



Nourish

2025 Annual Report

On the road to 100 Million Better Bites

*Transforming how Canadian Health Care
Systems approach Food and Health*



Dear Readers,

2025 reminded us - again and again - that food is one of the most human expressions of care.

In hospitals across the country, we witnessed teams choosing to nourish patients with dignity, cultural safety, and climate responsibility even in the face of shrinking budgets and rising pressures. These choices came from leaders who were willing to **see food not as a tray or a cost centre, but as a relationship**: to patients, to land, to health, to culture, and to future generations.

We saw dietitians and cooks redesign menus to honour Indigenous foodways. We saw supply chain staff carve out space for local growers. We saw executives take courageous steps to shift procurement and policy. And, **we saw how quickly things can change when people have a shared compass, trusted peers, and a place to ask hard questions together.**

Nourish exists to create those conditions. This year, our participants and alumni **shaped provincial nutrition standards, influenced federal policy tables**, and supported one another through transitions big and small.

The staying power of our alumni's initiatives gives us deep confidence: the **movement to transform the public plate is not fragile; it is rooted, relational, and growing.**

As we look to 2026, our **focus is on enabling scale** without losing the heart of this work. The Nourish Commons will give leaders a home for learning, courage, and coordination. 100 Million Better Bites will unite hospitals in a shared effort to serve food that heals people and land. And, we will continue **partnering with Indigenous leaders** to ensure this transformation is grounded in justice, reciprocity, and respect.

Thank you for walking with us. Together, we are proving that better nourishment is not only possible, it is already taking shape across the country: one meal and one act of leadership at a time.

With gratitude,



Hayley Lapalme & Jen Reynolds, Executive Directors

“The true testament to the impact of Nourish and its programming is the staying power of the work.

This is difficult to measure, but when we connect with participants from the very first cohort to the one that has just finished what we see is that the work continues without supports. The values and the importance of nourishing patients and planet stay beyond the learning.

They become part of the organizational culture.”

Wendy Smith
Mohawk Medbuy



Executive Summary

2025 was the year Nourish shifted from being a catalyst to becoming part of Canada's health-system infrastructure. Across the country, hospitals, policymakers, Indigenous leaders, suppliers, and global partners turned to Nourish for coordination, clarity, and courage at a time when budgets were tightening and the polycrisis was accelerating.

We advanced our theory of change by proving that leadership development, shared infrastructure, and Two-Eyed seeing can move whole systems. With our third national Symposium, new national communities of practice, and the growth of Coolfood and Food is Our Medicine, we equipped leaders with the foresight, tools, and relationships to redesign the public plate. Nourish's network **reaches 20% of all hospital meals** in Canada and has already **shaped provincial nutrition standards**, federal food-safety policy, **sustainability accreditation pilots**, and national climate strategies.

Our impact deepened and diversified. Together with our partners, we reached over **20 million meals**, reduced food-related emissions, expanded Indigenous-led learning, launched the Nourish Arrow as a Canadian Food as Medicine framework response to Tufts', and **brought hospital food to the centre of national conversations** at the **Victoria Forum**, the **EAT-Lancet 2.0** launch in Stockholm, **Health Canada's** FPT Traditional Indigenous Food Safety Community of Practice, and Canadian Malnutrition Awareness Week. Hospitals across most provinces began shifting menus, sourcing locally, integrating cultural foodways, and embedding planetary health into care. **British Columbia launched its new Acute Care Nutrition Guidelines** shaped by Nourish's work. And, we authored a low-carbon food procurement guide for **Buyers for Climate Action**, a coalition of leading green public buyers.



And we built staying power. Our alumni continued to shape policy, form provincial working groups, influence supply chains, and lead innovation far beyond their program years - evidence that Nourish cultivates leaders who transform systems long after funding cycles end.

At its core, this work is about life - people who deserve food that heals, staff who need nourishment to care for others, communities striving for dignity and resilience, and lands that can no longer bear the weight of extractive systems.

The year ahead is about scale. In 2026, we will launch the **Nourish Commons** as a shared national platform for food and health leadership toward the **100 Million Better Bites challenge**; strengthen hospital policies around **planetary health menus and procurement**; focus communities of practice that help hospitals shift from early pilots to widespread adoption; and **steward inter-ministerial collaboration**, regulation, and practice around hospital food as a powerful leverage point for planetary health, resilient food systems, and strong economies.





What we learned in 2025

- 1 - Hospitals are emerging as powerful civic leaders.** Unlocking their full potential as stewards of the public plate, Canada needs a unified strategy that treats food as critical infrastructure for health, climate resilience, and economic and cultural security.
- 2 - EAT-Lancet 2.0 echoes a lesson our work has continually surfaced: justice is core** to feeding people well within planetary boundaries.
- 3 - Food is now recognized as a primary driver of planetary boundary transgressions.** Public procurement is one of Canada's most underused levers for climate action and food-system transformation.
- 4 - Partnerships are force multipliers.** With a small team, our impact is outsized because we collaborate deeply with hospitals, Indigenous leaders, governments, and global networks.
- 5 - The system needs shared architecture.** A national digital Commons is essential to host ongoing learning, coordination, and action far beyond what any single cohort or convening can hold.
- 6 - Nourish is a trusted partner to government.** Sustained collaboration with federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous bodies is vital to shifting norms, narratives, standards, and regulation across the health system.
- 7 - Hospitals sit at the heart of the polycrisis** and are uniquely positioned to help address it. Food reveals both the vulnerabilities in the system and the pathways toward regeneration.
- 8 - It's time for shared targets.** Along with shared programs, shared targets can help to focus collective efforts and impact.

Nourish Theory of Change

Canada's food system drives rising diet-related disease, health inequities, climate emissions, with limited access to healthy, culturally appropriate foods. Hospitals - our largest public institutions - treat the consequences, but rarely influence the causes.

