

Look what we can do



2023 annual report





Nova Scotia government won't fast-track \$15 minimum wage increase

High food prices amid easing inflation has consumers questioning pricing power at big grocery chains

Federal benefits reduced child poverty in Nova Scotia, but 'province did very little,' report finds

'They're in crisis': Number of Nova Scotians waiting for rent supplement skyrockets

Cape Breton University food bank cannot keep up with demand: student union president

Halifax homelessness crisis: What governments are doing and why advocates say more is needed

Soaring food prices could have major impact on Canadians' health

Homelessness crisis is "brutal" says outreach worker

Wait list for family doctors nears 130,000 in Nova Scotia

'It never used to be like this,' street navigator says of spike in Halifax homelessness

'It is shameful': Large crowd demands more housing legislation in Nova Scotia

Racialized Communities Worst Affected by Rising Food Insecurity

Food bank use soars across the Maritimes

Soaring gas prices have N.S. government contemplating targeted relief

Feed Nova Scotia seeing major demand amid rising food and inflation costs

More Nova Scotians turn to food banks as cost of living continues to rise

'When are we going to say enough is enough?': Food banks urge longer-term solution

'We're going to run out': Low-income Nova Scotians bearing brunt of food crisis

Advocates say Nova Scotia budget neglects affordable housing crisis

Inflation forcing N.S. seniors to make difficult budget decisions

'We're scared to death': low-income Nova Scotians struggling to restock food after Fiona

Utility board defies Nova Scotia government, allows 14 per cent power rate hike

N.S. budget doesn't raise income assistance rates, shocks anti-poverty advocates

Some Nova Scotia students facing 'desperate' situation amid housing crisis

As people struggle with inflation in N.S., still no plans from premier for further relief

Visits to food banks up, schools struggling with food program costs, public accounts committee hears

'The worst is yet to come': Rising food costs devouring Maritime household budgets

Feed Nova Scotia sees spike in people accessing services as cost of living rises

Under the weight of it all

we continued to provide a basic need, and advocate for sustainable solutions to food insecurity—because of you.

In 2022-23, we distributed

2,714,589 kg

of food across our network.

Perishable items like fruit, vegetables, dairy, and meat made up half of that.

At least 46,434

people received food support from Feed Nova Scotia member food banks in 2022.

This represents a

25% increase

in the number of people accessing support compared to 2021.

14,721 people

accessed support for the first time in 2022.

These numbers reflect the growing food insecurity crisis in our province and the critical need for policy-based solutions.



A photograph of three children sitting at a black plastic outdoor table. The child on the left is partially visible, wearing a maroon shirt. The child in the middle is a girl with brown hair, wearing a white shirt, smiling and looking towards the boy on the right. The boy on the right has dark hair and is wearing a light blue shirt, looking down at something in his hands. On the table are several brown paper bags, a can of food, and other items. In the background, there is a colorful mural on a wall featuring blue waves, pink tentacles, and green hills. The text "Creating access to food" is overlaid in a large, white, cursive font across the middle of the image.

*Creating
access to food*



Responding to a disaster on top of a crisis

When Hurricane Fiona tore through our province, cutting connections to vital resources, and making thousands of food-insecure Nova Scotians even more vulnerable, we knew we needed to act fast. With your support, here's how we responded:



800 food boxes

distributed to folks in HRM, Antigonish, and Cape Breton



\$100,000 of non-perishables

purchased with funding from the provincial government



\$400,000 in cheques

sent directly to member agencies from provincial government funding



\$100,000 of frozen foods

distributed to member agencies to help replenish what was lost during the hurricane



\$20,000 in grocery gift cards

for United Way Cape Breton to distribute to people affected

Collective care lives here

We rely on the huge hearts of donors to raise food, funds, and awareness, and Nova Scotians always show up. The countless ways people rally for their neighbours is incredible!



More than 300 events

held on our behalf



\$1.3 million

collectively raised



65,000 kilograms

of food collected





Photo by Will Yang

Network members: Breaking down barriers

Adapting to provide support

Volunteers at the Christ Church Food Bank heard from some of their clients—especially those who worked full time and single parents—that only offering pick-up hours on a weekday morning was a barrier to access. So Christ Church added an evening pick-up time one day a week to their schedule. The response from clients has been overwhelmingly positive, with the number of evening pick-ups quickly outpacing the morning. The volunteers are now considering another evening to better serve the needs of their community.

