



HARVEST

nourishing our communities



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HarvestManitoba.ca



Dear Friends,

As I leave Harvest, I remember my first weeks and how busy they were. What made them easier were the many people that supported me then and throughout my tenure.

The Harvest CREW have always been extraordinary in the care and commitment they put into the work they do. That level of commitment is hard to find. It was paralleled only by the continued and generous support we enjoyed from the community. Advocates for more than 35 years who championed our cause, giving food, time, money, product and more. Without this level of community support, we simply could not achieve our mission and vision of ensuring no Manitoban goes hungry.

Your gift of food: local retailers, community partners, farm families, tins for the bin at grocery stores and food drives.


Your gift of time: volunteering on site at Harvest and throughout the province at local food banks and agencies, at events and on committees and the board.

Your gift of money: donors of all sizes, the business community, foundations, and grants.

Your gift of advocacy: using your voice to effect meaningful policy and program changes to alleviate food insecurity in Manitoba.

Your gifts make an incredible difference in the lives of Manitobans. You enable us to sort, pack and deliver 11 M lbs. of foods in Harvest Hampers to more than 325+ communities in Winnipeg, rural, northern and First Nations communities every year. Your support alleviates hunger for children, hardworking families, newcomers, and struggling adults.

We are truly a community of Harvest Stars. It has been a privilege to lead such an impactful organization. Thank you!



Keren Taylor-Hughes



You're Invited!

Keren's last day at Harvest is coming up soon. We are creating a digital memory book for her. Please take a few moments to share a memory or a few words of thanks to her. A print keepsake of her time at Harvest will be presented to her as a gift. **Thank you!**

[Click here](#)

HARVEST STAR

Volunteer of the Month

Laura Routhier

Laura decided to volunteer at Harvest after her eldest daughter needed a school credit. Eight years on, she is now August's volunteer of the month.

"I feel very good about getting the award. It was surprising that I got it. I thought there was more people that did more hours. I do it on my spare time," she said.

"Since joining our team of Harvest Stars, Laura has donated more than 600 hours of her own time. For every hour of time Laura has donated she has helped to feed 10 families. Meaning she has helped to feed more than 6,000 families in our community," said the Volunteer Services Manager.

When Laura is not volunteering at Harvest she provides respite for children in Child and Family Services' care. She brings the children into Harvest to volunteer to learn about



food insecurity and community. She also works in a home helping people with dementia.

"I like helping people. There're just too many people that are homeless and it's just giving back to the community something that I can do in my spare time," said Laura. "It's a great and rewarding experience ...I tell people to come and volunteer all the time. I'm encouraging it." ★



Member Spotlight

Southquill Health and Area Inc.

Southquill Health and Area Inc. is a food bank located three hours North-West of Winnipeg off Highway #10. It is a small town of about 500 people in the Municipality of Clanwillian-Erickson, due south of Clear Lake and Riding Mountain National Park on Treaty No. 4 territory.

Michelle Amiotte and Heather Howdle, both tireless advocates for ending poverty in their communities, are the co-runners of the Southquill Food Bank. They work with a dynamic team of 20 volunteers to feed all 177 families a month.

"Some of our volunteers help with sorting, packing, donation pickups and deliveries to and from Brandon," said Amiotte. "We had to improvise and set up a system to cover our safe practices once COVID had arrived in Manitoba. We support each other emotionally and spiritually, and our team comfortably smudges with sage and a prayer before we start our hamper day."

The food bank is a collaboration between Rolling River First Nation, Services for Seniors, and local volunteers, which distribute food hampers to hungry families once a week.

They recently completed a fundraiser in early May to raise money for a food security hub called Southquill Greenhouse & Educational Gardens. Part of the project was funded by a grant from Agriculture and Agri-Food Canada where they announced it in Anishinaabe and French. Elders Dennis and Elaine McKay from Rolling River First Nation even gave a blessing last summer at 43 Main Street in Erickson to prepare for the build.

Harvest is so proud of the work Southquill has done so quickly over the last few years and we look forward to seeing what they will do in the future! ★

CREW Spotlight

The Warehouse - backbone of Harvest

One of the biggest challenges at Harvest is managing the supply chain. This is the job of the Harvest Warehouse Crew, who receive, sort, pack, and deliver 11 million lbs. of food each year.