If hospitals shift their food systems toward culturally grounded, nutritious, low-carbon meals...

And if health leaders are supported with the skills, evidence, and infrastructure...

Then Canada can reduce diet-related disease, cut emissions, strengthen local economies, and advance reconciliation.



Assumptions

- Food is a powerful, underused lever for prevention, climate action, and cultural healing and reconciliation.
- Public procurement can reshape markets and strengthen regional food economies.
- Systems change requires aligned leadership, shared infrastructure, and relational trust across sectors.
- Indigenous knowledge, equity, and justice must be integral - not auxiliary - to transformation.

Desired Outcomes

- Hospitals adopt planetary health diets and design for healthy food environments in cafeterias and beyond.
- Hospitals implement impact purchasing.
- Hospitals reinvest in kitchens, skills, and value chains.
- Increased patient health, dignity, and satisfaction.
- Reduced waste and food-related health care emissions.
- Increased dignity, pride, and well-being for staff.
- Strengthened regional food economies.

Change Mechanisms

Nourish builds the conditions for transformation by:

- Developing leaders who can navigate complexity, shift culture, and mobilize teams.
- Coordinating a national platform (Nourish Commons) that shares tools, evidence, case studies, and peer expertise.
- Strengthening public procurement pathways that shift menus and markets toward sustainable, culturally grounded food.
- Supporting Indigenous-led approaches, cultural safety, and food sovereignty in hospital food systems.
- Creating narrative, policy, and public-will alignment across ministries, health authorities, and governments.

Systemic Influence

Shifted trajectory toward **planetary health**, driven by food system transformations, led by the public institution Canadians trust most: **healthcare**.

We nourish change at the individual, community, and planetary levels where food and health intersect.

Our Vision

Nourish envisions a future where mutually reinforcing food and health systems advance planetary health.

Our Guiding Principles

Complexity

We value diverse perspectives and work across boundaries, thinking and acting in systems.

Place-based

We understand that meaningful action is grounded in the unique relationships between people, place, and community.

Our Mission

Nourish harnesses the power of food in health care to advance the health of people and planet.

Awareness-based

We recognize that mindsets have to shift before systems can change. Awareness, understanding, and action are linked.

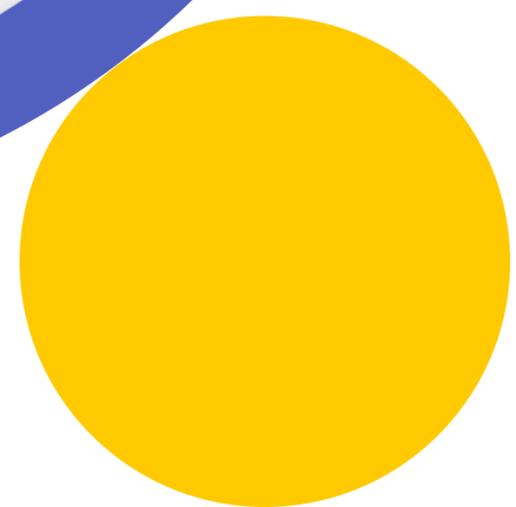
Historically-Informed

We know that where we've been shapes where we go. We are committed to decolonizing the ways we understand culture, food, land, and wellbeing. We are committed to listening and learning from Indigenous Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and communities, and to practicing Mi'kmak Elders Albert and Murdena Marshall's teaching of Two-Eyed Seeing.





A Year in Motion: 2025 Highlights



A Year in Motion

This past year was a catalytic one for Nourish.

In 2025, we **welcomed new partners** and **deepened relationships** within our existing network. We celebrated the **milestone completion of our Third Anchor Cohort**. We convened leaders from across the country and around the world for vital conversations on food and health in our **Symposium**. And, we created the scaffolding for what's to come in the **Nourish Commons**, our new national platform for collective action.

Read on for our 2025 highlights and join us in celebrating what we can accomplish together when we realize the power of food as medicine.

\$281M **20%**

Buying power of
the Third Cohort

Nourish's reach of
hospital meals in Canada

20M **10.8M**

Meals reached through
the Anchor Cohort

Meals impacted by
Coolfood

4000+ **38**

Food is Our Medicine
participants on a Truth and
Reconciliation journey

Coolfood Hospitals
pledged



Coolfood Members

- 38 current members.
- 7 new members joined in 2025.
- Clusters in BC Lower Mainland (14), Southwestern Ontario (18), and the Greater Toronto Area (6).

2017-19 Nourish Cohort 1 (C1)

- 26 individuals across the country in Nourish’s first Innovator Cohort.

2021-23 Nourish Cohort 2 (C2)

7 Teams in Nourish’s Second Cohort:

- Vancouver, BC
- London, ON
- Labrador, NL
- Montréal, QC
- Northern Ontario
- Saskatchewan
- Toronto, ON

2023-25 Nourish Cohort 3 (C3)

5 Teams in Nourish’s Third Cohort:

- BC Lower Mainland
- London, ON
- Newfoundland & Labrador
- Six Nations of the Grand River, ON
- Toronto, ON

Reaching 100 Million Meals

2025 has been about consolidating our successes and lessons, scaling our impact to reach a critical tipping point: capturing the early majority in 2026.

