



Growing Together

A Community Update on the Black
Food Sovereignty Plan

April 2026



Land Acknowledgment

The City of Toronto acknowledges that we are on the traditional territory of many nations including the Mississaugas of the Credit, the Anishnabeg, the Chippewa, the Haudenosaunee and the Wendat peoples and Toronto is now home to many diverse First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples. The City also acknowledges that Toronto is covered by Treaty 13 signed with the Mississaugas of the Credit, and the Williams Treaties signed with multiple Mississaugas and Chippewa bands.



African Ancestral Acknowledgment

The City of Toronto acknowledges all Treaty peoples, including those who came here as settlers—as migrants, either in this generation or in generations past—and those who came here involuntarily, particularly those brought to these lands through the Transatlantic Slave Trade and slavery. We pay tribute to those ancestors of African origin and descent.



Message from our Executive Director

As Executive Director of the Social Development Division, I'm pleased to share **Growing Together: A Community Update on the Black Food Sovereignty Plan**. This report reflects almost four years of progress and the strength, creativity, and determination of Black communities in Toronto, for whom food is culture and connection.

Born of community advocacy and rooted in Recommendation 8 of the Toronto Action Plan to Confront Anti-Black Racism, the BFS Plan, adopted by City Council in 2021, commits us to addressing chronic food insecurity and advancing equity in the local food system. As the first municipal plan of its kind in Canada, it was designed with Black food leaders, farmers, entrepreneurs, health practitioners, and cultural workers.

Since adopting the BFS Plan, we have faced challenges and made breakthroughs: community-led markets have grown, culturally rooted nutrition programs have expanded, and new partnerships have taken hold. We also learned where the work must improve. This report celebrates successes and is transparent about lessons learned and the work ahead.

The BFS Plan is about systems change, built through time, persistence, and collaboration among community leaders, City staff, and partners across sectors. It also requires courage to rethink how resources are shared, decisions are made, and how the City works alongside communities as a partner.

I thank the Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle (past and present), community organizations, City divisions, and most importantly, residents who continue to build food systems that honour Black histories, nourish Black futures, and advance a more equitable Toronto.

As we enter the next phase of the BFS Plan, I am optimistic. The foundation we've built can support deeper collaboration, greater impact, and sustainable change. Read this update as both an account of progress and a call to action: let us build food systems that are equitable, culturally relevant, and rooted in community care.

With gratitude,

Mohamed Shuriye, Executive Director
Social Development
City of Toronto

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cabr@toronto.ca

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Introduction

This report marks an important milestone in the City of Toronto's ongoing journey toward justice, equity, and food sovereignty. It tells the story of a collective effort to transform how food is accessed, shared, and governed by and for Black Torontonians.

The Black Food Sovereignty (BFS) Plan was adopted by Toronto City Council in October 2021 in response to persistent disparities in food access, health outcomes, and community infrastructure. The COVID-19 pandemic brought these inequities into even sharper focus, and in 2020 the City recognized anti-Black racism as a public health crisis, acknowledging the disproportionate impacts of both the pandemic and structural inequities on Black communities¹. While Black residents made up just over 9 percent of Toronto's population, they were 3.5 times more likely to experience food insecurity, and 36.6 percent of Black children lived in food-insecure households^{2,3}. Black neighbourhoods in northwest Toronto also experienced some of the highest COVID-19 infection rates in the city^{4,5}.

These realities made clear that the intersections between race, health, housing, income, and food access were not coincidental but the result of entrenched systemic inequities. Black leaders, community organizations, and

food practitioners had been raising concerns for years about the lack of culturally relevant, affordable, and accessible food in Black communities.

In response, the City of Toronto's Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit co-led the development of the BFS Plan alongside Black community leaders, including founding members of the Black Food Sovereignty Alliance, now Black Food Sovereignty Toronto. A pivotal moment in shaping the BFS Plan was the 2021 Black Food Sovereignty Gathering, a city-wide conference that brought together more than 250 participants, including over 100 Black food leaders and organizations. Insights from that gathering directly informed the Plan's five pillars and actions, creating a roadmap rooted in community experience and designed for municipal implementation.

This report covers from 2022 to 2025, documenting key actions, partnerships, outcomes, and learnings from this period. At its core, this report is a testament to the power of community knowledge, ancestral wisdom, and grassroots organizing. It recognizes that food is more than sustenance: it is culture, connection, and liberation. We invite readers to engage with this report not only as a record of progress, but as a call to continue building a city where food systems are equitable, culturally relevant, and rooted in care for people and the land.

1 City of Toronto. (2020, June 8). 2020-06-08 decisions: Board of Health. <https://secure.toronto.ca/council/report.do?meeting=2020.HL17&type=decisions>

2 Dhunna, S., & Tarasuk, V. (2019, November). Race and food insecurity [Fact sheet]. PROOF Food Insecurity Policy Research & FoodShare. https://www.urbanbounty.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/PROOF_factsheet_press_FINAL.6.pdf

3 Dhunna, S., & Tarasuk, V. (2021). Black-white racial disparities in household food insecurity from 2005 to 2014, Canada. *Canadian Journal of Public Health*, 112(5), 888-902. <https://doi.org/10.17269/s41997-021-00539-y>

4 CityNews. (2020, July 30). Data show racialized, poor Torontonians disproportionately affected by COVID-19. <https://toronto.citynews.ca/2020/07/30/toronto-socio-demographic-covid-19-data/>

5 Global News. (2020, July 30). NewToronto data shows how racialized, lower-income groups hit harder by COVID-19. <https://globalnews.ca/news/7235856/coronavirus-toronto-race-income-demographics-breakdown-covid-19-cases/>



Impact at a Glance

24,000+

people engaged

Markets, festivals, classes, events, and programs brought thousands together to eat, learn, sell, and celebrate Black foodways.

50+

partnerships and collaborations established

Dozens of collaborations with community groups turned ideas into programs, from gardens to markets to kitchen access.

150+

Black businesses supported

Vendors and entrepreneurs gained tables, kitchens, buyers, and buzz—moving from pop-ups to real pipelines.

Who we served (targeted)

- Black youth
- Black single parents & families
- Black trans & non-binary communities
- Black seniors
- Black newcomers
- Black people with disabilities
- Black low-income households
- Black farmers & growers
- Black foodservice workers
- Black entrepreneurs (incl. women-owned)

25+

Grants & funding dispersals

Targeted investments fueled immediate food access, youth leadership, and business readiness across neighbourhoods.



Feature Stories

Sovereignty, Innovation, and
Community



Elevating Black Farmers and Cultural Food Access in Toronto

Farmers' markets have been a backbone of the BFS Plan's push for sustainable, culturally relevant food access, and a standout initiative is the Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market (ACFM) in Little Jamaica. Since its launch, the ACFM has grown from a beloved neighbourhood gathering into a City-recognized anchor that connects Black farmers, makers, and food entrepreneurs directly with residents. Piloted in 2017 in the Jane and Wilson neighbourhood, and operating in Little Jamaica from 2021–2024, the ACFM welcomed over 18,000 attendees across four seasons. Each season, the ACFM housed 15–18 Black vendors per week from a roster of 20–30 vendors, helping make fresh, culturally specific produce and prepared foods an expectation in one of Toronto's historic Black neighbourhoods.

