

Cambridge Food Bank

Impact Report 2022/2023



**BUILDING HEALTH AND
BELONGING THROUGH FOOD**

Making a Difference

Reflecting on the journey our community has embarked on this past year, it has been truly challenging and insightful. The challenges posed by the pandemic, inflation, and the rising costs of housing, and food, have placed considerable financial strain on many of our friends and neighbours. However, amidst these difficulties, one thing has remained abundantly clear: our community has united to foster a sense of belonging through the power of food. We extend our heartfelt appreciation to all our generous donors, as it is your unwavering support that has enabled us to receive and distribute over a million pounds of food in the past year alone, while also continuing to provide essential wellness programs to those in greatest need.

2022/2023 have provided us with valuable insights into how our organization can best serve those who require assistance. Our Mobile Food Market initiative continues to flourish, and we are immensely proud to announce the establishment of 12 locations. Throughout the past fiscal year, we have successfully sold over 19,000 baskets of fresh produce and vegetables. Additionally, our collaboration with dedicated community partners to host the Mobile Food Market has transformed our host locations into vibrant gathering spaces for neighbours, where meaningful friendships have blossomed.

Beyond ensuring food security for our community, our commitment to offering health and wellness programs remains steadfast. We have witnessed a notable increase in engagement across all age groups, with adults, children, and entire families participating actively. Most importantly, our attendees have shared inspiring stories of personal progress, encompassing improvements in nutrition, mental and physical health, as well as the development of robust friendships and support networks.

The transformative impact we have achieved is a testament to the collective efforts of our community, donors, volunteers, and partners. Your extraordinary generosity continues to empower us to deliver nutritious food, innovative programs, and new initiatives to those who rely on our assistance. The Cambridge Food Bank owes its current standing to your unwavering support, and we are profoundly grateful for it. Your ongoing commitment has made a tangible difference, and together, we are truly building health and belonging through food.



Dianne & Kristen

Dianne McLeod - Executive Director
Kristen Danson - Chair

Our Board April 1, 2022-March 31, 2023

Executive Committee

Kristen Danson - Chair
Renée Darrell - Vice Chair
Kevin Swayze - Vice Chair
Natalie Williamson - Treasurer

Directors

Jen Loker	Hilary Wren
Yasmine Mohamed	Olivia Reed
Kari Breen	Sarah Loat
Mariam Ayob	

Volunteers



"In 2016, I started volunteering for personal reasons and to make a positive impact on the community. It was a way for me to help not only others but also myself. I continue to volunteer because it provides me with the opportunity to meet and work with a diverse range of people, helping me improve my interpersonal skills. The fact that the volunteer location is just a few blocks away from my home makes it even more convenient. I also admire the food bank's commitment to not only providing assistance but also ensuring that things are presented well and that genuine good is done for others."

Ken Bryden - Community Pantry Volunteer

"Since 2016, I've been a volunteer at the Cambridge Food Bank. I'm naturally inclined to help, and the food bank, being the lifeline for churches and agencies in need, was my choice. I continue to volunteer because of the clear community need and the infectious positivity among the staff and volunteers. Seeing the direct impact, where food comes in and goes out in real-time, is what I love most. Encouraging fellow volunteers' growth and balancing production outcomes with people's needs has been a valuable learning experience. My volunteer work also supports my church and the community, especially through the Mobile Food Market, which is vital in today's economic conditions. Being part of the Cambridge Food Bank shows me the power of volunteering and the difference it can make in our community."

Brian Hershey - Distribution Centre Volunteer



9,935 Volunteer Hours 363 New Volunteers

Wellness Hub

Child & Youth Programs

"My daughter and I enjoy the cooking classes the most. Vanessa is so fun and her recipes creative and delicious. My daughter now has no trouble creating her own healthy snacks for herself, her family and friends. Further, she asks to go out to eat less and less understanding the cost of eating out and the simplicity and joy of making food at home that is healthier and much less expensive." - Sabrina



"I always looked forward to picking my son up after boys club. He was also just lit up. He spoke clearly and at a volume you could hear, which is very rare. He was confident and happy!"
- Denise



Adult & Senior Programs



"These classes introduced me to yoga and helped me gain more awareness of my eating habits. It also connected me with the community." - Carol



