



# CULTIVATING *Healthy Generations* TOGETHER

**ANNUAL REPORT**

July 1 2020 to June 30 2021



# MESSAGE FROM LEADERSHIP

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**The land on which we operate is Mi'kma'ki**, the unceded ancestral territory of the Mi'kmaq people. As Treaty people, we strive to work under the Peace and Friendship Treaty of 1752 by incorporating Mi'kmaw values—like cooperation, sharing, and stewardship of nature—into what we do. We understand that there is still much learning and unlearning to do, and we will continue working to decolonize certain practices central to our programs.

This year was unlike any other. As the world struggled to stem the devastation from COVID-19, other systemic injustices were bubbling to the surface—George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and the Kamloops Residential School to name a few.

As a civil society organization we knew we must make the time and space to understand these factors that intersect in our work and how we could show up differently to bring forth change. We formed an Equity, Diversity & Inclusion committee with volunteers and staff to guide us on this journey. We quickly realized we needed to adopt a broader anti-oppressive approach, and we needed to invest in this work at the personal and organizational levels with time and resources. We have committed to embedding this lens to guide how we work moving forward, including ongoing development to support staff and volunteers in their learning journeys.



*Debbie Madore*  
**Debbie Madore, RD**  
Chair

COVID-19 also served to amplify inequities throughout the food system. We weren't the only ones to notice. Municipal, Provincial and Federal governments responded in numerous ways, from forming regional food policy councils, to putting local food and food security front and centre across government department mandate letters, to offering significant grants to support emergency food relief.

We capitalized on every opportunity within our capacity. Deeply rooted in the good food movement, we found our stride. We explored opportunities, embraced new ways of working and grew partnerships in the service of children and youth in Nova Scotia. We created new programs and resources, invested with community implementation partners, empowered youth to think outside the box and expanded our advocacy reach. Stepping up through COVID-19 was challenging and it required us to be nimble and innovative to have impact. It provided Nourish the occasion to fully come into itself. We're grateful for the opportunity and look forward to whatever the future might hold!



*Margo Riebe-Butt*  
**Margo Riebe-Butt, RD**  
Executive Director

**We're all in this together, and the "together" is getting bigger by the day.**

# IMPACTS AT A GLANCE

Leveraged over **\$350,000** in grants to support COVID-19 food relief work

→ Read more on **page 4**

Facilitated the delivery of **1240 donated Nourish Your Roots boxes** to families in need

→ Read more on **page 10**

Collaborated with almost **100 community partners** across NS in pursuit of our mission

→ Read more on **page 12**







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*We helped families in crisis to buy groceries [...], baby formula for their babies, snacks for children, and various kits to create healthy meals at home with their children. The impact for families is they know that they will have at least a healthy meal, or food for their children. Thank you for the opportunity to make a small difference in people's lives!*

**- Family Resource Centre Staff**



# CONNECTING FAMILIES TO FOOD

This year, schools faced increased costs for food programming and higher needs from their students. Alongside our partners, we worked to develop innovative food programming and delivery mechanisms to nourish children and youth in schools and communities across the province. We advocated for almost **\$250,000** in additional funding for Regional Centres for Education (RCEs) and Conseil scolaire acadien provincial (CSAP) to support increased uptake in school food programs.

Community groups also reported family food pressures and sought ways to alleviate children being hungry over holidays and weekends or through school shut downs due to COVID-19. We sent **over \$100,000** to community partners across Nova Scotia to support food in the community, so children and youth could still access nourishing food if schools closed. Initiatives supported by this funding included *Take and Make* cooking programs, *Market Bucks*, *Magic Cupboards*, after-school snacks with food literacy elements, and food hampers, to name a few. In some instances Nourish was able to provide in-kind nutrition expertise for programs along with funding support to help build healthy eating capacity for families. Thanks to United Way; Community Food Centres Canada; Agri-Food and Agriculture Canada; and Communities, Culture and Heritage for trusting us with this important task.

## SUPPORTING EQUITABLE ACCESS



Our partners were also seeking resources to support school staff to safely deliver school food programs in a COVID environment. To ensure that this support could equitably reach the Acadian and Francophone communities, we expanded

our website's French portal and collaborated with CSAP on a bilingual PD session about universal breakfast programs. The session was well-received by attendees and led to deeper conversations about **breakfast program inclusivity** with the diversity and inclusion staff at CSAP, which has since influenced our work.