Black communities have long faced uneven access to civic infrastructure, and the ACFM's early years were no exception. With support from City's Economic Development & Culture (EDC) division and the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit, and funding from the Main Street Innovation Grant, Transit Construction Mitigation Grant, and the Black- Mandated Funding Framework, the ACFM was stabilized and scaled. The City's hands-on support helped navigate funding, permitting, and public-space barriers so the ACFM could focus on doing what it does best: feeding people, circulating dollars locally, and showcasing Black foodways in full colour. Impact has also shown up in the vendor pipeline. ACFM vendors have since appeared at larger markets—Evergreen BrickWorks, Leslieville, Withrow, and Guelph—shining a light on exclusion in the food space and the ongoing work needed to ensure shoppers and systems welcome Black vendors. The ACFM is eager to invite vendors back in 2026 as it builds a bigger, bolder food space.

Today, the ACFM sits at tables where policy is shaped, serving as a member of the MarketCityTO roundtable to advocate for new market development across the GTA. This representation in food system decision-making matters. It carries a strong, Black-led voice into the city's broader food-market strategy, embedding Black Food Sovereignty in how Toronto thinks about public space, small-business incubation, and neighbourhood wellbeing. In short: what began as a seasonal market has become a systems lever—one that makes culturally relevant food access routine, not rare, and turns community pride into lasting economic inclusion.

“The Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit has been a lifeline to the market. The ability to discuss challenges with CABR staff, and seeing real-time results, is invaluable to this initiative.”

— Lori Beazer, Founder and Director, Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market

Reclaiming Space in Canada's Largest Food Trade Show

In 2024 and 2025, the Re-Seasoning Coalition, supported by the City's Economic Development & Culture (EDC) division and the Confronting Anti-Black Racism (CABR) Unit, brought the Black Experience Pavilion to the Restaurants Canada (RC) Show—Canada's largest foodservice trade event. Designed to counter the industry's long-standing underrepresentation of Black talent and businesses, the Pavilion paired free access with a visible platform: 400+ Black attendees participated across two years; 50+ Black-owned food businesses were showcased; and curated networking sessions connected corporate brand representatives with Black entrepreneurs, chefs, and jobseekers. The Pavilion marked a first in the RC Show's 80+ year history for this level of intentional Black representation—prioritizing Black talent and contractors to capture impact and setting a precedent for how the RC Show engages Black communities.

The 2025 Pavilion pushed further, adding on-site interviews (15 soft interviews) for Black job seekers, practical masterclasses, and structured buyer-supplier matchmaking that translated introductions into deals. The Pavilion featured 35 businesses (67% women-owned), generated 93 new business connections, and drew notable visitors including Chef José Andrés. Media coverage included a CP24 broadcast on April 8, 2025. One standout outcome linked Island Gurl Foods into Sysco Canada's supply chain—proof the Pavilion was not just raising visibility but building sustained market access.

Across two years, the effort reframed how major distributors, buyers, and media engage with Black food leaders, while giving participants the skills, networks, and credibility to compete on equal footing. As a municipal-community collaboration, it offered a repeatable model for inclusive industry participation: bring people in at no cost, set the stage for authentic storytelling and skills transfer, and back it with structured pathways to employment and procurement.

“Each part of our space at the Restaurants Canada Show is devoted to creating opportunities for Black people in foodservice to see themselves represented as business owners, creators, leaders, and experts but also to be inspired by the products and services on display. In a similar vein, our showcase also serves as an opportunity to expand the minds of non-Black attendees and create opportunities for them to build relationships with Black leaders, talent, and entrepreneurs to strengthen the economic resilience of the foodservice industry and the local economy. Foodservice is one of the country's most diverse and dynamic industries so it's no surprise that our Black Experience Pavilion continues to be a space where the seeds of the future take root.”

— Elle Asiedu, The Re-Seasoning Coalition



Supporting Gender-Affirming Nutrition

In 2023, the Trans & Non-Binary Food and Nutrition Program was piloted to directly respond to the often-overlooked nutritional needs of Black Torontonians undergoing gender-affirming Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT). This 12-week initiative was co-led by Ubuntu Black Trans, Non-Binary & Gender Diverse Collective and FoodShare Toronto, representing a powerful collaboration between grassroots leadership and institutional support. FoodShare provided the space and facilitators; Ubuntu ensured the curriculum reflected lived experience, Black foodways, and the specific dietary considerations that can accompany hormone therapy. The program became a living lab for Ubuntu's food practices—testing culturally-rooted menus, portioning, and distribution methods that later shaped how meals and pantry items are shared at drop-ins, workshops, and healing circles.

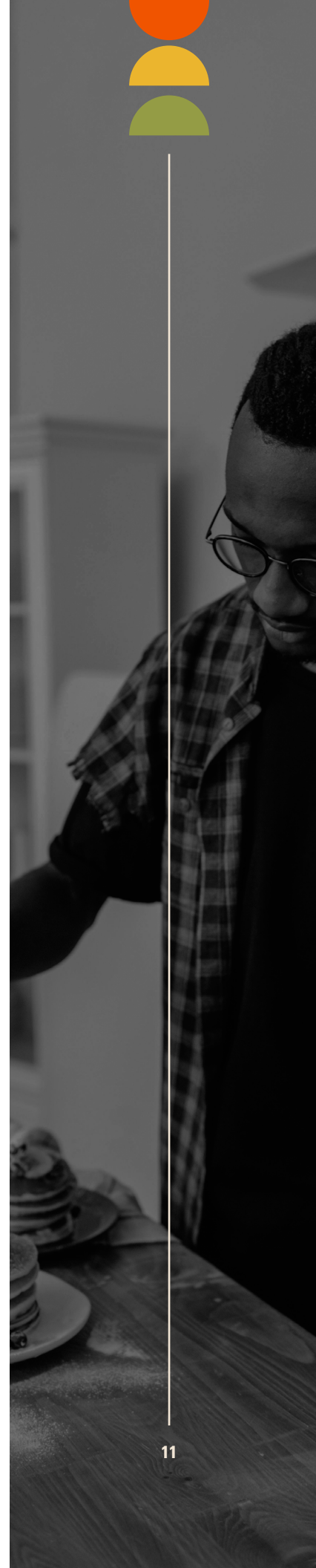
Each week, 15 participants received a culturally responsive food box, 180 in total across the program, paired with hands-on learning. Two in-person cooking and nutrition workshops focused on HRT-supportive eating, and two virtual sessions expanded access for those managing health, work, or transit barriers. Guided grocery store visits turned label-reading and budgeting into real-world skills, and \$100 gift cards underscored choice and dignity at the checkout. Insights from these touchpoints were folded into Ubuntu's ongoing provisioning (from pantry lists to voucher programs), improving reliability and relevance across the Collective's programming.

By recognizing the role of food in both health and identity, this initiative supported participants' body autonomy, dignity, and holistic well-being, many of whom face barriers to both food access and gender-affirming care. It also set the blueprint for future programming: a standing HRT-informed nutrition module in wellness cohorts; standardized culturally specific food boxes with swap options; trained peer food facilitators; and event catering guidelines that prioritize hormone-friendly, low-barrier choices. In short, this program didn't end at week twelve; it established practices of food sharing and provision that now anchor Ubuntu's year-round community care.



