



**PYE CENTRE**  
FOR NORTHERN BOREAL FOOD SYSTEMS



**LABRADOR  
CAMPUS**

# FROM THE GROUND UP

PYE CENTRE FOR NORTHERN BOREAL FOOD SYSTEMS

**STRATEGIC PRIORITIES 2022-25**

**We acknowledge that the lands on which we gather, plant, harvest, and share knowledge and resources are the homelands of the Innu and Inuit, and we recognize their ancestral and continued ties to these lands and waters.**



# PYE CENTRE FOR NORTHERN BOREAL FOOD SYSTEMS

## FROM THE GROUND UP: Strategic Priorities 2022-25

**The ways we grow, harvest, share, and eat are intrinsically tied to our relationships with land, people, and animals. Our food and farming systems have profound impacts on our health and wellbeing, on our communities and economies, and on our natural ecosystems and environments.**

The Pye Centre for Northern Boreal Food Systems of the Labrador Campus of Memorial University is a vibrant hub for food systems education, research, community connections, and wellness programming. We offer programs, services, events, and activities that educate, connect, engage, and inspire sustainable agricultural practices, environmental stewardship, and equitable access to fresh and desired food.

We partner with local farmers and Indigenous governments and communities in Labrador, as well as academic, industry, and administrative leaders and organizations across the region and country, to elevate the importance of more sustainable Northern food systems. Together with our partners, we share a deep commitment to honouring and celebrating the relationships among land, people, and animals that strengthen and support thriving food systems.

The Pye Centre's strategic plan, *From the Ground Up*, describes who we are, what we do, and how we will grow forward, together. It reaffirms our common purpose and shared goals—the qualities that are essential to our future success—and provides guideposts to help in strategic decision-making.

As a core component and institutional priority of the Labrador Campus of Memorial University, the work we do at the Pye Centre connects with, and contributes to, the themes and priorities outlined in the Labrador Campus strategic commitments and responsibilities plan, *In Your Element (2022-2027)*. Our work and strategic priorities for the future of the Pye Centre document also respond to, and are aligned with, the following five strategic themes outlined in [Transforming Our Horizons](#), the overarching strategic plan for Memorial University:

1. **Proactive programs;**
2. **Inspired learning;**
3. **Dynamic research;**
4. **Commitment to communities; and**
5. **Promotion and pride.**

*From the Ground Up* serves as a guiding framework as we move forward with the development of the Pye Centre over the next three years. It sets the groundwork for envisioning and creating the kinds of structures and systems we want and need to work towards our goals to the best of our abilities. Our strategic priorities intend to support and strengthen the work of our partners in farming, Indigenous communities and governments, the agricultural industry, municipal, provincial, and federal governments, and in academic units at Memorial University and at institutions across the North.

**At its heart, *From the Ground Up* follows a land-people approach, with an integrated human-farm focus that prioritizes relationships among people, land, and animals. In this document, we outline our responsibilities, hopes, and aspirations for the Pye Centre's contributions to Northern boreal food systems, Labrador and provincial food security and sovereignty, and the transformative role we can play in strengthening our communities, our economies, and our environments.**



# ROOTS:

## History and Structure of the Pye Centre

In summer 2019, Memorial University, under the leadership and operational ownership of the Labrador Campus, acquired the lease of an 80-acre farm in Happy Valley-Goose Bay, Labrador. The land on which the farm operates is on the homelands of the Innu and Inuit, and Indigenous Peoples and Settlers have been living and making livelihoods in the area for centuries. The land was operated as a farm for over a decade before the Labrador Campus became the owners and operators.

Through this acquisition and recognizing and committing to continue activities on the farm that honour the complex histories of the land, we have established and are growing and developing the *Pye Centre for Northern Boreal Food Systems (Pye Centre)*, a community-based and community-led hub for research, education, community, and wellbeing.

This acquisition is based on the commitment of the Labrador Campus and Memorial University to communities throughout Labrador, to increase food security and support diverse food systems and foodways (including agriculture, foraging, harvesting, hunting, trapping, and fishing), and to promote agricultural growth in the province through leading-edge research, educational, and community opportunities, and demonstrates our commitment to food innovation, food production, and community connections.

The Pye Centre is part of a community of engaged farmers, community growers, Indigenous governments, and researchers working together to co-create knowledge and evidence-based resources that contribute to strengthening and enhancing the diversification of the food base in Northern boreal food systems to enhance food security and food sovereignty in Labrador and the North.