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*The school I am connected to has been gardening, wanting to implement a pollinator garden, building a greenhouse, and are prioritizing outdoor learning at a level I didn't know existed and is so different from when I was in school. [...] I find it very encouraging that more students in our province are being exposed to such great environments.*

**- Volunteer Garden Mentor**



# PLANTING NEW SEEDS

Our garden support program, Grow Eat Learn, began to take shape this year. Building on the release of the Grow Eat Learn Guiding Practices, a resource designed to help schools unlock the full potential of food gardens as a place to learn, we took a leap and designed a **Grow Eat Learn pilot project** that was completely virtual and COVID-safe. Together with two school gardens and a community garden, we navigated the challenges of providing support at a distance with the help of three talented gardeners who were able to act as mentors to garden programming leaders.

As schools returned to at-home learning due to COVID-19 in the spring of 2021, both schools were unable to proceed with their pilot gardens. We continued to support these schools with re-vamped versions of our at-home Garden Lessons. For the community organization, we strengthened our connection and supported them to develop an effective strategy to engage youth in their garden programming. We look forward to supporting gardens in a more hands-on fashion in the future as Grow Eat Learn continues to take shape.

## CULTIVATING GARDEN KNOWLEDGE



Thanks to a handful of "green thumb" volunteers, our knowledge base for Grow Eat Learn is ever-growing! New resources developed include: a goal-setting worksheet for improving the a garden as a space of learning; an asset-mapping worksheet, to assist garden coordinators in identifying new or existing assets in their community; and a quick-start guide to crops with long growing seasons for a fall harvest.



Click through to view resources:







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*Families were so excited about [the slow cooker box]! They couldn't believe how much they were getting. I talked to a youth this morning who said they made one of the soups and loved it. The youth said he was in charge of making one of the meals this weekend.*

**- "Literally Nutritious" Facilitator**



# SLOW COOKING TOGETHER

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To address gaps in food access in southwest Nova Scotia, we collaborated with Tri-County Regional Centre for Education (TCRCE) on something new—a virtual slow cooker program, *Literally Nutritious*. **30 vulnerable families** were given a slow cooker, a box of local ingredients, and instructions to help them cook healthy meals together. Nourish saw this as an opportunity to collaborate to improve food access and support food literacy in the region. Our team was integral in developing and testing recipes, guiding the TCRCE to leverage partnerships with local farms, and improving program accessibility through cooking videos.