"This program wasn't just about nutrition, it was about creating safety, connection, and affirmation in a world that often denies all three."

— Ubuntu BlackTrans+ program participant




Linking Schools to Culturally Grounded Food Supports in Black Creek–Humber

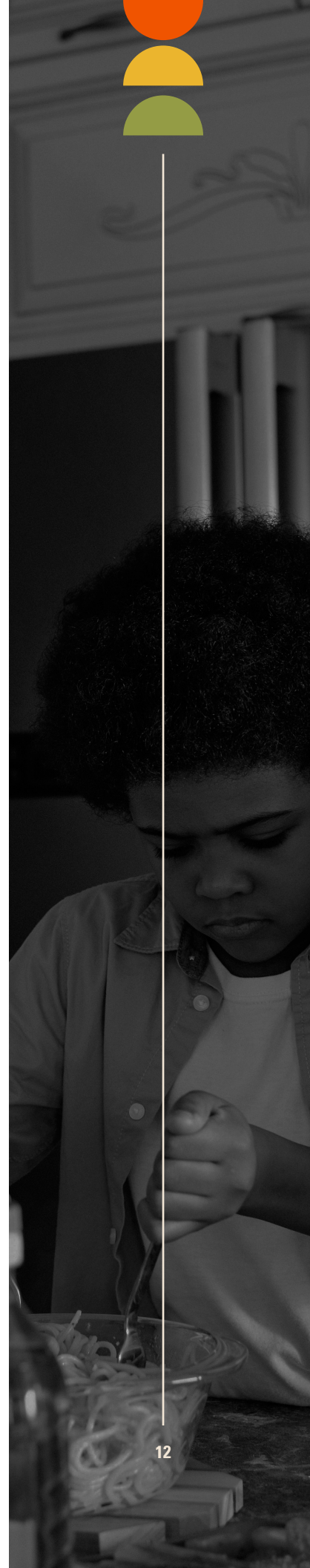
In October 2024, staff from the City’s Social Development division attended the Black Food Sovereignty Conference and heard a clear message: young people need education and access to culturally relevant foods, so stigma gives way to understanding. In the months that followed, conversations with Toronto District School Board staff in the Black Creek–Humber neighbourhood confirmed the urgency. Families across the area were facing food insecurity, and community partners identified a need for supports that were both practical and culturally grounded.

Working with Afri-Can Food Basket (AFB), the team identified Firgrove Elementary as an immediate high-priority site. AFB began supplying food baskets to 20 families over eight months, pairing direct support with cultural relevance and dignity. From there, City staff convened Black Creek Community Farm (BCCF), Toronto Community Housing (TCHC), and the City’s Parks & Recreation (PR) division to build a broader neighbourhood response that connected food access, learning, and community space.

That collaboration took shape in Summer 2025, when youth from Elias and Stilecroft elementary schools participated in a pilot that linked land-based learning with practical cooking. At BCCF, they learned to grow produce; at a local PR community centre, they cooked with what they had grown, linking soil to stove. Facilitators also introduced container gardening suited to TCHC apartments, helping ensure that the skills and harvest could travel home.

These pilots worked because partners aligned their mandates with community wisdom and need. City staff helped navigate processes to secure permits and space, while Black-led organizations delivered culturally responsive programming rooted in lived experience. The result was a bespoke model that helped demystify cultural foods, reduce stigma in school settings, and give families practical tools to strengthen their own food sovereignty. What began as a conference insight became a neighbourhood response—one that offers a promising model for future school-based food literacy, summer programming, and responsive food insecurity interventions.

 “This gave our children a chance to see food differently—not just as something you buy, but as something you can grow, understand, and share with pride.”
— Community participant



Opening Historic Doors for Black Foodways

As part of the BFS Plan, Fort York National Historic Site has spent the past three years co-creating programs with Toronto's Black communities—and lowering barriers to civic spaces. By offering free venue access, commercial kitchen use, and staff support, Fort York invited Black culinary leaders and vendors to animate a historic site with stories, skills, and shared meals spanning the Caribbean, East and West Africa, and Francophone Africa.

Programs have been both intimate and large-scale. Hungry for Comfort (Aug 2022) gathered 60 participants alongside Black vendors to explore how food sustains communities through adversity. Black Cultural Nutrients (Aug 2024), curated by Chef Bashir Munye, welcomed 75 participants and re-imagined the site through African and Indigenous lenses. The One Love Market series became a signature: in 2024 it drew 631 attendees (15–20 vendors per market), and in 2025 it expanded to 2,233 attendees (15–18 vendors per market) across bi-monthly dates—featuring partners like Foodpreneur Lab for vendor recruitment and kitchen compliance. The One Love Festive Market (Dec 2024) brought 382 attendees and 20 vendors, while Chef in Residence: Rooted at the Table (Aug 2025) convened 50 guests, three chefs, and a food historian to celebrate Francophone and Anglophone African cuisines.

Behind the scenes, Fort York has cultivated a network: cultural curators Lori Beazer (Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market) and Chef Bashir Munye; program partners like Foodpreneur Lab; and a vendor roster including Birdy's Daughter, Island Blaze Preserves Co., The Abibiman Project, and more. The approach—co-design, free access, and kitchen readiness—has normalized Black vendor participation within City-run heritage spaces, strengthening belonging and economic pathways. Looking ahead, even with reduced 2026 programming due to site constraints, Fort York's template endures: open the doors, share the kitchens, co-create the table.



"Thank you for giving small creators like us a platform to share our work. It's rare to find markets that truly celebrate community."

—Vendor, One Love Market





The Black Food Sovereignty Plan



Principles to Ground the Work

The Black Food Sovereignty (BFS) Plan envisions a future where Black communities in Toronto physically, culturally, and economically lead and shape the systems that nourish them. This vision is grounded in three core principles: Food Sovereignty, the Right to Food, and the values of the UN International Decade for People of African Descent.

Food Sovereignty affirms the right of people of African descent to access healthy, culturally appropriate food and to define and control their own food systems. It emphasizes local knowledge, sustainability, and Black community leadership.

The Right to Food recognizes food as a universal human right, as established by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948). This includes the right to adequate, nutritious, and culturally relevant food—and the means to grow and access it with dignity.

The BFS Plan is further shaped by the **UN International Decade for People of African Descent** (2015–2024) and its extension (2025–2034), which calls for development, justice, and recognition as essential principles in advancing equity and addressing historical and ongoing injustices faced by people of African descent across the world.

Rooted in a systems-change approach, the BFS Plan acknowledges that food insecurity results from broader structural inequities in land, housing, health, infrastructure, and economic opportunity. It calls for:

- Recognizing the impact of anti-Black racism on food access.
- Strengthening collaboration between City divisions and Black communities.

- Shifting power in food governance toward Black-led decision-making and resource control.

Food Security vs. Food Sovereignty

A central tenet of the BFS Plan is the shift from a food security framework to a food sovereignty approach. While food security focuses on ensuring people have access to adequate food, it often treats food as a commodity and views hunger as a result of insufficient production or access. It emphasizes availability, access, use, and stability, but pays less attention to who controls food systems.