### Central Pillars

1. COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS AND PROGRAMMING

2. COMMUNITY FARM-BASED RESEARCH

3. EDUCATION, LEARNING, AND TRAINING

4. ENTREPRENEURSHIP

*The activities and programming that fall within these pillars of the Pye Centre are not mutually exclusive. They complement and connect with one another to enable and support us in achieving our strategic goals.*



## ***Working in Partnership***

Partnership and collaboration are at the heart of all our programming and activities at the Pye Centre. We work in partnership with local farmers, the Nunatsiavut Government, the NunatuKavut Community Council, the Innu Nation, Sheshatshiu Innu First Nations, the provincial Agrifoods department, and Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada, faculty, staff, and students at Grenfell Campus, as well as many food-based organizations and community groups. Together with the Pye Centre Advisory Committee and our partners, we will ensure our work remains rooted in communities and is shaped by and responsive to local food security and food systems needs.

## ***Pye Centre Advisory Committee***

The Pye Centre Advisory Committee (PCAC) is comprised of a diverse group of individuals holding invaluable knowledge, perspectives, and strong expertise and skillsets in food production, food security, and food systems. Working together with the Pye Centre and other key partners, the PCAC ensures all Pye Centre programs and activities continue to serve our shared goals for strengthening and enhancing food innovation, food production, and community connections in Labrador. The PCAC meets at least three times per year, and additional meetings will be called as needed.

We recognize the importance of the relationships among PCAC members and the Pye Centre, as well as the respective webs of relationships we all hold within our respective communities. It is these relationships that will enable the Pye Centre to grow from a place of strength to co-create knowledge and evidence-based resources that contribute to strengthening and enhancing Northern boreal food systems in Labrador.



# SOWING SEEDS: The Future of the Pye Centre

## *Grounding Values*

The Pye Centre's core values lay the foundation for our vision and mission. Our values also provide a framework for identifying and organizing our strategic priorities, focused goals, and accountability mechanisms.

### **At the Pye Centre, our values are grounded in:**

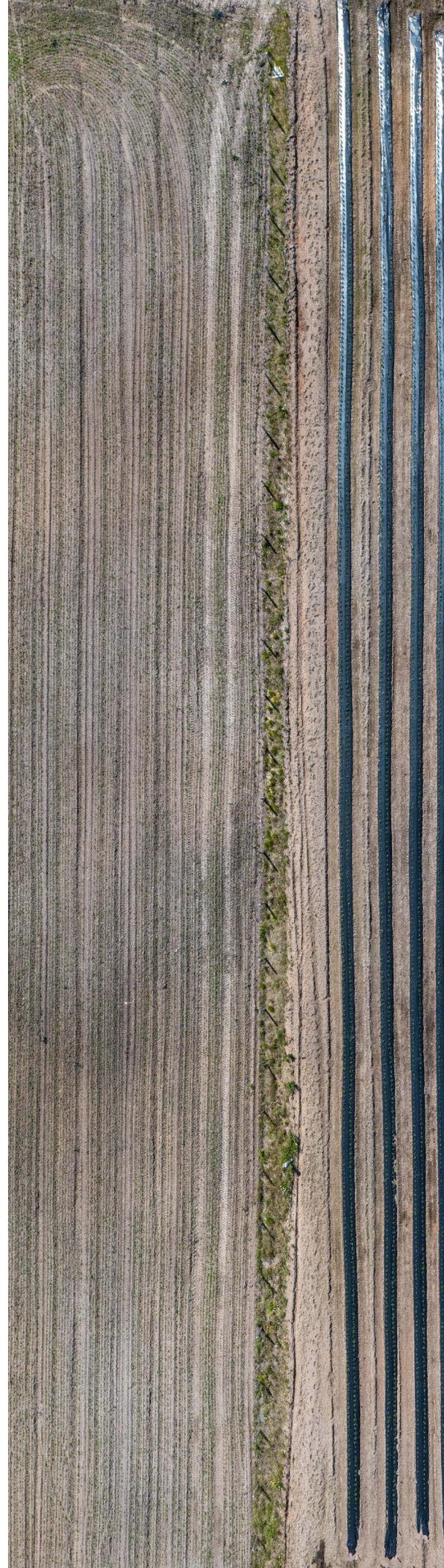
- **RELEVANCE** *for Labrador peoples and food systems;*
- **RESPONSIBILITY** *to peoples, lands, and waters;*
- **RECIPROCITY** *among peoples, lands, and waters; and*
- **RELATIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY** *among all those working with us to achieve our vision and goals.*

## *Vision*

The Pye Centre will be a vibrant community-led hub of Northern-focused food systems research, education, community connections, wellness programming, production, and distribution in Labrador.

## *Purpose*

To serve as a centre of food systems research, education, training, community connections, and wellness programming excellence that supports and enhances food security and food sovereignty, and that celebrates and strengthens connections among people, food, and the land from which it grows.



# GROWING FROM THE GROUND UP: Our Strategic Priorities



1. **COLLABORATE** with key partners to strengthen and connect existing local food networks in response to community needs and priorities.