COVID-19 food box program

For 21,000 Nova Scotians, our COVID-19 food box program bridged a critical gap to food access during the pandemic, and discontinuing it last summer felt tough. After the program ended, we provided financial support to 11 member food banks in areas where food box requests were highest to reach folks who experienced barriers to accessing support. Through this pilot project, some food banks were able to continue offering home delivery or taxi services.

We know people's challenges aren't limited to transportation. The top two reasons Nova Scotians requested food box deliveries were a lack of income and the high cost of food. Tackling systemic problems with charitable responses won't create food security. We need policy-based solutions that provide all Nova Scotians with adequate income.

A photograph of Christine Hoehne, a woman with short grey hair and glasses, smiling. She is wearing a white cable-knit sweater and a vibrant pink and orange scarf. She is standing in a food bank, with blue metal shelving units filled with cardboard boxes and white bags of food in the background. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.

"A lot of clients were asking for a different pick up time for the food bank, especially single moms, so we started opening one evening a week."

-Christine Hoehne, Christ Church Food Bank



Network members: Meeting critical needs

Staff and volunteers at member network food banks, meal programs, and shelters are much closer to their communities than we are, and sometimes it makes the most sense to provide money and get out of the way. Here's how they responded to the need when we distributed financial support:

76%



Bought food and gave it to people

49%



Provided gift cards to people

21%



Reduced transportation barriers to food
(e.g. taxi chits, mileage)

6%



Provided other essentials (e.g., heating costs, tents, sleeping bags, and other supplies for unhoused individuals)

These funds are so very important to our clients. I have been in my role as director for 24 years and I have never seen so many desperately hungry people since this past year.

-Christine Porter, Ally Centre of Cape Breton

Encouraging collaboration, taking action

When high school student Kai Hollett put out a call to action to his peers, people rose to the occasion—in a big way—raising over \$3,500 and 1,400 kilograms of food for Feed Nova Scotia, through a friendly competition among nine schools. We're proud to celebrate Kai and all the top community-led fundraisers and food drives.

\$100,000+ worth of food or funds

Loblaw - Spring and holiday food drives
NSLC - For the Good of Our Communities campaigns
Q104 Thanksgiv'er presented by Cherubini
Sobeys Inc. - Holiday Food Drive
Stuff-A-Bus presented by ATU Local 508, Move 100, and Scotiabank
Tim Hortons Smile Cookie
The Coast's Halifax Burger Bash
Walmart - Fight Hunger Spark Change

\$5,000+ worth of food or funds

AVR and Magic 94.9 - Give What You Can
BLT Jr. Elementary - Halloween for Hunger
CAPREIT - Holiday Food Drive
CBC Make the Season Kind
CBRE - Atlantic Market Outlook Breakfast
CFB Halifax Firefighters - food drive
Citco - We Feed Nova Scotia

Compass Commercial Realty LP - food drive
Dawson's Birthday food drive
EastPoint Engineering Ltd. - food drive
FX101.9 Fights Hunger
Gateway Business Brokers - online campaign
Herring Cove Fire Station 60 - food drive
HRM Schools food drive
Light Up Bedford Parade
Novacorp Properties Limited - food drive
Paramount Management - food drive
Park West School - food drive
Propeller Brewing Company - 25K IPA
Purolator - Tackle Hunger Holiday Boxes
Sackville High School - Fright Against Hunger
SaltWire Holiday Parade of Lights
The AndyVent Calendar
Tom Jackson - Stories, Songs & Santa Causes
Ultimate Online Nova Scotia Kitchen Party and NS Buzz



***"We saw how rising food costs
were impacting the people in our
communities, and wanted to do what we
could to help support our neighbours."***

-Kai Hollett



Championing change where we live

Sometimes, the passion to help runs so deep among our supporters they look for multiple ways to connect people with our cause. Joanne Lawen-Mrakic is a perfect example. We're thrilled with the way she engaged family, friends, and the community in supporting our work. Thanks, too, to the Lebanese Festival, Paramount Management, Lawen Dentistry, and Beads by Zoya, for responding to her enthusiasm!

The power of yes

When NSLC staff come together for the good of our community, they make big things happen. And they highlight the most critical part of fundraising—the ask! And they're not alone. Through donations at the till, staff and customers at Atlantic Superstore, Foodland and participating Co-ops, Lawtons, No Frills, NSLC, Sobeys, Walmart, and Your Independent Grocer collectively contributed \$361,000 for Feed Nova Scotia—and that doesn't include the support we received beyond the till! Our heartfelt thanks to staff who asked and every person who said yes.



