



# B.C. Food Expenditures in Health Care 2019/20



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## Feed BC

Feed BC is a provincial government initiative led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries, to encourage, inspire and support a shift to more B.C. food and beverages in hospitals, long-term care facilities, public post-secondary institutions, and other government-supported facilities. Feed BC:

- Supports jobs and businesses for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food and beverage processors and communities;
- Builds the provincial food supply;
- Connects patients, residents, students and clients to local food; and
- Supports economic development in all regions of the province.

Feed BC is a collaborative effort between government ministries, health authorities, post-secondary institutions, other government facilities and industry partners, including farmers, fishers, ranchers, processors, distributors, group purchasing organizations and foodservice management companies. Together, Feed BC partners are creating new, long-term opportunities for B.C. producers and processors.

## Foodservices in Health Care

In B.C., five regional health authorities and the Provincial Health Services Authority are responsible for food service in 170 hospital and care facilities. Health authorities purchase both B.C. and non-B.C. food and beverages for the millions of meals they provide each year. While procuring B.C. food is a priority for health authorities, protecting the health and safety of vulnerable patients and residents is paramount. All food, including B.C. produced and processed food, must comply with the highest standards for nutrition, allergens and traceability.

The institutional food supply chain is complex. Typically, health authorities do not have direct

### B.C. Food Definition

In health care, B.C. food is defined as a final food (or beverage) product produced and/or processed within the borders of B.C.

B.C. produced foods are raw food products that are grown, caught, harvested or raised within the borders of B.C.

B.C. processed food includes a food that has undergone a value-added activity (physical alteration, extension of shelf-life or combining ingredients to make a new product) in a commercial food manufacturing facility located in B.C. for the purpose of sales and distribution.

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## ***Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on B.C. Food Expenditures***

*This report tracks food expenditures from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020. Any impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on B.C. food purchases would largely be reflected in next year's report (2020/21).*

relationships with local producers or processors. They work with large, national group purchasing organizations and broadline distributors, if they operate the foodservices themselves. They also work with food service management companies, if they contract for all or part of their foodservice operations.

Health authorities have been working for several years to increase their use of B.C. foods. The Ministry of Health directed health authorities to track and report their B.C. food expenditures beginning in 2018/19. As well, the Ministry has directed health authorities to seek opportunities with their group purchasing organizations, broadline distributors and contracted food service companies to procure more B.C. produced and processed food. The Ministries of Health and Agriculture, Food and Fisheries are working closely together to support health authorities with this initiative.

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This is the second annual report that tracks health authority expenditures on B.C. food, for the year from April 1, 2019 to March 31, 2020. The report shows that the health authorities made considerable progress this year. There were many successes in B.C. food procurement in 2019/20 to celebrate:

- In 2019/20, the provincial total was 30.8%, up from 27.3% in 2018/19. This represents an increase of \$3.5 million in purchases of B.C. produced or processed food since 2018/19.
- Most health authorities increased their percentage of B.C. food expenditures over the past year, with some significant increases.
- Health authorities made many switches from non-B.C. to B.C. produced or processed food or beverages including beef, chicken, eggs, juice and frozen berries.

It takes time to make procurement shifts, and health authorities are continuing to work closely with their purchasers and distributors to source more B.C. produced and processed food. Price and availability of food products suitable for health care food service remain the greatest barriers to increasing their B.C. food expenditures.

The following tables summarize the results of the 2019/20 B.C. Food Expenditures in Health Care Report:<sup>1</sup>

## 2019/20 Results

Health Authority	2019/20	2018/19	Number of Facilities
Vancouver Coastal Health/Providence Health Care	33.1%	26.2%	33
Fraser Health	29.0%	27.7%	20
Interior Health	35.5%	30.9%	55
Island Health	29.9%	27.2%	29
Northern Health	22.4%	23.1%	27
Provincial Health Services Authority	32.7%	26.1%	6
<b>Provincial Total/Total Number of Facilities</b>	<b>30.8%</b>	<b>27.3%</b>	<b>170</b>

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<sup>1</sup> The data within each table has not been independently verified by each health authority.

