



COMMUNITY REPORT 2017

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MESSAGE FROM THE CEO

The past year has been filled with tremendous opportunities, the overcoming of challenges and organizational growth for the Greater Vancouver Food Bank.

We take, quite seriously, our mission to create empowering environments that provide and promote access to healthy food, education and training, and work each and every day, to bring that mission a little closer to reality.

As you'll see in the pages that follow, this year, we are continuing to execute on the plans we've laid out in past Community Reports. This year, among many other accomplishments, we have unveiled additional Community Food Hubs, we have hosted and been the beneficiaries of more than 50 events, and have made massive strides in our Food and Education Department in the areas of quantifying nutritional content of food and engaging our members on food related topics and activities.

None of this would be possible without the relentless work of our staff. It is no hyperbole to say that they inspire me every single day, with their phenomenal passion, their impressive dedication, and their boundless creativity. It is the honour of a lifetime to get to say that I am a part of this team.

And even though we have come a long way since we began implementation of our Strategic Plan, four years ago, our journey is far from over.

I hope you'll take a minute to learn about some of the exciting programs underway at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank, all conducted through our values of Accountability, Collaboration, Justice, Respect, and Trust. Once you've read through, we'd love to hear your feedback.

With your assistance, the Greater Vancouver Food Bank will take even more significant steps this upcoming year in delivering on its vision of accessible, healthy and sustainable food for all.

Aart Schuurman Hess
CEO

MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD CHAIR



We’ve come a long way since 1982, when the Greater Vancouver Food Bank first opened its doors. What was initially set up as a temporary relief to the hunger crisis in our community more than 35 years ago, has now grown and evolved to a mature organization that assists more than 26,500 individuals weekly, and is accountable and transparent in all of its practices, to a variety of key partners and stakeholders.

The Board of Directors ensures that the Greater Vancouver Food Bank moves forward with its mandate, and that the organization maintains financial stability, in order to deliver on that charge.

Over the past few years, we’ve been honoured to work closely with the leadership team to continue working towards accomplishing the strategic objectives set out in the Food Bank’s five-year plan.

Last year, we hit the halfway point for our Strategic Plan, and that gave us an opportunity to assess, strategize, and re-calibrate our goals and how we want to achieve them, in a way that benefits our members.

After reviewing our goals and tactics last year and adjusting, we took this year to work towards implementing those tweaked targets.

We believe that with these renewed goals, all of the Food Bank’s stakeholders, and in particular, our members, will appreciate the growth that this organization has undergone in the past year.

On behalf of the entire Board of Directors, I’d like to thank the Greater Vancouver Food Bank’s CEO and our entire staff, as well as all our donors, partners and volunteers for their tireless work towards a community with accessible, healthy and sustainable food for all.

A stylized, handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'D. Saip'.

Dale Saip
Chair, Greater Vancouver Food Bank

OUR VISION, MISSION & VALUES

VISION

Accessible, healthy and sustainable food for all.

MISSION

To create empowering environments that provide and promote access to healthy food, education and training.

VALUES

- ACCOUNTABILITY** – We do what we say and take responsibility for our work and actions. We evaluate our results and our behaviours.
- COLLABORATION** – We work together for mutual and collective success. We listen and we share.
- JUSTICE** – We believe in an equal voice for all. We speak up and out to make a difference.
- RESPECT** – We value people and our environment. We speak to and treat each other with dignity.
- TRUST** – We start from a place of openness. We build lasting relationships.

QUALITY OF FOOD

As part of the strategic plan, the GVFB has made a commitment to improve the quality of food that we share with our members and the community members our agency partner's support.

To that end, over the past year, the GVFB began to analyze the nutrition criteria of food products that we purchase and accept as donations.

