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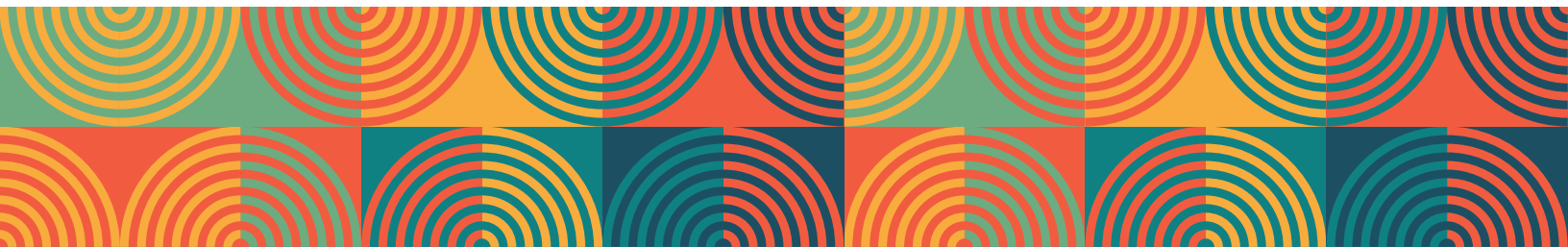
Mind the Disruption

PODCAST EPISODE TRANSCRIPT & COMPANION DOCUMENT

SEASON 2 | EPISODE 2

Disrupting for African Nova Scotian Food Sovereignty

Episode released on:
February 27, 2024



Mind the Disruption is a podcast about people who refuse to accept things as they are. It's about people pushing for better health for all. It's about people like us who have a deep desire to build a healthier, more just world.

In the second season of Mind the Disruption, we explore **social movements for social justice**: groups of people working together to build collective power for change. Throughout the season, we delve into approaches for advancing racial equity, applying intersectionality, building community power and working together. In each episode, we name concrete actions that public health can take to work with others in service of social movements for social justice.

This episode companion document, available in English and French, provides a different way to engage with the podcast. It includes a written transcript of Episode 2 with key quotes, related resources and discussion questions to prompt reflection, sharing and action.

HOST



BERNICE YANFUL

Bernice Yanful (PhD) is a Knowledge Translation Specialist with the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health (NCCDH), and she previously worked as a public health nurse in Ontario. Bernice is dedicated to advancing health equity with a particular focus on food systems.



PODCAST GUESTS*



WENDIE L. WILSON

Wendie L. Wilson is a mother, educator, artist, writer and cultural advocate. Born and raised in Kijipuktuk (Halifax), Wendie is a descendant of African Nova Scotians who have history in the province for 400+ years. Currently, Wendie is Executive Staff Officer – BIPOC Engagement and Advocacy with the Nova Scotia Teachers Union, a part-time instructor in the Bachelor of Education program at Mount Saint Vincent University and a co-founder of the African Nova Scotian Freedom School. She has a passion for food culture and food sovereignty and enjoys her work with Food Secure Canada, Halifax's African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group, the Pan-Canadian Black Food Sovereignty Network, the Indigenous & Black Peoples' Food Sovereignty Advisory Circle, and the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food.



NICKAYA PARRIS

Born and raised in the community of Uniacke Square, North End Halifax, Nova Scotia, Nickaya Parris is a recognized role model within the African Nova Scotian community, who allows her passion for nutrition, health care and underserved communities to lead her daily. Currently working at the population public health level as a food security policy analyst for the Government of Nova Scotia, Nickaya is a registered dietitian and holds a bachelor's degree in nutrition and food science and a certificate in food security from Toronto Metropolitan University, and a master's degree in public health nutrition and dietetics with a clinical nutrition specialization from the University of Toronto.

* Guests have provided the content for their introductions.

EPISODE DESCRIPTION

Wendie Wilson is a mother, educator, artist, writer, community advocate and member of the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group for the Halifax Region's JustFOOD Action Plan, alongside registered dietitian Nickaya Parris. In this episode, Wendie and Nickaya provide a window into the transformative work happening to advance community-rooted food sovereignty action in Nova Scotia. Explore this episode to learn about the food sovereignty movement and why it matters for public health.



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QUOTES FROM SEASON 1

JENNIFER SCOTT

I think if I go to work today, I'll die.
 (Season 1, Episode 1)

PAUL TAYLOR

There's been a series of injustices that have allowed some people to have food and allowed other people to struggle for access to food. (Season 1, Episode 5)

SAMIYA ABDI

People are stuck in this powerlessness paradigm. (Season 1, Episode 3)

HARLAN PRUDEN

Always ask yourself "Why?"
 (Season 1, Episode 6)

SUME NDUMBE-EYOH

There were times when I would think maybe I'm going to get fired, right?
 (Season 1, Episode 2)

SAROM RHO

It's the moment of refusal.
 (Season 1, Episode 4)

HEATHER LOKKO

If we're not intentional about creating some discomfort, things won't change. It will stay status quo, and that's not okay.
 (Season 1, Episode 8)



INTRODUCING SEASON 2

BERNICE YANFUL (NCCDH)

Hi. Welcome to the second season of *Mind the Disruption*. I'm Bernice Yanful. I'm a Knowledge Translation Specialist at the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health, an organization that moves knowledge into action with the goal of better health for everyone. I've also worked as a public health nurse in an Ontario public health unit, and I recently completed my doctoral studies at the University of Toronto.

This season, we're talking about social movements for social justice: groups of people working together to build collective power for change and health for all. We'll dive into a range of topics with people from across Canada. We'll talk about the environment, immigration status, food, birth, disability and poverty. We'll talk about racism, ableism and colonialism. And we'll talk about solutions and the power of collective action.

In each episode, you'll hear from a disruptor — someone who refuses to accept things as they are. They see something that is unfair or unjust, and they take bold, courageous action, often in the face of active resistance. They work with others to disrupt the status quo because they have a deep shared conviction that a better world is possible. You'll also hear from a second guest, someone who will reflect on how public health can do things differently and better. At the end of each episode, we'll name some concrete actions that public health can take to work with others in service of social movements for social justice.

REBECCA CHEFF (NCCDH)

This podcast is produced by the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health. We support the Canadian public health community to address the structural and social determinants of health and to advance health equity. We are one of six National Collaborating Centres for Public Health working across Canada. We're funded by the Public Health Agency of Canada. We're hosted by St. Francis Xavier University, which is located on Mi'kma'ki, the ancestral and unceded territory of the Mi'kmaw People. This podcast is part of our organization's commitment to confront intersecting systems of oppression and to reveal concrete opportunities to disrupt racism and colonialism. The views expressed on this podcast do not necessarily represent the views of our funder or our host agency.

