



# 2023 IMPACT REPORT

CENTRAL OKANAGAN  
FOOD BANK

## Mandate & Mission

We serve all individuals regardless of age, race, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, ethnicity, language, disability, or health status. COFB has created programs to inherently target assistance toward our seniors, children, infants, pregnant mothers, and those with medically diagnosed dietary needs and restrictions.

Our core mission is to create a healthy, hunger-free community and while our standard hamper program alleviates the challenge of hunger, our targeted programs work specifically towards improving the health of our community members.

## Organizational Scope

The official boundary for the Central Okanagan Food Bank includes all areas from Peachland to the west side of the WHR Bennett Bridge through Kelowna east to Beaverdell, and north to Lake Country. The COFB is a member of Food Banks Canada, Food Banks BC, the Kelowna Chamber of Commerce, and the Greater Westside Board of Trade.



# Year in Review

2023 has been a pivotal year for the Central Okanagan Food Bank. It's a year where the challenges we faced opened doors to learning and growth.

Throughout the past four years, our community has weathered five major crises, from record-high inflation to the pandemic and climate disasters. These crises have left many in our community in increasingly precarious financial positions.

In 2023, we experienced a 32% increase in the number of clients we served, reaching an average of 7,500 clients each month. This growth is particularly notable among low-wage, dual-income households, underscoring the economic challenges our community faces.

One of our key focuses this year has been building stronger relationships with the local agriculture community, partnering with farmers and growers, including the Vibrant Veggie community garden. This partnership allows us to provide vital nourishment to children, seniors, and anyone facing tough decisions to put food on the table.

The support from our individual donors, corporations, and community groups fuels our daily efforts. Their generosity was especially evident during the McDougall Creek wildfire. Without their support, none of what we do would be possible.

To meet the rising needs in our community, we are transitioning from a medium to a large-sized organization. This growth opens up incredible opportunities to reduce barriers, such as our Community Kitchen, More Than Food Program, and adding new hamper distribution points throughout the cities.

Together, we are stronger. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all those who feed hope in our community. Join us in making an even greater impact in the coming years.