### Vancouver Coastal Health / Providence Health Care (VCH/PHC)

CATEGORY	% B.C.: WITHIN CATEGORY	% B.C.: OF TOTAL SPEND
Baked Goods	65.4%	3.7%
Beverages	17.4%	2.2%
Dairy	80.6%	10.5%
Produce	36.3%	5.8%
Grocery	2.8%	0.6%
Protein	34.7%	10.3%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>33.1%</b>

### Successes & Challenges

- For 2019/20, VCH/PHC surpassed the aspirational goal of 30% B.C. food spend (33.1%, up from 26.2% in 2018/19). This was partly due to a switch to a B.C. supplier of liquid and cooked eggs.
- VCH/PHC is also now using B.C. processed diced beef, beef strips and sugar portions, and some B.C. processed juice in some sites.
- VCH/PHC has trialed some other B.C. products this year and continues to look for B.C. products that meet the health authority's price, nutrition, food service and patient satisfaction requirements, such as a suitable breakfast turkey or chicken sausage.

## Fraser Health

CATEGORY	% B.C.: WITHIN CATEGORY	% B.C.: OF TOTAL SPEND
Baked Goods	70.7%	5.1%
Beverages	15.3%	1.3%
Dairy	75.9%	9.8%
Produce	30.1%	4.1%
Grocery	6.0%	1.9%
Protein	25.5%	6.9%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>29.0%</b>

## Success & Challenges

- In 2019/20, Fraser Health increased its B.C. purchases to 29.0%, up from 27.7% in 2018/19.
- Fraser Health shifted some of its purchasing to local suppliers for egg products (scrambled egg mix and hard-boiled eggs) and juices.
- Some sites are also now using B.C. processed diced beef, beef strips and sugar portions.
- Some sites switched to a B.C. processor of concentrated fruit juices, which had a significant positive impact on B.C. food expenditures. These sites also switched to a B.C. supplier of poultry.
- Fraser Health continues to look for a coffee supplier that meets the health authority price and equipment needs.

## Interior Health

CATEGORY	% B.C.: WITHIN CATEGORY	% B.C.: OF TOTAL SPEND
Baked Goods	62.6%	5.1%
Beverages	41.6%	3.7%
Dairy	39.7%	6.0%
Produce	29.2%	4.3%
Grocery	2.4%	0.7%
Protein	64.7%	15.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>35.5%</b>

## Success & Challenges

- In 2019/20, Interior Health increased its B.C. purchases from 30.9% in 2018/19 to 35.5%. This increase was due in part to the introduction of their Healthy Choice Menu in January 2020, which incorporates local ingredients where possible, including entrees produced in Interior Health’s production kitchens.
- Interior Health began working on two switches to a B.C. producer/processor for frozen vegetables (six varieties) and for sugar (packets and bulk). Any switches will be reflected in next year’s report and will have a significant positive effect on their B.C. food spend.
- Interior Health explored options for a B.C. supplier of individually wrapped muffins. The health authority could not find a product that met size and price needs.



## Island Health

CATEGORY	% B.C.: WITHIN CATEGORY	% B.C.: OF TOTAL SPEND
Baked Goods	57.4%	3.0%
Beverages	9.1%	1.0%
Dairy	43.7%	7.0%
Produce	33.8%	6.1%
Grocery	4.0%	0.9%
Protein	42.8%	12.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>29.9%</b>

## Success & Challenges

- In 2019/20, Island Health had success in increasing their B.C. food expenditures with the support of their group purchasing organization, distributors and food service management companies (29.9%, up from 27.2% in 2018/19).
- Examples of B.C. food include stew beef processed locally; sliced bread, English muffins and buns baked in Langley; shell eggs from Abbotsford and fresh and frozen blueberries from the Fraser Valley.
- In Summer 2019, working with a local distributor and processor, Island Health implemented a pilot project to serve Island grown vegetables to residents in five long-term care facilities. Island Health created new recipes featuring Island-grown vegetables: potatoes, carrots, beets, zucchini and cabbage.
- Food service at the two large Victoria hospitals made gains by switching to some products from a local meat processor.
- Island Health also switched to a juice concentrate from a B.C. supplier for long-term care facilities in Victoria.
- The health authority has been challenged with finding B.C. products such as ready-made meals that are culturally diverse, and cheese suitable for health care food service.

