

We are a
Community
of
Harvest Stars



VISION

*Working together toward a healthier future
for all where no Manitoban goes hungry.*

MISSION

- *Collecting and distributing food*
- *Providing client-centered long-term solutions*
- *Advocating and informing*

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

- *Stewardship*
- *Collaboration*
- *Innovation*
- *Compassion*
- *Integrity*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

**as at March 31, 2022*

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- Dr. Philip Poon, Senior Vice Chair
- Brett Andersen, Vice Chair – Finance
- Patty Gifford, Vice Chair – Human Resources
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Two words that we can never say enough. At Harvest over the past two years, those two simple words capture better than any others our feelings about community. We are a community of Harvest Stars, and we are so grateful to each of the thousands of Manitobans and those beyond our borders who support our work. Thank you for all that you have done to keep Harvest open and food flowing during these unprecedented times.

There are three critical elements that empower Harvest to serve more than 80,000 people every month: food, people and funds. All three of these must be strong for us to mitigate food insecurity for too many Manitobans. All three of these elements share one very important thing in common – a foundation of kindness. Whether you roll up your sleeves to volunteer in our warehouse, open your wallet to support our fundraising campaign, or put a tin in the bin – you are a part of helping Harvest achieve its goal of building a better future for all where no Manitoban goes hungry.

This report provides you with a summary of the work we have accomplished over the last two years, thanks to your generosity. Along the way you will find tremendous stories of compassion, caring, hunger and hope. Stories like Louis Trepel's, a long-time donor and volunteer who is "hooked on Harvest" for life because he has seen the real-world impact his donations have made. Also, stories of how with your help, Harvest met the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic and continue to serve a province that has never needed our work so much.

There is still so much work to do. As we enter our 37th year in service to the community, we know that with your help we will be able to meet whatever the future brings our way. Thank you for being there to support us, so we have the ability and the confidence to help others, today and for years to come.

On behalf of the Board of Directors and all of us at Harvest Manitoba, please accept our gratitude.

Marilyn McLaren, Board Chair

Vince Barletta, President & CEO



Every Manitoban who asked for food support got it – thanks to you!

The past two years at Harvest have been unlike any others. The COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts have affected this organization in ways that we could have scarcely imagined at the beginning of 2020.

We began 2020 in celebration of our 35th anniversary serving the community as Winnipeg Harvest. But even as Harvest was set to embark on another memorable year, storm clouds were already building. The first stories of the new coronavirus were beginning to make headlines. In March of 2020, the magnitude of this global pandemic began to reach Canada and Manitoba. The Province of Manitoba declared a state of emergency and began a lockdown that would have immediate and dramatic impacts for Harvest, the people we serve and Manitobans more broadly.


One of the most dramatic impacts of lockdown was to the economic and food security of many Manitobans. Those early weeks of the pandemic

saw lost jobs and wages, layoffs and reduced hours. Closures of schools, community centres and other facilities where people in need can access support came next adding to the uncertainty and anxiety. And we all know that when times are tough it is those who have the least who hurt the most. This pandemic has been no exception. Those who already struggled with low paying jobs, irregular work, unemployment, fixed incomes, and health issues now faced even greater challenges. For thousands of those people the stress of the crisis was too much – people could not make ends meet, and they needed help. Harvest saw its client numbers jump from 70,000 people served a month to 85,000, with 25% of users looking for emergency food support for the first time.



As the demand for food support climbed, economic uncertainty led people to stockpile food and household supplies. We all remember the line ups for toilet paper! This surge in household purchasing along with supply chain disruptions caused a direct reduction in the volume of food donated to Harvest. In fact, in the early weeks of the pandemic, Harvest saw food donations from retail partners and the community decline by 60%. With warehouse shelves emptying faster than they could be replenished, Harvest was forced to purchase food, competing with grocery chains in global markets. We were unprepared and underfunded for this.

Adding to our challenges, lockdown combined with safety concerns meant a loss of volunteers, critical to keeping operations open and food flowing. Prior to the pandemic, Harvest relied on nearly 200,000 volunteer hours per year from Manitobans, community groups and corporate teams to collect and sort food, pack and deliver hampers, answer phones and other tasks required to feed people in need all across the province.



