

THE FoodBank OF WATERLOO REGION

2026 Community Impact

Who we are

Vision

A Waterloo region where no one experiences hunger.

Mission

Through community collaboration, we obtain and distribute essential food from our neighbours for our neighbours.

Organizational values

- Community Impact
- Equity, Inclusivity, and Respect
- Collaborative Partnerships
- Operational Excellence
- Continuous Improvement
- Integrity and Dependability



Territorial acknowledgment

The land on which The Food Bank of Waterloo Region operates is the traditional territory of the Haudenosaunee, Anishinaabe, and Chonnonton Peoples. We are situated on the Haldimand Tract, land granted to the Six Nations that includes six miles on either side of the Grand River. We acknowledge the enduring presence of the Indigenous Peoples with whom we share this land today, and we are committed to cultivating authentic and respectful relationships characterized by trust and collaboration.

Leadership message



Kim Wilhelm, CEO
The Food Bank of Waterloo Region



David Brenneman, Chair
The Food Bank of Waterloo Region Board of Directors

This year demonstrated what is possible when a community comes together to support one another. Thanks to the generosity, dedication, and collaboration of donors, volunteers, businesses, community partners, and staff, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region continued to respond to growing food assistance needs across the region.

Five organizations joined the Community Food Assistance Network this year, bringing the total to 65 partner agencies. Each new partner strengthens the Network's ability to provide food and other essential supports in communities across the region. Through the Network, we distributed a record 10.5 million pounds of fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food, helping ensure individuals and families could access the support they needed.

While the number of individuals accessing food assistance declined from 72,547 to 66,945, this doesn't mean the need has decreased. In fact, visits to food hamper programs reached a record 670,751, up eight per cent from the previous year. More households relied on food assistance frequently, with 7,618 households accessing a hamper program more than eight times during the year. At the same time, more older adults turned to food assistance, with participation rising 17 per cent year over year. The number of participants reporting Old Age Security as their primary source of income also increased 16 per cent, highlighting the financial challenges many older adults are facing.

These trends reflect a reality we're seeing across our community: food insecurity is becoming a long-term challenge for many households. Rising housing costs, inadequate incomes, insufficient social assistance rates, and fixed retirement incomes continue to make it difficult for people to afford their basic needs.

While the Network plays a vital role in ensuring people can access food, lasting solutions require government action to address the root causes of poverty and food insecurity. Until that change comes, The Food Bank and its Network partners remain committed to providing accessible food assistance while advocating for long-term solutions.

As you read this Community Impact report, we hope you see the impact made possible by a community committed to supporting one another. Every dollar donated, every hour volunteered, and every pound of food distributed helps ensure thousands of your neighbours can access the support they need.

Thank you for being part of that impact.



Left, Alison De Muy, David Brenneman, Kim Wilhelm, and Karen Armstrong. In recognition of completing nine years of service on the Board of Directors, Alison and Karen were presented with gifts. Thank you, Alison and Karen, for your years of dedication, leadership, and commitment to our organization. ▶

2025–2026 Board of Directors

David Brenneman, Chair
Laura Lawlor, Vice-Chair and Secretary
Don Dychuck, Treasurer
Hassan Asif, Director
Kevin Dopko, Director
Helen Loftin, Director
Julia Malott, Director
Terry Melo, Director
Julie Millard, Director
Penny Miller, Director
Glen Polson, Director
Pejman Salehi, Director
Mike Verhoeve, Director

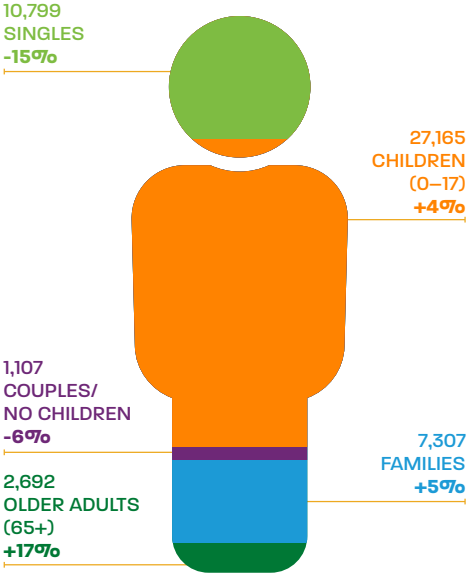
HUNGER IN

Waterloo region

Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, nearly **67,000 adults and children** in Waterloo region accessed food support through the Community Food Assistance Network, making almost **671,000 visits**, an **eight per cent increase** over the previous year and the highest total on record. While fewer individuals accessed support overall, those who did relied on food assistance more frequently, highlighting the continued severity of food insecurity in our community. Supported with essential food from The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, the Network remains a critical source of support for thousands of households.

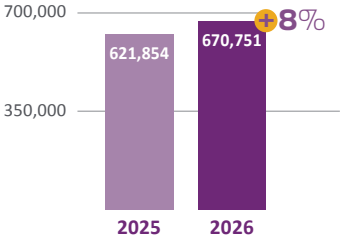
1 IN 10 HOUSEHOLDS RELY ON FOOD ASSISTANCE

PARTICIPANT DEMOGRAPHICS

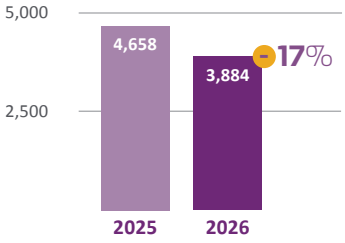


Thanks to our community's generosity, we're able to keep up with the growing need for food support year after year.

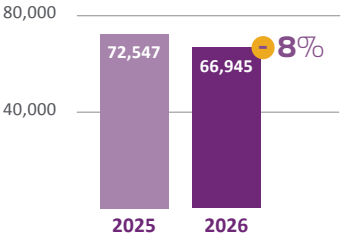
FOOD HAMPER PROGRAM VISITS



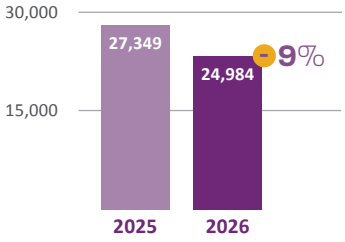
NEW HOUSEHOLDS: FOOD HAMPER PROGRAMS



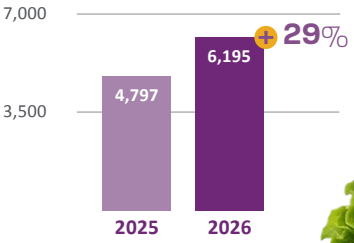
UNIQUE INDIVIDUALS SUPPORTED: FOOD HAMPER PROGRAMS



UNIQUE HOUSEHOLDS: FOOD HAMPER PROGRAMS



REFERRAL CALLS: FOOD AND COMMUNITY SUPPORTS





PARTICIPANT SPOTLIGHT

Stories behind the numbers

Each fall, we share our latest Hunger Count data to highlight the need for food assistance in Waterloo region. Behind every number is a person, a family, and a unique set of circumstances. The following stories offer a glimpse into the challenges many of our neighbours face and the difference that timely access to food can make. Thanks to the generosity of our community, people like Madeline, Suzy, and Mario can focus on their health, their families, and their futures while receiving the support they need today.