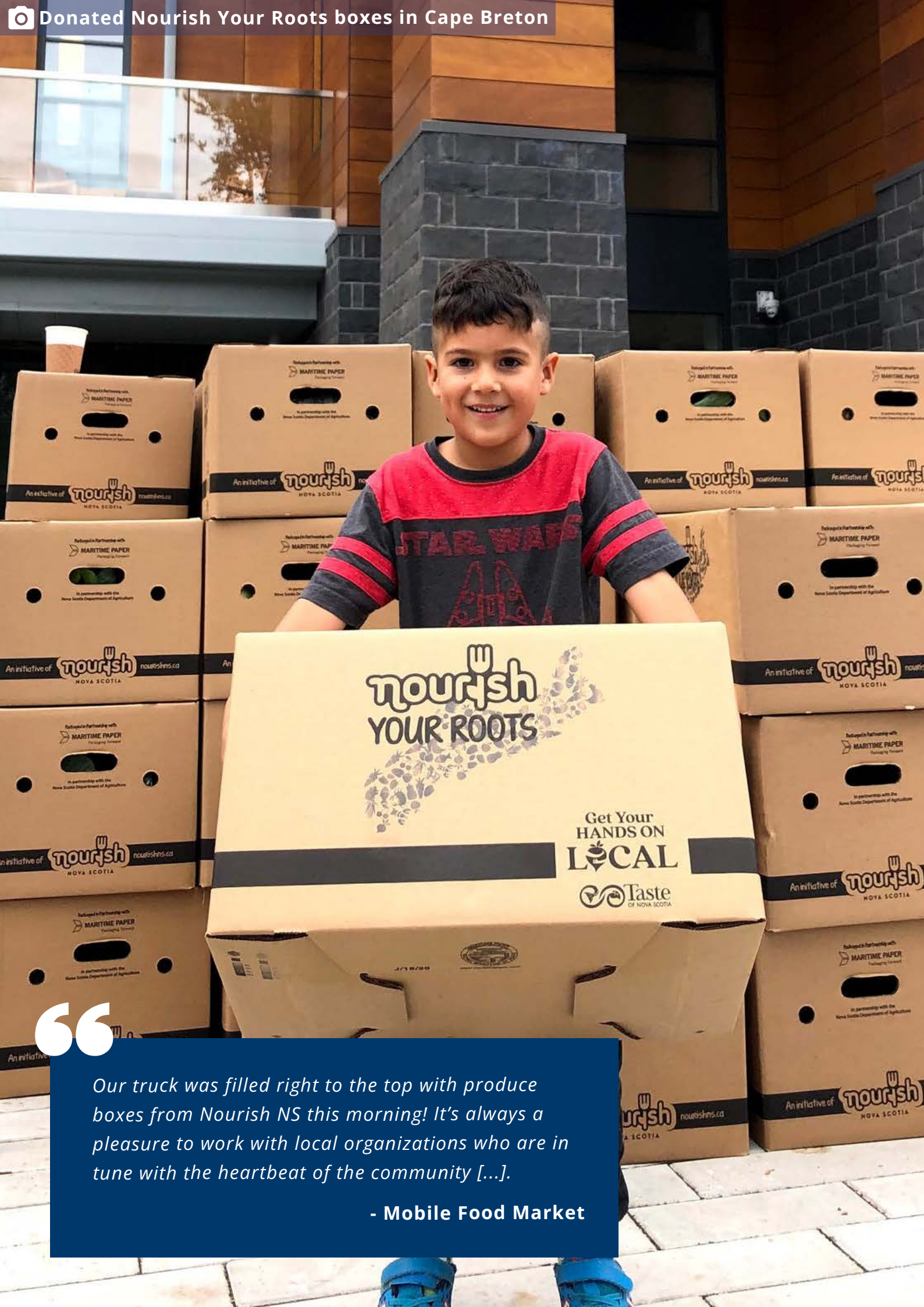
## FOOD LITERACY THROUGH ART

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Every year, Nourish partners with *Devour! The Food Film Fest* to present the *Big Picture Program*, a live educational event that encourages youth to learn about food through film. In the fall of 2020, we found out that the *Big Picture Program* would have to go virtual to keep everyone safe—so we took a new approach. We partnered with a local teacher to bring the films to life with in-depth curriculum guides. For the first time ever, students across the province could participate from the comfort of their own classrooms. These guides had students engaged with **experiential learning** from Mi'kmaw sustainability practices to community clean-ups, making it clear that youth care about the relationship between climate change and food.

Our third-annual *ReelTalk: Exploring Food Through Film* celebrated the top film entries submitted as part of the *Nourish Food & Film Challenge*. In the shift to virtual programming, not only did we find new ways to teach youth about food, but also to hear and share their stories. The films were shared with the public through our website with support and guidance from Halifax Public Libraries. Once on the site, users had access to our youth-centric intro video, activities, and the chance to vote for their favourite film. With over **600 page views** and **125 votes**, it was the most successful and accessible *ReelTalk* yet.





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*Our truck was filled right to the top with produce boxes from Nourish NS this morning! It's always a pleasure to work with local organizations who are in tune with the heartbeat of the community [...].*

**- Mobile Food Market**

# PIVOTING NOURISH YOUR ROOTS

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In the summer of 2020, news hit that schools would not be able to support their healthy school food programs through the **Nourish Your Roots (NYR) fundraiser** as they had in the past. The Nourish team wasted no time pivoting to a community-based model to ensure that the fundraiser could still run in the fall.

This model allowed customers to purchase farm-fresh boxes of local produce through an online store, designate proceeds to a school of their choice and pick up at a COVID-safe community location closest to them.

Communication became crucial to encourage sales. Nourish took part in television and radio interviews, public service announcements, and social media engagement. Highlights included features from Andy Hay of *Master Chef Canada*, food blogger Michelle Doucette, and Taste of Nova Scotia, which all helped to increase social media shares, likes and overall engagement within the community.

With deliveries no longer occurring at schools, volunteers played a key role. A volunteer coordinator was hired to recruit, organize and train volunteers to ensure smooth delivery and pickup at community hubs across the province. The resounding theme of NYR 2020 was community partnership—**32 community partner locations** and **84 volunteers** stepped in to help!

