



2024

IMPACT REPORT



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The past year at The Stop has been a journey of unexpected challenges and exciting opportunities. We've weathered everything from a sudden site relocation and summer storms derailing our garden plans, to seeing positive shifts in social policy and welcoming new members to The Stop team!

The tougher note, however, is that some issues persist: a sharp rise in food bank users, escalating food costs, and increasingly complex challenges faced by our community. Our Food Bank reached 32% more people this year than previously. It's disheartening, and I know these aren't new concerns. Yet, despite our staff's tireless work, the root causes of the challenges that our community face remain stubborn.

But we're charting a new course forward.

This year, we launched a strategy centered on partnership and innovation, building resilience, amplifying our voice and championing inclusion. This strategy emerged through many hours of community consultations staff input, and supporter feedback—a truly people-powered vision. After years of steadying post-pandemic, it feels invigorating to be in a place where we're not just looking forward – we're looking up! This report, that details our activity between 1 September 2023 to 31 August 2024, shows our recent progress.

Through all of this, one thing remains clear: the unwavering support of our community is the backbone of our work. To everyone who has stood with us over the past year – thank you. It is an honor to be on this journey with you, side by side, as we strive for a healthier, more connected West Toronto.

- SHAE LONDON



1884 DAVENPORT RELOCATION

In July 2024, The Stop's Drop-in meal service at 1884 Davenport Road was forced to pause service to our community. Our landlord, Toronto Community Housing Corporation (TCHC), made the decision to renovate the Drop-in space aimed at enhancing accessibility. We first received notice in November 2023, with a 60-day notice, which we contested due to the unsuitable designs and short notice. The construction is still ongoing.

Given the specialty of what we do, we were unable to find a location closer to 1884 Davenport Road from which to operate our meal program, as we required a full commercial kitchen and large dining space. During this time, we have pivoted our services to ensure that everyone in our community has uninterrupted access to nutritious food, through a hybrid of takeaway meals and an expanded seated service at our Wychwood Open Door site at 729 St Clair. This period has been one of adaptability and experimentation!

We await news about our return date, but as with all of these things we'll keep our community informed. And as always, we remain committed to serving our neighbors.



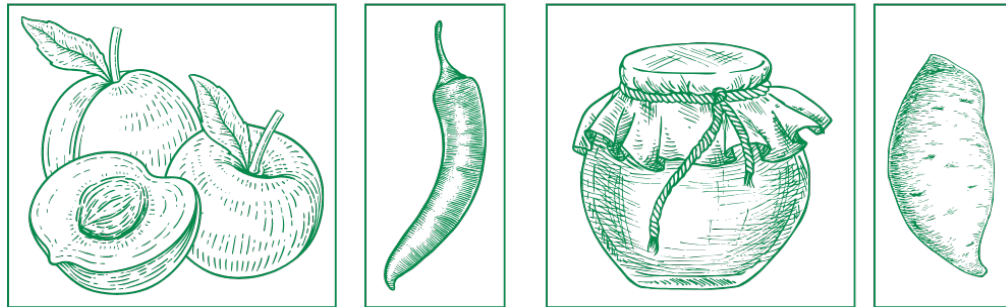
OUR WORK

Our work is built upon three pillars: **Emergency Food Access, Community Building, and Urban Agriculture.** Food is at the heart of everything we do. We provide opportunities for people to share a meal, enjoy a taste of home, and foster a sense of community.

Our **Emergency Food Access** services connect people to good food. The Stop's Drop-in Meal program extends across two sites in Toronto's West End, bringing vibrant, fresh, and healthy meals to our community daily. Our food bank distributes well-balanced and nutritious hampers to food insecure households.

In addition to providing access to nutritious food, we **build community** through a number of engagement programs and services including our peer support offices, health and nutrition classes for expecting and new parents, tax services, and mental health and wellness programs. Once someone comes through the door for a meal or to access our food bank, we can help them address and prevent deeper issues by building positive and rewarding social connections.

Our **Urban Agriculture** programs include park-based community gardens, greenhouse, supporting the Mashkikii;aki'ing Indigenous Medicine Wheel Garden, and our Global Roots program, for senior and youth newcomers. The Stop provides access to a 6,000 square-foot, year round greenhouse and surrounding gardens, where over 200 kg and 60+ varieties of fresh, pesticide-free produce are grown. This welcoming space also provides safe, supportive grounds for a variety of community activities and connects our members. This welcoming space also provides safe, supportive grounds for a variety of community activities and connects our members to hyper-local produce.



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FOOD BANK



“I’m a single mother and my paycheck is not enough to support my family anymore [. . .] The Stop’s staff was able to help me get food for me and my family for the weekend. You were patient and helped me find other food banks I would be able to access [. . .] I am so grateful The Stop was here when I needed it.