First, we confirmed the sample size that was required each month to represent the inventory in our warehouse. Then, we were able to analyze nutrition criteria to score over 3,500 unique food products into rankings. The result was that 59% of our foods were scored in our top nutrition ranks. With

one year left in our strategic plan and an end goal of 70% of our food in top ranks, we've got room to improve, and we're up to the challenge.

Purchasing and encouraging more nutritious donations has paid off. Our new nutrition baseline reflects decisions about donations, donors and food campaigns to help us meet our vision of accessible, healthy and sustainable food for all.

This endeavour was possible with support from a Masters Project with the Land and Food Systems Department at UBC, and our "nerd herd", a team of dedicated volunteers working with the Quality of Food Team.



COMMUNITY FOOD ACCESS

The process of supporting accessible, welcoming, and dignified food access spaces continued with a successful move of our New Westminster location, which reopened as the New West Community Food Hub. The move allowed us to significantly improve service for members with reduced wait times, a choice-based shopping model, and ongoing hospitality and child-minding on site. Plans for additional Community Food Hubs in East Vancouver and Downtown quickly followed.

We've also launched new comment cards at 12 of our 13 locations, allowing greater direct engagement and feedback from our membership as we continue prioritizing member relationships and voice when building out Community Food Hub elements across all our locations.

And of course, this work continues to rely on the 250 volunteers who are at the frontlines each week. We hosted two Volunteer Summits in the past year as a key way of building the human capacity and connections at our sites. Both gatherings provided space for volunteers to dialogue with staff and one another as well as participate in workshops ranging in topic from food quality to mental health first aid, change management, and anti-oppression. Not only that, but our volunteers, many of whom are members, are also now able to access Lifeworks counselling benefits in recognition of the emotional encounters that can arise from our frontline work.

Much of this work has been made possible thanks to a significant three-year grant by Maple Leaf Foods. In December 2016, The GVFB's Community Food Hub initiative was selected as one of the first projects to be funded by Maple Leaf's new Centre for Action on Food Security. The funds will help improve support, capacity-building, and training for volunteers, increase access to fresh produce at Hubs, and enliven all locations with community partners. This past year, we have already welcomed regular visits from community librarians, health practitioners, and neighbourhood houses, to name a few – we look forward to even more future connections!





CONNECTING THROUGH FOOD

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank is focused on building community around food in dignified, safe and respectful ways. This past year we created new opportunities at select food distribution locations for our volunteers, members and staff to connect and share food knowledge and skills. Even though our members have difficulty accessing food, we confirmed in the 6 month pilot that many of our members have food skills and knowledge, along with an interest to share them.

Our member community is diverse, representing many cultures and languages. To better connect the GVFB community, we engaged volunteers who spoke Mandarin, Cantonese, Arabic and English. GVFB staff and volunteers used creative activities to engage with members including tea service and the development of picture based food boards to gauge interest in relevant and desired foods. We incorporated this member input with foods we already distribute to create simple recipes, conduct food demonstrations and share cooking techniques. Week after week, the conversations kept going!

As we listened, we learned about the foods that our members favoured, how they cooked certain foods or prepared certain dishes. For example, our members shared that receiving potatoes, yogurt and eggs was valued, so we created recipes and demonstrated techniques for additional uses

of those items. More and more, what we learn informs our work in our food hub locations and how we work with our members.

The end goal is to create environments where our members feel their contributions are welcomed and valued – where they can speak up and share, not only their food knowledge, but also the challenges of living on a limited budget.

We are very pleased to have begun this journey with our volunteers and members. Together we will continue to build upon on our shared understanding of what it means and what it looks like, to have a just food system.



PROJECT CHEF

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank was proud to celebrate with its partner, Project CHEF: Cook Healthy Edible Food, as it turned 10 years old this year, marking a decade of educating Vancouver children, teachers, parents and community members about healthy cooking and eating.

What they’re cooking up in Vancouver schools is more than food. They’re building community and connecting schools to the real world. They’re making an impact on children and families by supporting family health and helping to change eating and health outcomes.