## CELEBRATING COMMUNITY GENEROSITY

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A total of **1240 Nourish Your Roots boxes** were donated and distributed to community organizations across the province, demonstrating that Nova Scotians care about their neighbours and healthy local food. This was in part thanks to **10 organizations and businesses** who stepped up to support the call

to action through the Corporate Challenge, alongside **hundreds of generous individuals** who chose to support a family in need. From volunteers to donated boxes and social marketing, Nourish engaged with a variety of community partners in new ways, which will ensure the ongoing success of the program in years to come.





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*Putting into words how this has impacted our work and the lives of many in our community will never truly compare to the gratitude expressed by the individuals impacted by these gift cards. Often times it's the small light at the end of a long tunnel that allows others to know that we care and to hang on, help and support is on the way, so thank you Nourish NS for this opportunity.*

**- Community Health Centre Staff**



# FOSTERING STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

More than ever, we rely on strong partnerships to further our work in service of children and youth in Nova Scotia. As a small organization, working in diverse partnerships enables us to broaden our scope and impact as contributors bring a wide variety of expertise and innovation to the table.

Our work looked very different as we expanded where we work to support children and families through COVID. We wanted to know if we were meeting the needs of our increased network of partners. To this end, we sent out an anonymous survey to **over 100 partners** across various sectors to help us sense the environment. Almost half of our partners responded—and the feedback was overwhelmingly positive! This exercise served to remind us that Nourish is highly valued for our contributions to food work in NS.

## Nourish supports partners in many ways:



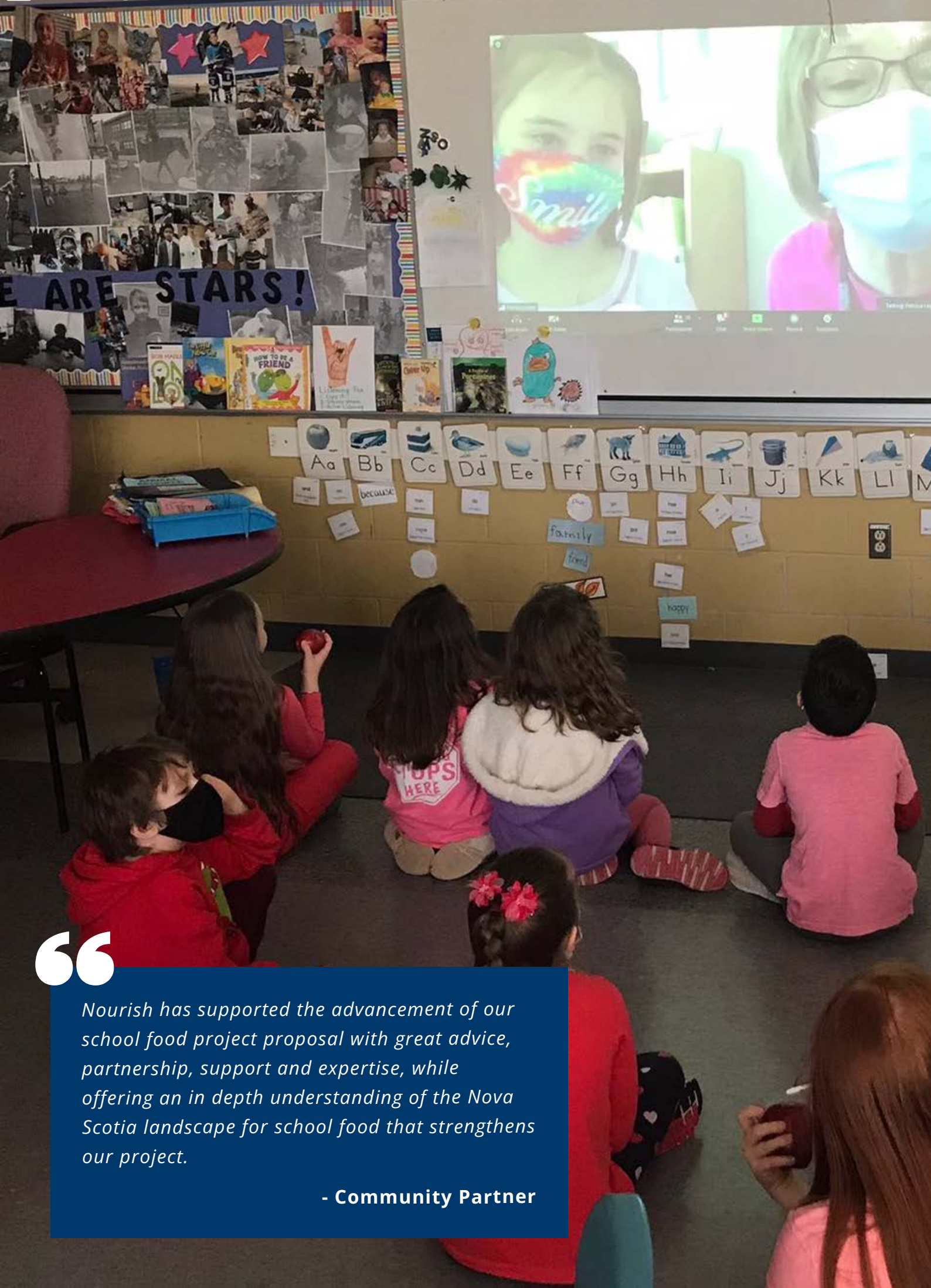
**93%** of Participants  
said that working with Nourish helps to strengthen their (or their organization's) impact

