

Feed Nova Scotia's Grant Stream

2025-26 Grantees

Prototype Funding Stream

THEME:

**Increasing access, availability and/or
choice of food**

Cape Breton Food Hub



Context:

In 2024, the CB Food Hub received funding to launch a gleaning program aimed at rescuing fresh produce that would otherwise be ploughed under due to not meeting the cosmetic standards of large grocery chains. Following its success, the Food Hub now aims to expand the program to include more farmers and community organizations

Proposal:

\$30,000 to scale/expand a farm gleaning and food recovery initiative to engage more farmers and community gleaners to redistribute 'seconds' to supply dignified community food programs.

Equity Lens:

Food insecure communities living in five municipalities, five First Nations communities, newcomers, seniors, those living in food deserts

Potential Impact:

Reduction of food waste, development of new partnerships for sustained access to surplus food, increased access to nutritious affordable food via community food programs.

Learnings:

Potential opportunities and impact of a coordinated farm gleaning project on regional food insecurity. Potential to transfer learnings and approach to mainland hubs (Halifax Food Hub, the Station Food Hub).

Pictou Landing First Nation

Context:

An Indigenous community who received funding to secure a greenhouse and are hoping to hire a gardener to manage/mentor residents in farming. Once impacted by a pulp and paper mill that damaged the aquatic habitat and local livelihoods, the community now sees this as a step toward rebuilding food security and self-reliance

Proposal:

\$30,000 to run a teaching greenhouse program for Indigenous community members to learn and practice growing and gardening skills, build health and wellbeing and connections across community.

Equity Lens:

First Nation/Mi'kmaq community with 700 community members living on reserve and a history of environmental racism

Potential Impact:

A transfer of Indigenous knowledge and skills about plants to the next generation. An increase of community access to fresh and locally grown food.

Learnings:

The extent to which an activated and resourced community greenhouse can serve as a community hub and support Indigenous food sovereignty.



Cole Harbour Community Fridge

Context:

The Cole Harbour Community Fridge was founded in 2023 in response to the rising food insecurity with focus on providing low barrier access to food for all without judgement.

Proposal:

\$10,000 to organize and run 4 affordable and low-barrier bulk-buy food events for community, including take-home recipes and meal-kit/recipe jars.

Equity Lens:

Low-income communities in the Cole Harbour area.

Potential Impact:

Immediate increase in community access to affordable bulk food in a priority low-income neighborhood. Community connections, community leadership and community development.

Learnings:

The impact of a community-led bulk-buy program on a community experiencing food insecurity. What works, what challenges emerge, what potential emerges for continuation or iteration if community interest is high.

The YMCA of Cumberland



Context:

The YMCA Cumberland is located in a food desert and is serving as the project lead for a group of community partners who are interested in launching a Square Roots program. This initiative emerged from community consultations and food summits held across Cumberland County, reflecting local priorities and need.

Proposal:

\$28,290 to launch an affordable food market leveraging a successful program that already exists, with food processing, food literacy and delivery components.

Equity Lens:

A rural community in Amherst with poor access to communication and a food desert.

Potential Impact:

Improved food access for local community members, strengthened and coordinated community efforts to address food insecurity with dignified and community-led solutions.

Learnings:

The impact of a community-led affordable market with additional components on a community experiencing food insecurity in a food desert environment. What works, what challenges emerge, what potential emerges for continuation or iteration if community interest is high.

The Station Learning Farm Society



Context:

The Station serves as a food processing hub for building a sustainable, food-secure community through innovative solutions, youth engagement, and strong community partnerships.

Proposal:

\$20,000 to launch and test a pilot program, which will involve receiving left-over produce from a local food bank and from local farmers, processing and freezing produce into family-sized portions and returning them to the food bank for distribution.

Equity Lens:

Low-income families, seniors, and youth.

Potential Impact:

A reduction of food waste at the food bank, an increase in 'shelf-life' of donated produce once processed and frozen, increased food bank client access to food.

Learnings:

The role and potential of food processing in increasing community access to produce. The strengths and challenges that emerge through partnership. The potential to scale or replicate the partnership in other areas of the province.

