritize long term against short term needs and outcomes. Finally, as the broad determinants of a lack of food security do not lie within the control of the health system, this limits the actions of PH personnel and makes the establishment and achievement of relevant and related health outcomes untenable. Nonetheless, PH in BC has taken on this challenge, emerging as a key player in BC food security; this has necessitated the need to more closely define the role of PH in food security. Congruent with the lack of clarity in food security work, the role of PH and effective approaches to address it is equally unclear. Addressing this wide range of issues calls for strategies which address their determinants or root causes. This chapter will now turn to a review of strategies and functions of PH from this determinants perspective.

3.2.2 Functional Roles of Public Health in Food Security

The wide breadth of food security strategies are outlined in Chapter 2. While there is no common framework for these strategies, the Continuum of Strategies in Addressing Food Security, outlined in Table 2.1 has been adopted by several organizations and scholars both in Canada and in the United States (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Dietitians of Canada, 2007; C. McCullum, et al., 2004; Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994).

3.2.2.i Public Health Frameworks Relevant to Food Security

Prior to examining the PH roles in food security, a review of PH functional frameworks is required. Canada has been a leader in the evolution of international “population health” frameworks (health models most salient to food security). Population health discourse has evolved over time, and attempts have been made to bring the differing concepts of health promotion, population

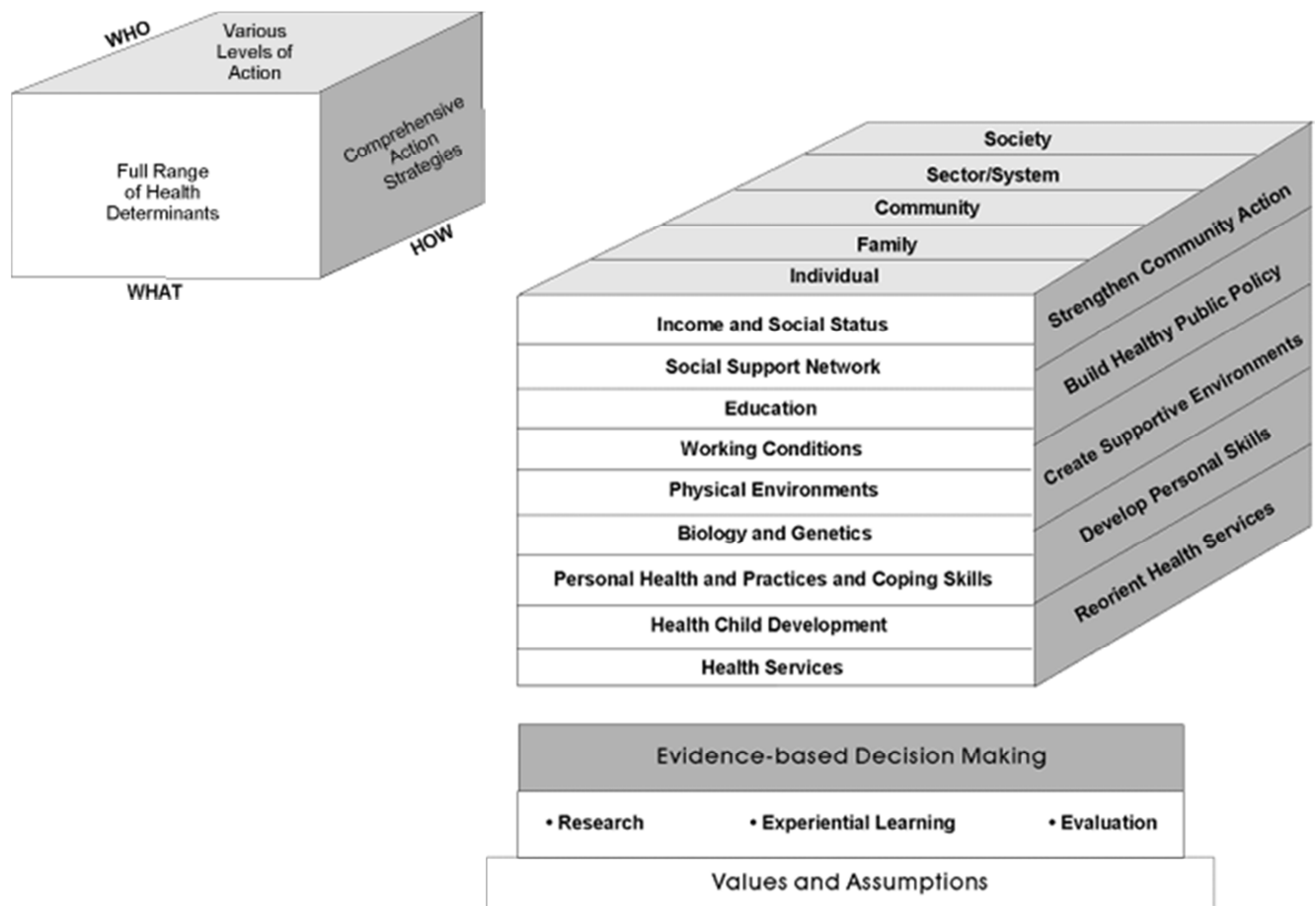
health, and the determinants of health together into a practical, working model. Varying understandings of these terms occur, even amongst Canadian government publications. The most frequently referred to definition of population health comes from the 1997 Federal, Provincial and Territorial Advisory committee on Population Health:

“population health refers to the health of a population as measured by health status indicators and as influenced by social, economic and physical environments, personal health practices, individual capacity and coping skills, human biology, early childhood development, and health services. As an approach, population health focuses on the interrelated conditions and factors that influence the health of populations over the life course, identifies systematic variations in their patterns of occurrence, and applies the resulting knowledge to develop and implement policies and actions to improve the health and well-being of these populations” (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2002b, p. 1).

More simply, population health focuses “upstream”, addressing the entire range of factors that determine health and, affecting the health of the entire population (Hamilton & Bhatti, 1996). On the other hand, health promotion (albeit having many definitions), has been defined as “a process for enabling people to take control over and improve their health” (Hamilton & Bhatti, 1996, p. 1); it is oft criticized for a focus on lifestyles of individuals, rather than broader health determinants. Rather than debate differences in definitions, Hamilton and Bhatti’s 1996 model integrates population health, health promotion and determinants of health into the Population Health Promotion Model Figure 3.1. It also incorporates evidence-based decision making, identifying three sources: research studies; experiential knowledge gained through practice; and evaluation studies. The Population Health Promotion Model is useful in moving the discussion away from a neoliberal focus on the individual which some describe as “victim blaming.” It calls for action on the full range of factors and conditions that determine health; provides an analytical tool to help develop a clearer picture of those likely to be most at risk; and provides a planning tool (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2002a). It defines “what” (health determinants), “how” (strategies) and “with whom” (levels) to take action. Hamilton and Bhatti (1996) also differentiate between what they call risk factors and risk conditions predisposing people to poorer health. “Factors” refer to

behaviour patterns, while “conditions” refer to general circumstances over which people have little or no control. They suggest that risk conditions “are usually a result of public policy and are modified through collective action and social reform” (p.12); these are commonly referred to as the aforementioned determinants of health. This model will be compared and contrasted to food security theory and models later in the chapter. The 1996 Population Health Promotion model uses “advocacy” as an example of “strengthen community action”. It is noted here as it is the researcher’s intent to highlight this function.

Figure 3.1: Population Health Promotion Model



Population Health Promotion Model

(Public Health Agency of Canada, 2002a)

An even more comprehensive model, the “Population Health Template working tool” is also proposed by Health Canada; it complements, but does not replace the population health promotion model (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001, 2002b). A simplified version is presented in Table 3.1. This model takes program management roles (in bold: *analysis of health issue; priority setting; taking action; evaluating results*) and breaks them down into what they refer to as “key elements” (focus on the health of populations; address determinants of health & their interactions; base decisions on evidence; increase upstream investments; apply multiple strategies; collaborate across sectors and levels; employ mechanisms for public involvement; demonstrate accountability for health outcomes). This builds on the Population Health Promotion model which limits *roles* mostly to strategies. The researcher suggests that strategies from the Population Health Promotion model - *strengthen community action; build healthy public policy; create supportive environments; develop personal skills; re-orient health services* - can be integrated into the Population Health Template under “Taking Action”.

Table 3.1: Population Health Template

Analysis of Health Issues
Focus on the health of populations
Address determinants of health & their interactions
Base decisions on evidence
Priority Setting
Increase upstream investments
Taking Action
Apply multiple strategies
Collaborate across sectors and levels
Employ mechanisms for public involvement
Evaluating Results
Demonstrate accountability for health outcomes

Adapted from: “Population Health Template Draft” (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001)

The researcher also proposes that the *key elements* in this model can be utilized to articulate PH functional roles in food security: *focus on the health of populations; address determinants of health and their interactions; base decisions on evidence; increase upstream investments; apply multiple strategies; collaborate across sectors and levels; employ mechanisms for*

public involvement; demonstrate accountability for health outcomes (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001, 2002a). This proposal will be examined further in the next section.

Explanation of some of these elements is worth noting where they may not be self-evident by the general description, where they underscore some core assumptions/values, and where they particularly relate to food security. In relation to “collaborate across sectors and levels”, the template calls for shared responsibility and accountability for health outcomes with groups not normally associated with health, but whose activities may have an impact on health or the factors known to influence it; as suggested previously, this is crucial to food security. “Demonstrate accountability for health outcomes”, emphasizes the increased focus on health outcomes; this raises the issue of health outcomes driving the food security agenda and the complexity of trying to link long term “upstream” food security work to outcomes. Under “focus on the health of populations”, the document states “outcomes or benefits of a population health approach, therefore, extend beyond improved population health outcomes to include a sustainable and integrated health system, increased national growth and productivity, and strengthened social cohesion and citizen engagement”; these latter points are consistent with the concept of food democracy. This supports the contention that the state has a role in facilitating citizen engagement in food security – or food democracy. Finally, the Population Health Promotion Model Figure 3.1 includes “experiential learning” under “evidence-based decision making”; the Population Health Template also suggests including “policy and program expertise of ... community organizations” (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001, p. 15). These factors are important to take forward in comparing and contrasting population health models to food security theory later in the chapter.

3.2.3 Review of Canadian Public Health Roles in Food Security

The researcher’s interest in the Population Health Template was sparked by a search for a more comprehensive and systematic way to articulate PH roles in food security – beyond that of simply strategies. To this end, work completed by Beaudry, Hamelin and Delisle on “Public Nutrition: An Emerging Paradigm”

was reviewed (M. Beaudry, Hamelin, Anne-Marie, Delisle, Helene, 2004). The authors proposed a new paradigm for “Public Nutrition” using the Population Health Template; as noted above, this model has potential use in describing PH’s role in food security. These authors also published an article in the “Public Health Nutrition Journal” in 2005 (M. Beaudry, Delisle, Helene, 2005); this Journal edition lays out an even broader paradigm shift, entitled the “new nutrition science project”, evolving from international nutrition-related scientists and academics (Cannon & Leitzmann, 2005). The basic premise of the “new nutrition science project” is that “Public Nutrition” must become an integrated science of biological, environmental and social sciences. This particularly resonates with the researcher; as a result of her involvement in food security in BC, she sees this approach akin to the expanded BC perspective.

Results from an examination of PH functional roles in food security by the researcher for presentation at the Canadian PH Association conference support the potential use of this template. This included a review of Canadian documents (2006 and prior) outlining PH roles in food security as well as a survey (n=19) completed by Seed (2006) of those involved in PH/food security partnerships across Canada. Documents reviewed which outlined PH roles in food security included: A Systemic Approach to Community Food Security: A Role for Public Health (Ontario Public Health Association, 2002); Food Security as a Determinant of Health (McIntyre & Tarasuk, 2002); Food Security from the Consumer's Perspective: An Agenda for the 1990's (Campbell, 1991); Individual and Household Food Insecurity in Canada, Position of Dietitians of Canada (Dietitians of Canada, 2005); Making the Connection – Food Security and Public Health (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004); BC PH Core Programs in Food Security (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006); Reducing urban hunger in Ontario (Toronto Food Policy Council, 1994); A Proposal for the Community Food Action Initiative (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005); Thought About Food? (Nova Scotia Nutrition Council & Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre, 2005).

Both the survey and document review yielded a collection of roles and strategies. However, none were comprehensive nor systematic (albeit, one that

did stand out for its comprehensiveness is the BC PH Core programs in Food Security (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006). Neither were roles consistent throughout the sources, and not all references included both functions (strategies) and scope (what) of roles. Further to this, all survey respondents articulated the need for PH to mandate and identify a systematic scope of roles for PH in food security. To this end, roles from these Canadian documents have been categorized by the researcher into an adaptation of the Population Health Template in Table 3.2: Review of Canadian Public Health Roles in Food Security.

Table 3.2: Review of Canadian Public Health Roles in Food Security

Population Health Template (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001)	Seed 2006	Campbell 1991	McIntyre & Tarasak 2002	BC Community Nutritionist Council 2004	BC Comm Food Action Init Proposal 2005	DC 2005	OPHA 2002	Thought About Food 2005	BC Core Pgm 2006
Analysis of Health Issues Focus on and Analyze the health of populations	X	X		X		X	X		X
Address determinants of health and their interactions			X	X		X	X	X	
Base decisions on evidence									
Priority Setting Increase upstream investments				X		X	X		
Taking Action Apply multiple strategies ²⁰ : - Strengthen Community Action (includes advocacy ²¹) - Build Healthy Public Policy - Create Supportive Environments - Develop Personal Skills (<i>increase food knowledge and skills</i>) ²² - <i>Food projects</i> - <i>Education & awareness: professional and public</i> - Re-orient health services	X X X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X		X X X X	X X X	X X X	X X X X X
Collaborate across sectors and levels - <i>Provide leadership/expertise</i> - <i>Funding/resource support</i>	X X X		X X		X X	X X	X		X X X
Employ mechanisms for public involvement		X			X	X			X
Evaluating Results Demonstrate accountability for health outcomes	X			X			X		
<i>Monitoring and enforcement of policy and regulations</i>		X		X					X

²⁰ Researcher has supplemented Population Health Template “Apply Multiple Strategies” with 5 “how” strategies from Population Health Promotion Model Figure 3.1.

²¹ The 1996 Population Health Promotion model uses “advocacy” as an example of “strengthen community action”.

²² Items in italics were specified in review, but were not part of Population Health models.

A few additions were made under some of the elements where they were significantly represented in the literature or interviews, and were not immediately apparent in the adapted Population Health Template categories; these appear in italics. This framework includes both functional roles - (e.g. under “taking action”) and the scope of roles (e.g. “address determinants of health”).

The Review of Canadian Public Health Roles in Food Security, Table 3.2 , illustrates that functions in all categories of the Population Health Template have been proposed in Canadian documents for PH in food security, but that no single document proposed all of them. Thus, the Population Health Template may provide a useful tool to define PH roles in food security. To further illustrate the utility of this model in combining PH and food security approaches, Table 3.3 outlines some sample food security strategies under the “Population Health Template” element *Taking Action*. Strategies could be outlined under each *element* of the template.

Table 3.3: Sample Food Security Strategies based on Population Health Model

Strategies of Population Health Promotion Model	Sample Strategies of Food Security
<i>Taking Action (Key Element)</i> <u>Apply Multiple Strategies:</u> Strengthen Community Action (includes advocacy)	- Work with community groups to advocate for poverty reduction - Facilitate community action regarding genetically modified food labelling
Build Healthy Public Policy	- National food policy joining health and agriculture to ensure healthy food staples available to all - Municipal Food Policy Councils
Create Supportive Environments	- Regulation limiting “junk” food advertising to children - School/workplace food policy
Develop Personal Skills	- Community kitchens - Community gardens
Reorient Health Services	- Local food procurement by hospitals - Development of food culture in long term care facilities

All of the strategies in the Population Health Promotion Model, Figure 3.1, also cut across the three categories in the Food Security Continuum (Table 2.1). For example, the “Build Healthy Public Policy” strategy can be applied across efficiency (e.g. food policy in food banks) to transitional (participatory

community based food policy) to systems change (social policy). This Population Health Template model is proposed by the researcher as a useful tool in bringing together the theories of PH and food security. Beyond theory, it is also reflective of food security practices within BC. Limitations of PH's ability to fulfil the roles articulated in the Population Health Template will be investigated by this research.

3.2.4 Public Health in Civil Society Empowerment and Engagement

Robertson and Minkler (1994) suggest that individual empowerment is the first step in a continuum toward societal empowerment and transformation. They also point out that issues of power, control and ownership are central to empowerment, and state that empowerment occurs not when power is given, but when power is taken up by individuals and communities; this is concurrent with Lang and Heasman's (2004) concept of food democracy, as defined in Chapter 2. This also supports the food security continuum (Table 2.1) assumption that Stage 2 transitional/capacity building can engage people in Stage 3 work toward broader systems change. As identified in Chapter 2, food security processes may act as instruments in moving toward deeper social democracy (Dahlberg, 2001; Wekerle, 2004). As Robertson and Minkler (1994, p. 305) state, "full community participation occurs when communities participate in equal partnership with health professionals in setting the agenda". As will be examined in this study, while community empowerment is central to food security, the extent to which the agenda can be set by the community is limited if the goal of health is already set by PH. Robertson and Minkler (1994) also examine the idea of community participation. In their critique, they first offer that it is often rhetoric and not actually meaningful participation. Second, (as alluded to in the review of community food security in Chapter 2), communities are not homogenous and can generate conflict within themselves. However, they suggest that empowerment provides the link between health and community participation. And further, that the state (in this case, PH) has a role in this. Robertson and Minkler (1994, p. 306) propose that health professionals "facilitate the mobilization of the community by providing technical and informational support". This is corroborated by Coburn (2000) who argues that the state could and should facilitate CS action. In fact, he argues that "social

capital” is facilitated by government and in fact decreased social cohesion is a product of increased neoliberalism. Coburn refers to a growing number of studies being conducted on social capital and health, showing that the level of social capital has a positive impact on health promotion (e.g., decrease in infectious diseases, prevention of risk behaviours, improved maternal and infant health), taking charge of health (e.g., social justice, community involvement), and psychosocial mechanisms (e.g., social support, social inclusion). This suggests that – at least in theory – in addition to their traditional, centralized role, PH has a role in facilitating citizen involvement, social capital and food democracy. This notion also posits a potential mediating space between CS and the state in Lang’s (2005a) triangle of contested space (Figure 2.1).

3.3 Comparing and Contrasting Food Security and Public Health Approaches

These theoretical frameworks can be helpful in creating vision; but do they reflect current practice? While this will be investigated to some degree in this thesis research, the researcher argues that some of the conflict between food security and PH stakeholders arises due to the gap between PH theory and practice. Although the rhetoric of PH is systems and determinants oriented - involving broad goals of environment and social justice and active participation from CS - the reality differs. Population Health comprises less than 1-3% of the health budget in Canada. Practice is often managed and driven by health care management and governments focusing on professional services offered to achieve short term health outcomes in individuals. In addition, administrators may be uncomfortable advocating against government policy and practices which may be contrary to food security. Instead, strategies for food insecurity focus on hunger alleviation; this mirrors results found regarding health sector initiatives addressing poverty in general in Canada, where almost two-thirds focused on consequences (Williamson, 2001).

Anderson and Cook (1999, p. 145) suggest that “food security theory should be explicit about how underlying political philosophy enters in, to make sure that disagreements over policies and practices are not actually disagreements over unstated political assumptions”. For example, as a systemic approach conflicts with the neoliberal agenda of a decreased role of state and focus on the individual, government stakeholders may be limited in their actions toward systems approaches. The potential for disagreement and lack of clarity is even more significant when bringing together the two somewhat ambiguous and wide-ranging areas of food security and Population Health. For this reason, this chapter concludes by comparing and contrasting strategies and assumptions of Population Health and food security.

In examining Population Health approaches, Robertson and Minkler’s (1994) critique of the “new” health promotion movement was reviewed. Like food security critics, they also state that a broader scope makes interventions more difficult to define and implement. The two authors outline key features of the “new” health promotion movement:

a) “broadening the definition of health and its determinants to include the social and economic context...; b) going beyond...individual lifestyle strategies to...broader social and political strategies; c) embracing the concept of empowerment – individual and collective – as a key health promotion strategy; d) advocating the participation of the community....” (Robertson & Minkler, 1994, p. 296).

These features and observations are consistent with the broad scope of food security strategies. Further, many of the same tensions experienced in food security are also experienced by the population health movement, such as limitations in addressing root causes of problems. Robertson and Minkler (1994) further point to ideological conflicts (of health promotion) relevant to both perspectives. These include: health versus social justice as the end goal; attention to the macro (structural) level versus the micro (individual level); and professional versus public ownership. Drawing on this work by Robertson and Minkler (1994) as well as observations on food security from Chapter 2, Table 3.4 compares and contrasts PH and food security approaches. Robertson and Minkler (1994) suggest that a greater examination of the features (of health

promotion) will help to move beyond tensions; the researcher suggests this can be extended to features under examination in this study as well. Of interest, Robertson and Minkler (1994) also contend that both structural and individual approaches are important, as “everyday practices of individuals shape those same larger forces” (p. 297). They cite the example of disabled groups ability to reframe issues that had been individual, to the social level in reforming physical environments to ensure access. They argue that whereas micro level theory lacks guidance for policy makers, structural views lacks guidance for individuals. Still they caution, as do critics of food security, that individual focus must not result in victim blaming or that community empowerment and participation must not lead to downloading of government responsibility. The concept of the need for both individual and structural approach is consistent with both PH and food security theories.

Table 3.4: Comparing and Contrasting Public Health and Food Security Approaches

Population Health Template: Key Elements	Public Health Theory and Practice	Food Security Strategies (from Chapter 2 and Table 2.1)
Analysis of Health Issues Focus on the health of populations	- In theory focus on the health of the population, versus solely individuals. - Contends with neoliberal context (i.e. focus on individual; decreased role of state).	- Stage 3 and policy focus on structural issues; stage 1 and 2 and food insecurity can focus on individual. - Contends with neoliberal context (i.e. focus on individual; decreased role of state).
Address determinants of health & their interactions	- PH addresses in theory, but limited in practice.	- Is fundamental to approach to food security (and food insecurity).
Base decisions on evidence	- PH interested in experiential, community based evidence in theory, but limited in practice (even evidence for prevention is challenging in comparison to gold-standard “randomized clinical trials”).	- Interest in community based and participatory research, and experiential evidence.
Priority Setting Increase upstream investments	- Theory looks upstream, but practice often limited to activities with short term outcomes. - PH planning tends to be top down; if PH sets the agenda, they are likely to control agenda.	- Differing agendas. Some focus on short term, tangible outcomes, while some look to long term and root causes; conflict between those wanting to “act” and those wanting to strategize in big picture. - Food security (activist) planning tends to be bottom-up.
Taking Action Apply multiple strategies: - Strengthen community action - Build healthy public policy - Create supportive environments - Develop personal skills - Re-orient health services	- PH has role, and becoming more engaged in policy; tendency to be top down. - PH professionals ability to advocate against government is limited. - Health system focuses on individual, pressure for PH to work toward personal skills. - Systems change is radical for PH.	- In practice, food security strategies focus mostly on stage 2, “participatory” strategies; policy work is increasing. - Many interested in systems change, but difficult to achieve.
Collaborate across sectors and levels	- PH theory supports. Determinants of Health approach requires many stakeholders to be involved; this poses numerous challenges including issues of power balance. - Many involved from PH have low power relative to other stakeholders in Health system . - PH limitations may result in, and be interpreted through lens of, personal conflict.	- Food security requires multi-sectoral, multi-level and multi-dimensional approach. - Food security activists demand meaningful participation (food democracy). - Food security activists often have low power relative to government stakeholders when at table convened by government. Further, agenda may be pre-set by government.
Employ mechanisms for public involvement	- PH in theory has role in CS empowerment and engagement, but is limited in their ability to facilitate.	- Food security approaches committed to “food democracy” and “food sovereignty”.
Evaluating Results Demonstrate accountability for health outcomes	- PH outcomes tend to use narrow, individualistic definition of health. - Measurable, relevant outcomes difficult to establish.	- Broad definition of health, including human and environmental health.

3.4 Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 3 has articulated the importance of CS and state roles in food security, and has argued the case for a defined role for PH in food security. A broad scope of role (addressing the determinants of health) and functional roles (as presented in the Population Health Template) are suggested for PH involvement in food security. Further, a review of Canadian documents outlining PH roles in food security suggests that the Population Health Template may provide a useful tool to define PH roles in food security. Acceptance of this wide range of roles by PH is predicated on the acceptance of the determinants approach to health as illustrated in: “Population Health” models; the “New” health promotion; “ecological public health” and the “new nutrition science project.” PH theory supports a role in facilitating CS engagement, but whether it can or does in practice remains a question which will be investigated further in this thesis research. And while in theory, emerging PH models are moving closer toward the themes and practices of the food security movement, limitations to PH practice in food security exist – to some degree due to the gap between PH theory and practice.

Figure 3.2: Research Issues Arising from Chapter 3

- What is the role of PH in food security?
- What is the relationship between PH and other players in provincial government related food security policies and initiatives?
- Do theoretical PH frameworks reflect current practice in their food security role?
- What are the limitations in PH's role in food security?
- What are the mediating factors in the integration of food security into BC PH?
- To what extent does PH facilitate the engagement of Civil Society into PH food security processes?
- Is there interest from BC stakeholders in a continued integration of food security into the government agenda?

Chapter Four. **Methodology**

4.1 Introduction

This chapter on methodology begins with a review of the choice of the research methods, then articulates the perspective of the researcher, under “Situating the Researcher”. Next, the methodological framework is summarized – using both policy analysis theory and case study methods. Research questions and objectives are then outlined, with an explanation of how they were derived. Following this, data collection sources and methods are examined, including interviews; document and archival records; and participant and direct observations. Finally, data analysis is reviewed, utilizing “Framework theory”, and also Ritchie and Spencer’s categories of Applied Policy Research (1994).

As outlined in Chapter 1, this research is a policy analysis of the integration of food security into BC PH and related government initiatives. It asks “how has food security been operationalized and translated into practice in PH and other provincial government programs in British Columbia”? As Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 7) suggest, “simply describing a government’s policy is nevertheless a relatively easy task compared to knowing why the state did what it did and assessing the consequences of its actions”. These latter tasks including an examination of drivers and consequences of the integration are the terrain of this analysis.

Harold Lasswell was a founder of “policy science” in 1951 (Lerner & Lasswell, 1951; Mitcham, 2007). Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 3), cite Laswell in identifying three distinct characteristics of policy science: “multidisciplinary, problem-solving, and explicitly normative”. In fact, they later quote Anderson (in Howlett & Ramesh, 2003, p. 4) in suggesting that “policy scholars now take it for granted that they must be experts in at least two fields” – policy science and the history and issues present in that area. The researcher of this study had the latter expertise, and has garnered experience in the former through this dissertation.

In regard to Lasswell's second point of problem solving, Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 4), state that "in the real world of public policy, technical superiority of analysis was often subordinated to political necessity". While hopes that policy science could drive policy decisions through the input of definitive information, this signals a recognition by policy scholars that politics would often trump evidence.

Torgerson, 1983 (in Howlett & Ramesh, 2003, p. 3) suggest that Lasswell's interpretation and expectation that it be normative has been generally retained over time - that "policy science should not be cloaked under the guise of 'scientific objectivity'" (albeit important to note that standard research principles such as transparency and rigour still apply to policy research). He goes on to say that policy science "should recognize the impossibility of separating goals and means, or values and techniques, in the study of government actions. [Lasswell] expected policy analysts to say clearly which solution was better than others". In support, Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 4) suggest "policy scholars have refused to exclude values from their analysis, and have insisted on evaluating both the goals and the means of policy, as well as the process of policy-making itself". However, they cite the intractability of many public problems as barriers in prescribing specific goals. As a result, "many investigators now either evaluate policies in terms of efficiency or effectiveness, or use the record of policy efforts to establish whether governments have in practice been directing their activities towards the achievement of their stated goals", rather than looking at the desirability or rationality of these goals themselves (Greenberg et al., 1977; De Leon, 1994, in Howlett & Ramesh, 2003, p. 4). This research looks primarily at the process of the policy making. It also examines both the values and means of the policy under investigation, and competing actions of government toward the stated goals.

Given the multiple policy opportunities available to society, Mitcham (2007, p. 1441) argues that "the most demanding questions are not simply quantitative but qualitative" e.g. what opportunities should be promoted or funded, and by what mechanisms? Milio (1990, p. 179) also supports this, suggesting that the collection and analysis of policy making data is best done through qualitative

research methods, which focus on “relevance, timeliness and usefulness over rigor and strict accuracy [of quantitative methods]”. Ritchie and Spencer (1994, p. 173) also remark on the “notable growth in the use of qualitative methods for applied social policy research”.

The qualitative/quantitative query can also be explored through an epistemological (the nature of knowledge, and how it can be acquired) perspective (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003). Positivism is associated with research that is “independent, objective and value free” – more so, with quantitative research (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 23). As this study focuses on perspectives and understandings (and is neither objective nor value free), positivism is less appropriate. Rather, interpretivism, largely obtained through qualitative research, is most appropriate. It “claims that natural science methods are not appropriate for social investigation because the social world is not governed by regularities that hold law-like properties” (Ritchie & Lewis, 2003, p. 23).

Morse and Field (1995, p. 10) state that qualitative research is employed when “describing a particular phenomenon or event about which little is known.” While knowledge about programs and policies in BC food security exists, perspectives from sectors about the drivers, consequences and future prospects of these initiatives have not been investigated. Nor have these programs been looked at as a whole. In addition, Morse and Field (1995, p. 10) suggest that “qualitative methods are particularly useful when describing a phenomenon from the emic perspective” (the insider’s perspective); this is appropriate here as key informants are central to this study .

Given the rationale above and the resources available to the researcher, qualitative methods are the chosen approach for this research.

Howlett and Ramesh (2003) outline a role for both inductive and deductive²³ theories in the approach to policy. However, they caution that deductive-

²³ “Induction looks for patterns and associations derived from observations of the world; deduction generates propositions and hypotheses theoretically through a logically derived process” (Snape & Spencer, 2003)

oriented researchers should “us[e] the study of public policy to test the hypotheses and assess the explanatory capability of their theories”, rather than “simply read[ing] public policy making in terms of the theoretical frameworks” (p.47). Ritchie and Lewis (2003, p. 23) further suggest that “although qualitative research is often viewed as a predominantly inductive paradigm, both deduction and induction are involved at different stages of the qualitative research process”. Indeed, this research will make use of both paradigms. Research collection is guided through the use of a framework, responses were coded inductively into themes, then analysis was presented back in relation to broader theories.

4.2 Situating the Researcher

A review of the role of the researcher is important to examine in any qualitative research – as outlined below – but in particular due to the researcher’s intimacy with many aspects of this integration. Discussions of reflexivity, which encourage a researcher to explore their relationship with the research, “var[ies] in the extent to which the analytic role of the researcher is considered as part of the evidence, with some accounts omitting or making only passing reference to the researchers and others treating the role of the researcher as an integral part of the interpretation offered” (Ritchie, Spencer, & O’Connor, 2003). The Sage Encyclopedia of Qualitative Research Methods offers one perspective:

“qualitative researchers ... believe that it is neither possible nor desirable for researchers to stand outside of a social world of which they are necessarily part”... qualitative research, which generally makes no pretense of disinterested objectivity, has been more likely than quantitative research to be labelled as political” (Given, 2008, p. 98).

The topic of this thesis originated from the researcher’s professional involvement as a Community Nutritionist working in the area of food security and food policy in BC, Canada. She has been heavily involved in various aspects of this policy integration as a PH Nutritionist working for a Regional Health Authority - Fraser Health. This relationship to the research is outlined more completely under Data Collection. While the work as a Nutritionist was

within PH (and consequently the government), the researcher found herself straddling the PH and food activist world both in her work as a community member and as a volunteer. This purview allowed insight from both perspectives, directing her interest toward a more critical understanding of the processes and its inherent challenges. The researcher's intimacy with this area clearly brings strengths and weaknesses, explored further under "Data Collection" below. Nonetheless, the researcher's approach strives to meet the standards of rigor of a qualitative researcher that "are most noted for their commitment to learning about and understanding the perspectives of others rather than imposing the researchers' own views, biases and theories..." (Schensul, in Given, 2008, p. 521). Further, the researcher has endeavoured toward scientific rigor through the detailed articulation of the methodology in this chapter.

Interviews were completed after the researcher had left her position as a Nutritionist. Findings were analyzed outside of the ongoing context of the BC situation, while living abroad in Kuwait. This provided an opportunity to consider the research as a snapshot in time, allowing an examination from a further removed, perhaps more objective perspective.

4.3 Methodological Framework

4.3.1 Theory of Policy Analysis

Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 13) outline one of the "most popular means for simplifying policy studies". This is to disaggregate the public policy-making process into a "series of discrete stages and sub-stages" – into what is often referred to as a policy making cycle, or a policy cycle. While models differ somewhat, these authors identify the "stages in policy cycle" as: "agenda setting; policy formulation; decision-making; policy implementation; and policy evaluation" (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003, p. 13).

Paralleling Howlett and Ramesh's cited disadvantages of this model, the researcher rejected this approach to policy analysis for similar reasons. First,

they suggest that the “principal disadvantage of this model is that it can be misinterpreted as suggesting that policy-makers go about solving public problems in a very systematic and more or less linear fashion” (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003, p. 14). Food security policy in the BC government is emphatically not intended or systematic. The first objective of this research is to develop a policy map of food security in BC, and in fact, answer the question of whether food security has become embedded within government policy. Accordingly, as there is no intended articulation of food security policy, a linear, stage by stage model was not followed in its development.

Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 17) built upon the five stages in the public policy process cycle by submitting that each stage could be “analyzed by addressing a distinct set of questions about actors, institutions, instruments, and ideas”. While this began to address some of the dissertation research objectives (see Table 4.2), it still did not resonate with the researcher as the cycle model had been rejected as not appropriate for this research. Further, it does not directly answer the research objectives. Neither is this model simple, which was required due to the limited research resources for this study.

Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 12) also suggest that early policy analysis models focused little on external or environmental influences on government behaviour, and emphasize these influences as important in understanding the influences on the various stages of the policy process. This concept was also key to the dissertation research in understanding how (and if) food security became integrated into the BC government.

Brooks and Miljan (2003, p. 11) describe the “pattern of public policy” more simply. They discuss three basic concepts that “provide the basis for comparing the pattern of public policy and the role of the state in different societies, and for charting – and understanding – the course of historical change within a society”. They examine what governments do (the scope of public policy); how they do it (the means or policy instruments); and the distributional dimensions of public policy (i.e., who benefits and who loses). However, for the purposes of

the research, this overlooks the concepts of why the events occurred, and strategies for furthering the policies in the future.

In searching for a more holistic (yet simple) model, Milio's Conceptual Framework for "Nutrition Policy for Food-Rich Countries: a Strategic Analysis" was reviewed. She describes her methods for this analysis as an "ecological view of policymaking", where "policy development – initiation, adoption, implementation, evaluation and reformulation – is seen as a continuous, but not necessarily linear, social and political process" (Milio, 1990, Appendix A). Milio focuses on policy substance or content, the social climate or environment, and the role of stakeholders in her analysis. She investigates context, asking "under what environmental (political, social, economic, organizational) conditions did a specific policy become feasible?" She also approaches the policy cycle from a more integrated lens, asking "Who were the most influential parties at interest and at what points of policy development did they become active?" The three remaining questions she recommends as part of "strategic policy planning" include: "what did they gain or lose" (echoing Brooks and Miljan's (2003) distributional dimensions of public policy above); "what strategic actions succeeded or failed"; and "what consequences of policymaking ... might make this or a similar policy more or less feasible in the future" (Milio, 1990, Appendix A). These questions resonated more with the intended research objectives.

One last conceptual, holistic framework of policy analysis was analyzed before the research questions were devised. These came from a draft report from the CARMEN Non-Communicable Disease Policy Observatory case study methodology (Vogel & Church, 2005). They propose a "Framework for Analyzing Policy Formulation Processes", building on the work of Howlett and Ramesh. In this, they acknowledge the stages of the public policy cycle, and layer the factors of context, ideas, interests, institutions, policy instruments, and policy action on top of the traditional policy cycle. They observe that policy-making requires a systematic analysis to address the current movement toward more integrated, multi-level and multi-sectoral decision making needed today. This model was helpful in building on the work of Howlett and Ramesh, but was

not used in the research as it was too complex and did not focus specifically on the research objectives.

Nonetheless, the policy frameworks described above provided sufficient concepts and themes to generate the research questions.

Following completion of the interviews, Ritchie and Spencer's categories of Applied Policy Research (1994) was discovered by the researcher (see Figure 4.1). This allowed the research questions to be brought together under a more succinct framework. Moreover, it was still congruent with the research objectives as well as the policy frameworks posed by many of the research scholars reviewed (as outlined below in Table 4.1). The Ritchie and Spencer categories also supplied a framework for the analysis of the research, as will be detailed under Data Analysis (see 4.6.1.ii).

Table 4.1: Concepts Derived from Policy Scholars used to Develop Research Questions

Concepts from Policy Scholars	Ritchie and Spencer Framework
Scope of policy; means/ policy instruments; actors and institutions	Contextual*
Drivers; Context*	Diagnostic
Barriers, facilitators, mediators, consequences and distributional dimensions (who and what benefits and loses)	Evaluative
Lessons learned and strategic recommendations	Strategic

** Note the Ritchie and Spencer use of the word "Contextual" here and below in Figure 4.1 differs from the notion of Context under "Diagnostic" (where it refers to the socio-political context from which policy emerges).*

Figure 4.1: Four Categories of Questions in Applied Policy Research:

- Contextual: Identifying the form and nature of what exists
e.g. What are the dimensions of attitudes or perceptions that are held?
What is the nature of people's experiences?
What needs does the population of the study have?
What elements operate within a system?
- Diagnostic: Examining the reasons for, or causes of, what exists
e.g. What factors underlie particular attitudes or perceptions?
Why are decisions or actions taken, or not taken?
Why do particular needs arise?

Why are services or programs not being used?

- Evaluative: Appraising the effectiveness of what exists

e.g. How are objectives achieved?

What affects the successful delivery of programs or services?

How do experiences affect subsequent behaviours?

What barriers exist to systems operating?

- Strategic: Identifying new theories, policies, plans or actions

e.g. What types of services are required to make ends meet?

What actions are needed to make programs or services more effective?

How can systems be improved?

What strategies are required to overcome newly defined problems?

(Ritchie & Spencer, 1994)

4.3.1.i Theoretical Frameworks Used Within the Policy Analysis

In analyzing the contextual and evaluative aspects of this integration (see Table 4.1), a number of theoretical models are utilized. These models were introduced in the first three chapters of the thesis.

First, the scope and means (e.g. policy instruments) of food security policy in British Columbia are analyzed by contrasting and comparing them to the Bellows and Hamm (2003) definition of community food security (see 1.3.2).

Next, the research utilizes Lang et al.'s food policy triangle, which identifies the state, CS, and the food supply chain and as key players in food policy and food security (see Figure 2.1). Using this triangle and the sectors within it, the research examines relationships between the actors and institutions, including the distribution of power between them. Finally, in a further examination of actors and institutions, PH roles in food security are analyzed by comparing and contrasting roles taken in British Columbia with the Population Health Template (see Table 3.1).

4.3.2 Case Study Methods

Yin (2003) suggests that case studies are used extensively in social science research, including public policy; this is corroborated by Merriam (in D. Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). The understanding of what is meant by the term “case study” varies amongst scholars. Stake (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 435) emphatically states that “case study is not a methodological choice, but a choice of what is to be studied”. On the other hand, Lewis (2003) defines the primary features of a “case study”, as “draw[ing] in multiple perspectives (whether through single or multiple data collection methods) and is rooted in a specific context which is seen as critical to the researched phenomena”. Under either definition, this research could be considered a case study (while utilizing policy analysis methodology).

While Lewis’s definition also supports Yin’s (2003) concept of “the case study as a research strategy”, rather than debate the term, on a very practical level the researcher has drawn on case study methods to direct the sources for data collection.

In his book, “Case Study Research: Design and Methods”, Yin (2003, p. 83) devotes one chapter to “Collecting the Evidence”. He suggests that “evidence for case studies may come from six sources: documents; archival records; interviews; direct observation, participant-observation, and physical artifacts”. These have been collapsed into four for this purposes of this study, including: review of documentation and archival records; interviews; direct observations; and participant observation (physical artifacts have been omitted, as they are not relevant to the study).

Indeed, interviews of key stakeholders, as outlined under 4.5.2 are fundamental in this analysis. Further, data collection from documents is useful for supplying information on socio-political context, organizations, and programs. It also serves as a cross check to perceptions of key stakeholders gathered through key informant interviews. Finally, due to the researcher’s significant involvement in these processes before and during the research period (see

Appendix 3), direct observation and participant observation is important. Data collection from these sources is reviewed in greater detail under 4.5 below.

4.3.3 Triangulation of the Data

Stake (in Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 443) describes triangulation as a “process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation”. Stake further states that “triangulation serves also to clarify meaning by identifying different ways the phenomenon is being seen”. In qualitative research, triangulation can strengthen findings, and enrich interpretations (Rothbauer, in Given, 2008, p. 892).

Rothbauer (in Given, 2008, p. 892) cites Denzin in outlining four types of triangulation - three of which are germane to this study. First, triangulation of data sources. Gathering data from multiple sources (interviews, documents and observations) allowed, for example, interviewee perceptions or understandings to be compared and contrasted to what was documented. This diversity in data sources also supports Milio’s (1990, p. 179) assertion in viewing “the policy-making process from the outside through organizations and other documents, and from the inside, through the eyes of the participants”.

Second, triangulation of methods. Rothbauer (in Given, 2008, p. 892) suggests that this includes using “a combination of sampling methods to collect data from different kinds of informants...”. Indeed, interviews were completed from three different sectors. This provided differing points of view, allowing for a more holistic picture. Moreover, as sectors were heterogeneous, perspectives within sectors also brought different viewpoints. Further, as information from various initiatives was compared and contrasted to each other, this provided an additional way to build a more comprehensive understanding of the situation in BC.

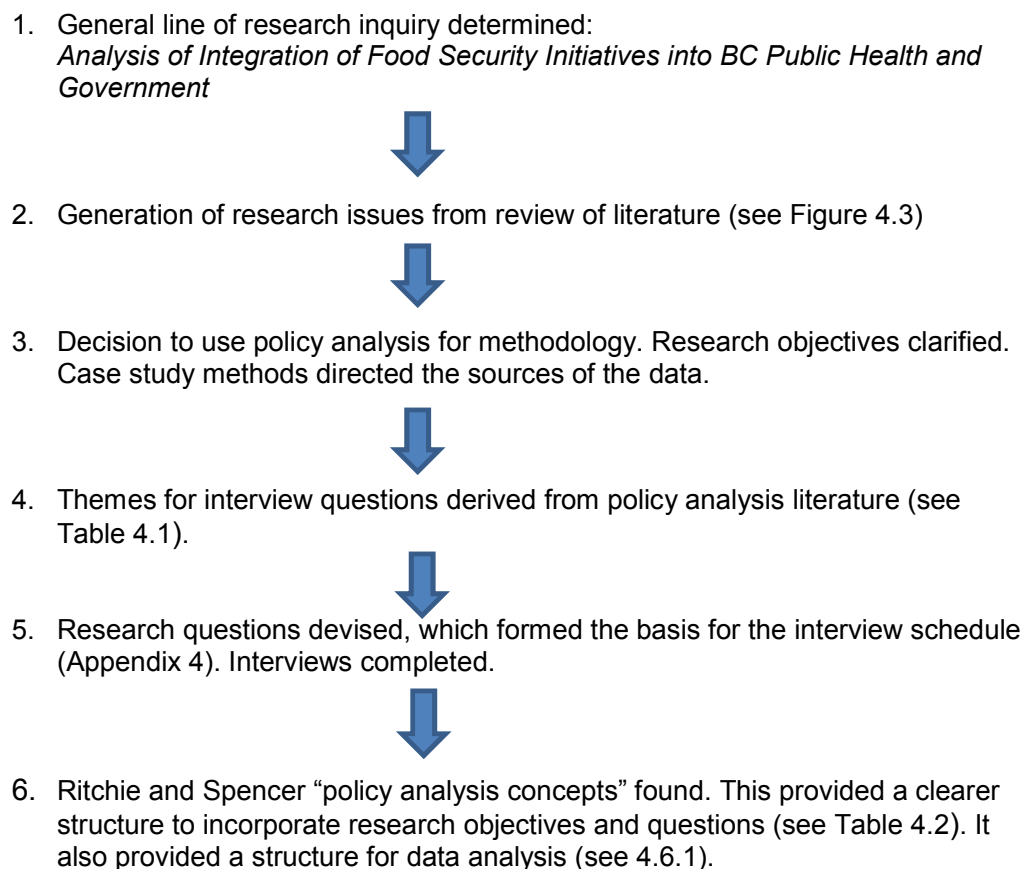
The third type of triangulation appropriate to this research is “theory triangulation”. Multiple theories (as outlined above in 4.3.1.i) and historical context were used in examining the scope of food security in BC and the stakeholder roles and relationships to each other within it. This contributed to a

richer analysis of the data. For example, examining the roles of PH in food security in BC under the framework of the Population Health Template gave a more holistic analysis, and provides the opportunity for greater generalizability.

4.3.4 Summary of the Research Approach

The methodology for this research - examining the integration of food security into BC - is policy analysis. Ritchie and Spencer's categories of Applied Policy Research (1994) (contextual; diagnostic; evaluative; and strategic) were used to structure the research questions and also to frame the analysis. Case study methods directed the data sources, which include: review of documentation and archival records; interviews; direct observations; and participant observation. An overview and sequence of this iterative approach to the research is outlined below in Figure 4.2.

Figure 4.2: Overview and Sequence of Approach to Research



4.4 Research Questions

The sequence and sources of the development of the research objectives and research questions is outlined in Figure 4.2. First, the general line of inquiry for the study was determined. Next, a list of research issues was generated from the review of literature (see Figure 4.3).

Figure 4.3: Research Issues Arising from the Review of Literature

Research issues arising from Chapter 2: - What are the various definitions and agendas of food security used in BC? How is the issue of food insecurity/hunger addressed in BC? - What is the socio-political context in which the integration has evolved? Does, and if so how has it influenced the situation in BC? - How are decentralizing and centralizing forces impacting the BC situation? - What are the key drivers that have led to the BC situation? - What is the relationship between the 3 key players in the BC situation: state; CS; food supply chain? What is the distribution of power between the players? - What are the strengths and limitations of stakeholders? What are the tensions between various perspectives? - What were the facilitators and barriers of the integration? - Does food democracy exist within the food security initiatives?
Research issues arising from Chapter 3: - What is the role of PH in food security? - What is the relationship between PH and other players in provincial government related food security policies and initiatives? - Do theoretical PH frameworks reflect current practice in their food security role? - What are the limitations in PH's role in food security? - What are the mediating factors in the integration of food security into BC PH? - To what extent does PH facilitate the engagement of CS into PH food security processes? - Is there interest in from BC stakeholders in a continued integration of food security into the government agenda?

Following the generation of these research issues, it was determined that they were consistent with concepts and themes associated with policy analysis; policy analysis was then pursued as a methodology. Themes for research questions were derived from the policy analysis literature, and research objectives were then clarified. These themes or concepts formed the basis for the research questions. Finally, research questions were matched to the Ritchie and Spencer (1994) categories of Applied Policy Research. Clearly, integrating this framework earlier would have been preferable, but nonetheless, this iterative process ultimately achieved a successful outcome.

4.4.1 Research Objectives and Questions

Next, research questions were constructed. These were later matched to Ritchie and Spencer's policy analysis concepts, and to research objectives, as outlined in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Research Objectives and Questions Matched to Policy Analysis Concepts

Research Objectives	Research Questions <i>(Questions are numbered below according to order asked in interview)</i>	Policy Analysis Concepts <i>(Ritchie and Spencer classification in italics)</i>
A. Develop a policy map of key players, processes and drivers of food security in BC PH and partner initiatives.	1. What food security initiatives and policies have emerged in BC PH (at Ministry and Regional Health Authority levels)? What food security initiatives (that partner with PH) have emerged within other Ministries, other levels of government and organizations affiliated with government?	<i>Contextual</i> - Scope of public policy - Policy instruments (or means)
	3a. What are the relationships between each of the sectors/players? Are there mediating factors or players between the sectors/players?	<i>Contextual (Mapping of:)</i> - Actors - Institutions
	4a. What are the macro and micro-level drivers that comprise the policy environment?	<i>Diagnostic</i> - Context; Drivers
B. Describe if and how the integration of food security has shifted the discourse, practice and power base of food security in BC.	2. What are the consequences and limitations of policies, programs and stakeholders to date? Has PH engaged CS?	<i>Evaluative</i> - Actors - Institutions - Distributional dimensions (who and what benefits and loses; consequences)
	3b. Have any stakeholders (or issues) lost or gained in the integration?	<i>Evaluative</i> - Distributional dimensions (who and what benefits and loses; consequences)
	4b. What are the facilitators and barriers in the integration of food security into BC PH and related provincial government programs?	<i>Evaluative</i> - What supports or limits success or failure?
C. What are the implications for the role of PH in food security in BC?	5. What lessons can be learned from these processes and what strategic recommendations can be made that support future progress in achieving food security in BC?	<i>Strategic</i>

4.5 Data Collection

A broad, systemized review of the literature was completed to develop the Chapters 2 and 3 of the thesis. Agricola, CAB, Web of Science and MedLine databases were searched for Chapter 2, using combinations of the words and phrases: food security; community food security; food; democracy; policy and justice. This was supplemented by review of bibliographies from selected sources. Historic information was gathered from advisors, the internet (e.g. FAO) and searching references from bibliographies. Information for Chapter 3 was gathered from the PH Agency of Canada website, from recent textbooks on PH and the determinants of health, references cited from personal communications by PH experts and by searching references from bibliographies. Collection methods for initiatives under review are outlined below under “Documentation and Archival Records”.

Yin’s (2003) recommended data sources reviewed above, including: review of documentation and archival records; interviews; direct observations; and participant observation is also consistent with a policy analysis approach. Ritchie and Spencer (1994, p. 175) suggest that in addition to document analysis, generated data is needed – which “may be in the form of individual interviews, group discussions, or observational work”. In this case, interviews were chosen. However, prior to reviewing data sources and collection, programs included in the analysis are reviewed.

4.5.1 Initiatives Included in the Study

As previously detailed in the Introduction and in Figure 1.1, this study focuses on food security programs and policies within the health promotion sector of PH, and other associated government initiatives in BC. As stated in the Introduction, the decision to expand the study to include partner food security initiatives outside of PH was made because these initiatives include the food supply sector whereas PH initiatives at the provincial level do not. The study was designed consistent with Lang’s (2005a) model of food policy (Figure 2.1: Food Policy – Key Players) which outlines state, CS and food supply as

stakeholders engaged in the “contested space” of food policy. Thus, involvement of all three sectors was important to the study in order to represent a broader, holistic perspective of food security in BC and beyond.

As the development of the study progressed, four of the twenty initiatives gained key prominence. First, PH Core food security programs, and the Community Food Action Initiative – both PH initiatives - became central to the study, as the research focus is on PH. Further, the Community Food Action Initiative was the only program which had the stated intention of the engagement of CS (beyond health NGOs). As engagement of CS by PH was a key research inquiry, this program became central to this query. Next, the BC School Fruit and Vegetable program is one of the few programs – and certainly the largest - that involve the food supply sector. Finally, the Meat Inspection Regulation did not begin as one of key programs under investigation, and the regulations per se will not be examined. However, their impact on both food security programs and on the relationship between stakeholders became evident once the interviews began, and these impacts will be examined.

As the study investigates only government initiatives, by definition then, all of these initiatives have state or government involvement. Table 4.3 outlines sector involvement in the initiatives at the provincial level. While insights garnered from individual programs are sometimes distinct, the researcher also wanted to look at the collection of all programs as a whole, in order to be able to generalize about the overall integration of initiatives. In fact, some research questions did ask about the general integration of food security, rather than about specific programs.

Table 4.3: Sector Involvement in Food Security Programs at Provincial Level in BC

Initiatives	Civil Society*	State	Food Supply
Food Security Core Programs		√	
Community Food Action Initiative	√	√	
School Fruit & Vegetable Program		√	√
Meat Inspection Regulation		√	√
Other Initiatives:			
- Farmer's Market Coupon Project		√	√
- Cooking and Skill Building	√	√	
- Fridges In Schools Program		√	√
- Provincial Health Officer's Report		√	

** The Community Food Action Initiative is the only program that involves CS food security activists at the provincial, more strategic level. The Cooking and Skill Building program is administered through a provincial health NGO. Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon, Cooking and Skill Building and School Fruit and Vegetable programs involve community-based social services programs or schools in local level implementation. BC Healthy Living Alliance not included above as they did not have specific food security programs articulated at time of research.*

4.5.2 Interviews

Lewis (2003, p. 58) suggests that in-depth interviews are the “only way to collect data where it is important to set the perspectives heard within the context of personal history or experience; where delicate or complex issues need to be explored at a detailed level, or where it is important to relate different issues to individual personal circumstances”. While this supports the use of interviews in this study, her further explanation that interviews are appropriate “where there are issues of power or status”, and “where people have communication difficulties” renders interviews even more essential in this analysis. Milio (1990, p. 179) suggests that gathering perceptions of key participants in policy making is crucial; she cites other authors in positing that “these are best obtained by semistructured interviews”.

Hancock and Algozzine (2006) offer the following guidelines in conducting successful interviews: i) identification of key participants; ii) preparation of interview guide; iii) consideration of setting; iv) recording; v) ethics.

These guidelines offer a structure for presenting the study's approach to the interviews. Interviews were conducted from October 2007-January 2008.

4.5.2.i Identification of Key Participants

Qualitative research employs non-probability sampling, where “units are deliberately selected to reflect particular features of or groups within the sampled population. The sample is not intended to be statistically representative ... instead, the characteristics of the population are used as the basis of selection” (Ritchie, Lewis, & Elam, 2003, p. 107-108). There are several types of non-probability sampling, and purposive sampling was chosen for this study.

In purposive sampling, where “sample criteria are prescribed ... sample units are selected on the basis of known characteristics ... relevant to the research topic” (Ritchie, Lewis, et al., 2003, p. 108). Indeed, as the authors suggest, interviewees in this study were chosen both to “represent ... prescribed groups”, and to “reflect the diversity of the study population as fully as possible”.

Forty eight key informants were interviewed, from three sectors: state (with a focus on PH); CS, and food supply stakeholders. Yin (2003, p. 90) suggests that key informants provide “insights into a matter but also can suggest sources of corroboratory or contrary evidence – and also initiate the access to such sources”. Sampling was limited to key informants involved in the food security initiatives under investigation. Interviewees were asked specifically about the initiatives and their integration into the BC government. Few outside of those involved in the initiatives were aware of them and thus would not be able to respond to the interview questions. However, numerous food security “key thinkers”/leaders and media representatives that were intimately involved in broader food security in BC, but not directly involved in the initiatives were interviewed. Milio (1990, p. 174) supports this purposive sampling, particularly in the realm of CS, where she suggests that “the larger, aggregate general public is not seen as a key player ... only rarely do they directly influence the formation of specific policies in important ways”.

Table 4.4 illustrates interviewees by sector and sub-sector. More specific detail (e.g. other provincial ministries) is not given in some cases to protect confidentiality of interviewees. Detailed information on stakeholders and key players is found in Chapter 6. Note that sectors were not homogeneous. The CS sector intentionally includes one sub-group with Aboriginal affiliation, as they are playing a substantive role and have a unique perspective in the evolution of food security in BC. Also, as the food supply sector is involved in fewer initiatives, the researcher attempted to balance lower numbers from this sector by including stakeholders from state who work with the food supply.

Table 4.4: Interviewee Description by Sector

Sector and Sub-Sector	Total Interviewees n = 48*
State	
• Min Health, Health Promo; Provincial Health Services Authority, Health Promo; Regional Health Authority, Health Promo <i>(includes Nutritionists, Food Security Coordinators and Managers)</i>	11
• Food Supply (includes: Ministry of Agriculture, Environmental Health/Food Inspection Managers, Administrative Dietitian)	6
• Other provincial ministries or levels of government	3
	<u>20 Total</u>
Civil Society	
• Food Activists <i>(includes those with a history of working on provincial or community food issues such as BC Food Systems)</i>	7
• Health NGOs	3
• Media	2
• Aboriginal affiliation	3
• Funders	2
• Academic	1
	<u>18 Total</u>
Food Supply	
• BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program <i>(includes: Farmers; Processors; Retailer; Wholesaler; Manager)</i>	6
• Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project	2
• Agriculture Associations	2
	<u>10 Total</u>

** While some interviewees represented more than one sector, the researcher assigned them to the most salient category in relation to this study.*

Numbers of interviewees associated with various programs are outlined in Table 4.5. As the study focused on PH health promotion initiatives, many interviewees were involved in the PH Core Programs and the Community Food

Action Initiative. The reason for the over-representation from the Community Food Action Initiative is three-fold. First, the Community Food Action Initiative has one of the broadest food security committee representations in the province, and was the only program to consider a province-wide, holistic approach to food security. Second, as stated previously, it was the only initiative at that point in time that had the stated intent of working in partnership with communities and CS. Finally, as it is broad-reaching, many interviewees that were involved in other programs were also involved in the Community Food Action Initiative.

Table 4.5: Interviewees Associated with Programs under Investigation

Program*	Numbers
Core Program in Food Security	10
Community Food Action Initiative	24
BC Fruit and Vegetable Program	10
Meat Inspection Regulation	6
Other Initiatives: - Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project - Cooking and Skill Building - Fridges In Schools Program - Provincial Health Officer's Report	13

**BC Healthy Living Alliance not included above as they did not have specific food security programs articulated at time of research.*

Interviews were relatively simple to procure. For the most part, initial contact with key informants was made and interviews were set up through e-mail. Some interviewees required personal contact to discuss the research. No one that was approached declined; one was unable to participate due to scheduling difficulties.

The ease of organizing these interviews was likely due to the researcher's network of connections. Further, one interviewee indicated that the high volume interviewed gave them a greater sense of anonymity. The researcher is highly sensitive to the confidentiality concerns of the interviewers. For this reason, details about the interviewees are more limited than they might be. While those outside of the BC situation would not recognize the respondents, the number of stakeholders involved in BC is small, and initiatives and relationships are ongoing. It is important to note here how the interviewees are referred to in the

findings chapters. First, they are referred to by number. Next, they are referred to as following: CS; Food Supply; and finally, State. Note however, that the first category under State in Table 4.4 (all health promotion staff: (Ministry of Health; Provincial Health Services Authority; Regional Health Authorities) are referred to as PH; this group was large enough to protect anonymity, and the researcher wanted to keep their responses distinct from others in the study given the focus on PH.

4.5.2.ii Interview Guide

The interview guide was developed from the research questions; it is included in Appendix 4. Questions were cross-referenced to research issues and research objectives to ensure no issues were omitted.

A semi-structured format was used, using open-ended questions. Arthur and Nazroo (2003, p. 111) characterize semi-structured interviews where “the interviewer asks key questions in the same way each time and does some probing for further information, but this probing is more limited than in unstructured, in-depth interviews”. This strength of this structure allowed for comparability of responses between sectors and sub-sectors while allowing the flexibility for probing on matters specific to their expertise and experience (D. Hancock & Algozzine, 2006). As Hancock and Algozzine (2006) further suggest, minimum information required from each respondent was determined. Then, specific questions salient to each interviewee were determined by the researcher prior to each interview where their perspective was desired on a specific issue. The interview guide was pre-tested on two people and adjusted accordingly.

Although individuals were targeted, questions were asked in such a way as to elicit organizational responses. Allen (2004), suggests that organizational responses are important as: a) organizations are more influential and b) because perspectives are products of larger discussions and deliberations and more representative of their constituencies.

Interview guides were sent out ahead of time to allow for prior thought, and for organizations to consider their participation and required prior approvals; the latter is particularly important in interviewing government employees. Interviews were conducted in English. Interviews were not sent out post-for validation. This was seen as not adding substantive value to the process – particularly as discourse analysis was not the focus of the research - but would add time for both the researcher and the interviewee. However, the researcher wrote to numerous respondents during the transcribing and coding period when clarification and/or elucidation was required.

4.5.2.iii Interview Setting

The researcher travelled to various locations across the province of BC, and was able to complete 43/48 interviews in person; the remaining 5 were completed by telephone. As suggested by Legard, Keegan and Ward (2003) interviewees directed the location of the interview.

4.5.2.iv Recording

Interviews took 30-90 minutes to complete, with an average of about 60 minutes. Interviews were recorded with a digital recorder. This allowed the researcher to devote full attention to the interview process (Legard, et al., 2003). Data have been stored in accordance with ethics standards outlined by City University.

4.5.2.v Ethics

Ethics approval for this thesis research was given by City University. Explanatory statement and consent forms are included in Appendix 1 and Appendix 2. Participation in the study was voluntary, and participants could choose not to participate in part or all of the project, or withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way. Respondent identities were kept strictly confidential. Participants are not identified by name in any reports of the completed study. Hand-written or printed notes regarding

interviews have been kept in a locked filing cabinet. Electronic versions of notes are saved on a computer with password protection. Only the student researcher and her advisors have access to the research data. No identifiable personal data will be published or shared with any other organization. Along with interview questionnaires, explanatory statement and consent forms were also sent to respondents ahead of time for their perusal and, if needed, for organizational approval. The researcher reviewed key components of participation, anonymity and confidentiality, and respondents completed an “Informed Consent Form for Project Participants” prior to the interviews (see Appendix 2). As noted above, the researcher is highly sensitive to confidentiality issues particularly due to the intimate nature of the food security setting in BC.

