

Nunavut Food Guide Educator's Handbook

ABOUT THIS HANDBOOK

This handbook has been designed for anyone who uses the Nunavut Food Guide for nutrition education in Nunavut. If you are a community health worker, a health professional or an educator, this handbook will help you to understand and to help others understand the Nunavut Food Guide.

The Nunavut Food Guide contains lots of images describing important health messages and behaviours, and it has very few words. On its own, the Nunavut Food Guide can inspire people to follow these healthy behaviours, but when people have a chance to learn about it in a workshop or counselling session with you, you can help them learn even more about what the food guide says.

This handbook explains the health messages that can be found on every page of the Nunavut Food Guide. You can guide the conversation by choosing health messages you think are most important for the topic or people you are speaking with. This handbook will help you to communicate these messages when using food guide posters for teaching groups, or using the handout while sitting with a client giving basic nutrition advice.

This handbook has two main sections:

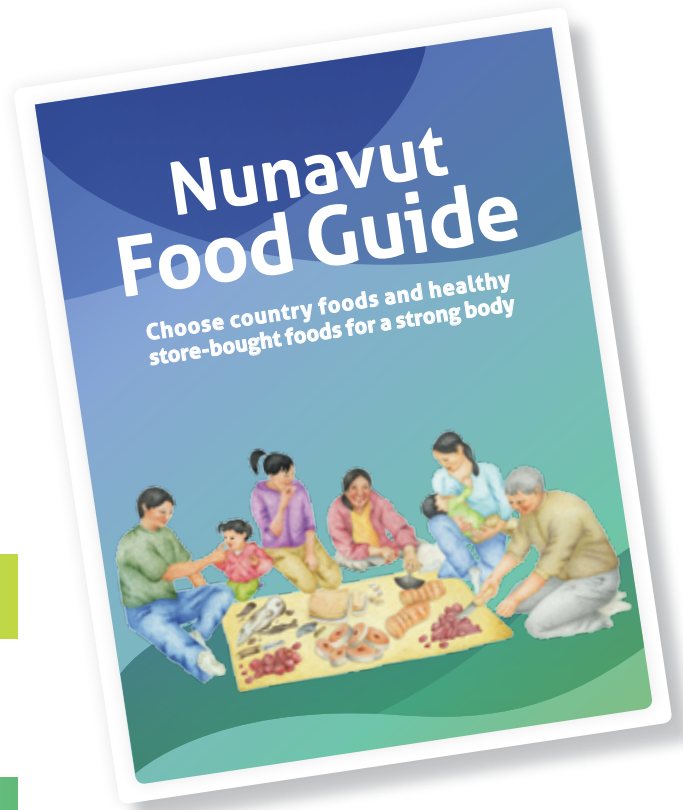
- 1. Facilitator's Discussion Guide:** In this section you will find questions to ask about each page and section in the Nunavut Food Guide. You can use these to get a conversation started about the images and messages within the guide. The questions to ask are followed by information to share. These explain the main messages in the guide. You can use these information to share to help add to or summarize the discussion.
- 2. Activity ideas:** This section has suggested activities that you can use when teaching people about the Nunavut Food Guide.



PLEASE SEND US YOUR FEEDBACK ON THE NUNAVUT FOOD GUIDE AND THIS HANDBOOK.

This is the first draft of this handbook. We want to make sure it is useful for you and we want to know what you think. We would also appreciate your feedback on the new version of the Nunavut Food Guide. We have included a page at the back of the book that you can photocopy, fill out, and fax your comments and ideas so that we can improve these important teaching tools.

THE COVER



Questions to Ask:

- What do you see on this page that is healthy?
- What do you think about the words on this page?

Information to Share:

The cover page shows some of the most important healthy eating messages for Nunavummiut, including:

> Country food is very healthy

- It is important to eat a variety of country food so that our bodies can get all of the different nutrients that they need (different animals and different parts of animals).
- If we introduce country food to children at a young age, they learn to like it.

> Food sharing is an important part of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit

- It helps to make sure everyone has enough to eat.
- It helps strengthen relationships.
- It creates chances for younger people to learn from elders about traditional ways of eating.
- Gives everyone in the family a chance to be involved and help. This strengthens people's feeling of belonging.

> Breast milk is the best food for babies

- Breastfeeding is an important part of building a secure, loving relationship between parents and their baby. It has many benefits for the health of babies and mothers.
- From birth to 6 months of age, babies only need breast milk and vitamin D supplements. At this time, babies do not need other foods or liquids, not even water. If babies are not breastfed, they should drink iron-fortified formula.
- Starting at six months, parents can gradually introduce iron-rich solid foods, like country food, while continuing to breastfeed up to 2 years of age and beyond.

