FRAMING COMMUNITY FOOD SECURITY:

CONNECTING THE PERSONAL TO THE POLITICAL

by

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Abstract

This study explores the way community food security is conceptualized within the community food security movement. Clarification of the concept can contribute to the development of a coherent policy map, and concerted efforts along the road to community food security. Through an interpretive process of analysis, data derived from interviews with leaders of British Columbia's community food security movement, supplemented with document data, were examined. A set of shared principles, constituting an alternative food justice vision emerged. Within this vision, the goal is health evidenced by a well-nourished population and local sustainable food systems. Three broad strategies are put forth to realize this goal including: 1) educating the masses to realize a paradigm shift, 2) creating food citizenry everywhere and 3) mobilizing communities towards policy and systems redesign. Missing from this vision are shared understandings about the cause(s) and the culprit(s) for community food security issues. In the absence of a well-accepted master frame, a coherent food policy strategy does not exist. Giving rise to differences amongst leaders in their understandings about the cause(s) and the culprit(s) are differing beliefs. Three framing tools are presented to assist the movement in furthering their policy aims and community food security endeavours.

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Acknowledgment

When I commenced this thesis journey, my daughter Vanessa was entering kindergarten and could not yet read. Many mornings she would pad into the thesis room rubbing sleepy eyes and asking for her morning cuddle. As I near completion of this thesis, Vanessa, who is now in grade four, reads over my shoulder and asks questions like "What does *I-dee-ol-o-gee* mean?" I want to express heartfelt thanks to Vanessa for her support during this journey and for keeping me grounded in motherhood.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

This study was undertaken to explore the way community food security is conceptualized within British Columbia's community food security movement and to articulate the extent to which conceptualizations are linked. Finding common ground between conceptualizations is an important place to begin the construction of a policy map and movement together along the road to community food security.

The Problem and the Need for Research

Despite the fact that Canada is renowned worldwide as a leader in the production of fresh whole foods, and the provision of food aid to third world countries, food security is a persistent and seemingly insoluble problem at home. There is no shortage of evidence demonstrating the systems governing food security are unable to ensure all people at all times have access to the foods required for health. The results of the 1998/99 National Population Health Survey revealed 7.8% of Canadians, or 2.3 million households, were food insecure and experiencing "at least a compromised diet" (Rainville & Brink, 2001). In 2002, in an average month, 750,000 Canadians turned to food banks to feed themselves and their families (Canadian Association of Food Banks [CAFB], 2002). Concurrently Canadian children are consuming more packaged, processed, simple carbohydrate and fat laden foods than ever (Northern Health Authority, 2002). The percentage of obese children has doubled in the last two decades, and the incidence and prevalence of childhood Type 2 Diabetes is on the rise (Northern Health Authority, 2002). Yet as government officials pledge their commitment to world food security, world nutrition, the right to food, and freedom from hunger in international arenas, a coherent food policy to address these concerns in Canada

has not been developed. Further, existing related policies are fragmented and appear to perpetuate, rather than prevent, food security issues (MacRae, 1999; Riches, 1997).

In response to food security issues a grassroots community food security (CFS) movement has emerged (Canadian Food Security Network [CFSN], 2003; Kalina, 2000; Kneen, 2000; Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition [OHCC], 1997). This movement is comprised of individuals concerned about CFS, including representatives of food policy organizations (FPOs). A FPO is a community, city, or region-based group whose aim is to improve CFS through actions towards policy change (Kneen, B., Kneen, C., & McDougall, 1997). Most FPOs are voluntary, grassroots, and non-profit organizations (See Appendix 1 for a snapshot of FPOs in British Columbia). The CFS movement seeks to create coherent food policy that has as a goal well nourished people supported by communities that are food self-sufficient (British Columbia Food System Network [BCFSN], 1999b;CFSN, 2001; CFSN, 2003; MacRae, 1999).

Over the years, the CFS movement has become more organized evidenced by a growing web of linked FPOs and related food security programs and activities (CFSN, 2003; Healthy Eating Active Living [HEAL], 2003; Kneen, 2000; Peoples Food Commission [PFC], 1980). While alternative community food programs have proliferated across the nation, the movement's success in the political area has been somewhat limited. Few municipalities have adopted a food policy and to date coherent food policy does not exist at provincial, national, or international levels (CFSN, 2001; CFSN, 2003; Kalina, 2000).

Social movement theorists, researchers, and practitioners alike suggest that framing is a critical limiting factor for the movement[1] (Lang, 1999; Lezberg, 1999; Nathason, 1999; Snow & Benford, 1992). For the purpose of this paper, framing is defined as the conscious construction of the meaning of a social problem. Frames may be expressed verbally, or recorded as definitions or illustrations. Frames imply a choice, a particular way of seeing a problem amongst a range of alternatives. Understanding the way food security is framed is important because it directs responses. In my experience as a community nutritionist and a leader in British Columbia's CFS movement, I have observed that social action towards health related policy change for food security is in part determined by the way CFS is framed.[2]

The literature specifically suggests a *master frame* for the CFS concept – or widely accepted, core grammar identifying the issue(s), the cause(s), and the culprit(s) responsible for CFS issues – is lacking within the movement. The construction of a master frame is an important first step on the road to the construction of a coherent policy strategy that can effectively target the cause of and the culprit responsible for food security issues (Lezberg, 1999; PFC, 1980; Snow & Benford, 1992).

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[1] While framing is a critically important factor for social movements in realizing their policy aims, this is not to suggest framing is the only factor. As the literature and this research shall reveal political opportunity, mainstream ideology/ public support, and the availability of resources are additional factors (Biehler, Fisher, Siedenberg, Winnie & Zachary, 1999; Yeatman, 1994). While each of these factors will be touched upon in this inquiry, examining each in depth is beyond the scope of this study. Such exploration may serve as fertile ground for future study

[2] It was my observation that when community food security was framed as a violation of rights and an abdication of the provincial government in living up to its responsibility, the response from BC's CFS movement was to support the submission of a report to government officials calling for social policy change to alleviate hunger (Dietitians of Canada, 2002). Likewise, when the problem was framed as loss of community capacity to feed their citizens, and a failure of the government to provide the context for local food self-sufficiency, the BC community food security movement responded by calling upon the Ministry of Agriculture and Food and Fisheries to create policy supporting local sustainable agriculture (Farmfolk Cityfolk, 1999).

There are different schools of thought about the way CFS is framed. US food security researchers have suggested that differing master frames exist beneath the banner of the CFS concept; the anti-hunger and sustainable food system frames predominating (Clancy, 1994; Lezberg, 1999). These researchers argue that the differing master frames are not wholly complementary, that linkages between the differing frames have not been articulated, and that this situation causes tensions between actors of the CFS movement. While other US and Canadian food policy analysts agree that there are differing frames at the table, and that this situation causes tensions, they argue that the differing frames are complementary (Biehler et al., 1999; Fisher, 1997, 1998; Lang, 1999; MacRae, 1999). They suggest the diversity of perspectives within the CFS movement has resulted in innovative ideas and solutions to age-old problems – solutions that may otherwise have failed to emerge with a less diverse group.

Lezberg (1999) justifies her argument that there are differing incompatible frames beneath the CFS banner by pointing out the fact that there are multiple definitions for the CFS concept – definitions citing differing issues, causes, and/or solutions for the issues. She concludes that multiple definitions paint an incoherent picture of the situation thus creating conceptual confusion amongst actors of the movement, potential new adherents, and policy makers alike. This conceptual confusion diffuses coordinated policy responses.

That differing definitions exist, that a coherent policy does not exist, and that this hinders the ability of the movement to further policy aims, resonates with my experiences as a leader within BC's movement over the past decade. During this time, I have observed the existence of many definitions of CFS citing a number of differing issues and causes for those

issues. Hunger, malnutrition, cardiovascular disease, food worries, insufficient food production, genetic engineering of foods, and sustainability of the food supply are but a sample of the food security issues identified in definitions within documents of BC's food security movement. The reported causes of these issues are equally diverse ranging from poverty, inequality, and erosion of the social safety net to consolidation and control of the food supply, loss of biodiversity and degradation of the soil. Furthermore, the definitions for CFS rarely name a culprit. Finally, the proposed solutions to CFS problems range from the institutionalization of emergency food programs and the support of community food self reliance, (through the development of alternative community food programs), to food democracy and welfare, economic, and agricultural policy reform (BCFSN, 1999b; British Columbia Heart Health Coalition [BCHHC], 1997; Dietitians of Canada, 2002; FFCF, 1998, 1999; Food First of Northern British Columbia, 2002; Food For Kidz Coalition [FFKC], 2001; Kalina, 1993, 2000; Kamloops Food Policy Council [KFPC], 2000; Riches, 1997, 1998; Vancouver Food Policy Organization [VFPO], 1998).

In addition to lack of clarity about the issue(s), cause(s) and culprit(s), I have observed that a coherent food policy strategy does not exist within BC's movement. In fact, food policy activity has been limited and sporadic. Furthermore, when policy recommendations have emerged, they have been contradictory.

This is not to suggest that activities within policy arenas have been without success. Limited success has been realized at both local and provincial levels. For example the City of Kamloops is poised to adopt a food policy and the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries' *Select Standing Committee on Agri-Food Policy* has included food security as an objective in provincial agriculture policy documents (British Columbia Ministry of

Agriculture Food and Fisheries [BCMAFF], 2000; Kalina, 2000). However, the ability of BC's CFS movement to further policy change at provincial and/or local levels is uncertain. An important factor creating both crisis and opportunity for BC's CFS movement is the current political context.

The newly elected provincial Liberal government has radically shifted policy direction on many fronts, a move that has contributed to a number of food security issues. Welfare benefits have been reduced and food bank lineups have lengthened (British Columbia Ministry of Human Resources [BCMHR], 2002; CAFB, 2002). Health budgets have been frozen and community nutrition positions have been lost.[3] Education budgets have been frozen contributing to a trimming of school meal programs (British Columbia Confederation of Parent Advisory Councils [BCCPAC], 2002; J. Manley, community nutritionist, personal communication, April 22, 2003). The changed policy direction paints grim prospects for the development of coherent food policy in BC.

On the other hand, the shift in government policy appears to have drawn British Columbians to the CFS movement. For example, the Healthy Eating Active Living project (HEAL) spanning the northern two thirds of the province, reports two consecutive years of growth in food security activities – from gardens to school policy (HEAL, 2003). Furthermore, new opportunities for food policy appear to be emerging at municipal levels and provincial levels. For example, councilors with the City of Vancouver and the City of Prince George have recently expressed an interest in the creation of municipal food policy (Food First of Northern BC, 2002; Corinne Eisler, board member of the Vancouver Food

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[3] Community nutritionists have played an instrumental role in the CFS movement (Houghton, 1998)

Policy Organization, personal communication, April 23, 2003)). As a second example, the Ministry of Health is creating a new Public Health Act and has requested input from the public health sector (British Columbia Ministry of Health [BCMOH], 2002). Community nutritionists are advocating, among other items, the creation of a provincial food policy council as an initiative within the new Public Health Act (Gibson & Kneen, 2003).

The need for clarity in the conceptualization of community food security amongst the actors of BC's CFS movement is greater than ever. Clarity can contribute to a concerted effort in the creation of a coherent food policy strategy. In turn, this may place the movement in a better position to collectively take advantage of opportunities and to collectively advocate for coherent solutions to food security issues in other areas.

The findings in the literature and practice suggest that research is timely and warranted into the way CFS is conceptualized within the CFS movement. There is little research on this topic area in Canada and BC's CFS movement provides fertile ground for this inquiry. The results of this research will be useful not only to the actors within BC's CFS movement, but to those concerned about CFS across Canada, and internationally.

The Research Questions

The research questions are as follows:

1. How is CFS conceptualized within BC's CFS movement? Specifically: What are the issues? What are the causes? Who are the culprits? What are the solutions? Who is responsible for the building of CFS?
2. To what extent are the conceptualizations linked? Specifically: To what extent are the conceptual elements listed above linked?

An interpretive, descriptive analysis was used throughout this study beginning with an exploration of context, theory, research, and practice. This review suggested answers to the research questions could be found through in-depth interviews with leaders of the movement as well as analysis of the documents of prominent FPOs. According to Snow and Benford (1992), leaders of the movement are choice sources of data for this type of inquiry because they are instrumental in the process of constructing and communicating frames of understanding. Document analysis contributes to the rigour of the study, providing a testing ground for developing insights emerging in the data analysis (Thorne, Kirkham Reimer, & MacDonald-Emes, 1997). Document analysis reveals the way the CFS concept is conveyed in words, definitions, and illustrations, and in changing context. Examining the way the concept is conveyed in text builds upon insights emerging from examining the way the concept is conveyed verbally.

Chapter Preview

The structure of the thesis will be as follows.

Chapter 2, a literature review, situates the reader and orients the inquiry. It provides an overview of the political trends giving rise to the emergence of the CFS movement, the development of the movement across Canada and in BC over the past three decades, and the theory and research relevant to the framing of CFS. Chapter 3 outlines the research approach and rationale, the principles of the approach, and the research methods.

In chapters 4, and 5, the interview and document data are analyzed and interpreted. Specifically, chapter 4 stitches together the leaders' stories, including their perceptions about the CFS issues, the causes, the culprit, and the solutions for those issues. Linkages and differences are drawn out. Attention is paid to language, and tools to convey

conceptualizations. Chapter 5 examines the underlying theme emerging from chapter 4 – ideology. Eighteen shared ideologically based principles shaping conceptualizations are revealed. Tensions amongst the leaders with respect to differences in their ideological stance are also revealed.

Chapter 6 summarizes significant findings and then discusses them in light of existing research in this area. The implications for theory, policy, and practice as well as for future research are drawn out. Recommendations for future research are put forth.

Chapter 2

Framing Community Food Security: Context, Theory, and Research

This chapter, a review of the literature on framing CFS, is divided into three sections. The first section provides an overview of the quest for food security from an international perspective. It draws out understandings of the nature of the problem and solutions. The second section presents an overview of food policy developments in Canada and the emergence of the CFS movement. This section includes a focus on developments in BC, a province said to have "strong" and "broad-based" CFS movement activity (Kneen, 2000). This section also draws out understandings about the nature of the problem and the solutions. Moreover, it explores the impact of the movement in terms of achieving public policy change. The third section presents framing theory with respect to social movements and their ability to realize public policy change. It also presents what is known and what is yet to be understood about the way CFS is framed. This review of context, theory, and research not only orients the inquiry, but it demonstrates the need for the inquiry. Further, it provides the preliminary analytical framework upon which the method of the inquiry was developed.

The Quest for Food Security: Rhetoric and Rethink

Few would argue with the assertion that food is a universal need and a basic human right, essential for life, and foundational to health. Each and every human being engages in the pursuit of food from the moment of their birth to the end of their days. Thus, it has been said that the quest for food security is as old as the dawn of humankind (Deslile & Shaw, 1998). Throughout the 20th century, this pursuit has been a seemingly endless journey – during the course of which the number of people for whom food is a privilege rather than a right has continued to grow. Recent data from the *Bread for the World Institute* estimates that

worldwide more than 840 million people are unable to access the foods required for health (Bread for the World [BFW], 2003). The paradox of hunger and food insecurity in a world that has the capacity to produce more than enough food for all continues to be one of the most pressing public health policy challenges of our time (Campbell, 1991; Lang, Heasman, and Pitt, 1999; MacRae, 1997; Ontario Public Health Association [OPHA], 1996; Schiller, 1993)

Understanding food security.

Definitions of food security have evolved, diversified, and multiplied over the years, explicitly reflecting its complexity, the changing political and ideological context, and the experience of those engaged in definition crafting processes (Lang, et al. 1999; Riches, 1997; Snow & Benford, 1992). Nearly two hundred definitions of food security are said to exist (Clay & Shaw, 1998; Liedenfrost, 1994).

One of the most frequently cited definitions offers a useful place to begin to understand the concept. This definition, agreed upon by over six thousand delegates, emerged during the United Nation's Food and Agricultural Organization World Food Summit (WFS). It reads: "food security exits when all people at all times have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious foods to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active healthy life" (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations (FAO), 1996).

Several elements of this definition are worth noting. First, inclusion of the words "all people" makes explicit that international leaders regard food security as a universal concern. Second, inclusion of the words "at all times" makes clear that solutions to food security issues must be sustainable over the long term. Third, physical and economic access, are

explicitly identified as barriers to food security. Thus, within the international community, the two critical root causes of food security issues are thought to be poverty and the availability of food. In the documents emerging from the WFS food availability is conceptualized as the physical presence of food. The source of the food – whether it is local or imported – is not explicitly raised as a concern. Fourth, food security is a concern that individuals are able to access the quantity and quality of food to meet their individual health needs. Fifth, as the goal for food security is an active healthy life, achieving food security clearly fits within the mandate of the public health sector (Campbell, 1991).

Food security, food systems, and food policy.

Missing from this definition (or at least not made explicit) is the fact that food security is a policy issue. Food policy analyst Lang (1999) drives this point home with his observation that malnutrition in the United Kingdom was virtually eliminated during the Second World War when revisions to food related policies were made supporting community food self sufficiency as well as the equitable distribution of foods through rationing.

Also notably absent in the definition is the fact that food security is a systems issue. According to food systems analyst Kneen (1993), food security is dependent on the food system – a sustainable food system. Kneen defines a sustainable food system as one that does not compromise the land, air, or water for future generations. He defines a food system as the deliberate organization of the production, processing, and distribution of food. He asserts that consolidation and control of the food system has not only contributed to growing inequities (which result in food poverty and hunger), but it has also profoundly reduced the capacity of communities to feed their citizens (which inevitably results in hunger). Moreover he asserts

that the current system is unsustainable and solutions failing to address this piece of the food security dilemma are doomed to fail.

The views of these two authors resonate with varying degree to my own. From my perspective food security issues are public health concerns. These issues arise from lack of comprehensive, coherent food policy that has as a goal healthy people supported by healthy communities, and healthy environments. Food policy represents the integration of policies that shape the systems providing the context for food security. Systems that impact food security extend beyond the conventional agricultural system to include environmental, economic, health, social, educational political, cultural, spiritual and communications systems. Together, these systems comprise what I term the food system. Food policy is part of an integrated public policy approach known as healthy public policy. Healthy public policy is fundamentally concerned with ensuring health through the creation of healthy social and physical environments. The creation of healthy public policy involves inter-sectoral partnerships. Such policy acknowledges that the responsibility for health is resides primarily with the community and the government.

My perspective resonates most closely with that of food policy analyst, MacRae (1999) who asserts,

> If food security is to be achieved food systems must be shaped by policy that has optimal nourishment of the population as its highest purpose, makes agricultural production and distribution a servant of that purpose, and ensures the food system is financially and environmentally sustainable. (p. 183)

The official response.

In response to food security issues, a number of wake up calls have been issued. According to Clay & Shaw (1998):

> Since 1920, it is estimated that 120 international declarations, conventions, and resolutions have been reached regarding the right to food. That right and the elimination of hunger were enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (United Nations, New York, New York, 1948); in the Universal Declaration on the Eradication of Hunger and Malnutrition (World Food Conference, Rome, Italy, 1974); in the World Declaration on Nutrition (International Conference on Nutrition, Rome, Italy, 1992); and in the Rome Declaration on World Food Security (World Food Summit, Rome, Italy, 1996). (p. 57)

The outcome of these events has thus far proven largely ineffective in stemming the growing tide of hunger and food insecurity. A closer look at the policy platform arising out of the 1996 World Food Summit (WFS) reveals current thinking amongst international leaders about the nature of the problem and the solutions. It also sheds some light on the apparent impotency of the response.