Food Share Association of Shelburne County



Context:

The Food Share Association is a community-led initiative that improves food security through gardening and distribution programs, innovative partnerships, and dignified access to fresh, locally grown food for diverse and underserved populations.

Proposal:

\$30,000 to test a partnership between a community garden, rural transit and local licensed kitchens to prepare and distribute meals to isolated seniors and community members living with disabilities

Equity Lens:

Low-income households, seniors, persons with disabilities/mobility issues.

Potential Impact:

Increased access to food for isolated community members. A strengthened food network through a partnership between community gardens, transport providers, and licensed kitchens. Increased policy engagement on rural food access.

Learnings:

The successes and challenges of the model. The replicability of the model to other rural contexts.

Fairview Food Pantry



Context:

A volunteer run pantry in North end Halifax that was founded in March 2021 in response to the lack of culturally appropriate and allergy-sensitive food options at local food banks

Proposal:

\$15,000 to pilot test initiative to deepen understanding of the diverse food needs, leverage local networks for outreach, and gather feedback through compensated participation to guide more inclusive and culturally appropriate food purchases.

Equity Lens:

Program targets low-income families particularly older adults, international students, newcomers, asylum seekers, and those with food sensitivities.

Potential Impact:

Increased inclusivity of culturally diverse community members, increased understanding of preferred cultural food in a low-barrier emergency food model of service.

Learnings:

An evaluation of the model's successes and challenges, its potential for replication in other contexts, and insights into the diverse food needs required to promote greater inclusion

THEME:

Increasing community-led production of food

The North Grove



Context:

In 2024, The North Grove launched a one-year pilot initiative Primrose Preserves to explore community interest in preserving produce from the North Grove farm. Workshops focused on building community skills to preserve produce and to develop a brand.

Proposal:

\$30,000 to transform a one-year pilot initiative from an occasional workshop to a full-fledged social enterprise. Expand farm supply to the social enterprise and build connections with local retail partners.

Equity Lens:

Low-income households, individuals who live alone, are unemployed or not in the labour force.

Potential Impact:

Skills development for participants in food processing and small business development.

Learnings:

Insights into what works, what challenges emerge. The extent to which participants build new skills or the initiative generates income for participants.

Regional Independent Student Association



Context:

RISA supports disadvantaged and homeless youth aged 16 to 24 in Nova Scotia by providing safe housing, educational support, life skills development, and trauma-informed care, empowering residents to overcome personal challenges and build brighter, self-sufficient futures.

Proposal:

\$29,870 to run a youth-focused cooking and storytelling initiative to explore identities and build community through food.

Equity Lens:

Marginalized and homeless youth aged 16 to 24 years

Potential Impact:

Essential life skills development for youth that supports independent living. Strengthened connections and cultural exchange through food-based story-sharing.

Learnings:

The role of blending cooking and storytelling in youth learning and skills development. The potential and replicability of the model to other contexts and populations.

Elizabeth Fry of Mainland Nova Scotia



Context:

A non-profit organization supporting women, girls, non-binary, and gender-diverse individuals involved in or at risk of involvement in the justice system.

Proposal:

\$30,000 to run a bi-weekly hands-on food skills/literacy program in a safe place: blending cooking and meal preparation with greenhouse/growing activities and group discussions about food.

Equity Lens:

Women, girls and gender diverse individuals involved in or at risk of involvement with the justice system.

Potential Impact:

Essential life skills development in cooking and growing. Strengthened connections and community between participants.

Learnings:

The role of blending cooking and growing skills in community- and confidence-building for people involved/at-risk of involvement with the justice system. The potential and replicability of the model to other contexts.

Believing in Transformation



Context:

A non-profit dedicated to empowering underrepresented and underserved communities through education and financial literacy to break cycles of poverty.

Proposal:

\$10,000 to run a four-part wellness workshop series(2 days each session) that combines financial and food literacy with in-person cooking classes, equipping participants with practical skills for budgeting, healthy eating, and chronic disease prevention.

