



Cambridge Food Bank

**Impact Report
2024/2025**



**HONOURING THE PAST,
FEEDING THE FUTURE.**



Making a Difference



This past year marked a meaningful milestone for the Cambridge Food Bank: 40 years of nourishing our community. What began with food shared from the trunk of a car at the local farmers' market has flourished into a vital community hub guided by the values of healthy people, a connected community, and environmental sustainability.

As we reflect on four decades of service, we also acknowledge the realities facing us today. The need has never been greater. Each month, more than 5,000 individuals turn to the Cambridge Food Bank for support. Their stories are a powerful reminder that food insecurity touches people from all walks of life.

In response, our team has expanded services and deepened our reach:

- **Mobile Food Market:** Delivering fresh produce to 16 neighbourhoods in Cambridge and North Dumfries at prices 30–40% below retail. Ensuring that everyone in our community has access to nutritious food at a price they can afford.
- **Community Pantry:** Providing culturally diverse and inclusive food options that reflect the dietary needs of our community, with a strong focus on fresh items such as fruits, vegetables, dairy, and eggs. Shifting the narrative that food banks only offer canned goods and processed food.
- **Wellness Hub:** Offering a comprehensive range of inclusive programs designed to empower individuals across all age groups—children, youth, adults, and older adults. These programs focus on enhancing nutrition education to promote healthy eating habits, developing practical cooking skills that enable participants to prepare nutritious and affordable meals, and fostering meaningful social connections to build a strong sense of community and support.

We've remained committed to environmental stewardship through our Food Rescue Program, diverting large quantities of good food from landfills and redirecting it into the hands of those who need it. Our partnerships with farms, grocers, and local organizations are helping us create a food system that values both people and the planet.

Looking ahead, we've launched a 5-year strategic plan to guide our continued growth and evolution. The plan focuses on nurturing a healthy and resilient organizational culture, fostering innovation, and strengthening partnerships to enhance our impact and support long-term sustainability.

We remain inspired by the same values that shaped our founding: the belief that everyone deserves dignity, respect, and access to nourishing food. With your continued support, we are confident in our ability to meet the challenges ahead and to keep building a healthier, connected, and more resilient community.

With heartfelt thanks,



Dianne & Renée
Dianne McLeod - CEO
Renée Darrell - Chair

Our Board

April 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025

Executive Committee

Renée Darrell - Chair
Nicole Papke - Vice Chair
Natalie Williamson - Treasurer
Kevin Swayze - Secretary

Directors

Kristen Danson
Jen Loker
Yasmine Mohammed
Kari Breen
Mariam Ayob

Olivia Reed
Sarah Loat
Stephen Witteveen
Daria O'Reilly



About Us

Feeding Community for 40 Years



This year, the Cambridge Food Bank is acknowledging 40 years of serving our community. What began in 1985 from the trunk of a car has grown into More Than a Food Bank at 54 Ainslie Street South, supporting over 5,000 individuals every month with food, wellness programs, and a sense of belonging.

Mission (our 'What')

Our mission is to build health and belonging through food, education & advocacy.

Vision (our 'Why')

Our vision is to see a compassionate, equitable community where everyone is nourished.

Values (our 'Non-Negotiables')



**HEALTHY
PEOPLE**



**CONNECTED
COMMUNITY**



**ENVIRONMENTAL
SUSTAINABILITY**

Strategic Priorities 2025-2030



People

Foster a healthy organizational culture where a sense of belonging and opportunities for growth and development are felt by all.

Sustainability

Ensure organizational stability to meet the needs of our participants.

Innovate for Impact

Optimize our operations and network of collaborators and partners to maximize our reach.





