The Affordability of Healthy Eating in BC

The average monthly cost of a nutritious diet for a family of four in BC in 2022.¹

$1,263

Households in BC experience household food insecurity.²

1 in 7

Children in BC live in households that experience household food insecurity.²

1 in 6

British Columbians can’t afford a basic nutritious diet.²

732,000 or 15%

Household food insecurity is a serious public health issue that stems from systemic inequities.

Household food insecurity affects people’s physical, social and mental health, and overall wellbeing.

Compared to food secure households, health care costs are up to 76% higher for food insecure households.³

The root cause of household food insecurity isn’t the price of food — it’s lack of income.

¹ Numbers don’t capture other costs related to food such as transportation or accessing traditional foods, which can be significant for remote and Indigenous communities.


For example, once low income adults reach the age of 65 and become eligible for seniors' pension programs (a form of guaranteed basic income) their risk of being food insecure drops by 50%.

Research shows that household food insecurity can’t be fixed through food-based initiatives or charitable efforts like food banks - it needs income-based solutions. For example, once low income adults reach the age of 65 and become eligible for seniors’ pension programs (a form of guaranteed basic income) their risk of being food insecure drops by 50%.

Disposable income refers to income remaining after deduction of taxes and other mandatory charges. Information on data sources used for these calculations can be found in the food costing report.

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Average monthly cost of healthy eating for a family of four in Vancouver Coastal Health

Vancouver Coastal Health $1,311

British Columbia $1,263

North Shore/Coast Garibaldi $1,379

Vancouver $1,287

Richmond $1,179

Northern Health $1,300

Interior Health $1,264

Island Health $1,366

Fraser Health $1,193

North Shore/Coast Garibaldi $1,379

Vancouver $1,287

Richmond $1,179

Northern Health $1,300

Interior Health $1,264

Island Health $1,366

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Individuals, communities and governments all have a role to play in making BC food secure.

FACE the facts on food insecurity

Frame household food insecurity as an income-based problem that needs income-based solutions.

Assess the affordability of healthy eating in your community using BC’s latest data on the cost of food.

Connect and collaborate with others who are working on food security, poverty reduction, affordable housing and other related issues.

Engage in policy action to ensure everyone in BC has equitable access to food that is affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious and safe.

For more information, see the Food Costing in BC 2022 report.