

## **BC Provincial General Election 2017: Food Policy Questionnaire for Standing Nominees**

The Vancouver Food Policy Council (VFPC) is an official civic agency that works to help improve food sustainability in Vancouver by providing advice to Vancouver City Council. The City of Vancouver adopted the Vancouver Food Strategy in 2013, however, many food and agriculture topics fall under the jurisdiction of provincial and federal governments.

Food is part of our culture, economy, well-being, and environment. The next provincial general election in British Columbia is scheduled for May 9, 2017 and the Vancouver Food Policy Council wants to know how you, a standing nominee for the 2017 BC Provincial General Election, will support the development of a just and sustainable food system for all.

Please take a minute to respond to the following questions. The VFPC will compile candidate responses, post them to the VFPC website, and circulate responses across BC.

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## Jerry Kroll

Vancouver Mount Pleasant, BC Green Party

Hi Kimberley!

*Your email has perfect timing, as we JUST released the Green Policy on your topics. Well thought out, concise, and it makes you wonder why the existing politicians have been ignoring these issues!!*

1) [http://www.bcgreens.ca/andrew\\_weaver\\_releases\\_b\\_c\\_green\\_party\\_agricultural\\_platform](http://www.bcgreens.ca/andrew_weaver_releases_b_c_green_party_agricultural_platform)

2) [http://www.bcgreens.ca/a\\_food\\_secure\\_bc](http://www.bcgreens.ca/a_food_secure_bc)

*This goes FAR beyond the few questions you have in your questionnaire, as it rightly should! This is a big, complex issue that needs to be totally executed, not just tiny bits!! Like shopping for a car and only coming home with one wheel! No good!!*

*Please let me know if you have any further questions now, and I'm available any time you like! Also at our Vancouver Headquarters in Kingsgate Mall if you'd like to meet in person!*

*All the best,*

*Jerry Kroll, BC Green Party  
Vancouver Mount Pleasant*

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## Janet Fraser

Vancouver-Langara, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

**1. The BC food system impacts public health, social well-being, community development, land use, education, economic prosperity, natural resources, public safety, and transportation in multiple ways. If elected, how will you advance and coordinate food systems initiatives across various ministries of provincial government?**

The BC Greens recognize that provincial governance covers many complex issues that do not neatly fit in one ministry. In building our high level policy we have addressed broad issues such as health, safety, standard of living and ecological balance that encompass many aspects of the BC food system and as a government we would continue this high level overview and coordination of the more detailed actions in each ministry.

**2. Food insecurity is directly linked to the unacceptable rates of poverty in BC. If elected, would you commit to implementing a comprehensive poverty reduction plan with legislated targets and timelines within the next term of office? If yes, how would you do so?**

The BC Greens will implement an income security plan that will address the unacceptable levels of poverty and inequality in our province. We will implement a basic income pilot project, increase Persons with Disabilities, income assistance and shelter allowances, provide basic income support for youth aged 18-24 who are transitioning out of foster care, establish a fair wages commission to set a new minimum wage and oversee rate reviews, work with the federal government to provide a low-income benefit of up to \$205/month for low-income families, and roll MSP premiums into taxes so they are administered in a more equitable and progressive manner.

**3. One in six BC children lives in a food insecure household. Despite this, BC does not have a universal school food program for public school children. If elected, what would you do to ensure that school aged children have access to healthy meals and food literacy programming in school?**

A BC Green government would invest \$35 million over the four-year term to support nutrition and physical activity programs to improve student health and improve learning readiness. Children who suffer from poor nutrition during the brain's most formative years score much lower on tests of vocabulary, reading comprehension, arithmetic and general knowledge. We will also increase public education funding by \$4 billion over the four-year term, providing sufficient resources for food literacy components in the new curriculum.

**4. Indigenous food systems continue to be eroded through ongoing colonialism. Indigenous communities are raising concerns regarding the negative impacts of development and extraction projects on their ability to maintain traditional food practices. If elected, what measures would you**

**commit to undertaking to ensure the protection and continuing revitalization of Indigenous food practices in BC?**

A BC Green government would fully commit to adopt and implement the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples as well as the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. A BC Green government would work hard to establish respectful working relationships with First Nations. More details will come in our First Nations reconciliation platform. We will recognize and support the importance to of indigenous food cultures. We will collaborate with indigenous peoples as well as not-for-profits and other interested parties on alternative land access models for food production such as cooperatives, agricultural land trusts, and land-sharing agreements.

