

MORE
Challenges
THAN EVER.
MORE
Support
THAN
EVER

Report to the community 2021



Gratitude. Frustration. Relief. Determination.

The past year—one we can all agree was unlike any other in our lifetimes—has left us with mixed feelings. On the one hand, we're incredibly thankful. People showed up for their neighbours across the province with incredible kindness and generosity. Our donors gave more than ever. Our member agencies were resilient. Our volunteers were devoted and understanding. And our staff were relentless in their resolve to make sure food got out the door every day. Despite the additional challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, there's no question that everyone pulled their weight and then some. We're beyond thrilled to recognize their efforts.

On the other hand, we're so disheartened and dissatisfied that our province is still struggling with the root causes of food insecurity. We're inspired to work harder—to step up our advocacy and awareness efforts—to solve the more fundamental challenges. The fact is, we know that food insecurity is a symptom of a bigger problem. Yes, we're as committed as ever to supplying food support. But we're even more determined to find long-term solutions. Because it's issues like systemic racism and oppression, low wages, precarious work, inadequate income assistance rates, expensive housing, and lack of affordable childcare that contribute to food insecurity.



So, as you read this,
we invite you to join us.
Join us in celebrating
the wonderful successes
of a challenging year.
And join us in working
toward a better future
where all Nova Scotians
have access to the food
they need.



A powerful, unified response from a network of partners.

We do not work alone. Far, far from it. We depend on the support we receive from our community. And beyond that, we're only as strong as our member network. This network—including 140 food banks, shelters, and meal programs across Nova Scotia—is the province's frontline of support services. We supply these member agencies with food, help them build capacity, and help them raise awareness of the challenges food insecurity creates each day.

And they, in turn, serve the needs of the people in their community in so many ways. The additional challenges posed by the pandemic only served to strengthen our network relationships. A shared sense of purpose buoyed us as volunteers adapted, staff stepped up, and we all adjusted processes. As much as our members might appreciate the support of Feed Nova Scotia, we are in awe of the dedication they show every day.

At a time when so many organizations were forced to close their doors, food banks, shelters and meal programs were still there, providing critical support to our communities.

Here are some of the ways they worked around COVID-19's impact.

- Members reached out to people by phone to keep in touch and provide emotional support.
- Food bank volunteers provided curbside support, loading food into people's car trunks to adhere to social distancing.
- Many meal programs, like Loaves and Fishes in Sydney, quickly pivoted to provide takeout.
- Faced with physical distancing requirements in small spaces, shelters were forced to reduce capacity. As a temporary solution, they worked to move shelter residents to hotels.
- Organizations that offered snacks or small meals during drop-in programming started providing food hampers since their programming was paused or moved to virtual.
- Since schools were closed, Pugwash Open Hamper Food Bank put together and delivered craft kits that were individually customized for the families they supported.
- Brunswick Street Mission used their kitchen to prepare meals for neighbouring shelters in addition to supporting their own clients with takeout.
- Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre put together and distributed meal kits (such as pizzas and tacos). It was both necessary food support and an activity for the family to do together.
- Staff of the Canadian Mental Health Association began making regular phone check-ins and even delivered food support for clients who were afraid to go out in the early days of the pandemic.



"There was just so much darkness in the world. We were hearing about people getting sick and dying and places that were closed. Everything that stayed open was almost like a candle in the darkness. The food banks staying open was a reassurance to people and a comfort to them."

John MacKillop,
Helping Hands South of Smokey,
Baddeck

"Early in the pandemic, the individuals we support became very quiet. We didn't hear from them. They were afraid to come out, but we knew they still needed food, so we had to rethink how we were going to connect with them."

Kathy Fleiger, Berwick Food Bank





The pandemic only inspired us to work harder.

Once the pandemic hit, we worried that the need for food would be greater than ever. We worried that our ability to source and distribute that food might be compromised. And we worried about keeping people safe while providing an essential service. Despite these worries, or perhaps because of them, the response of our staff and volunteers was inspiring. It was confident perseverance; a determination to do whatever it takes to keep supporting the people in our

community. And that meant a lot of troubleshooting in a small amount of time. It was a monumental task. But with each other's support and lots of creative thinking, we made it happen. As masks, distancing, and hand sanitizer became a regular part of our day, we kept the food moving. We not only stayed fully operational; we provided more food than ever, both to our member network and directly to Nova Scotians.

2,942,048 kg

Amount of food distributed.