Trevor Moss

**CEO**



Tanja Halsall

**Chair**

# 2023 In a Nutshell

at our front doors

**7,500 individuals**  
every month

**85,000 visits**  
per year

out in the community

**300 deliveries**  
each month

**3,037,343 pounds**  
per year

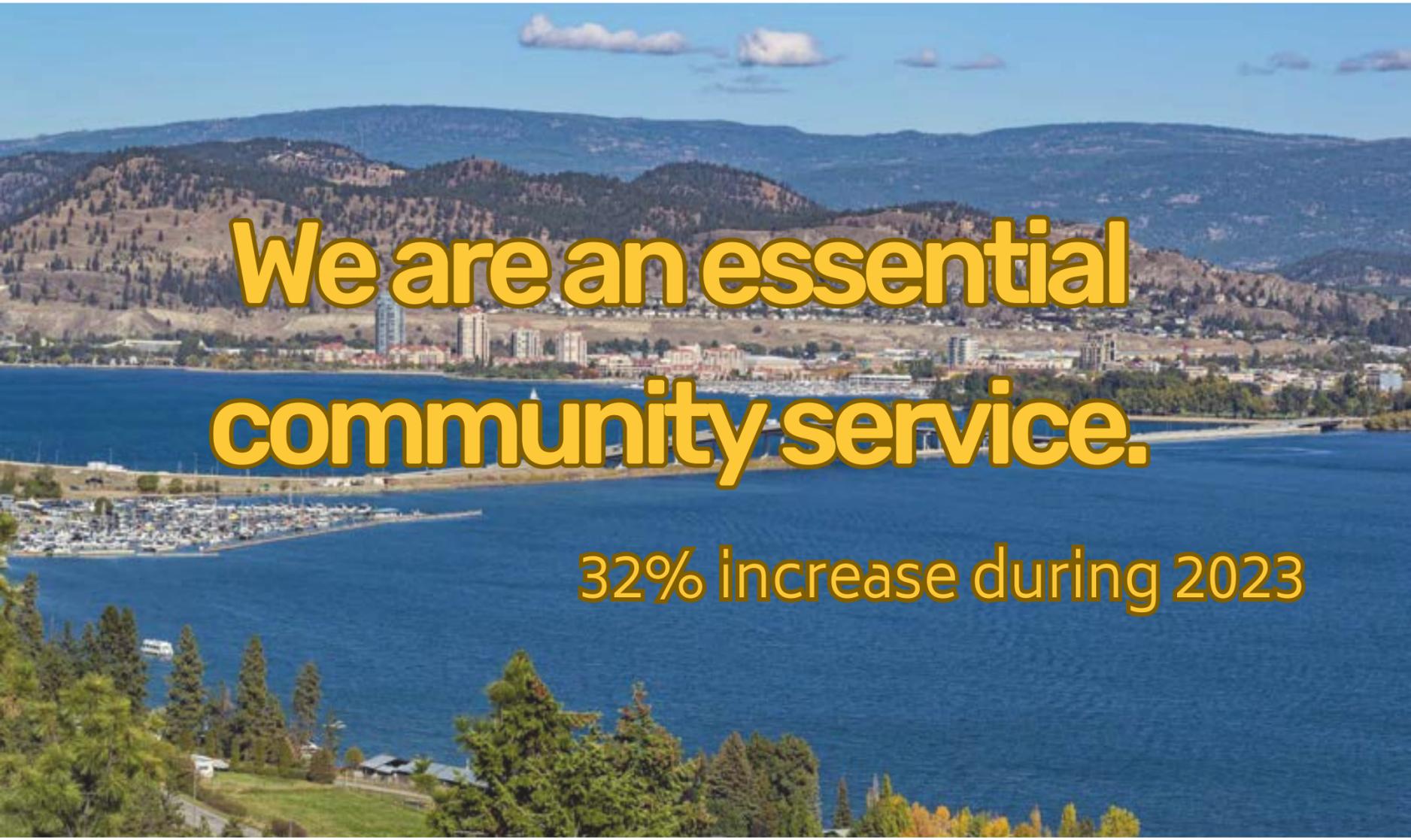
who we help

**36% are children  
& youth**

**28% are visible  
minorities**

**23% are seniors  
55 and over**

**27% are working  
households**



**We are an essential  
community service.**

**32% increase during 2023**

# Meeting the increased need at the door

## We Are Community



### Living on the Margin

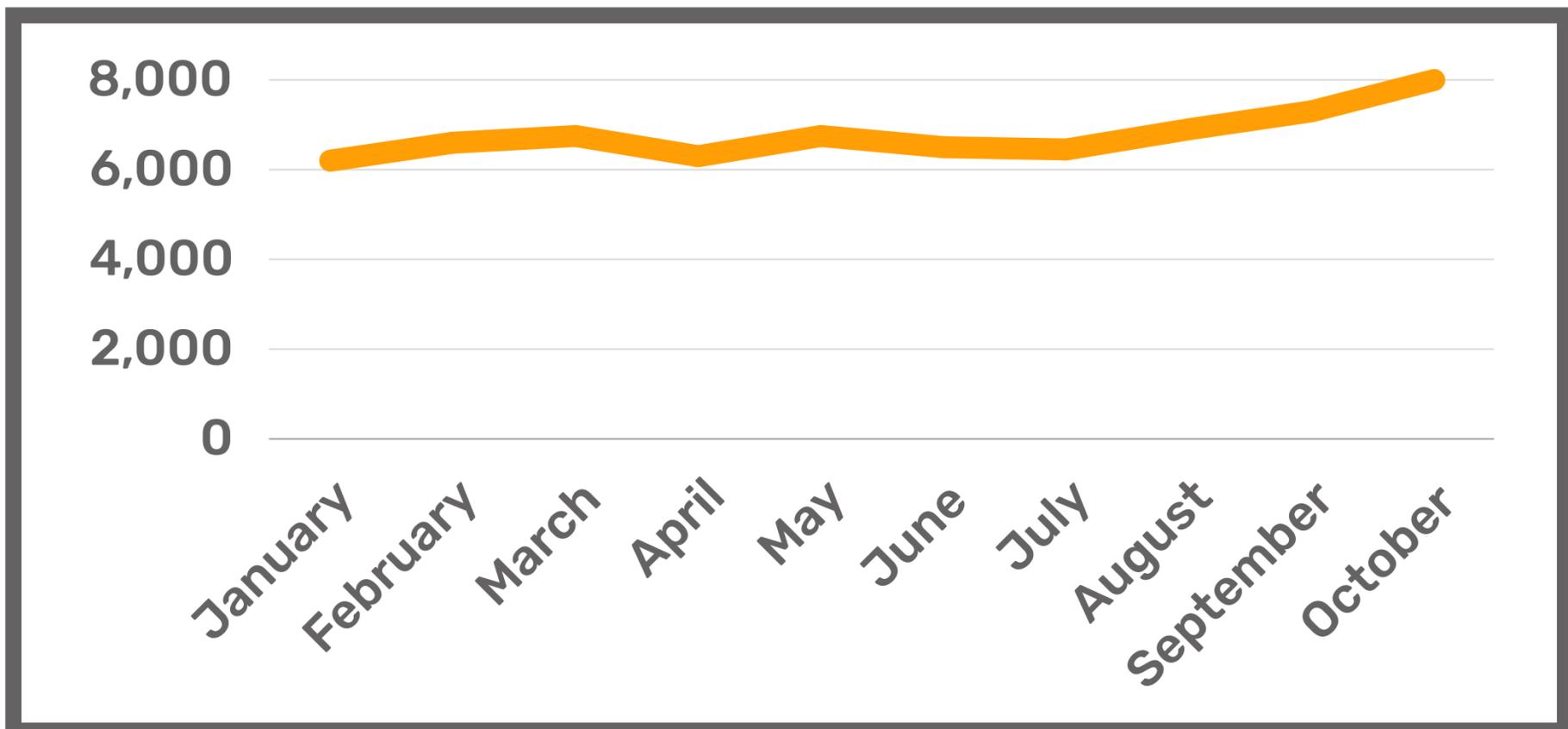
In 2023, the Okanagan community found itself grappling with an unprecedented economic challenge as interest rates and the cost of living surged at an alarming rate. This **financial storm** pushed a growing number of community members to the brink of financial instability.

Shockingly, just 7% of our clients own their own homes, leaving the majority at the mercy of a turbulent rental market that saw a mere **1% vacancy rate** this year.

One striking trend we observed was the sharp rise in **two-parent working households** seeking our assistance. This trend serves as a glaring testament to the unrelenting affordability crisis that has swept through the Okanagan, mirroring the larger economic challenges facing Canada as a whole.



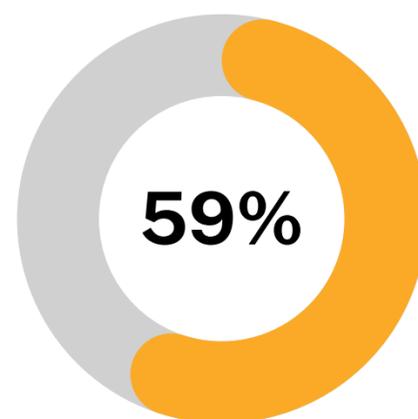
1980 to present\*



# THE LOCAL FOOD GAP

## WORKING FAMILIES

Our largest-growing demographic is two-parent working households. There has been a 59% increase in two-parent families served in the last 12 months.

