




BC FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION COUPON PROGRAM

PROGRAM OVERVIEW AND 2025 IMPACT



“Access to fresh fruits and vegetables through this program has been essential to my health. Living with a chronic digestive illness, diet is key, and these coupons allowed me to eat well with less reliance on medication. Beyond my own health, the program strengthens community connection and supports the farmers who grow food for our families.”

- Frances, Program Participant Senior



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Photo Credit: Riley Park Farmers Market & Emily Lorenz



BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program Objectives

1. Increase access to healthy local food for lower-income pregnant people, families with children and seniors/elders, to improve the health of lower-income British Columbians
2. To improve the economic prosperity of British Columbia farmers who sell at BC farmers' markets.

Program History 2012 - 2025

Ministry of Health Funding									
2012-2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	TOTAL
\$6.75M	\$750K	\$2M	\$2.25M		\$12.072M		\$250K	\$4.25M	\$28.322M
Household Reach									
1,100 → 3,708	4,054	5,404	5,717	6,684	10,152	12,045	12,011	11,917	
Provincial Direction									
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Coupon value \$15 to \$21 ↑ Pregnant Participants 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ 17 new communities ↑ 425 Households 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Include food plants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Coupon value \$21 to \$27 ↑ 6 Communities ↑ 300 Households ↑ \$1M/year for seniors/elders 				
					<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2024 - ↑ \$250k for seniors/elders Include honey 				



2025 Program: Other Funders Coupon Allocations

Source	2025
Columbia Basin Trust (first year of three-year funding)	\$ 142k
Community Fundraising	\$ 218k
Fresh to Families Fund (Vancouver Farmers Markets)	\$ 71k
Columbia Basin Trust – Child Care + Senior Residences (first year of three-year funding)	



Program Costs 2025

Category	Cost	Percent
Coupons	\$3.11M	74%
Program Management, Coordination and Support (4.4 FTE)	\$314K	7.5%
Community Partner and Farmers Markets Honoraria	\$197K	5%
Coupon Printing and Materials	\$40K	1%
Program Delivery	\$61K	1.5%
Community Partner Transportation and Vegetable/Fruit Grants	\$25K	0.6%
Annual Partners Orientations	\$22K	0.5%
Strategic Support and Evaluation Report	\$1K	0%
BCAFM Administration Fee	\$425K	10%
TOTAL	\$4.25M	



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FARMERS MARKET
NUTRITION COUPONS
ACCEPTED HERE

PROGRAM GROWTH



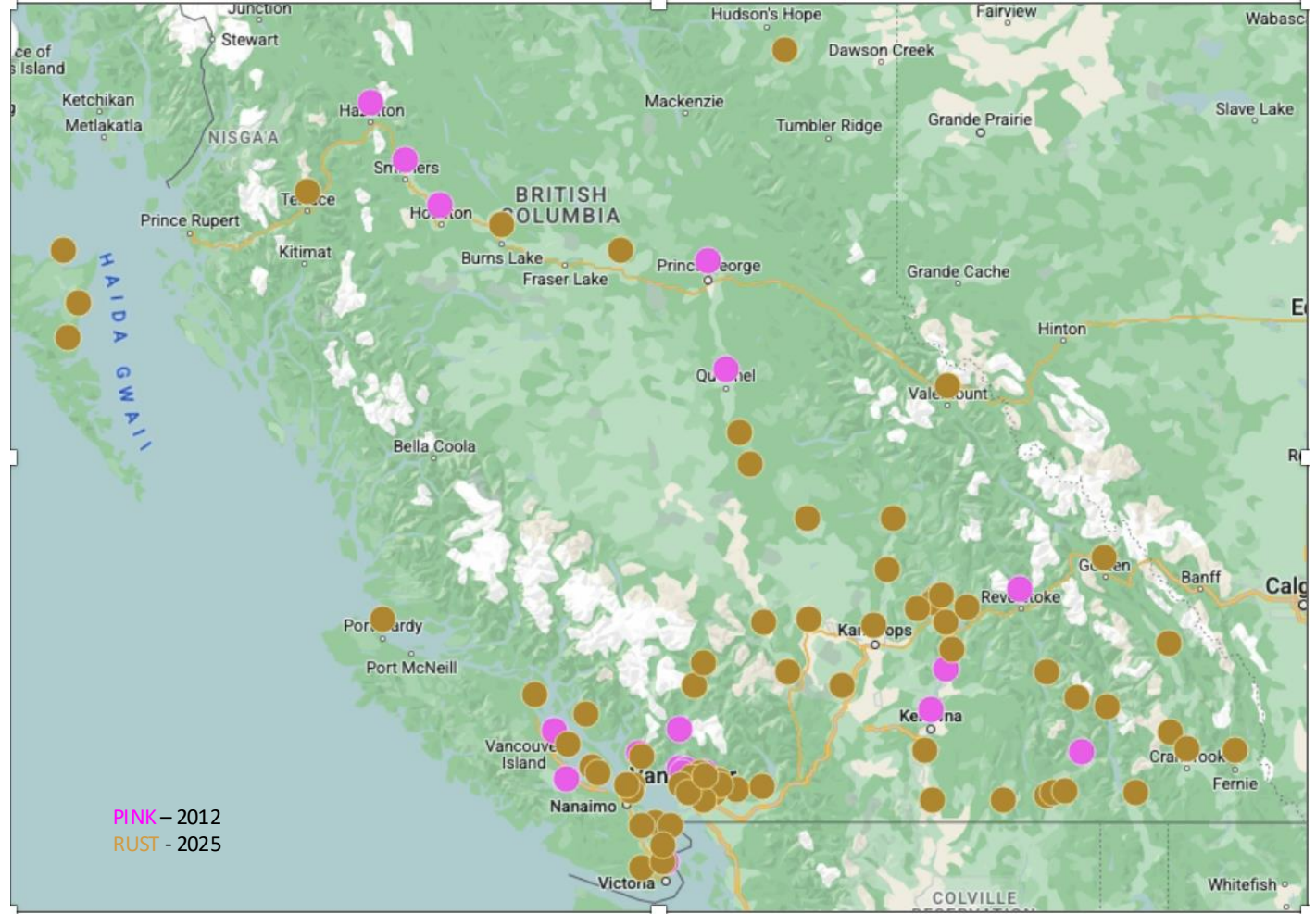
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FRESH CRUNCH PRODUCE
AMAKB FARMS
Horseshoe Road, Abbotsford, BC

Photo credit: Downtown Vancouver FM, Emily Lorenz

2012 -2025 Community Reach

Over 13 years the program reach has extended from 21 to 96 communities



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Program Enhancements

Translated Produce Brochures
(5 languages)
Nsyilxcən, Michif, Secwepemctsin,
Ktunaxa

Translated Participant
Brochures
(14 languages)

Translated Produce
Brochures
(16 languages)

