

L'Association  
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sur l'alimentation



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## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gratitude. The word sounds dull and hollow in relation to how strongly I feel it in relation to the CAFS/ACÉA community. As my time as president comes to an end, it seems an impossibly inadequate word. Really, most words do. Still, I wanted to use my last opportunity writing for this space to express a little gratitude.

My term spanned the most disruptive periods of the pandemic. During this time, the board rather ambitiously undertook several initiatives reflective of a collective desire to build a stronger organization. Learning, organizing, and strategizing with the members of the board has been a singularly inspiring experience. I am so grateful for this. We'll have more to share at the Annual General Meeting on May 31st (keep an eye out for more details on this soon), but suffice it to say for now, the collective work of the board over the last two years charts new



Michael Classens, CAFS Board President

and exciting directions for our association.

For the first time since 2019, the CAFS/ACÉA conference will be held in person. At last count, there are over 170 registrants, making this

## MESSAGE DU PRÉSIDENT

likely our largest conference ever. Certainly, this is partially explained by what many of us already know: Interest in food studies continues to grow. More specifically though, conference co-chairs Michelle Ryan and David Szanto deserve an immense amount of credit and our collective gratitude. Their vision, ambition, and organizational acumen have been staggering to witness. From the Pre-Conference for students, postdocs, and emerging scholars, through to three excellent plenaries, dozens of concurrent sessions, the Exploration Gallery, and a social gathering, Michelle and David—along with the many other volunteers they recruited—have organized a truly astonishing event. I hope you take time to express your gratitude to them during the conference. Conference details can be found [on the CAFS website](#).

Finally, I want to express my deep gratitude to the incomparable David Szanto. For over a decade, David has been our association's veritable man behind the curtain. This is David's second time serving as conference co-chair; he is the creative force behind the visual identities of CAFS/ACÉA and our journal, *Canadian Food Studies/La Revue canadienne des études sur l'alimentation*; he has led website/communication/email updates and support. And of course, he is the curator and editor of this newsletter. His work has been essential (again, the word isn't enough). As David moves on from these duties, he leaves a lasting legacy—and big shoes to fill. On behalf of CAFS/ACÉA, thank you David.

I hope to see you all at the conference.

—Michael Classens

*(Back at you, Michael, in spades. –Ed.)*

## NEWS

### Canadore College Selected as One of Ten National Demonstration Sites for a Campus Living Lab

[Sustainable Canadore's project](#) is focused on food security and researching ways to create food sovereignty for rural and remote Indigenous communities. This research is conducted through their off-grid grow pod that operates using solar power. The building envelope consists entirely of solar panels that work in conjunction with a battery energy storage system, which captures and stores any unused energy for use after dark. The pod has a capacity to produce about 13,500 kg of fresh produce per year and helps reduce the embodied carbon associated with production and procurement.

To date, the team has grown 50+ herbs and vegetables, as well as white strawberries, which are native to Japan, and Jaltomato berries, which are native to Mexico and Central America. The system also allows hydroponic and soil-based production to occur simultaneously, enabling research to be conducted by comparing the nutritive content of each production method.



The pod is climate-resistant, having withstood the northern Ontario winter, and can be an attractive option for communities looking to use sustainable technologies to curb their reliance on fossil fuels.



As part of their ImpAct Climate project, Colleges & Institutes Canada put out a call to develop living lab projects that demonstrate ways to implement GHG emission reductions. The Canadore pod was selected as one of ten sites, and through the project, the team was able to increase supply to the school's culinary program, consult with Indigenous communities to determine their needs, and grow the produce identified through the consultancy. The project helped divert approximately 1841 kg of greenhouse gases.

In the next phases, they will be adding a second, larger pod and seeking opportunities to collaborate with industry, post-secondary institutions, and communities looking to promote food security.

The Canadore project has been [featured on CTV](#) and in [the Globe and Mail](#).