"It taught me how to take care of myself with exercise and eating habits." - Kohar

"I was equipped with tools and techniques for problem solving, it helped me provide a sense of control and mastery over life circumstances. I attended Chronic Pain 6 weeks program and have got toolbox to deal with difficult emotions. Also, I feel connected with my peers due to these virtual sessions." - Joanne

89% of Wellness Hub participants reported improved health and wellness

Farm Partners

Over the past year, we've collaborated closely with various farms, including two standout partners. Oakridge Acres, a longstanding partner of the Cambridge Food Bank, has consistently supported local families, the land, and the community's well-being. Last year alone, their generous contribution amounted to an impressive 1,992 pounds of food. Additionally, our partnership with T.J.'s Farm Fresh, spanning two years, has been equally remarkable as they generously donated a substantial 2,500 pounds of food through their farm stand in Cambridge, nourishing the community and exemplifying their commitment to our cause.

OAKRIDGE ACRES COUNTRY MEAT STORE

Nestled in North Dumfries, Oakridge Acres, a 175-acre bison farm, has been a steadfast ally of the Cambridge Food Bank since 2015 with donations of almost 21,000 pounds of food. Certified organic and dedicated to raising natural Plains Bison, Oakridge Acres embodies sustainable farming. Beyond bison, their on-farm store, Oakridge Acres Country Meat Store, offers an array of products from 40+ local producers, from meats to honey, baked goods, and more. Their in-house kitchen creates delicious heat-and-serve options using market-sourced ingredients.



Shopping at Oakridge Acres supports local families, the land, and the community's well-being. Last year, they generously donated 1992 pounds of food to the Cambridge Food Bank, showcasing their commitment to combating food insecurity. We're immensely grateful for their enduring partnership and support.



TJ'S FARM FRESH

We are delighted to shine a spotlight on our incredible farm partner, T.J.'s Farm Fresh! Their farm stand, located right on their farm here in Cambridge, has partnered with the Cambridge Food Bank for the past two years. They grow a wide breadth of produce, as well as fresh flowers, right on site.

As outstanding partners, T.J.'s Farm Fresh has generously donated 2,500 lbs of food to help the Cambridge Food Bank feed community.

