News Release

Government of Nunavut's Actions Towards Food Security

IQALUIT, Nunavut (June 14, 2012) – The Government of Nunavut heard the powerful message delivered by Nunavummiut this past weekend about the need to improve food security and take action. Widespread protests against the high cost of food in Nunavut took place across the territory and in Ottawa on Saturday.

"The Government of Nunavut recognizes how critically important this issue is for Nunavummiut," said Premier Eva Aariak. "Our *Tamapta* mandate places a priority on ensuring the basic needs of Nunavummiut are met and our Government continues to make investments to help those most at risk."

The Government of Nunavut invested more than $6 million in the past year to bolster food security for Nunavummiut, and investments will continue through the term of this government.

Investments include $1.15 million each year through the Country Food Distribution Program, for communities to repair community freezers, purchase infrastructure for community markets, buy country food from hunters and fishers to distribute to the public, and to provide training to harvesters (Find full list of eligible activities and application form here). Investments in the Social Assistance Program totaled $3 million, with a 15% increase to food allowances – the first increase since 2005.

Working with Nunavut Tunngavik Inc. and community partners, the Government of Nunavut is putting into action the *Makimaniq Plan: A Shared Approach to Poverty Reduction*.

"The *Makimaniq Plan* is based on the visions and ideas of hundreds of Nunavummiut who participated in its development," said Peter Taptuna, Deputy Premier and Minister of Economic Development & Transportation. "What we heard from Nunavummiut is that food insecurity is a central part of poverty, that it is a complex issue, and that solutions require innovation and collaboration between government, Inuit organizations, communities and the private sector."

Along with the investments already made, the Government of Nunavut has committed to address food insecurity long-term. *The Makimaniq Plan* calls for the creation of a Nunavut Food Security Coalition to develop a long-term and sustainable approach to food security in Nunavut. The Coalition has the full support of the Government of Nunavut and its partners.

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The first meeting of the Nunavut Food Security Coalition—created through the Makimaniq process—will take place on June 26, 2012. This coalition will bring partners together in a sustained effort to combat food insecurity and alleviate the frustrations felt by many Nunavummiut.

“I would like to thank Leesee Papatsie who created the ‘Feeding My Family’ Facebook page and everyone who has been a part of this productive dialogue. This social media page inspired Nunavummiut to take action across the territory, and brought national attention to an issue that is so important to us. Working together we will find solutions,” said Premier Aariak.

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Links:

How to apply for the country food access program

More about poverty reduction in Nunavut

Media contacts:

Emily Woods
Press Secretary
Office of the Premier
Government of Nunavut

Tel: (867) 975-5059
Email: ewoods@gov.nu.ca

Matthew Illaszewicz
Manager, Communications
Economic Development & Transportation
Government of Nunavut

Tel: (867) 975-7818
Email: millaszewicz@gov.nu.ca

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