Why Food Literacy Matters

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Food literacy matters because everyday food practices matter

- What and how people eat has impacts at multiple levels:
  - Individual
  - Local
  - National and global
Everyday food practices matter for Health....

**Food choice**
- Low in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, dairy
- High in processed & ‘other’ foods

**Nutritional Status**
- Excess saturated fat, calories, sodium
- Low Vitamin A, calcium, fibre, potassium, magnesium

**Health Outcomes**
- Increased obesity levels
- Increased risk of type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular diseases
Everyday food practices matter for the Environment....

**Food choice**
- Low in vegetables, fruit, whole grains, dairy
- High in processed, animal & ‘other’ foods

**Food System Inputs**
- Fossil fuels, greenhouse gas emissions
- Pesticides & chemical fertilizers
- Water

**Outcomes**
- Climate change
- Loss of soil, biodiversity, water
Everyday food practices matter because of Ethical concerns....

Food choice
- High in processed, animal & ‘other’ foods
- Globally sourced 'cheap' foods
- High food waste

Ethical Concerns
- Animal welfare
- Global hunger
- Sustainable livelihoods for food system workers
What are the solutions?

**Food choice**
- More vegetables, fruit, whole grains, dairy
- Less processed, animal, & ‘other’ foods

**Food culture**
- Food knowledge
- Food skills
- Food pleasure

**Positive Change**
- Health
- Environment
- Food System
Food literacy as a tool for changing food culture
‘Food literacy’ is ....
‘Food literacy’ is ....

- “the ability to make decisions to support the achievement of personal health and a sustainable food system considering environmental, social, economic, cultural, and political components” (Cullen et al, 2015)
Taking a food systems approach to food literacy
‘Food literacy’ is...

Skills needed to:
- Plan
- Manage
- Select
- Prepare
- Eat

Food that:
- Meets health needs
- Is safe
- Is socially and culturally appropriate
- Supports a resilient, sustainable food system
Food literacy matters ...

- Because everyday food practices matter
- Because food literacy holds the potential to transform the ways people act within the food system, bringing about positive change in critical areas