-Program Participant

The Stop’s Food Bank offers nutritious & culturally appropriate food through our dignified choice model.

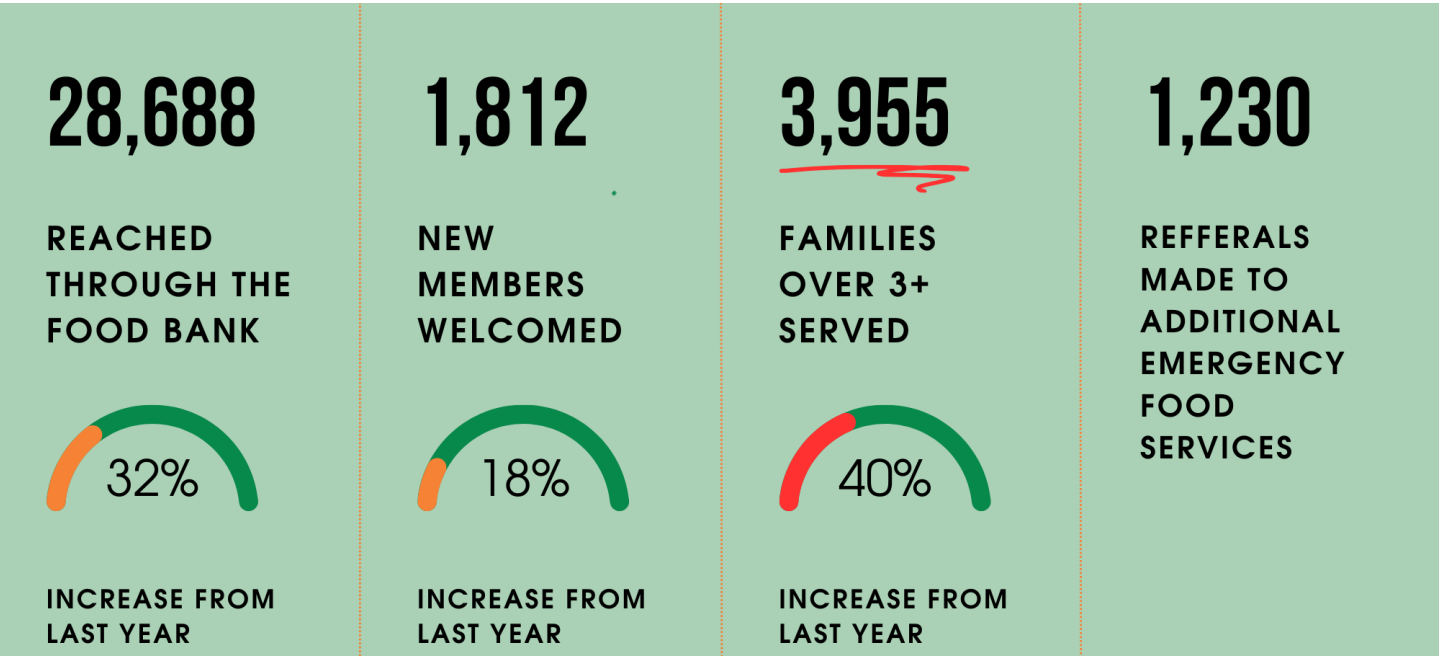
This year, we saw over **1,796 more households than last year and a 40% increase in households of 3 or more people being served**. A large portion of these new memberships are composed of newcomers to Canada, unemployed and precariously employed Torontonians, and those who rely on disability and related government support. We are seeing increasing numbers of neighbours across the city whose income is no longer sufficient to cover basic living expenses. Yet, the Food Bank continues to adapt and evolve.

This year we updated our emergency food resources in response to client trends, creating a North York Food Bank list for increasing numbers of North York users, and amending our city-wide list to include emergency options for members being turned away from other food banks. In coordination with a network of other food banks, we are currently in the process of streamlining data on catchment clients to get a more accurate picture of the communities we are collectively serving.

“I was released from prison this week, and I just needed some help until I could get back on my feet and get a job. The Stop was only food bank that listened to me, believed me, & helped me find a solution so that I could still get food.

-Program Participant

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024



The Stop's Good Food Market (GFM) offers fresh, local produce and prepared foods at affordable prices to low-income shoppers.

The Stop's Good Food Market (GFM) provides a progressive customer-driven alternative to the food bank model. Everything we sell at the market is priced at cost or lower, to give families who may be struggling with grocery expenses the opportunity to purchase quality, locally sourced, and nutritious food items

This year, the GFM provided dignified, consistent, and creative food for community members throughout the year. One of our foundational priorities is to keep food affordable and accessible, which requires substantial strategizing. The Stop's team works hard to ensure the GFM provides a positive shopping environment, one that offers new and exciting recipes, and diversifies our offerings, thanks in part to donations from local farmers and vendors, especially during the summer months when yields are high.