## ACTION ON EQUITY, DIVERSITY & INCLUSION

Building strong partnerships with diverse groups demands a level of understanding of systemic injustices. Board members proposed the formation of an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) committee to invest further time, money, and energy towards addressing knowledge gaps and cultivating change.

The new EDI committee recognized that the Nourish board, staff, and volunteers were all at a different phase of their learning journey, and decided to start off with the essentials. The Spring Strategy session introduced EDI concepts in an interactive way and encouraged reflection on the importance of this lens within our work. With this knowledge, Nourish committed to taking actionable steps within our understanding and our means; for example, funding family cooking classes in 13 Mi'kmaw communities and a breakfast program at a Mi'kmaw Kina'matnewey (MK) school. Nourish recognizes we still have much **learning, unlearning, and relearning** to do before systemic change can occur.





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*Nourish has supported the advancement of our school food project proposal with great advice, partnership, support and expertise, while offering an in depth understanding of the Nova Scotia landscape for school food that strengthens our project.*

**- Community Partner**



# GROWING THE GRASSROOTS

Creating awareness and a shared understanding of the issues surrounding school food; food security; and a healthy, just, and sustainable food system is an important part of our work at Nourish. Universal school food programs are uniquely positioned to address issues of both ill-health and inequities. They level the playing field, so that all children have an opportunity to be well-nourished to reach their potential in the classroom.

Our role has been to **advocate, educate, amplify partners** and **activate Nova Scotians** to bring forth change. A school food program for Canada would create jobs, support the local farm economy and serve to nourish vs simply feed children. We need to bring forth change through healthy public policy and take upstream approaches to improving the food landscape to enact real change.



## Did You Know?

Canada is the only G7 country without a national school food program.

The time to #SpeakUp is NOW!

[nourishns.ca/speakup](https://nourishns.ca/speakup)

This past year through the #SpeakUp4School Food Campaign, we helped Nova Scotians to engage in Federal pre-budget surveys, drive a letter-writing campaign targeting MPs and the Prime Minister along with members of the Budget Standing Committee. This advocacy resulted in school food as a named commitment in party platforms at both the provincial and federal levels. We supported champions by convening alliances and developing letter templates, postcards, briefings and other advocacy tools.

Nourish also engaged with The Young Canadian's Roundtable on Health in discussions about a school food program for Canada. We needed to hear first-hand perspectives from those we serve and who would benefit from a program to reinforce those messages to the electorate.





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*Creating a healthy food environment for children & youth has been very important to me for many years [...] I see our organization to be the leader in N.S. for helping create a healthier food environment.*

**- Nourish Volunteer**



# VALUING VOLUNTEERS

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When the Blue Nose marathon moved from the spring to the fall, Nourish volunteers ran with it. As part of the Charity Challenge, volunteers signed up for a virtual run and started fundraising. Our goal this year was \$10,000. With **17 team members** participating virtually across the province, Nourish won the third place award for the total number of fundraisers! The additional cash prize from this award helped us reach our fundraising goal. Thanks to such tremendous volunteer support, this was our biggest year yet!