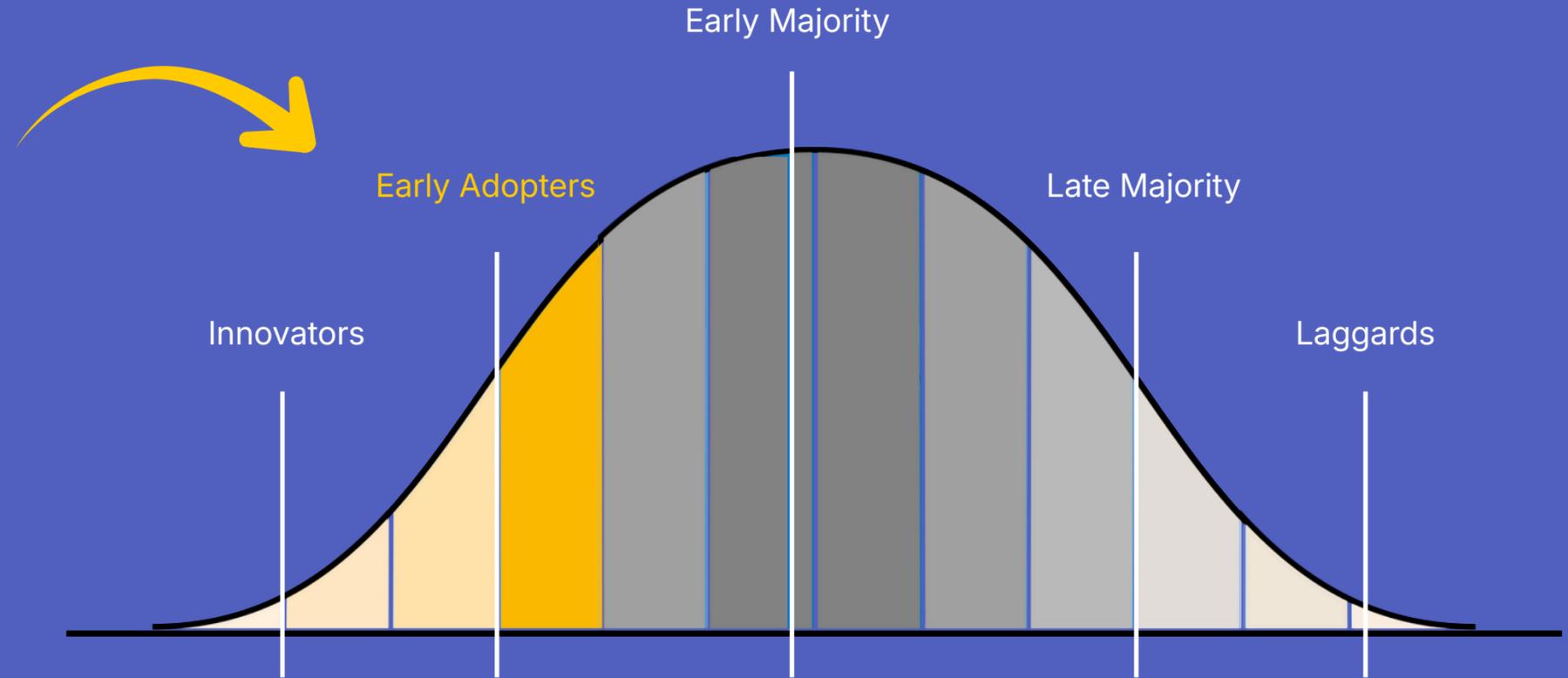


In 2025:

25M meals are influenced by Nourish.
That's 20% of hospital meals nationally.
We've got the Early Adopters.

2028 Goal:

102 Million meals are achieving
cultural and climate impact.



Our Partnerships – Where Nourish Leads, Systems Move

In 2025, we partnered with 30+ organizations to deliver impact in health sector capacity-building, narrative-shifting, and policy advancements.

Nourish is a well-embedded national leader trusted by partners and governmental bodies for our expertise and reputation across health, food, and policy landscape. Working together with our partners, we are shaping the standards, strategies, and collaborations that are defining the future.



3 Big Policy Wins: Nourish is Strengthening Health Care Standards

1. British Columbia's Provincial Nutrition Standards for Acute Care now require acute care facilities to “prioritize environmentally sustainable choices”, “design menus that consider sustainability, reduce food waste, and prioritize local food,” and favour reusable dishware over single-use plastics.

Our Anchor Cohort, Food is Our Medicine, and Planetary Health Menus programs **created momentum and resources** for hospitals to realistically deliver on those criteria. With our health care partners, **Nourish is shifting the paradigm: treating hospital food not just as a logistics issue, but as a core part of health care, healing, sustainability, and equity.**

Ultimately, the vision of food as medicine, supporting healing and planetary health, is **moving from innovation into real institutional change** - policy, new patient menus, procurement, and long-term food strategy. We are excited for the partnerships ahead and the potential for scaling across the country.

2. The Treasury Board of Canada contracted Nourish to write the Centre for Greening Government's *Guide to Best Practices and Green Criteria for Low-Carbon Food Procurement*.

Published in March 2025, this work is **shifting institutional purchasing toward more sustainable, climate-friendly food choices nationwide.**

By **providing a clear roadmap for low-carbon procurement**, the Guide empowers government institutions to reduce their greenhouse-gas footprints and sets a powerful example for sustainable food practices across Canada.

3. Nourish contributed to the development of new food-related standards the Health Standards Organization (HSO) is piloting with the Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care as part of its upcoming to health care accreditation standards update.

This **positions Nourish** to influence how hospitals across Canada integrate healthier, lower-carbon food practices into both inpatient and retail operations, making sustainable food a measurable part of what high-quality care looks like.



Convening and contributing to key conversations, we amplified our reach and influence.



From Trump Tariffs to Patient Trays: Healthcare's Role in National Food Security drew our highest-ever single-webinar registration (361), and has since gained an additional 221 YouTube views.



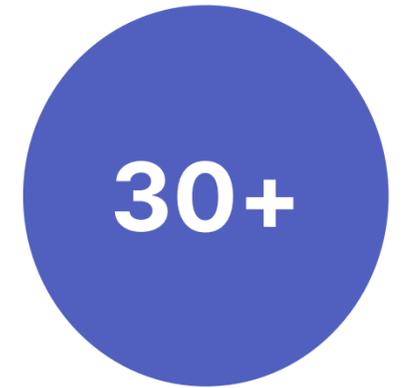
Nourish presented the kick-off webinar for Canadian Malnutrition Week - *From Bedside to Policy: Leadership for Food as Medicine in Healthcare*.