4.5.3 Documentation and Archival Records

Document and archival review began with the research proposal, where an environmental scan of food security programs and policies in BC PH, and related government initiatives was completed. This included a review of the processes and programs, socio-political context and key stakeholders involved since the 1990's. Over 50 documents were accessed in this initial scan. As secondary data sources contributing to the research analysis, a minimum of 25 more documents were accessed (the Community Food Action Initiative = 12; Core PH programs = 7; Other ~16). This included documents such as evaluations, annual reports and strategic plans. They were used to elucidate findings from the interviews, to contrast and compare results and in some cases, to directly address the research objectives and questions. Secondary document sources past 2008 were not used, as this exceeded the research period (as mentioned in Chapter 1, the research focuses primarily on the time period between 2002-2008).

Knowledge of and access to these documents occurred as a result of the researcher's role as PH Nutritionist in BC, her role on Provincial committees, personal communications with those involved, focused internet searches, and from searching references from bibliographies.

4.5.4 Participant and Direct Observation

The researcher was involved in the food security initiatives as a Nutritionist during the period of the investigation and thus was engaged in both participant and direct observation. Participant observation occurred through involvement in meetings and processes; a record of involvement in provincial and Regional Health Authority initiatives is listed in Appendix 3. More passive, direct observations occurred when the researcher often received information, minutes, and e-mails in her role as both Nutritionist and as researcher. Field note observations 2004-2007 were kept both as text documents, and as audio recordings. These notes are referred to in the findings as (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

On the positive side, due to the researcher's extensive involvement in these processes and projects, she was privy to information that would not be as easily accessible by an external researcher. She was also grounded in the historical basis of this work. Finally, her relationships with key informants were such that it was relatively easy to garner their participation in interviews. Her role also provided an emic perspective to the research: 'In qualitative research, the goal is to understand the situation under investigation primarily from the participant's [emic] and not the researcher's perspective' (etic or outside) (D. Hancock & Algozzine, 2006, p. 8). Further, Allen (2004) suggests that the role of "participant observer" can help to bypass academic isolationism. Finally, participant observation can enhance validity [provided the researcher is objective] (Morse, 1995).

On the negative side, while the researcher strived against bias, the likelihood due to her involvement was greater; bias may have occurred in overlooking phenomena a more passive observer might have perceived and also potentially in influencing the outcomes through her participation. Further, while the researcher was privy to many situations, she was not involved in others, which could also prejudice her perspective. Finally, while some interviewees may have been more open due to the researcher involvement, others may have been more guarded in their responses.

4.6 Data Analysis

4.6.1 Framework for Analysis

A conceptual model “Framework” is used to frame the data analysis; this analytic approach was developed in the context of conducting applied qualitative research (Ritchie & Spencer, 1994). Framework is described as “a matrix based analytic method which facilitates rigorous and transparent data management such that all the stages involved in the analytical hierarchy can be systematically conducted” ... and is now “widely used by researchers” (Ritchie, Spencer, et al., 2003, p. 220).

Researchers outline five stages of data analysis according to framework theory:

- i. Familiarization
- ii. Identifying a Thematic Framework
- iii. Indexing of Data
- iv. Charting
- v. Mapping and Interpretation

(Pope, Ziebland, & Mays, 2000; Ritchie & Spencer, 1994; Ritchie, Spencer, et al., 2003). Details of the stages followed are elucidated below.

In the “Charting” stage, Ritchie’s and Spencer’s categories of Applied Policy Research (contextual; diagnostic; evaluative; and strategic) were also incorporated (see 4.6.1.iv.).

4.6.1.i Familiarization

The researcher familiarized herself with the data mainly through the process of verbatim transcription of the interviews. Interviews were simultaneously listened to from the digital recording, then voice recognition software (Dragon Naturally Speaking) was used to record the researcher’s dictation as the voice recognition software did not work well for recordings beyond the researcher’s voice. Transcripts were then reviewed for accuracy one more time, again while listening to the digital recording. Approximately 1/4 of the interviews were transcribed by an external source, but were still reviewed for accuracy using the method described above. This was an onerous process, taking about 8

months to complete. However, the advantage was that the researcher was definitely familiar with the data, and was also able to start generating themes for the next step. Secondary data sources were gathered, and brought into the analysis process as described below under “Mapping and Interpretation.”

4.6.1.ii Identifying a Thematic Framework

Broad categories were set up according to the research questions and key policy concepts: background; existing initiatives; actors; drivers; consequences; lessons learned and strategic recommendations. This formed the general thematic framework. Sub-categories were derived from themes arising from the interviews.

4.6.1.iii Indexing or Coding of Data

Coding is referred to by Ritchie, Spencer and O'Connor (2003) as indexing. NVivo qualitative analysis software was used in the data analysis. The main benefit was the ability to search and retrieve data once it was stored. The downside was that it took over 2 ½ months to code the data, as full interviews were indexed and coded.

Initial coding categories (or NVivo nodes) were created based on key policy concepts and interview questions. As mentioned above, sub-categories (or NVivo tree nodes) were created based on themes that emerged inductively from the transcriptions. During the first 4 interviews, the researcher constantly modified the tree node categories and names to reflect the information garnered from the research. For example, themes were prematurely created and grouped at times, requiring modification back to raw categories. Also, after coding 4 interviews, it was apparent that responses from 3 different questions all fell under the theme of “drivers”: *“Have any players had a more substantive role than some of the others? What big picture or smaller scale occurrences facilitated the integration of food security into BC PH and provincial government programs? Are there any mediating factors (persons, organizations or events) happening in between the sectors or players that facilitated you working together/the integration of food security into BC government?”* These were

then re-grouped together. Some tree-nodes were also expanded when they became too large. This required the re-examination of other entries in the category to ascertain whether they were still appropriate. This practice continued – albeit to a lesser extent - for much of the coding process. In this sense, coding moved from “open coding” to a more “focused coding” as it progressed (Benaquisto, in Given, 2008).

The researcher attached cross references within the title of many nodes to ensure similar themes could later be linked or combined. Close to 500 nodes and tree nodes were created in the NVivo software. The researcher also utilized the NVivo “memo” function to record her emerging thoughts on a specific theme, as supplemental to the interviewee information in the categories. The researcher kept a log of the coding process (i.e. initial categories, and when and what changes were made).

4.6.1.iv Charting

Charting refers to the “rearranging of data according to the appropriate part of the thematic framework to which they relate” (Pope, et al., 2000, p. 116). The researcher began this synthesis by using the policy analysis concepts, but within the context of specific programs. For example, analysis was completed for both PH Food Security Core Programs and for the Community Food Action Initiative, with the sub-categories of actors, drivers, etc. However, after reflection and feedback, this approach was not seen as consistent with the research questions. The analysis was re-initiated, using Ritchie and Spencer’s categories of Applied Policy Research of contextual; diagnostic; evaluative and strategic (1994). This was modified somewhat according to policy themes and concepts outlined previously, and is now reflected in the current chapter headings of: Drivers; Stakeholder Analysis; Consequences; and Strategic Recommendations. While the use of this conceptual model was not originally intended for data analysis (Ritchie, 2011), this approach was taken for the same reasons that it was employed for the method of policy analysis. Primarily, it was consistent with, and answered the research objectives and questions; it ensured that data was utilized to elucidate the research questions. This was

reinforced with the unsuccessful first attempt at “charting” the data. The other key advantage it had was providing a structure for programs to be analyzed together rather than one at a time, therefore cultivating the establishment of some generalizations. This iterative approach also provided an internal validity check, as themes generated as a whole (through the Ritchie and Spencer concepts) were compared and contrasted to the themes initially generated through the specific program analysis.

4.6.1.v Mapping and Interpretation

Pope and Ziebland et al (2000, p. 116) define this step as “using the charts to define concepts, map the range and nature of phenomena, create typologies and find associations between themes with a view to providing explanations for the findings”. This reflects the comments of Richards and Richards (in Ritchie, Spencer, et al., 2003, p. 205) that “the main task of qualitative research is always theory construction”... and Miles and Huberman (in Ritchie, Spencer, et al., 2003, p. 205) that “just naming and classifying what is out there is usually not enough. We need to understand the patterns, the recurrences, the *whys*”.

The researcher was confident using NVivo coding and retrieval, but was not proficient at using NVivo for analysis. Further, this function is used primarily for contrasting and comparing between categories, which was not the objective of this study. This step of analysis was completed using a combination of NVivo and Word for Windows software. For example, the researcher would complete a search in NVivo of all tree nodes related to a specific theme, for example, “engagement of CS”. An “engagement of CS” set was then created for these nodes in NVivo where information from all related nodes was consolidated. This information (coded pieces of transcripts) was then exported into a word document and further sorted and synthesized. To enhance internal validity, the researcher consistently checked back with the original text to ensure comments were not taken out of context (a risk of this type of coding and retrieval).

Finally, relevant key documents, or secondary data sources (evaluations, proposals, etc.) were perused and relevant information was incorporated into

these word documents. A decision not to code entire documents was made, as it would have been too time consuming, and added little value to the research. The researcher's participation and direct observation notes were also reviewed and added to the word documents. As noted previously, this triangulation of data added to research validity.

This chapter established the rationale for the chosen methodology of policy analysis, outlines the research objectives and questions, presented evidence of research rigour, and sets the framework for the presentation of the findings in the following chapters.

Chapter Five. **Findings I: Historical and Socio-Political Context and Drivers of the Integration of Food Security into British Columbia Public Health and Government**

5.1 Introduction

"I'm still kind of curious myself as to why food, how did food get to be so, the driving force now? And I'm not against it. I kind of like it. We all eat food. It makes sense to me. But why food? Why not jobs, why not the environment, why not housing, why not poverty?" 31 CS

In order to understand the background of what occurred, this chapter presents "diagnostic" factors (drivers and context) of the integration of food security into BC PH and other government programs.

The context of the policy process is emphasized as important in understanding the influences on the various stages of the process (Howlett & Ramesh, 2003). To enable more thorough analysis, Brooks and Miljan (2003) distinguish categories of "Influences on Policy Making" into the macro "contextual"²⁴ (political culture, the constitution, characteristics of the economy and society and globalization) and "proximate" (cabinet; legislature; courts; media system; public opinion; political parties; interest groups). For the purposes of this thesis, the researcher has simplified these into 3 categories which form the structure for this chapter: Macro Socio-Political and Food Security Context and Drivers; BC: History, Socio-Political Context and Drivers of Integration of food security; and BC: Drivers of Specific Food Security initiatives under Research.

This chapter combines findings from key secondary document resources and interviewee responses. The second section draws on the documents to a greater degree as the focus is on the history and the development of the new thrust in food security.

²⁴ Note that Brooks and Miljan's use of "contextual" here refers to "context", differing from the Ritchie and Spencer notion of "contextual".

5.2 Macro Socio-Political and Food Security Context and Drivers

The shifting discourse of food security over the last century is documented in Chapter 2. Presented here are interviewee perceptions of current big picture influences on food security. Key themes emerged in their analysis of the macro level context and drivers of food security: limitations of neoliberalism, globalization and corporatization; health; climate change; media; and CS.

In describing the policy making context, many interviewees acknowledged the trend toward the political culture of neoliberalism in some Western governments over last 30 years, and the limitations it brings:

"We live in a society where ultimately policies are made by business. On an economic dollar bottom line ... the neoliberal agenda ... that has essentially ruled the roost for the past 30 years. And why we are in such dire straits. And what I am learning is that we are going further into that, within the public service system, reducing state to mere designers of regulation." 36 PH

"Fundamentally, the federal and provincial governments still are wedded to the globalization agenda, globalization, corporate concentration, so-called free trade, heavy reliance on energy, the magic bullet of biotechnology, nanotechnology ..." 2 CS

And the state has many complex agendas. And it's fitting into that whole big picture of, the global industrial food system. And being influenced by those major players." 1 PH

"All of the policies programs and practices are made for those corporations." 2 CS

The diminished role of government and shift of power was also echoed by others:

"Trade agreements really limit the power that the state now has to protect the interests of the people. And so when I look at who has the most power, I start to look more at the supply chain as having the most power. That their interests now determine how the food system looks. And so long as the food system is set up in such a way that the fewer the barriers, the fewer the regulations, the easier it is for them to operate however it is they want to operate. Which typically means being as homogenous as they can across borders and having one facility making the exact same thing for the rest of the continent, then that's a huge power." 10 CS

“One of the major US corporate giants actually is being contracted with by the provincial government to determine the welfare policies and run ...employment and income ... So you see, you have the corporatization of food, you have the corporatization of welfare, you have governments in power that actually look to the private sector to actually address these questions ... and these are the bodies that are creating ... the problems in the first place and then we look to them to actually solve the problems. And that’s exactly what the issue is. So the state has actually, I mean it has the power to act but it sees itself as a diminished role.” 14 CS

Not only does this interviewee refer to a diminished role for government, but also to public decisions being made by the private sector, who are argued to have created the problem - or externalities - in the first place, and where the costs incurred are picked up by the public purse. Another emphasizes the problem of externalities and their exclusion from the current economic models:

“Those things [water, air] are all externalized from the economy. So they are by definition externalized from corporate behaviour ... So, if these things were properly integrated into society, we’d be making ... decisions as society, about our life support systems and what they ought to be ... So the Ministry of Finance runs all that stuff, whether directly or indirectly. It ought to be the other way around. The economy ought to fit into social commands, social commands ought to fit in within environmentally, ecological imperatives.” 24 CS

Corporatization of the food sector was seen not only to contribute to the problem of food insecurity, the food industry was further criticized for exploiting their role in resolving the problem.

“One of them certainly was the effect of the commercialization and commodification of food, and the handing over therefore of food assistance to the corporate sector with the result to make a profit and to make a very nice profit thank you. Ever less nutritious food has been on offer, with the worst at the lowest level in terms of price. In other words, so that the diets of poor people have deteriorated visibly in the last couple of decades.” 40 CS

For some, this also raises the question of who is in charge?

“Walking down through the downtown eastside, I mean the question is who’s in charge here? Who’s actually making the decisions about permitting this state of affairs to continue and who’s actually got an overall perspective on where we are going, what we want to do, and you know where are the people themselves in relationship to this ... I think it’s a function partly of the Canadian constitution and sort of the jurisdictional disputes between different levels of government as to who is responsible for what.” 14 CS

Health, climate change, media, CS were also identified as macro-level drivers in the integration of food security into BC PH and the government.

Health

Two themes emerged under the category of health. First, obesity and diabetes (and associated costs):

“Because I think actually what has driven more of the agenda is the disease trend prevalence like obesity and diabetes, etc.” 1 PH

Second, food safety:

“... part of it has been just people getting really concerned about health. And then somebody pointing out for instance there is shit in our meat, there is more fecal matter in the average American kitchen sink than there is in the average American toilet.” 24 CS

“So, it is not just the advocacy groups, I think it is people just opening their eyes and being aware that there is this yearning on the part of people wanting to know about where their food is coming from and the horror stories from China in the news.” 19 CS

While these health related issues will also be identified in the BC analysis, it is also important to note their significance at the broader level.

Climate Change

Growing global awareness about climate change contributed to initiatives, and also to the establishment of “sustainable environmental management” as a corporate priority for BC government in mid-2000’s (Government of British Columbia, 2006).

“I think the growing awareness around impacts of climate change and the climate change agenda have got people thinking about it ... I think they are starting to be a lot more conscious about their footprint and their environment and making those kinds of decisions.” 11 CS

“The fact that everybody these days is talking about peak oil or climate change, a lot of people are also considering that getting food closer to home may be in their best interest.” 20 State

Media

The media was acknowledged by many in bringing an increased awareness of food security concerns to the mainstream population:

“The Internet, and CBC, and just the parts that have been allowed to seep through have done an amazing job of stimulating public concern and interest. So I think media is definitely a major mediating force. And more and more. It beginning to steamroll.” 2 CS

“The interest of the general public is being shifted by popular culture stuff is ... more visible. Like, mainstream movies about the issues. People are taking it on, and recognizing that that kind of exposure is really useful.” 41 PH

“I think that media because of food safety issues, because of climate issues etc. have played a significant role in drawing us ordinary folks’ attention to food systems issues. And I think without that we would be still whistling in the wind.” 4 PH

Civil Society

As outlined in Chapter 2, the decentralizing trend of food security beginning in the 1970's included a new thrust of participation in food security at the international levels by CS in the form of NGOs and non-profits. Terms invoked later such as community food security; food democracy; food citizenship and food sovereignty all reflect the emergence of CS as a key player in food security. Numerous interviewees spoke to the growing interest by public in local foods and organics as a contributing factor in the larger issue of food security.

“That drive for organic produce and locally grown and that idea is making it more popular as well.” 16 State

5.3 British Columbia: History, Socio-Political Context and Drivers of the Integration of Food Security into Public Health and Government

As this is a study of the integration of food security initiatives into the government, the analysis within BC begins with a review of the history and context within the provincial government, asking - what set the stage for the integration? It then examines the history of related food security work in BC. Finally, “additional drivers”, first, of the increased activity and awareness of food security in BC, and second, of the integration of food security into PH and government will be reviewed. While context, history and drivers are not mutually distinct, they are categorized as such for organizational purposes. Drivers are also summarized in Table 5.2. Interviewee comments will be included where relevant, but this section draws more on key document review.

5.3.1 History and Context: What Set the Stage for the Integration into Public Health and other Government Programs?

5.3.1.i History and Context: BC Ministry of Health, Public Health 1990 – 2005

A period of transition began in the broader health system in BC in the early 1990's, as a response to “Closer to Home: The Report of the British Columbia Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs (Province of BC, 1991). Decentralization of services and decision making, community involvement, integration within health care and between Ministries and focus on health outcomes were key themes of the report. Thus, in the mid-1990s, like many other provinces in Canada, the government in power (NDP) began a process of regionalization of health. Under regionalization, the Ministry of Health no longer had a mandate to provide services; the new mandate was leadership in setting overall principles and direction, providing funding and monitoring results (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, 1996). Transfer of most of health care decision making from the Ministry of Health to Health Authorities was completed by 1997 (Government of British Columbia, 1999).

Consistent with the concept of regionalization, provincial Ministry of Health staff were cutback through both Ministry reorganizations and severe bureaucratic reductions in the mid-1990's. With the Ministry's "Closer to Home" philosophy guiding the regionalization process, 20 Regional Health Boards overseeing 82 Community Health Councils were initially designated to govern health services in BC (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, 1996). This was later decreased to 11 Regional Health Boards, 34 Community Health Councils and 7 Community Health Services Societies (Government of British Columbia, 1999). Regional Health Boards consolidated independent hospital and health unit boards into single boards.

In 2001, the Legislative Assembly "Select Standing Committee on Health" was held to elicit public and professional feedback on the BC health system. Recommendations focused on equity (regarding citizen access), patient-centred care, application of evidence-based standards, accountability (for physicians, patients and the system in general) and a reduction of the number of health authorities. Thus, the newly elected Liberal government reduced the number of Regional Health Authorities to 5, with 15 Health Service Delivery areas. In addition, they also created one "province-wide" health authority (Provincial Health Services Authority). These Regional Health Authorities were required to submit three year health service redesign plans, with corresponding "performance agreements" outlining performance and expectation targets. In addition, the Select Standing committee focused on "Preventive Health" recommendations such as "cross-ministry cooperation to design health promotion campaigns that promote eating more fruits and vegetables and getting more exercise" (Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 2001) .

The Royal Commission on Health Care and Costs (Province of BC, 1991) also recommended that government articulate specific health goals for the province, with a method to assess and report on progress. "Health Goals for British Columbia" were adapted in 1997, setting out six health goals, objectives and indicators relating to: Living and Working Conditions; Individual Capacities, Skills and Choices; Physical environment; Health services; Aboriginal Health and Disease and Injury Prevention (BC Ministry of Health, undated). The 2001

“Policy and Practice – A Report on the Use of British Columbia’s Health Goals by BC Government Ministries”, suggested “the goals have not been fully adopted or applied as an explicit template for government planning” (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, 2001). This experience is consistent with the general Canadian experience where the importance of health promotion and the determinants of health has been articulated, but has not been followed through with matching resources or a strategy to carry this out (Government of Canada, 1974, 1986; Health and Welfare Canada, World Health Organization, & Canadian Public Health Association, 1986). Health promotion and prevention continued to be identified as key priorities for the Ministry of Health throughout the 1990s (Government of British Columbia, 1999, 2003), however, “New Era” commitments set by the Liberal government in 2001 appear to have had a smaller focus on promotion and prevention (Government of British Columbia, 2003). Further, as regionalization resulted in the loss of independent PH Boards²⁵, PH issues fell to low priority for Boards who were concerned with urgent primary care issues. In some health authorities, “integration” also resulted in the loss of a structure for PH Services, including the separation of programs from each other and from the Medical Health Officers. Loss of profile and increased workload for local PH staff was further exacerbated by the reduction of provincial staff that had traditionally provided a coordination and support function to provincial and local programming.

Interviewees support this notion:

“Some of the structural organizational stuff has happened I think has been detrimental ... I must admit I lament the loss of those partnerships. For example, with the environmental health people. I think those were key people to work with ... Like the dismantling of nutrition as a provincial program. And [resulting] reinvention of all these [nutrition] resources has just been ridiculous.”
1 PH

²⁵ Until the mid-1990s, Public Health in BC was centrally coordinated through the Ministry of Health, and operationalized under 16 locally elected Boards of Health across the province. Medical Health Officers administered the 16 Health Units.

In the opening plenary session of the 4th annual conference “Regionalization and the New Public Health” in Montreal, 2005, Dr. Paul Hasselback, Medical Health Officer from the Interior Health authority articulated that PH was “highly disempowered by regionalization” (Hasselback, 2005).

“And it is the incessant re-organization of the health authorities to try and figure out what to do with public health. When in fact, public health needs to be separated from the acute sector because it will never get a fair shake as long if it is competing with knees and hips.” 27 PH

5.3.1.ii History and Context: Public Health Renewal in British Columbia

The development of Core Functions in PH, the development of a new PH Act, the establishment of PH services in the Provincial Health Authority, and prevention initiatives under the “ActNow BC” banner are four of the key provincial strategies toward PH renewal in BC. These strategies are consistent with the recommendations of recent Canadian reports such as the “Naylor” report (National Advisory Committee on SARS and Public Health, 2003) and the report on the future of PH by the Canadian Institutes of Health Research (2003) toward more clearly defined functions of PH; consistent, modern legislation; strengthening of infrastructures and improved resourcing. The PH Agency of Canada, led by a Chief PH Officer was formed in 2004 in order to consolidate PH within one public agency (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2004). Renewal of PH in Canada and in BC has been driven by high profile issues such as SARS, drinking water, West Nile virus, food safety issues and the obesity “epidemic” (Canadian Institutes of Health Research, 2003).

“A Framework for Core Functions in Public Health” defines the core activities of a comprehensive PH system to improve the health of the population (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005b). It calls on the participation of all levels of government, ministries, communities, non-governmental organizations, the private sector, and citizens in utilizing a “determinants of health” or “population health” approach. This framework also identifies PH services that health authorities will provide using a standard program framework including a preliminary set of performance expectations (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005b). The 2005/06 to 2007/08 Health Service Redesign Plan identified

prevention and promotion as key priorities, with core functions providing a context for those plans (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005b).

The revised PH Act references core functions in broad terms (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005b). The draft “purpose of the act is to provide the authority for the Minister and Health Officials to establish organizational arrangements and take action to protect and promote the health of the population of British Columbia” (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2004). The PH Act would be the source legislation for establishing responsibilities and authorities (powers); core functions; statutory PH positions; safeguard and appeal mechanisms; and the regulation of individuals and organizations regarding PH matters” (BC Ministry of Health Services 2004). Also proposed in the new act at that time was a “planning requirement for the minister and health authorities to ensure that a population health plan is developed and regularly updated” (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2004).

In 2005 a number of programs related to prevention were initiated under the banner of “ActNow BC”. “ActNow BC”, designed to improve the health of individuals and communities and capitalize on the 2010 Olympic Winter Games, focuses on five goals for BC’s population related to Healthy Eating; Physical Activity; Tobacco Use; Overweight and Obesity; and Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. As mentioned in the Introduction, the target for the healthy eating goal was to increase by 20% the BC population eating the recommended fruit and vegetable intake (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005a). This target became one of the driving forces behind some of the food security initiatives.

This ActNow BC initiative became legendary for two reasons – one for the fact that it created the first cross-ministry effort toward health (and primarily health promotion) and secondly for the way it developed. High ranking health officials were able to convince all Provincial Ministries – using a “killer” slide - that the health budget would soon overtake the budgets of all other ministries, if they did not each take a role in contributing to health.

"You've probably seen over and over again that killer slide that Penny Ballem ... Because it all of a sudden the Ministry of Education said oh, I guess I've got a role. The Ministry of Agriculture said I guess I've got a role. So it's lovely. So from that point of view that's really positive that everybody is sharing and solving this. So that to me is the biggest. Is the awareness, the taking on the responsibilities, is one of the biggest pieces of ActNow." 43 PH

"Penny Ballem ... and I don't know if there were others too, they went around and there's a slide called a doomsday slide or something ... but it's a slide that shows that by 2010 or 2015 that if health expenditures go on the way they have been, they will overtake other all other expenditures and nothing will be left. So that supposedly... everybody is buying into health to save their own budget in the long run. So they are interested in more prevention." 19 CS

This BC example also exemplifies the significant impact that specific individuals (as opposed to institutions or structures) had on situations. This was shown repeatedly – whether sometimes seen as positive or “champions” (as below), or other times as obstacles.

"I think that the Olympics were a real catalyst, and it wasn't the Olympics in and of themselves, but it was the vision and I really have to credit Andy Hazelwood for this and Perry Kendall, it was the vision within that population branch of seeing the opportunity of the Olympics to create a long term agenda for population health. And then, all of that work, and around the chronic disease, then led to the development of ActNow ... That killer slide ..." 38 CS

Summarizing, one interviewee iterated the key reason for the government interest in health promotion:

"The big picture piece is that they can't sustain the health care budget ... I think that's really the only reason why they've had to start looking at - we'd better start to getting people healthier, because we really can't afford the whole sick people piece." 37 CS

Next, in addition to addressing obesity as an ActNow BC target, the BC government held a Select Standing Committee on Obesity (Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 2006). Recommendations and actions from the resulting report suggested a plethora of government and community responses: expansion of farmer's markets; increasing the proportion of the Ministry of Health budget devoted to PH promotion and disease prevention from three to six percent of total health spending; encouragement of municipalities in the adoption of vending and food sales guidelines; and the encouragement of

corporate self-regulation in food and beverage marketing and sales (Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 2006).

Finally, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) became an agency under the Provincial Health Services Authority (Provincial Health Services Authority) and Food Protection services was then transferred from the Ministry of Health Planning to the BCCDC in 2002. Food safety has emerged as major influencer on food security – as will be further elucidated in Chapter 8.

5.3.1.iii History and Context: Ministry of Agriculture and Land

While all activities under the Ministry of Agriculture could be considered as food security, a limited number of more relevant actions are highlighted in setting the context for the integration.

In 1973, the Provincial government responded to the continued loss of the agricultural land base by introducing BC's Land Commission Act. This commission, appointed by the Provincial government, established a special land use zone, the "Agricultural Land Reserve" (ALR), to protect BC's agricultural land. It placed the best classes of land within the ALR (BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, 2002), encourages farming, and controls non-agricultural uses. The ALR covers approximately 4.7 million hectares (about 5% of the land) and includes private and public lands. The Agricultural Land Reserve takes precedence over, but does not replace other legislation and bylaws that may apply to the land (Government of British Columbia & Agricultural Land Commission).

However, changes were made in the early 2000's to the ALR, giving more power to municipalities on decisions related to ALR land within their jurisdiction. The Agricultural Land Commission Act, was introduced in November 2002. This Act repealed the "Agricultural Land Reserve Act", "the Land Reserve Commission Act" and the "Soil Conservation Act", and replaced them with a new Act that incorporates some of the provisions from the repealed Acts, and established the Provincial Agricultural Land Commission. Some fear this

change has resulted in more land removal from the ALR; applications for withdrawal of land from the ALR have increased (Government of British Columbia & Agricultural Land Commission). This increase in applications has garnered significant CS attention and concern, as evidenced in the media.

Also in the mid-nineties, the Ministry of Agriculture began the process of the development of a new agri-food policy. Consultations were held in 1998 with farmers, food processors, retailers and distributors across the province in anticipation of the potential impact of free trade agreements and federal cutbacks in farm safety nets. Results of these consultations were published in: *Choosing Our Future: Options for the Agri-Food Industry* (Government of British Columbia, undated). Within this process, issues were identified that were beyond the ability of BC's agri-food industry and a single ministry, requiring "commitments and buy-in from British Columbians as a whole". As a result, the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture and Fisheries— a non-partisan committee of the Legislature – was formed in 1998, to examine, inquire into and make recommendations on the agri-food policy in BC. Food security, sustainable agriculture and increased self-reliance on local foods were all identified as key themes (Legislative Assembly of British Columbia, 2000). Unfortunately, with the change of governments in 2001, this process was put on hold. More recently, the BC Agriculture Plan was released (BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, 2008). It focused on promoting B.C. food products, making the agriculture industry a leader in reducing climate change impacts, and reconnecting British Columbians with locally grown food. However, as will be further elucidated in Chapter 6, some interviewees doubt the ability of the Ministry of Agriculture to fulfil these intentions:

"The Ministry of Agriculture has so little resources available and any of the people that are kind of on the ground they are pretty scarce and mandates are increasingly limited." 29 CS

"Ministry of Agriculture is really small. I don't know that they're getting any bigger, and they used to have more extension programs than they do now." 24 CS

5.3.1.iv History and Context: Social Welfare System and Poverty

First Call BC reported that BC had the highest rate of child poverty of any province in 2004 for the third year in a row, based on information from Statistics Canada. The 2004 BC rate was 23.5% (almost 1 in every four children) living below the poverty line; the national rate is 17.7% (First Call BC Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, 2006). Children living in poverty are at risk for food insecurity. In fact, in 2001, about 17% of British Columbian's could not afford the variety of food they wanted, worried about having enough to eat, or had not had enough to eat at some time in the previous 12 months (Provincial Health Officer, 2006). Income assistance rates were raised slightly in 2007, possibly as a response to growing CS unrest about poverty in BC. Two interviewees commented on concerns raised by the – more traditionally conservative - BC Progress Board report:

“BC progress Board report on social condition of BC which is a brilliant piece to be able to share. Because it totally respected government's policy direction about attachment to the workforce. But also pointed out some of the areas that need to be addressed with other strategies. Making work pay, giving children from low income families equitable access to education. And giving those who are unable to work good social assistance rates.” 22 State

“Certainly right now if you look at BC, the BC progress board, about a year ago brought out a report on the social conditions in BC. And they were quite concerned and pointed out that BC ranks 9th out of 10 provinces in terms of the social condition measured in a number of different ways.” 23 PH

When asked about drivers of the integration, one interviewee responded:

“The second piece is the destruction of the social welfare system. And in particular, the things that the Campbell government put into place when they came into power. Which you know whether it was minimum wage, destroying of unions, and slashing welfare, and slashing the capacity to get welfare and the capacity to get off welfare - and the things like being able to work while you're on welfare or go to school.” 40 CS

Building on concerns of corporatization of government identified previously, this interviewee questions the application of business models for bureaucratic compensation in social welfare situations:

“But, the Ministries have service plans which are basically their goals and objectives. And there are also incentives tied to those service plans. So when we looked at the income and assistance act, we found that, as with the other ministries, the senior managers were rewarded, they were compensated in various ways for achieving targets. Most unfortunately in the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance, the targets were reduction of the welfare rolls ... And they were given incentives for cutting people off. And if you can believe it, Tim Horton's food vouchers for kicking people off welfare. And that was at the lower levels. At the senior levels there was I believe fairly significant financial compensation. I guess what I am saying here apart from the awfulness of that particular type of incentive in that particular context is that when you link reward, you have got to, you want to be very interested in how rewards are linked to Ministry performance.” 25 CS

Increasing poverty rates, as well as private models used within the realm of the public good were identified as forming the context, and possibly contributing to the increase in food security concerns in BC. While poverty rates may have engaged the Ministry of Income Assistance in food security programs, their role in addressing food insecurity is sensitive and political, as many believe that an increase in the minimum wage and income assistance is the only way to address food insecurity or hunger. This dilemma will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 8.

Also influencing concerns over poverty levels in BC is the general minimum wage at \$8 per hour, with a first job/entry level minimum wage at \$6 per hour. The Ministry of Employment Labour and Citizens Services – Employment Standards Branch – administers the “Employment Standards Act” and regulation, which sets minimum standards of wages and working conditions in most workplaces (Government of British Columbia & Ministry of Employment Labour and Citizens Services). After they have worked for a total of 500 hours with one or more employers, these employees are entitled to the regular minimum wage rate. Despite the high cost of living in BC, as of October 2009, this was the lowest wage in the country - not even taking into account the training wage of \$6 per hour (Canada Online). A special agreement also exists between this Ministry and the BC Agriculture Council that is intended to protect farm workers in BC (Government of British Columbia & Ministry of Employment Labour and Citizens Services). The BC Provincial Health Officer reports that an individual working at a minimum wage of \$8 per hour, 40 hours a week for 52

weeks a year earns considerably less than the federal government's "Low Income Cut-Off" (2006).

"So it is disappointing that our province is not moving forward with some real policy changes i.e. their welfare rates, and our minimum wage hasn't changed in six years. I mean that is pretty bad." 39 CS

5.3.2 History of Related Food Security Work in BC

Food security programs were implemented by PH Nutrition programs (Community Nutritionists) in BC well before programs were categorized under the term "food security". Nutritious food basket costing and pregnancy outreach programs were two initiatives that addressed access to food by those living in low income in the 1980s. The early 1990s brought cooking clubs, community kitchens, low-cost cookbook development and collaboration with food banks (South Fraser Health Region, 2001). Interest was further peaked in the early 1990's when the then Provincial Nutritionist, Anne Carrow, met with the Nutritionists encouraging future work in food security (B. Seed, Ostry, A. , 2005). Concurrently, interest and awareness was also building through the efforts of Laura Kalina, Community Nutritionist, who was completing work on her book "Building Food Security in Canada" (Kalina, 2001).

The BC Dairy Foundation has a history of involvement in food security efforts in BC such as "BC Agriculture in the Classroom", and was instrumental in the development of the first BC Food Guide in the early 1990s:

"That's really a real proud achievement, that we were able to pull together not only from within our profession, but also by creating links with all different food industry organizations in BC. We were able to develop and print, I think it was on the order of 20 to 30,000 copies of the BC Food Guide. So that was linking what we have and produce in BC to the Canadian Food Guide that was in existence at the time." (Massey, 2007)

Again, the early 1990s brought the introduction of the provincial school meal program in 1992 (Government of British Columbia, 1996). It was administered by the Ministry of Education, had a budget of \$12 million, where school districts could apply for funding for "at risk" (low income) schools.

One of the earlier food security organizations to be formed in BC was Farm Folk City Folk, founded in Vancouver in the early 1990s. Farm Folk provided leadership in food security to many in the Lower Mainland of BC.

“Herb was really instrumental in helping us change our thinking, and you know shaping some of that too.” 36 PH

Grassroots food security CS activists worked steadily on food security awareness – both independently and in coordination with the state and other players.

“I would say all the conference and workshops that, all the precursors to the Vancouver Food Policy Council, the BC systems network, the precursors to the food secure Canada, all of the work that [has been done] for almost 15 years now, I think that that has built the momentum. And it’s just, change takes very long time. And I think a decade is really the shortest period of time to really accomplish something. Anything. So it is just a matter of building over at least a decade.” 2 CS

“There is food policy work that is happening all over the province that you know started from learning from the Kamloops folks, and you know, spreading that message, as an example.” 29 CS

By the mid-nineties, the term “food security” was well accepted amongst Community Nutritionists in BC, and their scope also broadened beyond hunger to supporting local food sustainability (South Fraser Health Region, 2001). Until Regional health authorities hired food security coordinators in the mid-2000s, Community Nutritionists took the lead role in comprehensive food security interventions. Many Nutritionists either initiated or were actively involved in food security groups, coalitions and/or networks from local to provincial levels.

“Because what’s over the years, the Community Nutritionists who have been the real front-line people in just doing these things, it’s not as if they’ve had a huge amount of support for it. It’s more like they have been allowed to it do it. They have not been pulled back. And they have been the visionaries, and have really carried the flag on that.” 4 PH

“I think absolutely, the community nutritionists were very integral. I don’t think that without that paper we would have got food security as a core program. Absolutely not. And also with, let’s be clear, Community Nutritionists, were very integral in the Community Food Action Initiative.” 45 PH

Other PH efforts are recorded later in the chapter under drivers of specific initiatives, and under CS, where they were joint initiatives. Table 5.1 provides a synopsis of initiatives that involved PH.

Table 5.1: Public Health and Public Health/Partner Food Security Highlights in British Columbia

Late 80's/Early 90's	1997	1998	1999	2000	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
- Pregnancy Outreach Programs (nutrition focus) - Nutritious food basket costing - Nutritionists work with food banks, cooking clubs - Ministry of Education School Meal Programs - Building food security in Canada report (Kalina)	- Feed Our Future Provincial Report - Numerous food security networks & Councils initiated in 1990s with PH leadership (e.g. HEAL); (& many without, e.g. BC Food Systems Network)	- Feed Our Future meeting with Provincial Ministers	- Inter-ministerial group on food security	- 1st Cost of Eating (COE) report	- Public Health Core Programs Development initiated - Community Nutritionists' Council food security - Council food security - Committee established; initiated evidence discussion paper - COE report - Meeting with Provincial Ministers on COE - Community Nutritionists' Council and CS members active in food security - presented on food security at Medical Health Officers annual meeting	- Joint meeting between Community Nutritionists' Council & Provincial Medical Health Officers - PH Alliance on food security formed - COE report	- ActNow BC initiated - COE report - Inaugural PH food security Alliance meeting at Sorrento (BC Food Systems gathering) - Community Nutritionists' Council evidence paper - "Making the Connection" completed	- Food security initiative under ActNow BC Umbrella: Community Food Action Initiative - consultation & implementation - Development of food security Core Outline Paper for PH Core Pgms - COE report - BC Healthy Communities - School Fruit and Veg Snack Pilot - Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools	- Food Security Model Core Pgm approved - COE report - Annual Provincial Health Officer Report: "Food, Health and Well-Being" - School Fruit and Veg Snack Pgm - Fridges in Schools Pgm - Cooking and Skill Building Pgm	- Farmer's Market Nutrition & Coupon Pilot Pgm - BC Healthy Living Alliance announces Healthy Eating Strategy including some food security initiatives - COE Report - School Fruit and Veg Snack Pgm - New BC Meat Inspection Regulation became mandatory

Two related food security programs were also initiated by the Ministry of Agriculture in the early to mid-1990s. First, the “Buy BC” Program, a logo and promotion program to support food grown and produced in BC was launched in 1993. Second, BC Sharing, a province-wide program which facilitates consumers to support BC food banks with BC food products was introduced. BC Sharing coupons in \$2 denominations are available at participating grocery store check-out counters for shoppers to purchase. Food banks then receive the funds to purchase BC foods from participating stores. The program benefits food banks, recipients, the grocery stores who handle donations and the BC agri-food industry, whose products are purchased with the donated dollars. As of 2003, the BC branch of the Canadian Association of Food Banks took over the leadership of the BC Sharing program.

In 1997, the Heart Health Coalition partnered with the government to produce a report entitled “Feed Our Future, Secure Our Health” (Heart Health Coalition of British Columbia, 1997). This report used a population health approach, focusing on food access, food supply, nutrition behaviour and skills and nutrition services. It called upon the provincial government to develop a Provincial Food Policy. The BC Ministry of Health responded in “The Provincial Response to Feed Our Future Secure Our Health” (1998) by highlighting inter-ministerial efforts to address food and nutrition issues and in 1999 established an inter-ministerial working group to explore coordinated approaches to food and nutrition policy. This group included representation from the BC Heart Health Coalition and was jointly chaired by the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture and Food. Also notable was that “Feed Our Future” was one out of four initiatives highlighted in the 2001 Provincial Health Officer Report which demonstrated collaborative action on Provincial Health Goal objectives (BC Ministry of Health and Ministry Responsible for Seniors, 2001).

“When we were doing the response to Feed our Future, Secure our Health, our report... there were reps brought around the table from all of the ministries, who should care about food security issues. People we’d actually met with about the Feed Our Future paper. So we had Education, Children and Families, Health, and some other ones, like, I can’t remember all the ministries, but some you wouldn’t necessarily expect to be around that table reviewing this draft of the paper that we were putting together. So, I think... that the feed our future report probably play a bigger role than the cost of eating report, because all of the

players were around the table in the development of that report, which took many years. It was the first kind of the initiative that brought a bunch of ministers together, and they all responded to it.” 39 CS

According to a government official, unfortunately other economic, social and health issues took precedence, and the policy environment did not appear ready for inter-sectoral collaboration at the provincial level, so the committee was short lived (Linton, 2005).

A joint initiative between the Community Nutritionists Council (Community Nutritionists’ Council) of BC and Dietitians of Canada, BC Region provided a further contribution. As alluded to earlier in the chapter, “The Cost of Eating in BC”²⁶ report has been published annually since 2000 (with the exception of 2008). It concludes that British Columbians living on a low income, especially those families on income assistance, cannot afford to access safe and healthy food in a dignified manner (Dietitians of Canada & Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2006). Over time, the authors of the report have met with various provincial Ministers and senior staff to advocate for those living on a low income.

Both of these CS initiatives were successful in bringing together inter-ministerial representatives on the issue of food security, albeit short-lived.

Finally, foundational work by the Ministry of Health Nutritionists was also acknowledged:

“I think that the people that we know in Health have helped to keep food security on the agenda. So they’ve been playing an internal civil servant role ... Janice Linton, and now Lisa and Lorie.” 39 CS

5.3.3 Additional Drivers

Some drivers have been elucidated above through review of the context and history. The following outlines drivers not yet articulated: 1) of the increased awareness of food security in BC, and 2) of the general integration of food security into government programs. Drivers related to specific food security

²⁶ Cost of Eating reports can be accessed at: <http://www.dietitians.ca/bccostofeating>

initiatives are identified in Section 5.4, and all drivers are summarized in Table 5.2.

5.3.3.i Drivers of Increased Awareness of Food Security in BC

CS was undoubtedly identified as the key driver in the increased activity in food security in BC.

"I mean Civil Society is the driver, has been the driver of community food security, and actually is the driver of community food security. Regardless of all of the stuff that is happening at the provincial level, the real work is being done on the ground. And they come from all over the place. They are farmers, First Nations people are so keen on preserving traditional foods, all kinds of things happening there, community outreach workers at the agencies, education sector, parents and foods in vending machines." 3 PH

"Oh, Civil Society", primarily. 23 PH

They are also credited with increasing awareness:

"I think an incredibly important role that it [Civil Society] has played, and played well is increasing public awareness ...". 2 CS

"Through their awareness campaigns and things like that. If you look at BC groups like Farm Folk City Folk and the Eat Local campaign in Vancouver and locally, there are a lot of local community food security organizations and things working at the social agency level that are focused on this." 11 Food Supply

In fact, they suggest that CS is both ahead of the state,

"I think its Civil Society that is leading the edge. And the supply is about to catch up. But the state is further behind, and if we wait, I think we're in trouble." 35 CS

and has provided the groundswell to influence government action:

"I mean really it's still Civil Society, the momentum to do this work and I think that the broad vision I think it forces the governments to look at it that way because we [governments] are not designed to look at it that way ...". 41 PH

"Up until now has been public pressure. It's been small groups, I think, like groups like the BC food systems network who have long been lobbying government to pay more attention to these issues." 10 CS

"But things like the 100 mile diet, the book comes along, and that has more impact than all of that [previous food security work] together." 19 CS

The formation of Vancouver Food Policy Council was referred to numerous times as an example of CS success in advocacy to government:

"The other area that I see as pretty instrumental is CS, like the growth of the Vancouver food policy Council, it was really a group of concerned citizens that said, 'We want this to happen', and you know finally getting the okay of government." 18 Food Supply

"I mean that's amazing that the City of Vancouver actually has a staff person looking at that. And that was all the push from the community." 35 CS

BC Food Systems emerged in the late 1990s as a key provincial leader:

"BC food systems network ... And yeah, the Kneens have been really active in this field. They are real advocates ... I think there has been a core group of people who are concerned about food policy in BC who are becoming much more effective in their networking and they just had a conference in Sorrento ...". 19 CS

One interviewee spoke of the facilitating role of CS:

"Just bringing people together. And it is a huge task to bring these people together. And it's also been extremely interesting because they have managed to knit together some really interesting sectors." 1 PH

This public interest, combined with targeted funding for food security initiatives through groups such as United Way of the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Foundation and Health Canada has contributed to an escalation of activity at the community and grassroots levels - in the form of food policy councils, food charters, networks, innovative programming and research.

Finally, the food sector has long been significantly involved in issues with the Ministry of Agriculture - such as Agricultural Land Reserve. More recently, they have responded to the escalating public interest in food security through increased: participation in farmer's markets; focus on local food choices, marketing and processing "healthier" choices; and "organic" food production. However, this role is seen as quite limited by many:

“Depending on what you are understanding by food security, there’s been not a lot of response in the private sector other than around organic produce, and that’s where they’ve seen an economic opportunity, and that’s what the private sector is going to do.” 23 PH

“If you go through the ads in the newspapers now, you will see Save on Foods and Safeway touting their local farmers who produce this food. It is still a small fraction of the total food supply in the store, but they have realized that oh this is an issue that people care about and it has to be pretty deep seeded and I guess for them to spend advertising dollars that way.” 19 CS

5.3.3.ii Drivers of Integration of Food Security in Provincial Government

“That’s a tough question to answer. I think that everybody has had their time on this agenda ... I think on this issue, everybody has pretty much been there.” 45 PH

As was outlined under the History and Context, and will be further elucidated under section 5.4, PH players and processes were key drivers in the integration of food security into PH. However, other stakeholders and issues also played significant roles.

CS contributed to the integration both indirectly and directly. First, they contributed to driving PH renewal through their outrage over Canadian PH crises such as Walkerton (water), Avian Flu and SARS. Second, CS has also played a direct role in the integration of food security into PH, lobbying for PH to take a leadership role in food security within the government.

“You know, it was really the non-profits [e.g. BC Food Systems] with individual actors from within the health authorities, but really the non-profits that have been pushing this along.” 15 PH

“They’ve [Civil Society] taken definitely the big part of it.” 12 PH

BC Food Systems Network hosts an annual gathering which brings together diverse stakeholders from individuals coping with food insecurity to farmers, policy makers and representatives from Health Authorities. The gathering also held the inaugural BC PH Alliance on Food Security meeting. In addition, the organization was successful in securing a seat at the Community Food Action Initiative provincial table – the only provincial table devoted to food security.

In fact, both PH and CS working together are credited toward driving the integration:

“Like one of the things that I think has been very important is the alliance between the Civil Society, the Sorrento group and the health drivers.” 27 PH

“I don't think it was just in Civil Society, and I don't think it was just health professionals, I think everybody has pretty much, whether it was, which straw broke the camel's back, I'm not sure.” 45 PH

CS health NGOs were also mentioned as playing a key role:

“I think the biggest influence to the government have been people like the Healthy Living Alliance, BCCPAC, teachers ... ”. 17 Food Supply

However, they were referred to by a much lesser extent than the grassroots food security organizations, and not by those involved in the PH initiatives. As they also had a history of involvement in food security in the province, this lack of association is puzzling; it will be further examined in Chapter 8.

The issue of food insecurity or hunger was also driver in the integration into PH. Increasing recognition of poverty as a determinant of health began in BC in the late 1990s, as reflected in numerous provincial reports (First Call Child and Youth Advocacy Coalition, Hay & Wachtel, 1998; Report on the Health of British Columbians, Provincial Health Officer, 1998, 2000). The latter states “An adequate income is important for health and, conversely, low income is associated with poor health status”. Inadequate income and subsequent food insecurity, advocated against by Dietitians of Canada and the Community Nutritionists Council through the Cost of Eating in BC Report (Dietitians of Canada & Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2006), was also instrumental in garnering the attention of the PH Medical Health Officer's Council (B. Seed, 2006).

When asked about key players in the state, one interviewee suggested one driver as critical:

“The premier, in BC [Laughs]. I think that is the only one.” 2 CS

This remark was made in part due to the perception of the current Liberal government and Premier, albeit considered by many as “neoliberal” (and ostensibly supportive of a lesser role of government) as “top down”. One interviewee echoed the remarks of a local politician:

“And she would say this is the most unkind government and she has ever known in BC. And she is a liberal. And she said, this is, they are so unkind. Because they think they know best. And so, we are looking at it and going, this is a whole new form of colonization. And paternalism. That you think is always there, but it is there. And yet I think it is good intent.” 13 CS

Nonetheless, the government has taken a “hands-on” approach to health promotion. One PH employee suggested:

“I think we are never going to find a more supportive government ... some of the things that we’ve been able to accomplish - this government is great ... I’ve had other governments where they wouldn’t even admit there was a poor person in the province.” 43 PH

And, the Premier was credited for leadership in the school food policy.

“The premier definitely led this initiative. It was his vision.” 43 PH

“Somehow Campbell heard that school food and nutrition policy was really important, and he took it on as an issue, and he had good information and he moved it forward and funded it to do so. So it is just another example that there was a political will at the time.” 28 CS

The government has taken a “top down” approach to non-smoking legislation and healthy eating initiatives such as school and public building vending machine policies. Many interviewees commented on its success.

“School food policy stuff is pretty powerful ... Even though it was a bit top down.” 28 CS

“The move to change the school system is a huge piece in that we are getting rid of the vending machines ... We got rid of pop, within, whenever the contracts are over. So we are changing a generation ...”. 20 State

“I think the school piece, with the requirement that pop and junk foods be moved out, I think that is also evidence of a big shift in thinking.” 27 PH

"I applaud the provincial government for taking the steps to get the junk food out of the schools, and see if there is a ... better way of developing eating habits and snacking habits." 47 Food Supply

Albeit not the focus of this research, the push for both school food policy and food security occurred in similar time frames, and were funded, supported and implemented by the Ministry of Health Nutrition staff and the Community Nutritionist Council. Further, school food policy was oft used as an example in explaining the food policy component of the continuum of food security, as per Table 2.1. In this way, school food policy can be considered a driver in the integration of food security, and interviewees spoke of food security and health initiatives within the same context.

"... and we're getting ActNow, and we were getting fruit and vegetables in the schools, and were getting pop out of the schools ... So it was, all of a sudden it was just flipping amazing. And it was on everybody's tongues." 27 PH

Policy intervention had long been recognized as having a higher degree of effectiveness by PH Nutrition practice in BC, as reflected in the "pyramid of professional influence", in "Guidelines to Support Best Practices in Community Nutrition" (BC Ministry of Health Planning, 2002); they took advantage of this opportunity for policy integration in schools. Nutritionists also took it one step further, advocating for food policy change within Regional Health Authorities, with the rationale that Regional Health Authorities needed to practice what they were preaching to schools.

The food supply sector, despite being the backbone of food security in BC, has been involved only minimally with the food security "movement" in BC, particularly as the "movement" relates to the health promotion food security government initiatives.

"I think the supply chain is still, you know, not really connected. Connected indirectly, I suppose through the ministries. But not directly. I think that's probably the weakest link." 41 Food Supply

Finally, the recent changes in BC Meat Inspection Regulation, influenced in part by the devastating effects on the meat industry of Avian Flu and Mad

Cow (BSE) have had a key impact on food security in BC. However, rather than being a driver in the integration of food security into PH, as will be elucidated later, it highlighted perceptions of competing food security policies of government. Consequences of the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation on food security initiatives and stakeholders will be examined in Chapter 8.

5.4 Drivers of Specific Food Security Initiatives within Research

5.4.1 Introduction

For an outline of initiatives under review, See Figure 1.1: Key Provincial Government and Health Authority Food Security Initiatives (and Lead Departments) in British Columbia, Canada, as introduced in Chapter 1. The question of specific drivers for individual initiatives was not specifically asked. However, where interviewees remarked on this, it is included below; comments emphasize the importance of the role of individual actors in this integration. More perspectives regarding the PH Core Food Security Programs were offered than for other initiatives.

5.4.2 Food Security Public Health Core Programs

In 2002, the BC Community Nutritionists' Council (Community Nutritionists' Council) was asked by Dr. Trevor Hancock (developer of PH Core programs) to submit an evidence paper to make the case for the inclusion of food security in PH Core Functions. To this end, the Community Nutritionists' Council Food Security Standing Committee secured funding for and wrote "Making the Connection - Food Security and Public Health" (2004). The objectives of the paper were to provide evidence that lack of community food security is a critical PH concern; provide evidence that community food security interventions are effective in promoting health and preventing food related illness and disease, and to identify the role of the health sector in building community food security in BC.

In 2005, “A Framework for Core Functions in Public Health” was released, and food security was indeed included. Many credit Hancock himself for the inclusion:

“It took a person [Trevor Hancock] who had a critical understanding, and had the opportunity and the authority to bring it forward. So it is the classic example of, you have to choose your timing and the champions and then all of a sudden it will move forward.” 28 CS

“I’m sure there are some other societal things that played a role, and maybe some of the statistics and concerns impacted government, but I’m less convinced about that. I’m more convinced that we brought attention to some of the issues, and we got some inside champions and some things began to move. If Trevor hadn’t come here, I’m not sure if we’d still see where we were before. I think he did play a role.” 39 CS

Hancock himself also credits the Community Nutritionists’ Council for this inclusion:

“First of all what was important was that the community nutritionists were pushing for it. And wanted it. And saw it as fundamental to their work. And of course I was very receptive to that, but all along as I think you well know, I said to them, I can put in there, but you are going to have to fight to keep it in. Because, I mean I’ll fight for it too, but it needed more than me. And so, having a strong association of community nutritionists who got it and saw it as important and were prepared to work, sort of within the system really, and to stress its importance and make sure it got in there.” (T. Hancock, 2007)

As did others -

“I think it was probably a very, vocal Community Nutrition Council who managed to get the ear of Trevor as he was doing some strategic work on core functions.” 30 PH

“The Community Nutritionists have been, I would say central. And working with Trevor Hancock. I think that’s where the guts of this came from.” 4 PH

And again, Ministry of Health Nutritionists also played a significant role in forwarding and defending food security as a PH core program (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

One interviewee suggested that the “Making the Connection” paper itself could be considered a driver as it situated food security within a more mainstream

food systems perspective, rather than continuing to demonize the government for its role in food insecurity:

“... because it is governments and policies that are creating people who are poor and not able to afford food. And what this paper did, was create it, and all of a sudden you have a food systems perspective and it's not just about poverty, it's about access to healthy food, right? So you put it in a format and a way that people can actually understand and dialogue and not feel so defensive, because see, were not going to increase you know, income assistance rates by 50%. So if that's your only solution and you come to talk to government, they don't want to hear it, and don't want anything to do with food security.” 45 PH

And in turn, the Food Security Core Program became a driver for Regional Health Authority initiatives:

“... and the fact that the model core programs ... having that, is to be able to say, see, we must do this. This is not optional. We must do it. And so, here is how I suggest we do it. So that you know, it gives rationale for managers that their staff should be involved and, to the overall organization, not to just 'what is this food security nat here' [Laughs]. You know when we are talking about [hospital] beds.” 15 PH

“The fact that food security is a core program and that [Regional Health Authority] has adopted it as one of the 21 programs to highlight is a major factor.” 1 PH

Another situation that supported these efforts was a resolution in the fall of 2003 to form a PH Alliance on food security between the Medical Health Officer's Council and the Community Nutritionists' Council, with links to the BC PH Association, the BC Food Systems Network and the BC Provincial Health Services Authority.

“The Community Nutritionists as I understood it were instrumental in bringing in the Medical Health Officers which involved the Provincial Health Officer and others ... it is just huge ... the very fact that health people were willing to talk about food and was a major leap forward.” 25 CS

In 2005, representation expanded to include the Environmental Health Officer's Council and the PH Nursing Leadership Council. Although the PH Alliance on food security held some potential – particularly in bringing together the areas of food security and food safety - the Alliance became defunct in 2007 due to a

general lack of capacity, including a lack of leadership and issues between disciplines:

“One is that there is a tension between food security health promotion and health protection ... And so often at the council meetings, if we could get people to attend, there was some head butting around basic principles. And then the other thing was that the nurses never bought in.” 27 PH

Prior to dissolving, the PH Alliance performed one last role, as described below.

5.4.3 Community Food Action Initiative

In the spring of 2005, the Ministry of Health partnered with the BC PH Alliance on Food Security to develop an implementation plan for the ActNow BC Community Food Action Initiative. Funding for the development phase of the project was transferred to the Provincial Health Services Authority. Contractors consulted with widely on this project – with Regional Health Authorities, PH professional groups, the Ministries of Agriculture and Human Resources, and CS to develop an implementation plan. Presumably CS influenced this process, as the extent of CS participation outlined in the resultant proposal was significant (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005); this is explored further in Chapter 7.

One of the recommendations resulting from the consultation was to have province-wide coordination. Subsequently, Provincial Health Services Authority was asked to take on the facilitation and coordination as well as the evaluation role. In addition to funding Regional Health Authority initiatives, funding was made available for provincial initiatives: a provincial coordinator/manager; administrative support; and support to an inter-sectoral, inter-ministerial advisory committee and a health authority operations group.

Near the end of the research period, the Community Food Action Initiative commenced an initiative with the BC Food Systems Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. It is likely that the provincial agenda on Aboriginal health (BC Ministry of Health, undated) promoted their work in this area.

Limited information on history and drivers of other programs was provided by interviewees. No information is available on drivers for the decision by the Provincial Health Officer to focus the 2006 annual report on food. Factors creating the mandate for a Food Security Core Program cited in Chapter 6, in addition to his ongoing concerns over food insecurity (cited in previous annual reports) likely provided the rationale.

5.4.4 BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program

While it originated out of the Ministry of Health with the goal of increasing fruit and vegetable intake, Brent Warner in the Ministry of Agriculture was credited as a driver in his vision and commitment to both the development of the program, and to the focus on local foods:

"I think, this originated out of Lisa Forster Coull's office, from a prevention perspective ... And so, they were very bright in bringing other people to the table, agriculture being a huge part of that. And I think, Brent's line and I won't speak for him. But his line was, "If we are not talking about BC growing then I am out of here. You know we need to promote our own sustainability." 17 Food Supply

"So I think there is a lot of people like Brent Warner around in BC, who have been just waiting for this opportunity to say, 'how can we, you know, support our local agriculture, like Oh Health, let's do it this way'." 18 Food Supply

"When I it comes to say the fruit in the classroom program, I mean that is the creation of one person [Brent Warner]. That was inspired by one individual within the ministry who understands the issues more than anyone else in the industry." 10 CS

One interviewee also referred to the role of the food sector in the program:

"I'm not sure that this has been driven by agriculture producers although they have certainly influenced and used their voice, saying this is a great thing for agriculture. I'm not sure that agriculture producers are at the top of the food chain so to speak with government though. I think retailers have done some driving. That's a good thing." 17 Food Supply

5.4.5 Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project

The idea for this program was brought to the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance by Anna Kirbyson, when she was employed with the Community Food Action Initiative. She approached them to work with Health and Agriculture (26 State).

"I would say that it this (FM coupon) was a spinoff from, partly from the Community Food Action Initiative at the provincial level, but also through the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance who had provided funding to other cooking and skill building programs to buy equipment." 6 CS

5.4.6 Cooking and Skill Building Program

As alluded to previously, the driver of this program could be looked at as positive for communities or as government downloading to community agencies:

"We really needed to know who was out in the province providing this service to people... For me, the value in knowing what is available and I think these community initiatives and stuff are really the foundation of how to reach individuals in limited or socioeconomic disadvantaged areas ... And I think that knowing who is at the ground-level really is the ones that are really reaching the folks. And for me, I have really seen a change in government, how they really want to reach out to those organizations and support them ... And for me I think, knowing who is at the ground and being able to funnel money directly to people on the ground." 26 State

5.4.7 Fridge Program

As in the Cooking and Skill Building program, capital resources were identified as a gap, and drove the implementation of this program addresses a practical need.