\$16.9 million

Value of food distributed

39%

Increase in food distributed compared to last year

\$1,343,675

Value of cheques provided to member agencies

\$278,500

Value of gift cards provided to member agencies

23,000

Bottles of hand sanitizer distributed

153,000

Masks distributed

50% non-perishable

like canned goods, cereal, pasta, and peanut butter

50% fresh and frozen

like fresh fruit and vegetables, frozen foods, meat, and dairy products

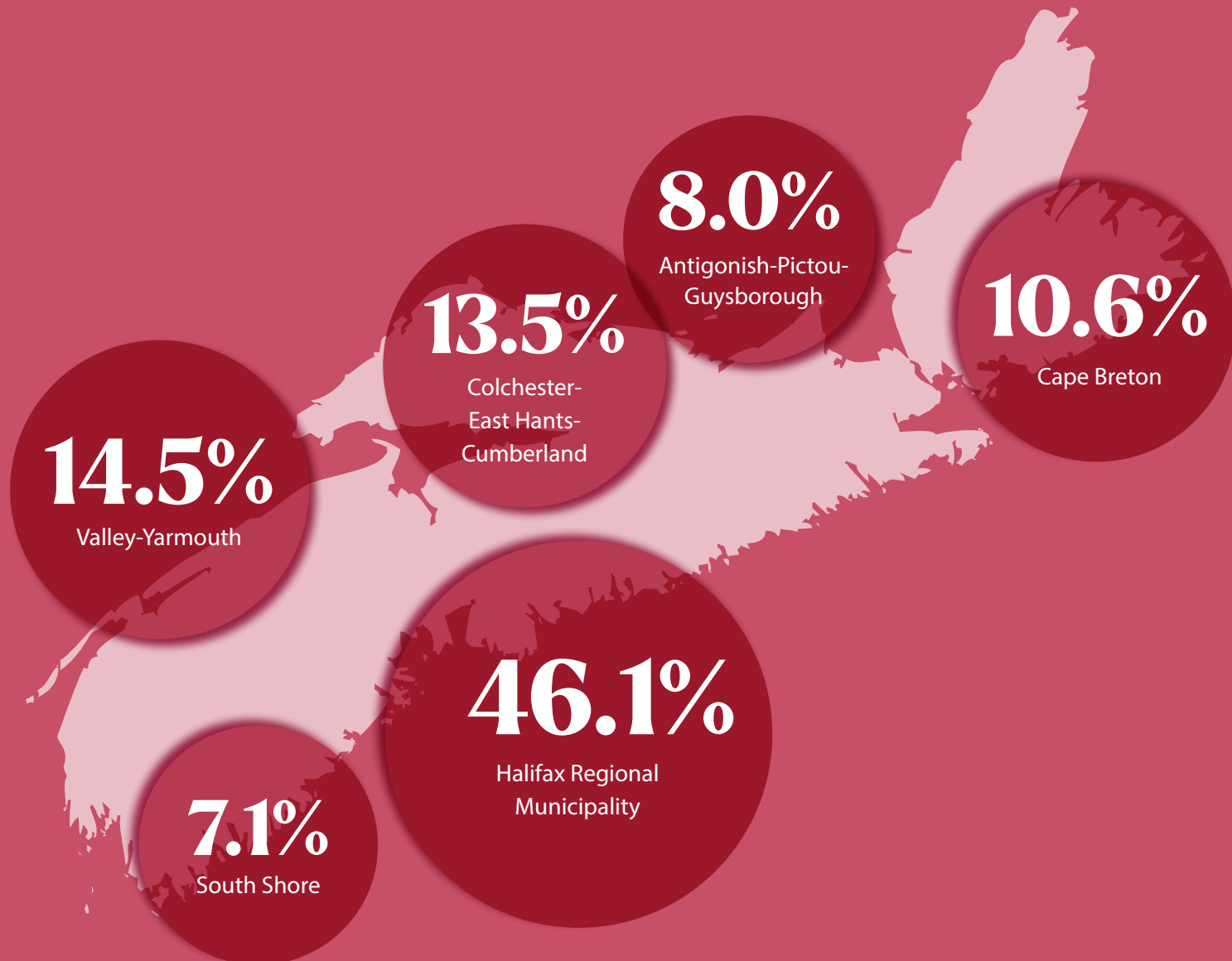


"The support that we get from Feed Nova Scotia is essential. I really don't know where we would be without it, quite honestly!"

Faye Curry,
Shumilacke Food Bank, Shubenacadie



Where we distributed the food.



2,558,290 kg*

*Excludes 383,758 kg delivered directly to homes across the province through our COVID-19 Food Box Program.

The COVID-19 Food Box Program.

Early in the pandemic, we learned that many people with limited financial means weren't able to get to a food bank. In response, we built a province-wide food box home delivery program. Doing this in the height of the pandemic was a huge undertaking. We bought \$900,000 worth of food (and that was just the start!); sourced extra warehouse space, forklifts, and boxes; developed an intake process that included working with 211 and setting up our

own call centre with nine navigators on the phone; and figured out delivery logistics through community partnerships and volunteer support. And we did it all while continuing our regular operations. The COVID-19 Food Box Program, funded largely by the Province of Nova Scotia, launched in May 2020 and played a critical role in making sure people had access to food. Special thanks to Davis Pier for helping design the program.

In the first 11 months of the program, we provided:

22,436
food boxes

6,760
deliveries

4,219
households



"This program was so seamless, from calling 211 and then Feed Nova Scotia. When you're in that kind of situation, you feel less than. With this, I never felt judged."

COVID-19 food box recipient



Other highlights that made a difference.



Member capacity fund

We awarded 34 grants totalling \$47,630. Projects included: Manna for Health's delivery program for folks unable to get to the food bank; additional supports from Mainline Needle Exchange (including tents, sleeping bags, phones, and gift cards); new equipment for MetroWorks to support the production of affordable, healthy meals; and Rainbow Food Bank was able to increase their ability to store special food items that meet the needs of those with dietary requirements.

