



2024 Impact Report





Acknowledging the Land

FoodShare acknowledges that the sacred land in which we operate is situated upon the traditional territories of the Wendat, Haudenosaunee, the Anishinabeg and the Mississaugas of the Credit. This territory is covered by the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Anishinabeg and Haudenosaunee allied nations to peaceably share and care for the lands around the Great Lakes. FoodShare recognizes the many Nations of Indigenous People, who presently live on this land, those who have spent time here and the ancestors who have hunted and gathered on this land known as Turtle Island.

FoodShare recognizes and supports the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action, as we work to apply both to our work.

FoodShare's work is guided by principles of Food Justice, this includes receiving ongoing guidance from an Indigenous Advisory Circle on our work and on collaborations with Indigenous groups working towards Indigenous food sovereignty and increasing Indigenous food access.

FoodShare also acknowledges the many people of African descent who are not settlers, but whose ancestors were forcibly displaced as part of the transatlantic slave trade, brought against their will, and made to work on these lands. We believe that advancing Indigenous sovereignty is deeply and inextricably linked to Black liberation and we remain committed to advancing both.



Food is a right.

FoodShare is a food justice organization, advocating for the right to food, and working to challenge the systemic barriers that keep people from accessing the food they need to thrive. We support community-led food initiatives and work alongside communities most affected by poverty and food insecurity: Black and Indigenous people, people of colour, people with disabilities, and folks living on a low income. Whether it is supporting urban farms, subsidizing local produce markets or coordinating community kitchens, all of our work is about folks accessing food on their own terms.

Our vision:

A Toronto where all people can feed themselves, their loved ones and their communities with dignity and joy.

2024/2025 Board of Directors

Wendy Blain

Victoria Blanco Salcedo

Germaine Catchpole

Natalie Cox

Hannah Devanesan

Sameera Karim

Michelle MacDonald

Jessica Mulder

Nader Qawasmi

Bindra Shah

Jackie Silverberg

Russell Speares

Jennifer Vachon

Julia Vlad

Erica Wright

Meet our current board and team on our website at foodshare.net/team





Reflections on 2024

A note from Executive Director Matt Johnstone

This being my first year at FoodShare, an organization I had admired from afar for some time, I was so pleased to find that I had been right about this place. People here care deeply about building a fairer, more just food system. Whether I was connecting with program teams in farms and gardens, sitting in on workshops or stopping by our market partners, everywhere I went this year I connected with folks working toward a better way.

From our food charter consultations to our podcast we got the opportunity to dialogue with incredible experts and advocates in 2024, each with a wealth of wisdom to share. At our annual general meeting, keynote speaker Lydia Phillip spoke to the importance of rest for those of us engaged in the project of longterm, sustainable change. Lydia spoke to the importance of resisting urgency culture and how closely it's tied in with capitalism, patriarchy and settler-colonialism.

At a time when the need to address food injustice feels more urgent than ever before, finding those moments for rest, ease and joy are vital to the long run. At FoodShare we'll continue to seek these moments, grateful always for the support of a community of people that surround our work with commitment, compassion and care. I look forward to continuing to rest and resist with you all.

In solidarity,
Matt



2024 by the Numbers

340

workshops offered



178

community
initiatives
supported



60 000 lbs
food waste composted

244 206
people reached



703 321

lbs of produce
distributed



2024 at FoodShare

LEADING AND BEING LED: MOVING TOWARD JUSTICE

2024 was an action-packed year at FoodShare, committed to advancing food justice through programs and advocacy that model the food system we want for our city.