Financials

For the Fiscal Year Ending March 31, 2025



Donations & Income

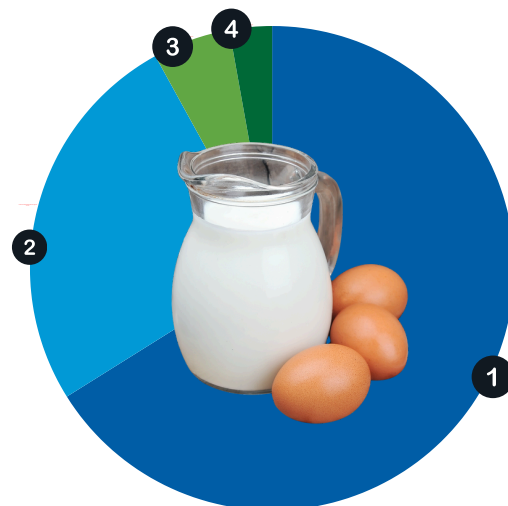
1. Donated Food - Incoming	\$4,313,510
2. Donations/Sponsorships/Grants	\$2,662,954
3. Region of Waterloo	\$395,914
4. Other	\$175,761



Total Donations & Income **\$7,548,139**

Expenses

1. Donated Food - Outgoing	\$4,313,510
2. Food Purchases/Distribution /Programs	\$1,689,382
3. Administration	\$ 337,941
4. Fundraising	\$184,801



Total Expenses **\$6,525,634**

Food Sources

Incoming Pounds

Food Retailer	667,981 lbs
Food Security Programs	255,009 lbs
Community Groups/Public	176,786 lbs
Business	78,095 lbs

Please note: This financial data is extracted from Cambridge Food Bank's audited financial statements and does not contain all of the information included in the financial statements and, as such, is incomplete. The financial statements were audited by Graham Matthew and are available upon request from Cambridge Food Bank by emailing info@cambridgefoodbank.org

Volunteer Award of Merit



Since April 2024, David Linton has been a dedicated and enthusiastic volunteer with the Cambridge Food Bank. Driven by a strong sense of community and an energetic nature to give back, David has become an invaluable part of our team, bringing with him not only time and effort but also heart and commitment.

David primarily supports the work in our Distribution Centre, but he is fondly known among staff as our “in-house repairman.” Whether it’s changing lightbulbs, assembling equipment, or helping to move large items, no task is too big or too small. He regularly steps in to tackle odd jobs and behind-the-scenes fixes that keep our space safe and functional. David has also gone above and beyond by sourcing much-needed materials and helping to coordinate small improvements around the building, always anticipating what could make our space work better for everyone.

Beyond the walls of the food bank, David’s commitment continues. He eagerly participates in community outreach events like Stuff-a-Van and Smile Cookie campaigns, and even brought his personal tractor to help prepare the soil at our community garden at Forward Church. His willingness to lend a hand, anywhere, anytime, is a testament to his generous spirit.

One of David’s favourite memories as a volunteer happened on a Friday when he knew the team was short-staffed. “They showed true gratitude and happiness that I showed up, it was very funny,” he says. That lighthearted moment reflects the mutual respect and appreciation between David and the staff team.

David also encourages others to get involved and support the food bank. He has helped direct several financial donations our way and often calls friends during events to invite them to come out and give.

David Linton is a true asset to the Cambridge Food Bank. We are grateful for his time, his drive, and the joy he brings to everything he does.

David Linton

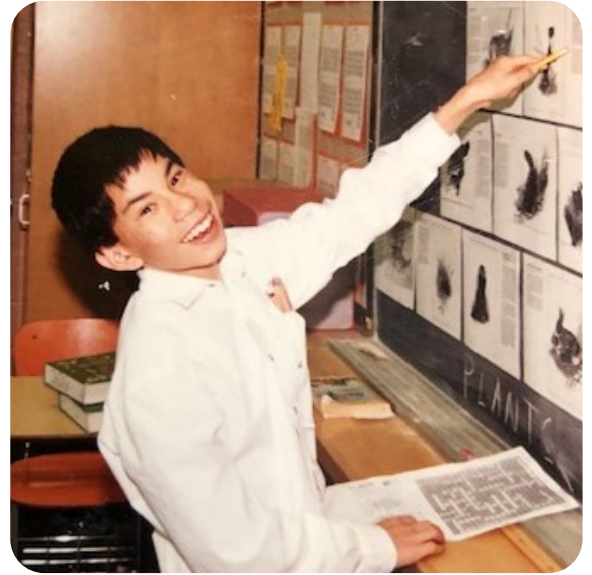


Abel Anderson Award

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 who 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's Abel Anderson Good Person Award recipient is Alex Spezzaferro.



