

DECEMBER 2024

IMPACT INSIDER

VOLUNTEER NEWSLETTER

LET'S CONNECT



@vanfoodbank



A MESSAGE FROM THE TEAM

Dear Dedicated Volunteers,

With the busy holiday season upon us, we want to pause to reflect on the incredible achievements of our volunteers. Over the last year, your unwavering commitment and passion have helped us ensure those experiencing food insecurity have access to healthy food.

Thank you for sharing your time with us. Each hour you've contributed has made a difference; together, we're building healthier communities.

We look forward to achieving more together in the new year!

*With gratitude,
Lisa and Hailey
Volunteer Engagement Team*

CONTACT US

Volunteer Team
volunteer@foodbank.bc.ca

UNDERSTANDING FOOD INSECURITY: A CLIENT STORY

Gisele moved to Vancouver 15 years ago, settling in the city in 2019 with a promising career in the film industry. But the pandemic in 2020 brought everything to a halt. She managed to get by until work resumed in 2021, only to face another shutdown in 2023 due to the actor and writer strikes, leaving her without income once again. Gisele joined a group volunteer session at the Greater Vancouver Food Bank (GVFB) in search of a connection. During orientation, she had an eye-opening realization: she fits the definition of food insecurity.

“We were learning about the services provided, and it just clicked—I was food insecure. I needed this service, and I was grateful to realize it in such a supportive environment.”

Gisele had been surviving on rice, crackers, and water, often forced to choose between paying rent and buying food. Her first visit to the food bank was life-changing.

“During my first visit, I’ll never forget how grateful I felt for a simple milk carton. Every time I visit, my fridge goes from empty to full of healthy food. I’ve stood there admiring it, feeling relieved.”

Now, as a regular client at the GVFB, Gisele values the access to fresh fruits, vegetables, and other essentials. Gisele is grateful to the food bank for its support. In a situation that feels like there is no hope for improvement, she feels that the kindness and support she has received allow her to feel the support of her community.

Day in a life of a GVFB volunteer!

Earlier this year, we asked our volunteers to create a video that captured a day in their volunteer lives. Paul, who donated over 80 hours at the Hastings Racecourse this summer, was eager to share his experience. Thank you, Paul, for creating this fantastic video that showcases a typical 50/50 raffle shift!

[Watch Paul's vlog on our Instagram @vanfoodbank.](#)

Volunteer Spotlight: Emily G

Emily, one of our amazing volunteers, was inspired to join us after hearing about her best friend's rewarding experience at the London Food Bank.

As a proud Swiftie, Emily admires Taylor's efforts towards supporting food banks on her world tour and felt even more motivated to make an impact herself.

“Volunteering gives me a purpose, and I love helping the community.”



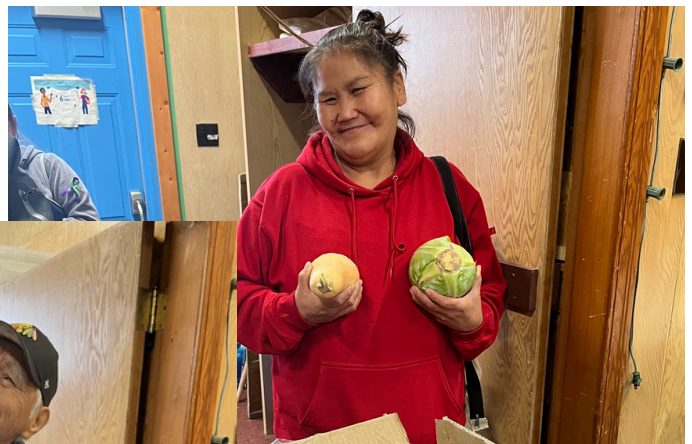
For her birthday, instead of gifts, Emily asked for a donation towards our food bank and raised over \$1,000 through our Virtual Food Drive!

We couldn't be more grateful for Emily's support and dedication!

From Farms to Food Banks

Since July 1st, 2024, **over 1,000,000 pounds of donated produce** have passed through our doors! Thanks to the [BC Farmers' Food Donation Tax Credit](#) (FTC) and our growing partnerships, these incredible donations have significantly reduced our food purchasing costs for this quarter. This has allowed us to spend our money on other necessary operational costs.

In November, we even sent a trailer load of FTC potatoes and squash to the Prince George Food Bank. They also support 19 other food banks and over 50 service programs across Northern BC! From Bella Coola to Fort Nelson, they help us direct fresh produce to families and communities who need it most.



More Hands Make Light Work!

In response to the generous FTC donations, we created temporary Produce Packing shifts. Over 140 volunteers responded to our call to action and signed up to help from November 7th to December 12th. We are joined by new and seasoned volunteers, as well as many groups such as ILSC Education, ACME Young Leaders Society, University Canada West, Lundin Mining, and RBC. A HUGE thanks to all distribution and warehouse volunteers for working tirelessly sorting, packing, and distributing these donations. We couldn't do this without you!



Celebrating Your Impact

Throughout the year, we've been hosting raffle contests for various events and gift cards. These raffles are a small token of our appreciation for the time you donate to the GVFB. In the new year we will start raffling off new GVFB merch as well. Keep an eye out for these announcements in our upcoming communications!

2024 WRAP (STATS YEAR TO DATE)

As we wrap up the 2024 calendar year, we wanted to share some key highlights:



50,000

volunteer hours donated

16

events supported



9 M lbs.

food distributed

150

Community Agency partners supported

24,641

individual lives supported

5

Provincial Agency partners supported



299

new individual volunteers joined the GVFB

228

new groups joined the GVFB