

# Unmasking a special donation



When most Manitobans think of Harvest, they're usually walking out of the grocery, realizing "Oh no, I forgot to put something in the bin for Harvest."

MedSup Canada, a medical supply company with production facilities in Canada, has not forgotten. Last month it donated 1.5 million face masks to Harvest Manitoba. Thanks to this generosity, Harvest is now able to do something it rarely can — give back to the community that has supported Harvest for 35 years, many of whom are now struggling to get by themselves.

## The value of in-kind donations

It takes a lot of resources besides donated food, time and money to provide thousands of Harvest hampers a month. In-kind donations can be any product or service that Harvest needs, such as hamper boxes, trucks and gasoline to run them, computers,

office paint or cleaning products. In-kind donations fill crucial needs without spending hard-earned donation dollars to purchase them.

## Outside the hamper thinking

Sometimes business owners or managers will hear Harvest Manitoba has a need that matches their company's products and think 'Aha!'

This was the case in 2018 when Harvest received an in-kind donation in the form of a forklift battery. The Harvest forklift's industrial sized battery was ailing and it takes a lot of forklifting to move more than 11 million pounds of food through the Harvest warehouse every year. The donation was made by Prairie Battery and Harvest was grateful.

Keren Taylor-Hughes, Harvest CEO, described the depth of the giving.

"What made it extra-special is that it was an unsolicited gift," she said. "They heard we were in need and they made the call. That is community. That is compassionate corporate character, social responsibility. We couldn't do all that we do without community leaders like that."



Supplied photo

Shaun Jeffrey (left), executive director of the Manitoba Restaurant & Foodservices Association was happy to receive a gift of protective masks for food service workers from Keren Taylor-Hughes, CEO of Harvest Manitoba. The masks were donated to Harvest Manitoba by MedSup.

homes and others in the community, so they can avoid one more expense.

## Protecting vulnerable Manitobans

That was the case with MedSup Canada, which donated Type 1 PPE masks (Health Canada and USFDA rated 95 per cent bacterial filtration efficiency @ 3.0 microns).

These masks are important to the Harvest community because people who need food assistance are already vulnerable and often making choices between food, rent and medication. Spending for vital face masks is not on the table, but the MedSup donations enabled Harvest to put masks into every Harvest hamper, so more people can protect themselves and those around them.

Taylor-Hughes summarized it this way: "While Harvest is responding to the pandemic with food, MedSup sees a way to help, and now, together, we are feeding people and boosting our community's ability to fight the pandemic."

## Community-wide mask distribution

Harvest is already distributing MedSup Canada masks across the province to those who need them:

- 600,000 to people currently receiving food assistance;
- 400,000 to keep Harvest Manitoba food network staff and volunteers safe. The network includes food banks, soup kitchens, schools, and communities in Winnipeg, rural, northern and First Nations communities.
- 500,000 to Manitoba restaurants, producers, farm families, personal care

## What kind of community are we?

As CEO of Harvest, Taylor-Hughes could probably end every other sentence with, "You're a Harvest Star," or "You put a tin in the bin — Harvest Star," or "You volunteered — Harvest Star."

Over the last 35 years, Harvest has become synonymous with us and our values. Even between times of giving, Manitobans have Harvest in their hearts.

Even thinking about Harvest can produce a moment of comfort that comes from realizing we "live in a Harvest community" or "we are a community that cares," and "I am part of all that."

There is no masking our connection. We have grown to become a province of Harvest Stars.

## More to come

2021 will launch a new era for Harvest. We are looking past the pandemic to a recovery period that is sure to test our community resolve. We remain committed to ensuring no Manitoban goes hungry and are planning to help Manitobans stay in touch with the spirit of community inside each of us.

To that we say: "Bring it on, Harvest Stars."

For more information on Harvest Manitoba and its programs, visit [www.harvestmanitoba.ca](http://www.harvestmanitoba.ca)

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