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ΛΡΌ Rhubarb-Jσ55UC, ἐϤϤΓΦ΄ Δ΄ Φυ νω Ċ÷Ο (4Φυ)ν 2017Γ)





Revisiting Nunavik's Food System Through Gardening Projects

ood is a basic necessity of life and a human right: everybody should have access to a sufficient quantity of nutritious and culturally appropriate food. Food sovereignty is the right and the power of a community to determine where its food comes from and how it is produced by taking into account its own tastes and traditions. At the heart of food sovereignty, we find the values of community and livelihoods reinforcement as well as the social and environmental sustainability of production, consumption and distribution activities.

Over the last decades in Nunavik, the sharing and consumption of country food has somewhat diminished. This has created space for increased sharing and consumption of store-bought food. However, Nunavik residents have no control over the production of this type of food. Food sovereignty has therefore lost some ground and an action-research project was launched in 2015 to explore potential solutions to rebuild it by increasing food production at a local scale.

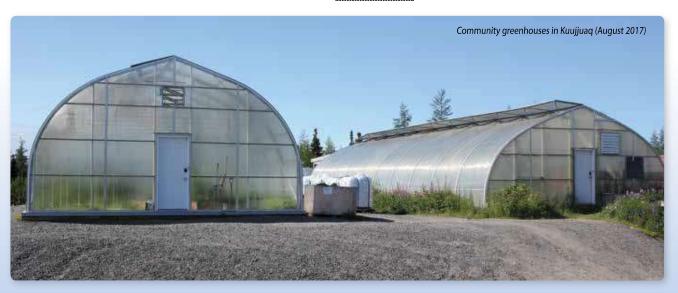
This research project has two main goals. Firstly, it aims to contribute to the development of alternative food procurement strategies in Kuujjuaq and Kangiqsujuaq by supporting and accompanying the implementation of gardening projects to improve the supply and availability of fresh local food. Secondly, several scientific objectives are being pursued. In Kuujjuaq, where two community greenhouses are already active, these objectives are:



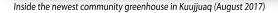
Students at Arsaniq School in Kangiqsujuaq are building six gardening boxes (cold frames) for the 2018 growing season (September 2017).



All the gardening equipment has arrived in Kangiqsujuaq for a new project with Arsaniq School (August 2017)







- To document its functioning and its technical and organizational challenges and to identify solutions;
- To evaluate the benefits of such projects for the health and well-being of its participants as well as for the environment;
- To investigate low energy solutions to increase the greenhouses productivity and extend the growing season.

In Kangiqsujuaq, where there is not yet a greenhouse, we are aiming to:

- Co-design gardening projects that fit local motivations and needs;
- Assess the possibility of including local plants and berries in these projects.

In both villages, we wish to take these gardening initiatives as an opportunity to reflect with the community on the factors that foster or counteract tomorrow's food sovereignty in Nunavik, including country food, store-bought food and locally produced food. Valuable information will be generated about the Kuujjuaq and Kangiqsujuaq food systems. Our results will include current challenges, the communities' perceptions and desires with regards to food in the future and the applicability of greenhouse or growing initiatives to address food security challenges. The results of this project will be of interest to other Inuit and Arctic communities facing similar challenges and for those interested in local production to support access to healthy food. To disseminate those results and share all the knowledge gathered and created through this project, we wish to launch a website as soon as fall 2017.

Funding has been received for this research from Labex-DRIIHM – OHMI-Nunavik – Tukisigasuaqatigit and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC).



Inside the oldest community greenhouse in Kuujjuaq (August 2017)



Rhubarb growing outside, behind a house in Kuujjuaq (August 2017)

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