Our Mission
Working together toward a hunger-free community.

Message From Our Board Chair

As we reflect on the last three decades, we are filled with gratitude for the unwavering support our community has shown Hamilton Food Share. We extend our heartfelt thanks to our generous donors, tireless volunteers, steadfast community partners, and dedicated staff who have been the pillars of our mission. Thank you for continuing to make a positive difference in the lives of those we serve and working with us toward a hunger-free community. And it is with immense gratitude that we highlight the exceptional journey of our former CEO, Joanne Santucci, and her remarkable contributions to Hamilton Food Share. Joanne championed initiatives that have expanded our reach, strengthened our impact, and turned challenges into opportunities. Her tireless efforts have ensured that no neighbour visiting a food bank in Hamilton is going to bed hungry, and for that we can’t thank her enough. Even as we bid farewell to Joanne, we know her influence will continue to guide the organization thanks to the solid foundation she has built.

Grew Hamilton Food Share from 6 original members to 23 hunger-relief programs

Over 62 million pounds of food raised

33 years of fighting hunger in Hamilton

Thank you, Joanne!
It is with mixed emotions I bid farewell to an organization that has been an integral part of my life for 33 years. From the very first day I founded Hamilton Food Share, I knew I had embarked on a remarkable mission to alleviate hunger and make a meaningful impact in our community. Over the years, I have witnessed the tremendous dedication and unwavering commitment of an entire city, and it has been my honour to work alongside each and every one of you.

Together, we have achieved remarkable milestones. We have expanded our programs, increased the capacity of our food acquisition and distribution programs, and established vital partnerships with local food partners and community organizations. These accomplishments are a testament to the hard work, compassion and collaborative spirit of every staff member, volunteer, and supporter associated with Hamilton Food Share.

None of this would have been possible without the incredible support of our community, the generosity of our donors, the dedication of our volunteers, and the trust placed in us by every individual who touched this organization. You have been instrumental in our success. Hamilton Food Share has a clear mission of Working Together Toward a Hunger-Free Community, and it is your belief in our mission that has enabled us to grow, evolve and continue in our fight against hunger.

As I step down from my role as CEO, I am confident that Hamilton Food Share will continue to thrive. The values and principles that have guided us throughout the years will remain the foundation of this organization, inspiring future endeavors and fostering positive change in the lives of those we serve.

In closing, I want to express my deepest appreciation to every member of the Hamilton Food Share team. Your dedication, passion and unwavering commitment have touched my heart, and left an indelible mark on my life. I am eternally grateful for the opportunity to have worked alongside you all.

Please accept my sincerest thanks for your support, trust, and collaboration throughout my tenure as CEO of Hamilton Food Share. It has been an honour and a privilege to serve this organization and our community. I look forward to witnessing the continued success and growth of Hamilton Food Share from the sidelines and remaining a lifelong advocate for those experiencing hunger in Hamilton.

With heartfelt appreciation,

Joanne Santucci
Founder, Retired Chief Executive Officer
Ancaster Community Food Drive

The Ancaster Community Food Drive has been engaging Ancaster residents and collecting non-perishable food donations for local food banks for over 30 years! After two years of COVID challenges, the food drive returned to in-person for their 30th+1 year anniversary. Over 72,000 lbs of food were collected bringing their three-decade total to 1,970,500 lbs of food. We know they’re going to surpass 2 million pounds next year and we can’t wait to celebrate with them!

Purolator Tackle Hunger

Purolator and the CFL worked together once again on the month-long Purolator Tackle Hunger program to raise awareness around the issue of hunger. For the month leading up to the Purolator Game Day Food Drive Competition, Hamilton Ticats players greeted shoppers at local grocery stores to help encourage food donations. From the community and then the community showed up big time on game day. With more than 170,000 lbs of food collected locally last year and $10,763.81 raised, the Ticats easily won the nation-wide Tackle Hunger competition. Since 2003, Hamilton Ticats fans have helped raise more than 2 million pounds of food for Hamilton-area families in need. Touchdown!

Canadian Pacific (CP) Holiday Train

The 24th Annual CP Holiday Train finally returned to Hamilton on November 29, 2022 after being a virtual display for multiple years during the pandemic. In partnership with Hamilton Food Share, the CP Holiday Train asked the public to bring cash donations and healthy, non-perishable food donations to the Gage Park event. An amazing group of over 50 volunteers were onsite collecting donations. Over 7,480 lbs of food were collected and over $15,000 raised. That’s the holiday spirit!

