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Network for the Advancement
of Black Communities

Réseau pour l'avancement
des communautés noires

March 2026

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THE SANKOFA

The Sankofa is a reflective look into the work of NABC and its partners to address longstanding systemic challenges of Black Communities. Pronounced SAHN-Koh-fah, the Akan Twi and Fante roots of its name originate in Ghana and translate to "retrieve" (san - to return; ko - to go; fa - to fetch, to seek and take).

Rooted and Rising

In this edition, we explore Black Food Sovereignty as a vital expression of cultural preservation, self-determination, and community empowerment.

More than access to healthy food, Black Food Sovereignty is about reclaiming control over land and food systems in ways that honor cultural knowledge and ancestral practices. Land ownership and stewardship are foundational to this work, just as Black leadership and eldership are essential in guiding community vision, sustaining traditions, and shaping pathways forward.

Systemic barriers have long limited access to land and resources, contributing to ongoing food insecurity and health inequities - challenges rooted in histories of land dispossession and agricultural exploitation during the transatlantic slave trade.

This edition brings together a range of information and resources that reflect both the history and the ongoing work of this movement. We highlight past Black Food Sovereignty conferences and gatherings, as well as key policies and action plans shaping this work. We also share insights from

initiatives happening beyond Canada, offering a broader view of how Black communities are advancing food sovereignty globally. In addition, this edition features community stories and articles that spotlight the individuals and organizations driving this work forward, grounding these efforts in lived experience and practice.

Thank you for engaging with this important issue. Your support and participation are vital to advancing meaningful and lasting change.

Past Conferences and Gatherings



2020 BFS Conference: Cultivating Black Food Sovereignty In Toronto

Organized by the Black Food Sovereignty Initiative Toronto, the 2020 Cultivating Black Food Sovereignty Conference drew over 250 participants and 30 community agencies to challenge the systems that limit food access and control within Black communities.

Read [here](#)



BFS Roundtable 2021

On May 1, 2021, a roundtable on Black Food Sovereignty was held in Toronto. Hosted by The Afri-Can FoodBasket and NABC, the event centered on the idea that food sovereignty is about more than just access, it's about control, autonomy, and cultural identity.

Read [here](#)



2024 BFS Conference Highlights

The 2024 Black Food Sovereignty Conference in Toronto was a major step in turning vision into collective action. Co-hosted by the City of Toronto, NABC, and the Black Food Sovereignty Alliance, the event used collaboration to ensure Black-led organizations drove the agenda.

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Global Black Food Sovereignty Mbongi

The Black Food Sovereignty Alliance (BFSA) proudly participated in the inaugural **Global Black Food Sovereignty Mbongi (learning circle)** held at the Kweku Andoh Sustainability Institute (KASI) in Liati Wote, Volta Region, Ghana, from October 13–17, 2025.

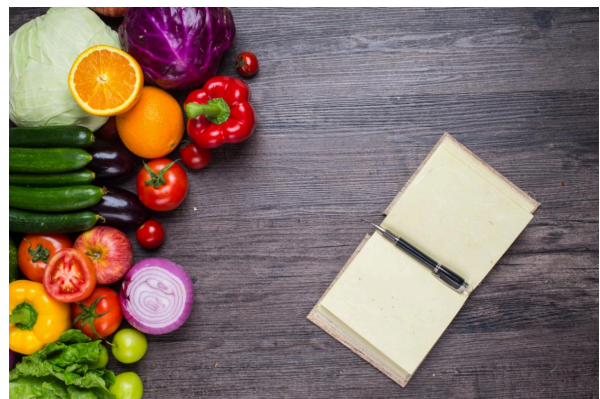
Read [here](#)

Polices and Plans

Policy Briefing: Black Food Sovereignty in Toronto

This policy brief on Black Food Sovereignty in Toronto calls for a shift from temporary fixes to systemic ownership. Key goals include allocating city land for Black-led farming, securing multi-year funding for grassroots organizations, and ensuring Black communities lead the design of their own food programs. The briefing emphasizes that true food sovereignty requires centering cultural traditions and local leadership to build a more resilient, self-determined future.

Read [here](#)



Key Information on City of Toronto's Black Food Sovereignty Plan

The City of Toronto's Black Food Sovereignty Plan shifts the focus from food access to community-led control. The plan centers on five pillars: building community leadership, expanding infrastructure like gardens and kitchens, securing sustainable funding, and opening doors for Black food entrepreneurs. It's a commitment to a system where Black residents are decision-makers, not just consumers.

Read [here](#)



City of Toronto's Black Food Sovereignty Plan: Progress &

Milestones

The Toronto Black Food Sovereignty Action Plan aims to strengthen community food security through funding, infrastructure, and land access. Key milestones include delivering food security grants, supporting Black-led youth agriculture, and expanding farmers' markets to increase access to culturally relevant food and economic opportunities for Black entrepreneurs.

Read [here](#)



News & Community Stories

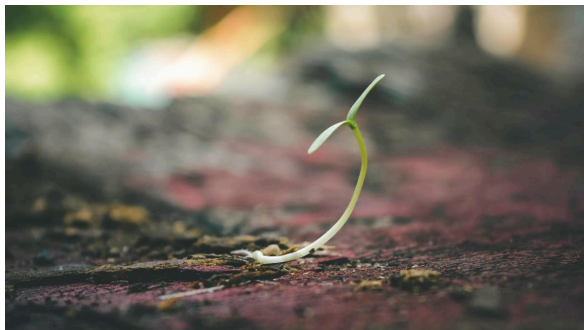
New Study To Examine Access to Culturally Preferred Foods for Surrey's Black Community



A new five-year study in Surrey is investigating why 76% of Black residents face food insecurity. Researchers and volunteers from Seeds of Change Surrey are looking beyond basic access to focus on "food dignity," the right to affordable, culturally preferred foods like cassava and yam. Currently, many residents must travel long distances or pay high prices for imported goods. The goal is to use these findings to shape equitable policies and support local farmers in growing produce native to Africa and the Caribbean.