2. **CREATE AND GROW** channels for equitable access to fresh and desired foods to enhance local food security and sovereignty.



3. **OFFER OPPORTUNITIES** for individuals and communities to learn and participate in place-based food systems programming and education to enhance health and wellbeing.



4. **CULTIVATE** thriving ecological and interpersonal environments that ensure the land, people, and programs connected to the Pye Centre are well-supported.

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 1

Collaborate with key partners to strengthen and connect existing local food networks in response to community needs and priorities



### Focused Goals

Goal	Key Programming and Actions
1.1 Provide farm-based educational programs for farmers and home gardeners	<i>Develop food and farming workshops, training, and mentorship opportunities with and for local farmers.</i>
	<i>Develop food and farming workshops, training, and mentorship opportunities with and for Indigenous community partners.</i>
	<i>Establish community and incubation plots at the Pye Centre, to provide resources and places for people to gather and grow.</i>
1.2 Connect and create local farming inputs for land and animals that are made and used in Labrador	<i>Develop food and farming workshops, training, and mentorship opportunities with and for local farmers.</i>
	<i>Pilot, grow, and provide forage for animal feed in Labrador.</i>
1.3 Serve as a hub for community farm-based research in the North that responds to priorities identified by local farmers and community members	<i>Establish community farm-based research principles and practices, and ensure research projects align with those principles and practices.</i>
	<i>Provide opportunities, resources, and support for researchers interested in conducting community farm-based research at and with the Pye Centre.</i>
	<i>Connect local priorities for farming and food systems in Labrador with interested researchers and research projects.</i>
1.4 Strengthen and maintain connections and knowledge-sharing among Northern farms and farmers	<i>Ensure research projects at and/or with the Pye Centre align with and adhere to Indigenous research ethics and protocols, respective to each Indigenous government.</i>
	<i>Host regular Farmers' Circles for local producers.</i>
	<i>Operate a viable farm that contributes to the body of knowledge guiding Northern farming systems.</i>
	<i>Find and create opportunities for professional development and farm-to-farm networking in Labrador and across the North.</i>
1.5 Facilitate and participate in community events that are aligned with the Pye Centre's values and that prioritize farm-community connections	<i>Promote responsible, sustainable practices for vegetable production and environmental stewardship of farmland through partnerships with farmers and researchers.</i>
	<i>Offer public talks and workshops that reflect / follow the growing season and promote learning and knowledge sharing.</i>
	<i>Organize an annual open house and farm fair at the Pye Centre to celebrate the harvest season.</i>
	<i>Participate in and contribute to local events hosted by Indigenous community partners that relate to farming, gardening, and food systems.</i>

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 2

Create and grow channels for equitable access to fresh and desired foods to enhance local food security and sovereignty

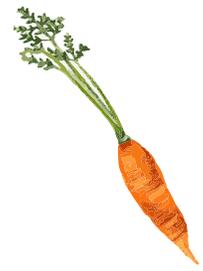


### Focused Goals

Goal	Key Programming and Actions
2.1 Build meaningful relationships among people, land, and food at the Pye Centre through engaging and educational programs and events	<i>Promote and develop sustainable vegetable production as the foundation for all Pye Centre programming and activities.</i>
	<i>Maintain a focus on educational programs that bring people to the farm to engage with food production and sustainable land use practices.</i>
	<i>Partner with Indigenous governments, organizations, and communities to align Pye Centre programming and activities with cultural values and priorities for growing, harvesting, and sharing food.</i>
	<i>Establish successful U-Pick operations.</i>
	<i>Establish successful community-supported agriculture (CSA) programming.</i>
	<i>Develop on-the-farm youth programming.</i>
2.2 Enable and support people in growing their own food	<i>Develop hands-on educational, research, and training opportunities for students.</i>
	<i>Provide opportunities for community members to access farming and gardening knowledge and resources.</i>
	<i>Work with Indigenous government, organization, and community partners to co-design and co-develop food production programming and resources to use in their own communities.</i>
2.3 Assist in breaking down barriers to available and accessible fresh and desired foods in Labrador	<i>Investigate the potential to support the development of local capacity for transplant production, including in partnership with the Pye Centre greenhouses, to support farm revenue.</i>
	<i>Secure sponsorships to provide subsidies for lower-income populations to access Pye Centre programming, events, and community garden rentals.</i>
	<i>Allocate a proportion of revenue from Pye Centre events, programming, and other activities to support lower-income populations to access food grown at the farm.</i>
	<i>Allocate a proportion of harvests and revenue from Pye Centre food production, events, programming, and other activities for Indigenous community partners to access food grown at the farm.</i>
	<i>Allocate a portion of surplus harvests to community health programs to support clients and programming.</i>
	<i>Build and maintain infrastructure to facilitate group gardening activities, farm-to-table food preparation and programming.</i>