*Fridges and freezers
were too close to
being bare*

***Food donations
declined by 60%.***



Every organization has its breaking point. In those early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, we were very quickly reaching our own here at Harvest. It is difficult now to remember that the combination of increased demand for food, dramatic drop in food donations and the loss of our volunteers nearly forced Harvest to do the unthinkable – close our doors for the first time in our history. It was unimaginable that we came so close to that fate at a time when our community needed us so much.

What came next stunned us with timely acts of kindness, generosity and hope for which Harvest will forever be grateful.

In mid-March 2020, Harvest began to reach out to organizations in our community to lend us a hand in a time of crisis. Among the first to offer support was the Winnipeg Foundation who offered Harvest Manitoba the first emergency funding that allowed Harvest to buy food to keep our hampers moving to the growing number of hungry families. Then came the Winnipeg Jets players who themselves passed the hat around the locker room and raised \$100,000 to help Harvest. Many other Manitobans and people outside our province answered the call for aid making special gifts and increasing their existing donations to allow us to continue to operate.

Innovative solutions were also found to meet the demand for workers in our warehouse. The City of Winnipeg made the incredible and generous decision to allow city employees who normally work in facilities like libraries and community centres, now closed, to work in the Harvest warehouse. These 23 Community Services Department employees were life savers for Harvest. Collectively, they put in over 20,000 hours, sorting and packing near to 125,000 hampers. Thanks to their work alongside our Harvest Crew, we were able to continue our production and feed hungry children, hardworking yet struggling families, seniors and adults on limited fixed incomes.

Over the next many waves of the pandemic, economic uncertainty, reduced levels of public

services, decades high inflation and prolonged isolation took their toll. Harvest adapted its methods of food collection, hamper production, distribution and volunteer programs to the realities of COVID-19. The record high levels of food bank use that we saw at the start of the pandemic, while seeing ebbs and flows, never really subsided.

The same challenges that continue to create hardship for many Manitoba families – such as lockdowns and rising prices for food and fuel, also create major challenges for Harvest as an organization. Thanks to the financial resources Harvest received from our generous donors, we have been able to adapt, purchase the needed food, supplies, run our trucks and pay staff when public health restrictions kept so many of our volunteers away. Because of your gifts, Harvest is also able to undertake some much-needed maintenance at our warehouse on Winnipeg Avenue and improve our vehicle fleet to ensure deliveries reach their destinations across the province and our drivers are safe. Because of you Harvest has been able to invest funds in hundreds of agencies in our community food network all over our province so they could purchase extra food, buy fridges, freezers and other equipment and supplies to make improvements to their own food banks and agencies to feed those who rely on them including those who are isolated and suffer chronic health issues.

It takes a province to feed a province, and we are a community of Harvest Stars. We owe an incredible debt of gratitude to the thousands of people like you who donated food, time, money, in-kind products and services to us. Thank you! Our organization will never forget your kindness. These past two years have shown that no challenge is too great for our community to overcome when we work together.

While we celebrate the fact that Harvest and the tens of thousands of Manitobans who rely on our support each month have been able to weather the storm, we need to remember that the future remains uncertain, and we still need your help and support.

In 2022, if you are able, please think of us, the work we do and how you may be able to help. If you can, pay us a visit. We'd love to show you the work we are doing. And, if you and your family have been spared the worst effects of the pandemic and are able to make an additional donation this year to support Harvest, please consider doing so. If you or your corporate team can donate time, we'd appreciate your help in the warehouse. And of course, gifts of food to fill our hampers are appreciated too.

Together we have been through so much over the last two years. Having surmounted these challenges, we know we have the strength to move forward as an even stronger and more resilient organization than ever before. With your help and support Harvest can continue to build a better future for all where no Manitoban goes hungry. ★



It takes a province to feed a province, and we are a community of Harvest Stars.





Milestones in Generosity

Here's how you helped as hunger soared.

- In 2020-21, Harvest collected, packed, and shared 11,440,000 pounds of nourishing food with hungry Manitobans.



- The value of that food was almost \$30 million

1st

- For the first time in history, Harvest purchased food.



