



Nourishing our Communities

STRATEGIC PLAN 2024-2027



Message from President & CEO of Harvest Manitoba

Harvest Manitoba has always been about so much more than just hampers; it is about hope.

The people who have come through our doors, since the founding of Winnipeg Harvest in 1985, are too numerous to count. These include the volunteers who give tens of thousands of hours every year, our agency partners, donors of food and funds, our staff and our clients. In the nearly 40 years that have passed since we opened our doors, we have seen many changes inside our building and across Manitoba. The number of people we are serving has never been greater than it is today. Each month Harvest Manitoba provides food to over 50,000 people who need a food bank somewhere in Manitoba – a 150% increase since 2020.

Thank you to all our supporters across this province and beyond, we are getting the job done to support a record number of children and families needing food. Through your generosity of food, funds and time, Harvest Manitoba has met the growing need for food, but we know that our path today is unsustainable. As an organization, Harvest Manitoba needs to change, adapt, and respond to the needs of a fast-changing province.

This strategic plan – the first for Harvest Manitoba - is a roadmap to do just that.

The four themes in our strategic plan are a culmination of months of work and conversations with stakeholders from across Manitoba. Thank you to everyone who gave their time and knowledge to this important process. The themes and strategies developed in this plan are also guided by our vision, mission, and principles through the stewardship of our Board of Directors. Thank you to our Board members for your work in building this plan, together with the communities we serve.

Now that we have completed our strategic planning, the time has now come for us to move into the most important part of the process, strategic “doing.” This strategic plan is a transparent, public, and collaborative document that will guide Harvest Manitoba’s actions in the years ahead.

Like me, I hope that you are energized and optimistic about the future that lays ahead of us, as we work together to build a healthier future for all where no Manitoban goes hungry.



Vince Barletta
President & CEO
Harvest Manitoba

Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles

VISION

Working together toward a healthier future for all where no Manitoban goes hungry.

MISSION

Collecting & distributing food
Providing client-centred long-term solutions
Advocating & informing

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Compassion: Each of us has challenges in our lives and often they are invisible to those we meet. Every human being deserves the compassion of others. At Harvest Manitoba, we keep these truths at the forefront of our work.

Integrity: We strive to respect the dignity of our clients and conduct ourselves at all times with integrity.

Stewardship: We promise exceptional stewardship of your contributions of dollars, food and time.

Collaboration: We believe in and rely on collaboration in all our work. We aspire to work in partnership with our donors, staff, volunteers and community partners.

Innovation: Relentless, as well as emerging problems, demand innovation and creativity. We identify promising strategies that foster reduced food insecurity and work to adapt them for our communities.

What we learned

The strategic plan process focused on alignment between vision, mission and guiding principles and the strategic direction.

The process validated that Harvest Manitoba's direction continues to be aligned to our vision statement and mission activities (i.e. no major shifts or changes to core focus.)

However, the process revealed that Harvest Manitoba is not consistently living guiding principles that will be core to success moving forward (collaboration, innovation), and that principles are not accessible or understandable to many on Harvest Manitoba's team (stewardship).

Moving forward

Building on the success of staff engagement in 2023, in 2024 we will work with staff to reinvigorate Harvest Manitoba's identity statements – the soul of who we are and what we stand for, as part of continued, intentional cross-functional team engagement and empowerment to act on the 3-year plan.



Strategic Themes

① Manitoba's Food Bank

② Indigenous Leadership & Reconciliation

③ Voice for food insecurity in Manitoba

④ Innovative, sustainable food network partner

1 Manitoba's Food Bank

Success Indicators:



Percentage of communities served



Percentage of need met



Revenue growth and diversification



Donor retention, percentage of geographic donor distribution



Food network satisfaction
(e.g. efficiency, quality, on-time delivery)

Harvest Manitoba's evolution from Winnipeg Harvest to a province-wide organization is not yet complete. Harvest Manitoba's facilities and programs are largely Winnipeg centred, our stakeholders and donors are still not familiar with our province-wide mandate. Nor have we formalized the structure, facilities and funding required to fuel a truly province-wide organization.

Our rural partners tell us they value Harvest Manitoba's support and are looking for us to play an important role facilitating connection within the network and equity, transparency in the food distribution. In short – it's time to formalize an intentional approach to connection, distribution, funding, and accountability.



Our Vision

Highest standards of health, safety, access, and equity in our work all over Manitoba.

Harvest Manitoba supports regular food bank activities across 380 members of our community food network in 46 communities and counting. We are Manitoba's Food Bank – a backbone that serves communities, ensures access to food supports around the province and coordinates activities among our members for the benefit of us all. Serving over 100,000 people a month through a wide range of programs, Harvest Manitoba works to bring the highest standards of health, safety, access, and equity to our work all over Manitoba. Our work means that food banks and other food programs can have regular, reliable access to food for Manitobans who need that help the most.

We will work with our Community Food Network to improve operating efficiency through regional distribution hubs and province-wide access to key food programs, with prudent investment in people, equipment, facilities, and technology.

