

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Executive Directors Message _____	3
Office Manager Message _____	5
Special Project Coordinator Message _____	6
Food and Warehouse Manager Message _____	8
New Board Member Bios: _____	9
2023 Statistics _____	12

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR MESSAGE

(Shawna Bissell)

Full disclosure, I know this annual report is going to be a bit of a disappointment, having seen the shiny, colourful, professional reports from past years. This has been a year of serious reflection and transformation at Food Banks Alberta and the creation of a beautiful document to illustrate those changes was simply not in the cards in terms of time, money or priority. This is not to say that I do not believe you need and deserve a comprehensive summation of our past year, but simply that I would prefer to give this information to you as plainly and honestly as possible. So here goes.....

As a start, I was incredibly grateful to be chosen to lead Food Banks Alberta in August of 2023, and I remain, to this day, grateful still. The kindness, welcoming and patience I have been shown by each and every one of you remind me of the reasons each of you has found your way into this business; you truly care for others and are invested in their success and happiness. I have enjoyed meeting those of you that I could and hearing about the innovative and impactful work you perform within your home communities. There is no us without you and I am thankful that you have allowed me to become a small part of this amazing movement over the past year.

As stated earlier, this has not been an easy year for any of us as we seek to navigate the work we do in an increasingly complex environment. Food Bankers are the masters of doing more and more with less and less, and I am committed to following in your footsteps at the provincial association level. In the upcoming year, Food Banks Alberta will strive to provide more direct services and supports to members while doing so in the most effective and efficient manner possible. We will do our utmost to make ourselves available for what you need and when you need it within a member-driven scope and direction. And while we know we can't solve all your problems, we are committed to working with you, cooperatively and collaboratively, to try to find solutions together.

This is not an easy time for food banks. Inflation, coupled with the high cost of living, has driven usage higher than ever before. We have heard your worries and fears over the past year and share your concerns as food stocks get low and reserve funds dwindle. But we remain hopeful in the resilience of you, our members and your capacity to continue to serve

even in the most trying of times. For our part, we will continue to advocate for badly needed funding and resources and seek out creative sources to help meet the need.

- **Emergency Event Response:** Develop a system for responding quickly and decisively to meet the immediate and identified food security needs of communities in times of disasters.
- **Sustainable Funding for Food Bank Programs and Infrastructure:** In partnership with the Government of Alberta, secure the resources necessary for food banks to serve and support
- **Member Sustainability:** Strengthen and support food banks facing operational challenges
- **Explore innovative means and methods for serving diverse populations including New Canadians, Indigenous and Rural/Remote Communities**
- **Standards of Excellence:** Provide members with the tools necessary to meet Standards within a process and system that is realistic and attainable for Alberta Food Banks
- **Membership Review and Application Process**

OFFICE MANAGER MESSAGE

(Leslie von Albedhyll)

I have been with Food Banks Alberta as Office Manager since October 2023. Since starting with FBA, I have transitioned the bookkeeping and financial reporting responsibilities from an external, contracted company, and now I am responsible for the full cycle bookkeeping processes and reporting. I hope moving forward that I will be able to present detailed, accurate, and transparent reporting for not only our internal use but for our members as well. Financials are not the most exciting read, so keeping it simple is important so the information provided can be understood by anyone. I am always available to support our members with questions regarding audit procedures and preparation, tax receipting, grant reporting, and any other admin support whenever needed, and establish a consistent point of contact for answering questions and providing information to our members. With 8 years of fundraising experience, I am excited to be part of the amazing team working to raise funds through different opportunities that will be used across the province to support all of our members in their efforts to support Albertans with food insecurities. The funds raised will also be used to fund programs to help with the cost of bulk food purchasing, transportation, and administrative support. I am grateful to work for such an amazing and important organization and I look forward to the upcoming year and everything it will bring!

SPECIAL PROJECT COORDINATOR MESSAGE

(Kim Williston)

I commenced my role as Special Projects Coordinator in late January 2024. The two priority projects for this role are: Standards of Excellence Accreditation and Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning. These projects address critical areas of process improvement for Food Banks Alberta.

Standards of Excellence Accreditation. This project focuses on ensuring that all food banks across Canada, including Alberta, adhere to and comply with a series of standards which promote best practices in food bank operations. Food Banks have recognized the need for a set of standards that create benchmarks while promoting transparency and accountability to the public. In response to this need, Food Banks Canada (FBC) formed a National Standards Committee who developed the Standards of Excellence Accreditation program.

Project Goal: The overarching goal is to ensure that every Food Bank in Alberta complies with the Standards of Excellence and submits their completed application to Food Banks Canada by March 31, 2025. The completed applications will be reviewed by the FBC National Peer Review Team.

Over the past 5 months, I have completed the FBA's Standards application, which was submitted in May 2024. I have provided support to food bank members across Alberta to assist with the completion of the seventy-two (72) Standards. Support has been provided in numerous ways including phone calls, one-to-one meetings, resource sharing, and webinars. Webinars are hosted monthly; each webinar covers one section of the standard. Examples, templates, and a variety of resources are provided. All information will be accessible through the Standards page on the member portal of the new FBA website.

