

FOOD MATTERS MANITOBA



ANNUAL
REPORT
2021-22



FOOD MATTERS
MANITOBA



FROM OUR BOARD CHAIR

When I first moved into my house, I knew that I wanted to plant a garden. But there were a number of challenges – one year a number of trees needed to come down to let the sunlight in; another year we planted and the rabbits ate most of the crop. After several years of trial and error, we had finally built a raised garden, that got lots of sunlight, had protection from any hungry critters and was producing some wonderful vegetables each year. Many organizations go through periods of similar adaptation – and Food Matters Manitoba is no exception. Over the past couple of years, however, with an intentional focus on stabilization and grounding, it feels like we have built a strong foundation and are collaboratively working towards a province where everyone has the food they need.

This past year, the board has been hard at work at creating some of those new foundations for the organization. We mapped out a new theory of change for the organization, re-worked our mission and vision, and have been creating some new internal policies and systems to ensure efficiency and transparency. I would like to thank all members of the board who have served over this past year: Vice Chair Alison McCullough-Butchart, Secretary Curtis Brown, Treasurer Erin Crymble, Kaylee Michnik, Cynthia Neudoerffer, Michael Salomons, Ramogi Nyonje, and Michelle Finley. I also thank outgoing board members Brenna Shearer, Erin Yaremko, and Beth Timmers.

Fortunately, the board is not alone in working towards our mission. We are supported by so many other people in this movement. FMM has a remarkable staff that embody adaptability and creativity. We offer sincere thanks to this hard-working team, led by our new ED Demian Lawrenchuk, who is bringing his own unique vision and energy to the role. On behalf of the board, I also want to bid a fond farewell to Rob Moquin, our former ED, and staff members Katie Anderson and Arista Schemma who have all left for new adventures.

We also have strong relationships with communities all around Manitoba that are up to the challenge of co-creating food programs that work for them. From our northern work where we are inspired by communities teaching growing and harvesting to their youth, to our friends who are addressing food security through the Brandon Food Council, to new groups who are learning about their own roles and responsibilities in food systems through our workshops, FMM is continuing to grow a provincial network committed to achieving sustainable food solutions.

Finally, deep appreciation goes out to our supporters and community who continue to provide us with the resources and expertise that we need as we continue to work towards our vision of sustainable food systems, rooted in food justice.

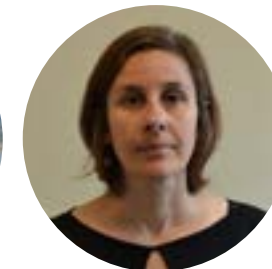
Kirsten Earl McCorrister
Chair of the Board

THANK YOU TO OUR BOARD

Thank you to the tremendous board for their vision, curiosity and thoughtful strategic planning efforts.



Kirsten Earl McCorrister-
Chair



Cynthia Neudoerffer
Member



Erin Crymble
Treasurer



Curtis Brown
Secretary



Alison Mc-
Cullough-Butchart
Interim Vice Chair



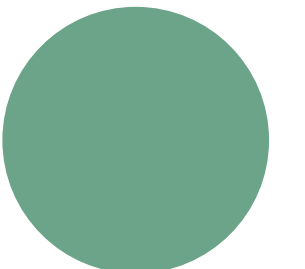
Mike Salomons
Member



Ramogi Nyonje
Member



Kaylee Michnik
Member



Michelle Finley
Incoming Member





FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

THANK YOU TO OUR STAFF

Thank you to the dedicated and passionate staff team at Food Matters Manitoba.

This year has been a challenging one to say the least. And yet this year has taught us so much about the love and dedication that fill our partner communities. We've witnessed the beautiful strength and spirit of people standing together to propel the food security movement forward, and bring positive impacts to their people. And we've remained committed alongside them on this journey, bringing support and opportunities where they are needed most.

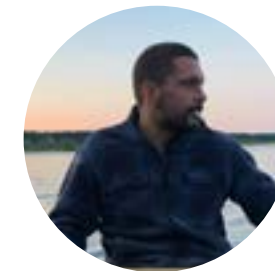
The ebbs and flows of the pandemic caused much of our programming to flow alongside it, to fit the restrictions of the time. However, the vast number of communities we work with meant that there was almost always something fun happening somewhere. And this allowed for people all across the province to join in on the experience through our online networks.

This past year has also given us the opportunity to put greater focus on supporting a more narrow (at times) form of programming, with profound impacts. The Harvester Program became a driving force and deeply impactful pandemic response. Community harvesters were supported to harvest from the land year round as dictated by the seasonal cycles to provide for their communities, taking youth with them as much as possible. This program has brought thousands of pounds of fresh food directly from the land and waters to the dinner plate across Manitoba's north.