Tim Hortons Smile Cookie Campaign

In September 2022, Tim Hortons ran their week-long campaign selling hand decorated Smile Cookies to support local charities. In Hamilton, almost 250,000 Smile Cookies were sold across the city and an impressive $369,210.10 was raised to support Hamilton Food Share and Food4Kids Hamilton! Over the past 5 years, the Smile Cookie Campaign has raised over $650,000 for Hamilton Food Share, which supports food banks and meal programs in every corner of the city. Now that’s something to smile about!
Where our food comes from
3,872,827 total lbs
- 67% Food Industry (2,593,358 lbs)
- 29% HFS Purchases (1,129,113 lbs)
- 4% Community Food Drives (150,356 lbs)

Where our food goes
3,567,420 total lbs
- 86% Hunger Relief Member Agency (3,062,860 lbs)
- 11% Regional Hub Member (397,065 lbs)
- 3% Hunger Relief Supported Agency (107,495 lbs)

Food in by type
3,872,827 total lbs
- 63% Fresh (2,434,189 lbs)
- 26% Non-Perishable (1,017,996 lbs)
- 11% Frozen (420,642 lbs)

Food Acquisition & Distribution Program

Food Is Procured From Food Systems Operating...

Hamiton Food Share Memberships
- Food Banks Canada
- Food Ontario
- Southern Regional Distribution Hub

Hunger Relief Member Agencies
- De Mazenod Door Outreach
- East Hamilton Food Centre (Mission Services)
- Flamborough Food Bank
- Good Shepherd Centre
- Hamilton Jewish Family Services
- Living Rock Ministries
- Mission Services of Hamilton
- Native Women’s Centre
- Neighbour to Neighbour Centre
- Niwasa Kendaasswin Teg
- Salvation Army Hamilton & Dundas

Hunger Relief Supported Agencies
- Ancaster Community Services
- Essential Aid & Family Services of Ontario
- Eva Rothwell Centre
- Food for Life
- Mishi Community Services, Barakah Box
- North Hamilton Community Centre
- Niagara Regional Hub Members
- Beamsville Community Care of West Niagara
- Benevolent Society of Grimsby & District
- The Burlington Food Bank
- Caledonia & District Food Bank

Hagersville Food Bank
- The Hope Centre, Welland
- Jarvis Caring Cupboard Food Bank
- Pelham Cares in Fonthill
- Project SHARE, Niagara Falls
- West Lincoln Community Care

Cayuga Food Bank
- Community Care, St. Catharines & Thorold
- Community Outreach Services, Fort Erie
- Dunnville Salvation Army
- Food Bank of Waterloo Region
- The Food with Grace Waterdown Food Bank
- Fort Erie Salvation Army
- Hogersville Food Bank

Food Acquisition & Distribution Program

3,872,827 pounds of food raised
- 74% or 2,854,831 pounds were fresh or frozen

$13,632,351 estimated value of food

361,800 public meals served this year

114,668 visits logged at local food banks

76,000 pounds of food distributed weekly

16,519 households accessed menstrual products

11,480 Christmas hampers distributed

23 local hunger relief programs supported
We gratefully acknowledge our major donors, the City of Hamilton and the following supporters who gave so generously throughout the year.
Financials

Where our funds come from
$3,340,448 total revenue
- 88% Donations ($2,924,942)
- 9% Grants ($298,214)
- 3% Interest & Amortization ($91,292)

Audited financial statements available at hamiltonfoodshare.org

How we use our resources
$3,067,421 total expenses
- 83% Food Acquisition & Distribution ($2,559,484)
- 7% Administrative ($205,311)
- 5% Resource Development ($148,820)
- 4.5% Amortization of Assets ($139,315)
- 0.5% Community Development & Public Education ($14,491)

We are deeply grateful to the individuals in the media who report on poverty issues and encourage donations. We could not do this work without your steadfast commitment to shine a light on tough issues, like hunger in our community.
In late 2020¹ to early 2021², Hamilton Food Share joined forces with researchers at McMaster University to better understand the relationship between local emergency food banks and homelessness. The study, which was released in the fall of 2022, set out to understand the role that local emergency food programs play, if any, in food bank users’ ability to retain their housing, and the impact food banks have on overall household and family stability.