Vegetable & Fruit and
Transportation Grants



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Photo Credit: Coquitlam Farmers Market & Johann Vincent

Program Expansion: Child Care & Seniors/Elders Residences

Supported by the Columbia Basin Trust

Child Care

Objective:

Child Care providers purchase food for meal/snack from BC Farmers Markets

21 providers participated

Outcome:

\$14,940 issued
10,990 redeemed
74%

Seniors/Elders

Senior/Elder Residences invited to participate in FMNCP

3 Residences participated

34 additional seniors/elders supported



Canadian Institutes of Health Research Study

The University of Calgary at Alberta

OBJECTIVE

Does the British Columbia Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program improve the diet quality and food security of parents and children with low incomes? A dose-response, pragmatic randomized controlled trial

ACTIVITY

268 dyads (parent + child)
1/3 received \$27/week
1/3 received \$54/week
1/3 received \$81/week

RESULTS

Study results expected after 6 months



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BCAFM – Grant Writing Support

- BCAFM hired a grant writer in August 2025
- Progress to date



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Lower Income Participation



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Comox Farmers Market & Sarah Kempner

Reinforcing Lower-Income Participation

- **Received guidance and methodology** from University of Calgary at Alberta researchers – based on CIHR study of FMNCP
- **Participant Brochure & Participant Enrollment Form:** Reinforced the language
- **Community Partner Agreements:** Partners explicitly acknowledge and sign off on lower-income requirement
- **Orientations – in person and online:** Reinforced lower-income requirements
- **FMNCP Operations Manual:** Added material and resources provided to all partners.

PROGRAM IMPACT

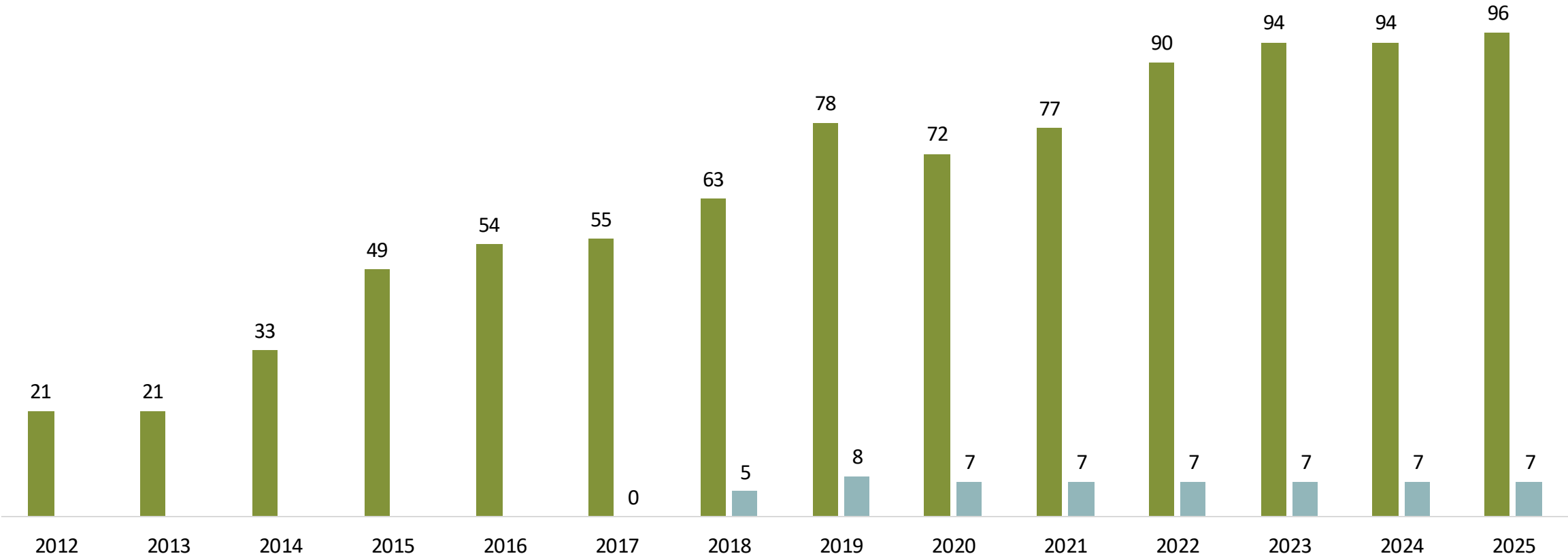


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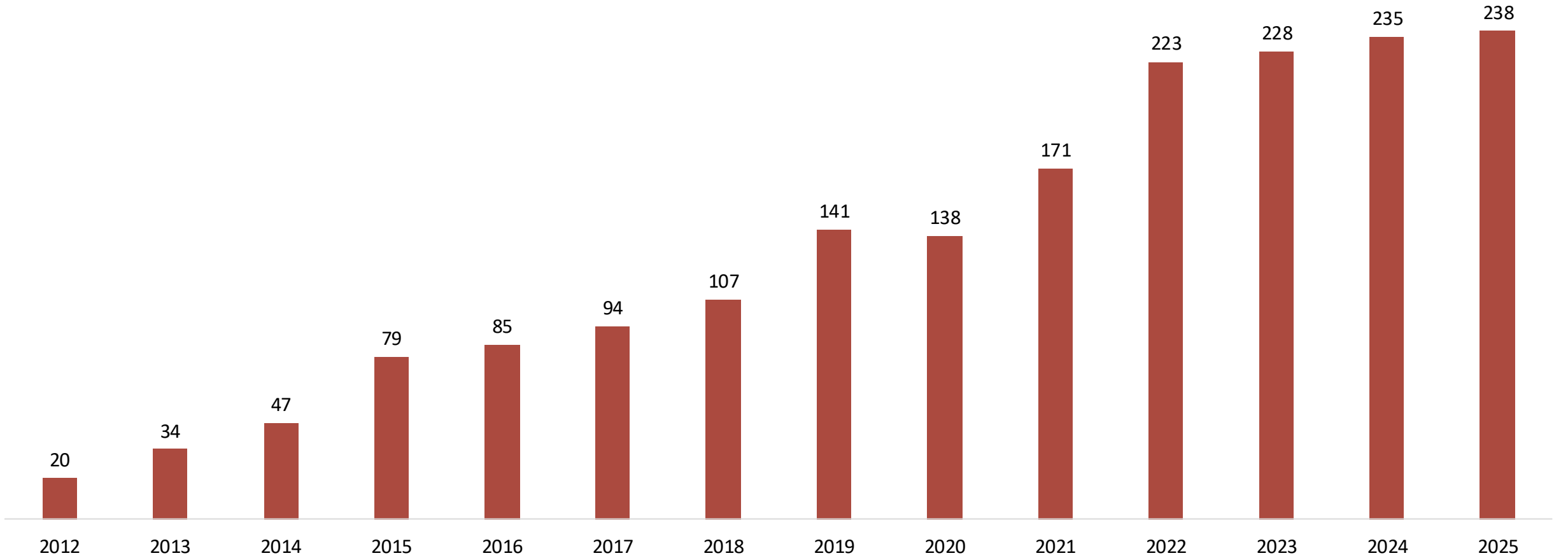
Lillooet Farmers Market & Emily Lorenz

