



Canadian
Association for
Food Studies

~~SUSTAINING~~ shared
food futures

STUDENT SOLIDARITY
FOOD FORUM

~~CAES Student Symposium~~
Concordia, Montreal
June 17 & 18th 2024



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This Forum came to life thanks to the dedication of a passionate and tireless team that worked intensely during the two weeks following the decision to cancel the CAFS Student Symposium.

A heartfelt thank you goes to Shylah Wolfe, who represented our key partner, the Concordia Food Coalition, and was instrumental in turning ideas into reality.

This initiative was also made possible through CAFS' support, as they allowed us to redirect resources previously allocated to the symposium. Although the decision to cancel was difficult, we all believed it was the right course of action. The cancellation was in response to activists raising concerns about current scientific practices and their potential implications in conflict zones. In this case, activists were advocating for the Palestinian people, urging scientific institutions to stand in solidarity by pressing academic institutions to reconsider or pause collaborations with Israeli counterparts until a peaceful resolution could be achieved.

We are deeply grateful to the professors who supported us throughout this journey: André Magnan, Elyse Amend, Eric Chevrier, Manon Niquette, Michael Classens, Mustafa Koç, Vivian Valencia, Julia Ros Cue. Special thanks also to the contributors who played key roles at various stages of this effort: Molly Stollmeyer, Claudia Laviolette, Chanel Perreault, Gabriela Lopes, Michelle Ryan.

Thank you all for your courage, commitment, and unwavering support.

Organizing team
Jodi Koperinski
Stephanie Chartrand
Julie Robertson
Ronaldo Tavares de Souza



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Solidarity Food Forum 2024
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MONDAY JUNE 17th: LOCATION: REGGIES

9:00 Registration open

10:00 Welcome

10:15 Food journalism - Dialogue between science and society with Elyse Amend

SPEAKER BIO: Elyse Amend is a lecturer in the Department of Journalism at Concordia University in Montreal. Her research covers the fields of journalism, science and technology, communication sciences, and food.

Source: <https://www.erudit.org/fr/revues/cuizine/2017-v8-n1-cuizine03717/1046624ar/>

10:40 Break out group introductions / expectations (location Reggies and outside)

11:15 Morning wrap-up

12:00 - 13:00 LUNCH

13 :00 – Food and power with Mustafa Koç / Discussion group

15:00 Break



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MONDAY JUNE 17th: LOCATION: REGGIES

15:15 FIRST BREAKOUT DISCUSSIONS

Thematic discussions, 4-5 students per group; each participant has opportunity to present; ask for advice; identify improvement areas.

Groupe 1 – Food risks (facilitators: Erik Chevrier, André Magnan)

Groupe 2 – Emerging challenges (facilitators: Manon Niquette, Julia Ros Cue)

Groupe 3 – Food security and politics (facilitators: Elyse Amend, Mustafa Koç)

16:30 CFC TOUR

Transformation with the People's Potato, CultivAction & Concordia Food Coalition

Join the Concordia Food Coalition as we showcase and celebrate the hyperlocal, circular food value chain established at Concordia. We'll visit the People's Potato kitchen where Simona will be working with Nico from Coop CultivAction to transform veggies they've grown right on campus. We'll learn about the projects they are up to and get a chance to jump in and get our hands dirty. Folks can sign up for one of the following timeslots 4:40pm, 5:00pm, 5:20pm and 5:40pm.



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TUESDAY JUNE 18th: LOCATION: OUT IN THE FIELD / CSU LOUNGE / H655

8:30 Coffee and welcome LOCATION REGGIES

8:45 Research on Food Communication in Québec and Canada with Manon Niquette

SPEAKER BIO: Les champs d'intérêt en recherche de la professeure Manon Niquette sont orientés vers la communication alimentaire, incluant la communication sur l'alimentation dans les médias sociaux, les représentations genrées des contenus culinaires et l'analyse critique des publicités alimentaires (images et discours).

