

Taking Stock of Canada's Approach to Food Insecurity

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ABSTRACT

Taking Stock of Canada's Approach to Household Food Insecurity

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In 1998, the Department of Agriculture and Agri-food published a document entitled *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*, outlining seven commitments stemming from a 1996 World Food Summit in Rome. The goal was to reduce the number of undernourished people in the world by half by the year 2015. Instead, Canada witnessed a slow but steady growth of those identifying as food insecure in the two decades following the publication of the *Action Plan*. There are many hypotheses as to why that is the case, with the bulk of the literature focusing on a policy environment characterized by government inaction and overburdened civil society organizations. This thesis argues that this policy environment was not an accident, but the result policy tools selected to address this social issue by successive federal governments. To that end, the thesis employs a policy tools analytical framework to categorize the types of tools chosen as either procedural or substantive in nature, and in doing so it assesses the amount of priority placed on household food insecurity. It quantifies the number of tools chosen to address food industry concerns versus those aimed at frontline service providers, and illustrates why the recently published National Food Policy was necessary to address an issue identified as worthy of government intervention two decades earlier.

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Introduction: Why Food Policy?

It is rare for a political issue to directly affect every citizen of a country; for example while the economic impact of an oil pipeline may be felt nationwide, only those whose backyards are expropriated bear the immediate burden. That is what makes the discussion of food policy so intriguing, as the results of food policy decisions will unavoidably affect everyone. The author Michael Pollan succinctly described this phenomenon as he wrote, “You can vote with your fork, in other words, and you can do it three times a day.” (Pollan 2006) The problem with those votes is that they are very difficult to tabulate outside of market research by the companies whose products are either purchased or left on the shelf. That is where the area of food policy research comes in, as it seeks to incorporate stakeholders from each level of society: consumers, producers, and governments, among others.

In the course of writing this thesis I have often been asked the question: “why food policy?” The simple answer to that question is alluded to above: people vote on food policy at least three times a day based on what they choose to eat. The more complex response to the food policy question is that it affects not only the options that people choose from (fast vs. slow food, organic vs. non, fresh produce vs. canned goods) but the impact of food policy is felt in the economy, environment, health and standard of living of entire countries. For myself, the most interesting component of food policy is that which touches on aspects of food insecurity, a problem affecting developing and wealthy countries alike.

Canada is a nation dependent on exports, and prides itself on its generosity towards alleviating hunger in developing countries. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1998, 4) Yet in the year 2012 almost 13 percent of Canadians reported experiencing food insecurity. (V. M. Tarasuk 2014, 2) How can one reconcile this discrepancy between producing enough food to supply other countries, but somehow not enough to ensure all Canadians are free from hunger? I argue that this is best explored through the lens of food policy and in particular the selection of food policy tools. Within this thesis I examine the policy tools selected by the Canadian government over the past two decades, beginning with the landmark *Canada’s Action Plan for Food Security (CAPFS)* and ending with the recently published National Food Policy.

The accepted definition of food security was adopted at the Global Food Summit in

Rome in 1996, and it refers to the ability of people to have adequate access to nutritious food in order to meet their basic food needs. This applies to roughly 80 percent of Canadians. Household Food Insecurity (HFI) is the reality for the remaining 20 percent at varying levels of severity. “Operationally defined as the lack of food due to financial constraints” (Jessiman-Perreault 2017, 465), HFI is prevalent across Canada, with spikes in aboriginal communities and other socio-economically disadvantaged areas. This thesis discusses both causes and symptoms of HFI, as it unfortunately has become a fixture of Canadian life. Despite increased awareness of the problem, it rose significantly between 2008 and 2012, with few signs of decline in the years since. (V. N.-M. Tarasuk 2014, 8)

The relationship of HFI to negative health outcomes is increasingly well documented, and it has been identified as “worthy of macro-level policy intervention” due to its relationship to mental health, obesity, diabetes and a variety of other issues. (Jessiman-Perreault 2017, 464) In a country such as Canada, where health care expenditures affect every citizen due to our single-payer system, addressing a problem such as HFI would have widespread benefits, and not simply for those deciding between paying the rent or feeding the kids.

Since the government-shrinking public policy reforms of the 1980s, public subsidies aimed at things such as public housing have been reduced, partially influencing the rising rates of HFI. Food bank usage has grown correspondingly at a steady rate over this 30 year time period, as food banks “are the only source of immediate assistance for households struggling to meet food needs.” (V. M. Tarasuk 2014, 1) In other countries, food banks are subsidized partially with public funds, and yet in Canada they rely almost exclusively on donations and volunteer labor. (V. N.-M. Tarasuk 2014, 9) This makes it very difficult to guarantee quality and availability of emergency food items. The fact that “there is no single, overarching policy instrument or department in place to address food security” necessitates the importance of food banks, and is a blemish on a country that prides itself on humanitarianism. (Canadian Federation of Agriculture 2017, 12)

People are incrementally paying more attention to what they put in their bodies, following a half-century of being presented with choices that would have been unfathomable prior to globalization. “I’ve got mangoes in goddamn January,” a character brags in reference to his fictional grocery store in the Netflix series, *Fargo*, but the reality is

that no matter what time of the year it is in North Dakota, mangoes do not belong there. (Fargo 2015) The same can be said of virtually any city in Canada, but globalization and its many tentacles is not the focus of this thesis. Rather, I examine Canadian food policy with an eye on whether or not it truly supports food security and access to adequate, nutritional food, or if Canada's food policy instruments were selected with the ultimate goal of reinforcing the productivist economic paradigm that views food not as a human right, but as a valuable commodity.

Canadian food policy is as much a part of the national discourse right now as it has ever been given the mandate letter from Prime Minister Trudeau to the Minister of Agriculture (Trudeau n.d.) to create a national food policy, which resulted in *A Food Policy for Canada (AFPC)*, presented to the House of Commons in December of 2017. The thesis examines the instruments selected over the course of the preceding twenty-year period, to hopefully provide some context as to the necessity of *AFPC*. By focusing initially on the 1998 document, *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*, as a landmark event in the national conversation surrounding food security, this thesis demonstrates that the similar policy recommendations presented twenty years later in *AFPC* are derived from two decades-worth of misguided attempts to address the issue.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

Bearing in mind the experiences of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) and other frontline actors for food security over the past twenty years, it may seem that *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security* had no effect on Canadian food insecurity. Unfortunately, from a strictly quantitative perspective, that is correct. Numerous reports have shown the use of food banks increasing during that time period, including one published in 2012 by a United Nations special investigator imploring the government of Canada to adopt a national 'right to food' strategy'. (de Schutter 2012, Health 2013, Food Secure Canada n.d., Food Banks Canada 2016) However, what this thesis argues is that while *CAPFS* may not have had the desired effects on food insecurity rates, it did provide a guide as to the types of policy instruments preferred by the Canadian federal government over the subsequent 20 years. In other words, *CAPFS* clearly outlined the intention of the federal government to reduce rates of food insecurity. It was less clear on the means to do so, but regardless of the tools

eventually selected, they did not achieve the desired results. The percentage of Canadians experiencing food insecurity has remained relatively stable over the 1998-2018 timeframe, and an increase has been documented since consistent monitoring began in 2005. (V. M. Tarasuk 2014, 15) What is less certain is the reason for this increase.

As the literature review will demonstrate in Chapter 2, there are many hypotheses as to the increasing rates of HFI, and their central theme is the lack of action on the part of the federal government. The arguments that the government has not done enough, and that civil society organizations are shouldering much of the burden, will not be disputed here. Instead, this thesis will analyze how and why those arguments are true. The principal hypothesis is that these circumstances came about as a result of the types of policy tools selected to address Canadian food insecurity. With that in mind, I will categorize government initiatives into either substantive or procedural categories, and argue that by moving away from substantive tools that directly regulate goods and services towards procedural tools aimed at managing the state-society relationship, the state created a food policy environment in which the government is content to steer while overburdened CSOs do all the rowing.

The thesis frames the argument in the proper context by comparing and contrasting *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*, *A Food Policy for Canada*, and a selection of key instruments employed during the intervening twenty years. *CAPFS* and *AFPC* serve as convenient and consequential bookends for my research timeframe, and the policy climate surrounding food security will be taken into consideration when analyzing each of them. On that note, this thesis hopes to add to the literature on this topic by taking stock of the past twenty years of Canadian food policy through the instruments selected as attempts to address such a universal, and often controversial, issue.

Thesis Outline

Given the principal research question revolving around the twenty-year period in between the publication of *CAPFS* and the presentation of *AFPC*, this thesis begins with a textual analysis of both documents. Considering the steady increase of food bank usage over the last 10 years (Food Banks Canada 2016, 2), it seems that the time is right to look back at the choice of policy instruments by the Canadian government to address the

problem of household food insecurity. The 20th anniversary of the publication of *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security* makes it a natural place to start. Catherine Mah and her colleagues reviewed the *Action Plan* using a frame-policy analysis to demonstrate how the framing of the major issues changed over the course of the 10 years following its creation (Mah 2014). Building on that research, this thesis undertakes a textual analysis of the document itself to identify the most critical aspects of the *Action Plan*.

Secondly, the thesis compares those aspects with the same type of factors present in *A Food Policy for Canada*. Given the twenty-year gap in between the two documents, it would stand to reason that there are significant differences in their makeup and goals. As Chapter 1 demonstrates, though, there are more similarities due to the lack of progress on the issue of Canadian food insecurity in the intervening time period. I believe by looking more closely at the ideas implicit in both processes, we'll find that the lack of progress is a result of policy tools selected to manage the policy subsystem rather than address the problem directly. By conducting this initial textual analysis, the thesis aims to provide context as to Canada's food policy environment both in 1998 and 2017.

That textual analysis is followed by a review of the existing literature surrounding Canadian food policy, focusing on the issues most relevant to the topic of this thesis. These are food security, food sovereignty and the role of Civil Society Organizations within the food policy environment. The authors discussed within the review use different frameworks for their research, as well as both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The variety of approaches to this area of research mirrors the food policy landscape itself, as it is a complex area that touches a multitude of government agencies. The departments of trade, agriculture, health, and social development are all affected by food policy, which explains why a comprehensive national food policy has long eluded Canada. The literature review also presents research on how municipal governments (and civil society organizations) shoulder the majority of the burden regarding providing emergency food services to vulnerable populations. (R. a. MacRae 2016, 147)

Following the literature review, the thesis introduces the policy tools theoretical framework to show how it is a comprehensive approach when taking stock of policy initiatives over a given timeframe. Whereas analyzing the evolution of relationships between civil society and the state, as well as the amount of influence enjoyed by

stakeholders is a critical component to understanding the issue, the reality is that aspects such as these are hard to define and even harder to measure. That is where a policy tools analysis can be useful, as one can find concrete evidence on whether or not a policy goal was addressed based on the selection of one policy tool over another. Once those particular tools are identified, they will be categorized into various typologies derived from experts in the field of policy instrumentation. The work of authors such as Pierre Lascoumes, Patrick Le Galès, Guy Peters, Michael Howlett and others will be reviewed to determine the most relevant method of categorization. Additionally, the chapter will address the methodology employed to conduct this assessment of two decades worth of food policy tool selection.

The fourth chapter will identify and categorize the policy instruments chosen within the 1998-2018 timeframe. This will allow for a discussion of potential trends, or path-dependent policymaking. *CAPFS* marked the first major attempt at participatory food policy formulation by involving civil society organizations as well as civil servants. While it did not have the desired effect on the rates of food insecurity, it changed the method of discourse in which civil society actors communicated with governmental agencies over the subsequent twenty years, for better or worse. By using *CAPFS* as the point of departure, I establish the policy climate surrounding food security in the late 1990s. The following twenty years will identify and categorize all noteworthy policy tools related to food insecurity, and divide them as either procedural or substantive in nature. By grouping them in this way it may be possible to identify the preferred method of the part of the federal government to address this growing social issue. The thesis analyzes policy tools selected between 1998 and 2018 as a means to answer the question: why have rates of household food insecurity not improved despite increased awareness of, and attention to, the problem?

Chapter 1: Moving from *CAPFS* to *AFPC*: The Canadian Food Policy Environment

Introduction to *CAPFS*

Canada's Action Plan for Food Security is the result of the work of a Joint Consultative Group (JCG) comprised of 50 stakeholders from across Canada. Civil Society was represented, as were departments and agencies from both the federal and provincial levels of government. As a "response to the World Food Summit Plan of Action," it used the agreed-upon definition of food security as its point of departure: "Food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life." (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1998, 9)

This conception of food security was developed at the 1996 World Food Summit, which was attended by several of the same institutions and actors who played major roles in the creation of *CAPFS*, most notably representatives from the Department of Agriculture and Agri-food. Building upon the goal of alleviating global food security, initially made in the 1970s, the Canadian delegation and leaders from all over the globe descended upon Rome to determine the best manner to address the problem. With the express objective of renewing the "global commitment at the highest political level to eliminate hunger and malnutrition, and to achieve sustainable food security for all people," the summit had lofty ambitions. (Koc and Bas 2012, 184) Chief among them, in fact, was the belief that through collaboration, the attendees could "eradicate hunger in all countries with the target of reducing by half the number of undernourished people by no later than the year 2015." (Koc and Bas 2012, 184) The goals of the initial World Food Summits held in the 1970s were to eliminate global hunger altogether; twenty years later the assembled nations would strive for a more modest goal of a 50 percent reduction.

In order to reach that reduction, the nations at the WFS were asked to adhere to seven specific commitments:

1. Enable political, social and economic environments to create conditions for the eradication of poverty and to provide durable peace
2. Implement policies aimed at eradicating poverty and improving access to food
3. Pursue sustainable agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices

4. Strive to ensure that trade policies are conducive to fostering food security
5. Prevent and be prepared for natural disasters and man-made emergencies and to meet emergency food requirements
6. Promote optimal allocation and use of investments to foster development in high and low potential areas
7. Implement, monitor, and follow-up this Plan of Action at all levels in cooperation with the international community (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations 1996)

A cynical person may read the first several goals as unrealistic, considering they appear to strive to eliminate poverty and bring about world peace. While that may be an accurate reading of them, the reality is that poverty is a, if not the, primary cause of food insecurity. The commitments of the WFS were idealistic, but at least grounded in a thorough understanding of the problem at hand.

Following the conclusion of the Summit, the Canadian delegation returned home and set about creating the conditions which would allow the country to meet the commitments made in Rome. This immediately became an issue, given that the Rome Summit was geared towards alleviating food insecurity through an international lens, whereas efforts to deal with the problem in Canada would need to take into account unique domestic political challenges. (Koc and Bas 2012, 193) This issue manifested itself in numerous ways within the document, as well as within the makeup of the committee tasked with creating the document.