GFM PRIORITIES

- Local, sustainable nutrition, sourced from responsible growers within the region.
- Culturally-specific options, chosen with an eye to many of the immigrant communities represented in our neighbourhood.
- Options that honor dietary restrictions or health needs. 25-30% of the prepared goods that we sell are conducive with a plant-based, restricted, or whole foods diet.

“It’s great for the community to be able to have access to this market. The cost of food is so crazy these days and sometimes just to get to the grocery store can feel so difficult, so it’s so nice that its available right in our backyard. I know that there are so many community members who can’t get around as easily, so the fact that it’s accessible is fantastic.

-Program Participant

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

3,893	\$13,227	\$7,030
PATRONS WELCOMED & SERVED	WORTH OF VOUCHERS CLAIMED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS	OF PROVISIONS BUDGET SPENT ON FRESH FOOD

DROP IN

Volunteer

“I started coming to The Stop at the lowest time of my life. I recently lost my job, house and friends. I came here sad, anxious, depressed, embarrassed, and angry. Having access to a respectful and welcoming space with nine healthy meals provided weekly made me feel like a human being.

-Program Participant

Our Drop-in programs are central to our work and are frequently a member's first point of contact with the organization.

We offer nourishing meals and a variety of activities through our signature west end Drop-Ins, at 1884 Davenport and Wychwood Open Door. These inclusive, dignified spaces provide opportunities to converse over a meal, connect over a game of chess, a domino tournament, or at an art table, and receive support from our knowledgeable staff. The vast majority of our members take their meals in the Drop-In, with fewer than 2% choosing to take their meals to go – a clear testament to the draw of this welcoming social hub. This year, the suspension of our 1884 location has impacted our Drop-In numbers. We served nearly 5,000 fewer meals than last year at 1884, and over 1,600 more meals at Wychwood Open Door.

Relocating to a new site, even temporarily, poses challenges for many of our members. From ongoing community consultations, we know that price and transportation are among the most significant. We have initiated a number of new measures to ensure ongoing access, through the transition: offering TTC tokens and increasing the number of take-away meals at our 1884 location for those that can't make it over for the sit down meal.

On July 31 we hosted our Summer Community Connect Event in partnership with Homelessness Connect Toronto (HCT) at Wychwood Open Door. **Together with 10 service providers, we provided 354 appointments and interactions to 47 pre-booked and walk-in guests.** Services included: free eye test, haircuts, wellness kits from the shoebox project, employment services, tax services, legal services, pet care by The Toronto Humane Society, Toronto Public Library resources, and 150 pairs of shoes.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

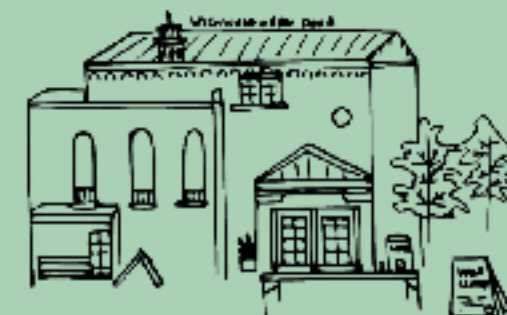
OUR IMPACT: DROP IN PROGRAM



1884 DAVENPORT

56,853

MEALS SHARED



WYCHWOOD OPEN DOOR

16,236

MEALS SHARED

the stop
09/23-08/24

COMMUNITY KITCHENS

“

I am greatly motivated to participate in the program as it helps me break my daily routine. I have met people and families who, like me, feel isolated in this city and face similar legal status challenges. This experience has allowed us to share valuable insights and resources that can enhance our lives here. I have formed lasting friendships with three individuals I met in the program.

-Program Participant

Our Community Kitchens are regular cooking lessons for individuals and families who have limited or no access to prepare healthy meals on their own.

Three programs -- Men's Cooking Group, Sabor Latino and Cozy Kitchens -- are run out of our two Drop-In locations. These programs promote the health benefits of seasonal food and foster community engagement and cultural exchanges, while teaching valuable cooking skills. Participants prepare and enjoy nutritious meals in a supportive, welcoming environment, and at the end of each session gather to enjoy their hard work.

This year, community members have learned about topics including safe food handling and sanitation practices, different vegetable cuts, kitchen tools and equipment, dressings, salsas and pesto-making techniques, bases for flavorful soup, as well as salads incorporating a variety of greens, herbs and fruits. Learning and sharing took place through the preparation of several recipes from a variety of cuisines to celebrate culture and traditions, catering to both meat-eaters and vegetarians.