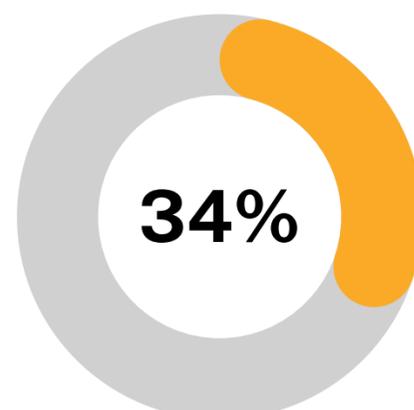


## INFANTS, CHILDREN, & YOUTH

Children make up 36% of our client base. Each month, we provide over 300 Tiny Bundles Hampers and 2,000 Snack Packs to children in need.

## MAIN REASON FOR VISIT

Inflation was listed as the #1 reason for visits, and many clients specifically mentioned the cost of Food.





## Nutrition Improvement Program

# We put healthy food first.

## Vitality

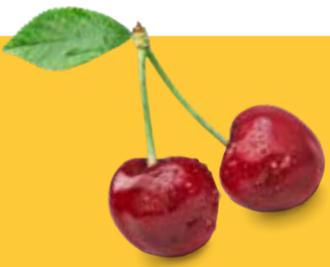
Our Vitality program ensures that families with children under the age of 15 and senior clients over 55 years of age receive balanced essential nutrients. All Vitality clients are provided dairy, seasonal produce, high protein items such as meat, eggs, beans, lentils/legumes, and whole grain pasta/rice.

**This program supports 2,580 clients per month.**

## Special Dietary Needs

Clients with special dietary requirements due to medically diagnosed conditions, including acute and chronic illness, eating disorders, and food allergies receive appropriate foods to support their health. Depending on needs, clients receive a selection of immune-boosting, gluten-free, low fat, low salt, and sugar-free foods, as well as fresh produce, dairy, and protein.

**This program supports 920 clients per month.**



## Tiny Bundles

Tiny Bundles supports pregnant mothers and families with children under the age of one. Tiny Bundles clients receive monthly hampers plus weekly nutritional supplements including fresh fruit and vegetables, milk, eggs, and cheese. Once baby arrives, clients are also provided with diapers, wipes, baby food, and formula. This year we reintroduced our Healthy Baby check in appointments in partnership with the help of Interior Health community nurses.

**This program supports 70-80 mothers/families per week.**

## Kids' Snack Packs

Our snack packs provide children and youth ages 1-15 with a one-week supply of ready-to-go healthy snacks, and are designed to take to preschool, day care, and/or school. Packs include yogurt, cheese, fresh fruit and veggies, nutritional bars, and juice among other items.

**This program supplies over 20,000 packs each year.**



## School Breakfasts

This partnership program assists local elementary schools to offer prepared meals, by providing bulk meal ingredients which can be prepared fresh on-site, at local schools for children in need.

**This program supports 321 children across 6 schools.**

## Christmas

Hampers are thoughtfully organized with all necessary items to prepare a special holiday meal, including our standard hamper items, plus turkey or ham, fresh seasonal produce, dairy, cranberry sauce, stuffing, jams, and desserts. There is a need for 27% more hampers compared to last year.