The composition of the committee included representatives from a multitude of government departments, which reflects the interdepartmental challenges inherent in any attempt at food policy. *CAPFS* was no different, as the Programs and Multilateral Affairs Division, Marketing and Industry Services Branch of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada led the efforts to assemble representatives from civil society (eg. Assembly of First Nations, Global Network on Food Security, OXFAM Canada, Union des producteurs agricoles), provincial governments (Alberta Agriculture, Food and Rural Development; New Brunswick Department of Agriculture and Rural Development; Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs), and federal government departments (eg. Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, Canadian Food Inspection Agency, Fisheries and Oceans Canada,

Health Canada, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada). (Koc and Bas 2012, 186, Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1998) Conspicuously absent from the committee were representatives from the food industry, leading to speculations that the Action Plan was not meant to be a serious document on the level of NAFTA or other international trade agreements. (Koc and Bas 2012, 186)

A positive aspect of the consultative approach to creating the *CAPFS* was the attention paid to civil society organizations (CSOs), in that a diverse number of representatives were invited to be involved in the process. (Koc and Bas 2012, 186) A lack of resources inhibited the participation of smaller CSOs from around the country, which was unfortunate, but at least a commitment was shown on the part of the federal government to recognize the importance of the CSO perspective. Regardless of the level of inclusion of Canadian CSOs in the consultation process for *CAPFS*, the outcomes of that process made it clear that CSOs would be responsible for taking the lead in implementation. The issue of inadequate resources for these organizations once again became a factor. Whereas the federal government has the infrastructure and manpower necessary to tackle complex issues such as food security – and thereby lead by example – CSOs compete over scant amounts of funding and have serious issues with retaining qualified employees, often relying on volunteer labour. (Koc, MacRae, et al. 2008, 125) They are set up to enact programs arising from policies created at higher levels of government, ideally with help and guidance in the implementation phase. Once the *CAPFS* process concluded, there was no help with implementation, as the assembled government agencies retreated to their areas of expertise and instead created a figurehead agency – the Food Security Bureau (FSB) – to represent the federal government as a whole.

From the outset, the FSB was a bureau in name only. Severely underfunded and understaffed, the FSB was a virtual office with no clear domestic mandate. (Koc, MacRae, et al. 2008, 130) Despite recognizing food insecurity as a serious issue and enlisting the help of frontline services (CSOs) to determine an action plan, when it came time to implement that action plan the mechanisms of government were (virtually) nowhere to be found. Criticisms such as these were levied at Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada (AAFC) at the time, as well as at the Global Affairs Branch of AAFC where the FSB was located. (Koc, MacRae, et al. 2008, 130) In responding to the public pressure, AAFC reactivated an

interdepartmental committee to periodically consult with CSOs to gauge the progress of *CAPFS*. This is foreshadowing the governmental approach of the following two decades as one concerned more with monitoring results than proactively preventing the problem. The sole outcome of the interdepartmental committee was to garner funding from the federal government to produce a conference on food security featuring prominent members of the CSO community. (Koc, MacRae, et al. 2008, 131)

Despite the inaction that derived from *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security* directly from the federal government, the early 2000s saw a rise in the prominence and capabilities of civil society organizations and other stakeholders from around the country on the topic of food security. They say that 'necessity is the mother of invention,' and as the CSOs realized that they would have to fend for themselves in delivering the services needed by thousands of Canadians, they began to establish national networks of likeminded organizations to ensure that the problem of food insecurity remained on the radar screens of politicians at all levels of government. This new environment of CSO-government interaction led to the establishment of a national CSO to lead the charge against food insecurity – Food Secure Canada. Initially tasked with keeping the public informed about pressing issues of food insecurity, Food Secure Canada eventually helped spearhead the initiative to create a national food policy for Canada. That is where we turn our attention now.

Introduction to AFPC

In December 2017 the Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-food submitted an initial report to parliament with recommendations to be considered for Canada's first national food policy. It focused on four central themes: food security, food safety and health, respecting the environment, and economic viability. Much like its predecessor twenty years earlier, the report was produced in consultation with stakeholders from a multitude of backgrounds over a four month period in 2017, and it leads off with a mention that a "right to food" should be the foremost guiding principle of any food policy. A United Nations special rapporteur took part in the consultations, and contrary to what her colleague, Oliver de Schutter, wrote in his 2012 report, Hilal Elver notes that, "Canada is a leader in supporting the right to food." (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food

2017, 9) This may be true in terms of global relief efforts, but just five years prior Canada was implored by the same UN agency to adopt a right-to-food strategy. (de Schutter 2012) That it had become a leader in such a short time would be quite impressive, albeit surprising. In fact, in Ms. Elver's testimony, she goes on to note that "for a considerable period there was no effort made by the Government of Canada to internalize the international law commitments through national legislation with respect to the right to food." (Elver 2017)

There is reference to a "commitment to adapt a national plan for the realization of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development...[which] is very central to Canada's evolving national and international food security." (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food 2017, 9) Regardless of future plans, the first recommendation in this report is for the government to recognize the right to adequate nutrition for all Canadians. (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food 2017, 9) This recommendation is light on potential policy tools to achieve this goal, although several other existing initiatives are mentioned in relation to it. For example, Nutrition North is aimed at reducing prices of healthy food in Northern communities; the Northern Farm Training Institute hopes to enable more local production in Indigenous Communities; as well as other provincial initiatives to provide healthier food in schools. (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food 2017, 12-13)

The fact that these initiatives are addressed within the report, and the presence of multiple recommendations acknowledging the need for a right-to-food strategy, make the publication of *AFPC* the logical bookend for my research timeframe. The recently published National Food Policy marks the first major policy statement devoted to combatting food insecurity since the 1998 publication of *CAPFS*, more than twenty years ago. That is not to say that it is the first to attempt to address the issue but rather it is the return to a comprehensive federal approach to reducing food insecurity rates. Food Secure Canada - founded in the wake of *CAPFS* with the sole purpose of working to alleviate food insecurity, and a valuable resource in terms of research on the topic - recommended a full evaluation of existing federal initiatives such as Nutrition North and the Poverty Reduction Strategy within a 2017 position paper submitted during the consultation process for *AFPC*. Additionally, they strongly encouraged mandatory participation by the provinces in the

Household Food Insecurity Index to ensure accurate reporting of the issue. (Food Secure Canada 2017, 8) These initiatives, among others, existed prior to *CAPFS* and serve as relics of a time when the federal government was more willing to involve itself directly with social problems.

The suggestion to revisit poverty reduction programs is due to the strong connection between low-income and food insecurity. In fact, one definition of food insecurity frames it as “the inability to access sufficient food through socially acceptable means due to income constraints.” (Mah 2014, 42) In other words, fewer income constraints on vulnerable populations would translate to fewer instances of food insecurity. As the recommendations from Food Secure Canada vehemently support the adoption of a right-to-food approach, they stress the need for policies “that deliver adequate social supports, benefits and protection of living wages.” (Food Secure Canada 2017, 7) These were initially put forth as part of a separate discussion paper entitled *From Patchwork to Policy Coherence (FPPC)*, which was published in May 2017, shortly after the mandate letter from Prime Minister Trudeau to the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food. In *FPPC*, the authors acknowledge that the current approach – a patchwork one that has persisted over the past twenty years – is insufficient to affect real change. (Food Secure Canada 2017, 3) Instead a systems-based approach is suggested, along with a shift to a more democratized style of governance, using a food-system lens to bring “diverse actors together to generate solutions.” (Food Secure Canada 2017, 4)

The position paper as a whole speaks to the reality of the Canadian food context in 2017 as one still mired in siloed and jurisdictional policymaking. This is something shared with the atmosphere surrounding the *CAPFS* process. *FPPC* speaks to this fact several times, using language such as “the fragmented nature of our food and agriculture policy,” or referencing “an approach that divides health, environment and the economy into different domains.” (Food Secure Canada 2017, 5) This approach was reinforced through the selection of specific types of policy tools. To remedy the situation, Food Secure Canada proposed to not simply draft a National Food Policy, but to create a National Food Policy

Council made of an array of actors from across the food spectrum.¹ (Food Secure Canada 2017, 6)

Collaboration was a theme within *CAPFS* as well, as the document begins with a message from the Prime Minister in which he mentions the collaborative efforts across all levels of government and with CSOs towards the goal of ending hunger. He goes on to write that *CAPFS* is a “reflection of this experience,” which is true in the sense that actors from the aforementioned areas of Canada came together to produce the document. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1998, 3) However, it is misleading in the sense that this type of collaboration was not common practice on the topic of food security prior to the 1996 World Food Summit. In fact, just several pages later there is a note of congratulations to CSOs, the academic and industry communities for their efforts in combatting food security over the preceding 50 years. While intersectoral cooperation may “play a key role in Canada’s approach,” the previous statement makes no mention of relationships between those three sectors, merely acknowledging that they have all been involved in the fight for food security. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1998, 5)

Perhaps the most consequential realization of *CAPFS* was the need for a more complete analysis regarding the scope of food insecurity across Canada. As demonstrated in the literature review, the federal government was slow to acknowledge the problem, so the *Action Plan*’s call for intersectoral cooperation to establish an accepted monitoring mechanism can be considered a landmark event. Twenty years later, *AFPC* also calls for greater monitoring of food insecurity, which demonstrates how the relations between stakeholders did not improve as dramatically as one may have hoped. In fact, another of the recommendations present within *AFPC* centers on building trust between producers and consumers in order to promote health and food safety. (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food 2017, 15)

The recognition of the need for a joined-up food policy has been voiced consistently over the years by food policy researchers and civil society organizations alike. Therefore, it is encouraging to see that the primary condition noted for a National Food Policy to be successful, according to *AFPC*, is the “inclusion of all stakeholders.” (Standing Committee on

¹ This proposal was incorporated into the National Food Policy.

Agriculture and Agri-Food 2017, 29) “Food matters to everyone,” the report goes on to say, which is not a novel concept and yet it is the driving idea behind both *CAPFS* and *AFPC*. (Standing Committee on Agriculture and Agri-Food 2017, 29) That is far from the only commonality, as the table below displays the similarities between the commitments and priorities of *CAPFS* and the recommendations of *AFPC*.

**Comparison Chart of
Commitments/Priorities (*CAPFS*) vs Recommendations (*AFPC*)**

Commitments/ Priorities	Recommendations The Committee recommends that...
Priority 1. The right to food reiterates Canada’s belief that this right is an important element in food security and underscores the need to better define the meaning of this right, and the actions required to implement it	1. The Government recognize that Canadians have the right to adequate nutrition and that the Government of Canada align its policies to achieve this goal for all Canadians.
Priority 3: Promotion of access to safe and nutritious food is seen as a critical component of food security.	2. The Government implement measures to provide for an adequate supply of more affordable, safe, high-quality and nutritious food for Canadians, especially vulnerable populations in Canadian society, such as children, Canadians living in poverty, Indigenous peoples and those in remote and Northern communities
Priority 5: Traditional food acquisition methods of Aboriginal and coastal communities acknowledge the important role that hunting, fishing, gathering, bartering and trading play in the food security of many communities in Canada and abroad.	3. The Government support the implementation of initiatives to combat food insecurity in Indigenous northern communities by reviewing the Nutrition North Canada program
Commitment 1: An Enabling Environment – “We will ensure an enabling political, social and economic environment designed to create the best conditions for the eradication of poverty and for durable peace, based on full and equal participation of women and men, which is most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.” – World Food Summit	4. The Government provide support for the growth and development of local and regional agriculture
	5. The Government help implement initiatives, such as a federal, provincial and territorial recognition protocol for animal care, that bring producers and consumers closer together in order to strengthen and maintain public trust.
	6. The new food guide be informed by the food policy and include peer-reviewed, scientific evidence and that the Government work with the agriculture and agri-food sector to ensure alignment and competitiveness for domestic industries
	7. The Government invest in awareness campaigns and education about healthy eating in order to improve the overall health of Canadians and reduce health care costs
Commitment 3: Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development – “We will pursue participatory and sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries, forestry and rural development policies and practices in high and low potential areas, which are essential to adequate and reliable food supplies at the	8. The Government support the Canadian organic sector by providing ongoing funding for the Canadian Organic Regime. The Committee also recommends that the Government support the growth of exports and ensure that the sector can meet the growing demand for organic products

household, national, regional and global levels, and combat pests, drought and desertification, considering the multifunctional character of agriculture.” – World Food Summit	
Priority 6: Food production emphasizes the critical role of research, rural development and investment in the productivity of the agriculture and agri-food sector.	9. The Government streamline approvals of new biotechnology innovation, such as seeds and plant breeds
	10. The Government, in conjunction with all members of the supply chain, establish education tools and take action to reduce industry food loss and consumer food waste
Priority 7: Emphasis on environmentally sustainable practices explores some of the most pressing challenges to food production	11. The Government continue and increase efforts and investments to assist the agriculture sector in continuing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and to improve environmental practices, with an emphasis on conservation of soil, water, and air
	12. The Government continue to support domestic growth in the regional agriculture and agri-food sector, as well as in the industries under supply management
Priority 8: Fair trade outlines the potential impact of liberalized trade regimes on incomes and overall welfare, and indicates the possibility that there may be adjustment costs in non-competitive sectors.	13. The Government continue to support domestic growth in the regional agriculture and agri-food sector, as well as the industries under supply management by ensuring that the outcomes of a renegotiated NAFTA do not erode the domestic market on which they rely
	14. The Government continue to focus on export growth in Canada’s agriculture and agri-food sectors, with a view to increasing Canadian agricultural exports to at least \$75 billion per year by 2025, and reducing barriers to export growth
Commitment 4: Trade and Food Security – “We will strive to ensure that food, agricultural trade and overall trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through a fair and market-oriented world trade system” – World Food Summit	
Priority 2: The reduction of poverty is an important element in the strategy for addressing food insecurity in both domestic and international actions, based on the notion that a key condition for food security is access to sufficient resources to purchase or grow food	15. The Government not increase the financial burden for Canadians, making the cost of food more expensive, and for our farmers who rely on export markets and must remain competitive
Commitment 6: Promoting Investment – “We will promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources, sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas” – World Food Summit	16. The Government, in partnership with community groups and non-governmental organizations, invest in community-level action in the areas of innovative agricultural initiatives, food security, food literacy, and food loss and waste
	17. The Government strengthen programs to support farmers and food processors in their efforts to innovate and adapt to changing production conditions and market demands
Priority 8: Fair trade outlines the potential impact of liberalized trade regimes on incomes and overall welfare, and indicates the possibility that there may be adjustment costs in non-competitive sectors.	18. The Government take a whole-of-government approach to ensure market access for Canadian producers in key export markets and address trade irritants and non-tariff barriers
Commitment 6: Promoting Investment – “We will promote optimal allocation and use of public and private investments to foster human resources,	19. The Government enhance tools to support young farmers and new entrants into agriculture and that the Government work with farmers to better accommodate

sustainable food, agriculture, fisheries and forestry systems, and rural development, in high and low potential areas” – World Food Summit	the intergenerational transfer of family farms
	20. The Government, in partnership with provincial and territorial governments, take steps to ensure sufficient labour is available in the agriculture and agri-food sector, including through the temporary foreign workers program to attract and retain talent, with a possible path to permanent residency
Commitment 7: Implementation and Monitoring – “We will implement, monitor, and follow-up the World Food Summit Plan of Action at all levels in cooperation with the international community.”	
Priority 10: A monitoring system for food insecurity identifies the need for a comprehensive set of agreed-upon indicators to determine the nature, extent and evolution of food insecurity, both to develop appropriate responses and to monitor their effectiveness.	21. The Government establish a national food policy advisory body consisting of the key government departments, the agriculture and agri-food sector, academia, Indigenous peoples and civil society

It is logical that both policy documents share a common organizing idea. Food does matter to everyone, and the Canadian food system, like the vast majority of systems throughout the world, has room for improvement. In that sense, it is not odd that there are similarities between the two documents. However, from a more pessimistic viewpoint, the similarities in policy recommendations are too close for comfort, in that it implies the suggestions from the *Action Plan* were not addressed. As can be seen in the chart above, thirteen of the seventeen priorities and/or commitments from *CAPFS* have roughly equivalent counterparts in *AFPC*.² This suggests that there has been a lack of improvement in the Canadian food system during the last 20 years, and by analyzing the chart more closely, we can begin to understand why.