They’re supporting academic success for all students through hands-on learning, and they’re empowering children to create real food for themselves.

Since the program began in 2007, they have taught more than 13,500 children in 509 classrooms from kindergarten to grade seven, in schools throughout Vancouver. To accomplish that, they have directly involved more than 7,000 parents and community

volunteers and have worked with more than 800 teachers and school staff members and have taught at more than 21 professional development days to Vancouver teachers about hands-on food education in an integrated way.

As part of that educational program, Project CHEF students have made more than 67,500 healthy meals in schools, which have been shared with their peers and families.

They continue to develop new recipes that meet the needs of school curricula, different ages, allergies and cultural diversity and we now cook over 40 different recipes in the schools - all from our transportable classroom kitchens.

Over the next few months, the Greater Vancouver Food Bank will be working towards further integrating Project CHEF into its food literacy programming and continuing the success and incredible impact it has had in school communities throughout Vancouver.

FOOD SUSTAINABILITY

In order to reduce the costs of disposal and the environmental impact of the work of the GVFB, we ran audits across the different disposal services we contract.

Briefly, the audit found that waste sent to the landfill is, by far, the most expensive option:

Average disposal costs per tonne in Fiscal Year 2017



A streamlining of disposal services and optimization of service levels resulted in a reduction in overall disposal costs from \$32,000 in FY 2016 to \$17,000 in FY 2017.

In FY 2017, of the 363,000 pounds (165 metric tonnes) of material that needed disposal, 85% was recycled, with just 15% going to landfill. That’s a significant improvement over the previous year (FY 2016), where data reflected that 60% was recycled and 40% went to the landfill.

Empty It! – A Community Partnership that Helps us be More Sustainable

In Fiscal 2017, the Food Bank delivered 11,500 beverages in refundable containers through the Empty It! project to United We Can (UWC), where Binners who are members of the Tides Canada Initiatives/Binners Project (TCI/BP) emptied the containers and retained the refund.

This project enhanced the financial independence of these community members, some of whom are also GVFB members.

The Binners who participated in the Empty It! project earned, on average, \$11.48 per hour, which was above BC’s minimum wage (\$10.85) in 2017. This is particularly significant for the Binners, as several have reported that on their usual route, they earn \$3.00 to \$4.00 per hour.



REEL THANKSGIVING CHALLENGE

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank has been the beneficiary of an event called the “REEL Thanksgiving Challenge”, which has leveraged the power and harnessed the generosity of British Columbia’s impressive film and television industries, by pitting productions against one another to see who can raise the most funds.

In four short years, the REEL Thanksgiving Challenge has raised more than \$360,000 for the GVFB, an impressive feat, which makes it one of the top grossing events and fundraisers in the Food Bank’s calendar year. Last year, on a goal of \$50,000, the REEL Thanksgiving Challenge almost tripled that amount, raising more than \$156,830, thanks to productions like CW’s Arrow, which has filmed in BC since inception and brought home more than \$37,000 in cash and more than 1,400 lbs. of food to the GVFB.

In 2016, 35 different productions participated, with 17 sponsor organizations, which event organizer Rob Larson attributes to the fun, competitive environment that they create to bring the most out of their participants: “We really try to get the competitive juices flowing between the different productions, and we try to challenge the teams each and every day, with different sponsors, different social media challenges and a few other tricks up our sleeve.”

THE REEL THANKSGIVING CHALLENGE

TOTAL RAISED
OVER FOUR
SHORT YEARS:
\$360,000



Mr. Larson adds,
**“It’s a terrific cause, and we’re
 so lucky to call Vancouver home,
 so it’s the film and television
 industry’s chance to give back.”**

The REEL Thanksgiving Challenge is just one of the many different events that the Greater Vancouver Food Bank is lucky to be the beneficiary of, and all donations – big and small – are appreciated and welcomed.





