

PROTECTING CANADA'S FOOD SYSTEM
Report of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts
CIRNAC Final Report

The PACP Report: *Protecting Canada's Food System* made the following recommendation to Nutrition North Canada:

Recommendation 6. That, by 31 December 2022, Crown-Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada provide the House of Commons Standing Committee on Public Accounts with a progress report about how it is systematically collecting pre-subsidy prices for all eligible food items under the Nutrition North Canada subsidy program, to assess whether the program is achieving its objective of making food more affordable in the eligible communities. A final report should also be provided by 31 May 2023.

Response: Crown–Indigenous Relations and Northern Affairs Canada recognizes the importance of high quality data to assess whether the Nutrition North Canada (NNC) program is achieving its objective. The Department is committed to adopting the Committee’s recommendation and work is well underway with NNC registered retailers to collect pre- and post- subsidy prices for all eligible items.

As a first step, the Department engaged with retailers to gather their input on this requirement. Retailers who already report on pricing data were engaged on the recommendations and are well ahead of schedule in reporting pre-subsidy prices. Additionally, the Department discussed the feasibility and possible challenges of this requirement with registered retailers that do not have a history in reporting pricing data to the Program.

Following this engagement, NNC reviewed the Contribution Agreement template and, as advised by the Committee, updated the Contribution Agreements to reflect retailers’ obligation to submit pre- and post- subsidy pricing data monthly to the Program. Furthermore, NNC amended all active contribution agreements and issued out the amendments to the registered retailers as a formal written notice outlining their monthly obligation to submit Food Price Reports on pre- and post- subsidy prices. The specifics related to the pricing data requirements are outlined in the program manual, which is updated and shared with registered retailers to reflect the new commitment to submitting pre-subsidy pricing data.

In May 2022, NNC’s major retailers signed the Contribution Agreements Amendments outlining this new requirement. Registered retailers that reported pricing data prior to this amendment will be consistent with the data collection and submission clauses as set out in their contribution agreements. NNC will leverage pre-subsidy and post-subsidy data submitted by registered retailers to the Program to track food affordability across eligible categories and inform policy direction moving forward.