

Annual Report 2012

Overview

After more than a decade of operation the Nelson Food Cupboard continues to provide barrier-free access to healthy food. After the recession of 2008 our usage numbers spiked sharply and have remained high for the past several years. In 2012 we received 13,201 separate customer visits as compared to 13,013 such visits in 2011. Despite mounting food costs we continue to offer a variety of healthy foods including whole grains, eggs, tofu and fresh produce. As always, this work is made possible by the generous and creative support of our community. In December 2011 we received funding from the BC Gaming Commission in the amount of \$42,000. In addition to this, we have received smaller grants from Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives Program, MAZON Canada and the Osprey Foundation.

The past year has been one of both challenges and accomplishments for the Nelson Food Cupboard. Some of our accomplishments:

- **New hours of operation.** Early in 2012 the decision was made to alter the Food Cupboard's open hours. We decided to close on Thursdays (previously we were open from 12-2pm) and now are open an extra hour (12-1pm) on both Mondays and Wednesdays. This decision was made to accommodate the needs of students and working people who wanted to access the Food Cupboard on their lunch break. The new hours came into effect in March. Because we are now open two days each week instead of three we are giving out slightly more food with each visit. On days when the Food Cupboard is closed for a holiday Monday we will open the following Tuesday instead to ensure that we are open two days every week. As always, we are open to arranging food pick-up times by appointment. Customers report that these new hours make it much easier to access the Food Cupboard.
- **First-ever Hunger Awareness Week.** In many ways this week (May 7-11, 2012) was a celebration of community collaboration. Local photographer Dave Gluns donated his services for an eye-catching poster. The Kootenay Co-op gave us the proceeds of a Community Donation Day. We held community information tables on three days. We had food boxes at four locations and money donation jars at 19 locations. This event was a success both in terms of donations collected and in terms of connections made.
- **Improved communication.** This year we increased our Facebook presence, and made changes to our website including posting and archiving newsletters online. We also made efforts to add interested members to our seasonal newsletter list. We designed and purchased a vinyl banner which will improve our visibility during community events.

- **Community collaboration.** We collaborated with numerous businesses and organizations to raise funds and awareness in our community. Fundraisers and food drives were organized by Nelson Waldorf School, Nelson and District Community Complex, Tea Garden Spa, Dr Shane Taylor Chiropractic, the City of Nelson, Investors' Group, Nelson Public Library, Knights of Columbus, Kootenay Insurance, Nelson Riding Club, Redfish Elementary School, Pacific Insight, Weight Watchers, BC Assessment, the Bank of Montreal, Fraternal Order of Eagles Ladies Auxiliary and many others. We introduced the Food Cupboard at various community events including the Lakeside Park outdoor film, Garnett Rogers' concert, Rotary Daybreak breakfast and at the Investors Group Comedy Night. We toured numerous school groups through the Food Cupboard and made presentations to several high school classes.

Some challenges:

- Two floods in July 2012 forced us to temporarily move our food storage and distribution areas. The work of cleaning and moving diverted significant staff time. The Nelson United Church's insurance coverage allowed us to purchase replacement furniture that is more suited to our needs. In the aftermath of the floods, our food storage and distribution areas have been reorganized to be more streamlined.
- A problem with theft in late spring resulted in some changes to our office security. We purchased a locking filing cabinet as well as a safe. We are hopeful that these measures will reduce the chance of a repeated theft.

"I am a person on permanent disability. My disability pension of \$906 per month has not increased in a long time. With rent and utilities costing approximately \$850 per month, my food budget is minute. The gift of organic food, especially eggs, has helped improve my health. With improved health I am able to function as a volunteer and get some part-time employment."

-Nelson Food Cupboard customer

Customer Visits

Our open hours changed in March, 2012. We are now open Monday and Wednesday from 9am-1pm, and by appointment. We also deliver food to the Nelson Women's Centre and to seven house-bound customers.