MADELINE'S STORY

Madeline is working multiple part-time jobs to support her family. Her partner was recently released from the hospital following a car accident and is recovering at home. As a result of his injuries, he's been unable to work and is not expected to return in the near future.

The family is facing additional household expenses while they wait for insurance payments. Without access to a benefit plan, the cost of pain medication has created further financial strain.

Access to a food assistance program helps ease some of the pressure the family is facing. Nutritious food supports her partner's recovery and allows Madeline to direct more of her income to rent, medical expenses, and other household costs.

SUZY'S STORY

Suzy is 64 and lives on her own. She has a progressive illness that makes it difficult for her to get around, so she uses a walker. Because of her health, she has been unable to work for several years and relies on disability benefits to make ends meet.

When her roommate moved out, Suzy could no longer afford the rent on her own. She was referred to The Food Bank of Waterloo Region and was relieved to learn that she could receive a weekly hamper delivered to her home.

Those weekly deliveries are making a real difference. With help putting food on the table, Suzy can focus on managing her health, paying her rent, and searching for a new roommate.

MARIO'S STORY

Mario and his family arrived in Canada as refugees, bringing with them only a few suitcases of clothing. As a family of seven with five children, they're living in temporary housing through a settlement program in Kitchener.

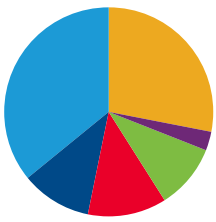
While working to establish a new life in Canada, the family is facing significant financial challenges. Like many newcomers, they're waiting for the documentation needed to seek employment and begin earning an income. In the meantime, they've been looking for ways to bridge gaps in their household budget.

Mario is grateful for the support his family receives through a food assistance program. Access to fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food helps ease some of the financial pressure they face as they settle into their new community. Mario has also begun volunteering with the program as a way to give back and gain Canadian work experience.

NEED FOOD?
CALL 519.743.5576 EXTENSION 340.
EMAIL NEEDFOOD@THEFOODBANK.CA.

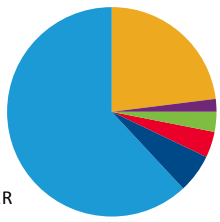


AGES



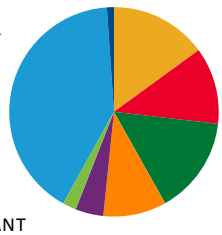
- 36% 0–17 YEARS
- 12% 18–30 YEARS
- 12% 31–44 YEARS
- 12% 45–64 YEARS
- 4% 65+ YEARS
- 24% UNKNOWN ADULTS (18+ YEARS)

HOUSING TYPE



- 62% PRIVATE RENTAL HOUSING
- 6% SOCIAL RENTAL HOUSING
- 4% HOMEOWNER
- 3% RESIDES WITH FAMILY/FRIENDS
- 2% EMERGENCY SHELTER
- 23% UNKNOWN/OTHER

INCOME SOURCE



- 14% ONTARIO WORKS
- 11% ONTARIO DISABILITY SUPPORT PROGRAM
- 14% EMPLOYMENT INCOME
- 9% NO INCOME
- 4% OLD AGE SECURITY
- 2% EMPLOYMENT INSURANCE
- 45% UNKNOWN/OTHER
- 1% STUDENT LOAN/GRANT

Feeding our community

The Food Bank of Waterloo Region serves as the region's central hub for food collection, storage, and distribution through the Community Food Assistance Network. By partnering with 65 local organizations that provide food support and other vital services, we help make food accessible across Cambridge, Kitchener, Waterloo, and the surrounding townships.

HERE'S HOW IT WORKS







THE FOOD BANK **ACQUIRES ESSENTIAL FOOD** FROM DONORS AND THE FOOD INDUSTRY

STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS AT THE FOOD BANK **FULFIL ORDERS AND DISTRIBUTE FOOD** TO NETWORK PARTNERS

INDIVIDUALS AND FAMILIES IN WATERLOO REGION **ACCESS FOOD** THROUGH THE NETWORK'S **120+ PROGRAMS**

OUR NETWORK PROVIDES

FOOD HAMPERS
Fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food

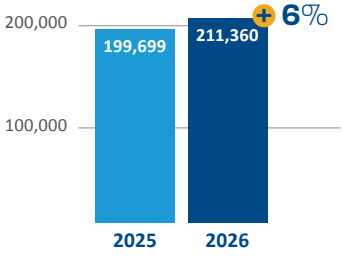
COMMUNITY MEALS
Nourishing meals for dine in or takeout

NUTRITIONAL OUTREACH
Food packs or temporary cooking programs

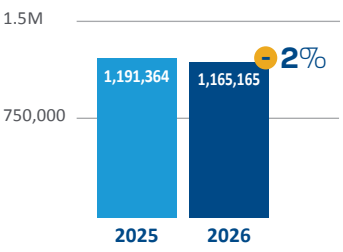
SHELTER AND RESIDENTIAL MEALS
Prepared meals for shelter guests or supportive housing residents

The Network ensures that adults, children, and families in every city and township in Waterloo region **have access to essential food support close to home.**

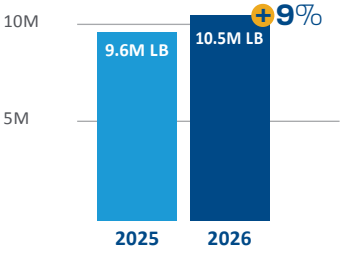
HAMPERS DISTRIBUTED



COMMUNITY MEALS SERVED



POUNDS OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED



PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

First United Church

Every Friday from November to April, First United Church in Uptown Waterloo welcomes community members for a meal and a chance to connect. The doors open at 2 p.m., giving guests time to warm up, enjoy coffee and snacks, and spend time together before dinner is served from 6 to 7 p.m. For more than 25 years, the church has provided a welcoming space through its overnight Out of the Cold program and, more recently, Fridays at First.

Every week, 15 to 20 volunteers prepare and serve about 50 meals using food from The Food Bank of Waterloo Region. Every meal includes a main course, salad, soup, and dessert, with accommodations available for guests who are gluten-free or vegetarian.

"We serve our guests at their seats," explains Cathie Stewart Savage, a program coordinator who has volunteered for 28 years. "We don't have them line up for food. We try to create a sense of family, rather than a distinction between those giving and those receiving."

Guests can also access clothing, toiletries, and non-perishable food items to take home if needed.

"Most of the people we serve receive some form of income support," Cathie says. "We also have people experiencing homelessness and others who are working in low-wage jobs."

Beyond the meal itself, Cathie says the relationships built with guests are what make the program so meaningful.

"You get to know people and learn about their lives," she says. "Sometimes they come to us with challenges we can help with. I often assist people in applying for the Ontario Electricity Support Program if they're struggling with high hydro bills."

For Cathie, the reward is knowing guests can access both nutritious food and a sense of community.

"They receive not only a healthy meal, but also the opportunity to connect with others, including volunteers from all walks of life," she says.

