



## Minister's Statement

No. \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

The Honourable Eva Ariak  
Premier

### **GN Response to the Food Mail Review**

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to convey Nunavut's interest in the federal Food Mail program and the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs' recent work to renew the program.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavummiut do not currently see the subsidy in the sticker price at the store. But, the Food Mail program provides tremendous value to Nunavummiut. Annually, this subsidy is equivalent to \$650 per person but can exceed \$2000 per person in the most remote communities. As such, we fully support the continuation of a food subsidy program for the North and agree with Canada's plans to renew the program.

The Food Mail program should be re-aligned from its present-day use to a culturally relevant and appropriate food security program for all Nunavummiut. We expect that the Food Mail review will lead to substantial program and administrative changes and would like to collaborate in a meaningful way into the design and implementation of this change.

The Government of Nunavut would like to see the Food Mail program revised to be based on clear principles, measurable objectives and relevant indicators. In Nunavut, focusing the program on the most vulnerable populations must be the first principle.

Now, more than ever, we should be supporting the traditional economy and the health and culture benefits of harvesting country foods.

Mr. Speaker, country foods must be adequately addressed in the renewed Food Mail program. It is no longer acceptable for Canada to discriminate against country foods.

Mr. Speaker, Nunavummiut must have a voice in the development in the eligibility list for the renewed program. By fully involving our experts on northern diets, nutrition and healthy food, we will find meaningful ways to work together on nutrition, health education and promotion activities.

The renewed program should focus on food products, rather than a component of cost. Only by focusing on food itself, will the program be aligned with the principle of good quality, nutritious foods at affordable prices.

For those individuals in our smaller and more remote communities, for Nunavummiut with dietary restrictions, for daycares and breakfast programs, some form of individual access should be maintained.

Finally Mr. Speaker, we expect diligent monitoring on the impacts and outcomes of a revamped program. As our communities are serviced only by air, any change to the program has the potential to dramatically affect the cost of living, access to medical care, and supply of other goods and services.

Mr. Speaker, at the appropriate time, I will table the Government of Nunavut's Response to the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Food Mail Review.

Mr. Speaker, Food Mail is an essential program in Nunavut. We strongly support the renewal of the program and offer the Government of Nunavut's time and expertise into the development of a culturally relevant and appropriate food security program for those most in need.

Thank you.