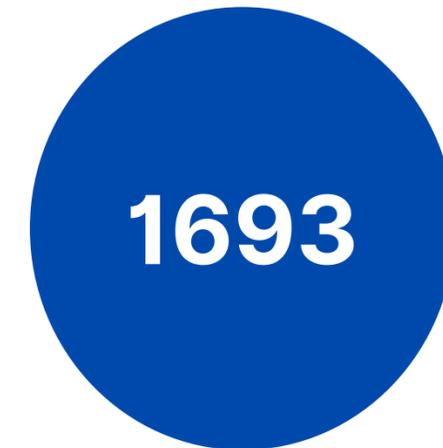
Part of *Sustainable by Design: Health Care Innovations for a Warming World*, Nourish moderated a rich discussion on food as a lever for sustainability at Toronto Climate Week



By-invitation External Speaking Events



Nourish-led Learning Sessions



LinkedIn Followers



Instagram Followers



Bluesky Followers

Moments and Milestones

The 2025 Nourish Food for Health Symposium convened **50+** speakers from around the world for a week of dialogues, shared learning, and connection.

Gordon Food Service becomes our **first** corporate Food is Our Medicine learning partner, joining **3000+** health professionals in completing the learning journey.

The Victoria Forum invites Nourish to program **two** food sessions with the Canadian Senate. We frame the leverage of food on the public plate in the polycrisis and test the idea of a **100 Million Better Bites** target for hospital food.

We partnered with the EAT Commission and Physicians Association for Nutrition (PAN) International in the **Global Communities for Action** initiative.

Coolfood hospitals cut over **600 tonnes** of food-related emissions

Nourish contributed to new food-related **standards** the Health Standards Organization (HSO) is piloting with the Canadian Coalition for Green Health Care.

Nourish convenes inaugural retreat of **6 health executives** at The New Farm - call for a shared target for healthcare food objectives.

7 new hospitals joined Coolfood, bringing our total number of members to **38**.

We created the **Nourish Arrow** - a new Food as Medicine framework that responds to Tufts' - but from our Canadian vantage point: one that is more holistic, intertwines equity and sustainability, and more attuned with place.

Nourish's 3rd Anchor Cohort (2023-2025) influenced **\$20 Million** in spending on **281 Million** health care meals from coast to coast, from organizing a moose hunt to bring Indigenous and country foods into care to coordinating for more impactful purchasing.

Nourish Board of Directors grows from **3 to 8 members** and welcomes health futurist Zayna Khayat as Board Chair.

Nourish becomes the **1st non-governmental organization** invited to participate in the Government of Canada's Traditional Indigenous Food Safety Community of Practice.



A Closer Look

2025 Achievements

Nourish's First Executive Cohort Gathers for Inaugural Retreat

In June, **Nourish hosted our first executive cohort retreat** at The New Farm, a regenerative organic farm in Ontario where the land grounded vital conversations on leadership, trade, and collective action.

With guidance from special guest Dr. Jeff Thompson, CEO Emeritus of Gundersen Health, a globally respected health care executive, pediatrician, and thought leader, we explored the growing complexity facing health care leaders today. These include constrained budgets, strained supply chains, growing rates of diet-related disease, and the ongoing need for action on Indigenous health, Truth, and Reconciliation. **Engaging health care leadership is critical to advancing food for health system action.**

Outcomes of the first convening include:

- Participants named themselves **Nourish's First Executive Cohort** and have continued to meet virtually, also participating in this year's Symposium.
- The **call for shared food targets** that hospitals can strive toward (the genesis of the 100Million Better Bites campaign).
- A call for a 45-minute version of **Food is Our Medicine** for executives to require as training for all their staff.
- A desire to **continue to convene and grow this cohort of executive champions.**



"This began with a conversation at a Nourish Wasan convening, and now we're here - leaders, farmers, funders, all in the same room. That's what Nourish does."

*Gillian Flies,
The New Farm Centre*



Nourish Leads Food Systems Programming at 2025 Victoria Forum

Co-hosted by the Canadian Senate and University of Victoria's Gustavson School of Business, **Nourish was invited to lead food systems programming** at the 2025 Victoria Forum, a role that placed hospital food at the centre of a national dialogue on the polycrisis. We introduced 100 Million Better Bites as a clear, practical pathway for hospitals to advance climate action, equity, and culturally grounded care.

Nourish's framing - making planetary health menus the clinical default, shifting procurement through values-based contracting, rebuilding the "missing middle" in Canada's food economy, and highlighting critical pathways for inter-ministerial collaboration through food - resonated as both urgent and actionable across sectors.



Wayfinding toward "100 Million Better Bites" at the Victoria Forum. Session contributors (from left) Elaine Chu, Dr. Annie Lalande, Jason Baillargeon, Andre Picard, Alistair Howes, Haida Knowledge Keeper Jenny Cross, Hayley Lapalme, Marissa Alexander, Wendy Smith, Shelly Crack, and Chef Paul Stewart (not pictured).

[Read *The Journey Begins: On the Road to 100 Million Better Bites* - Nourish's Report from the 2025 Victoria Forum](#)



Health Canada's Traditional Indigenous Food Safety Community of Practice invites Nourish to be the first non-governmental organization member

This year, **Nourish became the first non-governmental organization invited to join and present to the Health Canada's Federal-Provincial-Territorial Traditional Indigenous Food Safety Community of Practice**, a national body with representatives from every province and territory, Canada Food Inspection Agency, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Indigenous Services Canada, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada, and Indigenous knowledge holders.

We contributed insights from Nourish alumni hospitals and the Nourish Indigenous & Allies' Advisory that affirm the importance of cultural humility and Two-Eyed-Seeing in food safety policy around traditional and country foods.

