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The simplest things, such as apples in a Harvest hamper, can help restore a sense of normalcy to people whose lives have been upended by food insecurity brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and provincial shutdown.

## Being our best selves



Fighting Hunger and Feeding Hope

Just as people have been keeping their social distance, a lot of Harvest Heroes have quietly stepped forward and replaced spring flooding with a new high-water mark of community service.

Despite facing our biggest challenge in 35 years, we at Winnipeg Harvest have been able to provide one million pounds of hunger relief every month during this crisis. And for every pound of relief, there is a remarkable story of hope and connection.

### Apples for Amy

When her school closed in March, Amy lost the thing she liked most about her Harvest student meal program — apples. She got some when her parents brought home their first ever Harvest hamper. It was a comforting taste of normalcy lacking from their diet since the pandemic took away her parents' jobs, confidence and their food security. For Amy, sitting at the kitchen table, those apples represented all that was good in the world.

### Happy Dance

At her local food bank, Jennifer, a single mother with three young kids, stepped up to receive her Harvest hamper. When the volunteer put her portion of milk and cheese on the table, she did a happy dance. When asked, she said her "homemade mac and cheese was going to be a big hit at dinner."

### A sense of urgency

To make this happen, Winnipeg Harvest has been very, very busy. As supply chains collapsed and things got critical, a whole community of Harvest Heroes stepped up with donations of food, time, and money. We are now feeding 90,000 people every month. Our trucks are still on the road six days a week, and we're delivering food to more than 300 food banks and partner agencies in Winnipeg, in rural and northern Manitoba, and in First Nations communities.

### Behind the scenes

Volunteers do 90 per cent of everything it takes to get food in, sorted, packed and distributed. Individuals, families and clients — our Harvest Heroes — all contribute. Businesses often make a day at Harvest team-building event, bringing staff and management in for a day of sorting and packing

food. City of Winnipeg workers are regular contributors. All in all, volunteers provide more than 600,000 hours a year to feed and nourish our community.

### An open secret

A lot of our food comes from a network of community heroes — 20 per cent from food drives and 80 per cent from food producers and retailers. Collectively, they provide Harvest with more than 11 million pounds of food a year. Large and small, if there is a grocery store near you — you can be pretty sure it's a Harvest Hero.

### Amazing farm and food families

Last month, Manitoba Chicken Producers came through with an extra 3,000 'emergency' chickens. They also committed to providing another 1,000 chickens per month moving forward. Not to be outdone, Manitoba Egg Farmers hatched a plan to provide 10,000 eggs a week. Every day it bakes, Natural Bakery provides 500 loaves of rye bread to Harvest.

Manitoba Dairy Farmers, New Bothwell Cheese, Parmalat, Peak of the Market and numerous other Harvest Heroes also made significant contributions to nourishing our community, our sense of hope, and have taken our identity beyond 'Friendly Manitoba' to 'Caring Manitoba.'

That is a huge achievement!

### Good sports, great stories

The provincial shutdown meant that Winnipeg Harvest was forced to buy a lot of the food that is normally donated. Local media came to the rescue. 103.1 Virgin Radio, 99.9 BOB FM and TSN 1290 hosted a Harvest Hero Radiothon, and in one incredible day their listeners raised \$182,699 for Harvest. Two anonymous donors matched the first \$150,000 for a total of \$332,699.

It was the largest fundraiser in Harvest history and was enough to feed an additional 4,600 Manitoba families for a month.

### One more need

Here's a need we're happy to fulfill. We want to say thank you to all the Harvest Heroes who donated food, time or money during this crisis.

Your actions helped keep our operations open and food flowing. Thank you for making a real difference in many, many lives.

From the apple of her eye to the happy dance over a cold, tasty, carton of milk, all of these efforts make all of us a Community of Heroes.

For more information on Winnipeg Harvest and its programs, visit [winnipegharvest.org](http://winnipegharvest.org)

Be a 

# HARVEST HERO

You can help fight hunger from your home.



10,000 households need food assistance right now.

**1. FOOD DRIVE**  
Register for contactless pick up from your doorstep!

**2. FUNDS DRIVE**  
Every \$1 you give = \$2 now.

For details, please visit:

## WinnipegHarvest.org/SpringDrive