Number of Communities

■ All Communities ■ Columbia Basin Trust

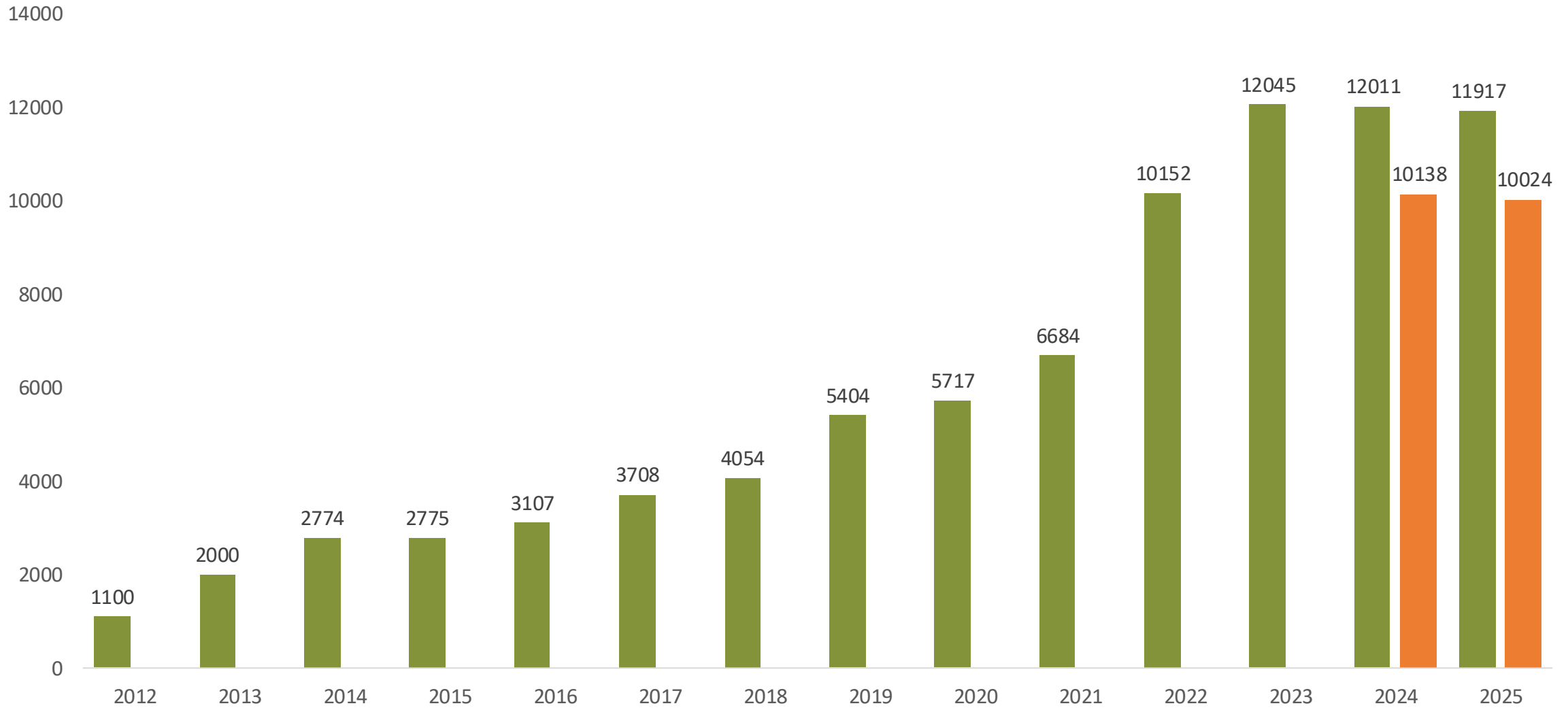


Number of Community Partners



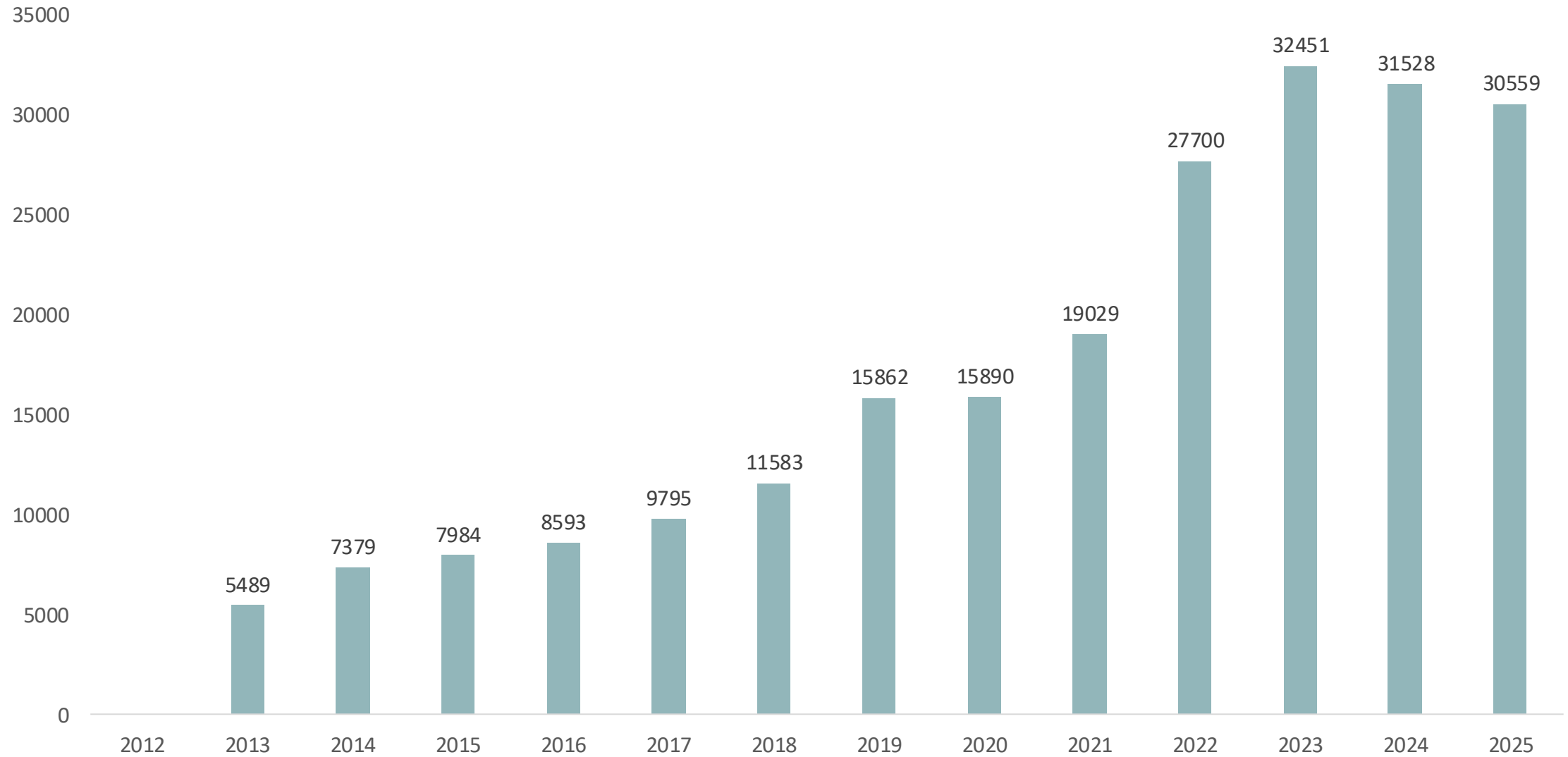
Households Enrolled

■ Households ■ Allocations



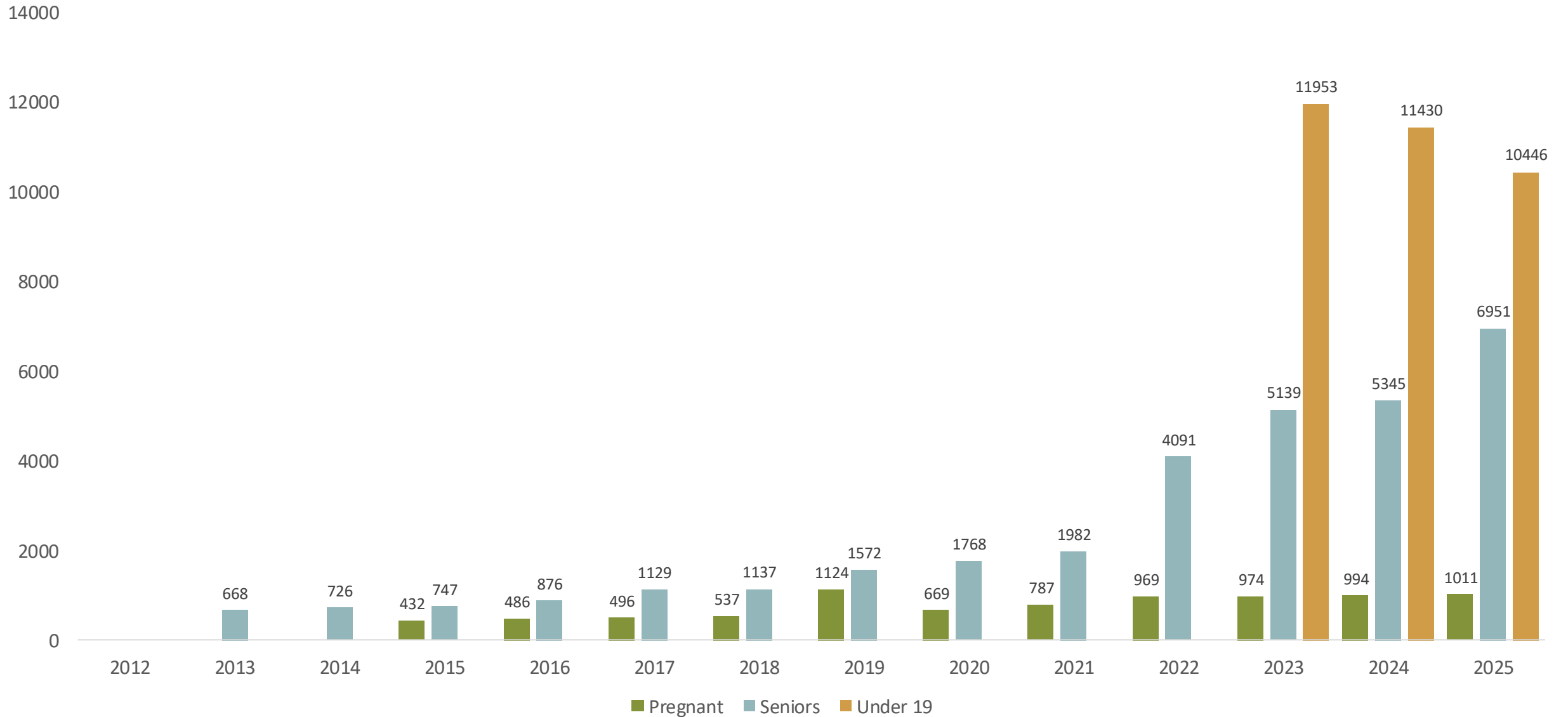
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Beneficiaries in Households



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Enrollment of Target Populations



Indigenous Participants

Identify As	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
First Nations	967	967	956	1153	2292	2236	2742 Households
Metis	235	235	269	358	962	686	
Inuit	36	35	13	14	31	34	

Percentage of all participants: Average of 23% in 2025

*Indigenous participants and partners described the challenge of collecting data on Indigenous household and family size. Starting in 2024, the question is optional.



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High Coupon Redemption

2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
86%	85%	85%	86%	86%	86%

BCAFM allocates coupons in excess of available funding.
In 2025 103% of the coupon funds in the Ministry of Health funding envelope were redeemed.





Impact on BC Farmers in 2025

1,211 farmers/producers redeemed coupons and were reimbursed 100%

Participants spent an average of \$10 of their own money each market visit.

- Income from coupons \$3.7M
- Est. Income from participants \$1.7M.
- Total direct funds to BC farmers \$5.4M.