Our participation signaled a shift towards recognizing hospital food, Indigenous food sovereignty, and planetary health as important - not peripheral - elements in national health conversations. **Nourish brought practical insights** from health care settings, showing how traditional foods, clinical nutrition, procurement, and public health intersect. We highlighted the **imperative of recognizing and funding under the Canada Health Act Indigenous foodways** in hospital and long-term care settings as medically necessary to the **government's Truth and Reconciliation obligations** and their **commitment to fostering health systems free from racism and discrimination**.

Nourish has been invited to host a workshop for Community of Practice members and health inspectors in 2026 to deepen this relationships, the evidence, tools, and field insights to support federal, provincial, territorial, and Indigenous partners as they develop 2026 workplans.



Nourish Executive Directors invited to attend the launch of EAT-Lancet 2.0 Commission at the Stockholm Food Forum.

At the October 2025 launch, the work of over seventy global scientists confirmed that transforming food systems is essential to meeting climate, biodiversity, health, and justice goals - and that public procurement is a critical driver in achieving these shifts.

The **Commission's findings validate Nourish's long-standing approach**: food is a critical climate lever, justice and sustainability are inseparable, traditional diets are cultural and ecological wayfinders, hospitals are pivotal actors in public procurement, and the business case for better food is overwhelmingly compelling. Our alumni are already demonstrating the "how," and the next 25 years will be decisive.

We are scaling the commission's findings through the Nourish Commons and the 100 Million Better Bites campaign, accelerating hospital adoption of planetary health diets, strengthening clinical integration, and deepening documentation and research. Canada needs coordinated, evidence-backed action, and Nourish is positioned to lead it. We will continue to engage with the EAT-Lancet leaders, several of whom, including Dr Walter Willett (lead of the Health Chapter of the report), participated in the Nourish Symposium this year.

[Read Hayley's Dispatch from the Forum](#)



Above Right: Hayley Lapalme with Dr. Walter Willett and Dr. Annie Lalande at the Stockholm Food Forum.



The **EAT-Lancet 2.0 report** confirms that shifting to sustainable, culturally-informed diets could prevent millions of premature deaths, dramatically reduce diet-related chronic disease, and restore planetary stability. The report reinforces that improving the public plate is not a "nice-to-have," but one of the highest-impact levers in health care today.

Nourish’s Third Anchor Cohort (2023-2025) wraps and sets sail to scale their impact beyond the program

Visionary health care leaders dedicated to transforming food and health systems across community, institutional, and policy scales, in the national Nourish cohorts.

This year marked the conclusion of Nourish’s Third Anchor Cohort. Over the past two years, five teams from coast to coast to coast have worked to shift how their colleagues, communities, organizations, and health care systems use food as a lever for health and healing, for people and planet. Working within and across their teams, they have accomplished so much together.

The Third Cohort’s work influenced thousands of patient meals. Look forward to impact reports with detail on each team’s work in early 2026.



“The Cohort program has enriched me and inspired me to think about my role as a dietitian in a hospital - and me as an individual on this planet thinking about our future. I wouldn’t have gained, accomplished, moved forward, advanced how I have been without this Nourish community, this involvement.”

Elaine Chu, Director of Food Service Transformation and Strategic Projects, Fraser Health (Cohort 3)

Third Cohort (2023-2025) by the Numbers

\$59M

Annual Food Service Budgets

5.2M

Meals Served Annually

5,137

Patient Beds

The Third Cohort teams:

- **Worked across seven health authorities** to form a Provincial Food Service Planetary Health Working Group, marking a significant milestone to establish a shared vision and platform for collaboration and resource sharing.
- **Turned tariffs and trade barriers into opportunity**, making new local supplier relationships, putting local blueberries, corn, lettuce, and more on patient trays.
- **Hosted a moose hunt**, working with local hunters to bring comfort to long-term care and tackling **regulatory barriers to country foods** in health care.
- **Convened a burgeoning national network on culinary medicine**, creating a **new Nourish community of practice** to launch on the Commons in 2026.
- Filmed a **new mini-documentary on culinary medicine** in Canada.
- **Launched Ajuinata, a podcast** uplifting Indigenous ways of knowing and being through stories of food and health care changemakers.



Listen to Ajuinata



"Being part of the Nourish Cohort made it easier to find time to sit in and work as a community, and that is why we were able to accomplish the things we did."

*Team Six Nations
(Cohort 3)*



"The garden was something I would talk about before we even joined the first Cohort. Just seeing that some of those things were actually possible. And it really was about some of the connections we were able to make. It gives you that boost you need sometimes - okay, this is actually how far we've come."

*Michelle Stranges, St. Joseph's
Healthcare London, Cohort 3*

Nourish Coolfood members cut over 600 tonnes of food-related emissions in their first year

Based on available data, in 2025 we recorded 652.04 tCO₂e in food-related GHG reductions from Coolfood member hospitals.

Engagement in our Planetary Health Menus Community of Practice exceeded expectations. We reached nearly 300 people through webinars and presentations, workshops, community of practice meet-ups, and an in-person retreat for senior health executives. **Participants reported greater confidence in plant-forward menu design, sustainable procurement, and local sourcing strategies.**

Looking ahead, we will **harnessing the benefits of the Nourish Commons** and 100 Million Better Bites to make further headway on healing people and planet.



“If we can find a way to provide better, more delicious, and more climate conscious food to our patients – we need to act on it. Being an early adopter to CoolFood enabled us to leverage the crucial patient and planet focused menu updates required for Hamilton Health Sciences to become a resilient, inclusive, and future ready healthcare provider.”

Victoria Brzozowski, Environmental Performance Strategy and Program Lead, Hamilton Health Sciences



Right: The sign for Onuhkwa:t Tsi'tKah^tay^' - 'At the Medicine Garden' at St. Joseph's Healthcare London.