> *"Seeing people find stability because they can access support is incredibly rewarding.*



FOOD DISTRIBUTION PERCENTAGE PER CATEGORY

In 2025–2026, **The Food Bank distributed 10.5 million pounds of fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food** across the Community Food Assistance Network—a **9 per cent increase** compared to the year before. It's also the most food we've ever distributed.



0.2%	BABY FOOD/ PRODUCTS	11.7%	GRAINS	0.4%	PERSONAL CARE
0.8%	BAKING	0.3%	HOUSEHOLD	0.2%	PET FOOD/SUPPLIES
7.5%	BEVERAGES	17.3%	MEATS & ALT	6.5%	PREPARED FOODS
40.1%	FRUITS & VEG	5.6%	MILK & ALT	8.6%	SNACKS & TREATS
		0.5%	MISC	0.3%	SPECIALTY

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT



Anishnabeg Outreach

Anishnabeg Outreach is an Indigenous-led charity that supports First Nations, Inuit, and Métis individuals and families. Through its Spirit Bundle program, community members in Cambridge, Kitchener, and Guelph can access food hampers twice a month. Hampers include fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food from The Food Bank, as well as produce grown at Anishnabeg Outreach's 17-acre Spirit Garden in Breslau. The program currently supports more than 600 households.



Base Church

Twice a month, Base Church's Kitchener location operates The Free Market, a food hamper program for community members experiencing food insecurity. Supported by The Food Bank, the program offers fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food and serves about 80 households each time it runs.



House of Friendship

House of Friendship provides a range of programs and services for individuals and families facing challenges such as poverty, mental health concerns, and addiction. One of those services is its Emergency Food Hampers program, which provides food assistance to people experiencing food insecurity in Kitchener-Waterloo. Supported by The Food Bank, the program distributes an average of 150 hampers each day containing fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food.

NETWORK PARTNERS

Adventure4Change
All Saints' Anglican Church
Anishnabeg Outreach
Base Church
Cambridge Food Bank
Cambridge Shelter Corp
Camino Wellbeing + Mental Health
Church of the Lord Jesus Christ Apostolic
Community Ministry
Crow Shield Lodge
First United Church
Food Not Bombs
Glencairn Church
Hespeler Village Neighbourhood Association
House of Friendship
Indwell
Islamic Centre of Waterloo with Muslim Association of Canada
Kinbridge Community Association
Kingdom Community International
KW Underhill Residential Home
Langs
Lincoln Road Chapel
Marillac Place
Nigerians in the Region of Waterloo with KW Multicultural Centre
Nutrition for Learning
oneROOF Youth Services
Porchlight Counselling + Addiction Services
Preston Heights Community Group
Ray of Hope
Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church and Family Care Centre
Sanguen Health Centre
Sexual Assault Support Centre of Waterloo Region
Services and Housing in the Province
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Agnes
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Anthony Daniel
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – St. Mary's
Society of St. Vincent de Paul – Our Lady of Lourdes
St. Aloysius Church
St. Andrew's Hespeler Presbyterian
St. Andrew's Kitchener with Nexus Church
St. John's Anglican Church
St. Matthew's Lutheran Church
Stanley Park Community Centre and Community Association
Starling Community Services
Stirling Avenue Mennonite Church
Supportive Housing of Waterloo
The Cambridge Vineyard
The Healing of the Seven Generations
The Region of Waterloo
The Salvation Army Cambridge Citadel and Community Services
The Village Parenting Centre
The Working Centre
Thresholds Homes and Supports
Thrive HIV Prevention and Support
Traverse Independence
Trinity Anglican Church
University of Waterloo – WUSA Food Support Service
Waterloo Wayside
Wellesley Food Cupboard
Wilfrid Laurier University – Students' Union Food Bank
Wilmot and Wellesley Resource Centre
Women's Crisis Services of Waterloo Region
Woolwich Community Services
YWCA Cambridge
YWCA Kitchener-Waterloo

Neighbours helping neighbours



Because of you, more people across Waterloo region can access the food and support they need.

Whether you give your time as a volunteer or your funds as a donor, your support helps strengthen the Community Food Assistance Network, ensuring nutritious food and other essential supports are available close to home for individuals and families facing food insecurity.

In the past year alone, nearly 67,000 adults and children, including 3,884 households accessing support for the first time, received food and assistance through the Network. By supporting The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, you help sustain a network of 65 organizations working together to ensure no one has to face hunger alone.

Member of Volunteer Canada

4,081
INDIVIDUAL VOLUNTEERS

39,149
VOLUNTEER HOURS DONATED

DID YOU KNOW?
That is the same as **19 full-time employees.**

29,331
KILOMETRES DRIVEN BY VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

6.5M
POUNDS OF FRESH, FROZEN, AND NON-PERISHABLE FOOD SORTED AND/OR ORGANIZED

FOOD HAMPERS PACKED
106,066 FRESH
5,866 NON-PERISHABLE

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Bud's story

Volunteers are essential to The Food Bank of Waterloo Region and play a crucial role in all aspects of our operations. From accepting donations, sorting food, and packing hampers to making deliveries, supporting events, and guiding our mission, we couldn't do our work without our nearly 4,100 volunteers.

One of those remarkable volunteers is Bud Witter, who joined our transportation team in April 2025. As a retiree with extra time on his hands, Bud was eager to give back in a meaningful way—and he found exactly what he was looking for at The Food Bank. Since then, he has become a familiar face on the road, volunteering two to three times each week. He picks up donations from local grocery stores and delivers food hampers to individuals and families who can't access a food assistance program in person, ensuring that mobility, health, or other challenges never stand in the way of a nutritious meal.

For Bud, the rewards of volunteering are simple and profound.

"The most rewarding part is seeing the smiles and the thank-yous from the people you deliver to," he shares. "You know, there's a lot of people who can't speak English, but they sure do know how to say thank you."

Through his volunteer work, Bud has also gained a deeper understanding of how quickly circumstances can change—and why it's important not to judge a book by its cover.

He recalls a delivery he made years ago while helping a partner in the Community Food Assistance Network. The home was in a neighbourhood that initially gave him pause, and he admits he felt skeptical as he approached the door.

"I knocked and this little young lad came to the door," Bud remembers. "He looked at the food and he said, 'Dad, we can now eat!'"

In that moment, Bud's perspective shifted.

"I didn't realize they were holding on by the skin of their teeth," he says. "They had a car. They had a house. But they also had bills to pay. What goes first? Food is the first thing to go. They have to keep a roof over their heads."

That experience stayed with him—and reinforced why his role matters.

The sense of gratitude, Bud says, goes both ways. He often jokes about the 'pay' volunteers receive.

"I said to another volunteer, 'The pay you get here is fantastic.' He said, 'We get paid?' I said, 'Yeah, don't you?' He said, 'What do you get paid?' I said, 'Gratitude.' The smiles, the thank-yous—you can't buy that.

That's why I do this. It's gratifying to know you're helping people."



SIGN UP TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER AT
THEFOODBANK.CA/VOLUNTEER.

DONOR SPOTLIGHT

Jessica's story

Thanks to EAT 365 monthly donors, more than three million meals were provided to people in Waterloo region facing food insecurity between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026.

One of those committed supporters is Jessica Blackler.

