



May 23, 2017
For Immediate Release

Household Food Security Survey results released

The findings of a survey conducted in each of the five Labrador Inuit communities will help enable the Nunatsiavut Government to make informed decisions in its attempt to address concerns over food insecurity, says Nunatsiavut's Minister of Health and Social Development, Greg Flowers.

"The Household Food Security Survey, conducted in partnership with the academic community and regional stakeholders, provides key information which will inform regional planning and action for Nunatsiavut," says Minister Flowers. "It is the first comprehensive survey of its kind for any Inuit region in Canada that specifically explored food insecurity levels for each community in a region."

Led by researchers at Trent University and including team members from the University of Guelph and McGill University, the survey was conducted over a two-year period (2013-14) and results were reported back to each Nunatsiavut community during February and March of this year through a series of public meetings and outreach events. The survey asked respondents a wide-range of questions about the ability of households to afford food, as well as experiences with food over a one-month period. Households were then classified as 'food secure', 'marginally food insecure', 'moderately food insecure' or 'severely food insecure'. A total of 537 (of a possible 722) households were surveyed in the region.

Data from all five communities was combined to determine an updated regional prevalence of food insecurity. A total of 61.1 per cent of households in Nunatsiavut were found to be food insecure - experiencing worry about or difficulty in accessing food on a regular basis.

The prevalence of household food insecurity was also reported for each individual community, as noted below:

- 79.4 per cent in Nain
- 83.1 per cent in Hopedale
- 35.1 per cent in Makkovik
- 39.6 per cent in Postville
- 21.6 per cent in Rigolet.

"The results confirm the seriousness of food insecurity in Nunatsiavut communities," notes Minister Flowers. "The prevalence of food insecure households in our communities is over four times the level reported for the province of Newfoundland and Labrador in 2012 and five times the level of food insecurity measured for households in Canada in 2014."

In response to these results a regional food security coordinator has been hired to work collaboratively with Nunatsiavut Government departments and Labrador Inuit communities to improve food security. Community-specific food security committees have been established and a regional food security strategy will be put in place, aimed at addressing high rates of household food insecurity in the region.

The surveys were conducted with funding from ArcticNet, the Public Health Agency of Canada through Food First NL, Indigenous and Northern Affairs Canada, and the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

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