**5. The Agricultural Land Reserve is a long-standing public legacy that enables a viable agricultural sector and food security for future generations in BC. If elected, what government policies would you support to ensure the long-term protection, viability, and use of the lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve? What additional approaches would you take to foster a viable and sustainable local farming sector in BC?**

A Green government will introduce new legislation to enhance the protection of agricultural land, to increase the proportion of land used for agriculture, and to address both property speculation and the construction of mega-mansions and country estates. We will introduce apprenticeship programs at the secondary and post-secondary levels and expand the "Buy Local" initiatives. We will work with farm operators to address labour shortages in agriculture, including a basic income pilot program.

**6. The Climate Action Plan is B.C.'s roadmap to an emerging green economy for the province that outlines how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. If elected, how would you support adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture and food sector?**

The Greenhouse Gas Reduction Targets Act (GGRTA) came into force in January 2008. GGRTA set legislated targets for reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 33% below 2007 levels by 2020, and 80% below 2007 levels by 2050. However, the Climate Leadership Team acknowledged BC will not meet its 2020 targets. They recommended an interim target of a 40% reduction below 2007 levels by 2030. The BC Greens believe this is a realistic target that can be met with immediate and decisive action. A BC Green government will provide \$40 million to fund research and will establish regional agricultural bureaus to provide expertise and support for local farmers in dealing with climate change. Research will include: Supporting long-term and strategic planning to deal proactively with climate change and plan for future food production and security. Conducting research into the impacts of climate change regionally, and on specific crops, diseases and pests. Developing technologies and practices that will improve climate resilience. Implementing initiatives to protect water supplies for agriculture.

**7. Food waste is an economic, social and environmental problem that occurs in all sectors the food system. If elected, how would you advance the reduction of food waste in BC?**

The BC Greens recognize the many aspects of food waste that occur in all sectors of the food system from crops that are not harvested, to food that cannot be processed, to retail and consumer waste. Addressing food waste, especially at the local level, will improve environmental, economic and social sustainability. A BC Green government would work with all levels of government, local businesses, not-for-profits and other interested parties to reduce food waste. We will support research and development of clean technologies that can be applied in this area.

**8. We know that neonicotinoid pesticides are toxic to bees and other insects that benefit our food system. If elected, would you commit to reducing the use of neonicotinoid pesticides across the province? If yes, what measures would you take to do so?**

BC Greens understand the serious questions and concerns about using neonicotinoid pesticides and recognize that it is essential to maintain healthy bee, as well as other insect, populations. Health Canada has proposed phasing out most uses of neonicotinoids and a BC Green government would work with the federal government to achieve phasing out their use to ensure a sustainable future for agriculture in BC.

**9. If elected, what other food issues or initiatives would you like to advance in the coming term?**

The BC Greens Strategy for a New Economy includes many measures to support small and medium sized enterprises and many of these exist in BC's food system. A BC Green government will modernize labour laws to recognize new and evolving types of work relationships as more people work part-time or on contract as independent contractors - designations that can allow employers to deprive them of basic gains such as benefits, regular work schedules, reasonable of job security, a minimum wage and overtime pay. We will also invest up to \$50 million a year in business incubators, accelerators and affordable space for small and medium-sized enterprises.

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## Joey Doyle

Vancouver-Fairview, Your Political Party of BC

**1. The BC food system impacts public health, social well-being, community development, land use, education, economic prosperity, natural resources, public safety, and transportation in multiple ways. If elected, how will you advance and coordinate food systems initiatives across various ministries of provincial government?**

Providing more food that is more local is the primary way by which we can ensure that people have access to healthy and nutritious food in a way that ensures economic and environmental sustainability. I would work with both levels of government to foster initiatives like community gardens, urban agriculture, local food boxes, and farmer's markets - and to provide public investment to make these local food sources affordable for everyone. This would involve working with initiatives in food production and distribution to change society's behaviour in growing, selling, and thinking about food. We can only truly create sustainable food systems if we change how people think about and demand food.