Jessica has called Waterloo region home for much of the past 20 years and has been supporting The Food Bank of Waterloo Region since 2009. Along with making financial contributions, she has volunteered onsite with colleagues from Definity. In 2024, she strengthened her commitment by joining EAT 365, helping provide the reliable, year-round support The Food Bank needs to respond to growing demand for food assistance.

For Jessica, giving to The Food Bank comes from a simple belief: anyone can face unexpected challenges.

"I want to give back because I know a lot of people are one paycheque or one illness away from needing help," she says.

She also understands that food insecurity is often closer to home than many people realize. The people who access food support are not strangers—they could be neighbours, coworkers, friends, or family members.

"It's a small community," Jessica says. "You could be helping your neighbour and you don't even know."

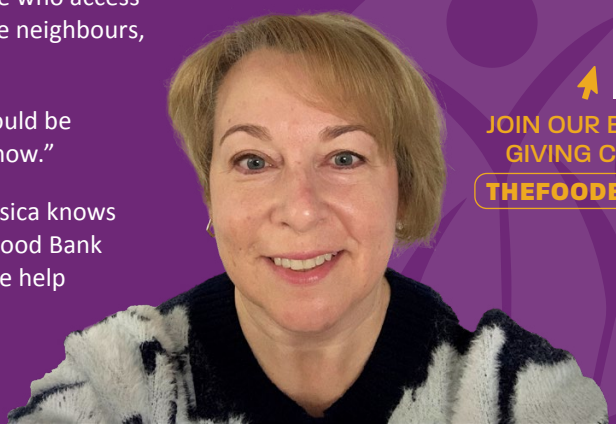
While grateful for her own circumstances, Jessica knows how quickly life can change. Supporting The Food Bank is her way of helping build a community where help is available when people need it most.

"While I feel fortunate in my career and where I am, I'm also very aware that it can change on a dime," she shares. "I don't like to take things for granted, so I want to give back because if I ever needed support, I would hope others could do the same for me."

As an EAT 365 monthly donor, Jessica is helping ensure The Food Bank can respond to food insecurity every day of the year.

"I feel proud to be a monthly donor," she says. "I hope my donations help meet the growing need and buy food that isn't easily donated."

When you join EAT 365, you help ensure nearly 67,000 adults and children experiencing food insecurity across Waterloo region can count on support all year long.



JOIN OUR EAT 365 MONTHLY GIVING COMMUNITY AT
THEFOODBANK.CA/EAT365.

EAT 365

Through our EAT 365 Monthly Giving program, **2,905 dedicated donors** are helping relieve hunger every day of the year.

Together, their annual contributions of more than **$1.6 million provide the equivalent of 3.3 million meals**, ensuring thousands of neighbours can put food on the table when they need it most.

3,693 FIRST-TIME DONORS

2,905 MONTHLY DONORS

$47.14 AVERAGE MONTHLY GIFT

ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The Food Bank of Waterloo Region offers corporate, community, and youth groups a hands-on way to connect, build stronger relationships, and make a meaningful impact in the community. Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, **159 corporate and community groups** and **19 youth groups** volunteered at our distribution centre, helping sort, repack, organize, and prepare food for distribution. Together, they sorted nearly **473,000 pounds of food**, the equivalent of **394,093 meals** for neighbours experiencing food insecurity. Thank you to Heffner Toyota for sponsoring our Engagement program!





6,054
MEALS PROVIDED

TOP non-perishable food sorters

▲ RE/MAX SOLID GOLD REALTY (CORPORATE GROUP)
Employees from RE/MAX Solid Gold Realty rolled up their sleeves at The Food Bank, sorting 7,265 pounds of non-perishable food. Their efforts helped provide the equivalent of 6,054 meals for neighbours across Waterloo region.

▼ PICKLEBALL OF WATERLOO WELLINGTON REGION (COMMUNITY GROUP)
For the second consecutive year, members of Pickleball of Waterloo Wellington Region volunteered at The Food Bank, sorting 6,385 pounds of non-perishable food, enough for 5,298 meals.



5,298
MEALS PROVIDED

Engagement on the road

Not every team can come to The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, so sometimes we bring The Food Bank to them.

During a workplace engagement activity, Stantec employees repackaged crackers that would later be distributed through local food assistance programs. The experience left a lasting impression on Shayna Meinzinger, who shared in a LinkedIn post:

> *One of the things I appreciate about working at Stantec is our SITC (Stantec in the Community) Week initiative, where employees are encouraged to spend time volunteering in their communities.*

This month, I spent a morning volunteering with The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, helping repackage crackers so they could be distributed to community members.

The Food Bank staff joked that when you get a group of Stantec employees together, even repackaging crackers turns into an exercise in process optimization. Between the engineers, scientists, finance professionals, legal staff, and teammates from across the company, the assembly line became pretty efficient in no time.

Also, I have to mention that the garlic crackers smelled amazing the entire time!

I'm grateful to work for a company that encourages us to give back to our communities and supports opportunities like this."





BRING YOUR TEAM TOGETHER
TO MAKE A REAL IMPACT.
SIGN UP TODAY AT
THEFOODBANK.CA/VOLUNTEER.

Food, funds, and fun!



The generosity of our community is at the heart of everything we do. By hosting food and fund drives, individuals, workplaces, schools, and community groups help ensure neighbours have access to the food they need.

Every donation helps The Food Bank of Waterloo Region stock shelves, buy nutritious food, and support deliveries to Community Food Assistance Network partners across the region. Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, 1,100 drives were held in support of The Food Bank, helping provide an incredible **1.4 million meals.**

318,065

POUNDS OF NON-PERISHABLE FOOD COLLECTED

$586,095

RAISED

2025–2026 FOOD & FUND DRIVE PROGRAM SPONSORS

Did you know? Thanks to our Food & Fund Drive program sponsors, we can provide boxes, bags, and posters for community and corporate food and fund drives.

Tim Hortons · AMMAR'S · Barber-Collins Security Services Ltd. · Grand Porter Logistics · dh · Melloul Blamey Construction · morell kelly · YNCU · Caudle's Catch Seafood · Zehrs · Clean & Tidy · Gary H. Attack Financial Planning Inc. · Pillers · Aire One Heating · Cooling · Plumbing · FreshCo · Kitchener Utilities · McINTYRE · oma · RBC Wealth Management Dominion Securities · Sobeys · Stantec · Port Charlotte · BSG Ball Service Group Inc. · EyeView Optical

FOOD AND FUND DRIVE SPOTLIGHT

Ruby's story

When 11-year-old Ruby Henhoeffer wanted to help neighbours experiencing food insecurity, she turned to her love of baking. With support from her mom, Ruby spent time preparing homemade treats and created a hand-drawn poster to spread the word about a bake sale she planned to hold during a community garage sale in Kitchener.

Throughout the day, neighbours, family, and community members stopped by to support her effort, making donations to The Food Bank of Waterloo Region in exchange for cookies, cupcakes, and other baked goods. By the time the sale wrapped up, Ruby had raised an impressive $179, enough to provide 358 meals for people facing food insecurity in Waterloo region.