In contrast, food sovereignty centers the rights and power of communities, especially those historically marginalized, to define their own food systems. It views food as a human right and addresses hunger as a symptom of inequitable governance, distribution, and systemic injustice. This approach prioritizes culturally appropriate food, supports local farmers and producers, and strengthens relationships between communities, land, and sustainability. The BFS Plan adopts a food sovereignty lens to advance justice, autonomy, and long-term resilience and agency for Black communities.

The Five Pillars for Action

The BFS Plan is built on five interrelated pillars, with 45 actions structured across them. Each pillar represents a thematic area where investments, partnerships, and City policies meaningfully advance the health, wealth, and wellbeing of Black Torontonians.



1. **Sustainable Funding & Community Capacity Building**

Supports long-term funding and infrastructure for Black-led food organizations to strengthen their capacity, leadership, and emergency response.

2. **Access to Growing Space**

Prioritizes land access for urban agriculture, healing, and education through the creation of Black-led gardens, farms, and food-growing initiatives.

3. **Accessible Infrastructure**

Expands equitable access to community kitchens, food storage, and production spaces, enabling Black residents and entrepreneurs to thrive.

4. **Black Food Hubs and Cultural Markets**

Develops spaces for Black food vendors, cultural events, and markets that celebrate Black foodways and foster local economic development.

5. **Culturally Rooted Community Health & Nutrition Programs**

Promotes African and Caribbean-centred nutrition, wellness, and food literacy programs to support community health and healing.

Each pillar contains specific actions, programs, and policy recommendations that guide City divisions and partners in supporting Black communities through responsive and sustained investments.

Governance Structure

The BFS Plan is implemented through a co-governance model that ensures community leadership and City accountability are central to decision-making and continue to guide and

inform the activities associated with the work.

Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle

The implementation of the BFS Plan is guided by the Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle (BFSAC), a community co-leadership body currently governed by nine diverse Black community members with expertise across the food system. The BFSAC ensures that the BFS Plan remains accountable, community-driven, and grounded in lived experience.

The BFSAC mandate is to:

- Measure and track outcomes to assess the impact of the BFS Plan.
- Identify and advise on emerging needs within the community.
- Engage and update Black communities and key stakeholders.
- Raise awareness on areas where the City should be taking a lead to advance outcomes.
- Amplify impact by increasing opportunities for collaboration with and between Black community members, Black leaders, organizations, and institutions.

The BFSAC includes farmers and growers, nutritionists, educators, chefs, restaurant owners, academics, cultural workers, and youth leaders, all of whom bring intersectional insights and deep commitment to advancing food sovereignty in Black communities. Members have contributed to policy consultations, partnership development, and community outreach.



Internal CityTable

The Internal CityTable is a standing, interdivisional working group that convenes periodically and as needed to align City efforts related to the BFS Plan. Participating divisions include Social Development (SD), Toronto Public Health (TPH), Parks & Recreation (PR), Economic Development & Culture (EDC), Environment, Climate and Forestry (ECF), City Planning, Children's Services, and others whose mandates intersect with food sovereignty priorities and Action Plan activities and deliverables.

The Internal Table supports light-touch, issue-driven coordination, information and resource sharing, policy and program direction alignment, barrier troubleshooting, and the identification of opportunities for joint action. By providing a forum for ad hoc collaboration, the table helps ensure that food sovereignty is not treated as the responsibility of one division but as a whole City priority requiring sustained, coordinated effort.

Connection to City Strategies and Divisional Partners

The BFS Plan is deeply connected to, and builds on, other municipal strategies and sectoral plans whose programs, policies, and resources intersect with food systems. These alignments ensure that the BFS Plan does not operate in isolation, but as part of a coordinated municipal effort to address food access, equity, climate resilience, and community development.

Aligned municipal strategies include:

- Toronto Food Strategy¹
- Toronto Poverty Reduction Strategy (TOProsperity)
- Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy
- Toronto Indigenous Health Strategy
- Toronto Seniors Strategy
- GrowTO Strategy
- Live GreenTO and TransformTO
- Resilience Strategy
- Equity, Diversity and Human Rights Strategic Plan
- Official Plan – City of Toronto
- Long Term Waste Management Strategy
- Milan Urban Food Policy Pact
- Golden Horseshoe Food and Farming Plan
- Community Garden Action Plan
- Culture Connects: An Action Plan for Culture in Toronto (2025-2035)

¹ While the Toronto Food Strategy is no longer active as a formal City strategy, it is referenced here to acknowledge its historical contribution to earlier food systems work and collaboration.



Looking Ahead: 2026 and beyond



Remaining Actions and Priorities

While significant milestones have been achieved, several key actions remain. These include:

- Informing community ownership models, including ongoing markets and community gardens.
- Increasing access to affordable infrastructure, such as commercial kitchens, food hubs, and storage facilities.
- Expanding urban agriculture initiatives on City land, including schools, museums, and underutilized properties.
- Enhancing Black-led data, research, and evaluation to support community advocacy and policy development.
- Integrating culturally relevant food access into public health and early years programming, including culturally inclusive nutrition supports and youth-focused food literacy.

These priorities reflect community calls for not only access to food but also ownership, agency, and governance in the systems that produce, distribute, and manage it. The Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit continues to invite Black leaders and grassroots groups to advance aligned community projects that leverage the City's strategic focus on these areas of work.

Building Sustainable Infrastructure and Governance

A central goal for 2025 and beyond is to embed the BFS Plan into City systems and community infrastructure. This means:

- Continuing to resource the leadership and direction of the Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle (BFSAC) as a permanent structure for accountability, implementation, and co-governance.
- Supporting Black-led and Black-mandated organizations to secure longer-term funding for food-based programs.
- Investing in stabilizing infrastructure and capital projects that serve as anchors for Black food networks. This includes and prioritizes the stabilization and improved access to existing commercial kitchen and community farm spaces.
- Expansion of Black-led farmers' markets and cultural food events across underserved neighbourhoods.
- Strengthening interdivisional collaboration and improved community accountability within the City, particularly between CABR, Parks and Recreation, Toronto Public Health, Economic Development & Culture, and Children's Services.

By grounding this work in Black leadership and ongoing partnership, the BFS Plan will shift from a time-limited initiative to a series of lasting interventions that communities can build on to realize improved food justice, agency and health equity.



Initiatives to Watch

Scaling Up: Zawadi Farm's Industrial Kitchen

Zawadi Farm has deep roots in sustainable farming, with a mission to promote sustainable agriculture, nurture community bonds, and increase access to fresh, locally sourced produce. Yet, one persistent gap continues to limit what Black growers and food entrepreneurs can achieve: access to viable, affordable industrial kitchen space where harvests can be processed, stored, and brought to market. With bridge funding from the City of Toronto's Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit, Zawadi will operate and manage an industrial kitchen to help close that gap. Offering below-market community rates, reliable scheduling, and clear operating expectations, the kitchen will support Black community organizations responding to food insecurity while also creating pathways for Black entrepreneurs. In partnership with Foodpreneur Lab, Zawadi will also provide readiness supports to help move products from recipe to label to buyer.

