



FoodBruceGrey.com

Measuring the size and scope of
Food Insecurity in Grey/Bruce



Change starts here.



Bruce/Grey encompasses 8,000 square kilometers, the same area as the GTA. There are 22 Food Banks, 19 Meal Programs, and 15 Community Gardens. Spread among these groups are only 7 paid associates and more than 300 very dedicated volunteers.



Greater Toronto Area





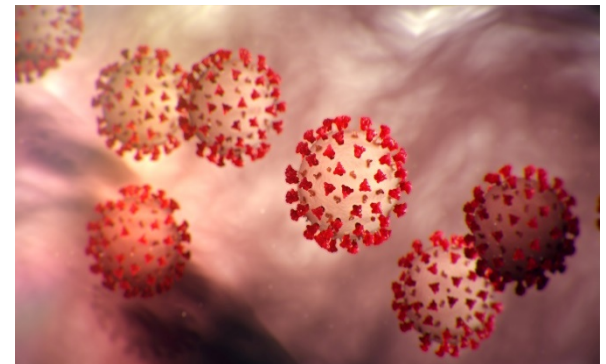
FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN GREY/BRUCE

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 volunteers are senior citizens, the most vulnerable age demographic for Covid-19





FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN GREY/BRUCE

LACK OF CONNECTION: Many volunteer organizations have grown organically in isolation. Some exist in silos and as a result they do not share protocols, joint bulk purchasing, and sharing simply is not allowed to happen.

Turnover in volunteer organizations leads to the loss of institutional knowledge



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



FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN GREY/BRUCE

LOGISTICS: With over 50 organizations, there are few mechanisms to move healthier foods quickly and efficiently other than an adhoc volunteer network based on senior citizens and their cars, rather than cargo trucks.





FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN GREY/BRUCE



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 GREY/BRUCE

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 GREY/BRUCE

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 them to know hunger and food insecurity is a symptom of the over-arching problem of poverty and the lack of affordable and safe housing. In addition, Food Banks are only part of the solution.





FOOD SECURITY ISSUES IN GREY/BRUCE

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
- 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.





HOW TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

A tool was needed that could help to tie everything together. Something that organizations could easily use, something that decision makers could go to for up-to-date information, something that the media could also easily access, and something that the public could have access to.

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

The problems with the Hunger Reports were:

- ☐ Produced every other year, so the data was old even when the reports were first released.
- ☐ They were not really accessible to everyone who might want to use them.
- ☐ Not everyone 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.

20%

OF GREY BRUCE HOUSEHOLDS ARE FOOD INSECURE



Nutritious Food Basket



\$217.99 +6.7%

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 ...

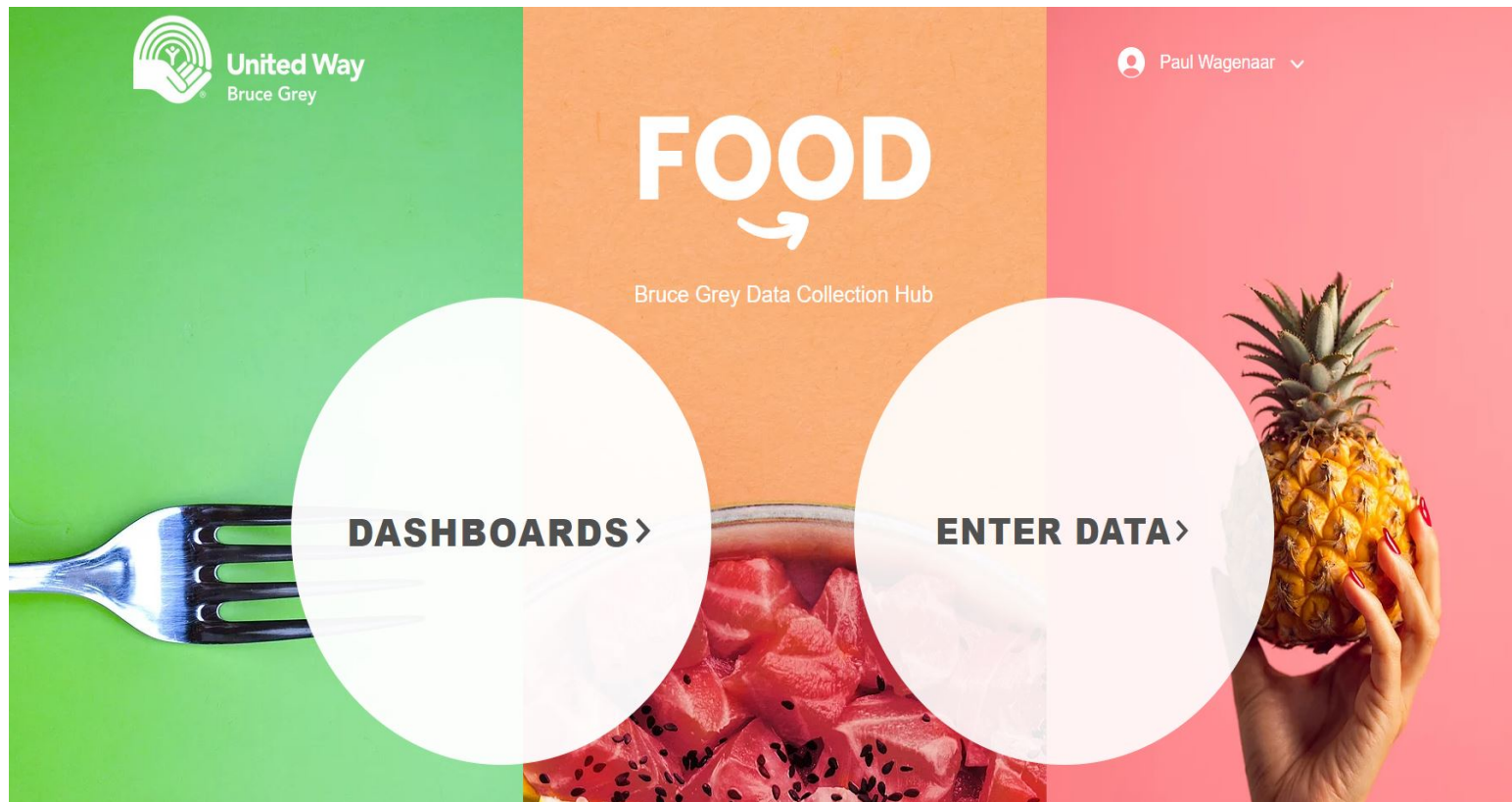
Something informative and easy to use for the governments and other funders, the media, and the public. An idea from the United Way of Bruce Grey was brought to the Nuclear Innovation Institute. The Nuclear Promise X (NPX) actualized and actioned the concept and with subsequent support from Community 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 for already 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 a conversations on who is hungry in our communities.