2024: Top Meals

Appetizers

Syrian kibbeh
Japanese Agedashi Tofu
Baba Ganoush & Hummus
Orzo tabbouleh

Entrees

Greek spanakopita spiral
Quinoa salad w/roasted eggplant
& feta cheese
Papaya Soup

Mains

Tandori chicken and Ginger orange paneer
Beef, beans and butternut burritos
Pad Thai

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

55

COMMUNITY KITCHEN
SESSIONS HOSTED

1248

MEALS SHARED

122

PARTICIPANTS
PER QUARTER

HEALTHY BEGINNINGS

Healthy Beginnings is a weekly pre- and post-natal support program for parents experiencing low income, poor housing, and immigration challenges.

Participants can join at any stage of pregnancy and stay six months post-partum. Healthy Beginnings promotes and develops healthy behaviors, increases access to nutritious food and connects participants to key internal and external supports. We deliver our programming with a team of Family Support Workers, practitioners such as midwives and doulas, and partnerships with organizations including Davenport Perth Neighbourhood and Community Health Centre, Parkdale Queen West Community Health Centre, TNG Community Services and FoodShare.

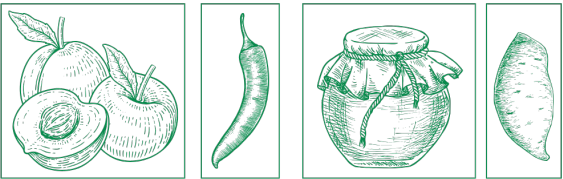
This year, as a result of compounding factors (pandemic aftermath, increased inflation, rising immigration), we saw more families in need of support. Beyond this, maintaining operations out of 1884 Davenport was a priority through the renovations. Our staff worked closely with participants and partners to provide clear communication and a clear plan to ensure we could continue to work in the building but in smaller sub-groups. Participants have expressed deep appreciation for these spaces where they can socialize, share their experiences and learn more about parenthood.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024



“Not having the assistance of The Stop would [mean] not having food supports, and other resources such as access to a lactation consultant. This was extremely helpful for my baby and me... and being able to ask questions without judgment is great. I don’t feel alone or stressed about what to do with my newborn, I have the support and help from the community to help me raise my baby.

-Program Participant



VOLUNTEER PROGRAM



Over 40 years strong,
The Volunteer Program is essential to our daily operations and the delivery of 15+ programs.

The program enables our role as a social service network, and provides an opportunity for our community to develop skills that can build their confidence and networks. Through the year we hosted 6 volunteer information sessions to induct potential new volunteers and showcase the breadth of our work. Beyond that, our volunteers benefit from vouchers to our Good Food Market, support with travel, and ongoing group training. Positions range widely in scope, including meal preparation, coordinating intake for our Food Bank, selling produce at our Good Food Market, welcoming members, and assisting facilitators with the delivery of community programs. This year, as a token of our appreciation, we celebrated our volunteers with a party at our Green Barn. The evening was complete with charcuterie, pizza, tea-making, tarot card reading and a raffle! Much fun was had by all.

Volunteer Spotlight

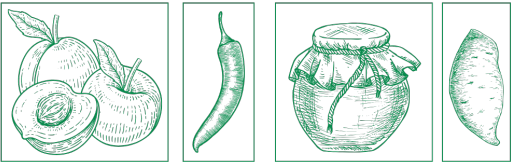
We'd like to congratulate **Charles, Arminda, Kim, Anna, Jill, and Sanyo** for collectively providing over 100 years of service to our community.

We're proud to share these volunteer were honored at Ontario's Volunteer Service awards, that recognizes exceptional contributions made by volunteers.