THE INSIDE



Questions to Ask:

- There are two ulus on the inside pages: one shows country foods and one shows store-bought foods. What does this tell you about healthy eating?
- One message is the same on both inside pages. It is "Make water your main drink". What do you think about this message?

Information to Share:

Each of the two inside pages shows a way of eating that is healthy.

➤ Country food has a separate page of its own to show that a traditional way of eating has everything our bodies need

- Country food does not really fit with the 4 food group idea. When all the parts of different animals are eaten, our bodies can get everything they need.
- The four food groups are used to describe store-bought foods. We only buy certain parts of animals at the store, and we need to eat a balance of the four food groups carefully to get everything that our bodies need.

COUNTRY FOODS PAGE

Questions to Ask:

- Why are there no “food groups” on this page?
- What do you think about the words on this page?
- What healthy messages are seen in the images across the bottom of the page?
- This page shows some ways that country food can be harvested. Can you think of other ways? Are there ways that you would like to learn?
- What country foods do children in your family enjoy? At what age did you start giving country foods to your children?



Information to Share:



- A traditional way of eating is balanced.
- To get everything our bodies need from country foods, it is important to eat a variety of animals and different parts of the animals.
- Traditional values teach us to eat a variety of different country foods.
- We sometimes hear that we should eat less fat to be healthy. This message is for store-bought foods ONLY. The fats in fish and sea animals are VERY healthy and do not raise cholesterol levels.
- In a traditional diet, fat is the main way to get energy (not grains). Traditional fats are wonderful for brain development, are good for the heart, and have many other health benefits.



- Harvesting is a great way to get exercise and to spend time with family.
- Involving children in harvesting helps them learn and gain interest in these skills and in country food.
- As adults, we can always learn from elders about harvesting. It is a good idea to think of traditional skills we still have not learned, and find someone to learn from.



- There are many ways to prepare and store country food, from drying, to ageing and cacheing, to fermenting.
- It is important for adults to pass these skills on to children, and also to think about what we would like to learn more about.



- Sharing country food is part of Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.
- Studies show that on days when Nunavummiut eat country food, they eat much higher levels of important nutrients (vitamins, minerals, healthy fats).
- Studies show that most Nunavummiut would prefer to eat more country food than they can access.
- It is especially important to share country food with children from a young age so they will learn to like it.
- Country food is especially rich in iron and vitamin D. Children and pregnant women in Nunavut have been shown to have low levels of these nutrients. It is important to share country food with pregnant women and children.

STORE-BOUGHT FOODS PAGE



Questions to Ask:

- What is different about the main words on this page, compared to the country food page?
- Why are there 4 food groups on this page?
- Do you think there is a reason for the different sizes of the coloured food group sections on the ulu?
- Can you find unhealthy foods on this page?
- Take a close look at the pictures on the bottom of the page. What do you see?

Information to Share:

- The biggest difference between store-bought foods and country foods is that ALL country foods are healthy, but NOT ALL store-bought foods are healthy.
- We CAN get everything our bodies need by eating store-bought foods, but to do it, we need to choose healthy store-bought foods and eat a variety from all the 4 food groups.



- When we shop for food, we make important choices for our family's health.
- If we spend money on unhealthy foods, we have less money for the healthiest choices. It is best to leave unhealthy foods at the store and fill our baskets with things that make our families strong.
- Walking to or from the store is a great way to get exercise.



- Fresh, frozen, or canned fruits and vegetables are all healthy choices.
- Choose the most natural canned or frozen ones without added sauces, which can be high in salt and fat. Choose canned vegetables with less or no added salt.



- Everyone in the family can help with preparing food.
- This is a good way to spend time together and to talk about why healthy eating is important.
- It is important to share responsibilities among family members. Everyone has a job they are good at doing, so give each family member a special role in family life.
- Involving children in preparing food can help them learn skills they will need in the future to make healthy store-bought food.



- Food sharing is an important Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit.
- Whether eating country food or store-bought food, eating together every day gives you important family time.

THE FOUR FOOD GROUPS

This picture represents a healthy way of eating with store-bought foods.



- Each food group gives our bodies different important nutrients.
- We need more of some foods than others. This is why the size of each of the food groups on the ulu is different.



> Vegetables and Fruit

This food group is the largest on the ulu because we need to eat more from this group than the other groups over a day. The foods in this group are healthy because:

- They are high in fibre. Fibre can help with good digestion, keep cholesterol down and prevent some kinds of cancer.
- They are high in vitamins and minerals which help our bodies heal and help keep our eyes and skin healthy. The other food groups do not have very much of these.