CONSIDER THIS!

Before reading or listening to this episode, think about your current understanding of food sovereignty.

- Have you heard of this term before? What do you know about it?
- What have you learned about this at school, at work, in your life or in the media?
- How has your work intersected with this issue?



INTRODUCING THIS EPISODE

BERNICE (NARRATION)

A world where everyone has enough food to eat.

PEMMA MUZUMDAR (NCCDH)

Food is culturally rooted.

CAROLINA JIMENEZ (NCCDH)

It nourishes our hearts, bodies and minds.

REBECCA

And it's produced in ways that are socially and environmentally just.

CAROLINA

Farmers and other food providers are treated with dignity and respect.

CHRIS PERRY (NCCDH)

Communities have the power to decide what they eat and how it's produced.

PEMMA

And people are nourished sustainably for generations to come.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

This is the future envisioned by advocates of food sovereignty, part of a growing global movement of people working to transform how we produce and consume food.

This episode is about food sovereignty. More specifically, it's about African Nova Scotian food sovereignty. It asks what food sovereignty means and why it matters for public health. And it tells the story of a group of African Nova Scotians working to create food sovereignty futures.

In today's episode, we'll meet Wendie Wilson.

“It's rooted in culture. It's about identity. It's about who I am in my essence. Not only who I am, but through this work, I get to understand who my ancestors were as well. That's important.”

WENDIE WILSON

BERNICE (NARRATION)

That's Wendie, educator, artist, mom, writer and community advocate. She works tirelessly with others to support African Nova Scotian food sovereignty. Wendie's work is part of a global food sovereignty movement. The term food sovereignty is relatively new, but the concept is not. Efforts to uphold, reclaim and advance food sovereignty stretch back centuries and

closely relate to the struggles of First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples for self-determination.

Rome, November 1996: a year etched in the collective memory of food sovereignty advocates worldwide. At the World Food Summit, La Via Campesina, an international farmers' organization, declares food sovereignty a fundamental right.



Eleven years later comes the Nyéléni Declaration. With rising global food prices leading to growing protests, over 500 people gather in Sélingué, Mali. Small-scale farmers, NGOs, Indigenous Peoples, youth, women and more from 80 countries around the globe. Together, they name problems with the global food system, like how it impoverishes small family farmers, fails to feed everyone, destroys the environment, exposes consumers to food safety risks, and robs people of their lands and territories.

Together, the more than 500 people gathered in Sélingué also name solutions. They craft the Nyéléni Declaration, and it becomes a key part of the foundation upon which the food sovereignty movement is built.

The food sovereignty movement is at once global and highly local. The Nyéléni Declaration, more on that later, is intended to be an outline, a template, to which communities, locally, nationally or regionally, add their own colour, their own flavour, their own ideas of what food sovereignty means for their particular place and time. Quoting researcher Lindsay Naylor, “food sovereignty ‘sits in places.’”

As the idea of food sovereignty travels, it takes on new shapes, new meanings. But at its core, it’s about equity, justice, and a sense of agency and autonomy in creating food systems that prioritize people and planet over profit.

“As the idea of food sovereignty travels, it takes on new shapes, new meanings. But at its core, it’s about equity, justice, and a sense of agency and autonomy in creating food systems that prioritize people and planet over profit.”

BERNICE YANFUL

Food sovereignty: What is it and why it’s important

NowThis Earth.
[2021].



Everyone should have a right to food, to knowing where their food comes from and to knowing how it is made. This video by NowThis Earth breaks down what this looks like through the six pillars of food sovereignty. This is a clear and succinct guide for anyone interested in understanding food sovereignty, and it provides a starting point for public health professionals to join the conversation.

In today’s episode, our main guest Wendie Wilson shares a vision of what food sovereignty can look like for African Nova Scotians. She is a member of the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group for the Halifax Region. As a group, they are developing a plan to address the anti-Black racism ingrained in the food system and advance food sovereignty. We’ll hear Wendie recount her journey as a food sovereignty advocate, share how her family history has inspired her path and describe her hopes for work in this area.

And then we’ll meet Nickaya Parris, a registered dietitian. On the same working group as Wendie, Nickaya will share more about the plan and the importance of community-rooted food sovereignty-oriented action. Together, Wendie and Nickaya provide a window into the transformative work happening around African and Black food sovereignty in Nova Scotia.

As you’re listening, think about what food sovereignty might mean in the places in which you live, learn, work and play. How can you work alongside local communities to contribute to the global movement for change?



TALKING WITH WENDIE WILSON

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Food sovereignty embraces the idea that food is more than just a source of fuel or something to be bought and sold in stores. It is imbued with cultural meaning and significance and can connect us with our ancestral roots.

For Wendie, “food is everything,” and her work to advance food sovereignty is intimately connected with learning about and documenting the history of African Nova Scotian food. Wendie told me about the boiled dinner as an example of a dish steeped in African Nova Scotian history.

WENDIE

Everyone has a food, everyone has a cuisine, right? And I always wondered, “What was our food?” I knew what our food was, but it wasn’t documented. I couldn’t do a Google search and find African Nova Scotian food. And I know what I was eating. I know what my friends were eating. I know what people in other parts of the province were eating. And so I just started documenting those things. And then making it, I guess for lack of a better word, legitimate because people would question us and say, “Well, a boiled dinner, that’s not African Nova Scotian food” or “Salt cod fish cakes and baked beans, that’s not African Nova Scotian food. That’s just Maritime food, that’s what we just eat in the Atlantic provinces.”

And I beg to differ because it is African Nova Scotian food, and African Nova Scotian food is really a repertoire of recipes that we hold near and dear to us, things that we have claimed from this land but things that we have also brought from the southern part of the United States. And then different ways that we cook our food and how we season our food from the continent of Africa and also from the Caribbean. So, collectively, all those things make up this repertoire of recipes that we know as African Nova Scotian food, and of course with any culture and cuisine, things are always evolving.

BERNICE

And it sounds like with the boiled dinner example, it’s not just that it’s a boiled dinner, but it’s how you prepare it, what are you adding to it, what are its ingredients that makes it African Nova Scotian.

WENDIE

Yeah, so what makes our boiled dinner actually a little different — I’m not sure if you’re familiar with what a boiled dinner is, it’s just root vegetables that are boiled, usually carrot, turnip, potato, sometimes parsnip and cabbage, sometimes people substitute sauerkraut. But what makes ours different is we grew up having the boiled dinner, instead of with corn beef, we would have it with pig tails.

BERNICE

Nice. And so that’s what you would have had growing up?