Ruby's bake sale is a reminder that making a difference doesn't require a large donation or a big event. Sometimes, it starts with a simple idea, a willingness to help, and a young person determined to support their community.



REGISTER YOUR FOOD AND FUND DRIVE AT **THEFOODBANK.CA/FFD.**

FIRST RESPONDERS TO FOOD BANK 365

When community members face an emergency, first responders are often among the first to answer the call. For the past decade, they have been answering another call as well: helping ensure neighbours have access to food.

Through First Responders to Food Bank 365, proudly supported by Melloul-Blamey, local firefighters, police officers, and paramedics have extended their commitment to the community beyond moments of crisis. By opening their stations as year-round food donation drop-off locations, they make it easy for residents to support neighbours experiencing food insecurity whenever inspiration strikes.

What began as a simple idea by former Waterloo Fire Chief Richard Hepditch has grown into a lasting community partnership. Whether someone drops off a few cans after a grocery trip or arrives with a trunk full of donations, every contribution helps stock shelves and strengthen food assistance programs across Waterloo region.

Since 2015, the program has helped provide more than **260,000 meals** for people in need. First Responders to Food Bank 365 stands as a powerful example of what happens when community leaders use their trusted role to inspire action. Every day, at stations across Kitchener-Waterloo, first responders continue to help build a community where neighbours look out for one another and where no one has to face hunger alone.



◀ *Every December, off-duty personnel from Kitchener Fire, Region of Waterloo Paramedic Services, Waterloo Fire Rescue, and Waterloo Regional Police Service volunteer during First Responders to Food Bank 365 Awareness Week, spending time at The Food Bank's distribution centre sorting food and collecting donations from communities across Waterloo region.*

CAMPAIGNS AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Behind every campaign, fundraiser, and community event is a shared commitment to ensuring everyone has access to the food they need. Over the past year, supporters of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region turned awareness into action, raising critical food and funds while helping shine a light on the growing need in our community. Here are just a few highlights from the year.

VISIT **THEFOODBANK.CA/EVENTS** TO DISCOVER FUN AND EXCITING EVENTS THAT SUPPORT THE FOOD BANK.



CBC MAKE THE SEASON KIND: Every year, CBC hosts its Make the Season Kind campaign, a celebration of community and kindness in support of food banks and charities across Canada. Since 2012, the campaign has raised over **$73 million** nationally. Locally, in 2025, the campaign raised $27,713. That's the same as **55,426 meals!**



CANSTRUCTION WATERLOO REGION: Canstruction Waterloo Region 2026, presented by Cohen Highley Lawyers, helped build a stronger, more food-secure community—raising an incredible **89,655 meals** for individuals and families facing hunger across the region. Held annually at Conestoga Mall during March Break, this event brings the community together in a creative and meaningful way to raise awareness about food insecurity while collecting food and funds for The Food Bank. This year, 13 teams used their imagination and technical skills to transform more than 26,000 unopened food items into impressive, larger-than-life structures. Since 2008, Canstruction Waterloo Region has raised more than **two million meals.**

Register your team for 2027 at thefoodbank.ca/canstruction.



EMPTY BOWLS: Empty Bowls returned on May 27 at Wilfrid Laurier University's Lazaridis Hall, once again proving to be a truly 'souper' community celebration of delicious food, beautiful art, and meaningful impact. The 28th annual event, sponsored by Bennett Wealth Management of RBC Dominion Securities Inc., and organized by Laurier's Robert Langen Art Gallery and the Waterloo Potters' Workshop, was a huge success, raising over $49,000—enough to provide an incredible **98,664 meals!** Since its inception, Empty Bowls has raised more than **1.7 million meals.**



FULL BELLIES. HAPPY HEARTS.: Every summer, our Full Bellies. Happy Hearts. campaign brings the community together to help ensure children and their families have access to healthy food year-round. Thanks to the incredible generosity of donors and the support of our matching sponsor, the Allan Bush Investment Team, the 2025 campaign reached its goal of **1.5 million meals.** Together, supporters have now helped provide an incredible **10 million meals** since the campaign began.



GREAT FOOD SORT CHALLENGE: The 2026 Great Food Sort Challenge, presented by BMO Financial Group Fischer-Hallman & Bleams Branch, delivered a knockout blow to hunger, raising an incredible **168,570 meals** for people struggling to afford food. The 10th annual event took place January 22, 23, and 26 at The Food Bank's distribution centre, bringing together 30 teams of ultimate hunger fighters for some friendly competition to sort the most food and raise the most meals in support of The Food Bank. Over the three days, 300 people stepped into the ring to sort through 71,223 pounds of non-perishable food. The teams, representing 27 local businesses, also raised $54,608. Since 2014, the event has raised more than **1.1 million meals.**

Register your team for 2027 at thefoodbank.ca/gfsc.

TIM HORTONS HOLIDAY SMILE COOKIE: Giving back never tasted so sweet! From November 17 to 23, Tim Hortons locations in Kitchener-Waterloo sold Holiday Smile Cookies in support of The Food Bank and Tim Hortons Foundation Camps. Thanks to the generosity of our community, the campaign raised an incredible $72,048 for The Food Bank—enough to provide **144,096 meals.** Talk about making food insecurity crumble!





KITCHENER-WATERLOO OKTOBERFEST: In October 2025, our community supported The Food Bank at various Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest events, including Grillefest hosted by City of Kitchener Council, the Onkel Hans Food Drive at the Kitchener-Waterloo Oktoberfest Thanksgiving Day Parade, Concordia Club's Community Appreciation Night, and Stuff a Bus. Altogether, since 2013, these events have raised more than **1.4 million meals** for people accessing food assistance programs in Waterloo region. Prost to making a difference in our community!

WHISKY & WINE IN THE WAREHOUSE: The Food Bank's signature fundraising event, Whisky & Wine in the Warehouse, raised a remarkable **253,000 meals** for individuals and families experiencing food insecurity in our community. Held on April 25 at The Food Bank's distribution centre in Kitchener, the second annual event welcomed more than 200 guests for a memorable evening of great food, drink, and community impact. Through ticket sales and various fundraising activities, attendees helped raise more than $126,600 to support The Food Bank and neighbours in need. Save the date! **The 3rd annual Whisky & Wine in the Warehouse is April 24, 2027.**









Saving fresh. Feeding community.

A food bank is about more than canned goods. At The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, we work to ensure people have access to fresh, nutritious food. Of the 10.5 million pounds of food distributed each year through the Community Food Assistance Network, **60 per cent is fresh or frozen,** including fruits, vegetables, dairy, meat, and other healthy essentials.

IF YOUR BUSINESS HAS EDIBLE FOOD TO SHARE, VISIT

THEFOODBANK.CA/CORPORATE-GIVING

TO LEARN HOW YOUR DONATION CAN HELP PROVIDE FRESH, NOURISHING FOOD TO PEOPLE THROUGHOUT WATERLOO REGION.



Food Recovery program: Good food belongs on tables, not in landfills. Since 2019, our Food Recovery program has partnered with manufacturers, distributors, farmers, retailers, and restaurants to rescue surplus and imperfect food that is still safe, nutritious, and fit to eat. By redirecting this food through the Community Food Assistance Network, we help reduce food waste while increasing access to healthy food for people facing food insecurity. From July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, the program recovered more than **3.3 million pounds of food**, helping provide essential support to the 66,945 adults and children who accessed food assistance across Waterloo region.