88 Food is our Medicine Learning Journeys decolonize mindsets and menus - and build cultural connection.

In 2025, Nourish led a successful first revenue-generating **Food is our Medicine (FIOM) Learning Journey for 88 participants**, guided by Kitty RLynn Lickers. This year, Nourish also **launched a strategic partnership with Gordon Food Services (GFS)** to support their learning.

Looking ahead, **we will host the 2025/26 FIOM Learning Journey in the Nourish Commons**, making the journey more accessible with an intentional space for participants to connect.

“The Food is our Medicine course was a helpful introduction to the team to learn and understand about the importance of food as medicine and how it relates to the community. One dietitian reflected on her experience taking the course and they feel that they can connect differently with Indigenous patients compared to previous encounters. Other team members reflected on some of the teachings from Indigenous speakers and how food is preserved for the long winter months in Northern Ontario communities.”

Team London, Cohort 3



“As an Indigenous person, this experience has helped me reconnect with my culture through teachings and knowledge that I will carry into my personal and professional life. Before Nourish, I never considered food to be medicine, even though I turned to the land for ingredients that our ancestors used to cure common ailments. Nourish offered numerous opportunities for learning and self-reflection, particularly during our time together at Wasan. I now recognize that my lived experiences are valid and can play a meaningful role in driving systems change.”

Dana Marshall, Regional Food Animator - Labrador, Food First NL (Cohort 3)

Nourish Partners for Collective Action on Planetary Health

Nourish partnered with 20 health care professional and sustainability organizations for the inaugural National Day of Action on Planetary Health.

Canada's National Day of Action on Planetary Health is a nationwide effort highlighting how human health depends on a healthy environment. It brings together health professionals, institutions, and communities for events, statements, and advocacy focused on climate and environmental issues - not only for the day but calling for systemic action.

This day of action matters because climate change, pollution, and ecosystem decline directly affect Canadians' health. With the health care sector a key contributor to greenhouse gas emissions, the day emphasized the need for sustainable, resilient, low-carbon health systems and a stronger national focus on planetary health.

Nourish works to deepen the ways that Canada's health institutions, educators, professionals, and citizens integrate planetary health principles into curricula, policies, operations, and daily actions. From supporting national advocacy to reducing emissions, getting planetary health diets on health care menus, and preparing for climate-related health challenges, Nourish is working with health care to make a difference.

“Through our work with Nourish over the past four years we have experienced the vital connection between food, health, and community. At the heart of this work is the belief that food is medicine, nourishing both people and the planet. By working with our partners and community, we are improving the patient and resident experience today while building a healthier, more sustainable future.”

*Vice-President and CFO,
St. Joseph's Healthcare London*



Also this year, **we partnered with the EAT Commission and Physicians Association for Nutrition (PAN) International in the Communities for Action initiative.**

The health care arm of this initiative works to **advance the recommendations of the EAT-Lancet 2.0 report from ideas into real-world change.**

This collaboration **positions Nourish to better accelerate food-system shifts** that improve public health and reduce emissions, moving Canadian institutions closer to diets that are both sustainable and nutritious.

Nourish Convenes Global Food and Health Systems Leaders at Symposium 2025

From November 3 - 7, our [2025 Food for Health Symposium: 100 Million Better Bites](#) convened **over 50 leading voices from around the world for a week of dialogues, shared learning, and connection.** Health care and food system leaders, practitioners, and partners explored urgent and inspiring questions at the intersections of food, culture, climate, and care.

We heard from leaders like **Dr. Walter Willett, Dr. Nicole Redvers, Dr. Joseph Leblanc,** and heard storytelling from leaders within Nourish's flagship **Cohort Program.** The Symposium also marked the soft launch of **The Commons**, Nourish's new network platform for collective action. Participants gained a sneak preview of what is to come with the official launch in spring 2026, laying the groundwork for a national campaign to scale food for health system transformation - **100 Million Better Bites.**

Convening on the Nourish Commons brought together Nourish's network - returning and new - strengthening our profile, global visibility, and relationships for the work ahead.

"I came away feeling not only hopeful, but with a better understanding of what institutions and individuals can do and have done to positively impact planetary and human health."

Nourish Symposium 2025 Participant

Join us for Symposium 2026 in-person next fall! Details coming soon! For now, check out our 2025 Symposium program!



Nourish

2025 Food for Health Symposium

100 Million Better Bites

Program



2025 Nourish Award Winners: Leading transformation in food and health.



**Anchor Leadership Award
- Individual**

Michelle Stranges
St. Joseph's
Healthcare London



**Planetary Plate Award
- Organization/Team**

Vancouver Coastal
Health Planetary Health
Menu Project Team



**Anchor Leadership Award
- Organization/Team**

Nova Scotia Health
Authority Nutrition and
Food Services Team



**Margaret Edgars Award
- Individual**

Laura Salmon
Yukon Health



**Planetary Plate Award
- Individual**

Annie Marquez
CHU Sainte-Justine



**Margaret Edgars Award
- Organization/Team**

Northern Health
British Columbia

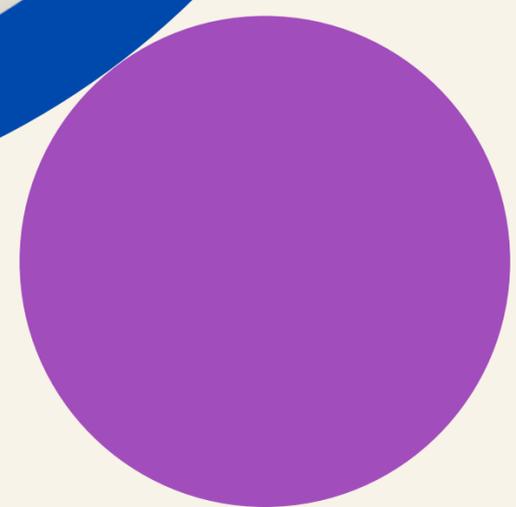


Shelly Crack & Jenny Cross accepted this award for Northern Health presented with Margaret's daughter, Blossom.



