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## NEWS RELEASE

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Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction  
Victoria Foundation

### **Kamloops, Lillooet grow more food secure**

KAMLOOPS – Kamloops and Lillooet area residents will have greater access to nutritious food through grants to local food security projects.

The Kamloops Food Policy Council and Southern Stl'atl'imx Charitable Society will each receive \$58,000 of provincial funding, part of \$800,000 being distributed throughout British Columbia, through the Victoria Foundation's Food Security – Provincial Initiatives Fund.

“Over the past few years, we’ve become increasingly aware of the need to improve food supply and food security,” said Nicholas Simons, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction. “We’re investing in local food security projects so local organizations can better respond to the community’s needs.”

Funding for the Kamloops Food Policy Council will support the Working Group for Indigenous Food Security (WGIFS) to increase awareness of the underlying issues, concerns and strategies affecting food security in Indigenous communities.

“We deeply appreciate the financial support that will enable us to focus time and energy and scale deep into our internal capacity,” said Dawn Morrison, founder and research curator, WGIFS. “This funding will empower us to transcend the challenges and limitations imposed within the institutional frameworks that are the root cause of many of the ‘wicked’ systemic social and environmental issues of our time. Building institutional-level capacity within Indigenous communities is a key strategy to protecting, conserving and restoring the last remaining Indigenous biocultural heritage systems.”

Funding for the Southern Stl'atl'imx Charitable Society will help expand their gardening program in the lower lake communities of Skatin, Samahquam and Douglas. This includes youth gatherings, intergenerational work bees, upgrades and ongoing financial support.

“This flexible funding will allow the four Southern Stl'atl'imx communities — N'Quatqua, Skatin, Samahquam, and Xa'xsta (Douglas) First Nations — to be served by the Southern Stl'atl'imx Health Society to build capacity and knowledge around food security, increase self-sufficiency and addressing the needs of the communities in a meaningful and impactful way,” said Allison Asapace, health director, Southern Stl'atl'imx Health Society. “This funding will engage the community, and particularly youth, to allow us to start a new fruit-tree program, provide continued support for our community-garden wellness program, teach food preservation skills and more.”

This new funding builds on the \$3 million the Province provided to the Victoria Foundation in March 2019, which helped establish the Food Security – Provincial Initiatives Fund and supported food security-related projects throughout B.C.

Since the Province’s poverty reduction strategy, TogetherBC, was released in 2019, government has provided nearly \$26 million for planning and implementing poverty reduction and food-security initiatives in communities throughout B.C., including Indigenous communities.

“Land-based programming led by Indigenous communities and organizations is vital to food security and Indigenous food sovereignty,” said Sandra Richardson, CEO, Victoria Foundation. “This funding will expand and deepen the work already underway in communities while also improving program sustainability.”

The Victoria Foundation’s Food Security – Provincial Initiatives Fund supports the Province’s work on food security by improving food access, food literacy and local food production, and by continuing to advance meaningful reconciliation by funding Indigenous-led initiatives.

**Learn More:**

TogetherBC, B.C.’s poverty-reduction strategy: <https://gov.bc.ca/togetherbc>

Victoria Foundation: <https://victoriafoundation.bc.ca/>

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