Since joining the Cambridge Food Bank in August 2023, Alex Spezzaferro has become a steady, joyful presence in our space. Whether sweeping and mopping the Distribution Centre, sorting food donations, or helping with end-of-day cleanup, Alex approaches every task with a smile and a willingness to help. He's the kind of volunteer who steps in wherever needed, always dependable, always kind, and never one to shy away from a task.

Each shift, Alex makes it a point to stop by and greet the staff, asking how everyone's day has been. This small act of kindness goes a long way; it reminds us that connection matters just as much as the work we do.

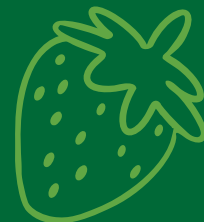
Outside of his time at the food bank, Alex is working toward becoming a power truck and coach technician. His determination and focus are evident, and we admire his drive. He also shares a love for adventure, often returning from vacations with stories and photos that brighten our days and bring laughter to the team.

Alex's consistency, warmth, and thoughtful presence have made him a valued part of the Cambridge Food Bank family, an exceptional volunteer, and an all-around Good Person.

Alex Spezzaferro



The Impact



1,196,008 lbs of
Food Distributed to
our Community

23,532

Visits to the Community Pantry

6,288 Lbs of food
provided to



5,637

People Served Community Dinners



Youth attended Wellness programs

10,653



People visited us
for emergency food
assistance

1,204,891

Pounds of Food Donated

923 Hours

Student Placements

18,362

Visits to the
Mobile Food Market

Provided over 73,000 servings
of fruit and vegetables to our
community



Adults attended Wellness programs

10,090

Pounds of food
grown locally



380,881

Pounds of
Surplus Food Rescued



Where it all began

The Cambridge Community Food Co-operative was born on May 2nd 1985



In 1985, Roy Spiegelberg, who worked at Waterloo Region Social Services, invited Ruth Thompson to join a group of concerned citizens who came together to change how people living below the poverty line in Cambridge were viewed. They reimagined food distribution with a focus on dignity and self-respect, leading to the creation of the Cambridge Community Food Co-Operative. Based on the belief that everyone has something valuable to contribute, this groundbreaking model was the first of its kind in Canada.

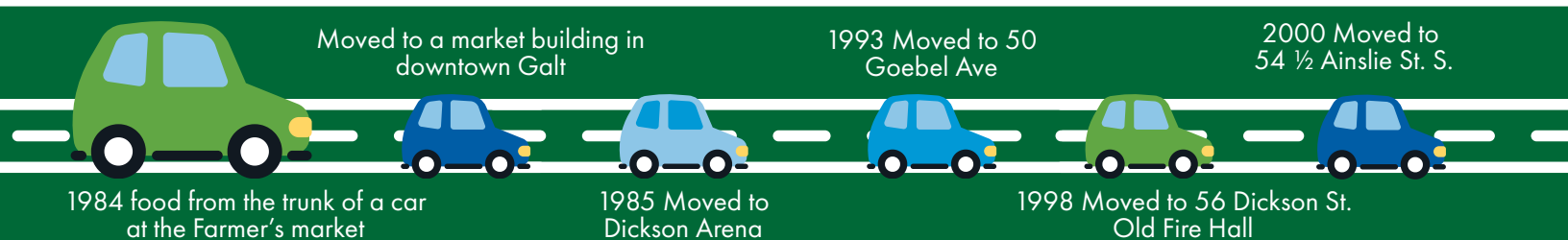


Ruth Thompson
Signed the Cambridge Self-Help
Food Bank's
Letter Patent

Ruth has lived in Cambridge for over 41 years and spent much of her career working in social services, community development, and social planning. When she was employed by Waterloo Region Social Services, she volunteered on the steering committee for the Cambridge Self-Help Food Bank and served on the board in the organization's early years

