

GLOUCESTER EMERGENCY FOOD CUPBOARD



ANNUAL REPORT

2021



From Our Board Chairperson

It is with great pride that I present the annual report for the Gloucester Emergency Food Cupboard (GEFC).

As we endured year two of the pandemic, the steady leadership of our Executive Director, Erin O'Manique, ensured that the GEFC continued to serve the community without interruption.

The shift in our service model to an online appointment system is here to stay and is getting some attention from other food banks. The system, introduced to help with social distancing at the height of the pandemic, is the only one in the city that allows people who use the food bank to book appointments and pre-select their food. While we can still take orders via phone and at the door for those who may not be able to access the internet, this new online model has been very well received.

This has also been a remarkably successful fundraising year, with funds exceeding that of pre-covid times. I continue to be astounded by the generosity of our community. I want to thank all the individuals and businesses for their ongoing support of the GEFC.

This year, the board has been busy continuing our strategic planning initiative and looking forward to what will be required in our new facility. We are committed to working hard and getting everything in place to expand our capabilities, make our vision a reality, and build a resilient, connected and vibrant community where everyone has access to good food.

Thank you to all the staff, volunteers, board members, and community partners for your hard work and dedication. With your ongoing support and confidence, we will work to build a more food secure future for everyone.

Sincerely,

Nadine Mansour



2021

Board of Directors

Chairperson:

Nadine Mansour

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Chelsea Liu

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Natasha Albert

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Amélie Lavictoire

Andrea Balfour

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Sofi Blazeski

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Terrena Bennett

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Staff

Executive Director:

Erin O'Manique

Office Manager:

Heather Kimbell

Summer Students

Morag MacKenzie

Zoe Boyd

From Our Executive Director

Reflecting back on the last year is a bit of a blur - 2020 and 2021 are blending into that sense of timelessness that many of us report experiencing during the pandemic.

But there are some distinctions. The year 2020 was the year of being in the moment - pivoting to adapt to be able to continue our programs. In 2021 vaccines gave us hope that one day things would return to “normal.” Here at the GEFC it was the year of setting in place foundations to help us achieve our strategic plan, such as:

- Our online/phone-in appointment system that maintains our core values - accessibility and the dignity of choice;
- A survey that was designed to engage people who use the food bank so that we can meaningfully incorporate their needs and aspirations into our future space and programming;
- The initiation of a pilot project to provide enhanced connections to other programs and services via an in-house social worker;
- New good food program possibilities in Ottawa’s first community greenhouse;
- Initial design of our new space as input into the Request for Proposal process for our new building.

The next few years promise to be equally challenging as we pull all of this together under a new roof. I know that we are up to this challenge because of the solid support we receive from our community of donors, supporters, partners and especially our amazing volunteers. I am also grateful for our hardworking board, and my partner at the office Heather Kimbell, who not only keeps the place running smoothly but is behind many of our technological innovations.

It is difficult to feel optimistic—the pandemic has clearly demonstrated the deep, structural inequalities that exist in our community which policy makers refuse to adequately address. It is shocking that 1 in 20 households in our area needed to use our food bank in 2021! We will keep working to decrease that number and create hope instead.

Erin O’Manique





A Community Hub

At a time of great uncertainty, the GEFC became more than a place to get groceries. Thanks to our many community partners and donors (listed on pages 7 and 8), we always had enough fresh, healthy food for people to choose from. Core funding from the **City of Ottawa Community and Social Services** and being a member agency of the **Ottawa Food Bank** are key to our operation. Community members could get a hot meal every Wednesday from the **Ottawa Mission Food Truck**, as well as **Ottawa Network for Education (ONFE)** school breakfast and snack box when schools were shut down and throughout the summer. Our partners also made sure we were well equipped to provide masks and hand sanitizer. We shared information about vaccine clinics, and hosted several Covid-19 test clinics by **Ottawa Public Health**. In partnership with the **Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre (EORC)** we delivered food to those most vulnerable, and were able to include frozen meals from Cooking for a Cause, a project of the **Ottawa Community Food Partnership**.



During the growing season, members of the **Arrowsmith Thyme-less Community Garden** demonstrated the beauty of an “edible landscape” and donated to our food share program. Students started seedlings for our neighbours and our farm plot at **Gloucester High School’s** newly refurbished greenhouse. Fresh food is a priority and during the summer we had produce table outside three times a week when we were open, offering free veggies to the community. Our plot at the **Just Food Community Farm** makes this possible, thanks to our many volunteers. We also received incredible support from:

- **Ottawa Farm Fresh** - provided a weekly pick up of greens and veggies;
- **Dominion City Brewing Company** - built a Beer Garden where they grow veggies for us;
- **Rochon Garden** - delivered a weekly box of veggies to us as part of their CSA program;
- **Beacon Hill Community Garden Network/Gloucester Allotment Gardens** and other local gardeners;
- **Hidden Harvest Ottawa**—brought us freshly picked fruit from the neighbourhood.