We are filled with optimism and excitement coming into this new year, as the depth and impact of our networks continue to grow. And as such I must extend my sincerest gratitude to the hard working and committed individuals in the communities on the ground. As well, to a better team than one could ask for, each bringing a unique perspective, experience, and skill set together making Food Matters Manitoba what it is today. To our board of directors, who volunteer their time throughout the year behind the scenes, that I greatly looking forward to learning from in the years to come. And lastly to our many supporters, providing us with invaluable resources, expertise, and funding so that the work can continue.

We welcome everyone to help support Manitoba's food security movement and join the learning journey with us.

Demian Lawrenchuk
Executive Director



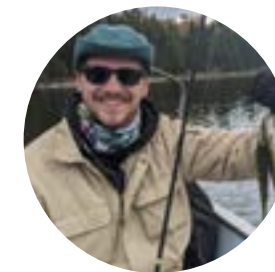
Demian Lawrenchuk
Executive Director



Debby Lute Storey
Finance & Logistics
Coordinator



Amalia Santiago
Evaluation Coordinator



Myles King
Northern Facilitator



Myreille Fortin
Program Manager,
Social Innovation &
Food Action Hub



Nikhat Merchant
Education and
Engagement Facilitator



Yoni Coodin
Social Innovation
Coordinator



Rebecca Black
Communications
Contractor

A YEAR IN REVIEW

This has been another busy year for the organization, working with our partners across the province. Our focus has been supporting community initiatives to deliver positive impacts in spite of the pandemic and its many challenges. Over the course of these past couple years, these community initiatives and programs have brought not only positive impacts, but inspiration across the province.

Our core activities remain...

- Partnering with Northern and Indigenous communities to deliver community driven food production and land based education programs
- Nurturing long term partnerships for improved food secure focused programming across the province; creating and promoting educational resources for practitioners, the public and policy makers
- Facilitating shared learning opportunities to develop our common understanding of food security across Manitoba to promote leadership, capacity development and to foster collaboration
- Collaborating with academic partners, sector practitioners and community leaders on food system reform

Teaching the next generation how to fish on Molson Lake



Wapawekka Winter Camping Trip with youth and knowledge keepers in Lac La Ronge



Youth from Gillam with a rabbit from the trap



Grow North Gathering in Norway House





NORTHERN PARTNER SHIPS

Main Northern Partnerships

This year FMM's main community partners include:

Lac Brochet, Brochet, Cross Lake, Split Lake, Misipawistik, Fox Lake/ Gillam, O-Pipon-Na-Piwin Cree Nation, Shamattawa, Moose Lake/ Crossing Bay, Norway house, York Landing, Crane River, Sherridon, Oxford House.

Individuals:

Gordon And Madeline Walker, Renuka Airi Of South Indian Lake, Billy Wavey of Split Lake, Evan Laquette of Crane River, Lawrence Saunders Jr of Fox Lake and recently, Floyd North And Dee Hatley of Sherridon.



From left to right

Lawrence Saunders Jr. And Mini Lawrence from Fox Lake, Evan Laquette and Kyle Richard taking youth out in Crane River, Madeline And Gordon of Norway House, and Barry Little agricultural specialist and winter roads driver.



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Harvester Program

FMM's Harvester Program provides support to harvesters to follow harvesting programs include fishing, moose hunting, goose hunting, and trapping.

The community of Sherridon held small gathering activities



in the fall and winter that focused on traditional harvesting. As a renewed relationship, they were sent nets, jiggers, augers, to support the push for harvesting. Harvester program supply buckets for fishing sent to Shamattawa, Fox Lake, Norway House And Cross Lake.

Through the fall, active communities were supported during the moose and grouse season.

Sherridon youth with moose with supplies from the Harvester Program



This year, the Harvester Program helped harvesters get out onto the land and harvest over **5000 lbs** to feed their communities.

In January, small gatherings in York Landing, Fox Lake, and Norway House saw quite substantial harvests produced and shared with each of their communities. Fox Lake and York Landing's activities pursued the caribou migration, while Norway House, often outside of the migration route, came together to harvest fish from beneath the ice with both rods and nets. Sherridon also actively partook in ice fishing.

Harvesters from York Landing, Fox Lake, and Split Lake were able to gather safely for a week of feasting, ceremonies, and time on the land. This included a feast and sweat lodge in Split Lake, and feast and night lodge in Fox Lake, as well as trapping and hunting on the land between the two communities.

The last round of small harvesting gatherings took place in March as the north started to show signs of the transition out of the winter and in to the new year. Fox Lake, Norway House, and York Landing focused on ice fishing, Brochet harvested a number of caribou as well as fish, and Ochichakosipi harvested water fowl and also produced maple syrup.