WENDIE

That would have been classic, yeah, in our home would have been instead of the corn beef. If you were in, I don’t know, Newfoundland or if you were in Cape Breton, you would most likely be having some kind of salted meat like corned beef or riblets. In the Black community, we would have been eating it with pig tails.

BERNICE

Oh, nice. I have to try it. I don’t think I’ve ever had a boiled dinner before.

WENDIE

So simple but just so delicious.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

As I listened to Wendie talk about boiled dinner, it drove home for me that food sovereignty means in part celebrating and upholding food cultures and traditions.

Before Wendie became formally involved in the food sovereignty movement, she embarked on the important journey of documenting African Nova Scotian food history and culture — a heritage often overlooked, undervalued and effectively silenced by a White-dominant culture.

Driven by her deep ties to Nova Scotia, she has worked fervently to, quoting Wendie, “find, locate, rediscover” the history of African Nova Scotians, including the rich tapestry of their cuisine, and most importantly, as she says, document it.

Wendie began this work long before she held any roles with food sovereignty anywhere in the title or description.

For me, Wendie’s story is a perfect illustration that food sovereignty-oriented work is not always labelled as such. So although the language may be new to some, the embedded ideas and practices may be familiar to many. Wendie made this point during a virtual event on Black food sovereignty held by Food Secure Canada in November 2020:

WENDIE | This Black food movement, the Black food sovereignty, Black food security, Black food justice, it’s new terminology to me and certainly new terminology to a lot of people in my community. So what I would like to see is how can we take theory and turn it into practice. Because even though these are terms that most people in my community might not be familiar with, they are things that we’ve been doing. We’ve been practising the food sovereignty movement. ([Food Secure Canada video: Cultivating change: Fireside chat: Reflections on Black food sovereignty in Canada](#))

BERNICE (NARRATION)

This was Wendie more than 3 years ago, and in a little bit, we’ll hear her talk about how her understanding of food sovereignty has grown and evolved since then. But carry with you her main point as you listen to the rest of the episode: the language of food sovereignty needs to be connected to place-based practices, and communities often have deep rooted wisdom, knowledges and experiences on advancing and upholding food sovereignty in their own context.

Back to my conversation with Wendie. I wanted to learn more about how her family history and deep roots in Nova Scotia influenced her interest in working towards food sovereignty.

“The language of food sovereignty needs to be connected to place-based practices, and communities often have deep rooted wisdom, knowledges and experiences on advancing and upholding food sovereignty in their own context.”

BERNICE YANFUL

The history of African Nova Scotian food

BERNICE

I absolutely love the piece you wrote for Chatelaine magazine. In that piece for Chatelaine magazine, you wrote so beautifully about the history of African Nova Scotian food and how it’s part of your own family history. How did your family background and deep roots in Nova Scotia shape your current interest in African Nova Scotian and Black food sovereignty?

WENDIE

I have to say that I feel like I was one of the lucky ones. I had the opportunity to see what accessing food looked like in the inner city of Halifax and some of the challenges that people have, some of the difficulty accessing healthy food and accessing affordable food. But I also, growing up, my father came from a rural community, a place called Guysborough Road. There are over 52 black communities in Nova Scotia, and he

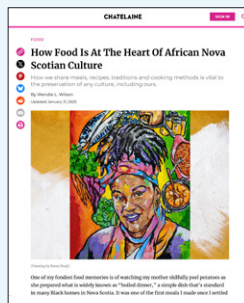


came from one that was about 30 minutes from the city centre, and so he always kept a garden on his father's land. My grandfather, Fred Wilson, always had a garden as well, and I would say without question that my father's father, his family all were food sovereign. So all of their food would have come from the land. Like I said, my grandfather had the garden. He had the root cellar. They fished, they foraged, they kept chickens, they had a couple of pigs.

How food is at the heart of African Nova Scotian culture

Wilson WL. [2024].

As Wendie says, “food is everything,” and for African Nova Scotians, it is deeply intertwined with their community, culture, health and well-being. This *Chatelaine* post written by Wendie, on the significance of food and community in sustaining African Nova Scotians, can inform public health practitioners in their work addressing food insecurity and community well-being, with an emphasis on food sovereignty and preserving cultural traditions.



And so I had the chance to not only participate in that, but I also had the chance to see how important being able to source your own food is and what a great sense of agency that is to not rely on the supermarket to get our food and basically to know where our food is coming from and, more importantly, how safe it is.

I saw neighbors and people in my community struggle to be able to afford food and then also struggle to be able to access healthy food. But with my family, I had opportunity to observe both and participate in both because the community I grew up in had lots of restaurants and convenience stores. And so we had access to that as well, to that ultra-processed food early on. But we also had the fruit and vegetable man come through once a week during the summer and the

fall to sell his wares, as well as the mackerel man. And so it was a bit of both, and that's where my connection to this whole food sovereignty movement came in — I saw the discrepancy, right? I saw how healthy food benefits us. And I also saw many people, and still do, have struggled with food-related diseases.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Wendie grew up in Uniacke Square, a public housing project in the North End of Halifax. Her early experiences made her keenly aware of inequities in access to food and also the importance of food sovereignty, a sense of agency, knowing where our food is coming from, though she didn't call it by that name at the time. These experiences planted an early seed for Wendie about the importance of food to health and well-being.

In our conversation, Wendie's deep love for her community was plain to see and hear, as were her hopes that her work would contribute to self-reliance for African Nova Scotians. Self in this context is less about the individual and more about the community being able to meet their own needs, a step towards liberation from the systems that threaten their survival and well-being.

Wendie invited me to learn more about the African Nova Scotian communities she hopes to benefit through her work.

WENDIE

So most folks that consider themselves African Nova Scotian, and actually that has been a little bit of a controversy here in Nova Scotia over the last few months in terms of what is a definition of someone who is African Nova Scotian. And I can tell you what it is, and I can tell you what most Black folks here in Nova Scotia that are African Nova Scotian will say that it is. And it's someone who has historical roots here in the province. And when I say historical, I mean that folks that have come during one of the major waves of immigration and that being Black refugees, the Black Loyalists. First, we had the Black planters who came to

plant and most likely harvest food. We have Jamaican Maroons that came to Nova Scotia as well. And so we predate Confederation. And that's what makes a person who is of African Nova Scotian descent African Nova Scotian.

The other piece as well is our last names. So our last names are very connected to communities. There are over 52 Black communities in Nova Scotia, and if you ask anyone, you know, you say the last name Sparks or Gray or Downey, quite often people will know what community you come from.

BERNICE

And how about your last name Wilson?

WENDIE

Yes, so my last name is Wilson, and my people hail from the Old Guysborough Road that's close to the international airport, by way of North Preston, which is the largest Indigenous Black community in Canada. Some African Nova Scotian people do use that word Indigenous to describe themselves. Until the '90s, we weren't referring to ourselves as African Nova Scotian, quite often we would refer to ourselves as Black or Indigenous Black.