Volunteers support every aspect of our work at Nourish. This includes our leadership teams, which play an integral role in our day-to-day work and decision-making. This year we saw increased participation in our teams, including new youth volunteers who brought diverse perspectives to our work. We can't thank them enough for their dedication and contribution to help us achieve our goals.

## RECOGNIZING CHAMPIONS

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Every year Nourish acknowledges an amazing volunteer through the Golden Carrot award. As an organization with many dedicated volunteers across Nova Scotia, selecting just one winner is challenging.

This year's Golden Carrot was awarded to Nourish Board member **Aimee Gasparetto**. Aimee is a strategic thinker, able to see the big picture, and has consistently stepped into leadership roles at Nourish. As a member of

our EDI committee, Aimee was integral in planning and co-facilitating an EDI workshop as part of this year's strategic session. Whether running for Team Nourish in the Blue Nose Charity Challenge, representing Nourish at Standing Committees of the Nova Scotia Legislature, or meeting with MLAs, Aimee always exemplifies our principles of integrity, respect, collaboration and excellence.





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*I really value the mission of Nourish Nova Scotia and feel it is important that young people learn about nutritious foods, have access to healthy food, and are well-nourished.*

**- Monthly Donor**



# NOVA SCOTIANS CARE

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We are grateful to the many supporters who joined our mission this year. In addition to our individual and corporate donors, many stepped up to make a difference by devoting time and energy to create third-party fundraisers for our organization. **This is big work and we can't do it alone!**

For example, in September, we welcomed back Staples Bedford for a month-long back-to-school campaign, where staff collected donations in support of our healthy food programs. Students at Acadia University (as part of Canada's Atlantic Foodservice Partners) raised funds at one of their meetings. Auctionable Change artisan Gretchen Tanner hosted an online auction of beautiful handcrafted items, and professional groups such as Women in Medicine Annapolis Valley supported our mission through online fundraising initiatives. Local businesses joined our mission with generous year-end gifts, with one even redirecting funds for client holiday gifts towards making a difference.

## WON'T YOU HELP US GROW?

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As we continue to build programs and resources in response to our community's needs, financial growth has become a key focus area to strengthen and expand our mission. Building our organizational philanthropic culture has continued through these challenging times. We are providing new ways for supporters to help with long-term growth and sustainability through our monthly donor and major gifts programs. Our monthly donor program provides a predictable income stream for sustaining growth, and this year continued to grow by 23%. We identified three areas for long-term multi-year donors to join us and make a greater impact on those we serve, which include:



**Piloting our Grow  
Eat Learn food  
garden program**



**Expanding Nourish  
Your Roots through  
the school year**



**Developing hands-  
on food literacy  
programming**

Cultivating generations of healthy eaters is big work that takes time, support, and transformational investments. **We look forward to building a healthy food future for Nova Scotia together.**

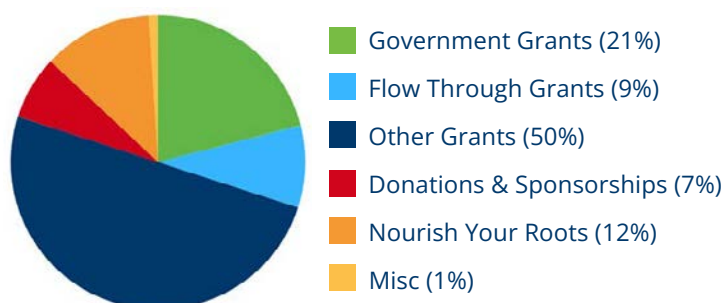


# FINANCIALS

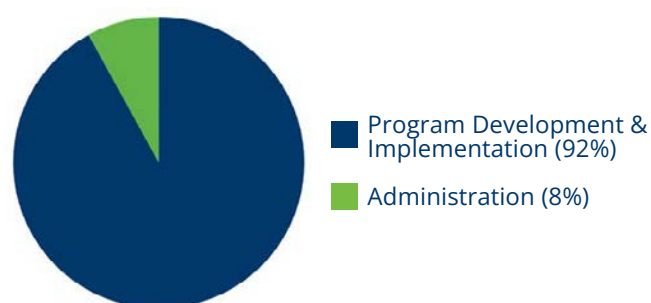
Nourish is fortunate to have donors and partners who believe in and support the work of the organization. The financial support of our core funder, The Province of Nova Scotia, as well as that of our corporate and community champions, enables us to strengthen and expand our programs across the province.