As *CAPFS* was exclusively dedicated to food security, its first priority was the ‘right-to-food,’ which matches exactly with the first recommendation of *AFPC*. This is not surprising, however the lack of a clear counterpart for the second priority of *CAPFS* – the reduction of poverty – seems odd considering the universally agreed upon relationship between poverty and food insecurity. Recommendation 15 acknowledges the financial aspect of food insecurity for Canadians, but the document as a whole does not go so far as

² Missing are references to: (Priority #4: food safety issues; Priority #9: the need for peace as a precursor to food security; Commitment #2: greater access to food for all Canadians; and Commitment #5: emergency prevention and preparedness as it relates to food availability. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1998)

to discuss a minimum-income strategy, other than to refer to the Federal Poverty Reduction Strategy already in place. Another oddity is the lack of a recommendation directly related to food safety, despite “Food Safety and Health” being one of *AFPC*’s four central themes. Food safety is the fourth priority in *CAPFS*, following the ‘promotion of access to safe and nutritious food,’ which – along with the second commitment to ensure access to food – closely matches the second recommendation of *AFPC*. To be fair, this recommendation does allude to the available food being ‘safe,’ but that is not quite equivalent to recommending greater adherence to food safety.

Both documents voice support for Indigenous peoples, either through the promotion of “traditional food acquisition methods” in *CAPFS* or through the review of Nutrition North in *AFPC*, a program meant to subsidize food distribution from the Canadian south. The existence of Nutrition North likely means that the fifth priority of *CAPFS* was not achieved. Other types of food production (the sixth priority and third commitment of *CAPFS*) are alluded to in *AFPC*, however, from organic to local/regional, as well as that which utilizes biotechnological innovations. Hand-in-hand with that is the seventh priority to emphasize sustainable practices, which *AFPC* echoes by encouraging a reduction in emissions from the agricultural sector. Given the current state of the global climate, any and all future agricultural policy discussions will need to consider this aspect of production.

The eighth priority (and fourth commitment) of *CAPFS* is related to ‘trade and food security.’ The ‘trade’ component of that is more present in *AFPC* as it is referred to in recommendations 13, 14 and 18. The critique levied at *CAPFS* as continuing to treat food as a commodity rather than a right will most certainly be applied to the National Food Policy if those recommendations make up a significant portion of the policy. Despite this implied understanding of the global nature of Canada’s food system, there is no mention of the need for peace in order to achieve food security. There is, however, continued recognition of the need for an enabling policy environment (first commitment of *CAPFS*), as *AFPC* refers to strengthening public trust (recommendation #5) along with investing in community-level actions and supporting new generations of farmers (recommendations 16 and 17, respectively). By promoting investment in the food sector (commitment #6), each document recognizes the need for a sustainable food environment, both in an ecological

and economical sense. Lastly, the penultimate recommendation/priority/commitment in each document refers to the need for vigilant monitoring of all previous recommendations/priorities/commitments. This serves as a final example of the similar organizing principles of each document, set two decades apart from one another.

Conclusion

As this chapter has demonstrated, the central components of *CAPFS* and *AFPC* are strikingly similar, leading to the conclusion that the Canadian food policy environments in 1998 and 2017 were similar, as well. The stakeholders tasked with creating these policy statements reflect a certain level of influence in the commitments and recommendations laid out in the plans. By bringing together representatives from civil society and multiple levels of government, the Joint Consultative Groups served as temporary sites of policymaking wherein the issue of food security was discussed. Ideas surrounding problem framing and agenda setting were presented, and the institutions responsible for dealing with the problem were forced to take note of these new concepts. The actors involved, and more importantly the relationships between those actors, makes it clear that there is still a lot to be desired in terms of democratic governance. As will be discussed in the fourth chapter of this thesis, the policy tools that were selected in the years between the two policies are reflective of the food policy environment in which they were implemented – fragmented and prioritizing procedure over substance. First, however, it is important to provide a broader context of the research already conducted on food policy in Canada, specifically in the areas of food security and sovereignty. In providing this literature review the next chapter will set the backdrop for a discussion on the policy tools selected to address those major issues.

Chapter 2: Literature Review of Canadian Food Security Research

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the research that has already been conducted on the topics of food security, food sovereignty, and the Canadian food policy environment as a whole. The term 'food security' will be used herein with the definition offered by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, who defines the concept as existing "when people have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and enable an active and healthy life." (Canadian International Development Agency 2009, 1) In order to address food security, nations must ensure that food is available from domestic production, imports, or as food aid; there is access to food from household production, local markets, or public support networks; the quality of food is healthy and nutritious; and each of these factors are stable throughout the year. (Canadian International Development Agency 2009, 1)

These recommendations are supposed to be factors in Canada's approach to food policy, but as will be revealed in the literature presented below, changes in governance have made it so it is increasingly lower levels of government and civil society responsible for actually implementing them, often without the resources to do so. The Food and Agriculture Organization's recommendations also do not take into account the diverse realities for social groups within Canada who have different obstacles to achieving food security. Often this is where the concept of food sovereignty is invoked. As another obstacle to a national, comprehensive food policy, the definition of food sovereignty expanded from "the right of each nation to maintain and develop its own capacity to produce its basic foods, respecting cultural and productive diversity" to include the "right of peoples to define their agricultural and food policy." (Andrée 2011, 133) This is an example of a factor that can be found throughout the literature of the conflict between government regulation and the neoliberal belief in the right of citizen's choice. Food security can be imposed from above, but food sovereignty necessitates the cooperation from below in determining how to reduce food insecurity.

Social movements and civil society organizations have been instrumental in advancing the cause of food sovereignty, and they have often been created to directly oppose the level of power that corporations possess in the arena of food policy. (Starr

2000, 18) The neoliberal movement successfully equated corporate interest with public interest in the years leading up to the 1997 Food Summit in Rome, (Starr 2000, 18) and consequentially the results of that summit were criticized as being too friendly to the agricultural productivist approach to food policy. (R. MacRae 2011, 425) Don Mitchell defined this productivist approach in 1975 when he wrote about the prevailing belief that economic policies will effectively respond to issues of food security. (Mitchell 1975 , 197) In other words, the marketplace is the answer to the global problem of food insecurity and as long as food production concerns are addressed directly, issues related to food insecurity will resolve themselves. This laissez-faire attitude is in contrast to the attitude of Canadians in the aftermath of World War II, who “insisted vocally that the state’s responsibility for preventing malnutrition extended beyond public education.” (Mosby 2014, 163)

These contradictory views demonstrate that the ebb and flow of food policies mirrors that of the paradigms surrounding government responsibility. Whereas a strong welfare state was supported following WWII, in the 1970s and 1980s the neoliberal movement gained traction and the Canadian federal government’s involvement in ensuring food security for its citizens declined accordingly. This decline also mirrored the shift from substantive policy tools to those more procedural in nature, which, perhaps not coincidentally, took place primarily during the 1990s in the years leading up to the Rome Global Food Summit. (M. Howlett 2000, 413)

As mentioned in the introduction, and will be illustrated in the literature review below, food policy formulation and research faces the same obstacle given the multi-faceted nature of the subject. Creating a national policy when so many actors are necessarily involved is exceedingly difficult, and this fact helps to explain the reticence on the part of the federal government to undertake such a task, instead focusing on maintaining their relationship with CSOs. Despite that reticence, Canada’s first National Food Policy was published in June 2019. In order to provide greater context of Canadian food security tools in the twenty years leading up to that publication, this literature review examines the research on both food security and food sovereignty; as well as the research already conducted on the Canadian food policy environment.

Food Policy Literature

Food Security/Sovereignty

Initiated by La Via Campesina, “Food sovereignty defends peasant livelihoods and advocates agro-ecological technologies as a matter of social justice.” (Koç 2016, 366) Food security, defined above but as will be shown below, utilizes a variety of definitions depending on the arena under analysis. Regardless, these types of food justice issues have become publicized enough over the past 20 years to warrant serious attention from academics and researchers. This is evidenced by the publication of textbooks dealing with the topic, such as *Critical Perspectives in Food Studies* by Koc, Sumner and Winston. Covering a wide variety of issues, they touch on *CAPFS* by characterizing it as a “stillbirth” due to tensions and contradictions within the document, as well as a continued dedication to the productivist paradigm. (Koç 2016, 309)

The authors go on to discuss a major agricultural policy framework from 2002 that contained little to no evidence of *CAPFS* influence. Given the proximity to the 1998 publication of *CAPFS*, this would support the notion that it was quickly disregarded. The *Food Studies* textbook is a prime example of how academic research into federal policies can shed light on food security issues across Canada. One issue encountered by researchers and policymakers alike is how vast the area to which ‘across Canada’ refers. While the majority of literature on food security and food sovereignty pertains to the majority of Canadians (those living within 100 miles of the U.S. border), there is a subset that addresses the harsh realities facing those living in northern Canada. Elaine Power’s article on conceptualizing food security for this population posits that there are unique considerations that must be taken into account given the existence of traditional, or country, foods. (Power 2008, 95) Arguing that the current legislation on food security focuses on the ability of Canadians to purchase adequate levels and quality of food within a retail system, there has been little action to support the role that traditional food plays for aboriginal people. (Power 2008, 96) This is another perceived flaw of *Canada’s Action Plan for Food Security*, because while it made the effort to acknowledge the role of traditional food in food sovereignty, Power points out that this acknowledgement did not lead to substantive action on the part of the federal government, one of several researchers to

make this assertion. (Power 2008, 96) That assertion is grounded in reality, however it is important to define inaction as it relates to the selection of policy tools. Researchers note that the lack of new programs and policies to address the issue of HFI implies a lack of support on the part of the federal government. The latter has taken a neoliberal approach to support, by funding research and creating public-private partnerships rather than intervening directly. As the following chapter will explain in greater detail, this is the difference between substantive tools (directly regulating goods and services) and procedural ones (managing the state-society relationship). The literature presented here implies that a government favoring procedural tools is an inactive one. The preference of CSOs and researchers alike would be to see a higher frequency of substantive tools resulting in a more engaged, and active, federal government.

Despite that preference, the reality is that it is increasingly important for civil society organizations to take matters into their own hands when it comes to providing food security for vulnerable populations. To that end, several researchers have begun looking at international systems to find possible food policy alternatives. For example, James D. Ford et al look at the country food market system developed in Greenland as a potential method of providing nutritious food in the Canadian North. Their article looks specifically at the territory of Nunavut, “where food security has been identified to be at a crisis level.” (Ford 2016, 35) In the past decade there have been local initiatives such as the Nunavut Food Security Coalition to address issues of food security while taking into account traditional foods, as opposed to the principal initiative of the federal government that provided a retail subsidy as part of the Nutrition North Canada program. (Ford 2016, 36) After conducting a systematic review on the conditions of Nunavut for instituting country food markets, the authors concluded that it would be quite difficult for reasons similar to those inhibiting the implementation of a national food policy: “knowledge gaps and regulatory and institutional conditions.” (Ford 2016, 39) The plurality of factors to consider makes implementation of any comprehensive programs problematic due to the lack of resources available, and in turn contributes to the perception of inaction on the part of the government. Further problematizing their creation, as Annette Aurélie Desmarais & Hannah Wittman point out, these programs also need to take into consideration the concept of food sovereignty from the indigenous perspective.

Echoing Elaine Power's observation that Canadian food legislation is written from a colonial framework, Desmarais and Wittman note that the participation of indigenous organizations in the People's Food Policy Project was not enough to shift the discourse. (Desmarais 2014, 1155) Through research conducted with indigenous food sovereignty activists she found that they are "critical of a version of food sovereignty they view as agriculture- and state-centric." (Desmarais 2014, 1155) This is no surprise, given the historically productivist focus of Canadian food policy as a means to support international trade and market-oriented goals, as opposed to those that would directly benefit vulnerable populations. (Desmarais 2014, 1157) The article by Desmarais and Wittman provides an inclusive look at the interactions of several concerned groups within Canadian food policy debates. The authors address the perceptions of food sovereignty from the perspective of farmers, indigenous peoples, as well as community members in urban settings where food security is an issue. They point out that the definition of food sovereignty will vary substantially in a nation such as Canada where the population is so ideologically diverse. (Desmarais 2014, 1158) Once again, the authors run into the obstacle of plurality when trying to define food sovereignty given the diversity of ideologies, communities, and languages throughout Canada. (Desmarais 2014, 1167) Noting the overarching factor of power relationships, and how it affects the ability to effectively map food sovereignty on a national scale, Desmarais and Wittman do echo the notion put forth by MacRae et al that the changing political spaces for food policy discussion provide at least the opportunity for development. (Desmarais 2014, 1167)

These reshaped political spaces, as noted by several authors above, provide openings in the policy process for civil society organizations to offer input and advice. However, as Sarah Wakefield points out in her article on food security, the framing of the food security problem can still serve as an obstacle towards meaningful legislation. (Wakefield 2015, 87) For example, as *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security* and subsequent Progress Reports describe how fortunate Canada is in terms of food production and abundance, the implication is that food insecurity comes about due to a lack of personal responsibility, as opposed to any failure on the government's part. (Wakefield 2015, 86) The Progress Reports that followed the *Action Plan* (to be analyzed in greater detail in Chapter 4) also included recommendations to alleviate Aboriginal food insecurity

(ex. subsidies for commercial foods, as mentioned by Ford), but these recommendations ignored “lingering issues such as the widespread marginalization of Aboriginal people,” among other aspects of historical colonization. (Wakefield 2015, 89) With another display of how the recommendations fit in a neoliberal approach to governance, the Progress Reports place the responsibility of adapting to environmental realities such as climate change and environmental contamination on the part of Aboriginal peoples. (Wakefield 2015, 89) Problem-framing, the diversity of stakeholders, a cohesive approach to research and the need for a ‘right-to-food’ policy perspective are the major obstacles cited by the research discussed in this section. The federal government did not address these obstacles despite having created spaces for CSOs to become part of the policy environment. The following section looks more closely at that reshaped policy environment and some of the issues associated with it.