Equity Lens:

This program targets BIPOC and immigrant communities facing financial and health-related challenges, seniors, and youth transitioning to independence, diverse cultural backgrounds, racialized communities, and those facing systemic barriers to financial and health resources.

Potential Impact:

Essential life-skills development in cooking, budgeting and chronic disease management, intercultural community connections

Learnings:

The role of wellness workshops in building intercultural connections for equity-deserving communities. The potential and replicability of the model to other contexts.

THEME:

Supporting service/system coordination

Island Food Network



Context:

The Island Food Network is based in Cape Breton and supports food initiatives, cultivates food knowledge, connects food leaders and advocates for food systems change. In 2024, the IFN conducted research across Cape Breton to understand community interests and needs in food access. This initiative builds on research findings

Proposal:.

\$30,000 to engage low-barrier spaces in rural communities, host community sessions to generate ideas on animating spaces through food, and build supportive tools (toolkits, workshops) to share with communities to support new food program development.

Equity Lens:

Food insecure communities living in five municipalities, five First Nations communities, small rural communities and CBRM.

Potential Impact:

Activation of low-barrier community spaces to support new food programs and food initiatives.

Learnings:

Methods and approaches to activate low-barrier rural spaces for community programming, successes and challenges in doing so. Potential to share learnings and inspire other rural communities to undertake similar actions.

Adaptation Funding Stream

Caja Container Adaptation Grant

Summary:

Four (4) organizations will receive funding to scale and adapt the Caja container Project. The aim of this project is to support scale out of an already tested Caja container distribution project, which is designed to allow community members experiencing food insecurity to grow their own produce.

Grantees:

Organization	Adaptation
East Preston Daycare Centre \$15,000 (Halifax)	Distribute 80 containers, seedlings and soil to 40-50 African Nova Scotian households connected to the daycare centre. Four workshops on growing to be held for participants at the daycare centre.
Metro Community Housing \$10,000 (Halifax)	Distribute 30 containers, seedlings and soil across 5 housing sites supporting people living with mental illness. Develop a multi-site resident learning committee to share tips and tricks on container gardening.
Annapolis Valley Frugal Moms \$7,700 (Annapolis Valley)	Distribute 20 containers, seedlings and soil to group homes in the Valley and support learning activities with residents.
Schools Plus Celtic Family \$11,500 (Pictou)	Distribute 50-60 containers, soil and seeds to 30 food insecure families (2 per family) in Pictou County to grow at home, with 100% of the budget directly supporting the program.

Frozen Soup Adaptation Grant

Summary:

Seven (6) organizations will receive funding to scale and adapt the Frozen Soup Project across diverse communities in Nova Scotia. The aim is to create dignified access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for clients, while also enhancing community collaboration to improve food security services, education, and awareness.

Grantees:

Organization	Adaptation
Halifax Brewery Farmers Market \$15,000 (Halifax)	Prepare soups and offer them on-site at the farmers market via the coupon program. Redistribute left-over soups to community fridges in partnership with the Bike Brigade Halifax.
POSSE Sipekne'katik \$15,000 (East Hants)	Run a youth focused soup-making program to develop and distribute frozen soups to Indigenous community members.
Multicultural Association of Cape Breton \$15,000 (Sydney)	Run a newcomer-focused soup program to develop cultural soups for distribution across Sydney.
Acts of Kindness \$15,000 (Yarmouth)	Leverage large scale commercial kitchen to supply 15 community fridges with 7,500 frozen soups.

Frozen Soup Adaptation Grant (continued)

Summary:

Seven (6) organizations will receive funding to scale and adapt the Frozen Soup Project across diverse communities in Nova Scotia. The aim is to create dignified access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food for clients, while also enhancing community collaboration to improve food security services, education, and awareness.

Grantees:

Organization	Adaptation
We Feed Lunenburg \$14, 790 (South Shore)	Develop frozen soups to distribute through a network of community pantries and community spaces along the south shore.
Belle's Pantry \$7,000 (Annapolis Valley)	Develop frozen soups to distribute through a community pantry and drop-off spaces for isolated seniors living in rural communities.