Source: <https://www.inaf.ulaval.ca/membres/manon-niquette/>

9:15 Food Futures: tips on key research choices with long lasting career impacts with Vivian Valencia

SPEAKER BIO: Vivian earned a PhD in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from Columbia University, a master's degree in Environmental Health from Johns Hopkins University, as well as a BS in Biology and a BA in French from University of Florida. Previously, she was a postdoctoral Research Fellow in Agroecology and Food System Sustainability at the University of Michigan. Vivian is active in the policy, diplomacy, and social entrepreneurship spheres, where she collaborates with diverse actors to support a coherent transformation towards a more sustainable and resilient society.

Source: [Faculty of the Environment, Agriculture and Geography Department](#)



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TUESDAY JUNE 18th: LOCATION: OUT IN THE FIELD / CSU LOUNGE / H655

9:40 SECOND BREAKOUT DISCUSSIONS LOCATIONS: CSU LOUNGE / H655 / OUTSIDE

Thematic discussions, 4-5 students per group; each participant has opportunity to present; ask for advice; identify improvement areas.

Groupe 1 – Food risks (facilitators: Erik Chevrier, André Magnan)

Groupe 2 – Emerging challenges (facilitators: Manon Niquette, Vivian Valencia)

Groupe 3 – Food security and politics (facilitators: Mustafa Koç, Julia Ros Cue)

10:50 GROUP REFLECTIONS & WRAP

11:30 Closure



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WORKSHOPS AND PARTICIPANTS

WORKSHOP GROUP: FOOD RISKS

Participant: Julie Robertson

Keywords: Arctic, greenhouse, Inuit, food insecurity

Food insecurity has increased from coast to coast to coast in Canada with 1 in 6 households or 15.9% of Canadians living in the ten provinces experienced food insecurity in 2021. However, in the Canadian Arctic food insecurity ranges from 17 % to as high as 80% depending on the region and community. This research is a case study in Arviat, Nunavut where two large greenhouses were constructed in 2018. The community is the third largest in Nunavut with a population of 2,864 in 2021. Only 3.7% of the population was born prior to living in permanent settlements and the introduction of western food resulted in a dual food diet. Although the federal, provincial, and Territorial governments in conjunction with local northern community groups, and food coalitions have working papers, and ongoing discussion about food insecurity the rate has increased year over year. This work delves into the impact of colonial settler ideology of food and the impact this has on Inuit people. The effects of climate change manifest in increases of extreme weather events and a reduction in access to local traditional foods as migration routes are impacted. There may be a need to increase local food production to reduce food insecurity. This research investigates the key components that influence the success or failure of greenhouse initiatives in the Canadian Arctic.

Participant: Maggie Morrison

Keywords: community food sovereignty, food systems sustainability, food policy, capacities for resilience and relationship building

I would like to express my enthusiasm to participate in the CAFS student symposium as a future Masters student at Concordia. My current work at the Concordia Food Coalition focuses on food justice and sustainability related education initiatives, funding programs, and community stakeholders' development. Working with the CFC, and my prior work in other food related non-profits in Nova Scotia, has confirmed for me the importance of using community organizing and community-based research as a mechanism for creating and implementing sustainable policies to effect systemic change. As a returning student, I do not currently have a research abstract, however I am still very interested in attending this year's symposium to develop my research network, investigate potential future areas of research for my graduate studies, and offer my perspective as a community food organizer during discussions. I also bring to the table my academic background in food research.



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As an undergraduate student, I completed an honours thesis titled, Exploring Capacities for Resilience in Response to a Pandemic, that investigated the impacts of COVID-19 on local food organizations in Nova Scotia. My long-term career goals are to make meaningful contributions towards building sustainable food systems and to work on environmental policy development, with a focus on food justice and community resilience. Participating in this symposium will help me to build a network of like-minded food friends and have conversations on where my interests in the intersections of food and policy can take my in the future as I continue my career! I attended the CAFS conference last year and learned so much from everyone who attended. Although the format is different this year, I think the value and intention of building relationships with like-minded researchers remains. Thank you for your time, and please let me know if you have any questions about the nature of my involvement in this symposium.