The Canadian Food Policy Environment

Rod MacRae published an article to promote the idea of a “Joined-Up Food Policy for Canada,” a precursor to the recently published national policy. The title alludes to the fact that any initiative requires the intersection between policy systems that have little in common with one another. (R. MacRae 2011, 428) This is a common refrain within the literature, that one of the major problems with Canada’s approach is the complexity of the policy subsystem. Other factors complicating the matter include the lack of institutional ground on which governments can work, the substantial number of existing systems already in place, and treating food not simply as a marketable commodity. This last factor would have serious repercussions in some sectors. (R. MacRae 2011, 428)

MacRae’s article on a joined-up food policy is not his first mention of the diffuse nature of the policy process, as in 2008 he co-authored an article outlining the problems at the parliamentary level. While 2008 may have been a particularly bad time for evidence-based policymaking for reasons too numerous to mention here, MacRae et al take the time to lament the unlikelihood of food policy to be a priority of the prime minister’s office. (Koc, MacRae, et al. 2008, 137) They also note the diminished participation of Cabinet in the policymaking process, thereby decreasing the chances of any food legislation to be proposed by health or agriculture ministers without the approval of the PMO. (Koc,

MacRae, et al. 2008, 137) For better or worse, MacRae's stance had yet to change by the publication of his 'Joined-Up Food Policy' article three years later, as he writes that, "the other significant dilemma of governance in the food and agriculture system is the limited role of parliament. Most recent significant federal government decisions in agriculture have not been debated in public." (R. MacRae 2011, 430) Ten years removed from *CAPFS*, the Prime Minister's Office had shifted away from collaborative governance in favor of unilateral decision-making. In addition to the inactivity of parliament on this topic, the authors go on to reiterate that issues of food policy are programmatically complex and spread across multiple sectors, making their formulation problematic. (Koc, MacRae, et al. 2008, 138)

An emphasis on pairing scientific knowledge with community experience is expressed in a discussion paper put forth by Food Secure Canada as part of the People's Food Policy in 2011. The paper focuses on Food Democracy and Governance, and one of the primary recommendations is the strengthening of the public knowledge base by the inclusion of scientific and community-based knowledge within the broader policy environment. (Canada 2011, 4) Noting the "silo-ification" of food and agriculture policies, this discussion paper promotes the incorporation of a systems-based approach to food policy. (Canada 2011, 10) The notion of a systems-based approach encourages "deliberative democracy" whereby all citizens impacted by a policy decision have a voice in its formulation. (Canada 2011, 11) This position was certainly influenced by the decreased role of civil society during the Harper years. The systems-based approach is a precursor to a 2016 article by Rod MacRae and Mark Winfield on regulatory pluralism, wherein the authors discuss – among other things – the context for food policy change in Canada and frames for understanding the food system. (R. a. MacRae 2016)

While noting the difficulties of achieving regulatory pluralism, MacRae and Winfield reinforce the importance of approaching food policy research using a variety of frames such as feminist theory, the right to food, alternative food networks and several others. (R. a. MacRae 2016, 153) By utilizing a blended-frames approach, researchers and the intended audience for that research (policymakers) are able to see the complexities of the food system as well as the goals for effecting change within it. The multiple frames listed within the article echo the variety of theoretical frameworks applied to food policy

research, as Advocacy Coalition, Punctuated Equilibrium and Power Elite theory are three of the more common approaches taken.

To support their claim, MacRae and Winfield offer an explanation for the problems associated with food policy formulation. Noting the issues with relying on third party actors for policy execution (as had been the case since *CAPFS*), they go on to point out the difficulties with ensuring “programmatic, regulatory and administrative compliance with legislation and policy directives.” (R. a. MacRae 2016, 148) In other words, if the formulation process employs regulatory pluralism to include the voices of a disparate set of actors, that becomes harder to monitor following the publication and implementation of a policy due to a lack of communication or collaboration between them.

Echoing MacRae and Winfield’s call for a diversity of frames in order to understand the complex Canadian food system, Charlebois et al note the difficulties of finding synthesized research on the topic of food security in their systematic review on the subject. There has been ample research on the effect food security has on health, economics, and the environment, but, as Charlebois argues, an intersectional approach is needed in order to be influential at the policy level in terms of addressing the cause. (Charlebois 2014, 534) This discrepancy on research addressing symptoms rather than causes is mirrored in the policy tools selected, as will be shown in chapter 4 of this thesis. Echoing the need for an intersectional approach, the Canadian Food Security Policy Group produced a set of recommendations in 2010 in support of a national food policy, and among them was a call to “improve multilateral governance in food and agriculture.” (Canadian Council for International Cooperation 2010, 8) Other authors argue that it may not be a matter of improvement, but of creating an alternate structure of governance altogether.

As this section concentrates on Canadian food policymaking and the problems associated with it, it can be useful to present concepts as to the methods that lead to policy opportunities – or policy windows. Lynn McIntyre incorporates these ideas in her article on household food insecurity in Canada, focusing on the language of problem definition within the legislature, and how this language affects the potential for public policy solutions. (Mcintyre 2016, 87) Citing Kingdon’s work on the policy process, she notes the importance of problem definition, policy proposal formation, and politics when it comes to the discussion of food security within Canadian parliamentary proceedings. (Mcintyre 2016,

84) By identifying three pathways used by legislators to propose solutions (nutrition, economic factors, government failures), McIntyre's work proposes that Canada's insufficient food policy to be a result of the difficulty to define the root cause of the problem of food security. (Mcintyre 2016, 89) Of her findings to support this assertion, she notes the lack of scientific journals or research used in discussions of the problem, with legislators instead relying on imagery and symbolism to convey the importance of policy formulation. (Mcintyre 2016)

The authors discussed above are at the forefront of the call for food policy reform and innovation in Canada. Their work largely discusses how governance structures have shifted over the past several decades and the implications of this shift concerning the involvement of civil society actors. Using various frameworks to describe power dynamics from a structural perspective, and multiple frames to explain the complexities of the Canadian food system, the research focuses on the difficulties of cohesive policymaking, with a secondary amount of attention paid to the necessity of a comprehensive national food policy. There is sufficient research outlining the problems with Canada's approach to household food insecurity as fragmented and reliant on CSOs. There are insufficient articles addressing how this environment has been reinforced by the selection of particular types of policy tools. This is the literature gap that this thesis aims to fill.

Whether viewed from an economic, health-based, environmental or social movement perspective, the fact remains that food security and sovereignty are still topics in need of significant attention from policymakers and politicians alike. The literature presented above is an overview of the general discussion as it has evolved over the course of the past several decades. Throughout that time period, one of the few constants has been the need for an intersectional approach towards food policy formulation. State actors, civil society organizations, social movements and others along the food continuum need to play integral roles in the creation of a national food policy. There have been attempts made by each of the authors reviewed here to present solutions and analysis of the overarching problem of food security, with the consensus being that it persists due to inaction on the part of the federal government paired with heightened responsibility on the shoulders of civil society organizations. While the degree to which the government was inactive can be debated, the fact that the problem of household food insecurity persists is not up for

discussion here. Nor is the fact that Canadian CSOs are overburdened and still responsible for the vast majority of emergency food assistance. With that being said, these conditions were not created in a vacuum, but rather are the result of conscious decisions made by various governments through the selection of particular policy tools over the course of two decades. Therefore, this thesis aims to more completely answer the questions of ‘how’ and ‘why’ Canada needed to address food insecurity through a National Food Policy twenty years after making an overt dedication to the problem with *CAPFS*.

Conclusion

The literature on food security and the actors involved in it is perhaps not as pervasive as it should be given the importance of food in the daily lives of all Canadians. Canada likes to think of itself as a place of abundance and as a provider of food aid from an international standpoint, and yet studies show that food security is still an issue for a significant number of Canadians. By incorporating research conducted by the authors listed above, the federal government can regain its place as an important player in the fight against food security. In the process it could address longstanding issues with self-determination for indigenous populations, and contribute to the Canadian sense of identity by using evidence-based policymaking to support the welfare of all its citizens. This was attempted at first through *CAPFS*, and also contributed to the formulation of Canada’s first National Food Policy.

To summarize the overarching theme of the research already conducted on Canada’s approach to food insecurity, one would have to begin with the difficulty in defining the root cause of the problem. Whereas some authors note the framing of the issue as one of personal responsibility as opposed to systemic failure, others believe it is the neoliberal governance structure that has resulted in lower levels of government and civil society organizations shouldering the majority of the burden. There is consensus that increased multi-level governance paired with a systems-based approach would decrease rates of household food insecurity, or at least stop them from steadily rising. However, considering the agreed upon notion that the problem is programmatically complex due to regulatory and institutional conditions, one could argue that by collaborating with such a diversity of stakeholders those conditions become even more difficult to monitor. More and

more civil society organizations have become involved in the discussion, and yet this has not resulted in any positive impact on the rate of household food insecurity. At some point, there is a need for a macro-level substantive policy intervention (such as the newly published National Food Policy), as opposed to the continued effort to improve stakeholder education and awareness through procedural policy instruments. To put it bluntly: the past twenty years have seen increased household food insecurity along with increased reliance on third party actors to deal with the problem. The latter fact is not by accident, but rather the result of conscious decisions made by consecutive federal governments in the form of procedural policy tools, which will be explained in greater detail in the following chapter.

Chapter 3: Theoretical Framework: A Policy Tools Approach

Introduction to Policy Tools Theory

“Faire l’analyse de l’action publique par les instruments, la matérialité de celle-ci, est une approche porteuse qui permet non seulement d’offrir une piste pour saisir les politiques publiques mais qui permet de retracer le changement, les marqueurs des transformations de l’État, au-delà du volontarisme des acteurs et de la rhétorique politique.”³ (Simard 2014 , 177) This quote comes from an article in which Louis Simard examines the procedural tools used by the Quebec energy sector as part of the same shift experienced by national food policy; a shift that witnessed the state move from ‘rowing’ initiatives on the frontline to ‘steering’ from afar. Simard’s article demonstrates the benefits of the policy tools approach. By taking stock over an extended period of time he notes that the participatory procedural tools had become co-opted by the state, which eventually restricted access to participation in order to facilitate and streamline decision-making. (Simard 2014 , 166) I believe this type of causal insight to be a gap in the food policy literature, as mentioned in the previous chapter. This chapter describes the policy tools approach in greater detail to show how it can fill that gap by looking at the causes of the food policy environment and how it has failed to adequately address household food insecurity.

Pierre Lascoumes is a prominent author on the topic of policy instrumentation, and his notion that instruments do not merely influence issues but rather restructure the relationship between the state and its citizens, is essential to understanding the history of Canadian food policy. (Lascoumes 2007) From our initial landmark of *CAPFS*, we can see that the evolution of state-society relations has been influenced by the choice of policy instruments. Policy tool choice is a phenomenon identified by Christopher Hood in an article reflecting on his seminal work, *The Tools of Governance*.

Hood writes that attempts to classify the various types of policy tools have been broad ranging, but it can be useful to group the principal schools of thought into three

³ Rough translation: “Analyzing public action by instruments, the materiality of the latter, is a promising approach that not only provides a pathway to seize public policies, but allows us to trace change, the markers of transformations of the state, beyond the voluntarism of the actors and the political rhetoric. ”

categories. If one perceives institutions as responsible for implementing policy, they can then be construed as tools themselves. Given the modus operandi of New Public Governance to use third party mechanisms for policy implementation, this “institutions-as-tools” is an interesting concept to explain the choice of policy tools. (Hood 2007, 133) Another method of categorization within the study of policy tools has been to group them in a more generic way. For example, one can bunch them into such categories as authority, incentive, intervention strategies or capacity building. In other words, policy tools can be perceived as “carrots, sticks or sermons.” While a generalization to be sure, it is an accurate means to understand the use of policy tools. (Hood 2007, 138)

The third approach discussed by Hood is termed the “politics-of-instrumentality,” and I believe it to be the most applicable of the three in the discussion of food policy. It deals with the problematization of “the political and cognitive processes that lead to the choice of instruments,” as opposed to assuming those decisions are taken in a neutral manner, devoid of political or social context. (Hood 2007, 133) For example, the constituents for trade policy discussions in the agri-food sector will look vastly different than those discussing an approach to urban food deserts. Therefore the tools selected – or preferred – by those constituents will be different, as well. Food policy tools are never selected in a vacuum; instead they take into account the “subjective perceptions and political processes that surround” their choice. (Hood 2007, 136)

Another aspect of significance when discussing food policy is the clientele affected by the chosen policy instrument. In terms of food security, this is presumably a vulnerable or disadvantaged population; therefore cash grants or subsidies could be effective options. (Linder 1989, 51). A second organizational factor mentioned by Linder and Peters is the policy community in which the organization functions. In the case of food policy we know that Agri-food Canada acts as the liaison between multiple interest groups as well as other government agencies. The authors point out that this type of collaborative policy community will inevitably influence the selection of policy instruments. (Linder 1989, 51)

Using both the model developed by Linder and Peters as well as work by Hood, Michael Howlett and M. Ramesh conclude that the instrument selection process is not inherently rational, but rather a classic case of “muddling through.” (M. a. Howlett 1993, 13) As it is rare for any two particular policy goals to be exactly alike, so is the case for the

choice of policy instruments. The choice of instrument will be influenced by “the nature of the problem at hand, experience of past governments in dealing with the same or similar problems, the subjective preference of the decision-makers and the likely reaction to the choice by the affected social groups.” (M. a. Howlett 1993, 13) In other words, there is a lot to consider when selecting an instrument, which in addition to the disparate groups of stakeholders concerned with food policy is another barrier to developing a policy instrument with a holistic, or systemic approach. In Lascoumes and Le Gales’ introduction to the special policy tools issue of *Governance*, they provide a perspective regarding instruments as institutions that is worth quoting in its entirety. They identify instruments as institutions due to the fact that they “partly determine the way in which the actors are going to behave; they create uncertainties about the effects of the balance of power; they will eventually privilege certain actors and interests and exclude others; they constrain the actors while offering them possibilities; they drive forward a certain representation of problems.” (Lascoumes, 9)

Each of these attributes can be found within the evolution of Canadian food security policy tools, which is why I employ a policy tools analytical framework in order to demonstrate how the policies created in the 2000s and onward can be linked back to the neoliberal shift in governance and the publication of *CAPFS*. It was a tool that restructured the relationship between the state and the food security policy community, and should be examined by taking into consideration the organizational setting as well as the timeframe in which it was produced. The same can be said of subsequent food security tools, as they were not created in a vacuum either, but rather were selected to deal with a specific type of problem situation affecting a particular type of clientele through consultations with a varied group of stakeholders.

Methodology and Categorization

“Policy instruments are tools of governance,” wrote Michael Howlett in one of his several influential articles on the topic. (M. a. Howlett 1993, 4) He goes on to describe how they represent the limited methods in which governments can implement their plans or policies. A policy tools framework can be quite useful in regards to food policy, primarily due to the possibility of identifying motivations based on the type of instrument chosen to

realize a policy goal. While the literature on policy instruments is not vast, it has identified various categories under which we can group the different types of instruments. The previous section outlined all of these types, therefore I will now turn my focus onto the categorizations that can best help to understand the instruments most prevalent in the past twenty years of Canadian food security policy.

Howlett and Ramesh note that a crucial step in understanding instrument choice is the identification of a) the policy community tasked with making the choice, and b) analyzing its membership and norms. (M. a. Howlett 1993, 16) The literature review in chapter two addressed the stakeholders in the food policy community as well as their norms. Chief among the findings was the realization that managing the relationship between Civil Society Organizations and state representatives has been an essential aspect of food policymaking. For this reason, I believe Michael Howlett's article on procedural instruments to be of particular relevance to my research question.

As his article notes, Canadian policymakers started moving away from traditional, substantive policy tools in the 1990s, coincidentally in the lead-up to the publication of *CAPFS*. (M. Howlett 2000, 412) Substantive tools are characterized by regulation, direct subsidy, and other methods that rely on the state as the principal actor and policymaker. Some examples include "the construction and establishment of regulatory and other political and administrative agencies and enterprises, traditional financial inducements, and the 'command-and-control' measures adopted by administrative agencies." (M. Howlett 2000, 414) Instead, Canadian governments began to dabble in 'procedural' policy instrumentation, whereby their principal involvement would be through collaboration with private enterprise, stakeholder and/or civil society organizations. In undergoing this shift, an opportunity arose for governments to outsource some of the policy decision-making, implementation and responsibility.