## Off the Menu: Appetites, Culture, and Environment

[L. Sasha Gora](#) has received funding from the Elitenetzwerk Bayern to lead a new International Junior Research Group at the University of Augsburg, Germany. [“Off the Menu: Appetites, Culture, and Environment”](#) will focus on seafood and slippery case studies that address the entanglement between appetites and environmental transformations, culinary extinction, and how cuisines accept or reject ‘invasive species.’ In May 2023, Sasha will be advertising for two fully funded doctoral researcher positions. [Email her for more info.](#)



photo: Vivi D'Angelo, from [sashagora.com](https://sashagora.com)

## The School Food Development Project

In March 2022, a University of Saskatchewan research team began work on the School Food Development

Project (SFDP), in collaboration with Saskatoon Public School Division and Meadow Lake Tribal Council. Using a co-design model, the SFDP is working to develop school food programs (SFPs) at twelve participating schools—SFPs that honor Indigenous culture and fit the unique context of each school community. They aim to create sustainable, culturally appropriate meal and snack programs as well as to engage students in food- and land-based learning activities: gardening, cooking, nutrition education, foraging, hunting, fishing, etc. The overarching objectives? To improve students' physical health, increase their cultural competencies, and expand their food literacy, all while strengthening community food systems and contributing to local food sovereignty.

Community engagement has been the major focus of the SFDP's work thus far. The first year of the project was dedicated to building relationships and sharing stories with school staff, students, families, and community leaders. This “engagement phase” allowed the SFDP to determine the strengths of each community, outline their available resources, and better understand their existing needs. It also generated a wealth of ideas, connections, and resources for schools to draw from as they worked to set priorities for year two of the project—the “implementation phase.”

In October 2022, as part of their engagement work, the SFDP hosted *Come to the Table*, a knowledge mobilization gathering, bringing together representatives from each participating school to be inspired by the possibilities. The event featured presentations by School Food Leaders from Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Maskwacis Education, Toronto

District School Board, SaskPolytechnic, and the University of Saskatchewan, who offered insights, shared resources and provided examples of successful, culturally informed SFP models from other jurisdictions. Presentations from *Come to the Table* can be viewed on [the SFDPA YouTube channel](#).

For more information about the SFDPA, [contact Rachel Engler-Stringer](#).



## Canadian Food Studies – Journal Update

A few important transitions have taken place over the past few months at *Canadian Food Studies*. Alyson Holland, who has served in multiple leadership roles since the journal's establishment in 2014, is stepping down as the administrative coordinator. Alyson has been invaluable to the journal's growth and expansion, in addition to working full time as a medical doctor, and will now move into a new advisory role. Alexia Moyer, who has been with the journal since 2019, takes over from Alyson. She will be joined by our new administrator, Sarah Henzi, an assistant professor of Indigenous Literatures in the Department of French and the Department of Indigenous Studies at Simon Fraser University. Ryan Phillips has stepped down from his role as the Book/Art/Event Review Editor, and Kristen Lowitt, an assistant professor at Queens University in the School of Environmental Studies, takes over this role. Finally, Jennifer Marshman, who

served as the CAFS-CFS liaison since 2021, has handed over the reins to Johanna Wilkes, a PhD candidate at the Balsillie School of International Affairs. A heartfelt thank you to all those that have supported the journal and a big welcome to our new members of the Editorial Collective.

*Canadian Food Studies* is also seeking new editors to join the Editorial Collective. Editors act as the primary editorial decision makers supported by the administrative staff. For more information or to express your interest, please [contact Charles Levkoe](#).

*See page 12 for the contents of the current issue.*



## RESEARCH

### Thunder Bay + Area Food Strategy Releases Second Community Food Systems Report Card

The [Thunder Bay + Area Food Strategy](#) has just launched an updated 2023 Community Food System Report Card, which provides a snapshot of the trends, challenges, and opportunities related to Thunder Bay's regional food system.

A Community Food System Report Card assesses the food system as a whole, compiling local food data on the economic, environmental, and social factors included in food production, processing, retail, consumption, and waste or repurposing.

The role of the Thunder Bay + Area Community Food System Report Card is to assess the Thunder Bay regional food system by tracking changes to 119 indicators across seven different food system pillars: food access, forest and freshwater foods, food infrastructure, food procurement, food production, school food environments, and urban agriculture. The updated 2023 data indicates what has changed across the food system compared to 2015, when the first Report Card was released.



The Report Card presents a snapshot of the current food system with a call to action to get involved in building a more equitable and sustainable food system for all.

[The Community Food System Report Card](#) is presented in chapters representing the seven different food strategy pillars. Each chapter includes background context for that pillar, the indicators that were measured, observations, and highlights.

### Picturing the Margins: History in a Fine Grain

In 1986, scientists and specialists gathered at Minaki Lodge, a resort hotel northwest of Kenora, Ontario, to compare notes on Canada's only native grain. The plant goes by a variety of names, including: *Zizania* spp. (the Linnaean classification), *psin* (Dakhótawin), *manomin/manoomin* (Anishinaabemowin), *zizanie des marais* and *riz sauvage* (French), and *wild rice* (English). The 1986 event produced a book of conference proceedings that is today difficult to find in its entirety—as well as the poster pictured on the following page.