## Northern Health

CATEGORY	% B.C.: WITHIN CATEGORY	% B.C.: OF TOTAL SPEND
Baked Goods	51.0%	4.3%
Beverages	19.4%	1.3%
Dairy	46.1%	5.2%
Produce	19.5%	4.7%
Grocery	4.5%	0.8%
Protein	19.3%	6.1%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>22.4%</b>

## Success & Challenges

- Northern Health faces challenges in finding and purchasing B.C. produced or processed foods largely due to its unique geography. Sites in the northeast use a broadline distributor in Edmonton; sites in the rest of the health authority use a broadline distributor in Kelowna.
- Northern Health's purchase of B.C. food and beverages declined slightly from 23.1% in 2018/19 to 22.4% in 2019/20. This change can be attributed, in part, to another priority to reduce food waste, which saw a decrease in milk and bread on meal trays, both of which are B.C. foods.
- In 2019/20, Northern Health began working on a collaboration with Interior Health to purchase select frozen entrees produced by Interior Health production kitchens rather than sourcing these entrees from a non-B.C. company. These entrees are used where on-site preparation is not possible. This collaboration will have an increasingly positive impact on Northern Health's B.C. food percentages and will be reflected in next year's report.
- Northern Health continues to look for a B.C. supplier of muffin batter suitable for health care. Northern Health investigated a muffin batter from a B.C. food processor including extensive testing with patients and residents, however the food processor recently announced that they will be moving production out of B.C.

## Provincial Health Services Authority

CATEGORY	% B.C.: WITHIN CATEGORY	% B.C.: OF TOTAL SPEND
Baked Goods	63.5%	5.0%
Beverages	25.5%	2.0%
Dairy	71.9%	10.1%
Produce	38.3%	5.6%
Grocery	7.7%	2.3%
Protein	30.0%	7.5%
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>32.7%</b>

### Successes & Challenges

- For 2019/20, Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA) surpassed the aspirational goal of 30% B.C. food spend (32.7%, up from 26.1% in 2018/19).
- In 2019/20, Forensic Psychiatric Hospital began working on procuring B.C.-caught and B.C.-processed sockeye and chinook salmon through Syilx, also known as the Okanagan Nation Alliance. This switch will be reflected in next year's report.
- This year PHSA completed its switch in some facilities to a B.C. processor of concentrated fruit juices, which had a significant impact on its B.C. food expenditures.
- PHSA also switched in some facilities to a B.C. supplier of raw meat products, including poultry and diced meats.
- PHSA continues to look for a B.C. coffee supplier that meets the health authority price and equipment needs.
- PHSA continues to look for B.C. products that meet its price, nutrition and institutional food service requirements.

## Conclusion

By encouraging, inspiring and supporting a shift towards more B.C. foods and beverages in B.C. government institutions and facilities, Feed BC supports jobs and businesses for farmers, fishers, ranchers, food processors and their communities. Feed BC builds the provincial food supply and provides patients, residents, students and clients with more access to a variety of quality B.C. foods. The Ministry of Health has directed health authorities to track B.C. food expenditures and seek opportunities to procure more B.C. produced and processed food that meet their price, nutrition and institutional food service requirements; however food budgets have not changed. Containing costs, while also providing nutritious and diet-specific food products to patients and residents is an imperative for health authorities. To support Feed BC, health authorities have allowed for the purchase of some B.C. products even when it is priced higher than similar non-B.C. food.

The results achieved over the past year are impressive. Most health authorities increased their B.C. food expenditures, with some significant increases. Feed BC's aspirational target of 30% B.C. food expenditures has been exceeded provincially, and by three health authorities.

Health authorities recognize the economic and community benefits of local food procurement and are committed to increasing their use of B.C. produced and processed foods. However, health authorities need foods that meet their nutrition, price, patient satisfaction and food service requirements. The Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries is continuing to work with producers, processors, group purchasing organizations food distributors and food service management companies to source and develop more B.C. products that meet the specific needs of health authorities.