Fresh Approaches Food Centre: Since opening in 2018, our award-winning Fresh Approaches Food Centre has helped give fresh food a second chance. Working with farmers, restaurants, retailers, distributors, and manufacturers, staff and volunteers safely process, repack, and freeze large food donations, extending their shelf life and ensuring nutritious food reaches local households instead of going to waste. From July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, **194,481 pounds of fresh food** were processed and redistributed to support the 1 in 10 households in Waterloo region that rely on food assistance. Since opening, the centre has helped save and share more than **912,000 pounds of food**, transforming potential waste into nutritious meals for the community.



Perishable hamper line: Nutritious food starts with dedicated volunteers. At The Food Bank, volunteers work side by side to pack food hampers distributed through the Community Food Assistance Network, carefully filling each one with a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables, and other essential foods. From July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026, volunteers packed **106,066 hampers**. Thanks to their efforts, thousands of individuals and families across Waterloo region had access to healthy, nutritious food when they needed it most.



Mobile Pantry: Launched in 2021, the Mobile Pantry was created to bring food support directly into communities where access can be a challenge. Through partnerships with organizations across Waterloo region, the program helps ensure nutritious food is within reach for more individuals and families. This past year, five Community Food Assistance Network partners hosted the Mobile Pantry. Each visit provided food for up to **100 households**, offering a mix of fresh, frozen, and non-perishable items, and helping connect people with support closer to home.

PARTNER SPOTLIGHT

Mennonite Central Committee Ontario

Helping people access nutritious food takes community collaboration. In March 2026, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region partnered with Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Ontario to provide high-quality canned chicken to households accessing food support through the Community Food Assistance Network.

MCC Ontario has been addressing food insecurity for decades and played a role in helping establish The Food Bank in 1984. In 2025, the organization expanded its impact by opening a 10,000-square-foot meat cannery in New Hamburg, creating new opportunities to support families locally.

"We approached The Food Bank because its trusted relationships with community groups enable food to be distributed efficiently to those who need it most," says Michelle Brenneman, executive director of Mennonite Central Committee Ontario.

Protein remains one of the most in-demand and difficult-to-source food items. Through this partnership, canned chicken is distributed across the Network, helping ensure families have access to nutritious meals while reducing pressure on The Food Bank's purchasing budget.

With a five-year shelf life and versatile use in everyday meals, the canned chicken provides a reliable source of protein for families accessing food support.

"Protein is one of the most requested items by both our partner agencies and the families they support. It's essential for healthy, balanced meals," says Jaime Bickerton, director of agency and partner network relations of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region. "Shelf-stable protein like this chicken gives our partners flexibility for hampers, meal programs, and emergency support. It also gives families confidence when they cook, knowing they can stretch the chicken into soups, casseroles, salads, and other affordable dishes."

The initiative is made possible through a three-year, $600,000 investment from the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation, which will help provide about 28,000 cans of chicken annually to children and families experiencing food insecurity across Waterloo region.

> *"This partnership with MCC Ontario is about more than providing chicken. It demonstrates what is possible when organizations come together to address a growing need in our community, says Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region.*

Thank you to MCC Ontario and the Lyle S. Hallman Foundation for helping strengthen food support across Waterloo region and ensuring families have access to nutritious, high-quality protein.







CORPORATE SPOTLIGHT

Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre

Behind one of our longest-standing partnerships is a simple but powerful routine: four times each week, a driver from The Food Bank of Waterloo Region arrives at the Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre in Cambridge to collect fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food donations.

Through our Food Recovery program, this food is rescued before it goes to waste and redirected to families and individuals facing food insecurity across Waterloo region, transforming surplus and imperfect food into nourishment for our community.

"This partnership is built on trust, communication, and a shared commitment to reducing food waste while ensuring nutritious food reaches people facing hunger," says Nicole Marinelli, manager of food procurement and distribution services of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region.

For more than 25 years, the Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre has been a cornerstone partner in our efforts to reduce food insecurity across Waterloo region. Since 2000, the facility has donated more than 30 million pounds of food, making it The Food Bank's largest and most consistent food donor. Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026, the distribution centre contributed an extraordinary 1.5 million pounds of fresh, frozen, and non-perishable food.

"At Loblaw Maple Grove, we believe that being part of our community means more than just doing business—it means making a meaningful difference in the lives of those around us," says Darryl Bodden, general manager of Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre. "Our partnership with The Food Bank of Waterloo Region is something we are incredibly proud of. Together, we support the families in the community where we live, work, and serve, helping ensure more people have access to the food they need. This partnership reflects our shared commitment to building stronger communities and helping put food on the tables of our fellow Canadians."

Turning good food into community impact

The impact of these donations reaches every corner of Waterloo region. Frozen and non-perishable food is distributed through the 65 organizations that make up the Community Food Assistance Network, reaching nearly 67,000 people accessing food assistance each year. Fresh produce is packed into hampers at The Food Bank, supporting programs across the Network and helping families and individuals access healthy, nutritious food.

When volumes allow, donations are also shared with participating food banks across southwestern Ontario through Feed Collaboration, extending the reach of this partnership and ensuring even more good food nourishes communities instead of going to waste.

"What makes this partnership exceptional is the strong relationship we have built with the entire Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre team," Nicole shares. "Their team takes the time to understand our operations, asks thoughtful questions, and works collaboratively to ensure products are used where they will have the greatest impact. They are proactive, flexible, and always willing to find solutions that help support our work. If there is an opportunity to help, the Loblaw team is always there to support us in any way they can."

More than a donor, the Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre is a trusted partner in our mission. Together, we are reducing food waste, feeding people facing hunger, and strengthening communities across Waterloo region and beyond.

In February 2026, staff from Loblaw Maple Grove Distribution Centre joined The Food Bank team to celebrate reaching an incredible milestone: 1.2 million meals donated through Loblaw's collective food donations. ▼



Feed Collaboration

Feed Collaboration, a program led by Feed Ontario in partnership with The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, connects food industry partners with more than 30 food banks across southwestern Ontario through a single, streamlined donation channel. Food manufacturers, processors, distributors, growers, farmers, and other industry partners can donate surplus or imperfect food, knowing it will reach communities that need it most.

As the program's regional distribution hub, The Food Bank receives donations, stores them in our 31,000-square-foot facility, and coordinates distribution to participating food banks based on organizational capacity and community need. This collaborative approach helps reduce food waste, expands access to a diverse range of nutritious food, and maximizes the impact of every donation.

In 2025–2026, food producers donated nearly **1.2 million pounds of food** through Feed Collaboration. Together, we are proving that when the food industry and food banks work hand in hand, good food can nourish people instead of going to waste.

LEARN MORE ABOUT FEED COLLABORATION AND THE FOOD BANKS WE WORK WITH AT **THEFOODBANK.CA/FEEDCOLLABORATION**

FEED ONTARIO

TOP FIVE CORPORATE FOOD DONORS

We thank all food donors for providing nutritious food to share with our community.