According to Clay and Shaw (1998), the *Plan of Action* coming out of the 1996 WFS contained 27 commitments, which can be summarized into seven broad statements:

1. Ensuring an enabling political, social, and economic environment most conducive to achieving sustainable food security for all.
2. Implementing policies aimed at eradicating poverty and inequality and improving physical and economic access to food by all.

3. Pursuing participatory and sustainable policies and practices in high and low potential areas.
4. Striving to ensure that trade policies are conducive to fostering food security for all through fair and market-oriented world trade systems.
5. Endeavouring to prevent and prepare for natural and human made disasters and meet transitory and emergency food requirements in ways that encourage recovery, rehabilitation, development, and capacity to satisfy future needs.
6. Promoting optimal use of public and private investments that foster human resources, sustainable agriculture systems, and rural development in high and low potential areas.
7. Implementing and monitoring the *Plan of Action* at all levels in cooperation with the international community (p. 64).

On the surface, this plan appears broad and balanced and contains a good dose of politically correct language, including terms such as sustainable, fair, and equitable. The meaning of these terms, however, is not spelled out and a closer look reveals contradictions. On the one hand, the plan suggests a reduction in poverty as well as the need for balanced economic and social environments. On the other, it promotes fair and market-orientated trade. Yet the preponderance of evidence regarding the impact of the global market-oriented trade system, however, indicates that it is far from fair. The global trade system yields the accumulation of vast wealth for a few and poverty for the masses (Lang et al., 1999; Lappe F. & Lappe A., 2002; Tansey & Worsley, 1995). In market-oriented systems, social and environmental issues like food security take a back seat to economic issues. Compromised public health is the inevitable outcome (Barlow & Clarke, 2001; Lang, 1999; Lang et al., 1999; MacRae 1997, 1999).

Also of interest in this plan is the absence of commitments to improve the sustainability of the food system (a critical concern as noted by MacRae and Kneen earlier), as well as the absence of rights and health language.

The unofficial response.

Although it received less fan fare, a second significant event occurred in Rome during the time of WFS. While government officials were meeting at the WFS to devise their plan to address food security, a group of representatives of non-government organizations (NGOs) and civil society gathered in another location to formulate their own model for food security. According to Clay and Shaw (1998), the collective NGO statement, *Profit for A Few or Food for All: Food Sovereignty and Security to Eliminate the Globalization of Hunger,* highlighted six key strategies:

1. Strengthen the capacity of family farms and local and regional food systems,
2. Reverse the concentration of wealth and power,
3. Support sustainable food production systems,
4. Ensure the state takes responsibility for providing the context for food security,
5. Ensure the participation of civil society and NGOs at all levels in discussions about food security,
6. Guarantee the right to food in international law. (p. 66)

A critical difference between the WFS plan and this NGO plan is the stance on trade. The WFS plan promotes fair market-oriented trade. This NGO plan calls for decentralization and a break-up of the present concentration of wealth and power, fostered by liberalized markets. This event and the resulting strategy reflects a rethink of the issues – a NGO rethink

that flies in the face of what has been termed government rhetoric (CFSN, 2001). This rethink emerges in grassroots or CFS activities in Canada and worldwide.

Canada's Action Plan for Food Security.

In 1998, as a measure of its commitment to food security, Canada produced an *Action Plan for Food Security* (Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada [AAFC] 1998). The creation of this plan involved a consultative process with NGOs and civil society. The final document however, mirrored the contradictions in the WFS document. Again, the problems of hunger and food insecurity were viewed as problems of poverty and food access. The two-pronged solution to hunger was: 1) to reduce poverty by providing targeted relief to vulnerable populations, and 2) to increase the availability of food. The latter objective was to be achieved by increasing food production and promoting more liberalized trade. Again the relationships between global trade policies, the food system, and hunger were not articulated. Again, sustainability was a missing element in the measures put forth to reduce food security issues. Again it was unclear how targeted measures to reduce poverty within certain vulnerable populations would ensure the right to food for all.

In this plan, the federal government acknowledged the growing incidence and prevalence of hunger within Canada. Further, it supplied resources for the creation of a virtual Food Security Bureau within the national Ministry of Agriculture. This Bureau has developed a mechanism to include the voices of NGOs and civil society by establishing a consultative working group. The Bureau's mandate is to monitor food insecurity and progress with the plan and then to report outcomes to the United Nation Food and Agricultural Organization every two years (AAFC, 2003).

The World Food Summit - five years later.

In 2001, heads of state, NGOs, and concerned citizens gathered once again in Rome to attend a follow up to the WFS. Several nations reported progress in realizing previous WFS commitments/aspirations. While many countries had moved forward in their food security endeavours (submitting separate detailed plans of action on domestic fronts), on the whole, the impact of such work appeared to be negligible. The estimated number of people unable to access the foods required for health remained at 840 million (BFW, 2003). Once again, the summit concluded with all countries reaffirming their concern about hunger and food insecurity and their commitment to work towards the 1996 *Plan of Action.* No significant new directions were put forth.

NGO activity – five years later.

An important development during this five-year period was the blossoming of a grassroots or CFS movement (Lappe and Lappe, 2002). This movement is characterized by community-based collective activity designed to increase citizen participation in the reshaping of systems that impact their access to food (CFSN, 2003: Kneen, 2000; Welsh & MacRae, 1998; Riches, 1998).

In Canada, this activity has become increasingly organized and politicized. Alternative community food programs such as community kitchens, community gardens, food co-ops, community- shared agriculture, food box programs, and food buying clubs, have proliferated across the nation (Kalina, 2000; Kneen, 2000; OHCC, 1997). Over time, these programs have come together within neighbourhoods, cities, and regions forming networks, coalitions, or food policy organizations (FPOs). The goal of most of these groups is to change public policy in order to change the systems contributing to food insecurity (CFSN,

2003; FFCF, 1998; HEAL, 2003; Kalina, 2000; Kneen, 2000). A number of groups are working with local and provincial policy makers towards that end. While coherent food policy in global arenas remains an enigma, NGOs have enjoyed limited success on the food policy front at local levels (CFSN, 2003; Kalina, 2000; Welsh & MacRae, 1998).

This situation raises two important questions: 1) to what extent has the grassroots CFS movement impacted food policy development? and 2) what enables and constrains policy endeavours? Seeking answers to these questions, the following section examines food security developments in Canada over the past three decades.

Food Security Developments in Canada: Food Policy from the Field

Food policy in Canada: A missing ingredient.

Although it has been described as contradictory, and somewhat narrow in scope, *Canada's Action Plan on Food Security* appears to be the closest the federal government has come to establishing a national food policy. A comprehensive, coherent food policy, having the health of the population as the primary goal while balancing economic, social, and environmental needs, does not exist at national levels. Nor does such policy exist at provincial levels (MacRae, 1999). The responsibility for food at all levels of government is divided amongst sectors, of which the agriculture sector is the principal driver.

Agriculture policy however, has as a priority of food production for export and profit, rather than food production to nourish the population. This is made clear in federal documents where Agriculture Canada describes itself as "a growing, competitive market-oriented agriculture and Agri-food industry that responds to the changing food and non food needs of domestic and international customers" (AAFC, 1994).

Health comes into the federal food policy picture in terms of providing regulations around food safety and food labeling. Health Canada also provides dietary guidelines; however, these guidelines are not enforceable and are not integrated into agriculture or social policy. Similarly, at provincial levels, the health sector provides food safety regulations, dietary guidelines, and public health nutrition program goals. Again, these guidelines and goals are, for the most part; separate from agricultural and social policy and goals.

With the demise of the *Canada Assistance Plan* in 1996, any national requirement that the provinces should ensure adequate social assistance benefits to meet basic food needs was abandoned (Houghton, 1997; Riches, 1997). Thus, a critical driver is not in the federal food policy car. At provincial levels across the country, social policy fails to ensure nutrition standards are met.[4]

The need for comprehensive coherent food policy, having health as a goal and placing multiple sectors together in the driver's seat, has never been greater. In the absence of such policy at all government levels, a number of health concerns emerge. Table 1, on the following page, illustrates the relationship between select trends in the Canada's food system, policies, and health outcomes.

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[4] Dietitians and community nutritionists conduct Nutritious Food Basket costing surveys in most provinces. These surveys provide a standard measure of the income necessary to purchase the foods required for health. In the past three years, annual surveys conducted in British Columbia demonstrate that social assistance benefits fail to ensure recipients are able to purchase the foods required for health (Dietitians of Canada [DC], 2002).

Table 1.

Select Trends in Canada's Food System, Policies, and Health Outcomes.

Food System Trend	Policy Issues [5]	Health Outcome
Proliferation of and dependency on food banks (Riches, 1986 & 1997).	Lack of federal social policy and inadequate provincial social policy to ensure social assistance benefits enable recipients to purchase the foods required for health.	Food insecurity and hunger.
Loss of the small family farm and farming skills. Loss of infrastructure to support local food production. Food traveling long routes. Increased dependency on non- renewable fossil fuels. Increased dioxins in the air and global warming. Increased synthetic fertilizers and chemicals in the soil, water, and food (Kneen, 1999; Lang 1999).	Lack of federal and provincial agriculture policy supporting local sustainable food production. Lack of provincial educational policy supporting agriculture in the curriculum.	Loss of community food self-reliance. Food insecurity and hunger. Environmental degradation (air, soil, water and food), food insecurity, and hunger.
Increased advertising of fast foods targeting children. Proliferation of fast food outlets. Proliferation of cheap packaged high fat and sugar- laden foods on grocery store shelves (Kneen, 1999; Nestle, 2002). Poor eating habits. Canadian children aged 13 – 17 years, derive on average, over one third of their daily caloric and daily fat intakes from the *other* food group – that's pop, candy, and chips (Northern Health Authority, 2002).	Lack of federal, provincial and municipal policy limiting corporate advertising of fast foods during the prime time children view television. Lack of coherent food policy in schools. Lack of federal and provincial agricultural policy making locally produced whole fresh foods more affordable and available.	Increased incidence and prevalence of nutrition related disease. During the 1981-1996 period the percentage of obese Canadian children aged 7 –13 years doubled; 29% of girls and 35% of boys are now obese (Northern Health Authority, 2002).

[5] Each of the policies said to lacking in Canada have been put in place in Norway as part of a coherent national food policy and the result has been a reduction in nutrition-related disease (Norwegian Royal Ministry of Health and Social Affairs (1981-82).

This situation has led to a paradox of views where Canada is internationally renowned as a leader in the production and export of quality fresh foods, and the provision of food aid to third world countries, while at home there is growing recognition that the food system is under severe strain and failing to ensure food security, health, and well being for all.

The People's Food Commission: the grassroots speak out.

Canadians have a long history of grassroots activism around social and food issues, which has been described as a part of the culture (Guest, 1985). Thus, the *People's Food Commission* (PFC) of the late 1970s was not the first organized attempt by ordinary citizens to have a voice in shaping the systems influencing their access to and supply of food – nor would it be the last. However, given the number of people involved in the initiative (over five thousand) and the fact that the inquiry visited all provinces, it was a milestone in what is now termed the community food security movement (PFC, 1980).

This commission was not a Royal Commission rather it was a grassroots endeavour. The Commissioner's mission was to understand the issues in the food system and the solutions to those issues. Three factors gave rise to the Commission: 1) the cumulative effect of soaring inflation rates, 2) high unemployment rates, and 3) loss of local food production capacity. These concerns, now termed CFS issues, were the backdrop for the stories told to Commissioners by the farmers, food processors, food retailers, health care professionals, the poor, and ordinary citizens from across the country. These stories were diverse, yet struck a chord that resonated with all. The task of the Commission was to discover chords of coherence amongst the stories and solutions to Canada's food system troubles.

In 1980, three years after the launch of the PFC, after compiling, analyzing, and synthesizing data from thousands of documents, a report *The Land of Milk and Honey* was released (PFC, 1980). This report had four broad conclusions. First, the report suggested that the greatest potential for common ground amongst all the sectors concerned about the food system was a "desire for change," a "desire for responsibility and control over their own [food] destinies" and a "desire to do satisfactory, creative work that would contribute to the well-being of others as well as themselves" (p.79).

Second, the report asserted that the greatest division amongst people was "differing beliefs about the cause of food problems". The authors concluded that a "circle of blame" existed. They stated, "farmers are still saying consumers could change if they wanted to"..."people are still pointing at 'greedy labour' as the cause of rising prices"...and "middle income people are still saying the poor could eat well if they only knew how to budget". Furthermore, the authors found that Canadians had difficulty believing that "the organization of the current food system was responsible for the loss of control over food decisions" (PFC, p. 91).

Third, the report suggested that deep divisions in beliefs were the outcome of a "wall of beliefs" constructed by the corporate sector. According to the authors of the report, within this wall the corporate sector is believed to be the engine of a healthy and wealthy economy, the market is believed to be the best guarantee of food security, individuals are believed to be responsible for their food issues, hunger is believed to be a temporary phenomenon, and it is believed that people need only to work harder to resolve food system issues (PFC, 1980, p.75)

Fourth, the report found that differing beliefs about the cause of the issue resulted in varying and contradictory solutions to food system problems. For example, the authors stated that some farmers embraced Agriculture Canada's policy direction supporting mega farms and increased food production for export, while others simply wanted to maintain their small family farm.

The final recommendation of the PFC report was that the grassroots continue to organize and seek ways to dismantle the wall of beliefs. Specifically the authors of the report stated " we need to become much clearer about who are our allies and who are going to work against us, and once we find our allies, be ready to work with openness and respect for different perceptions coming from different experience" (PFC, 1980, p. 91).

Spinning webs of connections: public health enters the picture.

In 1981, as grain elevators disappeared on prairie horizons, the first food bank opened in Edmonton, Alberta (Riches, 1986). During the next decade, food banks proliferated at twice the speed of McDonald franchises such that by 1991 there were 345 food banks across Canada serving approximately one thousand community food depots (Schiller, 1993).

During this period, public health departments across the country were reorganizing in line with the new broadened view of health detailed in the Lalonde Report (Lalonde, 1974). The report advocated a move from the view that health was an individual concern to a holistic view recognizing that a variety of influences affect health, among them food, housing, education, income, and employment.

In the wake of the Lalonde report (1974), the healthy communities' movement emerged. This focus of the movement was to bring multiple sectors together within communities to address the determinants of health. In 1988, the Toronto Board of Health

released one of the first healthy community reports in Canada entitled *Healthy Toronto 2000: a Strategy for Healthier City* (City of Toronto, 1988). One of the recommendations in the report was the establishment of a Toronto Food Policy Council (TFPC). Two years later, spurred on by growing pressure from a public having heightened awareness of a highly organized food system and fragmentation around food policy, the TFPC emerged (Schiller, 1993).[6]

The TFPC was Canada's first official Food Policy organization.[7] The mandate of the TFPC is to address the immediate problems of hunger and the long-term reorganization of the food system. Organizational documents reveal the TFPC frames CFS as a problem of hunger, poor nutrition, and unsustainable food systems (TFPC, 2001a, 2001b). The cause is not clearly identified in organizational documents, although lack of comprehensive food policy is identified as an exacerbating factor. The culprit for CFS issues remains unnamed. Within the documents of the TFPC, it is made clear that the organization believes that the state intervention (the provision of social assistance benefits) and emergency food programs are inadequate measures to ensure CFS. New solutions are required, thus the TFPC advocates a two pronged approach: 1) empowering people to become agents of change and to engage in community development activities in order to alleviate their poverty and dependency, and 2) creating the context to allow this to happen (that is, removing policy barriers at local levels and creating local policies to enable food security) (Schiller, 1993).

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[6] In historical documents of the TFPC, the PFC was one of the factors in raising public awareness about food system malaise (Schiller, 1993).

[7] The TFPC was not a novel concept it was inspired by the Knoxville Food Policy Council and the UK's London Food Commission (Lang, 1999; Yeatman, 1994). The TFPC differs from most other FPOs in the country in that it is based in government institutions.

Since its inception, TFPC has acted as a catalyst spurring on community development processes that have resulted in the establishment of a variety of alternative community food programs. On the policy front, the organization has developed a number of discussion papers and has advocated policy change in local and provincial arenas. In 2001, the City of Toronto adopted a Food Policy Charter (TFPC, 2001a).

The TFPC model has inspired the development of FPOs across Canada, from St. Johns, Newfoundland, to Dawson Creek, BC. These local groups are linking through a variety of mediums (Internet, teleconferencing, and face-to-face meetings), creating regional, provincial, and national networks, and pressing for public policy change. For example, a national gathering of actors within the CFS movement was held in Toronto in June of 2001 for the purpose of reviewing and responding to *Canada's Action Plan for Food Security.* The results were compiled into a paper and presented to the federal government. During that same meting the national food democracy network was launched (CFSN, 2001)

British Columbia's community food security movement.

Food policy in BC has been slow to emerge. The same critical issue exists in BC, lack of coherent food policy that has nourishment of British Columbians as the principal goal. According to the British Columbia Heart Health Coalition (BCHHC) (1997), existing policies around food and nutrition are fragmented, and fail to ensure nutritional health and well being of British Columbians.

Food related policies in BC mirror those in other parts of the country, with a notable exception - agricultural policy. In BC, local sustainable food production has a place at the policy table. Geography is a major reason the production paradigm has not taken firm hold. There is a rich diversity of ecosystems in BC (ranging from rain forest to desert) and this

diversity does not accommodate mass production of any one crop. The Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), created by the Ministry of Agriculture Food and Fisheries in 1973, has contributed to CFS as it has curbed urban development on designated agricultural land. This has ensured that an allotment of land is available to communities so that they are able to produce food to feed their citizens. The *Buy BC* program launched in the 1990s has also contributed to CFS. Promotion of fresh, pure BC food products during the 1990s boosted the public appetite for healthy foods (BCMAFF, 2003).

In 1984, the inadequacy of social policy became evident with the opening of the first food bank in Vancouver, BC. By the year 2000, there were 85 food banks across the province. In March of 2000, 75,987 British Columbians resorted to food banks to feed themselves and/or their families (Greater Vancouver Food Bank Society, 2003). In the 1990s, as a secondary response to hunger and food insecurity, community kitchens proliferated across the province (Kalina, 1993). During this period, FPOs began to emerge as well.

One of the first FPOs in BC, Farmfolk Cityfolk, was launched in 1992. By 1999, there were at least a dozen FPOs in BC (FFCF 1998; Kalina, 2000; Kneen, 2000). 1999 was a milestone year for CFS organizing as it marked the birth of the British Columbia Food System Network (BCFSN). The BCFSN is a communication hub, linking individuals concerned about or involved with (CFS) activities across BC. It hosts annual gatherings, bringing food activists together to strategize about food policy and programs. Finally, while an official tally of the current number of FPOs is unavailable, in the past two years alone, several new FPOs have emerged in northern BC (HEAL, 2003). (See Appendix 1 for a snapshot of FPOs in BC). While the bulk of FPO activities have centered on the development

and support of alternative community food programs, three significant provincial policy efforts are highlighted here.

The first was the development of a food and nutrition policy paper entitled *Feed Our Future: Secure our Health* (BCHHC, 1997). This report, developed by a coalition of dietitians, community nutritionists, and a handful of other concerned professionals and academics, included a series of food related policy recommendations, from continued monitoring and support of emergency feeding programs, to support of increased nutrition services from hospital to home. The major recommendation of this document was a call for a comprehensive food and nutrition policy. The document was the impetus for the creation of an inter-ministerial committee on food and nutrition policy, charged with the task of identifying options for a comprehensive food policy for BC.