**This year over 4,000 hampers are forecasted for distribution.**



# Perishable & Non-Perishable Food Rescue Program

## We make the best use of all food.

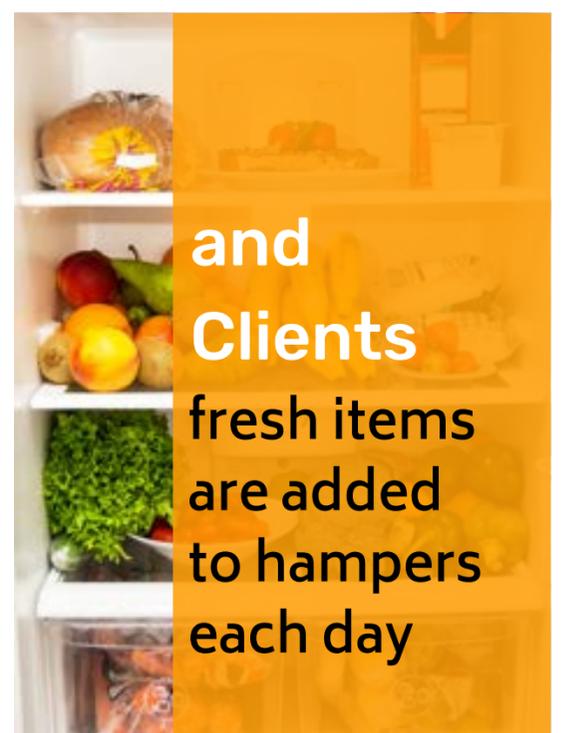
On a daily basis, food is collected from local retailers across Kelowna and West Kelowna, to help retrieve as much viable food as possible for those facing food insecurity in our community. Foods are then sorted and redistributed to our registered clients, local partner agencies, and at times out to our designated hub region of Food Banks BC's Associate locations.

**Despite decreased food intake caused by cost of living increases, grocery store shrinkages, and shipping delays, we maintained our commitment to providing food to those in need during the last fiscal year.**

**3,160,352 lb.**  
2021-2022



**3,037,343 lb.**  
2022-2023



Thank you to all our local growers

# We love our agriculture partners.



This year we accepted a record amount of local produce from farmers, growers and hobby gardeners. We collaborated with the Vibrant Veggie; a community garden that operates at Helen's Acres. A large portion of what the Vibrant Veggie grows is donated to us, which totalled 8,500 pounds.

We resumed our vegetable collection from farmers at the the Kelowna Farmers and Crafters Market on Wednesdays and Saturdays. On average 10 -12 growers will donate produce that didn't sell at the market. Fresh fruit and vegetable donations truly make a difference in the lives of our clients and we thank all those who contributed.

## IT TAKES A VILLAGE: OUR PARTNERSHIPS IN ACTION



\* OUR PARTNER AGENCIES PROVIDE SERVICES FOR AN ADDITIONAL 6,636 INDIVIDUALS IN NEED, HELPING US SERVE OVER 14,000 PEOPLE EACH MONTH.



Our Partners

# We value the power of community.

## Food Retailers

Eighteen local food retailers across Kelowna and West Kelowna have partnered with us to provide surplus perishable foods, to make sure once they leave store shelves, they go into the hands of folks who need it most.

Save-On Foods • 5 locations | Superstore • 2 locations | Walmart • 2 locations | FreshCo | Costco  
Nester's Market • 2 locations | IGA • 2 locations | Safeway | SunRype | Your Independent Grocer

## Community Producers

An area abundant with food production, we have been growing relationships with several farms and orchards in our community. Helen's Acres is our key partnership in this area, providing over 37,134 lb. of produce to us this season. Overall our agriculture partners donated a total of 45,634 lb. in 2023.

Helen's Acres • Okanagan Fruit Tree Project • Kelowna Jaycees • Unearthed Farms • Vibrant Veggie

## Local Agencies

Over forty partner agency locations help to support individuals who may also be food insecure in our community. To ensure equitable access to food, our partner agencies receive bulk foods and in turn provide food support to their people they serve each month; which means our reach in the community goes far beyond our registered clients.

All Are Family Outreach • BGC Okanagan • Childhood Connections • Canadian Mental Health Association  
Elevation Outdoors • Freedom's Door • HOPE Outreach • Karis Society  
Kelowna Community Resources • Kelowna Gospel Mission • Kelowna Women's Shelter  
Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society • Mamas for Mamas • Meals on Wheels • Metis Mamawapowin  
Metro Community & The Welcome Inn • NOW Canada • Okanagan College • Okanagan Nation Alliance  
Okanagan Valley Pregnancy Centre • Pathways Abilities Society • Society of Hope • Salvation Army West  
Kelowna • Senior's Outreach • Teen Challenge • Turning Points •

