



# FoodBruceGrey.com

A tool for building awareness of the size and scope of food insecurity.



**United Way**  
Bruce Grey

**BrucePower**  
Innovation at work



**NUCLEAR  
INNOVATION  
INSTITUTE**



Change starts here.



Our region encompasses 8,000 square kilometers, the same area as the GTA. In that area there are 22 Food Banks, 19 Meal Programs, and 15 Community Gardens. These organizations are mostly run by volunteers.



## Greater Toronto Area





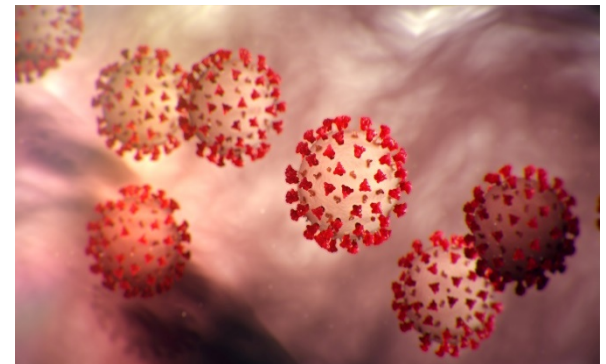
## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY

### **FUNDING/RELIANCE ON SENIOR CITIZENS:**

Food Security programs are virtually all volunteer based.

The lack of multi-year funding only adds to the precariousness of the programs that can be offered in rural communities.

In addition, many of the 300 + volunteers are senior citizens, the most vulnerable age demographic for Covid-19





## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY

**LACK OF CONNECTION:** Many food organizations have grown organically in isolation. Some exist in silos and as a result they do not share protocols or ideas and joint bulk purchasing is something that simply doesn't happen. Unfortunately this situation has contributed to keeping the scope of the issue out of the public's mind.

Since ideas are not shared, turnover in these organizations can lead to the loss of institutional knowledge when volunteers leave or become burnt out.



Limited resources often keeps people siloed as they are afraid to collaborate.





## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY

**LOGISTICS:** With over 50 organizations, there are few mechanisms to move healthier foods quickly and efficiently. Their adhoc volunteer network is based on each organization doing their own pickup's independent of each other with senior citizens and their cars, rather than cargo trucks.





## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY



Compounding the challenge to volunteers, the distances, and other transportation issues; we get lots and lots of snow in Winter making travel difficult for our volunteers.

In the summer, scorching hot weather can affect food spoilage



## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY

**STIGMA & PRIVACY:** One of the benefits of living in rural Ontario is that *everyone knows everyone else and pulls together*. That is also one of the biggest problems.

For people embarrassed that they require assistance, this is a major obstacle to overcome for vulnerable people who are trying to maintain their dignity and privacy.

### STIGMA

There are many statistics that show less than 1 in 4 people who are food insecure actually use food banks:

Their reasons may include:  
Pride,  
Dignity,  
Embarrassment,  
Feel others need help more than them.

### LACK OF PRIVACY





## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY

**AWARENESS** – Food insecurity is something that most people including our politicians, business leaders, and the media see solved by Food Banks. *Many believe that making a donation of some canned food is solving the problem.* We need everyone to realize hunger and food insecurity is only a symptom of poverty and the lack of affordable and safe housing.







## FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN BRUCE/GREY

**FOOD BANKS** are only part of the solution. Many people do not know that, clients typically in some communities:

- Will only get food for 3 or 4 days,
- Many are limited usually to one visit per month
- The hours are limited to only a few hours per week or month,
- Many newcomers are not even aware of the food banks because of the lack of signing or cannot access because they work when the food bank is open
- Clients still have to prove they are “poor enough”,
- Choices are limited,
- Due to limited hours, fresh fruits and vegetables are not always available.
- Volunteers often have pre-conceived ideas of “deserving” and “undeserving” clients

**Food banks do great work but they are only part of the solution.**



## WHAT WE ARE TRYING TO DO ...

We are trying to collaborate with Food Banks, Community Meal programs, Community Gardens, and other community partners. Our goal is to facilitate collaboration while maintaining the dignity and respect of the clients.