She went on to become the Director of the Social Planning Council and later worked for the City of Kitchener as the Seniors' Peer Support Coordinator. When her 12-year-old daughter developed a mysterious ailment, she turned to alternative health and retrained as a Holistic Nutritionist.

After 21 years in private practice, she is now semi-retired, devoting her time to writing and volunteering in community outreach with her church.





Community Pantry

Participant Survey Results

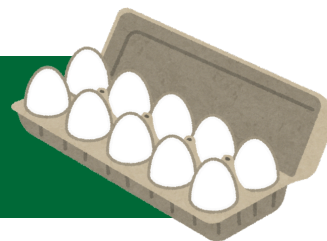
95%

Thought the types of foods available were great!



79%

Were most happy to receive fresh items, including eggs, milk, meat, bread and produce.



“

“Keep doing what you do.
It is so appreciated.”

”

“

“Very important and
incredible people that help
families in time of need.”

”

Food Diversion Efforts

Figures calculated from
February 16, 2024 - April 24, 2025



End Poverty
in All its
Forms
Everywhere



End hunger, achieve
food security and
improved nutrition
and promote
sustainable agriculture



Ensure healthy
lives and promote
well-being for
all at all ages

That's equivalent to:



15,617 lbs

Fresh food diverted from the
landfill for food consumption



\$35,423

worth of food rescued and
consumed



12,447 Kg

of greenhouse gases saved
from the environment



113 weeks

of food for a family of 4

Canada Food Price Report 2024 – Family of four
expected to spend \$16,297.29 per year



CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning



IMPACT & Outcomes

Wellness Hub



Literacy & Cooking



MFM Meals



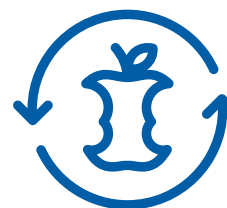
Affordable Proteins



81% of participants improved their healthy eating habits



82% of participants cook most meals at home



79% of adults are now wasting less food

How has the Wellness Hub Programs Impacted You?

"Start small. One day, one meal at a time. Rise early, shine bright, and nourish your body. It's not just food — it's hope, health, and the future I want for us."

"I recently had cancer and chemotherapy, which left me weak and intimidated. The wellness program inspired me to put together my own exercise program. I've started walking and I'm able to add more activities. This yoga class is helping to save my life."



Mobile Food Market

Mobile Food Market Shoppers



Where

38% of shoppers are from the Galt area, 19% from Preston, 15% North Dumfries, and 9% Hespeler.

Why

36% shop to save money, 29% to support access for all, 12% for quality and freshness, and 10% for convenience and location.

Who

38% of households have two people, 21% are single-person households, and 41% have three or more people.



Provided over 73,000 servings of fruits and vegetables to our community





Farm Partner Highlight

rare Charitable Research Reserve

Since 2005, **rare** Charitable Research Reserve has been donating fresh, local produce to the Cambridge Food Bank. What began as a small effort grew into something remarkable when, in 2012, the food bank garden at rare was established and led by volunteers. In 2016, rare expanded the size of the garden, dedicated staff time to managing it and its volunteers, and began developing an orchard. Today, fruits such as pears, apples, plums, and medlars from that orchard are donated alongside vegetables, adding to the variety available to participants.