- This was 540,000 pounds more than in 2019-20.

- In a typical month Harvest fed 79,795 food-insecure Manitobans; 46% of them were children.



Selfless, kind, and generous, our community of Harvest Stars shone brightly, and together, we endured.

- As the central shipping point for the Harvest Manitoba Community Food Network our fleet of trucks and drivers delivered those hampers to more than 325+ agencies and food banks across the province.



- We packed an average of 10,000 hampers a month.



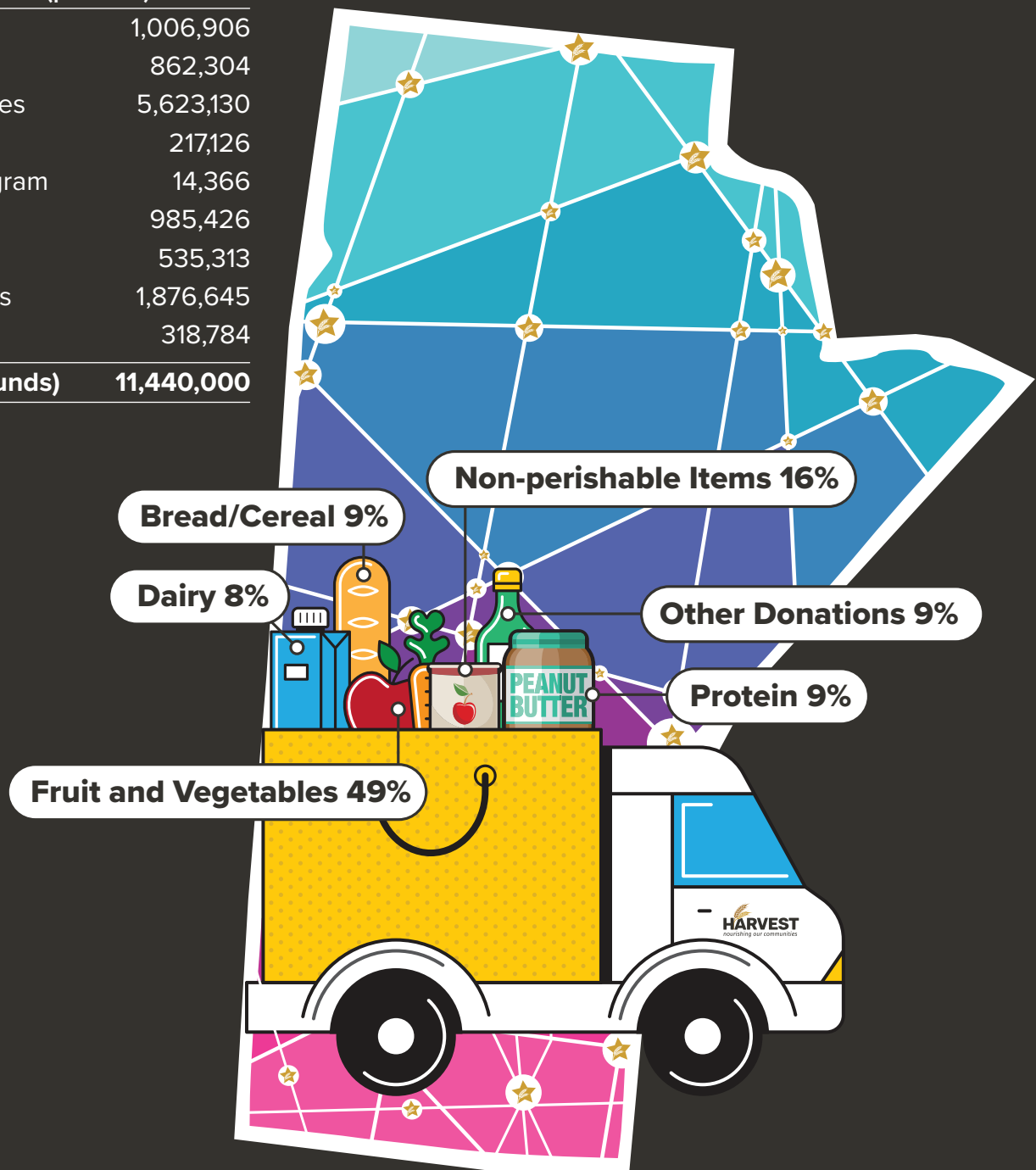
- 6,202 people relied on us for emergency food support for the first time.