Between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026 our top five corporate food donors provided a collective **2,513,784 pounds.**

Loblaw Companies Limited	1,497,868 POUNDS
COSTCO WHOLESALE WATERLOO	486,653 POUNDS
COSTCO WHOLESALE KITCHENER	262,800 POUNDS
Pillers	148,674 POUNDS
NORTERA	117,789 POUNDS

GROCERY BIN PROGRAM

A special shoutout to our retail partners across Kitchener-Waterloo who support our Grocery Bin program. Thank you to our incredible community for donating **214,578 pounds of non-perishable food** between July 1, 2025 and June 30, 2026. Every donation helps support people across our region experiencing food insecurity.

Central Fresh Market
Food Basics
FreshCo
Giant Tiger
Goodness Me
Longo's
No Frills
OMA Fresh
Real Canadian Superstore
Sobeys
Walmart
Your Independent Grocer
Zehrs



NEWCOMER PROGRAM

Opening doors to opportunity

When newcomers arrive in Canada, finding employment can be challenging. Many employers ask for Canadian work experience, but gaining that experience often requires having a job first. Breaking that cycle can be difficult.

In 2025, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region became part of an innovative community solution. Through the Newcomer Work Experience Program, newcomers received paid, hands-on training at our distribution centre while building the skills, confidence, and experience needed to enter the Canadian workforce. Funded by the Region of Waterloo and developed in collaboration with Immigration Partnership Waterloo Region, the pilot program ran from July 2025 to May 2026.

Over four weeks, participants worked alongside The Food Bank staff in a variety of roles throughout the warehouse. They learned practical skills such as order picking, pump truck operation, food safety, and workplace health and safety. Classroom training also introduced participants to Canadian workplace expectations, communication styles, and customer service practices, helping them navigate a new work environment with confidence.

For us, the program aligned closely with our mission of building a stronger, more resilient community.

“We believe in empowering newcomers by helping them build their skills and confidence so they can contribute to the Canadian economy and help fill critical labour gaps in Waterloo region by strengthening the workforce where support is needed most,” says Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region.

By the conclusion of the pilot, about 40 newcomers had completed the program. Nearly one-third secured employment shortly after graduation, demonstrating the value of providing meaningful opportunities to gain Canadian work experience.

The initiative also highlighted the power of community collaboration. The idea emerged through discussions among local employers and community leaders participating in Immigration Partnership Waterloo Region. Together, partners recognized an opportunity to support newcomers, strengthen the local workforce, and advance The Food Bank’s vision of a community where no one experiences hunger.

The pilot was made possible through a $249,000 investment from the Region of Waterloo and the collective efforts of Immigration Partnership Waterloo Region, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, and local employers who helped shape the program.

By opening doors to employment, the Newcomer Work Experience Program helped participants build more than workplace skills. It helped create connections, confidence, and a stronger sense of belonging in the community they now call home.

In their own words

“I gained both soft and hard skills in this program. It helped me upgrade my skills related to Canadian work culture and expand my network.”

“Overall, my experience at The Food Bank was very positive. I gained hands-on experience, learned the importance of teamwork and community support, and improved my customer service and communication skills. I’m grateful for the opportunity and the supportive environment.”

“The Newcomer Work Experience Program strengthened my soft skills and, in particular, my knowledge of proper food handling and safety standards. Learning safe food practices and improving my verbal and non-verbal communication helped me feel confident and prepared me for my new role at the Hilton hotel.”



Advocacy in action

The Food Bank of Waterloo Region continues to see record-breaking demand for food assistance, with visits to food hamper programs across the Community Food Assistance Network reaching historic highs. These record numbers reflect the growing reliance many households have on food support as they struggle to afford basic necessities. While emergency food programs provide critical relief for individuals and families, they are not a long-term solution to poverty.

Creating lasting change requires action beyond the food bank sector. That means investing in policies that strengthen incomes, improve access to affordable housing, and ensure social assistance programs provide adequate support. Alongside our provincial partner, Feed Ontario, and our national partner, Food Banks Canada, we continue to advocate for policies that reduce poverty and improve food security.

We also encourage community members to make their voices heard. By engaging with elected officials and supporting policies that address the root causes of food insecurity, we can work together to build a future where everyone has access to the resources they need to thrive.

LEARN MORE ABOUT HOW YOU CAN ADVOCATE FOR A WATERLOO REGION WHERE NO ONE EXPERIENCES HUNGER AT **THEFOODBANK.CA/ADVOCATE.**



Unequal Portions

In March 2026, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region was pleased to welcome Senator Marty Deacon. During her visit, she met with staff involved in the development of Unequal Portions, a new youth engagement tool created by The Food Bank.

The board game helps players better understand the difficult choices many families face each month, such as whether to pay bills or buy groceries, and the real-life circumstances that can lead someone to seek support from a food assistance program.



Hunger Action Month

Every September, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region joins food banks across Canada in recognizing Hunger Action Month. The national campaign shines a spotlight on food insecurity, raises awareness about its root causes, and encourages community action to help create lasting solutions.



Senate of Canada visit

In June, Senator Marty Deacon, who represents Waterloo region, met with Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, in Ottawa during the launch of Food Banks Canada's 2026 Poverty Report Cards. Their discussion focused on food insecurity and other issues affecting our community.



Telling our story

Thank you for helping us share our story and advance our vision of a Waterloo region where no one experiences hunger. Every conversation, contribution, and act of support helps raise awareness, inspire action, and move us closer to a future where everyone has access to healthy, nutritious food.

MEDIA RELATIONS

182 mentions in media stories

22 media releases and advisories, generating **27 earned media stories**

12 published op-eds

Mentions had a combined editorial **reach of 719 million** and an estimated **Advertising Value Equivalency** (AVE) of **$9.3 million.**

WEBSITE

142,290 visitors on The Food Bank's website

517,096 page views

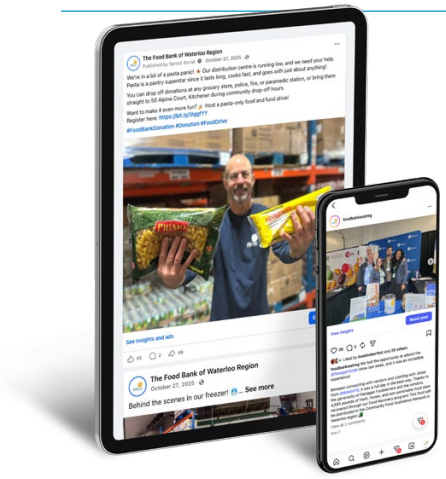
47 blog posts with **4,811 page views**

SOCIAL MEDIA

23,674 followers on The Food Bank's social media channels

12.9 million impressions and **40,630 engagements**

1.1 million video views





❶ ***CBC:*** *Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, joined CBC K-W's The Morning Edition host Craig Norris in studio for a conversation about food insecurity in Waterloo region.*