The second development was an organized series of public presentations to the *Select Standing Committee on Agri-Food policy*. This was one of the first organized political strategies of the British Columbia Food Security Network (BCFSN). The aim was to press for the context that would enable local, sustainable food systems within BC's new *Agri-Food Policy*. As a result, the final document included a section on food security (BCFSN, 1999a; BCMAFF, 2000).

A third development was the launch of an annual report entitled the *Cost of Eating in British Columbia* (DC, 2002). This report is the result of the efforts of community nutritionists who conduct annual surveys across the province to determine the cost of a nutritious basket of food in comparison to social assistance rates. The report is used as a tool to heighten awareness about the issues and to press for social policy change. It is forwarded annually to the Premier and all Ministers, calling for policy changes on three fronts: 1)

increased welfare rates to ensure recipients have sufficient funds to purchase the foods required for health, 2) additional child feeding programs, and 3) support of alternative community food programs.

An analysis of this policy work reveals intriguing conundrums. First, it is clear that this work has not been part of a coordinated strategy. Recommendations for policy change have come from many fronts and have involved many different sectors. Policy recommendations tend to come in a sporadic fashion, at times directed to the Premier and all Ministers; at other times directed towards a single Minister. Thus, policy demands are seen in a fragmented manner by differing ministries at differing times.

Second, policy requests have at times emphasized a piece of the food security problem and a particular solution. The difficulty with this approach is that the complex, multi-layered CFS phenomenon, requiring multi-pronged, integrated solutions will be reduced to a singular issue requiring a singular solution. For example, presentation of the phenomena as a sustainable food production problem suggests a resolution may be found with agricultural policy change solely. Policy makers can then claim they are addressing hunger by ensuring people have skills, land, and resources to produce food. In turn, efforts by another stream of the movement pressing for social policy change (adequate welfare rates) may be slowed.

Third, policy demands from one sector are seemingly contradictory to those advocated by another sector. For example, it has been argued that policy demands for support of emergency food programs does not fit policy demands for an increase in welfare rates. According to Riches (1997), history has demonstrated that reliance upon the individual, charity, and the community alone does not solve hunger. Furthermore, of these two policy

requests, the request for support of emergency food programs is more than likely to be granted, as it is the least costly.[8]

In the absence of a coherent policy strategy, the success of these endeavours has been minimal. Yet, this is not the sole reason policy work has had limited success. In 2001, a change in provincial government saw a radical shift in policy direction. BC, a province that has been governed by parties with social and/or environmental platforms for the past 70 years, was now governed by a party whose thrust was economic prosperity. To balance budgets in a sagging economy, the government moved into deficit reduction and fiscal restraint mode. The result has been the rapid dismantling of all previously mentioned efforts towards coherent food policy, as well as continued erosion of the social safety net. Four examples of the impact of the political context on food policy development in BC are provided below.

First, the *Inter-ministerial Committee on Food and Nutrition Policy* has "unofficially" disbanded (Janice Linton, Chair of the Interministerial Committee, personal communications, September 2002). Second, the *Agri-Food Policy* work has come to a stand still and the *Buy BC* program has been canceled (BCMAFF, 2003). Third, welfare eligibility requirements have become more stringent, and rates have decreased. In Vancouver, a single parent family of three receives social assistance benefits amounting to $1350 per month[9], yet the average cost of rent is $919.00, and the cost of purchasing a nutritious basket of food is $458.00 month. Thus, once the rent is paid, this family cannot afford a nutritious basket of food (DC

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[8] Over the past decade, social assistance rates in British Columbia have continued to decrease. Legislation has been passed however, to support emergency food programs. The *Food Donation Act* passed in 1996 facilitates the distribution of surplus foods from the food industry to emergency food programs (Chong, 1996).

[9] This amount includes social assistance benefits, child tax benefits, and BC family Bonus.

2002). Fourth, education budgets have been frozen at 2002 levels. The downturn in the lumber industry however, has resulted in a mass migration of workers out of the rural and remote communities in BC. Enrollment is down, and school boards, staff, parents, and children are grappling with school closures. Funding is no longer earmarked for school meal programs rather the money has gone into the envelope of general school revenues (BCCPAC, 2002). Scrambling to deal with budget shortfalls, schools are on the one hand trimming the school meal programs to reduce expenditures, and on the other partnering with the carbonated beverage industry to increase revenues (Welsh, 2002).

While the shift in policy direction has realized the grim food security scenario above, as discussed in the introductory chapter it also appears to have contributed to positive developments and opportunities for the CFS movement. That is, the movement has experienced an increase in membership and activities (HEAL, 2003). As well, new opportunities for policy development are emerging at local and provincial levels (BCMOH, 2002; Food First of Northern British Columbia, 2002)

Thus, the overall policy direction of the current Liberal government has resulted in crisis and opportunity for the CFS movement in BC. The potential however, for the CFS movement to realize public policy change is uncertain. A coherent policy strategy has not emerged and in its absence, policy direction has been sporadic, contradictory, and largely ineffective. The current political context suggests that now more than ever, members of BC's CFS movement would benefit if actors were coming from the same policy page.

Factors Influencing Policy: Framing Key

Thus far, this review has suggested that a number of factors enable and constrain the CFS movement in achieving their policy aims. Factors include: perceptions about the nature

of the issue, and solutions to the issue; the fact that ideology within the mainstream is opposite that shared within the movement; the existence of evidence considered legitimate by the policy-makers; political opportunity and public opinion; and the existence of human and material resources. Of these concerns, a number of policy analysts concur framing is a critically important issue (Delisle & Shaw, 1998; Lang, 1999; Lezberg, 1999; MacRae, 1999). According to Delisle and Shaw (1998):

> Food security as a multifaceted and multi-sectoral concept has been a major barrier in reaching consensus on how to define it and achieve it, and lack of agreement on effective policy prescriptions has resulted in inadequate, concerted action. (p. 9)

The need for a master frame.

Framing, in social movement discourse, is described as the conscious construction of shared meanings and definitions to describe social problems such that they legitimate protest and motivate adherents toward collective action (McAdam & Snow, 1997). Social movement theory suggests that in order to create a coherent policy, a universally accepted and well-articulated master frame is required. According to Snow and Benford (1992), a master frame provides core grammar upon which more elaborate frames can be constructed. Minimally, a master frame identifies the issue, the cause, and culprit for the problem. Agreement within social movements upon the nature of the problem and the culprit allows the formation of coherent policy that effectively targets the root of the problem and the institutions and actors responsible for the problem. In the absence of a master frame, other frames may be developed such as a motivational frame (a frame inciting action) or a prognostic frame (a frame identifying solutions). However, the policy direction arising from these frames will

likely be fragmented, contradictory and can serve to perpetuate rather than to resolve the problems.

The community food security frame: Existing research.

The framing of CFS has been studied in various disciplines and in various contexts. In US studies, researchers have found that the movement draws together people from differing sectors that conceptualize the problem differently. Further, these researchers suggest that there are two dominant master frames existing beneath the umbrella of the CFS concept - an anti-hunger frame and a sustainable agriculture frame.

Proponents of the anti-hunger [10] frame identify hunger as the primary issue, and poverty and inequality as the primary causes (Campbell, 1991; Riches, 1986, 1997). Typically, those holding an anti-hunger perspective support policy responses such as welfare change (to ensure, at minimum, basic needs are met, including food, housing, child care, transportation, and medical needs), living wage jobs, and literacy and employment training. The resonating motivational theme amongst adherents of the anti-hunger frame is the understanding that food is a human right Food security is seen as an entitlement. The government is believed to have the primary responsibility to ensure people are food secure.

Proponents of the sustainable agriculture frame, identify long-term sustainability of land and resources for local agricultural production as the critical CFS issue (Kneen 1993, 1999). They point to the industrialized food system as the causative factor. They observe that this system, characterized by dependence on chemical inputs, the technology treadmill, and the profit-orientated nature of the capitalist market, has distanced people from their food

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[10] Also referred to as the *entitlement frame*, or the *redistribution [of wealth] frame* or the *institutional frame.*

supply and has placed control of food decisions in corporate hands external to the community. They argue that the industrialized food system has created a situation where communities do not have the capacity to produce food to feed their citizens. Solutions to food security include policy support for local food self-sufficiency and local control of food production, support of organic production methods, and reestablishing connections between the local farmers and local consumers. The responsibility for food security lies primarily with community. The government is responsible to provide policies to create the context for local sustainable food systems. The resonating motivational theme amongst those holding a sustainability frame is the view that degradation of agro-ecological resources and the loss of local food self-sufficiency is an injustice to people, communities, and the environment.

An examination of the Canadian CFS movement reveals that there is at least one additional influential frame at play in the CFS movement – the health promotion frame (BCHHC, 1997; Schiller, 1993). The aim of the health promotion frame is to empower people to increase control over their health. Adherents of this frame are concerned with a number of health-related problems arising from lack of food security including, but not limited to, hunger, nutrition deficiencies, obesity, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, food allergies, and food borne illness (BCHHC, 1997). Of these issues, hunger is most frequently cited in health literature, and socio-economic inequities are most frequently identified as principal causes of this problem (American Dietetics Association, 1998; Campbell, 1991; Fitz, 1998). More recently, food security concerns, such as increased prevalence and incidence of food borne illness and the agro-ecological impact of genetic engineering, have appeared in health literature. These problems have seen the addition of consolidation and control of the food supply in the list of principal causes.

In the health promotion frame, solutions involve the creation of supportive environments, strengthening community action, developing personal skills, and building healthy public policy to address structural inequities. A community development approach bringing together key stakeholders from across the local food system to identify their issues and then to act upon them is a commonly employed health promotion strategy to realize CFS (Kalina, 1993; Kneen, 2000; OHCC, 1997). The resonating motivational theme for adherents of the health promotion frame is the understanding that the resources for health, including food, are universal human needs and entitlements. The government, the community, and the individual are all believed to be responsible to ensure this entitlement is provided. Thus, the health promotion frame compliments both the anti-hunger and the sustainable food system frames.

While additional frames may exist within the CFS movement, elements of these three frames in particular appear to dominate the Canadian scene (BCHHC, 1997; BCFSN, 1999a; CFSN, 2003; TFPC, 2001b).

The impact of differing frames within the CFS movement is an issue of debate. Some authors suggest that diverse agendas have facilitated the movement, while others argue that they have constrained the movement. For example, Lezberg (1999) asserts that the US CFS movement suffers from frame over extension. She states, "the framing for the CFS approach, in its broad conceptualization, reaches out to many concerns and issue areas but potential adherents, for whom portions but not the totality of the framing resonates, have difficulty identifying with the frame" (Lezberg, 1999, p. 22). She suggests that differing frames lead to recruitment and retention problems and tensions between the actors of the movement. She also asserts that linkages have not been made between the sustainable agriculture and the

anti-hunger frame with respect to issues, causes, and culprits. Lezberg concludes that in the absence of a master frame for the CFS concept, linking the anti-hunger and sustainable agriculture frames, the US CFS movement has limited ability to realize political change. Lezberg's findings regarding tensions and the problems with the lack of a master frame are consistent with the findings of the PFC report in the 1970s.

Fisher (1997, 1998), a leader of the US based *Community Food Security Coalition*, agrees that tensions exist within the movement, but he argues that the underlying concern is not an issue of over extension, but a problem of balancing the needs and wants of the principal sectors. Furthermore, diversity of partnerships is cited as a "strength" of the CFS movement in a number of documents (Biehler et al., 1999; TFPC, 2001b; Yeatman, 1994).

Lang (1999) provides further food for thought regarding the way CFS is framed. He points out that the CFS movement emerged in opposition to mainstream views. He suggests that for each view within the food security movement there is an equal and opposing view informing mainstream policy, practice, and the public. For example, he suggests that in contrast to the sustainable agricultural frame, the production frame exists. Adherents of the production frame identify hunger as the key food security issue and increased production as the solution. The cause is insufficient adoption of technology.[11] Similarly, in contrast to the anti-hunger frame, the residual frame exists. Adherents of this frame assert hunger is a temporary problem, and individuals, their families, and the community are responsible for hunger.[12] Welfare is viewed as a last resort. Finally, in contrast to the health promotion

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[11] The production frame is the basis of the *WFS Plan of Action*, *Canada's Action Plan on Food Security,* and Agriculture policy in Canada at federal and provincial levels.
[12] The residual frame is the basis of social policy at federal and provincial levels (Guest, 1985; Riches, 1997).

frame, the treatment frame exists, where the focus is to fix the sick rather than prevent the illness.

Lang (1999) suggests that a useful way of conceptualizing the difference between these frames is to consider that they exist on a continuum. At one end, the production, residual, and treatment frames exist. Together they form the dominant paradigm. This paradigm informs mainstream policy and practice. At the other end of the continuum, the sustainable agriculture, health promotion, and anti-hunger frames exist. Together they form the alternative paradigm. This paradigm informs the CFS movement. Lang suggests that these frames are pulling food policy in two different directions (this situation is explained in further detail in Appendix 2). Like Fisher, Lezberg, MacRae, and other prominent food policy analysts, Lang asserts that clarity of the CFS frame is absolutely necessary if a coordinated campaign is to be mounted that will effectively influence mainstream views which are currently completely swayed by the dominant paradigm.

Chapter Summary

The literature reveals that CFS is a long-standing problem, a problem that is structural in nature and requiring inter-sectoral collaboration towards public policy change. Current international, federal, and provincial policy directions appear to be ineffective in stemming the growing tide of hunger and food security issues. In fact, it has been argued that such policy has contributed to the current situation. A grassroots CFS movement whose goal is coherent food policy has emerged across Canada. While the movement has had limited success in realizing policy aims at local levels, the potential for the movement to maintain its momentum is uncertain. Social movement theorists, food policy analysts, and researchers

alike concur that framing is one of the critical factors limiting the success of the CFS movement in political arenas.

There are differing schools of thought about the way CFS is framed. Some studies suggest differing frames exist within the movement (Clancy, 1994; Lezberg 1999; PFC, 1980). These studies conclude the frames are not wholly complementary, causing tensions and reducing the ability of the movement to achieve its policy aims. Others involved with the US and Canadian CFS movement, believe the frames are more complementary and that the tensions are a strength of the movement (Fisher, 1997, 1998; Joseph, 1998; MacRae, 1999; Yeatman, 1994). Still others suggest that the real tensions are not within the movement, but between the movement and mainstream (Lang, 1999). All conclude that a well articulated, widely accepted master frame for the movement has not emerged. Making clear the issues, the causes, the culprit, and the extent to which these conceptual elements are linked is a perquisite to the crafting of a coherent food policy strategy. This in turn can substantially contribute towards concerted action towards the goal of public policy change.

What is missing from the literature, particularly the Canadian literature, are the voices of FPO leaders or those individuals who are instrumental in the process of constructing and communicating frames of understanding. In BC, considerable grassroots organizing has occurred over the past decade, providing fertile ground for research exploring the way the CFS concept is framed. If leaders from the health, agricultural and anti-hunger sectors are interviewed and the documents from the FPOs they lead are examined it may be possible to clarify the way they conceptualize CFS and the extent to which their conceptualizations are linked. Given the political context in BC, this research is timely. The results will have

significance for BC's CFS movement and for those involved with or concerned about CFS across Canada and abroad.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Overall Research Approach

The overall research approach was a qualitative one, involving interpretive description of data gathered through in depth interviews of leaders of FPOs in BC and supplemented with document analysis. The aim of this approach is to describe and interpret a shared experience from the perspective of those who live it. Assumptions within this approach are that experiences are individual and shared, complex and contextual, and that these experiences form the basis of knowledge (Thorne, Kirkham Reimer & MacDonald-Emes, 1997). The interpretive descriptive approach was chosen because, as is the case with nursing practice, this approach fits with the theoretical and philosophical underpinnings of community nutrition practice. Within these holistic relational and interpretive practices, there is a respect for knowledge about aggregates in a manner that does not render the individual case invisible (Thorne et al., 1997). There is also a respect for the dialectic between the personal and the political, the local and the global, the practical and the theoretical, individuality and commonality. The interpretive descriptive approach fits well with the research purpose and can yield knowledge that has application to both the science and practice of community nutrition.

The hermeneutic circle.

As is often the case with interpretive studies, this inquiry draws upon the philosophical underpinnings of hermeneutics (Gadamer, 1989; Koch, 1996). The hermeneutic circle, foundational to interpretive analysis, assumes that the act of understanding is achieved when we make sense of something, in relation to what we already

understand. Understanding and meaning come together through a dialectic process of examining the whole of the phenomena in relation to the individual parts. Our understanding of the individual parts gains meaning as our understanding of the whole takes shape. Simultaneously, our understanding of the meaning of the whole is dependent on understanding the meaning of the parts. It is essentially a reflexive process of moving back and forth from the individual parts to the whole, enlarging our understandings during the process (Koch, 1996; Steeves & Kahn, 1995). Understanding is thus existence, a way of being, and like conversation, is always a reciprocal relationship.

Language and context.

Attention to language and context are fundamental to gaining understanding. According to Gadamer (1989), "language speaks us" in so far as human beings are produced within a linguistic environment they inherit. They also reproduce and change this linguistic inheritance through their participation in it. Language is thus a contextual, social, and collective construct. Language and context, bridge meaning and understanding between the researcher and the subject of study. Language and context are mediums that enable interpretation of that which is not readily in view.

Throughout this study, attention was paid to language and context. For example, careful attention was paid to the use of the words 'food security" and "food system" as they were at times used interchangeably. Differentiating the meaning of each of these words proved to be an important aspect of understanding the tensions between conceptualizations. Similarly, careful attention was paid to the changing ideological and political context and this proved to be another important aspect of understanding linkages and tensions between conceptualizations.

The researcher's presence.

In interpretive analysis, it is understood that the researcher is engaged or situated in the study. Furthermore, it is understood that the researcher and the participants both arrive in the study with a set of values, beliefs, and assumptions derived from past experiences and projections of the future. The values, beliefs, assumptions, and experiences of the researcher cannot be avoided in the data making, analysis and interpretation processes. The perspective of the researcher is integral to proper engagement in hermeneutic circle and the process of interpretation (Koch, 1996). When the researcher makes explicit her prejudgments and frame of reference it enables her t keep her own understandings in question and to enter into a dialogue with the text. In interpretive research this reflexive process assists with understanding (Gadamer, 1989; Macleod, 1996). The task of interpretative analysis is to describe and interpret the often taken for granted understanding of food security recorded in the participant's interviews and in the document data. The way this task was achieved is discussed below.

Rigour

Ensuring the trustworthiness of the study was an important consideration in research design and throughout the process. To ensure rigour, two criteria were adhered to: 1) ensuring that a traceable audit trail for the research inductive reasoning processes was developed and 2) ensuring the voices of the participants were related accurately and well. The inductive reasoning process for this research can be traced through a number of mediums including importantly, a reflexive journal. This journal provides a record of my perspective at the onset of the research, my reactions to data in the process of interpreting, and my attentiveness to expressing the voices of the participants, contextual influences during the

research process and finally, the way my perspective changed during the process. Other mediums to trace the inductive reasoning process include audiotapes containing raw interview data; transcribed interview data; coding sheets containing interview data systematically differentiated by words, phrases, and paragraphs; flip chart sheets containing interview data integrated into broad themes. As well, the inductive reasoning process is evident in the research proposal and the differing versions of the thesis document leading up to and including this final version.