BERNICE

Okay.

WENDIE

And so my father's father was born in Cherrybrook, and that is in the Prestons area. And my mother's people come from Amherst and a place called Fall River, Nova Scotia, which has a really interesting history. Basically no Black folks living there now, but it was one of the few communities that were actually very fertile. Most of the communities that Black people were given or granted land in was land that wasn't really great for farming. And for some reason my mother's people were given this land in Fall River, and it was very fertile and they helped feed a community. And my mother's grandmother was a midwife. My father's grandmother was a midwife here in Nova Scotia.

BERNICE

Oh, cool.

WENDIE

So, yeah, our roots go back very, very deep.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

The history of African Nova Scotians goes back over 400 years. In waves, people of African ancestry arrived in Nova Scotia, bringing their food practices and traditions with them. These included, for example, enslaved and free Africans and Black Loyalists who fought for the British Crown during the American Revolutionary War. In exchange for their support, Black Loyalists were promised farmland — promises largely unkept. When granted, the land was often small, rocky and barren.

But there were African Nova Scotian families who did have access to fertile land, like Wendie's family. And that was a key part of what allowed her ancestors to feed themselves and their communities. So for Wendie and her work, food sovereignty means in part restoring intimate relationships with land and reconnecting African Nova Scotians with the sources of their food, and building futures that allow them to thrive.

In addition to Wendie's early life experiences, her desire to advance food sovereignty further began to take shape through her work as a classroom teacher.

Education and food sovereignty: Wendie's journey

BERNICE

And so you had those experiences as a young child, and then you pursued a career in education, and then somewhere along the way you became part of this African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group. Can you tell me the story of how you got involved?



WENDIE

I was a classroom teacher for 20 years. And the first school that I worked in was actually in the community I grew up in. And it was a walking school, so for the first 10 years or so, kids would walk home, have their lunch, come back. And then, the next 10 years, there was a policy that came in that said kids could eat at school. And so now the classroom becomes the lunchroom. And now I'm in the lunchroom and I'm able to see what children are eating.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

And what Wendie saw concerned her. In her view, the children were eating foods that lacked the essential nutrients they needed to thrive, and she witnessed firsthand the impact on their learning. Research and practice tell us that complex structural and social determinants of health play a significant role in what children eat — a reality with which Wendie is intimately familiar. So when she got the chance to be involved in bettering children's access to nourishing, culturally rooted foods, she jumped at the opportunity.

In 2020, she became a steering committee member for the Nova Scotia Chapter of the Coalition for Healthy School Food, invested in seeing the implementation of a Canada-wide universal school food program, a breakfast, snack or lunch program.

For Wendie, a school food program is not the entire story. It does not address the issue of a lack of financial access to food, and it cannot advance food sovereignty on its own. But it can be an important piece when it is designed to provide foods that are local, nutrient rich and reflect the cultures of the students it serves.

Involvement with the Coalition for Healthy School Food was an important launch pad for Wendie's food sovereignty work. Try this: google "African Nova Scotian food sovereignty," and Wendie's name is surely to come up. She is a member of a pan-Canadian Black food sovereignty network, on the board for Food Secure Canada, part of an Indigenous and Black food sovereignty advisory circle, and a member of

the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group for the Halifax Region. More about that later in this episode.

Wendie is deeply invested in this area, and it shows. Though the term food sovereignty was new to her a little over 3 years ago, she sees the connections to the work she has always done: upholding African Nova Scotian culture, uplifting her community, and creating spaces for people to gather, learn from each other and transfer knowledge from one generation to the next. I asked Wendie to describe further what food sovereignty means to her and how her understandings have evolved over time. Her response reflects key ideas related to land, local food, health, and a sense of control and agency.

WENDIE

Well, when I think about food sovereignty, that wasn't even a term that I heard until recently, and I say that, like the last 3 years. Mostly when I heard people talking about food, I heard them talking about food insecurity, and then I also heard them talking about food security and this goal of making people more food secure.

And then, when I met a man by the name of Byron Beardy, he's from Four Arrows Nation [Regional Health Authority], I believe, in Manitoba, and he had said something to me that I found profound. And that is "When you're born, food is included." And when he said that, I was like, "Oh ... that's true." Food is included when you're born. Humans, animals: food is there.

And so today sitting in my office, a deer came by and it was outside of my window snacking on the acorns that had fallen from the tree just outside my window. And then I left work and I could see these squirrels roaming around collecting nuts. And so I thought, okay, when you're born, food is included, meaning everyone has an inherent right to enough food, right? Every human being has an inherent right to enough food. And I kind of thought that was what he was talking about in terms of food being included.



And then, just recently, I realized, oh, there's another layer to that. When he's saying that food is included, he's not just saying that everyone has an inherent right to food. He's talking about a particular kind of food. He's talking about the food that comes from the *land*. That's the food that is included. He's talking about the food that the land has to offer. That is the food that we should be eating, right? That's the food that we're meant to eat.

And in saying that, food sovereignty is about localizing food. It's all about eating food that is local and taking care of our community and being stewards of the land. And it is most importantly about being in control of not just your food, but being in control of your food systems. And in particular, Black food sovereignty means that we're now feeding ourselves. When doing that, we are also taking back our health and taking care of ourselves.

I think it's very important to think about the economic piece as well. There's a lot of money in food. So it's really important to me, especially when it comes to school food and the possibility of a universal school food program, it's really important that we're able to put dollars back into the Black community so that we can become economically sustainable as well.

“Food sovereignty is about localizing food. It's all about eating food that is local and taking care of our community and being stewards of the land. And it is most importantly about being in control of not just your food, but being in control of your food systems.”

WENDIE WILSON

BERNICE

You described food sovereignty. How does that differ from food security in your view?

WENDIE

I think the easiest way to explain it is to give you an example. I'm someone who's food secure. I have a pretty good job. I have a vehicle. I can shop the flyers. I'm educated in terms of knowing what's good for me, what's not good for me. And so I would consider myself someone who is food secure. And if you look at any federal programs, provincial programs, that is the goal. We want people to be food secure.

But I don't have any control over my food. I don't know where my food comes from, I don't know if my food's safe, if it's been sprayed with pesticides. I don't even know really what's in a box of food that I get, if it's even what they're saying is in it, you know? I can barely read the number of ingredients that's on the back of any box or food label, and so I don't even know what's in my food. I have no control over it.

Food sovereignty is gaining control over your food system so that you are in control. So even though something happens with a crop somewhere in the world, I am still going to be able to feed myself and my family and my community.