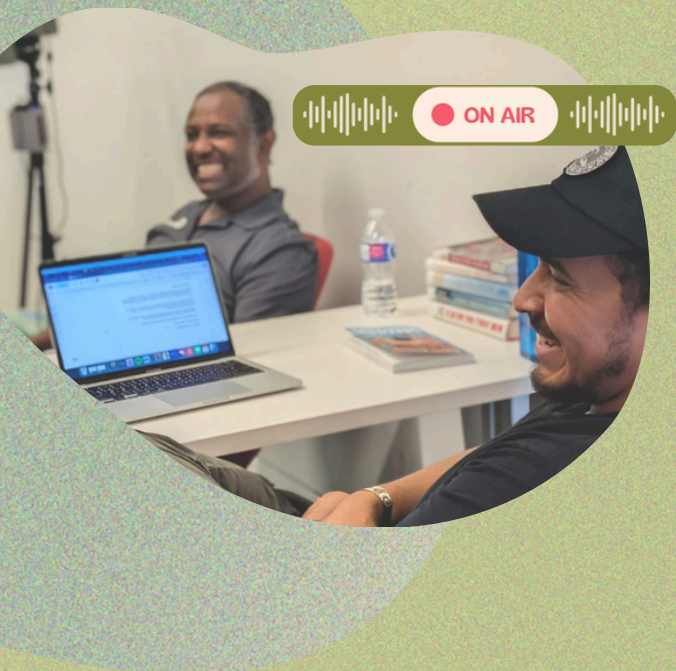


A groundswell of support for a boycott of the Loblaw supermarket chain showed us not only that the rising cost of food is coming for everyone but demonstrated the importance of listening and learning from the folks most impacted by food insecurity and those who are finding ways to keep their communities fed. (Read Matt's op/ed: [The Loblaw boycott is just the beginning](#))

Amplifying the voices of community is one of our greatest honours at FoodShare. In 2024 we had the unique honour of leading consultations around the development of a **new Toronto Food Charter** in collaboration with the City of Toronto. The conversations were illuminating and we are committed to ensuring frontline community leaders were able to offer meaningful input into the process and the final product: a charter that must be measurable, actionable and accountable.

Always central to our work is recognizing which are the moments to lead and those to be led. We proudly found opportunities to be in solidarity in 2024, joining more than 300 others in signing the **Food Security Organizations Coalition joint statement on Gaza**, demanding food not be used as a weapon of war, throwing our support behind migrant workers and the **Status for All** campaign and hitting the streets alongside so many others passionate about land and water justice at the **Grassy Narrows River Run**.

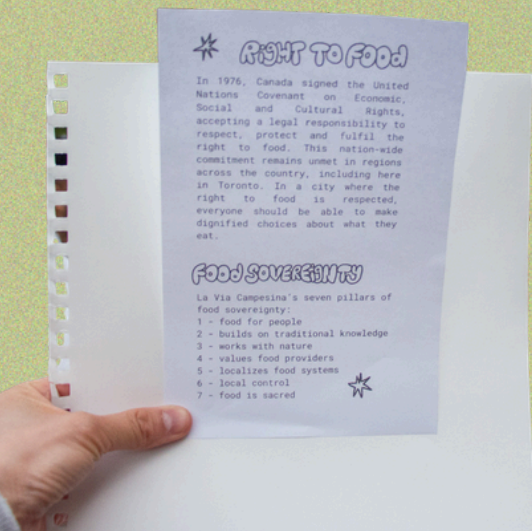




Art played a crucial role in our work in 2024. Community-led workshops at Flemo Farm, right to food education at schools and colleges, and the **Toronto Food Stories** project all used art to explore the potential of transforming our food system.

Toronto Food Stories, the brainchild of advocacy team members Moe Pramanick and Hansel Igbavboa, was an artist residency that brought together four artists from different corners of the city – North, South, East and West – and immersed them in food-justice related learning through workshops, site visits and hands-on experiences with grassroots organizations in their neighbourhoods (Black Creek Community Farm, Malvern Urban Farm, Emmett Avenue Communal Garden and Healing As One). Together, they used the art-making process to consider the urgent crisis of food insecurity in Toronto, and turn attention towards community-driven approaches to defending our food rights, culminating in four incredible exhibitions.

We welcomed an incredible lineup of guests in 2024, to our podcast (Vivien Sansour, Lorraine Lam, Gabriel Alladua), our upskilling workshops (Rania El Mugammar, Riley Yesno, Leticia Deawuo), and our annual general meeting (Lydia Philip) as well as a having the chance to share an illuminating conversation with the chair of our board of directors, Germaine Catchpole on Indigenous Food: Beyond June 21st.



"Through this residency I've witnessed different strategies that food advocates use and will integrate them in my own practice when engaging in community lead artmarking."