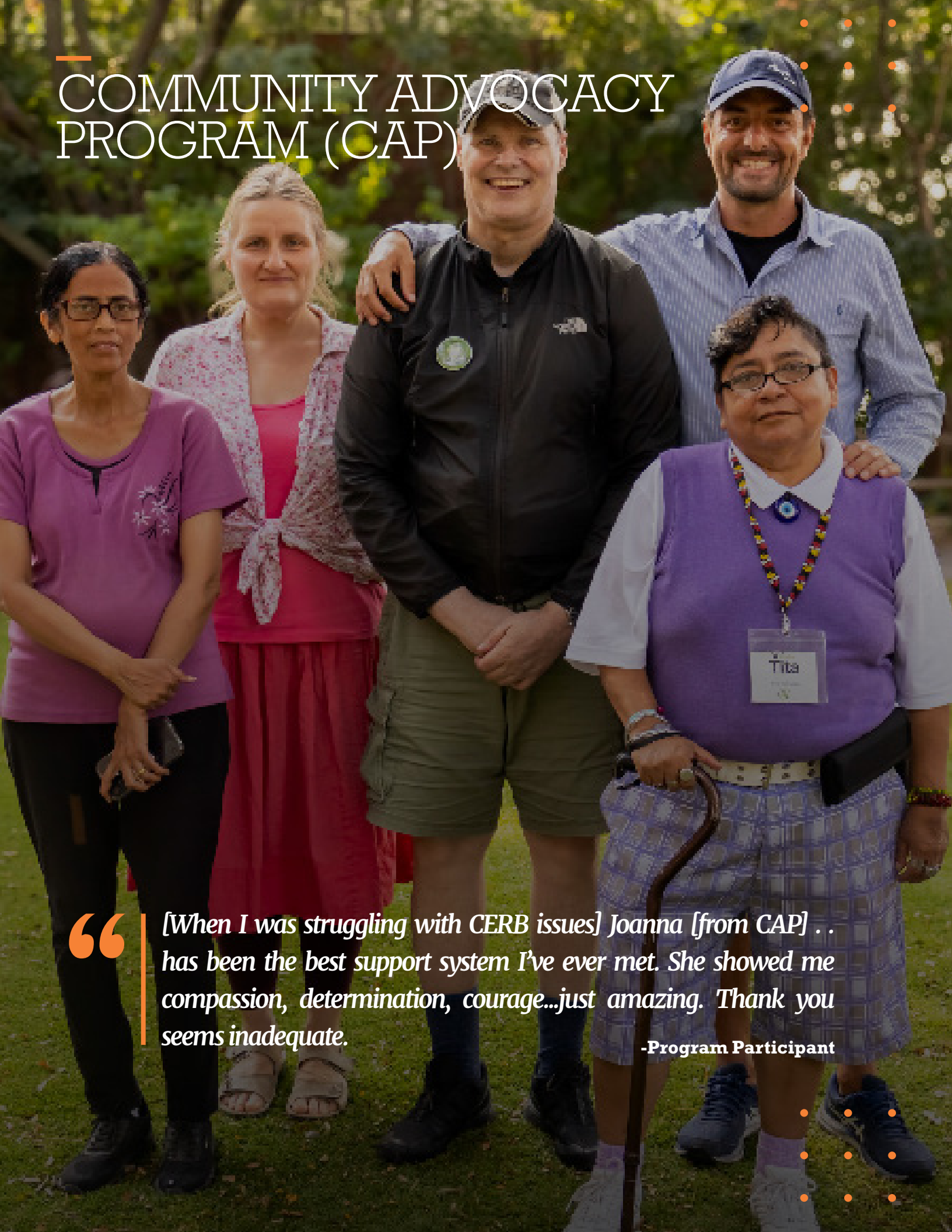
“Volunteering [has left me] profoundly enriched and incredibly humbled. I have grown food in public parks. I have helped create delicious recipes. I have taken home so many gifts of friendship, confidence, self-assuredness and deep, deep appreciation.

-Volunteer Participant

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024



COMMUNITY ADVOCACY PROGRAM (CAP)



“ [When I was struggling with CERB issues] Joanna [from CAP] . . has been the best support system I’ve ever met. She showed me compassion, determination, courage...just amazing. Thank you seems inadequate.

-Program Participant

The Stop’s **Community Advocacy Program (CAP)** is an adult education and peer-to-peer service model that has been running for over 15 years.

CAP provides compassionate, barrier-free assistance to people seeking housing, family services, employment, and immigration support, among other needs. Beyond that, it also develops and supports the leadership of low-income community members, leveraging lived experience to challenge systemic causes of poverty. Open five days a week across our two Drop-In sites, The Stop’s Advocacy Office is a welcoming, confidential, and supportive space where trained Advocates provide information, referrals, and assistance to fellow community members. Advocates provide support and information about housing, legal aid, and income support, in addition to settlement and medical services. We work in partnership with The Neighbourhood Group (TNG) to run ID clinics so people can be supported to apply for identification like health cards and birth certificates. CAP is anchored by a 3-month education process: our Community Action Training (CAT) engages 12 low-income participants to prepare them to apply for Advocate positions.

This year, helping members to navigate digital systems has become a point of focus. Government services operating via online portals have increased substantially in the past two years. Navigating this new technology requires literacy, English-fluency, and IT skills, as well as access to a computer and Internet. CAP and our Drop In computer space is an essential resource.

Spotlight: Tax Clinic

Our Tax Clinic provides community members with free support in tax filing from highly skilled Tax Preparers. In addition to our year-round virtual clinic, we provide a 6-hour in-person clinic each week during the tax season, offering guidance to navigate complex tax cases.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

2121 VISITS MADE TO THE ADVOCACY OFFICE

1008 REFERRALS MADE TO ADDITIONAL SUPPORTS

3 SPECIALIZED TRAININGS HOSTED

293 INDIVIDUAL TAXES FILED

\$76,988 IN TAX BENEFITS DELIVERED

\$719,901 IN TAX REFUNDS SECURED



EMOTIONAL WELLNESS

“Participating in the peer engagement group, art table and yoga helped me deal with my social anxiety. I have become more comfortable engaging with others and even made some new friends.”
-Program Participant

The Stop’s **Emotional Wellness** program provides critical support and activities as a break from difficult or traumatic circumstances.