**2. Food insecurity is directly linked to the unacceptable rates of poverty in BC. If elected, would you commit to implementing a comprehensive poverty reduction plan with legislated targets and timelines within the next term of office? If yes, how would you do so?**

I would commit to a comprehensive poverty elimination plan, as set out in the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals, and enunciated as part of YPP's platform on sustainability. This is a multifaceted issue that I can't pretend to know the answer to. We need to provide, at a minimum: affordable housing through accessible public social housing initiatives; accessible and affordable food; better public education; increased accessibility to health services; more robust social welfare programs, including disability and basic income; and a cultural shift that acknowledges poverty as a collective societal failure. There is a lot of work to be done in this regard, and all of it takes a bold commitment. It could start by recognizing, as Seattle and Portland have done, that poverty is a public emergency, and requires drastic productive action.

**3. One in six BC children lives in a food insecure household. Despite this, BC does not have a universal school food program for public school children. If elected, what would you do to ensure that school aged children have access to healthy meals and food literacy programming in school?**

Food literacy and education about nutrition should be included as part of BC's curriculum, and should be addressed in the current effort to redevelop the curriculum of K-12 education. In terms of accessibility to food, I support the adoption of public food programs that specifically target food-insecure children, and which would provide comprehensive nutrition - including, if necessary, three meals a day. Ideally, I would work with the federal government to develop a national food

program, as Canada is one of the only rich develop countries in the world without a national school food program. This is a provincial problem as well as a national one.

**4. Indigenous food systems continue to be eroded through ongoing colonialism. Indigenous communities are raising concerns regarding the negative impacts of development and extraction projects on their ability to maintain traditional food practices. If elected, what measures would you commit to undertaking to ensure the protection and continuing revitalization of Indigenous food practices in BC?**

This is another issue which can be addressed through K-12 education, and is something I would support including in the revitalized curriculum. By teaching kids about the importance of Indigenous food systems, there will naturally be a greater inclination to support them. Furthermore, we can integrate Indigenous food systems into the development of local food systems, which is how Indigenous communities lived for thousands of years. Finally, I would work with Indigenous communities to create greater exposure to Indigenous cultures and food systems. By allowing people to experience Indigenous food for themselves, they will be more inclined to support its development and revitalization.

**5. The Agricultural Land Reserve is a long-standing public legacy that enables a viable agricultural sector and food security for future generations in BC. If elected, what government policies would you support to ensure the long-term protection, viability, and use of the lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve? What additional approaches would you take to foster a viable and sustainable local farming sector in BC?**

I would first look into ways to protect the Agricultural Land Reserve against future encroachment by future governments and development interests. I would reverse the changes implemented by the BC Liberals to relax restrictions on the use of much of the ALR land. In particular, I would undo the division of the ALR into two zones, which creates perverse economic incentives to favour short-term economic value over long-term food security. Because concerns with the ALR are tied so closely to housing development, especially in the Vancouver area, I would work to develop higher density housing solutions in already residential areas. I would also look into expanding the mandate of the ALR to foster greater cooperative approaches to farming to reduce costs and increase efficiency in local food production.

**6. The Climate Action Plan is B.C.'s roadmap to an emerging green economy for the province that outlines how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. If elected, how would you support adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture and food sector?**

As recommended by the BC Climate Leadership Team, and ignored by the current BC Liberal government, the carbon tax should be expanded to include non-combustion emissions, which would primarily include carbon exuded from agricultural practices. This would encourage the agricultural sector to adopt more sustainable practices. I would also support investment into the development of more sustainable technologies, so the burden of shifting is not placed exclusively

upon farmers and food producers themselves. One potential option is to work within existing structures such as the ALR, or develop new structures, to foster efficient cooperation between food producers, and move away from inefficient competitive practices.

**7. Food waste is an economic, social and environmental problem that occurs in all sectors the food system. If elected, how would you advance the reduction of food waste in BC?**

Nutrition education in regard to things like proper serving sizes and safe food practices would be the primary method to reduce food waste on the consumer side. I would also work to implement methods by which restaurants and businesses can donate unsold food to organizations which might be able to distribute them to food-insecure communities, including legal protections for donation. Again, fostering community programs that tend towards cooperation rather than competition are in the best interest of sustainability.