"But we did identify some barriers to the [milk] program. And one was lack of refrigeration ... And at the same time, the fruit and vegetable snack program needed refrigeration too to be able to bring down some of the distribution costs ... So a few people got together and said, 'You know, this will be a great partnership idea. Both programs need a fridge so let's do something about it'." 18 Food Supply

5.4.8 BC Healthy Living Alliance Programs

Albeit not a direct focus of the research, BC Healthy Living Alliance programs in development during the research period were directed by the provincial target of increasing fruit and vegetable intake. It was suggested that food security programs provided an evidence-based approach to achieving this:

“One of the strategies is a healthy eating strategy. And the ultimate outcome that we are seeking is increasing fruit and vegetable access. Since that is the provincial target, we are using that as an indicator for healthy eating. Through the development of the strategy, right at the beginning it was identified that food security was an issue that we would have to look at ... one of our principles for the planning process is to look at best practices and to be using a population health approach, and to be evidence driven. And so all of those elements reinforced the value-centred approach to wanting to look at food security.” 38 CS

Finally, reflecting and reiterating the importance of individual advocates in many programs and institutions, when asked about drivers, one interviewee responded:

“Me ... I started the conversation ... I really don't know where we would, like I jumped on the bandwagon.” 34 State

5.5 Summary and Conclusions

This chapter began with the macro socio-political and food security context and drivers outside of BC. Next it reviewed the history, socio-political context and drivers of food security in BC. Finally, it examined the drivers in the initiation and development of specific food security initiatives included in the research. Highlights are reviewed below:

Table 5.2: Summary of Context and Drivers in BC Food Security Integration

Macro: External to BC	Internal to BC	To Specific Food Security Initiatives
Context:	Context:	Context:
Increased CS awareness of limitations of neoliberalism, globalization and corporatization (in relation to food security)	History of CS (grassroots and health NGOs) in food security History of PH Community Nutritionist working with CS in food security	Foundational work by state and CS stakeholders
	History of public consultations by Min of Ag in relation to agri-food policy	
	Increasing poverty rates	
	Meat Inspection Regulation highlights perception of competing food security policies in BC	
	Increased awareness of food security in BC due to CS work	
Drivers:	Drivers:	Drivers:
Health Concerns: obesity, diabetes and associated costs & food safety concerns	PH Renewal; development of PH Core Programs; ActNow BC; chronic disease, obesity and associated costs	Individual and group champions in state and CS
Climate Change	Individual and group champions in state and CS	Creation of food security as legislated mandate for Health Authorities (Core Pgms)
Media	Rising concerns about food insecurity	Provincial ActNow BC goal of increasing fruit and vegetable intake
Increased participation of CS in food security at international level	NGO and Federal gov't funding targeted to food security	ActNow BC funding

In looking at the macro context, of particular interest is the growing awareness of externalities created by the private sector. Concerns include shifting of costs incurred to the public, the increased privatization of traditionally public sectors

(moreover where they may still be assumed to be public), and the concern of who is in charge, or who is overseeing the big picture of the public good?

In examination of the micro context of BC, numerous key drivers contributed to the emergence of food security initiatives in the government of BC. PH renewal has been one of the instrumental drivers in advancing food security in BC PH - first, through the development of core programs in PH, including the determination of food security as a core PH program. And second, PH renewal, in combination with the obesity “epidemic”, the 2010 Olympics and the health care funding crisis contributed to the government “prevention” agenda under the auspices of the ActNow BC initiative. This cross-ministerial health initiative, advocated for by high level Ministry of Health champions, allowed for the further integration of food security into BC PH programs. Also, PH Food Security Core Programs were a driver in food security initiatives in Regional Health Authorities, as they created a food security mandate for Regional Health Authorities.

In addition to the ActNow mandates, other Ministries influenced the government interest in food security. Public consultations by the Ministry of Agriculture and their ongoing work, along with growing government interest in climate change have been drivers in local food sustainability. Increasing poverty rates, as well as private models used within the realm of the public good contributed to the increase in food security concerns in BC and may have engaged the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance in food security. Finally, the introduction of healthy school food policies also supported the general concept of food security.

A burgeoning increase in CS food security activist interest and activity in food security issues at both the macro and BC levels has driven an increased attention to food security; CS is seen to be ahead of the state in food security. Both CS grassroots food security groups and Health NGOs played key roles in laying the foundation for the current integration, including the push for PH renewal. Two CS health NGO food security initiatives were successful – albeit short term – in convening cross-ministerial meetings in food security. Given

their history, it is curious that CS health NGOs were given less credit for driving the integration. While this was not investigated in the research, it is possible that this is due to the lack of connection between CS health NGOs and food security activists and those who work directly in food security in the Regional Health Authorities.

The food supply sector, while exerting the greatest influence on food security, has had very little involvement in food security health promotion initiatives in BC. However, food safety is emerging as major influencer on food security; the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation increased the recognition of the competing food security agendas of government and reinforced the notion of the strength of the food supply sector. This will be explored further in Chapter 8.

The significance of individual and group champions as key drivers, particularly in the development of specific initiatives, was also highlighted in this chapter. Specifically mentioned were Community Nutritionists and Trevor Hancock as the key drivers of the PH Food Security Core Programs and Brent Warner and Anna Kirbyson in the BC Fruit and Vegetable Program and BC Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Program, respectively. The Cooking and Skill Building and Fridge programs seemed to be based on community interest and appeals.

Chapter Six. Findings II. Stakeholder Analysis: Mandate, Resources and Agendas

6.1 Introduction

Chapter 6 begins the stakeholder analysis, and congruent with the Ritchie and Spencer framework outlined in the methodology, examines the “Contextual” analysis and begins to evaluate the integration. As this new thrust of government food security initiatives primarily originated in PH and ActNow BC, the stakeholder analysis emphasizes PH. It first examines the PH stakeholders, then the mandate and funding for PH food security. Next, it identifies the other stakeholders involved, and outlines all stakeholder agendas and interests.

This chapter lays the foundation for the following chapters - where stakeholder relationships to each other are examined in Chapter 7, and then in Chapter 8, on how this impacted the way initiatives developed and progressed. As in all of the Findings, this chapter draws on interviewee data, review of the secondary literature (including documents related to initiatives, such as strategic plans, evaluations, etc.), and field notes from the researcher’s direct and participatory observations.

Key players from three sectors - the state, CS and the food supply sector - have been involved in food security initiatives in BC over the last two decades or more. However, state and CS have participated in the initiatives to a much greater degree than the food supply sector, whose involvement has been mostly a response to state initiation. Therefore, the food supply chain will receive less attention than the two other sectors.

“I certainly think that there is more emphasis right now here (Civil Society), and here (state). I don’t think that, I think that (supply chain) doesn’t have much interest right now in what is going on in BC.” 43 PH

6.2 Identification of Stakeholders within the Analysis

The initiatives under review are outlined in Chapter 1, and in Figure 1.1.

Involvement in initiatives of specific stakeholders within the three sectors is outlined in Table 6.1. This expands on Table 4.3: Sector Involvement in Food Security Programs at Provincial Level in BC, by identifying specific stakeholders within sectors. While all initiatives are led by the government, the lead Ministry varies.

Table 6.1: Stakeholder Involvement in Food Security Initiatives in BC*

	Civil Society	State	Food Supply
Food Security Core Program in PH		√ PH**	
Community Food Action Initiative	√ BC Food Systems; BC Healthy Living Alliance; academic	√ PH ; Min Ag; Min Employ & Income Assis; Min Educ; Food Protection Services; Aboriginal Health; PH Agency Canada; Union of BC Municipalities	
School Fruit & Vegetable Program	√ local level CS	√ Min Ag ; Min Education; PH	√ Farmers; processors; wholesalers; retailers
Provincial Health Officer Report		√ PH	
Cooking and Skill Building Program	√ DASH; local NGOs	√ Min Employment & Income Assistance ; PH	
Farmer's Market Nutrition & Coupon Program	√ local level NGOs	√ Min Employment & Income Assistance ; Min Ag	√ BC Farmer's Market Association
Fridge Program	√ local level NGOs	√ Min Ag	√ BC Dairy Foundation
Meat Inspection***		√ PH (Food Protection)	√

* Involvement is at provincial level, unless otherwise indicated.

** Lead ministry or department under State in bold.

*** Not a food security initiative, but key influencer on food security initiatives during research period.

BC Healthy Living Alliance initiatives not included above as they did not have specific food security programs articulated at time of research.

As the beginning of the chapter focuses on PH, and as involvement of PH is extensive, identification of PH stakeholders is first introduced. This is followed by an examination of the PH mandate and in food security funding to initiatives.

6.2.1 Stakeholders, State: Provincial Ministry of Health

As mentioned in the Introduction, the Ministry of Health had several reorganizations and subsequent name changes during this period, so for simplicity will be referred to as “Ministry of Health”. Unless otherwise stated, structures noted are consistent with the time of the research period.

Staff from the Ministry of Health Services, Population Health and Wellness Branch have key roles in food security. As was outlined in Chapter 5, the Medical Consultant (Dr. Trevor Hancock) under the “Business Operations and Surveillance” division is the author of the BC PH Core Functions. Also further elucidated in Chapter 5 was the work done to create the mandate and the funding for ActNow BC, which originated under Health (ActNow BC has been under various Ministries over the last few years).

Next, Nutrition Consultants work under the Healthy Living/Chronic Disease division. One is designated as the “Provincial Nutritionist”, with responsibility for general nutrition issues that are related to food security, but are not classified as food security. Examples of these are the BC Nutrition Survey, Pregnancy Outreach Programs and ActNow BC programs on school food policy. She is also involved in deliberations related to broad PH strategy. Another of the consultants has had a specific focus on food security. She sits on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee and was integral in the development of food security as a core PH program. She is also involved in ActNow BC food security programs including the Community Food Action Initiative and the BC School Fruit and Vegetable program.

The Provincial Health Officer is the author of BC Health Goals, and is a strong proponent of approaching health from a population and a determinants point of view. He promotes and monitors the BC Health Goals, as part of the legislated mandate to monitor and report on the health of British Columbians. He directed the production of the 2005 Provincial Health Officer’s Report: Food, Health and Well-Being In British Columbia (Provincial Health Officer, 2006), in collaboration with the Community Nutritionists’ Council, the provincial nutrition consultants and Environmental Health officers.

Finally, a representative from the Aboriginal Health Branch sits on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee.

6.2.2 Stakeholders, State: Provincial Health Services Authority

The Executive Director of the “Population Health Surveillance and Disease Control Planning” division under “Strategic Health Development Services” and his staff are key players in food security in BC. The staff member working under him oversees the provincial the Community Food Action Initiative, with a provincial manager of the initiative reporting to her.

Administration of the Community Food Action Initiative leaves the Provincial Health Services Authority in a position of strong influence in relation to the future of food security in BC PH; this program influences both government and community levels. It is one of the few government funded food security programs in BC. In their performance improvement plan for food security, the Provincial Health Services Authority is acknowledged for coordinating the provincial Community Food Action Initiative, but priority improvements identified are not specific to it (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2007a).

While the Provincial Health Services Authority is responsible for “managing the quality, coordination, accessibility and cost of selected province-wide health-care programs and services”, they have stated their intent to “gradually increase our emphasis on prevention, promotion and protection” (Provincial Health Services Authority).

In 2002 the Provincial Health Services Authority took on the provincial responsibility for food inspection from the Ministry of Health. They hold the BC Centre for Disease Control which houses “Food Protection Services”²⁷, while

²⁷ Roles of Food Protection Services at the Provincial Health Services Authority include: the development of public information material on food safety; the development of strategies to minimize risk of food borne illness; the review of legislation, the creation of policies and standards to ensure currency; the assurance of equivalency of food standards to national models; licensure and inspection of provincial dairy, fish and meat processing plants; initiation /participation in provincial/federal food safety management committees; primary provincial contact for food emergencies/recalls; ensure currency/viability of “FOODSAFE”; resource for Health Authorities; coordination of oral exams for the Canadian Institute of Public Health Inspectors. A number of Acts and Regulation provide authority for the inspection activity. In some cases provincial inspection activity is contracted to the Canadian Food Inspection

the Regional Health Authorities are responsible for the delivery of these services. A manager from Food Protection sits on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee, although did not participate consistently or be involved in its strategic plan (Maunder & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007). While Food Protection is not significantly involved in PH food security health promotion initiatives, it is nonetheless important due to its impact on these initiatives. This was illustrated through the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation, and will be discussed more thoroughly in Chapter 8.

6.2.3 Stakeholders, State: Regional Health Authorities

PH professionals engaged in food security work include Medical Health Officers, Environmental Health Officers, Licensing Officers, PH Nurses, Community Nutritionists and Food Security Coordinators. Until 1995, most PH employees in BC were government employees; they are now employees of the Regional Health Authorities.

Over the research period, all five Regional Health Authorities hired Food Security Coordinators. At the time of the research, the majority of the five of them reported directly to a Medical Health Officer (a relatively high reporting level). While the job description varies somewhat across Regional Health Authorities, their key role is the facilitation of key players within the health region in developing a food security plan, in coordinating existing community programs and promoting sustainability and in educating the public and professionals about food security and its impacts. These Food Security Coordinators are representatives on both the Community Food Action Initiative advisory and operations committees and are key in its implementation at the Regional Health Authority level. They also participated in the development of the PH Food Security Model Core Program. The researcher of this thesis acted in this position from February – August 2007.

Agency. In other cases, by agreement with the federal government, provincial or health authority staff carries out activities. Key Program Areas of Food protection services include: Fish, Food, Meat and Milk programs. (BC Centre for Disease Control)

As outlined in Chapter 5, Community Nutritionists (Registered Dietitians) took a lead role in advocating for and developing the evidence for food security as a core program; some were also involved in the development of the PH Food Security Model Core Program. In addition, many Nutritionists were involved in the Community Food Action Initiative projects at the Regional Health Authority level. PH Nurses work with those in low income and have been partners in some food security programs in health authorities, but have not taken lead roles to date.

Environmental Health Protection Programs – including Food Protection - are delivered locally by Medical Health Officers and Environmental Health Officers. Through “Food Premises Regulation”, Environmental Health Officers are responsible for direct service delivery in Regional Health Authorities throughout the province, providing surveillance and monitoring of activities and premises and administering and enforcing provincial legislation which may affect the public's health. They license, inspect, and respond to complaints regarding food facilities under their jurisdiction and administer the FOODSAFE education program in their region. They are not involved in food security programs at the Regional Health Authority level.

6.2.4 Stakeholders, State: BC Community Nutritionist Council

The Community Nutritionist Council of BC is made up of Community Nutritionists who work for Regional Health Authorities. While not quite a “state” player, Community Nutritionists’ Council is more state than it is CS. The Community Nutritionists’ Council mission is: “to enable all British Columbians to achieve and maintain optimal nutritional well-being through access to safe, appropriate and quality food, nutrition information and nutrition services” (BC Ministry of Health Planning, 2002). The Food Security Standing Committee is a sub-committee of the Community Nutritionists’ Council. As previously mentioned, they played a key role in the establishment of food security as a PH Core Program through publication of the report “Making the Connection - Food Security and Public Health” (2004) and their contracted paper “Food Security Indicators for British Columbia Regional Health Authorities (Ostry & Rideout,

2004). They were founding members of the PH Alliance on Food Security along with the Medical Health Officers.

6.2.5 Stakeholders, State: Public Health Alliance on Food Security

The PH Alliance on Food Security was formed in 2003. A Medical Health Officer took the initiative to found and lead the Alliance. While beginning with the Medical Health Officer's and the Community Nutrition Council, the PH Nursing Leadership Council and the Environmental Health Officer's Council later joined. However, tensions in philosophy and practices existed regarding the latter, as will be explored later. The Alliance worked with the Ministry of Health and the Provincial Health Services Authority to develop the framework for the Community Food Action Initiative, and also developed a three year strategic plan. However, they became defunct in 2007.

6.2.6 Stakeholders, State: Public Health Agency of Canada

The PH Agency of Canada was created in 2004, as an effort toward PH renewal across Canada. Led by a Chief PH Officer, the PH Agency of Canada coordinates federal efforts in identifying, reducing and responding to PH risks and threats (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2004). These functions were transferred from the federal government department, Health Canada. Health Canada, and then PH Agency of Canada, offered significant three-year grant funding to diabetes prevention in the early 2000s. Many organizations in BC applied for and received this funding for food security initiatives. For this reason, and for their involvement in food security within Vancouver, they played a significant role in food security in BC. A representative from the PH Agency of Canada sits on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee.

6.3 Public Health Mandate, Funding and Resources

6.3.1 Public Health Mandate in Food Security

The mandate for the integration of food security into the BC government centred in PH, at the provincial Ministry and Provincial and Regional Health Authority levels. According to the PH Model Core Programs for Food Security, “The legislative and policy direction for a food security program is based on: The Health Act; The Core PH Functions document recently approved by the Ministry of Health; and Government policy on food as reflected in the BC Community Food Action Initiative, Ministry of Education School Food and Beverage Guidelines, The Food Safety Act, The Agri-Food Choice and Quality Act, and The Organic Agricultural Products Certification Regulation” (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006).

Further, most financial resources either originated or were initially located in Health – which in effect gives further mandate and some power to Health.

“Quite clearly, the major player now is Health. And they have taken a central role in food security.” 2 CS

“Well I think Health has taking an astonishingly large role in it.” 4 PH

This does not discount the acknowledgement that PH is a relatively small player within Regional Health Authorities, and food security is a small player within PH:

“The piece of pie that public health gets is still extremely small. I think it gets like 6% if that of the total provincial budget. And people are not ... tuned into that because the whole health care system has been tuned, has been modelled after the biomedical model. And to shift that around it huge. It is like it is a monolith right?” 1 PH

“They are busy dealing with hospitals and the acute care needs, right? So the things that are happening in public health often are not a priority on the agendas there. And so food security is just a little tiny slice of public health.” 3 PH

Further, while the majority of Food Security Coordinators “are [at] a higher management position” (42 PH), others report lower, to Managers (at the same level as PH Nutritionists).

Nonetheless, PH has been successful in driving an inter-ministerial government agenda toward preventive health, which included many nutrition and food security initiatives.

“ActNow brought, came in, to actually have this cross government, cross sector, so that [Health] is absolutely everybody's responsibility.” 43 PH

Due to this, and the fact that Health comprises a large part of the Provincial budget, other Ministries also see Health as a significant partner.

“Ministry of Health has significant financial and political weight relative to [our Ministry]. So if we can partner with the Ministry of Health, then if we do it carefully, cleverly, then we have the potential to carry more weight. And have more programs. Push more programs.” 21 State

Finally, PH is well respected by communities. For this reason, and the fact that it provides one of the few sources of community-based funding, many interviewees perceive PH as holding some power, and as adding legitimacy to food security at the community level.

“When elected officials are hearing it from a variety of sources and one which, public health carries a great deal of credibility. Because we're a fairly conservative lot. And so, I think that when we go to the mayors and the regional district reps and the school board representatives and so on and say ‘food security is important, and we are part of this whole provincial initiative, and it is actually quite well structured and supported’, it gives extra credibility to the work that is happening at the local level.” 15 PH

The extent to which the integration has legitimized food security in PH is further explored in Chapter 8. Nonetheless, while the State and PH have a mandate and accompanying resources for food security, they do not see themselves as the only player:

“I think it would be very inappropriate if everything got pushed up to the state, because I see that in lots of documents. And I am thinking no way, it's not just that.” 43 PH

This poses the question – is it then the responsibility of PH to engage other sectors? If so, have they been successful? This matter will be examined in Chapter 7, particularly in relation to CS engagement.

6.3.2 Resources and Funding

Functional roles of PH (strategies or “how”) will be examined in Chapter 7. However, in order to more fully understand the mandate of PH and other stakeholders, funding and resources (described by interviewees as one of the key functional roles of the state), are reviewed below.

“Some of the roles of government I think we’ve seen in our own work. In terms of just making funding available for certain initiatives and being able to move some of this work into more of a priority, and just get the word out there... and then of course there’s the ActNow, the 2010 Olympics have probably made some more monies available.” 1 PH

“I don’t know that the provincial government is in the business of delivery, of these programs necessarily. So let’s pay for it, and throw some staff at it, but not actually do it on the ground.” 21 State

“I need to make sure I have got good connection to the community. And that is what the money gives. More than anything. It gives us access to information about what the community needs.” 15 PH

6.3.2.i Funding to Initiatives

The following account of funding to food security programs in BC circa 2007 (see Table 6.2) is very approximate, but gives some sense of the significance of the funding.

No resources beyond existing staffing were allocated to PH specifically for the Food Security Core Program. The Community Food Action Initiative which originated under ActNow BC, provided 1.5 million dollars annually to health authorities, including Provincial Health Services Authority.

Approximately \$1.3 million was provided to the 2007/2008 BC School Fruit and Vegetable program, most of which came from Health (43 PH, 17 Food Supply), although the lead Ministry was Agriculture. The Ministry of Education later provided bridge financing to continue the program until April 1st 2008. The

program received \$7.7 million in spring 2008 for the subsequent 2 ½ years through the BC Ministry of Agriculture (portions provided by the Ministry of Health, Ministry of Education, and the Ministry of Agriculture, albeit no documentation was attached to the funding (Babineau, 2010)).

The Fridge Program (Ministry of Agriculture lead) received \$1 million, working in partnership with BC Dairy Foundation. The Cooking and Skill Building Project (Ministry Employment and Income Assistance lead) received a total of \$ 500,000 (\$250,000, two years in a row) (26 State, 43 PH). The BC Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project received \$130,000, from Ministry Employment and Income Assistance (44 Food Supply). Seven-hundred fifty-thousand dollars was granted for 2008-09, however the program was scheduled to be cancelled in 2010 (BC Association of Farmers' Markets, 2010; Luther, 2010).

An observer of government staffing involved would also note that in-kind staffing provided hundreds of thousands of dollars to provincial, regional and community based security initiatives – from provincial government staff, to Regional Health Authority staff. In addition, as mentioned in Chapter 1, BC Healthy Living Alliance received \$25 million from the Ministry of Health, and (near the end of this research) designated a portion of this to healthy eating and food security programs; albeit significant, this was one-time funding.

Table 6.2: Estimated Government Funding to BC Food Security Initiatives circa 2007

Food Security Core Programs	No funding outside of program dev't
Community Food Action Initiative	\$1.5 million annually for 3 years
BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program	\$1.3 million (2007) \$7.7 million received spring 2008 for following 2.5 years
Cooking and Skill Building Program	\$0.5 million (250,000 x 2 years)
Fridge Program	\$ 1 million (one time funding)
BC Farmer's Market Program	\$ 130,000 (2007) \$750,000 granted for 2008-09 Cancellation announcement 2010
Staff (government) In-Kind	\$ 0.5 million+ (crude estimate)

Above chart does not include: 1) funding to: provincial school meal program; healthy eating/nutrition initiatives; food protection services; BC Healthy Living Alliance; and 2) in-kind food supply and in-kind Civil Society supports.

This crude estimate suggests that upwards of \$4.5 million was targeted toward food security programs in 2007. Some of this funding continued on, while some was granted for the specific year only. Although complete figures are not available, this increased to upwards of \$6 million in 2008 due to the significant funding increase received by the BC School Fruit and Vegetable program.

6.3.2.ii Background and Limitations to Funding and Resources

Initially, most of the funding originated from the Provincial government, and most of that from the Ministry of Health; some of the Ministry of Health funding was directed through ActNow BC. In ActNow BC, \$5 million over 3 years was made available for ministries to apply to fund cross-ministry work to meet healthy living targets (43 PH). Note though, that only some of this \$5 million was allocated to food security programs (other funds went to nutrition programs, anti-smoking, fitness, etc.). One of the ActNow funding criteria was that one ministry had to provide a leadership role, and also partner with a not for profit organization (43 PH).

The Community Food Action Initiative funding was significant as it is the only portion of the funding targeted: a) toward community identified food security plans and initiatives, and b) to health authorities.

"[the Community Food Action Initiative] was a really big part of the healthy eating strategy. And if you look at the budget for healthy eating, it actually took one third of the budget." 45 PH

However, many criticized that the funding to Regional Health Authorities was negligible, while a significant percentage of this \$1.5 million stayed with Provincial Health Services Authority for provincial projects, evaluation and administration.

"The amount of money that was being offered to these groups, it was enough to maybe host an event but not enough to really fund any working groups afterwards." 10 CS

"It's still really not a lot of money. One and a half-million, over one year, across the entire province. You know, it's still, I think anyway, it's pretty thin." 6 CS

“... because there is such a little trickle down of dollars. I mean you need money to bring together coalitions, money and time.” 3 PH

“It’s enough money that you can’t ignore it or slide it someplace else. And it is not enough to be effective in any way. So, it hasn’t been helpful.” 27 PH

Further, lack of continuity of funding created more barriers:

“One of the problems I guess with doing it the way we’re doing it is - it was small, smallish amount of money for a limited amount of time and it’s kind of hard to build up any kind of a force, a political, physical, concept, a known force. You know, any kind of organization, knowing that your deadline or your final thing may be ... ‘okay now it’s two months away, now it’s one months away’. Are we going to continue or not?” 31 CS

However, the provincial Community Food Action Initiative evaluation noted that this funding was leveraged to create more funding in the communities (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b), as was acknowledged by this interviewee:

“Most of the small communities get \$15,000 year. You know, that is not very much money. And so, they are able to do the usual loaves and fishes that local communities do with that by partnering with other organizations.” 15 PH

In the second year of implementation, rather than remain as project funding, the Community Food Action Initiative funding became “base funding” for the health authorities (43 PH). This meant health authorities were less restricted in the use of those dollars, putting food security funding at risk.

“The Community Food Action Initiative has no clout. This is all voluntary ... that is a limitation of the funding, is that because it is now part of the base funding, the health authority can say at any time, you know what, we are in a deficit position and I can take these dollars.” 30 PH

This would suggest that the Community Food Action Initiative was successful in addressing the concern of ongoing funding sustainability, however, at the Regional Health Authority level this did not translate to communities. And even when dollars remained within food security, the Community Food Action Initiative funding in some Regional Health Authorities was diverted to the fulfilment of Food Security Core Program Performance Improvement Plans.

Some interviewees resisted this:

“One thing that we don't want to do is we don't want to take away from the Community Food Action Initiative resources in Provincial Health Services Authority to actually put them under core functions unless there is real congruency between those two pieces ... from the Community Food Action Initiative, I am being very protective right now ... In saying that I am not going to diffuse the work from the Community Food Action Initiative to pull it into core functions.” 30 PH

In some cases Community Food Action Initiative funding was used for hiring Regional Health Authority Food Security Coordinators. This was viewed by some as contrary to the original intent of the initiative proposal and as co-opting the funding intended directly for communities to develop or implement community based food security plans (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

On the positive side, it was suggested that the advantage of base funding means that it is now perpetual or ongoing, allowing for more security:

“So that [funding] has really changed how we look at some of the strategic initiatives and the opportunities that we have to be very strategic on a more longer-term basis.” 30 PH

This difficulty of short time frames for distribution of funding, especially at the start of the program was noted in the Community Food Action Initiative evaluation (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b) and by interviewees:

“I think the process was quite flawed, because of the budget way that the budget funding letter came down and stuff.” 30 PH

In regards to the PH Food Security Core Program, a lack of resources for planning, implementation and evaluation was identified by numerous PH interviewees:

“So, the health authorities are frightened that while they have got a very significant gap analysis in each of the 21 [core programs], the earlier ones are at risk of being addressed, and the later ones will not have any money or any energy to be fixed.” 27 PH

“And that has been a bit of a challenge in the health authorities is that there are lots of responsibilities, lots of requests in the upfront planning stages and in the

implementation stages, but not always the resources to really do a terrific job with it ... the problem is that if we're going to actually show some impact of these programs then they need to be adequately resourced.” 4 PH

Compounding this is the fact that food security is one of 20 PH core programs, thus competing within existing health authority resources for more mature and strongly mandated programs such as communicable disease.

With many initiatives happening at once (including a number beginning under BC Healthy Living Alliance), Regional Health Authority PH employees felt the strain of needing to provide too much consultation and information to provincial projects.

“So you are busy working with your executive, you are busy working with this provincial level, and then you have got the Ministry of Health also wanting you to work with core services. So all of a sudden the work that you could do at the local level was almost zero.” 3 PH

“Health authorities are putting a lot of time and energy into the development of the core programs. And so, as [we] wanted to go through a consultative process at the same time, it was identified that there was a bit of consultation fatigue out there ... We ended up having limited involvement just because of their capacity issues. And the high demands that are being placed for participating in provincial processes.” 38 CS

While most funding originated in Health, a significant amount of funding had moved out of government Health at the end of the research period – to the Ministry of Agriculture led BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program and to BC Healthy Living Alliance (health NGO). Does this support the concept, as one interviewee queried, that the question of food security mandate for PH still hangs in the balance?

“When we look at the mandate of the health authority [in food security], we do struggle with, is this really within it? Is it the right fit? Are we the ones that should be doing this? I think we should. But I'm part of that tiny percent of the tiny percent.” 4 PH

To its advantage, food security as a legislated Core Program is likely the strongest mandate any Ministry had for food security at the time of the research - stronger than a program, to which funding can be cut. Further, the Community Food Action Initiative led the only inter-ministerial (and somewhat inter-

sectoral) table on food security in the province. On the other hand, interviewees reinforce that justification of the mandate of food security in PH will continue to be difficult.

“This work is always going to be challenging. It’s always going to take continual observance, continual tension by people that care about it to not have it slip off the table. That’s not a lot of money. I’m just thinking of it in resource terms. It’s not.” 41 PH

“When you get something on the radar, the good news is you’ve got it on the radar, the bad news is you don’t know what’s going to happen to it. And you have to sometimes fight even harder to protect it.” 25 CS

Other funding issues related to accountability are outlined in Chapter 7 under PH limitations in relation to the PH agenda.

6.4 Stakeholder Agendas

6.4.1 Stakeholder Definition and Practice of Food Security in Initiatives

As outlined in Chapter 1, government food security initiatives in BC have a wide scope spanning the three broad categories of health, local food sustainability and food insecurity/hunger; Table 6.3 illustrates the wide scope of issues addressed in most initiatives.

Table 6.3: Scope of BC Government Food Security Programs

Program	Health	Food Insecurity	Local Food
Food Security Core Program in PH	X	X	X
Community Food Action Initiative	X	X	X
BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program	X		X
Cooking and Skill Building Program	X	X	
Fridge Program	X		X
BC Farmer’s Market Nt & Coupon Program	X	X	X
Provincial Health Officer’s Report	X	X	X

Meat Inspection Regulation and BC Healthy Living Alliance not included here as are not food security programs under investigation

It is important to note, however, that these programs were not conceived as a whole, or planned in a comprehensive way (a criticism that will be expounded upon in Chapter 8). In fact, the researcher observed some resistance to sharing program goals across different initiatives during program development stages,

even when the same people were involved in the programs (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

While the three PH led initiatives (Community Food Action Initiative, Core Program and Provincial Health Officer's report) utilize the Hamm and Bellows definition of community food security (Hamm & Bellows, 2003), many stakeholders understand the definition differently:

"What is food security? We use the Hamm and Bellows definition within the community food security group. But I can tell you right now, that is not the food security that agriculture uses. They don't use that definition. Education doesn't use that definition. MEAI doesn't use that definition. Transportation doesn't use that definition. So that's one of the challenges that we have. Because we don't, we don't hold a common vision for what food security is." 4 PH

The fact that PH Stakeholders adopted the broad, holistic Hamm and Bellows definition in all three PH food security initiatives - often through exhaustive discussion (B. Seed, 2004-2007) - is testament to their commitment to keeping a comprehensive definition. While stakeholders are ambivalent about the definition, as will be illustrated in this chapter, they recognize the value of a broad definition of food security as a way to forward many agendas and include many players:

"I think just willingness to position food security whatever way made sense. Like I think if you wanted to call food security cooking and skill building, if you wanted to call food security access to local veggies, like, just being strategic. Just putting it in whatever, any arena you can." 43 PH

Another interviewee suggested that few will dispute this concept of food security.

"I might think that food security is contentious and political, but it's one thing that I truly believe in and I think you would have a hard time having anybody that doesn't agree with that statement. You would. How you get there is where I think the disagreement and the complexity and the issues lie." 45 PH

Another agreed, and also reiterated the differences regarding strategies of achieving food security:

"I think we would agree that we want food security. That food security is a good thing. So I don't think we are radically different in keeping that at the centre. But we do come at it in different ways." 4 PH

"How you get there", or strategies, will be investigated under functional analysis in Chapter 7. However, in laying the foundation for the next section, the researcher contends that stakeholder interests within the definition drive the agendas and strategies, and are thus more relevant than the definition of food security itself.

"The definitions don't get you that far. They're really your starting place." 41 PH

Concerns around understanding and application of definition are most salient to PH initiatives as they have broad mandates; this subjects them to a greater interpretation of scope. The other programs have more specific mandates, so the definition of food security was not as fundamental to their practices, and was not debated to the same degree.

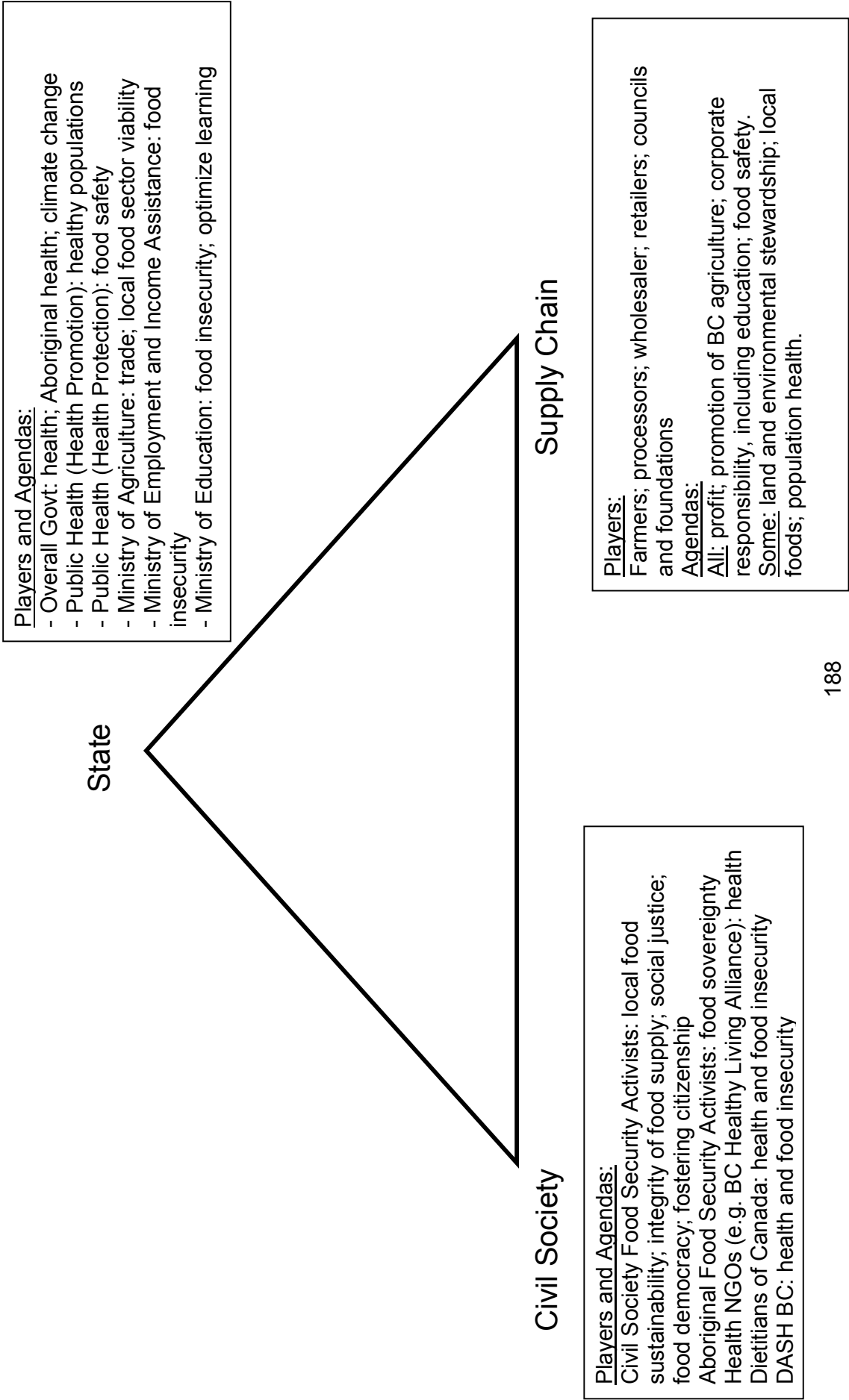
So, regardless of intended scope as per Table 6.3, upon program implementation, the issue of greatest interest may be prioritised by the lead ministry. For example, while the Community Food Action Initiative intends to cover all three categories, projects with outcomes clearly linked to health take precedence. Interviewees made it clear that various players focus on different aspects of the definition and take on different roles as a result of opportunities, mandate, and resources.

"Everybody has a different agenda. You want people sitting at the table who want income assistance rates increased, you want people growing local foods, you want people who are, you know, policies that actually guide healthy decisions in municipalities, you want local foods being provided in cafeterias right? It's all food security." 45 PH

A review of the full food security agenda of individual stakeholders is beyond the scope of this thesis. This analysis will focus on initiatives and stakeholder participation in them as expressions of stakeholder agendas and on interviewee perceptions. Key issues/agendas of stakeholders are outlined in

Figure 6.1: Food Security Agendas of Key Stakeholders in British Columbia Public Health and Related Programs. This also draws on Chapter 5, drivers of food security and food security initiatives.

Figure 6.1: Food Security Agendas of Key Stakeholders in British Columbia Public Health and Related Programs



6.4.2 State Agendas

6.4.2.i State Agendas: Government of British Columbia

“Healthy Living” was named one of the “Five Great Goals” for the Province of BC for the time period between 2006 – 2016 (Government of British Columbia, 2006). It was also noted that the government was “working with Aboriginal British Columbians to achieve the Five Great Goals”. This identification of healthy living as an overall corporate priority created the mandate for the cross-ministerial ActNow health promotion initiatives and in part, for food security initiatives. However, interviewees were clear that food security was not a key priority for the government.

“I think it's important to be clear that food security is not a provincial priority and it's not a priority for the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands.” 21 State

“If government itself, was really committed to seeing this, you know real progress in this area, that they would have, you know, ADMs [Assistant Deputy Ministers] sitting together and making policy together. That it wouldn't be ... all of us.” 6 CS

It is beyond the scope of this research to look at all food security agendas of government; instead, relevant themes that emerged in the findings will be examined. Prior to reviewing Department or Ministry agendas, government-wide themes of competing agendas; inter-sectoral agendas and dilution or omission of the food insecurity/hunger agenda will be examined.

Competing Agendas

Competing agendas were identified as a primary theme for both PH and CS interviewees in this research.

“I guess that's what, that is what makes food security so exciting but at the same time so challenging. You have competing policies even within the same ministry.” 45 PH

Competing agendas were identified in the promotion of health:

“When it comes to the mission of ActNow BC for example, in creating the healthiest jurisdiction in the province, you know that, I'm sure there's been some real positive impacts ... But at the same time, when you know, the

province is at the same time promoting the Olympics, and using the Olympics as a justification for the ActNow BC program, and when the Olympics themselves, have two major sponsors that you know, to be quite blunt, are arguably sponsored by two of the greatest criminals within the food system, being Coca-Cola and McDonald's, two of the five major international sponsors of the Olympics ... hypocrisy is not going to help any food security issue at all ... in order for the food security movement to really make headway, and for the state to really adopt those, those values, that they need to critically look at, what else the province is doing ... And that's a huge jump that, I don't know if it it'll ever happen." 10 CS

"We have very contradictory policies coming out of our government on this. Like eat your 5 fruit and vegetables, but not supporting family farms. You know, like, there are so many contradictions that go on." 15 PH

Competing agendas of energy production, trade agreements and meat regulations were identified in relation to local food sustainability:

"So, the premier says we need more energy, we need emissions free energy, so we want to build site C dam....so where can people in the northern half of the province get their food? ... the area they will flood in the Peace Valley contains fully one half of the class one farm land - climate and soil - of the whole northern half of the province. If the government was serious it would be looking ... at not building a site C dam ... Because it is classic one soils and climate, what that means is that it can produce a wide range of crops." 24 CS

"I am very interested in the local food, and every time I bring it up, I just hear, the inter provincial trade agreement, the inter provincial trade agreement, we can't get by it The government can't have it both ways. They can't have Pacific Green which is the whole green movement and have the trade agreement. They have got to choose. What do they want?" 34 State

The government Meat Inspection Regulation that was implemented during the time period of this study was a prime example of these diametrically opposed policies, where many from CS and some from the food supply sector protested that they work against local food security.

"But obviously, the government isn't totally engaged in food security because it passed the meat inspection regulations, which aren't, you know, which are seen and to some degree are, have a negative impact on it. And again, they didn't even take the step back to say how can we help that process out? They just put it through. So, so, you know they're almost like one part's over here, and one part's over here." 12 State

On the other hand, another argued that food security initiatives were contrary to government policy:

“Because actually what they’re actually talking about [food security] is contrary to government policy. I mean government has set the policy, we are going to have a single consistent meat system, meat safety system. Well, it doesn’t do us any good if one side is trying to battle that ... at the end of the day this is where these things need to be complementary. And if you’ve got contaminated animals and carcasses out there, you’re never going to have a sustainable system.” 33 State

The idea of competing and “weightier” agendas as rendering the food security agenda ineffectual was another theme that came up frequently:

“There are all these great little initiatives going on and they are trying support community gardens and community kitchens and various initiatives to increase people’s awareness and yet it is in the face of government policy, that I don’t think is in any way shying away from an international trade perspective and the whole standardization of everything. Which ultimately means putting it [processing plants] all in major centres and stripping all the communities of any real food security.” 29 CS

Ignorance or Intended Contradictions or Reality?

Some interviewees saw the contradictions within the state as understood and intentional, while others queried whether it was ignorance between or within departments:

“The federal and provincial governments have contradictory, even diametrically opposed policy positions in each jurisdiction. And that it’s known, it probably deliberate, and the one that receives the vast majority of support and funding is the globalization agenda, and export agendas ... but to placate and to keep the local food and organic and sustainable and the people that are trying to work towards healthier food from creating real problems, they have come up with programs and policies and plans and money for support of the – what I’ll call, the local and sustainable. And I think that’s typically what governments do, and it’s cynical and it’s effective.” 2 CS

“I mean we all know the hypocrisy of government programs and of course you look at some of the other programs being launched by the government that are in complete opposition to the idea of supporting local healthy food systems, right? So they launch these programs that get fruit into the classrooms. But at the same time, they launch these Meat Inspection Regulations that hinder the ability for small-scale meat systems to exist, for those who eat meat. And that is just a sign of the, you know, ignorance of certain departments versus others. Or individuals within the province, I don’t know.” 10 CS

The sincerity of intentions again raises the question, as alluded to in Chapter 5 - is the government serious about food security initiatives, with state and CS

players acting as early foot soldiers in the development, or can they be looked at as pawns in the neoliberal downloading of programs?

"I see various hopeful little initiatives, but their sustainability or possibility for really having an impact are so limited by larger government policy that is mostly hooked in with an international agenda that has nothing to do with sustainability and healthy communities. It's utterly frustrating. And it makes it hard to even want to encourage people to participate in them. Because you know, you know that it's, a lot of it sometimes even seems like a make-work project ... And I get concerned that it was just sort of well let's keep those little activist folks busy over in their little corner, get 'em all riled up, let 'em do their thing, waste a lot of energy and we'll carry on with business as usual, you know." 29 CS

However, the reality of the limitations of the state due to external pressures were also acknowledged:

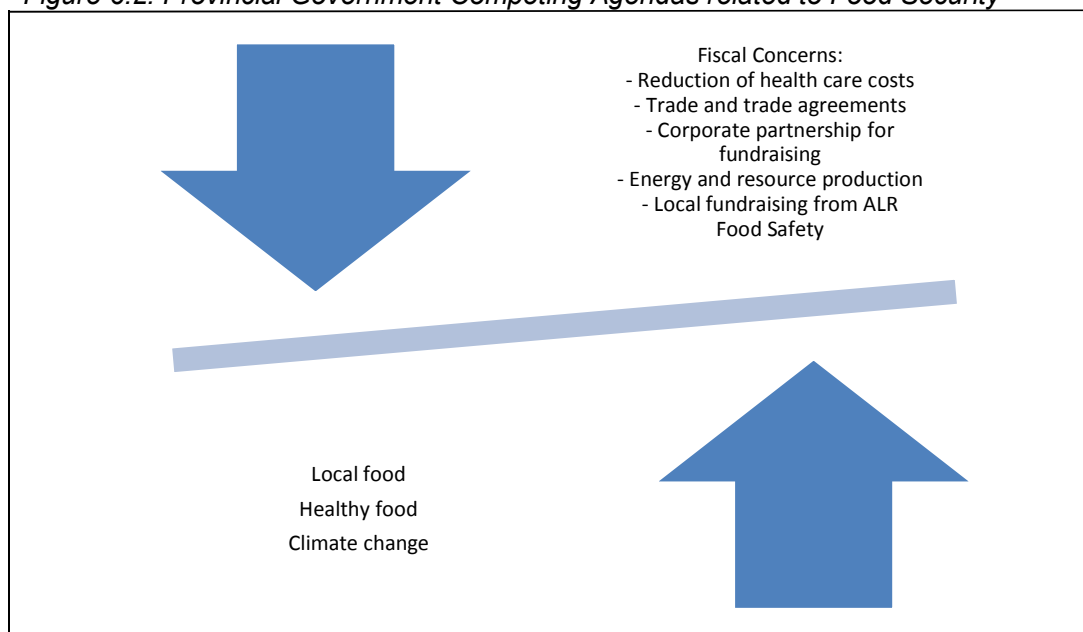
"And then the limitations of state are just legion. Because of all the agendas that they have to, the political agendas in terms of how are they going to get money from the feds? How are they going to please the voters? How are they going to stay in power? What about these developers that are not going to vote for them and they get money from. Oh yeah, then there is the environment ... and it goes on and on and on." 1 PH

As were competing agendas as being in the nature of power:

"Contradictions are the norm, not the exception. And that is the nature of power. You don't want anyone else regulating, you want to be the only one that can regulate. And, basically he [premier] also says that he is opposed to overregulation, and he is opposed to conflicting regulation. But he brings in ActNow, he also brings in the meat regulations. And he also brings in TILMA - the trade agreement between B.C. and Alberta. So, I expect him to be self-contradictory." 2 CS

Figure 6.2 illustrates competing agendas in relation to local foods and climate change and healthy foods.

Figure 6.2: Provincial Government Competing Agendas related to Food Security



Is the Agenda Inter-Sectoral?

One interviewee challenged the notion that ActNow was indeed integrated:

"I think one of the things that we have learned is the lip service if you like that's been paid to the integrated approach, I mean there may be a view there within Health, within ActNow as an expression of an integrated approach but it's not an integrated approach if you haven't got the other actors and other sort of key agents onside. And in terms of those other departments that, you know Children and Families, like Employment and Income Assistance ..."
14 CS

Nevertheless, some stakeholders see a greater integration across and within government sectors:

"It is an interesting time in government, because I see a change in the typical silo-ed, you know it's not our mandate it's not our responsibility ... and those silos think are just, I don't know if they are breaking down, but there are definitely holes in them that are allowing us to do some really interesting partnerships." 26 State

On the positive side, the success of the Community Food Action Initiative in creating the first cross ministry table on the topic of food security was acknowledged. At the time of the research, 15/19 representatives in the

Provincial Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee were from the government sector.

"Basically what it has done is it has created more cross ministry government partnership than ever on food security, so for example we have other ministries sitting on the Community Food Action Initiative provincial advisory where we wouldn't have had them before ... many other initiatives go external to government, and this one actually pulls government along with it." 45 PH

"I think there is a lot of growing interest in our government circles, at all the different government levels." 18 Food Supply

"What I feel really encouraged about ... is that I don't remember a time in my life when the health system has been quite as willing to take a look at the broader issues of health, and even at the possibility that they may be able to play a more collaborative role with other sectors, and with other parts of the community." 4 PH

However, silos still exist, as exemplified by state interviewees questioning where the food security mandate best fits, and whether their departments were relevant:

"I think if you are looking at food security as self-sufficiency, then health might not necessarily be the most natural choice to house food security, Ministry of Agriculture might have a greater role. But if you define food security as most of us do, and I include myself in this, more as access, then between Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and Ministry of Health, those two would be the right places in my view to house this issue. Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance, ultimately and this is my personal view, not Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance is probably the best place to address food security because it is about income security. Food security is about income security. If we didn't have any poor people, you wouldn't have any hungry people." 21 State

"For me I think, this isn't really our core business." 26 State

Finally, one interviewee described the difficulty they encountered in their inter-ministerial work:

"Unfortunately for a lot of budgetary reasons there's still financial silos, and a lot of fear in government of working together... sometimes, it's about protecting territory, sometimes it's about losing control ... Traditionally, in government, cross ministry initiatives don't go well. Somebody gets hurt, or marginalized, or really hurt or loses their job or ... And I think that's really unfortunate. I think we need more success stories and we've been bleeding edge and we've bled ... at some point we've all been angry, frustrated, hurt, worried, scared, all of those things. But I think, we've shown that if you take some goodwill to the table and

you continue to keep beating down the silos, and communicating with each other that we can actually produce some very positive things... There is a will on the Minister's part ... All ministers ...I think that there is a political will to do good things. I think that there are silos and bureaucracy that make it almost impossible to." 17 Food Supply

Dilution or Omission of Food Insecurity/Hunger Agenda

Interviewees suggested that the issue of food insecurity or hunger is not on the agenda.

"I mean that's a whole other debate really, because social policy has really fallen off the political agenda." 14 CS

"I think that government has acquiesced and left it to us and the non-profits to fill the gap. They don't see it as a core responsibility any longer. They will argue that they are increasing the monthly payments, food allowance within that." 9 PH

"The health sector also has to be an advocate ... I used to challenge hospitals on this saying 'I will believe you are serious about health promotion when I see a hospital advocating on behalf of poor people and addressing issues of poverty'. And they don't." 23 PH

Stakeholders see no intent toward change in the near future despite government reports documenting the issues; they identify that following through on existing report recommendations is important in working toward resolution of food insecurity.

"I don't think the NDP [political party] did any better job when they were in power and they are supposed to be a government that is supportive of social programs and we didn't really see any huge changes when they were in power either. So, I don't know that any party would be all that different. At least now we have a booming economy which we didn't really have when the NDP were in power. So we have, the government has an opportunity now to actually do something and try to eliminate from a policy perspective the poverty that we have. And I don't know why they're not more embarrassed about it. You know, the fourth year in a row that we have the worst child poverty rate. The BC progress Board which is the government's own board that Premier Campbell put in place, which criticizes our state here, and still I don't see any policy changes." 39 CS

"Ted Hughes report [review of child protection in BC] said that there were two parts to the office's [Representative for Child and Youth] mandate. One was to advocate for kids, and the other part of the mandate which could end in five years, was looking at advocating for systemic change. And that really surprised me. But that was the part he recommended could be dropped off in five years. The part for advocating for systemic change ... I don't see government being engaged for 15 years." 22 State

“And the government puts in a report that also includes reports from each of the provinces [on right to food]. So this is really about, in response to economic, social and cultural rights and Canada’s success in achieving these. That if you read the reports, you’ll see that they are very spotty ... I don’t know what the word is exactly but you cannot help feeling that provincial governments are by and large ignorant of these conventions ... there’s inadequate compliance and there is little buy-in to achievement of these goals.”
14 CS

The issue of food insecurity or hunger as part of these programs is both confusing and conflictual, and will be analyzed more thoroughly under consequences in Chapter 8.

6.4.2.ii State Agendas: Public Health

PH stakeholders and mandate in food security were outlined earlier in the chapter. The PH (health promotion) agenda in food security is elucidated below through specific program documentation (program proposals, evaluations, etc.) and interviewee perceptions of program stakeholders. PH (Food Protection), which has a food safety agenda, while not a focus of this research, will be addressed under in Chapter 8 under “Consequences” due to its influence on the food security initiatives.

Focus on Health

As indicated previously, the three PH-led food security initiatives have a wide scope including issues of health, local food sustainability and hunger. However, in practice, there is pressure on PH staff to link initiatives to a health mandate and to health outcomes that are clearly associated with human health.

“I think it is embedded within the Community Food Action Initiative around increasing access to local food, but I am not certain that they are as clear about how they can support that within their mandate.” 6 CS

“... from a nutritionist perspective our goal is always health. The health of the population.” 1 PH

“And not everything belongs in public health in food security. I think there are things within the food security and the food systems perspective that don’t belong in Health. There is a whole area of agriculture that doesn’t belong in Health.” 45 PH

"So the opportunity for a broader food security agenda is through the core functions health authority piece. But, it is going to be addressing again the public health aspect." 30 PH

Another spoke of PH's incomplete understanding leading to a limited scope:

"I think the limitation of Public Health taking on food security is so much of the production and distribution is beyond our knowledge, and our understanding. We do programs well [laughs]. And perhaps even, you know, analysis of food insecurity. But the whole systems approach to food and food production and distribution and all of that is really vast. And so, we have really got to be careful that we don't reduce our work to doing a few programs. Because that, I mean, they're important, but they won't solve it." 15 PH

Nonetheless, other PH employees and CS still advocated for a broader approach to health:

"I think there is a really good opportunity if we don't blow it to make some progress in terms of raising our own internal awareness that yeah this really is a health issue. And a health issue in many ways. Not just in individual health, but the health of our planet, the health of our communities." 4 PH

"I think Tim Lang's analysis is pretty smart where he says that we have to actually re-define farmers as providers of health products, health benefits and ecological goods and services. Because the public mind goes to health ... Food is clearly understood by more and more and more people as related to health ..." 25 CS

Lack of Clarity in Food Security within Mandate of Health

PH administrators' need to link health explicitly to food security did not seem to be made clear, partly due to lack of cohesion of PH staff on the breadth of the mandate.

One example of this confusion was documented by the researcher in her field notes from her involvement in the Community Food Action Initiative. It appeared to her that mixed messages were given about the broadness of the initiative – from the start to the end of her involvement (B. Seed, 2004-2007). As examples, in a relatively early discussion about indicators, experts representing a broad scope of community food security were invited to present, with no limitations provided in framing the discussion to a more narrow perspective. And yet, at meetings, there appeared to be an ongoing struggle between CS and some PH employees who urged a holistic approach and

Community Food Action Initiative administrators who felt obliged to limit the scope due to their PH mandate. The lack of cohesion was noted as a barrier in the Community Food Action Initiative strategic plan:

“The absence of a common language has hurt our ability to engage one another and to move forward (first and foremost within our group, but also in engaging the community).” (Mauders & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007)

The other PH food security initiatives showed a similar lack of clarity in the definition, however consequences of these were not as immediately evident. Core Programs had yet to be implemented, and the Provincial Health Officer’s report on “Food, Health and Well-Being” (2006) had little critique of definitions as stakeholders celebrated the idea that numerous food-related issues were included in one landmark document:

“Well, frankly I was thrilled to see the Provincial Health Officer’s report ... He addressed food as a key component of health.” 29 CS

However, the Provincial Health Officer report also illustrated the lack of clarity in definitions. While “food security” is introduced in the second paragraph of the introduction and referred to quite broadly, the chapter on food security (distinct from chapters on Food and Nutrition, Safety and Sustainability of the Food Supply, Impacts of Unhealthy Eating), focuses on primarily on food insecurity or hunger. At the end of the chapter, food policy and food policy councils are then introduced as tools to combat food insecurity. The section then expands to provide examples of a broad scope of policy initiatives, and narrows again in the summary by describing “food policy councils ... to address food insecurity at the community level” (Provincial Health Officer, 2006).

Finally, while Food Security Core Programs have the most comprehensive framework of any food security initiative in BC in terms of its approach (or what is referred to in this thesis as functional roles) (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006) some interviewees still saw a lack of clarity:

“I think the core program has helped identify the fact that we don’t know what we’re trying to achieve ... It’s not clear enough.” 9 PH

The limiting mandate of PH, and the confusion about mandate, was seen as putting the involvement of other sectors at risk.

"I think that it is fantastic that there is a huge range of sectors and ministries involved at the provincial level which meets with the Community Food Action Initiative's objectives. I think that the challenge is that it is housed in an organization that has a much more limited mandate. Which is to serve the Regional Health Authorities and the Ministry of Health ... And not just health, but I think a very limited perspective of health." 6 CS

"They keep seeing the funds and the programs all around health, and they wonder if they belong at the table anymore. Like, this [the Community Food Action Initiative] isn't about us." 3 PH

"... we are still not sure what our [the Community Food Action Initiative] purpose is." 26 State

The researcher proposes that the question of mandate comes down to – how far can Health be pushed into accepting a broad determinants of health approach where all aspects within the scope of food security were relevant to health?

During the time of this research, this tension was never resolved, and resulted in confusion and tensions. In fact, as will be investigated more fully in Chapter 8 under Consequences, some felt that PH had “taken over” or “co-opted” the concept of food security:

"The Community Food Action Initiative was talking about community food security as if the public health part was all there was. Like, you don't do that. You don't take a holistic definition, take a slice out of it and then make it look like the slice is the whole pie ...". 25 CS

Interestingly, the definition referred to above was not related to the Community Food Action Initiative, but was actually from an evidence paper created for Food Security Core Programs. Nonetheless, it is important to acknowledge that those outside of government did not distinguish between various projects of PH, but – as in this case – view PH as a whole. This reinforces the importance of collaboration within PH.

The frustration experienced around definitions is not entirely clear – it could be argued that both community and provincial projects of the Community Food

Action Initiative illustrate a broad approach to food security, as evidenced by its evaluation (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b). Was the Community Food Action Initiative either not framed or not successful in convincing committee members that it was framed under a broad scope? The researcher suggests that the conflict may have been as much about approach to the issues (e.g. in engaging CS), as it was about the scope or content. This will be further explored under PH Functional Roles in Chapter 7, under “Clash of Cultures”.

“I think some really good things have happened. But I think what the result has been that other players have not felt included or not felt that they had anything to add because it looked like a health authority issue, instead of a larger food security issue.” 4 PH

This contention also supports the concept that problems occurred not as a result of definition itself, but instead due to a lack of clear focus and disagreement about the strategies to address issues, as proposed above.

One stakeholder summed up PH’s struggle in their role in food security:

“... until health understands and has consensus on what it is that we mean by this [food security], and can articulate what the role for health then is, we’re going to continue to have, sort of this difficulty in limitations about how can we address this effectively.” 30 PH

The previous section introduces the notion that the mandate or agenda of institutions drive the emphasis within the definitions, and also how issues are addressed. This theme will be revisited throughout chapter 6 and 7.

6.4.2.iii State Agendas: Ministry of Agriculture

The Ministry of Agriculture and Lands has gone through various name (and mandate) changes over the research period, so for ease, will be referred to simply as the Ministry of Agriculture. Staff within the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture take the lead in School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program and the “Fridge” program which was developed to complement the snack program.

They are also involved in the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project, and sit on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee.

The theme of competing agendas within the Ministry of Agriculture was alluded to under the review of the provincial government agenda above - primarily the tension between trade issues (which tend to favour the industrialized food system) and local food sustainability.

"I do think that the weightier policies that come out of our government, whether it's Ministry of Health, Ministry of Agriculture for otherwise tend to have worldviews that does not view local food systems and local food security as a priority. That, you know, business as usual on an international level is the way things should be, in the face of everything telling us otherwise, but that's what our government does. And so, there may be great initiatives that happen at a sort of a lower level - for lack of a better terminology - within those ministries but they can only be band-aid solutions to a degree until we have a worldview shift within the government. And whether that's possible, I don't know." 29 CS

"[Health] take more of a role of supporting local agriculture [in cross-ministry meetings] than the agriculture people do. Which is a bit of a surprise ...". 43 PH

Albeit interviewees repeatedly commented on the commitment to local foods of some Ministry of Agriculture staff:

"There's certainly lots of people in the Ministry of Agriculture that have had a long time interest in this and I'm pleased to see how it's growing in the health sector." 18 Food Supply

Some interviewees see a shift toward greater inclusion of a local food approach:

"What we have seen over the last decade or two, is a split in the agriculture's sector, where we now essentially have two agriculture sectors in BC. One that is kind of larger scale production of commodities for the world market, because who is going to buy grain in BC? And the second sector is kind of smaller scale, production for local consumption, typically of produce and what we might call niche products. Partly in recognition of that shift from industry, and partly in recognition of the need to promote local consumption of local production for climate change and health reasons we are yes, we are shifting our policy focus toward more local for local." 21 State

"I think there has been a shift in terms of the need also to have a domestic policy and food security policy that makes sure that producers here support

diversification, support value added opportunity on farms, all of those kinds of things to keep a domestic base. Because we were losing our industry.”

11 Food Supply

“He is [Minister of Agriculture], because people are [taking more interest in local foods]. And politics are a weather vane of the public perception. If he deems that’s where public perception is, he would be a fool not to... If that’s where they deem the political will of the people are right now, if they think that’s where the interest of the people are, then why would you not ride that wave. It makes political sense.” 8 Food Supply

Moreover, as mentioned in Chapter 5, this shift is illustrated in the new BC Agriculture Plan, which includes a focus on “producing local food” (*BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, 2008*).

However, many suggest this is “lip service”, as the prime directive continues to be trade and few staff remain that work for local sustainability and land stewardship, etc.

