



Country Food Distribution Program Policy

Department of Economic Development and Transportation

POLICY STATEMENT AND PURPOSE

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation is committed to improving the viability of the harvesting sector. The funds available through the *Country Food Distribution Program* will encourage and support initiatives that build on and add value to the harvesting sector.

The program's investments in the local harvesting economy will promote and support the use of harvesting skills and community-based solutions to enhance access to nutritious food throughout the territory. .

The *Country Food Distribution Program Policy* establishes the general terms and conditions by which the Department of Economic Development and Transportation will support efforts to improve access to affordable, healthy country food through the following funding schedules:

Schedule A: Community Harvesting Transfer

Schedule B: Community Harvesting Infrastructure

PRINCIPLES

This policy is based on the following guiding principles:

- *Qanuuqtuurniq*: Being innovative and resourceful. The program recognizes and seeks to support the community-level capacity for innovation and the skills and resourcefulness of Nunavut's local harvesters.
- *Piliriqatigiinni/Ilkajuqtigiinni*: We must work together towards a common cause. Building community harvesting infrastructure and supporting the harvesting economy involves strong roles for local government and for the Government of Nunavut. By working together we will be much more successful in achieving our common goals.
- *Avatittinnik Kamatsiarniq*: Maintaining respect and care for the land, animals and the environment is necessary in any harvesting initiative. Harvesting of wildlife is also governed by and subject to the principles of conservation, as provided in Article 5.1.5 of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.
- Fostering a more diverse economy that will provide Nunavummiut with a wide range of employment options.
- Implementation of our priorities through practical actions that are expected to yield measurable outcomes in the short term.

DEFINITIONS

The following terms apply to this policy:

Community Freezer

A building or facility used for the preservation, storage, preparation and distribution of country food. May include chest freezers where these are used for public benefit.

Community Market

A facility allowing harvesters to convene for the sale of country food.

Conditional Contribution Agreement

A contractual agreement between two parties, which outlines the value of the contribution, the obligations and reporting responsibilities of the parties involved.

Country Food

Country food is the traditional diet of Inuit, and includes caribou, musk-ox, bears, whales, seals, birds, arctic char, shellfish and berries among other foods that are hunted, fished or gathered locally. It may also include locally harvested foods which were not traditionally harvested or eaten.

Cut and Wrap Facility

A facility for preparing harvested animals for distribution, by cutting it into meal-sized portions, and packaging the portions.

Department

The Department of Economic Development and Transportation.

Harvester

A person who harvests, as the activity is defined in the *Wildlife Act*, also includes a person who fishes.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Minister of Economic Development and Transportation

The Minister is accountable for the overall program funding and results, and will table annually in the Legislative Assembly or otherwise make publically available a summary of contributions detailing the recipient, amount of each contribution, the type of investment being supported, and community.

The Minister delegates authority to implement the provisions of this policy to the Deputy Minister.

Deputy Minister

The department head, or their designated lead senior official, establishes and communicates clear and transparent procedures and criteria for allocation of funds under this policy. This will include guidelines that address:

- Application Process
- Evaluation Criteria

- Terms and Conditions

At any time, the department may request that applicants submit additional information appropriate to the nature and amount of the requested assistance.

The department may:

- i) conditionally approve multi-year projects, subject to the availability of funds in subsequent years.
- ii) set minimum cash contribution levels toward project costs for applicants under any or all schedules to this policy. These cash contribution levels may vary according to the applicant community.
- iii) set aside funds for selected program areas for a specified period of time within a fiscal year. This is normally accompanied by a communication plan to announce a set amount of funding that will be reserved for a specific category of projects as well as an application deadline.

PROVISIONS

- i) Nothing in this policy shall be construed as to limit the authority of the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement. The Agreement shall take precedence over this policy.
- ii) Funding assistance under this policy is conditional on appropriation of a program budget by the Legislative Assembly, and on the availability of funds in the appropriate budget.
- iii) All relevant provisions contained in the *Financial Administration Act* and the *Financial Administration Manual* apply to the financial administration of all contributions issued by the department.
- iv) Eligibility for funding under this policy does not guarantee subsequent approval for financial assistance of any kind. Financial assistance will be provided only to the limit and availability of funding allocated to this policy within the main estimates of the budget.
- v) Proposals selected to receive contributions under this program may be funded at a level below the amount requested.
- vi) The department may terminate, suspend or reduce the scope of an agreement if the recipient fails to comply with the terms of the agreement.
- vii) Recipients must grant the Government of Nunavut the right to conduct an audit of activities supported under this program, even though an audit may not always be undertaken.
- viii) Recipients must repay any surplus project funds, disallowed expenses, overpayments or unexpended balances to the Government of Nunavut within 60 days of the delivery of final financial reports. Such amounts constitute debts due to the Government of Nunavut.

- ix) Recipients who access funding may be required to provide acknowledgment to the Government of Nunavut. Specific terms will vary depending on the project and will be contained in the Conditional Contribution Agreement.

APPEALS

An applicant for a contribution has the right to appeal a denial of funding.

In the event that an applicant is not satisfied with the application decision, the applicant may appeal to the Deputy Minister in writing no later than 30 days following the date that the applicant has received notification of the decision. Grounds for appeal will only be considered if:

- New information which affects the applicant's demonstrated need, viability or proposed benefits becomes available after an application has been submitted, and a decision made; or
- Cause to believe that the provisions of this policy were not fairly and adequately applied.