BERNICE

Yeah, absolutely. I think that control piece is so important, and that's the main difference between how we typically understand food security and what food sovereignty is imagining or aspiring for.

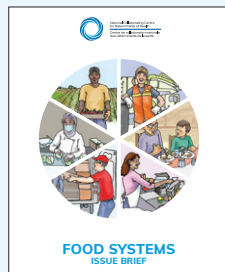
WENDIE

Yes, because I'm dependent. I am dependent on other people to provide my food for me. And food sovereignty is about having an agency and control over our food and our food systems. Like how we process our food, how we store our food, how we prepare our food, how much food we plant, how much food we harvest, when we harvest, what we harvest it for. And just in a foundational way, just knowing and having an intimate relationship with my food.

Determining Health: Food systems issue brief

NCCDH. [2024].

Everyone has a role in building healthier and more equitable food systems. This resource from the NCCDH provides an overview of how food systems and human health connect, and the steps that public health practitioners, educators, students and decision-makers can take to understand the relevance of improving food systems for public health. Through this resource, we learn how industrial food systems can produce health inequities and what public health interventions can be implemented to support sustainable and healthy food processes.



BERNICE

Looking back over the last 3 and a half or 4 years doing this work, how has your understanding of food sovereignty evolved?

WENDIE

I guess in so many ways, what it really comes down to is controlling our food, controlling our food systems. But if we filter that down even more, it's about controlling our health.

BERNICE

Tell me more about that.

WENDIE

Well, it's about our gut health being related to our brain health. And it's about our spiritual health. So even the way we collect food. What we eat can be just as important as who we eat with.

BERNICE

Oh, I like that.

WENDIE

Right? You know, you're eating a really delicious healthy meal by yourself every night and you're

not really making any connections, or you're eating something that might be subpar but you're doing it with people you love and you're laughing and you're cutting up vegetables together and you're in the fresh air collecting. It's not just about the food itself, but how we get the food, how we prepare the food, who we prepare the food with.

I heard someone say, she was a doctor from California, I can't remember her name, but she said, it was based in research, that people who eat their Indigenous foods are healthier. To me, that's profound. That makes me want to delve into knowing who my ancestors were and what they ate. And gathering that knowledge and that wisdom, right? Food is everything.

BERNICE

It's not just about the nutrients it delivers. It's not about it being sold for profit. It's our culture. It's our nourishment. It's our connections, our family—

WENDIE

It's our history.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

For Wendie, food security starts and stops with having access to enough food, while food sovereignty means so much more. It's about communities having control over their food supply and knowing where their food is coming from. And crucially, it's about relationships — to the land, our cultural roots and each other. Some people see food sovereignty and food security as more complementary concepts. You can check out the resources in our episode notes to learn more.

Recall the [Nyéléni Declaration](#) that I mentioned at the top of the episode? Well, Wendie's description of food sovereignty reminds me so much of the Declaration and its related six pillars of food sovereignty:

1. Focuses on food for people — This pillar is about making sure that people's right to sufficient, nourishing and culturally appropriate food is at the centre of all food policies.

2. Values food providers — The work of farmers and other food providers needs to be respected and supported. This means making sure policies don't threaten their livelihoods.
3. Localizes food systems — Local food needs to be prioritized over imports, and food providers and consumers should have the power to make decisions about their food systems.
4. Puts control locally — Local food providers should have control over resources such as land, water and seed to use and share in sustainable ways. Natural resources should not be privatized.
5. Builds knowledge and skills — Food systems should build on the knowledge and skills of local food providers, and this wisdom should be passed down to future generations.
6. Works with nature — The sixth pillar is about making sure that food is produced in ways that protect the earth's natural resources.

The Indigenous Circle for Food Secure Canada's People's Food Policy project identified a seventh pillar: food is sacred. The seventh pillar emphasizes that food is a gift that needs to be cherished and should not be treated like any another other commodity bought and sold on the marketplace.

Health inequities and the shifting paradigms of food security, food insecurity, and food sovereignty

Borras AM, Mohamed FA. [2020].

This article published in the *International Journal of Social Determinants of Health and Health Services* provides public health practitioners with a foundational understanding of the interconnections between food insecurity and health inequities, and how food sovereignty goes beyond the realm of food insecurity, with the potential to tackle health inequities at their roots.



The Nyéléni Declaration and the pillars of food sovereignty have provided an important foundation for the food sovereignty movement worldwide.

The pillars are guiding principles. How they come to life vary in different contexts. It was so cool to hear Wendie talk about what African Nova Scotian food sovereignty means to her and see the connections with the various pillars.

Connections between Black food sovereignties and Indigenous food sovereignties

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Next, Wendie describes what she sees as the relationship between Black food sovereignties and Indigenous food sovereignties. Note the plural.

You'll hear her talk about her work with an Indigenous and Black food sovereignty advisory circle. This is an initiative from Food Secure Canada, a pan-Canadian alliance that brings together Indigenous Peoples and people of African descent to share insights and collaborate in advancing food sovereignty.

WENDIE

The very first meeting that we had, one of the questions that I had going in was "What is the difference between Black food sovereignty and Indigenous food sovereignty?" So that question was asked, and there was silence for a while. No one could really come up with an answer. Most of the time, there's no loss for words, there's always so much wisdom pouring from this group. But when that question was posed, there was silence. And then someone broke the silence by talking about, well, these are some of the similarities.

And I walked away and did some reflecting, and I was like, "Why was it so difficult to answer that question?" And the answer that I came up with is because, when



we're talking about the differences between Black food sovereignty and Black and Indigenous food sovereignty, it moves beyond just this one thing, right? So when I think about Black food sovereignty, I really think about Black food sovereignties.

BERNICE

Plural, right.

WENDIE

It differs regionally where you are. So how can I take this one — there's no such thing as "a food sovereignty." That's like "all Indigenous people" or "all Black people." There's a framework, there are foundational pieces, but there are also differences, right? Depending on where you are in the land and what the needs of the people are. And so Black food sovereignty here in Nova Scotia would look different than Black food sovereignty in Quebec or Ontario or B.C., and even within the province. And so I can only attest to and support and move forward what Black food sovereignty looks like here in Nova Scotia for people of African Nova Scotian descent. So there really is this localizing it.

And so that's why I think it was hard for people to answer that question "What's the difference between Indigenous food sovereignty and Black food sovereignty?" Because it's Indigenous food sovereignties and Black food sovereignties.

BERNICE

Food sovereignties. Yeah, that's such a good point

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Wendie goes on to share that within the advisory circle, they are working separately but together. This means there is an Indigenous caucus and a Black caucus, which allows them to figure out their needs and goals separately but then come back together and support each other.