“It’s all lip service.” 20 State

“We are also in the context of a government that is continually under resourcing the agricultural services to the province, you know. Any of the programs that have been there just keep getting cut. And a lot of the field staff they are all retiring and they are not being replaced.” 29 CS

“I think the one place that the Ministry is missing out is that were losing young families to farming. Because they can’t afford to buy the land. They can’t afford to rent the land. And so, you’re sitting back, and unless a family is already on a farm, they’re not going to have a chance, and those families that are on the farm the parents are saying why do you want to farm?” 44 Food Supply

This is further illustrated by the changes to the Buy BC program. While the government proclaimed the success of this program (over 5,000 Buy BC products are identified at major grocery retailers throughout the province (BC Agriculture Council)), in the early 2000’s the government withdrew financial support for the program. It continues to function under the management of the BC Agriculture Council, through the use of participant user fees (BC Agriculture Council). However, interviewees expressed frustration with the ambivalent government involvement with the program and more proposed changes to it:

"I understand a whole rebranding of Buy BC being entertained right now which personally I think, is crazy because people already recognize that brand and the retailers aren't going to pick up a new brand. We are not going to change all the signage on our roads. That's insane. What they are going to do with that I don't know but they have commissioned a \$250,000 study to talk about it and I'm not really sure where they are at with that. But that got offloaded to BCAC and I think the government is looking at taking it back. I don't know what's going to happen." 17 Food Supply

"It looks like the government is coming full circle on creating awareness about British Columbia sources of food. We used to have a pretty good Buy BC program that was within the marketplace. They killed that. Now they are coming back again at that with some other variation on that theme." 19 Food Supply

One state representative summed it up by suggesting this shift is coming, but will take time:

"Historically [Ministry of Agriculture] has been very much focused as a ministry on the profitability of the sector. And it's only very recently that climate change and public health and these other kind of provision of societal goods and services have come into [the] mandate more strongly. And food security will come, I believe, but slowly ... [the] single main constituency ... is the farmers. And if food security ... if pushing a food security agenda is not beneficial to the farmers, [the Ministry of Agriculture] wouldn't have done it. That is changing, that is changing now, but it takes a while." 21 State

6.4.2.iv State Agendas: Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance

As outlined in Chapter 1, Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance staff took a lead role in Cooking and Skill Building project and the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project. They also sit on the Community Food Action Initiative provincial advisory committee. As the former two target the food insecure, and the Community Food Action Initiative has vulnerable populations as a key target group, from this participation, we can deduce that the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance has an interest in the alleviation of food insecurity.

Previously known as "welfare", the BC Employment and Assistance Program purports to facilitate moving people from income assistance to sustainable employment, and provide income assistance to those in need. Employable applicants are expected to look for work before they receive assistance, and

people receiving income assistance are expected to complete an employment plan, seek work and participate in job placement and job training programs. Assistance is also offered to those on disability, and to those not expected to gain independence through employment (Government of British Columbia & Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance).

Many poverty and food insecurity/anti-hunger advocates see that an increase in the minimum wage and income assistance is the only way to address food insecurity, the latter of which falls to Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance. As will be explored in Chapter 8, some advocates view other efforts, such as the “Cooking and Skill Building Program”, as band-aid.

“Food security policy and programs will do nothing to alleviate hunger. You have to either give people the means to produce their own food, or else re-establish the social safety net, even stronger than it was. So that people have adequate income to buy healthy, nutritious food. food security per se is not going to do that at all.” 2 CS

However, contrary to advocate goals, a recent focus of the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance seems to have been on decreasing the numbers on social assistance, which in turn has a substantial impact on food insecurity.

“When the current government, and I hold no brief for the previous one either, but when the current government of the province looked at welfare reform, they went to the state of Wisconsin. And the Wisconsin people said to them, if you are going to reserve the right to cut people off welfare, you must have food stamps, earning conventions, and tuition allowance. And the B.C. government went ahead without any of those things. Just introduced this policy to cut people off.” 25 CS

This stakeholder continued on, suggesting that decreasing the numbers on income assistance was based on a risk assessment of “could the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance get away with it?”

“... when they did their risk assessment ... They looked at, it was almost like, with the ministry of employment and income assistance, like could they put this over? ... what about our people that are getting cut off welfare arbitrarily after two years?” 25 CS

However, others have seen the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance as valuable in contributing to programs, such as their lead role in the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon program, which benefits both farmers and low income participants.

"My guess is that, politically their hands are tied, in terms of what they can do but, so they're willing to look at creative solutions, to address their clients' needs in other ways." 6 CS

A representative from the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance sits on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee, but was not seen as having taken a significant role:

"Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance is not there very strongly [the Community Food Action Initiative table]... they come, but in a kind of semi-unofficial capacity. I think there is a staff person who has some role and some great personal interest, but I haven't yet seen from my very limited perspective a really strong formal Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance role." 21 State

Inclusion of food insecurity on the agenda and future recommendations related to it will be explored further in Chapter 8.

6.4.2.v State Agendas: Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education has responsibility for the CommunityLINK program, which administers the provincial school meal program. This program was not associated with the ActNow BC or new food security initiatives (until a recent, post research publication of the School Meal and School Nutrition Handbook labelled it with the ActNow BC logo). However, it is important to note precisely due to this exclusion, as it is a long standing program addressing food insecurity in BC. The administrator of this program sits on the Community Food Action Initiative Provincial Advisory committee.

"And the school meal program is not aligned. That is a problem. It's not included in the alignment." 37 CS

The school meal program was initiated in 1992, with a budget of approximately \$12 million. It was targeted to “at risk” (low income) schools, and school districts could apply for funding for specific schools. However, the number of schools and children requiring this program far exceeds what is available, and the funding provided to this program has grown only minimally (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

“I think will have the opportunity to boost it up again. But the fact that it's hung on is amazing to me when there were huge cuts.” 43 PH

“The purpose of School Meal and School Nutrition Programs is to support the health and academic and social functioning of socioeconomically vulnerable students” (BC Ministry of Education & BC Ministry of Healthy Living and Sport, undated).

In 2001, the Ministry of Children and Family Development (who then held the funding for the school meal programs), approached the non-profit, DASH BC, to partner with Breakfast For Learning (Canadian Living Foundation) to provide ongoing support and further develop meal programs in BC. A BC Advisory Council directs the partnership and reviews and recommends approval of nutrition grants from Breakfast For Learning (DASH BC). Further, the DASH website reports that “In March 2003, the Ministry of Children and Family Development provided the DASH/Breakfast for Learning Partnership with a grant of \$65,000 to enable the partnership to: develop and support connections to business and industry, thus increasing the corporate donations to the Breakfast For Learning Nutritional Grants; increase funding and partnerships available for BC schools to support their new program: ‘CommunityLINK - Learning Includes Nutrition and Knowledge’; provide leadership to BC schools, school districts and communities in child nutrition programs” (DASH BC).

One could extrapolate from this that the government has an interest in downloading school meal programs to community and corporate sectors. Stakeholders who believe that school meal programs should be a “right” provided by the government have expressed concerns about this new model.

Very little current information is available on provincial government websites on the school meal program outside of the DASH partnership initiatives. This issue will be investigated in more detail in Chapter 8.

“I think part of the challenge [of school meal programs] has been to be able to share the information then forward and to de-politicize it so it doesn't become a political football.” 22 State

The Ministry of Education is also actively involved in BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program, but these contacts do not seem to interact with the PH initiatives except perhaps at the Ministry level (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

6.4.2.vi State Agendas: Union of BC Municipalities

“The Union of BC Municipalities was formed in 1905 as a collaboration of local municipal governments, to provide a common voice for local government. Policy-making is undertaken through the development of positions which are carried to other levels of government and other organizations involved in local affairs” (Union of BC Municipalities). A representative sits on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee. Their work in food security was minimal at the time of research, although work had begun with the Community Food Action Initiative on a resource guide for local governments to promote food secure communities.

6.4.3 Civil Society Agendas

The concept of CS encompasses many groups. The focus of CS in this thesis is on those working in the food security “movement” in BC. As outlined previously, CS stakeholders involved in this integration fall under two categories – grassroots food activists, and health-focused NGOs. Consumers, albeit members of CS, are not included in this study, as they are not actively involved in the initiatives under examination. Likewise, anti-hunger NGOs were also not involved.

6.4.3.i Civil Society Agendas: Grassroots Food Activist Non-Government Organizations

There are many food activist groups in BC. While groups are heterogeneous, those involved were primarily focused on sustainable local food systems and social justice:

"I think most of the messages are just connected to social justice issues ... Sustainability is another piece and both in terms of the farms themselves, environmental sustainability and the sustainability of individuals and families and communities as well." 6 CS

"I think that from the food activist perspective, it's a food system that is non-discriminatory and that is sustainable, locally sustainable. And is not-for-profit. And the whole idea that food is a right as opposed to a commodity." 1 PH

Grassroots food security CS activist involvement was primarily in the Community Food Action Initiative – via the BC Food Systems Network at the provincial level, and directly with individual activist groups at the regional or local levels. Some of these regional groups were spawned with Health Canada/PH Agency of Canada diabetes prevention funding.

Many activist groups came together to form the BC Food Systems Network in 1999, creating the following mission statement: "To work together to eliminate hunger and create food security for all residents of British Columbia" (BC Food Systems Network Society, undated). They focus on a holistic perspective of food security. However, as the name implies, the key focus of the organization is on food systems, so approaches to issues fall within that context. They function through an email network and notably, an annual conference. This gathering has brought together a diversity of stakeholders related to food production, processing, distribution, consumption, and quality. And even prior to Aboriginal health gaining prominence on the government agenda, the researcher also observed BC Food Systems, and Cathleen Kneen specifically, exerting distinct efforts in including Aboriginal stakeholders in BC Food Systems (B. Seed, 2004-2007). When asked about Kneen's role in this, one interviewee confirmed and added:

“Yes and really taking the initiative to do that at the grass roots level because a lot of times, what happens with governments, they’ll go to the elected band councils and say, ‘Oh we consulted the community’. But really, that’s a still colonial government structure. Those are still elected politicians.”
5 CS

Subsequently, the BC Food Systems Network - Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, formed in 2006. It has the potential to take on an increasing role in food security, especially given the provincial government agenda to decrease the health gap between Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. The Community Food Action Initiative program partnered with (and provided funding to) this sub-committee on a province-wide Aboriginal food security initiative. Their approach to food is inter-connected with land:

“An Indigenous food is one that has been primarily cultivated, taken care of, harvested, prepared, preserved, shared, or traded within the boundaries of our respective territories based on values of interdependency, respect, reciprocity, and ecological sensibility. As the most intimate way in which Indigenous peoples interact with our environment, Indigenous food systems are in turn maintained through our active participation in traditional land and food systems.” (BC Food Systems Network - Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, undated)

As the name implies, food sovereignty is central to their approach.

“[Food] sovereignty is, basically the ability of people and in this case indigenous people, to make decisions about how we get our food. So whether that is growing or hunting or fishing or harvesting, that we are the ones making those decisions. And that we are able to respond to our own needs for healthy, culturally adapted food. As opposed to food security, which, when you think about food banks, or when you think about food aid, really it is more about somebody else, an external kind of body coming in to just make sure, to provide the food ...” 5 CS

More profoundly, as reflected in the BC Food Systems Network title for their website: “www.fooddemocracy.org” and by other CS interviewees, food security activists saw food as a mechanism to forward democracy and citizenship.

“I am using both to get to each [democracy and food]. I realize that food is a better metaphor and a better tool for dealing with building community and building democracy than any other area that I have worked in.” 2 CS

Their approach (as alluded to in Chapter 2) also includes the idea that people should be regarded as active citizens rather than passive consumers, and is reflected in the comments below:

"We always say our work is around fostering the active citizenship."
13 CS

"Government and business responds to what they call the consumers, I call citizens, what the people are saying." 2 CS

This was also a key theme for Aboriginal-focused food activists who saw food as an integral part of citizenship.

"So we have two focus areas. One is building social capital, so we look at the assets of citizenship. So building personal and political power in the individual while building social capital. And so for us, because the belief is it's the quality and nature of relationships that will sustain community beyond any initiative or any project ... And food became very clear ... So for instance, to be a member of the nation, you have to have a fishing hole. Everything is built around the food." 13 CS

BC Food Systems worked to position their organization as representing the CS food security movement in BC. They were the only grassroots CS organization to sit on the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee. BC Food Systems was also a member of the PH Alliance on Food Security.

CS food security activists saw health within their mandate:

"I think that within BC Food Systems, those public health goals are definitely similar goals to what BC Food Systems would have. But we don't take just a health lens on what food sovereignty or food security issues would be. We are coming from a broader perspective than that. But I think that within that, health is something that is really important." 28 CS

However it was suggested that it was embraced as a result of perceived opportunity and allies.

"You've got to go where the centre of gravity is. And right now it's in health. Like, Health is the biggest agency, Health is the biggest budget."
25 CS

"BC Food Systems Network ... you know had to work to identify their work with health promotion ... for some time." 8 CS

Finally, one interviewee alluded to an “uneasy” partnership.

“There is some concern that the grassroots emphasis on the larger issues in terms of food security could be co-opted, or is in some cases being co-opted by the health authorities who have their own agenda which is a health agenda, it is health promotion ... As opposed to the food systems issues. So there's, we're uneasy allies sometimes.” 4 PH

The CS emphasis on “how” food security is achieved - through democracy, food sovereignty and control of food systems - could be considered the agenda furthest from the government and food supply stakeholder agendas. These agendas require serious reform within many sectors. This clash of cultures will be explored further in Chapter 7, and “Marginalization of CS Voice” will be examined in Chapter 8 under Consequences.

6.4.3.ii Civil Society Agendas: Health NGOs

Civil Society Health NGO Agendas: BC Healthy Living Alliance

The BC Healthy Living Alliance (formerly the BC Chronic Disease Prevention Alliance), formed in February 2003, is a group of health-related organizations that have come together with a mission to improve the health of British Columbians through leadership that enhances collaborative action to promote physical activity, healthy eating and living smoke-free. Until 2007, albeit sitting at the Community Food Action Initiative Advisory table, the Alliance did not play a substantial role in food security in BC. However, the provincial government allocated an unprecedented \$25 million to the Alliance in 2006 for health promotion and prevention projects. In August 2007, the Alliance announced intentions regarding provincial “Cooking and Skill Building” and “Access to Fruit and Vegetable” projects. These projects were under development at the time of writing this proposal. While the funding they received was one-off, the Alliance could become a stronger player in food security in the province if initiatives they implement are sustained. BC Healthy Living Alliance is health focused, comprised of large health NGOs and Regional Health Authorities.

“BC Healthy Living Alliance has really two real areas of focus. It was created initially as an advocacy group ... The other piece over the past year, what we have been very involved with and where the linkage with the Community Food Action Initiative is, that the alliance received \$25 million from the provincial government to help to reach the provincial targets around physical activity, smoking, and healthy eating.” 38 CS

Civil Society Health NGO Agendas: Dietitians of Canada, BC Region

Dietitians of Canada is the national organization representing Registered Dietitians. The BC region has been a key player in food security in BC. They took a lead role in the 1997 document “Feed Our Future, Secure Our Health”. As outlined in Chapter 5, the organization also works jointly with the Community Nutritionists Council of BC on the (nearly) annual “The Cost of Eating in BC” report (Dietitians of Canada & Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2006). They have taken on an advocacy focus regarding food insecurity, and have engaged politicians on the issue. They are one of few organizations with a focus on food insecurity. And as they represent the Healthy Living Alliance on the Community Food Action Initiative, clashes in philosophy have occurred with other Community Food Action Initiative representatives, which will be explored in Chapter 8.

Civil Society Health NGO Agendas: Directorate of Agencies for School Health

The Directorate of Agencies for School Health was established as a BC not-for-profit society in 1983. It is a cooperative interagency network representing a range of local regional and provincial organizations and individuals that support prevention activities that “enable students to develop to their fullest potential” (DASH BC). They do not sit at the Community Food Action Initiative table, however they are involved in numerous food security health promotion initiatives in BC. As outlined previously, they partner with the Ministry of Education and Breakfast For Learning (Canadian Living Foundation, a private fundraiser) to enhance support and further develop meal programs in BC through the CommunityLINK program. The Directorate of Agencies for School Health also administered the “Cooking and Skill Building” project, and is involved in provincial school food policy initiatives.

CS Health NGOs have a history in food security work, as outlined in Chapter 5. They are considered more legitimate by government than food security activists, as evidenced by large grant to BC Healthy Living Alliance, and significant partnering with the Directorate of Agencies for School Health. These NGOs had direct ties to the Ministry of Health and Regional Health Authorities, whereas activists were connected more at lower levels (e.g. Community Nutritionists). PH has a longer history of collaboration with Health NGOs due to their mutual agendas of Health. One stakeholder acknowledged the legitimization:

“So, I think that in BC, this government was extremely brave in making that kind of a commitment. It was a really large risk. To provide a grant to essentially a non-legal entity. And to allow Civil Society to make [i.e. through the BC Healthy Living Alliance members] to make the decision how that funding should be allocated. Very controversial.” 38 CS

Limitations of CS Health NGOs will be explored in Chapter 8.

6.4.4 Food Supply Agendas

As stated previously, no representation from the supply chain has been involved in PH Food Security Core Programs or in the Community Food Action Initiative; they were primarily involved in the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program, as well as the Farmer’s Market Coupon Program and Fridge programs. Food supply interviewees were partners in these programs, including: farmers (organic and conventional), processors, distributors, wholesalers, retailers and agricultural foundations and councils. What is evident is that their agendas are not homogeneous.

“... you’ve got completely all over the map group of folks in the food industry [in relation to support of local foods].” 43 PH

“We are promoting food security policy, but not at the expense of the export focus and the need for export opportunities. Because many of our sectors in BC with our diverse industry are very strong players in the export market.” 11 Food Supply

There can be a tendency by some to see the food supply sector as not interested in the public good or in local foods because they are profit driven:

"At the distribution level, like I have always felt that really the weak point, their interest is so different. It's, they don't have the interest of the Civil Society, like creating, like a good way to live. The distribution chain doesn't have that as a goal, but even that's starting to change ... some of the distribution ... their world is out here (global). And so if it bothers a few people over here (local), well if it is still working out good over here (global), I mean that's what they're interested in. So I think the distribution world is too global, too big today. So we don't have good local, local distribution teams here, like people who have an interest in making sure things get to market from A to B, like within BC."
18 Food Supply

"We have a common purpose ... state and Civil Society, I think truly it's for the public's health. I think part of the problem with this group - supply chain - that's not their goal. And farmers may say that, but I don't really truly think that they wake up in the morning for the public's health." 43 PH

"I think that all of the more mainstream players are doing what they must do, and that is protect their self-interest and survive." 2 CS

Some interviewees illustrate the opposite, particularly in relation to farmers:

"When I talk about the land, I'm talking, actually I wouldn't even have had this as little as 18 years ago until I got involved in organic agriculture because I didn't really understand that. Or I hadn't taken the time to be more learned about that end of it. So it is, its air quality, it's the health of the soil, you know, maintaining that. And it definitely is water quality and I mean that is really something that has to be talked about. But even further than that, it's habitat. And it doesn't mean what you can see, it means what you can't see. And organic agriculture is the biology of it. It's understanding that." 7 Food Supply

"When I go and speak to farmers [about farmer's market nutrition and coupon project], they certainly appreciate the increase in sales, and being able to reach a market or people in their community that they haven't necessarily been able to connect with before ... but what they think is really ... strong component of this project is that skill and education piece." 6 CS

As expected, larger food supply players described a mixture of business and corporate responsibility goals:

"For us, the big excitement for us being involved, is that it's about kids. And it's about getting kids healthy. So, that's ultimately what importance to us. The other part too is ... it's a way for us too, to be supporting one of our big customers as well." 46 Food Supply

"It was really sort of a no-brainer. I mean our mandate is to support local because we are. And our mandate is the health and wellness of the kids and their families, and that's been our focus all along. So when this came along, and it was about both of those things... it was really truly was just sort of okay well let's roll up our sleeves and figure out how to help you do this because this

is about the two things that matter to us the most - the health and wellness of our kids, and the health and wellness of our local economies.” 48 Food Supply

And, like many parts of this food security integration story, sometimes came down to the level of the individual:

“The funnest part for me was actually hearing how excited all of the schools ... this is just personal ...”. 48 Food Supply

Food safety was also identified as a priority agenda:

“We have to be quite involved in food security for two reasons. First is our product has to be food safe ...”. 46 Food Supply

“And really, other than food safety, [none of the program goals] trumps anything else.” 48 Food Supply

“When I think of food security, my head is mostly wrapped around health and safety and sanitation issues ...”. 8 Food Supply

Even within the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program, different agendas were perceived:

“So there is competing [agendas] ... not in a bad way. But just different focuses, right? And sometimes the loud voice wins. So everybody’s got their own thing that they care more about than the other thing. And that’s ok, because that’s everyone’s job to do that. But I mean, sometimes I think, more than one advocate of the all four [program goals] would be helpful for the coordinators.” 48 Food Supply

When asked what message comes up louder, the interviewee responded:

“I would say BC grown. Like BC grown is a great thing to say but if you don’t understand the nuances attached to that, and you could probably again set up expectations that we’re going to have a bunch of growers can just bring their apples that fell from the tree for a lot cheaper we could get the ones that fell from the tree and put them in the box and just wash them and take them to the ... It’s definitely the right mandate. I think it has to be discussed in the context of what is and what it means, and the double-edged sword side of it you know? [as related to business success and food safety concerns].” 48 Food Supply

Finally, one interviewee commented on the small role the food supply sector played in the overall food security programs, and questioned the need to bring in more mainstream players:

"Well I think that there are definitely different goals out there ranging from the small production operations that are really after local, buying local ... We certainly haven't seen the big production, big distribution groups coming to the table on food security. And yet aren't they the biggest player in this business?"
9 PH

6.4.4.i Supply Chain Agendas: BC Dairy Foundation

In addition to having a history of working in food security, the BC Dairy Foundation worked in partnership with the government and other organizations on the development of school food policy, and was involved in the "Fridge" program. They also worked with the BC Ministry of Health and the Knowledge Network on a provincial school food policy initiative. The Dairy Foundation is a not-for-profit organization that works to increase the consumption of milk in BC and deliver nutrition education programs; it is listed here under the Supply Chain, as it is funded by milk producers in BC.

6.4.4.ii Supply Chain Agendas: BC Farmer's Market Association

The BC Farmer's Market Association worked in partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture on the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Project (BC Association of Farmer's Markets, 2007).

6.4.4.iii Supply Chain Agendas: Agri-Food Partners in Healthy Eating

As a part of the ActNow health-related programs, the food industry formed the Agri-Food Partners in Healthy Eating under the leadership of the BC Agriculture Council to "make the healthy choice the easy choice" for British Columbians, and to "provide as many B.C. products as possible to meet their healthy food choices" (BC Agriculture Council). While they received funding from ActNow BC, they were not successful in their collaboration:

"And I don't know what to do about the supply chain piece because I am disappointed that the Agri-Food Partners in healthy eating piece, because you know, it would have been, they could've played a major role in promoting food security." 43 PH

"Partners in Healthy Eating? I'm not really sure what they've done. And they have had a lot of money. I'm not really sure what they have done. And I sit in an advisory capacity on that. And it's been really disappointing to me ... That's

a really good question [intent of group], and if anybody can clarify that for you, I'd like to get the answer back.” 17 Food Supply

This stakeholder sees the potential for change evolving from the food supply sector; food supply stakeholder involvement will be further explored in Chapter 8.

“The state I would say, right now, is at best irrelevant. And more negative than the economy or the supply chain side. In that business is more willing to make the change if they feel the public is behind it. And the government bureaucracy keeps some potentially good changes from happening.” 2 CS

6.4.5 Other Stakeholder Agendas

6.4.5.i Agendas: Funders

A number of funders have been offering grants in food security since the late 1990s. These include, but are not limited to PH Agency of Canada, United Way and the Vancouver Foundation. Grant structures have influenced the type of projects that have been completed. Numerous examples of this can be cited. When the Food for Kidz Coalition (with which the researcher was involved) was interested in an assessment of child hunger in the South Fraser region, participatory action was used, as traditional research was not fundable under the United Way grant system. However, grant applicants have also been creative in their approach to grants. Many food security initiatives were set up with three year funding from PH Agency of Canada for diabetes prevention in the early 2000s. And as alluded to previously, involvement of the Breakfast for Learning Foundation in partnership with DASH and the Ministry of Education has undoubtedly shaped the provincial school meal programs. Commenting on community-based funder role versus the government role, one interviewee suggested a balance of both:

“[funding from the government] ... doesn't mean that it is relieving ... funders from its responsibilities, but it's a partnership ... There will always be a role for organizations like [funder] to supplement something that the government has a key role to play, but there'll always be aspects of it that we can be doing.”
35 CS

Granting agencies have the ability to shape the evolution of community food security in both the focus of issues and also in how funds were administered.

Transparency of agendas coupled with flexibility and trust in grant administration was deemed effective for the PH Agency of Canada representative:

“I think Denise Weber, she is an incredible project officer ... she was able to come in to [our group] and say this is the agenda that I have. And what is it you guys want? And I am thinking, she made it work.” 13 CS

Unfortunately, funding agencies outside of PH Agency of Canada were not involved in the initiatives.

“From a funder point of view we have not been invited to tables, and we don’t see them at the funders table.” 35 CS

6.4.5.ii Agendas: Consultants

It is assumed that consultants don’t have their own agenda within these initiatives, but that they work toward the intentions of their employers. However, use of consultants impacted the initiatives; this will be reviewed in Chapter 7.

6.5.4.iii Agendas: Academics

A number of academics were brought into the process of the development of indicators to measure the progress of the Community Food Action Initiative. One academic has remained on the provincial the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee, and was not interviewed due to their status as advisor to the researcher.

6.5.4.iv Agendas: Stakeholder Omissions

In terms of key players, some CS and academic independent thinkers who have studied and worked in this field in BC for decades were not involved in the processes (B. Seed, 2004-2007). They were either not linked into an institution or organization that is involved, or not focussed on issues on the agenda (e.g. as will be explored in chapter 8, food insecurity and hunger). Nonetheless, this omission excluded some critical perspectives.

6.5 Summary and Conclusions

Chapter 6 examines stakeholder mandates, agendas and interests. The state and CS sectors have played a greater role in these initiatives than the food supply sector.

The mandate and funding for these food security health promotion initiatives originated primarily from PH and ActNow BC. This has given PH some power with other Ministries and PH involvement lends some legitimacy to food security at the community level. And while PH retains the only legislated food security health promotion program and leads the only inter-sectoral table on food security in BC, greater sources of funding centred outside of PH near the end of the research period. While the fact that PH Core Programs have no dedicated funding threatens the implementation of Food Security Core Programs, the Community Food Action Initiative funding also has limitations. First, Regional Health Authorities have the potential to divert funding to other needs and may not deliver it in a manner where the community can depend on funding sustainability. And second, critics suggest that limited funding reaches the community level.

Based on stakeholder feedback, the researcher contends that the interests and agendas that stakeholders bring to the table are more relevant than their definition of food security. Health and health care costs, climate change, and working with Aboriginal British Columbians are provincial priorities. Competing agendas emerge as a distinct theme across provincial government agendas, with food security often losing out to weightier agendas such as food safety. This raises the question – is the government sincere in the promotion of programs to advance food security, or are they exploiting lower-level state and CS players as pawns in the downloading of services?

Pressure exists within PH to limit the scope of the food security mandate to initiatives with health related outcomes. However, PH food security initiatives demonstrate a lack of clarity in their mandate. The researcher suggests part of

this confusion is the result of a struggle between stakeholders viewing health through a broad determinants of health approach and those working within a narrower mandate. This lack of clarity and limitation in scope has contributed to tensions between stakeholders, and acted as a barrier in the progression of initiatives.

The Ministry of Agriculture has traditionally focused on trade issues, favouring the industrialized food system. And while some remain sceptical, there is some movement toward local (i.e. BC) food sustainability. Many advocates believe that an increase in minimum wage and income assistance is the only effective way to address food insecurity. So while some see the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance efforts as “band-aid”, others see benefits to programs such the Farmer’s Market Nutrition and Coupon Project. The Ministry of Education administers the school meal program, but that program was not aligned with these new initiatives at the time of the research.

CS food security activist NGOs in BC have a wide view of food security, encompassing food insecurity, health and food systems, with a particular focus on the latter. As important, however, is how objectives are achieved – through justice and democracy, food sovereignty and control of food systems. Further, grassroots food security CS representatives saw food as a mechanism to forward democracy, citizenship and social capital. Food sovereignty is the main focus of the BC Food Systems Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty. Health NGOs have a history of involvement in food security in BC. They are focused mostly on health outcomes – particularly the BC Healthy Living Alliance. However, Dietitians of Canada and the Directorate of Agencies for School Health – also have a focus on food insecurity. Health NGOs are viewed as more “legitimate” by the government than CS food security activist groups.

While the food supply sector was not involved in any of the PH food security initiatives, they were involved in the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program, as well as the Farmer’s Market Nutrition and Coupon, and Fridge programs. Sector agendas are not homogeneous. Agendas include: land and

environmental stewardship, population health, food safety, education of the public, and of course, business and corporate interests. Interest in the public good is inspired by individual motivations, corporate responsibility, or a mixture of both.

Grant structures or funders have shaped the type of projects that have been completed, both influencing the focus of, and how funds were administered; these hold the potential to impact the evolution of food security in BC. However, outside of the PH Agency of Canada, funders were not included in the initiatives.

Academics are minimally involved in the processes. Finally, stakeholder omissions include key food policy thinkers in CS that have been active for almost two decades in BC, but were not affiliated with broader organizations or were involved in issues that were not a focus of the initiatives (e.g. anti-hunger).

Chapter Seven. **Findings III. Stakeholder Analysis: Public Health and other Stakeholder Limitations and Resultant Tensions**

7.1 Introduction

Chapter 7 continues the evaluative analysis of stakeholders, with the purpose of examining the relationships between stakeholders. As established in the previous chapter, PH holds a significant mandate for, and has taken the leadership role in this thrust of food security initiatives within the provincial government. Further, it was proposed that both agendas and approaches or strategies to meet agendas were potential points of tensions between stakeholders. So, while Chapter 6 focused on the role of PH (described in Chapter 3) in terms of the “what” (the scope of focus), Chapter 7 focuses on the “how” (functions or strategies), again, with a particular focus on PH.

Thus, this analysis will be undertaken by first examining the functional role of the lead stakeholder, PH. Its limitations in these roles and the resultant tensions with other stakeholders will then be reviewed. As this chapter centres on PH roles, the focus will primarily be on PH initiatives – the Core Food Security PH Program, the Community Food Action Initiative and the Provincial Health Officer’s Report - and to a lesser extent on other initiatives.

Stakeholder limitations and resultant tensions are discerned throughout the “findings” chapters 5-8, where they are most appropriate to subject areas reviewed. For clarification, this occurs as follows: state limitations (outside of PH) were reviewed in Chapters 5 and 6; limitations of CS food security activists, tensions within PH and within the food supply chain are outlined in Chapter 8; PH limitations are examined early in Chapter 7, and limitations of CS Health NGOs and the use of consultants are elucidated later in Chapter 7. Resultant tensions between stakeholders are summarized in Figure 7.1.

The chapter concludes with stakeholder feedback on the appropriateness of Lang's triangle model Figure 2.1 of sectors competing for control of food policy.

7.2 Functional Roles of Public Health

Functional roles of PH will be explored using the categories from the Population Health Template (see Table 3.1). PH's mandate for these roles, examples of where they demonstrate these roles, and interviewee's perceptions of their limitations in these roles will be examined. And, as the scope of this thesis does not allow for an analysis of all of the PH roles, the focus of this chapter will be on roles highlighted by interviewees or key documents. The review of roles will begin sequentially with "analysis of health issues", and "priority setting". It will then move to "Evaluating Results". "Taking Action" will be deferred until last. It incorporates a significant research objective and theme - the role of PH in CS engagement, and thus is given more attention than other key elements. Table 7.1 below provides examples of where PH stakeholders or initiatives fulfil each role within the template.

Table 7.1: Public Health (Functional) Roles in Food Security in British Columbia

PH Functional Roles (Population Health Template)	Examples of Functions from PH Initiatives ²⁸
Analysis of Health Issues Focus on and Analyze the Health of Populations	- Provincial Health Services Authority Report "A Review Of Policy Options for Increasing Food Security and Income Security In British Columbia" (2007b). - Surveillance, monitoring and evaluation of food security one of "Main Components" of Food Security Core Programs.
Address Determinants of Health and their Interactions	- Provincial Health Officer's Report on Food, Health and Well-Being 2005.
Base Decisions on Evidence	- "Best practice" is foundation for PH Food Security Core Program. - Food Security Core Program developed with Community Nutritionists' Council evidence paper. - "Promoting evaluation, evidence and research" key objective of the Community Food Action Initiative.
Priority Setting Increase Upstream Investments	- ActNow BC is specifically focused on prevention.
Taking Action Apply Multiple Strategies: - Strengthen Community Action (includes advocacy) - Build Healthy Public Policy - Create Supportive Environments - Develop Personal Skills - Re-orient (<i>health</i>) services	- The Community Food Action Initiative/ Provincial Health Services Authority advocacy report on Policy Options (2007b); advocacy not specified in other initiatives. - Food Security Core Program and the Community Food Action Initiative have policy as one of key mandates. - "Supporting Community Action" is an objective of the Community Food Action Initiative (helps to create supportive environments). - Cooking and Skill Building Project(PH a partner). - Concept of "redesign" part of food security continuum, and "internal comprehensive food policy" incorporated in Core Food Security Programs. - Regional Health Authorities intent to work on internal food policy (outlined in Performance Improvement Plans) demonstrates intent toward re-orientation (Fraser Health, undated; Interior Health, undated; Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008c; Vancouver Coastal Health, undated; Vancouver Island Health Authority, 2008).
Collaborate across Sectors and Levels: - <i>provide leadership/expertise</i> - <i>funding/resource support</i>	- ActNow BC is cross-sectoral (across Ministries and each involves a NGO). - Food Security Core Program specifies role of "enhancing communication amongst food security coalitions" and "coordinating initiatives with other ministries and with the federal government". Also identifies "Intersectoral Collaboration and Coordination/Integration" as key component. - Financial investment in alliance building in health NGO (BC Healthy Living Alliance) and food supply (Partners in Healthy Living). - At the Regional Health Authority level, cross-sectoral work is a goal. All health authority Food Security Core Program Improvement Plans and the Community Food Action Initiative strategic plan referred to engaging more partners in the strategies or in the development of them.
Employ Mechanisms for Public Involvement	The Community Food Action Initiative Strategic Plan states "We need to be more actively engaging both the "community voice" and the "system" voice"; "Community/Grass Roots Decision-Making" and "Involvement Of Citizens Who Lack Food Security" identified as "fundamental elements" in the original Community Food Action Initiative proposal (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005).
Evaluating Results Demonstrate Accountability for Health Outcomes	- "Promoting evaluation, evidence and research" key objective of the Community Food Action Initiative. - Surveillance, monitoring and evaluation of food security one of "Main Components" of Food Security Core Programs. - Most initiatives have evaluations incorporated.

²⁸ Unless otherwise indicated, references for Food Security Core Programs and the Community Food Action Initiative respectively, are (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006); (Mauders & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007)

7.2.1 Functional Roles: Analysis of Health Issues

Demonstration of the PH role in the “analysis of health issues” for all PH food security initiatives is outlined in Table 7.1. The need for evidence both in situational analysis and evaluation is well recognized:

“You need to, I think in health, people are really, really, really keen on evidence. And I think we need to build that.” 36 PH

“It’s not just a matter of persuading, we’ve got to help them because if they are going to continue to support our leadership in, at the provincial level, at the health authority level ... they have to be able to, in turn say to their public audience or their financial officers or to their board, they have got to be able to say, ‘This is why we are doing this’.” 4 PH

As alluded to previously, demonstrating the link between food security and health outcomes is a constant challenge:

“Because things like food security are not something the health authorities feel comfortable in having responsibility for. It’s too far upstream. And the link with health is pretty easy to demonstrate, but the link with what we’re doing and health is less easy to demonstrate. And that’s where the challenge comes in.” 4 PH

“So I think that is a huge limitation is that the language [of food security] is so foreign to health care decision makers and executive because it makes no sense in the context of the bio-medical model. It makes no sense in the context of health care per se. And so that I think is a really, really big limitation.” 30 PH

The Food Security Core Program was criticized for the lack of evidence provided (45 PH), however, the core program author stated that as more core programs were developed, it was recognized that many of the PH programs did not have strong clinical evidence reviews:

“As we’ve gone on, and people have gotten more and more accustomed to seeing evidence reviews that begin by saying ‘well there really isn’t really very much evidence’.” (T. Hancock, 2007)

Nonetheless, there is pressure on PH to measure progress and show evidence-based outcomes in their work.

“How do we show what difference it [the Community Food Action Initiative] makes? How does the evaluation contribute to that? Because if we can’t do that, then it’s really at risk.” 30 PH

"I believe it's always important to base your information on some kind of fact, or research. That that helps to maintain your credibility, and that's what I will always do, because I am a professional, and I work for an organization that is not interested in making off the cuff remarks, it needs to be based on something real." 36 PH

This is often met with frustration, as PH employees see the acute care side as equally lacking in evidence.

"Which is ironic, because in the acute care system, we do all kinds of things that cost a heck of a lot more than dealing with food security that we have evidence don't help. When we keep on doing them. But there's pressure to do them, and so we do them. So we need a lot of public pressure for food security." 4 PH

Further, interviewees expressed the difficulty in the establishment of appropriate indicators to measure progress:

"So it's like, how do you quantify what we do?" 42 PH

"The power of the culture of the medical model is just overwhelming and it comes in through the, in public health I think, through the imposition of irrelevant, and I think I definitely want to say irrelevant sets of indicators and evaluations. Irrelevant because they're not counting the right things. And because the things that we need to be looking at arguably - are difficult to count." 40 CS

In addition, the focus on evidence based human health outcomes versus broader determinants of health was criticized by some in CS and PH, suggesting that these outcomes drive and therefore limit approaches to food security:

"We are not going to see in a short time frame evidence that shows community food security makes a difference. So we are putting into an agency that wants to frame it in a way that is not conducive to furthering community food security ... Health wants to frame it as a problem that is causing ... a specific disease or illness. They want to make it into a small little box, as something that we can measure ... looking at the complexity of it, it isn't something that they are familiar with doing, or receptive to doing." 3 PH

One example cited by an interviewee underscores the disadvantage of a limited analysis of issues. As established in Chapter 2, the definition of the problem can dictate how it will be addressed. In this case, the definition of obesity as the concern and the measurement of it to monitor progress can divert the focus from the original problem.

The whole obesity and overweight emphasis, the concern about obesity and overweight, which is in my mind, also a red flag because of focusing on an outcome rather than what's gotten us to there. 4 PH

In the analysis of health issues, while the Provincial Health Officer's "Food, Health and Well-Being" and the Provincial Health Services Authority's "Review of Policy Options for Increasing Food Security ..." reports criticize specific government policies, interviewees raise limitations in government stakeholders' ability to criticize the government:

"We all know food security is really a question of policy and the politics of policy. Government agents do not have the latitude to speak up against a policy that contributes to food insecurity." 3 PH

Limitations in advocacy will be discussed further under "Taking Action" later in the chapter. This limitation is significant, especially as established in the previous chapter, many competing agendas exist within the government.

Finally, the limited ability of PH to incorporate community-based evidence in the analysis of health issues was identified. While the Community Food Action Initiative strategic plan outlines "Learning from Community Partners" as an objective, at the time of the research, CS did not see this occurring. This will be explored more under accountability and in Chapter 8.

"Within Public Health, there appears to be an imposed need to provide hard evidence of the effectiveness of expenditures and hard evidence is only numbers ... to use the kind of indicators that are used effectively in social planning and social programming is just too big of a stretch. And that was clear when we had the indicators meeting. Even though all the experts basically deferred to the community-based, Civil Society voices, the message that came through wasn't that at the end." 40 CS

"So that was, so there is a bit of a disconnect between the learning curve for people who are kind of in the bureaucracy and wanting to do more health promotion, sort of honouring the fact that people at community level have a lot of expertise." 28 CS

In sum, key limitations of "analysis of health issues" functions raised by interviewees include: difficulty in linking food security to measurable health outcomes; establishing a broad scope of indicators when evidence needs to link to narrow definition of health; difficulty for government employees to criticize the government in the analysis of health issues; and finally, lack of ability to incorporate CS/grassroots evidence in a way that is usable or trusted by PH.

Resultant tensions with other players as a result of PH limitations in their functional roles are summarized in Table 7.2. Some tensions between PH and CS are reflective of conflicts between decentralization and centralization outlined in Chapter 3.

Table 7.2: Limitations in Public Health Roles in Food Security and Resultant Tensions with Other Stakeholders

PH Functional Roles (from Population Health Template)	PH Limitations	Resultant Tensions with Other Players (from Chapters 6 and 7)
Analysis of Health Issues Focus on and Analyze the Health of Populations	- Limitations for government employees to criticize government in analysis of health issues. Difficult to address broad determinants of health (e.g. inequity/food insecurity).	- Clash between PH administrators and PH workers who are not comfortable lobbying against employer (government). - Clash between PH administrators and CS who take adversarial advocacy approaches.
Address Determinants of Health and their Interactions	- Food security administrators constrained as pressured toward measurable health outcomes (which is difficult to demonstrate). - Problematic to establish a broad scope of indicators when evidence needs to link to narrow definition of health (often human health and individual focus).	- Clash with other PH stakeholders and CS who adhere to broad determinants of health and have holistic view of food security (social, environmental, health). - CS frustration with imposition of potentially irrelevant indicators that may in turn drive focus of initiatives.
Base Decisions on Evidence	- Lack of ability to incorporate CS /grassroots evidence in a way that is usable or trusted by PH.	- Clash with CS who have vast experience and see the need to “ground truth-it”²⁹. - If CS not involved in analysis, then cannot be involved in setting agenda.
Priority Setting Increase Upstream Investments	- PH small player in Health. Food security small player in PH. Prevention not a priority; food security less so. - Limit within medical model where systems change is difficult to achieve and measure (vs. individual change).	- Prevention funding limited and precarious. - Tension between PH administrators who need to prove efficacy and PH employees committed to determinants of health approach and/or systems change.
Evaluating Results Demonstrate Accountability for Health Outcomes	Theme of accountability raised: - Health demands high degree of accountability. - Concern of accountability of Regional Health Authorities to food security mandate.	Tension due to CS perceptions that: - PH does not trust CS to be accountable. - Health not accountable in funding mechanisms.

²⁹ One interviewee described the concept of ground-truth-it as the need to “structure the governance so that what’s actually happening on the ground is connected as closely as possible to the government response” (25 CS).

Table 7.2, Cont'd Limitations in Public Health Roles in Food Security and Resultant Tensions with Other Stakeholders

PH Functional Roles (from Population Health Template)	PH Limitations	Resultant Tensions with Other Players (from Chapters 6 and 7)
Collaborate across Sectors and Levels - <i>Provide leadership/expertise</i> - <i>Funding/resource support</i>	- PH as "expert" culture; tendency toward "top down". - Partner involvement somewhat limited with health leadership and mandate. - While government invested in funding provincial Health NGO alliance and food supply partners, none was provided to provincial grassroots food security activists (outside of Aboriginal). - Funding to communities under the Community Food Action Initiative limited.	- Clash with "bottom up" CS philosophy of food security: power sharing; food democracy; food sovereignty. - Some partners outside of health, and "key thinkers" in province excluded due to structure and mandate. - Grassroots CS food security activists frustrated at lack of financial support and exclusion at provincial level.
Employ Mechanisms for Public Involvement	- Some believed that PH did not have structure or ability to successfully engage CS. - Loss of connection to communities with integration into greater Health systems.	Resulted in clash of cultures between CS and some PH administrators. CS seen as adversarial and lacked formality in representation. CS frustrated as food security drive in BC originated there and now somewhat excluded.

7.2.2 Functional Roles: Priority Setting

One overwhelming theme emerges within this category. Because food security is so far upstream, it is difficult to set food security – or even more broadly health promotion - as a priority in relation to urgent needs of the medical system. As illustrated in Chapter 6, there is broad acknowledgement that PH is a relatively small player within Regional Health Authorities, rendering food security as a very low priority, or not on the radar (1 PH; 3 PH; 27 PH; 6 PH).

One aspect of this constraint was explained by a CS interviewee:

“[Dr. Miller] was very clear about the difficulty that the public health authorities have in counteracting the push for acute care and extraordinarily expensive measures ... there was no mechanism [where] ... the public health authorities could somehow put brakes on ever more expensive pharmaceuticals, ever more technological wonders, and no way of saying no. I think Miller was right, that without some political process to protect themselves, they were caught.”
40 CS

Regional Health Authorities may be starting to see that through core programs they have some responsibility for the broad health of communities. With competing priorities amongst dwindling resources within the medical system, this is a concern.

“The buy-in [for core programs] was a philosophical buy-in. And that in fact the actual buy-in is becoming very difficult.” 4 PH

Albeit consistent with the determinants of health, the assignment of responsibility for the broad health of the community to the general health sector is a stretch for Health to recognize, contributing to tension between PH administrators and some employees. One CS interviewee expounds on the limitations on Health:

“... the limits of health sectors in total, which is bound by the government of the day, which is really bound by social norms, growth, a belief that corporations should be separate fully endowed entities that have rights like people, but no liabilities. So it is just the sense that we are not really allowed to venture past the social structures into some really radical stuff that would be really good health ...” 24 CS

7.2.3 Functional Roles: Evaluating Results

Evaluation is a key component of both Food Security PH Core Programs and the Community Food Action Initiative. In addition, all other initiatives have evaluations incorporated within them. The key theme raised by interviewees within this category is accountability.

The professionalized culture of PH articulates a requirement for accountability; some believe that PH has the impression that CS activists are not accountable to that standard.

“I think quite frankly, Provincial Health Services Authority at that point - and I don't know if that has changed - but at that point, could not trust the grassroots people to do anything that would be useful or effective.” 40 CS

However, CS argues about how accountability is defined, illustrating that the government practice of quickly allocating dollars at the end of fiscal year is not an accountable way of doing business.

“... you have to have accountability. And I think that the limitation is the governing variables around of accountability. I think the governing variables and Civil Society ... it is to my local communities first and then it ripples out ... The principles, the mission or purpose of accountability is different in government ... We got a phone call in March. Could you spend \$38,000. By the end of March. And I am thinking that makes me sick. As a taxpayer.” 13 CS

This suggests the issue of accountability is one that needs further discussion in PH/CS collaborations. Another argued that the Community Food Action Initiative was not accountable to their mission of working with community and CS:

“A contract was put very quickly for about \$50,000 or more, to do what we wanted to do at the grassroots community-based participatory empowering process. And to say that I was annoyed is to put it extremely mildly. I was absolutely furious. It seemed to me that is was a contradiction for everything we originally tried to set the thing up for. At that point, I thought why am I wasting my time?” 40 CS

Finally, as alluded to previously under funding constraints, PH representatives question health authorities' accountability to food security funding and mandate.

"I think getting it embedded in public health functions is, as long as you actually tie funding to a requirement for activity I think there is still that envelope funding and things can be a little shifty at the health authority level. So I don't know how you can have a bit more expectation around standards of delivery. It is just too easy to coast on what's already been done, as opposed to really working hard to fit it together. I think it still leaves quite a few options open for health authorities in terms of what approaches or what they would do. So I'd like to see a little bit of strengthening of how that, of a requirement to be maybe doing something in key areas." 41 PH

7.2.4 Functional Roles: Taking Action

For this review, Key Elements under "Taking Action" are drawn first from the Population Health Template Table 3.1. Under the category of "Apply Multiple Strategies", sub-categories are drawn from Figure 3.1: Population Health Promotion Model, including:

- i) Apply Multiple Strategies (i.e. Strengthen Community Action, including Advocacy; Build Healthy Public Policy; Create Supportive Environments; Develop Personal Skills; Re-orient health services).
- ii) Collaborate Across Sectors and Levels.
- iii) Employ Mechanisms for Public Involvement.

"Employ Mechanisms for Public Involvement", and "Strengthen Community Action" (except for Advocacy) will be reviewed last, under the rubric of "Engagement of CS". As outlined previously, extensive concentration will be given to this area due to its emphasis within the research.

7.2.4.i Taking Action, Apply Multiple Strategies: Advocacy

Advocacy is not identified as a role within core programs or in the Community Food Action Initiative within their supporting documents. However, it was identified by interviewees as an important role for PH:

"I think it's mobilization, with some resources and advocacy ... advocacy is part of the validation of the issue." 41 PH

“And regionally, I see my role is to do the things that can’t be done at a community level. Things that need to be rolled up to a higher level. You know, if that is education, if that is advocacy, if that is research ... that is what my role should be.” 15 PH

However, as noted previously, interviewees raise limitations for government employees in fulfilling this role:

“It is just not kind of kosher [advocacy], there has been such an increasing politicization of the civil service.” 22 State

“We are in a very dicey position for a lot of advocacy. So, and yet, that’s where, even if it’s internal, you know, we’ve got a role for sure, but it’s sort of negotiating, finessing that.” 15 PH

Nonetheless, the Provincial Health Services Authority created an advocacy document “A Review of Policy Options for Increasing food security and Income Security in British Columbia” (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2007b). The consequences of this document will be discussed further in Chapter 8.

And although advocacy by Health NGOs is a standard way of operating (Dietitians of Canada & Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2006; Krueger & Associates, 2005), advocacy by CS food activist groups is not seen in same light – as discussed under 7.2.4.vii. Moreover, support of these CS food activist groups by some PH employees created a tension within PH:

“So we still have Public Health folks who go into and support the big capital “A” [advocacy] work, which creates a lot of challenges for the government and the health sector.” 30 PH

7.2.4.ii Taking Action, Apply Multiple Strategies: Build Healthy Public Policy

Most interviewee comments on developing policy were related to strategic recommendations for the future; these will be reviewed in Chapter 9. And, as illustrated in Chapter 6, while most interviewees strive toward food security policy, they recognize the barrier of competing government policies. Also, as

alluded to in Chapter 5, numerous references were made regarding the success of school food policy, albeit top-down.

A policy role is articulated in key documents for all three PH food security initiatives. One of four key components of the Community Food Action Initiative Mission is to influence policy (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008a). Food policy is also a key goal and one of four program elements of the PH Food Security Core Program (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd 2006). And finally, food policy is integrated into recommendations within the Provincial Health Officer's report of "Food, Health and Well-Being" (Provincial Health Officer, 2006).

Finally, as outlined in Chapter 1, and in the Continuum of Strategies to Address Food Security, Table 2.1, food policy is a standard part of the discourse of food security in BC.

7.2.4.iii Taking Action, Apply Multiple Strategies: Create Supportive Environments

PH interviewees expressed that a key PH role, at which they were successful, was that of validation of community work. This helps to create a supportive environment in communities to facilitate work at that level.

"When communities see that the Health Authorities are actually taking this seriously, that's incredible confirmation for the work they're doing." 4 PH

"When Public Health becomes a more active player, just because of that whole professional voice and what that means to some people it validates that work and the importance of it for health. I think if they do nothing else, their involvement is a validation of the importance of that work." 41 PH

"I think there is an important role, I still think the two things that health authorities can really bring to Civil Society in discussion around any of this kind of stuff is we have good data, we have got credibility and so we can bring resources, particularly information resources to community. And we can bring credibility. And then, off you go. It's up to the community to take up the challenge." 15 PH

In addition, accomplishments in legitimizing food security within the government are outlined in Chapter 8.

7.2.4.iv Taking Action, Apply Multiple Strategies: Develop Personal Skills

The intent of the Cooking and Skill Building program was “to support community-based agencies that provide cooking and nutritional skill building programs for adults and families living with limited incomes” (DASH BC, 2006, p.1), thus the development of personal skills is a key goal. And while at the community level Community Food Action Initiative administrators may have responded to funding requests for initiatives that worked to develop personal skills, this is not a provincial priority for the initiative. “Food security programs and services” are outlined as one key element under the Food Security Core Program. However, it also states that “Health Authorities are encouraged to focus on community level needs, rather than on the needs of the individual, as a way to increase the shift toward transitional and long-term food security measures” (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006). As outlined previously, this creates a contradiction as many stakeholders and initiatives support a population based approach, however program outcomes can be driven toward measurement of individual health. Although not pursued in this research, this may have limited the possibilities for PH employees working in this area. Community members frequently express a deep need related to food insecurity; they often request food related alleviation programs and employees feel obliged to respond. And while they may prefer to respond at a more systems level, this is beyond their current health mandate, would not be considered legitimate work, nor produce measurable health outcomes (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

Interviewees are ambivalent about a personal skills approach, particularly regarding strategies to address food insecurity. This will be discussed further under Chapter 8.

7.2.4.v Taking Action, Apply Multiple Strategies: Re-orient Health Services

The concept of “redesign” is part of the Food Security Continuum (see Table 2.1) and is incorporated into the Food Security Core Program. The latter identify that “Every health authority should work towards establishing an internal comprehensive food policy” (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006). Regional Health Authorities followed through with this direction, articulating their intent to work on internal food policy in their Performance Improvement Plans (Fraser Health, undated; Interior Health, undated; Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008c; Vancouver Coastal Health, undated; Vancouver Island Health Authority, 2008). Supporting internal work with health authorities and the government was also identified by interviewees as a limitation to date, but as part of their role, and as vital to the future of food security.

“Because I think you need to know what builds credibility within your organization, and work to get that. I think not getting buy in, or not doing enough to get that support from your leadership, has been I think a gap.” 36 PH

“We have to get better about selling it to our colleagues in the acute care side and in the rest of public health. If we don’t, then the efforts won’t last.” 4 PH

“... [the health authority] mandate and role is very much to support the work of the health authorities and the Ministry and others.” 30 PH

Taking it further, one PH worker stressed the importance of the integration of the PH’s community-based food security work into the greater Health organization.

“The community stuff is awesome and that is really where change takes place. But from the point of view of the organization, if it is not integrated, if it doesn’t have any impact within our own organization, the funding gets cut off, nobody is the wiser ... And if we just focus on our organization, our organization can’t do food security. So you kind of need both, and you need to make sure that the intersection is strong so that you can really maximize what is going on in each.” 15 PH

On the other hand, this created some internal tension.

“The other tension is within the health authority, local foods in our own health authorities.” 29 CS

"I see Public Health as the rah, rah, rah [laughs]. And I also sometimes see you guys saying, "why can't you just be local?" Holy shoot. Because we have been doing it this way for 100 years, and to change that, and to change the mind set and the whole thing ...". 34 State

Beyond "selling or educating" health about food security work, the integration of community work into health authorities is brought forward as a strategic recommendation in Chapter 8. Further, it is a topic worthy of further research pursuit, and will be raised as such in Chapter 10.

The final category under "Taking Action: Apply Multiple Strategies (Strengthen Community Action) will be combined with Taking Action: "Employ Mechanisms for Public Involvement", and will be examined under 7.2.4.vii.

7.2.4.vi Taking Action: Collaborate across Sectors and Levels

Key roles in inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral work and resourcing and funding were outlined in Chapter 6 under PH and provincial government mandate.

Leadership and expertise is another role identified within this category.

"I know that in the food, this is based on conversations with Herb, and he's always said what is missing in this province around the food system is leadership." 36 PH

However, while CS lobbied for the integration of food security into PH, it seems that interviewees hoped for a "facilitator" rather than a "leader", where they would "share leadership, accountability and rewards among partners" consistent with terms outlined in the Population Health Template (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001):

"With government agencies, I think it is important to clarify that it is a supporting role, and that we are there ultimately to enable communities to be self-empowered that way." 5 CS

However, the mode of leadership often clashed with community expectations, who experienced more of a take-over than a collaborative leadership model:

"It [the Community Food Action Initiative] got bogged down and co-opted by health. In ways that are good on one hand, because you know you have got to hit the ground running, you have got to do some things ... So I think we probably bongled a bit." 4 PH

"So the practical piece is that the community folks need, aren't hooking up with what the health promotion folks are needing, which seems to be paper work and studies and pieces that are just like, 'we looked at it and this is what you are experiencing'. And were just like 'well, we didn't need you to ask us that question to know what we are already experiencing because we kind of knew that' ... And all they need is for those guys to sort of say 'how can we help you', rather than the public health folks coming in and saying something along the lines of, this is how we are going to help you." 28 CS

Some CS and PH interviewees saw this top down approach as contrary to the Community Food Action Initiative proposal recommendation to "build on existing community strengths and assets and utilize existing coalitions and networks", which food activist and other CS participants did not experience.

"And one of the things that was said very, very clearly [in the original Community Food Action Initiative consultations] is we do not wish to reinvent the wheel. Where there is effective work going on, we want to support it, enhance it. But when the BC food systems network which was acting as the communications network and to some extent coordinator of some action as well, applied for funds, there was no way of doing that. That wasn't possible ... And it felt very much like a slap in the face." 40 CS

"We were hoping to be partners with the provincial government food security program [the Community Food Action Initiative], but that did not unfold." 35 CS

In addition, the lack of clarity expressed by the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee members might question the direction of power - whether the advisory committee is indeed guiding the initiative, or whether it is being directed primarily by PH employees, again suggesting the top down approach.

"One of the pieces with the provincial advisory is just we don't really have a connection with how some of its being operationalized on the ground." 41 PH

"But there are some communication difficulties that we are having. And so I am not quite clear on what has been happening, going on?" 16 State

Even at the local level, a Community Food Action Initiative project experienced a similar clash in intended approaches, which suggests the problem is not

specific to the Community Food Action Initiative or Health, but to community work within bureaucracies in general.

“So we made it quite clear that we wanted to build the community that would build their own gardens. We were there to help every step along the way, but we weren't just, you couldn't order a community garden from us because that wasn't the way we wanted to work. We ran into some flak from the city, the first three, four months was over ... whether this philosophy or the 'build it and they will come' philosophy should be the guiding philosophy. And that was a problem.” 31 CS

Interviewees also pointed to the expert-driven, professionalized culture as contributing to the impression of a top down approach:

“Even that whole professionalized culture so that as soon as a non-profit group, or someone doing work in the area ... the first approach is that they're not credible because they don't have the information, whereas in fact, instead of seeing that as we have to get them the information so that we can strengthen their voice, it becomes, we sort of have to shut that down ... And so to me you can't afford that kind of luxury, that kind of elitism - I don't know. And I still find it sad that there's maybe a feeling that in order to be credible or to have some sort of credible voice, you have to marginalize people who are in fact affected the most closely. So, I find that, that epitomizes somehow the challenge of public health and food security you know it's kind of that the typical barrier of culture, you know the perfectionism of Public health. Everything has to be exact, everything has to be, you have to have the randomized controlled trial or are you terrified to act.” 41 PH

Others supported this view, speaking of

“... a built in arrogance in the Ministry of Health ... that is part of the attitude and the mind-set.” 25 CS

“And certainly within government and within health authorities, some real concerns and some real efforts to control it. And some real perceptions in terms of, to the point of, you know from some of the health authority representatives that perhaps they should be the ones making that decisions how the funding would be allocated to the respective members ... And so, it seems to be tricky to, and again you know that is in the literature. Is that on alliances, Public Health has a hard time participating as equal players on NGO driven alliances.” [anonymous]

Again, one PH employee suggests that this is not specific to PH, but is the nature of power and relationships.

“What I have seen, and having worked with pretty much all the sectors, is that we each think that we know it all, and we are the only ones who do good work. And all of the other people are crap, right? Business thinks that, and government thinks that, CS thinks that.” 36 PH

Relationships between PH and CS will continue to be explored next under “Taking Action” and in Chapter 8 under ‘Marginalization of CS voice?’

7.2.4.vii Taking Action, Apply Multiple Strategies: Community Engagement

A combination of both “Strengthen Community Action” and “Employ Mechanisms for Public Involvement” will be examined below under the concept of PH role in CS engagement – a fundamental inquiry of this research.

In categorizing and presenting research responses, the mandate of PH in engaging CS is first outlined. Next, interviewee support for this role and perceptions of why community engagement matters is examined, followed by evidence of CS engagement and lack of engagement. The importance of provincial versus community level engagement will then be examined. Finally, an explanation of the limitations of PH in engaging CS is provided by looking at a “Clash of Cultures” between PH and CS.

Public Health Mandate for Civil Society Engagement

Food security is one of a handful of core PH programs that mandates Health to work with communities and CS, pushing the boundaries of what Health generally recognizes as their role.

“I was really happy to do food security [core programs] in the first wave... because it also models a couple of broader things. It models inter-sectoral action, and it models community development. And so, by having something like that in that first wave meant that we went beyond the traditional public health.” 23 PH

The PH Food Security Core Program identifies “To strengthen community action by increasing community capacity to address food security” as one of six overall program objectives (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006). However,

this core program was just beginning to be implemented at the time the research was conducted, so it is difficult to examine engagement of CS from that perspective. Further, it appears that some Regional Health Authorities are using the Community Food Action Initiative to fulfil this core program objective (B. Seed, 2004-2007). Thus, this analysis of community engagement focuses to a greater degree on the Community Food Action Initiative.

As implied in the name, according to the Community Food Action Initiative original proposal, the concept of community is central – “the intent of this initiative is to provide funding for local food action projects and provincial supports” (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005). The Community Food Action Initiative names the community as one of three levels in its “proposed structure”. Further, the fundamental elements that were identified in the proposal include (amongst others): community/grass roots decision-making; involvement of citizens who lack food security; capacity-building; and sustainability of community efforts. This proposal is central to the Community Food Action Initiative discourse, as PH and CS representatives consistently referred back to it and its original intents when the direction of the initiative was questioned:

“The vision of this whole Community Food Action Initiative is quite beautiful. I continue to return to that proposal as my Bible.” 4 PH

Albeit perhaps not as detailed, more recent Community Food Action Initiative documents continue to stress work with communities. Their mission reads: “To provide leadership in achieving community food security, We: Build collaborative partnerships and Promote evaluation, evidence and research, To: Influence policy, and Support community action”. Supporting community action also one of five strategic thrusts, and includes the objectives of: “building community partners, learning from community partners [specifically addressing community food security partners] , helping communities assess and improve” (Maunder & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007) .