**A tool was needed** that could help to tie everything together. Something easy to use, something that decision makers could go to for up-to-date information, something that was readily accessible to the media and the public.

There was a tool already, the bi-annual Hunger Reports.

The problems with the Hunger Reports were:

- ☐ It was only produced every other year, so the data was old even when the reports were first released.
- ☐ The reports were not readily accessible to everyone.
- ☐ Not every organization participated in the data collection

**Something better was needed ...**

## Food Insecurity in Grey Bruce

### LOCAL RATES OF FOOD INSECURITY

Overall, Grey Bruce is above the provincial rate of household food insecurity (15%).

Although most food insecure households are employed, 70% of households reliant on social assistance are food insecure.



**\$217.99 +6.7%**

**20%**

OF GREY BRUCE HOUSEHOLDS ARE FOOD INSECURE



### COST OF LIVING IS RISING

In Grey Bruce, the 2019 Nutritious Food Basket reveals that a reference family of four requires \$217.99 each week to meet basic food needs, a 6.7% increase from 2018.

### FOOD INSECURITY HAS COSTLY AND LASTING IMPACTS TO HEALTH

As the severity of food insecurity increases, health care costs rise, up to 121% higher.

Childhood experiences of food insecurity increase risks of asthma, depression, and suicidal ideation in adolescence and early adulthood.

Adults living in food insecure households account for more than 1 in 3 hospitalizations due to mental health problems.

Health Care Costs      Hospitalization



**121%**



**1 in 3**



## A better tool was needed ...

An idea from the United Way of Bruce Grey was brought to the Nuclear Innovation Institute. The Nuclear Promise X (NPX) actualized and actioned the concept and with subsequent support from Community Foundation Grey Bruce and Bruce Power, they developed **FoodBruceGrey** in only 6 weeks.

### NPX created a tool:

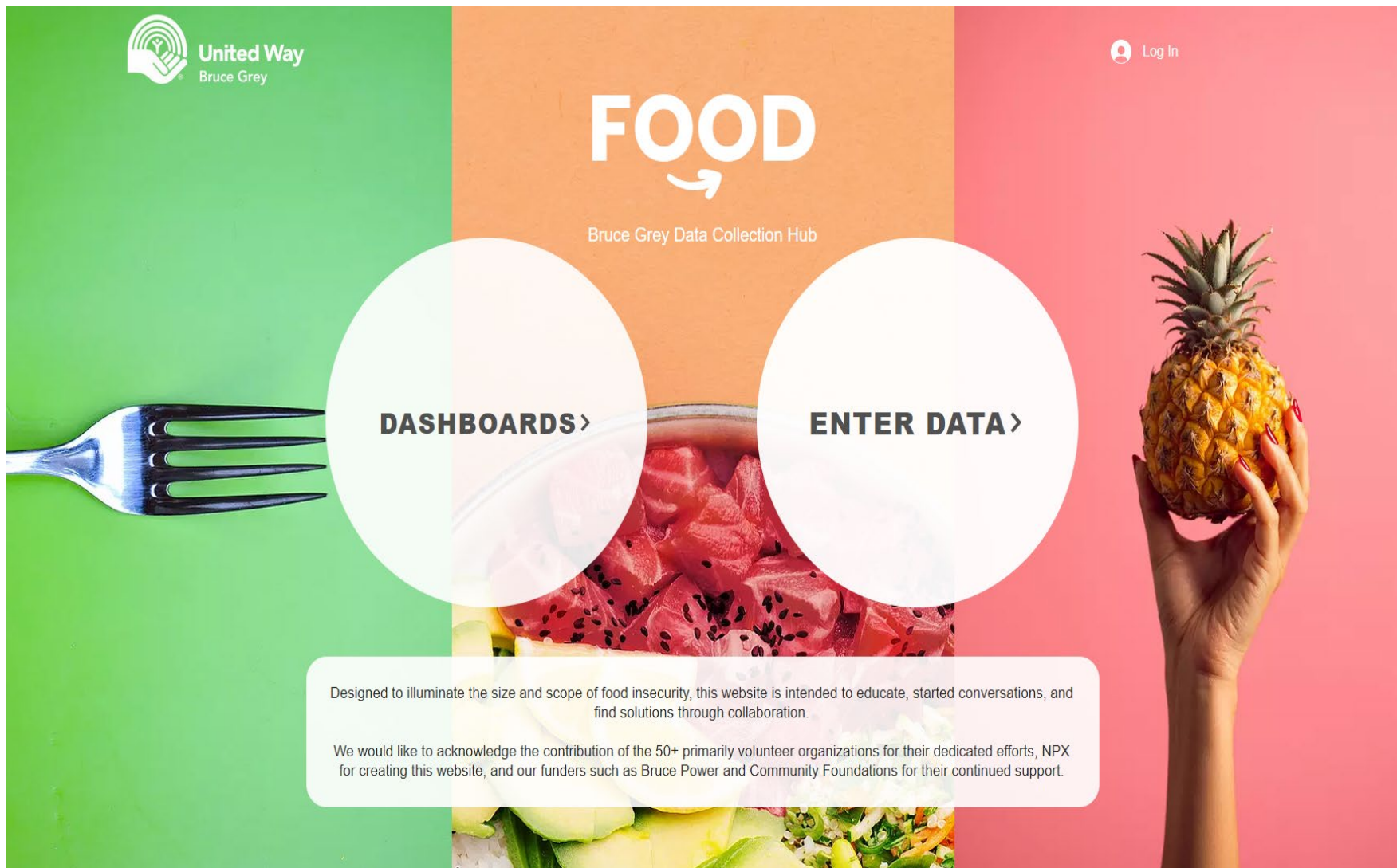
- ☐ That shows the **size and scope of food insecurity issue** in Bruce/Grey
- ☐ With **clear and concise** data graphics
- ☐ That was **easy to use** and made **use of the data already being collected** for the over-stretched volunteers, many of whom are unfamiliar with computers
- ☐ That is **available immediately** to any level of government, the media, the organizations themselves, and the public.
- ☐ That allows the **start of conversations** on who is hungry in our communities.