Howlett identifies the various types of procedural instruments, "such as government-NGO partnerships, public advisory commissions, roundtables, interest-group funding and information dissemination." (M. Howlett 2000, 424) *CAPFS* was a roundtable, a public advisory commission, as well as a tool intended for information dissemination. It also matches the procedural tool criteria noted elsewhere by Howlett as it succumbed to administrative delay in implementation – one of the key attributes to this type of tool. (M.

Howlett 2000, 419) The ability to produce, withhold, obfuscate or delay the release of information can be crucial to a sitting government, and thus the use of procedural instruments to “manipulate the number or nature of actors arranged in [...] policy subsystems” enables the government to appear active without necessarily taking action. (M. Howlett 2000, 420) As the next chapter demonstrates, this has been the modus operandi within Canadian food policy since the early 2000s.

By outlining the policy instruments selected to address food security over the course of the last twenty years, this thesis contextualizes how the current government arrived at the realization that a National Food Policy was necessary. Borrowing the categorization developed by the authors outlined earlier in this chapter, policy tools are sorted as either substantive or procedural. A taxonomy of these categories is provided at the end of this chapter, but writ large they can be split into those aiming to directly control or regulate the way in which society functions (substantive), as opposed to those simply attempting to manipulate subsystems in which policy approaches are discussed (procedural). Within those taxonomies are four categories that apply to both substantive and procedural policy instruments, in terms of the type of governing resource required to employ them. *Nodality*, or information, is the first of these categories as the examples of instruments within it make use of the governments ability to commission studies and surveys on a specific topic. The second, *authority*, employs the legitimacy of the state to regulate certain activities such as labeling or to ban groups or associations, as only the state has the power to do. *Treasure* based instruments, as one might expect, provide federal funding in the form of grants and loans when it comes to substantive instruments, or research funding and interest group creation for procedural ones. The final category deals with the *organizational* ability of the government to establish public enterprises or undergo institutional reform as a means to achieve a goal. For substantive tools, these categories are also split into those that intend to have an effect on a situation (effectors) or those meant to detect the nature of an issue (detectors). In the procedural table, they are divided into those with positive intentions such as information provision, as opposed to those using negative tactics such as administrative delay and obfuscation. (M. Howlett 2000, 415-420) Given the wide variety of instrument types that exist (as evidenced within the tables below), the thesis uses a loose definition of what constitutes a policy tool. Any

relevant initiative put forth by the federal government that touches on food insecurity will be analyzed as a policy tool and categorized accordingly. This may include public information campaigns, funding of civil-society initiatives, or pre-existing federal programs that are linked to household food insecurity.

The literature on procedural instruments is scarce, but they are generally considered to be the least resource-intensive methods for governments to address societal issues. This is not necessarily based on the ideology of any particular sitting government, but rather is derived from the neoliberal governance movement whereby the state is still involved in policy formulation but not as much in execution. The use of procedural tools fits perfectly within that paradigm, as they create a situation “where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets”. (Ansell and Gash 2008, 544) While this can certainly be a positive method to create public policy, the food security community would benefit from a heavier use of substantive instruments, as they would carry the authority and resources of the federal government along with them. As the next chapter will show, substantive instruments are typically reserved for issues related to food as a commodity, as opposed to as a human right.

The research of these instruments will be conducted through the archives of multiple governmental agencies, with Agri-food Canada being the most prevalent. I also comb the websites of various Civil Society Organizations, such as Food Secure Canada and PROOF (Food Insecurity Policy Research), in order to corroborate results and to assess stakeholder consultation in the instrument selection process. As mentioned earlier, it is essential to consider the societal context when analyzing the choice of policy instrument, as these decisions are rarely, if ever, made in a vacuum. (Hood 2007, Peters 2000) The goal of a policy-tools approach is not to determine whether or not the tools were successful; given current food insecurity rates we know they were not. Rather, this approach is an explanatory tool to further examine why those rates have not changed, leaving us with similar food security problems as twenty years ago. This thesis provides an overview of the Canadian government’s selection of food security policy tools during that timeframe in

order to address the research question: *what types of tools have the Canadian government used to address food insecurity, and why haven't they worked?*

Substantive Taxonomy and Spectrum

Fig. 1: A Taxonomy of Substantive Policy Instruments		<i>Principal governing resource used</i>			
		<i>Nodality</i>	<i>Authority</i>	<i>Treasure</i>	<i>Organization</i>
<i>General Purpose of Instrument Use</i>	<i>Effectors</i>	Advice Training	Regulation User charges Licences	Grants Loans Tax expenditures	Bureaucratic Administration Public enterprises
	<i>Detectors</i>	Reporting Surveys	Census-taking Registration	Polling Consultants	Record-keeping Police reporting

Source: Adapted from Christopher Hood, *The Tools of Government* (Chatham: Chatham House, 1986), pp. 124-25.

Procedural Taxonomy and Spectrum

Fig. 4: A Resource-Based Taxonomy of Procedural Policy Instruments		<i>Principal governing resource used</i>			
		<i>Nodality</i>	<i>Authority</i>	<i>Treasure</i>	<i>Organization</i>
<i>General Purpose of Instrument Use</i>	<i>Positive</i>	Education Information-provision Focus groups	Labelling Treaties and political agreements Advisory group creation	Interest-group creation Intervenor and research funding	Institutional reform Judicial review Conferences
	<i>Negative</i>	Propaganda Information suppression Denial of access	Banning groups and associations	Eliminating funding	Administrative delay and obfuscation

Source: M. Howlett and M. Ramesh, *Studying Public Policy: Policy Cycles and Policy Subsystems* (Don Mills, Ont.: Oxford University Press, Canada, 1995)

Chapter 4: Analysis of Canadian Food Security Policy Instruments

Introduction

The previous three chapters have provided the broader context of the Canadian food policy environment, as well as an overview of the research already conducted on the topic of Canadian food security. This chapter will shift focus to the principal research question of the thesis: what types of policy tools has the Canadian government favored to address the rate of food insecurity, and why haven't they worked? As the last chapter outlined, I will be using a policy tools approach based on the categorization put forth by Michael Howlett wherein tools are split between substantive and procedural. The former involve direct action on the part of the government along with high levels of resources and corresponding management. The latter are concerned more with shaping the process by which policies are created, or manipulating the discourse in order to favor the policy goals of the sitting government. (M. Howlett 2000, 412) As is shown throughout this chapter, the preference of the Canadian federal government over the past twenty years has been to use procedural tools when dealing with household food insecurity, and substantive tools for issues related to the food industry. At first glance it may seem that procedural tools are simply a way for a government to avoid taking initiative or responsibility on a societal problem. That is not entirely true. While substantive tools will have a more direct impact, there are instances where a procedural tool is necessary to learn more about an issue or convene a diverse set of stakeholders to determine the most effective way to address the issue via substantive tools. Implicit in that scenario is the follow-through with substantive tools, which as will be demonstrated throughout this chapter, rarely occurred in relation to Canadian household food insecurity between 1998-2018.

To further analyze this phenomenon, this chapter will break down the major policy tools into those two categories. The first section will look at the substantive tools that were in place during the twenty years between 1998-2018, and the second section will look at the procedural tools from that timeframe. In theory both of these categories of tools have their merits, however it is clear that the adherence to procedural tools when dealing with HFI has not had the desired impact. The policy tools established prior to the publication of *CAPFS* will be included, as well, assuming they continued to exist in the years that followed. These are mostly substantive, whereas new tools selected following the publication of

CAPFS skewed towards procedural. At the end of the chapter, the various tools are slotted within the taxonomy provided above in order to visualize patterns of instrument selection. This policy tools approach is an explanatory tool to address why CSOs have taken on so much of the burden in the fight against food insecurity, and provide answers as to whether or not the federal government has honored the commitments made within the 1998 *Action Plan*. Those commitments are grouped along with the policy tools ostensibly associated with them in the table below, to serve as the backdrop for the analysis of the tools that follows. As evidenced in the table, there are relatively equal *amounts* of both procedural and substantive tools; the discrepancy lies in the issue each tool is meant to address.

Charting Policy Tools Related to Food Security of the Past Twenty Years		
<i>CAPFS</i> Commitment	Substantive	Procedural
Commitment 1: An Enabling Environment	Health and Activity Limitations	<i>AFPC</i> Report, What We Heard, <i>CAPFS</i> , Human Resources Development Canada Literature Review, CSO/NGO Conferences, International Development Research Centre Case Study/Publications, Canadian Food Inspection Agency
Commitment 2: Access to Food	Youth Employment Services, National Housing and Homelessness Initiative, National Child Benefit, Old Age Benefits, Aboriginal Initiatives, National Health Initiative, Guaranteed Income Supplement, Employment Insurance	Canadian Federation of Agriculture Media Campaign, Northern Food Basket
Commitment 3: Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development	Northern Air Stage Program, Food Mail, Nutrition North, AgriDiversity, Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems	Office of Rural Health, Community Futures Development Corporation, Council of Canadian Academies Report, Sustainable Development Strategy
Commitment 4: Trade and Food Security	Allocation Transfer Program, \$45M in 2 nd Progress Report for Businesses	Food Program Policy Framework, Interest Group Creation (2 nd Progress Report)
Commitment 5: Emergency Prevention and Preparedness		Growing Forward, Canadian International Development Agency Strategy
Commitment 6: Promoting Investment	Putting Farmers First, Agricultural Policy Framework 2018, Early Childhood Development, 2 nd Progress Report's Investments to Producers, Canadian Institutes of Health Research Projects	Agri-food Policies, Development Grants from Council of Canadian Academies, Foodgrains Bank Study, Federal-Provincial Investment Strategy
Commitment 7: Implementation and Monitoring	Market Basket Measures, Canadian Community Health Survey Supplement, StatCan Reports, Food Insecurity Survey, Official	Progress Reports, Joint Consultative Group Re-creation, Canadian Food Security Network, Canadian Community Health Survey Reports,

	Developmental Assistance, Nutritious Food Basket, National Projects Fund, National Health Research and Development Program	Food Guide, Food Security Reference Group
Other:	Food Fortification, National Child Benefit Re-investment, Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy	Food Security Bureau, Labeling (HealthCan), Prenatal/Baby Friendly/Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program

Substantive Policy Tools: 1998-2017

The following is a selection of the major substantive policy tools related to food that were published, selected, or implemented during the 20 years after the publication of *CAPFS*. Through the course of this research it became clear that substantive tools were more prevalent when addressing problems associated with the food industry, such as those affecting producers, importers, or distributors. This lends credence to the charge of productivism in that the federal government was more likely to select resource-intensive substantive tools if the issue was commercially based, as opposed to those issues related to food insecurity. As a prime example of this adherence to productivism, the Agri-Food Policy document published in April of 1998 outlines the major elements of the Canadian Agri-food system. They are all productivist in nature, and perhaps not coincidentally, the policy tools referred to in the Agri-Food Policy document can all be classified as substantive.

Of the three major policy areas, the most evident is that of market regulation, as it uses the authority of the government to effectively regulate prices to ensure profitability for producers. Participation in marketing boards such as the Canadian Wheat Board was compulsory, which falls on the institutional end of the substantive policy spectrum. “Costless to governments,” the principal aims of the Canadian Wheat Board were to maximize producer returns, equalize prices at a given location, and provide equitable access to farmers. (Economic and Policy Analysis Directorate 1998, 9) Subsidies like this served to benefit producers, whereas the dairy subsidy helped not only producers but consumers as well who benefitted from reduced costs of milk. This subsidy was phased out in 2002. It represented one of the few examples of a substantive policy tool chosen by the federal government with a direct impact on household food insecurity. (Economic and Policy Analysis Directorate 1998, 10)

While the dairy subsidy aimed to ease the costs of a basic necessity for the average Canadian family, the Income Stabilization Policy was geared towards providing a safety net for the average Canadian farmer. The major tools associated with this policy included crop insurance (a market-based substantive tool) and the Net Income Stabilization Account (NISA – market-based and substantive as well). (Economic and Policy Analysis Directorate 1998, 11) These types of initiatives aimed at providing a minimum level of income for producers and farmers are commendable, and could serve as useful models when looking at the future use of substantive tools to protect the average Canadian from falling below a certain level of income. The document concluded, in fact, with the acknowledgement that overcoming poverty is key to ensuring food security for all Canadians. (Economic and Policy Analysis Directorate 1998, 19)

The last major element of the Agri-food system dealt with grain transportation, as at one point it was among the single largest expenditures of the government in terms of direct subsidies. (Economic and Policy Analysis Directorate 1998, 12) Its goal was to facilitate the movement of western grain to export, once again a clear example of a substantive policy tool meant to improve market conditions for producers. The subsidy was eliminated in 1995, as part of a large-scale downsizing of the Agri-food and Agriculture Canada's budget throughout the 1990s. To wit, between 1988-1992 the average budget of AAFC was \$3.3 billion, whereas by 1997 it had fallen to \$1.8 billion. (Economic and Policy Analysis Directorate 1998, 14) This mirrors the shift away from direct government expenditure in the form of substantive policy tools, towards procedural tools as well as greater public-private partnerships.

Much of the research conducted for this thesis stems from the progress reports produced in response to Canada's commitments to the Global Food Summit in 1996. While they are clear examples of negative propaganda-based procedural tools (which will be detailed further in the following section), they do provide verifiable snapshots of food initiatives in existence at the time of their publication. In one section of the first progress report, for example, the Food Security Bureau takes the opportunity to promote all federal programs dealing with issues related to vulnerable populations. Social development consultations; workshops on youth unemployment; Human Resources Development Canada partnerships focusing on education; these are all positive initiatives but were either

already in existence prior to the World Food Summit or only tangentially linked to food insecurity. The progress report also refers to programs dealing with child poverty, homelessness, people with disabilities and aboriginal initiatives. All beneficial in their own right, but not new tools stemming from the commitments within the *Action Plan*. Rather, these were already in existence prior to Canada's participation in the WFS. One new, or at least updated, substantive treasure tool mentioned in this section is the National Child Benefit implemented in 1998 to increase income support for parents. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 13) As poverty is a leading cause of food insecurity, substantive tools such as the National Child Benefit not only directly address the problem for families but also relieve some of the burden for provincial and municipal governments.

One substantive market tool described in the report is the "Northern Air Stage Program," which like the National Child Benefit, received an increase in funding in 1999, as the funding cap was removed due to increased demand and to account for increased shipping costs. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 20) This program, along with the Allocation Transfer Program, an initiative to promote aboriginal participation in commercial fisheries, signals a trend in the use of substantive tools to address problem areas unique to Canada's aboriginal population. The Allocation Transfer Program is an authority-based tool dealing with licenses, which fits nicely within the model of substantive tool choice given the low level of state capacity to regulate fishing, and the extremely high level of complexity within the aboriginal policy subsystem. It is the latter fact that may best explain the heightened use of substantive tools to address issues related to indigenous peoples.

The final part of the first progress report deals with domestic implementation efforts, specifically the need for increased monitoring mechanisms to assess levels of food insecurity amongst Canada's vulnerable populations. Here, as was the case with aboriginal issues, we see the consistent usage of substantive detector tools in the form of reports or surveys. This use of substantive tools for information-gathering as opposed to directly regulating or funding actions related to food security is a trend that continues throughout the twenty-year timeframe under review. For example, the newly formed FSB in 1998 launched an information-gathering survey entitled "Food Insecurity in Canada: Developing Indicators for its Measurement." Along those lines was the development of the National

Nutritious Food Basket by Health Canada. Also launched in 1998, it aimed to determine the cost of a healthy diet for the average Canadian. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 22) Straddling substantive and procedural in its use of nodality-based resources, it served as a report (substantive) as well as education for the policymaking process (procedural). Given the proximity to *CAPFS*, it stands to reason that more information was necessary when developing a cohesive approach to address food insecurity.

