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SASKATOON FOOD BANK  
& LEARNING CENTRE



**POVERTY AND HUNGER are overwhelming realities for the up to 20,000 people turning to the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre (SFBLC) each month. We plan to disrupt that harsh reality with a bigger facility to better address hunger and poverty in our community.**

Hunger is an issue with many faces. It's the grandparents having to work so they can provide for the grandchildren they're taking care of. The father that can't work after having surgery that's finding his disability cheque only covers his rent. It's single mothers skipping meals to make sure that their children have enough to eat.

**1 in 4 children in Saskatchewan are living in poverty.** This number is one we're painfully familiar with at the SFBLC as nearly half of our clients are children.

Our goal is to provide the community not only with what they need to survive but to thrive. We understand that the issues contributing to hunger and poverty are closely linked, as are the different kinds of assets people need to address them. Receiving safe, nutritious food, learning new skills, and gaining employment experience all grow to create something bigger than the individual asset.



## MISSION & VISION

**The Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre is committed to ensuring a food secure community wherein all people have access to safe, affordable and nutritious food. Our programs and strategic partnerships aim to address the underlying issues contributing to hunger and poverty.**

**Together, we strive to solve hunger and create a hunger-free community.**

# THE CURRENT CHALLENGE

Distribution of emergency food baskets began in the basement of St. Thomas Wesley United Church as a temporary project in the summer of 1983 to meet challenges related to the financial recession. The SFBLC has occupied several locations in Saskatoon, eventually coming to reside at its current location at 202 Avenue C South in 1990.

Unfortunately, the need for services that provide access to food not only remains but has grown. In the last ten years, Saskatoon's food bank has experienced an upsurge from 12,000 to as many as 20,000 people served each month.

The Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre has evolved over many years. People now benefit from a garden patch; community kitchen where people prepare healthy, affordable meals; programs to enhance literacy and understanding of healthy lifestyles; workplace experience training; counselling; free income tax services; varied volunteer experiences; and a clothing depot. We provide a diverse collection of programs and services because we know that the issues contributing to hunger and poverty as well as their solutions are just as diverse and interconnected.

**All of this happens within numerous nooks and crannies of poorly laid-out, aging buildings in serious need of expensive upgrades:**

- **Roof has been repaired and patched together numerous times**
- **Aging electrical system throughout the building incurs costly repairs**
- **Space is inadequate for food storage and distribution needs**
- **Shortage of office and program space for the volunteers and staff to effectively work**

The current facility has a small warehouse, space for distribution of food, two classrooms, a kitchen area, a small childcare play area and offices. There is no docking available for inbound/outbound shipments and no racking in the facility's storage space. Not having enough space has forced us to utilize an offsite freezer, refrigerator, and dry storage facilities resulting in operational inefficiencies. The SFBLC also manages a one-and-a-half-acre urban garden located about two kilometers away from the facility.

Generous donors, along with the dedicated volunteers and staff, have enabled the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre to keep up with increased demand for services. However, our main building is bursting at the seams. All SFBLC space is currently over capacity and the new building will double capacity to meet our goals and develop the programs essential for addressing the holistic needs of the clients served by the SFBLC.

**“When I lost my job, I sold everything I owned until I was living like a homeless person in my own home. With my last \$2, I put gas in my car and drove to the food bank.”**







# NOURISHING OUR NEIGHBOURS

Unforeseen situations can leave people from all walks of life wondering where their next meal will come from. Due to life's twists and turns, any of us, at any time, can find ourselves forced to rely on a food bank. Increases in food prices, changes in income support programs, and the lingering impacts of COVID-19 mean that the harsh realities of poverty and hunger are spreading day by day as people are forced to do more with less.

Food hampers currently provide 2 to 3 days of emergency food once every 14 days for anyone in need located in Saskatoon or within a 50-kilometre radius of the city. Children and pregnant and nursing women also receive one litre of fresh milk at each visit. The SFBLC plans to continue this practice at the new facility.



# RESPONDING TO THE NEED: A NEW CAMPUS FOR FOOD AND LEARNING

Creating real, lasting change requires us to work in bold and creative ways. When people enter our new home, they will be welcomed into a vibrant and lively hub for learning and connection with programs and services that go far beyond emergency food distribution.

Our goal for the new campus is to transform the model of service delivery in our community. This requires a new facility that is approximately twice the size with better use of space and more efficiencies. After several years of looking at options in our community, we have found our new home that will enable us to better serve those in need.