2025 PARTICIPANT SURVEY

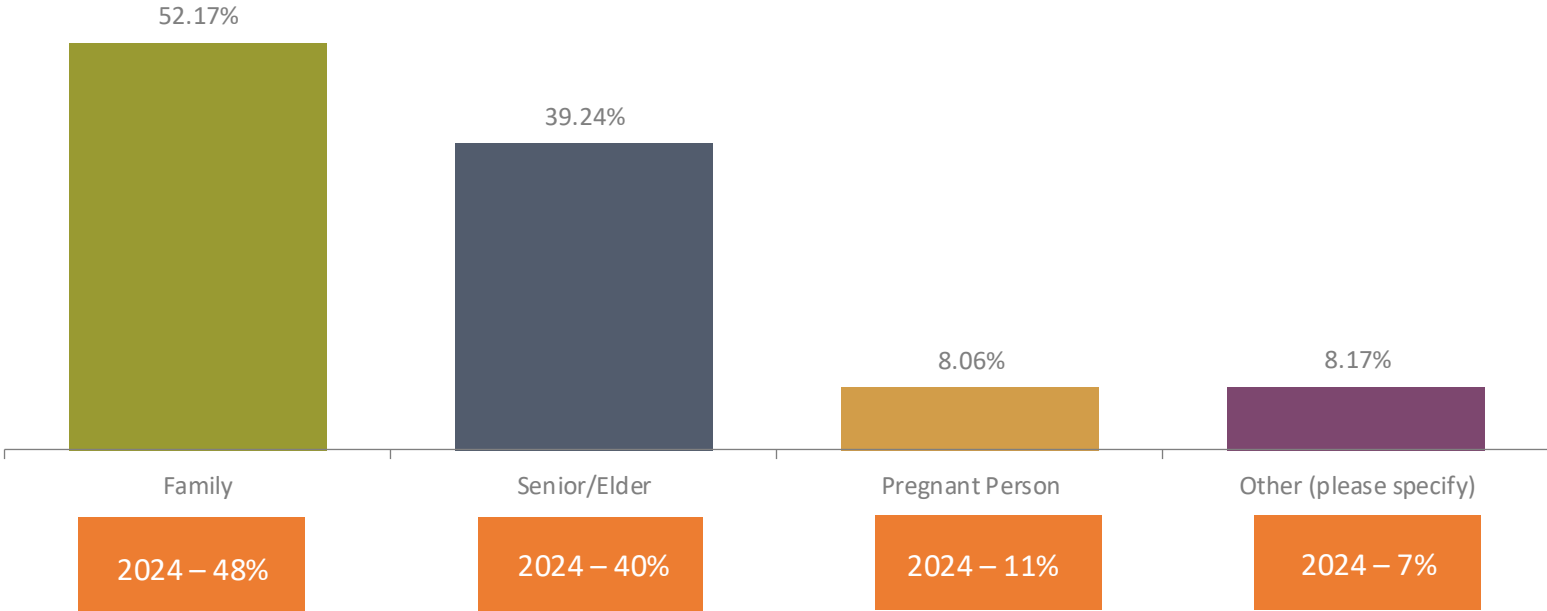
953 Responses- 8% of total households
Responses from 60 communities



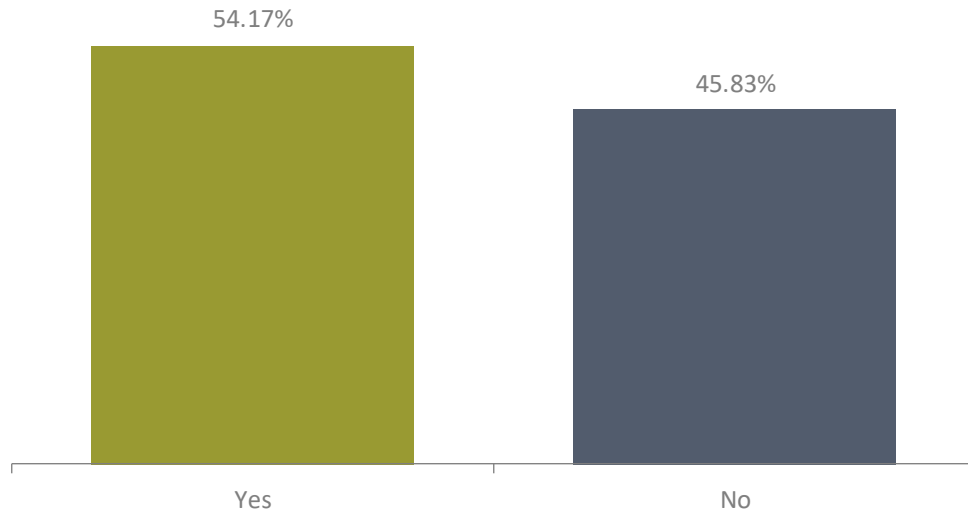
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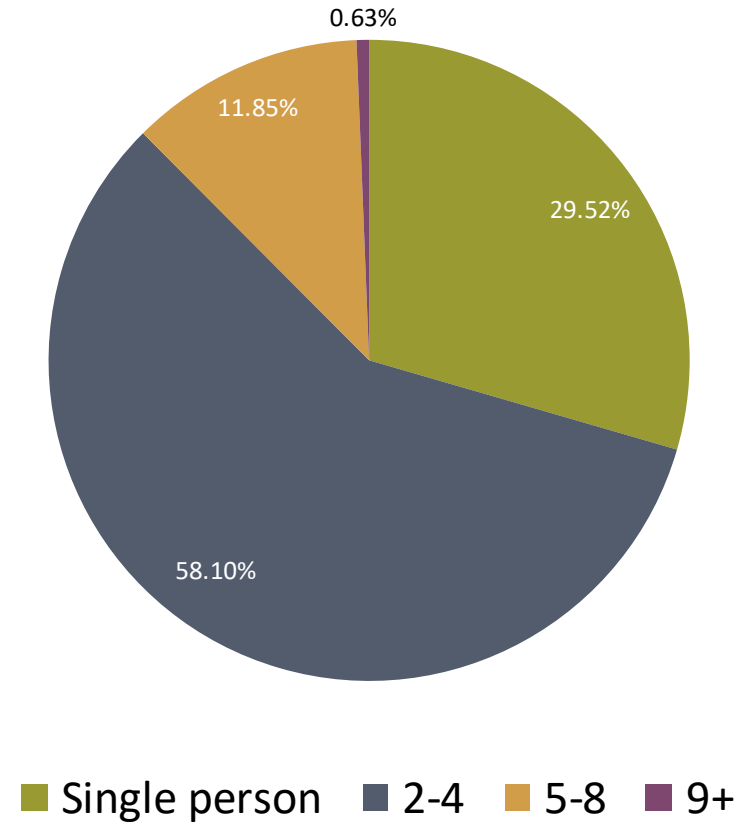
Are you receiving coupons as a family, pregnant person or senior/elder?