Other studies were conducted regarding specific populations, such as one funded by the National Projects Fund looking at nutritionally vulnerable sub-groups such as expectant mothers. Another study looked at the characteristics of food bank users as part of the National Health Research and Development Program. These would qualify as substantive as they were simply intended to be detectors of the complex policy subsystem (specifically stakeholders such as food-bank users and expectant mothers). Despite the inclusion of programs such as these, the paper concludes by acknowledging the difficulty of national programs to directly address the needs of unique and diverse populations. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 43)

Along with productivism, another issue noted by past researchers is the international perspective taken when discussing food insecurity. Reinforcing that concern, one can see in the second progress report a focus on programs associated with Canada's Official Developmental Assistance. These mostly deal with international food aid, and there is further mention of the Official Developmental Assistance in reference to the promotion of private sector development – straddling both the international and productivist concerns of the CSO community. (Food Security Bureau 2002, 3) Despite its presence in a report on food security, none of the various programs associated with Official Developmental Assistance are concerned with the issue from a Canadian perspective. In fact, it is noted that the Official Developmental Assistance would receive an 8 percent boost in funding per year in order to maintain its international commitments. (Food Security Bureau 2002, 5) This would imply its categorization as a substantive treasure tool, albeit one only loosely related to the topic of Canadian food insecurity. This is an ongoing theme, as when the topic turns to domestic strategies the bulk have been procedural tools linked to collaboration with CSOs, whereas the focus of the federal government has more international, or industrial, aspirations.

Amongst all the initiatives mentioned in the domestic section of the report, only five stand out as linked to the reports principal topic of food insecurity:

- Youth Employment Strategy
- National Housing and Homelessness Initiative
- National Child Benefits
- Old Age Security
- Aboriginal Initiatives

By focusing on specifically vulnerable populations (children, aboriginals, the elderly, the homeless) these types of programs can effectively address food insecurity. It is unfortunate that aboriginal initiatives are not referenced by name, while the first four are examples of specific government programs – all substantive tools in place prior to *CAPFS* (with the exception of the National Child Benefit). This further reinforces the fact that procedural tools are not having the desired impact; by maintaining pre-existing substantive tools and instead working to increase collaborative governance through procedural tools, there has been no noticeable change in the rate of household food insecurity.

The second progress report does offer updates on several treasure-based substantive tools, however, in the form of increased funding to the National Child Benefit, as well as an investment in Early Childhood Development. While these focused on children, 2001 also saw tax reform to “reduce the average Canadian families tax burden by 27percent.” (Food Security Bureau 2002, 74) Children and their parents were not the only ones to receive increased federal funding at this time. People with disabilities also were the beneficiaries of several treasure-based substantive tools such as increased tax assistance, improved access to study grants, and a nodality-substantive survey tool looking at Health and Activity Limitations. (Food Security Bureau 2002, 74) The National Health Initiative referred to earlier also received an additional \$753 million over three years beginning in December 1999. At the time of the second progress report over \$630,000 of that had been dedicated to food banks. (Food Security Bureau 2002, 75) While initiatives such as these do not comprise a systematic approach to Canadian food insecurity, they do serve to dispel the notion that the federal government was wholly inactive in response to the World Food Summit.

Unlike the previous two progress reports, the third version released in 2004 provided the reader with updated commitments, all of which would be classified as both productivist in nature, and substantive and treasure-based as policy instruments. To wit, the creation of a new production insurance system (tax expenditures); modifications to cash-advance programs to producers (grants); encouragement of private-sector involvement through “private sector risk management partnerships programs” (market instrument); and the redesign of the Farm Improvement and Marketing Cooperatives Loans Act (loans). The report estimated the total federal expenditure for business risk management at \$1.2 billion, an amount that surely frustrated the cash-strapped CSOs dealing with food insecurity from the frontlines while producers were afforded even wider safety nets via substantive policy tools. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004, 10)

The most promising policy instrument innovation from the mid-2000s was unquestionably the addition of the Income-Related Household Food Security supplement to the 2004 Canadian Community Health Survey. A detector substantive policy instrument, the “report provides for the first time in Canada – national and provincial estimates of income-related food security.” (Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion Health Products and Food Branch 2007, i) The report not only set the indicators with which to compare and contrast rates of food insecurity across different time periods, it provided evidence-based answers regarding the most effective ways to deal with the problem. For example, noting the direct correlation between income and food insecurity, the report states that these income-related factors will need to be addressed in order to combat HFI. (Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion Health Products and Food Branch 2007, xi)

Additionally, the Canadian Community Health Survey supports the notion that “macro-level approaches...have the potential to profoundly influence the key determinants of income-related food security.” (Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion Health Products and Food Branch 2007, 36) In other words, this is a problem that can, and should, be approached via the proper selection of policy tools. The data produced by the Survey should have been instrumental as part of that selection process. Unfortunately participation in the Survey was optional in the years following its creation, and already in 2005 four provinces and one territory had opted out of including the supplement in the Canadian Community Health Survey. (Health Canada 2012) The 2004 edition of the Survey

provided one more crucial consideration for future policymakers, citing the need to consider the effect that cuts to social programs (mostly substantive policy tools) had on those experiencing HFI. As a detector substantive tool itself, the Survey is emblematic of the importance of that type of tool when addressing a highly complex policy subsystem.

Despite the prior existence of a multitude of policy tools and programs designated to supporting the Canadian agricultural producer (as mentioned above), a report was published in 2006 entitled “Putting Farmers First!” citing the struggles overwhelming Canadian farmers. In order to combat this, the 2006 federal budget include a one-time investment of \$1 billion for farm-support along with a commitment of \$500 million per year for the following five years. (Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry 2006, 4) This type of treasury, subsidy substantive tool would have been welcomed by CSOs dealing with food insecurity, and yet it is very difficult to find examples of one. Those supporting agricultural producers, however, are rather easy to find. The report mentions food-related policy tools, but not those pertaining to food insecurity. The recommendations contained within the report stem from the steadily decreasing income of Canadian farmers, which is a worthy cause, but considering they make up a substantially smaller percentage of the population it is curious how much attention they received from policymakers. (Standing Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry 2006, 7)

Aside from the progress reports, and the supplement within the Canadian Community Health Survey, the focus of much of the government’s food-related energy during the mid-2000s is on the promotion of the new Agricultural Policy Framework. A series of discussion papers entitled “Economic Backgrounders” discuss the future of the Canadian agricultural industry, along with a strong focus on a market-based approach and providing opportunities for investment. While containing several mentions of policy initiatives dealing with the regulatory climate within Canada (authority effector substantive tools), none of these background papers touch on the impact this would have on Canadian food insecurity rates. While the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food should not focus exclusively on the issue, the “Next Generation of Agriculture and Agri-food Policy” should at least address it.

A document containing some of the same issues was published by the Canadian International Development Agency discussing their food security strategy. Referring to

Canada's standing as a "lead donor to combat global food insecurity through sustainable agricultural development; food aid and nutrition; and research and development," the Canadian International Development Agency neglects to mention the food insecurity realities of Canadians themselves. The document notes the large amount of money invested in the Canadian International Development Agency's food security program, implying awareness of the effectiveness of substantive treasure-based tools. (Canadian International Development Agency 2010)

Within the last decade that awareness has produced some encouraging signs, such as the increased focus on the food security needs of those living in remote, and primarily northern communities. While this has long been an area of attention by the federal government – a Statistics Canada report referenced the fact that there have been food subsidies for northern communities since the 1960s – the revision of the Northern Food Basket and the conversion of Food Mail into Nutrition North in 2011 show that it remains an area of need. The latter program is a treasure-based substantive tool meant to subsidize both the cost of transportation of perishable food items, as well as to provide funding for retail and "community-based nutrition education initiatives." (Arriagada 2017, 2) Positive tools, to be sure, but again related to funding awareness as opposed to adequate access to nutritious food. Another encouraging initiative from AAFC (that did promote access to food) was the implementation of a treasure-based substantive policy tool in 2018 to support Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems. By providing up to \$8.5 million over five years to entrepreneurs or communities interested in starting agriculture projects, the initiative is part of the larger Strategic Partnerships Initiative of the federal government. This latter program is broader in nature and focuses primarily on the indigenous-government relationship, but any substantive policy tool with a food security flavor to it is a welcome sight.

While the Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems Initiative is a step in the right direction, the latest iteration of Canada's Agricultural Policy Framework continues in the wrong direction. Other than a call for greater funding of the food processing sector due to "its potential to alleviate food insecurity" (with no further details provided) there is no mention of the issue within the 2018 document. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2018) It is unclear how AAFC can have had the level of involvement throughout *CAPFS* and the

twenty years that followed, and yet still produce a policy framework that does not acknowledge the role agriculture has to play in the fight against food insecurity. As pointed out in the criticisms levied against the Department in the early 2000s, this neglect appears to be due to their commitment to productivism. To wit, the Canadian Agricultural Partnership, produced in 2018 as a federal funding arrangement, focuses on three key areas of agriculture, all of which are market-based:

- Growing trade and expanding markets
- Innovative and sustainable growth in the sector
- Supporting diversity and a dynamic, evolving sector (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2018)

With a goal to increase exports to \$75 billion by 2025, the various federal programs and initiatives listed as part of the partnership are all steeped in productivism (eg. marketing, competitiveness, innovation, and science). These will receive a total of roughly \$700 million between them, while the sole program that could potentially address some aspect of food security – AgriDiversity, to incorporate underrepresented groups in the sector – is scheduled to receive a mere \$5 million. If nothing else, at least AAFC is up front with their goals, as the partnership document states that all federally funded activities and programs will “directly benefit producers and processors.” (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2018)

This last quote is key to the understanding of Canada’s approach to food insecurity policy, as one in which substantive tools are largely reserved for the populations who can provide the greatest economic benefit. If we consider the claim that the government was largely inactive on food issues for the last twenty years, there is some truth to that, but perhaps a more accurate truth is that they were selectively active. When the economy, or powerful constituents within the agriculture sector stood to gain, one could expect substantive policy tools to be selected. As will be shown in the following section, when the problem area was more directly linked to food insecurity or the civil society organizations tasked to deal with that problem, the federal government took a more passive approach by selecting procedural policy tools. This may have encouraged stakeholder engagement and participatory governance, but it did not materially impact the prevalence of household food insecurity.

Procedural Tools: 1998-2017

The first procedural policy instrument under review is the point of departure for this thesis as a whole: *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security*. Published in 1998 as a response to Canada's participation in the 1996 Global Food Summit in Rome, *CAPFS* may appear to be substantive given the presence of 'action plan' in the title, but in reality it very closely resembles the criteria of a procedural policy tool. To begin, there are no direct programs or subsidies prescribed as part of the document, instead the government maintains an arm's length from the implementation and monitoring processes associated with the plan. Secondly, it is primarily symbolic in nature as a necessary output to demonstrate that Canada had intentions to follow-up on the commitments made at the Global Food Summit. Given the complexity of the Canadian food environment, as demonstrated in earlier chapters, the use of an informational procedural tool makes perfect sense. As Howlett points out, "if a state faces a complex network or subsystem but has only limited capacity....it is expected that it will tend to utilize regulatory or information-based instruments." (M. Howlett 2000, 416) Therefore, rather than risk increased regulations on a disparate group of policy stakeholders, the federal government attempted to manipulate the policy process by convening the *CAPFS* Joint Consultative Group in the name of collaborative government.

As was the case in the section on substantive tools, the progress reports following the implementation of *CAPFS* provide a snapshot of procedural policy tool selection as well as serving as procedural tools in their own right. Within the first report one can see that rather than getting directly involved in the subsidizing or regulation of issues surrounding food security, the government was content to shift responsibility through the use of procedural tools. To begin with, the introduction of the progress report highlights the new department that will be charged with the implementation and monitoring of *CAPFS*: the Food Security Bureau. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 6) Using this type of institutional reform falls under the positive category within Howlett's taxonomy of procedural instruments, but given how deeply buried the FSB was within the AAFC it is difficult to consider it in a positive light. A virtual office "located within the Programs and Multilateral Affairs Division of the Market and Industry Services Branch of Agriculture and

Agri-food Canada,” one could be forgiven for assuming this newly formed bureau lacked the full support of the federal government. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 6)

Furthering the use of procedural tools within the progress report, but fully committing to the negative tone, is the propaganda present in the document. Mentioning that “the vast majority of Canadians are food secure” is misleading at best, and at worst disrespectful to the several million Canadians suffering from food insecurity at the time of publication. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 7) Using the model for procedural tool choice provided by Howlett, this type of information manipulation is to be expected when an agency such as AAFC still enjoys legitimacy within the policy environment. The expectation is that the document would not be closely reviewed, and while the domestic priorities may have been glossed over by the international community (its intended audience), the refusal to name even one of the “existing programs and policies in support of the WFS plan of action” serves to further solidify this document as a negative, nodality-based procedural tool due to the suppression of information. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 8)

The document does ultimately deem several programs and policies worthy of mention as part of the domestic implementation report. The report begins by presenting a series of information-provision initiatives undertaken by various federal agencies and national organizations. For example, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture sought to inform Members of Parliament about the real costs of food via a media campaign. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 10) This is an example of a nodality-based procedural tool, the same type of information provision that was also employed by the International Development Research Centre in the form of two separate publications dedicated to food security. The first was an overview of community-based efforts released online in 1999, and the second was a hard-copy book investigating sustainable urban food systems. While beneficial in terms of education, these are procedural tools taking stock of existing programs, not new programs unto themselves. Another procedural tool example is presented, this time of the treasure-based resource variety, as the Canadian Foodgrains Bank sponsored a study on food security. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 11) Funding research on issues is a positive procedural tool, which, along with the previous

nodality-based tools, falls low on the spectrum of state manipulation of the policy subsystem.

While those tools were not intended to have a large impact on the policy subsystem, the acknowledgement within the document that NGOs and CSOs have often assumed full responsibility for program and service delivery is the type of information manipulation that signals a desire to focus less on program provision and more on process shaping. Straddling all types of procedural tools (nodality-authority-treasure-organization) the reference to the production of the Food Program Policy Framework to guide stakeholder involvement in food policymaking is a clear attempt to ensure that stakeholder voices are heard through a government-provided lens. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 11) It is important to remember that procedural tools are intended to shape the discourse and manipulate the policy subsystem as opposed to assuming a leadership role for the federal government, a fact acknowledged in reference to the Policy Framework: "Partnership has become a key feature in virtually all areas of government activity, with the private sector and non-governmental organizations becoming full participants, and often the primary delivery agents, of programs and services." (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 11) This is further evidence that the selection of procedural policy tools is part of a broader shift away from direct government involvement, and the resulting burden on CSOs did not happen by accident.