Food Collected **Food Shared**

2020-21 Total Food and Grocery Items (pounds)

Bread/Cereal	1,006,906
Dairy	862,304
Fruit / Vegetables	5,623,130
Juice/Drinks	217,126
Mealshare Program	14,366
Protein	985,426
Reclaim	535,313
Non-Perishables	1,876,645
Non-Food	318,784
Total Food (pounds)	11,440,000



Food Rescue Now **and in Our Future**

In addition to purchasing food when we must, we also work with our industry partners to rescue and recover food that in other times might have been wasted. In the past two years we did more of this than at any other time — and we plan to grow that effort, together. We monitor quality constantly, and only share food that is safe to eat, nutritious, and that we would feed to our own families.

Harvest Manitoba Community Food Network



Thanks to you, Harvest now supports more than 325 community organizations across the province, who work on the front lines to alleviate hunger in Winnipeg, rural, northern and First Nations communities.

Support to meet local needs

Food support, consumer products, education and training, gift cards, PPE, cleaning supplies and other resources all combine to support our Community Food Network. In 2020, we shared \$150,000 through food and equipment grants. And in 2021, we provided an additional \$320,000.

Food Distribution to Community Food Network Members

Food Banks	2019-20	2020-21
Winnipeg	111	119
Rural	48	63
Sub Total	159	182

Partner Agencies

Breakfast2Go / Meals2Go	3	5
Daycares	47	48
Meal Snack Programs	66	119
School Programs	46	38
Soup Kitchens	18	10
Sub Total	180	220
Total	339	402

Paulette Cote, St. Mary's Road Food Bank

Paulette Cote, the coordinator for the St. Mary's Road Food Bank, discusses the impact of Harvest on the people served at her food bank, near to 60 families every month.

"We are so grateful for our partnership with Harvest! Last month we served 627 food insecure clients... More than doubled since the start of the pandemic."



"Listen to Paulette's story as you read on (59 seconds)"

Major Initiative – Harvest Meals2Go Weekend Food for Hungry Kids

Manitoba is the child poverty capital of all the provinces in Canada. The sad fact is that kids who grow up in households without food security, who miss a lot of meals and go hungry, don't do as well in school or adulthood as those who grow up with reliable nutrition. So, we thought it was important to put more focus on feeding our kids. In 2019 we augmented our school meal programs with Meals2Go.

As it runs now, on Fridays, students at a growing number of schools get two Meals2Go take-home meal-kits for the weekend. Each kit provides servings of cereal, milk, fruit, and a dairy product (such as yogurt or cheese). This reliable food source is important and effective for these kids. Not only does it increase attendance on Fridays (when the kids themselves administer the handing out of meals), it's been shown that on Monday's, kids who have been nourished over the weekend are more ready and able to learn, pay attention, and succeed in class.



“It’s good to be able to get milk, cheese and yogurt too... These foods are very nutritious and important for our health.”

Expanded During the Pandemic

In 2019-20, we launched Meals2Go Weekend Food for Hungry Kids as a pilot in 1 school. Two years later, and we’re supporting approximately 1,000 students at 3 schools. Keeping it going, and expanding as we have, has been a major achievement.





You have it in you to succeed! Remember - every great person in the world was once your age.

The POWER of Affirmation Notes

Every Meals2Go weekend kit includes a hand-written affirmation note. Many of the messages are written by volunteers taking a break from sorting foods and packing hampers. They love writing them. The students positively love them, to the point where the notes are often the most valued, and emotionally nourishing item.

Amazing Results

Teachers reported that providing children with access to healthy food on the weekends had several impacts including a decrease in sick days, increased ability to focus, better test scores and an increase in student self-esteem and self-image. We can now see that we'll be feeding children directly every year from now on. The only question is how many schools and communities we can help.