❹ ***The Record:*** *A story about Empty Bowls was published in May.*



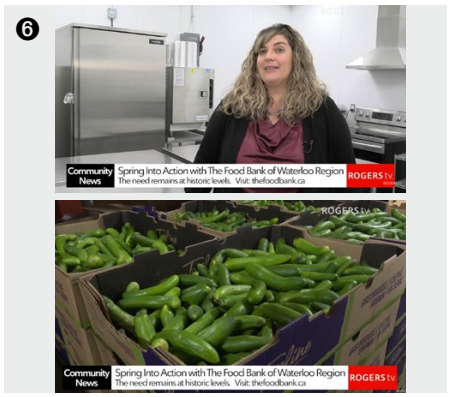
❷ ***CTV:*** *CTV Kitchener News Anchor Leighanne Evans, left, interviewed Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region. They are joined by fellow CTV News Anchor Ashley Bacon. A special shoutout to CTV cameraman Dave Pettitt for helping cover the segment.*



❺ ***CityNews 570:*** *Left, Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, and Mike Farwell, host of the Mike Farwell Show on CityNews 570.*



❸ ***Faith FM:*** *Faith 93.7 morning show hosts Michael Harris, left, and Carrie Guse, right, met up with Michelle Rickard, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region's manager of marketing and communications.*



❻ ***Rogers:*** *Kim Wilhelm, CEO of The Food Bank of Waterloo Region, appears on Rogers TV's Community News This Week.*



Our team

As demand for food assistance continues to grow, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region has expanded its team to strengthen support for the Community Food Assistance Network. Today, our staff of 55 includes both operations and office professionals whose collective efforts help ensure people across Waterloo region can access the food and support they need. Together, they play a vital role in advancing our vision of a community where no one experiences hunger.

We are also proud to be a Living Wage Employer, ensuring every employee earns a wage that reflects the real cost of living and helps cover basic needs while supporting full participation in community life.

ONTARIO LIVING WAGE NETWORK

CANADA SUMMER JOBS PROGRAM

In summer 2025, The Food Bank of Waterloo Region welcomed three students through the Canada Summer Jobs program. As warehouse associates, they gained meaningful work experience while helping support daily operations and ensuring nutritious food reached individuals and families across Waterloo region. Their energy and dedication made a valuable contribution to our team.



Back left, students Brad, RJ, and Cooper, and Neale Thompson, warehouse associate. Front left, Myleen Ugalino-Racho, warehouse associate, Sara Melo, warehouse lead hand, and Lydia Tavares, warehouse operations manager. ▶

Financial accountability

Income statement for the year ended June 30, 2026.

The generosity of our community ensured that nearly 67,000 people in Waterloo region had access to food when they needed it.

DONATIONS & INCOME

FOOD DONATIONS	$27,566,506	**67.41%**
DONATIONS & FUNDRAISING	$10,542,944	**25.78%**
REGION OF WATERLOO – COMMUNITY FOOD ASSISTANCE NETWORK	$1,500,000	**3.67%**
FOOD BANK DISTRIBUTION SERVICES	$113,426	**0.28%**
INVESTMENTS & OTHER INCOME	$1,169,993	**2.86%**
TOTAL	**$40,892,869**	**100%**

EXPENDITURES

FOOD DONATIONS	$27,566,506	**70.34%**
PERSONNEL	$4,545,779	**11.60%**
ADMINISTRATION	$618,386	**1.58%**
FUNDRAISING & FOOD DRIVES	$1,212,934	**3.10%**
FOOD PURCHASE & PROCESSING	$2,635,567	**6.73%**
FACILITIES	$525,167	**1.34%**
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT & AGENCY RELATIONS	$154,043	**0.39%**
TRANSPORTATION	$343,238	**0.88%**
REGION OF WATERLOO – COMMUNITY FOOD ASSISTANCE NETWORK	$1,350,000	**3.44%**
COMMUNITY FOOD ASSISTANCE NETWORK – NETWORK CAPACITY	$7,069	**0.02%**
AMORTIZATION OF CAPITAL ASSETS	$229,659	**0.59%**
TOTAL	**$39,188,348**	**100%**



★ NOTE: IN THE PAST YEAR, MORE THAN **7.57 MILLION** POUNDS OF FOOD WERE DONATED, VALUED AT **$3.64 PER POUND.**

The Food Bank of Waterloo Region focuses on growth, sustainability, and innovation as part of our long-term planning. Through a financial strategy, the Board of Directors ensures financial stability to navigate potential fluctuations in donations and the effects of economic uncertainty. As part of this approach, the Board internally designates the following operating reserves:

EMERGENCY FOOD PURCHASE RESERVE

$3,900,000

provides funding to purchase food in the case of significant events and damages (such as COVID-19) or gaps in supply chains to prevent disruption to community programs and agency partners.

CAPITAL MAINTENANCE RESERVE

$280,000

addresses the needs of an aging building and ensures optimal health and safety of staff and volunteers.

EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT RESERVE

$300,000

supports community food and program needs in crisis situations as outlined in the Region of Waterloo Emergency Management Plans.

FUTURE CAPACITY RESERVE

$10,261,876

provides resources as we look to the future. Investing in a new space and supporting our team is fundamental to ensuring safe and secure food distribution that meets the needs of our changing community.

OPERATING RESERVE

$5,200,000

provides about six months of operating expenses as working capital to accommodate fluctuations in cash flow and program funding.

NETWORK CAPACITY RESERVE

$800,000

supports programs in the provision of innovative food support services and programs in the community to meet the food assistance needs in Waterloo region.

Looking ahead

As we look ahead, we recognize that hunger in our community continues to evolve. What was once a temporary need for food assistance has increasingly become an ongoing reality for many households. Rising living costs, housing pressures, and economic uncertainty continue to drive demand across our Community Food Assistance Network, with more individuals and families relying on food assistance as a necessity rather than a short-term need.

Meeting this growing need requires continued innovation, collaboration, and adaptability. As demand has increased, we have worked to strengthen our operations, improve efficiencies, and maximize the use of our existing resources. At the same time, we continue to explore opportunities to enhance our capacity and ensure our facility, systems, and infrastructure can support the needs of our Network and the community well into the future.

Our **2024–2027 Strategic Plan** provides the foundation for this work. It challenges us to:

- **Design for high-performing partnerships** – Elevating collaboration within our Community Food Assistance Network and beyond.
- **Build an innovative and sustainable workplace culture and environment** – Creating space and practices that reflect the scale of our mission.
- **Bring clarity to community** – Inspiring understanding, connection, and action across Waterloo region.
- **Strengthen our numbers** – Growing our resources and capacity to ensure no one goes hungry.

The years ahead will require resilience and collective action. While the challenges facing our community are significant, so too is our shared commitment to addressing them. With the support of donors, volunteers, Network partners, and community members, we will continue strengthening the local food assistance system while advocating for long-term solutions at all levels of government that help reduce the need for food assistance over time.

Together, we are building a more nourished, connected, and resilient Waterloo region where everyone has access to the food they need.

LEARN MORE ABOUT OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES AT **THEFOODBANK.CA/STRATEGICPLAN.**



Food Banks Canada

FEED ONTARIO

Food Banks Canada Banques alimentaires Canada EXCELLENCE

Agréé IMAGINE CANADA Accredited

Community impact
Printing partner

Simpson SINCE 1984 PRINT

Design partner

DESIGN Co CREATIVE BRANDING HOUSE

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