There are two sections within the first progress report that focus on programs and initiatives linked to healthy eating practices as well as traditional food acquisition. I address them simultaneously as they both approach the problem of food security from a nutritional adequacy perspective. In terms of healthy eating, the government once again employs information-provision procedural tools in the form of a new policy on labeling put forth by Health Canada. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 19) This authority tool is paired with a variety of nodality tools such as programming and training for vulnerable populations to educate them about healthy eating practices. Along these lines, there is a substantial emphasis on the promotion of breastfeeding, as pregnant mothers are identified as an at-risk population. To this end, both the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program and the 1998 publication of the Baby Friendly Initiative are geared towards ensuring

greater nutrition for babies and their mothers. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 19-20)

While traditional food is clearly a different subject than breast milk, they share a commonality in that both provide more nutrition than their more costly, market-based alternatives. With that in mind, the government's progress report refers to policies that have been put in place to ensure traditional food service exists in public institutions such as hospitals, daycares, or elder hostels. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 21) Taken at first glance, this is a positive approach, however once again the document fails to identify a single one of these policies by name. This reinforces the document's status as a negative, nodality-based procedural tool using information suppression. This is especially concerning given the subsequent mention of the Brighter Futures Program, an initiative to promote the passing down of traditional food knowledge. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 1999, 21) No further information is given on the program, but at least it is mentioned by name.

Moving on to the second progress report produced by the Food Security Bureau, it is important to remember that these reports are information-provision procedural tools unto themselves. Commissioned and reported by four federal agencies (Food Security Bureau, Global Affairs Bureau, Market and Industry Services Branch, AAFC), the second report focuses on three of the seven commitments of *CAPFS*. These three were deemed as the commitments concerned primarily with development, and include "Sustainable Agriculture and Rural Development, Trade and Food Security, and Promoting Investment." (Food Security Bureau 2002, 1-4) As such, none are directly related to food security (despite the presence of 'food security' in the name, the fourth commitment focuses almost exclusively on trade). However, the report does shed some light on programs offered or updated in the years immediately following the publication of *CAPFS*.

One procedural treasure tool that is presented as a federal initiative is the creation of an interest group to formulate an agricultural policy to ensure the sector's growth and profitability (once again lending credence to the productivist critique). (Food Security Bureau 2002, 5) The entirety of the section focusing on the third commitment deals with issues of production, in fact, and the topic of food insecurity takes a back seat. Even in the discussion of commitment four (Trade and Food Security), there is reference to several

discussions and conferences held with CSOs and NGOs – qualifying as organizational and authority-based procedural tools – but little else of note related to food insecurity. Once again issues related to trade and environmental impact overshadow it. While these are undoubtedly critical topics, the report is ostensibly dedicated to food security.

Moving on to commitment six (promoting investment), the first two tools mentioned focus on remote areas of Canada, such as those often inhabited by indigenous populations. For example, an institutional reform procedural tool is presented in the form of the establishment of the Office of Rural Health. Focusing on rural issues, this is presented along with increased funding for the Community Futures Development Corporations, an example of a treasure-based procedural tool. These were both part of the Federal-Provincial Investment Strategy, to promote trade and investment in the agri-food sector as well as to enhance access to federal programs. Another treasure-based procedural tool was implemented to increase funding for the Canada Prenatal Nutrition Program to account for the difficulty of service delivery in remote areas. (Food Security Bureau 2002, 29)

The progress report also lists some of the monitoring actions that took place in the years following the first report, such as the re-creation of the Joint Consultative Group as yet another treasure-based procedural tool in the form of interest group creation. Referring once again to the actions of CSOs and NGOs, the report notes that the Working Together Conference brought together some of the same stakeholders from *CAPFS*. The Conference also witnessed the creation of a Canadian Food Security Network. (Food Security Bureau 2002, 33) The Conference and Network are examples of organizational procedural tools, and they underscore the shift towards procedural tools related to domestic food security. This is perhaps due to the high complexity level of the food policy subsystem and the relatively low state capacity to effect change within it. This is referenced in the “Lessons Learned” section, and it explains the use of information-based policy tools mentioned in the subsequent sections regarding the “Next Steps” of the Food Security Bureau. Among the primary concerns are:

- Improving understanding (procedural/treasure/research)
- Develop indicators (substantive/detector/reporting)
- Improved stakeholder coordination (procedural/treasure/interest group creation)

- Policies and programs with access to enhanced information

(procedural/nodality/information provision) (Food Security Bureau 2002, 64)

These are in regards to the future initiatives of the Food Security Bureau, and they serve as perfect examples of the federal government's approach; all four are geared towards information gathering and dissemination as opposed to taking direct action. The report concludes with a look backwards at the initiatives presented within the first report.

Several of those initiatives, such as the Youth Employment Strategy and the National Health Initiative, existed prior to publication of *CAPFS*. While that type of policy tool is helpful to combat the problem of food insecurity, CSOs undoubtedly would have preferred to see some new initiatives as part of the Third Progress Report published in 2004. Instead there is an increased emphasis on the arrival of a new Agricultural Policy Framework (APF) within the coming years. The focus of this Framework was on food safety, innovation and sustainability within the agricultural industry. The goals were to increase the adaptability and improve the productivity of producers as mentioned in the previous section. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004, 3) Once again, critics of the *CAPFS* process were provided with more ammunition that it was steeped in the productivist paradigm as a follow-up dedicated to a food security action plan instead focused on the commercial potential of the agricultural sector.

A positive development during the mid-2000s stemmed from Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC), in the creation of the Northern Food Basket to compare the price discrepancy faced by those living in remote Northern communities. This procedural, information-provision policy instrument was conducted to assess the viability of a substantive subsidy instrument already in place, the Food Mail program. The Northern Food Basket is one of several detector tools created during the mid-2000s, and is evidence that the commitments laid out in *CAPFS* were at least being monitored if not directly acted upon. Along those lines, Health Canada developed a baseline of HFI indicators around this time to use in the national nutrition survey in order to look at its prevalence and severity. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004, 25) Once again we see the selection of an information-gathering policy tool without a corresponding substantive tool to address the problem directly.

The remaining commitments referenced in the report, though, did not have much to show in the way of progress. The third, “Sustainable Agricultural and Rural Development,” alluded to the fact that food insecurity would be significantly addressed by a “Business Plan for a new comprehensive animal genetic resources conservation and sustainable utilization program.” (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004, 33) That sounds quite interesting, but it is difficult to see how that would decrease rates of Canadian HFI. In terms of commitment #4, “Trade and Food Security,” a further \$45 million is designated to support strategic trade policy initiatives, yet another subsidy to producers to ensure market access and hope for a trickle-down effect on food prices. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004, 38) Even in the section on commitment #5, “Emergency Prevention and Preparedness,” the sole program mentioned is a federal insurance program to help producers recover from natural disasters. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004, 39) These are just three examples from the remainder of the report further demonstrating the use of substantive tools for food industry purposes. The report itself, on the other hand, is theoretically dedicated to household food insecurity but instead is another prime example of a nodality-based, propaganda procedural policy instrument.

This brings us to Canada’s Fourth Progress Report on Food Security. Given the eight years between its publication and that of *CAPFS*, the fourth installment was trimmed down to the essentials of what was being offered in terms of concrete initiatives dedicated to food security. The eight-year time gap also saw a 24 percent increase in food bank usage, according to Hunger Count Canada, which would imply that whatever the initiatives were, they were not solving the problem. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2006, 5) While a StatCan survey noted a decline in incidences of low-family income between 1996-2001, between 2001-06 the rates had remained stable. The findings of these two detector tools support the claim of the CCHS Supplement that income is the most significant factor to consider when addressing food insecurity. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2006, 6)

Several other initiatives were undertaken leading up to the fourth progress report, such as the Integrated Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy to improve overall health outcomes. Along those same lines, the Canadian Institutes of Health Research funded various projects around this time to explore the impact of food insecurity on vulnerable populations. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2006, 6-7) Here we see further examples

of a transition to procedural tools, as research funding is a positive method in which the state attempts to manipulate the policy subsystem. Health Canada was also in the process of updating the Nutritious Food Basket based on changes in pricing since its inception in 1998. In addition to analyzing the data from CCHS, the health aspects of food insecurity received more attention in the fourth progress report than in previous iterations, and with good reason. These are health-related attempts to address the symptoms of food insecurity rather than the causes, while there is still a dearth of initiatives aimed at prevention.

Between 2007-08 and 2011-2012, the rate of HFI rose from 7.7percent of households to 8.3percent. (Health Canada 2012, Health Canada 2015) As a detector tool, the CCHS survey was used to determine those rates. However, a major issue with the HFI supplement was the ability of provinces to opt out, and once again in 2009-10 the provinces of Prince Edward Island and New Brunswick decided against including the supplement in their version of the survey. (Health Canada 2012) While those provinces could have positively impacted the rates described for 2011-12, it is equally likely that the prevalence of HFI throughout Canada could have been heightened by their participation. The publication of results in 2012 was the last time any national statistics were taken, as the supplement was subsequently removed from the CCHS. As an information provision tool it had done its job setting criteria and baseline indicators of HFI. However, in the absence of additional substantive policy tools to address the problem, one might expect that the results in later years would be largely the same.

Another procedural tool was presented in 2010 in the form of a report regarding the potential of increased cooking food preparation skills among low-income families. The government of Canada commissioned this report from the Pan-Canadian Public Health Network. Once again approaching the issue from a public health perspective, the report analyzed available research in order to inform policy development as to the impact increased food skills could have on food insecurity. While their findings were that researchers often did not quantify the level of food insecurity experienced by participants, there was acknowledgement that healthy and nutritious food access was a strong influence on food insecurity. With that being said, the report also mentions that promotion of nutritious food consumption through government publications (procedural information provision tools) often lacked the necessary programs and supports (potentially substantive

tools) to increase parents' food preparation skills and expertise. (Pan-Canadian Public Health Network 2010, 16) The government cannot be expected to teach every parent how to cook, however the report and its findings are emblematic of the federal procedural approach as a whole: conduct research via procedural tools without providing substantive support to affect real change.

The fifth and final installment of the progress reports on food security produced by Agriculture and Agri-food Canada was published in 2008. At this point it is worth mentioning that aside from the progress reports, there are no other food security-related policy tools stemming directly from AAFC. Rather, Health Canada is the foremost actor on the issue, and justifiably approaches it through a public health perspective. There are several initiatives outlined in the fifth report that touch on areas related to AAFC, such as the removal of potential contaminants from traditional food supplies. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2008, 6) Even in the case of those initiatives, though, it is Indian and Northern Affairs Canada that takes the lead.

Prefacing the initiatives with the statistic that 9.2 percent of Canadian households were food insecure in the previous year, this is contrasted with the statistic from the Canadian Association of Food Banks that presented a decline in usage of 4 percent. This is a positive trend, albeit one that would not be sustained when looking at future data from Hunger Count Canada (28% increase in food bank usage from 2008 to 2016) (Food Banks Canada 2016, 2). The progress report goes on to acknowledge the importance of government programming in the reduction of poverty, and by extension, food insecurity. (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2008, 4) To demonstrate the government's commitment to combatting those issues, the same four programs are presented as from previous progress reports: the National Homelessness Initiative, National Child Benefit, Youth Employment Strategy, and the Old Age Benefit, to be precise.

The document also references several initiatives that took place during the mid-2000s timeframe, but are only presented in the 2008 publication. For example, in 2007 Health Canada released a new food guide to promote healthy eating, along with a supplemental section aimed at first nations, metis and inuit populations. Keeping with that theme, Health Canada was also responsible for the creation of the Food Security Reference Group, an authority-based procedural tool assembled to address the unique problems

faced by Canada's indigenous population. These are several examples of the prevalent approach towards food security as a problem of health and personal choice, reinforced by the fact that in 2010 a Canadian Security Intelligence Service document noted that "Canada still views food as an ordinary commodity." (Canadian Security Intelligence Service 2011, 3) This document dealt primarily with global food security, but acknowledged that the use of food banks in Canada was increasing and would soon become a political issue – foreshadowing the call to arms from the UN special rapporteur imploring the adoption of a 'right to food' approach.

In addition to the references to procedural tools introduced by Health Canada, the progress report also mentions several lessons learned throughout the 10 years following the publication of *CAPFS*. For example, the need for greater data to inform policymaking (hence the procedural tools), as well as the need to strengthen civil society input through partnerships when designing and implementing initiatives (more participatory governance, or procedural tools). (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada 2008, 12) The fact that the latter lesson had not been learned already would designate this progress report as a negative, organizational procedural tool given the administrative delay and obfuscation on display. Also on display was the continued emphasis on Canada's international commitments at the expense of initiatives addressing domestic food insecurity. There were only nine domestic programs mentioned, whereas the report details 32 separate programs addressing global food aid. Suffice to say that the nine federal (and seven provincial) programs are not indicative of a systematic approach to Canadian food insecurity. Rather, they represent the end of a decade following *CAPFS* in which few substantive policy tools were implemented. This reliance on procedural tools resulted in steadily increasing, albeit well documented, rates of HFI.

Through the use of other nodality tools aimed at generating information on the problem, the second decade following *CAPFS* also saw potential problems with the approach taken by the federal government. For example, looking back at the progress reports produced in the follow-up to *CAPFS*, the most commonly referenced programs were that of income support or social assistance in terms of combatting food insecurity. However, as noted by the Statistics Canada report produced in 2015, "households relying on government benefits as their main source of income had much higher rates of food

insecurity (21.4 percent) than households with an alternate main source of income (6.1 percent).” (Hawkins 2015, 4) While this can be attributed to the fact that those receiving government benefits were likely experiencing HFI before receiving them, it goes to show that the approach touted within the AAFC progress reports had not generated positive results. This is perhaps due to the fact that the substantive tools referenced throughout the reports were already in place prior to *CAPFS*, and therefore may not have adapted to an evolving issue. In other words, the social safety nets in place were not catching enough people.

This report, a policy tool meant to detect policy problems, determined that rates of HFI have remained relatively stable since the time of those progress reports, which would imply that the federal government had come to accept them as satisfactory. In fact, another 2015 publication - the Canadian Community Health Survey – mentions that the nutritional supplement accompanying the survey was only the second such use of that supplement since the initial version in 2004. (Health Canada 2017, iii) Furthermore, the use of the nutritional data was not meant to monitor HFI rates, but rather gauge the impact that HFI was having on population health outcomes; this focuses once again on symptoms as opposed to prevention. What seemed in 2004 to be a promising federal initiative in terms of monitoring HFI had turned out to be, in 2015, a relatively negative procedural policy tool using administrative obfuscation.

As a matter of contrast, the year 2014 saw the publication of a comprehensive report on food security in Northern Canada as the result of a public-private partnership via the Council of Canadian Academies. An example of a positive procedural treasure-based tool, this report was the result of intervenor and research funding on the part of the federal government meant to provide a comprehensive understanding of the factors that contribute to HFI in Canada’s north; finally we see an example of an initiative looking at causes as opposed to symptoms. While the results of the report itself were not necessarily positive (for example, in a table listing the federal initiatives using a right-to-food approach, the report notes the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, and *CAPFS* in 1998; not a long list), its presence during an otherwise barren timeframe is noteworthy. (Council of Canadian Academies 2014, Table 1.1) There is yet another mention that the primary methods of the federal government to address cost-of-living are income support programs,

such as those referenced throughout the progress reports (Old Age Security; Guaranteed Income Supplement; Canada Child Tax Benefit; Northern Tax Benefits; Employment Insurance, etc.). (Council of Canadian Academies 2014, 155) These can be used alongside other social programs such as subsidized childcare and food subsidies, all of which are important to address the high-levels of HFI in the territories, and the North as a whole. However, as noted earlier, these have not been sufficient in terms of addressing the issues as those receiving government assistance were still experiencing household food insecurity at a higher rate than those not receiving it.

