

Because of you!

A report to donors and volunteers



Packing our trucks with produce

If you stepped into our perishable warehouse lately, the first thing you'd notice (after the chilly fridge-level temperature!) would be the colourful pallets of produce. Depending on the day, you might see some vibrantly green asparagus, or a splash of yellow from a bin of bananas. It's a sight we're happy to see, but one that we enjoy only briefly, since we're always eager to load it on the trucks and get it out to our member food banks and meal programs across the province.

We are pleased to report that in the first three quarters of our current fiscal year, we've distributed 830,426 kilograms of perishable food items to our member agencies — an increase of 33% compared to the same period last year. A huge part of food security is about having access to nutritious food, so we continually strive to increase the level of produce, dairy, and meat products we deliver to help promote the health and wellness of our most vulnerable Nova Scotians.

With the summer season often comes an increase in donations from local farmers and individuals who generously contribute some of the fruits of their labour to us. Together with your steadfast support, we're making sure this wonderful food makes its way to the refrigerators of food banks across the province, and ultimately to the kitchen tables of families in need.

A reminder of why distributing nutrient-rich food is so important

The 2012 Nova Scotia Food Costing Report examines the price of a basic nutritious diet, and examines why accessing this is out of reach for so many. This year's recently-released study reinforces why it's so important that we continue to increase our distribution of fresh foods. In the last ten years, the cost of a nutritious diet for the reference household of four (two adults and two children) for one month has increased 48 per cent between 2002 and 2012, from \$572.90 to \$850.59. Visit our Helpful Resources page under the Hunger Facts tab on our website to read the full report.

Devoting a week to awareness

Every day we advocate for Nova Scotians struggling with hunger, and during National Hunger Awareness Week we put those efforts on overdrive. From May 6-10 we joined the collective voice of food banks and provincial organizations across Canada to bring heightened attention to the solvable problems of hunger and poverty.

During the five days, community members and politicians from across the province brought the issues to life in the headlines, in the legislature, on social media, in city hall, and in meetings and casual conversations. We were so proud of the individuals who decided to 'Give It Up for Hunger' by fasting for 24 hours as a symbolic gesture to get people thinking of the reality thousands face every day. We also organized a Leaders' Breakfast on the last day of Hunger Awareness Week. Hosted by Halifax Regional Municipality Mayor Mike Savage at City Hall, invited guests gathered to learn more about hunger and poverty and make personal commitments to help solve the problem.

The goal of Hunger Awareness Week is public engagement, so we have deemed this one a success.



Top left: Halifax Regional Municipality Mayor Mike Savage; Robert Chisholm, MP Dartmouth-Cole Harbour; Dianne Swinemar, Executive Director FEED NOVA SCOTIA; and Lenore Zann, MLA Truro Bible Hill at the Leaders' Breakfast. **Top right and bottom:** Taking advantage of our traffic-heavy spot by sharing thought-provoking messaging.

A supportive ear available around the clock for all Nova Scotians

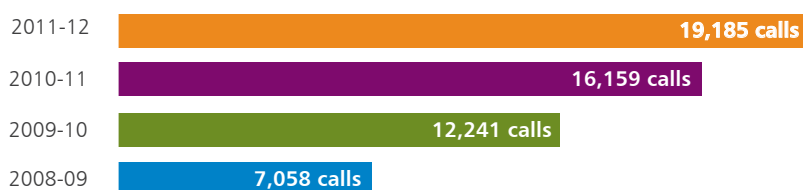
Sometimes all you need is somebody to listen and help you work through the challenges you're experiencing.

That's the driving force behind our 24-hour Helpline, a provincial telephone service where trained staff and volunteers provide a supportive ear to Nova Scotians experiencing distress. In 2012, we received close to 20,000 calls from people dealing with a wide range of challenges such as parenting troubles, relationship issues, grief, abuse, and food or housing concerns.

James, a volunteer who assists with our Helpline training, compares the service to the best friend we all talk to when we're down. The big difference he says, however, is that, "Helpline provides an ear to a much greater population."

Like James, we know that Helpline is invaluable, and the stats we're collecting each month prove it plays a vital role in our province's social support network.

Number of Helpline calls received: A four-year comparison



The number of calls our staff and volunteers receive on Helpline continues to grow significantly each year, showing a continued need for the service across the province.

Recently, we've highlighted the parent support we offer on the line. With the devastating effects of bullying and cyber-bullying continuing to be topical issues, there has been much discussion about the supports available for youth. Dealing with these challenges can also be incredibly difficult for parents, so we have been reminding our community partners that

Helpline is there to help parents and guardians support their children through this. As with any program or service, Helpline is only effective if people know it's available. To this end, we've created an awareness strategy to continue to spread word of Helpline as a valuable resource where individuals can find relief from stress or helplessness they may be experiencing.

A gift to the community that lives on

After passing away at age 96, Corinne Hopgood left a very generous bequest to FEED NOVA SCOTIA—a contribution that makes sense to her nephew, Christopher Hopgood.

His family name is synonymous with the business of food. His late uncle and Corinne's husband, William, made a living with Hopgood & Sons Food Markets, a family chain of supermarkets that had a reputation as the finest grocery store east of Montreal. Being in the business, he would see those in need and help out, and as a teacher, Corinne also saw students who came from less fortunate families. Their nephew feels the connection

between their roles in the community and his aunt's desire to help those in need after she passed away was a natural one.

Christopher says his aunt and uncle weren't vocal about the issues during their lifetime; they were quiet about the ways they helped out. But he says they accumulated wealth and shared it well.

"I'm quite proud of that," Hopgood says of his family's generous gift to FEED NOVA SCOTIA. "They took it upon themselves to help the community."

Making plans to support a charity through one's will is a special gift from the heart.



William and Corinne Hopgood

A dedication plaque will be installed at FEED NOVA SCOTIA's Learning Kitchen training facility in honour of Corinne and William Hopgood's generous contribution.

Celebrating hundreds of huge hearts

On May 1, we dug the best costumes out of the vault, dusted them off, and flexed our vocal chords for our annual Volunteer Appreciation Dinner. Students from our Learning Kitchen catered and we entertained our guests of honour with songs and skits. While we were anything

but pitch perfect, our performances and hospitality were straight from the heart.

Without volunteers, our work at FEED NOVA SCOTIA simply wouldn't be possible. The 44,132 hours they contributed in our last fiscal year is the equivalent of 24 full-time staff positions and a savings of over three quarters of a million dollars!

While recruitment, training and support are critical elements of a robust volunteer services program; so too is recognition. And we couldn't be happier that this year's event brought out an incredible 250 volunteers to celebrate nearly one third of our active volunteer base.

If you're a volunteer reading this, please

know how deeply we appreciate having you as part of our FEED NOVA SCOTIA family. And if you're a donor, feel good knowing that the efforts of volunteers means more of your financial support directly benefits our programs and services that assist Nova Scotians in need—from food distribution to advocacy work, and employment training to emotional support.

One volunteer's words following the event really warmed our hearts:

"I was telling a colleague about the evening the next day, trying to put into words what made it so special. In comparison to other recognition events, all of which have been appreciated, this one was like getting a sweater hand knit by Grandma instead of one purchased at the mall. It felt like a hug."



HMCS Montreal was recognized as the group who donated the most hours during the year—a whopping 1133 hours!

Mission Statement

Our immediate goal is to feed hungry people. Our ultimate goal is to eliminate chronic hunger and alleviate poverty.