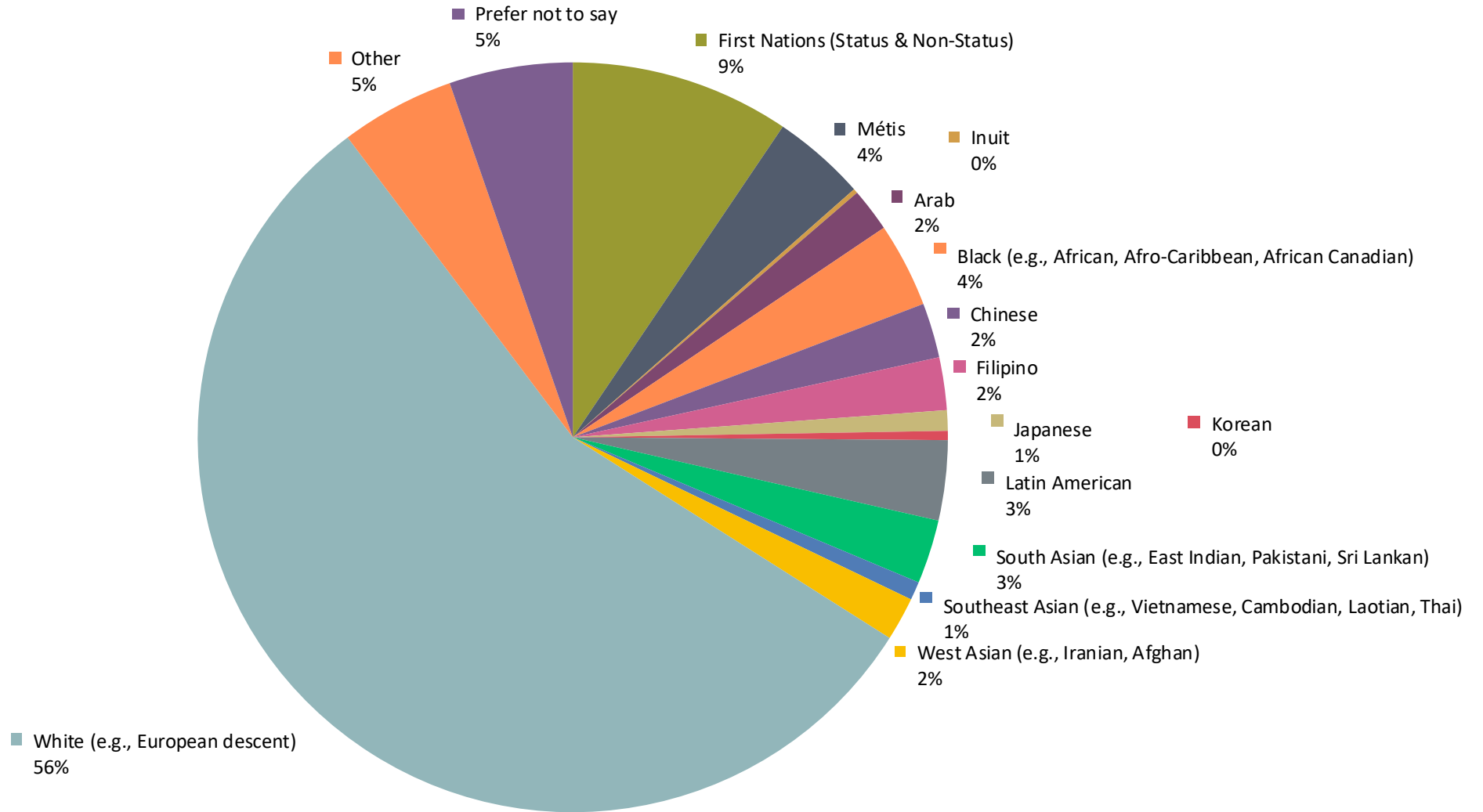
Are there any children living at home?



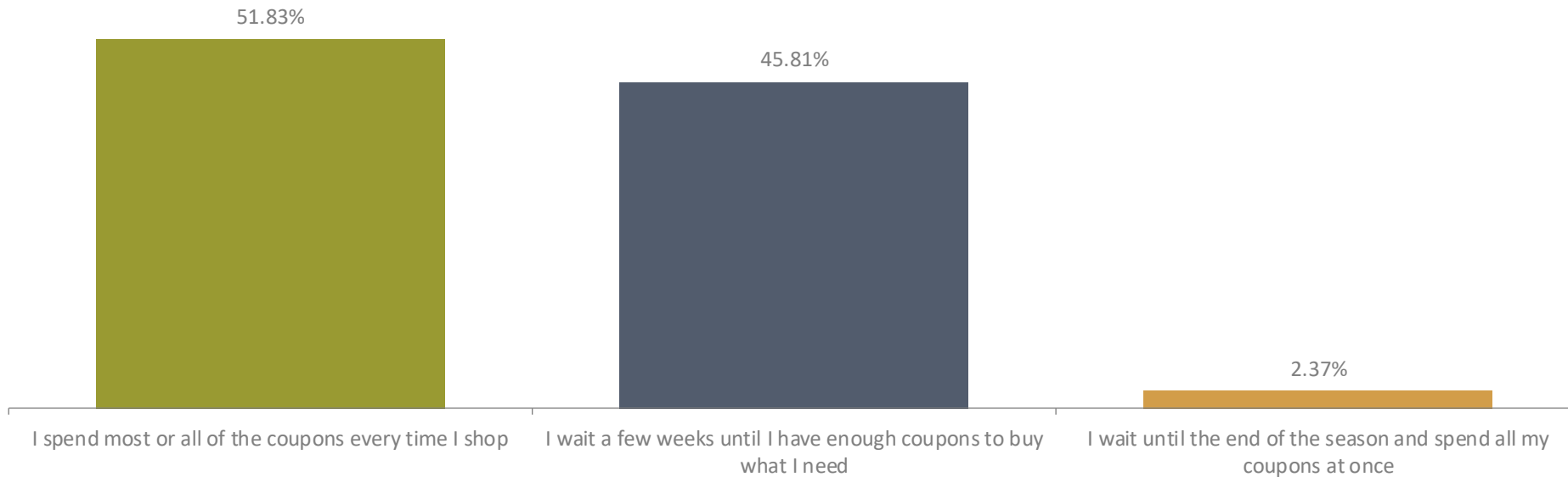
How many people live in your household?



What is your race/ethnicity?

