MEDIA RELEASE
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New Harvest Voices Report Shows More Families Turning to Food Banks

Food Bank Households This Year Are Larger, Younger, and Feeding More Kids

Winnipeg, MB – Harvest Voices is an annual report on our clients and key factors that drive people to access food banks in Manitoba. This report illustrates the profound, real-world impact on the challenges facing Manitoba families and individuals as they struggle to keep up with the increasing cost of living.

Harvest Manitoba's 2025 *Harvest Voices*, the fifth edition of this annual report, shows a significant rise in households with children, along with more clients who are working or have post-secondary education.

"Families with children now make up forty-five percent of food bank households. This is a forty percent increase from when we did our first report five years ago," says Meaghan Erbus, Director of Network, Advocacy & Education at Harvest Manitoba. "Many are working and educated, and doing everything they can to stay afloat. Rising housing costs, childcare shortages, and wages that don't match the cost of living are putting enormous pressure on households. These are conditions that require long-term solutions, and our hope is that this report helps guide that work."

Each year, Harvest Manitoba surveys hundreds of food bank clients across the province to gain insights into issues affecting households who utilize our services. In addition to key findings from the survey data, the report also shares stories directly from people participating food bank clients.

"When I came here, I saw people with two or three jobs," says Kenny, a Harvest Voices respondent who works full-time and still struggles to make ends meet while caring for her children. "Now I realize, one job cannot sustain someone, especially if you have a family."

Key five-year trends (2021–2025):

- The average household size increased from 2 to 2.9 people per household.
- Families with children under the age of 18 years of age have increased from 32% to 45%.
- Those with at least some post-secondary education increased from one-third (33%) to two-thirds of clients (61%).

- 62% of families go hungry once a month or more because they cannot afford food.

“The research and advocacy of Harvest Manitoba continue to be guided by the tens of thousands of Manitobans who live with poverty and know food insecurity firsthand,” said Harvest Manitoba President & Chief Executive Officer, Vince Barletta. “By sharing their stories, the participants in the 2025 Harvest Voices report are offering real and practical solutions to the record setting levels of food insecurity faced by Manitoba families.”

Food banks alone cannot solve food insecurity. Harvest Voices 2025 also outlines 10 recommendations to address the pressures food bank clients face. Housing issues, wages, inflation, and rising grocery prices all contribute to food insecurity in Manitoba. The recommendations include investing in solutions related to childcare, affordability, and lower-barrier employment and skills training, especially in trades and healthcare.

Harvest Voices 2025: https://www.harvestmanitoba.ca/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/harvest-voices-2025.pdf

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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 13 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 400 food banks and agencies in Winnipeg, rural, northern and First Nations communities. Right now, we feed up to 60,000 Manitobans who rely on using a food bank every month, and nearly half 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.