> Grain Products

This group is next in size, because in the store-bought way of eating, it is the main way to get energy.

- The healthiest foods in this group are “whole grains” like whole wheat bread, whole wheat pasta, large flake oats and brown rice.
- Whole grains have lots of fibre, which has many health benefits, like preventing some cancers.



> Milk and Alternatives

- The best choices in this group are the ones that are lower in fat.
- A cup of milk is less expensive than a cup of pop.
- Powdered milk or UHT milk are less expensive than fresh milk and just as healthy.
- These foods are very important for pregnant women and children.
- For persons with milk intolerance there are ways to still get adequate choices in this food group, such as fortified soy milk and almond milk. Ask your health care provider.



> Meat and Alternatives

We should only have a small amount of meat when we eat store-bought foods.

- Meat is a much smaller part of the store-bought food way of eating. We only buy muscle of the animal at the store and to get everything our bodies need from store-bought food, we need to include foods from the other groups.
- This food group is a great source of protein, which helps our bodies to build and maintain muscle.
- It is also a very good source of iron, which is especially important for pregnant women and babies after they are 6 months old.
- To get good nutrition from meat, it is important to choose fresh or frozen natural meat that looks like real animal muscle. Meats that don't look like real muscle (like canned meat, bacon, hot dogs, bologna or other processed meats), can have a lot of salt and unhealthy fats.
- Breaded meats (like fish sticks or deep-fried chicken) also have a lot of salt and unhealthy fats.

UNHEALTHY

Questions to Ask:

- What do you think when you see this yellow section of the guide?
- What do you think about the words in this section?
- Can you name all the foods in this picture? Are you surprised about any of these foods?
- Why do you think those foods are not on the ulu with store-bought foods? Are there any other similar foods you can think of?

Information to Share:

- The foods in this section are very high in sugar, fat, or salt, and do not have many things that our bodies need.
- Eating too much sugar, fat, and salt can lead to many health problems, like obesity, diabetes, heart disease and cancer.
- Studies show, most people in Nunavut spend up to half their food money on these unhealthy food choices.
- If we spend money on unhealthy foods, we have less money for the healthiest choices. It is best to leave unhealthy foods at the store.
- A cup of milk is less expensive than a cup of pop.



CHOOSE FATS WISELY

Questions to Ask:

- What do you think when you see this section?
- Have you ever worried that seal fat or muktaaq might make your cholesterol high?

Information to Share:

There is a lot of confusing information in public places about the fats that we eat. In this section, we are trying to clarify some of the most important points.

> Healthy Fats in country food

- The fats found in fish and sea animals are very healthy. They can help to lower cholesterol.

> Unhealthy Fats

- Unhealthy fats can lead to high cholesterol and heart disease.
- Some store-bought foods have a lot of these unhealthy fats. Some examples are pictured here: lard, bacon, bologna, and hot dogs. The fatty white parts of store-bought meat are also unhealthy, like the fat on steak or pork chops.
- Baked goods are also high in these fats, such as donuts and cookies. These can be found in the unhealthy food section and should only be eaten sometimes.

> Healthy store-bought fats

- The healthiest store-bought fats are liquid oils, like canola oil, and olive oil. These should be used only in small amounts.
- Deep frying with any fat (lard or liquid oils) is not healthy. Eating these foods every day can lead to high cholesterol and heart disease. Deep fried foods should only be a special treat.



VARIETY IS IMPORTANT

Questions to Ask:

- Why do you think it is important to eat a variety of different foods?
- In a traditional way of eating, what does “variety” mean?
- In the last week, what different country food did you eat? What different parts of the animals?

Information to Share:

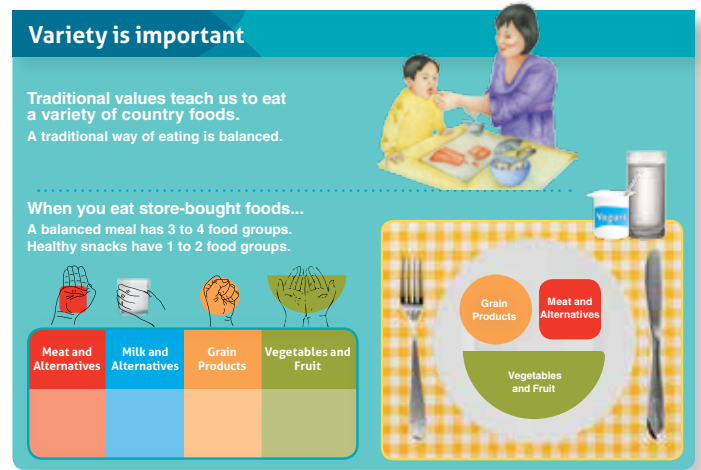
If we eat the same foods again and again everyday, then our bodies will not have everything they need to work properly.