Through the support of the CFCC, FMM was able to support multiple communities out for a late winter harvest. This resulted in harvests from Lac Brochet, Split Lake, Brochet, Gillam/Fox Lake, Crane River, Norway House and York landing being able to go out into the land and harvest caribou, geese, ducks, pickerel, whitefish, and lake trout.

Photos from the Harvester Program in Norway House



12 gatherings

7 communities

109 participants



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Gatherings

This year FMM supported ceremonies - goose dances, Sundances, sweat lodges, and Sundance preparation ceremonies. Throughout the pandemic, harvesting has continued as normal, however people have been forced to harvest in isolation from their community and families. FMM's main goal for these gatherings has been to bring people together again to safely harvest food for their communities, as food has



always found a way to bring people together.

Livestock Support



This year FMM provided livestock support to Leann and Roy's farm over the course of the year as they expand. They have pigs, sheep, geese, a turkey, chickens, and a cow. FMM supported them by supplying them with hay and feed for the winter. We also helped Sheri in Shamattawa populate her chicken coop by sending 50 hens to her.

Infrastructure Support

FMM is supporting the community of Sherridon to construct a processing center for community harvesting to be able to cleanly process the food that the community catches. This includes fish, big game, small game. This project will expand upon the harvesting that food matters has begun supporting over the course of the year. FMM also supported partnering

communities by coordinating the shipment of supplies on the Winter Roads.





Rose taking care of the gardens in Crane River.

Garden Support

FMM's community partner, Barry Little distributed over 40 bags of seed potatoes, grown at his farm near Thompson, to several of our partner communities. At the end of June; T&T Seeds, Shelmerdine Garden Center, Schriemers Market Centre, Fort Whyte Farms generously donated of over two hundred bedding plants. We had several carloads full of squash, cucumbers, kale, spinach, cabbage, onions, and basil, and lots of tomatoes and peppers. These donations made it all the way to Fox Lake, Gillam, Split Lake,

Norway House, York Landing, Grand Rapids And Crane River.

To help the gardens thrive up North we helped coordinate with communities to deliver healthy soil to Fox Lake, York, Shamattawa, Brochet, Lac Brochet, Cross Lake, Moose Lake, Crane River, And Grand Rapids.

Other garden supports included sending seeds, fruit trees, indoor grow lights and grow kits to all 13 partnering communities.



From left to right
Seedlings ready for our community partners
Norway House garden harvest



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SPEAKER SERIES



EVELYN L FORGET



KIRSTEN BERNAS



MEAGHAN ERBUS

4
speaker
series

10
speakers

215
attendees



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The Food Action Hub partnered with several key Food Matters Manitoba partners to have four speaker series last year. We were very pleased as each event was popular amongst hub users and had a very good turnout, amounting to over 200 attendees total.

May 2021

Small Scale, Big Ideas for Climate, Land & Food
With Justin Girard from Hearts and Roots Farm, Roy and LeeAnn Ross from Cross Lake Farm, as well as Amy Nikkel from Adagio Acres Farm and Grain Mill.

September 2021

COVID-19: First Wave Impacts on the Charitable Food Sector in Manitoba
With Dr Joyce Slater from the University of Manitoba.

November 2021

Food Security: Why Income Matters
With Evelyn L Forget from the University of Manitoba, Kirsten Bernas from the West Central Women's Resource Centre, and Meaghan Erbus from Manitoba Harvest.

April 2022

The Food Reality for Newcomers
With Roselyn Advincula from the Immigrant Centre, Sue Hoang from Winnipeg 1 School Division, Zebiba Ibrahim from the Canadian Muslim Women's Institute, and Carol Reimer from the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba.

WORKSHOPS

New Workshops

Always seeking to improve people's relationships to food, FMM staff developed two new curricula last year, Let's Talk About Food, and Food Security Matters.

Food Security Matters

Participants build a collective definition of food security, reflect upon & expand understandings of food (in)secure experiences and work to unseat shame and empower individuals in community. This workshop promotes deep discussions around the oppression and systemic influences that are part of a food secure (and insecure) experience.

5
Food Security Matters
workshops given to partners

Let's Talk About Food

The ways we talk about food communicate far more than personal preferences and can reinforce damaging ideas about bodies, culture, our own relationship with food, and our sense of connection. This workshop encourages participants to be deliberate and mindful in the language they use to talk about food within their programs, workplaces and lives.

10
Let's Talk About Food workshops given to partners

"The facilitator had us think pretty deeply about not only food and why it matters locally, but also all the feelings we attach to food. It got us thinking about how food is more than just something we need to survive, but something we need to be happy"

- Let's Talk About Food Participant

Delivery of Well Established Workshops

Always seeking to improve people's relationships to food, FMM staff developed two new curricula last year, Let's Talk About Food, and Food Security Matters.