Change starts here.



# This is that tool



# Change starts here.



Identifying Information

First Name  Last Name  Email Contact

Organization Name

Month of Report

Month  2021

Data Submission

Total Number of Households  Number of Seniors  Number of Adults  Number of Children

Amount of Food Distributed

Weight of Food  Weight Unit

Source of Primary Income (Please enter number of households for each)

Ontario Works  Disability  OAS/GAINS/PPP/PPD  Employment Insurance  Working

Number of Volunteer Hours

Number of Hours

Fresh Produce Donations Received

Amount from Private Gardens  Weight Unit

Amount from Farms/Orchards  Weight Unit

Amount from Grocery Stores  Weight Unit

Food Rescue from Corporate Sources

Amount of Rescued Food  Weight Unit

## DATA ENTRY SCREEN: FOODBANK

- ✓ Designed to use whatever data the food organizations were already collecting.
- ✓ Each group is encouraged to collect all of the data points.
- ✓ Food banks collect the most data as they usually have “intake forms”
- ✓ Data is easy to enter and literally takes just a few minutes.

Change starts here.



### Identifying Information

☐ Don't see your organization?

### Month of Report

### Data Submission

Number of Meals Provided

Number of Volunteer Hours

### Fresh Produce Donations Received ?

Amount from Private Gardens

Amount from Farms/Orchards

Amount from Grocery Stores

### Food Rescue from Corporate Sources ?

Amount of Rescued Food

SUBMIT

## DATA ENTRY SCREEN: MEAL PROGRAM

- ✓ As with the Food Banks the Meal data was designed to be based on what data the groups were already collecting.
- ✓ Scales have been offered and accepted by all of the operating programs.
- ✓ Strongly lobbying to add Food Rescue in smaller communities.
- ✓ Data is easy to enter.

Change starts here.



### Identifying Information



### Month of Report



### Data Submission



### Number of Volunteer Hours



## DATA ENTRY SCREEN COMMUNITY GARDEN

- ✓ All of the food organizations and Public Health want to encourage more consumption of nutritionally dense food for vulnerable people.
- ✓ To provide metrics All of the operating gardens have been given scales for 2021 so their contributions can be measured.