Social Prescription: Food as Medicine

In 2022, in collaboration with the Alliance for Healthier Communities, TAIBU Community Health Centre, a Black-focused health centre based in East Scarborough, supported the development of a social prescription initiative. To address the unique health barriers experienced by Black communities, TAIBU adapted the social prescription model—which involves prescribing non-clinical supports for clients, such as nutritious meals and culturally relevant foods—to its patients. Grounded in TAIBU's Model of Black Health & Wellbeing, TAIBU launched a Black-focused social prescribing program at 5 Community Health Centres in Ontario. Successfully running for 2.5 years, the program provided culturally appropriate food access to food-insecure households. As the project nears the end of its funded cycle, it is keen to capture key research, analysis, and insights to understand the impacts of Black food insecurity and the benefits of social prescribing for Black families and participants. To realize this vision, TAIBU will be partnering with the Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit to extend program funding to develop a resource and tool kit to not only document how to start or implement a Black-focused social prescription initiative, but also integrate it into existing resources and health centre infrastructure to ensure it can be sustained over time.



A Message from the Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle (BFSAC)

To our community, partners, and allies,

As we bring this report to a close, we do so with a shared commitment to the work ahead. Black Food Sovereignty (BFS) Plan implementation so far has been full of learning, relationship-building, and community action. There has also been opportunities for honest reflection on what has not worked as we hoped.

When the BFSAC was created, it was envisioned as a space where Black community leadership could help shape, guide, and hold accountable the implementation of the BFS Plan. While there have been meaningful moments of influence and connection, the BFSAC's impact has at times been constrained by the level of consistent staffing, time, resourcing, and interdivisional coordination available to support the work. These realities reflect the broader implementation context of the BFS Plan, with the complexity of interdivisional work and municipal capacity shaping what has been possible. The BFSAC remains committed and ready; with steadier support, this community leadership can be fully activated.

Yet, there is much that has worked. The BFS Plan has supported markets, programs, and initiatives that have tangibly improved access to culturally relevant food. It has brought together new partners, amplified community-led leadership, and made the case for why food sovereignty is essential to the wellbeing of Black communities in Toronto. The BFSAC has been a part of that progress: offering community perspective, pushing for transparency, and ensuring that Black voices remain central to the conversation.

Serving within municipal structures has taught us that community leadership inside government processes requires persistence, creativity, and reliable institutional partnership. It has also made clear that true collaboration means building trust, creating space for grassroots voices to lead, and embedding accountability in every stage of the work.

As we look to the future of the BFS Plan, our focus must be on strengthening governance, deepening partnerships, and ensuring that the actions still to come are implemented with clarity, urgency, and measurable community benefit. We see value in a gently strengthened governance model—regular meeting cadence, clear decision pathways, dedicated staff support, and transparent reporting—so that community leadership and City follow-through move in step. We have an opportunity to carry these lessons forward and use them to build systems that will last beyond the life of this Plan.

To everyone who has contributed their time, energy, ideas, and advocacy—thank you. The next chapter will be stronger because of what we have learned together. We invite you to continue walking with us, encouraging accountability across all partners, and imagining what is possible when Black communities lead the systems that nourish us.

In solidarity,
The Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle (BFSAC)



Honouring Toronto's Black Food Community

The foundation of this report and the Black Food Sovereignty movement in Toronto is built upon the deep and enduring work of Black communities who have long cultivated food as a source of survival, culture, healing, and liberation. Long before municipal strategies, funding frameworks, or formal policy interventions, Black people across generations were sowing seeds, feeding neighbours, preserving cultural foodways, and passing down ancestral knowledge. Much of the most vital work in Black food communities is unpaid, underrecognized, and carried out quietly: parents making meals stretch, neighbours sharing food with elders, or volunteers preparing culturally affirming meals for others.

We honour the elders who have sustained and preserved food traditions through storytelling, community gardening, seed saving, and mentorship. Their teachings have helped maintain a connection to ancestral land-based knowledge and have nourished generations through the values of care, reciprocity, and cultural pride.

Across the food system, Black growers, chefs, vendors, caregivers, community educators, entrepreneurs, and emergency food workers have shaped the city's food landscape. Through formal and informal labour, these stewards have not only fed communities, but have transformed kitchens, markets, gardens, and cultural gatherings into spaces of safety, joy, and resistance, even in the face of resource scarcity and structural barriers.

We honour the people whose vision and labour have brought this movement to life. We recognize that this work has always existed, and we affirm our shared commitment to continue building a future rooted in dignity, care, and sovereignty for Black communities across Toronto.



Summary of BFS Actions and Activities to Date



Pillar 1: Sustainable Funding & Community Capacity Building

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2024-2025	Social Development (SD) – Community Funding Unit (CFU); Black Creek Community Farm (BCCF); The Public Clinic	<p>Black-Mandated Funding Framework (BMFF): 2025 Grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD–CFU awarded two grants for BFS-related programming, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> BCCF trained 15 youth in farming leadership, seed saving, and soil/compost fundamentals. The Public Clinic delivered a Debt & Credit clinic, a Black History initiative, and “Project Nourish”. 	Youth gained practical agriculture leadership skills; residents improved financial/legal literacy; and families benefited from strengthened food access.
2024	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Black Creek Community Farm (BCCF)	<p>Market Garden supporting newcomer growers to produce and sell to the local community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CABR Provided \$20,000 to operate a market garden engaging newcomer growers Produced culturally familiar crops and sold through local channels. Offered hands-on training in urban agriculture and micro-enterprise. 	Increased local access to fresh, culturally relevant produce while creating place-based economic participation for newcomer growers.
2023-2024	Social Development (SD) – Community Funding Unit (CFU); Afri-Can FoodBasket (AFB); Art + Health; Black Creek Community Farm (BCCF); Canadian Gambian Youth Development Association (CGYDA); Shelley Cares Foundation; Ubuntu Community Collective; Tropicana Community Services	<p>Black-Mandated Funding Framework (BMFF): 2024 Grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD–CFU awarded seven grants for BFS-related programming, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFB’s four-month worth of food baskets for 120 families with Ambassador training Art + Health’s ENIBLAH feast and Beiteseb produce supports. BCCF’s youth urban-agricultural leadership CGYDA services for 150+ residents Shelley Cares’ culturally appropriate supports. Ubuntu’s healthy food supports for mothers/families. Tropicana’s appliances and harvest boxes with home delivery (~105 families). 	Black-mandated capacity was stabilized and expanded; culturally relevant food supports reached diverse households; and youth pathways into land-based leadership were strengthened.



