



Community
Connections
REVELSTOKE SOCIETY



Regional Food Procurement Network Project

Following a steep rise in food prices and demand for food bank programs in 2022, we set out to discover how a more collaborative approach between rural food banks might offset rising costs and keep up with the rising level of food insecurity in our communities. Informed by the results of a feasibility study completed in 2024 and continued interest from an anonymous philanthropic donor to explore a regional approach to food procurement, we have secured two years of funding for a shared coordinator to develop a Regional Food Procurement Network. The Golden Food Bank is partnering with Eagle Valley Community Support Society (Sicamous) and Community Connections (Revelstoke) Society on this project, and will oversee the development of the network through the work of a Procurement Network Coordinator.

The full feasibility study report and more information about our project is viewable online at: www.goldenfoodbank.ca/blog/regional-food-procurement-network

Project Summary

The Procurement Network Coordinator will take a regional scope in identifying sustainable and cost-effective avenues for food procurement between our three organizations by creating strong partnerships and identifying further funding and opportunities for collaboration. We are pleased to share that Melissa Hemphill (Food Security Specialist) of Revelstoke, BC has been hired into this role for a two year term, beginning November 2024.

With greater availability of recovered and low-cost food in urban centers, we see an opportunity to increase rural food access through the work of our shared coordinator to navigate the financial and logistical challenges of getting more of this food into our communities. The intention of our project is to establish a Regional Food Procurement Network, with a vision to supply food and create interconnection between food programs throughout our region. We expect the boundaries of the network service area might extend from Cranbrook to the Okanagan, with other food programs contributing a reasonable procurement fee to receive food through the network. The development of cost-recovery programs has been identified as an important avenue for sustainability, as food insecurity levels continue to grow along with heightened demand. Joint procurement could allow us to get better prices for the growing number of people who have some income for food, but are being priced out of the grocery store.

Timeline: November 2024 - October 2026



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Project Deliverables:

- Development of relationships with food suppliers, local producers, and transportation and logistics providers.
- Food banks have consistent access to purchased and recovered food.
- Implementation of the systems and infrastructure required to access pre-consumer food recovery.
- Implementation of cost-recovery food programs at each food bank, with a consistent and affordable supply of food being available (ie, low cost markets, bulk-buy programs, 'good food box').
- Partner with other food programs across the Columbia-Shuswap and East Kootenay regions (schools and School Districts, food programs, early years and afterschool programs, community meals, Better at Home program, etc) to offer recovered and purchased food.
- Increase of food coming into our communities.
- Reduced staffing costs and cost efficiency.
- Food cost savings for multiple organizations and institutions providing food security programming in our communities.

Contact Melissa if you are interested in:

- Donating fresh, processed, or recovered food
- Making connections with local farmers and producers
- Supplying the network with foods for purchase at discounted rates
- Providing transportation or warehouse support
- Joining the network to receive food

Project Contacts:

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