As the COVID-19 situation unfolded this year, food security remained a huge concern. An additional \$497,108 was received to further support school food programs and to assist community groups with funding for their COVID-19 food relief programs. \$167,330 of these funds received were deferred to next year for continued food relief support.

## ANNUAL REVENUE \$1,280,242\*



## ANNUAL EXPENSE \$1,271,195\*



\*Includes \$167,329.69 deferred to F2022

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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**Sherry Jarvis**  
Vice-Chair & VT Lead

**Janice Silver**  
Treasurer & BT Lead

**Kelly Sherwood**  
Director & CT Lead

**Aimee Gasparetto**  
Director

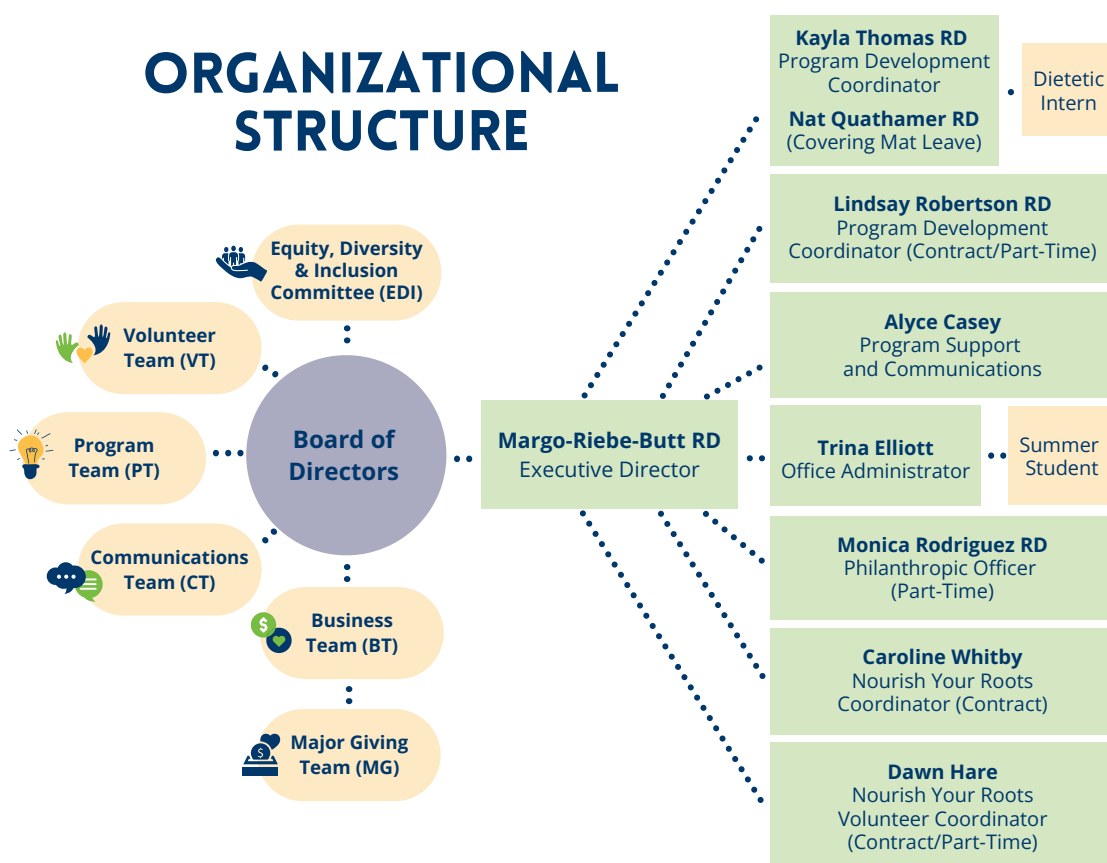
**Jodi Posavad**  
Director

**Heather Morse**  
Director

**Maria Wilson**  
Director

**Margo Riebe-Butt**  
Secretary (ex-officio)

## ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE



# WE ARE BETTER, TOGETHER

\* = Monthly Donors

## DONORS & SPONSORS

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BrokerLink  
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Michael Wood  
Scotiabank Charity  
Challenge Donors  
Stewart Young  
United Way Donors