Beyond Your Plate

As high school classes in Manitoba functioned remotely as part of the COVID-19 response during the 20-21 school year, we facilitated two Beyond Our Plate workshops online in late spring 2021.

Food Handlers

While COVID-19 restrictions allowed it, we were happy to get out there and deliver an in-person Food Handlers course for our friends at Graffiti Gallery in the fall of 2021.

18
workshops delivered to

197
people across the province

Social Enterprise

With the goal of diversifying our funding sources and relying less heavily on donations, FMM has been embracing a social enterprise approach for the delivery of workshops. As we understand that affordability can be an issue, we offer cost options through a sliding scale for our partner organizations who want to host our workshops.



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RESEARCH PROJECTS

Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Engage Grant

FMM was given an opportunity to work with principal investigator Dr. Kristen Lowitt of Queen's University, and with co-investigator Dr. Joyce Slater of University of Manitoba through the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council Partnership Engage Grants, which aimed to understand the impact of covid-19 on food security landscape in Manitoba. Assessment done by FMM revealed that pandemic reduced the number of programs delivered due to limited resources (funding, manpower, venue, and time).

According to some staff, donated foods shifted from whole to pre-packaged, thus, reducing the nutritional quality of free meal bags. Their capacity to meet the needed amount of free meal bags declined due to insufficient number of volunteers and programs' participants, which stemmed from fear of infections and adherence to government restrictions. While free meal bags became less available, demands inflated due to unemployment.

For organizations to cope, they recommended the use of online platform as a tool to connect with other organizations for support especially during crisis since it could be accessed anytime especially with the use of mobile phones. Small organizations were very enthusiastic to connect with organizations with more resources for they were badly hit. A platform that should be opened to everyone so that problems could be discussed and addressed promptly by interacting directly with community members. This innovation will allow organizations and communities to share expertise and resources, and to work collaboratively in addressing issues and concerns.

Future Direction

In response to the organizations' needs, FMM will enhance its existing website or Food Action Hub to be the venue for organizations to connect and support each other especially during the time of crisis and emergency. The online platform will also provide up-to-date food-security-related-province-wide information that promotes food security policy change and assists organizations in program delivery.



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FOOD ACTION HUB



User Focused

The Food Action Hub was moved from a third-party host to a custom website of our own and relaunched in June 2021. Since then, FMM staff have focused their efforts on welcoming users and helping them learn how to make the best of their experience on the hub. As a result, the number of users has quadrupled compared to our trial during the previous year. The hub now has a more diversified network as the users come from 82 different organizations across the country to connect with each other. The goal for the upcoming year is to continue to improve user experience and increase engagement by listening to the feedback collected.

Growth

Since June 2021, FMM staff have been busy making more content available to users on the hub by expanding the library of resources and the hub blog to cover a wider range of subtopics related to food security. FMM also built an online course, Food Perspectives and Preferences, available to all Food Action Hub users for free.

If you haven't yet, hop on the Food Action Hub anytime at hub.foodmattersmanitoba.ca! Join the conversation, share your experience, knowledge and favourite food security resources with fellow community practitioners all across Manitoba.

201
users

82
organizations

104
online
resources

72
blog articles

1
online course



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THANK YOU, FUNDERS!

Government of Canada

Government of Manitoba - Municipal Relations

Government of Manitoba - INR (formerly ANA)

Government of Manitoba - MHSAL

The Winnipeg Foundation

Telus Foundation

Anonymous Donor

Makeway Foundation

Community Food Centres Canada

NIB Trust

**There were also corporate donations (small amounts)
from Roquette, Westland Insurance, Dillon Consulting and
CWB Leasing**

In addition to the education and engagement work being done (through the delivery of Lets Talk About Food, the Food Security Matters Workshop, and the Food Action Hub) and the Northern Partnerships, FMM also act as a host for grants for bands and communities that do not yet have registered donee status. FMM does this work in partnership with the Makeway Foundation. These grants have been used for everything from raising chickens, to community gardens, from food hampers to culture camps and more. As grant host, FMM provide financial, procurement and logistical assistance to facilitate these programs.

And while FMM focus is on Manitoba projects FMM is also involved in the Northern Lifestyles Program in Northern Saskatchewan- a land based learning program sponsored last year by the NIB Trust, allowed over 800 participants to be involved in activities as diverse as canoe trips, medicine gathering, hunting, trapping, and snow shoe making. The program, run out of the Churchill Community High School, has proven to be so successful that it is being copied in other schools in the area.

**WE'RE LOOKING FORWARD
TO ANOTHER YEAR AT FOOD
MATTERS MANITOBA, THANK
YOU FOR JOINING US.**



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