"For us, the partnership with Feed Nova Scotia means we have something tangible we can offer people every day. Food is a universal ice breaker. It's a kind gesture that can meet one need while opening up conversations about what else they might need."

Jo Parker,
Mainline Needle Exchange, Halifax



Halal chicken

Just as we were closing out the year, Food Banks Canada provided 12,000 whole halal chickens. We were excited to share this unique food donation with our network of member agencies, and to designate a large portion to community organizations offering food support specifically to households who choose a halal diet, including this delivery to Ummah Masjid and Community Centre.



School backpacks

We purchased and delivered 2,544 school backpacks to our member agencies who then distributed them to kids across the province.

“To work so hard to make sure others have food on their tables—that’s love. We’ve felt the love and respect of your team whenever we have reached out for help. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. We love all of you. Keep safe.”

The team at Helping Hands Food Bank, Dartmouth



After the bell

We distributed 9,600 healthy food packs through Food Banks Canada’s After the Bell program. This program is designed to help fill the gap when families don’t have access to school nutrition programs in the summer.



Frozen food pop-ups

Frozen food distribution grew 70% this year, and lots of it was meat, poultry and seafood. Sometimes sharing the food from the back of our refrigerated truck at a member agency was the best way to get it into the hands of those who need it.

Christmas registry

During the Christmas season, we matched 6,503 households—that’s 18,406 individuals—with food or gift support. This program was provided in partnership with 27 Feed Nova Scotia member agencies and 26 other community partners. Of the food support provided, Feed Nova Scotia supplied 4,247 produce hampers; 4,534 turkeys; 1,373 chickens; 152 tofu roasts; 137 prepared dinners; and 143 grocery gift cards. Through the Hearts for Christmas campaign, we also provided gift cards to families with children to help parents put a little something under the tree for 2,028 children.



**The root of food
insecurity is social inequity.**

Charity is not the answer.

Food insecurity is the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints—and it's a crisis in Nova Scotia and across our country. People aren't food insecure because they don't have food, they're food insecure because they don't have enough income.

And a variety of factors can contribute to this:

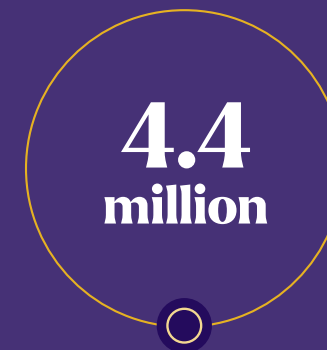
- Systemic racism and oppression
- Lack of affordable childcare
- Mental and physical health challenges
- Precarious work and low wages
- Inadequate income assistance levels
- The increasing cost of living
- Lack of affordable housing
- Inadequate disability support



"We asked for support because we struggle in a good year, but during 2020 and both being on EI, it was harder. Thank you for your help!"

In other words, a lack of food is a symptom of greater social problems and inequities. And the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the truth of this. According to a Food Banks Canada report, the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) contributed to lower food bank numbers. Why? Because CERB made sure that people had the income they needed to provide food for themselves. CERB also illustrated clearly that when government wants to, they can move quickly to make social policy changes that make a real difference.

Food banks fill a critical gap and have evolved over the years to provide things like parenting programs, community gardening opportunities, and connections to other organizations. While we advocate for much-needed change to the system, we'll continue to ensure people have food today. But as much as we're committed to supplying food, we're even more committed to helping correct the social inequities that are the root of the problem.



