



2020

ANNUAL
REPORT



For fiscal period ending December 31, 2020

YORK REGION FOOD NETWORK

Acknowledges

York Region Food Network acknowledges that we live and work on the traditional territories of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee and the Anishinaabe peoples and are part of the Williams Treaties and Treaty 13. We acknowledge the Chippewas of Georgina Island First Nation as our closest Indigenous community.

We also recognize that many of our practices including our organizational structure, the seeds we plant, the food we prepare, the ways we educate and our methods of growing, harvesting, preparing and sharing food came to these lands through the ongoing process of colonialism. We seek to hold this understanding in our interactions and engagements with this land and its people as we are all treaty people and play a role in reconciliation.



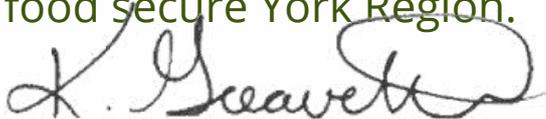
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

We started the year with a 2020 vision – we had big ambitions for our urban agriculture and food skill classes, slow and steady changes we wanted to make to our Good Food Box program and a lot of plans for food systems training. In January, York Region Food Network's leadership changed as Joan Stonehocker left the organization after twelve years and Kate Greavette took on the role of Executive Director. Following a successful WinterFresh fundraiser and Seedy Saturday, everything changed overnight as COVID-19 hit in March 2020.

Pre-pandemic food insecurity was a public health crisis, impacting 1 in 8 people. In March 2020, with mass workplace and school closures and precarious employment, access to food became a major concern and food insecurity rates increased.

We shifted our priorities and throughout the year, York Region Food Network's Board and staff team demonstrated strength, resiliency and commitment to the right to food as we provided immediate food support while keeping our eyes on the vision of 'food for health - food for all'. We refused and continue to refuse, settling for band-aid solutions to food insecurity because they have put so many people in precarious positions pre-pandemic and in even more precarious positions during a crisis like COVID-19. Demand for our services increased dramatically and with the support of funders and donors, we adapted our operations to fit the core needs of the community.

This year has been full of surprises but it has shown us that change is possible. We've stepped up to the plate to provide the community with innovative programming, services and supports; all while ensuring that addressing the true causes of food insecurity - racism, colonization, poverty - are at the forefront of our conversations and actions. As we look ahead, we'll be looking to merge our pre-COVID-19 strengths with lessons learned through COVID-19 so we can increase the scale and scope of our work across York Region. As we continue to fight for the right to food for all, we will be working strategically to build partnerships, collect data and broaden our networks so we can continue to make advancements towards a food secure York Region.



Kate Greavette
Executive Director



Rebecca Kopel
Chair of the Board of Directors

PROGRAMS



Food Access



Good Food Box



**Production
Kitchen**



**Allotment
Gardens**



**Food Skill
Development**



**Systems
Change**

IMPACTS

Food Access

When people's finances are impacted, their risk of food insecurity increases. In March 2020, with the onset of the COVID19 pandemic, mass work closures and tremendous uncertainty, York Region Food Network immediately shifted our priorities to focus on our immediate food services. Without missing a day of service delivery, we partnered with groups and organizations to distribute Good Food Boxes, grocery gift cards and deliciously prepared meals to people in our community.



IMPACTS

Good Food Box

With some minor adjustments to our Good Food Box program, including increasing the frequency to twice each month, partnering with Ebenezer United Church on a new pick-up site in Markham and offering contactless pickup, we distributed **5071 Good Food Boxes in 2020.**

York Region Food Network partnered with York Region District School Board, Rose of Sharon, Girls Inc., Victim Services of York Region, Women's Support Network of York Region, Newmarket African Caribbean Canadian Association, Mapleglen Residence and Biindigen Healing and Arts to extend the impact and reach of our Good Food Box Program.



IMPACTS

Grocery Gift Cards

Through support from Community Food Centre Canada, York Region Food Network distributed **\$36,500 of grocery gift cards**.



Production Kitchen

York Region Food Network scaled up our production kitchen to prepare **13,145 wholesome meals and snacks**. Meals were distributed via a variety of community partners including Hope House Community Hospice, Canadian Mental Health Association, Biindigen Healing and Arts, and Aurora United Church.



IMPACTS

Allotment Gardens



The Aurora Allotment Garden and Mulock Allotment Garden opened for the 2020 growing season and served **172 gardeners**.

Food Skills Development

In March 2020, we transitioned our food, nutrition and cooking classes online to offer virtual classes. With the transition to a virtual space, we experienced some hiccups, but through trial and error, we have built a virtual library of food skill workshops.

In 2020, we facilitated **67 newcomer cooking classes, serving 836 people**. We facilitated an **additional 26 classes for community partners** and **12 workshops** catered to Cooking for One and food and nutrition.

We also launched York Region Food Network's **Compost Learning Hub** through virtual workshops, supporting York Region's composting sale and securing new composters.



IMPACTS

Systems Change

In 2020, York Region Food Network took an active lead in systems change – educating about the food system and advocating for a better food system for all.

The two core pillars of our systems work is the **York Region Food Council** and the **Just Recovery** campaign.

The York Region Food Council has a spark of fresh energy as Morgan Sage took on the coordination and leadership of the Council. This has resulted in monthly op-eds in the media and the undertaking of the Food Stories research project to capture stories and experiences of service providers during COVID as they relate to food. The York Region Food Council also hosted virtual events on local food, income security and youth and food, and developed the York Region Youth Food Committee.



The Just Recovery Campaign, in partnership with Social Planning Council of York Region has been a regional effort to imagine what a just recovery from COVID19 could look like. In 2020, we held **six events with 146 people, representing over 60 organizations.**

OUR FUNDERS



*CHARITABLE GAMING
BENEFITS THIS ORGANIZATION
AND YOUR COMMUNITY.*

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Canada



An agency of the Government of Ontario
Un organisme du gouvernement de l'Ontario



community food centres
CANADA good food is just the beginning



AT A GLANCE

	2020	2019
Total Assets	384,764	235,705
Current Liabilities	164,082	113,290
Net Assets	220,682	122,415

Total Revenue	761,443	576,236
Total Expenditures	663,176	562,773
Excess (Deficiency)	98,267	13,463

*Complete Audited Financial Statements
are available upon request*

THANK YOU

York Region Food Network would like to thank the over 250 individual donors who supported our operations and administration. Without your support, day-to-day operations would be impossible.

We would also like to thank the following for their generous financial and in-kind support:

100 Youth Who Care
19th Avenue Farmers Market
605485 Ontario Ltd.
Argosy Securities Inc.
Buchner Manufacturing
Central York Panthers Midget B Hockey Team
Elementary Teacher's Federation of Ontario
ETFO York Region OT Local
Infomaxium Inc.
Investors Group
Joe Johnson Equipment Inc.
Nature's Rainbow
OSSTF ARM Chapter 13/16
Our Independence Project
Springboard Strategies Inc
St. Jamestown Steak and Chops
The Cutting Veg
Toronto and Area Road Builders Assoc.
W. P. Scott Charitable Foundation
York Unit OECTA