As a measure of ensuring that emerging conceptualizations were indeed grounded in the data, reflecting a fusion of the participant perspectives and my own, conceptualizations were shared with participants on two separate occasions. That the participants would have an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the emerging conceptualizations was a mutual agreement made between the participants and myself prior to commencing the study. The first opportunity to share conceptualizations presented itself when one of the participants suggested that I present the preliminary interpretations of the data to herself and a small audience during her trip to Prince George. She was eager to see the results of the research and to support the completion of the paper. Together, the participant and I drew up a list of invitees including a medical health officer who was widely recognized as a leader within the northern CFS movement, a community development consultant who was a leader of a northern network of FPOs, and a professor of environmental studies who was a long-standing member of a northern FPO. The fact that a research participant was in the audience at the time of the presentation was not disclosed to the group. While the thesis itself had not been yet been constructed emerging definitions, principles and the tools for practice were available and shared with the group. The feedback was extremely useful. On the whole, interpretations

appeared to be on track. The principles appeared to have a good degree of resonance with the audience and the tools (preliminary versions of the *Food Security Continuum*, the *Food Justice: A Vision for Community Food Security,* and the *Cycle of Food Insecurity)* were received enthusiastically. An important insight during this process was that the possibility of discovering or developing a single tool to illustrate the complex CFS phenomenon was remote. Differing tools were needed for differing context, differing audience and differing purpose.

A second opportunity to share the findings presented itself once the initial chapters, containing analysis of the data from the interviews, were written. Chapters 4 and 5 were distributed to each of the participants for their review and feedback. Again, the results were positive and the feedback was most constructive. Overall leaders appeared to be satisfied that their perspectives were present in the interpretations. Three leaders put forth additional information to clarify their views. This information was incorporated in this final document. Of interest is the fact that the research appears to have already had impact on practice. The imminent completion of the thesis was announced at a FPO meeting by three of the participants. As well, while the tensions revealed in the paper did not appear to come as a surprise to the leaders, each leader expressed a concern about the tensions and a desire to explore the tensions with members of the CFS movement.

Ethics

Four ethical considerations presented themselves during the course of this research. The first was ensuring that the participant's names were kept confidential. As promised in the letter of consent signed by each participant and I, pseudonyms were used rather than actual participant names (See the letter of consent and consent form in Appendix 3). Pseudonyms

were used in place of FPO names as well. Pseudonyms appear in field notes, transcripts, coding sheets, and flip charts. As I was aware that the circle of prominent leaders and FPOs comprising BC's CFS movement was relatively small, and that leaders knew each other well, I was particularly sensitive to ensuring pseudonyms were used during conversation.

A second ethical consideration was reciprocity. As a measure of reciprocity for the estimated four hours of time the participants contributed to the study (one hour per interview, plus three hours to review and provide feedback to the initial conceptualizations), I have assisted participants with their local or provincial food policy endeavours. Support has been provided in terms of assisting with the writing and/or editing of articles, papers, and reports. Support has also been provided through, planning, organizing, or implementing meetings.

Intrusiveness and safety were two additional ethical concerns. To address these concerns, the interviews occurred in places and at times convenient and safe for both the participants and myself. All interviews took place in the participant's home, and/or in a quiet public meeting room.

The Research Process

An initial step in the research process was to ensure there was coherent logic in the research design. This involved an examination of relevant literature on the framing of CFS and the formulation of analytic framework for the inquiry. The literature suggested a purposeful sample of leaders of FPOs within BC's CFS movement – leaders having agricultural, ant-hunger and health backgrounds. It also suggested that the initial questions should elicit from the leaders their understandings about CFS issues, the causes of such issues, solutions to the issues as well as their views about the culprits responsible for the issues.

The analytic framework differed from a formal theoretical conceptual framework demanded in traditional quantitative research as it represented a platform or a beginning point for the study rather than organizing structure for the inquiry. As the inductive analysis proceeded, the analytic framework was challenged. For example, the literature suggested three separate master frames – the anti-hunger, sustainable agriculture, and health promotion frames - existed within BC's CFS movement. This implied that the analysis should involve examining each of the leaders' conceptualizations separately. It was anticipated that from this process, the three differing frames described in the literature would emerge, and the tensions between those frames would become readily apparent. However, during a preliminary analysis separating data in this manner it was discovered that differences in framing were minimal and similarities were far greater. The data were then reexamined to identify the linkages between the various framing elements (the issues, the cause, the solution, and the culprit). Both processes were extremely useful; the initial approach drew out the differences while the later approach drew out the linkages.

Sources of data.

As noted in the introductory chapter, two sources of data informed this research: data derived from in-depth interviews with leaders of prominent FPOs in BC and data from the documents of these organizations (and/or the leaders' personal document files). Document data included organizational terms of reference, position statements, minutes of meetings, reports, fact sheets, brochures, newspaper articles, journal articles, and educational booklets, videos and manuals.

Selecting the participants and the sites.

The second step in this inquiry involved the selection of participants and sites. The literature suggested a purposeful sample of each taking the following criteria into consideration:

- The leader was well recognized in terms of his/her influence on BC's CFS movement,
- The leader was ready, willing, and able to participate in the research.
- The leader had a health, agricultural, or anti-hunger background.
- The leader represented a prominent FPO within the CFS movement.
- Collectively the FPOs represented a geographically diverse scope of practice including provincial and local, urban and rural, south and central.
- Substantial documentation existed within the FPO to supplement the findings from the interviews and
- I could easily access this documentation.

The process of selecting the leaders and sites involved phoning recognized leaders and requesting the names and contacts of three other leaders who might fit the selection criteria. New contacts were phoned and asked to provide three names. The list was complete when all new contacts were phoned and no new names emerged. From the list of 22 potential research participants, the 6 names put forth most often were chosen as potential research participants. Within this group, at least two had a sustainable agriculture background, at least two had an anti-hunger background, and at least two had a health promotion focus. Further, this group of leaders represented five FPOs having urban, rural, provincial and local focus. Each leader was phoned and each agreed to participate. (See chapter 4, p. 52 for a summary of the leaders).

While it was understood that that the sample of leaders was small given the complexity of the CFS phenomenon, the perspectives within this pool of leaders represented the most predictable variations in the way CFS is framed. It was also understood that the conceptualizations derived in this study might not be representative of conceptualizations drawn from a different sample of leaders or a sample taken in different locations. However, it was not the intent of this study to reveal representative conceptualizations. This study aimed to understand conceptualizations within the group studied in order to uncover new insights about the framing of CFS. The information garnered here will contribute to existing knowledge and practice and can inform further inquiry.

Collecting the data.

The third step in this inquiry involved developing a semi structured interview guide with open-ended questions following the areas of relevance derived from the literature. (See interview guide in Appendix 4). The phrasing of the questions and the order in which they were asked varied from interview to interview in response to the leaders' responses and/or the changing context. For example, in response to the initial question "tell me about yourself and your interest in community food security" most leaders spoke at length providing rich, detailed information relevant to several of the other questions not yet asked. During the response to the first question, opportunities arose to probe a bit to get the details about a question not yet asked. The phrasing of the remaining questions was adjusted so as not to cover the same ground. Maintaining flexibility in the interview process was essential to the interpretive process. Flexibility afforded the leaders maximum opportunity to use their imagination and knowledge resulting in the gathering of much rich detailed data that may have otherwise been missed if the initial set of interview questions had been rigidly adhered

to. Placing maximum control of the process in the hands of the participant also increased the phenomenological validity of the research (Patton, 1990; Marshall & Rossman, 1995).

With permission from the participants, all interviews were captured on audiotape. Field notes were taken during the interview process to capture initial interpretations of data. Over the next three months, I transcribed all of the audiotapes.

Analyzing and interpreting the data.

The following discussion attempts to outline the process of data analysis and the process of constructing the thesis document. During these processes, the principles of interpretive analysis were adhered to including: attention to language within the study, attention to the context in which the study occurred, and a commitment to rigour. Initially an inductive non-categorical approach was utilized during the data analysis process. This means that predetermined coding schemes were avoided. According to Thorne et al. (1997) premature coding arising from an eagerness not to let the data gathering get out of hand, can privilege superficial findings at the expense of deeper more meaningful analytic interpretations. The data analysis took on the form of repeated immersion into the data prior to coding. Repeated immersion allowed initial synthesizing, theorizing and recontextualizing, rather than simply coding and sorting.

An attempt was then made to derive themes of understanding for each participant data set. Each word, set of words, or phrase was carefully and systematically defined, coded, and organized under broad themes. At this point, the themes were essentially the framing elements identified in the literature (CFS issues, cause, culprit etc.…). Codes were recorded directly in the transcripts beside the paragraphs of data. The sum of themes, and codes from the first review of one leaders' data set formed a lens for the review of the next leaders' data

set. During the review of the next leaders' data set new themes were added and coded. Definitions were also were expanded upon and the lens was adjusted accordingly.

At this point, underlying ideological, motivational, and relational themes began to emerge. The lens was further expanded to include the new themes. At the conclusion of the first round of coding all of the data, the lens was quite stretched with many overlapping codes and themes. I then placed the themes on flip charts where they were integrated and/or differentiated. The coded words, sentences, or phrases, applying to one or more of each of the new themes, were reorganized under the new themes. Definitions were made more succinct.

Following analysis of the interview data, systematic analysis of document data was conducted. Specifically, the organizational goals, objectives, activities, definitions, and diagrams were pulled from the documents. Paying attention to context and language, each data source was examined to derive conceptualizations of the CFS issues, causes, culprit, and solutions. As per the process used with the interview data, the document data were initially examined to explore the way CFS was conceptualized within the individual FPOs. Then the document data were examined to explore the way CFS was conceptualized amongst the group of FPOs. Finally, the document data were examined together with the interview data.

The final stage in the research process involved constructing a thesis in which emerging insights were described and interpreted and recommendations were put forth for theory, research, policy, and practice. This involved several rewrites, during which interpretations were refined until the paper was complete. One of the most rewarding stages of the research process was receiving feedback from the participants indicating that the work indeed reflected their perspectives

Chapter 4

The Cycle of Food Insecurity

Those who cannot feed their people will be dominated by those who can.

Mohawk Proverb

The knowledge that food is power served the Mohawks well. Prior to the influence of European culture, they were a healthy vibrant people – seed savers, food growers, hunters, fishers, and traders. Only one food master, the earth, dominated them (K. Patterson, Director Aboriginal Health, Northern Health Authority, personal communication, March 23, 2003). As I will reveal in this chapter, a common thread engaging all leaders in CFS work is the knowledge that food is power. All understand that food security problems are the result of an imbalance in power. All are aware that increasingly the decisions about food are made at boardroom tables rather than at the kitchen table. The belief however, that a shrinking pool of huge transnational food corporations dominates civil society is a leap for some. That this is the root cause of hunger and food insecurity is another leap. Yet, this is precisely the picture that emerges when the leaders' stories about the food security situation are stitched together.

This chapter begins an analysis of the data derived from in-depth interviews with leaders of select FPOs within BC's CFS movement. Supplemental data from the documents of the FPOs is integrated throughout the interpretive analysis process. The chapter commences with a description of the leaders' perceptions about CFS issues. This is followed by an interpretation of the responses and a description of their perceptions about the causes of such issues, and the culprits responsible for these issues. Again, interpretative analysis follows. The process is repeated a third time with respect to their perceptions about the solutions and the responsibility for CFS. During the interpretive process, attention is paid to

similarities and differences in conceptualizations, the rationale for such, and the implications of conceptualizations on the ability of the movement to achieve policy aims. The resulting broad-brush picture of the leaders' conceptualizations sets the stage for chapter 5 where the common thread amongst their views, ideology, is examined more closely. Prior to launching into an analysis of the data, however, a brief summary of the leaders and their background is provided.

The Leaders

Six leaders representing five FPOs participated in this research. Of the six, one is a retired food bank administrator, two are food system analysts and activists with farming backgrounds, and three are community nutritionists. All of the leaders are deeply and personally involved in food issues, and community and/or political organizing around food. One leader provides a succinct description of her personal and political relationship with food:

> One thing about working in food security is that it has asked me to walk my talk, profoundly linking personal to political. The foods I buy centre on my knowledge of food security - local, non-GMO[13], organic, fair trade, etc. This is hugely important to me! I also make a point of telling my friends I am feeding them this way, and if they ask, I tell them why.

The leaders bring to the research a wealth of knowledge and experiences in a spectrum of areas including, but not limited to: emergency food provision, community development, sustainable community planning, health promotion, nutrition, sustainable

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[13] Genetically Modified Organisms

farming/food production, food marketing, food policy analysis (specifically in the agricultural, economic and trade areas), community organizing and public education. The combined CFS organizing experience of these six individuals totals 66 years

Why the Concern About Community Food Security?

The question, "What are the key food security issues?" elicited a passionate and lengthy response. The leaders voiced a plethora of concerns ranging from poverty, hunger, and loss of farming skills, to soil erosion and toxic chemicals in the food.[14] As noted by Lezberg, (1999), the issues could be sorted beneath the umbrella of two issue areas – freedom from hunger and sustainability of the food supply. Indeed the words hunger and farms came up again and again during the 2-hour interviews.

Only one leader, the food banker, conceptualized hunger as a distinct issue separate from the sustainable food systems issue. He fully supported sustainable food system activities, however, because they address immediate hunger concerns even if in a modest way. All others spoke of the two issues as if they were inextricably linked.

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[14] The comprehensive list of issues included: the valuing of money above all else, the commodification of food, reductionism, individualism, competition, loss of community, loss of food production, processing, distribution, selection, preparation skills, disempowerment (loss of control over food decisions), food democracy, globalization, free trade, distancing from food supply, hunger, obesity, nutrition related diseases, food poverty, the proliferation and reliance upon food banks for basic food needs, institutionalization of charitable emergency food programs, inadequate welfare policy, the right to food denied, policy supporting food export rather than feeding the neighbors, lack of policy to support sustainable local food production, policy supporting the dismantling of local food production facilities, loss of the family farm, lack of public awareness about community food security issues, manipulation of the media to promote the corporate agenda; loss of traditional foods, dependency on imported foods, proliferation of unhealthy food products in public institutions, dignity in food access , loss of food diversity (and food nutrients associated with this), contamination of the environment with use of synthetic fertilizers and chemicals in conventional food production methods, a food system dependent on transport and the burning of fossil fuels, global warming, and food waste in a food rich country.

Health the invisible link.

Surprisingly, although three of the participants were community nutritionists, health was not readily put forth as an overarching link between the predominant issue areas. It came across during conversation as a subtle background thread or undercurrent linking the issues. Clearly, hunger is a personal health issue, just as the sustainability of the food supply is a community and environmental health concern.

All leaders verbalized the link with health when they were directly asked, "What is the critical outcome of community food insecurity?" Their responses were immediate – "unhealthy communities," "malnutrition," "hunger," "obesity," and "poor health". The health link also emerged among the indicators or measures of community food insecurity that the leaders put forth.[15] The health link was also woven throughout discussions about the motivational factors engaging the leaders in the CFS arena. That is, each leader explicitly stated that they valued and respected food and its foundational role in life and health. They made clear that this valuing of food, and respect for its role in health and life, fueled their expressions of outrage about hunger and food insecurity.

Finally, while a number of FPO documents state the goal of CFS is "the elimination of hunger" or "the creation of just and sustainable food systems", when the leaders were probed about their vision for CFS they readily painted a picture of healthy well-nourished people. These people were described as "active participants shaping their local food system".

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[15] For example "obesity rates", "hunger", "Type two diabetes" standard population health indicators were offered as indicators of community food insecurity. Additionally, "food bank usage data", "school meal program usage", "fast food proliferation", and "emergency food supply" are emerging community health indicators. Finally "toxins" and "chemicals" in the air, land, water, and food were stated as standard environmental health indicators.

In food secure communities food gardens bloom in backyards, school yards, and on rooftops; farmers markets, food box programs, and community cooking circles thrive; fresh local food can be found in hospitals, schools, prisons, and recreation centres; healthy food policy is standard in all public institutions; and emergency food programs have been closed because there is no longer a need for this service. Thus, the vision for CFS is healthy, well-nourished people residing in healthy, food self-sufficient communities.

Food injustice: The visible link.

While the health link was a quiet undercurrent in conversation, the leaders were outspoken and clear that the common motivational thread linking the two issue areas was an imbalance in control over systems impacting access to and/or supply of the foods required for health. The leaders described this thread as "food injustice"[16] and declared the situation was ecologically and socially unsustainable.

The leaders defined food injustice as an imbalance (political, structural, ethical, and/or immoral), limiting the ability of a person, community, region, and/or nation to access the foods required for health. The leaders cast their lens on a spectrum of food injustices, from the existence of malnutrition in a food rich and wealthy country, to the deliberate dismantling of structures that ensured communities had the capacity to feed their citizens. Table 2 illuminates the food injustice with which each leader appeared to be most profoundly concerned:

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[16] *Food Justice* is elaborated upon in chapter 5, in the *Shared Framing Principles* section pp. 76-84. It also represents the core of the *Food justice: A vision for community food security* diagram chapter 6 p. 102.

Table 2.

Select examples of food injustices identified by leaders of British Columbia's community food security movement.

Food Injustice	Quote
Societal Values	[There is a general] lack of respect for food and the importance of food for us nutritionally, socially, ecologically, respect for food, and the land I guess, and heck for each other. We know that people on minimum wage or social assistance do not have enough money to have a healthy diet, but we're not doing anything about that)!
Unmet food needs	[I] went down [to the food bank] and just saw the extreme state of despair down there. I talked to one of the mothers and I'll never forget her story. She said "We have no food in the house the third or fourth week" and "I boil hot water and I add salt and pepper to it to make soup."
The right to food denied	We're hearing stories where the daycare supervisor was lining up at a food bank to get food for the kids. When we heard that we were outraged! It's shocking! There are some big gaping holes [in the social safety net]. These are things [food programs] that are underpinnings of our society, where there is no negotiation they have to be there! People are going to suffer!
Food democracy denied	When I'm a dad and my wife and kids are going hungry and I've lost my job and I've done everything that I could possibly do and now I find after years of paying taxes and contributing – and realize if the bottom fell out of everything, I could still go on welfare- but you've just told me I'm not gonna get welfare or I'm gonna get such a small amount I can't feed my family! I'm gonna get mad at some point! I'm gonna talk to my neighbor and he's gonna get mad! And we're all gonna march down the streets and throw rocks through windows until somebody listens.
Corporate control over that which is sacred (food)	Food is absolutely necessary for life; it has always had some sacredness. It is because God or the Earth or Manatu gives us food to survive that we are able to survive...so all of our spirituality and our religious basing go towards trying to be as one with the holy power that feeds us. Now, commodifying, the insistence that food is to be valued solely for its monetary worth...Now we have Monsanto and Loblaws as the holy power, which feeds us...which seems to me like something's missing here...something extremely important.
Corporate control over values	[Corporate manipulation through the media means] the average citizen is denied the knowledge to make educated decisions about how they want to feed themselves. One of the horrors of our time is how people who are basically totalitarian have stolen the family and community values.

Table 2 is most instructive not only because it illustrates the breadth of food injustices the leaders are concerned about, but also the depth of their concern, expressed in language ranging from despair to horror. This table reveals the very personal nature of the CFS concept, the way it touches people's lives physically, socially, emotionally, spiritually, psychologically, and environmentally. It also makes clear that ideology is a strong link between these leaders. Important ideologically based framing principles emerge, such as the right to food and food democracy. A closer examination of these principles is the focus of the next chapter.

Significantly, Table 2 also illustrates the complexity and interconnectedness of injustices. It reveals CFS is impacted by a number of systems including, but not limited to, the economic, welfare, communication, agriculture, health, education, and political systems. Finally, it suggests there are differing perceptions amongst the leaders about the cause and the culprit for these problems – society, government, and corporations are all implicated.

What is the Cause of Food Insecurity? Who is to Blame?