### STRATEGIC PRIORITY 3

Offer opportunities for individuals and communities to learn and participate in place-based food systems programming and education to enhance health and wellbeing



## Focused Goals

Goal	Key Programming and Actions
3.1 Work with community partners and local health experts to design and deliver farm-based and community-focused programming at the Pye Centre for children, youth, adults, seniors, Elders, and families, based in wellness practices	<i>Identify, co-design, and co-deliver on-farm wellness programs and activities with partners.</i>
3.2 Work with Indigenous community and government partners to align with and support the development of culturally-specific and relevant farm-based wellness programming	<i>Identify, co-design, and co-deliver on-farm wellness programs and activities with Indigenous government, organization, and community partners.</i>
3.3 Work with Labrador health providers to incorporate local foods into their programming and services	<i>Identify opportunities for incorporating local food into health-based programming and services.</i>
3.4 Establish working relations with key restorative justice programs for long-term programming	<i>Connect with already-present restorative justice programs to explore avenues for partnership and skills development at the farm.</i>
3.5 Offer engaging and rewarding volunteer and service-learning opportunities for all ages that prioritize reciprocity among people and land	<i>Identify opportunities for developing farm-based volunteering and service-learning at the Pye Centre .</i> <i>Identify opportunities for connecting with already-present volunteering and service-learning programs and activities led by community and government partners.</i>

## STRATEGIC PRIORITY 4

Cultivate thriving ecological and interpersonal environments that ensure the land, people, and programs connected to the Pye Centre are well-supported



### Focused Goals

Goal	Key Programming and Actions
4.1 Plan for environmental and organizational longevity that promotes environmental stewardship and sustainable food production	<i>Assess and manage growing practices to allow for maximum production without compromising long-term environmental health of the land.</i>
	<i>Assess opportunities for expanding farming operations and hosting research projects at the Pye Centre.</i>
	<i>Continue to build and strengthen relationships with community members, farmers, Indigenous governments, organizations, and communities, and key partners to contribute to a foundation of support for current and future farming practices, programming, and activities at the Pye Centre.</i>
4.2 Balance strategic priorities and goals with organizational and infrastructural capacities to ensure Pye Centre programs and staff are well-supported	<i>Attract and retain high-quality staff through providing supportive working environments and opportunities for growth and development.</i>
	<i>Ensure that all existing and new programs have adequate staffing, physical resources, and financial support.</i>
	<i>Identify and prioritize infrastructural improvements that support organizational efficiency and effectiveness (e.g. offices, farm structures, technology, and equipment).</i>
	<i>Identify accountability mechanisms that clarify responsibilities and that enable Pye Centre staff to support one another and themselves in working towards strategic priorities and goals.</i>
4.3 Ensure financial stability to support organizational and operational effectiveness	<i>Work with the Pye Centre Advisory Committee to assess and evaluate alignment and relevancy of programming and activities to the Pye Centre's values, vision, and mission.</i>
	<i>Identify, develop, and implement social enterprise models at the Pye Centre for cost-recovery, and to potentially generate profit that supports our programming and activities.</i>
	<i>Build fundraising and advancement capacity and opportunities to attract financial support from a diverse grant and donor base that provides organizational support and promotes public awareness of our work.</i>
	<i>Target funding, research, and grant strategies that are aligned with the Pye Centre's values, vision, and mission, and that balance financial return and opportunity with staff investment.</i>

# CONCLUSION

Going forward, our work at the Pye Centre for Northern Boreal Food Systems will remain grounded in our fundamental values: relevance for Labrador peoples and food systems; responsibility to peoples, lands, and waters; reciprocity among peoples, lands, and waters; and relational accountability among all those working with us to achieve our vision and goals.

The implementation of this strategic plan will enable community members, farmers, Indigenous Peoples, organizations, researchers, and governments in Labrador and across the North to engage with the Pye Centre through our programming and activities, and work with us and each other to support and enhance diverse and complex Northern food security, food systems, and food sovereignty, and celebrate and strengthen connections among people, food, and the land.

**We are committed to growing the reach and impact of the Labrador Campus and Memorial University in the North through community-led and Northern-focused food systems research, education, community connections, wellness programming, production, and distribution in Labrador. Together with our partners, we will co-create knowledge and evidence-based food systems resources that contribute to a prosperous, vibrant, inclusive, healthy, and sustainable region.**

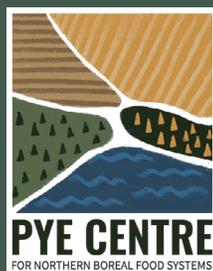






For more information, and to stay up-to-date on Pye Centre activities and news, please visit:

[www.pye-centre.ca](http://www.pye-centre.ca)



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