**8. We know that neonicotinoid pesticides are toxic to bees and other insects that benefit our food system. If elected, would you commit to reducing the use of neonicotinoid pesticides across the province? If yes, what measures would you take to do so?**

I would commit to not just reducing neonicotinoid pesticides, but working toward their elimination. I would do this by banning neonicotinoid pesticides, and significantly increasing government resources and working to make them accessible to farmers. This would, for example involve creating jobs for land and food resource systems researchers and organic chemists to work in direct contact with farmers. Their role would be to offer their knowledge of everything which can increase farm yield, lower input costs, and reduce the farm's carbon footprint. This would involve practices such as teaching about how to maintain a healthy soil ecosystem, ideal crop rotation for each farm, and collecting farm data, for the farm's future. This would be provided at as little expense to the farmer as possible.

**9. If elected, what other food issues or initiatives would you like to advance in the coming term?**

I would like to forward substantial and quality food and nutrition education reform into the primary and secondary public school curriculum to balance against the detrimental effects of food advertising and fad diet trends. It is critical that there is a consensus on what it means to be personally healthy, if we want to be healthy as a society. I would also work toward regulating food advertising, much like France has done. YPP's platform includes a commitment to featuring environmental letter grades on every product purchased in a BC grocery store, which would allow consumers to compare the environmental impact of products they purchase, and hopefully make the more sustainable choices.

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## Eric Kolotyluk

Vancouver – Fraserview, Green Party Political Association of British Columbia

**1. The BC food system impacts public health, social well-being, community development, land use, education, economic prosperity, natural resources, public safety, and transportation in multiple ways. If elected, how will you advance and coordinate food systems initiatives across various ministries of provincial government?**

1. By understanding the issues through research and education. 2. By advocating such initiatives through government processes 3. By supporting government initiatives I agree with

**2. Food insecurity is directly linked to the unacceptable rates of poverty in BC. If elected, would you commit to implementing a comprehensive poverty reduction plan with legislated targets and timelines within the next term of office? If yes, how would you do so?**

Yes, poverty reduction is an important plank in the BC Green Party platform, as well as an important issue personally. By working to implement our policies derived from our platform, as well as other policies that make sense on this issue.

**3. One in six BC children lives in a food insecure household. Despite this, BC does not have a universal school food program for public school children. If elected, what would you do to ensure that school aged children have access to healthy meals and food literacy programming in school?**

1. By understanding which children are most at risk, where they are, and why they are at such risk 2. Working with school boards to identify the problems which cause these risks, and finding solutions to resolve the problems 3. Working to provide solutions via the provincial government where necessary or pragmatic

**4. Indigenous food systems continue to be eroded through ongoing colonialism. Indigenous communities are raising concerns regarding the negative impacts of development and extraction projects on their ability to maintain traditional food practices. If elected, what measures would you commit to undertaking to ensure the protection and continuing revitalization of Indigenous food practices in BC?**

I do not have specific expertise on this issue, and would have to rely more on BC Green Party principles and policies for guidance.

**5. The Agricultural Land Reserve is a long-standing public legacy that enables a viable agricultural sector and food security for future generations in BC. If elected, what government policies would you support to ensure the long-term protection, viability, and use of the lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve? What additional approaches would you take to foster a viable and sustainable local farming sector in BC?**

This is a very intractable problem that has existed for many years, so it is hard to propose some sort of magic bullet. That said, much of the land in the ALR is unused

because the risk of farming it is too great for investment by farmers. My first approach would be to find a way to mitigate the risk problem, and I have no snappy answers for that. For the most part I have always been in favor of the ALR, and disturbed it is eroding so quickly.

**6. The Climate Action Plan is B.C.'s roadmap to an emerging green economy for the province that outlines how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. If elected, how would you support adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture and food sector?**

This is an interesting but complex question that I cannot answer without sufficient research and consideration on my part. Suffice it to say, that such research and consideration would be in line with BC Green Party principles and policies, as well as my own principles towards reducing greenhouse gas emissions, while at the same time promoting local agriculture and a more efficient food sector.

