



PATRICK WEILER

Member of Parliament

West Vancouver-Sunshine Coast-Sea to Sky Country

[/PatrickBWeiler](#) [@PatrickBWeiler](#) [@PatrickBWeiler](#)

Patrick.Weiler@parl.gc.ca patrickweiler.ca



As extreme weather events and crop failures, transportation bottlenecks, and the illegal Russian invasion of food producing Ukraine have upended the global food supply chains, food security is becoming an issue in Canada with food prices at grocery stores increasing rapidly.

All Canadians, regardless of where they live, deserve to have access to affordable and nutritious food. With high grocery prices impacting the ability of many to put food on the table, we are fortunate to have amazing programs that are providing food for the most vulnerable in our community through food banks to delivery programs.

At the same time, we are seeing a growth in the number of small-scale farming operations and production across our riding, from the Sunshine Coast all the way to Pemberton. You can find their products at farmgate, farmers markets, through CSA boxes, and otherwise. These organizations are producing healthier, in season, and more nutrient dense products than what you may encounter at a grocery store – at prices that are increasingly competitive.

This newsletter contains information on the Government of Canada’s actions to reduce the cost of groceries in Canada, and how we are working with and providing over \$2 million in support for organizations since 2020 that are increasing local food production in our riding, educating people about growing and consuming healthy and nutritious food, while feeding the most vulnerable in our communities.

BILL C-56: THE AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND GROCERIES ACT

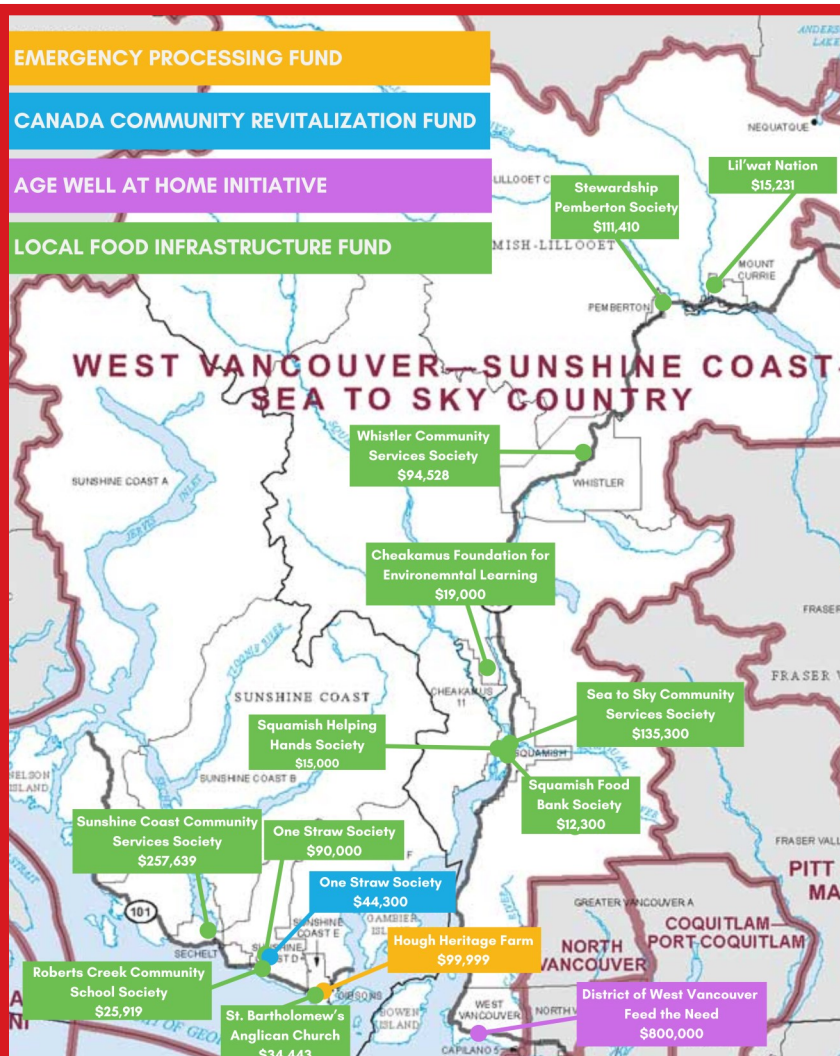
Tabled earlier this fall, Bill C-56 will make changes to the Competition Act that will give the Competition Bureau new powers to tackle anti-competitive mergers and behaviour, especially in the grocery sector. The heads of the five biggest grocery stores (which control 80% of the industry) were summoned to meet with the Industry Minister in October to discuss how they will stabilize prices through measures like prize freezes, discounts, and price matching campaigns. Together these measures will increase competition and lower prices for Canadians.