Pillar 1: Sustainable Funding & Community Capacity Building

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2021, 2022, 2024	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Black Food Sovereignty Toronto (BFST); Afri-Can FoodBasket (AFB)	<p>Black Food Sovereignty Conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The CABR Unit, BFST, AFB, and community partners hosted the second, third, and fourth annual multi-session BFS conferences. With \$20,000 in funding from the CABR Unit each year, the conference was expanded and scaled with keynote presentations and community dialogues focused on governance, accountability, knowledge-sharing, and community-building. 	Shared accountability practices and community capacity to steer implementation were strengthened across the BFS network.
2022-2023	Social Development (SD) – Community Funding Unit (CFU); African in Partnerships Against AIDS (APAA); Tropicana Community Services; BGC East Scarborough	<p>Black-Mandated Funding Framework (BMFF): 2023 Grants.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD–CFU awarded three grants for BFS-related programming, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> APAA provided food vouchers to clients during COVID-19 lockdowns. Tropicana provided fruits and vegetables to clients who did not have access to enough fresh food . BGC’s youth program to promote healthy eating, including gardening and cooking. 	Black community organizations retained essential staff and programs and strengthened readiness to deliver, evaluate, and scale culturally relevant food-security supports.
2023	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Economic Development & Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services; Chef Bashir Munye; Aina-Nia Ayo’dele	<p>Breaking Bread Feast (Fort York).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City convened a culturally affirming feast with leaders from 17 organizations to celebrate contributions and lay the groundwork for a Black-led consortium to steward the annual BFS conference. 	Trust and peer coordination deepened among Black food leaders, creating a platform for ongoing joint implementation of the BFS plan.
2023	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Afri-Can FoodBasket (AFB)	<p>Food baskets for families.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With \$20,000 in funding from CABR, AFB provided culturally appropriate food baskets to families. 	Increased dignified access to culturally relevant foods and reduced short-term food insecurity for Black households.



Pillar 1: Sustainable Funding & Community Capacity Building

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2022	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); African Caribbean Farmers Market; Belka Enrichment Centre; Black Creek Community Farm; FoodShare; Somali Canadian Association; St. Jamestown Co-op; Toronto Black Farmers and Growers Collective	2022 Microgrants for Immediate Food Access & Market Supports. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CABR Issued 8 microgrants totaling \$80,000 (\$10,000 each) to deliver immediate food security (food baskets, food delivery), stabilize the Little Jamaica farmers’ market, and purchase food storage infrastructure to expand access to culturally appropriate foods. 	Improved short-term food security and strengthened local, culturally rooted food access across multiple neighbourhoods through rapid supports and market infrastructure
2022	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Afri-Can FoodBasket (AFB); Toronto Metropolitan University (TMU)	Mobilizing Black Climate Action (Report). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFB and TMU researched climate impacts on Black communities and produced a report following consultations with Black farmers and community organizations. 	Environmental justice was centred within BFS, seeding Black-led strategies for climate resilience in Toronto.
2022	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR)	Black Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle (BFSAC). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The inaugural Advisory Circle was selected, launched, and onboarded to guide implementation quality and equity. 	Co-governance and accountability were embedded within the City–community implementation model.
2020-2021	Social Development (SD) – Community Funding Unit (CFU); Belka Enrichment Center/Caribbean Global Missions	Black-Mandated Funding Framework (BMFF). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SD–CFU awarded one grant for BFS-related programming Belka provided monthly deliveries of healthy culturally appropriate cooked meals, fruits, gift cards, and other food items to 150 vulnerable African-Caribbean single mothers and seniors in the Jane-Finch and Jane/Wilson communities. 	Culturally relevant food supports reached diverse households and vulnerable Black households benefited from strengthened food access.



Pillar 2: Access To Growing Space

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2025	Parks & Recreation (PR); Jamestown Community Garden; Rockcliffe Community Gardens; local community partners	Jamestown Community Garden – youth plots & neighbourhood activation. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Youth worked two plots (adjacent to Elmbank CC), received vegetable and soil donations, and engaged neighbours in decorative rock painting to beautify plots. 	Strengthened youth skills and peer connection through hands-on land-based learning and community beautification.
2025	Parks & Recreation (PR); Social Development (SD) – Community Development Unit (CDU); TDSB; Black Creek Community Farm	Social & Environmental Enterprise Development (SEED) Program (with TDSB & Black Creek Community Farm) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five-week program for up to 15 Jane & Finch youth, tower-garden sessions at Stilecroft PS (Mon/Wed/Fri), and fieldwork/workshops at BCCF (Tue/Thu). Youth also supported the Black Farmers Market (Thurs 3–7 pm) with a plan to expand in 2026. 	Youth built practical urban-agriculture, food sovereignty, and leadership skills connected to Black-led market activity.
2024-2025	Parks & Recreation (PR); Toronto Employment & Social Services (TESS); Lawrence Heights Youth Council	Lawrence Heights Community Garden – launch & community leadership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Launched Sept 2024, 20 local members (nearly half identify as Black) tended to the community garden. Participants attended bi-weekly coordination meetings and applied for a local leadership grant. Community garden celebration took place Sept 25, 2025. 	Built place-based food growing, leadership, and social cohesion among Black residents in Lawrence Heights.
2023	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Afri-Can FoodBasket (AFB)	Food for the North – Youth Farm Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With \$110,000 in City support, numerous Black-mandated / Black-serving partners delivered 25 meetings, 10 public presentations, 25 youth outreach engagements, an intergenerational knowledge exchange, and established growing activity at Glen Garden Co-op and the Ujamaa Learning Farm expansion. 	Black youth built practical urban-agriculture skills and mentorship ties; community access to culturally relevant produce increased; and public education on BFS expanded.

Pillar 3: Accessible Infrastructure

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2025	Social Development (SD) – Poverty Reduction Office (PRO); Parks & Recreation (PR); Malvern Urban Farm	Hydro-Corridor Market-Gardens Resource. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with the City, Malvern Urban Farm is preparing a clear “how-to” on Community Energy & Emissions Reduction (CEED) pathways to help community growers navigate approvals and access land in hydro corridors. 	Community growers will gain clearer pathways to scale local production in hydro-corridor spaces.
2022-2024	Economic Development & Culture (EDC)	Food Hall Support for Black Entrepreneurs and Start-ups. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> \$210,486 in funding over three years to provide mentoring, coaching, and programming, and enabled access to kitchen spaces and wraparound supports for culinary and food-based enterprises. 	Strengthened an inclusive entrepreneurial ecosystem by increasing Black innovators’ access to capital, facilities, and structured business supports, improving the sustainability of culturally relevant food businesses.
2022-2023	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); Councillor Filion (Section 37 initiative); Venture Park Labs; North York Food Hall	Food Hall Vendor Support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Through a Section 37-funded initiative championed by Councillor Filion, EDC is supporting the design and launch of a new Food Hall. This included: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Supporting vendor selection (many Black-owned/equity-deserving). Developing a training program to employ at-risk youth in food service. Embedding diversity requirements into the operator agreement. 	Integrated anti-racism and food-equity principles into procurement and operations, creating stable commercial space for Black vendors and structured employment pathways for Black youth.

