

canstruction

WATERLOO REGION



THE
FoodBank
OF WATERLOO REGION



What is Canstruction?

Canstruction Waterloo Region returns to Conestoga Mall during March Break, **March 14 to 22, 2026**. The week-long event, hosted by The Food Bank of Waterloo Region and presented by Cohen Highley Lawyers, brings the community together to raise food and funds, spark conversations about food insecurity, and showcase incredible creativity—all in support of a future without hunger.

How it works

Participating teams use unopened food cans to build impressive structures. Every single can is donated to The Food Bank! Teams design their build, source and buy the food needed, and construct their structure on build day, March 13. The finished structures are on display for the public to enjoy from March 14 to 22.



Does your workplace or community group have what it takes to build something extraordinary out of cans?

Why it matters

Impact of Canstruction

Events like Canstruction raise much needed food, funds and awareness about food insecurity in Waterloo region.

Last year, Canstruction raised 117,543 meals

Did you know...

- 1 in 8 households in Waterloo region is struggling to put food on the table.
- Over the last year, 73,600+ adults and children were supported by the Community Food Assistance Network.
- The Food Bank is funded by the generosity of our community.



How do I participate?

Build your team

- Teams can include any number of participants—coworkers, friends, or community partners
- Each team designates a team captain to coordinate details with The Food Bank
- It's helpful (but not required!) to include someone with architecture or engineering experience
- Teams can represent a single organization/group or a collaboration of several
- Registration opens on November 1, 2025
- \$650 per team

★ If you need design support, we can help connect you with a past participant!

How do I participate?

Design your structure

- Get inspired by past creations—visit [Canstruction International](#) for ideas!
- No set theme—focus on creativity and community. Aim for something that is easily identifiable on first look.
- Think about how your structure connects to The Food Bank’s mission: **Through community collaboration, we obtain and distribute essential food from our neighbours for our neighbours.**
- Max structure size: 10”l x 10”w x 6”h (3.48m x 3.48m x 1.83m)
- Initial design due January 15, 2026
- Final design due January 31, 2026, along with information for event sign

★ **Initial design helps** to not have duplicate structures. First come, first served!

How do I participate?

Purchase your food

- Teams are responsible for buying or collecting their cans.
- The Food Bank will provide contacts at preferred suppliers, but you can make alternate arrangements as well.
- You can fundraise to collect donations for the purchase of your cans, and we can help set up that online donation page.
- Deadline to purchase food is February 6, 2026, and all food must be at The Food Bank by March 6, 2026.
- It is advisable to purchase early to avoid delays or shortages
- Choose food from the [most needed items](#) list whenever possible.

★ Have **alternate cans** in mind in case of any shortages.

How do I participate?

Transporting the food

- The Food Bank offers one-time transportation from the store or your pre-build site (if you are doing a practice build).
- Orders must be paid in full before pick up.
- All food must arrive at The Food Bank by March 6, 2026.
- If you are delivering your food to The Food Bank, please ensure food is in boxes or cases to allow for proper stacking on pallets.
- The Food Bank will deliver the food to Conestoga Mall and have it at our build site on build day.

★ **Availability is limited.** We do our best to accommodate specific requests but can't guarantee.

It's time to
build!



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What happens on build day

Friday, March 13, 2026

- Build times begin between noon–6 p.m. doing your best to keep the build time to 6 hours or less
- You are responsible for your own tools and supplies—think step stool, utility knives, clear tape, Velcro, etc.
- You are also responsible for any levelling materials which must be ¼” thick or less.
- When you arrive at the mall, your build site will be taped off, and your cans will be on pallets beside
- Plan for the unexpected and have fun!
- Staff and volunteers are on site to answer any questions as well as document the event through photos and video.

★ **Team photos are important** so be sure to get that done when your build is complete.

Additional build information

These are important!


- Builds must use unopened canned food. Other packaged food can be used as accents.
- Your structure must be self supporting. Materials such as foam core, cardboard, plexiglass, Velcro, clear tape, rubber bands, string, wire, tie backs, etc., can be used.
- Not allowed—2x4 boards, leveling material >1/4”, sheet metal, permanent adhesives, glass containers, junk food, pet food, expired or opened items.
- Labels must remain intact and visible.

★ **Magnets** are a popular supply to have on hand.

Build is done, now what?

March 14–22, 2026

- The community is encouraged to visit Conestoga Mall to view the structures and donate to vote for their favourite.
- The structure with the most “votes” (donations) wins the People’s Choice Award and bragging rights!
- Voting can be done in person with cash, at the structure with tap or online
- Each structures has a dedicated donation page. That link is shared with you to share with your network. We also provide social media support materials to make posting easy!
- We hide stickers of Phil our mascot in a handful of structures for the community to participate in “Find Phil” to win a prize.

 **Share** your donation link and encourage people to donate to vote.

De-Canstruction and Awards



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Awards and judging

New format

- Awards categories—Most Cans, Best Use of Labels, Best Meal, Structural Ingenuity, Best Original Design, People's Choice.
- A panel of judges from the community as well as The Food Bank will judge each structure to determine the winner in each category, except for People's Choice.
- Awards will be announced at the awards ceremony at Conestoga Mall on Sunday, March 22, 2026, at 5 p.m. prior to de-can.
- Photos of each winning structure are sent to Canstruction International to be judged against all the citywide competitions all over the world.

★ **50% of score** will be from community judges. 50% of the score will be from The Food Bank judges.

De-can day

March 22, 2026 at 5:30 p.m.

- At the conclusion of the awards ceremony, instructions will be given to each team for de-canstruction.
- Each team is responsible for breaking down their structure and removing all leveling materials.
- Watermelon bins will be provided to collect the all the cans.
- Staff from The Food Bank will remove all the food and take it back to The Food Bank to be weighed, sorted and distributed.

★ **Clear tape** must be cut to ensure that the label remains intact.

Important dates

Keep these in mind

- November 1–December 31 – Registration
- January 15 – initial design
- January 31 – final design with measurements, team information for sign, payment
- February 6 – food ordered, and copy sent to The Food Bank
- March 6 – all food at The Food Bank
- March 13 – Build Day
- March 14 – 22 – Event runs during mall hours at Conestoga Mall
- March 22 5 p.m. – Awards followed by de-can

★ **Deadlines are important** to ensure that the event runs smoothly.