This program is especially important for socially isolated populations, and consists of three components: a peer engagement group, an art table, and a distribution of personal care items. The peer engagement group allows members to learn and share from each other through facilitated dialogue. Many of our members face similar challenges and issues, and the group leverages knowledge, resources, and lessons from individual participants, building empowerment and solidarity. We run this program as an informal drop-in, to ensure the lowest possible barriers to access.

This year, our Emotional Wellness program continued to host an art table and delivered over 4,387 personal care items at both our Drop-In locations. These personal care items included hygiene essentials like toothpaste, shampoo, soap, socks, mitts, feminine care products; and educational information from other programs at The Stop. The Emotional Wellness Peer Engagement Group ran bi-weekly at our 1884 Davenport location, as an open session about mental and emotional wellness, for anyone who wished to stop by and listen or share with other members. Community members are free to attend as many sessions as they want. We also piloted bi-weekly yoga sessions across both sites for the first time, to help our community members experiencing mental health issues stay active. In addition to personal care items, 4,370 zines were provided to community members, many of whom shared their enthusiasm for the resource. These contain essential information about mental health care and supports and service access in Toronto, as well as engagement activities like crosswords and puzzles. They often serve as an entry point to conversations about mental health

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

4387	PERSONAL CARE ITEMS DISTRIBUTED TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS
2339	TOTAL VISITS TO THE ART TABLE ACROSS OUR LOCATIONS
19	PEER MENTAL HEALTH ENGAGEMENT SESSIONS HELD
71	PARTICIPANTS JOINED AND BENEFITED FROM THE SPACE
48	YOGA SESSIONS HOSTED
50	REFERRALS PROVIDED FOR SPECIALIZED SUPPORTS AND SERVICES

“Being able to be present for our Community Members who are often experiencing a lot of stress with few other supports is an important way that The Stop makes positive change in people’s lives. Often people know what their next step should be, but need some reassurance in knowing that this is the correct next step.”

-Sharon, Emotional Wellness Coordinator

MASH-KIKII-AKI-ING GARDEN

MASH-KIKII-AKI-ING

“ [MKK has] been a huge support for my mental health. Being around the greenery and getting healthy food every Tuesday... that is a huge blessing for me, and I recognize it.

-Program Participant

In the **Mashkikii;aki'ing** garden, Indigenous participants come together to learn, act, and share in culture and community.

The Stop works in partnership with Toronto's Native Men's Residence (Na Me Res), an organization serving unhoused/underhoused Indigenous men to deliver programming in their Mashkikii;aki'ing (Medicine Wheel) garden. Participants work in the garden, enjoy a meal, and share cultural traditions. Grounded in Indigenous traditions of earth work, food, medicine, and eco-restoration, the Mashkikii;aki'ing garden creates a space for learning, cultural exchange, and community. Many participants have expressed that they feel safe and welcome in the garden. Often when participants have nowhere to be, or are not permitted in the shelter, they return to the garden outside of programming; some have volunteered to look after the space after hours. **This year, twice a week we enjoyed communal meals with our participants, followed by trips into the garden to harvest vegetables and medicine.**

With Na Me Res staff, the program offered traditional teachings and activities like Full Moon Ceremonies, Bundle Feasting and Drum Birthing. Our meal sharing included hearty breakfasts and occasional BBQs with both traditional and non-traditional meat. We focus on incorporating lower calorie and more traditional meals every year. As of last November, we transitioned to weekly programming inside our Green Barn, where participants were able to continue learning, using ingredients grown in the garden as the core of their work. We made body butters with medicines and herbs, baked holiday treats, and experimented with natural dye-making, using marigolds. Mashkikii;ak'ing provides much more than knowledge and skills, bringing healing and well-being to our participants.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

70	PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED IN THE GARDEN
810	HOMEMADE MEALS SHARED ON SITE
20	SPECIES OF PLANT MEDICINES GROWN AND HARVESTED
50KG	OF FRESH & ORGANIC PRODUCE GROWN & HARVESTED

“ Everyone [in the program] is so friendly and helpful, there's no prejudice about who you are.

All the staff here are nicer and softer with us, which is nice compared to what we were used to in other places. Also, it feels safer.

-Program Participants

GLOBAL ROOTS PROGRAM

“[Global Roots] opened up my understanding of different cultures and their foods...I love the energy of the program and talking to the young people. And I love the caring. I love how the people within the group of seniors are helping each other. Though we don't speak the same language] we understand each other.”