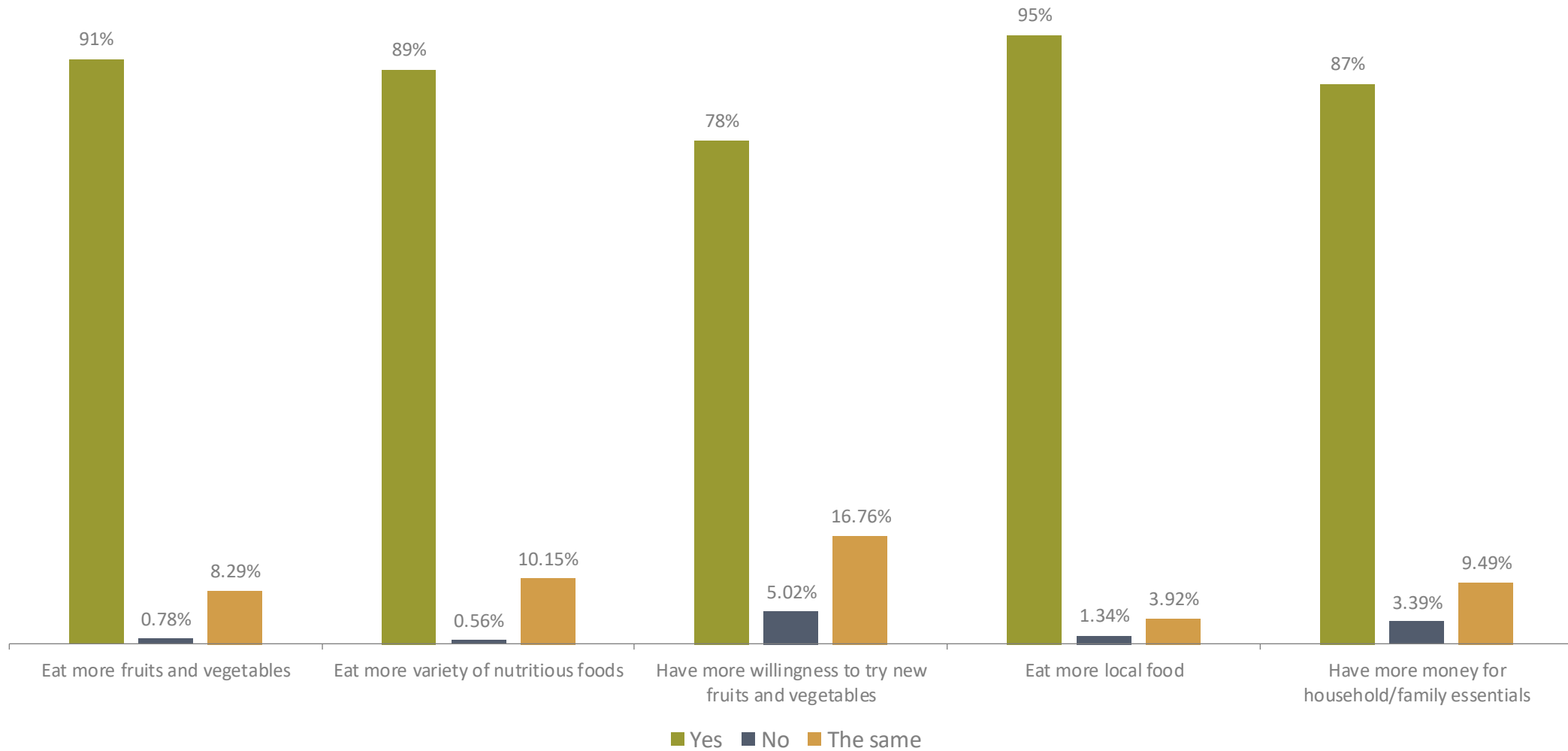


Which statement best describes how you use your coupons?

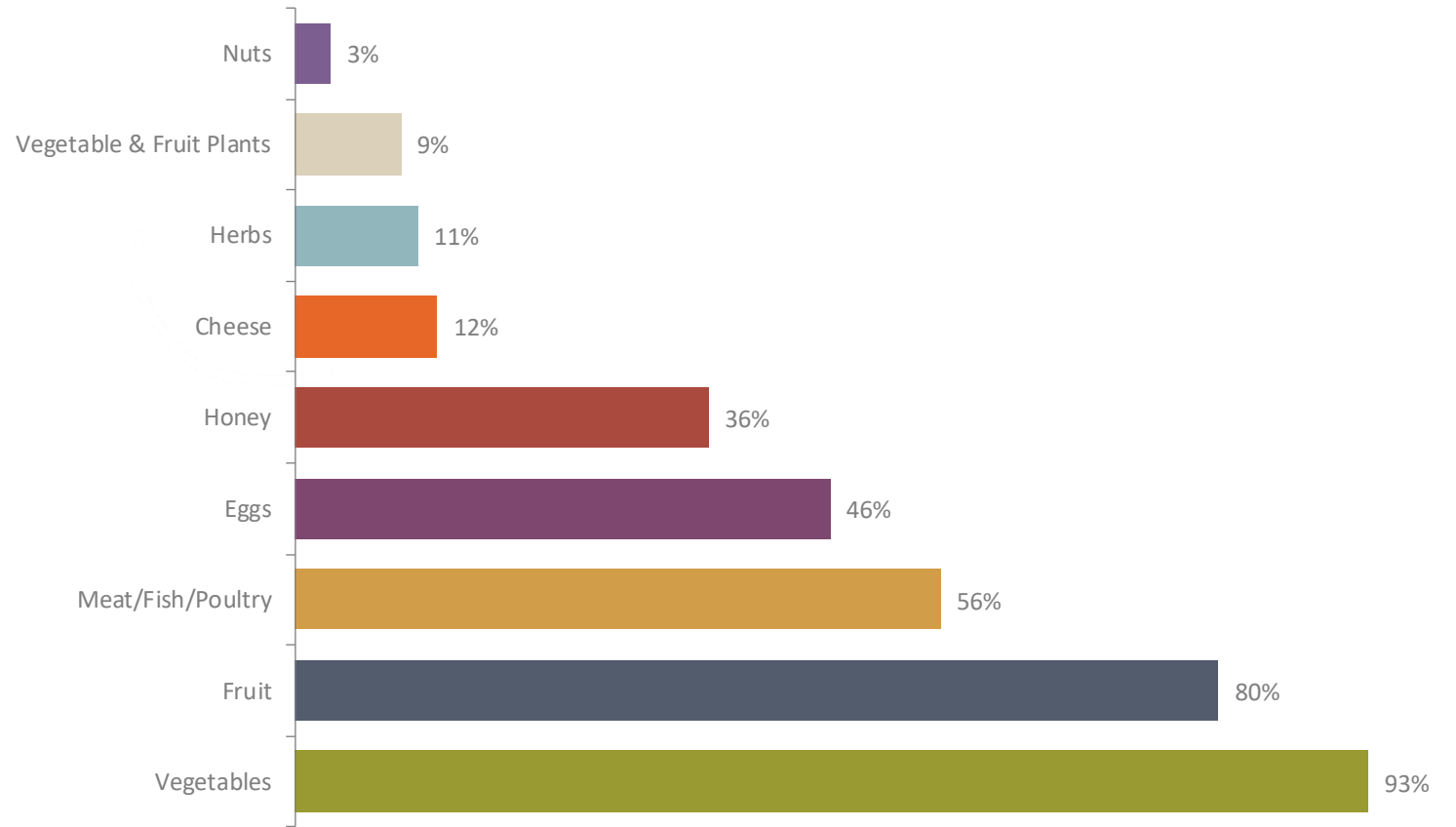


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While participating in the program did you and/or your family:



On what items do you most frequently spend your coupons?





QUESTIONS ABOUT 2025 IMPACT RESULTS?