In virtually every case when leaders were asked to identify the cause of and/or to name the culprit for CFS issues, the interview momentarily came to a standstill. Several asked that I repeat the questions, while they contemplated responses. As the interviews progressed, it became clear that leaders were either at different stages in their critical analysis of the problem (and its causes) and/or they were simply finding the articulation of the linkages between cause and effect challenging.

One leader provided this response to the question about the cause and culprit for food security issues: "My goodness. I just realized this was my first food security issue [lack of long-term thinking] and now I have to come up with the whys." When further pressed she

added, "Right. The one [cause] that comes immediately to mind, but I don't know if it's gone on about, I don't know if it's the driver or not, or if it's the result of - it's certainly our political process. We can't even say we have a four year plan, right?" In this quote, the leader identified lack of long-term thinking as the primary issue. In later discussions, she expanded upon the meaning of her lack of long term thinking comment. Specifically, she stated "society lacks visionaries" who insist "the root of the problem must be addressed today rather than patching up concerns tomorrow". She also asserted, "many of these concerns are entirely preventable".

This leader's concern about lack of long-term thinking came up frequently during the interview as did the observation "right now I guess what drives our society is money and that maybe doesn't lead us to making long term decisions." During the interview she also suggested she was in search of common ground between hunger and sustainable agriculture issues:

> There are so many special interest groups out there. How do you make it so that it's not just more special interest groups...so we are all working towards the same objectives and that they do meet...the new Ten Commandments or something else in society? What's the common theme? What can we say we are all committed to here?

Again in later discussions, she expanded upon her line of thinking. Specifically her search is to find ways to articulate the links between the two issue areas, an articulation that would make the broader food system issues meaningful to those individuals experiencing the day-to-day realities of hunger.

In response to the same question, another leader initially replied, "I don't know the whys, but I know the outcome – the outcome is that the line up gets longer every year." However, in the next breath he added:

> Well the quick answer to that question is that the government has reflected society's wish that we reduce the social safety net that used to go at least partly towards meeting some of those objectives [ensuring food security]. Now we are in a worse situation then we were 10 years ago. In some cases its individual choices – which people have decided to spend income on things that don't necessarily reflect those particular objectives [getting the best nutrition for their dollar]. But in most cases, it's simply not enough financial resources to meet those needs. Depending on charity to do, it still doesn't meet those needs.

This leader suggested that societal values were the problem. Moreover, he expanded upon his thoughts by articulating linkages: values affect policy, policy affects the welfare system, the welfare system affects income, and income affects food access and whether or not one will go hungry. He did not offer an explanation, however, for the fact that societal values are different today than they were 10 years ago, when social programs appear to have more satisfactorily met the needs of the poor. At one point in the interview he did say, "the [social] agenda is basically a corporate one." Yet he did not make a link between corporate values, societal values, and his key concern - hunger. In fact this leader was reluctant to place blame, stating, "it isn't a constructive approach." He was particularly cautious about blaming the corporate food industry - he spoke of the corporate food sector as partners in the alleviation of hunger (the rationale for caution in placing blame is elaborated upon in the *political nature of community food security* section pp. 71-73).

The third leader stated she has remained committed to the original concerns that brought her to the food security table – hunger, health, and well being. She said her perspective had broadened recently to include the local food system component of the CFS concept. She suggested a cause and effect relationship between hunger, control of food decisions, and the industrial food system. She added, "It's all those bigger picture things- policy, trade – the stuff [other leaders] go on about." She made clear that these issues needed to be addressed if food security was to be realized over the long term. She also stated that she addressed the issues in a small way, and she supported others who were addressing these issues, but her main interest was in the local picture.

The fourth leader was most concerned with the political picture, particularly the provincial political landscape and its impact on communities and people. She clearly articulated that her primary concerns were hunger and sustainability of the food supply. Further, she named the causes - values within the provincial government (which in her view do not reflect the populace) and current policy directions resulting in the dismantling of systems that supported programs alleviating hunger and promoting sustainable food systems. Her position is illuminated, in part, in the following excerpts from her interview:

> I think this government is shifting towards individualism and an individualistic society where it's "you're on your own, baby" and "we're not going to help you"... and "we're going to do everything we can to cut back the social safety net". I believe that it [the current government's philosophy] does not represent the average person in our community. I think people are much more giving and empathetic than what we're going to see quite frankly. I think we're going to see an increase in poverty – an increase in the inability of people to cope. People are going to suffer, they're going to

> become sick, they're going to become ill and the burden of disease on our system...and it's going to show up in terms of malnutrition, it will show up in terms of crime, it will show up in terms of drug abuse, it will show up in terms of alcoholism and it will turn up in terms of suicide.

This leader linked provincial concerns to global concerns, however, she stopped short of naming a global culprit.

The remaining two leaders appeared to be quite a bit further down the analytical track, articulating causes, effects, and complex linkages between differing phenomena. Perhaps they were simply more at ease articulating the linkages given each had at least a decade more experience in the food security arena than had each of the previous four leaders.

The fifth leader placed the blame for her priority issue, unjust and unsustainable food systems, squarely on the shoulders of the corporate food industry. She asserted that the corporate agenda, essentially the accumulation of wealth, has resulted in the commodification of practically everything, including food. Further, she firmly believed the commodification of food (valuing it solely for its monetary worth), along with the view that food is to be produced for export first, was the key factor contributing to consolidation and control within the food industry. According to this leader everyone lives in a very food insecure situation. She states "We are all dependent on a shrinking number of huge transnational food corporations controlling that which is essential for life and health."

This leader extended her analysis to explain hunger:

> If food is viewed solely as a commodity, then the commodification of food essentially means the poor will be hungry. Commodification mitigates against the subsistence perspective, the idea that we have in fact the capacity to feed ourselves. It mitigates

> against the "of course we do it" attitude, the attitude of self-reliance -and that's not individual self-reliance but community self-reliance.

Thus from this leader's perspective, values, and attitude play into consolidation and control and a shift in values and attitudes is the way out.

Finally, in the following excerpt, the sixth leader offered one of the most comprehensive explanations for CFS issues, food injustice, and poor health:

> [Community food insecurity exists because of] the successful corporate agenda of getting people to think of themselves as consumers, then consumers to think that debt reduction and deficit reduction are more important than everything else has gotten to the point where the corporate agenda has been successful in convincing governments that they have no power and authority, and acting as though they don't, and then acting and moving ahead as a purveyor of corporate interest. So then they become an aide to the further destruction of democracy and further the empowerment of corporations to be making decisions for us.

This leader does not focus blame exclusively on the industrialized food sector, rather he places blame on the broader corporate sector. He clarifies during his interview that he does not believe capitalism, as an ideology is to blame, rather he believes it is "capitalism gone awry". He places the blame on a handful of corporate oligopolies that have seemingly limitless power and/or control over food decisions.

This leader's explanation appears to tie together most of the responses from the other leaders. That is, he identifies there is an imbalance in control over systems impacting food access and/or supply. He states the causes (knowledge/values of the dominant paradigm, media, policy, systems, and behaviours) and he names the culprit (primarily corporations and

secondarily governments and civil society). As such his explanation may serve as the basis of a master frame for the CFS concept. However, this understanding of the issues, causes and culprit, is not clearly articulated and/or illustrated in any of the FPO documents. Moreover, while all leaders identified components of a master frame, not all were able to articulate linkages between components. Not all were willing to directly place blame on the corporate sector. Thus, in the final analysis, as a group, the leaders participating in this research did not have an agreed upon master frame. Yet the components of such a frame are known amongst the group.

The Cycle of Community Food Insecurity.

To illustrate the way conceptualizations of the issues, the causes, and the culprits amongst this group of leaders may be viewed as complementary, a new diagram entitled *The Cycle of Community Food Insecurity* has been crafted (see Figure 1).

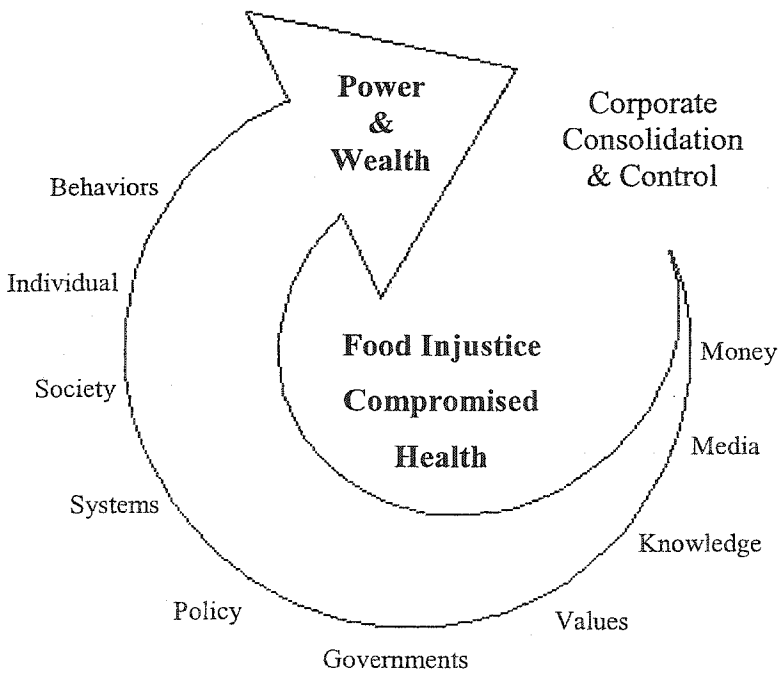

Figure 1. The Cycle of Food Insecurity: An interplay of factors giving rise to community food security issues

The *Cycle of Community Food Insecurity* illustrates that the leaders believe no single factor in itself is the sole cause of CFS issues rather they are the result of cyclic interplay between a number of factors. The cycle illustrates how corporations use money and the media to influence the knowledge and values of governments. Governments then create policies, systems, and programs congruent with corporate values (the commodification of food and water; global free trade; and the privatization of health, education and social systems, are all sample systems changes that perpetuate the corporate agenda). Society encourages and supports these policies, systems, and programs. At the end of the cycle the individual receiving information from media, society, government and corporations (as well as living in a context where policy, systems and law perpetuate the corporate agenda) adopts values congruent with the corporate sector and behaves in ways to perpetuate their agenda (money is valued, food is considered solely as a commodity, farming is not valued, hunger is ignored, and fast food establishments proliferate as do food banks). The result of this cycle is increased inequities in wealth; corporate consolidation and control over systems impacting the access to and the supply of the foods required for health; food insecurity and compromised environmental, community and individual health. The leaders within BC's CFS movement assert this cycle creates systems that are socially, ecologically, and economically unjust and unsustainable.

It is important to emphasize here that this cycle was crafted upon information found within the research data only. Undoubtedly, more elaborate, in-depth cycles portraying similar concepts exist in the literature, particularly within political, economic, and/or social disciplines. This tool, in conjunction with other theory, can further the construction of a master frame.

Just Food for a Change

This section presents the leaders' conceptualizations about what needs to be done to realize CFS and who needs to be involved. Just as the issues are broad, diverse, complex and inextricably linked, so are the solutions. In essence, it appears that the leaders want nothing less than a paradigm shift (Details of the paradigm shift concept may be found on p. 83). Such a shift is necessary in order to reverse the cycle of food insecurity, to change policies and systems, and to realize food justice, health, and well being.

Integral to achieving this paradigm shift is the support of processes encouraging food citizenry everywhere. According to Welsh and MacRae (1998), food citizens are active participants in shaping the systems impacting their access to, and supply of food as opposed to passive consumers. In a community that encourages food citizenry, people are engaged in gardens, kitchens, farming, policy, research, whatever measures they identify as necessary to shape the system to meet their needs. Reflecting on the varying degrees of political activism in the group, the leaders speak of creating food citizenry as the creation of a "social movement" or a "crusade" towards political change. One leader describes it as "community development" towards policy change. Another leader describes the process as "building community capacity" and moving towards policy change.

The activities put forth by the leaders are summarized in five activity areas: 1) educating and enlightening the masses to raise consciousness about the issues, the causes and the solutions, 2) feeding people in the short term to alleviate immediate hunger needs, 3) managing systems more efficiently to ensure no healthy foods are wasted, 4) creating alternative community food programs, and 5) changing welfare, economic, trade, agricultural, health, and other food security related policies. This spectrum of activities fits

well with an illustrative prognostic framing tool *The Food Security Continuum* found in the documents of participating FPOs (See Figure 2). Three leaders mentioned that they utilized this tool to convey meaning to others about the "road to CFS".

The Food Security Continuum

The *Food Security Continuum* illustrates and explains solutions to CFS issues and the typical stages of change that individuals and communities experience on their journey to food security (Houghton, 1998). The theoretical backbone for the continuum was derived from the work of MacRae (TFPC, 1994). A visual diagram of the continuum was originally published in the *Dietitians of Canada Newsletter* in 1998, and has since appeared and/or has been cited in other documents (Gibson & Kneen, 2003; Houghton, 1998; Kalina, 2000, 2002). .

Stage 1	**Stage 2**	**Stage 3**
Efficiency	**Alternatives**	**Redesign**
		→ **Food Security**
Feeding programs:	Community food projects:	Policy development:
Food banks,	Community kitchens,	Municipal food policy,
Soup kitchens,	Gardens,	Health food policy,
School meal programs.	Food buying clubs,	Agri-food policy,
	Shared farming,	School food policy,
	Co-ops,	Welfare policy,
	Markets,	Economic policy,
	Gleaning.	Trade policy,
		Income Policy.

Figure 2. The Food Security Continuum: Stages of change in mobilizing communities towards food security.

Figure 2 illustrates group activities to address food security are quite varied but fall into one of three broad stages along a continuum. The first stage involves the creation of efficiency strategies, or action plans, to maximize existing resources to address food issues. These strategies provide immediate, albeit temporary relief for the individual experiencing food insecurity. These strategies may be completed with little commitment from the individual in receipt of resources or services. The second stage, alternatives, involves bringing together concerned citizens to identify their food security issues and to act upon them. The result is the creation of alternative community food programs. Stage two strategies take longer to evolve and require involvement and commitment from the food insecure themselves. The third stage, redesign strategies, involves focused activity on policy to redesign the systems giving rise to food insecurity. Stage three strategies require a long-term commitment from a diversity of sectors concerned about food security including policy makers and the food insecure themselves. As such, they are often the most difficult to mobilize communities to pursue. Individuals and/or groups will enter the continuum at any stage. Moreover, they will only move on to another stage, if they have exhausted efforts in a current stage.

The *Food Security Continuum* not only presents the various solutions to CFS issues, but also it demonstrates the relationship between the solutions. Further, it makes clear the long-term goal is systems redesign. It is broad in its conceptualization of the solutions such that it resonates with practically anyone concerned about food (from the food banker to the policy activists). For example, the food banker said the work he was engaged in fit well with stage one and perhaps even stage two on the continuum. The farmers/food policy activists described activities that fell into stages two and three. The community nutritionists were

engaged in activity across all three stages of the continuum. While stage three is the stated goal of each FPO in this study, the thrust of activities in evidenced in the documents these organizations was stage two, the creation of alternative community food programs.

Policy Suggestions Put Forth in the Absence of a Master Frame

As part of their response to the question "What are the solutions to CFS?" the leaders asserted seven broad policy needs: 1) an action plan on food security at all levels of government, 2) social policy at all levels of government to eliminate child hunger, 3) health, social, education and agricultural policy to support nutrition education and meal programs for schools, seniors, children in day care, high risk pregnant women and their families, and people with mental illnesses, 4) social policy to support adequate social benefits ensuring recipients could purchase the foods required for health, 5) health policy that focuses on prevention or "turning off the tap, rather than mopping up the mess," 6) agricultural policy preserving agricultural land, local food production capacity, and 7) agricultural policy supporting food production to meet the needs of the population first and then exporting the rest.

At first glance these statements may appear contradictory. This may or may not be the case. First, the full meaning of each statement was not explored or revealed during the course of the interview. Exploring the specific policy aims of the leaders and/or the FPOs was not the focus of this inquiry. Also, the statements are presented without context, thus they may appear contradictory. For example, one policy suggestion put forth was to create social policy targeting vulnerable groups. However, as shall be revealed in the next chapter, the same leader(s) support the universal right to food. Advocating for policy to support feeding

programs for vulnerable populations may represent a strategy that the leader(s) felt was feasible given the political context at the time of the interview.

That the statements appear contradictory however, is entirely consistent with theory and research that suggests that in the absence of a master frame attempts at policy change will be fragmented and contradictory. The fact that these statements appear contradictory is also consistent with an analysis of the political activity of BC's CFS movement in chapter 2, which was based on a review of the policy documents from the FPOs including the five FPOs represented by the leaders involved in this research.

Who is Responsible for Community Food Security?

The leaders provided a lengthy list of partners who are vital to the process of ensuring food security. Partners included representatives of the environmental, political, cultural, education, spiritual/faith, social, economic, and health sectors, as well as ordinary citizens (including farmers and those living with poverty). Interestingly, the corporate sector is excluded from the list of partners, indicating perhaps more consciousness of allies and adversaries than apparent in other parts of the interview.

Leaders also provided numerous suggestions regarding the role of the different sectors. Significantly, each leader emphasized that all sectors are responsible to ensure the right to food and freedom from hunger. Further all sectors have a responsibility to participate in the activities to create just and sustainable food systems. Suggestions found in both the interview and the document data regarding the responsibilities of differing sectors have been synthesized in Table 3.

Table 3.

Sectors and their responsibility for community food security.

Sector	Responsibility
Academics	Academics have a responsibility to conduct research monitoring the CFS situation, evaluating the effectiveness of CFS measures, and ensuring policy makers and the public, are informed about the results of their endeavors. Further, they have a distinct responsibility to enlighten the populace about the issues, the causes, and their solutions.
Business	Business has a responsibility to have local food products on their shelves and to voice their food concerns to policy makers.
Community Nutritionists	Community nutritionists have the professional responsibility to ensure the nutritional health and well being of the population, to educate and raise awareness about the issues, causes, and solutions, to support community food alternatives, to voice their concerns to food decision makers and empower the food insecure to voice their concerns to decision makers.
Community Organizations	Community organizations involved with or concerned about CFS have a responsibility to: purchase local foods based on quality not just price; to support citizen empowerment in the creation of community food alternatives voicing their food concerns to policy makers.
Farmers	Farmers have a responsibility to use sustainable food production practices, and to voice their food concerns to the policy makers.
Faith Groups	Faith groups have a role not only in feeding the hungry but also in building community capacity to move towards longer-term solutions. Further they have a responsibility to participate in any social movement to create the policy change to make that happen.
Individuals	All people must voice their food needs to policy makers, and purchase local food based on quality not just price.
Policy Makers	All levels of government have a distinct responsibility to provide policy, programs, and services that reflect the will of the populace. They are responsible to provide the context for CFS including economic security and sustainable local food systems.

While Table 3 does not provide an exhaustive summary of the responsibilities for key sectors, it is instructive in demonstrating that diversity of sectors the breadth of responsibilities.

The Political Nature of Community Food Security

This chapter has revealed that the leaders are at varying stages in their analysis of and/or their ability to articulate the political nature of CFS issues. While a number of factors may play a role in this situation, those that emerge in this research include: the belief wall, the risky business of speaking up, dealing with the immediate crisis, and knowledge, experience, interest and time.

The belief wall.

The fact that the leaders did not readily articulate causes and culprits corresponds with findings of the *Peoples Food Commission* study discussed in chapter 2 (PFC, 1980). That study concluded that the inability of society to identify the cause and culprit for food system problems was a phenomenon deliberately constructed by the corporate sector. That is, through the use of the media, corporations created a belief wall that was seemingly impermeable. Corporations portrayed themselves as the engine of a wealthy and healthy society, providing jobs and security. The study concluded that Canadians were conditioned to believe, among other things, that they are responsible for their problems. A circle of blame existed where people blamed each other for food system failure rather than probing deeper to examine the root cause and the culprit.