What's Next

2026 and Beyond



Creating a New Framework for Food as Medicine: The Nourish Arrow

In spring 2025, Nourish convened two workshops, hosting actors from across Canada's food and health systems to explore the potential for a new framework. Our aim was to explore what we view as strengths and limitations of the Tufts Food is Medicine framework for Canada, identify what makes the Canadian context different from a food as medicine perspective, and surface promising opportunities for collaboration.

With input from across Canadian health care facilities and organizations, Nourish created a new direction for Food As Medicine: The Nourish Arrow. The Nourish Arrow approaches Food As Medicine from a different vantage point - one that is more holistic, intertwines equity and sustainability, and more attuned with place and models the continuum from patient foodways to flourishing food systems.

In 2026, we will socialize this new framework and work with policymakers to embed this homegrown approach into new, bolder actions for Food as Medicine for planetary health in Canada.

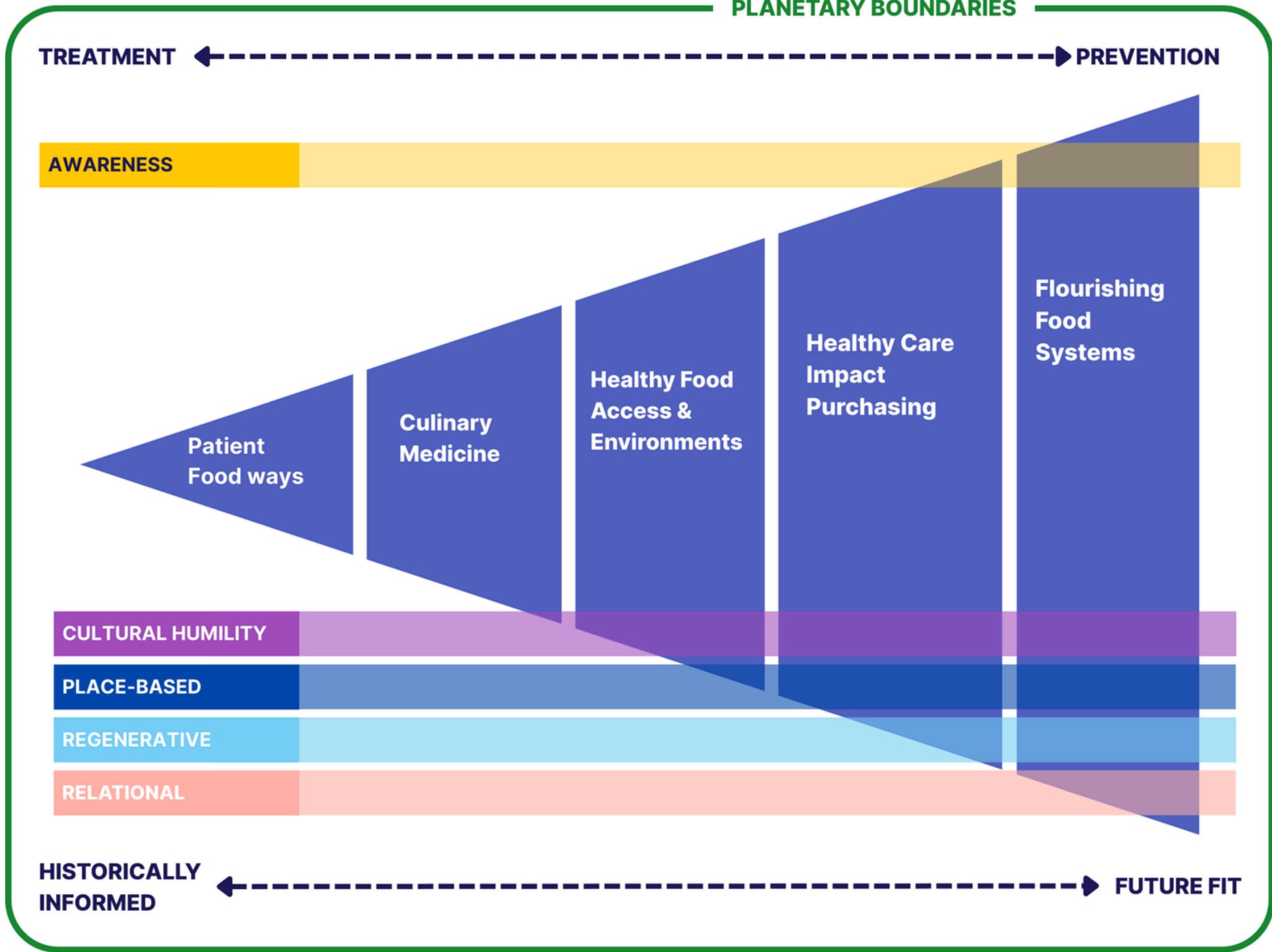
Check out our latest briefing on the Nourish Arrow



The Nourish Arrow spans from treatment to prevention, aiming to fully integrate food as a lever for health within care systems.

Key domains across the continuum include:

- Patient Foodways
- Culinary Medicine
- Healthy Food Access & Environments
- Health Care Impact Purchasing
- Flourishing Food Systems



The Nourish Arrow approaches Food as Medicine from a different vantage point - one that is more holistic, intertwines equity and sustainability, and more attuned with place.

The Arrow shows how to leverage the \$4B spent on health care food services in Canada annually to create more systemic benefits for people and planet, and the further investments that could be made.

Coming early 2026: 100 Million Better Bites as a shared target for collective action.

100 Million Better Bites is a shared target that Nourish is challenging Canadian health care organizations to make commitments toward, to achieve a collective goal by 2030 to advance planetary health in health care through food.