Increasing access to local foods

This year we purchased more food from local producers to provide staple items for Nova Scotians accessing support. We've budgeted an extra \$1 million for food purchases next year, and we've set a target to source 50% of all food purchases locally, with a particular focus on buying direct from farmers. Here's what we bought and distributed this year, because of you:



\$156,000 of eggs



\$154,000 of milk



\$87,000 of produce






\$136,000 of poultry and beef





"I cried very happy tears. It's been a rough several years and this food carried me through."

During the holiday season, Feed Nova Scotia alongside 21 member agencies and 24 community organizations supported 20,737 individuals in 7,195 households in HRM with Christmas support. Here are a few facts unique to this year:

-  1,200 additional households registered for support compared to 2021.
-  To support the additional number of unhoused or precariously housed people who applied for support, we provided \$50 grocery cards through the Navigator Street Outreach team.
-  We recruited additional volunteer groups to help meet the request for home-delivery service.





*"Giving back to the community
over the holidays was an incredibly
rewarding team-building experience
for everyone."*

-Ambassadors

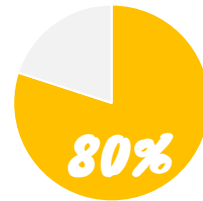
*Advocating
for real,
meaningful
change*

Our message is clear: Nova Scotians need adequate income to live a dignified life.

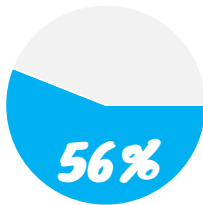
This year we surveyed individuals receiving food support and their voices were a chorus, highlighting the urgent need for policy intervention.

We were pleased to see our public opinion survey echo that sentiment.

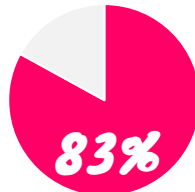
Bottom line, charitable band-aid solutions aren't going to cut it. A dignified life for all Nova Scotians is possible. It's time to make it so.



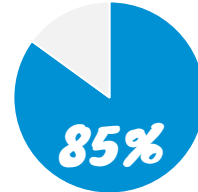
of food bank clients surveyed cited insufficient income and rising cost of living as the top reasons for food insecurity.



of food bank clients surveyed sacrificed food to pay for medication.



of Nova Scotians surveyed believed provincial income support should be increased.



of food bank clients surveyed spent more than 30% of their income on housing, the threshold for what's considered affordable.

We delivered an urgent call for policy-based solutions to MLAs at a Public Accounts Committee meeting in June and a Standing Committee on Community Services meeting in January. A few months later, in the provincial budget, we'd see our politicians' blatant choice to leave thousands of Nova Scotians in crisis.

Nova Scotia non-profits plead for higher income assistance amid rising cost of living

By Lyndsay Armstrong • The Canadian Press

Posted January 10, 2023 6:58 pm • Updated January 10, 2023 7:46 pm



We were encouraged to see that at the 64th General Assembly, our recommendation resulted in Bill 209, which proposes to reduce out-of-pocket expenses on pharmaceuticals for families and seniors.

Four ways we can create food-secure communities:

(our policy recommendations)

- 1** Raise Income Assistance rates substantially to match the poverty line and index the rates to inflation.
- 2** Provide a minimum income floor for Nova Scotians, often referred to as a basic income guarantee.
- 3** Support and invest in non-market, non-profit, co-op, affordable housing.
- 4** Reduce out-of-pocket expenses for prescription medication by waiving or reducing the deductible in the Family Pharmacare Program.

Member network: Working to provide homes

Thousands of Nova Scotians are at the intersection of the housing and food insecurity crises. We were thrilled to cheer member agencies on as they continued to dig in and provide long-term, sustainable solutions.

When Adsum for Women & Children opened The Sunflower, they showed everyone that when resources, leadership, and vision align, we can create dignified, affordable housing. They could've filled the 25 units several times over, once again highlighting the need is urgent, and has been for *years*.

In Cape Breton, the North Sydney Community Food Bank began major upgrades to their building, with accessibility and sustainability at the forefront. Future work will include 20 new affordable housing units for seniors in the community.

The Mi'kmaw Native Friendship Centre will also redevelop an existing building to include 21 long-term housing units to support Indigenous clients experiencing chronic homelessness. They will also provide cultural support and programming to encourage clients to engage with their community and traditions.

Photo: The Sunflower



*Supporting
community
to lead the way*

The best solutions to food insecurity will come from those with lived experience and local community leaders who know what people want and need.

In this spirit, our Innovation and Learning Lab aims to explore, test, and develop new ways of meeting the needs of food-insecure Nova Scotians.