Participant: Tasnim Saidi

Keywords: Food system mapping, System thinking, Transformation, sustainable, resilient, efficient, cloud problems, interconnection, loops

I am working on food system transformation and making our food system more sustainable resilient and efficient. However, I have to get a holistic vision of the system as it's a complex system to understand the connections and interdependencies between its different components. Systems thinking is the approach that I am using it to look at the whole system, in other words looking at the problems in its context because to promote other outcomes and get to the change that we are looking for we have to address this interlocking system. Collective sense-making and participatory processes are one of the key components of systems thinking and that's what I am looking for.

Participant: Mike Lawler

WORKSHOP GROUP: EMERGING CHALLENGES

Participant: Richard Bloomfield

Coauthors: Rebecca Ellis, Kassie Miedema

Keywords: Agriculture Policy, First Generation Farmers, Political Economy of Agro-Food Systems

Urban agriculture practices and initiatives have been increasingly taken up by people, organizations, and municipal governments globally (Bradley and Herrera, 2016; Braswell, 2018; FAO, 2019; Tornaghi, 2016). We will present early findings



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of an ongoing research project studying Urban Agriculture (UA) in Canada. In response to increased interest in growing food within urban boundaries, the City of London released one of Canada's first Urban Agriculture strategy reports in 2017 and officially adopted that strategy to inform policy changes in 2019. There is limited scholarship on the impact of municipal policies on the success rate of UA initiatives (Rosan and Pearsall, 2017). Further, there is limited scholarship about how UA initiatives have succeeded in achieving or failed in achieving their intended goals of re-localization in an era of globalization, creating more sustainable and just cities, and improving access to healthy food to low-income residents remains missing in the Canadian context (Financial Times, 2022; McClintock and Simpson, 2018). We will share the results from 25 semi-structured qualitative interviews as well as key themes that emerged from a visioning futures workshop hosted in February of 2024. The workshop participants included 41 community organizers, policymakers, urban planners, scholars, and environmental advocates actively involved in London's UA ecosystem. Coupled with a comparative analysis of the insights from primary research as well as findings from a literature scan we will identify: 1) strengths of London's UA strategy which can be translated to other cities, 2) weaknesses which can be addressed from lessons learned from other cities' UA strategies, 3) opportunities where UA engagement can be increased, and 4) challenges which are unique to London and require novel solutions. Based on the knowledge gained, we aim to: 1) identify the range of goals of UA initiatives and the factors behind why some goals remain unmet, 2) establish a typology of implementation challenges, and 3) identify ways to address these challenges. The Canadian Association for Food Studies (CAFS) is an excellent forum to disseminate our research since it gathers a wide-reaching multidisciplinary group of scholars concerned with all aspects of food justice. Our team is currently working to understand how municipal policy helps or hinders UA, something which will interest CAFS members.

Participant: Emma Somerville

Keywords: critical education, experiential learning, food systems

Critical education which engages students in challenging the status quo and working toward the transformation of food systems that increase accessibility, equity, and justice for all is more important than ever. Food systems education needs to promote a more critical lens regarding the current state of global food production and engagement with movements that are working to transform the current food system. Experiential learning opportunities have been demonstrated to be impactful and beneficial to both instructors and students and are an important aspect of critical food systems education, particularly as students are asked to engage in activities that directly involve transforming the system they are studying. When it comes to critical engagement, issues pertaining to food justice and inequitable distribution of resources are not at the forefront of many university agriculture and experiential learning programs. Many experiential learning opportunities available within sustainable agriculture education can be limiting. In Ontario, experiential learning has been made an institutional priority