Change starts here.



The app is showing data from 100% of the operating meal programs, currently 6 programs have not re-opened because of Covid-19. Please note April 2020 starts at 2,000 meals, the total number of meals, and the average number of meals per day.

Change starts here.



Clear All Filters



## Food Rescue Diverted from Corporate Sources

Clear

Select Organization

All

Select Relative Date Range

Last 21 Months

1/23/2020 - 10/22/2021

Total Kilograms of Food Rescue Diverted

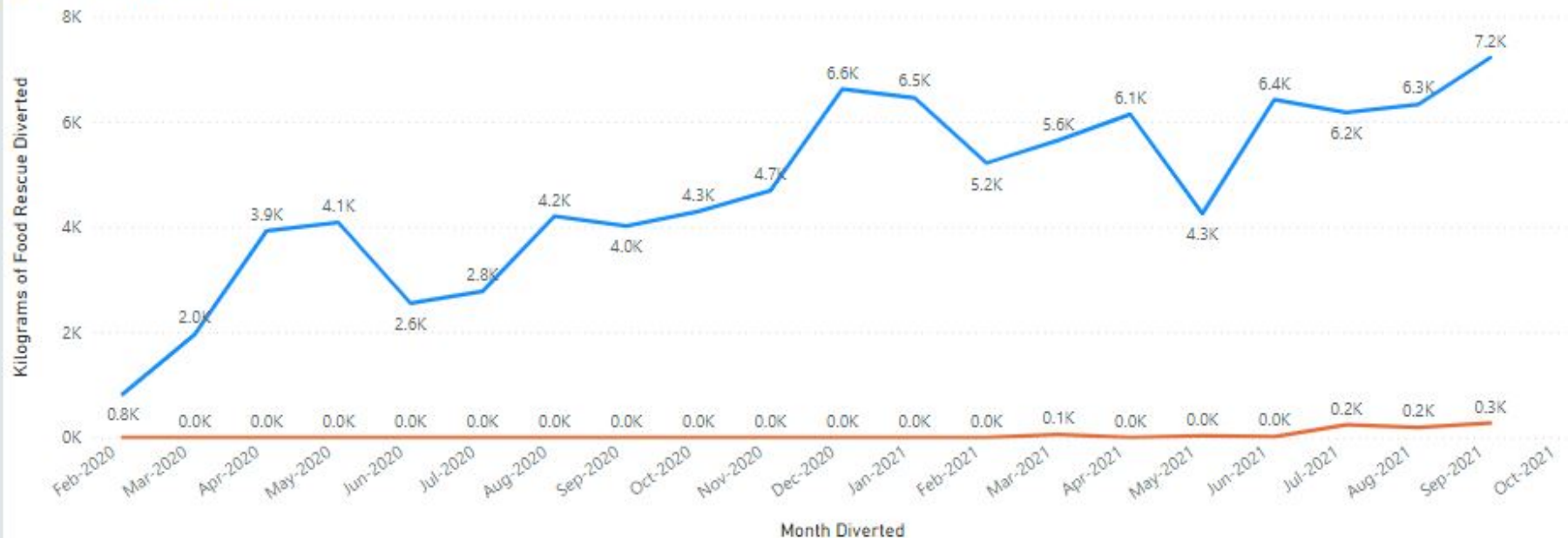
94,634.92

Meal Programs / Food Banks Logging Data in This Period

31 out of 35

### Food Rescue Diverted from Corporate Sources Over Time

Meal Programs Food Banks



Change starts here.



# Food Banks

Clear All Filters

Clear

Select Food Bank

All



Select Relative Date Range

Last 16 Months

3/16/2020 - 7/15/2021

Kilograms of Food Distributed

183587

Total Households Assisted

12431

Food Banks Logging Data in  
This Period

17 out of 20

Food Distributed over Time



Households Assisted over Time



Change starts here.