Harvest Manitoba will also be a voice for food banks and food charities in our province and beyond. We will make sure our network of partners is represented and that we work together with our community partners and government to secure the resources required to ensure that no Manitoban who needs food is turned away.

Strategies:



Improving food service delivery.



Province-wide access to food programs.



Formalized framework for network connector, facilitator, and voice.



New, stable funding partnerships to support province-wide mandate.

2 Indigenous Leadership & Reconciliation

Success Indicators:



Number of Indigenous-led initiatives/food banks



Partner satisfaction
(e.g. efficiency, quality, on-time delivery)



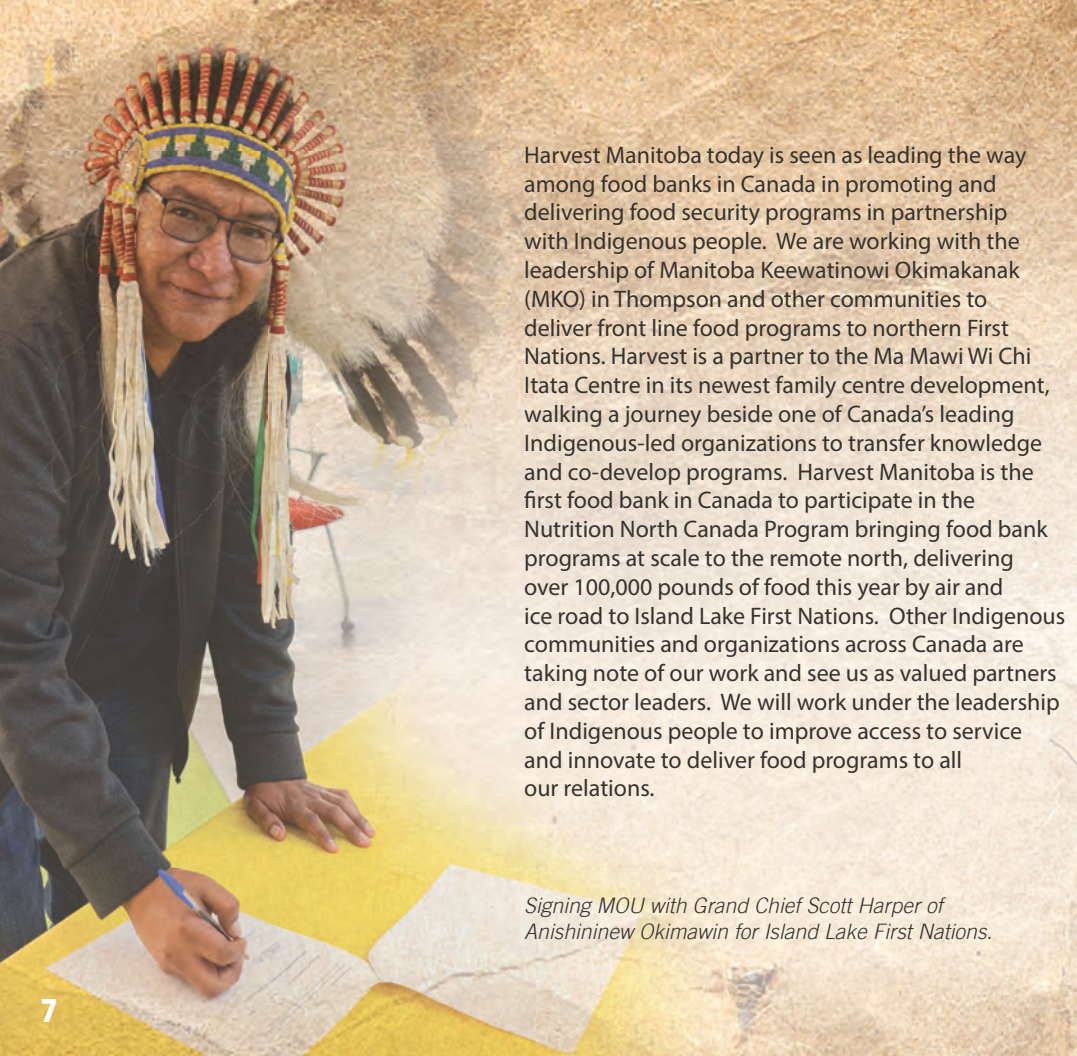
Percentage of Indigenous volunteers and staff

Harvest Manitoba's expansion of service to the North and in Winnipeg, led by Indigenous partners, is work our network, partners and team members are proud of, and want to see continue, and grow. We also recognize that we have work to do within our organization as part of our own reconciliation journey – including a focus on representation, anti-racism and continuing to implement the TRC Calls to Action.

Increase Indigenous participation and leadership within our organization as part of our broader commitment to diversity, inclusion, and reconciliation.

Harvest Manitoba dedicates itself, in the spirit of reconciliation, to be allies and partners with First Nations, Métis, Inuit and off-reserve Indigenous people and organizations. We commit ourselves to share knowledge, services and energy and work with Indigenous people in uplifting Indigenous people and communities.