Number of Canadians who live in food-insecure households



Number of households in Nova Scotia that are food insecure

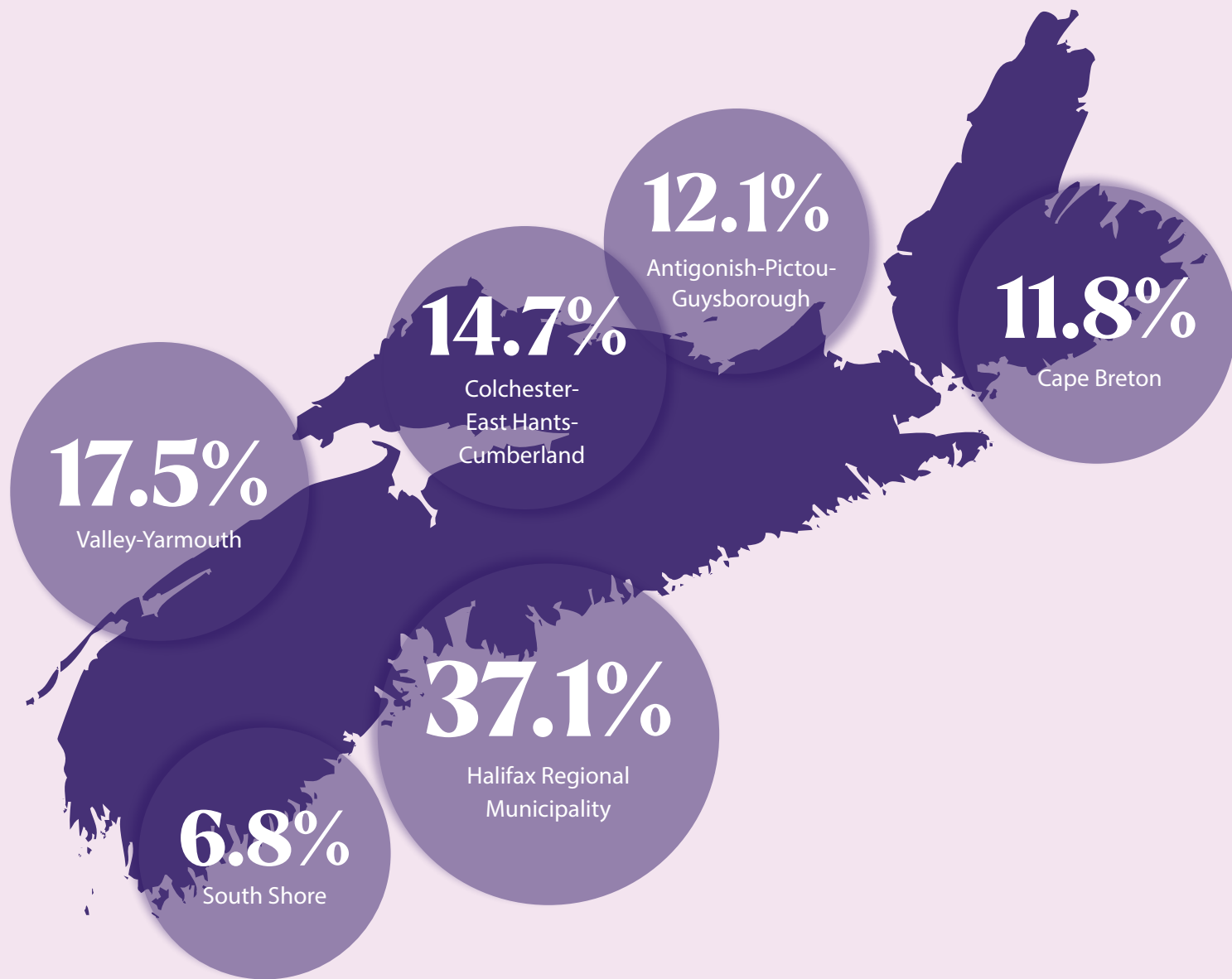


Number of people supported by member food banks



Number of visits to member food banks

People supported by food banks by region.



Food insecurity doesn't affect all Nova Scotians equally.

About 30% of Black and Indigenous households are food insecure in Canada, compared to about 11% of White households. So, when we think about how we can help make positive change, we have to also consider how disproportionately Black, Indigenous, and people of colour (BIPOC) are affected by food insecurity. Food security for all is only possible when we dismantle systemic forces that work against this group of Nova Scotians.

Since change begins from within, we began by doing a little soul-searching of our own. Here are some of the ways we started to centre diversity, equity, and inclusion in our work:

- Developed an equity lens to help us better think about and change the way we make decisions at Feed Nova Scotia, by incorporating the input and experiences of those most impacted by those decisions.
- Held an all-staff training session tailored to our organization: Building Bridges and Understanding Diversity and Inclusion Through Dialogue, Reflection, Awareness and Action.
- Created a staff lending library to commit to learning, sharing knowledge, and sparking important conversations.
- Started looking critically at our recruitment efforts as we strive to build a culture where difference is valued.
- Created a wall to celebrate Black excellence, resilience, strength, and stories, and pushed to support local, Black-owned businesses.
- Select staff members took a trauma-informed care training course.



Are we there yet? No, not at all. But we're committed to, over time, weaving a diversity commitment into the essence of Feed Nova Scotia every day going forward. We're committed to getting there.