CANADA’S LOCAL FOOD INFRASTRUCTURE FUND

Through the Local Food Infrastructure Fund (LFIF) and other food security programs, over \$1.7 million has been provided for 14 projects in our communities that are improving food systems and addressing food security challenges. Including emergency COVID-19 funding in 2020, over \$2 million has been dispersed for food security in our riding.

The backside of this newsletter and the map to the left provides a few highlights on some of the projects and programs in our riding and how they have made a difference in our communities.

Photo: Visiting One Straw Society, SC



INCREASING & LEARNING ABOUT LOCAL FOOD PRODUCTION

Since the 1990s, **One Straw Society** has helped Coast residents access and engage in local, resilient, and sustainable food practices. Projects like their One Tiny Farm and Crop Circle Food Box support local agriculture and provide nutritious local food for residents and visitors alike. Founder Robyn Wheeler epitomized this grassroots approach to food sustainability, and her vision remains strong today. Having seen their projects firsthand, our government is proud to have invested in their work, so they can continue inspiring local food production on the Coast.

Roberts Creek Community School Society has helped maintain both the Roberts Creek Legacy Garden and Cedar Grove Elementary School Garden for years, serving as an educational hub for students and community members to learn how to prepare healthy food from garden produce. Through hands-on educational programs, children and new gardeners work with more experienced people to learn and master skills, helping provide more produce for vulnerable groups and the community at large. With federally funded LFIF improvements in place, food production has increased more than 4-fold.

The **Cheakamus Foundation for Environmental Learning** provides residents and visitors with cultural, recreational, and other hands-on experiences including community-based food programs. Through cooking and gardening activities, community members develop skills in growing, harvesting, preserving and cooking--including Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) traditional foods. LFIF funding has allowed the Foundation to deliver its programs with new kitchen facilities and new programming for immigrants, First Nations, low income families and others to increase food security through multicultural cooking and community garden activities.

SUPPORTING FOOD BANKS IN OUR COMMUNITIES

Started during the pandemic, **West Vancouver Seniors' Activity Centre's Feed the Need** program provides the community's most vulnerable seniors with quality meals to those who need it most. Currently serving hundreds of meals per week, it is an essential program for many in our community that do not have the means or ability to access food. Their Intergenerational Market brings youth and senior volunteers together to plant, harvest and sell from the garden. The Feed the Need program has been a shining example of how community can come together to help our most vulnerable, and we have been proud to support their work.

Under One Roof is a new one stop shop in Squamish that offers housing, support services, and food programs that connects people and leads to improved health for people at-risk in the community. They offer a market model that represents a longer-term, more community-based approach to tackling food insecurity. The federal government was proud to invest in their new Food Hub, allowing more people to access services through a lens of dignity, empowerment, and equity.

Squamish Climate Action Network's (SquamishCAN) Mamquam Edible School Yard is another example of how to get students and youth their green thumbs, learning with educators on how to grow their own food in a fun and hands-on way. This includes learning gardening skills, preserving garden bounties, and creating a Market Stand for all to enjoy. Federal funding for SquamishCAN has supported their food security programs over the years, and we're proud to see their work continue to have a positive impact for the Sea to Sky.

With the support of the LFIF, the **Lil'wat Nation's Nlep'calten project** addresses food security directly within the Nation. Using a market community garden, they are producing organic vegetables for the Nation and supplying the local school with vegetables for their hot breakfast and lunch programs. Their work also supports Elders in need with weekly food deliveries, and provides vegetables to members of the community at a reasonable cost.

Hough Heritage Farm is a local gem on the Coast that follows ethical and regenerative agriculture methods for their meat products, a process which is both healthier and more environmentally friendly. Federal funding has been used to invest in a new meat processing facility to process their own products, as well as offering it to other farms in the area, saving valuable time and money on travel.



Photo: Visiting Laughing Crow Organics, Pemberton

Sea to Sky Community Services Society is a not-for-profit organization focused on providing programming and support throughout the Sea to Sky region, helping build and sustain healthy, connected and diverse communities where residents can grow, develop, and lead meaningful lives. Federal funding has allowed them to purchase a refrigerated van, appliances and food processing equipment for their new Pemberton Food Bank kitchen.

Sunshine Coast Community Services Society is a not-for-profit organization whose focus is on being a low-barrier service provider, serving multiple underserved populations whose challenges include maintaining economic self-sufficiency and food insecurity. LFIF funding is being used for their Building Together project they are creating in the heart of Sechelt, where their free store allows residents to select their own food, and through a new commercial kitchen will help residents learn how to cook, grow and preserve healthy food, while sharing meals together.