

Examining Student Food Insecurity in BC Post-Secondary Institutions

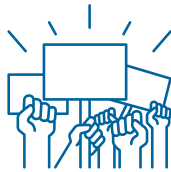


BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Post-secondary institutions (PSIs) across British Columbia (BC) are finding different ways to address student food insecurity. These approaches tend to address immediate needs first. Meeting current food needs is critical, but implementing long-term strategies that address the range of factors causing food insecurity would have more impact. Here are highlights from interviews examining food insecurity with 12 PSIs across BC.

What is Working

Student leadership and activism



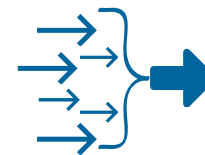
Dignified access to food



“To solve a multifaceted issue like food security, the solution needs to be multifaceted as well.”



Campus wide committees



Multi-pronged approaches

KEY CHALLENGES

Limited staffing and inconsistent funding

Lack of institutional prioritization

Unclear responsibility and lack of mandates

Stigma



IDENTIFIED OPPORTUNITIES

Dedicated staffing and stable funding

More robust research, data, and evidence

Cross-campus coordination and stronger partnerships

Dignified access to food and wrap-around supports

“It's still the dignity part...now you pay \$5, you get a full-size meal rather than you go to those like traditional old school style food bank that you're getting some soon to expire deals...”

Student food security supports at PSIs fall into two categories:



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Food-based Supports



Emergency food access

Food banks, food pantries



Food skills and education

Nutrition education, cooking classes



Subsidized food programs

Free or low-cost produce and meals



Food production

Community gardens including
Indigenous gardens, greenhouses



Centralize food resources

Campus food hubs



Food recovery and redistribution

Promotion of free food on campus

"We do have a really great partnership with the grocery store right by our campus. And so, we do most of our bulk ordering through them because they give it to us at cost. And they personally deliver it...we're very fortunate."

"I think a really successful thing that we have that we give out is stuff...from our campus community garden. As students really love getting like fresh stuff that's grown..."

Other Supports



Financial assistance

Bursaries, emergency funding



Information navigation

Websites outlining campus and community food supports



Food-specific financial supports

Grocery cards, meal vouchers



Wrap-around supports

Access to cooking supplies, basic needs like toiletries



Employment opportunities

Work study or work learn programs



Referrals

To community food programs, nonprofits, institutional services



Financial literacy

Budgeting workshops



Read the full report at
www.bccdc.ca/food-security
or scan the QR code