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through Strategic Mandate Agreements entered into with the provincial government in an attempt to address the evolving needs of the labour market and to strengthen Ontario's economic competitiveness. Given the many demonstrated benefits of experiential learning, and the need for capacity building of future practitioners of sustainable agriculture, in my Ph.D. research, I will map the ecology of critical food systems learning within one campus by conducting a full and holistic inventory of, and interactions between, all formal and informal place-based experiential learning that happen within one institution (Trent University). This will be done through community participatory mapping of the Trent University foodscape and by developing an inventory and topology of the associated learning. This inventory will focus on formal and informal food learning as well as hidden curriculum found within formal syllabi as well as through institutional structures and the built environment on campus. This will include but is not limited to traditional curriculum, as well as learning opportunities provided by student levy-funded groups on campus. By mapping the ecology of experiential food learning within one institution I hope to provide a better understanding of the role and capacity of similar institutions to support food systems transformation. This may also allow for the exploration of the barriers and enablers of the continued and ongoing success of experiential food learning of all types within post-secondary institutions.

Participant: Jyotsna Kumar

WORKSHOP GROUP: FOOD SECURITY AND POLITICS

Participant: A.C. Cameron

Keywords: Campus Food Security, Campus Housing Security, Student Experience, Graduate Funding, Policy Development/Advocacy

Food and housing insecurity among university students in Canada are not isolated issues; rather, they are related symptoms indicative of larger material deprivation. To address these challenges strategically and systematically, the Graduate Students' Association (GSA) at UCalgary conducted a members survey aimed at quantifying the prevalence of food and housing insecurity among our graduate students and better understanding our members' firsthand experiences. Our survey aimed to evaluate the intersection between these insecurities, assess the awareness and utilization of existing food support services framed within an emergency response, and identify barriers to access. Furthermore, the survey sought to identify future directions for enhancing support and resources for students facing food and housing insecurity. The survey, developed by two graduate students with support from the Faculty of Graduate Studies, provided a nuanced understanding of graduate students' lived experiences regarding food and housing insecurity. When completing standard modules of assessment, a majority



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of respondents identified experiences of food insecurity, and a vast majority identified experiences of housing insecurity over the past year. These insecurities are felt especially by international students, and correlate to an absence of scholarship income, informing minimum funding negotiations with the Faculty of Graduate Studies. Detailed insights into students' experiences, perspectives, and practices can further contribute to the development of an institutional food and housing strategy, on-campus meal offerings, and enhance campus access programs through collaboration with stakeholder partners. These practical implications highlight the direct impact of our survey's findings on institutional policy development and resource allocation.

Participant: Stephanie Chartrand

Keywords: Indigenous Food Sovereignty, Culinary, Urban Indigenous

My thesis explores the intricate relationships urban Indigenous people have with culinary practices within the city of Toronto (Canada), focusing on food preparation, consumption, storage, and sharing. Informed by interrelations among urban Indigenous communities, non-Indigenous individuals, and other kin, this research aims to highlight the significance of culinary place-making in fostering Indigenous Food Sovereignty. Building upon existing scholarship on urban Indigenous experiences, this study investigates the role of culinary spaces as hubs for cultural resurgence. Through qualitative methods including semi-structured interviews with chefs and food organization leaders, these ongoing initiatives in culinary food spaces such as restaurants, cafes, and culinary markets will be examined to understand their contribution to cultural resurgence and Indigenous Food Sovereignty. Utilizing narrative discourse analysis, this research seeks to uncover the underlying meanings behind these culinary place-making efforts. The theoretical framework of Indigenous Food Sovereignty serves as a guiding principle, emphasizing the importance of nurturing cultural practices and decolonizing the broader food system. By amplifying the voices of urban Indigenous communities engaged in culinary place-making, this study aims to contribute to the fields of Community Development and Indigenous Studies. Ultimately, it seeks to shift the discourse from a paternalistic approach to one that recognizes and supports Indigenous-led efforts of place-making toward cultural resurgence and Indigenous Food Sovereignty.

