

Press release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

CAPI's Response to the New Food Policy for Canada, "Everyone at the Table"

OTTAWA, Ontario, June 21, 2019 – The Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI) supports the launch of the "[Food Policy for Canada: Everyone at the Table](#)," especially the creation of a Food Policy Advisory Council, which will bring together a diverse group of stakeholders to enhance the agriculture and agri-food dialogue and action plan for Canada.

- CAPI was thrilled to be present at the launch of the "*Food Policy for Canada: Everyone at the Table*" presented by Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, together with Parliamentary Secretary Jean-Claude Poissant and representatives from various industry, government and civic society organizations, on Monday, June 17 in Montreal, Quebec.
- In addition to the Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI), the groups in attendance for the Minister's announcement included the Canadian Federation of Agriculture (CFA), Food Secure Canada (FSC), the School Breakfast programs, the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), the Egg Producers of Canada, the Government of Quebec (MAPAQ), the Retail Council of Canada, the Dietitians of Canada, the McConnell Foundation, Canadian Produce Marketing Association (CPMA), among others.
- Making the announcement at the ***Carrefour Alimentaire Centre-Sud***, in Montreal, the Minister highlighted the important role of small-scale, local community gardens and initiatives contributing to the Government of Canada's vision for a Food Policy, which ensures that "*all people in Canada are able to access a sufficient amount of safe, nutritious and culturally diverse food.*"
- The Food Policy was developed after consultations and in collaboration with Canadians from across the country throughout 2017 and 2018. It strives to "*make Canada's food system resilient and innovative, sustaining the environment and supporting the economy.*"
- CAPI has been involved throughout the process, in providing input on the development of the Food Policy, collaborating particularly with the other participants of the ad hoc Working Group on Food Policy Governance, led by Food Secure Canada.
- CAPI believes that the Food Policy can provide a roadmap for:
 - A healthier and more sustainable food system with investments that will contribute to economic growth, better nutrition and food security for all Canadians.
 - Recognizing and promoting the important contribution of producers and processors in providing Canadians with quality food
 - Promoting Canadian food at home and abroad and in addressing food fraud and food waste.
 - Working alongside provinces and not-for-profit organizations to create a ***National School Food Program*** to help improve the overall health of children as they learn.

Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council

- One of the central elements of the Food Policy is the creation of a ***Canadian Food Policy Advisory Council***, which will bring together the expertise and diversity needed beyond government, from grassroots to industry, to work towards a common understanding of food issues and the challenges of today, by facilitating collaborative action.
- This Council will need to include representatives from the agriculture and agri-food industry, health professionals, academia, non-profit organizations, Indigenous organizations, the provinces and territories. Letters of nominations will be sent out for membership over the summer.
- The Council's goal will be to help in the development of programs, monitor achievements and develop indicators of progress through dialogue and collaboration.

CABI's Position

- With CABI's active engagement in providing input on the consultations around the *Food Policy*, and the *Food Policy Advisory Council* in particular, CABI is very supportive of this initiative and its actualization.
- CABI feels that the *Advisory Council* addresses a major challenge that was identified during last year's National Conversation entitled "Barton Forward," hosted by CABI, which found that:
 - "policy coordination and the "desilofication" of the policy debate requires collaboration amongst a group of stakeholders, who may not traditionally work together."
- In this way, the *Advisory Council* can play an important role in promoting an inclusive dialogue amongst a very diverse group of stakeholders who do not traditionally feed into the policy process, thereby contributing to achieving inclusive growth.
- As CABI has extensive experience promoting dialogue and collaboration amongst a diverse group of stakeholders in the sector, CABI hopes to play a role on the *Advisory Council*
- CABI believes it is vital to continue to recognize and promote the important contribution of producers and processors, in providing Canadians with quality food, at the *Advisory Council*

Further Details of the Announcement

- The Government of Canada had already announced in Budget 2019 that it would be investing \$134 million in these Food Policy initiatives. The announcement Monday provided more detail for several elements of the policy including:
 - \$50 million over 5 years for local food infrastructure initiatives, including community gardens, greenhouses and kitchens, programs at food banks and farmers markets. Applications will be open starting in August 2019 for non-repayable funding of up to \$25,000
 - \$25 million for a Buy Canada Promotion Campaign, at home and abroad;
 - \$15 million for Northern Isolated Community Initiatives Fund for community-led projects like greenhouses, community freezers and skills training to strengthen indigenous food systems;

- \$26.3 million to reduce Food Waste, through an innovative “grand challenge” program for processing, grocery retailers and food service suppliers; and
- \$24.4 million to the CFIA to crack down on food fraud and faulty labelling of fish, honey, oil and spices.

CAPI supports the release of the “Food Policy for Canada: Everyone at the Table,” particularly the multi-stakeholder Food Policy Advisory Council, as it will be important for enhancing the agriculture and agri-food dialogue, bringing a diverse group of stakeholders to the table from across the food system that do not normally work together, with the goal of moving Canada towards inclusive growth.

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ABOUT THE CANADIAN AGRI-FOOD POLICY INSTITUTE (CAPI)

As an independent, non-partisan policy catalyst, CAPI brings insight, evidence and balance to emerging issues. CAPI provides a neutral place to hold dialogues and generate perspectives among leaders across the food system. For more information, visit www.capi-icpa.ca. Follow us on [Twitter @CdnAgriFood](https://twitter.com/CdnAgriFood) and [Facebook @CdnAgriFood](https://www.facebook.com/CdnAgriFood)

Contact:

Louise de Vynck

Communications Coordinator, Canadian Agri-Food Policy Institute (CAPI)

devynckL@capi-icpa.ca

613-759-1029

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