The food bank garden at rare addresses hunger by focusing on improving food systems to increase access to local food for all and supporting local and sustainable agriculture, community-based gardens and local food sector initiatives. The gardens at rare improve access to local foods in the community through sustainable seed saving goals, regenerative agricultural practices, providing accessibility support for community members facing food insecurity, growing food for donation, and providing educational opportunities for adults and children.

There have been countless memorable moments in the food bank gardens at rare. From children planting seeds for their very first time to seeing vegetables growing in a field when they'd only ever seen them in the grocery store or kitchen and staff who began in the garden going on to careers in sustainable, community-supported agriculture.

CFB's early spring greenhouse sessions at rare start seedlings and build connections between the two organizations.

The Cambridge Food Bank's recent donation of an industrial composter will further improve soil quality and future yields.

Together, rare and the Cambridge Food Bank continue to grow food, sustainability, and hope.



Since 2005, *rare* has provided over 34,000 pounds of fresh, local produce.

Donor Spotlight

A Lasting Legacy: Remembering Ted Fairless

This year, the Cambridge Food Bank was deeply moved to receive a generous bequest from the late Ted Fairless, beloved community member, longtime City Councillor, and tireless advocate for the people of Cambridge.

Ted dedicated much of his life to public service, representing our community on both City and Regional Councils across four decades. He brought care, conviction, and compassion to his work, always striving to make Cambridge a better, more connected, and more inclusive place. Whether through his involvement with the Grand River Conservation Authority, the Galt Jaycees, or his many years on Council, Ted never stopped working for the common good.

His decision to include the Cambridge Food Bank in his will is a powerful reflection of his values. Even in passing, Ted found a way to continue serving the people of this city, helping to ensure that individuals and families facing hunger will find support, dignity, and hope at times when they need it most.

We are humbled by this extraordinary gift and honoured to carry on Ted's legacy of community care. His generosity is a reminder that we each have the power to make a difference—and that acts of kindness can echo far into the future.





Jassica's Volunteer Story



One moment that really stuck with me happened while I was volunteering at the Cambridge Food Bank's community pantry. Honestly, I was just restocking shelves when an older man quietly asked if we had any canned soup. What started as a simple question turned into a really emotional conversation about his life, his late wife, and how lonely he felt after retiring. It was so moving. I didn't give advice or judge him, I just listened.

Amazingly, he seemed to really open up, and I could tell how much he needed someone to talk to. Because of my studies in mental health and substance use, I understood that he might be carrying a lot of pain, things like grief, loneliness, or maybe even depression. Honestly, that conversation showed me just how powerful it is to simply be there for someone.

Really, it's not always about having answers—sometimes, it's just about giving someone your time and empathy. That moment changed how I see community work.

Honestly, it touched me deeply. I could see how important it is to have safe, welcoming spaces where people feel accepted. What really stuck with me is that even small acts of kindness, like just being present, can make a big difference. These moments keep inspiring me to support my community in meaningful ways."



13,108 Volunteer Hours
296 New Volunteers

Make a Difference



We welcome the support of returning and new friends and partners who have the same belief as we do: that nutritious food is a human right. We provide a variety of ways for everyone to get involved and make a difference in their community. Join us today by getting involved with the Cambridge Food Bank!



Donate: Make a difference in your community today by donating to the Cambridge Food Bank. Every dollar donated helps to provide three meals. Donate today on our website.



Fundraise: Host a fundraiser today! Some fundraisers include a food drive, bottle drive, or carwash. For more ideas or to let us know about your upcoming event, give us a call: 519-622-6550 extension 101.



Work: Get involved on a company-wide scale! Compete against other departments when collecting food or funds, sponsor food resources, or provide a holiday dinner for a family in need. Check with your company to see if they provide dollar or time matching programs.



Volunteer: Volunteering is a great way to give back while connecting with others. Head to our website to see available volunteer positions and start volunteering today!



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



Cambridge Food Bank
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Cambridge, ON, N1R 3K3
519-622-6550



A Special Thank You...

Thank you to our many funders
for your support in making our work possible.



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