-Raoul Olou
Multidisciplinary Artist



Community Food Growing

IT TAKES A VILLAGE

The community came together to make dreams come true this year on the **Community Food Growing** team. 331 community members in Flemingdon Park volunteered their time to support the ever-growing Flemo Farm, while 705 people volunteered to help with our composting programs. Between 12 youth employed on our **School Grown** team at BCI Farm, 9 community farmers and 6 staff at **Flemo Farm**, and 47 clients and 23 clinicians at the **Sunshine Garden**, folks showed up for each other and for their crops. Ultimately, we harvested over 40,000 pounds of produce and reached nearly 14,000 people through the Community Food Growing team's programs in 2024.

DIY: THE 'Y' IS FOR YES YOU CAN!

In addition to leading and supporting larger-scale agriculture projects like at Flemo and BCI Farm, the **Community Food Growing** team helped folks across Toronto to grow their own food, even in small spaces. In 2024, the team was proud to support 68 virtual and 35 in-person community garden groups across Toronto, reaching over 1,800 people. And, to help kick-start their growing ventures, the team distributed 10,000 seedlings of over 60 plant varieties grown in the Sunshine Garden greenhouse to more than 30 community gardens and urban farms throughout the city. One community member who has worked closely with their community garden for over two decades said, "Community garden programs in less privileged neighbourhoods across the city rely on the technical support and resources provided under this program for successful food production. Thank you FoodShare!"

PLANTING SEEDS FOR FARMING FUTURES

In 2024, we saw participants in our **Youth Grown program** at BCI Farm in south Etobicoke make huge strides. The participants are young people who were just beginning their careers in food growing. Access to a plot plus support and guidance from FoodShare staff, provides them with a lower stakes opportunity to generate income as a farmer than traditional (limited) land access opportunities. Youth Grown farmers' entrepreneurial endeavours soared in 2024 from Kristine's carrot and zucchini soaps to Kevin and Michelle's bouquets, folks couldn't wait to get their hands on what these talented young people got growing.





“Q: What do you like most about this market?”

*A: Everything The people
Convenience fresh vegetables
Venders was SO friendly The
freshness convenient, eating
organic Fresh from the garden.
Appreciate produce very fresh
vegetables Open air. the friendly
people*

**- A conversation with a Flemo
Farmers' Market shopper**

Community Learning and Engagement

FOOD JUSTICE FOR ALL AGES

In 2024 the Community Learning and Engagement team worked with people of all ages to create pathways for learning about, and engaging with, food. Reaching 3,300 people overall, a highlight of the year for the team is a program dedicated to bi-weekly cooking and gardening sessions with a cohort of elders designed to increase access to food and reduce social isolation. The group came together in 2024 to share recipes, laughs and the challenges inherent to aging in a context where food is increasingly priced beyond the reach of so many. One participant said, “I now have more secure and regular access to food. I also have enjoyed participating in cultural activities with other people my age. Finally it gives me a supportive space and nourishing experience to look forward to each week.”

DELICIOUSNESS AT DE COOK-UP

The **Community Learning and Engagement** team brought folks together in communities and kitchens across the city this year. The team was delighted to be able to continue with **De Cook-Up**, a Black Trans Food Program run in partnership with Ubuntu Collective – a local organization focused on serving women and children of the African diaspora – CLE staff and participants connected with one another, fostering new friendships and exchanging cultural food knowledge. These weren’t the only exciting partnerships in 2024. The team also got the chance to collaborate on community kitchens with McMaster University’s Mycelium project and Not Far From The Tree.

FUN WITH NEW FOODS

In 2024, the **Community Learning and Engagement** team offered 105 **Early Years Food Basics** workshops to 1,180 participants, sharing skills and building the confidence of parents and caregivers to make their own baby food and introduce new foods to their little ones. The team also continued to offer the hugely popular **Chefs in the Classroom** program at Toronto District School Board schools in Neighbourhood Improvement Areas. Young folks get the chance to learn everything from basic chopping skills to the preparation of tasty and delicious recipes they can take home to share with their families, all under the guidance of supportive chefs from a variety of backgrounds who show students that they can be proud of their cultural foods.