**7. Food waste is an economic, social and environmental problem that occurs in all sectors the food system. If elected, how would you advance the reduction of food waste in BC?**

1. Study of other countries, regions, and municipalities who have demonstrated success in these areas 2. Education and promotion to the public of the issues 3. Creation of a province wide process improvement process for reducing food waste

**8. We know that neonicotinoid pesticides are toxic to bees and other insects that benefit our food system. If elected, would you commit to reducing the use of neonicotinoid pesticides across the province? If yes, what measures would you take to do so?**

Yes. I would advocate province wide bans on such pesticides.

**9. If elected, what other food issues or initiatives would you like to advance in the coming term?**

Having acquired Type 2 Diabetes, I am well aware of the effects of food and lifestyle on our health. My wish is that other people would not make the mistake I have leading to this unfortunate condition. During my health training we used to say 'food is medicine' to remind ourselves of the important of eating right. I would like to advance more education and awareness around food and lifestyle.

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## David Stall

Vancouver-Point Grey, Your Political Party (YPP)

**1. The BC food system impacts public health, social well-being, community development, land use, education, economic prosperity, natural resources, public safety, and transportation in multiple ways. If elected, how will you advance and coordinate food systems initiatives across various ministries of provincial government?**

Access to healthy, nutritious, and sustainable food is becoming harder for the average person to get as food costs continue to climb. Not just in terms of the money expense, but also the environmental costs. Declining bee populations, toxic farm runoff, and a good deal of global annual CO2 emissions are largely the fault of industrial agribusiness. However, farmers do indeed feed cities. To ensure nutritious food security for all British Columbians, I would actively promote government engagement with food systems initiatives both on the production, and distribution side of agriculture and agribusiness, in order to fundamentally change how we grow, sell, and think about food. Some food initiatives worth pursuing for example, are community gardens, urban agriculture, and farmer's markets. A good example of a food initiative that is worth mentioning is the Neighbourhood Food Networks.

**2. Food insecurity is directly linked to the unacceptable rates of poverty in BC. If elected, would you commit to implementing a comprehensive poverty reduction plan with legislated targets and timelines within the next term of office? If yes, how would you do so?**

Yes. I would absolutely work toward that goal. However, I am not comfortable with merely poverty reduction. That implies that some poverty is still acceptable. I will work toward poverty elimination, as per the UN 2030 Sustainability Development Goals. Poverty elimination is an immense subject which cannot be summed up within the scope of this questionnaire while paying fair respect to how it can be done. Poverty is a multifaceted issue, and so requires an interdisciplinary approach. To eliminate poverty, we need to also solve issues around access to quality food, nutrition education from an early age, affordable and accessible housing, comprehensive and robust social service programs, extreme reduction of drug addiction, and fulfilling employment opportunities. Poverty is unacceptable, and solving food security is one facet to eliminating poverty.

**3. One in six BC children lives in a food insecure household. Despite this, BC does not have a universal school food program for public school children. If elected, what would you do to ensure that school aged children have access to healthy meals and food literacy programming in school?**

I would begin with re-funding the public education system, while forwarding policy which allows schools more autonomy for administration. This would allow schools to build the capability of offering sustainable food programs. I would then like to see extensive education reform about healthy living, and nutrition, food systems and the

environment and even the advertising and the marketing of processed foods, so that children are less susceptible to it, by being aware. From there, when the students and schools are ready for meal programs, they will be healthy, nutritious, sustainable, and unanimously wanted.

**4. Indigenous food systems continue to be eroded through ongoing colonialism. Indigenous communities are raising concerns regarding the negative impacts of development and extraction projects on their ability to maintain traditional food practices. If elected, what measures would you commit to undertaking to ensure the protection and continuing revitalization of Indigenous food practices in BC?**

I absolutely would. Canada owes its very existence as a settler nation to the first nations peoples, their hospitality and lands which our western ancestors disrespected and took for granted (to put it very mildly). As a result, we currently have a debt to the first nations peoples. While we can never fully atone for our national disgrace, we have an obligation to for everyone who resides in this great nation to never repeat the sins of the past. Furthermore, if we truly value Canada's strength through its diversity, we need to recognize and protect all aspects of this diversity; especially the cultural practices of those who came before us. I would actively work toward the inclusion of localized indigenous cultural practices into the education system, to foster an appreciation for it, and build social values which are in tune with the social values of the first nations peoples. to do this constant and frequent consultation and cooperation with first nations needs to actually be taken seriously, in order to understand the specific issues they face, and how they could be resolved, for the benefit of everyone.