Participant: Mariia Kozlova

Keywords: Food insecurity, food banks, food waste, food redistribution

Research purpose: Investigate how emergency food providers in Canada evaluate the benefits and drawbacks of using food waste to address food insecurity. Research question: what are the factors influencing food bank operators' decisions to accept/reject discarded foods for further redistribution? How are they navigating the contradictions of having to provide as much



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food as possible and make it in a way not to conflict with people's dignity? A brief background and rationale: Researchers argue that the programs and organizations trying to deal with food insecurity are ineffective and fail to deal with the root causes of food insecurity (Wakefield et al., 2012; Poppendieck, 1998). Indeed, the current food system in Canada is in a fragile state, despite all the efforts made. With prices on groceries constantly rising, more people struggle to afford to buy even the most basic food. Emergency food organizations such as food banks are supposed to help solve this issue by providing food for free to those who need it most. The food comes from different sources, such as farms, grocery chains, and private donations. Those who operate food banks have to make a lot of decisions concerning the incoming food. They are caught in between political and commercial processes, and they still have to navigate food distribution. Each time they have to make decisions on whether to accept the incoming food or let it go to waste (as food banks are often the last "stage" of products' "lives"). The judgement comes from food bank users, the public and researchers (Wakefield et al., 2012). These decisions must have an internal logic to them, as there are some rules and guidelines that might not be clear to external observers. I will conduct interviews with food banks executive directors and staff in British Columbia and Alberta to compare the situation in these provinces with different political programmes. It is planned to conduct in-person and remote interviews with 15 people from each province; each interview is expected to take 45-60 mins. With this research I hope to help improve our understanding of effective strategies to address challenges connecting food insecurity, dignity, and food waste. These connections will demonstrate a broader picture of relationships between different actors, as well as their influence on each other and on the Canadian food system in general. What is more, it will help identify objectives for potential further research.

Participant: Wilnise Saint Fleur

Keywords: Sécurité alimentaire, Peuples autochtones, Premières Nations, population urbaine, population rurale, Programme alimentaire.

Objectif : La présente étude vise à documenter les initiatives améliorant la sécurité alimentaire chez des populations autochtones au Canada, en analysant les enjeux d'équité entre les initiatives de sécurité alimentaire en contexte urbain et rural.

Méthodologie : La méthodologie adoptée consiste en une revue narrative systématisée de la littérature, visant à conduire une analyse approfondie des recherches disponibles concernant les initiatives en sécurité alimentaire au sein des communautés autochtones du Canada. Quatre bases de données MEDLINE, Web of science, Global Health, Embase ont été consultées. La sélection des articles a été effectuée selon les directives du diagramme de PRISMA.

Résultats : L'étude a permis de répertorier quarante articles détaillant des programmes alimentaires au Canada. Les interventions étaient plus fréquentes en milieu rural, avec des programmes axés sur le jardinage, les serres communautaires et les initiatives gouvernementales, bien que souvent confrontées à des défis logistiques. En revanche, dans en milieu urbain, les



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programmes se concentraient davantage sur les initiatives communautaires comme les banques alimentaires, les ateliers culinaires et les programmes de subventions, tout en étant confrontés à des défis liés au faible revenu et aux inégalités. Les enjeux communs comprennent la promotion de la sécurité alimentaire et la création de communautés alimentaires résilientes.

Conclusion : En abordant ces problèmes de manière holistique, en tenant compte des connaissances traditionnelles, des initiatives de redistribution des ressources et des besoins spécifiques des populations autochtones, ces stratégies peuvent contribuer à réduire les disparités et à favoriser une inclusion plus juste et équitable des communautés autochtones dans les systèmes alimentaires et promouvoir la santé et le bien-être de ces communautés, tant en milieu urbain que rural.