At the farm we supported 14 refugee families who grew and preserved food for themselves and their communities. We look forward to post-pandemic times when we can celebrate the harvest together. In December we shared over \$25,850 in grocery gift cards in addition to turkeys and Hahal chickens, all the trimmings. **Christmas Lights Ottawa** also lit up our building, creating a beacon in the neighbourhood.



Building for the Future

As we ride out the pandemic, we were also looking to the future.

Our appointment system is a big change - we continue to make improvements to make it more robust and easy to use, printing order forms, lists and delivery slips. We conducted a survey of people who use the food share program to see if they want to go back to the old way of coming into the building to select groceries. Most want to keep the new system of choosing online and picking up, while some would like to have both options. We are working to bring back “shopping” in 2022, but will also continue with the pre-ordered pick up method from now on. Line ups and crowded waiting rooms will be a thing of the past.

In preparation for the Request For Proposals for our new building that was issued in January 2022 by the **City of Ottawa Community and Social Services Affordable Housing Branch**, we consulted with some local “activist chefs” and did a preliminary design of our new space to include a community kitchen and enhanced cold storage.

Anticipating this expanded program space, and in keeping with our strategic plan, we sought to engage the community by designing and user testing a survey to be implemented in the first six months of 2022, to enable a conversation about program possibilities in our new space.

We have initiated a program to provide “wrap around services” under an ongoing pilot project - to effectively point people who use the food bank to other community and social services in order to help them accomplish their goals. We hope to have that program in place in 2022 in partnership with the **Eastern Ottawa Resource Centre** and the **Ottawa Food Bank**.

Building on our food growing programs, we have received several grants, in partnership with **Just Food** to build Ottawa’s first community greenhouse. This will enable us to extend our growing season, grow more culturally appropriate vegetables, offer training and engage more of the community in growing food. We are grateful to the **Canada Community Revitalization Fund**, the **Ottawa Food Bank** and **Barristers for a Better Bytown** for supporting this project. Watch for more about this in 2022!

Food is what connects us all. These initiatives provide a base for us to demonstrate how our community can come together and help each other thrive through good food.



In 2021



we completed over
460
home deliveries to our most
vulnerable neighbours



7%
of the population of Beacon
Hill-Cyrville uses our food
share program



we distributed food to make
331,360
meals



we planted and harvested
1/3 acre
of produce at our own
community farm



we provided
7 days
of emergency food to our
neighbours



we distributed
3,120
prepared meals through
"Cooking for a Cause"



