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Canadians Spend More than 20% of Their Household Income on Food*

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Toronto, ON – Canadians have much to learn about the concept of food security, according to a new Ipsos Reid poll conducted on behalf of World Vision Canada. Those polled were given a true or false quiz of eleven questions, and the average score was 7.3, or 66% correct, suggesting that there are significant gaps in Canadians' knowledge of the tenets of food security. Admittedly, just one in three (34%) Canadians say they're 'familiar' (8% very/25% somewhat) with the term food security, while two thirds (66%) say they're 'not familiar' (38% not very/28% not at all) with the term.

Canadians also do not agree on what constitutes various tenets of food security: four in ten (37%) believe a farmer's ability to produce food constitutes food security, while a similar proportion (36%) believes it's a family's ability to put food on the table a mealtime. One quarter (23%) say a government's ability to have enough food stockpiled in case of emergencies constitutes food security, while others believe that it includes the price of food in one's local grocery store (20%), guarding food stockpiles (16%), Canada's grain prices (11%), or the military distribution of food (6%). One quarter (25%) believe none of these constitute food security.

Three quarters (75%) say that the most important thing every parent in the world should be able to offer their child is healthy food at every meal (75%), more than the six in ten (64%) say

it's clean water, or a safe home to live in (62%). Half (51%) say that education is the most important thing every parent should be able to offer their children. Others say it's immunizations or doctor visits (43%), toys and playtime (17%), or some other thing (7%).

Last year, 925 million people worldwide didn't have enough to eat. This year's soaring food prices mean that people living in poverty are being forced to eat less food and less nutritious food. Half (50%) of Canadians believe that poor crop yields contribute to the rising food prices, while 45% say climate change is a factor. Others believe that stock market speculation (43%), the use of food crops for fuel (36%), greed on the part of grocery stores (23%), a shortage of food in the world (18%) or some other factor (14%) contribute to the rising price of food.

Thinking about various long-term solutions to help people who don't have enough to eat, nine ten (93%) 'agree' (67% strongly/26% somewhat) that a long-term solution could be to 'give small farmers seeds, tools and training so they have better harvests', while 85% 'agree' (38% strongly/47% somewhat) that the best solution for those who are hungry is to 'give them food aid when there is a serious shortage of food'. Three quarters (76%) 'agree' that the best solution could be to 'help them to start a small business so they can earn more money to buy food', and seven in ten (72%) 'agree' (28% strongly/45% somewhat) that it could be to 'set up a permanent food bank in their community'. Just one in three (36%) 'agree' (10% strongly/26% somewhat) that they best solution to help those who are hungry could be to 'give their governments money to help them'.

Quiz Results...

Overall, while 89% of Canadians passed the eleven-question quiz, the scores are not glowing as Canadians only scored an average of 7.3 out of 11, or 66% -- a C grade. Generally speaking,

Canadians across all demographic group and regions performed equally, although Quebecers only scored an average of 6.9, the lowest average score in the country. Here is how Canadians fared on each of the questions:

- 1) There is enough food to feed everyone in the world today: **57% true**, 43% false – correct answer is true.
- 2) Canadians spend more than 20 percent of their household income on food: 85% true, **15% false** – correct answer is false.
- 3) When people don't have enough food it's because they don't work enough: 5% true, **95% false** – correct answer is false.
- 4) Famines can be prevented: **64% true**, 36% false – correct answer is true.
- 5) The Canadian government sends food to countries where people are hungry: 80% true, **20% false** – correct answer is false.
- 6) Food aid given out to people always provides them with all the nutrients they need: 16% true, **84% false** – correct answer is false.
- 7) When my grocery bill goes up, it's only because the store is trying to make more money: **24% true** 76% false – correct answer is false.
- 8) Eating nutritious food is most critical when a baby is conceived until he/she reaches age two: **79% true**, 21% false – correct answer is true.
- 9) People in developing countries spend as much as 80 percent of their household income on food: **70% true**, 30% false – correct answer is true.



10) When a child is starving how much the child eats is more important than what the child eats: 14% true, **86% false** – correct answer is false.

11) When global food prices rise, people in developing countries are often forced to buy less nutritious food: **86% true**, 14% false – correct answer is true.

These are some of the findings of an Ipsos Reid poll conducted between October 4 to 7, 2011, on behalf of World Vision. For this survey, a sample of 1,026 adults from Ipsos' Canadian online panel was interviewed online. Weighting was then employed to balance demographics and political composition to ensure that the sample's composition reflects that of the adult population according to Census data and to provide results intended to approximate the sample universe. A survey with an unweighted probability sample of this size and a 100% response rate would have an estimated margin of error of +/- 3.1 percentage points, 19 times out of 20, of what the results would have been had the entire population of adults in Canada been polled. All sample surveys and polls may be subject to other sources of error, including, but not limited to coverage error, and measurement error.

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