"My staff is amazing. And I say that because I watch them. If there's an issue – let's say we're going to be late or we need added items for a food bank or a truck doesn't start or a volunteer doesn't show – my team pulls together and they get it done," said Tracey Marshall, Senior Warehouse Manager, whose team includes 12 Crew members and 3 regular volunteers.

In the Warehouse, you'll find our inventory of food and grocery items stored on shelves, in refrigerators and freezers. Much of it is received from local retailers and suppliers like Peak of the Market, grocery stores, local producers and farm families, and organizations like Food Banks Canada. About 20% of our food donations come from community food drives including tin for the bin.

Once received, all inventory is sorted and checked for quality, and then packed into Harvest Hampers for the Harvest Community Food Network, who will distribute perishable, non-perishable and baby kits to Manitobans who have registered for food assistance.

Accuracy, efficiency and quality are important. Our goal is to ensure that we can serve healthy and nutritious foods to as many Manitobans as possible while reducing waste.

"If any of the donated food is on its last legs or will not be distributed soon enough, we place it in the 'leftovers' area," said Marshall. "One of our business partners picks this up and re-uses it, preparing meals right away or mulching for farmers."

For Marshall, working at Harvest is about being in a "feel good place." She said her heart is here because she knows she's doing something that will benefit people. ★



Harvest Stars (L to R) Robinpreet Kaur, Tracey Marshall, Jaskirat Singh, Leo Moreno, Napporn Chanmekha, Edwin Tunjo, Carlo Suarez, Carter Kobar, Prabhjot Singh, Alejandro Espana, Norbert Hendl, and Rubaljeet Singh



IT TAKES A PROVINCE TO FEED A PROVINCE.

Solidarity Kitchens 50,000+ Meals



A federally-funded initiative led by a group of professional chefs called La Tablée des Chefs Solidarity Kitchen made 500,000 prepared meals for use in Winnipeg, Vancouver, Calgary, and Toronto.

“Harvest is extremely pleased to support this initiative,” said Keren Taylor-Hughes, Harvest CEO. “The demand for food has significantly increased during the pandemic, and the 50,000+ meals we receive is being provided to soup kitchens and other agency members who can provide ready-made meals to hungry Manitobans.”

La Tablée des Chefs is a charity whose mission is to fight against food insecurity and educate young people to develop their food autonomy. La Tablée des Chefs’ innovative initiative, Solidarity Kitchens, began at the start of the pandemic, when the organization was approached by suppliers, farmers, restaurants, hotels, and large venue sites who wanted to donate food that would otherwise go to waste. La Tablée des Chefs worked with distributors to deliver the food to revived kitchens where the food would then be cooked and frozen.

The meals produced will be primarily made with chicken, ground veal, eggs, and a variety of vegetables from producers, processors, and partners of the Canadian food industry.

Chef Ben Kramer mentored Red River College’s culinary arts students to make the meals. He said food insecurity is a big issue nationally and in Winnipeg specifically. He said the students are happy for the opportunity to give back.

“Poverty is a pretty big issue nationally and the fact that it’s one in eight families that struggle to put food on their table is a big concern. We’re obviously not a solution to the problem, but we’re able to Band-Aid it a while other people work on those issues,” he said. “So, getting food into the hands of those people that need it is pretty critical. Our program focuses on getting nutrient dense food – so not junk food but actual food – into the hands of real people that need it.” ★



FEATURE VIDEO



Red River Mutual \$25K Grant

Last year a fire ravaged the greenhouse and 22,000 square feet of green space surrounding Harvest's headquarters and Warehouse on Winnipeg Avenue. Now thanks to a \$25,000 Red River Mutual Grant, we can start to redevelop the space.

"The garden area was used by our CREW for training with the vegetables used by our kitchen training programs and given to volunteers and clients to supplement their food supply," said Meaghan Erbus, Sr. Manager of Community Food Network and Advocacy. "When the space was vandalized and set on fire, we were anxious to clean it up make it into a safe and attractive area again."

Renovation plan ideas for the space include clean up and disposal of the fire-ravaged structures, adding storage areas, fixing the walkways, improving lighting for safety, adding picnic tables and greenery. The burned-out metal from the greenhouse will be sold for scrap with the proceeds re-invested in renovations.