The Impact



1,038,230 lbs of
Food Distributed to
our Community

15,851

Visits to the
Community Pantry

NEW VISITS  183%

6 5 3

Youth attended Wellness programs

4,300



Neighbours visited
us for emergency
food assistance

3% Homeowners
18% Employed

920,756

Pounds of Food Donated

2 8

6537 Hours

Student Placement Opportunities

19,150

Visits to the
Mobile Food Market

Providing 76,600 nutritious
meals to our community

2 7 5

Adults attended Wellness programs

9,641 lbs of
food grown
locally



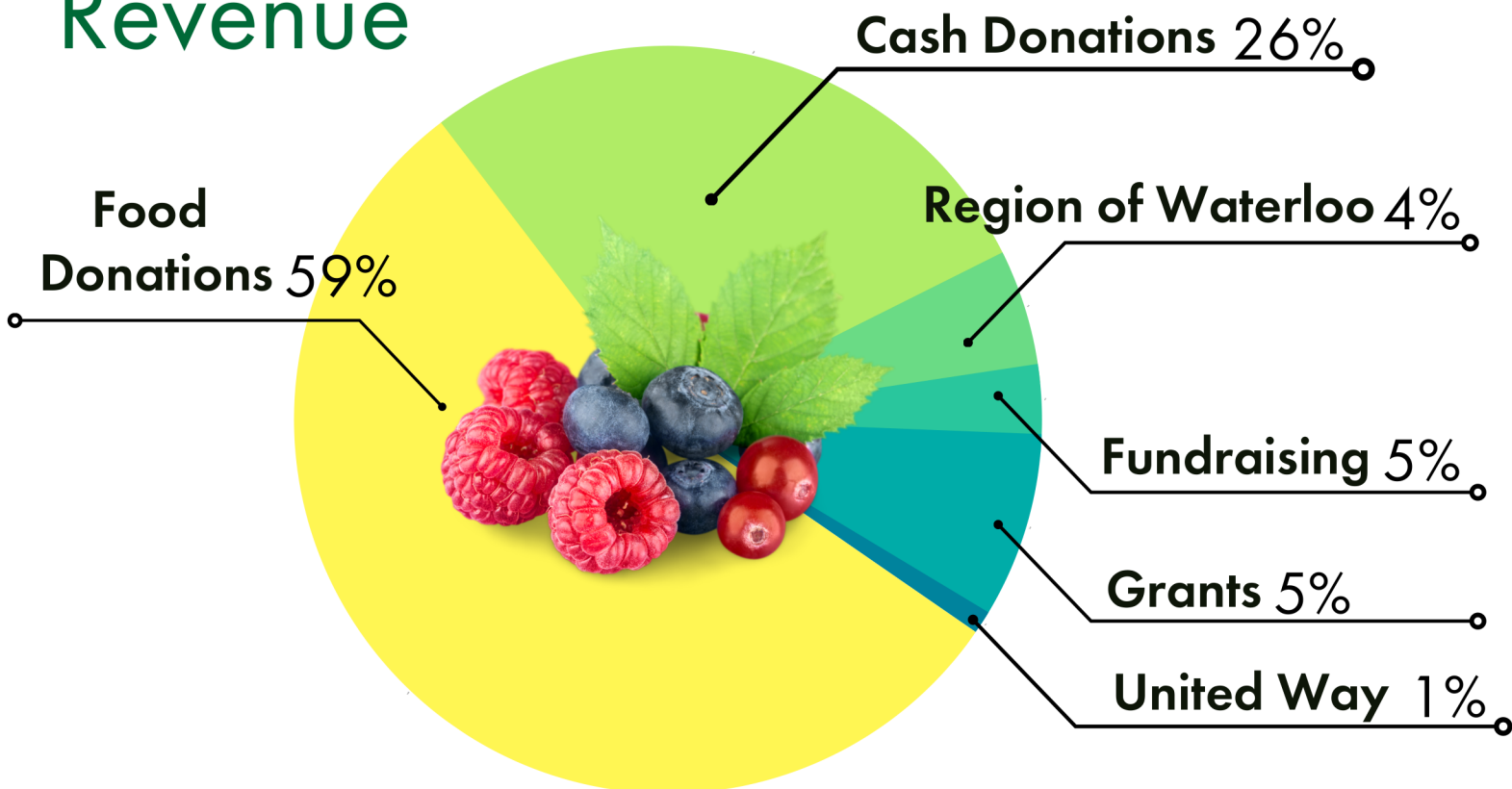
141,810

Pounds of Food Diverted
From Landfill

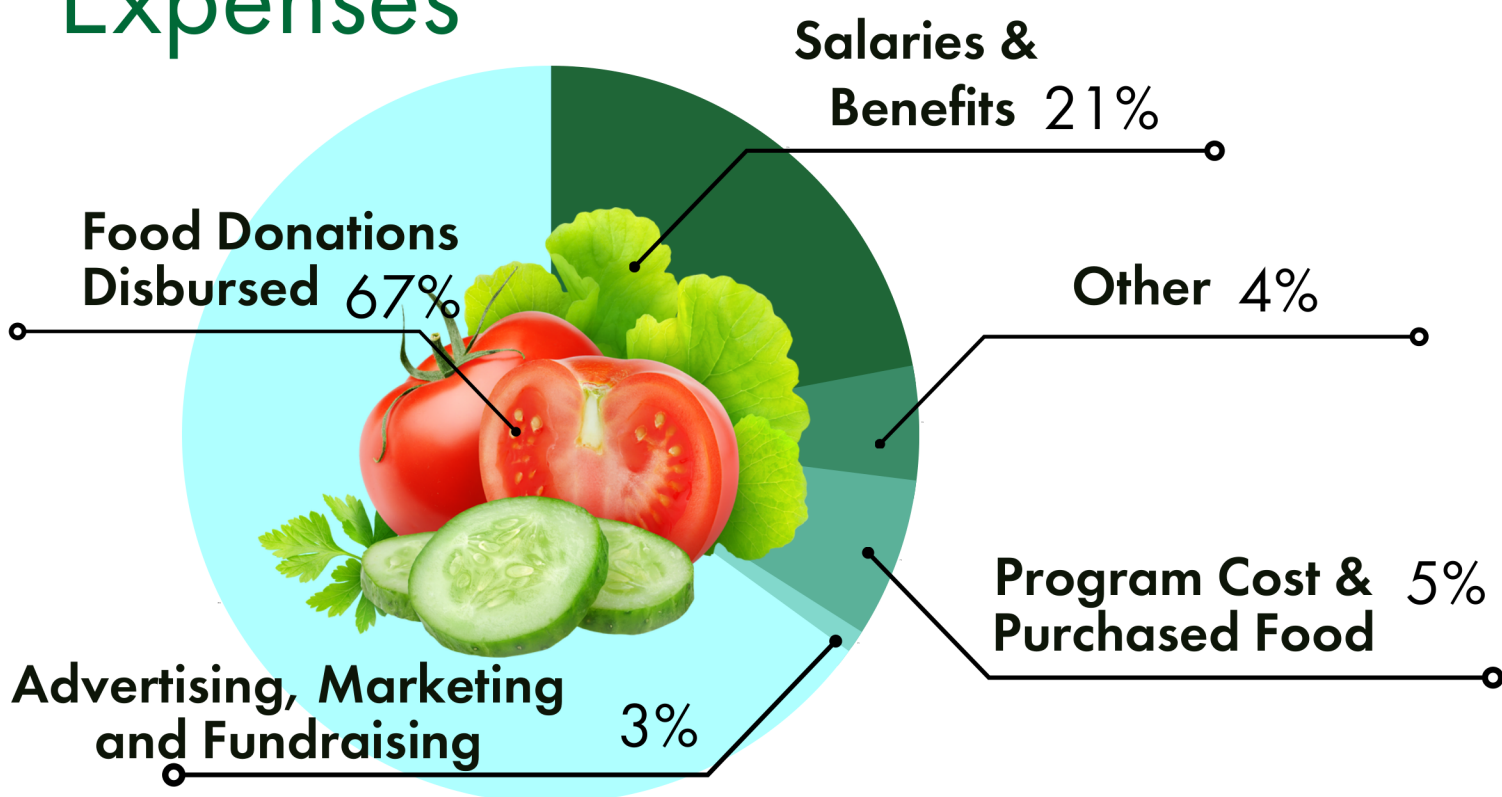
FINANCIALS

For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2023

Revenue



Expenses



Abel Anderson Award

This award is presented annually during the Annual General Meeting of the Cambridge Food Bank. It was established in 2002 as a memorial to Abel Anderson, a young man that died in a tragic accident in 1991. He was fourteen.

Abel's native heritage encouraged him to be the best he could be, despite facing many challenges. Abel's mantra of always doing his personal best was a legacy that he left. When asked what he wanted to do when he grew up, Abel's comment was, "I want to be a good person". For his family and friends, he more than fulfilled that aspiration.



This year we are pleased to announce that Balaji Ramanathan is the winner of the Abel Anderson Award.

Balaji joined the CFB warehouse team in February 2023 as a placement student from Conestoga College's Community Integration through Co-operative Education (CICE) program.



Balaji and his support worker, Simon, became regular fixtures in our warehouse on Monday mornings throughout this semester and we all soon fell in love with his infectious laugh and positive personality. With his student placement term coming to an end CFB staff spoke with Balaji's school advisors about having him connect with Community Living to seek supports to continue his volunteer experience post graduation. Staff also spoke with Balaji about his plans for after school and volunteering at the CFB often came up in these conversations. On Balaji's last placement day at the CFB we celebrated with cake and the team signed a card and presented it to him thanking him for all the hard work he had done that semester. Balaji and his worker Simon said their goodbyes and left the building with no plans made to return. However, Balaji promptly showed up the following Monday morning, this time without his support worker, and he has not missed a week with us since then. Balaji loves to take pictures with his friends at the foodbank and he loves baseball and his coffee breaks. Balaji now has a routine when he comes to the foodbank and he has tasks he completes before taking his coffee break. He knows everyone by name and his shifts at the CFB are full of laughter and pure joy. Balaji is learning more and more about how the foodbank operates with each passing shift and he continues to develop and grow his workplace skills and abilities.