## COMMUNITY & IN-KIND PARTNERSHIPS

Canada Broadcasting Corporation (CBC)  
Devour! The Food Film Fest  
Food Secure Canada  
Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia  
Farm to Cafeteria Canada  
Good Food Bus  
Halifax Public Libraries  
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)  
Jenny Osburn and Rosie Gair  
Just Food  
Kings Produce Transport

Mobile Food Market  
Nova Scotia Community College (NSCC)  
Nova Scotia Federation of Agriculture  
Perennia  
R&G Strategic Communications  
Surrogate Technologies  
Taste of Nova Scotia  
TechSoup  
UpLift  
Urn Song Pottery  
Western Kings Memorial Health Society

## COMMUNITY GRANT RECIPIENTS

Conseil scolaire provincial acadien (CSAP)  
Regional Centres for Education (RCEs)  
Bayers Westwood Family Resource Centre  
Bear River First Nation  
BGC Cape Breton-Whitney Pier Youth Centre  
Chebucto Connections  
AVRCE Child and Youth Care Practitioners  
Cobequid Youth Health Centre  
Community Cares Youth Outreach  
Family SOS

Good Food Bus  
Halifax Public Libraries  
Immigrant Services Association of Nova Scotia (ISANS)  
Memory Lane Family Place Association  
Parents and Children Together (PACT)  
SSRCE SchoolsPlus  
SRCE SchoolsPlus  
Union of Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq  
YMCA Immigration Services



# WE ARE BETTER, TOGETHER

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## NOURISH YOUR ROOTS SUPPORTERS

### CORPORATE BENEFACTORS

BDC Wealth  
Canadian Tire Sydney  
Chicken Farmers of Nova Scotia  
Evolve Fitness  
Freeman's Little New York  
Killam Apartment REIT

Kings County Federation of Agriculture  
Roddis Communications  
Salvatore Insurance  
Stewart McKelvey Law  
Sysco Atlantic  
WCL Bauld Insurance

### PARTNERS IN THE COMMUNITY

Alder Meadow Farm Market  
Antigonish Farmers' Market  
Boxing Rock Brewing Co.  
Brady Home Building Centre  
Dr. Carson & Marion Murray Community Centre  
Elmridge Farm  
Halifax Regional Municipality  
Hank's Farm Market  
Home Hardware - Baddeck  
Home Hardware - Port Hood  
Home Hardware - Windsor  
Hubbards Barn  
Indian Garden Farms  
Longspell Point Farm  
Meadowbrook Meat Market  
New Dawn Enterprises  
New Ross Home Hardware Building Centre

Noggins Corner Farm Market  
Noggins - Alderney Landing Market  
Noggins - Santé Centre  
Noggins - Seaport Market  
Port Hawkesbury Civic Centre  
Riverview Produce Market  
Smith's Cove Fire Department  
St. Antonio's Antiochian Orthodox Church  
St. Mark's Anglican Church  
Staples - Bedford Commons  
Sweet Spot Chocolate Shop  
Truro Agromart  
Walker's Livestock Feed and Supplies  
Waterford Home Hardware Building Centre  
Whycocomagh Volunteer Fire Department  
Wilson's Home Hardware Building Centre

### DONATION PARTNERS

East Hants Family Resource Centre  
Family Resource Centre of West Hants  
Good Food Bus  
Kings County Family Resource Centre  
Leaside Society Strait Area Women's Centre  
Maggie's Place - Amherst & Truro  
Mobile Food Market  
New Ross Family Resource Centre

Open Arms Resource Centre  
Parker Street Food Bank  
People's Place Family Resource Centre  
Shelburne Loyalist Food Bank  
South Shore Family Resource Centre Association  
TapRoot Farms Community Outreach  
Ward 5 Neighbourhood Centre

### FARM PARTNERS

Alder Meadow Farms  
Elmridge Farm  
Hank's Farm  
Indian Garden Farms  
Longspell Point Farm

Noggins Corner Farm  
Riverview Produce  
Sawler Gardens  
Spurr Brothers Farms  
TapRoot Farms

# SUSTAINING PARTNER

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## CORPORATE & ORGANIZATIONAL DONORS

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Agriculture and  
Agri-Food Canada

Bell Aliant



STAPLES®  
IT'S PRO TIME™







## VISION

All Nova Scotia children and youth are well-nourished to live, learn and play

## MISSION

Nourish children and youth by promoting and supporting food and nutrition programs in partnership with communities and schools



## PURPOSE

To cultivate generations of healthy eaters