When COVID-19 shut schools down, Harvest took its in-school meal program on the road, providing daily meal kits, Monday to Friday, in 5 urban and 3 northern communities where kids and families could pick them up. And they did. Not just on weekends, but 5 days a week along with books to read. The summer program continued in 2021, and Harvest feeds kids year-round – in daycares, in schools, at home and in the community. ★

Brenda's Voice

Brenda is a single mother with two children aged 2 and 6. She works full-time, but is unable to make ends meet. After paying basic living expenses, she is left with less than \$10 a day for food.

Our Donors:



Canadian
Children's
Literacy
Foundation

Fondation pour
l'alphabétisation
des enfants
canadiens





Community Engagement

For years Harvest has sponsored incredibly successful programs where backyard gardeners and community garden associations contribute home-grown produce.

In the past 30 years, more than 4,000,000 pounds of food has been donated to the Grow-A-Row program that was established in 1986.

Gardens of Motivation

Few things boost morale and nutrition like putting your own food on the table. In 2021, we started the Harvest Home Garden Program, and distributed kits to 54 mostly first-time gardeners. Garden kits included one garden box, soil, two seed packets, two seedlings, trowel or small rake, a pair of gloves, and a garden curriculum booklet.

Garden Food Collections (pounds)

2020: Grow-a-Row	5,429
2021: Grow-a-Row	23,821
2021: St. Vital Community Garden	168

Feedback was fantastic; emotional and positive. So we're expanding it. While the kits don't provide enough food to live on, the experience nourishes feelings of achievement, confidence and empowerment — for life. We're good with that.

Celebrating our Volunteers

We would never have lasted this long or helped as many people as we have if it were not for you, the people who support us.

At last count, in the past two years 1,745 new volunteers and 1,482 corporate and community groups became Harvest volunteers. Outstanding!

Volunteers play a critical role in helping to ensure no Manitoban goes hungry. Every year in our warehouse, they sort, pack, organize, clean, drive and whatever else it takes to get 11 million pounds of nutritious food to hungry Manitobans. Corporate teams and community groups volunteer where they work and live, contributing by organizing or participating in Harvest events, giving campaigns, and food and funds drives. Some volunteers do tax returns that put \$504,000 back in the pockets of people receiving emergency food assistance in 2020/21.

From school kids to octogenarians, from the boardroom to the classroom - it takes a lot of helping hands to fight this much hunger in our community.

Theresa, food bank client 30+ years and volunteer

Theresa has used the services of food banks on and off for more than 30 years. She noted that she appreciates homemade items she receives as well. "If you're doing scarves, gloves – things like that. That's really appreciated because there's a lot of people that can't really afford them." The grandmother now shares how she misses volunteering at Harvest due to COVID.

"It's really hard (not being able to volunteer) because I kind of miss the community...A lot of relationships (were built) that are still continuing to this day."



Hear her story: [CLIP](#)

Using Advocacy Fighting Hunger

Harvest advocates for people fighting hunger in Manitoba. We need to learn about and understand the causes and contributors to hunger and food insecurity and the impacts they have on individuals, families and communities across our province.

Groundbreaking Groundwork

To get that knowledge firsthand, we contacted more than 900 clients, conducted more than 400 live interviews, and produced the report, Harvest Voices 2021. Harvest Voices gave us a real-world cause and impacts that food insecurity and poverty have on people we serve right here in Manitoba. It was heart-felt and eye opening. Every line in this finding involves people who are living in real poverty.



[View this report in full online.](#)



Major Findings:

- Most food bank clients are women. Respondents to the survey were predominantly female (67.5%), single (56.5%), with no children (67.59%), and an average of 49.5 years of age.
- 80% of food bank clients live below Canada's official poverty line
- More than one third of food bank clients are Indigenous
- 100% of food bank clients are food insecure

Louis Trepel, Long time donor and former Board member

Louis Trepel has been a long-time donor and volunteer at Harvest, and he sees the power of his gifts in the community. He's says, "I'm hooked for life".

"I'm overly impressed (with how Harvest uses its funds). They are so, so, so specific in how the money is spent and ensure that those dollars and cents get to the need of people who are hungry, who need food, are going through transition, and that really impresses me...And the fact that it's a community-based organization. There is no government funding, they rely on each and every one of us in the community (to donate)."