Next 6 months: There are two overarching priorities over the next 6-9 months with this project:

- On-going member support to assist in completing the Standards of Excellence.

- While food bank members in Alberta support best practices and some degree of standardization, it has become evident that there are areas of the Standards that are problematic and/or don't align with provincial health regulations. FBA and FBC are continuing to consult to determine how to meet the needs of all food banks in Alberta.

Emergency Preparedness and Response Planning. This project focuses on ensuring Food Banks Alberta has the resources needed to provide a comprehensive and coordinated response to food insecurity during emergency events. The Government of Alberta (GOA) is a key stakeholder in this project.

Over the past 5 months, I have supported the Executive Director in developing a proposal for the GOA to advocate for core funding to support FBA in emergency preparedness and response. This proposal established the essential role FBA plays in emergency response. I have also started to work on the FBA Emergency Preparedness Response Plan Manual and assisted in creating the process for internal protocols for members needing to access food support. I am also actively engaged as the FBA representative on the Non-Government Organization (NGO) Council of Alberta. These groups of non-profit organizations meet regularly to coordinate response in the event of an emergency.

Project Goal: It is important that FBA can respond to all food bank members during emergencies, including those food banks not impacted by the emergency. Therefore, the goal is to create an Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan for FBA. This Plan will serve as a go-to document for the oversight of emergency preparedness and response as it relates to food insecurity in Alberta.

Next 6 months:

- Focus on the development and completion of the Emergency Plan and Manual

FOOD/WAREHOUSE MANAGER MESSAGE

(Fran Riehl)

I have been with FBA since 2021 and have worn many hats: warehouse manager, member services, network support, etc. As our team expanded however, my position has shifted to focus primarily on food procurement and warehouse supervision. Food insecurity continues to increase across the province, so it is imperative as an organization to form closer connections and partnerships with primary donors in agriculture (Potatoes, Corn, etc.) and protein (Bison, Beef, Chicken, etc.) sectors and to focus on moving these procured resources to our members in more efficient and cost-effective manners.

Accomplishments in last 6 months:

Bulk purchasing program. Re-launching the bulk purchasing program for the allotment this year. It was a program previously available to members a few years ago but had no reliable budget available to implement in large and consistent quantities. This year, in partnership with Food Banks Canada and The For Good Foundation, we were able to secure brand-new low-cost goods that were in high demand for the network, utilizing a larger purchasing budget than the previous years. For the steady rotation of staple foods, systems had to be designed to implement, track, and monitor the movement and resale of this food. By doing so, the warehouse's ability to forecast purchases increases. Members who have limited resources in their communities or were not in a 'ship to zone' from wholesalers directly are now able to procure resources at greatly reduced rates directly from our warehouse.

Upcoming projects:

Some of the upcoming projects currently in development include a program for uninspected eggs (in partnership with AHS), securing no-cost or donated transportation partners, modifying the allotment program for better equitability, and (re)forming partnerships with primary donors in the agriculture, protein, and fresh sectors.

NEW BOARD MEMBER BIOS:

Lynne Jenkinson

Lynne Jenkinson is the Executive Director of Flagstaff Family and Community Services and has held that position since 2011. She began her employment with FFCS in 2009 and has been on the Flagstaff Food Bank Board since then. Lynne has had a varied career, beginning in Broadcasting straight out of college, retail, contracting with different levels of government, and running her own campsite business with her husband, she also sells AVON as a side gig. She has been a very active community worker and volunteer since settling in Camrose County in 1988. She loves grant writing but also loves time with her spouse, Austin, her ONYA and her 7 cats. She looks forward to serving on the Food Banks Alberta Board representing East Central Alberta.

Heather Innes

Heather grew up in Calgary after her family moved from Montréal. For the last twenty years she has worked as a lawyer with Alberta Justice, Legal Services Division. She lives in Edmonton with her two nearly grown children, husband and cat. Heather enjoys travelling, singing in choirs, hiking, working out, and reading, and she is an avid soccer/hockey and former dance mom. She is looking forward to supporting the important work of Food Banks Alberta.

Maeve Duggan

Originally from Ireland, I moved to Canada in 2014 and am proud to be a Canadian citizen. As a founder of Skyline QS Consultants Ltd., I have dedicated my career to the insurance and construction industries, focusing on providing exceptional quantity surveying services across Canada. At Skyline QS, we pride ourselves on our professionalism, trust, and accountability, especially in the wake of catastrophic events like wildfires, floods, and earthquakes.

Beyond my professional work, I am deeply committed to community service. Joining the board of Food Banks Alberta allows me to contribute to an organization whose mission to alleviate hunger and food insecurity resonates deeply with me. I am excited to bring my

expertise and dedication to the board, and I look forward to supporting the strategic direction and success of Food Banks Alberta.