The report goes on to mention the various programs in place specific to northern communities, such as Nutrition North (formerly the Food Mail Program), the Northern Health Foods Initiative (a public-private partnership), and the Inuvik Community Greenhouse (the most northerly greenhouse in North America). (Council of Canadian Academies 2014) Several of these initiatives tackle the problem from a public health perspective, and to that end the Canadian Institutes of Health Research also launched a program to provide “Development and Engagement Grants and Team Grants in Food Security and Climate Change in the Canadian North.” Procedural in nature, the treasure-based policy tool is aimed at providing funding to parties interested in conducting research on addressing HFI in Canada’s north. (Canadian Institutes of Health Research 2018) PROOF – a research organization looking at Canadian HFI – was created thanks to one of these grants. They serve as a perfect example of the procedural policy approach by the federal government: funding research conducted by non-governmental organizations in order to subtly manipulate the policy subsystem. Other than grants such as those used to fund research, the initiative does not contain any direct subsidies.

In terms of other initiatives from the federal government, the Sustainable Development Strategy was published in 2018 with a plan for 2019-2022 that includes a reference to the importance of sustainable food in the fight against food insecurity. While focusing on the importance of sustainable agriculture practices in Canada’s north, the strategy also mentions the goal to develop a general food policy by the end of 2019 to “support improved access to safe and healthy food for all Canadians.” (Environment and Climate Change Canada 2018, 80) This policy came to be known as *A Food Policy for Canada*, and it has already been discussed at length within this thesis. While both the

Sustainable Development Strategy and *AFPC* can be considered information-provision procedural tools, with any luck *AFPC* will also result in more substantive tools in order to finally turn the tide on the rate of Canadian household food insecurity. This will be examined in the conclusion of the thesis.

As part of the consultation process to produce *AFPC* – an authority-based procedural policy tool in itself – there was clear support throughout Canada for more concrete action on the part of the federal government to combat food security. Within a document entitled “What We Heard,” a summary of the consultation process, 65 percent of survey respondents placed a high-level of importance on “Ensuring that all Canadians can access nutritious food no matter where they live”. (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2018, 13) The summary goes on to point out that the majority of those consulted also would support the adoption of a right-to-food approach by the federal government, especially considering that this “was originally recognized in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948.” (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2018, 14) We are now more than 70 years removed from that Declaration, but the problem of food insecurity is as prevalent as ever.

Conclusion

As demonstrated in the previous two sections, the majority of the policy tools selected to deal directly with food security are procedural, and of those a substantial amount fall within the information-provision or survey categories. This is in contrast to the substantive tools such as direct subsidies and market-based instruments selected to address issues linked to the commodification of food. Through its selection of policy tools, it is clear that the federal government is content to let CSOs take the lead on Canadian household food insecurity. Additionally, from a strictly quantitative perspective, the number of programs dedicated to international initiatives is double that of the domestic initiatives. This can be viewed as a continued resistance to acknowledge the severity of Canadian food insecurity, suppressing information such as that provided by the CCHS wherein it clearly states “food insecurity is a reality for many socio-economically vulnerable Canadian households.” (Office of Nutrition Policy and Promotion Health Products and Food Branch 2004, 36)

However, part of the problem rests with CSO's preference for collaborative governance. By incorporating so many different and disperse stakeholders within the policymaking process, the silo-ification is reinforced and implementation and monitoring become increasingly difficult, if not impossible. The use of procedural tools, while often perceived as beneficial by researchers, instead serves to keep CSOs as the leaders on an issue that requires a coordinated and centralized approach – the type of approach best executed through substantive policy tools. While this is just the opinion of one researcher (the author of this thesis), the reality is that we now have two decades of evidence supporting the theory that procedural tools increase participatory governance but do not decrease rates of household food insecurity. This is the crux of my argument: despite the evidence-based awareness of the causes, symptoms, and prevalence of household food insecurity, the rate of Canadians dealing with the issue has only increased. Unlike what previous research has argued, this is not due to an avoidance of the topic by the federal government. Rather, it was a strategic approach to provide civil society a seat at the table while simultaneously asking them to continue shouldering the burden. This was accomplished through the repeated selection of procedural policy tools. Over the past two decades food insecurity was simply considered a topic of interest, and consecutive governments were content to conduct research on it without any substantive follow-up. It is clear now, though, that research alone will not produce results, nor will simply including more stakeholders in the conversation.

The ability of governments to delay, deceive or obfuscate information “are all forms of authority-based procedural instruments,” (M. Howlett 2000, 419) wrote Michael Howlett in his article on ‘Managing the Hollow State.’ It appears that this ability has been one of the key components to HFI policy decision-making since 1998 as CSOs have been asked to address the problem without the federal funding necessary to do so. This is the ‘Hollow State’ alluded to within the title of Howlett’s article, as one in which the government relies on third parties to execute policy strategies in exchange for greater input into how they are created. In looking at the existing literature on this relationship, it is clear that CSOs are ready to renegotiate that arrangement.

The bulk of the research within this chapter stemmed from the progress reports published by the Department of Agriculture and Agri-food Canada as a follow-up to *CAPFS*.

It is important to recall that these reports are also part of the procedural tool approach by the federal government as they were intended to demonstrate action while in reality containing very few new substantive initiatives. In fact, within five years of the last installment, a visit from a UN Special Rapporteur on Food Security ended with a report imploring the government to adopt a right-to-food approach. The government that received that report did not welcome it with open arms, to put it mildly. (Kilpatrick 2012) However, in the seven years since it was published, Canada has seen the election of a Prime Minister who wasted no time in mandating the creation of a National Food Policy. Given the widespread nature of food insecurity, and the ever-widening wealth disparity in countries such as Canada, the importance of the new national food policy cannot be overstated. If it bucks the trend of using procedural tools to manipulate the food policy subsystem, and instead promotes the use of substantive measures to address the problem of food insecurity directly, that would recognize the pleas of CSOs over the last twenty years. The concluding chapter of this thesis will provide more analysis as to the justification of those pleas, along with a brief analysis of the policy initiatives stemming from the long-awaited publication of *A Food Policy for Canada*.

Chapter 5: Moving Forward

Summary and Questions for Future Research

This thesis sought to enumerate the various programs and policy tools utilized by the Canadian federal government to address household food security during the twenty-year timeframe of 1998-2018. The recurring theme of previous food security research is that there has been little to no substantive action taken in order to combat the problem, and instead civil society organizations have shouldered much of the burden. For the most part, I concur with that assessment, although it is important to answer how that came to be. As was shown in the previous chapter, this is best addressed through a policy tools analytical framework to examine the types of instruments selected to deal with the problem of food insecurity.

What started as a promising approach following Canada's participation in the Global Food Summit in 1996 – the creation of an *Action Plan for Food Security* – quickly reverted to the same productivist paradigm in which food is treated not as an inalienable right but as a commodity to be assigned a market value. This can be seen in the tables on the following pages, as the policy tools dealing directly with food insecurity are largely procedural, whereas substantive tools are more often selected to address issues with market-implications. For example, if we focus on the treasure-based policy tools (those using federal funds as a governing resource) we see several subsidies in the substantive table, linked to dairy and grain production, along with a more general one billion dollar investment in 'putting farmers first.' In the procedural table, all funding comes in the form of sponsored research or indirect funding, such as the Development and Engagement grants meant to support civil society organizations, or in the report from the Council of Canadian Academies. These are necessary and beneficial initiatives, hence their placement in the 'positive' column. However, they are representative of the federal government's overarching approach to food insecurity issues in that they maintain a comfortable distance from the frontline service providers. This is in contrast to issues affecting the larger agricultural system where they have consistently provided direct subsidies throughout the past two decades.

<i>Principal governing resource used</i>	<i>A Taxonomy of Substantive Food Policy Instruments</i>	<u>General Purpose of Instrument Use</u>	
		Effectors	Detectors
	Nodality	Youth Employment Services Health and Activity Limitations	Food Insecurity Supplement National Nutritious Food Basket Research on Food Bank Users and Expectant Mothers Income-Related HFI Supplement CCH Market Basket Measure Low-income Cut-offs
	Authority	Canadian Wheat Board Allocation Transfer Program Agriculture Policy Framework	
	Treasure	Dairy Subsidy Income Stabilization Policy Grain Subsidy National Child Benefit Old Age Security Farm Improvement and Marketing Coop. Loans Act \$1B Investment from Putting Farmers First Nutrition North Indigenous Agriculture and Food Systems National Child Benefit Reinvestment	Official Developmental Assistance
	Organization	Northern Air Stage Program National Homelessness and Housing Initiative HRDC Framework Paper	

<i>Principal governing resource used</i>	<i>A Taxonomy of Procedural Food Policy Instruments</i>	<u>General Purpose of Instrument Use</u>	
		Positive	Negative
	Nodality	Canadian Federation of Agriculture Survey International Resource Development Council Survey Sustainable Urban Food Systems Food Skills Training Northern Food Basket Pan-Canadian Healthy Living Strategy Pan-Canadian Public Health Network <i>AFPC</i> IRDC Case Study on Right to Food	<i>CAPFS</i> Progress Reports StatCan Report
	Authority	Health Canada labeling initiative Joint Consultative Group Canada's Food Guide Food Security Reference Group Sustainable Development Strategy	
	Treasure	Canadian Foodgrains Bank sponsored research Agriculture Sector Growth interest group Community Futures Development Corporations Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program Council of Canadian Academies report Development and Engagement Grants PROOF	
	Organization	Food Security Bureau Working Together Conference Office of Rural Health Canadian Food Security Network	2004 & 2014 CCHS

The bulk of procedural tools fall into the nodality category (using the information producing ability of the federal government), as they are primarily concerned with information provision in the form of surveys or reports synthesizing information across a broad spectrum of sources. These appear in the form of substantive tools, as well, as detectors meant to gauge the severity of Canadian food insecurity. This latter fact supports the hypothesis that effector substantive tools are mostly concerned with market-related topics. When the topic turns to food insecurity, substantive tools are only selected to assess (or detect) the scope of the problem.

The selection of procedural tools is done almost exclusively for positive purposes, and yet the reality is that these types of tools do not directly impact those suffering from household food insecurity, with the possible exception of the Canadian Prenatal Nutrition Program. Instead, most are selected for the same reason as the point of departure for this thesis, *CAPFS*. Basically, they serve as a means to manipulate policy processes by devoting a low amount of resources to a highly complex subsystem. This helps to explain the criticisms levied at *CAPFS* as being steeped in the language of the predominant productivist paradigm. It was produced fully within the context of that paradigm. Despite that entrenched starting point, though, the *Action Plan* did inspire some new initiatives. For example, providing an enabling environment through a case study on the right to food in Canada conducted by the International Development Resource Council (procedural/information provision); setting criteria to assess levels of food insecurity such as Low-Income Cut-Offs (LICOs) or the Market Basket Measure (substantive/reporting), or the National Child Benefit Reinvestment enacted by Indian and Northern Affairs Canada to provide additional familial support (substantive/tax expenditures). (Agriculture and Agri-food Canada 2004)

These examples are meant to show that the charge of inaction is not entirely accurate; rather the federal government was selectively active and implemented policy tools according to the complexity of the problem area, and the corresponding level of state capacity. On issues of food security, substantive tools were selected to evaluate and monitor the prevalence and severity of the problem. In the parlance of policy tools, they were meant to 'detect' the issue, not to have a direct 'effect' on it. The majority of other tools directly related to food security fall within the procedural category in the form of

interest-group creation or research funding. This created a sense of inclusion and collaboration on the topic without much action.

The question remains as to why consecutive governments selected procedural tools to address an issue clearly in need of direct and resource-intensive intervention. That question is beyond the scope of this thesis, but is a question that needs to be considered for future research when analyzing the evolution of the food policy environment. For the purposes of this thesis, the goal was to use a policy tools analytical framework to establish two facts. One was demonstrated throughout the literature review, and it is the fact that the rate of Canadian food insecurity has remained stable over the past twenty years. The second fact was addressed throughout Chapter 4 as well as in the table within this chapter: the federal government has primarily selected procedural tools to address Canadian food insecurity. While I cannot definitively say that there is a causal relationship between those two facts, the aim of this thesis was to demonstrate that they are related.

Given the laissez-faire approach of the federal government since 1998, CSOs across Canada have devised new and innovative ways to address the problem on the frontlines. Using their legitimacy afforded them in the *CAPFS* consultation, the federal government's increasingly neoliberal attitude "led to the growing capacity of civil society within a country like Canada to shape food policy." (Andrée 2011, 151) This growing capacity in the form of participatory governance did not materially impact rates of household food insecurity, and therefore it did not deter the call for a better approach to food policy. Aided by the lobbying and coordination of Food Secure Canada, academics and researchers from a multitude of disciplines continued to advocate for a national policy. Research showing the crisis levels of food insecurity in Nunavut, (Ford 2016, 35) or the quantitative work done in BC linking food insecurity to nutrient inadequacies (and in turn more health problems due to the lack of nutrients) (Kirkpatrick 2008) kept the issue of food security in the public eye. In doing so, when a policy window opened in the form of a liberal government, the nationwide network of CSOs were ready with a revised proposal for a national food policy, entitled "Resetting the Table."

While the "Resetting the Table" document was not a substantial deviation from previous versions, it did carry the weight of evidence-based research to support it. During the years of the Harper administration, evidence based research had become somewhat of

a dirty word, but once Justin Trudeau supplanted him in the fall of 2015, hopes for a meaningful response from the federal government were at an all-time high. Newly elected PM Trudeau did not waste anytime upon arriving in office before calling on civil servants to get back to work because he had work for them to do. In his mandate letter, he called on the Department of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to develop a “food policy that works for all Canadians.” (Trudeau n.d.) Almost four years later, that policy came to fruition following a process resembling the joint consultations that took place as part of *CAPFS*, twenty years earlier. It remains to be seen if the policy proposals as part of the *Food Policy for Canada: Everyone at the Table*, will have a more positive impact on food insecurity rates, but it does appear that there has been a shift towards substantive tools to directly fund and support frontline service providers. \$50M has been committed to a Local Food Infrastructure Fund, wherein small community-based organizations can receive up to \$25k for equipment related to providing access to healthy food, and up to \$250k for capital. There is another initiative aimed at protecting consumers through tighter regulation of food product labeling. This is an example of direct involvement that has been lacking over the previous twenty years. Further funding was also allocated to address the heightened rates of food insecurity in Canada’s North – the Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund received \$15M to support community-led projects. A national school food program is in the works, along with a \$26.3M commitment to reduce food waste and \$25M to promote the purchase of Canadian products. (Government of Canada 2017) These are all examples of a renewed awareness that if the government wants to finally see the rate of food insecurity decline, it will require direct action in the form of substantive policy tools. These initiatives, along with the creation of a National Food Policy Advisory Group, comprise the most promising approach to the issue since the publication of *CAPFS*. Hopefully the lessons of the past twenty years will help produce greater results over the next twenty.

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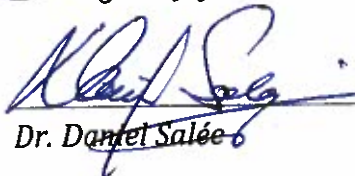
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