Read [here](#)

Planting Seeds of Change Through Black Food Sovereignty



Black Food Sovereignty (BFS) is a movement focused on empowering Black communities to reclaim control over their food systems, addressing historical and systemic barriers to land, resources, and markets. Elder Anan Xola Lololi, a key leader in this movement and co-founder of Afri-Can FoodBasket, has been instrumental in advocating for Black food justice and economic empowerment. BFS emphasizes the importance of self-determination, ensuring access

to healthy, culturally relevant food while tackling issues of food insecurity that disproportionately affect Black communities. By challenging white-dominated food systems and promoting equitable access to resources, BFS aims to build resilient, self-sufficient communities and preserve cultural heritage, creating a foundation for long-term empowerment and sustainability.

Read [here](#)

"When I think about people like my grandmother and the amazing work she does, her knowledge about the soil and land. I see my grandmother as a scientist. I see my grandmother as a doctor. But society does not value their work in the same way."

- Leticia Ama Deawuo

Amplifying Women's Voices in the Black Food Sovereignty Movement

At the heart of the Black Food Sovereignty (BFS) movement, Black women like Leticia Ama Deawuo are driving change with resilience and determination. Former Executive Director of Black Creek Community Farm, Ama's journey into food justice is deeply personal, driven by her own experiences with food insecurity. Black women in the movement face systemic biases, economic disparities, and food apartheid, often sacrificing their own well-being to ensure their families are fed. Ama calls for a comprehensive approach to tackle these issues, emphasizing that true food sovereignty in Canada requires not just access to food but also living wages, affordable housing, and healthcare, because every person deserves the dignity of being nourished in all aspects of life.



Read [here](#)

Black Food Sovereignty In Mi'kma'ki (Nova Scotia)

"They who control the land control the food and they who control the food control the people".

This panel discussion provided participants an opportunity to consider how food is closely connected and entwined with our health; including mind, body and spirit. Food sovereignty is about agency and access to land. It is more than food security, its about Indigenous wisdom and most importantly culture.



Panelists are all part of the African Nova Scotian & Black Food Advisory which is a branch of the JustFood Action Plan for the city of Halifax. Come and listen to what Black food sovereignty looks and tastes like in Mi'kma'ki.

Read [here](#)

Food Sovereignty for a B.C. Black Community

Even in the winter, Nigerian-born Toyin K. Ajayi is blazing trails.

He's a big part of a tiny fraternity in Canada — there are not a lot of Black farmers in Canada.

“Zero-point-two per cent,” Ajayi said.

He is 100 per cent committed to not just farming, but providing affordable, culturally preferred food for Canada's Black, African and Caribbean communities.



Read [here](#)

Reviving Heritage Through Culturally Relevant Foods

In the quest for Black Food Sovereignty (BFS), culturally relevant foods play a crucial role in preserving heritage and building community resilience. Bashir Munye, a culinary expert and advocate for BFS, highlights how foods deeply rooted in ancestral traditions, offer more than just nourishment, they provide identity and belonging. Munye's experiences reveal the impact of Eurocentric food norms and the trauma associated with African foodways. Munye's work in innovative farming techniques and community support illustrates how growing culturally relevant foods in Canada can improve health, foster economic resilience, and support sustainable practices. Munye's efforts highlight that reclaiming culturally relevant foods is not just about sustenance, it's about identity and belonging, paving the way for a more equitable and vibrant future.



Read [here](#)

What's Happening Outside Canada?

Detroit Food Commons: A Practice Model For Black Food Sovereignty

In May 2024, NABC joined Black community leaders in a visit to Detroit for the grand opening of the Detroit People's Food Co-op. This project is the result of a 14-year community effort to build a Black-owned food system.

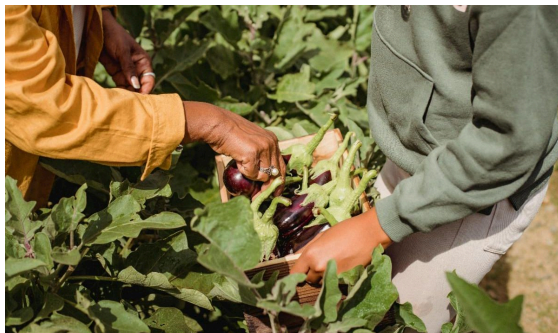
The facility integrates a cooperative grocery store, community kitchens, and a farm-to-market supply chain. With over 3,000 community co-owners, the model shifts residents from consumers to stakeholders. It serves as a powerful blueprint for moving beyond temporary programs toward permanent, community-owned infrastructure and wealth.



Learn about our visit [here](#)

*"Our experience as people of African descent is unique, and our approach to agriculture must reflect that. We are not just growing food, we are cultivating liberation."
- Cashawn Myers*

Reparative Agriculture: A Pathway to Black Food Sovereignty



Reparative Agriculture, as discussed by Cashawn Myers, executive director and co-founder of HABESHA Inc., addresses the legacy of colonialism and systemic oppression by transforming agriculture into a tool for empowerment and healing. Myers, whose early farm experiences in rural Georgia shaped his connection to the land, now uses his role at HABESHA Inc. to promote sustainable agricultural practices and holistic health.

Reparative Agriculture combines modern techniques like organic and regenerative farming with a Pan-African perspective, aiming to heal historical injustices and reclaim African cultural practices. Guided by principles like education, restoration, and preservation, it supports Black communities in building food systems that are sustainable, culturally rooted, and grounded in self-determination.

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