IN KIND DONATION PROFILE

When Belinda Guité decided to retire from her work and sell her M&M Meat Shop business of 13 years, she was faced with a unique problem – what to do with the industrial walk-in freezer that she had used to house the frozen meat in her shop.

To dispose of it seemed like a waste, especially since it was in perfectly normal working condition. Finding a buyer for it would be an impossible task, since it was more than 30ft. long and took up almost the entire length of her shop!

Luckily for her, she had met the Greater Vancouver Food Bank CEO, Aart Schuurman Hess, at a Rotary Club meeting and she had a brilliant idea – maybe it could be used in the Food Bank’s warehouse?

She proposed the idea to Aart, who was immediately intrigued, and involved his colleague and fellow GVFB staff member, Brian Coe. The two of them came down to Belinda’s closing shop in Tsawwassen’s Town Centre Mall, saw the freezer and decided this would be a terrific fit at the Food Bank.

In order to pay for the installation fees of the freezer, they called upon local businessman and annual donor, Mars Koo, to see if he’d be inclined to give his annual donation a bit early in the year and target it towards this specific cause. Fortunately, Mars was happy to help.



Brian and his team spent 4 days in March at the shop, taking the freezer apart, and then re-assembling it back together in the GVFB warehouse.

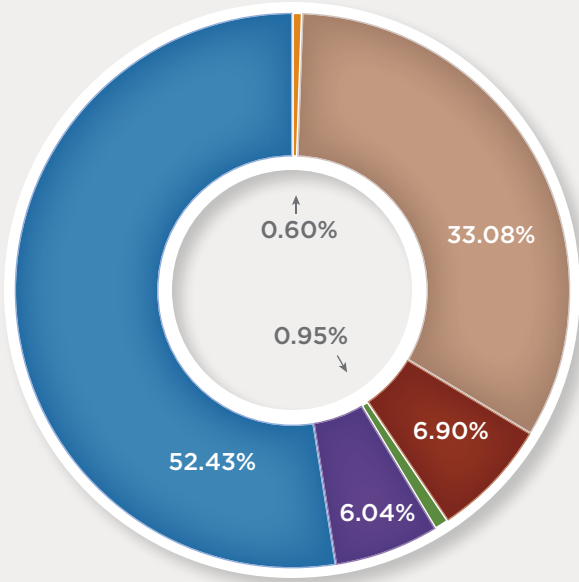
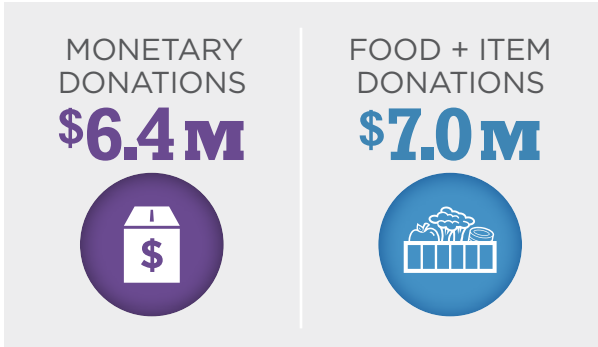
And beyond just installing the freezer, they were able to take one of its sections and isolate it, turning it into a “cooler” with slightly warmer temperatures. This allows the Food Bank to ensure that the fresh and frozen foods they are transporting stay in the right temperatures, as needed, until they land on the shelves of the Community Food Hubs to be distributed to their members.

As for the donors, Belinda and Mars, these supporters of the Food Bank couldn’t be happier that this project worked out so well. They saw the final product at a lunch in the summer time, and were thrilled with the impact of their generous donations.