Interviewee Support for the Role of Public Health in Engaging Civil Society

PH interviewees suggested that key PH roles should focus on community engagement and community support:

“I think their roles should be supporting community mobilization on [food security] as a health issue.” 41 PH

“... health promotion is about strengthening community engagement. That is number one.” 3 PH

“I think Public Health, as long as we continue or strengthen our great privilege and ability to be in the community, to work with the community, to engage the community, to work with municipal Councils, which we are not doing.” 27 PH

Interviewees further explained the importance of the engagement of CS:

“I think those [food security goals] are major philosophical shifts I think that I don't know that any government is prepared to do ... the only way you'll get there is through the politics of it and in the community mobilization at the end of the day. Which is why you can't do it in a way that is independent of a public information and empowerment.” 41 PH

“By paying attention to indigenous food sovereignty and paying attention to that connection with land, maybe, we can learn some lessons that will allow us to have food sovereignty everywhere. And if we don't pay attention to that, then we're going to deserve what we get ... I am saying what we need to do is, pay attention to what happens when you lose access to and control over the land that produces your food. And we are not paying attention to that ... What's that got to do with anything? Well, sovereignty. And without that you don't really have food security.” 4 PH

Evidence of Community Engagement

Interviewees were asked “to what extent has PH engaged CS in these initiatives?” This solicited considerable feedback, i.e. 25 references from 14 sources.

Within programs led outside of PH, CS is engaged at the more strategic provincial level, such as BC Healthy Living Alliance programs and the Cooking and Skill Building operated by DASH. Local NGOs are engaged at the community level in programs such the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Program run by the BC Farmer's Market Association, and the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program is beginning to engage CS:

“And that Civil Society is playing a larger role as we grow [BC Fruit and Vegetable Program] ... I hope to see that shift.” 17 Food Supply

In addition, one interviewee explained the provincial government's intent to engage CS in health promotion through BC Healthy Living Alliance:

“That was the premise [engagement of Civil Society] behind giving the BC Healthy Living Alliance \$25 million. It was through the Ministry of Health, through Andy Hazelwood, and you know what, I could almost quote him in terms of using that term of engaging in Civil Society through the BC Healthy Living Alliance ... Because the NGOs, they have, the degree of volunteerism is phenomenal ... they certainly are working independent from government, and have strong community-based representation through their boards, and through their local work.” 38 CS

Differentiating between CS representatives from Health NGOs and food security activists lends insight into the perceptions of engagement that will be explored below. As outlined previously, health NGOs hold a greater legitimacy with the government than food security grassroots activists, as evidenced by substantial grant funding to and greater collaboration with them. Additionally, Health NGOs have a similar “professional” health culture as PH, made up of mainstream health promotion and disease prevention groups, including representation from the Regional Health Authorities. As alluded to, they also appear able to advocate to government in a way that is more acceptable to government employees.

Returning to the Community Food Action Initiative focus, CS engagement varied dependent on whether it was interpreted at the provincial or regional levels and on stage of program development. Most agreed that it is important to engage CS at the Regional Health Authority level, and that the Community Food Action Initiative fulfilled its mandate in terms of community involvement. This is also supported by its evaluation (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

“I think that the Community Food Action Initiative is doing a lot. I think it is doing a lot, the work that goes on, particularly in the smaller communities where they are doing presentations and information and all kinds of events and campaigns and stuff, I think it is happening a lot.” 15 PH

"I think at a local level. So, this is the mantra that I hear ... projects are designed, delivered at a community level. Decisions are made and supported and policies are articulated through very community based advisory committees that are very community based, engaging citizens essentially."

36 PH

"They [the Community Food Action Initiative] have been able to support a number of different programs on the ground. And so, they have a number of different funding projects available and then once the monies roll out into the community, it seems that it has done really well at the community level."

28 CS

At the provincial level, the initial consultation for the Community Food Action Initiative engaged CS. Contractors consulted widely – with Regional Health Authorities, PH professional groups, the Ministries of Agriculture and Human Resources, and both CS health and food activist groups who were already engaged in the issue. About half of the representatives came from PH and one representative from the food supply chain (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005). However, no representatives from low income (outside of Ministry representatives) were present (e.g. First Call BC, End Legislated Poverty, etc.). The researcher - who participated in this consultation observed a high degree of satisfaction with the final proposal from the participants involved (B. Seed, 2004-2007); this was confirmed by respondents:

"Yeah because what we had envisaged collectively, the 'we' included people from various health regions are at different levels and the public health alliance for food security, as well as activists, and people who have been engaged in food security work at the grassroots level."

40 CS

"When I had read the plan for the Community Food Action Initiative, and the proposal ... I saw a lot of possibility in creating really meaningful working relationships between Civil Society and government. Where government would play that supporting role to enhance Civil Society capacity."

6 CS

In addition, the Community Food Action Initiative was striving to increase focus on Aboriginal food security (Maunder & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007), and were successful in engaging with the Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty of the BC food systems network. While working with Aboriginal populations was a government mandate, the initiative worked with them in a way that CS seemed to approve of:

“So they [Provincial Health Services Authority] were willing to say, normally speaking, we would want to have a rock hard time line etched in stone and we would like to see a number of etched in stone outcomes ... And so, they gave her the freedom to work in a culturally sensitive way. Which meant that she wasn't tied to a timeline as much as she would be if she had done that through [regular procedures]. And she wasn't tied to specific outcomes because she needs to let it sort of organically go to where it has to go. And so, that, the fact that they were even able to see that it is almost unbelievable ... It is another good example of a model where they can identify key players and just sort of say, what can we do to help you?” 28 CS

Evidence of Lack of Civil Society Engagement

Two PH respondents commented that PH in general was losing connection to community:

“If you jump right into it, all the provinces lost the connection to the local communities to some degree.” 9 PH

“We have been so much struggling with our own internal reorganization and aligning within this corporate structure and trying to figure out how to get along with the acute side, that we have forgotten that we belong in the community.” 27 PH

In terms of the Community Food Action Initiative implementation, many – both from PH and CS - agreed that there is limited CS participation at the provincial level (43 PH; 15 PH; 40 CS; 4PH).

“It's the provincial level that I think we [the Community Food Action Initiative] haven't done or have not had success. I think we have certainly tried to engage, but haven't been successful.” 36 PH

“[Provincial Health Services Authority] do not provide a lot of opportunity to pull together Civil Society for input.” 30 PH

In addition, as stated previously, of the approximately 19 members on the advisory committee, two are CS. One is the BC Healthy Living Alliance Health NGO, and the other is the BC Food Systems food security activist organization. Also, one Aboriginal voice is included – which could be either from CS or government; this representation was not firmly established at the time of the research. So while there is some evidence that the BC Healthy Living Alliance CS representative on the Community Food Action Initiative felt marginalized due to the representative's interest in food insecurity (B. Seed, 2004-2007),

most concerns regarding lack of engagement were articulated in relation to CS food security activists.

This lack of engagement was particularly frustrating given some CS and PH workers understanding of the Community Food Action Initiative mandate, and perception of a gap between its original proposal (which was seen to be in line with CS food security activist values and expectations) and the implementation the program.

“... [we] had assumed that this would be community based food security in all its aspects - from production through access through personal and population health. And it seemed to default to, on hiring external academics and quote/unquote experts to gather data from the people in the community, pay those external folks, and then do something bureaucratic with the results, which just drove us completely insane.” 25 CS

This lack of engagement contributed to what is examined in Chapter 8 as “Marginalization of CS Voice”.

Is Civil Society Engagement Important at Both Community and Provincial Levels?

While many observed that CS was excluded, some in PH felt the CS mandate was complete as it occurred at the community or regional level, as noted above. Further, some PH interviewees suggested that while CS engagement at lower levels is crucial, it is not important at the provincial level:

“Health authorities are supposed to bring the voice of community to that provincial level table.”. 45 PH

“Where I think that the CS gets to be part of the conversation is what happens at the community level within the health authority.” 30 PH

Another suggests that while theoretically higher level engagement does not need to occur, in this case it does:

“At a policy level, and if you truly have a system designed so that information gets funnelled to a policymaking table, you don't necessarily have to have citizen engagement at that level ... At this point, we are not getting the information coming up from the bottom in an organized, methodical way. So, given that, we do need the community voice at the table.” 36 PH

This is problematic when the Community Food Action Initiative has an interest in supporting CS:

“My interest is more is how does the system [the Community Food Action Initiative] then support whatever CS puts forward and says with regards to that. Because that is the big missing piece from my perspective.”
30 PH

Responses from CS and some PH saw the need for participation at a higher, more strategic level:

“The problem with relegating Civil Society involvement to the regional level is the barrier to participation at the decision-making level. When provincial decision makers hear only filtered, second-hand experience, they make decisions based on incomplete knowledge ... Excluding Civil Society from the deliberations is a luxury we cannot afford.” 4 PH

Finally, acknowledging the role of CS as a driver, this respondent stated:

“The simple answer is that the initiatives on food security have come from Civil Society. We have done the thinking and the organizing and if the government wants to be effective in programming, they need to pay attention to what we are doing - and why we are doing it.” 40 CS

Nonetheless, while also critical, this stakeholder applauds the efforts of the government and the Community Food Action Initiative.

“At the end of the day, I still think the Community Food Action Initiative is an unusual example of government's putting money into something with potential for far-reaching impact, something that does engage Civil Society at the regional level. Would it be stronger if it engaged Civil Society at the provincial level? Of course.” 4 PH

Public Health Limitations in Civil Society Engagement: Clash of Cultures

While CS representatives lobbied for the integration of food security into PH, a key limitation to the Community Food Action Initiative described by interviewees was “clash of priorities” or cultures between PH and grassroots food security CS.

“So I think that, at least in my experience was that there was a clash of priorities there ... I think that an initiative that is looking at ultimately supporting communities in achieving food security might take on activities or directions

that may not necessarily serve solely the Regional Health Authorities as an organization.” 6 CS

One CS interviewee described the Community Food Action Initiative process of having an almost impossible mandate of trying to incorporate a community-based initiative based on community input,

“... having no framework in terms how to bring that into this bureaucratic system.” 28 CS

Others supported this stating:

“A great deal of lip service was paid to the grassroots work. But the Provincial Health Services Authority was not set up to work at that level, and they didn't have - let's put it this way - the corporate culture to enable that to happen.” 40 CS

“I'm not sure what it is, but they are different cultures to reconcile.” 41 PH

Many suggested that PH is limited in their ability to successfully engage CS – that either the “system”, “Health”, Provincial Health Services Authority, or the Community Food Action Initiative did not understand how to go about or were not capable of working well with CS.

“They [Public Health] were working with the bureaucratic system that had no understanding of how community works ... And they went out and got really good community input ... they just didn't understand even a little bit about how you fit that into this ministry, that ministry, and this other ministry. When they are so used to meeting around an exclusive table being informed by all of their people and having only what they considered to be experts sitting there all making very important decisions.” 28 CS

“I think the other big issue that we have is that there are a lot of capital “A” advocacy groups that are really basically challenging government on policy, on issues. And I think that we still in public health don't know how to work with those people effectively.” 30 PH

PH respondents also raised the dilemma of what one voice can represent CS at a provincial level, compounded by the oft lack of formality of infrastructure (15 PH; 41 PH; 43 PH; 45 PH) as compared to government or more highly financed groups.

“Who is going to be able to represent quote unquote Civil Society at the provincial level? ... what one voice represents Civil Society at a provincial level?” 45 PH.

“I mean you always have that, that dilemma [Civil Society representation] when you're doing it.” 15 PH

On the other hand, as alluded to previously, there was also criticism that representatives from the Regional Health Authority representatives were also not able to fully represent their organizations at the Community Food Action Initiative advisory committee level due to their relatively low status/power.

A summary of PH limitations in relation to CS engagement is outlined in Table 7.3. Limitations of PH in CS engagement cut across all categories of PH roles, so are not categorized according to roles.

Table 7.3: Clash of Cultures Between Public Health and Civil Society in Civil Society Engagement

Public Health	Grassroots Food Security Civil Society
Limited mandate impacts analysis, implementation and evaluation (e.g. evidence-based indicators specific to human health).	Holistic view of food security. Broad definition and indicators (social, environmental, human health); Success measured by “Ground Truth”.
Expert driven. Experiential learning not highly valued.	Shared learning, experiential learning.
Top down.	Bottom-up, power sharing. “How” food security is achieved is crucial. Food democracy and food sovereignty central tenets.
Formal organization/hierarchy. Clarity re: who represents CS?.	Low funded; volunteer based; formality often low.
Limits on advocacy by PH. Discomfort with method of CS food security activist advocacy.	Advocacy central to approach.
Accountability to measurable health outcomes.	CS accountable to communities. CS perceives that PH does not see them as accountable.

By considering these limitations as a clash of cultures, it can raise the discourse beyond the personal level, instead, viewing tensions as related to limitations of institutions. In support of this, this clash also parallels the tensions between “centralization” and “decentralization” approaches described in Chapter 2. Stakeholder feedback from BC also reflects the literature outlined in Table 3.4: Comparing and Contrasting Public Health and Food Security

Approaches. This further suggests that arising tensions have an institutional rather than a personal base.

While this section focused on PH limitations, it does not mean that CS food security activists were not culpable in this “clash”. CS limitations, and the consequences of PH limits in engagement are reviewed in Chapter 8 under “Marginalization of CS Voice”.

7.3 Other Stakeholder Limitations and Resultant Tensions

Stakeholder limitations and resultant tensions are discerned throughout the “findings” chapters 5-8, where they are most appropriate to subject areas reviewed. State limitations (outside of PH) were reviewed in Chapters 5 and 6, and PH limitations in Chapter 7. Those of CS food security activists and tensions within PH are in Chapter 8. Finally, the section below focuses on limitations of CS Health NGOs and the use of consultants as they are not elucidated elsewhere. Stakeholder tensions are summarized in Figure 7.1.

7.3.1 Civil Society Health Non-Government Organization Limitations

The BC Healthy Living Alliance was the only CS Health NGO that interviewees commented on. One interviewee suggested that the formation of the BC Healthy Living Alliance was a positive consequence of ActNow BC.

“I didn't expect the BC Healthy Living Alliance thing, like I didn't expect those big NGOs to come together ... I think there is more openness in the province to collaboration ...”. 37 CS

However, interviewees commented that individual member agendas and the inherent difficulties of collaborative work had a negative impact on their effectiveness.

“So why couldn't people leave their bloody hats at the door, and come in and say what we are about is not changing lifestyles or making sure that we sustain our own organization, but we're after the health of our communities.” 4 PH

“I don't think the BC Healthy Living Alliance has done it well. The other thing that I would say, is that it's not simple to work collaboratively, and I don't know

if that got sorted out before the dollars came in ... I think that the BC Healthy Living Alliance came together with a good intention of them to work collaboratively with one voice on an issue, but I think the behind the scenes understandings weren't really sorted out. And they weren't particularly organized. But I'm trying not to be too negative, because it's something is going on, but I don't know what the outcome of all of that is going to be." 37 CS

On the other hand, another suggested that their intentions were positive, and the task of allocating significant funding was considerable:

"... they [BC Healthy Living Alliance] weren't set up as a funding agency. So there is you know capacity issues there. So they are on a, it's my understanding anyway, so that's a big learning curve too. You know, moving from, like doing advocacy work to doing, to becoming a funder. So, and I'm sure that they want to do it right. And they want to [be] as effective as possible with those dollars which is maybe why they are working the way that they are." 6 CS

Like other programs, BC Healthy Living Alliance initiatives were criticized for their lack of emphasis on community capacity building and a top down approach.

"What the BC Healthy Living Alliance has wanted and insisted on, is a very top down approach. When they first got that \$25 million. I thought, thank the good Lord. Because these organizations are out in communities ... So I thought, great, they will get that money out to the communities where it belongs ... Well instead the money is all staying at the top. It's all about advising, helping to implement, there's just not much at all that is going to get down to the community level." 4 PH

"I think the BC Healthy Living Alliance, no, not at all [engagement of Civil Society]. But they had, the BC Healthy Living Alliance, \$25 million. And I don't know how many millions have already been spent on healthy eating, active living, tobacco reduction strategies, but they are all more provincial programs that are quick fix ... But one of their strategies is capacity building. They are just getting to that now. First they developed their food and tobacco and their different strategies, and now they have this one over here that is capacity building. How does that fit in? ... They haven't thought about this as framing our actions in these other areas. It is seen as oh, now how can we get communities to do these things that we want them to do. That is capacity building?" 3 PH

However, the BC Healthy Living Alliance did advocate for the establishment of community coordinators and the provision of modest funding to community groups in their "Winning Legacy" plan (Krueger & Associates, 2005), as well as focus on community capacity building in their Healthy Eating Strategy (Context

Research Ltd., 2007). Lack of funding continuity was also a concern, as funding that BC Healthy Living Alliance received from the government was one-time funding.

“Sustainability would be a big one. Bringing in programs and keeping with them. So that they – it’s again that BC Healthy Living Alliance money coming to me, talking about what to do with one of the programs, oh food access. And she said, well, it might be around for a year or two. So it’s just like well, what are we doing?” 42 PH

Also of note, while one of their thrusts was healthy eating and involved the Ministry of Health Nutritionists, the Community Nutritionists’ Council was minimally involved in their efforts:

“Those Community Nutritionists’ Council meetings and hearing about the initiatives that got funded, and I know I wasn’t the only one in the room that was surprised, because people sort of looked at each other when ... the other two initiatives that were announced then it’s like, how did it happen?” (anonymous)

7.3.2 Limitations in Use of Consultants

The following section documents the perceptions of the use of the consultants in general, rather than the impact of consultant work. Interviewee comments centred on consultants utilized in the Community Food Action Initiative and the BC Healthy Living Alliance.

“Consultants have done all right with this BC Healthy Living Alliance and this whole planning process. And they are going to continue to do all right. Because we are hiring people at the bigger level to help the poor benighted folks on the ground do the work that we say they need to do in order to have healthier communities.” 4 PH

One CS respondent spoke of the pros and cons of the use of consultants:

“I think that good planning takes an investment. And, you know, I cringe at the amount ... invested in consultants ... but at the same time, all of these organizations that are becoming interested and engaged in this issue already have their plates full ... Organizations require a significant amount of infrastructure ... and the organizations are saying we can’t staff up, and we can’t act as quickly as we need to ...”. 38 CS

Another advantage was also noted:

"The strength is the consultants can say some things that the organizations sometimes can't say." 38 CS

On the other hand, they suggested:

"The danger of consultants is a lack of sustainability and continuity ... The organizations don't necessarily assume the same amount of ownership for the work that's produced." 38 CS

Others saw the diversion of funding and projects from CS as compounding the sustainability and continuity issues:

"It's all about advising, helping to implement, there's just not much at all that is going to get down to the community level. And that really upsets me. Because in the years that I've worked in community development ... we can always get money. Get money for working on a strategic plan, for coming up with new ideas ... But implementation money, really taking the money and making a difference where it counts with people that we are supposedly trying to serve? It is always hard to get money there, really hard. Well, you know I think we have missed a good opportunity. Because the BC Healthy Living Alliance could have come together, could have left their hats at the door and said, how can we be of service to, instead of how can we help the poor benighted souls out there." 4 PH

"We were talking about consultants and a lot of money goes into that, well, a lot of energy, dollars, activity go into that and nothing changes on the ground." 37 CS

Further, these top down processes did not seem to address the needs at the community level:

"I think that it has sort of been that community folks have been doing it for a long time at a level with virtually no funding ... and so, that means that a lot of them are run on volunteer time and so it goes. So when you get sort of a provincial bureaucracy coming in and saying how can we help you or not even that, it's just well, we think that we can do that better, is often the way that it is. Then what I have seen is that they end up then bringing in consultants. The consultants do a lot of research on it, but then they don't unroll it in a way that is sort of like what they really wanted, what they only really needed was how can you hook us up to bags that are cheaper so we can get it going. How can we hook us up with a network so that we are more sustainable? And how can you help us with some of the coordination piece so that we are just running it on a more business scale, right? With still having some of the same outcomes." 28 CS

“So, some of those groups might have been able to benefit, you know, more significantly from, in order to implement activities rather than go into consultant type of expertise, who you know aren't necessarily connected and who often are relying on that Civil Society expertise.” 6 CS

Another also alluded to using the people in the community as data sources, while not meaningfully involving them.

“Then there is a research problem in that if you want to make connections with people in communities, you go make connections with people in the communities. You don't hire external academics ... and then use the people on the ground as sources of free, raw data.” 25 CS

In balancing these criticisms, some constraints due to agendas of and pressures on organizations were noted:

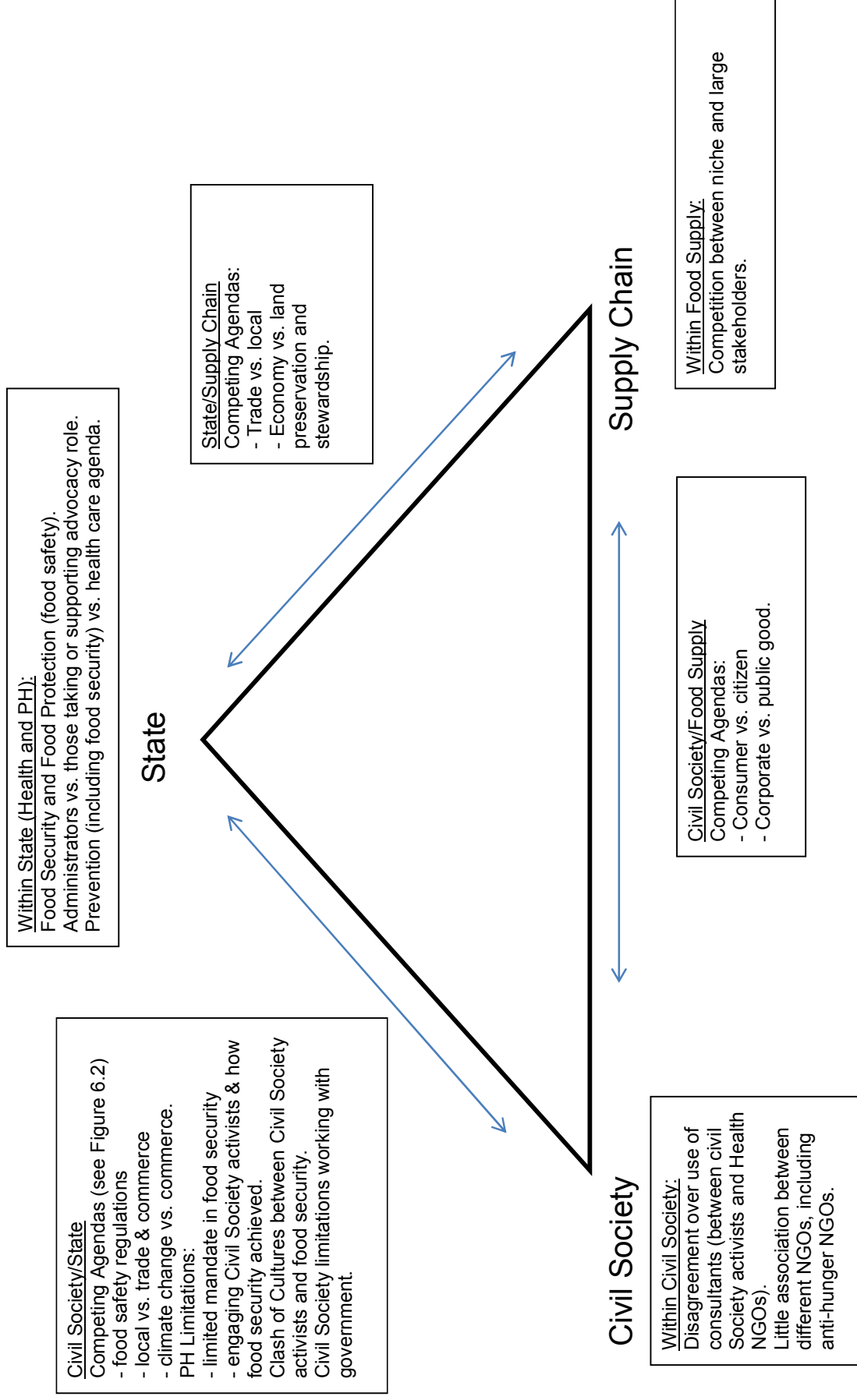
“And in the urgency to get stuff done on, then because the infrastructure, or the structures aren't in place to do the work, that's where these consultants are ... Like, now I've got something I have to do and I don't know how to do it, or how to get started, so could you please help me. There goes \$50,000.” 37 CS

Financial pressures and pressures toward health outcomes, as noted previously, are also salient.

“I think it would be interesting to do an economic argument - if all that planning and work was done within an organization [as opposed to using consultants], would it really end up costing less?” 38 CS

However, CS may argue that economics is only one leg of the argument, despite financial pressures on government and health. For example, a lack of coordination between initiatives is a key theme noted in Chapter 8, to which the use of consultants could contribute.

Figure 7.1: Summary of Stakeholder Tensions in British Columbia Public Health Food Security and Related Programs



7.4 Relationships between Sectors: Stakeholder Feedback on Triangle Model

When asked if Lang's triangle model (Figure 2.1) represented the key stakeholders involved in food security in BC, numerous interviewees said no.

"I am always suspicious of these kinds of things. One of my favourite, this notion, bad metaphor, bad policy. And I think the three legged stool is a bad metaphor. So you get bad policy from it. Because it ignores the fact that there is a fundamental hierarchy. The environment is, without it you have not neither of the other two. And in reality as well, the economy should be a tool used to facilitate the social piece... That is quite commonly the three legged stool, or triple bottom line [environment, economy and social]. But the metaphor with the three legged stool has them all equivalent. And they are not. And when I see something like this, I immediately ask questions like, in my mind, why is the state at the top? Why does Civil Society not subsume the state? Why doesn't it subsume the state and then the supply chain?" 24 Civil Society

"I mean the first thing I think of when I look at this as is that it's unfortunate that they are all separate. You know I mean really, I don't know if a triangle is the right shape. Like there should almost be a circle. The state is Civil Society, like it is supposed to represent the people. And the supply chain should also be controlled by the people right? And that's to me one of the big, the big problems with our food system. Is that all of these groups are actually separate. When they should be all representing most importantly, the people themselves." 10 Civil Society

In contrast, one did not attach great importance to it.

"Let's pick one and go with it." 9 PH

Another suggested:

"Well, that is the classic three sector analysis. Public sector, private sector and community sector." 23 PH

Many suggested the triangle is too simple and cannot reflect the many inherent nuances.

"I am not sure the triangle does, I mean the key players are the key players, but I'm not sure the triangle actually reflects what goes on ... It is a lot sloppier than that. [Laughs]. This looks nice and trim in that there is equidistant and that the state and Civil Society ...". 15 PH

"I can put anything into these ... Because that [triangle] is simple. It's not simple. There's not one of those [sectors] that is simple." 4 PH

"... Civil Society incorporates all of us. State to some degree states incorporates all of us. The supply chain in terms of getting food from A to B to C to D to E ... I mean food security is not just that can you buy it? It is, is it physically available, is it physically grown, can we physically afford this? And are we educated enough to make good choices." 17 Food Supply

Others argued that the triangle suggests certain assumptions.

"This little diagram actually assumes that there is even communication between any of the players that are on the page. I don't know if that is happening either in any fundamental way." 28 CS

"... you've got a triangle, because the triangle is even, it looks like they have the same level of contribution." 37 CS

Some commented on how the reality of how they currently see it:

"I would draw as the supply chain as the base, and almost the entire triangle. And then the state having a little bit of influence, and Civil Society having virtually none ... So it would be almost a flat triangle." 2 CS

"And when it gets lopsided, I think we get into some real troubles." 41 PH

"You know you have got supply chain, well obviously that would be the corporation. And that is at the same level, linear level, as Civil Society in your triangle. But ultimately I think the corporations have been given way too much control." 5 CS

Many CS stakeholders offered suggestions on how to modify it:

"I guess the only thing that I would see is the state underneath the Civil Society in the supply chain. Because I still think that the role of the state is you to enable these different components of society to function to be its most effective ... I would hate to see them off on their own little corners ... my vision would be that it would be integrated". 6 CS

"I wouldn't exactly, because I am used to thinking about food sovereignty. And seeing the community at the top of that chain. That food chain. And the people themselves, as opposed to the state, the nation state being at the top of that food chain. I would place it differently and I wouldn't necessarily use a triangle. I would probably use a circle. To show how we are all connected. And again, to balance out those imbalances of power between what happens at the corporations." 5 CS

"As a grassroots person, I would want to switch that around right away. Not that, and I think that the reality is probably true that the state is at the top.

Because ultimately their authority is, they are the ones with the authority to ultimately create the policy that makes that happen. But I don't think it should be that way necessarily." 28 CS

"I would probably have a tension between demand and supply actually played out." 14 CS

"Some of the other work that I have been doing looks at it from the point of view as concentric circles." 35 CS

"I would just do concentric circles ... Herman Daly does a great piece ... He is sort of the godfather of the sustainability economics ... But that [outside] is the biosphere. And in the middle you have the economy and in here you have all of our resources. And the only input really is energy from the sun, and everything we get in our economy comes from here. Not only that, everything that comes into here, eventually goes out to there. And so we have got sources that we cannot deplete or ruin, and we have got sinks that we cannot deplete or ruin. And they happen to be pretty much the same thing. Only, so as the economy grows, the sources and the sinks become smaller and smaller. It just a neat way, the footprint of showing what limits are about. That kind of thing makes sense to me. This kind of thing, if I had to have a metaphor for it, the broadest and most important would be the environment, then it would be the society and the economy." 24 CS

This last interviewee introduced the environment as a missing element in the circle. When asked what else is missing, while one suggested that media was missing, another proposed that they could be a part of each sector.

"Well the media is, where is the media? I would say the media is missing from that. Because the media constructs the issues for everybody ... it should be operating as a separate state in terms of its potential role but it's become confused." 14 CS

"[I see] independent media as being part of Civil Society. I see the CBC as being part of the state. And I see the supply chain incorporating mainstream media. Because it is all part of the supply chain. In order for these companies that dominate the food system ... they need the media, they need CanWest, they need CTV Globe media ... media fits in to all of these different groups. But yes that's maybe why don't see media on its own." 10 CS

Similarly, funders and not for profit organizations were also identified as absent by one, but as part of CS by another.

"Because it is missing. You've got your supply, and you've got your demand, and you've got the role, but where does anything else fit? ... but there is that whole not for profit and community piece that is not there unless it is centre ... this is where traditionally government has seen the relationship and so, I'm not surprised that [funding] organizations ... are not, they don't recognize that we even exist and have a role to play in this." 35 CS

“So for me, Civil Society actually includes the charitable sector, right? The charitable sector, a charitable funder like the Vancouver foundation.” 36 PH

Finally, the ways food security is achieved was also articulated as missing.

“The whole issue of food sovereignty which is crucial to food security is still an intersection of these.” 4 PH

These findings suggest a more sophisticated model be developed. A new model – based on this feedback as well as all of the findings will be illustrated in Chapter 9, Discussion.

7.5 Summary and Conclusions

Whereas Chapter 6 focused on agendas, or the “what”, Chapter 7 focused on functional roles, or the “how”. Chapter 3 proposed the use of the Population Health Template (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001) as a model for identifying PH roles in food security, suggesting that a systematic articulation of PH roles would allow stakeholders to more effectively work together. Table 7.1: Public Health (Functional) Roles in Food Security in British Columbia illustrates that indeed PH has articulated or demonstrated a role under each element in the template. Thus, the Population Health Template may be a useful tool in articulating PH roles in food security. Limitations in their roles and resultant tensions with other stakeholders were identified in Table 7.2.

PH Limitations in the “analysis of health issues” include: difficulty in linking food security to measurable health outcomes; establishing a broad scope of indicators under a narrow definition of health (where narrow indicators could ultimately drive initiatives); difficulty for government employees to critically analyze the government; and the lack of ability to incorporate CS/grassroots evidence.

Regarding “priority setting”, prevention or a determinants of health approach, including food security, is a low priority within greater Health, as is a focus on systems versus individuals. “Evaluating results” limitations focused on

accountability, suggesting that accountability needs further discussion in PH/CS collaborations.

Under “taking action”, PH employees taking or supporting advocacy roles was raised as problematic. Food security policies were seen to compete with “weightier” agendas, and competing policies raise the concern that food security initiatives are either “make work” projects, or government downloading. While some food security initiatives focused on skill building, many stakeholders were not satisfied with this alleviation approach to food insecurity. And in attempting to integrate food security into broader Health (and even PH), PH found this systems change very difficult, particularly within an environment foreign to population health approaches.

“CS engagement” was a key theme of the chapter. The Community Food Action Initiative identifies this as part of their mandate, and was successful at regional and community levels. However, grassroots CS food security activists were frustrated at the lack of financial support and their exclusion at the provincial level. Some partners such as funders and key thinkers in food security were also not invited into the PH processes. A summary of limitations of PH in CS engagement is outlined in Table 7.3. This “Clash of Cultures” is characterized by a limited PH food security mandate versus a holistic CS mandate and top down versus bottom up approaches. This “clash” parallels tensions described in the literature, and can thus raise the discourse beyond the personal level, instead, viewing tensions as related to limitations of institutions.

CS Health NGO, the BC Healthy Living Alliance was criticized for their lack of emphasis on community capacity building and a top down approach, and interviewees suggested that individual member agendas impacted their effectiveness.

Consultants were used significantly in the Community Food Action Initiative and the BC Healthy Living Alliance initiative development. Organizations were criticized for their reliance on consultants as: funds were diverted from CS and

community-based processes; it underscores lack of confidence in CS to do some of the work; the process was top down; it contributes to lack of sustainability and continuity; and processes don't address the questions that CS need resolved.

Feedback on Lang's triangle model of stakeholders involved in food policy
Figure 2.1 showed that the model is too simple; it does not reflect the inherent nuances associated with the reality of stakeholder relationships. A new model based on the BC situation will be proposed in Chapter 9.

Chapter Eight. **Findings IV. Consequences, Mediators and Strategic Recommendations**

"I don't know if there is a clear winner yet, that's for sure, or a clear loser." 3 PH

"It has been fascinating. And because there have been some very interesting initiatives, that sometimes have gotten a mis-appropriated, and sometimes have just disappeared. And enormous potential that hasn't quite realized yet. I don't give up all hope. I think there are still great possibilities." 27 CS

8.1 Introduction

In keeping with the research methodology, this chapter reviews: evaluative dimensions of policy analysis, examining the question of "has integration shifted discourse, practice and power?" by reviewing consequences of the integration, and then factors that support success. It also examines strategic dimensions, analyzing interviewee suggestions on strategic recommendations for the future. It is not the intention of this chapter to assess the success of programs or to determine whether or not program objectives have been met (e.g. increase of fruit and vegetable intake). This is left to program evaluations. Recommendations are based on interviewee responses, and supplemented with recommendations from program evaluation documents.

Consequences are divided into two sections - first, the impact on food security discourse and practice of food security in BC, and second, the impact of the integration on stakeholders. The first section addresses the questions: did initiatives help to institutionalize and legitimize food security in PH and within the BC government?; did initiatives support the coordination of food security efforts in BC?; was there a dilution or loss of hunger/food insecurity from the food security agenda? The second section examining stakeholders investigates: marginalization of CS voice; tensions within PH (between food security and food safety); increased awareness and awareness of competing agendas in BC; shifting roles/impact on PH Nutritionist; and the impact on food supply stakeholders.

And while factors mediating the impacts of the consequences and strategic recommendations on moving forward are integrated within sections noted above, a third segment entitled “General Mediators and Strategic Recommendations” reviews propositions not outlined in the first two sections, including “work together” and “be strategic”.

8.2 Impact on Issues

8.2.1 Impact on Issues: Did Initiatives Help to Institutionalize and Legitimize Food Security in Public Health and the British Columbia Government?

8.2.1.i Supporting Arguments

ActNow BC was explicit in bringing the mandate of health across all government Ministries. Food security was chosen as a focus by a number of ministries – in particular, Health, Agriculture, Employment and Income Assistance. The simple fact that this number of food security initiatives have been introduced supports the argument toward institutionalization of food security into PH and the provincial government.

“Food security is now ... I think it is very mainstream in Health.” 45 PH

“But food security has become more mainstream, it is in the vocabulary of most governments now. The Ministry of Health has food security as a core program in BC.” 32 PH

“So what happened was, there were a few movers and shakers back in the old days, right? And then it built and it built and it built, and then all of a sudden it was mainstream.” 27 PH

“The fact that the BC government made a commitment to invest in food security is very significant. Regionally, that made government a partner in a multi-pronged approach to addressing food security. People outside the province tell me they are very impressed with BC's active food security scene and the participation of government in it.” 4 PH

“... it has provided quite a bit of credibility within the Ministry of Health knowing that it's [food security] a core program.” 45 PH

The integration of food security into PH core programs was cited as one of the biggest successes of all of the initiatives by close to one-quarter of the

interviewees (the importance of core programs was not as significant to those outside of PH, as impacts have not yet been seen at the community level). Although there are no resources attached to core programs, the fact that it became a legislated program both provided legitimacy and assures long term continuity for PH involvement in food security.

"I think clearly one of the consequences is simply that it legitimizes food security work in health authorities. And no one will be able to back away from it or do nothing, because it is there. And it is endorsed and it is central. So that that has been very important." 23 PH

Another suggested that it provided the rationale for ongoing Community Food Action Initiative funding, which could be a benefit to the merging of the two initiatives:

"Because it used to be that the funding for the Community Food Action Initiative was going to get nixed as soon as the next flavour of the week came along which was going to be injury prevention. But when they ended up putting that as legislation, they now have core funding, so that they have got funding that is going to be ongoing for a while. So it changed the whole vista of what is happening to public health because they are mandated ... that's brought the province forward in a pretty major way." 28 CS

The Community Food Action Initiative brought resources to initiatives, which was seen as another factor signifying or bringing recognition to food security:

"I think that [the Community Food Action Initiative] has been a wonderful program for BC to be involved in. For example, the very fact that they are giving the health authorities, and it is in their base funding - 1 1/2 million dollars annually - to look specifically at food security to me is just a tremendous change from five years ago when we were working on this." 43 PH

"I think that the consequences of having Health get some dedicated resources up front to look at the Community Food Action Initiative put it on the radar screen for the health authority executives. Or at least, it put it, it highlighted it as a budget item." 30 PH

"The Community Food Action Initiative would be the primary food security program that I would say is happening with government support in the province, which is the program that is funded to increase community food security across the province." 45 PH

The Community Food Action Initiative was also credited in creating the first ongoing provincial table on food security:

“Basically what it has done is it has created more cross ministry government partnership even on food security, so for example we have other ministries sitting on the Community Food Action Initiative provincial advisory where we wouldn’t have had them before ... so many other initiatives go external to government, and this one actually pulls government along with it.” 45 PH

“Higher profile and priority for food security” was one of five impacts of the Community Food Action Initiative reported by the evaluation of the initiative (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b). These comments reflect community, regional and provincial levels.

Another change brought about as a result of the Food Security Core Program and the Community Food Action Initiative, is the hiring of food security Coordinators in all of the Regional Health Authorities.

“And we were able to get food security coordinators.” 43 PH

Other initiatives have also shown evidence of “integration” into the government.

“I should have mentioned as some of the things that made a difference in terms of putting food security on the agenda, Perry’s report [Provincial Health Officer’s report on Food] was a major factor, it gets referred to all the time.” 43 PH

The School Fruit and Vegetable program has grown in recognition within the government, and is highlighted in key provincial documents. First, it is shown as an example of “initiatives to improve childhood health using BC agriculture and food products” in “The British Columbia Agricultural Plan: Growing A Healthy Future for BC Families” (BC Ministry of Agriculture and Lands, 2008). Second, it is a recommendation for expansion in “A Strategy for Combating Childhood Obesity and Physical Inactivity in British Columbia”(Select Standing Committee on Health, 2006). Also of interest, both of these reports link local foods and health, also a key intent of the School Fruit and Vegetable program.

As noted in Chapter 5, it was also helpful that school food policy was implemented during the same time period, as food security proponents drew

upon school food policy as an example of a food security initiative that was directly related to health.

8.2.1.ii Opposing Arguments

As illustrated in Chapter 6 under State agendas, food security is not a priority in overall government policy and action. In addition, while most PH employees saw the establishment of core programs in PH as legitimizing, one CS interviewee saw it in a different light:

“The provincial government and in its fervour to destroy government altogether, and to put everything on a business footing, decided that, every department needed to re-write its mandate in terms of what was a core program. Because a core program then could be contracted. So that instead of having a regulatory relationship, the provincial government would have a contractual relationship [with the health authorities]. And then anything that wasn’t in the contract didn’t have to happen. It was part of the Campbell government’s right-wing agenda. To move government out of the business of government.” 40 CS

That aside, even within Health, the lack of understanding of the term “food security” and food security initiatives is recognized by PH employees:

“The Community Food Action Initiative, at this point I think it is very much still is out in the community at a very grass-roots level. I don’t see, being very new eyes, us making a huge amount of transformation within our own organization in terms of pushing food security or community food security as a viable health strategy within the health authorities ... I hear all the time that the leadership within health authorities don’t understand food security.” 36 PH

“Instead of having our act together on what we are talking about and being able to coherently present this to the executive in the health authorities we have got these mixed messages all over the place and I am still hearing from executive folks, food security, what the hell does that mean? ... Like it means nothing to us. And we don’t see where it fits. So that is still a huge challenge for us in the health authorities.” 30 PH

One CS interviewee suggested that the Food Security Core Program in PH was a bit like a Trojan Horse, in that Health did not really understand the breadth of what they had agreed to do (2 CS). This was rejected by PH staff (45 PH, 23 PH), noting that it was an “evidence-based process with substantial input” (45 PH). Other PH employees suggested that this lack of understanding is not

unique to food security, as many PH programs are not well understood by Regional Health Authorities.

"I think a lot of public health is a mystery to corporate health authority, and so food security is just one other weird thing that they don't really get." 27 PH

This lack of understanding of Regional Health Authority responsibility for the greater health of communities under core programs was alluded to previously in Chapter 7. Perhaps the following sentiment suggests that food security has not been put into practice within the government for a long enough period to be institutionalized.

"I don't think we have given them long enough time period to really demonstrate what sort of returns we are getting on them." 9 PH

In sum, it can be argued that these initiatives have helped food security to acquire some legitimization within PH, in some communities, and perhaps with a small government circle outside of PH. And, while Chapter 5 acknowledges that food security is not a government priority and that many agendas compete against it, competing agendas are the nature of government, and this does not necessarily preclude legitimization.

Prior to reviewing the next consequence, interviewee suggestions regarding mediators and strategic recommendations that could forward the legitimization are examined.

8.2.1.ii Mediators and Strategic Recommendations to Forward Legitimization

Formalize Structures and Relationships

"You really have to have a fairly formal structure and process in place to make that happen. Otherwise, it depends upon goodwill and sort of, accidental intersections and whatever. And it never becomes part of your real work. Your real work is in your own ministry, your own silo." 23 PH

The idea of inter-ministerial food policy or a food policy council has been promoted for years in BC (Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2004; Heart Health Coalition of British Columbia, 1997; Houghton, Kalina, Kneen, MacRae, & Riches, 1999; Provincial Health Officer, 2006).

Stakeholders were not wed to the idea of this council per se, but were committed to something formalized – be it a food policy council, select standing committee, Assistant Deputy Minister committee, secretariat, or Ministry of Food (albeit the latter could pose difficulty when food security is considered against the weightier policies of food protection). The PH Alliance was one step toward a formalized structure, so it is unfortunate that it did not endure.

“We’ve been calling repeatedly for an inter-ministerial committee with outside government representation which would look at policy, you know within and maybe external to government, so we can work on addressing some of the issues together, get at the root of the problems.” 39 CS

“There has to be a provincial roundtable. With not token players, but key players who are actually given the resources and the time to do some real strategic planning and analysis and research. And collaborative. Nobody has the answers. But collectively, there is phenomenal potential. And we will have to do it. Someone is going to have to do it.” 2 CS

Stakeholders were also clear that a council or committee would bring together the 3 sectors – government, food supply and CS, and would be both inter-ministerial and inter-sectoral:

“So, if you're going to do something on food policy in BC, you've got to bring together these three players - the public, private and community sectors. And you've got to give it some profile ... there are two challenges. We often talk about it as if they are the same but they're not. But there is inter-ministerial, and there's inter-sectoral. And they're different. Inter-ministerial is within government, and then inter-sectoral is government/private sector/community sectors, across the three sectors. And we need both ... And probably to give it a heft and weight it needs, it really needs to be chaired by a minister, and it needs to have some fairly senior leadership.” 23 PH

“I would really worry that the government is going to keep it in a separate box, so how can you talk about food security in Vancouver, without talking about planning ... And how can we talk food security without saying what does that mean when we're doing resource development and ripping up more wilderness. Like, I think, that integration, for me it always comes down to – it's the conversations. If we don't get the mix to have the conversation, then we're not going to be informed.” 13 CS

Further, interviewees were adamant about CS participation:

"That we need an inter-ministerial working committee with strong Civil Society representation that addresses issues of food policy and that looks at all policy proposals from the provincial government through a lens of food security. Whether you call this a food policy council or whatever I don't know and I don't care. But it's got to have strong Civil Society representation, and that representation has got to come out of an authentic Civil Society process. Not picking and choosing who you want." 40 CS

"The provincial food security committee would be a committee that would be truly embracing the bottom up approach." 3 PH

"You want a blend, you want it to have traction in the province, and you want it to have citizen representation, like the real people, the grassroots people. Or a third body, you know maybe you have the intermediary people, like the non-profits and then you have a grassroots body that are the ground truth-it. And then, you have to think of how to do it so it's not too onerous ... So you somehow want to structure the governance so that what's actually happening on the ground is connected as closely as possible to the government response." 25 CS

A few suggested that the Community Food Action Initiative could lead this type of effort. However, many felt that the Provincial Health Services Authority culture and mandate was too restrictive. And one suggested that this limitation was not particular to Provincial Health Services Authority:

"Like as soon as it disappears into any of the Public Health or Agriculture or Environment or Ministry of Income Assistance, you're doomed."
25 CS

They further alluded to the concept of triangulation (from the Toronto Food Policy Council) where the council or group would have different reporting mechanisms so it would not vanish if one point of contact was lost (25 CS).

Other Mediators and Recommendations

Another approach shared (24 CS, 36 PH) is to look at all policy proposals from the provincial government through food security lens, but this still requires formalization. Another suggested memorandums of agreement between different organizations (37 CS). Finally, one stressed that legislation would demonstrate the legitimization of food security.

"I really think that if food security is important, then we need to look at reflecting it in our legislation." 12 PH

Stakeholders also suggested that focus was important to facilitate and legitimize food security.

"If you make the agenda too dilute, it actually becomes a barrier ... It hasn't got the roots in the ground yet adequately for some of what it is trying to do on the periphery of the tree." 9 PH

"We were very successful through our advocacy document ... We established targets, we reviewed the best practice literature to come up with 27 clear evidence-based recommendations for action, and then did an economic analysis on it, and then went out and did the advocacy strictly on those 27 recommendations, and we really don't allow ourselves to waver away from those, because that's the area where we have the consensus." (Kupka, 2007)

"I mean the thing with food security is that it is vast. And keeping it to a manageable program that you can actually do with the resources that you have." 15 PH

"One of the big limitations is that food security is so complex." 4 PH

In addition to the acknowledged role of leadership below, the researcher suggests that the specificity of focus and outcomes is a key reason for interviewees expression of gratification with their involvement in the BC Fruit and Vegetable program:

"The one thing that I've found to be quite impressive, is working with Anne, and a little bit with some of her people ... very impressed, and very impressed at the passion. It's beyond energy, it's almost beyond passion, that I get - just with working with people which it's pretty hard not to get swept up in that and be real excited about it ... I would like to figure out how to be more involved in this." 46 Food Supply

Finally, it is evident from the quotes that interviewees use terms "food policy council", "food security policy council" inter-changeably, and further do not use the term community food security in reference to these.

8.2.2 Impact on Issues: Did Initiatives Support the Coordination of Food Security Efforts in BC?

Initiatives have increased coordination at the community level, and within the specific context of their program mandate, as will be described below.

However, numerous interviewees from both PH and CS commented on the lack of overall provincial vision or holistic approach to the initiatives.

“So there are these great initiatives, but there is not much, there is not a holistic approach to it. You know, it is not a very holistic model.” 10 CS

“They are penny ante and scattered. As you know, there is no policy, there are just piecemeal actions. They don’t have any real grounding.” 2 CS

“I really do wish someone would have a bigger picture. Maybe somebody has a vision but they can’t implement it.” 1 PH

“Suddenly they got a grant out of Health for \$2 million to set up a 6 pilot salad bar programs. Now, totally disjointed from the School Fruit and Vegetable program which I think, you know, if I was in charge, everybody would sit in the same room, and we would figure out how to build the economies of scale.” 20 State

“So I think that whole provincial piece is at the moment probably the weakest link.” 23 PH

On the positive side, while not as strategic as some would like, more food security initiatives were created as a result of provincial government staff advocating for food security initiatives under the auspices of ActNow BC. Second, initiatives created more inter-ministerial partnerships at the provincial level:

“Basically what it has done is it has created more cross ministry government partnership even on food security, so for example we have other ministries sitting on the Community Food Action Initiative provincial advisory where we wouldn’t have had them before ... so many other initiatives go external to government, and this one actually pulls government along with it.” 45 PH

Provincially, the Community Food Action Initiative also actively engages all health authorities, as the initiative is implemented by an operations committee consisting of: 2 Provincial Health Services Authority staff; Ministry of Health Nutritionist; and 5 Regional Health Authority Food Security Coordinators (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008a). Health authority representatives

work both in provincial strategies (e.g. collective evaluation) and supporting regional initiatives.

“Having the health authority operations committee ... if you look at all the other healthy eating initiatives, you don't necessarily have that much commitment by health authorities to support something like this, right?” 45 PH

Perhaps in practice, the most cross-sectoral initiative is the School Fruit and Vegetable program, which actively includes four ministries, and the food supply sector.

“There are four ministries involved in the program, and five public affairs offices [the Premier's offices] ... most of the funding for this program to date has come from Health, the bulk of it. ... Agriculture from a budget perspective it was really more in kind ... Education ... sat at the advisory committee level and Education has actually pretty much taken that lead, which is stunning to all of us [for bridge financing].” 17 Food Supply

Furthermore, it connects the demand side (school students) to the supply side of the food supply chain, (e.g. BC farms).

“[BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program] has provided new opportunities for individual producers in terms being product suppliers. So it opened up a product stream that is given some individual producers and an individual sectors some good opportunities. It has, in our view, created significantly more awareness within the school system about agriculture and its economic contribution, the importance of the industry to the province ...”. 11 Food Supply

And as mentioned earlier, it integrates stakeholders from the food supply chain who had not been previously involved.

Some amazing stuff that's going on that never would have happened. I guess, probably one of the key ones is our partnership with the Overwaitea food group. They have been an absolutely amazing partner. 17 Food Supply

Coordination was also an intent of the Cooking and Skill Building program.

“When we did the scan [of Cooking and Skill Building Programs], we did a PDF version of all the resources that are out there and send it out to the agencies along with the application form ... And just to keep up the inventory of the programs. We are going to try to do that. And have a sustainable updatable searchable list as a resource for the public and for community agencies in general.” [anonymous]

Finally, the 2005 Provincial Health Officer report “Food, Health and Well-Being” set a precedent by consolidating concerns of nutrition, health; food insecurity, food safety, food sustainability, health of the Aboriginal population in one document (2006).

Greater coordination has occurred at regional level. Regional Health Authority Food Security Coordinators contributed to coordination of food security within their regions through their work in Food Security Core Programs. This program facilitated inter-sectoral work by requiring Performance Improvement Plans which included internal Regional Health Authority food policy as one of the four key objectives, necessitating cross-departmental work. The model core program document also proposes that “food security principles need to be integrated into the food safety program, healthy living/healthy eating program and the communicable disease control program” (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006, p. 21). And indeed, in their Food Security Core Program Performance Improvement Plans, Regional Health Authorities referred to engaging more partners in the strategies or in the development of them (Fraser Health, undated; Interior Health, undated; Vancouver Island Health Authority, 2008). Reflecting community, regional and provincial levels, the Community Food Action Initiative evaluation reported “increased relationship building, networking and partnerships” as one of five key themes emerging regarding its impact (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

Greater coordination also occurred at the community level; this was central to the Community Food Action Initiative. According to the Community Food Action Initiative Proposal, “Regional Health Authorities [were to] provide funding to communities based on community plans that facilitate cooperative integrated solutions to community needs, rather than on a project-based granting application process”. PH employees involved in the Community Food Action Initiative described their visions of the initiative as a longer-term strategic initiative:

“... giving infrastructure support to some of that community work [as opposed to] pumping dollars into all of these grants [where] ... there is no sustainability.” 30 PH

“... in supporting communities to do things in a meaningful, thoughtful way, so then you’re not just grabbing initiatives left and right and thinking that that is going to solve the problem.” 45 PH

“So, we have dedicated resources to each of our communities that they get on an annual basis now. And, most of them have hired sort of a food security coordinator that links with everybody in the community. And there is a multi-sectoral committee in each community, and that has also decided where the funding was going to be spent.” 15 PH

However, as mentioned in Chapter 5 under resources, many community members commented that the Community Food Action Initiative resources were not adequate to contribute longer term to coordination at the community level.

“We had a really, really successful food forum ... there was definitely a build up within the community of awareness. And then after that the funding kind of disappeared. So in terms of the negative side of the funding is that it was there to inspire, but it wasn’t there to help continue that movement and given that the amount of funding that was available was really only enough to support something that was mostly coordinated by volunteer efforts. You know, volunteer efforts are only sustainable to a certain degree.” 10 CS

Other programs contributed to coordination of different community sectors, such as the Farmer’s Market Nutrition and Coupon program:

“Oh the connectivity. Yeah. Well, I think I was surprised at how quickly that happened. Because the project ran for 15 weeks. And we saw these connections happening between coupon recipients and vendors and markets and agencies ... happening almost immediately. Which I thought we would maybe start to see toward the end of the project. But it happened so quickly. And the business community coming in. And the restaurant industry coming in too. And that community coming in to provide support as well.” 6 CS

In sum, greater coordination of food security initiatives as a result of this integration did occur at community and regional levels. Regional coordination was supported by the PH Food Security Core Programs and the Community Food Action Initiative. Albeit not optimal, there was also some improvement in coordination at the provincial levels, primarily via the Community Food Action Initiative and the School Fruit and Vegetable programs.

8.2.2.i Mediators and Strategic Recommendations to Forward Coordination

A planned analysis and approach was the overwhelming feedback from stakeholders in both critiquing initiatives to date and recommending how to move forward.

“Concrete actions and solid analysis, that’s what I think is lacking. So, if you actually want to support local production, what kind of infrastructure is lacking now that are barriers to local production?” 29 CS

Dahlberg (2001, p. 141) states that “where we can consciously seek to change the direction of society is in the careful analysis of the types of changes that are needed and then in the development of goals and strategies that facilitate them”. Echoing this, interviewees spoke to the need for more coherent analysis and planning.

“It needs the strategic planning development that we tend to undertake in other areas.” 9 PH

“And you need to be able to chart your progress and not just leave it to something just called strategies or policies, (where) you can’t ever really assess whether you are making any progress.” 14 CS

This advice extended to policy analysis:

“Well I think that that’s again another issue of where a policy agenda was created, or a policy came about without a really good inter-sectoral analysis, right? [Meat Inspection Regulation]. So I think to me, that again is a wonderful example of where there are unintended policy, or unintended consequences to policy, and we don’t have good mechanisms [to] ... actually look at those unintended consequences to make sure that we can mitigate those unintended consequences through other policy adjustments.” 30 PH

However, when the Provincial Health Services Authority did undertake a policy analysis of food insecurity, as outlined later in the chapter, it was rejected by many at the Community Food Action Initiative table.

“The Provincial Health Services Authority went so much out on a limb, and then to have that criticized instead of embraced, it’s ... they are shooting themselves in the foot. And it makes it very easy for government not to act.” 38 CS

The idea of provincial food policy council or other ways of formalizing structures introduced above would also increase coordination.

"I think it is a recognition that the issue that we are dealing with, the issues that we are dealing which extend far beyond food security are interdisciplinary. I mean climate change is huge. And public health is huge. And you know, the government has to work in a cohesive way to address those in a joined up, what I refer to as a joined up way to address those issues. And there is a recognition in policymaking circles in government now you need to have a broad range of views in order to come up with good policy. And that you can't deliver policies that go against the realities that the industry face. So you have to all work together if you're going to get stuff done, and if you're going to be effective." 21 State

Finally, picking up on the ActNow BC approach, when asked about the future of food security integration into the provincial government, one interviewee suggested:

"I think that's what I would like to see it in the future with the integration, is that, it is somehow embedded within, kind of like what ActNow is trying to do. Like, asking every ministry, "how can you be part of this?" Like even the Ministry of Transportation. Like what kind of food facilities are available along the highways ... you know really there is a way every level of government, every ministry can be involved, and I think needs to, if we really want to see a big shift." 18 Food Supply

8.2.3 Impact on Issues: Dilution of Hunger/Food Insecurity Agenda?

"It still puzzles me particularly given that the hunger agenda was there and the next thing it's not there and it was so diluted, I am kind of wondering what happened?" 9 PH

"What about it [hunger]? It is not on the agenda." 2 CS

"I think the poverty sector has lost, yeah. I would say, yeah. I think they have gotten left behind. Or they've become split off of health in some ways." 1 PH

Food insecurity or hunger is one of the most conflicted areas in terms of scope of food security.

"Obviously the provincial [the Community Food Action Initiative] committee ... has been very divided on that. My perspective is that it [hunger] has to be part of it, and it can't be all of it." 15 PH

Tensions reflect the struggle between a focus on low income and the community based agriculture approach described by Allen and others, in Chapter 1. This tension is not unique to PH, and is experienced at all levels across Canada.

“Depending on the constellation of the people around the table at [local food policy group], we have a dynamic tension between the food/land/agriculture based representatives, and the hunger/ food access representatives ... So, there is a tension in the country, I have been involved in battles about this at the national level, as well as provincially and locally with the food bank system.”
25 CS

But while there is a sense that food insecurity or hunger is not on the agenda, others still feel that it is overemphasized:

“In the beginning, it [the Community Food Action Initiative] was food security was strictly the FAO definition, it was around ensuring people have access to sufficient food to meet their dietary needs. And it was about income in order to have access, and it was about reducing hunger.” 3 PH

In fact, some stakeholders got the sense from others that a focus on food insecurity was ill-informed:

“I get the feeling from some people that because you're focused on household and individual security, that you just don't get it.” 39 CS

8.2.3. i Is Hunger or Food Insecurity on the Agenda?

As illustrated in Table 6.3, food insecurity is incorporated in the design of most initiatives. An equity lens is included in the broad PH Core Functions Overview (BC Ministry of Health Services, 2005c) and food insecurity indicators are suggested as performance measures in the Food Security Core Program (Hollander Analytical Services Ltd, 2006). One intention of the Community Food Action Initiative is a “focus on the population living in low income” (BC Public Health Alliance on Food Security, 2005). The Provincial Health Officer report on Food, Health and Well-Being” includes the issue of food insecurity (Provincial Health Officer, 2006). And clearly, the Cooking and Skill Building program and the Farmer’s Market Nutrition and Coupon program, affiliated with the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance focus on food insecurity.

However, in practice, to what extent is food insecurity part of the initiatives? One of the overarching ActNow goals is the increase of fruit and vegetable intake by the BC population. This is seen by stakeholders as one way to indirectly address food insecurity.

"[Food insecurity] is not on the political agenda. So I think the work that is happening on the government agenda is under the guise of fruit and vegetable access." 38 CS

"I'm very honest when I say it's not socioeconomic program, but I completely see the socioeconomic benefits of this program in areas like Slokan and Deese Lake and, actually, anywhere in the province. I mean, downtown Vancouver, anywhere, Chilliwack. It doesn't matter where you go." 17 Food Supply

When asked if Regional Health Authorities are interested in hunger, one interviewee response was:

"No ... we're not really involved in addressing hunger. And we don't want to be. Ooo no. that is the social sector. [Laughs]. But doggone it. We have got to be. We have got to be concerned with malnutrition whether it's because people don't have enough food or because they have the wrong kind of food, and don't have access to a healthy diet. In fact, if you get right down to it, here is a direct quote, a direct quote from one of our senior leaders. Like right up there next to the top. 'In the health authorities, food is a luxury'." 4 PH

Alluding back to the quote above, the Community Food Action Initiative shows mixed support toward their intention of a "focus on the population living in low income" (Provincial Health Services Authority 2008). One interviewee suggested:

"We've lost the low income focus." 30 PH

Another commented:

"It is an issue that makes everybody feel a little bit individually nervous." 22 State

However, it is of interest to note that the Community Food Action Initiative evaluation states that at the community level, "access issues (including affordability, low income and poverty) were among the top food security issues

in their community ... [identifying] increased access and availability of healthy foods as one of the most important outcomes of the Community Food Action Initiative". And numerous community level initiative projects did target these areas (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b). Further, "child food insecurity" has remained in their 2008 strategic plan (Maunder & On Strategy Consulting Inc., 2007).