Pillar 4: Black Food Hubs, Procurement & Cultural Markets

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2025	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); local BIA; Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market (ACFM)	Event support for Black-led markets on City-permitted lands (including ACFM support via local BIA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided event support for farmers' markets on City-permitted lands, continued local BIA support for the Afro-Caribbean Farmers' Market in Little Jamaica. 	Embedded inclusive access to public space and permitting pathways for Black-led markets.
2025	Economic Development & Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services; Local MRKT; Samosa Delight	Montgomery's Inn – weekly Farmers' Market + Fall Festival <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly market (Wed 2–6 pm) with 200–350 visitors and diverse vendors, including Somali-owned Samosa Delight. • Fall Festival (Sep 18, 2025): 1,003 attendees, including two Black-owned businesses. 	Normalized Black-owned vendor participation within City-run market infrastructure, improving equitable access to stalls and audiences.
2024–2025	Economic Development & Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services; Foodpreneur Lab	One Love Food & Arts Market – Fort York series (vendor access & kitchen support) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2024: 631 attendees total; 15–20 vendors/ market across multiple dates. • Dec. 2024: 382 attendees; 20 vendors; seasonal activation. • 2025: 2,233 attendees total; 15–18 vendors/ market; vendor recruitment & kitchen. • Compliance supported by Foodpreneur Lab. • EDC provided commercial kitchen access, enabling safe, affordable prep. 	Reduced operational barriers for Black vendors (kitchen access/ compliance), expanding participation and market readiness.
2024–2025	EDC; Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); The Re-Seasoning Coalition	Black Experience Pavilion at The Restaurants Canada Show <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Re-Seasoning created the Black Experience Pavilion, the first of its kind at the RC Show, which provided free access and a visible platform for the Black food sector at Canada's largest foodservice trade show. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 400+ Black attendees participated, and 50+ Black-owned businesses showcased (across 2 years). • 2025 cohort: 35 businesses; ran masterclasses, curated buyer–supplier matchmaking, and 15 on-site interviews; generated 93 new business connections; leveraged \$75,000 private funding. 	Shifted industry procurement and hiring pathways toward inclusion by embedding Black vendors and talent in a national trade platform, moving from symbolic representation to sustained market access (e.g., supplier onboarding outcomes).

Pillar 4: Black Food Hubs, Procurement & Cultural Markets

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2024–2025	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Parks & Recreation (PR)	Permitting access for Black-led markets on City-permitted lands. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintained Special Event permit pathway for fresh food/farmers’ markets on City land, supporting consistent access processes for Black-led markets. 	Normalized equitable access to public space for Black-led markets through clear permitting and operations.
2021, 2022, 2023, 2024	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Afro-Caribbean Farmers’ Market (ACFM) (Little Jamaica); SD – CFU	Afro-Caribbean Farmers’ Market – Multi-Year Support. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ACFM welcomed 18,000+ attendees across four seasons (2021–2024), hosted 15–18 Black vendors per week from a roster of 20–30, and stabilized and scaled through City funding/support (permitting, public space, operations). ACFM vendors progressed to larger markets (Evergreen Brick Works, Leslieville, Withrow, Guelph). ACFM became an active member of MarketCityTO to advance inclusive market development. 	Made culturally relevant, Black-led food access routine in a historic Black neighbourhood, circulating local dollars, strengthening vendor pipelines, and deepening pride, belonging, and community wellbeing.
2022–2023	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); MarketCityTO; Red Onions Events; Golden Horseshoe Food & Farming Alliance; Malvern Family Resource Centre; Centre for Immigrant & Community Services; TAIBU CHC; Grant AME; St. Andrew’s Anglican; Distributors: 100km Foods; Graze & Gather	Scarborough Neighbourhood Fresh Food Markets Pilot (5 markets + ScarbTO Mrkt Bucks + Ontario Fresh Food Table) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Operated 5 neighbourhood markets (4 in public parks) with 10–15 vendors/market (53%BIPOC entrepreneurs) Launched ScarbTO Mrkt Bucks enrolling 100 households with 73% redemption Ran the Ontario Fresh Food Table for 33 market days in 2022, generating ~\$14.6K in produce sales (incl. Mrkt Bucks) and employing 8 youth + 1 urban grower Impacted 33 producers 	Increased dignified, culturally relevant, fresh-food access in underserved neighbourhoods while building local vendor pipelines, youth employment, and community pride.
2023	Social Development (SD) – CABR; Economic Development & Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services (Fort York National Historic Site); Shop Black Owned Canada Inc. (BlackOwnedTO)	Emancipation Month “Freedom Market.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City and BlackOwnedTO co-deliver a vendor market where 25–30 businesses, including Black food vendors, engaged more than 300 attendees. 	Black businesses gained revenue and customer reach while forging stronger relationships with City programs.

Pillar 5: Culturally Rooted Community Health & Nutrition Programs



Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2025–2026	Toronto Public Health (TPH); Social Development (SD) – Poverty Reduction Office (PRO); Toronto District School Board (TDSB)	<p>Student Nutrition Program Expansion</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City and its partners advanced the City Council–approved phased expansion of a universal school food program in Toronto. By the end of 2025, approximately 81% of public-school communities offered a student nutrition program and introduced culturally representative menu planning. 	School-based nutrition supports became more universal and culturally relevant, reducing barriers to learning and wellness.
2025	Economic Development & Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services; Chef Jean-Régis Raynaud; Chef Marc Kusitor; Ozoz Sokoh; Nigerian guest chef, Victor Ugweke	<p>Chef in Residence: Rooted at the Table – Fort York and Montgomery’s Inn.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EDC hosted a French African Haitian-inspired dinner with Chef Jean-Régis Raynaud, Chef Marc Kusitor and food historian Ozoz Sokoh at Fort York on Aug. 7, 2025, with 50 attendees including CABR staff. Program moved to Montgomery’s Inn in Nov. 2025 for a community cooking class with Nigerian Chef Victor Ugeweke of Afrobeat Kitchen. 	Participants deepened foodways knowledge and cultural pride through hands-on cooking and storytelling.
2025	Social Development (SD) – Community Development Unit (CDU); Toronto District School Board (TDSB); Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC); Parks & Recreation (PR); Afri-Can Food Basket (AFB); Black Creek Community Farm (BCCF)	<p>Black Creek–Humber: School-Linked Food Supports & Summer Pathway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> AFB food baskets for 20 families over 8 months (Firgrove Elementary). Summer 2025 grow-cook pilot—youth from Elias and Stilecroft schools grew produce at BCCF and cooked at a PR centre. Container gardening adapted for TCHC apartments. 	Reduced stigma around cultural foods in schools; practical food literacy and budgeting skills; home-based growing introduced; and repeatable model for school-based food literacy, summer programming, and crisis-responsive provisioning.
2025	Economic Development and Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services; Pelau Catering	<p>Emancipation Walking Tour – Mackenzie House (with Pelau Catering)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In the fourth year of this partnership, post-tour refreshments provided by Pelau Catering highlighted Caribbean cuisine; Aug 23, 2025: 32 attendees. 	Deepened shared learning about Black culinary heritage and positive peer connection through food.