[Hear his story: CLIP](#)



Amidst The Chaos A New Era

During the middle of the pandemic in 2020, Winnipeg Harvest celebrated its 35th anniversary, and announced the next phase, and a new era, of bringing food to vulnerable Manitobans.

First, we changed our name from Winnipeg Harvest to Harvest Manitoba.

In 1985 when we started, the name Winnipeg Harvest said everything you needed to know about us. But over time that changed. We quickly made connections with and shared food with several food banks outside of Winnipeg. And we began receiving food from producers outside the perimeter.

As we learned more about the needs in our community we started to support soup kitchens, shelters, school and daycares along with so many community food banks inside and outside of Winnipeg. Today our food and money donors and volunteers support Harvest's partner agencies in Winnipeg and in rural, northern and First Nations communities across Manitoba.

And then in our 35th year, Winnipeg Harvest joined with the Manitoba Association of Food Banks to become Harvest Manitoba. Harvest is the 4th largest food distributor of its kind in Canada – and we are committed to fulfilling the promise of our new name.

And now, our new name, Harvest Manitoba, better reflects who we serve, where we serve, and the breadth of contributions we receive. It better reflects our vision of ensuring no Manitoban goes hungry. We know that,

It takes a province to feed a province.

And together, as Harvest Manitoba, we will do more, do it better, and nourish more of us, faster and more efficiently than either of us could have done independent of the other.

Instead of competing with food banks and agencies, we embraced them as members of a new Harvest Community Food Network, and all food donations received are sorted, packed and delivered to more than 325 food banks and agencies in every corner of our province.

**We've changed
our name, but
not our passion.**





Hiding in Plain Sight

Harvest Stars Working Together

Tins for the Bin and cash donations are major connection-points with our community. However our partners play a big role too. Eighty percent of the 11 million pounds of food we use to fill all those Harvest Hampers comes from the major grocery stores, Peak of the Market, Natural Bakery, Bothwell Cheese and other local businesses. And a huge amount comes from farm families and producers like Manitoba Chicken Producers, Dairy Farmers of Manitoba, Manitoba Egg Farmers and Manitoba Pork.

These companies and industries don't blow their own horns about helping Harvest. In fact, many of them prefer to remain anonymous. Nonetheless, they are the backbone of our food supply just as much as they are for everyone in the province.



Thank You! To our Donors!!



Our deepest thanks to all the donors, corporations, foundations, schools, faith and service groups who supported Harvest Manitoba by helping us support the families in Winnipeg and Manitoba.

Moving Forward - With Gratitude While the number of our supporters is too long to list, some of our donors and their stories can be found here: [Our Donors.](#)

The lessons we've learned will help us to adapt, innovate, build capacity and resiliency, responding to events that we can foresee and those that we cannot. The funds we receive enable us to maintain current service levels and provide stability when we need to react to spikes in need during periods of decreased donations. The future is coming, and thanks to you our community of Harvest Stars, we are more motivated and more prepared than ever before to move forward with gratitude – feeding a record number of hungry kids, helping hardworking families and struggling adults put food on the table, and doing our part to nourish the feeling and the identity that we are all a community of Harvest Stars.



Manitoba Needs **HARVEST** to Be Ready To Feed People

- Food prices are still soaring
- Seniors are still on fixed incomes
- Single moms still need a living wage, and good jobs
- Indigenous Manitobans are still over-represented among the food insecure relative to the population
- Sick are still sick, and the health care system needs to recover
- Social supports that were ended are not back

And on top of it all 5-6% inflation means a bigger chunk out of everyone's budget so hard-working families will be struggling to feed themselves for some time.