The findings were eye-opening. Without food banks, participants said they would have to go hungry, rehome pets, move, put a partner in long-term care, or end up homeless.

For most food bank users involved in the study, the need for food assistance started as a temporary measure. However, in the absence of adequate public policies, their need for support from food banks has extended long-term. Today food assistance is much more than occasionally helping someone make ends meet, but rather the service that regularly helps them meet basic needs.

The study concluded that beyond a shadow of a doubt, emergency food banks are the lifeline of many Hamiltonians, by providing a resource that allows households to pay their rent and their utilities, keeping families in their homes and off the streets.

“The significance of food banks goes beyond providing food, they serve as a crucial support system in preventing homelessness. If even 1% of the households dependent on hunger-relief programs were to lose their housing, there is nowhere for them to go.” – Karen Randell, Senior Manager, Operations.

Thanks to the amazing donors, funders, and community partners at Hamilton Food Share, we can continue to play a vital role in not only feeding people in our city, but in enabling them to stay in their homes.

¹Impact Analysis of Food Bank Supports on Households Experiencing Food Insecurity. Wahoush et al (2020). Available from wahousho@mcmaster.ca
“Joanne is literally an angel. What she has done for the Hamilton community when it comes to not letting anymore go hungry is immeasurable. Beyond the work she has done in all her years with HFS, it’s the attitude and passion she brought to this job. Nothing better than getting a hug from Joanne, because it means you have done something positive and are getting closer to the ultimate goal of becoming Hunger Free. Happy Retirement Joanne!”
Tim Bolen, CHCH Morning Live.

“Joanne Santucci is an incredible advocate for food security and poverty reduction; her passion for social justice is contagious. She has been an active member of the Feed Ontario network since its inception and always supported the important collaborative work of the provincial network. She will be missed!”
Carolyn Stewart-Stockwell, CEO Feed Ontario.

“Joanne has been a dedicated, passionate and energetic leader across Greater Hamilton for many years. Her infectious charisma has inspired all of us at Cable 14 to embrace her and Hamilton Food Share as one of our key community partners. We have always shared Joanne’s passion for making Hamilton the absolute best community it can be, and we wish Joanne much happiness in her retirement.”
Bill Custers, Senior Manager, Broadcast & Strategy Cable 14.

“Joanne Santucci is, and always has been, a force of nature. With a heart of gold and a lifelong commitment to equity and justice for all - her advocacy, passion, and compassion have guided her tireless pursuit of resources and connections in order to feed Hamiltonians in need. Her work has saved lives and lifted people up, and for that our City is forever grateful.”
Mayor Andrea Horwath.

“Thank you, Joanne, for your tireless leadership and commitment to our work. Your passion, always in service and defense of those who use food banks, is a legacy that will be felt by the food bank network for years to come. We’ll keep up your fight until we are no longer needed!”
Kirstin Beardsley, CEO, Food Banks Canada.

“No one I know has done more to provide food and resources to those in need than Joanne Santucci. Her dedication and commitment to the cause was total and complete. Thank you for your amazing service Joanne!”
Fred Eisenberger
(Former) Mayor of Hamilton.

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Kirstin Beardsley, CEO, Food Banks Canada.
Board of Directors & Staff

Board of Directors

Joe Mercanti  Chair  Moi Vienneau  Secretary
Don Forbes  Vice-Chair  Jennifer Paulino  Director
Sheean Patel  Second Vice-Chair  Vince Raso  Director

2022 - 2023 Staff

Joanne Santucci  Chief Executive Officer
Deborah Walsh  Sr. Manager, Business
Karen Randell  Sr. Manager, Operations
Moris Rosa  Warehouse Manager
Justin Destro  Warehouse Coordinator
Chayda Adora  Executive Assistant
Michael Sun  Administrative Assistant
*Sheba Khan  Administrative Coordinator
*Bailee Hunter  Administrative Support
*Elisabeth Damiani  Administrator
*Kristina De Marzio  Community Relations Coordinator
Gary McCarthy  Driver/Warehouse Worker
Jimmie Bussey  Warehouse Worker/Driver
*Doug Clarkson  Warehouse Worker/Driver

*Denotes partial year

Cover art designed by Bailee Hunter