

PlantU.ca

A place for plant-based learning

Approaches to engaging with decision-makers

Focus on connecting your plant-based advocacy efforts with existing government priorities. Making this connection will create a stronger case for your recommendations and will showcase how decision-makers can take action in alignment with their existing priorities. Below are a few examples of government priorities to consider highlighting.

- **Canada Food Guide** – Canada’s [food guide](#) was updated in 2019 and has moved away from recommendations around meat and dairy requirements. It notes that many of the well-studied healthy eating patterns include mostly plant-based foods and that plant-based foods can have a positive effect on health, including a lowered risk of cancer, heart disease and type 2 diabetes. The guide also recommends choosing plant-based protein foods more often.
 - o Tip: Food and beverages offered in publicly-funded institutions are supposed to align with Canada’s Dietary Guidelines, so the updated food guide is a useful document to reference in advocating for improved access to plant-based foods in schools, hospitals and other public institutions.
- **One Health & One Welfare** - This [approach](#), which is commonly referenced by governments, connects human, animal and environmental health and welfare. It focuses on improving animal welfare in order to improve human welfare (and vice-versa); protecting the environment in order to improve animal and human welfare; and coordinating animal protection with other services.
- **Food Policy** – The federal government is developing a “[Food Policy for Canada](#)” intended to set a foundation that will guide food-related decisions, policies and programs. Becoming familiar with the goals of this national food policy and incorporating them into your discussions around plant-based food with elected representatives and decision-makers may be a helpful strategy.
- **Climate commitments** – All levels of government will have some form of climate commitment or goals that you can connect your plant-based food “ask” with, from a sustainable food perspective. For example, the federal government outlines its climate goals in its “[A Healthy Environment and a Healthy Economy](#)” plan and the B.C. government’s plan is “[Clean BC](#)”. Locally, the City of Vancouver has a [Greenest City Action Plan](#) (Goal 10: Achieve a one-planet ecological footprint, pg 44) and a [Climate Emergency Action Plan](#) (Appendix A, page 16), both of which reference shifting toward more plant-based diets.