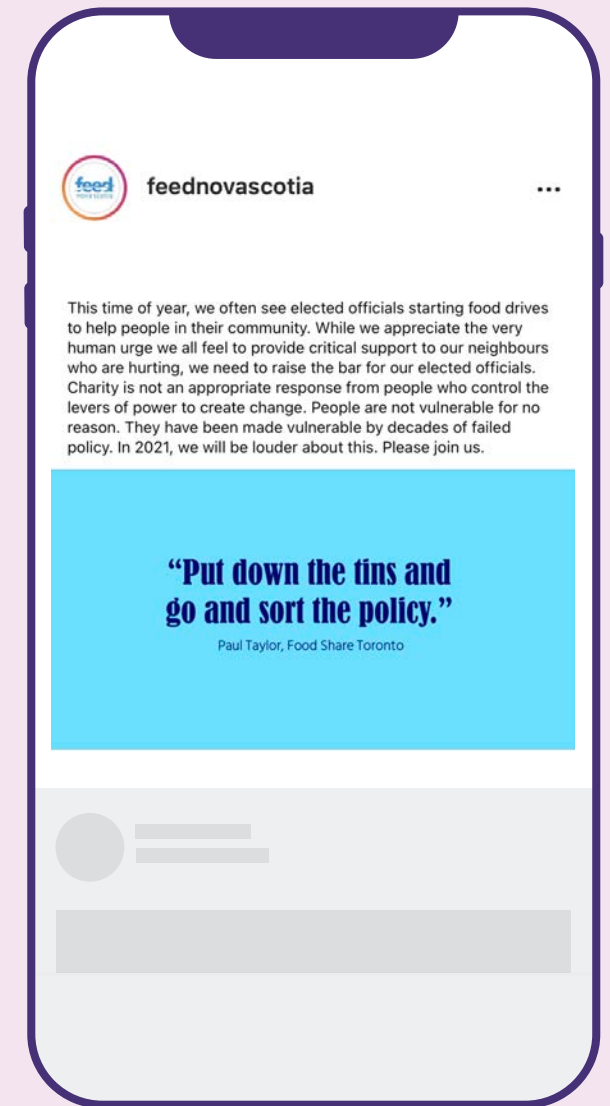
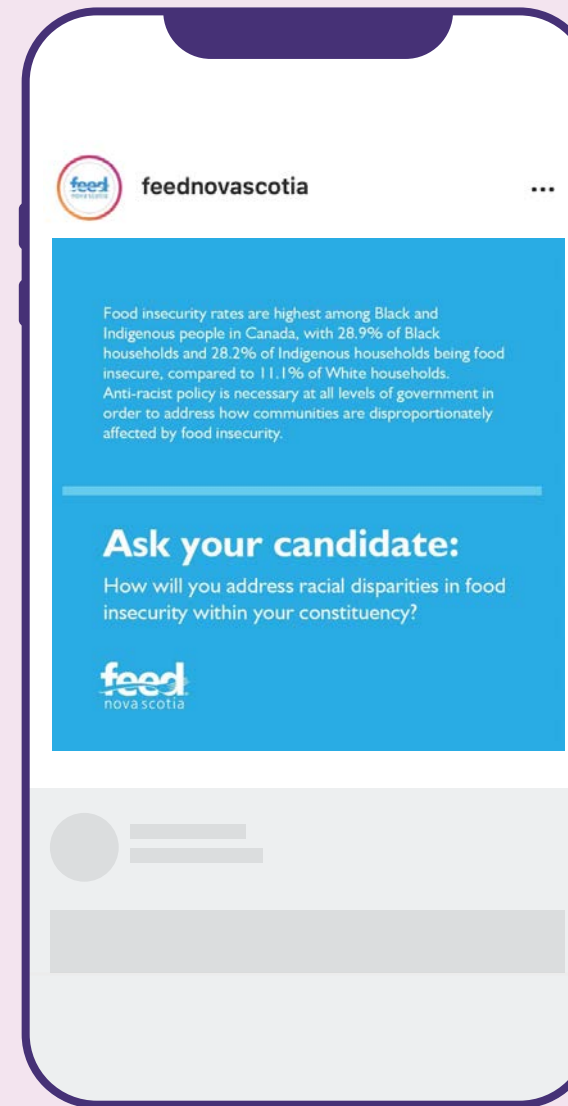
Pursuing a future without food insecurity.

Pushing for systemic change takes advocacy. As a provincial organization with influence and a credible voice, we have a responsibility to raise awareness of food insecurity and advocate for long-term change.

One early effort involved meeting with representatives of Nova Scotia Department of Community Services to explore ways to support those experiencing food insecurity, including a recommendation to equip low-income Nova Scotians with additional funds to buy food on their own. The Province subsequently announced an investment of \$2.2 million so every individual and family member on income assistance would receive an additional \$50 in April 2020 to help pay for food, cleaning supplies, and personal care items. While a one-time investment can't address food insecurity long-term, we were pleased to have a voice at the table and encouraged by the speed with which the Province implemented the initiative.

Other advocacy efforts this past year included inviting Nova Scotians to engage their elected officials. Policy created by municipal government has a major impact on both the communities we live in and the people we support through our network. So, we created and shared a list of questions that we encouraged people to ask their local candidates.

These posts discussed racial disparities, food deserts, healthy food strategies, local food businesses, and poverty. At Christmas time we also reminded elected officials that the best use of their effort and time is not to host a food drive, but to use their unique position to fix the policies that lead to food insecurity.



"We're low income and struggle monthly with food and other things. We quite often find ourselves needing to take some bill money to put toward food and that still isn't enough."



Celebrating a year of outstanding generosity.

Once a state of emergency was declared, we feared that a new culture of frugality might minimize the donations we received. Instead, the floodgates of generosity opened! We saw substantial and immediate increases in the number of people

donating online; many people signed up for monthly donations; and businesses and individuals initiated fundraisers to engage their family, friends, and customers in donating. Thank you!

1

Big in-house efforts

We spearheaded two successful fundraisers this year: Our online 50/50 brought in \$72,000 (shout out to 89.9 The Wave, Mr. Lube, and Trout Point Lodge), and our new virtual bulk food drive added 10 pallets of food to our warehouse, thanks to top fundraising teams like Sobey's Dartmouth Office, Paula Langille's Helping Hands, and Nova Scotia CRA.

2

Lockdown donations

When pandemic-related lockdowns forced restaurants to close, it was heart-wrenching to know they were struggling. But it was heartwarming when these same restaurants stopped by to donate their unsold fresh food. We also thank the farmers and agri-food associations who donated what they couldn't sell.

3

Stay the Blazes Home!

