

2023 AGM – Food bank report

April 2022 – March 2023

Introduction

The 2022-2023 fiscal year has been an interesting and challenging year for the food bank. There have been changes in leadership, changes in staffing and changes in policy. The number of clients per month spiked to 118 households. Over 29,000lbs of food was distributed. There were food drives and holiday hampers. Fundraisers and donations. It was quite a year.

Carol's Cupboard follows the mission of HJFS – Strengthening individual, family, and communal life in keeping with Jewish values and traditions. In keeping with this mission, the food bank runs in such a way as to emphasize the dignity and agency of our clients. Clients can come once a month, by appointment only. Clients shop for the items they need for their family and take home approximately 3 days' worth of food. They have access to fresh produce, milk, eggs, kosher meat, non-perishable items and hygiene supplies.

In the grand scheme of things, it is not a lot. But we have been told over and over by our clients that it has a positive impact on their lives.

Key Achievements of the Last Fiscal Year

Aug 2022 – Food drive

Once again we filled a truck with food donations for the food bank. Approximately 500lbs of food was donated, and the event was a huge success!

Sep 2022 – Rosh Hashanah baskets

118 Rosh Hashanah baskets were distributed. 64 were delivered by a team of volunteers and 54 were picked up from the office over just a couple of days

Nov 2022 – updated the food bank policy to new catchment rules – 4km or need kosher food

A new policy was approved by the board and implemented. Clients of the food bank must either require kosher food or live within 4km of the food bank. This policy was in response to the staggering increase in clients we were seeing. While a change, this policy is in line with other food banks across Hamilton and allows us to continue to properly support our community.

Dec 2022 – Purchased a new fridge and freezer

We received the Feeding Possibilities grant from Feed Ontario. The funds were used to additional shelving, new wagons and cooler bags for volunteers to use on food deliveries and a new fridge and freezer.

Feb 2023 – began the process of updating all client information

Renewal forms were sent out to all clients, to ensure that we had correct and up to date information. All client information was added to the Link 2 Feed system, a city-wide network that tracks food bank usage across Hamilton. Link 2 Feed is a resource for collecting and reviewing data as well as the data collected is used for the Hamilton Food Share Annual Hunger count.

Feb 2023 – Interview and news articles about the food bank

Carol’s Cupboard was featured in CHCH news and the Dundas Star.

Feb 2023 – successful fundraiser

Thanks to the hard work of the event committee, the annual wine tasting was a huge success and raised \$50,000 for the food bank. The first year back in person, it was the first time many people had seen the food bank and the HJFS office. Many tours were given, including one to Mayor Andrea Horwath.

March 2023 – Food bank survey

A survey was distributed to all food bank clients. The survey was confidential and optional. The goal was to see how we can continue to support our clients and how we can improve.

March 2023 – Passover hampers

The Hamilton Food share provided Carol’s Cupboard with a grant to support the Passover baskets.

71 bags were prepared, and 65 bags were distributed. 41 deliveries and 24 picked up. This was 2420lbs of food.

The numbers of this fiscal year:

	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23
# of client visits/households served per month	88	102	98	99	110	118	103	88	66	59	61	62
Lb of food per month	2640	3727	3281	2767	3046	3293	1802	2117	604	2117	1977	1786

	Apr-22	May-22	Jun-22	Jul-22	Aug-22	Sep-22	Oct-22	Nov-22	Dec-22	Jan-23	Feb-23	Mar-23	Total
Total available \$	8500	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$8,500.00	\$102,000.00
Total Expenses	8088.95	\$6,282.97	\$8,056.44	\$9,675.26	\$8,042.78	\$17,249.31	\$2,151.29	\$13,222.59	\$5,321.83	\$8,173.01	\$8,514.81	\$5,790.63	\$100,569.87
Balance	411.05	\$2,217.03	\$443.56	\$1,175.26	\$457.22	\$8,749.31	\$6,348.71	\$4,722.59	\$3,178.17	\$326.99	\$14.81	\$2,709.37	\$1,430.13

Grocery	\$54,288.62
Hamilton kosher gift cards	\$5,575.00
Fortinos gift cards	\$40,706.25

Challenges and successes

- Briefly mention the challenges encountered during the year
- Highlight the innovative strategies and solutions implemented to overcome them
- Successes
 - Passover
 - Rosh hoshana
 - Food drives
 - Fundraiser
 - gardens

Appreciation and Recognition

A huge thank you to Lloyd Orson for running the food bank and taking care of the clients. He stepped up when asked and faced an incredibly hard year on his own and thrived. He is loved by the clients and is a pleasure to work with.

It is no exaggeration to say that the food bank could not run without a dedicated team of volunteers. Thank you to everyone who stocks the shelves, picks up food, makes phone calls, works in the gardens and delivers food packages.

Facing the future

There are lots of exciting things happening with the food bank in this current fiscal year.

The data from the survey is being analyzed and interviews will take place with those who agreed to speak with us. The goal is to improve food security programming in a way that is community led. In that vein, we are continuing to apply for grants and to work with fundraising experts to find the funds for any new projects.

The community gardens are currently up and running. They have expanded to 10 garden beds in 3 locations. 2 new garden beds at the Hamilton Hebrew Academy, with one being used by the students to learn about gardening, soil and food security. A new garden bed at Temple Anshe Shalom and Kehilla day school, dedicated to the children who died in the Holocaust. And 3 new garden beds at the Beth Jacob Synagogue property. The produce grown will go directly to the food bank.

Our annual summer food drive in memory of Carol Krames Z'L will take place on July 13th, with an open house on July 16th. Keep an eye out for more information.

Conclusion

Thank you to the volunteers, staff and board members who support Carol's Cupboard. We are the only kosher food bank West of Toronto, and our community relies on us. It was a hard year. Tough choices had to be made to be able to survive. But for every tightening of the belt there have been new opportunities presented. 2022-2023 is a year we are proud of and one we are glad to be done with.