Appeals will be decided by the Deputy Minister.

PREROGATIVE OF THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Nothing in this policy will in any way be construed to limit the prerogative of the Executive Council to make decisions or to take actions, respecting business and/or funding contributions or any other form of business and/or funding assistance, either direct or indirect, outside the provisions of this directive.

SUNSET CLAUSE

This policy remains in effect until replaced or repealed. The department will initiate a review of this policy no later than March 31, 2022.

Schedule A: Community Harvesting Transfer

Purpose

The *Community Harvesting Transfer* schedule provides an annual contribution to each community for the purposes of improving the local harvesting economy and country food distribution system.

Eligible Applicants

Eligibility is normally limited to municipalities in Nunavut incorporated under the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* or under the *Hamlets Act*; and Hunters and Trappers Organizations (“HTOs”) recognised under the Nunavut Land Claims Agreement.

Other local organizations may also be eligible with a letter of support from the municipality or HTO.

Eligible Activities

Eligible activities include community-identified initiatives that will improve the viability of the local harvesting economy.

Communities in which the utilities or maintenance costs of the community freezer or other country food infrastructure are not covered by another Government of Nunavut department are also eligible for additional utilities and maintenance funding, as described in “Amount”, below.

Ineligible Activities

The purchase of country food from outside the community is not eligible.

Review Process

Projects that involve harvester skills development will receive priority access to the program.

An applicant submits an annual project plan to the relevant Community Operations division.

Community Operations reviews the applicant’s project plan for conformity with the provisions of this policy.

Once projects are approved by Community Operations, a Conditional Contribution Agreement is drafted and signed by the parties.

Supporting Data

The following information must accompany the annual project plan:

- A description of planned projects, including a short description of how the project(s) will improve the local harvesting economy or country food distribution system; and
- A project budget.

Applications from organizations other than an HTO or a municipality require a letter of support from either the HTO or municipal government.

Reporting

Recipients must provide accounting for how funding was spent on an annual basis, including project reports and general ledgers detailing eligible expenditures.

Recipients are also expected to participate in departmental efforts to showcase successful initiatives and to work to continually improve the impact of transferred funds with departmental support.

Amount

Each community is initially eligible for \$30,000 for projects identified in an annual project plan and set out in a Conditional Contribution Agreement.

If program funds are available, a further contribution of up to \$30,000 may be made to each community on or after October 1. Such additional contributions will be made through the amendment of the Conditional Contribution Agreement.

Communities where the utilities or maintenance costs of the local community freezer or other country food infrastructure are not covered by another Government of Nunavut department are also eligible for up to \$10,000 for utilities, basic maintenance and small improvement costs per year. The department may approve utilities and maintenance costs above \$10,000 if program funds are available.

Maintenance and refurbishment projects over \$5,000 should apply to Schedule B: Community Harvesting Infrastructure.

Payment

Where the annual project budget is \$25,000 or less, funds may be disbursed in a single payment upon signing of a Conditional Contribution Agreement.

Where the annual project budget exceeds \$25,000 annually, funds will be disbursed according to a schedule of payments corresponding to the cash requirements of the recipient and set out in a Conditional Contribution Agreement.

Schedule B: Community Harvesting Infrastructure

Purpose

The *Community Harvesting Infrastructure* schedule provides contributions to municipalities for the renovation, construction, or expansion of infrastructure that supports the harvesting economy.

Eligibility

Eligibility is limited to municipalities in Nunavut incorporated under the *Cities, Towns and Villages Act* or under the *Hamlets Act* and Hunters and Trappers Organizations.

Eligible Activities

The *Community Harvesting Infrastructure Schedule* provides contributions to the following activities:

- Repair and upgrading of existing community freezer, community market or cut and wrap facilities;
- Design, purchase, and installation of new community freezer, community market or cut and wrap components and infrastructure; and
- Design, purchase and installation of country food, community market or cut and wrap infrastructure.

For infrastructure that is not a GN asset, municipalities are eligible for funding under Schedule A: Community Harvesting Transfer to offset utilities and maintenance costs associated with harvesting infrastructure.

Review

The department will work in partnership with interested municipalities to develop a project that meets community needs and is feasible and economically sustainable for the community while also within the eligibility criteria and available resources of the *Country Food Distribution Program*.

The department may establish review committees and engage other GN departments or third-party experts as required to assist in selection and due-diligence review of submitted applications.

Supporting Data

The community must send the department a letter of interest to initiate the project development process.

Through the review process the applicant will be required to submit technical and financial supporting documents appropriate to the scale and complexity of the project, as identified by the department.

A demonstration of support from both the Hunters and Trappers Organization and the local Municipality is required for non-renovation projects.

Reporting

Applicants must submit a final report by March 31 of the applicable fiscal year that includes original receipts and a statement of expenses. The report should also describe the project outcomes and document the construction, installation, repair or upgrading activities and results in photographs.

Amount

The maximum funding amount for this program is \$400,000 per year, and, subject to the availability of funds, up to \$800,000 per project.

Payment

Payments will be released to match the applicant's cash needs throughout the project development cycle rather than in a lump sum. The payment schedule will be detailed in the Conditional Contribution Agreement.