# Wildfire Emergency Response

## IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

EXECUTED WITHIN 72 HOURS OF DECLARED  
STATE OF EMERGENCY

Support agencies who specialize in emergency response with procurement, storage, stability, disbursement and utilization of food as required

Provide bulk food items to humanitarian aid relief organizations who are creating meals for evacuees and first responders

Build and distribute 900 emergency food hampers and counting to evacuees in Kelowna and West Kelowna with more on standby for neighbouring communities

## Long Term Recovery Plan

### COMMUNITY RE-ESTABLISHMENT SUPPORT

In the coming weeks and months, many evacuees will return to communities that have been impacted on every level, Food Banks and partnering agencies within those communities included. While functioning at reduced capacity, equitable access to food will be required more than ever in order to re-establish communities. By providing food shipments to community food banks and community support teams, we will be able to support these communities in their revitalization.

### TOTAL LOSS & RE-ESTABLISHMENT SUPPORT

Though many will return home to re-start their lives, others may be faced with the inability to return at all. Of this group, some will be covered by insurance and others will not. And while temporary financial supports will be made available to these more adversely affected evacuees, without strong financial security, many individuals and households will be challenged to re-establish themselves. These residents will require continued food supports while rebuilding their lives that the Central Okanagan Food Bank is well-equipped to provide.

### RESOURCE REPLENISHMENT

Some activities in wildfire support have and will continue to be serviced by donations from our community for regular client service provision. To continue to meet the needs of our community members who face food insecurity on a regular basis, replenishment of supplies depleted due to wildfires is necessary, and corporate funds will help the Central Okanagan Food Bank to maintain its core service to community.



Regional Hub Support  
**We are part of  
something bigger.**

## Hub Services

As a Food Banks Canada National Food Sharing Service Hub, we are part of a team of four distribution centres in BC that services regional catchments of outlying food banks.

Large case lot shipments of food are provided to the Central Okanagan Food Bank, which is broken down into more usable lots for smaller communities. These items are then shipped and shared out to 32 food banks across our region each month.\*



### **Central Okanagan Food Bank's National Food Sharing Service catchment area includes:**

Armstrong, Castlegar, Cawston, Cherryville, Creston, Cranbrook, Enderby, Fernie, Golden, Grand Forks, Invermere, Kaslo, Kelowna, Kimberley, Lake Country, Lumby, Nakusp, Nelson, Oliver, Osooyos, Peachland, Penticton, Revelstoke, Salmo, Salmon Arm, Sicamous, Slokan, Sorrento, Sparwood, Summerland, Trail, and Vernon.

**\*An Important Note:** Donations made in Kelowna and West Kelowna stay in our communities. This program works alongside Food Banks Canada and Food Banks BC to ensure regional food access throughout the rural Southern Interior of BC.



COFB Volunteers  
**We know it  
takes a village.**

in the last fiscal year...