the Ottawa Mission Food Truck
served hot meals here
52 times



our volunteers gave
8,725 hours
of their time



Farm tour with local politicians and youth



Deliveries ready to go

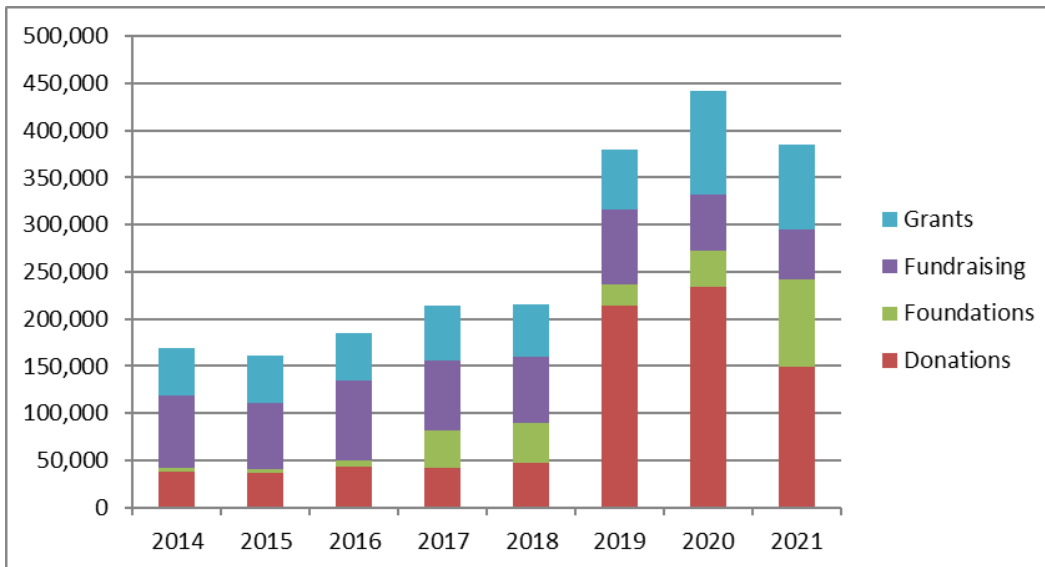


Heather

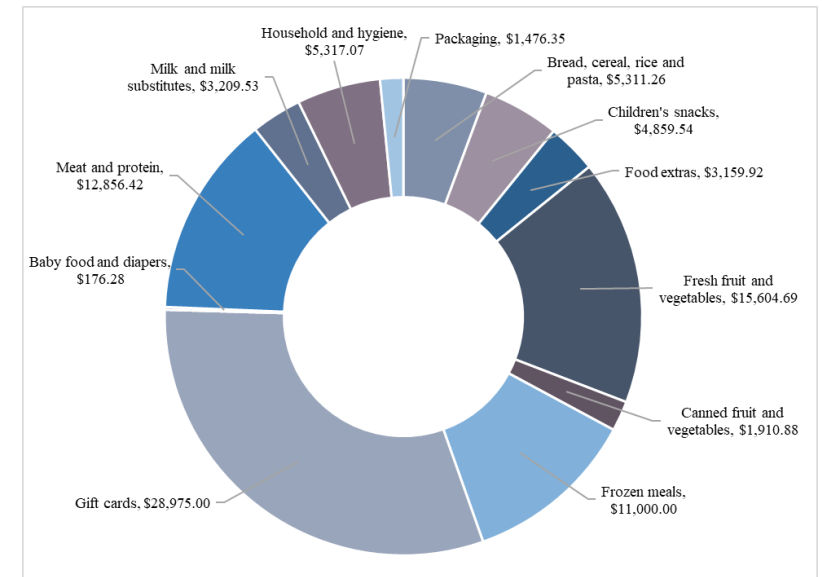
Morag

Zoe

Where our funds come from



How we spent our food budget



Our Community of Supporters

The GEFC provides the space and the infrastructure for community members and groups to support their neighbours. In addition to many individuals and families the following schools, churches, clubs, teams and businesses work with us by donating food, funds, conducting food drives and volunteering.

14th Gloucester Scouts

180 Fitness

29th Sparks/ Brownie Pack

2020 Jasmine - Sutton Place

Action Martial Arts

Agilec

Almanac Mill and Bakery

Annunciation of the Lord Parish

Beacon Hill Community Association

Boom! Savings! Charity Shopping Club

St Brother Andre Catholic School

Cadence Ecological Farm

Cairine Wilson High School

Capital Bees

Carson Grove Elementary School

Christmas Lights Ottawa

Church of Christ

Club Richelieu Orleans

Colonel By Secondary School

Curves (Montreal Road)

Dominion City Brewing Co

Ecole Elementaire Publique

Seraphin-Marion

Epiphany Anglican Church

First Capital Realty

Flying Squirrel Trampoline Park

Forest Valley Elementary School

Gloucester Center Juvenile Hockey Club

Gloucester High School

Gloucester Horticulture Society

Gloucester North Lions Club

Greenbelt Church

Greta's Organic Gardens

Grow and Give Community Garden

GTD Investments

Islamic Association of Gloucester

Katherine Kurdyla Physiotherapy

Kiwanis Club Of Orleans

Ladies Auxiliary Branch 632

Le Phare Elementary School

Lester B. Pearson Secondary School

Mattamy Homes

Mazon Canada Foundation

My Little Farm

Nerds on Site

Ogilvie Dental

Orchardview Montessori School

Orleans United Church

Paroisse Saint-Gabriel

Pine Grove Bible Church

Pineview Community Association

Resurrection Lutheran Church

Riverview Park Church of Christ

Robert Hopkins School

Rogers Group Employees

Rothwell Day Care

Rothwell United Church

Royal Canadian Legion- Branch 632

St. David and St. Martin
Presbyterian Church

St Helen's Anglican Church

St Kateri Tekawitha Catholic School

St Matthew High School

TD Bank

Telesat Canada Employees

The Beacon Learning Centre

Thomas D'Arcy McGee Catholic School

Titan Performance

Tulips of Thanks

University Of Ottawa Employees



* We apologize if we have inadvertently misspelled or omitted the name of any organization on this list and we ask that you please advise us of any errors.

Our Sponsors, Donors and Partners



Our Memberships



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