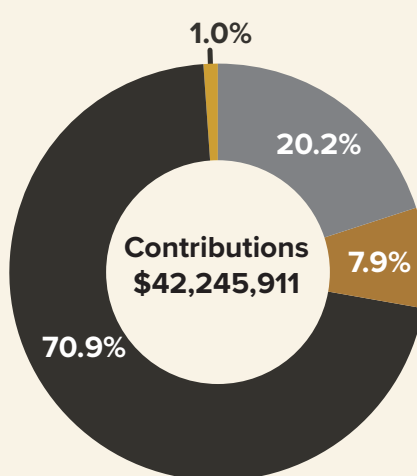
April 1, 2020 to March 31, 2021

Year at a Glance

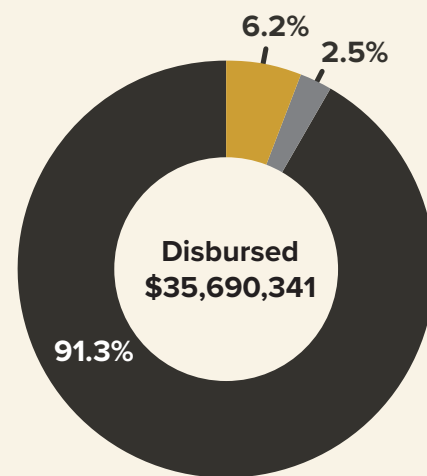
The 2020/21 fiscal year was a challenging year globally and resulted in more Manitobans accessing Harvest Manitoba. Our committed and generous grocery and industry partners donated almost \$30 million worth of food during the period. The Government of Canada, Food Banks Canada, and our donors responded to the increased need by providing over \$3.3 million in extraordinary pandemic - related support to help our clients during this trying time. Our supporters provided a record of over \$8.5 million grants, in-kind and cash donations during the year to help us fulfill our mission during the year.

While the support that was received in 2020/21 was remarkable, it was because of the tremendous need faced by our clients. The gifts and support received in 2020/21 made it possible for us to help more Manitobans put basic food on the table during the fiscal year. It has also ensured that Harvest Manitoba has the resources to support our clients as Manitobans continue to face the economic, social and food security challenges exacerbated by the pandemic.

The unfortunate reality is that food insecurity has only increased since March of 2021. Harvest Manitoba will require more food, more resources, and will need to make investments in our fleet, people and infrastructure to serve our clients. The continued support of Manitobans will be critical to our ability to feed the thousands of households who rely on Harvest Manitoba.



- Grants, Donations and In-Kind Support
- Extraordinary Pandemic-Related Support
- Donations of Food
- Other Contributions



- Administrative and Fundraising Costs
- Program, Volunteer and Support Services Costs
- Food

* A total of 11,440,000 pounds of food was collected by Harvest Manitoba in 2020/21. Food is valued at \$2.62 per pound, an average value determined by Food Banks Canada.

Our audited financial statements are posted here: [Financial Statements](#)



We are a community of Harvest Stars

Thank you to each one of you for being a Harvest Star, giving and receiving, so no Manitoban goes hungry!

Whether you give or receive, if you live in Manitoba, you are member of, and can take pride in being part of our community of Harvest Stars. This message and emotion defines us as an organization and sustains us a province. We ARE a province of Harvest Stars.

The soundtrack for our video 'Feel the Stars' is an inspirational song by Manitoba's own Keith MacPherson and Renée Lamoureux. They generously gifted it to us for this project.

Since our launch, our brand has become the cornerstone of our touchpoints with the communities

we serve, communicated through our website, monthly e-news, donation letters, trucks, programs, promotions via radio, newspaper, print, social media, and more.

We'll never have a huge marketing budget, but we will do the best with what we have. We will inform, involve and engage our community of supporters to do the same. And together, we will repeat our core messages everywhere we go to build recognition and buy in. And, as we nourish our communities, this focus will be the force that nourishes our sense of community as well.



Gratitude **Is**

No matter what your life is like.

Hungry or full,

Rich or poor...

*Gratitude is the gold and grace
of a happy life.*

*For Harvest Stars who receive,
a meal for their table,
food for their cupboard,
a sense of belonging,
valued and wished well
from good people in our community,
who ask not that you are beholden to them,
just to be one of them,
frees you to feel that golden grace
and be happy.*

*For all the Harvest Stars who contributed
to that opportunity, that feeling,
your grace is golden in equal measure.*

*Believe in this,
it is only together
that we can achieve this golden grace
when we shine and become
a community of Harvest Stars.*

- Contributed by Harvest Star Dan O'Dell

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