Nic-Caron-Lavoie

Born and raised in western Canada, Nic Caron-Lavoie has been part of the food banking community since 2014 when she first started volunteering. In 2021, Nic became the first and sole staff of the Cold Lake Food Bank as Executive Director. Her dedication to community service extends to all aspects of her life, from her past military service to sitting on the board of the local men's shelter to her current time as a volunteer firefighter. Nic is passionate about addressing food insecurity and its root causes and improving the food banking network in our vast regions.

Melissa From, President & CEO, Calgary Food Bank

Melissa joined the Calgary Food Bank as the President & CEO in March 2023. With her, she brings nearly two decades of leadership and advocacy experience. Alongside her Bachelor of Business Administration, she also holds a Master of Public Policy Administration from the University of Saskatchewan. She has completed a Certificate in Non-Profit Management from Mount Royal University and is one of just 1200 CFRE designated fundraisers in Canada. She is also a recipient of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Medal in recognition of her work in the charitable sector.

Melissa currently sits on the board of directors for the Alberta Mentoring Partnership. She is a frequent podcast guest, public speaker and loves volunteering in her community. On the weekends you can find Melissa enjoying time at the hockey rink with her husband and two children.

The Calgary Food Bank is one of the largest food banks in Canada and the city's primary emergency food hub. In a day, it supplies nearly 700 households with nutritious food, supports over 50 local charities with food support, and leads the way in research on food insecurity in the city. Melissa believes in the boundless potential of the city of Calgary and its citizens. But she knows that potential can only be reached when we are all thriving. Melissa is committed to making certain that all Calgarians have access to the food they need to ensure that they can contribute in their most meaningful way to a strong community.

Jana Thompson, COO, The Olive Tree Community Centre Inc.

COO of The Olive Tree, Jana has been with the organization for 8 years. Her passion for helping her community and communities abroad at a young age led her to find her purpose working in the non-profit industry. With a background in project management, public relations and fundraising she hopes to drive organizational growth to ensure the mission of the organizations she works with is met. She seeks to find sustainable solutions to social issues and create meaningful change in the community she loves and chooses to call home and raise her young family.

The Olive Tree Community Centre is a unique organization that offers support in the areas of homelessness, hunger relief and education. Through their food bank programs, they are able to distribute over 300,000lbs of food a year in their community and the surrounding area. The social enterprise that they operate provides essential support to community members through the provision of clothing, household items, and furniture. They are a vital resource that not only addresses immediate needs like food insecurity, and necessities but also fosters community well-being through education, outreach support, and social initiatives. Their efforts contribute significantly to enhancing the quality of life for many residents in the area.

2023 STATISTICS

In 2023, Food Banks Alberta exceeded donation amounts that haven't been seen since COVID-19 relief efforts in 2020. We tracked a total of 105 donation offers over the course of the year, including wildfire emergency relief, NWT evacuee relief, and Kraft Pantry days (Quarterly donations in partnership with Food Banks Canada).

The allotment system, although still far from perfect, simultaneously managed to substantially increase the number of members accessing our warehouse stocks, the number of requests made for food, shipments, and overall movement of food. Our transportation and storage expenditures have, as a result, also increased with the growing need from our members. For example, external storage and transportation were under \$3,000 combined per month by the end of 2020. Late in 2022, we saw expenditures jump to a combined average of over \$6,500 per month

Donation amounts (lbs) in 2023 exceeded recorded numbers during the height of Covid in 2020

2020: 2,627,396 lbs

2023: 2,776,742 lbs

Distribution to our food bank members reached an all-time high in 2023 at 2,038,465lbs shared. Since 2020, the average number of food banks served by Food Banks Alberta increased by 175.68%

Avg. # of food banks served per month in 2020: 37

Avg # of food bank allotment submissions per month in 2023: 65

to move allotments requested/ordered. As a result, in 2023, we worked hard to organize bulk shipments to hubs and formed a new partnership with Rosenau for better freight rates.

On May 06, 2023, the government of Alberta officially declared the province in a State of Emergency. Food Banks Alberta prioritized support for all affected communities and evacuees, but staff were also steadily

Total movement of food and resources from all sources during Wildfires: 211,680bs = \$418,353

Total movement of food and resources from all sources during NWT evacuee: 48,346lbs = \$170,178

Courtesy of FBC funding, FBA received funding to purchase food during the NWT Emergency for support of members impacted by the influx of evacuees from Aug 15 to Sept 30th = \$108,093.28

FBA moved 82,013lbs of food from combined own stocks and donations = \$288,685.76

working on allotments submitted each month. The team further made a few calls for member support for those impacted by the wildfires. The NGO council was activated at the start of the emergency and a great deal of support was funneled through Food Banks Alberta into impacted communities. A second round of emergency relief was activated when the fires up North and in BC forced evacuees into Alberta on Aug 15, 2023. As a result of FBA's emergency efforts in 2023, the GOA proposed a contract with our organization to provide emergency relief to food-insecure communities during emergency events (local or provincial level).