No sooner had these words been spoken, when our amazing community seized the moment to help their neighbours across the province. From t-shirts by My Home Apparel, to locally-brewed beer by Garrison Brewing Company, and digital downloads of a song by The Stanfields—we received more than \$64,000 thanks to those four little words and a whole lot of community generosity.

4

Our new generator

This new natural gas generator at our warehouse in Burnside will protect thousands of dollars of food in the event of a power outage. A huge thank you to Heritage Gas, Benoit Electric, Iron Dog, Halifax Community Grants program, and other partners who made it possible.

5

THE BIG FEED

This socially-distanced GIVETOLIVE event got people active outdoors and was a big boost to everyone's spirit, raising \$25,000 and 1,100 kilograms of food.

6

Atlantic Superstore

Atlantic Superstore held two province-wide food drives, donated nutritious rescued food, offered bulk gift card purchasing at incredibly discounted pricing, and invited our team to share in the celebration at the opening of their new Larry Uteck store.



"I'm very grateful for the support. It has been a tough year. I haven't been able to work since March of last year, because of the pandemic."



1

Online awesomeness

We were blown away by the creativity and kindness of those who took to the Internet to drive donations our way—joyful dancing by Maritime Bhangra, music at the Ultimate Online Nova Scotia Kitchen Party, online trivia with Adam Aldred, live-streamed video games with Keegan Meyer (aka Faerghast), isolation bingo by The Town Heroes, turkey drive by Halifax Transit, and so much more.

2

Walmart

Our friends at Walmart continued to show up for their neighbours, donating rescued food throughout the year, and raising \$162,365 through the 2021 Fight Hunger Spark Change campaign. Amazing! Huge thanks to everyone who participated.

3

Tim Hortons

Feed Nova Scotia received a whopping \$126,380 through the Tim Hortons Smile Cookie campaign. Thanks to all the restaurants that chose us as their charity match and to everyone who bought these yummy treats!

4

Thanksgiv'er

With so many events cancelled, we were thrilled to see the Q104 Thanksgiv'er come to life. A huge shout-out to Cherubini Group of Companies, Q104, Sobeys, Pete's Frootique & Fine Foods; O'Regan's Automotive Group; and everyone who helped raise \$80,000, resulting in a donation of 21,367 kg of fresh and non-perishable food.

5

Case of Compassion

Grateful for another stellar year of support from Bishop's Cellar and everyone who participated in our Case of Compassion fundraiser. In 17 years, this campaign has raised \$650,000!

6

Halifax Burger Week

In an especially tough year, Halifax Burger Week still saw 105,000 burgers sold by 146 restaurants—raising \$126,000 for Feed Nova Scotia!

"Never thought I'd ever go to a food bank until COVID and I'm so appreciative for the genuine support."

Outstanding financial support

\$25,000 +



Department of Surgery
Dalhousie University
at QEII Health Sciences



The Stevens Family
Foundation



The Windsor
Foundation

\$10,000 – \$24,999

ATU Local 508
Andrew Peller Ltd
APMPM Administration Inc
Arterra Wines Canada
Atlantic Mining NS Corp
Bank of Nova Scotia
Benoit Electric Ltd
Black Family Foundation
Breathing Green
Chisholm Thomson Family
Foundation
Clearwater Seafoods Limited
Dalhousie University -
Department of Psychiatry
Devonian Coast
East Coast Credit Union Ltd

Emergency Medical Care Inc
Enterprise Holdings / ERAC
Canada Foundation
Flemming Charitable
Foundation
Gordon Stirrett Wealth
Management
Harry Freeman & Son Limited
High Liner Foods
Holly Murphy-Stenton and
Ted Stenton
iA Financial Group
K+S Windsor Salt Ltd
KPMG
Labatt Breweries
Loyalty One

Maritime Paper
Molson Canada
Moosehead Breweries
National Bank of Canada
NSGEU
NSGEU Local 470
Pomerleau Inc
RBC Foundation
RCMP Veterans' Assoc (NS)
Retired Teachers Organization
Scotia Metal Products
Southwest Properties
Storage Vault / Access
Storage / Sentinel Storage
TELUS Friendly Future
Foundation

The Church of Jesus Christ of
Latter-Day Saints
The Edwards Family Charitable
Foundation
The Jeffery Hale Foundation
The Plum Foundation
Tweed Inc
Unifor Social Justice Fund
Wawanesa Insurance
ZeniMax Halifax

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

Outstanding food support

100,000 kg +

Atlantic Superstore
Food Banks Canada

Second Harvest
Sobeys

Walmart

25,000 kg – 99,999 kg

Basinview Farms Ltd
Charles Keddy Farms Ltd
Coca Cola Canada Ltd

Costco Wholesalers
Elmridge Farm Ltd
Mid-Isle Farms Inc

Nova Agri Inc
Saputo Dairy
Products Canada

Sawler Gardens
Sysco Halifax
Vermeulen Farms Ltd

5,000 kg – 24,999 kg

Agropur - Farmers
Co-Operative Dairy Ltd
Apple Valley Foods Inc
den Haan Enterprises Ltd
Eden Valley Poultry

Egg Farmers of Nova Scotia/
Egg Farmers of Canada
GFS - Gordon Food Service
Green Seafoods Ltd
High Liner Foods
JD Irving Ltd