Clear All Filters



# Food Bank Demographics

Clear

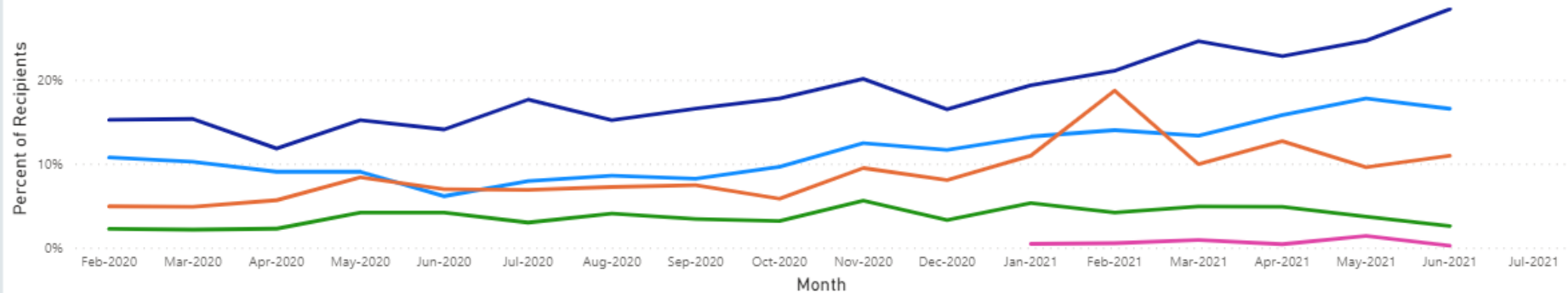
Select Food Bank

All



## Income Sources of Recipients

Ontario Works Ontario Disability OAS/GAINS/CPP/PPD Working Employment Insurance



## Select Relative Date Range

Last 18 Months

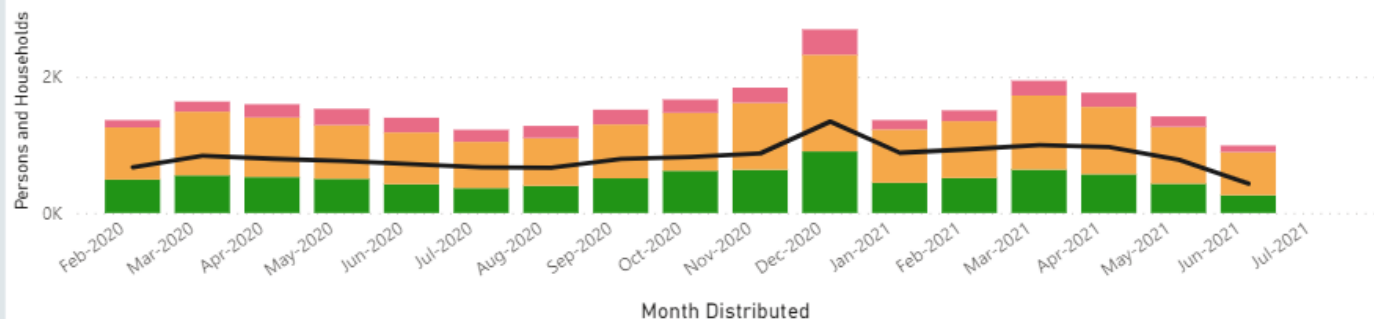
1/16/2020 - 7/15/2021

Total Community Members Assisted

26724

## Community Members Assisted

Children Adults Seniors Households







## Fresh Produce

Clear All Filters

### Select Relative Date Range

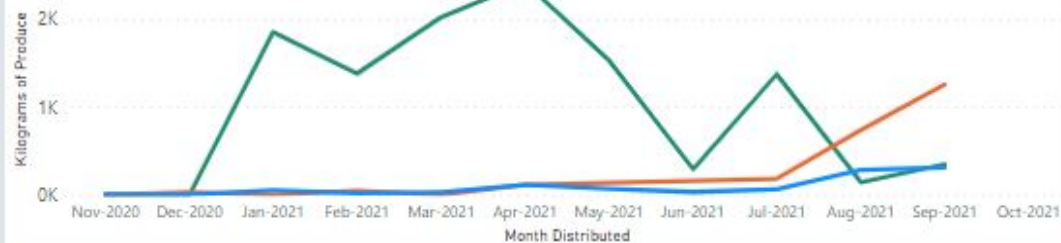
Last 12 Months  
10/23/2020 - 10/22/2021

Kilograms of Produce Distributed

14999

### Kilograms of Fresh Produce Distributed to Food Banks and Meal Programs over Time

Original Source: Grocery Stores Private Gardens Farms and Orchards



### Notes

We are working to ensure that all community gardens are part of this network.