Stands of *Zizania* growing in slow-moving, shallow water have been a staff of life for Indigenous North American peoples for thousands of years. The grain is high in vegetable protein and nutrients, and the rice beds provide fish habitat and attract migratory waterfowl. *Z. palustris*, the northern species, thrives in cold water, and ranges into northern Saskatchewan and Alberta. For thousands of years, waterborne traders in pre-contact North America carried wild rice, maize, dried meat and fish, furs, and sturgeon oil in networks that exchanged staple commodities and elite luxury goods across the continent. As maize (*Zea mays*) spread across North America over the past millennium and a half, it supplemented Indigenous food economies that combined hunting, fishing, fowling, the farming of domesticated



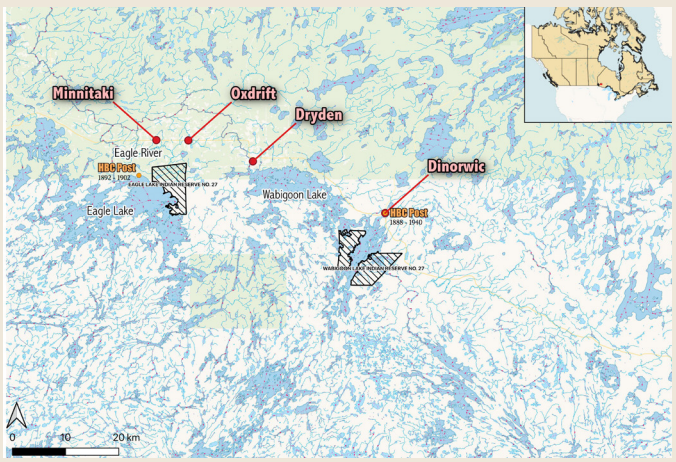
dams for electricity and waterwheels for ore processing. Some wild rice beds were flooded, others washed away by now fast-flowing water or killed with defoliant to clear space for tourists' or vacationers' boating and swimming.

Today, as wild rice is marketed in North American cities and supermarkets as a miracle grain, it retains its role as a staff of life and as a focal point for traditional culture in the 21st century among Indigenous peoples in the Boundary Waters region and across North America. As you consider this poster and the map below, what if you thought of Minaki or Kenora or Dryden as places where people have lived well for thousands of years, and not as wastelands or cultural backwaters? Nineteenth-century planners thought in terms of farm or wilderness. The history of wild rice beds suggests: what if farm and wilderness are one and the same?

plants and the cultivation of others. European travellers in the Boundary Waters region from the 17th to the early 19th centuries noted in their journals and reports that the peoples of the region—Ojibwe, Cree, Assiniboine (Nakoda), Dakota, and others—flourished on a diet of wild rice, and that they deliberately expanded its growth through seeding to produce surpluses for sale and exchange with fur trading companies.

These observed realities would be effaced in the later 19th and early 20th centuries by historical myths that informed colonization policies: of Indigenous peoples as wanderers at the mercy of a barren environment, and of most of North America as an unpeopled and therefore unclaimed wilderness. A Canadian industrial society that saw the Boundary Waters and Rainy River regions as hinterlands for resource production and extraction reshaped the region's hydrological landscape for its own purposes: dredging rivers for boat traffic, emplacing hydroelectric

Peotto, T. & Nelson, C. 2022. "Picturing the Margins: History in a Fine Grain." *Intersection: Canadian Historical Association*. 5(1), 31-32.



## PUBLICATIONS

### The Immaculate Conception of Data: Agribusiness, Activists, and Their Shared Politics of the Future

Every new tractor now contains built-in sensors that collect data and stream it to cloud-based infrastructure. Seed and chemical companies are using these data, and these agribusinesses are a form of big tech, alongside firms like Google and Facebook. [The Immaculate Conception of Data](#) looks into the secretive legal agreements surrounding agricultural big data to trace how it is used and with what consequences. Agribusinesses are among the oldest oligopoly corporations in the world, and their concentration gives them an advantage over other food system actors. The book explores what happens when big data get caught up in pre-existing arrangements of

