

Calgary Regional Partnership Unveils Regional Food Security Strategy

BY CRPADMIN • OCTOBER 19, 2017 • GIS, PARTNERSHIP/PLAN, RESEARCH

The Calgary Regional Partnership (CRP) is contributing capacity to one of the most significant conversations unfolding in the [Calgary Region](#):

How will we feed the three million people who will be living, working and playing here by 2076?

Its recently released strategy [Food Secure](#) brings a regional lens to the long-term vision of increasing food security in the Calgary Region.

According to CRP Food Security lead Jessica Letizia, the strategy builds on the good work of the Calgary EATS! [Food Assessment and Action Plan](#) and as a living document, it will create opportunities for stakeholders, partners, and advocates to work collaboratively on a resilient food system for the Region.

“A sustainable local food system has social, economic, and environmental benefits, so we’re looking at how our food is grown, distributed and consumed, and how food waste is managed to increase food security in our Region. We want to ensure there is equitable access to fresh, healthy food by building both individual and community capacity,” says Letizia.

A resilient food system

According to [Eating Local: Defining the Local Foodshed to Meet Local Food Goals](#) it currently takes over 5.2 million pounds of food per day to feed 1.3 million people in the Calgary Region, and much of the local food retail system is dependent on imports – a key indicator of both economic leakage and an insecure food system.

“To survive and thrive in an uncertain future we need to think seriously about our ability to feed ourselves,” says Calgary City Councillor Gian-Carlo Carra, one of the 192 stakeholders who contributed to the development of the [Food Secure](#) strategy.

“The purpose of Food Secure is not to “reinvent” work that has already been completed or is ongoing, but instead to explore partnership opportunities and areas where we can build on the progress and successes of other individuals and organizations.”



Consumer behaviors, natural disasters, or the severe floods or droughts the Calgary Region has experienced in recent years can have lasting effects on the food system. Recognized within the strategy are actions that will increase the capacity, flexibility, and adaptability of the food system to tolerate these kinds of changes without disrupting the flow of food.

The power of local

The overarching vision of the CRP's strategy is abundant, locally produced food that feeds the Calgary Region. And efficiently and sustainably producing and processing a variety of food in the Region that accommodates the area's population is one of the six goals outlined in the strategy.

"To imagine our food system for a generation to come we need to think in terms of self-reliance and reliable access to food. *Food Secure* was designed to initiate discussions in the Calgary Region as we consider food security today and as we grow to an expected three million people by 2076," says Colleen Shepherd, Executive Director of the Calgary Regional Partnership.

By empowering producers and consumers to grow, eat and support local the Calgary Region will have a healthier food system that provides enough safe and nutritious food to support the population.

Future of Food Secure



An increase in regional food security is the result of a culmination of grassroots activities, tactful and actionable policy and a political will to influence the food conversation.

At present, the Calgary Regional Partnership is working toward creating [regional food data layers](#), available on the [Calgary Region Open Data Site](#), to help action the strategy.

The *Food Secure* team aims to understand how food is produced, processed, distributed, accessed, consumed, and how food waste is managed region-wide. By developing data, convening stakeholders, and exploring existing and emerging partnerships, a 'base case' of food security will be developed for the Calgary Region.

For more information, or to get involved in *Food Secure*, please contact [Jessica Letizia](#), Regional GIS Program Lead, Calgary Regional Partnership.