

Minister of Health



Ministre de la Santé

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0K9

**Message from the Minister of Health
2019 National Farm to School Conference
May 15-17, 2019**

Encouraging healthy eating habits in children and youth is important to ensure a healthy future for young Canadians. Healthy eating habits also help prevent chronic diseases such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and some cancers. Research shows that poor diet is a top risk factor for these conditions.

The Government of Canada is supporting initiatives that promote healthy eating among children and youth in Canada. We are proud to be providing \$1.8 million over three years to implement the *Farm to School: Canada Digs In!* initiative. This initiative aims to bring healthy, locally grown food into schools, and provides students with hands-on opportunities to learn about healthy food options, meal preparation, sustainable food systems, local food production, and more.

Just this year, we launched the new Canada's Food Guide, which promotes healthy eating in a variety of settings, including schools. The new Food Guide encourages Canadians to eat vegetables, fruit, whole grains and protein foods and promotes life-long healthy eating habits by encouraging people to cook and prepare healthy foods at home.

Promoting healthy eating habits and improving access to nutritious foods requires support and collaboration among partners across Canada. This conference is an excellent opportunity for people from different sectors and disciplines to come together to collaborate and inspire one another to find new ways to improve eating behaviours among students. Your collective efforts will help make it easier for children and youth in schools and on campuses to learn about healthy eating and adopt nutritious eating habits for life.

On behalf of the Government of Canada, I would like to thank *Farm to Cafeteria Canada* for making this conference possible and for their valuable contributions in improving the health and well-being of children, youth, and young adults across Canada. This important work will have a positive impact today and for generations. By working together, we can help make the healthy choice the easy choice for all Canadians.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ginette Petitpas Taylor'.

The Honourable Ginette Petitpas Taylor, P.C., M.P.

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