	2010	2011	2012
Men	5,978	5,083	6,150
Women	4,399	4,078	4,263
Children	3,096	3,852	2,788
Total	13,886	13,013	13,201

Fundraising

I. Grants

Funding Agency	Contribution	Use of Funds
BC Gaming Commission	\$0	Note: In December, 2011 we received \$42,000 for 2012
MAZON Canada	\$3,000	Weekly purchase of fresh local eggs
Columbia Basin Trust Community Initiatives Program (RDCK Area F & City of Nelson)	\$730	Purchase of Harvest Rescue laptop
RDCK Area E Community Development Grant (unsolicited)	\$500	General operations
Osprey Foundation	\$450	Purchase of a Harvest Rescue juicer
Total	\$4,680	Total of \$46,680 with BC Gaming Commission grant received in 2011

II. Special Events

Event	Funds Raised (after costs)	Details
Hunger Awareness Week	\$2,248	This was our first-ever Hunger Awareness Week. In addition to financial contributions we also collected various food donations over the week. We had donation jars at 19 businesses and food donation boxes at four locations.
Rancho Vignola Nut Sale	\$1,200	The nut sale yielded approximately \$1,200 in profit. These funds were used to purchase nuts & dried fruit for our holiday hampers.
Like the Dickens	\$2,011	Several other large additional donations were processed after the event. Once again this event was organized by the NFCS board.
Total	\$4,948	

Special Events

III. Community Donations

i. Monetary Donations

2010	2011	2012
\$56,515	\$36,410 * Additionally, close to \$30,000 was received from mid to late December and deposited in January 2012, thus raising our total of community donations to more than \$60,000.	\$68,216

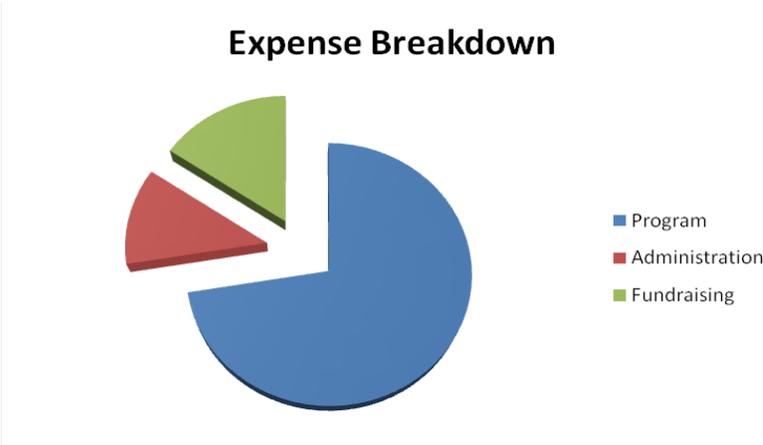
ii. Food and In-kind Donations

Name	2011	2012	Comments
Save On Foods	\$26,404	\$13,473	This amount reflects the value of bread donations. We are receiving very little reclaimed food.
Kootenay Co-op	\$11,185	\$5,664	Weekly produce and bread donations, plus occasional dry and frozen goods. Co-op donations were higher than usual in 2011. In 2011 we received (and inventoried) produce from the Co-op but the produce was often too poor to be useable. In 2012 we were not actively seeking these produce donations.
Silver King Tofu	\$1,500	\$1,500	Weekly tofu donations
Oso Negro	\$785	\$1,055	Monthly coffee donations
Random Businesses & Individuals	\$23,634	\$27,557	
Curves Food Drive	\$1,220	-	This event did not happen in 2012
Investor's Group Food Drive	\$1,700	\$1,400	
Harvest Rescue	\$15,617	\$9,653	Includes gleaning from the Wednesday farmers' markets and Nelson's fruit stands.
Fresh Produce from Nelson & area farmers & gardeners	\$3,303	\$1,745	
Hume Hotel	\$2,657	\$8,710	Prepared foods from their restaurants' kitchen. In August we increased our pick-up schedule to twice weekly.
Holiday Hampers	\$15,290	\$14,880	
Other contributors	\$5,510	\$4,338	Volunteer travel, discounts on goods & labour, etc.
Total	\$108,805	\$89,975	

Expense Breakdown

The vast majority of our revenue goes directly towards program costs. Program costs are varied and include food purchases and other essential costs for our food bank program. The following is a breakdown of how Food Cupboard funds are spent:

Program: 72.4%
Administration: 12%
Fundraising: 15.6%



Organizational Development

I. Staff

From January through March Marya Skrypicjazko worked as Coordinator. Anna Kirkpatrick took over as the new Coordinator in April and Marya returned to her part-time Financial Coordinator position. Jenny Erickson continued on as Front Line Coordinator and Supplies Manager. In July Jen Smith was hired as our 2012 Harvest Rescue Coordinator.