Today, twenty-five years later, it seems the belief wall described by the *Peoples Food Commission* is still an obstacle. One leader stated she believed society has bumbled its way into the current predicament, as opposed to believing that today's CFS issues are deliberately

constructed by the corporate sector. Another clearly stated that corporations were responsible citizens and partners in combating hunger. His beliefs about targeting the corporate food industry are summarized below:

> When you think of [those who say] "we gotta tear down the Safeways", "completely change and go back to little rural markets and this wonderful way where everybody can be close to the food that is grown" -it isn't gonna happen, right? And there's no point in food banks helping tear down Safeways, that isn't a constructive approach. I don't think food banks will buy into [dismantling Safeways], because they already have close relationship with the existing food system.

However, while it is clear the wall still exists, cracks are appearing. Within this group, three leaders plainly pointed to the corporate sector as the culprit, while the other three implied this sector had a role.

Speaking up is risky business.

Undoubtedly, fear prohibits blaming. The food industry is a multi-billion dollar business in Canada. As such, it wields considerable power and influence. For example, a number of leaders were directly linked to organizations benefiting from and/or dependent upon the food industry. Kellogg Canada, Nestle, Kraft, and others offer huge educational grants to charities (food banks), community organizations, and Dietitians of Canada. Finger pointing at a funding source is risky business. One leader spoke of this issue:

> A shift in power that's [what members of my FPO desire] for sure, and as I go on I realize easier said than done! I'm always ruminating on things [and] thinking, OK now is the next stage of the project. These people that are living in poverty need to take a lead role. They were talking about marching on City Hall. Now our FPO name

> is attached to that. Now what if they go a bit awry and the FPO name is attached to that? We're- you know it comes down to - we are responsible to our funders.

Another leader spoke directly about the corporate consolidation and control issue at a CFS visioning session. She said, "We need to learn to fly under their radar" (HEAL, 2003).

Dealing with crisis.

Hunger, and/or loss of the family farm are immediate critical needs that must be addressed. It may be unrealistic to expect that people who are engaged in fulfilling this need will have the time or energy to reflect upon root causes and/or culprits. It is quite a leap to look upstream when there are so many individuals needing rescuing downstream. One leader offers his thoughts on moving towards systems redesign work:

> I must say I was initially quite threatened by the food security initiatives. I didn't see that our board at the time was ready for a community development aspect of [added to their food bank work] and providing coordinators and having a whole bunch of educational stuff going on when you're trying to get potatoes for tomorrow! My feeling [today] is that it [feeding] is the first step [and] make[ing] sure people can get enough to eat then move on giving them the tools to be self sufficient and build community capacity and on from there [to changing the systems].

Knowledge, experience, interest and time.

According to one leader, policy is a foreign word to many and an overwhelming task to others. Further, he suggests not all leaders have the understanding, expertise, and interest to work in the policy area. Another leader observed that moving into the policy arena takes time. This leader used the *Food Security Continuum* to trace her decade long journey in connecting the personal to the political. She spoke of her initial engagement in CFS work, a

personal eye-opening experience at a food bank, and the transition to her current activities, which include advocacy around the creation of municipal food policy. She discussed the way her thinking evolved in the process:

> I never really understood the policy piece - it took me a while. Although I talked about it, and we formed a food policy council, it just didn't make sense to me. Every year I learn policy makes more and more sense. I can [now] see an example of local policy that makes a difference.

Chapter Summary

Leaders identified two dominant issue areas –freedom from hunger and sustainability of the food supply. Food injustice, an imbalance in control of the systems impacting the ability to access and/or supply the foods required for health, was passionately verbalized as the link between the two issue areas. Health, the goal of CFS, was spoken of only after probing and is thus referred to as the invisible link between issue areas.

Food matters - the leaders value food and understand its critical role in life and health. It was this understanding that fuels their outrage when they perceive the ability to access food is denied. Food injustice is the motivational factor behind the leaders' continued engagement in CFS work. Hence, ideology is a significant consideration, which must be included in any analysis of the CFS concept.

A widely accepted "master frame" did not emerge within this group, nor was one found in the documents of FPOs. Further, a coherent policy strategy had not been developed. However, the pieces of a master frame were articulated. That is, most leaders were able to identify the issues. Further, all were able to name one or two causative factors. All were also

able to name a culprit. Two of the leaders were able to articulate complex linkages. One described a complex interplay of the factors or a cycle of food insecurity.

This chapter also revealed that the leaders sought nothing less than a paradigm shift and the policy change required to create just and sustainable food systems. They provided a broad number of activities to achieve this mammoth task. Creating food citizenry everywhere was a central strategy to achieve their aim. The policy advocated is best described as vague, and this is to be expected given the absence of a master frame and a coherent policy strategy.

One of the barriers to the creation of a master frame, or the identification of the cause and the culprits, is thought to be a wall of beliefs. This wall is a set of messages created by the corporate sector to further their agenda – the accumulation of wealth and power. This wall plays a role in the leaders' reluctance to name the culprit.

Ideology has emerged as the central theme in this chapter. It fuels the leaders' outrage, it hinders articulation of the master frame, and a change in ideology is the thrust of the movement, which is thought to be necessary to achieve CFS. Exploring ideology is the substance of the next chapter.

Chapter 5

Going Against the Grain

This chapter draws out the ideological underpinnings, or the values, beliefs, and assumptions, shaping the way leaders conceptualize CFS. It specifically pieces together a set of ideologically based principles shared amongst the leaders. When this set of shared principles is examined in light of the dominant paradigm it is clear that the leaders' perspectives are counter–culture. This chapter also reveals that differences exist amongst the leaders in their ideological stances and these differences cause tensions. Language emerges as a factor contributing to tensions.

It is important to point out that the set of common principles does not form what social movement theorists would call a master frame. The principles do not specify the issues, the causes, and the culprit. The discussion in the previous chapter makes clear that within this group of leaders a widely accepted master frame has yet to emerge. However, ideologically based principles underpin the master frame. Thus, the extent to which the leaders' ideological stances agree reflects the extent to which leaders are able to construct a master frame and a coherent food policy strategy. Similarly, the capacity of the group to find common language also reflects their capacity to construct a master frame and a coherent food policy strategy.

The chapter concludes with the leaders' reflections on tensions and set of propositions to inform the construction of a master frame.

Shared Framing Principles

The shared set of ideologically based principles espoused by each leader includes those mentioned or alluded to in previous chapters – balance, community, community

alternatives, diversity, economic security, education, empowerment, food democracy, food justice, food matters, food needs and rights, health, holism, local, paradigm shift, social movement, policy change, sustainability, and systems redesign. Each principle is vital to realizing CFS. That is, in the absence of any one principle, CFS would not be realized over the long term.

Principles are presented in alphabetical order rather than hierarchical or functional order. Each principle includes a definition derived from the interviews. In most cases, a quote from the data is provided to illustrate and/or expand upon the meaning of the principles.

Balance.

The principle states that harmony and equilibrium between people, the planet, and systems that govern each is necessary to achieve CFS. Leaders demonstrated the principle of balance as they sought to accommodate dialectical agendas and relationships in their ongoing CFS work. Further, they demonstrated this principle in their desire for sustainable, diverse, peaceful non-violent solutions to issues. In the following quote, one leader reveals a remarkable capacity for balance:

> When it [food banking] sounds to be dishonored or denigrated - I get upset about that! Because it's negating all that good will and all that good energy that goes into it. There has to be a way of turning that into a positive somehow and so I have tried to do that. There's an interesting saying that a candle doesn't loose its brightness by sharing its flame with another candle – so there's a way. My philosophy has been to encourage food banks to work with everybody because we have much more to gain by working together.

Community/Food Citizenry.

The principle of community/food citizenry states that creating community around food is an essential ingredient for community food security. Creating community involves bringing together a group of people so that they may articulate their food needs, develop a vision for food security, participate in shaping the local food system, depend upon one another, respect and care about each other's food needs, make decisions together, identify themselves as something larger than the sum of their relationships, and commit themselves for the long term to their own and each other's nutritional well-being. According to one leader "community" is the key word in the CFS concept. She says:

> What makes me feel safe, secure, not anxious is knowing I've got good neighbors, and friends who'll take care of me. In a food secure situation people are dependent only on members of the food community in that we all have certain gifts- we all have certain skills and so we share them around in a community.

Community-based alternatives.

The principle of community-based alternatives states the creation of community food security programs, as alternatives to current programs that are unable to provide CFS and/or ensure CFS over the long term, are essential steps along the way to realizing CFS. According to one leader:

> There's not one answer [to address CFS issues], there's lots of answers. The answers are those little building blocks, which create the sustainable, equitable, just, open, non-commodified food system...the community kitchens, the community gardens, gleaning projects ...all kinds of festivals.

Diversity.

The principle of diversity states differences are strengths, and that there are multiple ways of doing things, and that people can learn from the experiences of others. Diversity was evident in the spectrum of actors and agendas welcomed at the food security table within all FPOs. It was also evident in the breadth of the issues and solutions undertaken to address the issues. Leaders expressed concern about loss of diversity, culture, and community – characteristics of current "unjust" and "unsustainable" systems.

Economic security.

Within the realm of CFS, economic security exists when all people at all times have the income required to access and/or supply the foods required for health. Leaders advocated social assistance benefits that enabled recipients to cover basic food, clothing, housing, medical, and child care needs. Further they advocated a fair living wage for all people including in particular those working in the food system.

Education.

The education principle states that educating the masses - raising social consciousness about the issues, causes, and culprits and solutions - is a critical strategy to realize CFS. In line with this belief is the belief that values have been manipulated by the corporate sector through a variety of media. Providing society with the knowledge to make educated decisions is the key to shifting values such that people view themselves as citizens rather than consumers.

Empowerment.

The empowerment principle states fostering processes to place individuals and communities in the driver's seat with respect to decisions about their food is a central strategy to realize CFS. According to one leader:

> I guess the primary one [CFS element] is citizen empowerment – people will have some control and say over the decisions related to food that affect their lives. [When empowered] individuals and as members of communities can decide, with knowledge, [they can] make educated decisions about how they want to feed themselves.

Food democracy.

The principle of food democracy states that systems impacting food access and food supply must be participatory and involving; that people are entitled to have a voice in decisions about their food and that the decisions that people make can't be overrun by other larger entities and larger forces. Ensuring food democracy was identified to be another critical element to any food security strategy: According to one leader:

> We need voice from more people, a bit more diversity of people. [It] can't just be people with money running the show. We need more people informed about the issues.

Food justice.

The food justice principle appeared to be an over-arching principle under which all other principles could be placed. This principle states that CFS must be equitably and fairly assured for all. As seen in Chapter 4, if food justice is to be realized, there must be balance in the structures governing food security. Accordingly, when there is an imbalance, an inequity,

unfairness, a violation of rights and/or oppression compromising access to and/or a supply of the foods required for health, then a *food injustice* is said to exist. In the following quote one leader speaks about the injustice of Canada's agricultural policy, which has lead to the demise of the small family farm and has enabled the monopolization of the food system by a handful of transnational food corporations:

> We have a farm population under 2% and the wheat used to provide the baker with the bread the local person would have been nourished by is now in the hands of only a handful [of] corporations, that are also tobacco companies, that are also pharmaceutical companies [and] that are also genetic biotech companies. These conglomerates, oligarchies, in many ways act as a monopoly would. There are very little differences [and] there's no competition between them.

Food matters.

The food matters principle asserts that food is to be valued, respected, and understood as foundational to life and health. The food matters principle is very closely linked to the principle of health. Leaders each expressed a personal, and at times intimate, connection to food and/or CFS extending beyond the career/economic security link.

Food needs and rights.

The food needs and rights principle states food is a universal human need and a basic human right. As such, food access and supply must be assured for all people today, tomorrow, and in the future. Further, the context must be such that the right to food can be realized. The food needs and rights principle is integral to the food justice and sustainability principles.

Local.

The local principle states that a decentralized, closer to home, bottom-up approach is necessary to realize CFS. It is also states that the wisdom of experience is to be valued and included in CFS building processes. The local principle is highly complementary to the community and the sustainability principles. The following two quotes from two different leaders illustrate their local stance:

> And it [policy] should come from us and it should come from top up and top down – more top up –meaning from the grassroots and from what we see as well as what other partner stakeholders see.
>
> They [communities] have to have something that's close to people, that people trust and feel secure and so creating the farmer's market and community gardens – all of that is essential.

Health.

The health principle is the belief that healthy, well-nourished people supported by just, sustainable local food systems is the goal of CFS. Compromised nutritional health and compromised community capacity to feed its citizens are the critical outcome when CFS is lacking. The principle of health is closely linked to the principles of food matters, food justice, food needs and rights and sustainability.

Holism.

The holism principle states that every event or phenomenon must be seen as a whole, and that it cannot be properly understood without reference to the smaller integral components of the larger systems. Leaders demonstrated a remarkable capacity for holistic thinking - linking food access to supply, local to global, past to present and future, and

personal food issues to political issues. In the following quote, this leader links the problem of a lack of long-term thinking or the failure to address the root causes of problems to a variety of other food issues:

> I'll figure the number one [CFS] issue is not looking long- term. It goes across all the issues: genetic engineering; our feeding practices with our cows; food safety; the kinds of farming techniques that [are contributing to] contaminating our water. It goes with not seeing the true cost of food [and] the economic ramifications. It goes with not caring for our children and building [feeding] the children so that they can learn in school.

Paradigm shift.

The paradigm shift principle states that in order to realize CFS dominant world-views must be shifted to more closely resonate with the views within the CFS movement. That is, the principles that underpin the CFS movement must be understood and embraced to a greater degree than they currently embraced by the mainstream. Further, until a paradigm shift occurs all other measures to achieve CFS shall have limited success. One leader suggests:

> People instead of admiring the greedy, the socio-paths, have to start seeing it [money] for what it is, and start looking for values at community level – community and family.

Policy towards systems change.

The policy towards systems change principle states that, while measures must be taken to address the immediate food security issues, unless changes are made to the policies

that create and perpetuate dysfunctional systems any other solution to CFS problems will have limited value.

Social movement /building capacity.

The social movement/building capacity principle states that mobilizing communities towards policy change is a central CFS strategy. Leaders described community organizing towards policy change in a variety of terms – terms that varied in their degree of political neutrality. For example one leader stated: "we need to create a social movement based on the principles of justice and equity", while another suggested "we need to build community capacity all along the [food security] continuum with a net movement towards policy change".

Sustainability.

Within the realm of CFS the term sustainability extends beyond traditional ecological concerns to encompass social and ecological concerns. In the ecological sense, food sustainability means that the methods by which food is produced, processed, and distributed must not compromise the soil, land, air, water, or food for future generations. In the social/economic sense, food sustainability means assured access to food today, tomorrow, and in the future. In order for these principles to work together the measures to ensure social and economic sustainability must not compromise measures to ensure ecological sustainability. Thus, if the problem is poverty, the solution is redistribution (of wealth, resources etc.), not the creation of more wealth.

Principles: Degree of fit With the Dominant Ideology.

At first glance, these principles may seem like motherhood statements that would resonate with practically anyone. The set of principles, however, outlines quite clearly a

paradigm that is not congruent with mainstream views in BC. In fact, the leaders pointed out that the existing dominant paradigm is based on principles counter to their own. The leaders spoke at length about the differences suggesting specifically that within the mainstream: the principles of economic growth and competition take precedence over the balance principle; reductionism and linear thinking take precedence over holism; globalization and food for export take precedence over local (farms and feeding the family); specialization (and technology) takes precedence over diversity (and nature); individualism and competition takes precedence over community; food for the deserving (those who work or those deemed eligible for welfare) takes precedence over the right to food for all; treatment of disease takes precedence over prevention of disease; big box food outlets take precedence over the local food markets; profit for a few takes precedence over economic security for all; food valued as money takes precedence over food valued as life, health and community; and consumerism takes precedence over citizenship.

Differences in Ideological Stances: Tensions Revealed

While the previous section painted a somewhat rosy picture of the fact that the leaders shared a set of common, complementary principles, this is not to say that the ideological stance of each leader was perfectly matched. This research revealed that ideological differences existed, which were reflected in differing interpretations of the principles of economic security, local, power/empowerment, the right to food, and policy towards systems change. In addition, there were differences in beliefs around the role of money and the role of foodbanks in the CFS situation. These differences are summarized below.

Economic security.

Each leader at one point in their interview articulated that economic security was a fundamental prerequisite to CFS. Five of the six explicitly asserted economic security was necessary for everyone. One leader explicitly advocated for economic security for a segment of the population -those working in the food system. Upon further conversation with this leader, it became apparent that this position required further explanation. The leader stated that she openly advocates for economic food security for farmers, because she is aware that farmers are a rare group in Canada, and that they are on the verge of becoming extinct. Farmers' lives are with the land, yet they are being forced off their land, pushed by unjust policies and systems. They have little voice at policy tables. This leader asserts that advocating explicitly for their needs does not lessen her support for economic security for the growing number of Canadians reliant on food banks (CAFB, 2002). Further, support of farmers benefits all of the hungry, as food access is dependent on food supply. This insight is an important consideration for the movement in order to diffuse tensions that may arise when one leader advocates economic security for a specific group rather than for all.

Local.

The existence of tensions around the notion of local was raised by one of the leaders. Specifically, the debate concerned the following two views. The first view held that decisions about food must rest in communities if communities are to realize long- term food security. Central to this view is the belief that the current imbalance in power is perpetuated by the fact that people are distanced from their food and decisions about their food.

The second view held that centralized power is necessary for some aspects of CFS. For example, history has demonstrated that the implementation of national social policy, the

Canada Assistance Plan (CAP), reduced the situation of hunger and food insecurity (Guest, 1985). This policy specifically stated that all recipients were entitled to adequate funding to meet basic food needs. Prior to the CAP, the individual, charity, and community had the responsibility to ensure the right to food. Emergency food programs existed and public begging for food was the norm. When the CAP was originally put in place, emergency food programs all but disappeared, as did public begging for food. Since the demise of this policy, responsibility continues to be moved back into the hands of the charitable and community sector. Concurrently the food banks have proliferated, as have lineups (CAFB, 2002;Riches, 1986, 1997)

This debate raises the following important questions: What is local? To what extent can localized power ensure CFS? Is there a role for centralized power in ensuring CFS? To what extent can centralized power ensure CFS? What does this mean for policy direction? Tensions in this area will likely continue to mount, particularly if streams of the movement press for centralized policy and control, whilst other streams of the movement press for community policy and control over food decisions.

Money.

In the previous chapter, it was revealed that as a whole this group of leaders was grappling with the cause and culprit component of the food security dilemma. While the links between the global economic system and local food security issues were opaque for some, most observed that the valuing of money was a key CFS issue. One pressed this line of thinking a bit further than the rest by asserting that valuing food solely as a commodity is the key factor perpetuating consolidation of the food system, and the plethora of food issues.

This leader advocated a non-commodified food system. This was put forth as the ideal situation, understanding that the practicalities were huge hurdles.

The position is more idealistic and politicized than the positions of any of the other leaders. On the one hand, if pressed it would most certainly cause tensions amongst the group. On the other hand, putting forth this position may engage the leaders to examine the cause and effect piece of the puzzle. This can further the articulation of a master frame.

Power/Empowerment.

While all leaders agreed that citizen empowerment was a crucial element of CFS, there were differences in perceptions about how to increase citizen power. All leaders believed empowerment involved finding opportunities so that those experiencing the day-to-day realities of food insecurity at the grassroots level could participate in shaping the systems impacting their access to and supply of food (food democracy). All leaders stated that the ultimate goal was to change policy in order to change the systems creating CFS.