> Variety when eating country food

- When Inuit rely only on country food to survive, every part of the animal is eaten (muscle, fat, brains, stomach contents, internal organs). Each of these parts of the animal gives our body different nutrients that our body parts need.
- When you eat country food, try to eat many different parts of the animal. This helps to make sure our bodies get all of the different benefits that are in the animal.
- It is important to let children try all of the different country foods at a young age so they grow up with these healthy foods.
- Think about the country food that you ate in the past week. Did you eat different parts of the animal? Did you eat different animals? Could you have made different choices to eat more variety?

> Variety when eating store-bought food

- Variety is also important if we want to get everything our bodies need from store bought food.
- If we follow the basic statements in this section of the guide, we can be sure that we will have every nutrient our bodies need.
- Eat foods from 1 or 2 different food groups at each snack.
- Eat foods from 3 or 4 food groups at each meal.
- The plate in this section shows how much food of each food group we should have at each meal to get the right balance of nutrition.
- You can also use your own hand to help you figure out how much food from each food group is best for you at a meal.



Activity Ideas:

Country Foods and Variety:

These activities are a good way to lead into a conversation about the importance of everyone eating a variety of different parts of the animal, and of introducing all different country foods to children from a young age.

1) When you are looking at the country foods page, ask your group or client to talk about all the country food they ate in the last week. Write this on a flip chart paper.

- Make a point of asking "which parts of the caribou (or other animal) did you eat?"
- Ask about parts of the animal that haven't been mentioned (did you eat the _____?
" Did someone in your family eat the _____"
- Ask about children in the family and whether they also ate the various parts.

2) Another fun activity is to have individuals in a group work together using a blackboard or flip chart: Draw the outline of a traditional food (e.g. caribou or seal). Next, discuss and add to the drawing the parts we eat (e.g. caribou brain, heart, bones, liver, etc). The facilitator can use the "Nutrition Fact Sheet Series" for reference or a handout.

Store-bought foods and the 4 food groups.

These activities are good ways to have people see their own habits. They can help start a conversation about what changes people could make to their eating (and how they feed their families) that would be healthier.

1) Give out the handout "What I ate Yesterday" and ask people to circle the foods that they ate yesterday. When they have finished, show them how to fold it, and they will see which food groups they ate the most of, and which food groups they might need to eat more of.

2) The "Junk Food Challenge" is an activity that your participants can do at home.

- Suggest that they keep the receipts for every single food item they buy for three days, This could be foods from restaurants, the grocery store or the Quick Stop and should especially include receipts for "unhealthy foods" like pop, chips, chocolate, candy. If they smoke, they could also choose to keep track of the cost of cigarettes that they buy in this time.
- At the end of the three days, encourage them to add up how much money they spent on unhealthy items. This is a good way for people to become aware of how much money they are spending on things that their bodies do not need. Ask your participants to then think about what kinds of things they could spend that amount of money on that would provide healthier choices.

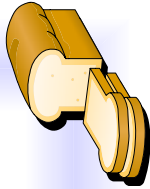
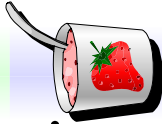
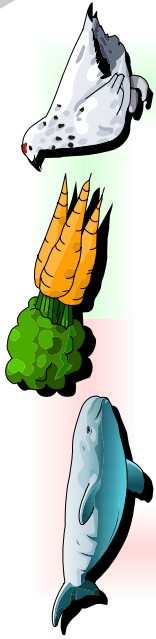
3) Build a Healthy Plate!

Use things available in your community, like paper plates, flyers, and magazines, to build a balanced meal.



This activity will help participants to practice planning a healthy balanced plate using store-bought foods. You can refer to the picture of the plate on the last page of the Nunavut Food Guide for this activity.

- You will need a paper plate for each participant, grocery store flyers, scissors, and glue or tape.
- Participants can cut out foods from flyers and, using the glue or tape, stick foods on the plate to show much food of each food group we should have at each meal to get the right balance of nutrition. If flyers are not available, participants could use markers to draw different foods on the plate.



What I ate

Yesterday...



Feedback Form for the New Nunavut Food Guide (October 2011) and on this First Draft of the Educator's Handbook

Please tell us what you think!