### Select Community Garden

Clear

All

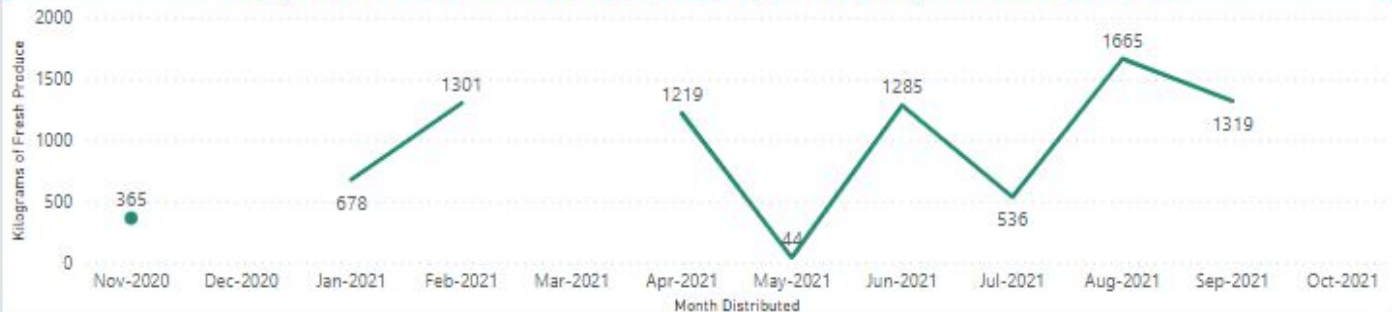
Kilograms of Produce Distributed

8413

Organizations Logging Produce in This Period

9 out of 14

### Kilograms of Fresh Produce Distributed by Community Gardens over Time



Change starts here.