We formed a committee of 16 Nova Scotians who have lived experience with food insecurity to ground and inform our work. They're compensated at a living wage rate for the time they spend contributing their expertise—providing meaningful insight into where we're getting things right, and more importantly, where we're getting things wrong. We're extraordinarily thankful for their participation, openness, and honesty.



We launched a grant stream and supported 14 community-led projects that are trying new ways to increase access, availability, or choice of food; increase community-led production of food; support service coordination and/or build awareness and advocacy around the root causes of food insecurity. We'll take the learnings from this year's soft launch to refine the process before opening the grant publicly in 2024.



The Halifax Food Policy Alliance spent a year and a half engaging in extensive community consultation and from this, identified 56 action items—known as the JustFOOD Action Plan. We'll be working closely with community partners to advance two items from the plan: a social supermarket and a rural food access program.



*Shifting
our culture*



Change starts within

Many staff expressed that accessing mental health support can present a challenge; commuting, scheduling, and other commitments at home and in the community are obstacles, and the cost of private mental health services can be prohibitive. Understanding that it's critical for staff to be able to connect with support in whatever way they are most comfortable, and recognizing these barriers, we established on site mental health support with counsellor Stacy Darku of Esinam Counselling, and doubled the allowance through our benefits provider.

In a continued effort to be a fair and equitable employer, and help create social change, we partnered with the Diversity Employment Network to host the first BIPOC Atlantic Job Fair. There were 250 participants and 46 exhibitors. From first-hand feedback, we know of 16 people who received job offers through connections they made.

We are also grateful for support from several community partners like Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS), Black Business Initiative (BBI), and the Diversity Employment Network (DEN). Through these critical connections, we continue to diversify our pool of candidates and strengthen our recruitment efforts to have a staff team that is reflective of the community we support.

23,769 hours

contributed by volunteers to help in every aspect of our organization. And they did it with big heart!

472 people

chose or continued to choose Feed Nova Scotia as an organization they want to volunteer with. How amazing is that?

3 volunteers

hit a very big milestone this year, contributing over 3,000 hours. Hats off to Mary McNab, Nancy Fullerton, and Delores Smith!

1,382 hours

spent by volunteers out connecting with the community at fundraisers and food drives.

"I've been in the Pride parade before with businesses, but this felt different, and so very special. We danced the whole way. The crew was SO fun, the crowd was screaming with joy, and I was so proud to be a part of the magic!"

-Tanya Colbo





Sharing a legacy of support

For more than 20 years, Charles Belliveau has been quietly supporting our work, sending a cheque in the mail almost every single month, to help support folks experiencing food insecurity. For Charles, growing up with mobility and speech impairments had its challenges, but one thing he's grateful for is that he's never had to worry about food. This year, when Charles wanted to deepen his impact in the community, a gift of shares made it possible. We're honoured to recognize Charles for a lifetime of showing up for his neighbours—allowing us to provide enough food for 350,000 meals. But that's not all; in true Charles fashion, he's already planning for his next gift.

Donating securities is a tax-smart and impactful way to give. Together with Charles, 35 of our incredible donors contributed \$570,000 this year through gifts of shares.

Celebrating excellence

How do you honour someone who gave over 10,000 hours and a whole lot of heart in their 14-year volunteer post? Well, we decided to make it an annual celebration, by creating the Norma Searle Award for Volunteer Excellence. Congratulations, Norma! We can't wait to recognize some amazing people who, like you, have done so much to help us work toward our mission.





Building a framework for the future

How do we start working toward social justice when we're all deeply entrenched in a system that holds up charity as an acceptable response to human rights violations? There's no easy answer, but as a staff and board of directors, we started to dig in this year. Led by DLM Consulting, the board and staff team are looking critically at our mission, vision, and values and developing new strategic pillars to ground our future direction.

We know there's much work to be done in the days ahead and the only true measure of success will be how our efforts are felt by the communities we support.



We acknowledged it's time to move away from a Eurocentric governance model to one that is intentional and respectful of African Nova Scotian and Indigenous heritage. We're working with Paul Taylor of Evenings & Weekends Consulting to make this change.



We've created a justice, equity, diversity, decolonization, and inclusion standing committee and a workplan to hold these principles at the forefront of our work.



We now use a five-P equity lens (people, process, place, power, possibilities) at every board meeting with an in-camera evaluation at the end of the meeting. The board looks critically at our own work with 27 guiding questions for discussion.

care and humility, with social-justice focused agencies, donors, private sectors, etc.? How will we work with and in service to equity-deserving groups who have been historically marginalized and who continue to be today?