Red River Mutual's Spruce Up Your Story campaign was started in 2020, and in its second year, 243 submissions were received and \$200,000 was granted. "A few years ago, we were thinking about our community involvement and how we could grow that connection further within the communities we represent and work to protect," said Lainie Goldstine, marketing manager at Red River Mutual. "We developed the 'Spruce Up Your Story' campaign to spruce up well-loved spaces in our communities and to give back to the people in the communities we protect."★



View the greenspace

Harvest Hamper Healthy Recipe of the Month: Bacon and smokey cheddar potatoes

Ingredients:

- 4 large potatoes
- 1 cup (250 ml) milk (lukewarm)
- 4 oz (113 g) cream cheese, softened
- 1 cup (250 ml) shredded Cheddar, divided
- 3 minced green onions (optional)
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) salt
- 1/4 tsp (1.25 ml) fresh ground pepper
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) smoked paprika (optional)
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 ml) dried oregano (optional)
- 2 1/2 cups (625 ml) diced cooked chicken
- 8 slices crisp cooked bacon, chopped (or 1/2 cup bacon bits)

Tip: Bake the potatoes and make the potato chicken mixture ahead of time; refrigerate until ready to stuff the potato skins. The stuffed potatoes may need an extra 5-10 minutes of baking to melt the cheese.

Directions:

Preheat oven to 400F.

Wash and dry potatoes. Bake on middle rack of oven until tender (about 50-60 minutes). Remove from oven and cool just until they can be safely handled; cut in half lengthwise.

Scoop the insides of the potatoes into a large bowl, taking care to leave the skins intact. Add milk, cream cheese, half the Cheddar cheese, green onions, salt, pepper, smoked paprika and the oregano; mash together until well mixed.

Stir in the chicken and half the bacon.

Fill each potato skin with an equal amount of the potato and chicken mixture.

Top each stuffed potato with the remaining cheese and bacon.

Place stuffed potatoes on a baking sheet and bake at 400F for 20 min. or until cheese is melted and bubbly.



Partnership brings back Gluten-free Hamper Items

Harvest has partnered with the Manitoba chapter of the Canadian Celiac Association to provide gluten-free items for Harvest Hampers.

“We recently partnered with them to bring back our celiac hamper items,” said Mika Peterson, Harvest Community Events Manager. “We used to provide them to food recipients, but when the pandemic began, we were unable to continue due to shortages of food and volunteers.”

The Manitoba chapter of the CCA graciously stepped up to help source and donate gluten free food items for our Harvest Hampers, and then volunteered to pack them in our Warehouse. In the first month, they packed about 125 gluten free kits.

Celiac Disease is an autoimmune disorder that’s triggered when you eat gluten. Gluten is a protein in wheat, barley, rye, and other grains. It’s what makes dough elastic and gives bread its chewy texture. When someone with Celiac Disease

eats something with gluten, their body overreacts to the protein and damages their villi of their small intestine. The intestines then can’t absorb nutrients which may cause malnourishment, loss of bone density, miscarriages, infertility, neurological diseases, or certain cancers, according to the CCA website.

“It’s a life-long condition. Nobody grows out of it or gets over it. The absolute only treatment is a gluten free diet for life,” said Joy Plohan, vice president and gluten free 101 coordinator for the Manitoba chapter of the CCA.

The organization donated three pallets (about one tonne) of gluten free pancake mix, bread, and rolled oats.

“We’re going to continue to work with Harvest Manitoba. We’re going to make sure that there is gluten free food available to be packed in kits on an ongoing basis,” said Plohan, adding one in 100 people have celiac disease.

In case you missed it...

Harvest Voices and the pyramid of choices

It takes a province, and an organization like Harvest Manitoba, to feed a province. With a task that big — to feed 80,000 people a month and counting — you must be efficient, organized and knowledgeable. You must know food and nutrition, and you must know the needs and life conditions of the people who need food support to get by.

Harvest Voices is a new survey we conducted, in which we asked Harvest recipients about their lives. The published report will contain plenty of charts and academic footnotes, but Harvest Voices is not about the food. It turns out that more than anything else, Harvest Voices is about people who need food and about what they need to be self-sufficient.

Here are a few of the lessons we learned from the 2021 Harvest Voices report:

Here are a few of the lessons we learned from the 2021 Harvest Voices report:

- People want to work and support themselves. Earned independence is a life goal;
- People who have disabilities have a harder time finding work with a living wage;
- Kids can suffer from food insecurity and from the anxiety of parents who worry about it every day.

One of the other big takeaways is the amazingly positive story in the background of Harvest Voices, which is that your donations to Harvest — cash, tins for the grocery bin, or a car full of garden vegetables — are much more powerful and valuable than we ever knew.



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