Two leaders, who were more community focused, emphasized that the grassroots approach is foundational to achieving this aim. Two other leaders, who were more policy focused, explicitly emphasized the need for a simultaneous two-pronged approach: creating a grassroots social movement for policy change, and joining the ranks of those in power and influencing them to change policy.

During the course of the interviews, differences between leaders around the approach became apparent. The basis of the disagreement, from one leaders' point of view, was the insistence that mobilizing the grassroots was the only way to realize CFS. This leader asserted that influencing those in power yielded immediate returns of human and material resources that were desperately needed by the movement, and thus it was an empowerment

strategy. Moreover, speaking with policy makers on behalf of the grassroots would fit with the principle of democracy, if permission from the grassroots were obtained. This leader further asserted that a two-pronged approach fit with the principle of diversity (as well as holism and balance).

From another leaders' point of view, however, the basis of the disagreement was not that the grassroots approach was the only approach, rather that the grassroots approach was the foundational approach. Those emphasizing a grassroots approach assert that policy makers will not change direction unless they are forced to do so by strong public opinion. In the context of strong public opinion, lobbyists can be effective. Further, the elitist approach - influencing others and acting on behalf of, or as the voice of the people - can be disempowering and undemocratic. The grassroots approach fits well with the principles of community and local.

If an imbalance in power is a central concern to the CFS movement, and an elitist approach by some leaders is seen as furthering the imbalance, then the use of this approach will continue to cause tensions unless this matter is addressed.

The right to food.

All six of the leaders asserted food was a basic human need, fundamental to life and health. Moreover, five of the six leaders clearly stated that food was a basic human right, something that should be assured. While the sixth agreed that food was a human right, this leader suggested that advocating for the right to food might not be the best overall strategy for the movement. This leader was concerned that the use of rights language implied a need to be protected. The use of rights language moved food into a legal arena where it could be viewed as something to be fought for, rather than a community arena where it could be

viewed as something to be shared. Placing the responsibility for the right to food with lawyers and/or government places control over this right in their hands. This leader also said dependence on the government to ensure the right to food, mitigates against self-sufficiency, or community self-sufficiency.

The counter argument to this was that without rights, food inequities grow. The line-ups at food banks were evidence of this. One leader who asserted food was a right said, "Food is medicine and just like Medicare, it must be guaranteed to everyone." Leaders advocating the right to food clearly saw a need for legal or policy protection. They believed the right to food was the responsibility of the government. Moreover, they were pressing the government for increases in social benefits to ensure recipients had sufficient income to purchase basic food needs.

While tensions about this issue were not voiced by the leaders during the interviews, (as had the tensions about perceptions of power), it seems highly probable that tensions will arise if this difference in ideologies is not addressed. This is particularly so, as streams of the movement push for the government to fulfill what they believe is its responsibility.

Systems change.

Differences arose between leaders with respect to which systems were problematic and requiring change. As mentioned in chapter 4, the leader with the food banking background believed the welfare system needed to be changed to ensure recipients have sufficient income to cover food, rent, clothing, health care, child care and transportation and other essential necessities of everyday living. In contrast, the sustainable agriculture advocates were adamant that the industrialized food system needed to be changed. They believed that resources and infrastructure are needed to support local sustainable food

production. These views can be complementary as previously described in the *Cycle of Food Insecurity*. However, the food banker disagreed with the notion that the industrialized food system was a problem. In fact, given the system provided huge amounts of surplus food to the food bank he saw the system as a partner in combating hunger and community food insecurity.

This situation points to the need for a master frame. Clearly, there are differences in perspectives about allies and culprits. Differing perspectives suggest different policy directions.

The role of food banks.

The perception of the place to start in moving towards systems change varied from leader to leader. While all agreed that feeding the hungry was critically important, two asserted it was the place to start, while the others suggested that the starting place was building capacity to create alternative food programs and/or in the policy arena.

Although this group of leaders saw food banks as partners, the leader with the food banking background spoke of the fact that this was not the case with all members of the CFS movement. This leader asserted that there were those who saw food banks as part of the problem rather than part of the solution. He asserted that those unsupportive of food banks point out that by feeding the hungry the food banks were letting the government off the hook. That is, governments can claim the hungry are fed. From this viewpoint food banks mitigate against social policy change that would ensure that social assistance rates allow recipients to purchase basic food needs.

Of interest is the fact that this leader agreed that the government was abandoning their responsibility: His position is made clear in the following quote:

> And I saw that part way through my mandate where it [social policy] shifted from welfare people saying "once you've used your benefits on welfare there's always the food bank" ...and we were [food banks] sort of a safety net in effect for the welfare system...and now they're saying "until you've exhausted your food bank entitlement you're not eligible for welfare!" We've actually had it come back to us like that. It's sort of taking the charity model and exploiting it.

Yet this leader remained steadfast in his belief that bottom line is ensuring people are fed. He added:

> And so I think many people realize that but they've got a tiger by the tail, working in charity. You want to help people and you don't want the people to be the football between government and the society as a whole.

This leader concluded his argument by posing the following question, "How can we expect the hungry to participate in building food security if they are not fed?"

Central to the debate about the role of food banks in the CFS movement is the extent to which the service is believed to be empowering. The food banker rationalized his position by suggesting that food banks were empowering. He asserted that the programs were empowering because they provided those experiencing the day-to-day realities of food insecurity with food - a fundamental prerequisite to engage the food insecure in further measures to build CFS. During his interview, he also suggested that food banks were empowering when recipients were engaged as board members in the shaping of and the provision of the service. This section raises again the differences in views about power, how to shift power, responsibility, and implications for policy. These are critical concerns to be addressed by the movement in order to further their policy aims.

Learning to Speak the Same Language

A differing yet intriguing conundrum, which has really only been alluded to thus far, became apparent during the examination of the data - the challenge of language. Given the breadth of perspectives at the food security table, finding words to satisfactorily capture the meaning of concepts can be difficult. Various actors in various ways interpreted words such as "community", "justice", "sustainability", and "health".

The process of coming up with shared meaning requires that thoughts are put forth as words. Actors in the movement hear, see, discuss, and digest these words. When a term fails to resonate with the majority, often a new innovative word emerges. Words such as food democracy and food justice have likely emerged from this type of process. These terms have excellent resonance with the group – given that food and ideology are foundational factors engaging their interest in CFS work. Likewise, the words "community food security" appear to be going through a reiteration process as the group searches for the language that resonates with the majority. The following section illustrates the tensions that arise with language.

Food security or food system?

One leader asserted the term "community food security" was problematic. The difficulty was not with the word community - which she defined as good neighbors who will take care of me. Furthermore, the difficulty was not with the word "food" - the common denominator bringing actors of the movement together. The difficulty for this leader centered on the word "security" and the "militaristic" notions it invoked. She asserts, "security is the idea that you are protected, over/against others." Thus, from her perspective CFS may be interpreted as protecting, stockpiling, and/or hoarding food sources. This leader goes on to say that she is "not interested in killing people" for food. In this light, the term CFS does not

fit with several of the common framing principles outlined in this previous chapter. This leader concludes that the word "system" is preferable to the word "security", because system makes explicit the locus of the problem. The word system links to the notion that food issues are the result of a dynamic interplay of structural factors.

Recently this matter was the topic of discussion at a food security meeting of community nutritionists (CNC, 2003). While the group was receptive to the sustainable food system concept, they were reluctant to use it in place of the CFS concept. The counter argument for retaining the CFS concept was that it linked CFS activities to international covenants – legitimizing and garnering support for their work in the area. Moreover, the food system term brought to mind the food supply issues and not the food access issues. At the end of the day, the group elected to use the terms interchangeably.

Finding the right words can be a source of tensions within the group and it can also impact the process of framing.

The Leaders' Reflections About Tensions

That tensions exist has not gone unobserved by the leaders. In fact, given the breadth of perspectives at the table, and that perspectives evolve with experience and changing context, leaders comment that tensions are to be expected. Further, they describe these tensions as "dynamic" and suggest that they are vital and, when acknowledged and addressed, build the strength of the movement. One leader sums up the differences eloquently:

> Within our group, for whatever reason, (and some of it is the largeness of heart of the people involved), the members of our FPO have been able to say our overriding

concern is sustainability and justice. We see this differently, so we'll just keep fighting about it.

Chapter Summary

This chapter illuminated a shared set of principles that represent ideological underpinnings shaping the leaders' conceptualizations of CFS. The principles represent an alternative world-view that acts as glue holding this group together. Moreover, while the set of principles did not constitute a map with detailed directions to CFS, it did include prominent signposts pointing the way.

That the principles were counter to mainstream was congruent with findings in the literature (Lang, 1999). This explains in large part the challenges the movement faces in realizing healthy public policy. The movement needs to build public support to create a paradigm shift. This requires a massive educational campaign. It also means the simultaneous crafting of policy and activities palatable to the views of the mainstream while serving desired policy aims of the movement.

In this chapter, we also discovered that there were differences in the ideological stances of the leaders. Power is certainly an issue for this group. These leaders must come to some agreement about their stance regarding the locus of power. That is, they need to agree upon who should have the power and over what food decisions in order to ensure justice and sustainability prevails. The group suggests that the balance of power must reside with the community, but it also seems clear they are suggesting the government must be a partner as well as the charitable sector. How this power will be shared is not clear. Until power issues are resolved policy direction emerging from the CFS movement will continue to be fragmented and contradictory.

Although the set of principles does not represent a master frame because they do not specify the cause and culprit for CFS issues, they can serve as important guides for the construction of a master frame. Tension amongst the leaders around differences in ideologically based principles, coupled with language issues, and contributes to a delay in framing and strategic policy planning. Resolution of these tensions will strengthen the cohesiveness of the group, and may expedite the process of master frame construction and the development of a policy strategy.

Chapter 6

Discussion and Implications

Community food security is a persistent and seemingly insoluble public policy problem. Whether it is described as hunger, the inability to access foods, or the dependency on out-sourced food, CFS is the banner under which a growing number of people from differing walks of life are gathering to engage in a social movement directed at policy change.

This movement, with its alternative vision, has emerged in response to policy direction supporting a global market driven culture, which has seen the concentration of power and wealth into a few hands. This situation has realized a rapid widening of the gap between the rich and the poor, escalating incidence and prevalence of hunger and obesity, and loss of localized capacity to produce food. While the movement has had success in drawing adherents across Canada and particularly in BC, its ability to realize policy change has been somewhat limited.

The literature suggests that way CFS is framed is a critically important factor impacting the movement's ability to realize policy aims. According to theorists and policy analysts alike, the crafting of effective, targeted policy solutions minimally requires agreement within a social movement about the issue(s), the cause of the issue(s), and the culprit(s) responsible for the issue(s) (Lezberg, 1999; Snow & Benford 1992). These three features comprise a master frame. In the absence of a master frame, CFS policy endeavours may be sporadic, contradictory, and/or serve counter purposes. Importantly, it is understood that the master frame is a reflection of the ideology of the individuals crafting the frame. Understanding the ideology informing the views of leaders within the movement who are

instrumental in the constructing and conveying of meaning about the CFS concept can guide the development of a master frame. Little research has been conducted about the way CFS is conceptualized, particularly in Canada.

This research set out to explore the way CFS is framed within the CFS movement. Specifically, it sought to understand the way leaders within BC's CFS movement conceptualized the issues, the causes, the culprit, the solutions, and those responsible for building CFS. It also sought to understand the extent to which the leaders' conceptualizations were linked. Six leaders representing five FPOs within BC's CFS movement were interviewed. Conceptualizations were drawn from both interview and FPO document data.

The introductory chapters of this paper offered a description of the emergence of BC's CFS movement and the need to understand the way issues are conceptualized within the movement. The current literature on this topic was also presented in further detail. In chapter 3, the methodology for the research, descriptive interpretive analysis, was discussed. In chapters, 4 and 5, the insights derived from the data were described and interpreted. In this final chapter, the significant insights are presented and reflected upon in light of what is known in theory, literature, and practice. During this process the implications for those involved with, and concerned about, the CFS movement are drawn out.

An Alternative Vision.

This research revealed that although the CFS concept *is* complex, coherency *does* exist. Five areas of coherency amongst the leaders' conceptualizations CFS emerged and are highlighted below.

First, all leaders shared a set of complementary principles representing the ideological underpinnings shaping the way they conceptualize CFS. These principles appeared to be the

glue or connective tissue holding the group together. The full set of principles were balance, community/food citizenry, community-based alternatives, diversity, economic security, education, empowerment, food democracy, food needs/rights, food justice, food matters, health, holism, local, paradigm shift, social movement, and policy towards systems redesign. Importantly, as noted by Lang (1999), Lappe F. and Lappe A. (2002), these principles represent a world-view that is in many ways opposite mainstream views.

Second, the leaders made clear that their primary concern was food injustice evidenced by a growing imbalance in control over systems impacting the ability of people and communities to access and/or supply the foods required for health. This situation was viewed as a breach of several shared principles including a lack of respect for food and its role in life and health, a denial of the right to food, a failure to ensure food democracy and economic security. Further, this situation was said to be socially and ecologically unsustainable. As leaders readily expressed a deep and profound concern about food injustice, this issue was described as a *visible link* between conceptualizations. The idea that CFS is a matter of social and ecological justice is consistent with a number of authors (Kneen, 2000; Lappe & Lappe, 2002; Welsh & MacRae 1998; Riches, 1997).

Third, all leaders agreed compromised health was the critical outcome when CFS was lacking. For some, this conclusion came after a bit of probing. That is, while "hunger" and "unjust, unsustainable food systems" were immediate responses to the question "What is the key food security concern?" when asked, "Why the concern about hunger and/or sustainable food systems?" leaders were quick to make the health connection. Similarly, all leaders concluded the ultimate goal of CFS was health – healthy, well-nourished people supported by healthy, sustainable food systems. As health existed as an undercurrent to

conversation and was not readily apparent at the surface, it was termed the *invisible link* between conceptualizations.

To my knowledge, the concept that health is an invisible link in the framing of CFS has not been previously described in the literature. However, according to public health policy analyst Nathason (1999), making more readily visible the fact that lack of CFS is a health risk may further the movement's policy aims. Framing smoking as an infringement of rights and as a health risk contributed to the creation of healthy public policy around tobacco use in the US. Importantly, framing CFS as a public health issue was instrumental in the launch and continued support of the TFPC (Schiller, 1993; TFPC, 2001b). Placing the CFS concept in the health domain increased public and policy-makers perceptions of the legitimacy of CFS work. Undoubtedly this has contributed to the success the TFPC has had in achieving policy aims.

Fourth, all leaders believed the imbalance in control over food decisions was essentially an ideological, political and structural matter. Thus, they offered the following integrated set of solutions to address CFS issues: 1) support a paradigm shift within the mainstream such that mainstream views about food and food issues resonate more closely with those within the movement (facilitated by a massive education and awareness raising campaign), 2) foster community/food citizenry everywhere (encourage ordinary citizens to become active participants in shaping their food system), and 3) mobilize communities towards policy and systems change. A prognostic framing tool, the *Food Security Continuum* exists illustrating the stages communities typically move through in their endeavours to realize CFS over time (see Figure 2, p.66). The solutions offered by leaders of BC's CFS

movement are consistent with those proposed by the Canadian and US based FPOs (Biehler et al, 1999; Welsh & MacRae, 1998; TFPC, 2001b; Yeatman, 1994).

Fifth, acknowledging the multi-dimensional nature of CFS, all leaders asserted a diversity of sectors must play a meaningful role in the process of building CFS. Minimally, representatives from the following sectors must be included: health, agriculture, environment, spiritual (also described as the faith or religious sector), cultural (including Aboriginal people), economic (particularly the food sector), educational, social, political, and citizens experiencing the day-to-day realities of hunger. A balance of views was said to be critical. Again, this is entirely consistent with strategies employed by FPOs in Canada and the US (Biehler et al. 1999; Joseph, 1998; Welsh & MacRae, 1998; Yeatman, 1994). These important dimensions of the CFS concept were crafted together and illustrated in a diagram entitled: *Food Justice: A vision for community food security* (see Figure 3 p. 101). While the diagram is not a master frame – as it does not identify the cause and the culprit for the problem – it does represent a broad alternative vision for CFS, to inform the construction of a master frame and a coherent policy strategy.

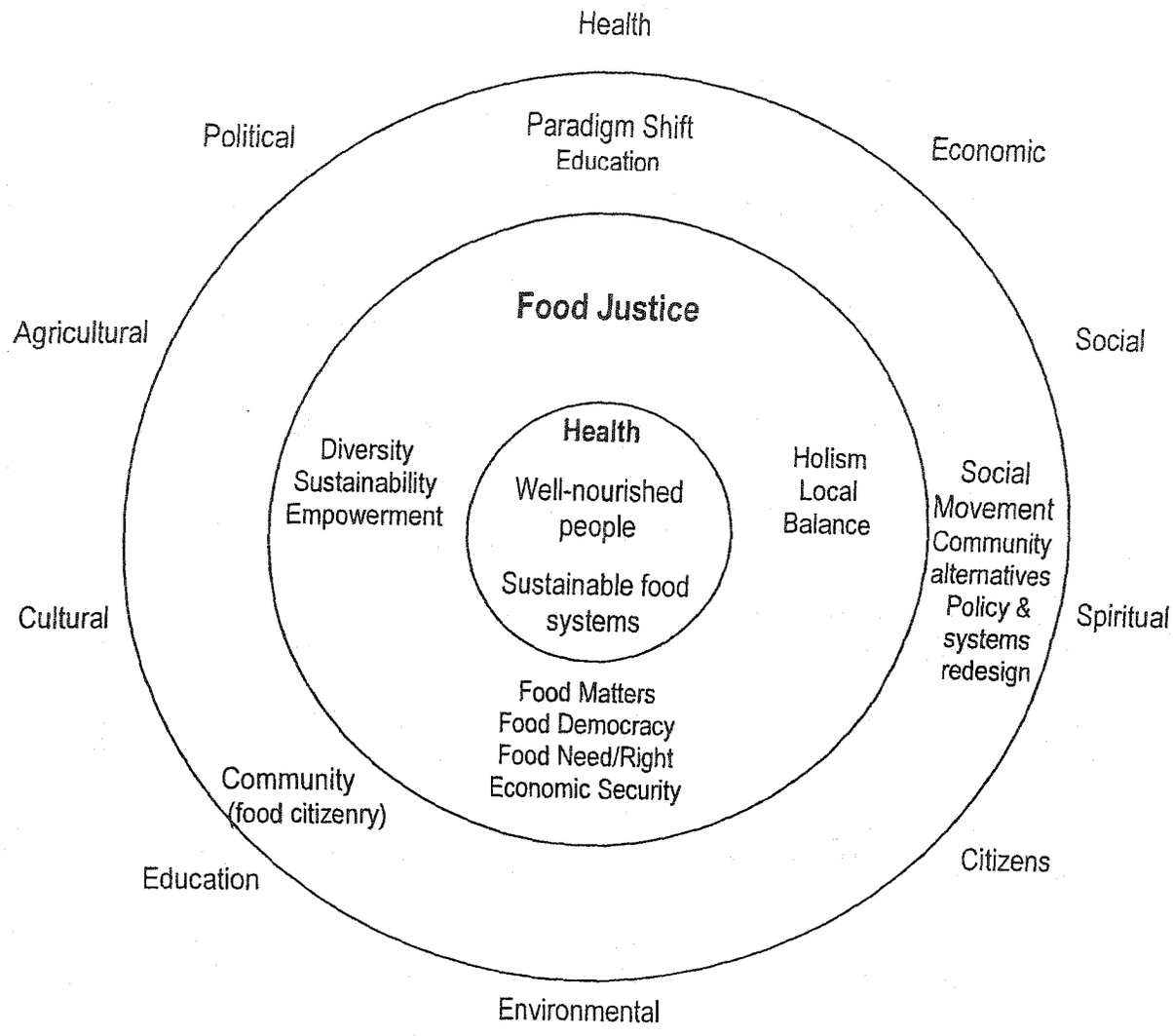

Figure 3. Food Justice: A vision for community food security.