II. Board of Directors

We were delighted to welcome long-time volunteer Nikki Pelletier to the board. She joined Tim Powell (Chair), Phillip Jackson (Treasurer), Yasmin Maliel (Secretary) and Marilyn Lawrence. Sandy Prentice and Julia Bennett resigned from the board in 2012. The board organized fundraisers, worked on policy development, served on personnel, fundraising and advocacy committees and assisted with the day-to-day operations of the Food Cupboard.

III. Volunteers

Each week about 20 volunteers assist the Food Cupboard with a variety of tasks. Volunteers welcome customers at our front reception, repackage bulk food, collect food donations, do grocery shopping, and help with clean-up. Approximately 75 additional volunteers help with special events such as our Hunger Awareness Week information tables, Holiday Hampers and the Harvest Rescue Program.



Many thanks to all our wonderful volunteers:

Lorill, Dave, Phillip,
Malcolm, Jai, Michelle,
Kelvin, Ernest, Bernie,
Peta, Catherine, Wayne,
Bill, Kate, Daniel, Clarice,
Niels, Drew, Andreas,
Loray, Valerie, Tara,
Carrie, Susan, Jim,
Chantelle, Nikki, Christy,
Michelle, Sebastian, Tim,
Dana, Jeff, Stacey, Peter,
Patricia, Maureen,
Melissa, Andria, Valerie

IV. Community Supporters



Our thanks to these local businesses for their ongoing support:

Kootenay Co-op
Kootenay Bakery Co-op
Save On Foods
Silverking Tofu
Hume Hotel
Oso Negro
Mountain Sky
Abacus Beads
Grounded Coffee

Special Programs

I. Harvest Rescue



After an extremely successful year for Harvest Rescue in 2011 we experienced a significant reduction in total fruit harvested in 2012. Conditions at bloom time for many trees were rainy and cold. Over half of last year's fruit tree owners were unable to donate this year. Those who did donate reported that their trees did not produce nearly as much as last year. The Harvest Rescue Project Coordinator responded to this challenge by seeking out new sources of fresh produce. Project volunteers harvested blackberries, blueberries and potatoes and had an increased presence at the farmers' market. This work was accomplished with the help of 31 volunteers who picked 73 trees and gleaned \$6,207 worth of fruit. Volunteers collected an additional \$3,446 worth of farmers' market produce.

II. World Food Day

Once again this year the Nelson Food Cupboard opened its doors to local schools on World Food Day. We welcomed six local classes ranging from kindergarten to grade 12. The students toured the Food Cupboard and learned about local food security. The students also helped prepare and dehydrate Harvest Rescue fruit for distribution to our customers.

III. Holiday Hampers

On December 19 and 20 we distributed 170 holiday hampers that helped 500 people in the Nelson area. The hampers contained home baking, fresh produce, pantry staples, poultry (or meat alternatives) and much more. The hampers also contained a wrapped book for each child. We assembled 132 of these hampers and the remaining 38 hampers were assembled by community sponsors.



IV. Customer Survey

From March 21 to April 4, 2012 we conducted a voluntary customer survey. The purpose of the survey was to gather information about our customers and their needs and also to solicit feedback about our new hours of operation. A total of 94 surveys were completed. We believe that the surveys were filled in by a typical cross-section of the customers we serve. The survey coincided with an effort of publicize and explain our new operating hours. Survey highlights:

- 68% of those surveyed come to the Food Cupboard once or twice every week.
- 77% of those surveyed are from the City of Nelson with the remainder coming from the surrounding area.
- 99% of customers surveyed feel comfortable in the waiting room and the food selection room. The one negative response came from someone who feels uncomfortable in all social situations.

Community Awareness & Advocacy

I. Public Events

The Food Cupboard had a presence at a variety of public events including the Nelson Garden Festival, Express Lakeside Park Outdoor Film, Garnett Rogers' concert, Investors' Group Comedy Tour and Community Connect Day.

II. Presentations

We made classroom presentations to LVR Social Studies and Leadership classes. We welcomed seven school classes and two SkillsLink groups on tours of the Food Cupboard. We presented to clients of the Kootenay Kids Society and to members of Nelson Daybreak Rotary Club. For the month of November we had a colourful Food Cupboard display at the Kootenay Bakery Co-op.

III. Media

The Food Cupboard was featured on Kootenay Co-op Radio, the Bridge Radio and EZ Rock Radio. We had articles featured in the Express Online and the Nelson Star. We had a monthly column in the Express Online including a simple recipe, a Food Cupboard statistic and our contact information.