

The Food Bank Farm



The Food Bank Farm was created in response to an obvious need in the community of Sault Ste. Marie for fresh produce to supplement the food currently provided to individuals and families in need via the food bank system that exists within the city.

We operate the farm on a not-for-profit basis, and are dedicated to producing the maximum volume of a variety of high quality, nutritious produce items to those in the community who lack the financial resources to obtain food through traditional retail outlets.

The objective of the Food Bank Farm is to produce high quality vegetables for families in need. We grow, harvest, wash and package the food items, then deliver them to our partner the Soup Kitchen, who coordinates delivery of the food through their food bank located at 172 James Street in Sault Ste Marie. The successful operation of the farm is entirely supported by financial donations from within the community. We thank our donors for their ongoing support and generosity.

What's Happening At The Farm – Harvesting and Distribution is in full swing

In our first newsletter we described our efforts to plant all of the crops that we grow on the farm. Those efforts are now paying off and we have been busily harvesting food and delivering it each week to the



Soup Kitchen. A portion of the food has been used in the operation of the soup kitchen and has been helping provide healthy and nutritious meals to those in need. The remainder of the produce has been made available for individuals to prepare at home.

Our original concept was to prepare hampers of food containing a range of produce. But we changed our approach because we realized that if a family was given a box of food – some of the contents may not get used, either because the recipient may not like an item, or may not be familiar with how to use it. The last thing

we wanted to do was see food go to waste. So we took a different approach – we have been working with individuals using the soup kitchen, to set up a display of available food (similar to a market garden display). Soup kitchen staff distributes coupons to recipients, who can then trade in coupons for food. This way a recipient gets a choice in what items they receive and in what quantity. It has been working very well.

Supporters – Service Rentals and Sales, National Supply Center

We want to extend a special thank you to the owners and staff at Service Rentals and Sales and National Supply Center located at 9 Sackville Road here in Sault Ste. Marie. Recently they ran a customer appreciation BBQ and all proceeds from the event were donated to support the Food Bank Farm. Drove of people showed up for the event and this resulted in a very generous donation to the project. With their help, a large number of families in the city have been receiving some great produce.

If you are planning a project around your home or business, and there is a piece of equipment that you lack, but really require to get the job done, you can drop by these businesses to pick up what you need. The tractor used by the Food Bank Farm was purchased here, and it has run perfectly from the day we bought it, and believe me I use it every day!



Volunteers – We love them!

We have been getting a few volunteers out at the farm and they have really been a big help. In this newsletter I wanted to introduce you to one: Ayushi I invited her to tell you a bit about her experience at the farm, and here is what she had to say:



My experience at the farm

I have volunteered at the Food Bank Farm for over a month, and I became immediately drawn to this cause because of its direct positive and local impact on hundreds of families. Volunteering here has been inspiring as I get to see the behind-the-scenes of a great operation while experiencing the hard work and labour that goes into growing fresh produce. When I take a step back and look at the rows of bell peppers, lettuce and spinach that I had helped grow, I feel proud to see the impact this action will have on families. I am really happy to be volunteering here as I have gained

new knowledge. I learned about the conditions plants require to grow, how to accelerate plant growth, and how to sustainably start my own garden – skills which I can take forward with me in my life.

Check out the lettuce she grew! →



Additionally, this experience is an outlet where I can give back to a community that has given a lot to me. As a summer student who has moved to the Sault, not knowing a single family or friend, I have luckily experienced nothing but great interactions and met incredible people who have quite literally, welcomed me into their home with open hearts – which I am grateful for.

This has truly been one of my favourite volunteer experiences, and a huge thank you to Colin and Isabelle for starting this great cause and allowing me to take part in it!

Just like Ayushi, You can get involved too!

In addition to being able to contribute to the work of the food bank farm via a charitable donation on our website, foodbankfarm.ca you can also participate in farming activities. No experience is necessary; we will teach you what to do.

Weekends are a great time to visit the farm, there is always a lot going on. Right now we are irrigating, weeding, harvesting and more.

Come on out and give it a try, stay for as long as you want, and bring clothes you can get dirty! A sun hat is always a good idea, and a snack/lunch if you plan to stay for a while. Give us a call first at 705-255-1459 and we will give you directions to the farm, it's not far, only about 10km from downtown!

Media

Have you seen the video on SooToday about the farm? <https://www.sootoday.com/great-stories/video-meet-the-local-farmer-whos-giving-his-crops-away-663571>

We also want to thank Jeronamo Solutions who are the creator of the foodbankfarm.ca website. The website has great features which tell our story, and allows interested people to make a safe and secure online donation directly to the project. If you haven't had a chance yet, consider checking out the website.

And if you need a website of your own, or other business services such as social marketing, content marketing or sales support, they are located at 83 Huron Street (the old mill site), or call 705-910-0436

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