**31,975 hours**  
donated



**\$1,016,805**  
of time value\*

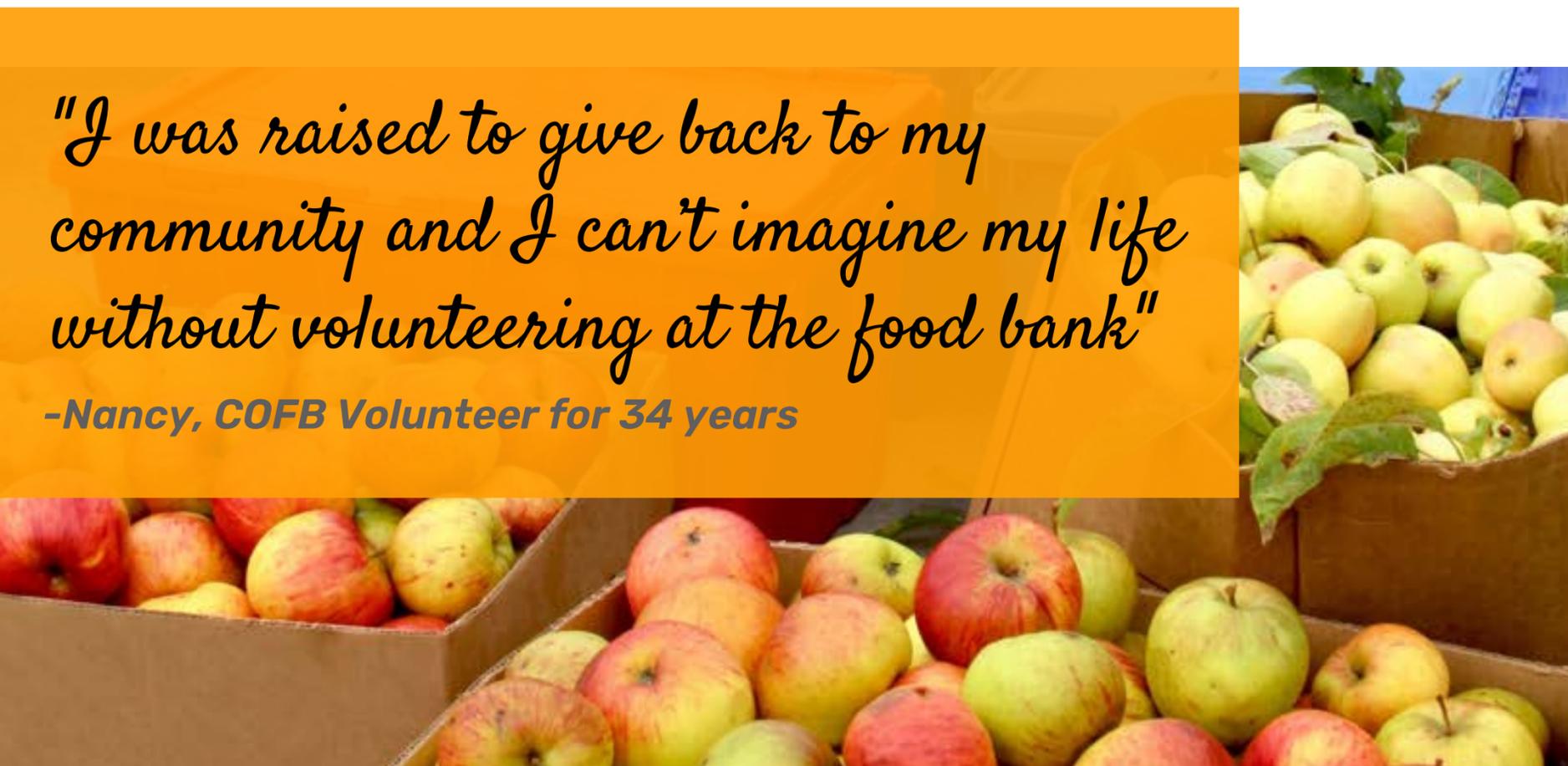
Just as monetary donors help to keep our lights on and food in the building, our time donors help to keep our resources moving daily.

Volunteers are the heartbeat of our organization and we wish to thank our **amazing, dedicated, tireless volunteers** for their support of our community at the Central Okanagan Food Bank this year.

*\*value is calculated based on University of Maryland's Do Good Institute, Aug 2023*

*"I was raised to give back to my community and I can't imagine my life without volunteering at the food bank"*

*-Nancy, COFB Volunteer for 34 years*



What's next for the COFB?

# We're Building a Better Future.



## **NEW SATELLITE LOCATIONS**

Our satellite location in Rutland is now taking clients and a downtown location is currently being looked at.



## **MORE THAN FOOD PROGRAM**

This program aims to connect clients to other vital resources and supports in the community.



## **COMMUNITY KITCHEN**

Construction on our community kitchen is officially underway and scheduled to be completed early 2024.



## **NEW BUILDING IN WEST KELOWNA**

Purchase land and a building for a new location to meet the rising demand



# Central Okanagan Food Bank

November 2023