Les Fermes Dani
Ocean Crisp
Apple Company Inc
Outcast Foods
Smoke's Pouterie
Spurr Brothers Farms Ltd

Stokdijk Greenhouses
TDL Group Corporation
Tomavo Inc
Van Meekeren Farms Ltd

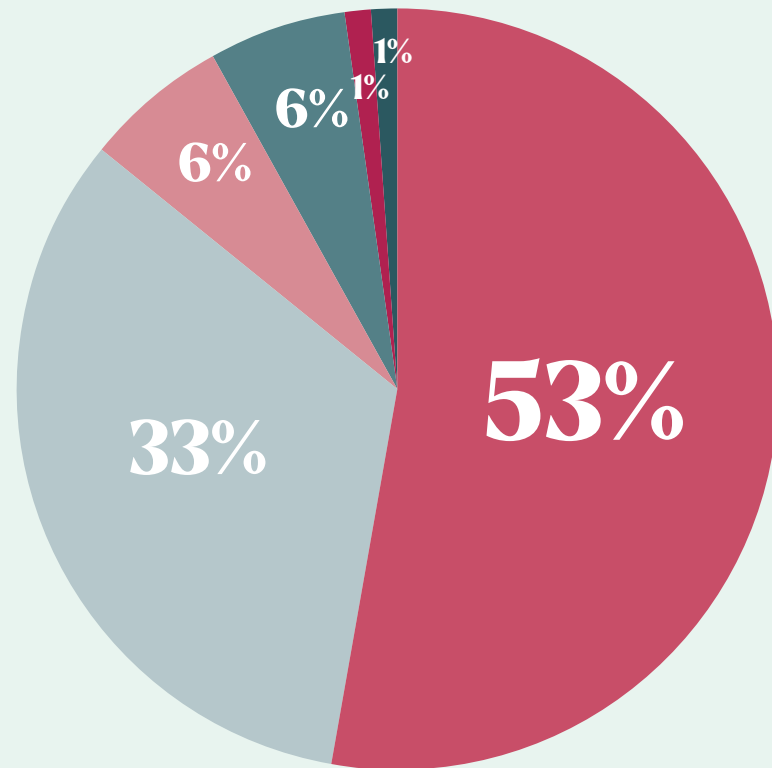


We received—and spent— more money than ever.

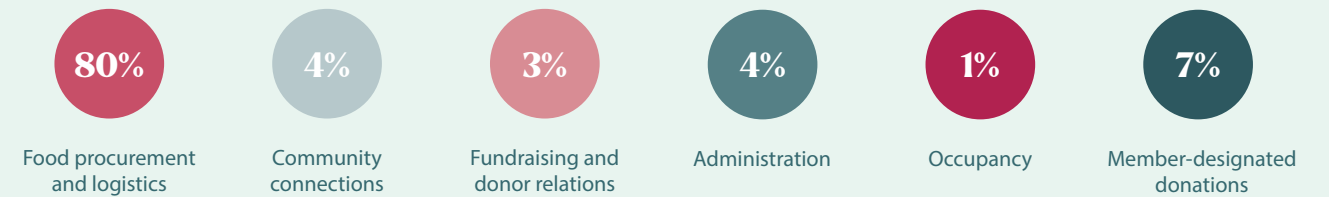
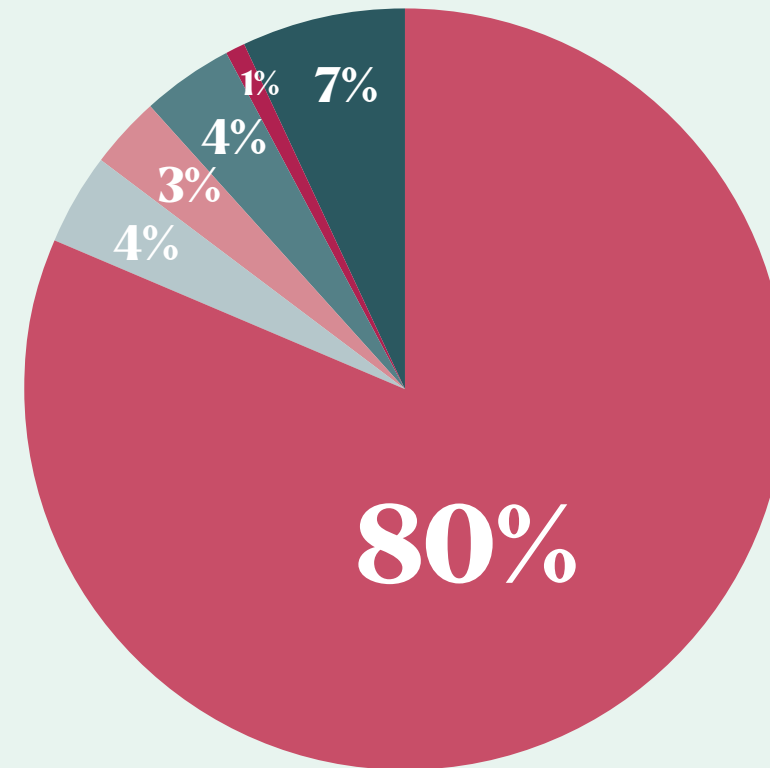
After a year of both higher revenues and expenses than ever, we're grateful for an operating surplus to help make sure support continues as we navigate the uncertain economic recovery ahead.