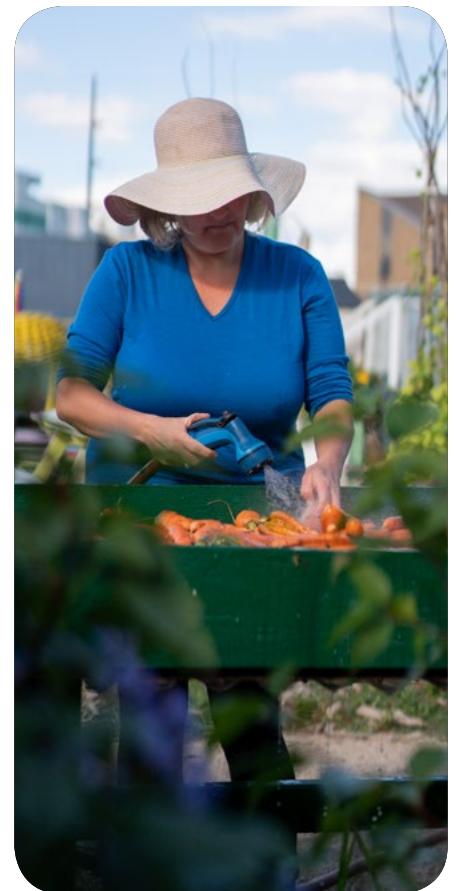
The SFBLC has purchased a warehouse at 425 Avenue P South. This location is centrally located and accessible to many of our clients. The adjacent train tracks are often travelled by foot by many people in the area. Additional parking, a new bus stop, and a planned corridor along 17th Street West will make the location more accessible for all who visit.

## The SFBLC's vision for a new campus will prioritize:

- **Optimizing operations by bringing all facilities together at one location**
- **Increasing the quality and quantity of healthy food available with adequate storage for dry, refrigerated and frozen goods**
- **Enhancing flow of food from pickup/delivery to storage and distribution with dock-ready shipping and receiving, and a building designed for this specific purpose**
- **Expanding food distribution from a warehouse with a shipping and receiving dock able to manage five-plus tonnes of food a day and distribute 8,500 plus baskets per month**
- **Increasing the program and office space for volunteers and staff to work efficiently all under one roof**
- **Serving all 36 food banks in the province as the administration, shipping and receiving hub for Food Banks of Saskatchewan**

SFBLC also provides employment training opportunities for community members. This creates a powerful scenario in which operations are supported, community members gain valuable participatory work experience, and employers have the opportunity to hire employees who have already been through an intensive hands-on training experience.

"I didn't think I'd have to choose between paying for rent or paying for food when I lost my job."





# YOU MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

The cost of purchasing and retrofitting a larger warehouse to meet the evolving needs in our community is \$12M.

This is where you come in. We invite you to join us as we focus our intention on real life solutions and adopt bold, big picture approach to some of the most pressing issues of our time. Investing in this project is much more than a one-time gift; it is an investment that is designed to make a transformative impact, today, and tomorrow by ensuring hungry people will be fed.

You can support this vital service with a needed investment to help create healthy, sustainable livelihoods in our community. Please join us with your financial support and ensure everyone in our community has safe and nutritious food.

Together we are shifting what is possible, and we thank you for your belief in what we do and for your support — a true reflection of the spirit, resilience, and values of Saskatchewan people.

“When I first heard about the Saskatoon Food Bank & Learning Centre, I thought it was only for people needing food. Then I learnt about their Workplace Experience Program and many other programs to help people in the community.”



# HUNGER COUNT 2022

Each year, a report is compiled on the realities of hunger in Canada. This Hunger Count took place from March 1-31, 2022 and includes folks when they come for a food hamper.

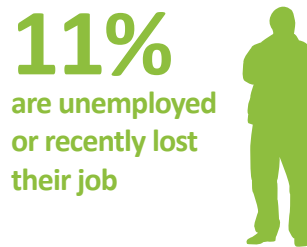
The numbers reveal the following about the diversity of individuals who rely on the SFBLC:



**64%** of families who use the food bank are single-parent families



**14%** of clients are "working poor"



**20%** cite the cost of food as the reason for their visit



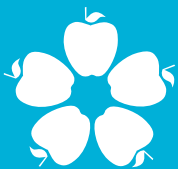
Over **27%** of clients accessed the food bank due to benefits being too low

"I am a single mother of 3 and part of being a good parent is providing for them. I wouldn't be a good mother if not for the food bank. The food bank has saved us from starving many times. Thanks so much for support and food."

"Thank you for being there when my funds are low. Rent and power take everything, and I love that this service is here."

A variety of people use the food bank. This includes seniors, post-secondary students, immigrants and refugees, and people living with a disability.





## SASKATOON FOOD BANK & LEARNING CENTRE

To answer your questions, please contact us:  
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