

The Honourable Marjorie Michel P.C., MP
Minister of Health
Address Locator 1801B
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0K9
Email: hcminister.ministresc@hc-sc.gc.ca

The Honourable Mélanie Joly P.C., MP
Minister of Industry and Minister responsible for Canada Economic Development for Quebec
Regions
235 Queen Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0H5
Email: melanie.joly@ised-isde.gc.ca

The Honourable Heath MacDonald P.C., MP
Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food
1341 Baseline Road
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0C5
Email: heath.macdonald@agr.gc.ca

The Honourable Shafqat Ali P.C., MP
President of the Treasury Board
90 Elgin Street, 8th Floor
Ottawa, ON K1A 0R5
Email: president-presidente@tbs-sct.gc.ca

April 9, 2026

Re: Canadian Community Health Survey - Nutrition

Dear Ministers,

On behalf of the undersigned coalition of Canadian academics, researchers, and national stakeholder associations, we write to emphasize the critical need for the Government of Canada to urgently undertake a new *Canadian Community Health Survey* addressing nutrition (CCHS-Nutrition).

The CCHS-Nutrition dataset provides nationally representative food and nutrient intake data and critical insight into the dietary habits of Canadians amid an ever-changing nutritional landscape. This data represents the foundation for developing effective health policies, guiding public health initiatives, and facilitating research that addresses the unique nutritional needs of Canadians, particularly population subsets more at-risk of developing diet-related chronic diseases. It also supports broader work on assessing nutrient adequacy of the population to inform programs, policies and regulations.

The last CCHS-Nutrition was conducted in 2015. Since then, a number of nutrition guidance tools and policies have been published using that data. However, we, the undersigned, share a common concern that, at this time, this ten-year-old dataset may no longer fully reflect current dietary intakes of Canadians due to shifts in consumption patterns over the past decade. This lack of recent data represents a significant challenge to impactful nutrition research and evidence-based regulatory and

public policy development for the benefit of Canadians' health. The importance of an up-to-date picture of the nutritional status of Canadians cannot be overstated.

Adding to the impetus are several significant demographic trends that have emerged since the last survey was conducted in 2015, including increased immigration and a rapidly aging population. Furthermore, innovation in food production and changing consumer habits (significantly impacted by the pandemic as well as recent trends affecting food choices and eating patterns) are likely reshaping the nutritional landscape in various ways. These changes underscore the need for updated data to comprehensively understand these shifts, their impact on health and nutrition and to inform appropriate public health regulations and policies.

The Prime Minister was clear in his election platform, noting that “Our researchers achieve breakthroughs when they have access to better data”. We strongly support this sentiment. It is in the best interest of the Government of Canada and the public to equip researchers with better access to health data to ensure federal policies and programs are informed by current information to the benefit of all Canadians. Compared to the U.S. and several other developed jurisdictions, Canada has continuously lacked consistent dietary surveillance and long-term prospective cohorts evaluating dietary intakes of its population. A concerted effort to address gaps in health and nutrition data is essential. The insight from updated CCHS surveillance not only informs initiatives that facilitate better health for Canadians, it also plays a role in supporting innovation that strengthens the competitiveness of Canada’s agri-food system. Both the aforementioned elements are critical from an economic perspective.

In order to ensure confidence among Canadians that our policies, programs and research are based on the most accurate and current information, we strongly urge Statistics Canada, Health Canada, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada to commit to conducting an updated CCHS-Nutrition as soon as possible. We look forward to your collaboration in advancing this important matter and would welcome the opportunity to discuss this request further.

A comprehensive list of signatories to this letter, representing non-governmental and professional organisations, commodity and industry groups, and members of the academic and scientific community, is included in the attached appendix.

Thank you for your consideration.

CC:

Shalene Curtis-Micallef, Deputy Minister of Health

Philip Jennings, Deputy Minister of Innovation, Science, and Economic Development Canada

André Loranger, Chief Statistician of Canada

Lawrence Hanson, Deputy Minister of Agriculture

Bill Matthews, Secretary of the Treasury Board

Appendix – List of Signatories

Non-Governmental and Professional Organisations

Breakfast Club of Canada

Canadian Nutrition Society

Coalition for Healthy School Food

Deans Council - Agriculture, Food & Veterinary Medicine (AFVM)

Diabetes Canada

Dietitians of Canada

Food Allergy Canada

Heart & Stroke

Obesity Canada

Osteoporosis Canada

Commodity and Industry Groups

Canada Beef

Canadian Cattle Association

Canadian Federation of Agriculture

Canadian Meat Council

Canadian Pork Council

Canadian Produce Marketing Association

Chicken Farmers of Canada

Dairy Farmers of Canada

Egg Farmers of Canada

Food, Health & Consumer Products of Canada

Protein Industries Canada

Members of the Academic and Scientific Community

Harvey Anderson, PhD
Professor, University of Toronto
Director, Program in Food Science Nutrition and Regulatory Affairs

Jennifer Black, PhD, RD
Associate Professor, University of British Columbia

Sergio A. Burgos, PhD
Associate Professor, McGill University
Scientist, Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre

Stéphanie Chevalier, RD, PhD
Associate Professor, McGill University
Scientist, Research Institute of the McGill University Health Centre
President, Canadian Nutrition Society

Rajavel Elango, PhD
Professor, University of British Columbia

Rachel Engler-Stringer, PhD
Professor, University of Saskatchewan
Researcher, Saskatchewan Population Health and Evaluation Research Unit

Hrvoje Fabek, PhD
Assistant Professor, University of Guelph

Anthony Hanley, PhD
Professor and Associate Chair, Graduate Education, Department of Nutritional Sciences
University of Toronto

Mary L'Abbé, CM, PhD
Professor Emeritus, University of Toronto
Director, WHO Collaborating Centre on Nutrition Policy for Chronic Disease Prevention

David W.L. Ma, PhD
Professor, University of Guelph

Andrew Mente, MSc, PhD
Associate Professor, McMaster University
Scientist, Population Health Research Institute

Hassan Vatanparast, MD, PhD
Professor, University of Saskatchewan