Harvest Manitoba today is seen as leading the way among food banks in Canada in promoting and delivering food security programs in partnership with Indigenous people. We are working with the leadership of Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak (MKO) in Thompson and other communities to deliver front line food programs to northern First Nations. Harvest is a partner to the Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre in its newest family centre development, walking a journey beside one of Canada's leading Indigenous-led organizations to transfer knowledge and co-develop programs. Harvest Manitoba is the first food bank in Canada to participate in the Nutrition North Canada Program bringing food bank programs at scale to the remote north, delivering over 100,000 pounds of food this year by air and ice road to Island Lake First Nations. Other Indigenous communities and organizations across Canada are taking note of our work and see us as valued partners and sector leaders. We will work under the leadership of Indigenous people to improve access to service and innovate to deliver food programs to all our relations.

Signing MOU with Grand Chief Scott Harper of Anishinew Okimawin for Island Lake First Nations.

Our Vision

Innovate and improve access to service to all our relations, led by Indigenous people.

Strategies:



Build relationships and trust. Listen and respond.



Formalize internal framework and advisors.

3 Voice for food security in Manitoba



Success Indicators:



Number of client conversations/
month, by geography



Number of client voices uplifted



Percent targeted government
policies/program shifts achieved

Our partners and stakeholders tell us they value Harvest Manitoba's strong relationships with media and government partners and, that these relationships are critical to creating an understanding about the root causes of food insecurity amongst the public and decision makers. But the work to lift up client's voices has only begun. To raise more voices, we need to build ongoing relationships with clients across the province and help them tell their stories and shape sustainable solutions with impactful programs and targeted policy victories over hunger and poverty.

Harvest Manitoba has thousands of conversations every year with food insecure Manitobans from all walks of life. Those conversations are critical to our delivery of service but the stories we hear also change us as an organization. We help to give voice to people in our communities who would not otherwise have a platform to advocate for change. We know that food banks are not the long-term solution to hunger in Canada but these organizations, the people that support them and the clients they serve are working together to create victories over hunger and poverty every day.

No one knows better than a food bank and our clients the real-life everyday challenges that keep people in poverty. From the challenges that face new Canadians as they settle in this country; to the lifetime of poverty faced by hundreds of thousands of Canadians who live with inadequate disability benefits; to the families and kids who try to make ends meet as they watch their incomes buy less and less each month at the grocery store; Harvest Manitoba can give voice to them. Manitobans who live in poverty know better than anyone the actions that will make their lives healthier. Through our research, education, advocacy and government relations work, Harvest Manitoba will continue to be a respected community partner tackling hunger and poverty in our province.

Providing **valued advice** and **knowledge** to policy makers for targeted, sustainable, client-centred solutions to hunger and poverty.

Our Vision

Valuing the voices of those who struggle with food insecurity.

Strategies:



Ongoing client engagement and empowerment to share their stories.



Strong, productive government and media relations.



Province-wide access to programs that sustainably improve client's lives.

4 Innovative, sustainable food network partner

Success Indicators:



Industry metrics

(e.g. throughput, shrinkage)



Environment KPIs

(e.g. GhG impact, food rescue by weight)



Partnerships, and industry partner satisfaction

(e.g. NPS)



Innovation projects implemented, NEOC results



Today we collect, manage, and distribute one million pounds of food each month, 98% of which comes directly through our partnerships with the food industry. All parts of the food industry are dealing with rising prices, changing technology, global uncertainty, and an urgent need for climate action. Our success is linked with industry, and this uncertainty creates risk for Harvest Manitoba.

Currently, Harvest Manitoba doesn't have an articulated philosophy on sustainability, nor a measured impact on climate action. To become a valued part of the food industry and provide more value, stability, and food intake for Harvest Manitoba's province-wide network, we need to stake a claim more formally, evolving how we act and are understood, with innovation and sustainability at the forefront.

A Manitoba without food waste.

Harvest Manitoba, along with food banks around the country are already vital regional partners to divert and reclaim food waste with its corresponding positive social, economic, and environmental outcomes. This includes our retail food reclamation program, food processor/producer surplus, partnerships with agricultural organizations and our own growing volume of food purchasing.

We can do more to expand our capabilities as we ensure the diversion of more food waste, become a better partner within all levels of the food industry and invest in processes that will allow us to transform more food into usable products for our clients. Through these partnerships we will distribute more food as we also reduce waste and act on climate change.

More importantly can we do it safely, with the highest level of health standards. Through our programs and partnerships, we help industry eliminate food waste, ensure safe handling, storage, and distribution of reclaimed food, and manage environmental impacts of waste in the food industry.

Our Vision

Be a recognized leader and industry partner in efficient food distribution, reduced food waste and climate action.

Strategies:



Expand capabilities for efficient food distribution, reclamation, and waste reduction.



Train and empower teams, embrace innovation, technology, and best industry practice.