

Cowichan Food Security 2014 Report Card

An initiative of the Cowichan Food Security Coalition, the **Cowichan Food Security Report Card** is a baseline assessment of food security within the Cowichan Region.

Addressing three themes, including **Zero Hunger, Healthy Food Choices,** and **Local Food Economy,** the goal of the Report Card is to highlight the challenges and successes within the Cowichan Region's food system so that points for regional dialogue and action can be identified.

Zero Hunger

There are 5 registered **food banks** in the Cowichan Region.

In 2013, 3 regional food banks and The Salvation Army provided **12,775 food hampers.**

In 2013, 4 agencies provided **1,057 Christmas hampers.**

Cowichan Food Connections **distributed bread** to over 5,000 clients in 2013.

4 Meals on Wheels programs delivered over **7,000 meals** in 2013.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition and Coupon Program provided 55 seniors and families **access to local food** in 2014.

Meals on the Ground **served 5,108 meals** between September 2013 & June 2014.

Cowichan at a Glance

Geographic Area: 3,474.55 km² (2011)

Total Population: 80,332 (2011)

Median Age of Total Population: 47.2 years (2011)

Median Income: \$29,012 (2012)

Basic Monthly Household Expenses:
Family of 4 = \$5,162.58 (2014)

Cowichan Living Wage: \$17.04 per hour (2014)

Minimum Wage in BC: \$10.25/hour (2014)

Unemployment Rate: 7.9% Southern Coastal BC (2014)

Estimated Absolute Homelessness: 58 people (2014)

Profile: Cowichan Valley Basket Society

	2013
Bowls of Soup Served	32,901
Sandwiches Served	27,965
Hampers Distributed	4,965
Adults Served (18+)	7,771
Children Served	4,656

Local Food Stats

	Cowichan Region
Number of Farms Reporting	685 (2011)
Total Area Farmed (hectares)	11,394 (2011)
Total Area Farmed (% of region)	3.33% (2011)
Average Farm Size (hectares)	16.5 (2011)
Gross Farm Receipts	\$48,089,900 (2011)
Average Age of Farmers	54.4 years (2006)
Number of Certified Organic Farms	14 (2014)
Estimated Expenditure on Food	\$264 Million (2006)
Percentage of Food Consumed Sourced Locally	18-19% (2006)

Local Food Economy

- ▲ **Type of Farms:** 62% report primarily livestock production and 38% report crop production *
- ▲ **Food Processors:** 50
- ▲ **Commercial Kitchens** for Food Processors: 3
- ▲ **Cold Storage Units** for Food Processors: 0
- ▲ **Abattoirs:** 4
- ▲ **Farmers' Markets:** 9
- ▲ **Farmers' Institutes:** 3
- ▲ **Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)** Programs: 8
- ▲ **Community Supported Fishery (CSF)** Programs: 1
- ▲ **Grocery Stores:** 65+
- ▲ Local Food **Marketing Organizations and Resources:** 4
- ▲ **People employed in the aquaculture industry** in the Cowichan Region: 85 (0.24% of employed labour force) *

**All "Local Food Economy" data, with the exception of stat #1 (2009) and stat #12 (2011), were sourced in 2014.*

Healthy Food Choices

4 of 24 public schools in SD 79 have school gardens (2014)

5 of 16 private schools in the Cowichan Region have school gardens (2014)

Cost of a Healthy Food Basket: \$873.08 per month for a family of 4 (2011)

Food Literacy/Skill Building Programs: Community Kitchens, Food Skills For Families & Healthiest Babies Possible (2014)

Founded in 2008, the **Cowichan Food Security Coalition** is a network of regional food security stakeholders who work collaboratively on regional food projects and initiatives. With the goal of increasing regional dialogue between food security practitioners in the Cowichan Region, the Coalition meets once per month to address these objectives.

Members include representatives from an array of backgrounds – from nutritionists, business owners, chefs, community gardeners, to volunteers. Contact info@cowichangreencommunity.org for more information.