**5. The Agricultural Land Reserve is a long-standing public legacy that enables a viable agricultural sector and food security for future generations in BC. If elected, what government policies would you support to ensure the long-term protection, viability, and use of the lands in the Agricultural Land Reserve? What additional approaches would you take to foster a viable and sustainable local farming sector in BC?**

While I do not know enough about the Agricultural Land Reserve to comment on which specific policies are best, or what approaches to implementing sustainable local farming will be effective, one of the biggest issues with the ALR is land speculation. Any policies that prevent speculation are useful to ensure that these lands remain in agricultural use and that there is enough supply for a local food system. Furthermore, I believe that the entire agricultural industry would greatly benefit from increased financial and information resource support.

**6. The Climate Action Plan is B.C.'s roadmap to an emerging green economy for the province that outlines how to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 33 per cent by 2020. If elected, how would you support adaptation and mitigation in the agriculture and food sector?**

In consulting with researchers of human, urban geography on environmental issues, I have developed a strong stance that the responsibility of changing a resource

system lies in the hands of the government structures, with paramount responsibility to the welfare of every citizen. Access to food is a fundamental human right, and cannot be treated as a commodity. Resource systems are constrained and defined by market policies that have produced the world that we live on, and that depends on the energy costs of transporting this food globally. It is only governments which have the capacity, and therefore the duty to direct the agriculture industry to be economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable. Consumers have very little power when it comes to changing food systems, beyond holding the government accountable to its social imperative. I would work toward banning neonicotinoid pesticides, funding agricultural sector restructuring programs, provide farmers with easily accessible and frequently offered sustainable alternative crops, and agricultural practice information. For consumers, I would work toward making all government data transparent, so citizens can more easily hold the government accountable, and I would work toward creating a sustainable product letter grading system, to give more power over the food system back to the people. This would work by making sustainable decision choices easier, to help force the agribusiness industry to sell more sustainable products.

**7. Food waste is an economic, social and environmental problem that occurs in all sectors the food system. If elected, how would you advance the reduction of food waste in BC?**

I would work toward increasing financial incentives for businesses such as grocery stores and restaurants to donate their unsellable but safe food to food banks and shelters. I would also work to increase the legal protection for businesses that want to donate food, but are concerned about legal repercussions if in the rare instance they donate spoiled food. I would also promote policy which increases the capacity for social food services to screen, and distribute food, while listening to their concerns so as to make them more autonomous and efficient.

**8. We know that neonicotinoid pesticides are toxic to bees and other insects that benefit our food system. If elected, would you commit to reducing the use of neonicotinoid pesticides across the province? If yes, what measures would you take to do so?**

I would commit to not just reducing neonicotinoid pesticides, but working toward their elimination. I would do this by banning neonicotinoid pesticides, and significantly increasing government resources and working to make them accessible to farmers. This would, for example involve creating jobs for land and food resource systems researchers and organic chemists to work in direct contact with farmers. Their role would be to offer their knowledge of everything which can increase farm yield, lower input costs, and reduce the farm's carbon footprint. This would involve practices such as teaching about how to maintain a healthy soil ecosystem, ideal crop rotation for each farm, and collecting farm data, for the farm's future. This would be provided at as little expense to the farmer as possible.

**9. If elected, what other food issues or initiatives would you like to advance in the coming term?**

I would like to forward substantial and quality food and nutrition education reform into the primary and secondary public school curriculum to balance against the detrimental effects of food advertising and fad diet trends. It is critical that there is a consensus on what it means to be personally healthy, if we want to be healthy as a society. I would also work toward regulating food advertising, much like France has done, and work toward implementing a product sustainability letter grading system, so that consumption choices are clearer for everyone.