



[HarvestManitoba.ca](http://HarvestManitoba.ca)

## Harvest Voices 2021: Report Shines Light on Food Insecurity and Poverty in Manitoba

**November 30, 2021, Winnipeg, Manitoba** – Harvest Manitoba released today the findings of their Harvest Voices survey, which shows how food bank use correlates with economic difficulties including inadequate income and a lack of strong social supports and programs.

The survey was commissioned to listen to the experiences of Manitobans who rely on food assistance from food banks in the Harvest distribution network, with the intention of better understanding the challenges they face living with food insecurity and poverty, and what they would need to become economically self-sufficient.

With a network of more than 325 food banks and agencies across the province, Harvest has become the fourth largest food distributor of its kind in Canada. Harvest collects 11 million pounds of food each year and is currently sharing it with 83,000 Manitobans this month, half of whom are children.

“This report gives us a picture of who our clients are, the challenges they face every day, the help they need, and how we at Harvest can support their health,” said Meaghan Erbus, Senior Manager, Harvest Community Food Network and Advocacy. “It’s just one snapshot of the real-world impact of food insecurity and poverty in our province, with several eye-opening personal stories that should inspire us to work for a future where no Manitoban goes hungry.”

The Harvest Voices report disclosed that women and Indigenous people were overly represented as food bank recipients, and that children in these families who suffer from food insecurity often also face difficulty learning, growing, and developing adequately. It also shed light on the challenges vulnerable people face with food insecurity because of insufficient income from support programs currently in place, and the difficulties with accessing supports and services they need in Manitoba.

Seventy-nine percent of individuals who accessed food banks received most of their income from government programs such as: EIA, EIA Disability, CPP and Canadian Child Benefit (CCB), or Canada Pension Plan (CPP). Many of the Harvest survey respondents identified having an annual income of between \$10,000 to \$20,000 per year, with 41% receiving under \$10,000 a year.

Food bank use in Manitoba is increasing, and recent food prices have resulted in a 76% increase in the demand for food support over this same time last year. Like the recession in 2008, Harvest anticipates the economic decline resulting from the pandemic will further affect people's incomes, consumer spending, and levels of employment. An economic crisis like this fuel's reliance on food banks, and history has shown it often does not fully recover.

"We all have a role to play in helping Manitobans build a sustainable and healthy province", said Erbus. "We believe that by working together, we can create a stronger future for all, where no one goes hungry."

The Harvest Voices 2021 report is now available for download from the Harvest website at [HarvestManitoba.ca/HarvestVoices](https://HarvestManitoba.ca/HarvestVoices)

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### **About Harvest Manitoba**

Harvest Manitoba ("Harvest") is a charitable organization dedicated to nourishing our communities and our sense of community so that no Manitoban goes hungry. We collect 11 million pounds of food every year, which is sorted and packed largely by volunteers into Harvest Hampers and distributed to Manitobans through our Community Food Network of more than 325 food banks and agencies in Winnipeg, rural, northern and First Nations communities. On average, we feed 80,000 Manitobans every month, 46% of whom are children. Our Food Distribution Centre, which includes our Emergency Food Support Assistance Line and Warehouse, are in our Winnipeg Headquarters.

To learn more or donate, please visit: [HarvestManitoba.ca](https://HarvestManitoba.ca)

**For more information and interviews, please contact:**

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