Challenges, the importance of pushing forward and the future of food sovereignty

BERNICE (NARRATION)

This work has not been without its challenges. Wendie told me that funding is one of the biggest barriers to advancing food sovereignty for African Nova Scotians. Wendie identified an important role for local, provincial and federal government bodies to provide financial support, and stressed the need for the African Nova Scotian community to use these funds to build capacity to sustain these programs in the long term.

Despite these challenges, Wendie believes the work is well worth it.

BERNICE

You've been so engaged in this work over the last few years, if someone were to ask you why African Nova Scotian food sovereignty is important, how would you respond? Why is it important to you?

WENDIE

Well, as a cultural advocate, it's important to me because it's rooted in culture. It's about identity. It's about who I am in my essence. Not only who I am, but through this work, I get to understand who my ancestors were as well. That's important.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

And finally, I wanted to know Wendie's hopes for the future in this work. She described with passion her desire for a food hub, painting a vivid picture of the hub as a space where African Nova Scotians ...

WENDIE

And people from the broader Black community can go to this one spot to gain knowledge, tell stories, share knowledge and, most importantly, preserve culture. Generationally. And this would be a place where anyone from one to 101 could access. And it would be run by community.



It's a place where we'll have commercial kitchens, people with food expertise like chefs, a place where people can be trained. It's a place where people can come and have a meal, a good meal. It's a place where people can come and purchase food at a market, where the food is highly subsidized or free. It's a place where people could come and gather spiritually, transfer knowledge. It's a place where you would have different generations learning from each other. And that's one thing that I loved as a teacher is that I not only taught kids, but they in turn also taught me a lot of things. It's a place where people could build skills. It's a place where people could find refuge.

And it could be a place people use for other types of programming. But mostly it would be a place where people would come to get fed.

And when I see it, it's going to be a really nice place too, you know, like a nice place, like a nice restaurant, lots of light, nice artwork, beautiful commercial kitchen, like all of those things. I see it being a place like a modular place that could be, like the space could be used and utilized for different reasons, stuff could be moved around, and really tall ceilings, and I see a lot of light coming in. And I see people in crisp white shirts and chef's hats. And I see young people coming to help gather and organize things and be part of what it takes to really build a community.

BERNICE

You have a very, like, concrete vision—

WENDIE

Oh, no, it is a concrete vision. Oh, I see it. I see it. I just think it could be a place that we grow together as a community. But it should be within the 5-year period, like, I don't want to see kids struggling for food.

Oh, it's going to be a place where people come to heal too, right?

BERNICE

Oh, yeah, I love that.

WENDIE

Right? And multidisciplinary. So, like a place where we can have some primary care workers there as well, maybe doing research. And just a hub. It's a food hub. A food centre.

BERNICE

And do you see public health being involved in that?

WENDIE

Absolutely. I see the universities being involved in it. I see that research part. I see that opportunity for people to be mentored and apprenticeship and just a place for people to build capacity. When I talk about capacity, the capacity to be able to be self-sustaining, those things, that knowledge, that intellectual property, all those pieces that can never be taken away from you. It's not like, you know, a new pair of shoes or a nice car, or things that depreciate, or things that get lost or destroyed. It's these things that, building capacity, these things that will stay with you for a lifetime.

“A place for people to build capacity. When I talk about capacity, the capacity to be able to be self-sustaining, those things, that knowledge, that intellectual property, all those pieces that can never be taken away from you.”

WENDIE WILSON

TALKING WITH NICKAYA PARRIS

BERNICE (NARRATION)

Wendie is committed to seeing this food hub come to life. She's working towards this goal with others from the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group for the Halifax Region — another thing she's involved in. In this part of our episode, we'll hear more about the working group through my conversation with Nickaya Parris.

Nickaya is a registered dietician and food security junior policy analyst for the Government of Nova Scotia. And, fun fact, Wendie was her third-grade teacher.

Nickaya spoke with excitement about being part of the working group and their current work. Through community consultations, they developed recommendations for Halifax Region's JustFOOD Action Plan meant to support the creation of a just, healthy and sustainable food system.

Just as our podcast team was writing this episode, the Halifax Regional Council endorsed Part B of the plan focused on implementation. I spoke with Nickaya prior to this endorsement. As you'll hear, the recommendations the working group put forward align closely with what Wendie shared about her hopes and dreams for African Nova Scotian food sovereignty.

Advancing food sovereignty through Halifax's JustFOOD Action Plan

BERNICE

So how did the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Group come about? And tell me a little bit about the JustFOOD Plan that you've been working on.

NICKAYA

So I want to take you back to the beginning of the whole amazing JustFOOD Action Plan that the Halifax Regional Municipality has been partnering with

community to implement and move forward. I think it was March 2023, Halifax Regional Council endorsed Part A of the JustFOOD Action Plan, and so Part A sets the stage for really a regional food system. It captures the public engagement findings that they had. And from that, a set of 56 recommendations for positive food system change were developed. The whole goal around Part A is to function as a living and breathing document that will be monitored, evaluated and refined by community and plan partners over time.

And so, as Part A got endorsed, there were different sets of what they were calling JustFOOD working groups established to continue to move Part A forward but for a more specific or localized lens. For example, there was an Indigenous JustFOOD working group and the African Nova Scotian and Black community JustFOOD working group.

“As the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group, our main goal is to honour and embrace the right of Black people to have healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically and sound and sustainable methods for our community members.”

NICKAYA PARRIS

As the African Nova Scotian and Black Food Sovereignty Working Group, our main goal is to honour and embrace the right of Black people to have healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically and sound and sustainable methods for our community members. And that really includes the



right for us to define our own food, our agricultural systems, and to build our own institutions to advance our community's capacity and resilience for access to food. So really, we want to focus on being able to create food that's for us and by us, and that's acceptable and accessible to all of us.

And the main mandated ways that we're accomplishing this work is through the development of some specific actions and implementation strategies that are based on the Part A 56 recommendations, but we have some specific ones that are, that are housed in—

BERNICE

Right, those are the five recommendations, is that correct?

NICKAYA

Yeah, yeah, those five recommendations.

BERNICE

Can you take me through ... so those actions are building African Nova Scotian food system governance, access to growing space, supporting community capacity, community infrastructure, and culturally rooted community health and knowledge programs. I'd love to hear about maybe one action in particular, what that action is about and how you're hoping it will impact the lives of Black and African Nova Scotians.

BERNICE (NARRATION)

You're about to hear Nickaya talk a little bit more about the name of the working group, its uniqueness, and discuss why fighting for recognition for African Nova Scotians is so intimately connected to the larger sovereignty movement. Then, she'll get into specific ways the working group is striving to advance food sovereignty.