Pillar 5: Culturally Rooted Community Health & Nutrition Programs



Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2025	Economic Development and Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services; NutMeg Spiced Caribbean; Birdy’s Daughter	<p>Spadina Museum – food & culture programming with Black vendors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Artist’s Talk with Natalie Wood (Feb 22, 2025): 38 attendees (refreshments by NutMeg Spiced Caribbean). Garden Party (Jul 20, 2025): 830 attendees (food vendor: Birdy’s Daughter). Fall Festival (Sep 28, 2025): 2000 attendees (food vendor: Birdy’s Daughter). <p>Scarborough Museum (SM)- Food & culture programming with Black vendors.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Canada Day event featuring Black food vendors (July 2025): Patty King & Amira Khelifa: 4,728 attendees Emancipation Month and weekends featuring Black food vendors (August–September 2025): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Honey Guru programming: 4,712 attendees Leteni Khawa programming: 989 attendees YAWDIs programming (August 9–September 14, 2025): 3,704 attendees Chef in Resident with Chef Jean Régis Raynaud and Scarborough Chef Christopher Loney (Honey Guru) (October 2025): 116 attendees Black businesses actively promoted via Festival & Events City of Toronto webpage, outreach, and business materials onsite. 	Elevated visibility of Black food vendors in heritage programming, strengthening belonging and cultural affirmation.
2025	Toronto Children’s Services (TCS)	<p>Family Urban-Gardening Kits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TCS extended childcare-centre programming by providing starter kits and resources for families to grow food at home. 	Families gained home-based food literacy and practical skills for fresh food growing.
2024–2025	Toronto Children’s Services (TCS)- EarlyON Child and Family Centres (EarlyON)	<p>Black-Focused Family Programming through the EarlyON Black Innovation Grant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> EarlyON expanded Black-focused programming by offering culturally relevant meals/snacks and grocery gift cards sourced from Black-owned vendors and caterers. 	Families accessed dignified food supports while reinforcing Black-owned supply chains.
2024–2025	Toronto Public Health (TPH) – Toronto Urban Health Fund (TUHF); Weston Frontlines Centre (Frontlines)	<p>Youth Skills & Wellness (Weston/Mount Dennis).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TUHF supported a program for 20 Black female youth that combined cooking skills, outings, and culturally rooted supports. 	Participants built resilience, practical skills, and peer connection through affirming programming.

Pillar 5: Culturally Rooted Community Health & Nutrition Programs



Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2024–2025	Toronto Public Health (TPH) – School Health	Culturally Appropriate Foods in Health Promotion. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPH embedded culturally appropriate foods in school health-promotion work and partnered with Africentric/Black-centered schools. 	Black-centered health promotion became a normalized part of school-based practice.
2024–2025	Toronto Public Health (TPH); Senior Services & Long-Term Care (SSLTC); Toronto Seniors Housing Corporation (TSHC)	Food Access & Navigation for Seniors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City produced food-access/navigation materials for residents in 10TSHC buildings, clarifying pathways to supports. 	Seniors experienced reduced navigation barriers and clearer access to food resources.
2023–2025	Toronto Public Health; Toronto Public Health (TPH); Afri-Can FoodBasket (AFB); EarlyON Child and Family Centres (EarlyON)	Family Meals, Hampers & Cookbook. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through programming funded by the EarlyON Black Innovation Grant, partners delivered hot, culturally relevant meals, family hampers, and nutrition education, and created a community cookbook by Black diaspora families. 	Food literacy improved for parents and caregivers, and Black culinary heritage was celebrated across family-serving spaces.
2023–2024	Toronto Public Library (TPL); FoodReach	Youth Hubs Food Access. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • TPL collaborated with FoodReach to provide nutritious food at all 23TPLYouth Hubs, located primarily in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas (e.g., Malvern, Albion, York Woods, Weston, Downsview). The food provision was integrated with learning, mentorship, and access to resources for Black and other racialized youth. 	Youth had increased access to nutritious food and wrap-around supports and safe spaces for socialization and peer support; and food programming in library services addressed social determinants of health.
2024	Economic Development and Culture (EDC) – Museums & Heritage Services – Fort York National Historic Site; Black Cultural Nutrients Collective Inc.; Chef Bashir Munye; Griot’s Table	Cultural Nutrients – African foodways community gathering (Emancipation at Fort York). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A first-of-its-kind, one-day, multi-ethnic, multi-sensory African foodways event featuring workshops led by local Black elders/healers (e.g., Restorative Knowledge; Roots & Remedies; Sacred Earth & Sacred Self; A Seat at Hoyo’s Table), a curated Nomadic Supper by Chef Bashir Munye, and a collective myth-making session (“Transcendence”). • 75 attendees. 	Reconnected participants to ancestral African foodways and strengthened cultural pride, wellness, and community bonds through shared cooking, learning, and storytelling.

Pillar 5: Culturally Rooted Community Health & Nutrition Programs

Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2023	Toronto Public Library (TPL) – Sanderson Branch; Black Men’s Therapy Fund (BMTF)	Regrowing Store-Bought Herbs & Vegetables (Pilot). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> TPL partnered with BMTF to deliver a pilot workshop for 10 participants that raised awareness about Black Food Sovereignty, food sustainability, and self-sufficiency. Participants learned practical techniques to regrow herbs and vegetables commonly used in African and Caribbean cuisines. 	Participants gained practical home-growing skills and tools, and reconnected with Black cultural practices of self-sufficiency, gardening, and land stewardship.
2017-2025	Parks & Recreation (PR) – Enhanced Youth Spaces (EYS)	“Chop It Like It’s Hot!” After-School Culinary Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PR delivered programming across 20 EYS sites building core life skills for youth through cooking, competitions (incl. Afro-Caribbean BHM special), and internship pathways. Maintained a SEED tower growing herbs that feed into Chop It Like It’s Hot! citywide program. 	Youth improved nutrition literacy, cultural pride, and confidence through Afro-diasporic cooking and peer learning.
2023	Ubuntu – BlackTrans, Non-Binary, Gender Diverse Collective; FoodShare; Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR)	BlackTrans & Non-Binary Food and Nutrition Program. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ubuntu and FoodShare ran a 12-week program for 15 participants, including 180 culturally responsive food boxes, HRT-supportive workshops, guided grocery visits, and gift cards. 	Participants gained HRT-supportive nutrition and budgeting skills in an affirming program designed by and for Black TNB and gender diverse communities.
2023	Social Development (SD) – Confronting Anti-Black Racism Unit (CABR); Art + Health; Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture (CCVT); FoodShare	Beiteseb (Family) Food Program for Seniors. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> With \$25,000 in funding from the CABR Unit, partners provided ten weeks of culturally appropriate fresh-food delivery to 35 Ethiopian and Eritrean senior households. 	Vulnerable Black seniors experienced short-term, culturally relevant supports while reducing isolation and food stress.
2022	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous Community Leaders; Black Food Organizations	Afro-Indigenous Community Feast. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The City co-hosted a community feast with more than 50 participants, centring shared sovereignty, relationship-building, and reciprocal learning between Indigenous, Afro-Indigenous, and Black communities. 	Indigenous–Black relations were strengthened and participants articulated shared governance visions related to food and land.

Pillar 5: Culturally Rooted Community Health & Nutrition Programs



Years	Lead Division(s) / Key Partner(s)	Activities / Outputs	Key Outcomes / Impact
2022	Economic Development & Culture (EDC); Foodpreneur; Afro-Caribbean Farmers Market; CEE Centre for Young Black Professionals; Chef Roger Mooking	<p>“Hungry for Comfort” – Emancipation Month Programming.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The City delivered public programming at Forth York National Historic Site that included panel discussions, culinary tastings, and Black food-history walking tours, highlighting the past and present contributions and challenges across Black food cultures. • 60 attendees. 	Public understanding of systemic barriers increased; culture-based solutions and culinary heritage were celebrated; and citywide awareness of Black food histories and leadership grew.



City of Toronto April 2026