We're proud to be ranked by Maclean's as Canada's 15th best charity in their 2020 listing of the best charities in the country, in which they assessed hundreds of Canada's major charities on what they do with each donated dollar (60% of their scoring), and how transparent they are about it (40% of their scoring).

Revenue
\$26,700,952



Expenses
\$22,031,122



Our volunteers are everything to us.

Volunteerism runs deep at Feed Nova Scotia. And it's not just the physical work they do, it's the heart and soul they bring to the work that means so much.



In a normal year, we couldn't get by without volunteers. Of course, this was anything but a normal year. Typically, our warehouse relies on 150 volunteer shifts every week. To minimize the number of people coming through the building when the pandemic first hit, we paused onsite volunteer activity and engaged a team of 15 contract staff. When COVID-19 numbers declined, we shifted to a blended approach—keeping some of the contract staff and reintroducing a core team of volunteers who gave with all their might, each filling 2-3 shifts weekly to keep the number of people down. One volunteer even filled an amazing 8 shifts per week--yay, Brody! We wholeheartedly thank those who were able to help over this unusual year.



"I felt a stronger sense of urgency to help our communities at this difficult time, and I was happy to take on extra shifts to help create a safe environment that allowed for continued volunteer support."

Maureen Jeffries, volunteer



"It's a wonderful experience to see the expressions on the recipients faces when we drop off the food boxes. You feel like you're making a positive difference."

Jack and Colleen, volunteers



Outside the warehouse, volunteers delivered both literally and figuratively! Through our COVID-19 Food Box program, 111 volunteer drivers dedicated 3,500 hours and clocked an estimated 56,000 kilometres while getting food to people's homes--the equivalent of 10 trips across Canada!

For an organization that's built around volunteer generosity, asking so many members of our volunteer family to stay home during various phases of lockdown has been extremely difficult, and their absence is felt deeply. For those who either had to or chose to stay home, we know it wasn't easy, and your concern for everyone's safety means a lot to us.

339

Volunteers this year

16,748

Number of volunteer hours
(amazingly, only 20% less than the previous year, despite having half the number of volunteers)

411 hours

Most hours volunteered by a single person.
Thank you, John Stone!


Looking ahead.

Clearly, there's a lot to celebrate around the way that we—Feed Nova Scotia, our network partners, and all Nova Scotians who gave so generously—managed to provide so much help in such a difficult year. But it's not lost on us that there's a lot more to be done.

So, when we look ahead, when we consider what more fundamental solutions to food insecurity might look like, we see opportunity in innovation and advocacy. With these tools in mind, the board of directors identified two new strategic goals in February 2020. The first is to lead an action-based innovation lab strategy to create new, self-sustaining solutions that increase food security; the second is to engage an inclusive network that facilitates dialogue and influences stakeholders, resulting in policy and legislation change to address systemic barriers to food security.

To be clear, though these goals are bold, they're not pie-in-the-sky dreams—we fully intend to achieve them. Before closing out the year, we were excited to turn our attention to devising a concrete plan that will guide our efforts. Led by an expert, systems change consulting team called The Outside, we engaged a broad group of stakeholders to work with us to identify a two-year roadmap. This roadmap will both hold us accountable and keep us on track as we fundamentally shift the way we work.

Ambitious? Certainly. But if there's one thing the last year has taught us, it's that when we put our mind to something, we get it done. No matter the height of the hurdles.



"Incremental change is great, but big audacious change will help us to move forward. It's going to take courage and we'll be uncomfortable. But now is the time."

Stakeholder session participant

Board of Directors

David Miller (Chair)
Grant Thornton LLP

Sylvia Parris-Drummond
(Vice Chair and Incoming Chair)
Delmore "Buddy" Daye Learning Institute

Maxime Lessard (Treasurer)
PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP

Susan Hazelwood (Secretary)
(Outgoing Board Member)
Westend Community Food Bank
Member Representative

Ahmad Hussein
Scotia Dental and
Ummah Mosque & Community Centre

Chaz Thorne
(Outgoing Board Member)
OnePagePlans.ca

Jeff Hillyard
BMO Bank of Montreal

Kristen Hollery
St. Paul's Family Resources Institute
Member Representative

Lisa Haydon
Pivotal Growth Inc.

Mohammad Ali Raza
Cox & Palmer

Nadine Bernard
Office of Equity and Anti-Racism,
Province of Nova Scotia

Patricia Bradshaw
Sobey School of Business,
Saint Mary's University

Robert Strang
Nova Scotia Department of
Health & Wellness

Roddy Macdonald
(Incoming Board Member)
Linx Strategies Inc.

Miranda Mavhunga
(Incoming Board Member)
Deloitte

Together
WE MADE
it
POSSIBLE

A huge and heartfelt thank you.

We're grateful for the kindness you've shown and the critical role you've played. And knowing how much you care, we see a future that's full of potential to do more. A future where we can

build something better—one where all Nova Scotians have dignity and are empowered to thrive. Let's be bold and make it happen.