Moreover, the Community Food Action Initiative and Provincial Health Services Authority did take on food insecurity in "A Review Of Policy Options for Increasing Food Security and Income Security in British Columbia" (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2007b). The paper was criticized for its focus on food insecurity versus a more holistic look at food security (B. Seed, 2004-2007) and on other accounts:

"I don't think it was worth doing it [the Community Food Action Initiative policy paper]. It was too flawed. Put up backs. It pissed off the Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance and the Ministry of Health. ... so, it got those two ministries irritated with I don't know how much so, but irritated to some extent with the Community Food Action Initiative. The papers won't be read by anybody. It won't make any difference." 22 State

The Cooking and Skill Building program is explicitly targeted to working with vulnerable populations and is notably responsive to community needs and requests (Food for Kidz, 2001). On the other hand, as will be explored later, and alluded to in the Chapter 2, it is not seen by many as a valid way to approach hunger:

"I thought the cooking and skill building program wasn't the best program. I thought it got advocated by a MLA, it is like a geez, if you poor people knew how to cook better, you would be able to feed yourself. Well wow, you know. If you are working outside of the home, which is government strategy for getting people out of poverty, you've got to set the time aside to cook." 22 State

And while more accepted due to its links to local foods, the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon program is still criticized by some:

“In order for anybody who wants to access those farmers market coupons they have to commit to taking cooking classes from what I understand. And they can only get the coupons if they commit to the classes. And for a lot of people that may be great ... But for a lot of others, it's kind of an insult, saying what, you don't think I know how to cook? Or I don't have time for that.” 10 CS

Perhaps the most glaring evidence that food insecurity is not on the agenda is the omission of the expansion of the provincial school meal programs as part of this new thrust in food security.

“But the healthy eating piece has been distributed throughout all of the ministries ... And what has happened is, people's service plans and the core work they are doing has all been aligned. And the school meal program is not aligned. That is a problem. It's not included in the alignment ... I think that they are on the bottom of the barrel.” 37 CS

Further to that, the recommendation of the expansion of provincial school meal programs has even been dropped from the “Cost of Eating in BC” report recommendations in the last few years (Dietitians of Canada & Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2006).

Nonetheless, some interviewees indicated that it should be a key focus of food security work in BC:

“If we can feed kids in the morning and they do better during the daytime, they do better educationally, we will have better health outcomes. That's a simple model to work from, that's one we should at least use as the core of what we do. But we don't.” 9 PH

8.2.3. ii Barriers in Addressing Food Insecurity

There are numerous reasons why there is reluctance to including food insecurity on the agenda, some of which reflect the literature outlined in Chapter 2.

Current Approaches Not Effective and May Divert Focus

As alluded to above, there seems to be a broad agreement that the hunger issue is not well represented in these recently integrated initiatives, and where it is, is addressed in a band-aid manner;

"I think the programs that are out there to address hunger are really just band aid solutions to hunger." 3 PH

and it does not address the root causes of the problem.

"If the effort is to go and fix poverty or poor people's food buying habits with food stamps or food programs or food banks or whatever, it doesn't get at the needs to modify the food system. And it certainly isn't getting at poverty because poverty and child poverty are amenable to social policy." 27 PH

Echoing this, another suggested that other organizations have more expertise and may be more effective in social policy work.

"I am just cautious because there are so many, there are very organized advocacy groups that that is their primary role and they are very good at it. And those are the ones that are probably going to get the bang for the buck. I am not sure that community food action initiative should be putting their energies into trying to change welfare rates. I think we can, we shouldn't ignore it, and it is an elephant in the room if you don't talk about it." 26 State

Finally, there is always a concern that as the community tackles the outcomes of food insecurity, that the government will continue to ignore it.

"I think that government has acquiesced and left it to us and the non-profits to fill the gap. They don't see it as a core responsibility any longer." 19 CS

Tensions between Universal and Targeted Approaches

"When we were doing our strategic planning for the Community Food Action Initiative, the low income focus was very much lost into this broader thing of, and I think that to me is very indicative of, we don't have, we haven't had the dialogue in Public Health around universal versus targeted initiatives." 30 PH

The school meal program is an example of a program with competing notions about universal versus targeted approaches. The researcher was involved in school meal programs when they were first introduced in BC in the early 1990s. Poverty advocates were adamant regarding the stance of "right to food", where programs should be offered by the government (versus charity organizations), where programs should be universal (and participants not stigmatized) and where employment opportunities were an important part of what was built into

the program. With an increasing demand for programs, others see it differently, arguing for more food in more stomachs:

"They [school meal program] have been in a difficult position in that the program is very expensive ... most of the money is used in operating and delivering that program. So the dollars that actually end up as food is small. And so when you think of it that way, it's output has a small footprint. But the cost is big ... Because it is caught up in the employment pieces opposed to actually delivering food to hungry kids ... I think people have kind of given up on the school meal program. In the way that it is. And it is just, that it is really a dead horse really." 37 CS

Another also expressed doubt about the idea of universal school meal programs, a concern common to the critique of a social welfare state:

"I honestly don't know how I feel about universal meal programs. I know that there are groups out there that advocate for that in Canada. I worry sometimes about the school taking on too many roles, and that it takes away parental responsibility to care and nurture our children." 39 CS

Too Political

As alluded to by a stakeholder above, while proven amenable in other countries, many interviewees see that the government is currently not interested in addressing the issue of poverty:

"Our record on eradicating poverty in children is pathetic. As a nation and as a province ... One obvious barrier is simply the extent to which any government is prepared to tackle the issue of poverty. And the deeper meanings, and the deeper origins of poverty." 23 PH

"The whole poverty piece. And I think the other thing too is that, as a policymaker, I think you don't want to draw too much attention to that either. That they're not dealing with that piece. So if you put some money at it, it's never going to be, like it is not going to be enough. Like, it's not a good story to participate in." 37 CS

"I mean that's a whole other debate really, because social policy has really fallen off the political agenda." 14 CS

"And there is nobody, I guess the other thing that I find hard in BC is sort of, well, and in the ministries I am not feeling like there is a sense of community that I can work with. That I can ask questions of ... or even within government because I certainly wouldn't you have a degree of trust to ask anyone in MCFD or Ministry of Employment and Income Assistance what is going on ... I don't know who has responsibility in government for looking at kids in poverty." (Anonymous)

And in fact recommended against getting too political ...

"I see the food security people wandering into things like income supplementation and minimum wage and, there is a social advocacy environment, which food security is now getting aligned with, which is not beneficial for food security. Social agenda environment tends to be seen as a left-wing, tends to be seen associated with certain political aspirations, and certain political bodies which would be useful if they were the government. But they are not. And if they're seen as a, I mean, associated with certain political bent, and that's not the government, that's not necessarily going to get the attention that it deserves. And that's why the alignment isn't always to the benefit of food security." 9 PH

Food Insecurity and the Mainstreaming of Food Security

Some stakeholders are concerned that the politics of food insecurity could hold back the holistic food security agenda.

"Governments and policies that are creating people who are poor and not able to afford food. So if that's your only solution [increasing income assistance] and you come to talk to government, then don't want to hear it, and we don't want anything to do with food security." 45 PH

Further, the broader food security agenda may have the potential to pull the hunger agenda along with it:

"I think that once people start understanding some of those other issues and then connecting more with some of the land issues and some of those other type of issues, then I think that you bring along a little brother, the poverty piece. And eventually the timing will present itself." 28 CS

"Because it does fall off. And just to have kept food security on the agenda so it can be talked about, I've sort of tried to not talk about it as hunger." 43 PH

However, while the mainstreaming of food security may be credited with the ability to move food security forward on the government agenda, it may also be credited for the dilution of the hunger agenda.

"Well I think maybe, the food security movement is a middle-class movement. You know, it's not the movement in Canada really about poverty and low income. I think it's probably a middle-class movement one can feel good about. That sort of growing one's string of beans or having nice tomatoes to eat, or ... you know, but that's not really from my perspective, what it's all about or should be about." 14 CS

“And those that are uncomfortable working with the impoverished area can work in food security without necessarily addressing what should be the core for food security, which is all about ensuring that there is adequate food for Canadians.” 9 PH

Lack of Understanding of Links of Food Security to Food Insecurity

Stakeholders have widely differing views on the links between hunger and food insecurity and the broader food security. Some argue there is a strong link to food issues:

“One attitude to it and it’s probably a fairly strong one, is ... they are really income issues; they are not actually food issues. See I would beg to disagree, because I think that the food, to look at those issues through the lens of food, highlights so many issues that actually need to be addressed, if you want to resolve the income issue because ... food is at the heart of it in terms of social, cultural, physical health, economic sort of wellbeing, that’s why it makes it a very important sort of matter to address.” 14 CS

“One of the things that I still find peculiar is that there is a sector in health, and I am speaking provincially now, that insists on looking at food security as a poverty issue. And what are poor people going to eat instead of looking at it more globally and seeing that it has got a lot to do with the producers, the food system, and the eaters at the end, poor and not, alike. Because a lot of the diseases that we are trying to cope with now on the acute side are being driven by the food system and the food that is most easily available to us.” 27 PH

As reviewed previously, others see food insecurity as primarily a social policy issue:

“In all of the food security reports that we have written, on the first page is, food security policy and programs will do nothing to alleviate hunger. You have to either give people the means to produce their own food, or else re-establish the social safety net, even stronger than it was. So that people have adequate income to buy healthy, nutritious food. food security per se is not going to do that at all.” 2 CS

This lack of understanding of the relationship to broader society is reflected in the literature. Riches (1997) asks:

“How also do we ensure that the complex and interrelated issues of hunger and food security become the subject of informed democratic debate and are thereby publicly understood to be critical not only to the interests of the poor and vulnerable but also to society’s interest in long-term ecological and societal well-being?”

With this lack of clear understanding of how to practically address food insecurity in both a food based and determinants way, strategies can easily fall to doing something to alleviate problems for those impacted.

"I think sometimes with the poverty issue that if you think about the poverty issue and just how big a social issue that really is, you end up getting paralyzed by there is nothing I can do. So therefore those other pieces, the sustainability piece, the local gardening piece, local food and really building on that as a strength, then you can start looking at the issue down the road because those pieces in terms of sustainability and local food issues also contribute to the local food access issue. Which unrolls for people who are experiencing poverty benefit from some of those programs." 28 CS

"We're tinkling away here offering community kitchens, but in the meantime the local food source is disappearing. So, we've got to be careful we don't, you know, do the things that we are familiar with." 15 PH

Part of the dilution of food insecurity from the agenda may, reflecting the general CS issue, be due to the fact that there has been little to no representation by either those experiencing, or NGOs representing those experiencing food insecurity. As mentioned previously, no anti-poverty NGOs were involved in initial consultation for the Community Food Action Initiative, or were involved afterward. Nor were they involved in any development stages of the other initiatives.

"So the low income to me, is one voice that in the Community Food Action Initiative that we have not done a good job of addressing and figuring out how to do that." 30 PH

Another interviewee suggests the blame does not necessarily fall to PH for this:

"I think there is a conflict there is a tension here ... between poor nutrition and obesity etc. and the impact that's having on the population as a whole and the way in which issues are understood in terms low income or poverty or social exclusion. I mean, they are related but I think it, it's, well let me just say that maybe this isn't Health's fault. This is more the fault that the people in the social policy arena are not there at the table. They are not there in any informed way to debate it ...". 14 CS

Finally, one interviewee states that food insecurity has not been brought to the table in a cohesive way:

"I would say hunger's not on the agenda because I don't think that it's positioned in a very strategic way ... grass roots is bringing hunger to the table,

but nobody else has done it in a very cohesive way. To be honest with you, the only agency really that is bringing hunger to the table to the government is the 'Cost of Eating' report." 45 PH

However, the researcher argues that this reflects a much larger issue, as outlined in Chapter 2, that we do not know how to conceptually or practically bring together the issues of the food system and food insecurity in the Western world. On the other hand, lessons from the developing world, and from the recent global world food crisis quickly illustrate the links between food supply and hunger (Rocha, 2003; United Nations, 2008).

8.2.3. iii Mediators and Strategic Recommendations to Forward Food Insecurity

Interviewees suggest that ActNow BC needs to consider the issue of food insecurity.

"I think it needs to keep being there and from the provincial side I would say that there needs to be more explicit way of dealing with it. Because even if you look at ActNow, and that type of thing, that's getting a lot of press and there is lot of advertising out there for it. But I don't see the food side, the food security and food access side being there. It's saying, 'add a vegetable and fruit to your daily diet', but, well, some people can't." 16 State

"I would have as an objective, you know, the abolition of food banks by 2015. And what would actually need to happen for that to come about. That would actually pose a central question for ActNow in terms of what it's gonna do. I mean why are we recycling junk food and wasted food [food banks] and what has that got to do with this policy of making sure we have a better healthier BC community." 14 CS

Pursuant to comments in the previous section, the researcher found this stakeholder's comments on bringing hunger and local food sustainability together particularly salient.

"You'd have to see it as a common goal. You'd have to see how you're connected. That would be the very first thing you'd have to do. And so, maybe we need to spend ... maybe we need to spend time understanding that connection. Just like we've been spending time understanding food policy. We need to understand that better, about how we are disconnected." 37 CS

The researcher notes that indeed much effort was spent in the last decade on educating those working in food security on food policy at individual, institutional (e.g. schools), community and provincial levels (B. Seed, 2004-

2007). This theme of common goals will be expounded upon at the end of the chapter under mutual agendas. Another interviewee echoed this call on a more specific level:

"You know, so for the last 2 or 3 years, I kept saying the food security working group and the cost of eating report working group should actually get together and have some conversations ... doing some strategic thinking." 45 PH

Also, reflecting overall strategic recommendation themes, this interviewee stressed documenting the evidence, and linking to health and health costs.

"But yet every day they [hospitals] see the consequences of poverty carried through their doors. So why wouldn't they? It adds to their burden of disease, it adds to the cost of the system. So I think we need to do a better job of spelling out the health costs, or put it correctly, we need to do a better job of spelling out the economic costs of the health consequences of poverty." 23 PH

In looking toward solutions, two stakeholders referred to income related recommendations from Provincial Health Services Authority policy paper on food insecurity:

"I can't believe that this government can continue to be one of the few provinces that still continues to claw back the child tax benefit. That Newfoundland doesn't do that anymore. And other provinces who are economically in much more challenging positions than BC. So even the Provincial Health Services Authority and the food security paper they have come out with, and they have done some pretty objective economic analysis on some of the actions. I would be very surprised if this government didn't act, even on that one piece of the clawback." 38 CS

"Certainly the public sector has a big role in terms of income assistance. And, I mean the paper that Provincial Health Services Authority recently released is very clear on that. There are some effective ways to affect income security and income security and food security are tightly linked ... So, we need to be more interventionist in my view, in addressing income insecurity. And when you do that, then you will address food security at the same time ... just tying it (hunger) into issues of homelessness and looking at some of the strategies that are being developed around homelessness." 23 PH

Another referred back to a provincial advocate for child poverty.

"I don't know if you don't have an independent advocate reporting on child poverty how do you get a system engaged? ... I don't think it will happen because of government, I think it will happen despite government." 22 State

Food system solutions were also suggested, and echoing previous comments, one interviewee proposed that food can forward the anti-poverty agenda.

“The other important thing is, I think through food, we can actually get some the other bigger issues like poverty, sufficient income, housing also on the public agenda. So my, kind of broadly my agenda is creating more equitable societies. Creating a basic social minimum. Not creating equal societies where we dress in blue and till the soil, and get paid the same, but I think there needs to be a basic minimum for everybody. Sufficient income, sufficient food, roof over their head, and access to opportunities. I think the food helps ... gives us a very simple way to introduce that into the public discourse.” 36 PH

As was recommended for food security in general, investigating other existing, effective models was also recommended:

“Trying to work with the private sector and the community sector on how to make food affordable in low income communities. So, is it co-ops that you have to set up? Is it other systems like that?” 23 PH

“Again, BC scored the highest child poverty rates in the country again this year. We’ve got to start looking at something different, different models and I think that’s a good one. And I think that one could be ramped, partnered or whatever with a bunch of other things to put food systems together that work for people that are in disadvantaged areas ... We give out money in income assistance in one form or another. Why not give it out in real food. And BC food so you are benefiting both sides ...”. 20 State

And to “ensure that we do not have kids going to school hungry” (9 PH), akin to ActNow BC where Health became everyone’s responsibility, one stakeholder suggested:

“Like it shouldn’t be, it shouldn’t really be one person’s responsibility in the school. It should be, like that should be something that everybody is looking at ... This takes us a little bit back onto the school meal program. But that is one ministry’s and one person’s responsibility. And that is partly why it has been missed.” 37 CS

And finally, one suggested changing the focus of not only actions but also of research from supporting people in poverty to helping them get out of poverty.

“How do we support getting them out of their poverty, back into a lifestyle which is more comfortable for them? And healthier... we need to be looking strategically at what are the investments that then lead to the outcomes that we are trying to achieve. We haven’t clearly defined that ... And most of the social work is being done on, how do we get more for people who are living in poverty

... I think, at least should be explored, and perhaps some experimentation between the two approaches.” 9 PH

The next section of this chapter turns the focus back again to stakeholders. It builds on Chapters 6 and 7, examining the impact on stakeholders, and the question of - did any stakeholders within food security gain or lose ground? Mediators and strategic recommendations from interviewees related to impacts are also examined. Marginalization of CS voice and other barriers for CS food security activists are first reviewed, followed by shifting roles/impact on PH Nutritionist, impacts of food safety meat regulations, and finally the impact on food supply stakeholders.

8.3 Impact on Stakeholders

8.3.1 Impact on Stakeholders: Marginalization of Civil Society Voice?

Tensions, or a clash of cultures arising between PH and CS as a result of PH limitations were outlined in Chapter 7. This section builds upon that critique, asking – did this lead to a marginalization of CS voice? This analysis primarily examines the Community Food Action Initiative as a case example. Barriers to involvement, mediators and strategic recommendations are also reviewed.

As outlined previously, grassroots CS food security activists were key drivers in the integration of food security initiatives into PH and the BC government and were involved in provincial level consultation in the development of the Community Food Action Initiative. However, as alluded to in Chapter 7, once these programs were integrated, many argue that CS voice was restricted from substantive participation (i.e. participation at the provincial planning and development stages).

“I don’t think they’re marginalized in terms of the community action component, but maybe setting the direction and strategic policy areas, things like that, setting priorities for overall policy and some of the provincial level roles - I would say their voice is not as strong.” 41 PH

BC Food systems represented the CS voice for grassroots food security groups. While some referred more gently to “*growing pain with Civil Society involvement*” (15 PH), many, both CS and PH, spoke more bluntly of the marginalization of this CS voice.

“They [BC Food Systems] have been definitely marginalized and that is something and when I say that government is not good at talking to community, I would say, It’s not just good talking to community, that government doesn’t trust or honour community. And that’s what happened with the BC food systems network. They were brought into the conversation but their contribution wasn’t really welcome. It’s a big mistake, because I think that’s where the real food security is going to come from.” 4 PH

“And the [BC food systems] representative has never had a voice at that table.” 28 CS

“And these programs are provincially developed with a token, maybe community food security voice at the table. the Community Food Action Initiative, there is a token voice that comes. They don’t come because they are not listened to ...”. 3 PH

“There was just to me a sense of potential exclusion, you know, of some of that you know grassroots community mobilizers ... And so to me you can’t afford that kind of luxury, that kind of elitism - I don’t know. And I still find it sad that there’s maybe a feeling that in order to be credible or to have some sort of credible voice, you have to marginalize people who are in fact affected the most closely.” 41 PH

A dismissing of community priorities was also identified.

“And I think also that there was conflict between community and community priorities versus provincial strategic priorities. And I think, I will be honest, I think a bit, of dismissing of community priorities.” 6 CS

On the other side, BC Food Systems was criticized for their adversarial approach.

“And so often the approach was not constructive criticism. It ended up kicking the legs out from the initiative at the provincial level and setting up things to be adversarial ... it freaked out Provincial Health Services Authority to be honest. They really didn’t know how to handle it. And it ended up creating a bigger gap, I think. And cemented in their minds that NGOs and advocacy groups are adversarial and are not here to help us do our work. And we have just got to manage them.” 6 CS

This interviewee suggested this was consistent with many grassroots groups:

“... when they come to the table they know that we are not operating at a grassroots level. We are operating at a higher systems level where we are now looking at impacting policies. So they need to bring the knowledge of the grassroots, but be able to work at a different level. And for many very grassroots groups, that is a challenge. I see us playing a role in building that capacity as long as organizations don't come to the table saying we know it all. You just need to listen to us. My experience working with some of the grassroots groups is that that is their approach. They don't realize that they need to have different strategies and modes of operation to function at different levels. You don't go grass roots when you are in at the cabinet level.” 36 PH

Acknowledging this, one PH employee assigned blame to both sides.

“So why is it so difficult to engage CS at the provincial level? Part of the reason is the question of whom to engage. BC Food Systems Network is the obvious choice in terms of food action coalitions, but the attempt to engage them was short-lived and uncomfortable. From the perspective of the Community Food Action Initiative, the network was confrontational and intransigent. From the perspective of the network, the Community Food Action Initiative side lined and ignored them. Who's right? Both.” 4 PH

8.3.1.i Other Barriers to Civil Society Involvement: Consultation Fatigue?

As alluded to previously, consultation fatigue was identified as problematic with the CS sector.

“On the other hand we've had communities pushing back and saying, 'I have had enough, I have had enough, I have had enough'. And other communities that even go so far as to say, 'Isn't that what my tax dollar is paying you to do for me?' And I think we actually got to listen to all of them.” 9 PH

“I think that a lot of communities feel stretched. My perception is, particularly with the Community Food Action Initiative is that they felt stretched to the max.” 6 CS

However, consultation fatigue may be exacerbated when CS believes they are consulted with, but not heard,

“Because people are, the wretched people on the ground are often consulted to death. But they're taken advantage of at the same time.” 25 CS

Or if efforts are in vain.

“And just on a very mundane level, is we've now done all of these food assessment reports, the food security reports, and they're all sitting on shelves. Nobody is using any of them.” 2 CS

Moreover, as outlined earlier in the chapter, when grassroots food security CS see funding and capacity building support going everywhere but to those who were key drivers of the emergence of food security in the province, frustration is further exacerbated.

“And in that sense I would say that there needs to be a huge paradigm shift in the understanding of what it takes to kind of get any kind of food security group going. In that it shouldn't just be based on volunteer efforts. That there is an economic impact to responding to food security concerns and health concerns.”
10 CS

One stakeholder suggests that this kind of volunteer effort will not be sustained over time and should be given greater value.

“I don't know that there's a huge emerging group of cohort of volunteers coming up that has the same sense of community, responsibility, to take it on in a volunteer way. All of the services have been provided that way. So, I think there's a lack of gratitude in relation to that, you know? A lack of acknowledgment and gratitude, right? ... In ten years you're going to be begging to have that in your community and wish you had that partner with, wish you had something to support when you could have made a marginal investment to keep something alive that took a lot of energy to create ... They take a lot for granted, and I think at some point they are going to recognize that. But it will be too late to do things that way. But maybe it will force some of the policy shifts, because you won't have the people running around picking up the pieces anymore.” 41 PH

8.3.1.ii Other Barriers: Lack of, and Threats to Resourcing

“Civil Society has been knocked on its ass. We have a really weak sector. There isn't a lot of depth, there isn't a lot of money, energy, expertise... and its spread very thinly. So, I think some of the criticisms are not unfair, but certainly the reason that its spread so thinly and its weak and so few is because of consistent government policy over the last 40 years ... and the control by government of advocacy and lobbying, is so total, that it is a combination of government muting and self-censorship. Not willing to risk speaking out for fear of losing charitable status ... There is not much left of Civil Society ...”
2 CS

The difference between many Health NGOs who are funded both at the organizational and the individual level is in contrast to many CS NGOs who operate mainly on individual volunteer time. For example, the CS food security activist was the only attendee not funded by their organization to attend the Community Food Action Initiative meetings.

Was the end result a shift of power away from CS to Health? This will be explored to a greater extent in the Discussion chapter. But certainly some felt that Health was taking over food security from CS activists who were integral both to food security in BC, and in the integration into PH.

“So, the other part is, from the grassroots, what I hear is that health is colonizing community food security.” 3 PH

This respondent acknowledged that feeling, yet also stated that PH was abiding by the resolve of CS toward integration.

“There was the feeling of disempowerment from people who had made it happen but weren’t in government ... I think there has been a real key shift. Whenever a movement gets sort of mainstreamed if you will, sort of, you know, it was really the non-profits with individual actors from within the health authorities, but really the non-profits that have been pushing this along. I think that there is, and it becomes mainstreamed, it really changes the nature and focus of the debate. And I did feel that from some of the people from say the BC food systems network, and some of the other players that had been involved for a long time, and it is all of a sudden who are you and you are way too bureaucratic. Well yes, we are a bureaucracy. And that is what you asked us to do.” 15 PH

This shift paralleled a shift of power and participation away from the Community Nutritionists, as will be explored in the next section.

8.3.1.iii Mediators and Strategic Recommendations to Forward Civil Society Food Security Activist Engagement

In looking forward, one PH respondent suggested:

“That’s history. Why is it important now that Civil Society be engaged at the provincial level? There are too many critical issues on the table for a provincial body to presume it can adequately address them without the participation of those who know those issues most intimately.” 4 PH

And some suggested that food security coordinators act as mediators between PH and CS.

“... people like Cathryn Wellner, she really acts as a bridge in that way. So she is the person who is trying to educate and convince folks, administrative folks within the interior health and help shift in that culture within Interior Health. In terms of what that means in regards to involving community and involving communities.” 28 CS

PH stakeholders had recommendations regarding CS engagement:

“But I think also Civil Society has a lot of ability or potential that it is not using. But it's not organized. It is not organized potential and I think it requires leadership.” 1 PH

However, as outlined in Chapter 6, resourcing to CS – outside of Health NGOs – was minimal, and where it occurred at the regional or community level, did not provide enough continuity for building CS capacity. One PH stakeholder articulated the need to build levels of capacity from the bottom up, then to have space for them to participate at higher levels.

“... these dollars should be going to communities to further their work. And their work, their voice should be coming into a very strong regional voice. And then that one, when it's really strong should be going to the next level really strong. Instead of us going up to the province and you know getting things, but not having space for that voice to come up because we haven't built each of those levels.” 3 PH

CS capacity building was suggested in numerous program reports, often in the form of a recommendation for community coordinators; in the case of the School Fruit and Vegetable program incentives were recommended to promote parent advisory committee participation (Krueger & Associates, 2005; Morrison, 2008; Naylor & Bridgewater, 2007; Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

The concept of CS engagement was a central theme when stakeholders were asked “should food security be further integrated into government agenda?” While most said yes, some had a qualified yes.

“On the one hand that it's, I can't see anything but good that the issue gets a profile because if you don't embed it into the regulatory structures, you get no traction. The problem is, while that's happening, it seems that the voices of the real people are marginalized or not heard. And there's got to be a way to do that better.” 35 CS

"I think, my standard answer, it depends. It depends how it is done. Lots of brilliant programs and policies just are perverted through the implementation. So it depends how it is implemented ... it has happened time and time again [in BC] ... There is always a reliance on champions. You get the right person in the right place at the right time, and marvelous things can be done. And you get a federal civil servant and a provincial civil servant acting as a block to funds flowing. And nothing happens. Or negative things happen."

13 CS

"I wouldn't want to see it integrated anymore without more substantial work to supporting the grassroots. And that middle layer (e.g. PH Alliance on food security) ... making sure that we acknowledged and prioritized the foundational pieces that got it going, and didn't neglect those." 3 PH

"I think there is a real need to keep a good balance between what goes on in the community and what goes on in government. I think it's really important to make sure that the government is not racing ahead on it independent of what's going on in the community. So this is why, I'm very, I like that we managed to get core services at the same time as the Community Food Action Initiative. Because I think that either one without the other is much less than half. And I think that's probably true provincially too." 15 PH

Some PH workers also had recommendations directed to CS regarding their participation. They suggested that advocacy to government needs to have boundaries, and that once food security was more entrenched in PH, the advocacy role needed to adapt:

"This is a very important role that Civil Society has in advocating to government, but, you know, it could be a, if they don't advocate in a helpful way, that government has a long memory ... Being kind to government. It's a very self-serving comment, but when Civil Society is critical of government ... I get tired... You know, I'm a good person...". 43 PH

"The ebb and flow of grassroots movements once they do get a bit of pickup from government, it really changes the nature of the debate. And I think it changes the skill sets required to move it along as well. And so you need to keep that follow of history, but you also change the type of people that you need ... in the non-profit world, when you're campaigning for something you can advocate on behalf, you know you have got a certain range of action. And it is a lot more, I don't mean confrontational, but you are a lot more assertive ... Once you are within a health authority or any other big government, it is really a process of very fine finessing of the opportunities and strengths within the organization." 15 PH

However, on the other hand, one suggested government can use the challenge:

"It was like, oh, dismissive. Because other people around the table can be more careful now, because nobody can really be an advocate, but this is in-

house, we are just government to government so we can say anything right? But you actually bring people into the table who asked the hard questions and who say government is responsible for a lot of these issues, makes people feel uncomfortable. So we just as soon, not make them too welcome.” 4 PH

8.3.2 Impact on Stakeholders: Impact on the Role of Community Nutritionist in Food Security

As outlined in Chapter 5, Community Nutritionists and the Community Nutritionists’ Council of BC were key drivers in the integration of food security into PH and the government.

“I think that just the vision of the Community Nutritionists to move forward on this agenda was absolutely key.” 43 PH

In fact, their leadership role at the genesis was even acknowledged by some as a possible hindrance:

“If there's a barrier it probably would, one that's coming to my mind is the champions to date have been the nutritionists. And others have supported them in their efforts, but I haven't seen champions coming out of other sectors.” 9 PH

However, this integration has impacted the role of the Community Nutritionist in food security.

“The Public Health Nutritionists have definitely, I tried to say that earlier, the fragmentation of that level has again, struggling, they're struggling. I don't know if they've lost, but they're struggling.” 3 PH

“We have lost the power of that nutritionist group.” 27 PH

Why did this occur? One interviewee commented an internal issue of the “fatigue and burn-out” (40 CS) of the Community Nutritionists’ Council food security committee as a result of the core program advocacy process. Next, Food Security Coordinators were hired by the Regional Health Authorities, rendering food security no longer the specific domain of the Nutritionists as it had been. Two interviewees vaguely alluded to the question of territoriality by Nutritionists (4 PH, 30 PH). Regardless, delineating program responsibility

between the two programs at the Regional Health Authority level remains an issue.

"I had a hard time, and I have not had any easy answers on it, and I don't think there are, but where does my role supporting food security, like where does nutrition begin and end. Because I am not responsible, I don't have any sort of, there is a whole set of nutritionists that are out there doing amazing things - including food security. And then there is me supporting food security and what is that? How do you manage that interface. It is very complex."15 PH

This can also be viewed as marginalization from the process with which Nutritionists had been intimately involved. Despite being founding members of the PH Alliance on Food Security, the Community Nutritionist Council was not represented at the provincial level in any of the food security initiatives – including the Community Food Action Initiative or the BC Healthy Living Alliance. Their association and advocacy for the CS food security activists (as alluded to previously) may also have contributed to tensions within PH.

Further, the post-research elimination of a Community Nutrition department by the largest Regional Health Authorities suggests another possibility regarding their loss of status. Did Nutrition - through the food security agenda, including community development and policy work - stray too far from its traditional clinical routes, to then be labelled as generic work that any health professional could perform?

"Food security maybe a good way of clumping together a piece of the community nutrition agenda which was lost and didn't have a home ... what else got thrown into the pot of food security, and it may be fair to say that Community Nutritionists were headed that way, in that direction ... Many of the other fringe areas that were occurring in community nutrition all of a sudden became core into food security. And that may be have been a good thing or it may not have been a good thing. I'll leave it up to you to decide." 9 PH

At the institutional level, this is compounded by the division of PH from the Province and its integration into Regional Health Authorities, which have primarily a health care mandate. Like other PH professionals, Nutritionists struggle to keep a prevention mandate when Regional Health Authorities require individual health outcomes. Community Nutritionists in BC consistently struggle with making their role understandable to Health administrators.

“Four and a half years later, I had a conversation with a guy, who is now the manager of the area and he is still asking what the program looks like. And that maybe a credit to the nutritionists, in the sense that, they are a highly professional individuals there. They see it as a profession, they treat it as a profession and they all have their own opinions about what's important and about what's not important.” 9 PH

With the separation from the Province, the Nutritionists have also suffered from a severance from the Provincial Nutritionists. In the past, the Provincial Nutritionists were able to provide significant leadership to the Nutritionists. Some believe they have been discouraged from this role due to the new roles and relationships between the Ministry of Health and the Regional Health Authorities (B. Seed, 2004-2007). This question of the reduced status of Community Nutritionists in BC cannot be answered by this research, and requires more study. However, it would be wrong to assume that even if the proposal above was true that the only direction forward for Nutritionists is moving back to more traditional nutrition education roots.

“I see some very bright well trained, powerful individuals not, being saddled with a mandate that doesn't fit.” 27 PH

8.3.3 Impact on Stakeholders: Tensions Resulting from the Meat Inspection Regulation

There are many consequences of the launching of the Meat Inspection Regulation (introduced in Chapter 1). This review does not purport to look at these, but only how they impacted initiatives under review.

8.3.3.i Tension within Public Health

The introduction of new provincial Meat Inspection Regulation created a tension between small farmers and processors and the PH Environmental Health Officers (also referred to below as Health Inspectors). Smaller operators argue that the regulations: “do not actually address the issues of concern; threaten local food security; and, impede their economic viability” (BC Food Systems Network Society, 2004). Thus, grassroots CS food security activists

lobbied against the regulations. Then, as Community Nutritionists and Food Security Coordinators within PH work with these local groups, the tension spread internally within PH - between Health Officers and some Regional Health Authority Nutritionists and Coordinators who empathized with the point of view of CS and small farmers and processors.

“They [PH staff] are pretty frustrated by the fact that they have been promoting ActNow and the Community Food Action Initiative all of this stuff around local community food security. And yet they run up against regulations like the meat inspection regulation ... so they are deeply frustrated by the fact that sort of a larger policy, a more weighty policy, is having exactly the opposite effects that they are trying to manifest through population health initiative.” 29 CS

Tensions arose within PH as it became apparent that the two groups were giving mixed messages about the new regulations.

“I'm thinking of the meat regulations when they came down ... what happens now, is that often times we have the health authorities speaking negatively about something that the health authorities are enforcing. That is not a good message for anybody. That doesn't get us anywhere. And if we are spending our time doing that, we're really not spending our time getting the right stuff done.” 12 PH

“Because actually what they're actually talking about is contrary to government policy. I mean government has set the policy, we are going to have a single consistent meat system, meat safety system. Well, it doesn't do us any good if one side is trying to battle that. Throw up obstacles or whatever.” 33 PH

This tension has occurred at a smaller level for years (e.g. the encouragement of food sharing in preschools as nutrition education vs. food safety risks) (B. Seed, 2004-2007). However, it has been exacerbated more recently due to the greater push by CS toward local food systems in contrast to a parallel shift of the global food system paradigm toward a more globalized, centralized system. Dahlberg refers to this as “a dominant trend toward standardization and uniformity in the global industrial food system” (Dahlberg, 2001, p. 139). He suggests that this standardization makes societies more structurally simple than previous ones. Moreover, he states that it is easier for one power to dominate a simple system than a complex one “which may be one reason corporations and governments seek to simplify systems though the imposition

of standards and regulations that simplify the sectors and systems they are seeking to influence and/or dominate” (Dahlberg, 2001, p. 140).

“And so long as the food system is set up in such a way that fewer the barriers, the fewer the regulations, the easier it is for them to operate however it is they want to operate. Which typically means being as homogenous as they can across borders and having one facility making the exact same thing for the rest of the continent, that’s a huge power.” 10 CS

One interviewee suggested that the shift in the food safety paradigm is part of this global food system trend:

“And the reason for the federal harmonization [of food safety standards] and being able to say that Canada has a single national standard is because we need to be able to say to the Americans, partly so they leave the border open for our carcasses to go down there and get processed, that we have a single national food safety standard. Or they will use it to choke off our export trade.” 25 CS

While the meat regulations were modified after the research period, this tension is still playing out, and has propelled the understanding of the need for dialogue between the two programs.

“You know, it might start happening moreso now only because food safety and food security is starting to butt heads ... I think what it does is it creates a table to sit at.” 45 PH

“I don’t know to what extent it has facilitated any kind of dialogue with the inspectors ... but I have heard health authorities talk about the need to bring together the healthy living, sort of healthy eating piece that is to say and food security and food safety as more of a package. And that is a good thing.” 23 PH

8.3.3.ii Greater Realization of Competing Agendas

Albeit not a consequence of food security initiatives per se, the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation during the thrust of food security initiatives increased stakeholder awareness of the competing government agendas.

“I do think that maybe there is an understanding that government arms are working in contradiction to each other. I think that’s becoming, so I think food secure meat regulations has to really brought ... I think, we look at that and go ‘this is a great learning opportunity for all of us’, right?” 13 CS

"Obviously, the government isn't totally engaged in food security because it passed the meat inspection regulation, which aren't, you know, which are seen and to some degree are, have a negative impact on it." 12 PH

"If there's a lesson to learn, it's that the hypocrisy [of competing agendas] is not going to help any food security issue at all." 10 CS

Stakeholders suggested that we need to have a greater awareness of larger and competing agendas.

"We need to keep our heads up, and not get so, just caught up in our little life that, it's like this has been coming down for how long, and all of a sudden were all going waa waa." 13 CS

8.3.3.iii Civil Society Confidence in Government Leadership in Food Security Agenda

It is difficult to say if this was a result of the Meat Inspection Regulation per se. Nonetheless, it was alluded to when the question of government leadership in food security was broached.

"I'm not sure I trust the government agenda to have food security. Only if it was a well informed agenda. One of the things that's come up repeatedly in the context of the Meat Inspection Regulation is that they should be scale appropriate requirements ...". 29 CS

"Yeah, I don't think the province would know how to work with a group, say in Nelson who says, 'ok, listen, here are our issues. We can't access local meat anymore. We want to be able to create a local dairy here. We are going to make a case for it', you know. And I don't think the state's in any position right now to understand that." 10 CS

Further to this, this interviewee suggested that health promotion versus the health protection role in the consequences of PH involvement in food security cannot be distinguished from one another.

"What I have seen, I don't think you can limit it. So we have already sort of, we just take as described the problems with their involvement in meat And what seems to be this need to focus on global, the need to focus on big, need to focus on things that are really you know, just ecologically unsustainable ... And there may even be a growing, there certainly is in the professional bodies, a recognition of the relationship between local food and freshness, local food and sustainability, local food and culture, and that all of these things are sort of in a mix of community and public health." 24 CS

8.3.3.iv Strategic Recommendations to Mediate Tensions from the Introduction of Meat Inspection Regulation

The need for resolution was identified by many in PH.

“The first thing is to - we need dialogue between health protection and health promotion. We need that tension resolved.” 27 PH

Many people spoke about the importance of building individual relationships, which as alluded to previously, became more difficult in the regionalization and the consequent restructuring of PH where it often physically separated health promotion and protection staff.

“One of the priority areas for me in the next while is building our relationship and our capacity to work with environmental health.” 15 PH

“I think that you do need to do one on one within each of the health authorities. You need to build relationships in those areas. And I think even just building the relationships will take a lot of it a long way forward ... And I think for them to get together to look at an endpoint ... And not to get together because those darn health inspectors aren't being reasonable or easy to get along with. Or those darn security people are putting the wrong messages out ... you know, the real truth of the matter is, is once you know somebody as a person, how do you deal with them is entirely different.” 12 PH

Next, working on common goals was another suggestion toward resolving the tensions.

“Protection and population health, maybe we ... need to go like this [fit together like a puzzle]. You know how a puzzle has those little pieces that stick out? Sometimes I think that the reason we have trouble finding a common path is we are trying to put those little pieces that stick out together. But we have to put the little pieces that stick out into the little holes. [Laughs] And if we can find out where those places are ...”. 4 PH

Areas of common goals were articulated by two PH interviewees:

“I think the common goal [between food security and food safety], what people would like to see is British Columbia have an integrated agriculture policy so to the greatest extent possible British Columbia is as self-sufficient as it can be in the production of food for our citizens ... selling food to the public, that it will meet both the nutritional and industry economic viability side of things. With again, these food safety requirements.” 33 PH

"Well, the transportation issue is, the whole greenhouse gas, and climate change. I think that's a key one. I think community kitchens and supporting community kitchens, supporting education around the safe production and processing of local foods, we have certainly have worked hard with our food reclamation and our food redistribution networks so, you know, the food banks when they originated, we worked closely with them around what they could accept as donations, what was kind of borderline, and what was on the no go list. It's been a fairly positive relationship." 32 PH

The integration of the two is required,

"Food safety is mentioned once in a while [in the Community Food Action Initiative], but then it is not. I mean it needs to be, it needs to be an integral component of every step. And I don't necessarily see that happening. And it isn't until these conflicts occur, like big bad food safety is trying to shut down farmers markets, or they're trying to destroy the BC animal production industry." 33 PH

Although how to achieve this with a severe power imbalance between a historic and heavily legislated role of food protection and the new younger sibling of food security will be difficult. While many from food security might agree that food security theoretically encompasses food safety, it would likely not be palatable to Environmental Health Protection.

"So truly, a true food security policy is actually an over-arching concept that should incorporate healthy eating and food safety." 23 PH

8.3.4 Impact on Stakeholders: Impact on Food Supply Stakeholders

Stakeholders commented generally about farmers in BC and food security, albeit not in relation to the particular initiatives under study.

"Farmers have been losing, I don't think that the food security agenda has helped farmers. They were going to lose anyway, but now they have one more ... if they do stay in business, they have to be environmentally benign or positive, now they have to have a health and social justice agenda. So I think the farmers, it has made more difficult. But it would have been difficult anyway." 2 CS

"At the farmer end, I think, they kind of feel beleaguered. I think they are, they are not as involved, as they should be, because, I don't see, I don't think they're at the point of thinking they can affect change." 18 Food Supply

As alluded to previously, the only programs that involve the food supply sector are the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Program and the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon Program. Both of these programs link local foods to health, and the latter also to food insecurity – not always an easy link to make in developed countries.

The evaluation of the BC Farmer's Market program (Coyne and Associates Ltd., 2007) showed some impact from the initiative on the food supply sector:

"Farmers at participating markets perceived a moderate increase in the sales of their products [as a result of the coupon program] and generally experienced their role in the community in new and positive ways."

The latter part of the statement above refers to their role in working with low income participants in communities. However, this was not necessarily of financial benefit to the farmers.

"While this outcome [not returning coupons, or farmers adding value to coupons] was ... viewed as an added value to the program, it is important to consider whether it may also conflict with other desired outcomes. Specifically, the project seeks to support local BC farmers and this outcome, while generous, puts some of the burden for supporting the program on people who are also intended to benefit from it." (Coyne and Associates Ltd., 2007)

Finally, program administrators felt validated in the way the funding was administered by the government.

"The only unexpected was to have the money just dropped in our lap within a week was what was most unexpected. It was like whoa, and then it was here's the cheque. It wasn't like, alright, you do the work and then we'll give you the money. It was like, here's the money folks, you go do your job. And that for me, was like a real step of faith that they took. They had faith that we would be able to do what we said we were going to do. And that just in itself is worth everything." 44 Food Supply

The evaluation of the School Fruit and Vegetable Program pilot showed that children increased their fruit and vegetable consumption according to several measures (Naylor & Bridgewater, undated). A subsequent evaluation of a further roll out showed that teachers, administrators, parent advisory

committees, suppliers and distributors were satisfied with the program (Naylor & Bridgewater, 2007). In addition,

“... suppliers and distributors believed that the program would have benefits for both the health and agriculture sector and for their businesses. The program extended their reach to their target market, created efficiencies, networked them with like-minded businesses and enhanced the potential of their business.” (Naylor & Bridgewater, 2007)

This was also iterated by interviewees:

“Oh, and this one [School Fruit and Vegetable Program] is really significant. I think so. Moreso than anything else. The rest are if you like, I guess you could connect it to niche marketing opportunities with chefs or maybe with established retail, organic retailers ... I think it is the largest thing that I have personally ever been involved in that covers such a broad scope. I think it is really, it is definitely the most positive thing that we have been involved in.”
7 Food Supply

“BC School Fruit and Vegetable Snack Program, in my mind, have such huge potential. Because by requiring or needing to have a food supply, kind of a year round food supply, to be able to supply that many people at schools with fruits and vegetables, you are bringing it into the community. And by having a partner like Save-On Foods, in this case, in other words, really tackling the distribution question, which in my mind has been the difficulty all these years, we are solving one of those challenging problems. So the food supply is there for the community.” 18 Food Supply

The potential impact on BC agriculture is significant.

“The potential for BC agriculture is huge. I mean, at full ramp out ... it is one million pieces of the serving per week. And that is just in the school. And you know that a lot of those kids go home and get their parents to buy the same product. And it is just a recognition that wow, BC grows great apples. Or BC grows great cucumbers. You can't buy this program. You can't buy the amount of advertising that that would do, with any amount of money. So, to get people thinking about agriculture again in BC, it is huge.” 20 State

However, actual numbers or impact was not reported in the evaluation (Naylor & Bridgewater, 2007). Another interviewee speculated on the potential impact for the wholesaler and key distributor involved in the program.

“Obviously they gain something from this too. I mean they are, if you like, the father of this because they are the ones that get the exposure, right? Save on foods [Overwaitea] is because they are going to be the good boys, if you like, on the block. Because this is what we are doing to get this thing going. And it is

going to pay back. Big time for them ... that is a payback for all of us again. For us, for Overwaitea and for us too. Because now, where did those organic plums come from? Or where did those organic apples come from?"
7 Food Supply

One of the only criticisms of this program was their focus on BC produce versus produce local to the communities where the program was delivered (10 CS, 27 PH). However, addressing these concerns were not seen as feasible in the short term.

"I guess the farm community participation has been you know, initially we heard from local schools saying why can't we get this from a local supplier? It is just totally impossible because of the volumes required. And the cost. I mean centralized distribution is the only thing we can make this economic. If we have to pick up from 45 different farms, you know, enough for one school here and one school there, it is just not viable." 20 State

"Probably the major criticism, because the school fruit and vegetable program doesn't get very many detractors, is why do we have to use a provincial source of food, why can't we use our local, local? ... How can we meet the food safety concerns, and still have the local ... as it evolves and we will probably come up with more local solutions ...". 43 PH

Related to this concern, there was an example within the program where a smaller player could not compete with the efficiency of a larger player. The farmer/processor who created the prototype of bagged, sliced apples used in the initial phases of the program lost out in the bidding process after the first two years (8 Food Supply).

"I guess the RFP process, when you are driven strictly by price, yeah, somebody got left out, the company that started the whole bagged apple thing got beat out by Sun Rich ... [they] couldn't carry a company simply because they were the first guys in ... every contract that goes out now has to be open tendered unless there is some real reason that [they] can't take it, it is lowest price." 20 State

Echoing this, one stakeholder suggested that the growth of the program, while positive overall, increases competition.

"From my perspective the only negative ... As this gets larger, were going to have maybe three or four competitors going after this business, so it just becomes far more ... it works for the program because I think, I don't think competition is bad, because I think it makes you better, and I think it ensures that they get, for the good of the program, it means that they get the right, they

get the right suppliers. But it definitely makes things more challenging for suppliers the mark up for competition there.” 46 Food Supply

This left a relatively small processor substantially invested, with a significantly smaller market.

“You build a small line and you kind of grow from there, and you package it by hand and then you do little deals here and there just to get a little bit more feedback and then you realize you’re not just cost effective to package it by hand, so you have to automate, which now, now you are talking substantial capital investment. But you have to go there otherwise your economics don’t make any sense. So, you don’t go for the, you know 2 million dollar plant, but you’re probably up to the 1 million dollar plant and you’re still not on a large scale.” 8 Food Supply

The competitive bidding process to control prices creating a lack of guaranteed markets for local food supply stakeholders is both a conundrum and a barrier for participation in programs.

It is interesting to note that while many interviewees observe that the food supply chain exerts too much control over food security in BC,

“And so when I look at who has the most power, I start to look more at the supply chain as having the most power. That their interests now determine how the food system looks.” 10 CS

they are minimally involved in the BC food security “movement”.

“We certainly haven’t seen the big production, big distribution groups coming to the table on food security. And yet aren’t they the biggest player in this business?” 9 PH

Why is this the case? While this research does not examine this in detail, some reasons are suggested by interviewees.

8.3.1 Barriers to Food Supply Involvement in Food Security Initiatives

First and foremost, the interest of the food security movement in BC has focused more on creating an “alternate” food system as a response to the industrialized food system. Food supply stakeholders that have been involved have generally been smaller operations whose interests are similar to many of

the grassroots CS NGOs, such as environmental health and local food promotion. These smaller processors, organic farmers, etc., can be philosophically and operationally in conflict with the interests of the larger operations and the regulations that govern them as evidenced through the BC Meat Inspection Regulation.

"I have been working on very local community food security projects, and linking them with provincial and national programs. But I realized that about 2 ½ years ago, that I was working on less than 2% of the food system. The mainstream food system was feeding 98% of the people. And the corporations were changing, faster than we were. And Wal-Mart going organic, McDonalds doing recycling of their materials and Costco doing some interesting stuff. So at that point I decided I needed to move into mainstream. Try and influence the mainstream food systems rather than deal with micro-level enterprises and producers." 2 CS

Further, as suggested throughout this research, finding dovetailing interests between health, social justice and the food supply can sometimes be challenging in both theory and practice (P. Allen, 2004; Pelletier, et al., 2003; Pothukuchi, 2004). Nonetheless, this food supply stakeholder suggested that many goals coincide.

"But, you know their overall objective of focusing on food security focusing on local food production, connecting consumers to producers is, we have the same objective, or the same goal. We just don't necessarily agree ... probably on things like supply management." 11 Food Supply

And again, the barrier of competing agendas was raised:

"... it seems to me that Health and certainly, when he [Dr. Perry Kendall] goes, he takes more of a role of supporting local agriculture than the agriculture people do. Which is a bit of a surprise and it certainly happens when you go to national meetings. That piece there, when you don't have the ministries that are supporting that ...". 43 PH

"Retailers, we probably have, they are important partners as well. We have probably got some differences with them in terms of, they talk the talk, but they don't always walk the walk in terms of being, they say they are very supportive of local food production and putting an emphasis on local products and everything like that, but they are driven by ... And it is a result of consolidation in the retail sector. Where buying decisions are made in Calgary and local stores don't have a control. So you look at other entities like Choices or Thrifty's foods or something like that that have more local autonomy in terms of

independent grocery chains that are probably better [in terms of supporting local foods].” 11 Food Supply

Finally, the sense that all industry is “bad” is another barrier to food supply involvement in food security initiatives.

“I think people have sort of like this hard-line thing that the industry is bad. And when you do that, you're not really going to make progress ... It's like you automatically cast someone or an organization a certain way just because of preconceived ideas and not You know and then also if we really want to see change in the food that we eat or how it's distributed, we do have to engage the people that supply it. You can't ignore them and just say they are bad. They have to be included and I think some of the earlier attempts at food policy failed because they were not included or didn't find a way of working together.” 18 Food Supply

Therefore, some stakeholders are concerned that credibility could be impacted (3 PH, 38 CS). Representation was also identified as an issue, as it was previously in regards to CS representation on government committees. In reference to a specific committee, one asked:

“Why would we have just one industry represented?” 38 CS

8.3.2 Mediators and Strategic Recommendations for Integrating the Food Supply Sector

Integrating the food supply sector to a greater degree was recommended.

“How about integration into the private sector agenda? ... Clearly, you don't bring the private sector groups that are antithetical to everything you are trying to achieve. So you probably don't bring in the Coca-Colas or whatever, but, or maybe the cereal manufacturers ... You find the good guys and you work with them. And in a sense you reward them for being good.” 23 PH

And in “finding the good guys” another interviewee suggested the creation of “guiding principles” to work with the private sector (38 CS). Further, as the stakeholders working in school food policy in BC have worked with some food supply stakeholders, it might be beneficial to speak with those involved to seek out their “lessons learned”, or to involve them in the processes.

As alluded to earlier in the chapter, the Farmer's Market Nutrition and Coupon program created many new partnerships and linkages. And in fact, the evaluation for this program recommended "to continue to enhance the capacity of [the program] to play a leadership role in projects that link local food production with food security for low-income families" (Coyne and Associates Ltd., 2007). Interviewee comments and the range of participants in the School Fruit and Vegetable program illustrated the development of partnerships for that program as well. Both of these programs had defined objectives, creating common agendas to work toward. Perhaps had the Agri-Food Partners in Healthy Eating had a common agenda to work together on, they may have been more successful.

Regarding the inclusion of more partners from the food supply, the researcher speculates that the integration missed an opportunity in not including the BC Dairy Foundation. While some dismiss them for marketing a single commodity, over the last decades they have demonstrated their commitment and leadership in the area of local foods from their leadership in creating the BC Food Guide in the early 1990s, to their participation in school food policy at provincial and local levels. As well as bringing a food supply lens to the discussions, they also hold the potential to connect other food supply stakeholders.

Finally, the importance of transparent agendas and broad understandings was further understood by the researcher when she asked about the inclusion of milk in the Fruit and Vegetable program.

"I think the government would have some issues with farmers, with dairy farmers, with quota³⁰ complaining that they were poor. There are some differences in agriculture here." 18 Food Supply

And particularly because the food supply is an area less understood by PH, bringing transparent agendas and understandings to the table could be an essential step in the formation of partnerships.

³⁰ Reference to Canadian Dairy Industry Supply Management System

8.4 General Mediators and Strategic Recommendations

Mediators and strategic recommendations have been presented under the categories in the previous section, as well as alluded to in previous chapters. They are summarized below in Table 8.1 under two main themes which emerged from the data. These themes are: “work together”/partnerships and “be strategic”. Consistent with the rest of the findings, “agendas” also emerged as a key focus, under both of these themes. Mutual agendas will be examined under “work together” and alignment of agendas will be explored under “be strategic”. Strategic recommendations originate from interviewees. Some interviewee recommendations from the findings will be built upon by adding in suppositions garnered from the review of literature, and the analysis of the research (e.g. work toward the marriage of health and agriculture).

Table 8.1: Summary of Strategic Recommendations and Chapter of Origin

Strategic Recommendation: Working Together	Chapter
Formalize structures and relationships	8.2
Build capacity in Civil Society to enable more effective participation	8.3
Soften Civil Society advocacy approach	8.3
Ease tensions between Public Health Food Security and Food Protection	8.3
Develop mutual agendas	8.4
Define and delineate roles	7,8.4
Build personal relationships	8.4
Study barriers, mediators and stakeholder limitations and agendas	7,8.4
Strategic Recommendation: Be Strategic	
Focus, do not dilute	8.2
Planned analysis and approach	8.2
Study links between food security and food insecurity	8.2
Cost analysis on health impacts of food insecurity	8.2
Research other effective models	8.2
Increase awareness of competing agendas and “bigger picture”	8.3
Align with other agendas (government, organizational, media, public) and establish areas of “buy-in”	6,8.4
Build evidence based outcomes and stories	7,8.3
Work toward marriage of Health and Agriculture	2,8.3
Do not link to political agendas	8.4
Nurture champions and leadership	5,8.4
Establish long term commitment to funding and initiatives	6,8.4
Create, integrate, and analyze policy options	1-8

8.4.1 Work Together

“Well, I think the lesson that we’ve learned is that everybody has a role. That’s the lesson we have learned, right? That these big issues can’t be solved by one sector ... That if any of us are trying to solve the problem independently, we’re not going to get there.” 37 CS

One stakeholder explored the idea of what working together means:

“I think they [Public Health] like to partner with the voluntary sector but that’s different than supporting the voluntary sector ... to partner is just to go to meetings with, and maybe share your information, and just be happy that the voluntary sector is out there doing this work. Whereas I think supporting it is actually contributing more concretely and some resourcing to that.” 41 PH

And in regards to partnerships with CS, another continued,

“There’s genuine partnerships, and participation and consultation and incorporation of ideas into government policy, and then there is co-optation.” 2 CS

One common suggestion in any type of partnership is that stakeholders are clear about the extent of their partnership. Health Canada's draft Population Health Template (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001) outlines a continuum of public involvement, from communication to consultation, to citizen engagement. From the information explored in Chapter 7 and 8, it seems that discontent from the CS food security activists involved in the Community Food Action Initiative stemmed from their expectation that they would be at the engagement end of the continuum in contrast to their perception of themselves at the communication end.

And finally, another echoes the importance examining how to most effectively work together.

"Even though we could say that it would be better if people talked more to each other, we need to look at the processes of that, we can't just say that you should talk more to one another. We have to look at how does that happen effectively. Deconstruct." 37 CS

8.4.1.i Mutual Agendas

"People at the table all have different agendas, but as long as you can all agree on a common language and a common vision, you move the whole agenda forward and food security is no different than any other broad comprehensive topic area." 45 PH

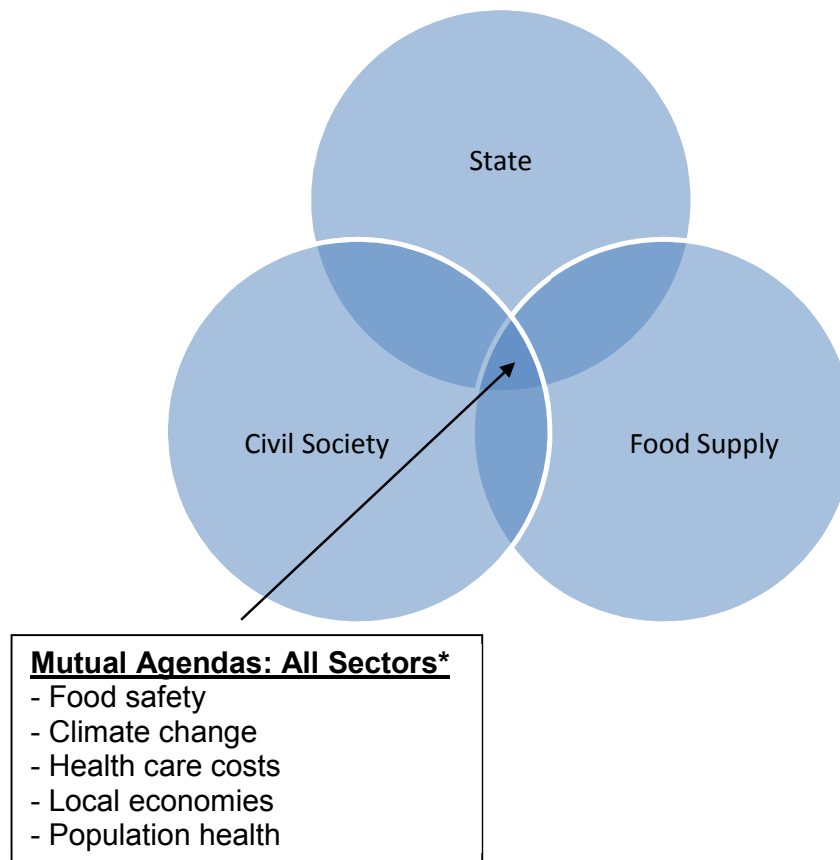
Determining mutual agendas emerged as a key theme in the findings:

"In order to bring the silos as pieces of the puzzle around the table, you have to have something compelling enough in the middle of the table to make it worth it." 25 CS

"This circle gets bigger and bigger, and then this circle gets bigger and bigger and the same thing with this circle getting bigger and bigger. Then recognizing when the overlap is happening, and how they can capitalize on that overlap." 28 CS

The previous response prompted the following figure, which will be expanded upon in the discussion. Mutual agendas are drawn from Chapter 6 – 8.

Figure 8.1: Mutual Food Security Agendas of Stakeholders



** Sectors are heterogeneous, so more mutual agendas exist between stakeholders within sectors (e.g. local food sustainability is priority for organic farmers, local food activists and some in Ministry of Agriculture). Mutual agendas are also difficult to articulate due to competing agendas. For individual stakeholder agendas, see Figure 6.1.*

As an accepted PH approach, many interviewees believe that the government has a role in creating mandates and directives (which can also be considered agendas).

"There is a role that the state plays there in saying thou shalt ... live the healthier." 35 CS

And further that when funding accompanies a mandate, it becomes stronger.

"I think it has to have come from money being put on the table ... it has to have come from it being a priority in the government. Because it trickles down. With money, then we have to talk. Because you now have actually a means to do it." 42 PH

And many agreed that support for mandates depends on whether people agree with the intent or implementation of them.

“And I guess other mediating factors are like directives. Thou shalt work together for example ... Some mediating factors are welcome, some of them are not.” 1 PH

“Well, it is beautiful when they mandate something that you agree with. It's not so good when you don't agree with it.” 34 State

The use of mutual agendas as a strategy to problem solving was suggested:

“... just to even internally apply a health promotion approach of enabling and starting where people are at. And basic conflict management principles of starting where there's agreement.” 38 CS

“... that discussion between health protection and health promotion. And how do we mandate that? I think we'd have to have someone like Perry Kendall say, you must do this.” 27 PH

Programs can be also considered an articulation of mutual agendas. First, as outlined previously, the mandate of core programs created the requirement for PH to work in food security, creating an agenda of food security for the Regional Health Authorities. Next, the Premier's directive was helpful in promoting the School Fruit and Vegetable Snack program and the Healthy School Food Policy.