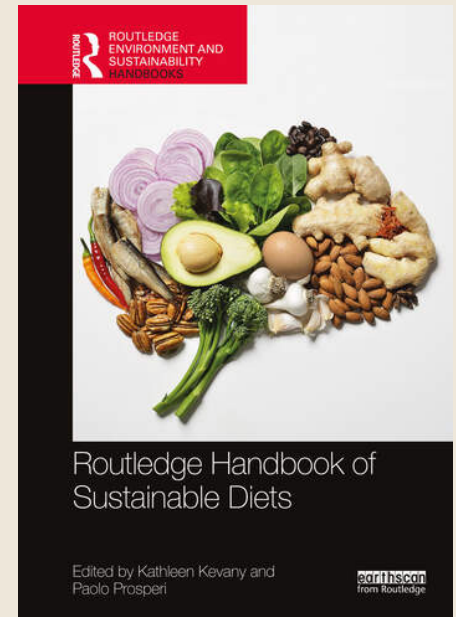
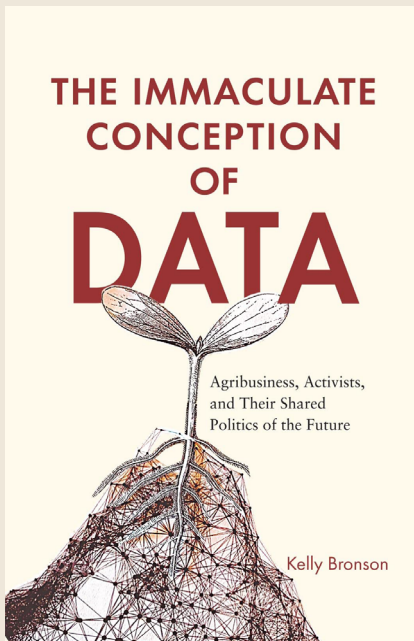
power. The ethnographic accounts detail the work of corporate scientists, farmers using the data, and activist hackers building open-source data platforms. Actors working in private and public contexts have divergent views on whom new technology is for, how it should be developed, and what kinds of agriculture

it should support. Surprisingly, despite their differences, these groups share a way of speaking about data and its value for the future. This is “the immaculate conception of data,” a phenomenon that is a dangerous framework for imagining big data and what it might do for society.

Bronson, Kelly. 2022. *The Immaculate Conception of Data: Agribusiness, Activists, and Their Shared Politics of the Future*. Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press.

### Life, Death, and Dinner Among the Molluscs: Human Appetites and Sustainable Aquaculture

Not everyone eats oysters, or even shellfish for that matter. Religion, culture, science, and personal preference all inform which plants and animals we call food. But whether you swallow an oyster in one slurp or take a pass, eating is one of the most intimate ways humans interact with environments: by literally digesting them. What is a sustainable diet if we look at the sea? How do human appetites transform, harm, and perhaps also heal, watery environments? This chapter explores the waters we farm and eat and considers water and shellfish from a culinary perspective; it zooms in on the oyster—its biological, cultural, and culinary lives—to discuss contemporary aquaculture, with an emphasis on animal mariculture. Part





one of the chapter discusses oysters, appetites, and how humans know these bivalves through eating them; the second addresses aquaculture and sustainable appetites.

Gora, L.S. 2022. "Life, Death, and Dinner Among the Molluscs: Human Appetites and Sustainable Aquaculture." In *Routledge Handbook of Sustainable Diets*, edited by Kathleen Kevany and Paolo Prospero, 119–128. London: Taylor & Francis.

## Food Porn

Le dernier numéro de la revue [Communication & langage](#) présente un dossier sur le phénomène de la food porn: « #Foodporn: les 'mobiles' du désir ». Les contributions analysent certaines représentations visuelles de la nourriture sur les réseaux numériques dans une perspective à la fois socio-esthétique et socio-politique.

*The latest issue of [Communication & langage](#) presents a dossier on the phenomenon of food porn: "#Foodporn: The motives of desire." The contributions analyze certain visual representations of food on digital networks from a socio-aesthetic and socio-political perspective.*

Bien que la food porn ne constitue évidemment pas une véritable pornographie, elle repose sur un imaginaire culturel qui érotise la nourriture. L'article étudie d'abord certaines de ses conventions iconiques marquantes, établissant que la nourriture y est souvent représentée comme un corps féminin à consommer. Il s'attache ensuite spécifique-

ment à ce qui survient lorsque dans l'image, de « vrais » corps féminins accompagnent la nourriture. L'analyse révèle qu'alors, la trame hédonique associée à la nourriture dans la food porn se complexifie. La représentation assimile les corps féminins à des nourritures destinées à être consommées, mais au-delà du niveau référentiel, ces images fonctionnent grâce aux connotations, à l'esthétisation et à l'humour. Cette polysémie pose la question de leur statut sémiotique dans l'univers numérique.