100 Million Better Bites has two parts:

- **A call to action.** Built on this powerful premise of hospitals as anchor leaders. We want to build, amplify, and advocate for the role of food in health and well-being, and the importance of health care as food environments.
- **A challenge.** To health care leaders and institutions at all levels to examine their current ways of operating and, starting from wherever they are, shift actions along four key pathways to create better bites.

1 bite = 1 transformed meal served in health care, to patients at bedside or in hospital cafeterias



| 4 Proposed Pathways to Better Bites | | | |
|--|---|---|---|
| Cool Food Plant-Forward Shift | High-impact animal proteins like red/processed meat | → | Lower-impact plant proteins |
| Medicine Food Whole & Traditional Foods Shift | Ultra-processed foods | → | Minimally-processed, whole foods that support healing and preventive health |
| Local Food Origin Shift | Far-flung value chains | → | Regional, provincial, on-site growing, and/or Indigenous value chains |
| Sustainable Food Agriculture Shift | Conventional, industrial agriculture | → | Foods grown/raised in ways that respect planetary boundaries |

Launching in early 2026: The Nourish Commons

With 100+ hospital alumni dispersed across the country, the Nourish Commons will be the **new national home for collective learning and action** toward the 100 Million Better Bites challenge. It is the shared architecture the system has been missing - to move farther and faster together on food in healthcare.

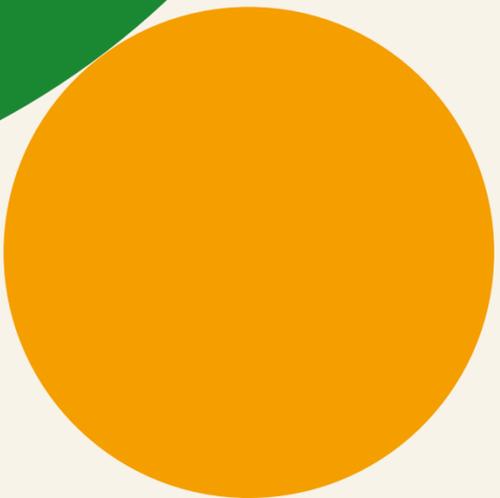
- **Quality programming & network activation:** Courses, coaching, working groups, and mentorship decentralized for accessibility and scale. The Commons strengthens operational skill and leadership capacity.
- **A coordinated hub to influence** policy, philanthropy, and collective efforts by aggregating efforts, data, and lessons to strategically leverage investments and policy.
- **A one-stop place** to showcase your work, join mentorship circles, and lead member-driven initiatives, ensuring hospitals stay ahead of emerging standards, expectations, and opportunities while tapping into a trusted ecosystem of peers.
- **Members gain access** to micro-grants, exclusive events, national benchmarking data, and year-round support.

The Nourish Commons is designed to help hospitals lead with clarity in a rapidly changing environment. It brings together the people, tools, data, and shared learning needed to make smart decisions, coordinate action, and elevate food as a strategic asset for patient care, staff wellbeing, and climate leadership. By connecting leaders across regions and roles, the Commons strengthens the relationships and insights that make lasting change possible. Going live in 2026!





Our 2025 Calls to Action



Our Calls to Action for 2026



To Health Leaders

- Join the Nourish Commons and take up the 100M Better Bites Challenge.
- Get food on your executive agenda to enact planetary health menu and purchasing policies.
- Invest in Food is Our Medicine for staff training on culturally mindful care.
- Save the Date for an early October 2026 in-person Nourish Symposium.



To Funders

- Join our Core Partners in shaping a powerful legacy of healthy food and healing amid polycrisis.
- Stabilize our nonprofit operations with multi-year funding.
- Introduce us to a possible collaborator who could help bring our work from the early adopters to the critical mass.



To Policymakers

- Harness the public plate to advance economic, social, and environmental health outcomes.
- Act on the TRC and address discriminatory regulatory barriers to Indigenous foods.
- Prioritize inter-ministerial collaboration on the synchronicity of CFG and Planetary Health Diet.



To Suppliers

- Provide solutions for regional, sustainable purchasing by expanding Vendors of Record, and origin and sustainability reporting.
- Aggregate local production and develop minimally-processed food options to health care buyers.



Our Team

Dedicated people
behind the work.

Our partners and funders

Nourish started in 2016 as an initiative of the McConnell Foundation. Two years later, we welcomed the Arrell Family Foundation as a Core Partner. Since then, our partnerships have expanded to include over ten philanthropic partners. Most recently, we welcomed the Definity Foundation to the fold. All our funders' support is reflected in the changing culture around food and health we are now seeing nine years on.

The Arrell Family
Foundation

La fondation
McConnell
Foundation



WORLD
RESOURCES
INSTITUTE



Team, Board, and Advisors

Our **staff**, **board**, and **Nourish Indigenous Allies and Advisory (NIAA)** members make all of our work possible.

Board of Directors

| | | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--|--|
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Northern Health



Tessie Harris
Diabetes Practice
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Term ended 2025



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Health Authority



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Early Childhood
Development Educator &
Haida Knowledge Keeper



Kaya Hill
Student Nutrition
Lead, Six Nations
Health Services



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(Retired) Manager of
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Roxanne Notley
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Term ended 2025

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Hayley Lapalme
Executive Director



Jennifer Reynolds
Executive Director



Kitty RLynn Lickers
Guide and Knowledge
Keeper, Food is Our
Medicine



Amy Ford
Director,
Planetary Health



Ngaire Leaf
Manager, Events and
Operations



Roya Damabi
Director, Innovation
and System
Transformation





Contact Us



@nourishleadership



@nourishlead



www.nourishleadership.ca

info@nourishleadership.ca

Nourish is a registered Canadian charity (BN: 794405209RR0001).

Tax receipts are issued for all eligible donations.

Audited financial statements available upon request.