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INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION AND HEALTH EQUITY



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Photo credit: Chris Horner, Masset Farmers Market

Indigenous Community Partners- 37

ᑭᐱᑦ	Aboriginal Housing Society - Prince George	Akisknuq First Nation	Cariboo Friendship Society	Carrier Sekani Family Services- Prince George	CF of Central Interior First Nations	Dze L K'ant Friendship Centre Society- Houston	FNHA Lytton Heath Centre
Fraser River Indigenous Society	Islands Wellness Society	Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society	Kitselas First Nation	Ktunaxa Kinbasket Child and Family Services Society	Kwselktken Services Society	Lower Kootenay Band	Mamele'awt Qweesome Housing Society
Mission Friendship Society	MIKI'SIW Métis Association	Niwikowin Metis Family Service Society	NLHA'7KAPMX CHILD & FAMILY	North Okanagan Friendship Centre	Nzenman Child and Family	Old Masset Village Council	Prince George Native Friendship Centre
Quesnel Tillicum Band	Shuswap Band	Sishalh Nation	Sixty Scoop Indigenous Society of BC	Skeetchestn Indian Band	Spirit of the Children Society	Tansi Friendship Centre Society	Tobacco Plains Indian Band
	Two Rivers Metis Society	Snaw-Naw-As Health Centre	Tla'amin Health	Upper Island Women of Native Ancestry Society	Victoria Native Friendship Centre		





BCAFM INDIGENOUS RECONCILIATION JOURNEY

In 2026, BCAFm is working with Cedar Tree Communications to:

Listen + Learn to better understand Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives related to local food systems, farmers' markets, access, participation, and community priorities, and

to use that understanding to help guide how BCAFm continues to evolve its practices, programs, and relationships.

The focus at this stage is on listening and learning, rather than arriving at immediate solutions or predetermined outcomes.

This engagement also includes conversations about Indigenous Food Sovereignty and how farmers' markets can support respectful relationships and inclusive participation across BC.



“ These coupons have made an immense difference for my family. Instead of choosing between paying bills and buying fresh food, I can nourish my kids with healthy, local produce. It has changed our lives.”

- Katherine, Vernon BC
Single, Indigenous, mother of three



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Photo Credit: Lillooet Farmers Market & Emily Lorenz

2026-2028 Program Funding Request At Current Level

2026/27	2027/28	2028/29	TOTAL
\$4.38M	\$4.51M	\$4.64M	\$13.53M



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Lillooet Farmers Market & Emily Lorenz

Existing Waiting Lists

Requests from <u>current</u> partners we could not fulfill	Participants requesting referral via BCAFM website	Requests from <u>new</u> partners we could not fulfill
3,646 households 2,903 households (2024)	1,245 households	3,638 households 4,243 households (2024)
@ May 2025	@ January 2025	@ May 2025
\$1,575,072	\$537,840	\$1,571,616



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Future Program Opportunities

Increase Funds to Meet Demand

Reach Remote Communities without Farmers Markets

Target Additional Populations

Support British Columbians In Health Recovery (Prescribing)



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Photo Credit: New West Farmers Market & Johann Vincent



Surrey Urban Farmers Market & Johann Vincent



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Thank You!

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ALIGNMENT WITH PROVINCIAL POPULATION AND PUBLIC HEALTH







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Photo Credit: West End Farmers Market & Emily Lorenz

British Columbia's Population and Public Health Framework: Strengthening Public Health

From the Framework	BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program
<p>Core Public Health Functions - Health Promotion Enabling people to increase control over and improve their health and well-being through individual and collective action on the determinants of health.</p> <p>One Health is an approach that seeks to balance and optimize the health of people, animals and the environment. Foundational to the One Health approach is an acknowledgment that the health of human beings is closely linked with animals, plants and the wider environment or ecosystem.</p>	
<p>Public Health Emergency Preparedness and Response Developing the capacity to mitigate, prepare for, respond to and recover from health emergencies.</p>	
<p>Working together across sectors and communities to advance population health. Population and public health teams partner with a range of different actors, including other health system partners, Indigenous partners, local and regional governments, community-based organizations and priority populations, to promote population health and increase health equity. Communities are the best judge of their needs.</p>	

British Columbia's Population and Public Health Framework: Strengthening Public Health

From the Framework	BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program
<p>Best Start in Life Build foundations of good health by reducing unfair disadvantages for pregnant people, children and families.</p>	
<p>Intersectoral Collaboration Work with partners outside of the health system, including immigrant- and refugee-serving organizations and Indigenous service organizations, to integrate public health services with parenting supports for priority populations.</p>	
<p>Non-communicable Disease and Injury Prevention Food security: Decrease household food insecurity and increase access to nutritious foods. Physical activity and sedentary behavior: Encourage physical activity and reduce sedentarism.</p>	
<p>Population Mental Health and Wellness Community belonging and social inclusion: Increase the sense of community belonging and social inclusion.</p>	

British Columbia's Population and Public Health Framework: Strengthening Public Health

From the Framework

BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program

Priority populations

Groups of people that experience systemic barriers to equal access, opportunities and resources as a result of historical and ongoing harms. Black, Indigenous, and other Peoples of Colour, newcomers (immigrants and refugees), persons with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities, those living in rural and remote areas of the province and those disproportionately impacted by negative health outcomes (where population and public health interventions may be targeted) may be considered to be priority populations.



Indigenous rights and racism

The Framework will build upon our progress to eradicate Indigenous-specific racism within B.C.'s health-care system, making the system more culturally safe for Indigenous Peoples. Within population and public health in B.C., we have unmet responsibilities to fully upholding Indigenous rights and becoming anti-racist as a public health system.



**BC FARMERS' MARKET
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Age Forward British Columbia's 50+ Health Strategy

From the Strategy

BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program

Vision

A British Columbia where older adults feel empowered, valued, and supported to thrive and maintain their autonomy across the dynamic continuum of aging.



Support adults to age with dignity in their homes and communities



Community Partnerships and Engagement

The Province recognizes the value of collaborating with health authorities, local organizations, charities and non-profits, health-care providers, and individuals to co-develop programs and approaches that are rooted in community needs and strengths.



Priority 1.2 Increase opportunities for community-led initiatives and promote meaningful social interaction and community engagement






1.3.4 Expand food access support through the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program

Increasing the number of participants receiving coupon subsidies for nutritious foods through the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program, with a focus on older adults and Indigenous populations.



Age Forward British Columbia's 50+ Health Strategy

From the Strategy	BC Farmers Market Nutrition Coupon Program
<p>Nutrition Eating with others creates a sense of belonging and social connection, as well as providing opportunity for improved nutrition.</p>	
<p>Food Security Access to affordable, culturally preferable, nutritious, and safe food is critical to the health and well-being of older adults</p>	
<p>Food Security Those most likely to be food insecure include people and households that are marginalized due to structural, social, economic, and geographic inequities.</p>	
<p>Community Based Senior's Services Enhancing social connections is important for supporting the well-being and health of older adults. Social support has been shown to slow cognitive decline, impact physical and mental health, quality of life, loneliness, anxiety and mortality risk</p>	