FISCAL YEAR 2017

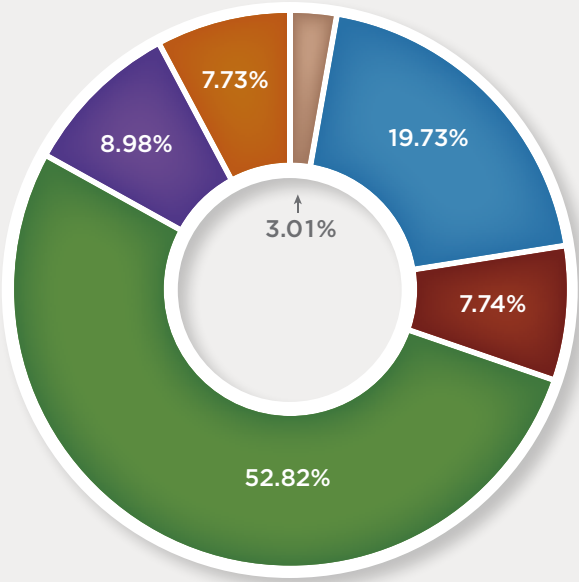
In cooperation with the Operations team, the Finance team prepared the implementation of the financial module for our new SAP integrated management system, to prepare for the upgrade of our accounting practices in the new fiscal year (2018). Starting with the next fiscal year, the new software enables our reports to include inventory movement in our financial reports. It is an important update for an organization that tracks the monetary value of food donations. In Fiscal Year 2017, the Food Bank’s total revenue exceeded \$13.4 million (\$6.4 Million of monetary donations and more than \$7.0 million in donated food and other items).

To achieve the goals of the fourth year of our Strategic Plan, GVFB spent \$5.8 million and distributed \$7.0 million worth of food and other items directly to our members and across our agency network.



Where the GVFB funds come from:

| | | |
|-----------------------------|---------|------------|
| Public Support | 33.08% | 4,440,003 |
| Community Engagement Events | 6.90% | 926,495 |
| Grants Received | 0.95% | 127,148 |
| Funded Community Programs | 6.04% | 811,195 |
| Food Donated | 52.43% | 7,036,079 |
| Investment Income | 0.60% | 80,154 |
| TOTAL | 100.00% | 13,421,074 |



Where the GVFB funds are used:

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---------|------------|
| Operations and Programs | 19.73% | 2,620,066 |
| Food Purchased and Distributed | 7.74% | 1,027,855 |
| Food Donated and Distributed | 52.82% | 7,016,079 |
| Development and Fundraising | 8.98% | 1,192,190 |
| General and Administration | 7.73% | 1,026,538 |
| Contingency Reserve | 3.01% | 400,000 |
| TOTAL | 100.00% | 13,282,729 |



OUR VOLUNTEERS

The Greater Vancouver Food Bank is the beneficiary of more than 75,000 hours of volunteer work each year. That is an incredible amount and likely rivals with any other not-for-profit organization in the Lower Mainland. This means more than 38 full-time staff, working 37.5 hours a week, all year.



We simply cannot do the work we do without the help of our volunteers. They are the lifeblood of this organization and their work is deeply appreciated and valued.

This year, for the first time, the Greater Vancouver Food Bank presented perhaps its most prestigious award, the Danny Welsh Volunteer of the Year Award to **Paula Wilson**, a long-time volunteer with our organization, who has shown dedication and commitment above and beyond the call to action of the GVFB throughout the year.

All of our volunteers, regardless of the total amount of time they spend with our organization, are welcome and truly appreciated. For those interested in contributing and making a difference in the communities we serve, we encourage you to sign up today.

For more information, please visit us at www.foodbank.bc.ca



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OUR STAFF



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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THE GREATER VANCOUVER FOOD BANK IS A MEMBER OF:

- BC Food Systems Network
 - Food Banks Canada (Affiliate)
 - Greater Vancouver Board of Trade
 - BC Poverty Reduction Coalition
- Food Banks BC
 - Food Secure Canada
 - Imagine Canada (Sector Champion)
 - National Zero Waste Council

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IT'S A NEW DAY
- Collaboration - WHOLESOME
Nutritious
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FARM FRESH
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