“And I think that nobody was really willing to put the bull's-eye on their chest and go to the treasury Board [for more funding for Fruit and Vegetable program], until a couple of politicians said, I don't know which part of the Premier's commitment you didn't understand.” 17 Food Supply

“We were, our vending contracts were up, and we were going to phase in the school guidelines. That's what we were going to use. I don't know how, why, probably just because it was getting the media buzz, North Americans and are getting fatter, the whole trans-fat area, all of that stuff was getting a lot of press ... Anyway, then, one day Gordon Campbell decides, bless his heart, that he is going to put the vending guidelines into every government place – and we were like, yes! And also, we were a little bit ahead. We were already going that way.” 34 State

However, even when mutual agendas exist, strategies to reach them will still differ (e.g. food safety is a priority for all 3 stakeholders, but approaches differ). Nonetheless, mutual agendas can be one step forward. Further to this theme,

the alignment with existing agendas is further explored below under “Be Strategic”.

Several other topics emerged under the theme of “work together”.

8.4.1.ii Define and Delineate Roles

As evidenced thus far, stakeholders agree that food security efforts must be inter-sectoral and inter-ministerial. In practice, defining roles in these partnerships is not always simple; as outlined in Chapter 7, PH suffered from lack of clarity in their role in the Community Food Action Initiative. PH stakeholders agreed that acknowledging the big picture and taking one piece of the pie (i.e. role definition and delineation) is the way to move forward.

“You have to bite off one piece at a time. I think we have acknowledged elephant in the room, and now I think what we need to do is learn ways that we can actually get people to bite off that?? ... pieces of the elephant. And I think we’ve done a good job on the elephant, now it will be interesting to see how the rest of it actually ... and how strategic everybody else is going to be on it, right?” 45 PH

“There is a need for all of these different sectors to be involved with food security. And I think the trick for when you’re doing it within public health is you focus on what can public health do most. So rather than me trying to focus all of my time to change agriculture, I need to focus on some of the things closer to home like environmental health, first. Like, you just kind of be a bit more strategic into what is my role knowing that there are others and they have the other roles. And that they are complementary. They shouldn’t be the same.” 15 PH

Perhaps this recommendation limits a holistic approach - and the researcher did observe some resistance to this (B. Seed, 2004-2007). However, it is difficult to realize another approach, particularly if an initiative is driven (and measured) by one discipline (e.g. PH).

8.4.1.iii Build Personal Relationships

While tensions occurred between PH Food Protection and Food Security, stakeholders were clear that this extends beyond this group.

“Part of the problem in BC is something I hesitate to write down because of my high regard for the people involved and the fact that this is still a pretty small group of people who really do need to figure out how to work better together.

But if we're ever to get to the point where we can all sit down together and make a difference, we have to find a way around the road blocks.” 4 PH

Many interviewees referred to skills, abilities or attitudes of specific individuals as a barrier.

“Maybe this one individual will move on and we will have someone who gets it. And it is amazing how much difference one person can make, I have to say for good or ill.” 25 CS

For example, as iterated below, individual passion has been a driver in the integration, but it also has its down sides.

“People are so passionate about it that they don't necessarily put [food security] forward strategically.” 45 PH

“I guess another limitation that is a bit of a double edge sword and, but the area of food security is so valued based, and so fuelled by passion and by personal interests, that it is a strength because that passion really propels people to move forward around the issue and take action. But, it can be a limitation because if taken too far, it can, there is a risk that it almost invalidates ... if it gets too much for example into the grey literature, and it's based on good intentions, strong beliefs, but the evidence hasn't gotten caught up, that's a little bit, it's a little bit of a risk. It's a little bit of a limitation. So how to harness, but not control that passion to direct it in a way so it can continue to move forward.” 38 CS

Relationship building is essential to both conflict resolution and in overall collaboration, and several interviewees referred to the importance of it (13 CS; 27 PH; 21 State). Building relationships can temper understandings of other stakeholder's opinions and also enable feedback to be given in a constructive way.

The recommendation of “study barriers, mediator and stakeholder limitations and agendas” (which comes not from the stakeholders, but emerged as an overall theme from the analysis) is also salient to relationship building. It can help people separate individual grievances from institutional limitations and thus avoiding erroneous assumptions (consistently observed throughout the research period (B. Seed, 2004-2007)).

This CS interviewee suggests there is open-ness to relationship building in BC:

“Well I think that when I compare it to say, Ontario or Alberta, like there’s a really different culture in BC and so one of the real strengths in terms of B.C. is that somehow people are actually talking to each other. Like who knows how that happened. So, I say that if there is anything that we could sort of bottle, and sort of say, here’s the solution, then I’d say it’s that people are willing to talk to other people, and they are willing to work with other people, and they’re even willing to work with people that they know that they disagree with.”
28 CS

8.4.2 Be Strategic

As outlined previously in the chapter, stakeholders stressed that the food security initiatives suffered from a lack of coordination and strategic analysis and direction.

“It needs the strategic planning development that we tend to undertake in other areas.” 9 PH

“While I was excited about the province taking it on, I never really had the foresight to think about what would that mean, and do we have a strategy in place to deal with, even just bringing them up to speed before they take it on.”
3 PH

8.4.2.i Alignment with Existing Agendas

One thrust associated with the theme “be strategic” is to looking for opportunities to link food security to other agendas and establishing areas of “buy-in”. Related to this, building on existing programs was also mentioned by numerous stakeholders (3PH, 4PH, 39 CS, 40 CS), and was also identified as an effective intervention in the BC Healthy Living Alliance “Winning Legacy” report. Linking agendas focused more on government agendas, but also on organizational, media and public agendas.

“I think it’s a matter of the linkage, showing the linkages, and showing maybe you don’t, I hate to use the word spin or package, but it is sometimes the packaging, because you have to kind of go with the opportunities. Instead of looking at problems, looking at it as opportunities ...”. 26 State

“We need to do a Wayne Roberts³¹ inside of each health authorities. We need to figure out, what is it that will trigger a response and get people on board. So we’ve got a watch for those moments and those priorities and study Wayne Roberts because that’s what he does so well ... Yeah, he figures out, what’s

³¹ Establishing areas of “buy in” was a consistent theme when Wayne Roberts - past coordinator of the Toronto Food Policy Council – lectured on successes for local food policy councils. (B. Seed, 2004-2007)

your issue? And what is it you are responsible for? 'So you are the municipality, you are responsible for zoning bylaws etc. Okay, let's not talk to you about food security. Let's talk to you about zoning'." 4 PH

"We just look for opportunities through those who are already changing to help them change and work out a direction." 2 CS

Echoing this, the concept of positioning food security to meet other agendas was brought forward.

"If you want to get food security into other ministries in government, you have to figure out what they have control over that impacts it, and find a champion who can bring the action forward. Instead of positioning it as food security." 45 PH

"Understanding that the government wasn't ready to look at income supports, but maybe they were ready to look at food supports. So just really understanding what was possible and not possible at that particular time." 43 PH

Considering the limitations outlined throughout the thesis on the definition and title of food security and the concept of positioning food security opportunistically, it may behoove stakeholders to be open to modifying the title and definition of food security. However to date, despite vigorous discussion, stakeholders have not been able to come up with a more suitable name (B. Seed, 2004-2007). This respondent suggests the title is not important, as long as the issues remain on the agenda.

"I think we are going to have to look at the specificity and whether the title of food security hold the test of time or not. I don't think it is relevant. It's like the title of Public Health. You can try to take away, it's still going to be there. The issues are still there." 9 PH

The concept of positioning suggests we need to spend time analyzing opportunities and linkages.

"How do you recognize where those opportunities are and create a communication network that allows people to be in touch with what is going on enough to sort of be able to capitalize on when those opportunities come up?" 28 CS

8.4.2.ii Alignment with Provincial Government Agendas

As outlined in Chapter 6, health care costs and Health are provincial government priorities. This includes a specific focus on Aboriginal health, and the ActNow BC objectives of increasing fruit and vegetable intake and decreasing obesity. And within PH, food safety is a priority.

“... everything I have been saying is showing that the efforts that we are making right now on this project are driven through Health. And I don't think the food safety piece is a crock at all ... I expect that the way we address it is going to be driven by Health. And so it is huge.” 25 CS

Climate change is another provincial government priority. In their stated commitment to issues of climate change, in 2008, the BC Ministry of Environment, Climate Change Secretariat released a “Climate Change Plan” (BC Ministry of Environment & Climate Action Secretariat, 2008). Although it included nothing explicit related to the food supply, stakeholders in support of local food sustainability see the potential for a greater thrust under the Provincial agenda.

“Climate change is going to be the next big, is the next big push for community food security, and I love it because it's outside of health, like climate change is ... everybody has to take a piece of climate change and health needs to sign on.” 3 PH

Although integrated efforts toward climate change are seen as a gap,

“There is not to, in my view there is not the kind of large-scale meaningful involvement, integration of agriculture, and food and health and climate change that is required.” 24 CS

numerous stakeholders pointed to the emerging agenda of the integration of health and climate change.

“And right now ... [the opportunity] is greening healthcare.” 4 PH

The first provincial conference on “Greening Health Care” was held in Fraser Health (Regional Health Authority) in 2007. A key driver of this conference was cost savings related to hospital waste (B. Seed, 2004-2007). This theme is echoed by this respondent.

"I think everything we put forward should be all green initiatives. That is where we are going to try and cut our money. Either recoup or cut." 34 State

Finally, "Link the Community Food Action Initiative into the bigger picture and advocate for inter-ministerial policy related to food security at the provincial and national levels" is recommended in the evaluation for the initiative (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

8.4.2.iii Alignment within Public Health and Health

"It needs to be aligned with the rest of the Public Health agenda, if that's where it belongs." 9 PH

The need for greater interconnection between food security and food safety was outlined above. In addition, many suggested linking the Food Security Core Program to other core programs such as healthy communities, healthy living and food safety. This was seen as important for both practical, resource-based reasons as well as for creating a more cohesive approach by decreasing the silos.

"... if we continue the way that we are now, addressing each core function separately, that will burn out the health authority they will back off ... we looked at those 21 core functions and we said, we can't isolate food security from these other things. And so, I think that potentially what will happen is that it will be possible to look at them in a more cohesive and collaborative way. ... So if we are really talking about healthy eating, healthy living, healthy communities all of this, you know these things, and food safety, why are we talking about it in all this separate way? If we're really trying, through these core functions to be less stove piped, then maybe in the core functions process we need to be less stove piped." 4 PH

"It's very interesting. I mean I'm not really up to date on how the core programs are being implemented and how on a health authority level they are trying to integrate between food security, food safety, healthy living and are those the only three that have healthy eating as their base? So even that there are three separate pieces is interesting isn't it? It just shows that it becomes hard to integrate." 41 PH

The importance of linking food security to Health agendas was alluded to previously, as well as the integration into broader Health – beyond PH:

“... nobody else in Health knows anything that is going on in ActNow except for us. And that’s not good. Because, there are lots of things that are happening in the acute care sector, for example, hospital, you know, food service. Could we have a food security, much more food security focus? Or we could be thinking about how you know, purchase products in the, for our big hospitals and other facilities. So I think we need to spend more time making sure that the other parts of Health, Ministry of Health, know about it.” 43 PH

“So you need to look at food security within all of the work you do ... So let's look at food security when you are talking food safety. Let's talk about food security when you are doing emergency planning. Let's talk food security when you are procuring your food products for all of your institutions.” 36 PH

In moving forward in food security, one stakeholder suggested a revitalization of food security under the banner of core programs:

“Once the core programs are a little bit further along, and maybe it could be timed with your presenting your findings here, maybe some kind of a consensus conference, and a renewal of direction. ... my sense is that we're at the point where we need to pull it together and re-launch. And we may be able to use the core program for that.” 27 PH

In linking with PH, as identified earlier, there is a need to define evidence based outcomes.

“... [food security] needs the clarity of definition of what its outcomes are that it is trying to achieve and to begin to measure the effectiveness of its programs. It needs research, which is also sorely lacking.” 9 PH

The Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty also identified this need by recommending to: “develop tools that adequately assess the health and cultural risks associated with developments in traditional harvesting areas; conduct research on the health risks associated with eating contaminated traditional foods”; and incorporate Indigenous food sovereignty strategy into regional health plans (Morrison, 2008).

And this respondent suggests that the only way to effectively do this is in an interdisciplinary way.

“We don't really have the resources to do that for eight core functions. So if we can work with other partners ... For instance, if you are talking about evidence-based work and you are talking about a health authority, you can't just look at process outcomes. You can't just say okay we've got x number of communities

who now have the food assessments or whatever. That's really not going to be a good enough measure over the long term. But we also know, that not one of these core programs on its own, and maybe not even all of them together, can make the claim that they are the reason that health outcomes have improved. So we'd better be, within public health, looking at how together we can work on the improvement of the health of our communities.” 4 PH

However, some stakeholders stressed that evidence is most effective when balanced with stories.

“I think a recommendation for the future is to keep telling stories ... Our politicians, they're people. They listen to stories of people ... that help interpret the facts. So those were good things. And, you know, what are the impacts of the programs. And how valuable they have been to folks.” 43 PH

8.4.2.iv Alignment with Organizational, Public, Private and Media

Agendas

This stakeholder suggested the importance of being aware of, and linking into broader food security agendas in the communities.

“So some places are, some big enough places like universities, not here in BC but in other places, yeah like Toronto are saying, ‘Well, we want to source local food’. Well, I mean universities are big entities, like thousands of people, right? And so that's when a distributor will wake up and pay attention and say how are we going to do that?” 18 Food Supply

Numerous stakeholders spoke of the need for and opportunity in integrating the private sector – both the food supply sector and beyond.

“But, it's like ignore them at our peril [private sector and board of trade].” 38 CS

“I think that government is slower to change than the private sector. So, they are wedded to the neoliberal agenda, and they are wedded to it while more progressive businesses are saying that was yesterday, and we have to move on.” 2 CS

In integrating the food supply sector and Health, this stakeholder echoes calls from the 1930s of the “marriage of health and agriculture”.

“And the Danish Agriculture Council, which was a private sector council in fact, said, well, we just think it out. We could make as much money selling a pound

of fatty meat as we could selling a pound of lean meat. We can make profit on either. We don't really care. But we look better selling the lean meat. So, they were doing it for marketing reasons ... I think we really need to be much more thoughtful and imaginative about how you engage the private sector to get healthy food and local food and organic food and safe food and all of the rest of it." 23 PH

Acknowledging the power of the media, these stakeholders suggested consideration be given on how to get onto the media agenda.

"And I do, from my sort of media perspective, believe that the media holds much more power, than really all of these groups combined." 10 CS

"People working at the grassroots level have to think of unique and, innovative ways to get those issues on the public agenda." 19 CS

The Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty identified the development of a media campaign as a strategy (Morrison, 2008).

And finally, this respondent commented on food security as a part of the public's agenda of health.

"The health piece in B.C. has been for some time and increasingly, health is the biggest ministry, the biggest issue, and it is going to get bigger because of the boomers. So, if you are looking at who is going to have a significant influence on the direction of policy and what happens policy wise to our agriculture, I think Tim Lang's analysis is pretty smart where he says that we have to actually re-define farmers as providers of health products, health benefits and ecological goods and services. Because the public mind goes to health. And you know, we hear people talking about that. Like, the customers have health concerns. Food is clearly understood by more and more and more people as related to health and all of the cancer body burden stuff says the same thing." 25 CS

8.4.2.v Do Not Link to Political Agendas

While linking to agendas was seen as important, many commented to the contrary in relation to political agendas.

"I guess the piece for me is that it doesn't become political. It becomes embedded. I would hate to see something like this become political. So that the shift in governments mean that some programs are cut and some are not. So that it's almost becomes embedded as a value in community that we say, you know, people have a right to education, but they also have a right to eat." 35 CS

"I think the other lesson for me is that you have somehow got to take politics out of this stuff. Politics shouldn't be anywhere near this. This is good news, this is about the right thing to do. And politics is permeated down so far into a lot of this stuff that it is very difficult to do things anymore. Because, politicians are afraid to make a step because they're going to get assassinated in the news one way or another, you know. And that's just not right ... This should not be about partisan politics. This should be about doing the right thing." 20 State

However, as alluded to above, and echoed below, food security has become political to some degree.

"It could be to the detriment if in this environment we had major philosophical swing that began to align food security with a left-wing political agenda. And all of a sudden it becomes a political interpretation of what food security is about and then ... that happened with public health." 9 PH

"During estimates this year, the NDP jumped up and down in the aisle screaming at the minister 'what are you going to do about food security'? So it's an NDP issue and he's a Liberal cabinet minister. And so, what's he going to do? So the statement is that food security and has never been a priority for this ministry and still isn't ... it's an NDP issue. It's an NDP owned issue." 21 State

Although the latter comments focus more on food insecurity, nonetheless it is important to acknowledge the interpretation of food security.

8.4.2.vi Other Strategic Recommendations

Other recommendations related to "be strategic" were noted previously in the thesis. The role of champions was noted in the review of the drivers of the integration; champions must be continued to be nurtured, along with leadership. This was also iterated in the Community Food Action Initiative evaluation: "continue to work with partners in both government and the

community to identify champions and organizations to support the Community Food Action Initiative projects” (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

“It needs some leadership, in an environment where we have been challenged to actually get leadership. Ok, we’ve had stars, but we haven’t necessarily had stars with anybody following them.” 9 PH

And as introduced in Chapter 6 under funding limitations, in order to be effective, initiatives and funding must be long term.

“It’s the old non-profit conundrum of - you want to do what you’re doing, so you do it, but can you really keep doing it for how long? And if you’re always struggling and scraping along, can you do it as effectively as you could be doing it? And obviously not. So we want to get more of the - the recommendation I guess would be make it a real commitment. Fund the thing, say for three years - you’re to be going, you’re set, you’re not going to be scrambling every three months worrying about if you’re still here or you got to look for other jobs because you’ve got mouths to feed and such.” 13 CS

“The ActNow piece. But the concern is that - is that sustained? Will that be sustained?” 35 CS

Increasing sustainability of funding is also a recommendation of the Community Food Action Initiative evaluation: “consider multi-year funding for projects to ensure the Community Food Action Initiative objectives can be met” (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b).

Finally, policy was a consistent theme throughout the analysis. Policy work is foundational to Food Security Core Program, the Community Food Action Initiative, BC Healthy Living Alliance initiatives and indirectly through the School Fruit and Vegetable program. It also emerged in the interviews in the identification of competing policies, alignment of agendas, provincial food policy, food policy councils and policy options.

“It’s important to know that there are some thought through policy options on the table. Be nice if everyone knew about them too. If that was information that was public and people knew what choices were being made with what trade-offs, and that generally doesn’t happen. And I think that would be really a useful thing.” 41 PH

"It's a Ministry of Agriculture and Lands policy. Oh wow I could have so much fun. We need to have a stronger formal relationship with Ministry of Health and Ministry of the Environment. We need to have an explicit food security policy... that looks at the access part, the first Nations part, and the capacity to feed ourselves part. And we need to put resources financial and staff into that."
21 State

8.5 Summary and Conclusions

In investigating evaluative dimensions of policy analysis, consequences of the integration, mediating factors and interviewee suggestions on strategic recommendations were examined.

The impact on food security discourse and practice in BC was first analyzed. These initiatives have helped food security to acquire some legitimization; competing agendas are extensive but do not preclude legitimization. Strategic recommendations for moving forward include: formalize structures and relationships (e.g. food policy council), and to be focused and not dilute issues to be addressed. While still acknowledged as lacking a holistic plan, some provincial coordination was achieved through the Community Food Action Initiative and the School Fruit and Vegetable program, and a greater coordination of food security initiatives at the regional and community levels resulted from this integration. A planned analysis and approach, including more policy analysis, was the key recommendation in advancing coordination.

Food insecurity, or hunger, is included only weakly in the agenda, and when included is addressed through alleviation. Interviewees believe the responsibility for it has been downloaded to CS and to lower levels of government. They also see that a broader food security agenda has the potential to both pave the way for hunger to be incorporated and to deter from the issue. Barriers to inclusion are: fear that current approaches are not effective and may divert focus from valid solutions and lead to downloading; a tension between universal and targeted approaches; that it is perceived as "too political" for governments to take responsibility and may further take away from the mainstreaming of food security; and a lack of understanding between food

security and food insecurity. Recommendation for moving the agenda forward include: studying the links between food security and food insecurity; completing cost analysis on health impacts of food insecurity; following through with recommendations from existing reports, and researching other effective models.

An examination of the impact on stakeholders included an examination of the power relationships between stakeholders. While the Community Food Action Initiative was one of the few programs with the intent to involve CS, CS was marginalized from substantive participation in the provincial planning and development stages of initiatives. Some responsibility was cast on grassroots CS for this due to their confrontational approach. Interviewees also see a lack of acknowledgement of the importance of CS contribution, predicting this could be a concern regarding future volunteerism. Barriers identified in CS involvement in food security initiatives were consultation fatigue (or frustration with type of consultation), and a lack of, or threats to resources. Some suggested that Food Security Coordinators acted as mediators between Regional Health Authorities and CS. More support by the government to build CS capacity was recommended, which would further enable their effective participation. The need to increase CS participation as a requirement for further integration of food security into the government was identified. Finally, PH suggested that CS soften their advocacy approach to increase effectiveness.

While the causes require further investigation, Community Nutritionists were marginalized to some degree after the integration. Also requiring more study is the fit of PH Nutrition within the health care system and within food security.

The introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation created a tension between Food Protection and some PH Food Security Coordinators and Nutritionists, who supported CS and small processor perspectives. Resolution of this tension was identified as a priority for many in PH. This introduction increased stakeholder awareness of the competing government agendas. It also emphasized the importance of policy analysis prior to implementation, and

possibly contributed to a decreased confidence in government's ability to lead a food security agenda.

Few programs involved food supply stakeholders. The BC School Fruit and Vegetable program has the potential to increase demand for BC produce, but if the markets are not guaranteed due to competition or otherwise, it is difficult for smaller operators to participate. Several barriers to food supply participation were identified. These include: inclination to think that all industry is bad and will therefore tarnish credibility and related tendency to work with smaller stakeholders whose goals are more in line with food security goals, and finally the competing agendas of producing food for export (often associated with greater financial benefit and larger operations) versus food production for local consumption. Interviewees recommended involvement of more food supply stakeholders – which could provide a food supply lens, and also lead to links with more partners. As PH stakeholders do not have a terrific understanding of the food supply system, a greater knowledge would be beneficial if more partnerships are formed. Guidelines to work with the private sector could also prove valuable.

Finally, “work together” and “be strategic” emerged as themes from the interviewee comments on mediators and strategic recommendations. Develop mutual agendas, define and delineate roles, build personal relationships and study barriers, mediators and stakeholder limitations and agendas were identified under “work together”. Recommendations under “be strategic” included: align with other agendas (government, organizational, media, public) and establish areas of “buy-in”; build evidence based outcomes and stories; work toward the marriage of Health and Agriculture; do not link to political agendas; nurture champions and leadership; establish long term commitment to funding and initiatives; and finally, create, integrate, and analyze policy options.

Chapter Nine. Discussion

9.1 Introduction

This research embarked on a policy analysis, asking the question “how has food security been operationalized and translated into practice in PH and other provincial government programs in British Columbia”? The findings chapters approached this question according to categories in the Ritchie and Spencer framework for policy analysis; key themes are highlighted in the summary below under section 9.2. This discussion chapter then builds on these findings, analyzing them through the lens of the three research objectives. First, findings are summarized in Figure 9.1, which fulfils the first research objective, “developing a policy map of key players, processes and drivers of food security in BC PH and partner initiatives”. The remaining two objectives are then addressed; first, if and how the integration of food security has shifted discourses, practice and power; and, second, implications for stakeholders, including recommendations for facilitating CS engagement.

The impacts of the integration on food security discourse, practice and power are reviewed from the perspectives of the three sectors – CS, PH, and the food supply sector. In examining this, some background on the macro Canadian socio-political context is interjected into the discussion - with a focus on pluralization in Canada and the movement toward regulatory pluralism and cultural recognition. The researcher suggests that this integration in BC is occurring within this corresponding, shifting political paradigm; thus, power shifts experienced in this integration are examined in sections 9.3 through the lens of this development. This moves this analysis beyond the decentralized/ centralized discourse described throughout the thesis. This paradigm provides a context to both reflect back on the integration and also for consideration of implications for moving forward.

The examination of the final objective, looking at implications for stakeholders, builds upon the two themes from interviewee strategic recommendations in

Chapter 8 - “working together” and “being strategic”. Implications for “working together” are also examined through the lens of the societal policy shift toward regulatory pluralism and reconfiguration. Integrated throughout this chapter are reflections on how the BC findings support, refute and contribute to academic research and how they relate to the broader socio-political context.

Finally, the chapter turns to a brief discussion of how individual program evaluations contributed to the research, equally, how the research can contribute to future program evaluations; it concludes by summarizing core arguments of the thesis.

9.2 Findings Summary

Findings have been presented and summarized in Chapters 5-8. Rather than reiterating these summaries here, key themes which emerged from the findings are highlighted. As in the Findings chapters, these will be categorized according to the Ritchie and Spencer policy framework concepts of: Contextual, Diagnostic, Evaluative and Strategic. These are also summarized in Table 9.1 below.

Table 9.1: Research Objectives and Questions Matched to Policy Analysis Concepts and Core Findings: Summary

Research Objectives	Research Questions (Questions are numbered below according to order asked in interview)	Policy Analysis Concepts (Ritchie and Spencer classification in italics)	Core Findings
A. Develop a policy map of key players, processes and drivers of food security in BC PH and partner initiatives.	1. What food security initiatives and policies have emerged in BC PH (at Ministry and Regional Health Authority levels)? What food security initiatives (that partner with PH) have emerged within other Ministries, other levels of government and organizations affiliated with gov't?	<i>Contextual</i> - Scope of public policy - Policy instruments (or means)	See Figure 1.1
	3a. What are the relationships between each of the sectors/players? Are there mediating factors or players between the sectors/players?	<i>Contextual</i> (Mapping of:) - Actors - Institutions	- Lang's triangle is too crude. See Figure 9.1 for policy map. - PH agendas and limitations determined approaches to food security.
	4a. What are the macro and micro-level drivers that comprise the policy environment?	<i>Diagnostic</i> - Context; Drivers	- PH has re-emerged as a driver in food security and food policy.
B. Describe if and how the integration of food security has shifted the discourse, practice and power base of food security in BC.	2. What are the consequences and limitations of policies, programs and stakeholders to date? Has PH engaged CS? (see 3.b for core finding)	<i>Evaluative</i> - Actors - Institutions - Distributional dimensions (who and what benefits and losses; consequences)	- Public Health limitations in food security led to a clash of cultures with civil society. - Tensions emerged within PH between Food Security and Food Protection as a result of competing agendas.
	3b. Have any stakeholders (or areas of focus) lost or gained in the integration?	<i>Evaluative</i> - Distributional dimensions (who and what benefits and losses; consequences)	- Marginalization of CS and Community Nutritionist stakeholders from the provincial level restricts the broad source of expertise which informed the integration and the political base for further integration. - Dilution/loss of hunger from agenda. - Legitimization of food security agenda.

	4b. What are the facilitators and barriers in the integration of food security into BC PH and related provincial government programs?	<i>Evaluative</i> - What supports or limits success or failure?	- Competing agendas highlighted the relative insignificance of food security initiatives.
C. What are the implications for the role of PH in food security in BC?	5. What lessons can be learned from these processes and what strategic recommendations can be made that support future progress in achieving food security in BC?	<i>Strategic</i>	<i>See also Table 8.1</i> 1. "Work Together": i) Develop mutual agendas. ii) Define and delineate roles. iii) Build civil society capacity to facilitate greater participation. iv) Study barriers, mediators and stakeholder limitations and agendas. v) Conflict between stakeholders over approaches to food insecurity/hunger requires a commitment from a broader range of players to analyze, study and discuss workable responses that move beyond alleviation. 2. "Be More Strategic": i) Align and position food security agendas with current BC government agendas, and include corresponding policy alternatives (but do not link to political agendas). ii) Need comprehensive plans and formalized structures. iii) Build evidence based outcomes and stories. iv) Work toward the marriage of Health and Agriculture. v) Establish long term commitment to funding and initiatives.

In first looking to “diagnostic” factors (drivers), it is apparent that while CS was the driver for food security in BC, PH was the key policy driver in BC for the integration of food security into the government. This occurred through PH’s role in content (obesity, diabetes and funding crisis), process (PH renewal, ActNow BC, PH Core Programs) and players (Community Nutritionists, Dr. Trevor Hancock, etc.). Relating to the literature, the positioning of health at the forefront of the discourse is a departure from the agricultural origins of community food security in the US (P. Allen, 2004). This also illustrates the concept of the re-emergence of food security in PH proposed in the introductory chapters, and the notion of health as a key policy driver for food security. These latter concepts will be further elucidated later in chapter.

Contextual analysis of stakeholders, institutions and policy instruments showed agendas emerging as a theme. Stakeholder feedback supports the concept that interests and agendas which stakeholders bring to the table are more relevant than their definition of food security. PH held the bulk of power in this integration. They had the most solid government mandate for food security health promotion initiatives, and funding for these initiatives originated primarily from PH and ActNow BC. Agendas within and between sectors were not homogeneous. Competing agendas within the government also arose as a distinct theme. Recognition of this was highlighted with the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation. Food security policies were seen to compete with “weightier” agendas such as food safety and trade. The recognition of competing policies also raised the concern that food security initiatives could be deemed “make work” projects, or government downloading.

The evaluative perspective looks to some of the more interesting questions posed by the research – the consequences of the integration. Did the discourse, practice or power shift? Interviewees suggested that these initiatives helped food security to acquire some legitimization within PH and at community levels, albeit food security is still acknowledged as a low priority at higher levels of government. Findings further showed that while recognized as lacking a holistic plan, some provincial coordination was achieved, and a greater coordination of food security initiatives at the regional and community levels

resulted. Planned analysis and approach, including more policy analysis, formalized structures and relationships, and being focused were key interviewee recommendations in advancing coordination. The dilution of food insecurity/ hunger from the agenda was another consequence. Food insecurity is included only weakly in the agenda, and when included is addressed through alleviation rather than prevention. Interviewees believe the responsibility for it has been downloaded to CS and to lower levels of government. They also see that a broader food security agenda has the potential to both pave the way for hunger to be incorporated and to deter from the issue. Finally, conflict over if and how to address food insecurity existed amongst stakeholders.

Recommendations for moving the agenda forward include: studying the links between food security and food insecurity; completing cost analysis on health impacts of food insecurity; following through with recommendations from existing reports, and researching other effective models. These findings illustrated another departure from the origins of the community food security discourse, which focused primarily on the links between sustainable agriculture and hunger (P. Allen, 2004).

In examining the ability of PH to engage CS in advancing food security government initiatives, the marginalization of CS voice emerged as a consequence. While this was frustrating for those impacted, interviewees also saw this as risky in restricting the broad source of food security expertise which informed the integration as well as thwarting what they see as the greatest potential for advancing government and societal shift. Further, Community Nutritionists, who were also central drivers in the integration were also marginalized from the provincial level after the integration.

PH has limitations in engaging CS. Their limited mandate of human health in food security along with a lack of clarity in their food security mandate contributed to tensions between stakeholders, and acted as a barrier in the progression of initiatives. Interviewees described tensions between PH and CS as a clash of cultures. In addition to PH's limited mandate, their top-down, expert-driven approach clashed with CS's bottom-up, power sharing, "food democracy" discourse and practice. This "clash" parallels tensions described in

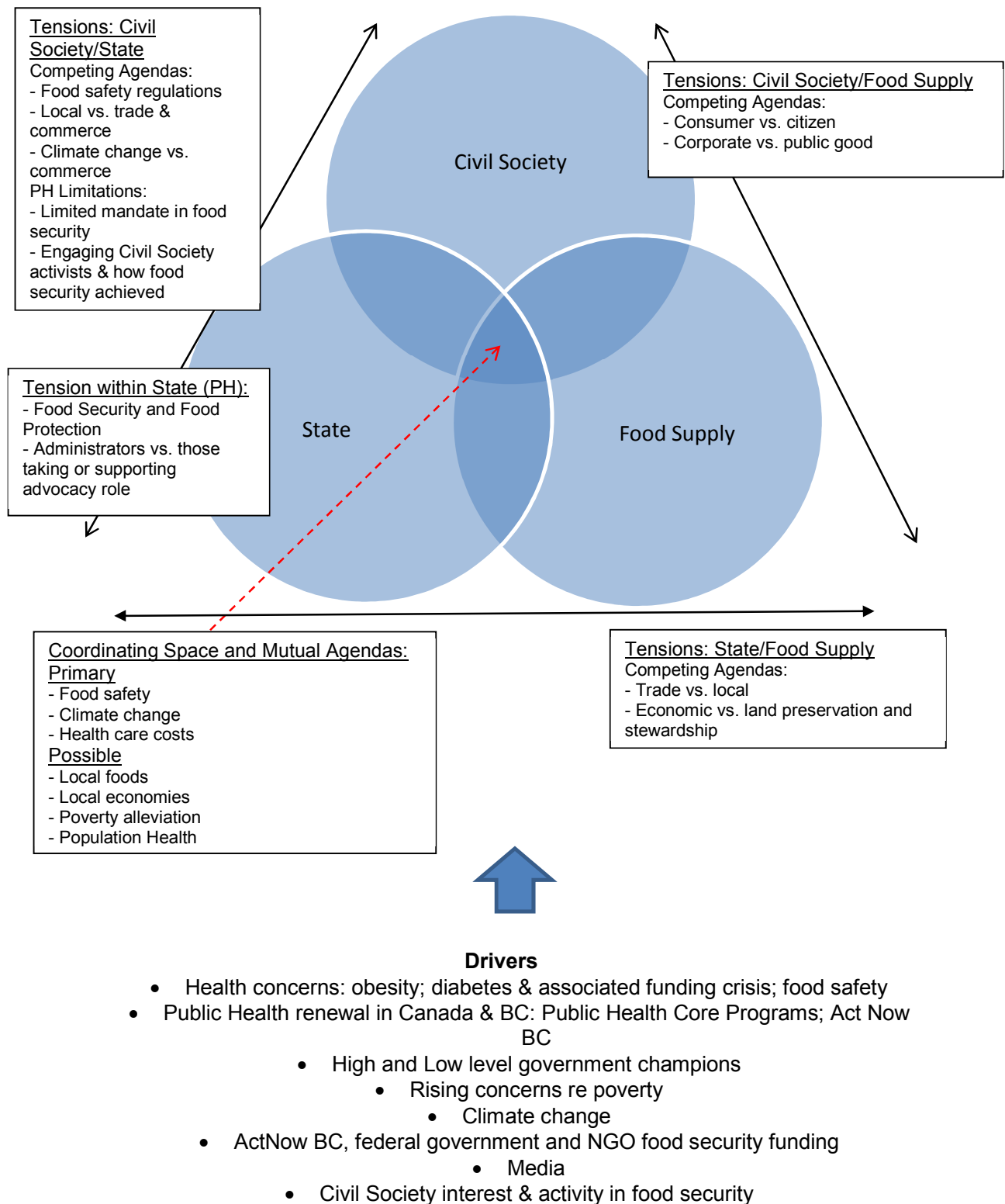
the literature, and can thus raise the discourse beyond the personal level, instead, viewing tensions as related to limitations or institutions. And while some stakeholders initially suggested that this was a PH “takeover” or colonization of food security, interviewee feedback suggests that it was not, as CS lobbied for and supported the integration; this idea will be explored further later in the discussion. Nevertheless, concerns stemmed from PH limitations in the way they approached food security. Finally, tensions between Food Security and Food Protection branches of PH were noted as a result of differing perspectives on the Meat Inspection Regulation.

The final findings chapter focused on interviewee comments on mediators and strategic recommendations. Two themes emerged from the findings in regards to future recommendations: “work together” and “be strategic”. Develop mutual agendas, define and delineate roles, build personal relationships and study barriers, mediators and stakeholder limitations and agendas were identified under “work together”. Recommendations under “be strategic” included: align with other agendas (government, organizational, media, public) and establish areas of “buy-in”; build evidence based outcomes and stories; work toward the marriage of Health and Agriculture; do not link to political agendas; nurture champions and leadership; establish long term commitment to funding and initiatives; and finally, create, integrate, and analyze policy options. The final section of the discussion builds on these strategic recommendations, examining implications for stakeholders under the same two themes.

Figure 9.1 summarizes the findings in a model based on Lang’s triangle model of stakeholders involved in food policy. Interviewee feedback on Lang’s model showed that the triangle is too crude. First, reflecting feedback from CS interviewees about what the relationships “should” be, CS was moved to the top. This is consistent with a similar triangle presented by Rice and Prince where “members of the community” are at the top of the triangle, with the “state” and the “economy” occupying the two other corners (2000). Next, instead of a triangle, the three players are presented the Venn diagram. This allows for a coordinating space in the place where the three circles overlap. Mutual agendas are an important part of this coordinating space, with the idea

that mutual agendas and other factors should be fostered in order to increase the areas of mutual interest within this coordinating space. With significant space in each sector outside of the coordinating space, this allows for sectors to pursue matters beyond mutual interests. The arrows on the side of the “triangle” signify the tensions between the different sectors, as well as the dynamic nature of the model. They also illustrate that forces from both ends are needed in order to advance food security. The potential for the wider applicability of this model is outlined under 10.2.4.

Figure 9.1: Summary of Findings: A Policy Map of Food Security Government Health Promotion Initiatives in British Columbia



9.3 Food Security Discourse, Practices and Power in British Columbia

This next section focuses on consequences, and on the research objective: “Describe if and how the integration of food security has shifted discourses, practice and power”. The focus is on where the integration impacted discourse and practice of food security in BC, and how the findings compare and contrast to the literature. However, as the global and Canadian social policy context is vastly relevant to this analysis, this section begins with a brief review of the context in order to situate the integration.

As proposed in Chapter 2, some of the challenges of this integration are a result of higher level forces creating tensions at lower levels, or as Rice and Prince (2000, p. 232) articulate “tensions arising from the capacity of local communities to address social problems in the face of globalization of the economy and pluralization of the population”. While the challenges of globalization have been addressed previously, this discussion will benefit from a short discussion on pluralization in Canada - as this is especially relevant to the CS discourse in this analysis. Rice and Prince describe “the process of pluralization as the growing divisions within Canada based on the social characteristics of groups of people”, and as a “trend happening in many countries”. They iterate,

“elements in present day Canadian society [include]: ... declining consensus on post war welfare state and the deconstruction of common ideas and theories; the proliferation and networking of interest groups; the decentralization of government authority and program delivery and the constitutional recognition of several groups and identities” (p.25).

Acknowledging the reference to pluralization as “the politics of difference”, they suggest that,

“on the one hand pluralization encourages the development of new identities leading to personal empowerment and group recognition for people who have felt excluded from the mainstream of society. On the other hand, the process creates fear and leads to attacks on groups by people because they are seen as different” (p. 24).

Finally, they state that within this increasingly pluralistic society of Canada, there is a “desire by diverse groups for community recognition”.

This social policy theory holds some parallels to what was observed in this research. Where this theory compares and contrasts to the experiences of CS stakeholders in BC and also to PH theory will be elucidated throughout this chapter. This thesis argues that challenges within the integration are microcosms of higher level tensions. And further, that many challenges and conflicts arise as the integration is on the forefront of a changing political landscape.

The impacts of the integration on food security discourse and practice will be reviewed from the perspectives of the three sectors – CS, PH (and the provincial government), and the food supply sector. After examining the impacts, the BC discourse will be compared and contrasted to the critique of community food security from the literature. Impacts on power balance are investigated under 9.3.5.

9.3.1 Impact on Civil Society Food Security Discourse and Practice

Prior to examining the impacts of the integration on CS, a brief review of CS discourse which emerged from the findings will be reviewed; it will also be compared to the literature in order to locate it within the broader socio-political context. Next, the impact that CS discourse had on the PH food security discourse is then outlined. Finally, whether the integration influenced CS food security discourse and practice will be examined. This section focuses primarily on CS food security activists, however part 9.3.1.iii regarding the impacts on practice extends to the broader CS.

9.3.1.i. Review of Civil Society Food Security Discourse

CS food security activists have a rich food security discourse. In keeping with the theme of food democracy, CS interviewees referred to “citizens” when describing the public and their participation in the food system. Incorporation of the concepts of food democracy and food citizenship reflect the writings of

many scholars (Dahlberg, 2001; Hassanein, 2003; Lang, 2005a; Wekerle, 2004; Welsh & MacRae, 1998). Interviewees seem acutely aware, as Rice and Prince (2000, p. 24) suggest, that the “change from citizen to customer has the potential of undermining the social fabric of the community. It undermines and encourages public institutions to abandon their social obligations”. Thus, concerns of food citizenship raised by Welsh and MacRae (1998) over a decade ago remain salient today as the consumer versus citizens paradigm is seen to impede food democracy.

Further, reflecting Dahlberg’s (2001) and Wekerle’s (2004) perspectives (outlined in Chapter 2), at least one CS interviewee viewed food as a tool to promote greater democracy. The researcher also supports this notion. Additionally, this parallels Canadian social policy theory as a whole, as Rice and Prince (2000, p. 31) suggest “At a deeper level, however, pluralization and the pursuit of cultural recognition³² seek to redefine and to democratize the social contract underpinning both policy and the Canadian welfare state”.

The incorporation of food sovereignty into the CS discourse in BC reflects an international trend (NGO/CSO Forum on Food Sovereignty, 2002). This inclusion is consistent with Via Campesina’s 1996 definition which states that “food sovereignty is a precondition to genuine food security” (Patel, 2009, p. 665). Food sovereignty is also seen as a prerequisite to food security by the BC Food Systems Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty, as traditional hunting and gathering relies on access to land and water. Further, one Aboriginal interviewee became known for her contention that Aboriginals represent the “canary in the coalmine” in terms of how control has been stripped from them, and could also be stripped from the general population (B. Seed, 2004-2007). This has always resonated with the researcher, and was alluded to by one interviewee.

Food sovereignty centres on control of the food system. Issues related to control were also voiced by CS and government interviewees in relation to

³² See definition of cultural recognition on p. 356

corporatization and privatization of the public good - ranging from food to government systems. This reflects concerns articulated in the literature as outlined in Chapter 2 in relation to: exploitation of and inequalities in large segments of society; increasing exploitation of the natural environment; and an increasing loss of national, state and local political power (Dahlberg, 2001; Mustafa. Koc & Dahlberg, 1999; Lang, 1999a; Graham Riches, 1999b). The CS focus on food sovereignty and food democracy reflects Koc and MacRae's (2003) concept of "agency" or "the policies and processes that enable or disable the achievement of food security"; how food security is achieved is as important as food security itself.

CS discourse reflects a profound understanding of the drivers and issues of the broad notion of food security. However, while CS sees both food system and societal causes of food insecurity, they do not seem to have devoted significant energy to understanding how to link food insecurity with food sustainability, and how to effectively address the former.

Finally, this research showed that PH and CS interviewees used the terms community food security and food security interchangeably, with most using food security. Further, their use of the term was typically broad and holistic; only one interviewee used the term food security when referring more narrowly to food insecurity.

9.3.1.ii Civil Society Impact on Public Health Food Security Discourse

Grassroots CS activists in BC were instrumental in introducing the concept of food security in BC, and they worked since the 1990s with PH in food security. CS discourse significantly influenced the original PH discourse through conferences, seminars and participation in joint projects (B. Seed, 2004-2007). And specifically, grassroots CS food security activists worked with PH (mainly Nutritionists), on the construction of the food security definition for the "Making the Connection" (2004) food security document; the partners eventually adapted and incorporated the Bellows and Hamm (2003) community food

security definition, which was subsequently used in other PH food security initiatives.

9.3.1.iii. Shift of Civil Society Food Security Discourse and Practice

The fundamental understanding and discourse of food security at the CS grassroots activist level did not appear to change from the beginning to the end of the study period. However, the discrepancy between the original CS drivers of food security in BC and the PH drivers of the integration resulted in some confusion, conflict and disappointment. Initiatives under PH mandate focused on the human health outcomes of food security, rather than the more holistic CS perspective.

Impacts observed on practices are reviewed below, while power shifts are examined under 9.3.5.

Impacts on Practice

CS shifted attention from food sustainability, and focused significant efforts on PH (as a concept and as a stakeholder) to lobby for the integration; however, this is likely consistent with any opportunities they might see for forwarding a food security agenda. That CS was a driver in the integration supports Bellows and Hamm's (2003) contention cited earlier "that the potential to improve food security policy and practice lies foremost in the capacity of a populace to define and demand change rather than in a bureaucracy's readiness to change". This also infers implications for their future involvement, as will be discussed later in the chapter.

The relationship of CS and PH was impacted by the enforcement of the Meat Inspection Regulation. While the Community Food Action Initiative worked within PH and CS at the community level to promote food security, the Food Protection side of PH was seen to impede local food sustainability efforts by restricting the ability for local meat processing through the Regulation. As CS and many other interviewees viewed PH as working in contradiction, this may have decreased CS's confidence in PH's future leadership capabilities for food security.

The integration pushed food security efforts at the Regional Health Authority and community levels toward food security policy that focused more on human health (e.g. institutional food policy), versus other food security goals. However, this also contributed to the introduction of healthy food policy to communities – schools, municipalities, etc. And further, the food sustainability agenda such as local food purchasing was often introduced along with healthy food policy (Food Action Coalition, undated).

At other CS levels, the integration into PH legitimized food security at the community level. It is also possible that the high profile of food security during the time that the BC Healthy Living Alliance was allocating their \$25 million budget may have impacted their decision to include food security. However, the integration seemed to have no impact on other funding agencies, other than marginalizing them from the process.

9.3.2 Impact on Government and Public Health Food Security Discourse and Practice

Although not specifically examined, there was likely some increased awareness of food security across Ministries due to the ActNow BC thrust and the cross-ministerial Community Food Action Initiative. Whether this had an impact on discourse or practice in other Ministries cannot be determined from this analysis.

Within PH, food security discourse existed prior to the integration at front line levels (i.e. PH Nutritionists), within the Ministry of Health Nutrition department and to some degree with the Medical Health Officers. However, the integration of food security into PH put food security on the agenda (albeit low) of PH administrators and perhaps beyond PH in some Regional Health Authorities. As outlined previously, some legitimization of food security occurred at the Regional Health Authority level. And the increased profile and resultant tensions in relation to food protection propelled the call for greater coordination within PH.

Did the integration influence PH practice? Yes. Both PH Food Security Core Programs and Community Food Action Initiatives obliged health authorities to comply with performance requirements associated with each. And at the time of the research, all Regional Health Authorities employed Food Security Coordinators. This integration of food security into PH in BC can be regarded as a “re-emergence” of food security within PH due to the historic establishment of a role for state in food security and PH as described in Chapter 2. Further, while not specifically identified as part of the world food movement, food safety (under the concept of food adulteration) became an important predecessor to nutrition policy in Canada in 1874, adopted from earlier legislation enacted in Britain (Ostry, 2006). Thus, the emergence of food safety as a significant influencer on food security, and particularly on food security under PH is also not new. Interestingly, Ostry (2006) also states that it was a coalition of health professionals and citizens that pressured the British Parliament to enact these early public health laws. Again, this parallels the integration in BC, also brought about by these two stakeholders working in tandem.

The food security agenda and PH have the potential to each influence the other. On one side, interviewees suggested that food security could forward the determinants of health and the responsibility for community health further into the broader Health agenda. On the other side, PH has the potential to forward the food security agenda by linking food security to an agenda seen by CS and the government as critical – the Health agenda. These two ideas are expanded below.

9.3.2.i Food Security and the Determinants of Health

It is difficult to say whether the integration of food security helped to push the broader determinants of health approach within Health, as this was not the focus of the research. However, some interviewees referred to the idea of Regional Health Authorities’ increased awareness for the responsibility for the health of communities through the core programs process. PH has a history of protection of society and the public good. The integration of food security

reflects a struggle to inject back into PH a social vision of health that has been medicalized; great power and momentum are behind the medicalization, so efforts will be ongoing. In theory, food security and the broader determinants of health approach could push a holistic strategy required to meet food security objectives and allow for integration across government silos and across sectors. It could also be used as a tool to inform and reform the medical system toward the import of the greater determinants of health and their economic impact on health. However, prevention has been rhetoric now for decades in Canada since the Lalonde Report (Government of Canada, 1974), and the struggle between individual versus structural or built environment approaches continues. Lang and Heasman (2004) associate the individualistic approach to PH with the minimal state, market approach to the economy. Further, Allen (2004, p. 126) argues that “perhaps one reason that ideologies of individualism are popular is that if social problems are treated as individual rather than social, everyone else can be absolved of ... helping to solve social problems”. She calls this “extraction of social relations from the realm of the political”, a “hallmark of economic liberalism”. Moving toward a population, determinants of health approach requires a fundamental shift in societal priorities and possibly a return to a greater separation from the acute health care system.

9.3.2.ii Health as a Driver in Food Security

On the other side, it has been clear that food security and health are inextricably linked - from the 1930s world food movement to current scholars and nutrition movements (M. Beaudry, Hamelin, Anne-Marie, Delisle, Helene, 2004; Caraher & Coveney, 2004; Gussow, 2006; The Pan Canadian Task Force on Public Health Nutrition Practice, 2009). However, the articulation by Lang (2005b) of the emergence of health as a “key policy driver” in food is salient. Is Health central to forwarding the food security agenda? How can Health forward the food security agenda? Perhaps, as outlined in Chapter 2 the rationale for health as a driver of food is best expressed by MacRae:

“[a coherent food policy has] optimal nourishment of the population as its highest purpose, making agricultural production and distribution a servant of that purpose, and ensuring the food system is financially and environmentally sustainable.” (Rod MacRae, 1999, p. 182).

Lang (2005b, p. 39) argues, “the arrival of the new public health evidence and analysis could and should alter how policy-makers conceive of future food and farming policy. But whether they make this mental leap, history suggests, will not be just a matter of evidence”. This reflects the policy analysis literature which shows that more than evidence is often required to affect policy change (Brooks & Miljan, 2003; Howlett & Ramesh, 2003).

So was health a driver in food security in BC? Yes. As outlined previously, PH was the key driver in this integration in terms of content, stakeholders and processes. This was acknowledged with the development of ActNow BC, in response to PH officials’ proposal that the health budget would soon overtake the budgets of all other ministries if they did not each take a role in contributing to health. Unfortunately this push for health as a driver in food security comes at a time when it seems the argument must be made for funding PH itself (in competition with health care). Nonetheless, health is a growing public and political concern in Canada due to the health care finance crisis. There is an increasing recognition that this is associated to some degree with preventable issues (obesity, diabetes, food borne illness, etc.), and that it can be addressed through prevention efforts in the built environment. Ultimately, policy makers need to be convinced, and were in this case. More recommendations toward this will be examined in section 9.4.

Policy makers, and in particular the Premier of BC, do seem committed toward some top down food policy. Anderson (2007) reviewed changing food policy throughout Canadian history, illuminating the importance of overall policy approach in the determination of policy instruments. She suggests that neo-classical liberal policy prevention approaches used in the last decades, such as education focussed on individual change, are not working. And moreover, that “the primarily neoclassical liberal policy approach to food and nutrition used over the last 30 years allowed the promotion of sub optimal nutrition choices which have negatively affected health” (p. 171). Different approaches are required as the financial and social costs of preventable diseases escalate. Anderson (2007) proposes there is now a consensus toward both individual and population based solutions, and that more coercive approaches (in the

sense of actions that impede markets or increase the role of government) are required. Examples include: incorporation of food and nutrition in public policy; restrictions on advertising to children; and market incentives for developing and marketing healthier foods. As will be explored later, these top down methods are one part of a comprehensive approach to food security.

In sum, PH discourse and practice of food security were impacted by the integration. Awareness of food security appeared to increase across Ministries for those involved in initiatives, and food security was legitimized to some extent within PH, including the employment of Food Security Coordinators in the health authorities. Responsibility and accountability for PH in food security was established through the requirement for Performance Improvement Plans within the Food Security Core Programs. The higher profile of food security in PH resulted in a tension between Food Security and Food Protection employees. While the extent to which this occurred cannot be determined by this research, food security has the potential to increase attention to the determinants of health, and to expand the health authority's sense of responsibility toward broader community health. Finally, evidence increasingly supports the emergence of health as a driver for food security, and this did occur to some degree in BC; top down food policy seems to be a key area where this has occurred.

9.3.3 Impact on Food Supply Discourse and Practice

The food supply sector was not necessarily familiar with the term food security when they were interviewed. However, they were familiar with, or equated food security to concepts within their agenda. And as the food supply sector is heterogeneous, their concepts of food security included food safety, land and environmental stewardship and local foods. It is difficult to say whether their discourse changed as a result of the integration. However, involvement in the initiatives did change their practice – primarily in sourcing and developing suppliers for more local foods. Further, almost all food supply stakeholders interviewed were excited to be involved in the initiatives that linked consumers/citizens to their food supply; this was a level of enthusiasm not observed in the other initiatives.

9.3.4 How did Discourse and Practices Contrast and Compare to the Critique of Community Food Security?

In some ways this union between food activists and PH resulted in a unique food security discourse. Whereas the origins of community food security in the US primarily linked sustainable agriculture and hunger (P. Allen, 2004), this discourse reflected more recent calls for health as paramount to discourse and practice. Further, the focus of integration was at the provincial level, and at a government level. Even in looking forward toward strategic recommendations, many stakeholders centred on provincial programs or strategies such as a provincial food policy.

While in some ways diverging from the construct of community food security, practices in BC are subject to criticisms consistent with the broader critique of community food security. The lack of coherent big picture planning and coherent framework in the overall approach in BC could be said to reflect Anderson and Cook's notion (1999) that "doers" have dominated community food security work. However, with PH and not the grassroots in the lead in these initiatives, lack of coordination is more likely related to the limitations of government: silos and competing agendas between and within Ministries, funding limitations and the limited PH mandate in the face of the complexity of food security. Reflecting comments of PH interviewees who described the limited understanding of the broad concept of food security by PH and consequent focus on a restricted range of activities, Muller et al (2009) reinforce these limitations. They suggest "it is particularly challenging, however, for [PH] professionals to understand and consider the numerous policy drivers that impact the food system ... [and when] confronted with this complexity ... often focus on narrow objectives with disregard for the larger system" (p.225).

As reflected in the literature, the difficulty in bringing together the disparate perspectives of community food security was also experienced in BC (P. Allen, 2004; Pelletier, et al., 2003; Pothukuchi, 2004). This occurred in various ways: in content (combining health, local food sustainability, and hunger); in stakeholder partnerships (and integration of diversity of voices); and also in

approach or strategy (between expert driven/top-down and food democracy/bottom-up).

Looking back, while abject hunger is not widely prevalent in BC or Canada and other “developed” countries, it exists in the form of food insecurity and malnutrition. Thus, the 1930s concept of “hunger in the midst of plenty” is still germane to the current situation in BC, where available food exceeds needs, while farmers and those in poverty continue to struggle. Unlike approaches to community food security in the US (P. Allen, 1999; M. Anderson & Cook, 1999; Community Food Security Coalition), practices in BC do not focus to a great extent on hunger or food insecurity. In some ways, this avoids the critique (well understood by some stakeholders) that food programs may alleviate, but are not a solution to food insecurity. Where food insecurity is addressed in BC, it is approached from an anti-poverty lens in reports (Dietitians of Canada & Community Nutritionists Council of British Columbia, 2006; Provincial Health Officer, 2006; Provincial Health Services Authority, 2007b), and a food centred approach in initiatives. Food centred approaches and dilution of hunger from the agenda has some relationship to political limitations of government (as examined in Chapter 8 (under 8.2.3). Further, within PH, Nutritionists exposed to food insecurity may feel compelled to help, but may be limited to food focused approaches due to politics and the PH mandate.

As one interviewee suggested, dilution within the agenda is also related to the lack of involvement of anti-hunger advocates and the difficulty combining the agendas of sustainable food systems and hunger in the developed world. The most apparent omission of food insecurity from the integration in BC was the exclusion of school meal programs from the agenda. One could extrapolate from the description of the evolution of the BC School Meal program from government funded toward non-profit (as described in Chapter 8) that the government has an interest in downloading school meal programs to community and corporate sectors – as has been seen previously with food banks (G. Riches, 1997). This reflects a neoliberal approach, consistent with Allen and Gutham’s (2006) contention that “farm to school” programs in the US can be viewed as neoliberal with the injection of agri-food initiatives into what

were originally welfare state programs. It also means it is a move away from a “right to food”, guaranteed approach toward a charity-based response. The concept of “right to food” seems largely ignored and in the researcher’s experience, many do not differentiate between a “right to food”, state based guaranteed model and charity, instead seeing them both as hand-outs (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

Allen (2004, p. 114) writes “to a large extent, there is a continuation of the neoliberal orientation of the conventional agri-food system embedded in alternative agri-food efforts ... while this may ensure that people can have more control over the sources and quality of their food, it does not address basic questions of equity and access”. Whether the BC experience can also be viewed through this lens will be explored later in the chapter.

Next, the question - whether a shift in power balance occurred - will be examined. This query is immersed within the social policy context in which the integration transpired. Thus, the final part of this section bridges to the next query, outlining a shift in the political paradigm within which this integration is occurring.

9.3.5 Did a Shift in the Balance of Power Occur?

While Lezberg (1999) suggests that definitions are important in framing issues, this thesis argues that definitions are much less important than the stakeholder power and agendas - definitions have now broadened to the extent that many agendas can be incorporated. This supports Patel’s (2009, p. 664) assertion that “the expansion of the definition of food security in 2001, in other words, was both a cause and consequence of its increasing irrelevance as a guiding concept...”. In this case study of BC, definitions were salient only in the PH initiatives, as the others had explicit objectives. In the PH initiatives however, definitions were only the starting point. Instead, stakeholder agendas – particularly the stakeholders with power – determined the greater agenda and courses of action. This is consistent with observations of McCullum et al. (2004) who showed that mechanisms of power influenced participation in decision making, agenda setting, and the shaping of perceived needs within a

community food security planning process. Adding to this, Howlett and Ramesh (2003, p. 121) cite other authors in suggesting “resolution of this conflict [clashes in policy agenda setting] is related more to the abilities and resources of competing actors than to the elegance or purity of the ideas they hold”.

Was there a shift in power balance within BC food security? This question is considered below also in light of the extent to which power existed before this integration.

Many food security activists were reminded of the fairly insignificant power of food security overall when faced with the significance and power of “weightier” competing policies such as the Meat Inspection Regulation. However, while food security is clearly the weaker cousin, it could also be suggested that Food Protection was challenged to a greater extent by food security activists than it had been in the past, due to the growth in legitimacy of food security within PH. Also central to power and control, food sovereignty was recognized as at acute risk in BC by CS. They spoke of recent pressures regarding trade agreements (TILMA) and food safety (Meat Inspection Regulation) which a few related to international economic and trade related pressures.

These issues of power reflect several contentions put forward in Chapter 2 and subsequently reinforced by interviewees. First, as expressed by interviewees, that focusing on the local can result in losing sight of the global (P. Allen, 1999). Second, as introduced at the start of this chapter, that higher level forces can exert pressure and create tensions at lower levels and further, that community food security cannot necessarily solve problems that are caused at a greater, or global scale (P. Allen, 1999; Pothukuchi, 2004). And finally, as expressed by other scholars (P. Allen, 1999; Dahlberg, 2001; Lang, 1999a), that tensions between centralizing and decentralizing forces are experienced at both international and, as in this case, local levels. In this instance, while food protection pulls toward centralization, local food sustainability pulls toward decentralization.

From a CS perspective, it could be said that power was secured by PH, and not shared with CS food security activists to the extent they desired or anticipated; their voice became marginalized in a process which they were instrumental in initiating. This suggests a lag in a shift toward cultural recognition and a greater CS participation in social policy. Rice and Prince (2000, p. 12) contend that those with a policy orientation of “cultural recognition” are: interested in “an active yet more facilitative state for citizens, one that is enabling ...”. Instead, CS experience was more consistent with Rice and Prince’s (2000) observation that historically within Canadian social policy, “voices of social movement and public interest groups were simply ignored, or more troubling, deliberately marginalized” (p. 239). Some power was also secured by CS Health NGO BC Healthy Living Alliance (whose players had some previous involvement with food security) with their decision to allocate some of their funding toward food security. However, how much power remains may be subject to the sustainability of those initiatives. Funders who had traditionally supported food security were also left out of the discourse, except for the PH Agency of Canada. In addition, individuals that the researcher terms “key thinkers” in BC CS food security were also not included.

Within PH, prior to the integration, food security was primarily the purview of Community Nutritionists. They initially held the power within PH, albeit relatively insignificant power at the Regional Health Authority level. Nonetheless, their power was central at the provincial level for a period of time, as exemplified by their role as a driver in the integration of food security as a core PH program. However, with the integration, Nutritionists lost power to higher levels of PH and in some cases were marginalized from the food security processes, such as at the provincial level. The reasons for their loss of power and involvement, however, were not investigated by the research and likely extend to issues beyond the integration. PH Nutrition at the provincial level seemed to maintain a consistent level of power, as illustrated by their continued involvement in provincial food security and food policy initiatives. Although unlikely related to the food security integration, an increased separation between Provincial Nutritionists and the Regional Health Authority Nutritionists may continue to

weaken the Nutritionist function at the health authority level, and possibly PH Nutrition Services in the province.