-Program Participant

Delivered in partnership with the settlement agency Culture Link and focused around social connection, **Global Roots** unites newcomer youth and seniors to share cultural traditions, knowledge, and steward the environment.

This year, we were able to grow 129KG of fresh organic produce with our intergenerational program participants. To foster intercultural connections and help ensure evenly distributed access to light, soil, and water, we dissolved our previous cultural-based garden plots and moved towards growing specific cultural crops, mapped based on growth needs. We find the biggest factor attracting our returning elder participants is connection to others and the relief of social isolation. Many have cited the garden as giving them a reason to leave the house. With the recent layout changes, accessibility improvements, and harvest sharing, many new friendships were formed between seniors, youth, staff and volunteers. This year we also introduced cover crops to the south-facing side of the garden, in an effort to shift towards no-till growing. This process permits the plots to become more climate resilient over the years, without the need for expensive amendments.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024



EARLSCOURT GARDEN

“I’m learning so much about growing food, growing plants, and working with soil. I find it’s just very healing and meditating. So for me, the garden is helpful for my mental health and my physical health.

-Program Participant

Earlscourt Community Garden is an 8,000 square foot garden and hub for urban agriculture activities. Earlscourt is a space to grow relationships, learning, and healthy food.

We host weekly community garden programming for neighbours (marginalized residents of the area) to gather and collaboratively grow fresh, nutritious, culturally-relevant produce. The garden prioritizes contributors who are food-insecure and low-income, providing a space for them to develop food sovereignty, growing plants from seed to harvest. This year, we added two rows of native plants at the back of garden donated to us by the Mashkikii;aki'ing team, advancing aims of sustainable, lower intervention growth. This season felt refreshing with many new participants finding community and solace in the garden and learning new skills to bring to other green spaces in the city. We gave our participants free seedlings to grow in parallel to their experience at Earlscourt, helping them put their learning into practice.

2024 Highlights

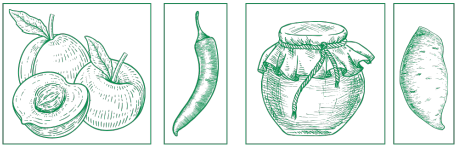
- We introduced 176 square feet in increased garden space with the introduction of new raised garden beds, which increased accessibility options and allowed for a more controlled learning experience.
- We hosted two weekly garden sessions per week for the local community, throughout the growing season, and 5 educational workshops in the garden including a compost building workshop led by FoodShare, a natural dye workshop in collaboration with local community artists, and a harvest preservation workshop developed by staff.
- We provided several sessions for participants from partner programs, including The Stop's Community Kitchens, and a student volunteer group.
- In August, we welcomed over 200 neighbours to a garden open house, to share the fruits – and vegetables – of our labour.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

286KG	OF FRESH, ORGANIC PRODUCE GROWN AND HARVESTED
66KG	OF FRESH PRODUCE DONATED TO THE STOP'S FOOD BANK AND MFAI PROGRAMS
21	PARTICIPANTS GAINED AGRICULTURAL KNOWLEDGE THROUGH CULTIVATING THE GARDEN
23	PARTICIPANTS LEARNED TO GROW AND HARVEST MICROGREENS THROUGH A HANDS-ON WORKSHOP

“I’ve been used to kind of living a life that’s very controlled and fast-pace. The first day at the garden, I remember Justine [saying] ‘This is not a place to prove yourself or to excel.’ And I was like, oh, liberation. It’s been really, really good for me.

-Program Participant



10-METRE GREENS



10-Metre Greens provides a platform for community members facing barriers to employment access to develop professional agriculture skills at The Stop's Greenhouse.

10-Metre Greens is The Stop's unique and popular social enterprise. The program supports participants to market and sell their products at The Stop's Farmers' Market every Saturday (10 metres away from the growth site.) Our microgreens are young seedlings of edible vegetables and herbs. Often used as salad greens or garnishes, they're sought after for their distinctive flavours and nutritional content, and they've become increasingly popular in the last decade among both home cooks and professional chefs. This year, we transitioned away from a paid model with three growers toward a program to support eight participants interested in urban agriculture and food growing work.

