



Ottawa Food Bank

FALL 2024

You Feed the Need

GRATITUDE REPORT

TOGETHER, WE ARE SO MUCH STRONGER



WHAT'S INSIDE:

How your support
helps our work go
beyond food

Advocacy Corner:
Addressing the root
causes of hunger

Your 2024
Community
Harvest update

A note from Rachael

Dear caring neighbours,

There aren't enough words to convey just how amazed I am by the generosity of Ottawa Food Bank supporters like you. Put simply, WOW!



At an event commemorating our 40th year of serving the community, I had a chance to chat with two previous CEOs of the Ottawa Food Bank. We reflected on the incredible need our community continues to see, and how incredible your support has been. An astonishing 19 tons of food leaves our warehouse each weekday. This food is distributed through a network of food programs across Ottawa to our neighbours experiencing hunger. Your kindness helps to make this happen.

Many of you have also been generous enough to give your time. Volunteers are at the heart of OFB's operations, and we're so grateful for everyone who pitches in to help fill families' tables.

I hope you enjoy reading this issue of your newsletter. It always brings me joy to see the impact of your kindness in our community!

With sincere thanks,

Rachael Wilson
CEO
Ottawa Food Bank

Community Farm Update

Your kind support ensures the Ottawa Food Bank can grow and collect nutritious, local produce on our 8-acre Stittsville farm. This fresh food is then distributed to our more than 100 agency partners.

Here's an update on what your generosity has helped accomplish so far in 2024!



4,728 hours
volunteered



22 crop
varieties planted



71,115
lbs of produce
harvested

yield as of August 22, 2024



COVER STORY



Empowering people to thrive, thanks to the generous supporters like you!

Q&A with Shannon Szkurhan, Coordinator, Community Development (Wrap-Around Supports)

Your gifts support the Ottawa Food Bank's Wrap-Around Support Initiative (WASI), **providing personalized and holistic supports that extend beyond food assistance to foster empowerment and improved quality of life** for community members accessing food banks. We spoke to coordinator Shannon Szkurhan to learn more.

Q: How does the wrap-around support initiative work?

The Ottawa Food Bank partners with community health and resource centres to hire professionally trained staff who offer supports to people experiencing a life crisis, right there in their community. These staff have backgrounds in social work or community development and they make it easier for people to get the help they need without having to navigate the social service system alone.

Q: What are some examples of wrap-around supports?

Childcare, assistance filling in documents, health care, employment, counselling, and translation are all really

important supports, but they can be hard to find. Donor support helps connect these dots so community members can achieve greater stability, self-sufficiency, and well-being.

Q: Why do wrap-around supports matter to the Ottawa Food Bank's 2050 goal of ending food insecurity in Ottawa?

Food alone won't solve the complex issue of food insecurity. **We need help to invest in and support skilled workers, targeted supports for those in crisis,** and solutions that help us surround food bank visitors with all they need to thrive. Our amazing donors are helping to build a sustainable social safety net that goes beyond food to address the root causes of poverty and the resulting food insecurity.

Q: Anything else you'd like to share with our wonderful supporters?

You're driving real change! Through your support of the Ottawa Food Bank, the Wrap-Around Support Initiative will allow us to support diverse populations in ways that are more impactful and foster broader community engagement. **Your support of the Ottawa Food Bank is helping to make it all possible. Thank you!**

equiTABLE

Your support is helping to bring the voices of people with lived experience of food insecurity to the forefront. Together, we're working in partnership to create a healthier city.

The involvement of individuals who self-identify as having experienced or currently experiencing food insecurity is crucial to ensuring changes made at OFB are driven by those directly affected by and utilizing food security programs.

The equiTABLE is comprised of nine Ottawa residents who have firsthand experience accessing food banks. The group's objective is to present practical approaches and solutions to bolster food programs, resources, and services in Ottawa.

If you would like to learn more about the equiTABLE group or connect with them, please reach out to Michelle Lemieux, Community Development Coordinator, at michelle.lemieux@ottawafoodbank.ca

Thank you for ensuring we can continue to adapt and grow our efforts to end food insecurity in our city. You're amazing!

"We are your neighbours and your community members. We are YOU. Most of us are one single hardship away from complete destitution and when you support OFB you are, in essence, aiding in the development of the very safety net that could be there to catch you and your loved ones one day." – equiTABLE members

ADVOCACY CORNER

Working together to address food insecurity.

Did you know that an astonishing 98% of the Ottawa Food Bank's funding comes from amazing donors like you, while only 2% is provided by the government?

As the need for emergency food assistance in our community continues to grow, it's clear that something has to change. The Ottawa Food Bank is committed to advocacy that addresses both the immediate needs of our network and the communities they serve, and the systemic causes of food insecurity and poverty.

We believe that no one in our community should go hungry. Food insecurity impacts health, well-being, and the ability to thrive. That's why we're advocating for the resources needed to create a more equitable and just community.

With your help, we aim to secure sustainable and significant support from the municipal government, partners, and individuals to create a resilient and well-supported food network that can meet the needs of everyone in our community. *Thank you for your support!*

"We very much appreciate all the amazing work the Ottawa Food Bank does for us and the community, you are all heroes!"

– Ottawa Food Bank partner agency



"With our low income, we are glad to be in a situation where we can get help. And we're thankful to the generous people who are helping us."

– Mike, grateful husband and father of two

Other Ways to Help

There are many ways to help the Ottawa Food Bank and no matter which way you choose, your support is greatly appreciated!

Donate Money

Every \$1 you give is stretched further, thanks to our incredible industry partners. This means more food to our neighbours!

Donate at ottawafoodbank.ca/donate.



Donate Food

Drop your non-perishable items in our red bin at the front of your local grocery store or bring them to our Bantree St. warehouse.



Host a Food Drive

Host a food or fund drive.

For more information go to:

www.ottawafoodbank.ca/ottawa-food-bank-events/register.



Become a Volunteer

Join the team of Ottawa's Best Volunteers! Volunteers support our warehouse and food distribution centre, Community Harvest Farm, special events and more. Questions? Visit ottawafoodbank.ca/volunteer-to-help for more information. If you're interested in volunteering as an individual, please contact Adam Janes, Coordinator of Volunteer Resources, adam@ottawafoodbank.ca. If you're interested in volunteering as a group, contact Jo-Anne Turple, Manager of Volunteer Resources at Joanne@ottawafoodbank.ca



Leave a Gift in Your Will



TOMORROW'S
HARVEST

LA RÉCOLTE DE
L'AVENIR

If you would like to leave a gift in your Will to the Ottawa Food Bank, contact **Jenn Graves, Major Gifts and Planned Giving Officer**, at **613-745-7001 ext. 114** or at jenn@ottawafoodbank.ca.



To find out other ways you can become involved by donating food, time or other supplies. Please call us at **613-745-7001 ext. 222** or by email at foodbank@ottawafoodbank.ca.



Ottawa Food Bank

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