The movement of healthy eating out of the sole realm of the PH Nutritionist, while likely appropriate and required, may have put their function at risk. Whether this contributed to the dissolution of the PH Nutrition program by one of the regional health authorities following the research period is a question which cannot be answered, but can be posed by this research. This, and the current push by Regional Health Authorities toward clinical work is contrary to calls to expand, not reduce, the purview PH Nutrition (M. Beaudry, Hamelin, Anne-Marie, Delisle, Helene, 2004; Caraher & Coveney, 2004; Gussow, 2006; The Pan Canadian Task Force on Public Health Nutrition Practice, 2009). Further, could this be considered, as one interviewee suggested, a consequence of the new contractual, rather than regulatory relationship between the government and the Regional Health Authorities?

9.3.5.i Downloading Responsibility to Community Levels?

While the argument can be made that food insecurity has been downloaded by the government (i.e. transferred to lower levels of government and CS), this question in relation to food security in BC is more complex. On one hand, it could be viewed that CS and some PH are trying to “upload” responsibility to the government, and to Health in particular. This parallels a persistent effort of PH to expand government responsibility to include the greater determinants of health. Further, social movement scholar Allan Scott argues that the push to create ongoing linkages with the state and to institutionalize previously excluded issues are criteria for evaluation of the success of new social movements (Scott, in Wekerle, 2004). In addition, there is no evidence suggesting an overall intention toward downloading, nor are initiatives coordinated enough to suggest any deliberate effort. And, albeit subjective, the integrity and intentions of government employees involved in the integration in their desire to work toward stated goals would not be questioned by those involved; in many cases, there is a high degree of respect between and amongst CS and government workers. Still, this does not negate the notion that

the initiatives that were successfully funded were in accordance with a neoliberal government context - or as one interviewee suggested, to keep subordinates occupied or content while other larger agendas were at work.

Perhaps whether this integration is a download or is true community mobilization depends on the integrity of how programs are resourced and supported. One could continue to argue that a lack of resourcing and structural space directed toward grassroots CS - and Regional Health Authorities who are relying to a large extent on communities to fulfil program objectives - still intimates downloading.

While the hypothesis of neoliberal government downloading seems to run contrary to the idea put forward by some interviewees that food security had been “colonized” or taken over by PH as a result of the integration, the next section will address this question from a different perspective. Nonetheless, as CS lobbied for PH to take a greater role, there is significant concern about how PH manages its role and its limitations: the scope of food security addressed; how the agenda is set; who is involved (or invited); what strategies are employed; and how success is defined and measured. Implications arising from the thesis regarding the future role of PH are explored at the end of the chapter.

While external pressures such as neoliberal ideologies and an acute care centred medical system pressure PH toward downloading, some aspects of CS and PH discourse push the other way. How do these pressures relate back to the historic tensions documented between centralization and decentralization? This analysis builds on the concept of these opposing, historic trends. While CS involvement demonstrates a shift toward decentralization, CS is also recognizing and demanding a role for state. This analysis contends that this situation is likely more nuanced than a polarized discourse of centralization and decentralization and downloading.

9.3.6 Moving toward a New Political Paradigm

This research supports the idea that some tensions in BC mirror and illustrate the historic tensions between decentralizing and centralizing forces in food security observed in the literature (Bellows & Hamm, 2003; Maxwell, 1996). It further suggests that opposing, decentralizing and centralizing forces are both needed. The campaign for “centralizing” or integrating food security into the government was strongly supported by grassroots CS. This push built on years of CS, Health NGO and PH advocacy for a provincial food policy. CS sees this centralization (uploading) as essential, but demands meaningful participation in the processes.

Tensions and positions between centralization and decentralization have become more nuanced within the changing political context. Rice and Prince (2000) describe the changing politics of social policy in Canada resulting from the tensions between global economic forces and the pluralization of the society. While the governments are pressured from corporations for less constraint in trade and economic growth, they are also pushed by diverse CS groups who claim needs and recognition. They suggest that “pressures from both sides have undermined the support for the existing welfare system and we are entering a new era of social policy development” (p.14).

Rice and Prince (2000) also differentiate between the divergence of policy orientations in CS response - from social protection in the 1940s -1970s (characterized by universal social programs) toward cultural recognition (seeking an active, enabling state for citizens), post 1970s. This latter approach was demonstrated by CS food security activists in BC. This shift in policy orientation may explain the origin of some of the tensions in CS demands of state determined rights (such as the right to food approach) versus claiming rights from below. While left-leaning CS movements once may have argued for more centralized, state based mechanisms of social or public protection, a new discourse now argues for increased democratization and may in fact criticize “welfare” state methodologies (Rice & Prince, 2000). This shift could also have been a contributor to CS’s lack of attention to food insecurity in BC.

Examples of “cultural recognition” apparent in food security in BC are: a) the power of genetically modified seed manufacturers in contrast to the demands of CS activists and some farmers, and b) the pressures exerted by ski resort development versus Aboriginal land claims. In fact, Rice and Prince (2000) identify Aboriginal nations as a key group focused on cultural recognition, and land claims as one of the methods of redressing issues.

Both globalization of the economy and demands of pluralized society can undermine, or at least demand a redesign of, the role of the state (Rice & Prince, 2000). Further, there is an increasing recognition in practice and in the literature that traditional relationships between the state, industry and CS (where change has often been sought through conflict) is not effective (Gunningham, 2002). This case study suggests that this is true in BC, as reflected by tensions and resistance to “top down” government approaches. Gunningham also states that “the capacity of the regulatory state to deal with increasingly complex social issues has declined dramatically” (p.3). Koc et al. propose that

“Food sustainability issues however, present challenges that are difficult to solve. This is because they are politically and programmatically complex, vast in scale, spread among multiple sectors that may face benefits or losses, and challenging to the competencies of government. Nevertheless, these types of modern issues are the reason why next generation policy instruments are currently under development” (2008, p. 138).

This supports the need for a new way to approach food security in BC. In fact, the ActNow BC declaration that all ministries and to some extent industry, need to work toward a greater goal of PH in order to address upwardly spiralling health care costs is an example of this redesign of state role. Gunningham et al. (2002, p. 5) refer to this type of policy-making as “regulatory pluralism”, where the “government harness(es) the capacities of markets, CS and other institutions to accomplish its policy goals more effectively, with greater social acceptance, and at less cost to the state”. However, for greater acceptance and effectiveness, CS in BC would argue that their goals need to be integrated into government goals in this reconfiguration. And in fact, the idea of government

harnessing CS toward their goals does not support the hypothesis put forward by some interviewees of colonization, but does support the idea of co-optation by PH, in accordance with a neoliberal agenda.

In support of reconfiguration, Porter and Kramer, in the Harvard Business review, recently argued for the importance of “shared value” to “reshape capitalism and its relationship to society” (Porter & Kramer, 2011, p. 64). They define shared value as “policies and operating practices that enhance the competitiveness of a company while simultaneously advancing the economic and social conditions in which it operates” (p. 66). This reinforces the concept of creating mutual agendas, as outlined in the findings.

With a growing understanding of the complexity of societal problems and thus the need for pluralistic approaches to them – reconfiguration of the relationship between players, as well as reconfiguration of policies and regulations is required. Rice and Prince (2000, p. 243) also call for this in the reconfiguration of social policy where they state “what is urgently required, we believe, is to find a new balance between the market economy, CS and the welfare state”. Gunningham (2002, p.2) states that “neither the precise direction of the [regulatory] reconfiguration, nor its results are yet known”. It is also of interest to keep in mind, as Rice and Prince (2000, p. 18) suggest, that “social change is not part of an evolutionary process leading to greater stability and integration, but rather generates both positive and negative outcomes”.

The researcher suggests that this reconfiguration, as described in the literature, is being played out in the integration of food security into BC policies and programs – in relationship building, policy formation, regulations and in the emerging role of the state. With ActNow BC (and the food security initiatives within it), the government has reached out to all Ministries and also to private and CS sectors to work in partnership toward health objectives; this shifting role of the state in food security in BC is a key element under examination in this thesis. And as was outlined in the findings, most stakeholders acknowledge the need for both top down/centralized and bottom up/decentralized strategies to

advance food security. Finally, CS stakeholders demonstrated the shift toward cultural recognition, and an active, enabling role for themselves.

The question of whether or to what extent reconfiguration of this kind can be considered neoliberalism is beyond the scope of this thesis. Community food security (Maxwell, 1996) and pluralization (Rice & Prince, 2000) share the characteristics of being post-modern, deconstructionist and bottom-up. However, while Maxwell (1992, p. 162) acknowledges that “a predictable option for a post-modernist would be to abdicate state responsibility”, he argues this is an extreme form of neoliberalism, and as noted in Chapter 2 cites Lipton and Maxwell in suggesting that the state has “a key, enabling role to play...”. This again supports the concept of a facilitative role for BC PH in food security.

And although emerging within a neoliberal context, nor does this analysis answer whether the interpretation of food security in BC is a neoliberal construct. Nonetheless, interviewees and the literature suggest that both top down state intervention and bottom up CS engagement is required for moving forward - even if, as Gunningham suggests, the outcomes are not known. Koc et al. (2008) are adamant that regulatory pluralism be embraced. While agreeing, the researcher suggests that a wary lens be cast in this process in guarding against potential negative impacts of neoliberalism on social justice and equity. Further, as some interviewees seemed to equate neoliberalism with globalization, the distinction of neoliberalism as only one policy choice within globalization (as outlined in Chapter 2) seems important in forwarding food security. Implications for moving toward reconfiguration are outlined in the next section.

9.4 Implications and Recommendations

This next section of the discussion is devoted to implications and recommendations. Drawing and building upon the two themes from interviewee strategic recommendations in Chapter 8 plus the societal policy shifts toward regulatory pluralism and reconfiguration outlined above, this section will be presented in two parts. The first part looks at “Working Together” in conjunction with the social policy context of “regulatory pluralism”. It examines implications for PH and CS in greater CS engagement, then outlines stakeholder implications for greater integration of the food supply sector. The second part builds on the interviewee recommendation theme of “Being Strategic”. Implications and recommendations, as detailed below, are intended first and foremost for BC. However, Section 10.2 also justifies the applicability to similar settings or contexts outside of BC.

9.4.1 Implications and Recommendations on “Working Together”

The previous chapter identified the following recommendations under “work together”: develop mutual agendas; define and delineate roles; build personal relationships; and study barriers, mediators and stakeholder limitations and agendas.

Agendas emerged as a key theme in the research. It is clear from the findings that a greater transparency of, and understanding of stakeholder agendas in BC (including competing agendas) could contribute to success of initiatives and possibly mitigate tensions between stakeholders. This supports both Dalhberg’s (2001) assertion that an understanding of trends and their underlying structures are required for effectiveness, and Anderson and Cook’s (1999, p. 145) contention that “food security theory should be explicit about how underlying political philosophy enters in, to make sure that disagreements over policies and practices are not actually disagreements over unstated political assumptions”. Adding to the latter, the researcher also suggests this understanding can also alleviate disagreements that appear to be personal. A greater grasp of competing agendas will also provide a gauge of importance to

food security work. And finally, the creation of mutual agendas, or shared values has the potential to forward food security goals.

The other key theme in “Working Together” is the concept of reconfiguration within the social policy context of “regulatory pluralism”. Thus, the next sections examine implications for stakeholders in greater CS engagement and greater integration of the food supply sector.

9.4.1.i Implications and Recommendations for Public Health in Engaging Civil Society

The previous section states that one aspect of reconfiguration is a greater integration of CS participation in BC. PH has taken a lead in this integration of food security into the government. And as outlined in Chapter 7, they have a mandate in CS engagement both in theory and also according to PH food security objectives and interviewee feedback. Rice and Prince reinforce this role of government: “Public structures and processes must provide a way for emerging interest groups to find a legitimate voice on behalf of the communities they represent ... the new social discourse about the community and the rights and responsibilities of citizenship” (2000, p. 242). Further, in the more recent climate of neoliberalism, social theorists argue that the decreased role of government has led to decreased social cohesion (Coburn, 2000) and a weakening of democracy – obviously contrary to the notions of cultural recognition, food democracy and food sovereignty, and to CS food security objectives.

Was PH successful in engaging CS in BC? Was this a step toward it? The Community Food Action Initiative - as the sole initiative operating during the research with this objective – was used to evaluate this. Chapter 7 suggests that while CS was engaged in the planning stages and at regional and local levels, their voice was minimal at the provincial, planning levels. The viewpoint of those in power seemed to be that CS input should appropriately remain at a local, rather than a provincial level.

However, interviewees argued for the importance of CS involvement at the provincial, more strategic level. They also suggested that meaningful involvement of CS requires capacity building at a higher level in the form of resources, and space or structure for involvement. This would also signal that government food security efforts in BC are not simply a download of responsibility, but are acts of true community mobilization, which would build greater trust between partners. In support, Rice and Prince argue:

“government can never take the place of community: what it can and should do, however, is create political, institutional and financial frameworks which help local people rebuild their communities from the bottom up, making them safer places in which to live and generating a better quality of life which can support wider economic opportunities” (p. 243).

This research suggests the PH “top down”, “professionalized” approach needs to shift to positioning PH as one player within “regulatory pluralism”.

While power sharing is simple in theory, in practice, it is not. One interviewee referred to their cross ministry project as being on “the bleeding edge”. These same power tensions would also likely extend to working with community stakeholders, as demonstrated in the literature (C. McCullum, et al., 2004). The Community Food Action Initiative could also be said to exemplify a project on the “bleeding edge”. While its stakeholders demonstrated progressive intentions and commitment to initiative objectives, they are challenged by changing roles in regulatory reconfiguration – balancing the demand for greater government involvement in food security with meaningful involvement from CS.

The Community Food Action Initiative could benefit from going beyond the formal evaluations and examining their success in process objectives related to CS engagement. Looking to the literature on conflict resolution (see <http://www.jibc.ca/>), before examining ways to increase engagement with CS, stakeholders need to clarify if, and to what extent they want CS engagement. If greater engagement is agreed upon, a conscious, detailed plan is required for this – including an examination of barriers and facilitators in CS engagement. As outlined in the findings, articulation and transparency of agendas is

required. Clarity of mandate of the initiative and of PH's role limitations within it is essential, with articulation of accountability needs. For example, if a Health led initiative requires health outcomes, this should be stated up front.

How can the issue of power be further addressed? Again, if true community engagement is desired, tactics previously reported in the literature such as providing incentives and supports (e.g. childcare) for participants and having more than token representation (e.g. a peer group) can be undertaken (C. McCullum, et al., 2004). However, these tactics only skim the surface of power sharing. If this is a goal, negotiation between stakeholders needs to occur. Some direction on this can come from participatory action research, where research is community owned (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). This can also evolve, where power is progressively shared as trust between stakeholders is built. And while McCullum et al. (2004, p. 220) suggest that "practitioners can work with community members to enhance their own skills in facilitation, negotiation and conflict resolution", the researcher suggests these skills be fostered in all stakeholders in BC.

Koc, MacRae et al. (2008) suggest:

"in theory Civil Society and government bodies have much to offer each other: creativity, cutting edge information, on the ground successes, and political legitimacy from Civil Society; and decision making power, some financial resources and scaling up capacity from federal government. In reality, it is not currently obvious that either has the knowledge, structures, will or capacity to work in either formal or loose networks of collaboration" (p. 139).

The researcher suggests that once the will is determined, a plan looking at capacity and structures and stakeholder strengths and limitations can be developed to facilitate working together.

Taking up the other side of this challenge, the next section turns to changes needed in CS to increase their ability to work more effectively with the state.

9.4.1.ii Implications and Recommendations for Civil Society in Effective Engagement with the Government

In addressing pluralism, Rice and Prince (2000) state that there is a proliferation of interests within most public policy fields “expecting to participate in policy reviews and consultations”. This was certainly true in BC, and as illustrated, participation was limited. How can this more effectively occur?

First, in relation to CS food security activists, a number of interviewees suggested that changes are needed on the part of CS in order to more successfully work with government - essentially away from a confrontational to a more conciliatory approach. Concurring - and in reference to a shift in Canada from decision making loci in government from parliamentary to bureaucratic levels – Koc, MacRae et al. (2008) suggest:

[this] “require[s] different skill sets from Civil Society. Instead of a traditional focus on the parliamentary level, [Civil Society organizations] must display an ability to understand civil service realities, a detailed grasp of programs and regulatory instruments (down to the regulatory protocol and directive level), and a willingness to provide information and legitimacy to civil servants in a useful, politically sensitive manner” (p. 140).

This is consistent with the position of Toronto Food Policy Council’s former director Wayne Roberts who has long encouraged food security activists to determine, then meet the needs of bureaucrats (B. Seed, 2004-2007). Koc, MacRae et al. (2008) also suggest:

“For their part, Civil Society, although looking for alternative approaches, has been slow to realize that shifts are underway within the state, and have not necessarily recognized the opportunities and challenges inherent to government efforts to find next generation policy instruments” (p. 136).

This echoes state interviewee wishes for CS in BC to take a less adversarial, more constructive approach in working with government. This recommendation relates more to CS food security activists, as these collaborative abilities have been demonstrated more successfully by the Health NGOs involved. This is not

surprising, due to the fact that these NGOs are made up of health professionals (with oft similar agendas), and are for the most part funded. This is consistent with Coleman's observation in (Rice & Prince, 2000, p. 30) of "a significant professionalization of interest groups, as these have become institutionalized participants in public policy making". However, while their greater ability to work with government was evident, Health NGOs were criticized for internal power struggles, overuse of consultants, and their top down approach and consequent lack of emphasis on community capacity building. This research did not look specifically at this group's engagement with PH. However, in light of regulatory reconfiguration and interviewee comments, the research can recommend Health NGOs consider a greater focus on community capacity building.

9.4.1.iii Recommendations for Greater Integration of Food Supply Sector

In addition to the concept of reconfiguration, interviewees recommended greater involvement of food supply stakeholders; this could provide a food supply lens, and also lead to links with more partners. Several barriers to food supply participation were outlined in Chapter 8. These include: inclination to think that all industry is bad and will therefore tarnish credibility; the related tendency to work with smaller stakeholders whose goals are more in line with food security goals; and the competing agendas of trade versus local.

The marriage of health and agriculture proposed by Orr and colleagues in the 1930's is still part of a laudable solution toward food security, and as many suggest health should be the driver for food systems. Further, since the 1930s concept of the marriage, issues of environment/ecology and social justice have been added to the broad scope of food security. This, as well as the concept of food sovereignty and food democracy- adds more to the discourse and complexity of this marriage.

Seemingly simple in concept, how can this marriage be accomplished? One step encompassing many of these factors, is reflected in programs such as the BC Fruit and Vegetable in the Schools program and the Farmer's Market

Coupon program. These programs focus on local foods with fair prices for farmers, and improving health and accessibility for participants (who are in some cases considered vulnerable populations). However, even within the School program, the issue of “the large overtaking the small” paralleled what has occurred in the broader organic industry (P. Allen & Gutham, 2006, p. 408).

Further illustrating the effects of greater forces on provincial and local food security was the increasing influence of food safety, as illustrated through the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation. While Gussow (2006, p. 3) suggests food safety might “accelerate a movement toward more community based systems”, it would seem that these two movements are currently in opposition in BC. This parallels one of the battles that Lang and Heasman (2004) characterize in food policy overall – between the productionist paradigm (focusing on international standardization and often on crisis intervention) versus the ecological, more prevention focussed paradigm. CS attention will be needed to advocate for the latter. Nonetheless, this supports the suggestion of some PH interviewees that food safety and the relationship with those administering it is an important focus for PH in food security in BC. Interviewees suggested beginning with collaboration on mutual goals, where greater understanding of opposing positions, and trust and relationships can be built.

In addition, as outlined in Chapter 2, the increasing attention to food policy at International, Regional and National levels shows the potential for approach from a systems level (FAO, 1996a; Norum, et al., 1997; World Health Organization, 2001, 2004; World Health Organization Regional Office for Europe, 2000a). These reports also outline significant roles for the food supply sector. Changes in food policies affecting the food supply have been demonstrated to contribute to population health at international levels such as post war (Vernon, 2007) and national levels (Norum, et al., 1997). As Lang (2005b) and De Schutter (2009) suggest, we need to move beyond the idea of producing more food – to principles understood by the broad definition of food security outlined in this research. In taking action on food policy, BC can seek direction from these broader recommendations, and confront and apply them

where appropriate – whether at municipal, provincial, national or international levels. In Canada, MacRae has been analyzing and promoting agricultural sustainability and food security through Canada's agricultural policy for over a decade (R. MacRae, 1999). In BC, Ostry and Morrison (2010, p. 2653) showed evidence in BC that despite nutritional advice to increase consumption of whole grains, vegetables and fruit, "local production capacity of these foods in BC has decreased markedly between 1986 and 2006". Not surprisingly, it appears that the market, not health, guides food production in BC.

As alluded to by interviewees, many see great potential in municipal food policy. This interest and activity has been demonstrated in BC since the establishment of the Kamloops Food Policy Council in the early 1990s to the Vancouver Food Policy Council in the mid-2000s. In addition, the Community Food Action Initiative worked with the Union of BC Municipalities and BC Healthy Communities to create a resource guide for local governments to promote food secure communities (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008d). Also, municipalities now hold greater control over the Agricultural Land Reserve – which many see as primary in achieving food security in BC.

Rice and Prince (2000) suggest that a balance needs to be found between "the market economy, civil society and the welfare state. They describe Karl Polanyi's contention that "economic activities were disembedded from the community as pre-industrial societies were transformed into industrial societies ... [where] in order to create markets, governments placed constraints on community rights...undermin[ing] cooperative aspects of civil society" (p.6). Involving CS in BC (to date through farmer's markets, cooperatives, etc. but potentially in the greater food system) and enhancing the shift from consumer to citizen status can help this re-balance, where citizens have more input into food systems. CS involvement at the international level is exemplified through The International Association of Consumer Food Organizations³³ (2006)

³³ The International Association of Consumer Food Organizations is an "association of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that represent consumer interests in the areas of nutrition, food safety, and related food policy matters". They were "formed in 1997 to increase consumer

submission on how the Codex Alimentarius Commission and its committees could support the promotion of healthy dietary habits and, thus assist the implementation of the “Global Strategy on Diet, Physical Activity, and Health”

Finally, as PH health promotion stakeholders in BC do not have a terrific understanding of the food supply system, a greater knowledge would be beneficial. Interviewees also suggest that guidelines for partnerships with the private sector could also be valuable.

9.4.2 Implications and Recommendations on “Being Strategic”

Recommendations from interviewees under “be strategic” included: align with other agendas (government, organizational, media, public) and establish areas of “buy-in”; build evidence based outcomes and stories; work toward the marriage of Health and Agriculture; do not link to political agendas; nurture champions and leadership; establish long term commitment to funding and initiatives; and finally, create, integrate, and analyze policy options. Some of these themes are elucidated below in terms of their relationship to the literature and implications for stakeholders, beyond what is outlined in Chapter 8.

Regarding the development of an evidence base, as promoted by Caraher (2008) and others (Public Health Agency of Canada, 2001), the Community Food Action Initiative has the goal of generating “practice based evidence”. This is important, but as Caraher suggests, it needs to go one step further. The focus needs to move from small scale program evaluations, to evaluating the grouping of projects and resources. This reflects the call from interviewees (Chapter 9) for “bigger picture” planning and greater coordination of programs. In fact, in order to come close to rivalling competing agendas in BC, food security needs to continue to move further toward this broader approach rather than a program focus.

representation in the debate over the global food trade and to work with international agencies responsible for harmonizing standards related to the production, distribution, and sale of foods”.

In terms of capitalizing on current agendas, recent international events such as the 2008 economic collapse and the world food crisis challenge the current food system paradigm, as well as “climate change, water shortage, soil erosion and over reliance on oil” (Lang, 2005b). The increased discourse regarding externalized costs (such as that brought to the fore by the 2010 oil spill in American gulf) seems to supply further ammunition for the challenge and re-examination of existing paradigms (Porter & Kramer, 2011). In BC, in addition to the health care crisis, climate change and Aboriginal health are two current “corporate priorities” in BC which could provide another pathway for the integration of food security into the government. Further, climate change and Aboriginal health both bring broad agendas which have the potential to focus on land and ecology and the determinants of health.

How should these challenges be approached? Rocheforte and Cobb (1993, p. 58) suggest that solutions determine how problems will be defined, arguing “public officials will not take a problem seriously unless there is a proposed course of action attached to it”. This was demonstrated numerous times during this integration. First, many interviewees suggested that the common approach to discussing food security in a global, expansive way was a hindrance to moving the agenda forward. Medical Health Officers reinforced this to the researcher in her role in the integration, suggesting that while they were willing to support food security, they needed concrete directions to be articulated (B. Seed, 2004-2007).

Further, when simple evidence-based solutions were put forward, they garnered significant support and were often adopted. Several examples of this were demonstrated during the research period. First, the solution of institutional food policy in BC helped to frame poor eating and obesity as an issue of the “built” environment (versus individual), and was supported. Second, the simplicity of the objectives of the BC Fruit and Vegetable Program likely contributed both to significant ongoing funding as well as unequivocal passion, excitement and positive support to the program by all of those involved. This can be contrasted to more ambivalent views from participants in the Community Food Action Initiative, a much more complex program with many

objectives related to community development and other process (versus outcome) oriented objectives. This not to say that the Community Food Action Initiative is less beneficial than the Fruit and Vegetable program; in fact, the Community Food Action Initiative was created more responsively based on CS needs than the Fruit and Vegetable program. However, it illustrates the challenges in this type of more obtuse, process-oriented work. The BC situation also highlights the potential risk in adopting solutions solely because they are available or more familiar, and provides lessons for success that clarity and simplicity offer.

Determining “a proposed course of action” is fundamental. In what Naomi Klein (2007) refers to as the “Shock Doctrine”, she quotes Milton Friedman’s (“grand guru of the movement for unfettered capitalism”) observation:

“only a crisis – actual or perceived – produces real change. When that crisis occurs, the actions that are taken depend on the ideas that are lying around. That, I believe, is our basic function: to develop alternatives to existing policies, to keep them alive and available until the politically impossible becomes politically inevitable” (p. 6).

While this tactic has been used to forward capitalism and privatization, it can also be used to advance food security and the public good. Policy options for BC need to be proposed, analyzed, and marketed, to be ready for enactment when the opportunity presents itself.

PH in BC faces a challenge in convincing decision makers of the validity and efficacy of the Food Security Core Program within the context of competing priorities. Educating Regional Health Authorities about the determinants of health (as was done extensively in the past with health units), capitalizing on current agendas, building an evidence-base and developing policy alternatives can contribute to forwarding food security.

9.5 The Question of Program Evaluations

Information from individual program evaluations was incorporated into the thesis findings and analysis where relevant. For example, the ambivalence in approaching the issue of hunger was highlighted when evaluation recommendations suggested an ongoing focus on those living in low income, while research results showed that some stakeholders disagreed about if and how to do this.

However, variation between the individual evaluations makes it difficult to articulate the collective value of the programs. Moreover, as outlined previously, this research does not investigate the effectiveness of the programs, but the impact of the grouping of initiatives on policy. Nonetheless, lessons can be drawn from examining individual program evaluations in the context of this research.

First, the analysis showed that recommendations from specific evaluations are relevant to all initiatives; these should be considered in program planning. Examples include: the Community Food Action Initiative recommendation to link initiatives into the “bigger picture” (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2008b); recommendations by several initiatives regarding the ongoing sustainability of funding (and the problems that a lack of it brings); and finally, several evaluations noted the significance of leveraging small amounts of funding to create widespread community benefits. These findings suggest that evaluations of other programs should be reviewed in various aspects of program planning.

Second, this analysis can make recommendations for future evaluations. The most significant contribution this research can make to ongoing program evaluation is for evaluations to be located within a broader context. While not facile, considering some questions similar to this analysis may be helpful in providing useable information – important not only for program justification, but also for strengthening the initiative. For example, the impact of the initiative on overall policy direction of key stakeholders, and factors competing against or

facilitating the program could be investigated. Next, the analysis showed that some stakeholders perceive that evaluations use “irrelevant indicators”. Albeit politically difficult, the development of more relevant indicators for food security demands that cross ministerial and cross sectoral initiatives must be established for each ministry and sector involved. This will also ensure that their participation is more salient to the goals of their organization. Finally, the issue of accountability was raised by both CS and state stakeholders in the research. If regulatory pluralism, including the engagement of CS, is to be achieved, more discussion and consensus regarding accountability is needed between sectors. Development of evaluations should reflect these different perspectives of accountability.

Third, the research raises some provocative questions about evaluations. Research results demonstrate the pressure to provide evidence that programs are effective and evidence-based. However, this analysis raises the question “Do evaluations and evidence make a difference?” As noted previously, policy research shows that evidence does not necessarily ensure appropriate policy is enacted. Clearly, evaluations are undeniably important to administrators who need to justify programs both financially and ethically. However, programs funded by the provincial government, for example, may be more vulnerable to political decisions, regardless of their evaluation results. In this context, it may be helpful for programs to understand the plethora of factors that make a difference at these higher levels, and where and how program evaluations play a significant role.

Another provocative question might ask “Do evaluations answer all the questions that need answering?” When stakeholders hire independent evaluators to examine their programs, are they asking some of the tougher questions? This is an incredibly difficult position for program stakeholders, as they need to show funders that programs are successful. A temptation may exist, therefore, to ignore some of the controversial or conflictual aspects of programs – even though many involved know these aspects intimately. However, while this could strengthen programs, this suggestion does not deny that this may be too great a risk for them.

9.6 Summary and Conclusions

The discussion began with a summary of the findings, including a dynamic “policy map” in Figure 9.1. It illustrates drivers of the integration, stakeholder agendas, tensions within and between sectors, as well as the significance of collaboration and mutual agendas between sectors. By outlining the need for both top down and bottom up forces to toward food security, it also alludes to the concept of shifting roles and reconfiguration of relationships between stakeholders.

Findings were compared and contrasted to academic research and analyzed within the broader socio-political context within which the integration occurred. They were also examined through the lens of the other research objectives: if and how the integration of food security has shifted discourses, practice and power; and stakeholder implications. Core implications of the thesis derived from the analysis of findings are presented below in Figure 9.2.

Figure 9.2: Core Implications of Thesis Derived from Analysis of Findings

- Public Health has re-emerged as a driver in food security and food policy.
- Agendas of those in power (rather than definitions) determine strategies.
- Competing agendas highlighted the relative insignificance of food security initiatives under investigation.
- The integration of food security into Public Health challenges the boundaries of Public Health.
- The Population Health Template is a useful tool in articulating the roles of Public Health in Food Security.
- Lang et al.'s triangle model is too crude; a more sophisticated model was generated from the data (Figure 9.1)
- Relationships between government, Civil Society and food supply stakeholders need to be reconfigured in order to work together more effectively to advance food security.
- Marginalization of Civil Society and Community Nutritionist stakeholders from the provincial level restricted the broad source of expertise which informed the integration and the political base for further integration.
- Conflict between stakeholders over approaches to food insecurity (hunger) requires a commitment from a broader range of players to analyze, study and discuss workable responses that move beyond alleviation.
- Arguments for food security could be better positioned within current BC government agendas, and should include corresponding policy alternatives; comprehensive plans and formalized structures.

While CS brought attention to food security in BC, PH was the main driver for the integration. The identification of PH as a driver in food security parallels that of the 1930's world food movement, where the marriage of health and agriculture was first proposed. In this sense, this integration demonstrates a re-emergence of food security in PH, and also echoes more recent calls in the literature for health as a key driver for food policy. The re-emergence of food security in PH has the potential to further the food security agenda; health as a driver can foster the optimal nourishment of the population as a focus for food systems. On the other side, food security in PH has the potential to help health authorities recognize responsibility for the greater health of the population; however, this will require a fundamental shift in societal priorities.

The broad definition of food security allows for the expression of many agendas within it. In this integration, the player with most of the power (PH) often determined the agenda and in some cases, the players who were involved. Many interviewees (particularly those in PH) heralded the accomplishments of the incorporation into PH. However, stakeholders also acknowledged the relative insignificance of the food security agenda in relation to other “weightier”, competing agendas.

This analysis highlighted ways in which the integration of food security challenged PH and pushed the boundaries of recent PH practice. First, it urges PH to move beyond individual human health outcomes toward the determinants of health and the ecological PH approach. Second, it forces them to contend with competing agendas within PH between food protection and food security. And finally, it contests the “top down”, “professionalized” approach, instead positioning PH as one player within “regulatory pluralism” that incorporates CS voice.

Findings of the thesis argue that CS disillusionment with processes was not – as some suggested – about PH colonizing food security. Rather, the frustration was related to PH’s role limitations, particularly in engaging CS, who had been a key driver in the integration. Nor were the tensions solely about top down versus bottom up. CS lobbied for a greater role for government in food security. Moving away from the discourse of centralizing versus decentralizing trends outlined in the literature, this thesis suggests that this relationship is more nuanced. Instead, a social policy movement toward a new political paradigm – “regulatory pluralism” calls for greater engagement of CS, and for all sectors to work together toward common goals. This integration exemplifies an undertaking on the cutting edge in progress toward this reconfiguration.

Stakeholders see further engagement of CS as essential in incorporating the broad source of food security expertise which informed the integration and as a political force toward a societal shift. Moving toward regulatory pluralism and cultural recognition suggests implications for both PH and CS. If the government commits to a greater engagement of CS - supporting capacity

building at that level, finding ways to share power, and articulation of agendas and limitations could boost their intentions. CS Health NGOs can also contribute to capacity building in CS. For CS activists in food security, while their understanding of greater politics is significant, a more conciliatory approach could better enable them to work constructively with government. As Community Nutritionists were a driving force in the integration, it seems that dialogue regarding their future involvement is warranted, as will be outlined in the following chapter.

Regarding the role of PH, Chapter 3 proposed the use of the Population Health template as model for identifying PH roles in food security, suggesting that a systematic articulation of PH roles would allow stakeholders to more effectively work together. This research indeed illustrates that PH has articulated or demonstrated a role under each element in the template; this suggests the template may be of use in articulating PH roles.

Inclusion of the food supply sector is seen as essential. While interviewee recommendations were not specific on strategies, the 1930s concept of a marriage of health and agriculture can map an approach. Direction on food policies contributing to population health can be drawn from international documents and acted upon at the appropriate level. Balancing economics, health and food sustainability will be an ongoing challenge in BC provincial food policy. In working with the food supply sector, PH can benefit from greater understanding of the food system, and the development of guidelines for collaboration. Finally, interviewees identified municipal food policy as an area of potential in BC for integrating differing agendas, including those of the food supply sector.

In addition to stakeholder recommendations on “Being Strategic” reviewed in Chapter 8, implications outlined suggest capitalizing on current government agendas in BC, with a focus on health care funding, Aboriginal health and climate change. Food security policy alternatives should be developed in these areas along with proposed recommendations for action.

Finally, food insecurity and hunger was only weakly included in the initiatives. Interviewees believe responsibility has been downloaded to CS and to lower levels of government. They also see that a broader food security agenda has both the potential to pave the way for hunger to be incorporated and to deter from the issue. A lack of understanding between food security and food insecurity was identified as a barrier in addressing food insecurity. Dialogue between stakeholders will need to be devoted to understanding how food insecurity can be integrated into the agenda in a way that exceeds alleviation.

This thesis, and this integration, began during the emergence of interest in climate change, and prior to the global food security crisis and consequent reminder of the fragility of the food supply. While beginning at the local and provincial levels, examination of this integration within the global and Canadian social policy context shows that some of the challenges of this integration are a result of higher levels forces creating tensions at lower levels. This highlights the idea that political context and theories related to it contribute not only to a greater understanding of current events and agendas, but also shape policy responses. Thesis results propose direction and implications for stakeholders. Results also suggest the vigilance that will be required: to keep the integration of food security within the provincial government at the forefront of this changing socio-political landscape; to continue to move it toward a policy focus; and to further it in a manner reflecting the values of the original BC food security discourse, including the determinants of health, food democracy and food sovereignty.

Chapter Ten. **Reflections**

10.1 Introduction

This final chapter begins with a summary of the value and generalizability of the research. It then outlines limitations of research, and recommendations for future research. Planned journal submissions stemming from the dissertation are then articulated. Finally, the chapter ends with final reflections on the dissertation process.

10.2 Value of the Research

British Columbia has taken a lead in Canada regarding the integration of food security within the provincial government. To what extent can the lessons learned from this research be generalized? This has been elucidated throughout the thesis, particularly within the methodology and discussion chapters. However, this next section gathers together and summarizes the value of the research. Lewis and Ritchie (2003) describe three ways findings can be generalized: to the parent population from which the sample is drawn; to other settings, and whether theoretical statements can be drawn from the findings to be applied more broadly.

Representational generalization, “whether what is found in a research sample can be generalized to or held equally true of, the parent population from which the sample is drawn” will be first addressed (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003, p. 285). The number and selection of interviewees in this study encompassed the majority of those involved in the integration, particularly in reference to Community Food Action Initiative and Food Security Core Programs. This, in addition to the research rigour outlined in methodology, such as supporting findings with relevant program documentation, suggest that inferences to the BC integration into PH are thus valid. Interviewees from the School Fruit and Vegetable program were also well represented and findings related to programs outside of PH rounded out a holistic perspective of the analysis.

Further, these programs supported the validity of the findings by comparing and contrasting to the PH programs. They elucidated parallel themes between PH and other programs, such as competing agendas and tensions between centralization and decentralization. A contrast in enthusiasm between programs with clarity of purpose versus those with more complex purposes was illustrated. These programs also provided a food supply lens, in part illuminating the omission of food supply stakeholders. The researcher endeavoured not to make conclusive statements where limited data was collected, such as the area of the role of the PH Nutritionists.

Over three years have passed since the data was collected, and this integration has continued to progress. Some individual stakeholders remain, while some have moved on. Nonetheless, it offers stakeholders reflexive praxis. The “Contextual” aspect (what) of the research was useful in documenting the features of the process that occurred in BC, and in examining the range of stakeholder perspectives and agendas. In suggesting that agendas are more salient than definitions, this highlights the importance of the transparency of and a greater understanding of stakeholder agendas and competing agendas in collaborative work.

Exploration of the “diagnostic” factors (“why” or the drivers) that facilitated this evolution provided insight into the micro and macro origins of the integration; this is helpful in understanding why events evolved in the manner they did, for example, the focus on PH outcomes. Further, situating the integration within both the socio-political context and within PH and food security theory allowed for a greater understanding of stakeholder limitations and tensions between them. It also illuminated the perspective of the integration as being on the threshold of a new political paradigm - toward “regulatory pluralism”. Examining evaluative factors such as the consequences took the analysis beyond program evaluation to looking at the impacts of the integration as a whole. This highlighted how it compared to bigger picture competing agendas and stakeholders and issues that were excluded or marginalized. Strategic recommendations for advancing food security and food policy were also

explored at this broader level, and were specific to PH and the government in BC.

The second category, inferential generalization, examines “whether the findings can be generalized or inferred to other settings or contexts beyond the sampled one” (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003, p. 285). Lewis and Ritchie suggest that while qualitative research limits the ability for inferential generalization, it does not exclude the possibility. Moreover, they reference Lincoln and Guba (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003, p. 268) suggesting that “transferability depends on the congruence between the ‘sending context’ within which the research is conducted, and the ‘receiving context’ to which it is to be applied”. They pose that a “thick description” of the research context and phenomenon will “allow others to assess the transferability to another setting” (p. 268). In this instance, it means that those involved in other situations need to compare and assess their situation in order to establish whether this research can be generalized to their situation. As PH begins to take more of a leadership role in food security, and as CS takes a greater role in partnering with government, more situations that parallel the circumstances of this research should emerge. Further, many of the observations and recommendations in the findings parallel what is already found through the literature at local, national and international settings: tensions between centralizing and decentralizing factors; the difficulty of bringing together disparate agendas; the challenges in addressing food insecurity in a meaningful way; the issue of competing agendas; the notion of the marriage of health and agriculture; and the re-emergence of PH as a driver in food security. This both validates the findings of this research and makes them transferable to situations experiencing these congruent concerns. Further, numerous theoretical frameworks were incorporated into the analysis (see section 4.3.1). Comparing and contrasting these models to the situation in BC also strengthens the generalizability of the findings. And finally, the diversity of perspectives adds to the potential for inferential generalization. This analysis investigated numerous programs; when parallel themes such as competing agendas were found across distinct programs, this also supports the generalizability.

The third category, theoretical generalization, looks at “whether theoretical propositions, principles or statements can be drawn from the findings of a study for wider application” (Lewis & Ritchie, 2003, p. 285). The richness of situating this research within a socio-political and theoretical context supports generalization of some of the themes. While detailed in the discussion, the next section summarizes these generalizations into six main categories of where this research parallels and/or contributes to broader research and theory in PH and food security.

10.2.1 Public Health as a Driver in Food Security

The identification of PH as a driver in food security harkens back to the 1930's world food movement, where the marriage of health and agriculture was first proposed. In this sense, this integration demonstrates a re-emergence of food security in PH. This also demonstrates the current relevance of the marriage of health and agriculture, albeit the proposition also now invites the environment into the marriage. In addition, it echoes more recent calls in the literature for health as a key policy driver for food policy.

10.2.2 Shifting Roles of Public Health

The incorporation of food security into PH pushed the boundaries of recent PH practice. This analysis highlighted ways in which the integration of food security challenged PH. First, it urges PH to move beyond individual human health outcomes toward the determinants of health and the ecological PH approach. Second, it forces them to contend with competing agendas within PH between food protection and food security. And finally, it contests the “top down”, “professionalized” approach, instead positioning PH as one player within “regulatory pluralism” that incorporates CS voice. The first challenge, particularly in relation to the determinants of health, is outlined extensively in the literature. The latter two are documented less so, suggesting areas of focus for future research. And as suggested in the discussion, moving toward a true population health and a determinants of health approach requires a fundamental shift in societal priorities. Also, the involvement of Nutritionists in

food security took them beyond traditional roles, and may have provoked Regional Health Authorities to question the appropriateness of their role. Finally, the use of the Population Health Template was identified as a useful model in the systematic articulation of PH roles in food security.

10.2.3 Notion of Food Security in the Developed World

There is a rich tradition of thought about food security in developing countries. However, this thesis explores what food security looks like in the developed world. It begins with a definition of food security used in BC – that of community food security. It explores where it converges and diverges from this notion of community food security that has emerged as an approach in developed countries. The practice in BC departs from the agricultural origins of community food security and also from a focus on the intersection of agriculture and hunger. In fact, it highlighted stakeholder ambivalence about addressing food insecurity. By viewing it through the lens of PH in Canada, a different view of food security emerges, with a focus on health and food policy. CS, and in particular the Aboriginal discourse, also brings food sovereignty into the fore of the discourse and practice.

10.2.3 Power and Agendas

This analysis echoed scholars' proposals that higher forces create tensions at lower levels. The power and significance of these impacts on the BC situation reinforce and reiterate forces outlined in the literature. Impacts experienced in BC stem from: trade policies; food safety policies; impact of the neoliberal approach on the diminishing the role of government; market determination that environmental/social/cultural costs are externalized from economy; and impact of regionalization of health care on PH (and the subsequent integration of health care and PH). More positively, the power of the health care funding crisis agenda was demonstrated as a driver in the ActNow BC and food security initiatives.

10.2.4 Food Policy Model

Figure 9.1 outlines an evolving, more sophisticated model of Lang's food policy triangle (Figure 2.1). This model is built not only on experiences in BC, but moreover, integrates additional concepts from the literature such as tensions between centralizing and decentralizing forces, regulatory pluralism (and shared agendas and value), tensions between stakeholders, and the notion of "drivers" as significant in understanding and analyzing policy. It is proposed as an emerging template for the understanding and analysis of factors influencing food policy.

10.2.5 Policy Theory

The research demonstrates the applicability of the Spencer and Ritchie policy framework model in the retrospective analysis of processes in food security and food policy. As alluded to previously, ecological, holistic models of policy making, do not appear to be well established in literature, and the researcher found this model very helpful both in framing research questions and analysis. In fact, personal communication with Ritchie (2011) suggests that there this may be one of the first documented uses of the model in structuring analysis. Further, the researcher suggests that this model could be applied to analyzing policy in progress. This approach to research also builds on Caraher's (2008) recommendations regarding evaluation, suggesting that more attention be given to the evaluation of a collection of initiatives and resources and not simply to individual programs.

10.3 Limitations and Reflections on Research

First, it would have been beneficial to discover the Ritchie and Spencer policy analysis framework prior to the development of the research questions and interviews. This could have supported a greater degree of focus in the interviews. Interviews were rich and detailed, but were lengthy. Nonetheless, the framework was a significant contribution to the research.

The length and number of interviews resulted in an extended period of time spent by the researcher in transcribing, coding and analyzing the interviews. However, this increased the internal validity of the research due to saturation of most themes that were reported. Formulating bullet points for each interview after completion may have provided another validity check. However, the researcher did not do this in order to avoid a bias toward what was heard in the interview, versus a more thorough analysis.

The inclusion of a less relevant sector – food supply stakeholders – also increased the number interviewed. Additionally, it complicated the research throughout the process. However, in the end, it enriched the research by ensuring that a food supply lens was included – and highlighted where their participation was lacking. It also expanded the initiatives studied, and allowed for comparison and contrast of PH initiatives to other government initiatives.

On one hand, the researcher's long-standing involvement in the field contributed to the validity of the research. As well as drawing on personal field observations, some interviewees likely were more open in their responses due to familiarity. On the other hand, this familiarity could also have contributed to respondents' tendency to answer questions in a way that might be seen as desirable by the researcher. Further, some that were familiar with the researcher's background - and differed in philosophy - may have been more guarded with responses. Finally, the researcher's sensitivity to these differences may have prevented her from asking more penetrating questions. Casting aside bias required ongoing attention to research rigour – including the triangulation of data.

Next, while the researcher originally intended to compare and contrast different perspectives of stakeholders, this was not possible for two main reasons. First, sectors were heterogeneous, with subsequent differing perspectives. Second, ensuring anonymity within such a closed community was of utmost importance to the researcher. This prevented the further categorization and identification of interviewees within specific sectors.

Over-emphasis on certain programs occurred. In the case of the Community Food Action Initiative, it was the only PH food security initiative that was actively being carried out at the time of the research, was the only program undertaking a province-wide holistic approach to food security, and as iterated previously, was the only program actively engaging CS food security activists. The PH Food Security Core Program was still in an early stage of development, and had not manifested itself to a great degree outside of PH. And while it was not a program per se, more emphasis could have been placed on the Provincial Health Officer's Report on Food. Similarly, outside of PH, BC Healthy Living Alliance food security programs had not yet been implemented at the time of the interviews.

Finally, outside of documenting the role of the PH Nutritionist as a driver in the integration, the research focussed minimally on their role. Concentrating more specifically on this was beyond the scope of this research. However, the dissolution of a Nutrition program in one of the 5 Regional Health Authorities near the end of the research period highlighted the need for more research on the shifting PH Nutrition role.

10.3.1 Issues of Perspective

As was made clear throughout the thesis, the researcher's point of reference was as someone intimately involved both in this integration and in food security practice. Another researcher with a different background may have approached the analysis in a different way, focusing on other aspects. However, the grounding in the issues as a result of the intimacy suggests that matters salient to key informants were indeed emphasized. For example, due to her background, the researcher probed specifically on PH's role and success in facilitating CS engagement, and on whether "hunger" was an area that "diluted" in the integration. While this likely resulted in a greater emphasis on these areas by key stakeholders, they were reflective of key informant concerns.

The fact that the researcher has always been a person that recognizes and empathizes with different points of view in a situation may have also helped to reveal varying perspectives. She entered this research with some sense of the

perspective of the individuals involved. However, interviewees almost always incorporated new concepts and ideas into the conversations, and the researcher came away with new “nuggets” for the research. One key area that emerged from interviewees, as mentioned previously, was the impact of the meat inspection regulation.

Ironically, while a Nutritionist herself, the shift in the role of the Community Nutritionist - from heavy involvement at early stages to minimal involvement later – was a bit of a blind spot. Perhaps as she felt so familiar with this role, and also did not want to assume an importance in their role, she left this to interviewees to raise, rather than probe in this direction. It was only during the analysis period that she began to see how diminished their role had become.

As alluded to in the foreword, the research has pointed to the importance of understanding the deeper significance of occurrences, in relation to drivers and context. The researcher is now more prone to dissect and examine current paradigms rather than accept popular rhetoric. For example, understanding that a neoliberal approach is only one path within globalization. And to comprehend the nuances between government “colonization”, “co-optation” and “regulatory pluralism”. And further, to begin to understand the benefits and need for a brand of “regulatory pluralism” which involves all three sectors working toward mutual goals (focussing on the public good). While part of this shift in perspective is due to an increased awareness, it is also related to stepping outside of a daily role within PH - looking beyond the PH perspective of perceived success of the initiatives and putting them into the context of overall government direction.

10.4 Recommendations for Future Research

The primary recommendation for future research is the development of food security policy alternatives within emerging policy areas in BC: climate change; health care; and Aboriginal health. Both climate change and Aboriginal health would allow for a broad scope of approach to food security. Research would need to be undertaken with stakeholders working in these areas in BC.

Follow up on the Provincial Health Services Authority policy paper on food insecurity (Provincial Health Services Authority, 2007b) could be useful in informing future work on food insecurity. Research could examine stakeholder perspectives on the paper and barriers to acceptance and implementation.

Again, outside of documenting their early role, this thesis did not focus a lot of attention on the PH Nutritionists. The dissolution of the PH Nutrition program in one of the Regional Health Authorities after the research period shed a new perspective the marginalization of the Nutritionist voice after the integration. A more urgent question of a trend toward a loss of worth of the PH Nutritionist role emerged. The researcher was left wondering if the constant push by PH Nutritionists in BC to move outside of the more traditional education box - to areas like policy and community development - put their positions at risk.

When they dilute their role beyond focusing on nutrition content, does it then become something that health administrators think can be carried out by any health practitioner? This threat may be important to pay attention to, and could be examined through a similar analysis to the thesis. Questions of “why did this happen? What is socio-political context? What were the consequences? and “How best to move forward?” could be helpful to both the Nutritionists and the nutritional health of the BC population. This research could be approached in conjunction with Dietitians of Canada. The researcher plans to do an exploratory presentation on this at a Canadian conference in August 2011.

The other area that emerged during the integration that created a greater urgency for action was the introduction of the Meat Inspection Regulation, resulting in the clash between PH Food Security and Food Protection. Applied

research looking at mutual agendas and barriers to collaboration could contribute to the ability of the two areas to work together.

Examining ways to make food security and community work relevant to health authorities and the health care system is a topic worthy of further research pursuit. This research could be done on a practical, applied level at one of the Regional Health Authorities. One step within this is to further cultivate food security and population health indicators that are relevant to Regional Health Authorities. Another suggestion is to tailor and position food security to health authorities' agendas – beyond core programs (as the Food Security Core Program is not a health authority priority).

Finally, the research noted that certain coalitions (e.g. Agri-Food Partners in Healthy Eating) and NGOs (e.g. BC Health Living Alliance) were funded by government, while others were not. It would be interesting to identify factors which support and hinder government funding and collaboration.

10.5 Planned Journal Submissions from Research

In addition to exploring research related to the role of the PH Nutritionist, as identified above, the researcher plans the following journal submissions:

Canadian Journal of Public Health: “The Re-emergence of Food Security in Public Health” (Focus on PH history, mandate, strengths and limitations in their role in food security).

Agriculture, Food and Human Values: “Food Security and Public Health in British Columbia, Canada – a Policy Analysis” (Overview of the thesis, including the policy process used, findings and results).

Critical Public Health: “Can Public Health Partner with CS in Advancing Food Security?” (Evidence and mandate toward, and limitations of PH's ability to collaborate with CS).

Journal of Hunger and Environmental Nutrition: “Where did Hunger Go?” (Consequences Arising from the Integration of Food Security into the Public Health Agenda in BC, including recommendations and implications for moving forward).

10.6 Final Reflections

This research represents a snapshot in time between 2002-2008. Some perspectives and situations have since changed. Nonetheless, the researcher anticipates that this rich analysis will provide insight for stakeholders in BC for advancing food security within the government.

It is evident that policy requires much more than evidence to evolve. The issue of competing agendas – which emerged in this analysis at so many levels – has compelled the researcher to move beyond the surface of occurrences to examining the greater relevance of them. Living in the Middle East whilst completing the dissertation has also undoubtedly opened the researcher's eyes to the impact of politics on issues and actions. Further, this reflection is written just a week after witnessing Egypt's citizen revolution. This reinforces interviewee suggestions that pressure for any real societal shift will need to come from CS – and that such shifts are possible.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Thesis Introduction Explanatory Form



October XX, 2007

Re: Public Health and Food Security in British Columbia

Dear _____,

Your name has been chosen as a potential participant in my Doctoral research due to your affiliation with Public Health and Provincial government food security³⁴ initiatives in British Columbia. Would you consider sharing your perceptions and experiences about the progress in these partnerships and initiatives to date?

You are invited to participate in an interview that will contribute to my doctoral thesis work. This research focuses on food security initiatives and policies that have emerged in British Columbia Public Health (at Ministry and Regional Health Authorities levels), and government related initiatives that partner with Public Health. This analysis focuses only on partners currently involved in these initiatives, and compares and contrasts the perspectives of the three key players - the government; Civil Society; and the food supply chain. It centres primarily on the time period between 2002-2008.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the integration of food security into BC Public Health and provincial government programs by analyzing:

³⁴Community food security, for this purpose, refers to food security programming that may encompass aspects of hunger/social justice; agriculture and land use; health; and food systems, consistent with the 2003 Hamm and Bellows definition: Community food security exists when all community residents obtains a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice.

Public Health, for this purpose, refers to the Provincial structures in British Columbia within which Public Health/Community Nutritionists, Medical Officers of Health, Public Health Inspectors and Public Health Nurses work. These include the Ministry of Health, Provincial Health Services Authority, and Regional Health Authorities.

- the roles of, and relationships between different players
- how involvement has influenced key players
- the facilitators and barriers in the integration
- the perspectives of different players on the role of Public Health and the Provincial government in food security; and
- lessons to be learned that could support future progress in achieving food security in BC.

Participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in part or all of the project, or withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way. If you decide to participate, the interview will take 60-90 minutes of your time. Results of the study will be kept confidential and will be recorded anonymously. Data will be used in my doctoral thesis. Confidentiality will be maintained in any resulting printed or web-based publications.

Your identity will be kept strictly confidential. Participants will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. Electronic versions of notes will be saved on a computer with password protection. Files will not be labelled according to interview names. Only the student researcher and her advisors will have access to the data in its raw form. No identifiable personal data will be published or shared with any other organization. Digital and written data collected will be kept for 4 years, at which point the digital recordings will be wiped clean, and the interviews will be shredded.

In follow up, I will contact you by phone to establish your interest in participating. If you have questions regarding this research, please contact me at barb_seed@yahoo.com. I look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,

Barbara Seed, MPH, RD
 PhD student in Food Policy, City University, UK
Advisors: Dr. Tim Lang and Dr. Martin Caraher (City University)
Dr. Aleck Ostry (University of Victoria; NEXUS Investigator).

If there is an aspect of the study which concerns you, you may make a complaint. City University has established a complaints procedure via the Secretary to the Research Ethics Committee. To complain about the study, you need to phone 020 7040 8106. You can then ask to speak to the Secretary of the Ethics Committee and inform them that the name of the project is: "Public Health and Food Security in British Columbia."

You may also write to the Secretary at:

Dr Naomi Hammond

*Secretary to Senate Ethical Committee
Academic Development and Services
City University
Northampton Square
London
EC1V 0HB
Email: naomi.hammond.1@city.ac.uk*

Appendix 2: Informed Consent Form for Project Participants

Project Title: *Public Health and Food Security in British Columbia*

Student Investigator: Barbara Seed; barb_seed@yahoo.com

Barbara is a PhD student in Food Policy with City University, working with Dr. Tim Lang, Dr. Martin Caraher and Dr. Aleck Ostry (University of Victoria).

I agree to take part in the above City University research project. I have had the project explained to me, and I have read the Explanatory Statement, which I may keep for my records. I understand that agreeing to take part means that I am willing to:

- Be interviewed by the researcher

The information will be held and processed for the following purposes:

- Barb Seed's doctoral thesis
- Resultant papers or web-based publications

I understand that any information I provide is confidential, and that no information that could lead to the identification of any individual will be disclosed in any reports on the project, or to any other party. No identifiable personal data will be published. Only the student researcher and her advisors will have access to the identifiable information.

I understand that my participation is voluntary, that I can choose not to participate in part or all of the project, and that I can withdraw at any stage of the project without being penalized or disadvantaged in any way.

Name: (please print)

Signature: Date:

Address:

Appendix 3: Researcher Involvement in Provincial and Regional Health Authority Food Security Initiatives

British Columbia Public Health Food Security Alliance

- Chair of BC Community Nutritionist Council (Community Nutritionists' Council) Food Security Committee; attended joint meeting between Community Nutritionists' Council and Provincial Medical Health Officers when PH Alliance on food security formed in 2003.
- Member of Alliance, and attended inaugural meeting in Sorrento in 2004

Core Programs

- Chair and Co-Chair of Community Nutritionists' Council during development of "Making the Connection" advocacy/evidence document for Food Security Core programs: 2002-2004
- Committee member in development of Model Core Program for Food Security: 2005
- One of three developers of Fraser Health Food Security Performance Improvement Plan: 2007

Community Food Security Action Initiative

- Community Food Action Initiative initial consultation: 2005
- Community Food Action Initiative Indicators Meeting: 2007
- Community Food Action Initiative Evaluation Meeting: 2007
- Regional health authority representative to the provincial the Community Food Action Initiative operations and advisory committees: 2007
- Community Food Action Initiative Strategic Planning Session #1 June 2007
- Administered the Community Food Action Initiative at the local level within the Regional Health Authority: 2006-2007

Other

- Meeting with Medical Health Officers where conflict between PH employees working on food security and Environmental Health Officers regarding Meat Inspection Regulation was first discussed as a group: November 2007

Appendix 4: Semi-Structured Interview Guide

Research Questions	Interview Questions <i>Introduction:</i> - <i>Purpose/focus of research</i> - <i>Definitions</i> - <i>Explanatory and Consent Forms</i>
1. What food security initiatives and policies have emerged in BC PH (at Ministry and Regional Health Authority levels)? What food security initiatives (that partner with PH) have emerged within other Ministries, other levels of government and organizations affiliated with government)?	Food security programs in BC PH (and other provincial government programs partnering with PH): Are you aware of food security programs “health promotion” programs or policies that PH or provincial government oversees or partners with at Provincial and/or Regional Health Authority level? Can you name two of them that you are most affiliated with? These are the programs and policies I am investigating. What is your understanding of these programs (brief description)? What is your understanding of the key goals of these programs? Are these similar or different to the goals your organization is working toward? What is your relationship to these food security “health promotion” programs or policies? What is your experience with them?
2. What are the consequences and limitations of policies, programs and stakeholders to date?	What have been consequences of these programs and policies to date? Were any of these unintended? Please explain. Are there limitations to these programs and/or the players involved? In theory, PH has a role of facilitating the engagement of Civil Society? To what extent do you think this happens in practice? Can you give examples of where this does or does not happen? Are there ways this could be improved?
3. What are the relationships between each of the sectors/players? Are there mediating factors or players between the sectors/players?	Key Players in BC in PH/food security partnerships show the triangle of key players in food security: A) Does this triangle represent the key sectors of those involved in the development and implementation of food security policies and programs in BC PH (and related partner programs)? Any sectors missing? Who are the key players in each sector in BC that are involved in or have influence on the food security “health promotion” programs? In your view, what has been the role of the key players to date? Probes: policy development? program

	implementation? Have any players had a more substantive role than some of the others? In your opinion, do any of the sectors or players have radically different goals from each other? Where do you see your organization? Do you see your organization as a partner in these initiatives? Why or why not? Are there any mediating factors players or organizations happening in between the sectors or players that facilitate you working together? B) Do you think any specific sectors or players have lost or gained in the integration of food security into BC PH. Probe: Hunger? If yes, can you explain? Has Civil Society lost or gained? Please explain. Have any disciplines within food security been marginalized - overemphasized?
4. What are the macro and micro-level drivers that comprise the policy environment? Are there any facilitators and barriers in the integration of food security into BC PH and related provincial government programs?	Influences on the Programs, Policies and Partnerships: A) What big picture or smaller scale occurrences facilitated the integration of food security into BC PH and provincial government programs? Probe: (e.g. PH renewal, increased Civil Society interest in local foods, specific champions) B) Are there any other barriers in policy development or implementation that you have not referred to earlier, or that you would like to reiterate?
5. What lessons can be learned from these processes that support future progress in achieving food security in British Columbia?	Recommendations for the Future: What lessons can be learned from these processes that support future progress in achieving food security in British Columbia? Would you like to see the further integration of food security into the government agenda? Please explain (why or why not). If yes, how? Is there anything else that could facilitate the further integration of food security into BC PH or government policies and programs in the future?

Anything else to add?

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