NICKAYA

I think one of the main actions that we're really trying to push and move forward is under the structure of governance. And so really having the African Nova Scotian and Black community, and I should say our

name in the working group is very unique, we have African Nova Scotian and Black. And in Nova Scotia, there's lots of work and there's a movement to having the label, I'll say, African Nova Scotian recognized not just provincially and municipally but federally. Because right now it's not federally recognized.

BERNICE

What would recognition entail, in terms of when you say federally recognized, what would that look like?

NICKAYA

It would look like being able to have that term recognized. And right now, for instance, you wouldn't see the term African Nova Scotian on any sort of federal legislative mandates or anything recognizing us as a distinct group to having meaningfully, truly contributed to the land of Nova Scotia and making it what it is today.

Right now, we're kind of, and a lot of Black people are in Canada in general, lumped into this great, beautiful mosaic of "you're just Black." And it doesn't give us any sort of distinction or differentiation. And I think a large part of the fight and the movement, as well as to have the way in which we identify recognized, is that for many people who are part of the African diaspora and who do settle here in Canada, a lot of people are able to pick out and pinpoint where their lineage or where they come from, right? So if you're of Jamaican descent or of Ghanaian descent. I'm half Ghanaian as well—

BERNICE

That's my family background.

NICKAYA

Yay! So, you know, half of me, from my dad's side, I can pinpoint that back. I've gotten taught those things, I know I'm part of the Ashanti tribe. I know my middle name, the meaning of that, it's Akua, the day of the week that I was born—

BERNICE

On Wednesday?



NICKAYA

Yes!

BERNICE

I'm also Wednesday-born.

NICKAYA

Oh, I love it. So I have those traditions and knowledge from his side, but from my mom's side, where she is African Nova Scotian, the only historical connection of us being able to identify as a people is tied to Nova Scotia, and specifically my family on my mom's side come from the community of Africville. So having that recognition will really open the door for us to hang onto a lot of the things that our ancestors here in Nova Scotia fought for.

And so that's where the African Nova Scotian portion of the name comes from. But we also as a working group decided to say African Nova Scotian and Black food sovereignty and justice because there's a lot of people who belong to the African diaspora who have migrated and who have settled in Nova Scotia for many years who, you know, they're not necessarily connected to the historical 52-plus land-based Black communities. But they might be second or third or fourth generation, let's say, Ghanaian or Nigerian or something, and they've also helped us to move this food work forward. They've established such a strong ground, and they've contributed to the food system that we experience as Black people.

To move forward to ... your question specifically was what are some municipal actions for governance that we've been focusing on. One of the initiatives that we really are hoping to implement is actually around having an African Nova Scotian and Black food coordinator. Our working group standpoint of this is we would love to have somebody in a physical role of employment who will be able to dedicate their time to really building out a lot of initiatives, building out a lot of programming that will focus on propelling African Nova Scotian and Black food sovereignty forward.

So, for instance, one of the project plans that we're focusing on is having this coordinator lead and implement the Caja planter boxes. We're really excited about that because people in our working group got to try those out through a local community urban farm and it was fantastic. It's like gardening that is super easy for people to take into their own hands and be able to produce fruit or produce vegetables that they can harvest and use in their kitchen the same day.

And then we're going to be doing some partnerships with local chefs where people from our community can create meals that are culturally inclusive, but also is teaching them how to utilize some of the produce that they may harvest from their planter boxes that they're able to do at home. And then be able to teach them more about food sovereignty from an African Nova Scotian and Black lens, some intergenerational teaching.

And then the future goal would be to work towards a physical African Nova Scotian and Black food hub space. And I know Wendie spoke about this as well.

BERNICE

Oh, she did.

NICKAYA

There are some specific, systematic things that need to come in place. Who's going to take care of the facility, who's going to have the knowledge do that, who's going to do a lot of the outreach? And so we're like, okay, if we have a food coordinator, then they will be able to—

BERNICE

That can be some of their role.

NICKAYA

Exactly, that can be some of their role to help that and implement that, and we can spend some time working on developing that infrastructure.

Engaging with African Nova Scotian and Black communities

BERNICE

Have you had conversations about how you as a working group try to reach out to the wider Black community within Halifax Regional Municipality? Or what have you done to try to ensure that the ideas that you're bringing forth are a reflection of not just the four of you but also the wider interests as it relates to the African Nova Scotian and Black communities?

NICKAYA

Right from the beginning, as a working group, we knew that it was going to be very important to get and to gain insight from the rest of our community members. So we held some engagements in community to teach people: (1) about who we are as a working group; (2) this JustFOOD Action Plan, of what it is; (3) and to really hear some of their insights on what they'd want to see for themselves and what they feel would be beneficial more to the African Nova Scotian and Black community at large.

And that part's really, really, really important because a lot of times community is consulted when there's already been a decision made. There's not always space created for them at the table, or there's not always a table created for them to come. So we really wanted to do that.

“A lot of times community is consulted when there's already been a decision made. There's not always space created for them at the table, or there's not always a table created for them to come. So we really wanted to do that.”

NICKAYA PARRIS

We did some formal engagements, but we also did a lot of informal engagements as well, which worked great. We didn't always take that formalistic approach, but the approach worked for us and our community members to just meet them where they're at, to show up and open that space. But then we also obviously had to uphold our formal obligations as well in terms of making sure we met our deadline so that this work actually can move forward in the larger system.

BERNICE

And it sounds like it would be a balance, trying to be flexible and allow for informal conversations to kind of organically happen, but also still meeting the timelines that you have set as part of the JustFOOD Action Plan. Was that difficult to strike that balance in the work you've been doing?

“We're not just going to people from community and taking. We're going and we're sharing, we're being vulnerable, we're allowing you to get to a place where you're ready to think about what you feel you need.”

NICKAYA PARRIS

NICKAYA

Sometimes. Because, I think, as people who are Black or people who are part of marginalized groups, let's say groups of people of colour, sometimes we do, I think, carry a different type of burden where there's a lot that kind of rests on our shoulders — of we know how important this work is and we know there's no blueprint that we're following. We don't have the luxury of going to somebody else and saying, “Can you help us? Can you hold our hand along?”

Sometimes we found that we just needed a solid hour as working group members to debrief with each other about the work, about our personal stuff. And we always got our things done, but we didn't always come with a written-out agenda of, okay, we have to hit every point. Sometimes we actually created that as we went. And we created that space in our working group for us to heal as people and just pour out to each other if we knew somebody that was ill or was no longer with us, creating that space. And we found that that was really important. And we also took that approach with formal and informal engagements of we're not just going to people from community and taking. We're going and we're sharing, we're being vulnerable, we're allowing you to get to a place where you're ready to think about what you feel you need.