Food Justice: A Vision for Community Food Security is a framing tool depicting the leaders' vision for the CFS movement. At the centre of the diagram is the goal of CFS – health. Health is evidenced in well-nourished people supported by sustainable food systems. The second ring, outwards from the core, illustrates that food justice is a prerequisite to health. Ten principles foundational to food justice are included in the second ring. Moving outward again, the third ring illuminates six prognostic or solution focused principles underpinning the food justice vision. Outside the rings, the key sectors that must be included

in processes to realize CFS are listed. A balance of all sectors must be involved to realize meaningful, effective long-term change.

The Elusive Master Frame.

Despite the existence of complementary, ideologically based principles, a widely accepted master frame remained elusive. That is, while all leaders were able to identify important cause and effect factors (knowledge and values of the dominant paradigm, money, money, media, policy, systems, and behaviors) and culprits (the corporate sector was implicated most often), there were differences in their responses, and most were unable to articulate the linkages between these framing elements. Moreover, when linkages were offered, quite often they only illuminated a portion of the complex concept (i.e., the cause and effect relative to hunger or the cause and effect relative to unsustainable food systems). This finding is entirely consistent with US, UK, and Canadian literature (Lang, 1999; Lezberg, 1999; PFC, 1980).

Nonetheless, sufficient cause, effect, and culprit information was provided to construct a diagram illustrating what is known about the master frame – *The Cycle of Food Insecurity* (see Figure 1, p. 63). This diagram is not a widely accepted master frame; rather, it represents the best-fit explanation of the information derived from the data in this research. It may serve as a model or proto-type to inform the construction of a widely accepted master frame.

Differing Beliefs: Tensions Emerge.

While this research demonstrated the leaders shared a long list of common ideologically based principles, it also revealed their ideological stances were not perfectly matched. Differences in ideological stances were evidenced in differing interpretations of

some of the principles and in differing perceptions of the cause and the culprit for CFS issues. This situation contributed to tensions amongst the leaders.

The greatest difference of views was observed between those who believed the problem was hunger caused by poverty solely, and those who believed the problem was poor nutrition, caused by loss of local sustainable food systems, the result of the industrialized food system solely. Those who believed the cause of the problem was poverty, believed welfare and economic policy change were principal solutions to CFS issues. Those who believed the cause of the problem was the industrialized food system believed agricultural policy change was a key solution to CFS issues.

It is important to point out that these views are not necessarily incompatible -the *Cycle of Food Insecurity* suggests that they can fit well together. Leaders were well aware of tensions and described them as dynamic and integral to the strength of the movement. Once leaders had an opportunity to review insights emerging from this inquiry, each expressed a readiness and willingness to address the tensions revealed.

Towards Community Food Security

This research has revealed that the way the CFS concept is framed *does* impact the ability of the CFS movement to realize policy aims. In the absence of a master frame, a coordinated, coherent policy strategy does not exist within British Columbia's CFS movement. Policy recommendations emerging from differing streams of the movement have been limited, sporadic, contradictory, and have had minimal impact. In BC and across Canada current policy direction on many fronts has contributed to escalating incidence and prevalence of a plethora of nutrition related concerns, as well as loss of community capacity to feed its citizens the food required for health. Without a master frame and a coordinated,

coherent political strategy there is little hope that the movement will be able to sway current policy direction.

Consistent with the findings of the *Peoples Food Commission* in the late1970's, differing beliefs are principal barriers to the construction of a master frame. Twenty-five years later, it appears the wall of beliefs constructed by the corporate sector still exists (PFC, 1980). Within this wall the corporate sector is believed to be the engine of a healthy and wealthy society or 'partners in combating hunger'. Within this wall food is valued as a commodity rather than a foundation to health, a basic human right, and an element central to culture and community. Within this wall, hunger and food security issues are believed to temporary problems best resolved through increased food production, liberalized food trade, and targeted food relief for the most vulnerable populations. This wall of beliefs continues to contribute to the reluctance in blaming the corporate sector for CFS issues.

A second contributing factor to a general reluctance in placing blame lies in the fact that naming the culprit is risky business. If wide agreement is reached amongst the leaders that the corporate sector is the principal culprit then, the fledgling movement is up against a powerful and influential industry. Identifying the target or the opposition also allows the opposition to see their target.

An important first step in the construction of a master fame, and the subsequent development of a coherent food policy, is to explore differences in beliefs revealed in this inquiry as well as the rationale for such differences. Furthering common ground amongst leaders in their understandings of the personal dimension of the CFS concept can facilitate furthering common ground in the leaders understandings of the political dimension.

The *Just Food: A Vision for Community Food Security* framing tool serves as a useful a starting point for this process. Leaders can use the tool to explore the principles in which there were tensions. Importantly, they can use it to arrive at a common understanding of power as it relates to community food security. Questions to be answered include: Who has power over the systems controlling access to and/or the supply of food? How is the power to be shifted to arrive at balance? What is the optimal arrangement of power over food decisions?

The tool also has utility in clarifying the economic dimension of the CFS concept. Analysis of documental and interview data revealed that the economic dimension of the CFS concept was under developed, as compared to the social, health, agricultural dimensions. There were tensions amongst the leaders with respect to the role of money in CFS building processes. This situation is problematic given the prominence of economics in the dominant paradigm. According to Hall, Land, Parker & Webb (1985), policy makers will respond to issues they perceive to be legitimate, feasible, and well supported. In the current political context, a vision for community food security that lacks an economic analysis and an economic dimension as part of an overall strategy will undoubtedly fail to stimulate policy development.

Finally, bringing the health link to the forefront when framing CFS is a critically important strategy for the CFS movement. Making visible the health dimension will increase perceptions about the legitimacy of the issue and will garner additional support to further policy aims. Once again, the *Just Food: A Vision for Community Food Security* framing tool (as well as *The Cycle of Food Insecurity* framing tool) can facilitate this process. Together these tools make explicit the fact that food security is a critical health concern, that current

imbalances in policies and systems have given rise to food security issues, and that building food security falls within the mandate of the health sector. Together these tools can be used to raise awareness about the health link. Expanding and broadening the base of support from the health care sector – a powerful ally - can reduce the risk associated with naming the culprit.

Implications for theory.

This research revealed that CFS is a complex multi-dimensional phenomenon that cannot readily be wrapped into a neat package. A number of concepts and tools emerged from this research including a set of shared principles and three illustrative diagrams – *Food Justice: A vision for community food security, the Cycle of Community Food Insecurity,* and *the Food Security Continuum.* Each resource has utility in revealing differing dimensions of the CFS concept – the issues, the cause/culprit, and the solutions. Together a fuller picture of the concept emerges which can inform the development of theoretical frames.

Implications for policy-makers.

This research suggests that if British Colombians are to enjoy CFS, a coordinated coherent food policy is required at all government levels. Moreover, this policy must have the goal of healthy well-nourished people and healthy food self-sufficient communities. To achieve this goal, key stakeholders from multiple ministries who make decisions impacting food access and/or supply must be engaged in the process. Further, they must aspire to this goal and commitment themselves and the material resources to achieve it. Policy makers from differing ministries will need to find ways to cross-traditional departmental and administrative barriers. Importantly processes must be in place to ensure the community has a meaningful voice in food policy-making processes

This goal and these measures are what have proven to be the elements of success at local levels in BC. These elements are reflected in the set of principles emerging from this study. Minimally, policy makers may choose to use the principles as a lens for future policy development. Optimally they may elect (as is the case in some in some municipalities), to no longer look in on the process, but to become active participants themselves. Working together with a broad range of individuals from throughout the local food system innovative ideas to resolve age-old issue have emerged.

Implications for British Columbia's health sector.

While food security is a growing concern impacting personal, community, and environmental health, other than the voices of the community nutritionists, the voice of the health sector on this issue has remained relatively quiet. While nutrition and food safety are readily recognized as a provincial public health concerns and reflected in current public health policy direction, the broader CFS concept is notably absent.

Opportunity presents itself to incorporate CFS within public health policy. Members of BC's Community Nutrition Council are advocating a food security initiative within the new Public Health Act (Gibson, K & Kneen C, 2003). The conceptualizations revealed in this research and the tools to articulate and illustrate those conceptualizations can further the development of this initiative.

The *Food Justice: A Vision for Community Food Security* and the *Community Food Security Continuum* are particularly useful tools to convey meaning about the CFS and to garner support from the health sector in general.

Implications for community nutritionists.

Community nutritionists in BC are seen as leaders and champions of the CFS movement. Community food security not only fits well within the scope of public health nutrition practice, it also fits with their unique expertise and skill set. Those who are engaged in CFS work employ community development, primary prevention, and population health approaches. They also employ a wide range of skills to facilitate processes including project management, education, awareness, advocacy, community organizing, proposal writing, fund raising, research, and communications.

Yet this expertise and skill set is not necessarily a requirement of the undergraduate, internship, and/or graduate programs that the community nutritionist completes. The areas of study and experience that are often quite difficult to find are those that provide an agricultural perspective (conventional and sustainable practices) about food security, a social work perspective, an educational perspective (how is food taught in schools), and a cultural perspective as well as economic and trade perspectives. Food policy, including multiple related policies, and globalization and free trade and their impact on food security, are additional courses that are difficult to obtain.

This research suggests that those wishing to practice pubic health nutrition in the food security area would benefit from undergraduate programs providing a holistic view of food as well as nutrition. They would benefit from internship experiences in the CFS area, as well as postgraduate studies in food policy, globalization, and community development.

Implications for British Columbia's community food security movement.

This research has perhaps the most relevance for BC's CFS movement. The research revealed that the movement has tremendously strong food justice vision, which is anchored

by complimentary and shared ideological principles. Leaders not only expressed these principles but actively sought opportunity to live them. That is, the principles were reflected in their approach to the issues, the solutions, and even in the tools they used to convey meaning about the concept.

Further, when awareness was heightened about the existence of tensions amongst principles (upon their review of the findings of this research) several expressed an openness and willingness to address those concerns. Most perceived the tensions in a positive light and all asserted that examining them together would yield a stronger movement.

This research revealed that addressing the tensions is critical if the objective is the creation of a coordinated coherent political strategy. Furthermore, given the political context in BC the need for such a strategy is greater than ever. All three framing tools presented in this study can provide a starting point to engage in this discussion.

Importantly, the fact that differing leaders and members are at differing stages in connecting the personal to the political suggests that the resolution to the tensions may take time. A mentoring program for leaders and members expressing a desire to further personal and or political connections would assist the process

Finally, this research makes clear that it is critically important to bring the health dimension of the CFS phenomena to the foreground in framing processes. Such a move can enhance the legitimacy of the CFS movement and garner additional support for the movement's policy aims.

Limitations of this research.

Three areas of limitation emerged:

1. This research did not specifically set out to examine the ideology underpinning the way CFS is framed. The questions for the leaders were not geared to extract this type of information. Yet upon review of the data, ideology emerged a critical framing factor. While the participants reviewed the principles and concurred that they were reflective of their perspectives, the fact that specific questions about ideology were not asked during the interviews, limited the depth of understanding that could be derived from the data.
2. One finding of this research was that the ideology of the leaders was counter mainstream. This was asserted by each of the leaders, yet the views of mainstream were not explored. A comparative analysis of principles guiding the movement and those within the mainstream can help to create policy that has more likelihood of being adopted by the mainstream.
3. The research indicated that hunger and lack of local capacity to produce the foods required to nourish the community were the dominant food security issues, yet the perspectives about these issues were provided by professionals and service providers, rather than individuals living with hunger (and/or individuals unable to make a living through local, sustainable food production practices). These professionals and service providers are, however, the known leaders of the movement and their views have clearly influenced framing. This raises a question for future research: To what extent do the conceptualizations presented here represent the perspectives of those who are most food insecure? This is a critical question to be answered for the movement and in line with their set of principles.

Recommendations for future research.

Five potential areas for future research emerged:

1. A possible area for future research would be to explicitly explore the ideology informing conceptualizations of CFS - to examine more closely interrelationship and the interactions of the principles revealed in this study.
2. A second possible area for research would be to explore the perspectives of those members of the CFS movement who are most food insecure – those living on a fixed income and small-scale farmers.
3. A third possible area for research would be to explore the perspectives of the mainstream – including policy makers – in order to compare and contrast conceptualizations.
4. A fourth area might be to explore the utility of the tools developed during this inquiry – their efficacy in conveying conceptualizations or furthering the construction of the master frame.
5. A fifth possible area for research would be to explore other factors that influence the ability of the movement to achieve its aims such as the political context, the ideological context, and resource issues.

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Appendix 1

A Snapshot of Food Policy Organizations in British Columbia*

British Columbia Food System Network
Provincial non-profit FPO network, est.1996
Sorrento, BC
www.bcfooddemocracy.org

Boundary Farm to Table Society
Regional, non-profit society
Christina Lake/Grand Forks, BC
iam@sunshinecable.com

Capital Region Food and Agriculture Roundtable
Southern Vancouver Island, non-profit coalition.
Victoria, BC
Lorie.Way@Caphealth.org

Community Nutritionists Council
Food Security Standing Committee
Sub committee of a provincial non-profit council of community nutritionists, est. 1999.
Flo.Sheppard@nwch.hnet.bc.ca

Dawson Creek Food Share
Dawson Creek community, non-profit society
Dawson Creek, BC

Farmfolk Cityfolk Society
Provincial, non-profit society, est. 1992
Vancouver, BC
herb@ffcf.bc.ca

Food First of Northern British Columbia
Prince George community, non-profit organization, est.1996. Prince George, British Columbia
khill@northernhealth.ca

Food For Kidz
Southern Fraser Valley, non-profit coalition
White Rock, BC
Barbara.Seed@fraserhealth.ca

Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL)
Northern non-profit FPO network, est. 2001
Miocine, BC
www.heal.bc

Kamloops Food Policy Council
Kamloops community, non-profit society, est. 1998
Kamloops, BC
Laura.Kalina@interiorhealth.ca

Lush Valley Food Action Society
Regional, non-profit society
lushval@yahoo.com

Mission Community Food Coalition
Mission Community, non-profit coalition
Mission, BC
Catherine.Atchison@fvhr.org

Nanaimo Food Share
Nanaimo community, non-profit society
Nanaimo, BC
Living_well@shaw.ca

Nelson Food Coalition
Nelson community, non-profit coalition
Nelson, British Columbia
brynne@uniserve.com

North Okanogan Food Coalition
Regional, non profit coalition
Vernon, BC
dantonishiak@interiorhealth.ca

Vancouver, Food Policy Organization
Municipal, non-profit society, est.1998
Vancouver, British Columbia
Corinne.Eisler@vrhb.bc.ca

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* A FPO is a community, city, or region-based group whose aim is to improve CFS through actions towards policy change. All FPOs in BC are non-profit and reliant upon volunteers. A comprehensive list of FPOs in BC was unavailable. This list was crafted pulling together information from two sources: 1) the British Columbia Food System Network website www.bcfooddemocracy.org, and 2) the Healthy Eating Active Living website www.heal.bc.

Appendix 2

Two directions for food security: The dominant model and the alternative model

The dominant model (informing mainstream views)		*The alternative model (informing views within the CFS movement)*
Globalization	vs.	localization
Urban/rural divisions	vs.	urban-rural partnership
Long trade routes (food miles)	vs.	short trade routes
Import export model for food security	vs.	food from own resources
Intensification	vs.	extensification
Fast speed, pace & scale of change	vs.	slow pace, speed, scale of change
Non-renewable energy	vs.	re-usable energy
Few market players (concentration)	vs.	multiple players per sector
Costs externalized	vs.	costs internalized
Rural de-population	vs.	vibrant rural population
Monoculture	vs.	biodiversity
Science replacing labour	vs.	science supporting nature
Agrochemicals	vs.	organic/sustainable farming
Biotechnology	vs.	indigenous knowledge
Processed (stored) food	vs.	fresh (perishable) food
Food from factories	vs.	food from the land
Hypermarkets	vs.	markets
De-skilling	vs.	skilling
Standardization	vs.	difference and diversity
Niche markets on shelves	vs.	real variety on field & plate
People to food	vs.	food to people
Fragmented (diverse) culture	vs.	common food culture
Created wants (advertising)	vs.	real wants (body & culture)
Burgertisation	vs.	local food specialties
Microwave re-heated food	vs.	cooked food
Fast food	vs.	slow food
Global decisions	vs.	local decisions
Top-down controls	vs.	bottom-up controls
Dependency culture	vs.	self-reliance
Health inequities widening	vs.	health inequities narrowing
Social polarization & exclusion	vs.	social inclusion
Consumers	vs.	citizens
Food control	vs.	food democracy

Source: adapted from Lang et al. (1999)

Appendix 3

Letter of Consent and Consent Form

Letter of Consent

October 2001

Participant: xxxxxx
Address: xxxxxx

Dear (participant):

I am writing to you in my role as a graduate student in the University of Northern British Columbia's Community Health Program. As you are aware, I am interested in conducting research for my Masters of Science thesis to explore and describe the way the community food security concept is framed within British Columbia's community food security movement. Specifically I seek to understand how community food security is defined, as well as perceptions about the issues, the causes and solutions to food security problems. By *movement* I am referring to the collective activity of Food Policy Organizations across British Columbia. Additional details of the study may be found in the attached *Research Information Sheet.*

Given your involvement with community food security organizing, your name has been brought forward as a candidate for this study. I am hoping that you will agree to participate! Participation will involve a one-time interview this fall, in a place and location that is mutually convenient. It will also entail a one-time review of an initial interpretation of the data. Your support in furthering understandings about the way community food security concept is framed can contribute to a more coordinated, collective, and effective approach towards realizing community security.

If you are able and willing to participate, please read the attached *Consent Form* carefully. If you agree, sign and print your name in the spaces marked "participant". Ensure that the form is dated and signed by a witness. Please return the completed form to me in the enclosed self addressed envelope by (date).

Thanks in advance for your consideration of this request

Sincerely,

Researcher: Joanne Houghton
Address: **UNBC Community Health Program**
Phone/Email: **xxxxxx/xxxxx**

Consent Form

I have read the attached *Research Information Sheet* and I agree to participate in this research study. I understand that I will be interviewed and that the interview will be recorded. I understand that I will be expected to review and provide feedback on an initial interpretation of the data. I also understand that I am free not to answer any questions and to withdraw at any time from this research process without any penalty to my organization or myself. I understand that my responses will be kept confidential and that a pseudonym will be used in the research materials (transcripts, notes and final document) rather than my actual name or the name of my organization.

Participant: _____ Date: _____ Witness: _____
Signature Signature

Participant: _____ Witness: _____
Printed Name Printed Name

Researcher:_____ Date: _____
Signature

Researcher: _____
Printed Name

Appendix 4

Sample Interview Guide

1. Tell me about yourself and your interest in community food security.
2. How do you define community food security? What are the important elements?
3. To what extent does community food security exist in your community?
4. In your opinion, what are the key food security issues?
5. Of these issues, which three are the most important? Why?
6. What are the causes of these problems?
7. What are the solutions?
8. Who is responsible for addressing these issues?
9. To what extent do you think your views about community food security reflect the perspectives within your Food Policy Organization?