

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

*For fiscal
period ending
December 31, 2022*



YORK REGION FOOD NETWORK

Acknowledges

We work on the traditional territories of the Wendat, the Haudenosaunee, the Mississauga's of the Credit 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

The past few years have been extremely challenging and unpredictable. With the onset of the pandemic in 2020, we saw a spike in demand for our immediate food services and programming that fosters social inclusion. We also saw flexibility among our funders and beyond generous donations from the community to support this work. In 2020 and 2021, we had a chance to believe that change was possible as the general public could see the inequities in our communities and conversations centred on how we need to change public policy and the system so we can build healthier communities.

Though we have pushed for and hoped for the creation of public policy that will build more equitable communities and reduce the pressure on food charity, unfortunately, that has not come to light.

Rather, in 2022, York Region Food Network experienced a truly unpredictable and unprecedented year. Demand for our services and programs remained high as we started the year and started towards COVID19 recovery. Many people had exhausted their resources and networks in 2020 and 2021, and in 2022 were forced to rely more and more on food charity. This was intensified at the end of February 2022 when the war broke out in Ukraine, and we saw an influx of refugees into York Region needing support with meeting their basic needs. At this time, we also saw a cost-of-living crisis where food costs increased dramatically. The cost-of-living crisis impacted York Region Food Network on three levels: 1) The cost to deliver our services and programs increased exponentially; 2) Demand for our services and programs skyrocketed as interest rate hikes, fuel costs and food costs pushed people past a breaking point and more people than ever had to rely on food charity; and 3) We experienced intense funding unpredictability as funders were committing to very short-term funding terms and we saw a decrease in personal donations as people were stretched thin.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW (continued)

2022 proved to be a perfect storm of need and uncertainty. All while trying to heal from staff burnout of COVID19, supporting participants with complex needs and trying to be proactive on collective impact work.

Thankfully, York Region Food Network ended 2020 with a surplus in revenue, which in 2022 we were able to pull from to respond to the food insecurity crisis that continues to run rampant across York Region communities. We are also privileged to have had the support of incredible agricultural operations in York Region throughout this year, including Doug Coates, Sharon Orchards, Sandy's Farm and Garden Centre, The Cutting Veg, Brook's Farms and JR Agri Orchards. All these farms provided our programs and patrons with fresh produce. Though we have taken a financial hit in 2022 to respond to the community's needs during this crisis, rather than reducing services and programs, we have remained committed to supporting our community. In 2022, we raised our public profile and built awareness about York Region Food Network. In 2022, we had the opportunity to make some capital purchases, such as wheelchair accessible garden beds for our collective gardens and acquiring kitchen equipment to support our food production with support from grants from the Government of Canada.

Our dedication to this work has contributed to us being a regional leader in food insecurity across York Region. It has influenced the direction of our Strategic Plan (2022-2025) and has helped us secure funding for 2023 to build our organizational capacity for fund development, communications, evaluation and impact.

Unfortunately, the need for our services and programs remains vital in our community. As we look ahead, York Region Food Network will continue to support community with their needs today, while also advocating for the right to food for all.

Kate Greavette
Executive Director

Suzette Seveny
Chair of the Board of Directors

PROGRAMS

Breakfast



Production



Good Food Box



Gleaning



Community Cooks



Urban Agriculture



York Region Food Council



York Region Youth Food Committee



IMPACTS

Food Supports

Breakfast and Gleaning

York Region saw the food insecurity situation worsen in 2022 with 1 in 7 households experiencing food insecurity. We reached an all time high with breakfast and gleaning services in 2022 and served 7167 breakfasts to 1941 people and their household/neighbours this year. Breakfast menu items were supplemented with fresh produce gleaned from local farms, with a record high 33,927 lbs of fruits and vegetables coming from farms in East Gwillimbury, King and Georgina.

Production Kitchen

In 2022, we prepared and distributed 9809 freshly prepared meals to community members via Canadian Mental Health Association – Aurora and Hope House Community Hospice.

Good Food Box

Good Food Box operated twice each month from January to December, distributing a total of 5972 Good Food Boxes to residents and organizations throughout York Region. Most of our Good Food Boxes were distributed via three main hubs (York Region Food Network in Aurora, Keswick Christian Church in Georgina and Ebenezer United Church in Markham). We also worked in partnership with Jewish Russian Community Centre, Girls' Inc., St. Vincent de Paul Newmarket, St. Vincent de Paul Aurora, Cornerstone Church, Routes Connecting Communities, Women's Support Network and Hope House Community Hospice to ensure our communities were supported with fresh food access.

IMPACTS

Food Skills

Community Cooks and Urban Agriculture

Since 2020, the number of people living with food insecurity in York Region has increased dramatically and we are seeing more and more people impacted by the mental health and social health impacts of COVID19. As a result of this, our food skill classes were extremely popular in 2022, providing opportunities for people to come together to grow and make food together, and form friendships and community connections. Staff and volunteers worked tirelessly in 2022 to provide both in-person and virtual learning and interactive skill-based opportunities for residents throughout York Region.

In 2022, we executed 97 food and nutrition workshops and 538 staff-led hours in our collective gardens.



IMPACTS

Systems Change

York Region Food Council and Youth Food Committee

In 2022, our systems change work thrived. The York Region Food Council was able to move beyond emergency needs to coordinate research, establish new partnerships and build engagement throughout York Region. This year also marked the start of two multi-year projects for the Council, a York Region Food Asset Map and the York Region Food System Report Card. The York Region Food Council's Working Groups grew in 2022 to include both the Youth Food Committee and the Emergency Food Access Cluster.

Throughout this year, we:

- Released 10 opinion pieces via York Region Media Group.
- Supported 3-Youth led events.
- Released *It's Not Just About Food* research report.



OUR FUNDERS



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AND YOUR COMMUNITY.

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Ontario



United Way
Greater Toronto



community food centres
CANADA good food is just the beginning

York Region

AT A GLANCE

	2022	2021
Total Assets	\$ 222,666	\$ 307,741
Current Liabilities	\$ 66,502	\$ 84,073
Net Assets	\$ 156,164	\$ 223,668
Total Revenue	\$ 780,886	\$ 878,393
Total Expenditures	\$ 848,390	\$ 875,407
Excess (Deficiency)	\$ (67,504)	\$ 2,986

*Complete Audited Financial Statements
are available upon request*

THANK YOU

York Region Food Network would like to thank the over 375 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 Women Who Care Central York Chapter
605485 Ontario Limited
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Association of Ontario Land Surveyors
Buchner Manufacturing
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Canadian Online Giving Foundation
Charities Aid Foundation
Cornerstone Christian Community Church
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Magna International
Round the Bend Farm
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The Dunin Foundation
The Egan Family Foundation
The W.P. Scott Charitable Foundation