All you need to do is photocopy this page, write in your comments, and fax it to (867) 979-8648 or email it to Niqittiavak@gov.nu.ca at any time. You do not need to answer every question – any and all feedback is appreciated! If your comments do not fit in the space given, you can write a longer note and fax or email it the same as above.

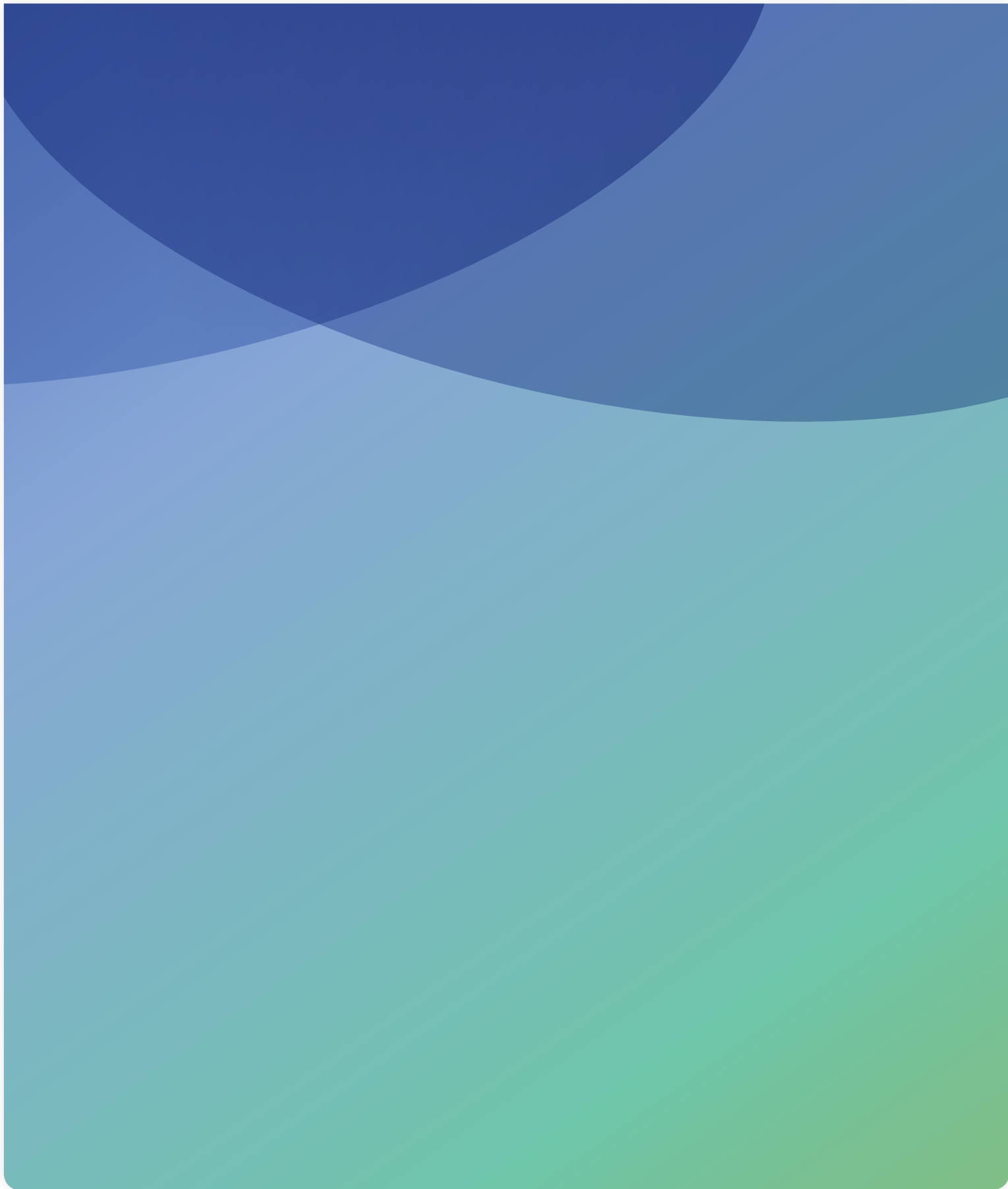
We look forward to hearing all of your comments and ideas, including additional activity ideas and information to share!

Nunavut Food Guide:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| What I like the most: | What I do not like: |
| What would make it better? | |

Facilitator's Handbook:

| | |
|----------------------------|---------------------|
| What I like the most: | What I do not like: |
| What would make it better? | |



2012

For more information on health and nutrition visit
www.hss.gov.nu.ca