photo: [Marta Dzedyshko](#) on [Pexels](#)

*Although food porn is obviously not true pornography, it is based on a cultural imaginary that eroticizes food. This paper first examines some of its salient iconic conventions, establishing that food is often represented as a female body to be consumed. It then focuses specifically on what happens when "real" female bodies accompany food in the image. The analysis reveals that, in this scenario, the hedonic framework associated with food in food porn becomes more complex. The representation assimilates female bodies to food intended to be consumed, but, beyond the referential level, these images function as a result of connotations, aestheticization, and humor. This polysemy raises the question of their semiotic status in the digital universe.*

Cambre, C. et Sicotte, G. "'Mangez-moi'. L'érotisation de la nourriture et des corps dans la food porn," *Communication & langage*, 2022/3 (213), 67–84. DOI: [10.3917/comla1.213.0067](https://doi.org/10.3917/comla1.213.0067)



## On the Cover

Walking past my local *fruiterie* in Montréal's Village last summer, I noticed a rather robust little cherry tomato plant growing out of a crack where the cement sidewalk meets the building's brick. Next to it, the steel piping of a natural gas line added an extra bit of visual grit. *Guerilla gardening?* I wondered, imagining food activists running around the neighbourhood lobbing homemade vegetable-seed bombs. A day or two later, I induced a more probable cause of this unlikely urban ag, and it gave me no end of satisfaction.

To the left of the plant, beyond the frame of this image, is the shop's delivery entrance. This is where the fruit and veg suppliers park their vans and load in their twice-weekly deliveries. And, as happens, things slip, like the canteloupe I once witnessed rolling out of a crate and landing on the sidewalk with a desultory *thud* . . .

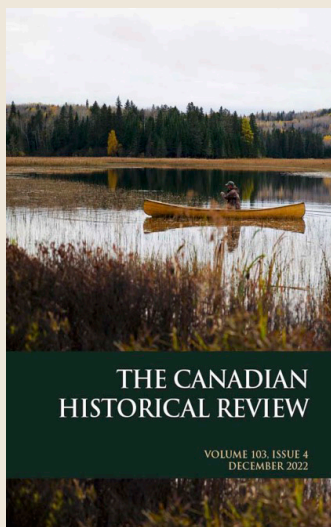
And so it was that I came to assume that at some point, at least one ripe-and-ready cherry tomato also fell from its delivery dolly. And that it got squashed under a work boot. And that it was perhaps raining that day and that a seed got washed down the crack . . . and that perhaps more than that fell into place.

Food's ecosystems never cease to amaze me. Now, if only burrata also grew wild on city streets.

—DS

## Food Production in the Wabigoon Basin: The First Nine Thousand Years

This local history of the Wabigoon Basin surveys food security in the region over the longue-durée: from the retreat of the glaciers until the imposition of the Indian Act and industrialization in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Synthesizing local history and ethnohistory with recent archaeological and anthropological readings of landscapes managed by Indigenous peoples as anthropogenic spaces, we aim to critique traditional 19th-century historiography that saw Canadian landscapes (especially the Canadian Shield) as previously uncultivated before Euro-Canadian agriculture. Here, we use colonization in the 1890s not as a beginning point for history but as an end point for 9,000 years of Indigenous peoples' food sovereignty, unhindered by bureau-

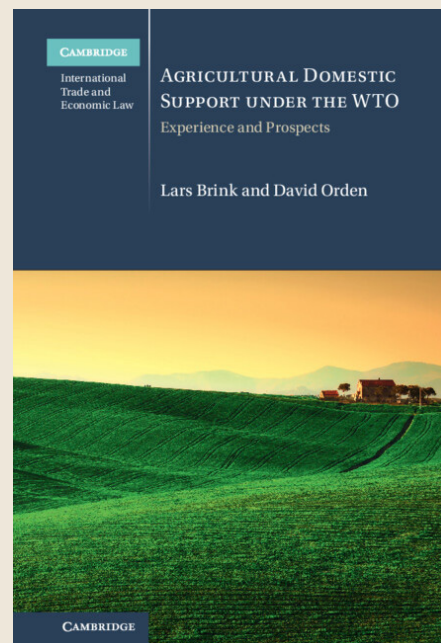


cracy and third-party management. We also discuss the conceptual gap between the reality of Indigenous (specifically Ojibwe/Anishinaabeg) farming and food production in the Dryden-Wabigoon and Boundary Waters region within their long history of innovation and adaptation, versus the fantasies of Indigenous stasis and unpopulated wilderness which facilitated colonization at the turn of the 19th century.