Board of Directors

Duma Bernard

Patricia Bradshaw

Kim Burns

Cynthia Dorrington

Joe Fraser

Mark Fullerton

Mary Ellen Greenough

Ahmad Hussein

Maxime Lessard

Roddy Macdonald

Miranda Mavhunga

Sylvia Parris-Drummond

Mohammad Ali Raza

Robert Strang

Thank you to outgoing members Lisa Haydon, Jeff Hillyard, and Kristen Hollery.

Outstanding contributions (\$10,000+)

Brad Abernethy



Stella and Scott
Balfour



Charles
Belliveau



Black Family
Foundation



THE CHURCH OF
JESUS CHRIST
OF LATTER-DAY SAINTS



The Edwards
Family Charitable
Foundation



The Elia
Corporation



Flemming Charitable
Foundation



Helga Guderley



Heather Jean
McInnes



John
Himmelman



LiFT Family
Fund

Marian
Fund



F.M. McCulloch



Michael Robert
Merchant

Partially Funded by
Natural Resources
Canada

Financed partiellement par
Ressources naturelles
Canada



The River Philip
Foundation



The Sidney Crosby
Foundation



St. Augustine's
Church, Purcell
Cove Road

Holly Murphy-
Stenton and
Ted Stenton



The Windsor
Foundation

Thanks, also, to those who prefer anonymity or haven't consented to recognition.



Outstanding food donors

100,000+ kilograms

Atlantic Superstore
Food Banks Canada
Sobeys
Walmart

25,000 - 99,999 kilograms

Charles Keddy Farms Ltd
Costco Wholesalers
GlobalMedic
Sable Warehousing & Distribution Ltd
Saputo Dairy Products Canada
Sawler Gardens
Spa Springs Mineral Water Company
Stokdijk Greenhouses
Sysco Atlantic
Vermeulen Farms Ltd

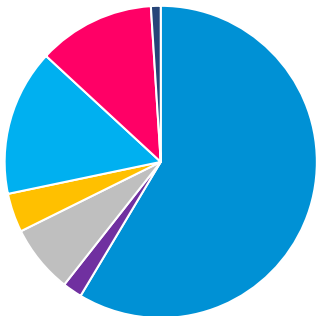
5,000 - 24,999 kilograms

Apex Sales Group Inc
Apple Valley Foods Inc
Canada Bread
Catelli Foods Corp
den Haan Enterprises Ltd
Egg Farmers of Canada
Elmridge Farm Ltd
Ferme Benoit Vernier
High Liner Foods Inc
Maple Leaf Foods Inc
McCain Foods (Canada)
Nova Agri Inc
Ocean Crisp Apple Company Inc
Scotian Meat Market
Spurr Brothers Farms Ltd
TDL Group Corporation
Van Meekeren Farms Ltd

Financials

Revenue

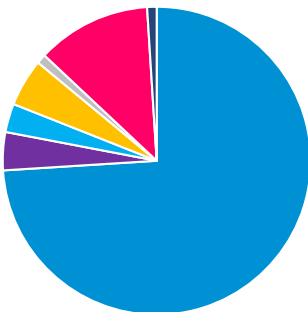
\$24,563,830 (Includes \$89,720 from Innovation and Learning Lab)



- In kind food donations (58%)
- In kind other donations (2%)
- Individual donations (7%)
- Corporate donations (4%)
- Donations by and through other charities (15%)
- Government grants (12%)
- Other income (1%)
- Investment income (less than 1%)
- Innovation and Learning Lab (less than 1%)

Expenses

\$24,003,648 (Includes \$187,900 from Innovation and Learning Lab)



- Food procurement and logistics (74%)
- Community connections (4%)
- Fundraising and donor relations (3%)
- People, culture, and administration (5%)
- Occupancy (1%)
- Member-designated donations (12%)
- Innovation and Learning Lab (1%)

Find our audited financial statements at feednovascotia.ca



A different Nova Scotia is possible.

Through the generous donations of food and funds by our donors, and the incredible work of our volunteers, we move into the next year hopeful about the future despite the notable absence of government leadership in poverty reduction.

We're thankful for, and humbled by, the continued outpouring of support.

We all agree better is possible for Nova Scotians struggling with food insecurity. With your steadfast contributions of time, money, and vocal support for change, we can make it so. We can build a province where everyone has adequate income to access the food they want and need to live a dignified life.

We will get there. Together.