Niurka Z.

Alba M.

"To cook with community is a beautiful way to spend time, and everyone ends up happy and full. I also would be significantly less able to eat on a daily basis if it wasn't for this program."

-Seniors Program Participant

Community Action Support

SUPPORTING THE SUPPORTERS

FoodShare's **Supportive Partnerships Platform** program which offers resources and logistical support to community-led food initiatives continued to support the capacity-building funds of the 7 platform members to help them achieve their self-determined goals in 2024. This is way we aim to amplify the voices of communities most impacted by poverty and food insecurity and acknowledge that so much of what we need to do build a fairer, most just food system is already happening in small ways all over Toronto. What's needed is to get the resources needed to sustain these initiatives into the hands of the skilled, committed community leaders who may otherwise struggle to keep them going longterm. From labour organizers to community farmers, the groups that are members of the platform are doing incredible work with limited resources. FoodShare's role is to offer them greater stability with the help of our staff teams such as Human Resources, Communications and Finance.



BUILDING LASTING CONNECTIONS

In 2024 our **Indigenous Community Action Support** program worked with Indigenous-led initiatives across Toronto to improve access to food, growing opportunities and meal sharing. Having supported the City in developing a network of land-based workers, the team was able to see where great initiatives were underway and look for opportunities for FoodShare to support their work with grants and produce distribution. In 2024 we offered continued support to the Seniors Helping Seniors food pantry at Wigwamen Terrace, Sweet Grass Roots Collective, Native Child and Family Services (Mount Dennis), Malvern Aboriginal Child and Family Centre, ENAGB Youth Drop-In (East End) and the Every Child Matters Garden at Flemo Farm. We were proud to add a new group this year: The Life Long Care Program at Toronto Council Fire. Support to LLCP went toward the purchase groceries for their programming which includes arts and crafts lunch gatherings, bingo days, community kitchens and weekly 'Dinner and a Movie' events where participants cook and share meals together, fostering a sense of community that is especially important for Indigenous seniors who often face food insecurity and social isolation.



"I just wanted to share with you how much of an impact the produce box has had on our family. My 4 year old is now trying new vegetables simply because she knows that the box comes from your centre! Thank you!"

- Program Participant
Native Aboriginal Child and Family Centre

*"The market is the
reason why I get out of
my house every week."*

**- Community
Market Shopper**



NEW NAME, SAME MISSION

This year our markets team announced their name change, leaving behind Good Food Markets in favour of **Community Market Support**. This was part of broader work being done in alignment with FoodShare's values, in particular our commitments to body liberation which reject the idea that we moralize any particular foods as 'good' or 'bad'. The change also better reflects FoodShare's role, a support to the citywide network of fresh produce markets we work with all of which are run by and for members of their community. Community Market Coordinators who are volunteers, agency staffers, seniors, youth, students and more provide the time, skills and direction. FoodShare provides produce priced as affordably as possible as well as operational support. We welcomed 12 new markets to the network in 2024, bringing the total to 52. Together we were able to help Torontonians access 1,116,562 servings of fresh fruit and vegetables.

Produce Distribution

KEEPING IT FRESH

In 2024, we bade farewell to our produce box subscription, shuttering our online shop and ended door-to-door deliveries. We hated to say goodbye to our small but devoted subscriber base (we love y'all!) but as more and more folks returned to brick and mortar shopping over online it no longer made sense to continue an initiative that had always been intended to generate revenue to support our community programming. Working with a diverse range of vendors and growers in 2024 we were able to make harder-to-source cultural foods available as affordably as possible. We continued to supply local agencies and school nutrition programs with bulk orders of produce boxes for their clients and supplying wholesale fresh produce to partners across the city, including the community-led markets that depend on FoodShare for Grade A fruits and vegetables.





Thank you!

This past year, both longstanding supporters and new organisations and individuals joined us in our commitment to building a city where everyone can feed themselves, their families and their communities with dignity and joy. We're so glad you have chosen to support food justice. Thank you so much.

\$300,000+

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BALSAM FOUNDATION

Canada



Andree Rheame and Robert Fitzhenry Family Foundation
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the **greater** 



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kpm power

Thank you!



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