Peotto, T. and Nelson, C. 2022. "Food Production in the Wabigoon Basin: The First Nine Thousand Years." *Canadian Historical Review*. 103(4), 563-589.

## Agricultural Domestic Support under the WTO: Experience and Prospects

Most farm products become food. Having experienced ungovernable chaos in food and agriculture trade, the governments of many countries agreed almost 30 years ago to limit the support they offer through some types of policies to producers of basic agricultural products. Support under many other types of farm policies is of course free from any limits. The exemptions vary by country. This new book on farm subsidies and agricultural trade rules examines the patterns of support over time, the applicability of different rules, lessons from dispute settlement, and the ongoing negotiations. It discusses the potential for support under several of today's policy priorities to be exempt from limit.



[Look inside](#) | [Chapter summaries](#)  
[Read the non-technical blog post](#)

Use code ADSWTO23 for a 20% discount on purchases.

Brink, L, and Orden, D. 2023. *Agricultural Domestic Support Under the WTO: Experience and Prospects*. New York: Cambridge University Press. [DOI: 10.1017/9781009082440](https://doi.org/10.1017/9781009082440)

## Canadian Food Studies – latest issue!



### Editorial

[Confronting Anti-Black, Anti-Indigenous, and Anti-Asian Racisms in Food Systems in Canada:](#)

Leticia Ama Deawuo, Michael Classens

### Themed Section Articles

[Racism, traditional food access, and industrial development across Ontario: Perspectives from the fields of environmental law and environmental studies:](#)

Kristen Lowitt, Jane Cooper, Kerrie Blaise

[Field Notes from RAIR: Putting Relational Accountability into Practice:](#)

Lauren Wood Kepkiewicz, Danielle Boissoneau, Terran Giacomini, Ayla Fenton, Adrienne Lickers Xavier, Sarah Rotz

[Deconstructing 'Canadian Cuisine': Towards decolonial food futurities on Turtle Island:](#)

Hana Mustapha, Sharai Masanganie

['Paki go home': The story of racism in the Gerrard India Bazaar:](#)

Aqeel Ihsan

[Ethnic food practices, health, and cultural racism: Diabetes risk discourse among racialized immigrants in Canada:](#) Eric Ng

["Dismantling the structures and sites that create unequal access to food":](#) Paul Taylor and Elaine Power  
[in conversation about food justice:](#) Elaine Power

### Perspective

["Eating is a hustle": The complex realities of food in federal prison:](#) Amanda Wilson, Julie Courchesne, Ghassan Zahran

### Research Articles

[Barriers and supports to traditional food access in Mi'kma'ki \(Nova Scotia\):](#) Amy Grann, Liesel Carlsson, Kayla Mansfield-Brown

[A livelihood to feel good about: Enacting values around animals, land, and food outside of the agricultural core:](#) Elizabeth Finnis

[Characterizing the development and dissemination of dietary messaging in the Inuvialuit Settlement Region, Northwest Territories:](#) Julia Gyapay, Sonja Ostertag, Sonia Wesche, Brian Laird, Kelly Skinner

[Band-aid solutions: Small business owners' perspectives on a sugar-sweetened beverage tax in Manitoba:](#) Natalie Riediger, Fareeha Quayyum, Andrea Bombak, Emma Robinson, Kelsey Mann, Krista Beck, Jeff LaPlante, Michael Champagne, Myra Tait, Riel Dubois

### Book/Art/Event Reviews

[Review of Hunger: How food shaped the course of the First World War:](#) Laurie Wadsworth

[Review of First we eat: Food sovereignty north of 60:](#) Catherine Littlefield, Patricia Ballamingie

## DE L'ÉQUIPE DE L'INFOLETTRE FROM THE NEWSLETTER TEAM

Merci à toutes celles et ceux qui ont contribué à ce numéro de l'infolettre. Bonne continuation de vos recherches !

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this issue of the newsletter. Keep up your good work!



Apertivo hour, Sainte-Lucie-des-Laurentides (photo: Maxime Giroux)