

A Message from our CEO:

The Food Bank of York Region (FBYR) is the new name we adopted in 2018 to highlight the leadership role we are now playing in addressing food insecurity across the nine municipalities of our Region. This name also reflects our unique approach of delivering food to dozens of community organization partners, including food pantries, shelters and social housing facilities that feed their clients.

Experience tells us that there is a clear link between low income, poverty and food insecurity. Last year, the 64 organizations we supported reported 44% of households accessing food through our community partners earned their primary income through social assistance, disability benefits or old age pension.

We responded by delivering \$3 million, or 600,000 meals, worth of food to community organizations serving 16,000 people who are impoverished, homeless, neglected, abused, hungry and otherwise marginalized. That's \$900,000 more than the previous year.

However, the real value in this accomplishment was our focus on collecting and delivering more fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, meat, and frozen goods. The value of these perishable foods has grown from \$433,000 in 2017 to over than \$1 million in 2018.

This growth was made possible by the food retailers and suppliers, and the funders who supported the cost of collecting, storing and delivering this food across the region. Please join me in thanking these champions in the fight against hunger. They are highlighted later in this report.

Approximately 45% of the individuals accessing the food we delivered in 2018 were children – an alarming statistic that we need to lower. Plans for 2019 include a move to a larger warehouse, which will allow us to pursue an aggressive goal to deliver to collect and deliver \$4 million worth of food, or 800,000 meals to feed over 17,000 people. We continue to be firmly focused on the urgent need for more fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy products, meat, and frozen goods. Over 50% of the food we will deliver will be fresh and frozen products – a far healthier option for those who don't get enough nutritious food to eat.

When we think about York Region, prosperity often comes to mind. And while these pockets of wealth do exist, the Region also holds a high rate of precarious employment rate — contract work, no benefits, part-time employment. More than 15% of York Region households, representing over 125,000 people, live below the low-income cut-off. Please remember those struggling to put food on the table the next time you consider your next charitable donation.

Thank you and warm regards!



Alex Bilotta
Founder & Executive Director

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