Balaji Ramanathan - 2023 Abel Anderson Award Recipient

Volunteer Award of Merit:

This award is presented to a volunteer who is dedicated and supportive to the Food Bank programs and overall mission. They show compassion without judgment to all of our participants and are extremely reliable and trustworthy. The recipient is someone who may not necessarily have a long history of volunteer work with the Food Bank but their quality of work exceeds their overall duration with us. They are friendly and work well with others, staff, volunteers and clients included.

This year we are pleased to announce that Jamie Colwell is the winner of the Volunteer Award of Merit.



We are delighted to introduce Jamie Colwell, a community champion whose presence embodies the profound impact of generosity and compassion. Jamie's journey serves as a testament to the transformative power of dedication, resilience, and the indomitable spirit of community unity.

For the past two years, Jamie has stood at the forefront of the Cambridge Food Drive Initiative. His leadership has rallied a team of dedicated volunteers and supporters, resulting in impactful food and fund drives for the Cambridge Food Bank. In 2023 alone, these collective efforts led to the remarkable collection of over 4,200 pounds of food and over \$6,300 in monetary donations, doubling the achievement from the previous year.

Jamie's journey is a testament to the resilience of the human spirit. Having once been a recipient of assistance from the food bank, he deeply understands the challenges faced by those in need. In 2005, he and his partner encountered financial hardships and unforeseen expenses.

"Despite being employed, unexpected costs arose, and we were faced with a tough choice between paying bills and having enough to eat. We prioritized bills and turned to the food bank for support," Jamie shared.



His firsthand experience left an indelible mark, inspiring him to pay forward the kindness he received. Jamie's commitment to making a difference underscores the transformative impact of community support.

Donor Spotlight



Seasons Retirement Communities has supported their local food banks through partnerships since 2016. They recognize the growing issue of food insecurity among seniors and have actively engaged in various initiatives to make a difference in the community. This critical commitment continued when their Seasons Cambridge location opened its doors in 2020.

Their annual 'One Can Make a Difference' Challenge, held in July, emphasizes the fight against food insecurity, particularly during summer, when donations tend to decline. Residents, families, and team members from Seasons Retirement Communities come together for a friendly competition to collect cans, contributing to local food banks. In 2023, they donated 230 cans from Seasons Cambridge alone and 6,376 cans across all Seasons 21 locations. Additionally, Seasons provides monetary support, including a \$2,100 donation directly to the Cambridge Food Bank.

In December, they hold their Holiday Food Drive, collecting non-perishable goods to combat food insecurity in local communities. "Last year, we collected 3,044.5 pounds of non-perishable goods company-wide, equating to over 3,000 meals for those in need," says Mike Lavallée, CEO of Seasons Retirement Communities.

One remarkable initiative is Seniorosity, a volunteer-driven program encouraging Seasons' residents to give back to the community. Seniorosity activities include supporting hospital workers, sponsoring families in need, and donating supplies to local shelters. The residents' efforts have been recognized and appreciated, fostering a sense of purpose and joy. One of Seasons Cambridge's exceptional residents, Joan, turned 97 this year and decided to celebrate by giving back. She initiated 'Footsteps for Food,' completing 97 laps around Seasons Cambridge to raise money for the Cambridge Food Bank. "Everyone needs food! You can't survive without it," shared Joan. "I see this as an opportunity to make the biggest impact on the most people. I am only going to be 97 once; that's the reason I'm doing this. I live each day as if it's my last!" 'Footsteps for Food' raised over \$1,600 and collected 210 lbs of food. Joan hopes to do this fundraiser again next year when she turns 98! Seasons' ongoing commitment to local food banks, including the Cambridge Food Bank, is reflected in their 'One Can Make a Difference' Challenge, Holiday Food Drive, and various Seniorosity initiatives. Since 2016, Seasons Retirement Communities has donated more than a quarter of a million dollars in food and funds to positively impact their communities.



Growing Because of You

Thank you to our \$5000+ donors

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Our Partners





Connect: Join the conversation with all things happening at the @CambFoodBank. Connect with us on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, Threads and on our website!



We are members of a food assistance network, and together with The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, we play a central role within it.

Donate, Volunteer, Learn More:
cambridgefoodbank.org

Cambridge Food Bank
54 Ainslie Street South
Cambridge, ON, N1R 3K3
519-622-6550

@CambFoodBank