Next steps: implementing the JustFOOD Action Plan recommendations

BERNICE (NARRATION)

And finally, I asked Nickaya about how they're working to ensure their group's recommendations for the action plan are implemented and what accountability for that implementation looks like.

BERNICE

One of the other curiosities I had is — I've worked on different municipal action plans around different areas, anti-racism comes to mind — and there's lots of good work that goes into creating plans. The challenge becomes implementation, as well as accountability for that implementation. How is the working group striving to ensure that the actions that you've developed and thought about actually get implemented and who's going to be accountable for that?

NICKAYA

One of the ways that we're going to ensure that this work continues on is from the passion that I think each working group member has. We truly feel like this work ... it can't stop now, the ball just cannot be dropped,

there's too much on the line. There are people that are dying from things that are preventable, that are large in part related to food or lack thereof. So that's one thing, I think our passion is really going to fuel that accountability piece on our end.

Secondly, we're taking the approach of looking at this work large in part, yes, it's a part of the JustFOOD Action Plan, but taking ownership of this work. We're not putting it all in the hands of HRM [Halifax Regional Municipality] or of the province of Nova Scotia or of the government. At the end of the day, community needs to meet community needs and understand we have power within our community. We view this as our responsibility for our community. So that ownership piece, we're not looking for other levels of government or other people to do this work for us and to do it as well as us. Yeah, we'll take your support for sure. But it's ours, right? It's ours.

From the support that we do have from municipal government and eventually provincial government one day and federally as well, which would be a huge blessing, if you say you're going to support us, we'll hold you to it. The last thing that anybody, whether it's from a governmental perspective or from a personal perspective, you don't want to look like you dropped the ball on something that's so important.

And that's where I think the community power comes in. There's power from voicing your concerns. There's power from utilizing media. There's power from spreading the word about things that are going on and extending personal invites. There's so much power that a person has.

And so I think those are some of the other mechanisms that we're going to take in terms of holding the proper people accountable, including ourselves, to continue on doing this work and making sure, at the end of the day, this isn't just something that just gets dropped. Or this isn't just going to be another role that gets transferred into something else. Or this isn't going to be a big building that becomes abandoned and no longer used.



This has huge implications for our health care system in terms of one day hopefully decreasing the prevalence of non-communicable diseases. You know, we see people again within Black and Indigenous communities have higher rates of heart disease, have higher rates of type 2 diabetes, have higher rates of preventable nutrition- and food-focused diseases that they didn't have to have in the first place, right? All because the proper infrastructure and the proper programs and supports weren't there.

Thinking of just how powerful this work is but also taking that ownership of the work moving forward is going to be how we're going to hold and take ownership of that accountability too.

EPISODE TAKEAWAYS

BERNICE (NARRATION)

It was such a pleasure to learn from both Wendie and Nickaya. With passion, they described what they were doing to, quoting Nickaya, "propel African Nova Scotian and Black food sovereignty forward." The actions they shared are part of larger efforts to redress the systemic racism faced by African and Black Nova Scotians that create social, spatial, economic and other barriers to health and well-being.

Their commitment to food sovereignty is a site of resistance. Resistance to systems and structures that devalue Black life and ways of being. And they seek self-determination, the right for African and Black Nova Scotians to define for themselves what they need, to imagine and create futures of possibilities.

I said at the beginning that the food sovereignty movement is at once global and highly local. The interconnected web through which we grow, harvest, collect, distribute and eat food means that actions are required at multiple levels for transformative change.

Local action is an important part of moving towards this goal and allows for a deeper understanding of how food sovereignty might unfold in different places.

Here are some things to think about as you consider what this episode might mean for the places you live, learn, work and play:

- What is food and why does it matter?
- What do the communities with whom I work need me to know about what food means to them?
- Why don't all groups of people benefit equally from the systems through which we produce, distribute and consume food?
- What are the implications of these inequities for public health?
- What can the focus on food sovereignty offer in terms of addressing these inequities?
- How can I be a part of supporting healthy public policies that foster food sovereignty?

If you enjoyed this episode, check out "[Disrupting food insecurity and fatphobia](#)" and "[Disrupting environmental racism](#)," two of our past episodes.

I will leave you with words from Wendie Wilson, cited in the [JustFOOD Action Plan](#):

Our ancestors have always resisted ownership over our bodies. From the moment we landed in North America, we have found ways to resist. Food was one of these ways.... Our food is our sustenance, our freedom, and our culture. Black food sovereignty is a way to express ourselves and continue the legacy of resistance. It is a way to center our health, take back our freedom and regain our agency. Institutionalized systematic racism continues to deny us access to opportunities and resources and Black food sovereignty a vehicle to reclaiming what is inherently ours.

Production for this episode was led by Bernice Yanful, with contributions from Carolina Jimenez, Rebecca Cheff and Pemma Muzumdar.



PEMMA

Thanks for listening to Mind the Disruption, a podcast by the National Collaborating Centre for Determinants of Health.

Visit our website nccdh.ca to learn more about the podcast and our work.

This season of Mind the Disruption is hosted by Bernice Yanful and is produced by Rebecca Cheff, Carolina Jimenez, Bernice Yanful and me, Pemma Muzumdar. The Mind the Disruption project team is led by Rebecca Cheff, with technical production and original music by Chris Perry.

If you enjoyed this episode, leave us a review! And share the link with a friend or a colleague. Hit the “follow” button for more stories about people working with others to challenge the status quo and build a healthier, more just world.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

We encourage you to work through these questions, on your own or in a group, to reflect on this episode and make connections with your own context.

INITIAL REACTIONS

- What is something that surprised you in the conversations with Wendie and Nickaya? How did you feel as you were reading or listening to this episode? What prompted these feelings? How can you use them to fuel action?

MAKING SENSE OF FOOD INEQUITIES

- What is food and why does it matter?
- Why do all groups of people not benefit equally from the systems through which we produce, distribute and consume food?
- What are the implications of these inequities for public health?

CONNECTING THIS TO YOUR CONTEXT

- In the context of your work, what are the most significant barriers that equity-denied communities face in accessing healthy, culturally appropriate food? How can these barriers be addressed?
- On page 13, seven pillars of food sovereignty are identified. What might food sovereignty mean in the places in which you live, learn, work and play?

DISRUPTING FOR A HEALTHIER, MORE JUST WORLD

- How can you incorporate food sovereignty principles into your public health initiatives?
- What can the focus on food sovereignty offer in terms of addressing health inequities?
- What role can you play in supporting local food sovereignty movements?



CONTACT INFORMATION

National Collaborating Centre
for Determinants of Health
St. Francis Xavier University
Antigonish, NS B2G 2W5
nccdh@stfx.ca
www.nccdh.ca

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