Clear All Filters



# Volunteering (All Sectors)

Select Organization

Clear

All

Select Relative Date Range

Last 21 Months

1/23/2020 - 10/22/2021

Total Hours of Community Volunteering

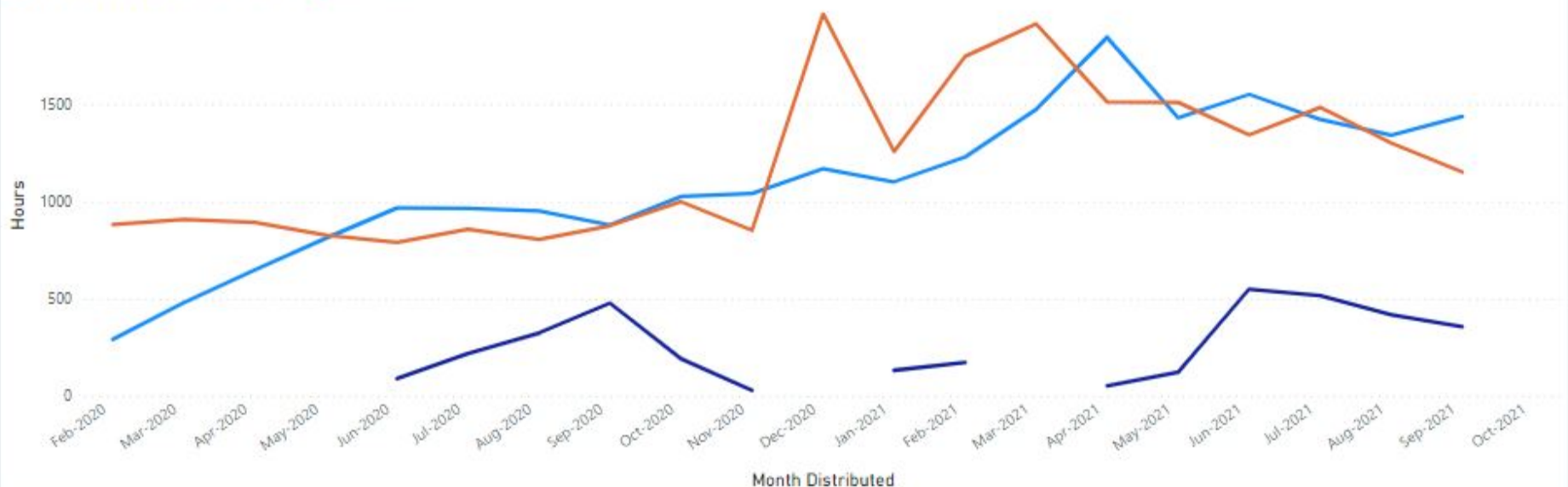
49573

Organizations Logging Data in This Period

40 out of 49

## Volunteer Hours

Meal Programs Produce Distributors Food Banks





## Finding Local Data During COVID-19: Bruce Grey Tracks Food Insecurity

Posted on December 17, 2020  
By Natasha Pei

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At the best of times, good local population-level data is difficult to find to inform poverty reduction efforts. With the added pressures of COVID-19, it is critical now more than ever to understand the changing face of poverty – who is in need, to what extent, what supports are available, and whether people are able to and accessing those supports. However, common data challenges roundtables face include:

- Inability to disaggregate data by local geographic region
- Inability to disaggregate data by target demographics
- Delays in data release (out-of-date data sets)
- Representativeness of the sample group
- Confidentiality
- Expense
- Non-collection (ex. hidden homelessness; lack of surveys)

In the midst of a pandemic, when access to census data is unrepresentative of current realities and changes are occurring rapidly, how do we find good data to guide service and program delivery and uncover policy implications? In Bruce Grey, the response is local data sharing amongst community partners and service agencies.

A new "Food Bruce Grey App" is capturing and sharing back food collection and distribution statistics, user demographic information and volunteer efforts across the region.



## THE REACTION TO THIS UNIQUE TOOL

- ❑ The Tamarack Institute has featured FoodBruceGrey.com drawing attention at a national level.
- ❑ TVO profiled the tool when it spotlighted the Chesley Baptist Church's weekly hot meal program.
- ❑ Windsor/Essex is working with NPX on creating their own version. Edmonton is also looking at creating a version.
- ❑ The Food App was the focus of attention at the *Global Food Security* conference at Centennial College.
- ❑ Every Mayor, Chief, MP, and MPP has received an invitation to use this tool. In addition all local media outlets have also received instructions on using this tool.
- ❑ Presentations have been made to local service clubs, municipal counsels, and other groups interested in building awareness of Food Insecurity.





## THE DATA IS ALREADY MAKING A DIFFERENCE!

- ☐ The data was used to identify the number of children in each community for several local support projects.
- ☐ Several food organizations are using the data to support grant applications.
- ☐ The Town of Saugeen Shores, Southgate, West Grey, Chatsworth and Arran-Elderslie have created permanent links on their website to FoodBruceGrey.com to highlight Food Insecurity in their community and to help foster solutions.
- ☐ Many food organizations are using the data and their graphs for their board reports and for local media.







## Challenges and Goals

- ☐ We need the continued support all organizations in the collection of data and the sharing of knowledge and resources.
- ☐ To convince the remaining food organizations to share their data and to continue to educate decision-makers on the importance of this issue.
- ☐ Expanding Food Rescue to more communities.
- ☐ To use the data from this tool to support programs, educate, and to be able to provide tangible ways to measure the impact of those programs helping to “BREAK THE CYCLE” and find solutions to Food Insecurity.
- ☐ Raise awareness of other food related resources such as [Foodthoughts.ca](https://www.foodthoughts.ca)

Change starts here.



# WELCOME TO FOOD THOUGHTS

A place for those dedicated to and interested in, solving the Food Insecurity Needs of Bruce  
Grey





# THANK-YOU

Any Questions?