The program is delivered in collaboration with Mashkikii;aki'ing participants, who helped plant seeds, increasing our community's access to indoor green space during the winter months. Bringing more members into the space extended the impact of 10M Greens – participants built friendships over the course of the program that increased their overall livelihoods. We continued our collaboration with Karma Co-op, who sold our microgreens in their west end community store, providing our social enterprise with a consistent weekly income, and allowing week-long access to our greens. We experimented with new varieties for our Spicy and Hearty mix, and launched broccoli singles. Seedlings grown through this program were used in community meals at The Stop's 1884 Drop In and Wychwood open doors.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

8	PARTICIPANTS PRODUCED AND PACKAGED MICROGREENS FOR THE FARMER'S MARKET & KARMA CO-OP
107KG	OF MICROGREENS GROWN AND HARVESTED
\$1000	IN PRODUCE SOLD TO LOCAL RETAILER KARMA CO-OP
\$2298	IN SALES REVENUE GENERATED
\$3477	WORTH OF FOOD PRODUCED FOR THE STOP'S COMMUNITY SERVICES



GREENHOUSE & DIG IN PROGRAM

“

The program adds a lot of positivity [to my life] because I don't have the room for a garden at my apartment. It's been really nice to be able to have that connection and ... access and I get to learn and grow with the plants.

-Program Participant

Our Greenhouse and Dig-In Program builds gardening skills and food systems knowledge, and increases well-being through access to locally grown food and community.

The Stop's greenhouse is a year-round facility for producing food with sustainable growing practices. Greens, herbs, and other heirloom and international vegetable varieties are grown organically, for use in The Stop's food programs. Weekly Green Barn harvests are incorporated into our food bank and community meal programs. We host "Dig-In" sessions at the Green Barn, to provide participants with tangible urban agriculture skills and opportunities for knowledge-sharing of their own. These included Plant Propagation Workshop, Medicinal Herbs: Homemade Cough Drops and Teas, Hot Sauce Making with Greenhouse Peppers and Visioning the Future of Toronto's Food System.

Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

107KG	OF FRESH PRODUCE GROWN
357	UNIQUE PARTICIPANTS ENGAGED
43KG	OF FOOD SUPPLIED TO THE STOP'S FOOD BANK AND COMMUNITY KITCHENS
3622	SEEDLINGS CULTIVATED FOR PARTNER COMMUNITY GARDENS
122	SEEDLINGS PROVIDED TO COMMUNITY MEMBERS
320	VARIETIES OF CROPS GROWN

This year was the inaugural year of our liberation garden, initiated in response to collective grief surrounding multiple international genocides (Palestine, Sudan and Congo). We sourced seeds from suppliers whose proceeds support the Palestinian heirloom seed library and Urban farms in Chicago, founded by previously incarcerated men to protect specific seed varieties at risk of being lost amidst violence. We participated in a heat tolerant lettuce seed trial in partnership with EFAO (Ecological Farmers Association of Ontario), Bauta Family Initiative and the University of BC, working with farmers across Canada to select and save climate change resilient lettuce seeds. In light of the difficulty we experienced growing lettuce last year, the trial was a huge success. We grew 8 different varieties suited for our region and were able to harvest around 4 KG of produce for The Stop's meal program. Our learnings from this experience will inform our selection of lettuces, moving forward.



FARMERS' MARKET

“This Farmer’s Market is a chance for collaboration and building a community. I have met people involved in the current food movement and are ready to do something positive. It’s my second year in the market and I can see the sense of good community and support which means a lot to me.

-Farmers’ Market Vendor

The Stop’s Farmers’ Market is a celebration of community featuring weekly pop-ups of food and farming vendors, a space for advocacy groups, and musical performances from local artists.

2024 Highlights

The market, which operates out of Wychwood Barns, is open every Saturday of the year. Over the last year, we’ve seen an increase in attendance as more people seek local, ethical produce in a community focused-setting. We introduced a Vendor Advisory Committee to better support our expanding list of applicants.

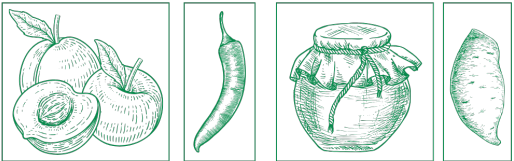
Between Sept 2023 + Aug 2024

12	NEW VENDORS WELCOMED-CHOSEN FROM OVER 60 APPLICANTS
118,742	PATRONS WHO VISITED THE MARKET
30	COMMUNITY NEWSLETTERS DISTRIBUTED

- We have extended vendor opportunities to former volunteers and program participants in our urban agriculture programs, leveraging the Farmer’s Market to better express The Stop’s community values among the Wychwood community and beyond
- Our pop-up vendor model is a valuable accelerator for food entrepreneurs in the early stages of business development, allowing them to promote their products among a food-conscious community
- The market has strengthened our partnership with York University’s Black Entrepreneurship Alliance
- Our community partnerships have strengthened over the course of the year- highlighting life-long education, climate, local arts and transformative approaches to accessing food. Extending complementary space within the market spaces has received positive feedback from participants providing exposure and much needed momentum to important community initiatives

“It’s been amazing chatting with people because it’s a diverse audience. ... I really like the number of Caribbean vendors here, as I am from same community. Plus, other vendors being available to support each other [provides] a true sense of community.

-Farmers’ Market Vendor





The Stop Community Food Centre

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