This is that better tool



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Identifying Information

First Name Last Name Email Contact

Organization Name Don't see your organization?

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

- ✓ FoodBruceGrey.com was 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”
- ✓ All food banks were offered a free scale.
- ✓ Data is easy to enter and literally takes just a few minutes.
- ✓ When finished simply press “Submit”
- ✓ We will enter data for any organization that asks

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.
- ✓ Simona is trying to establish more links with Second Harvests and community gardens.

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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.

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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 10,000 meals, the total number of meals, and the average number of meals per day.



Food Rescue Diverted from Corporate Sources

Select Organization

All

Select Relative Date Range

Last 12 Months

3/18/2020 - 3/17/2021

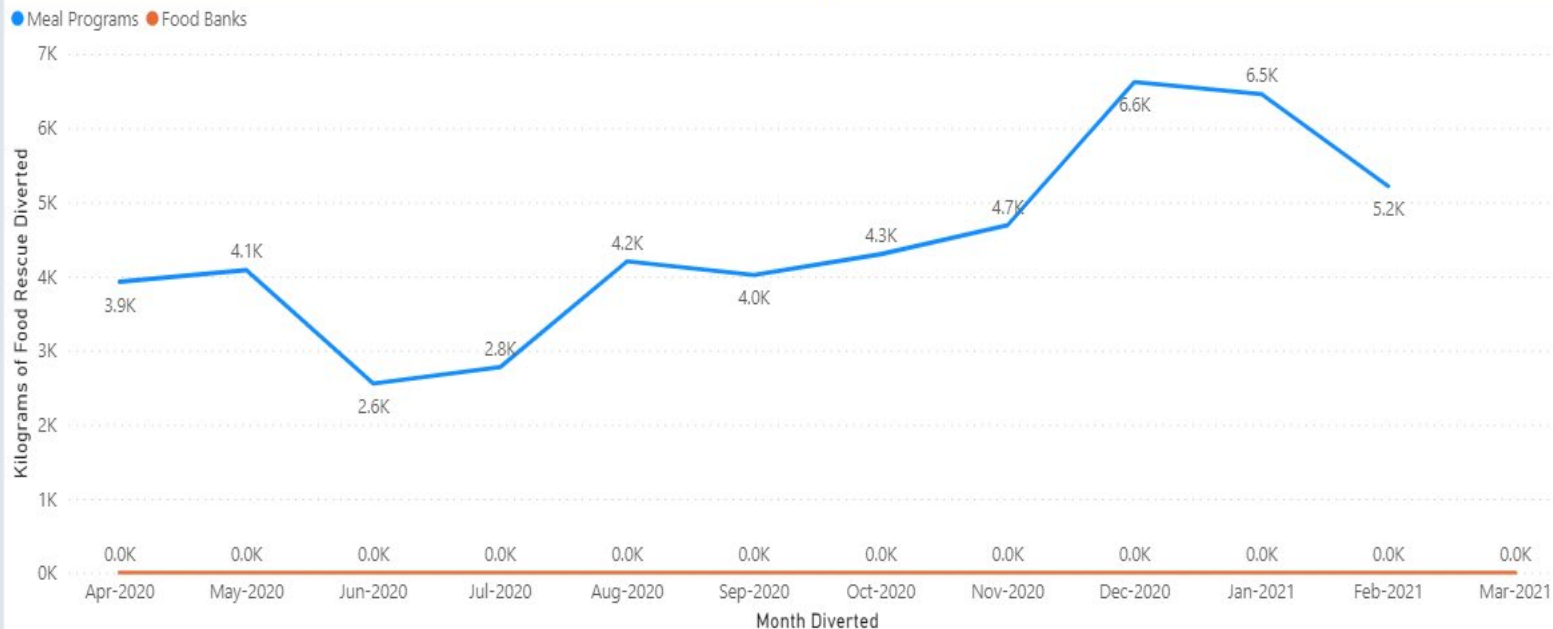
Total Kilograms of Food Rescue Diverted

48,848.53

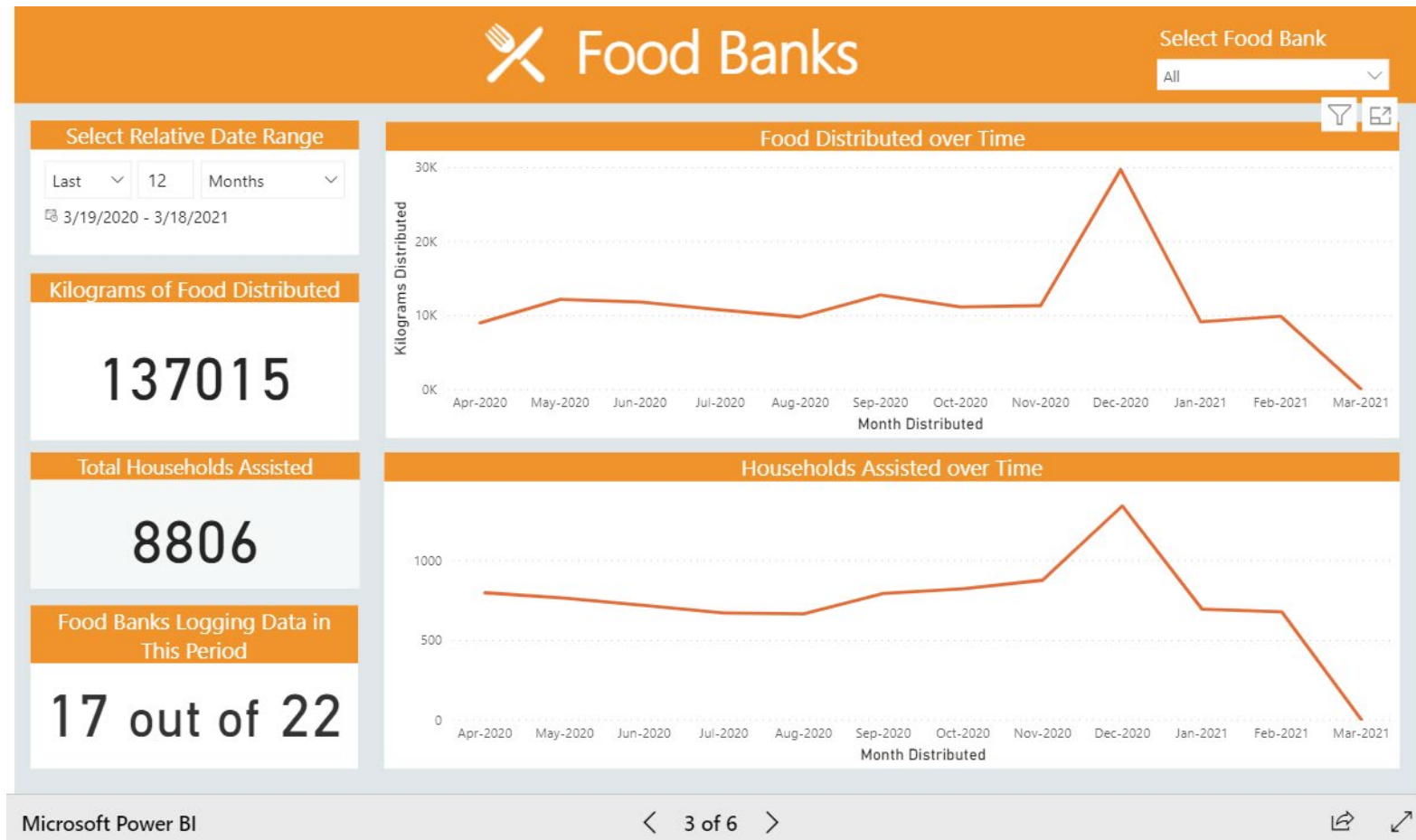
Meal Programs / Food Banks Logging Data in This Period

30 out of 41

Food Rescue Diverted from Corporate Sources Over Time



Change starts here.



In 2020 Food Bank use remained relatively steady. CERB was likely a factor and it is very interesting compared to the explosive growth of Meal Programs.

Change starts here.

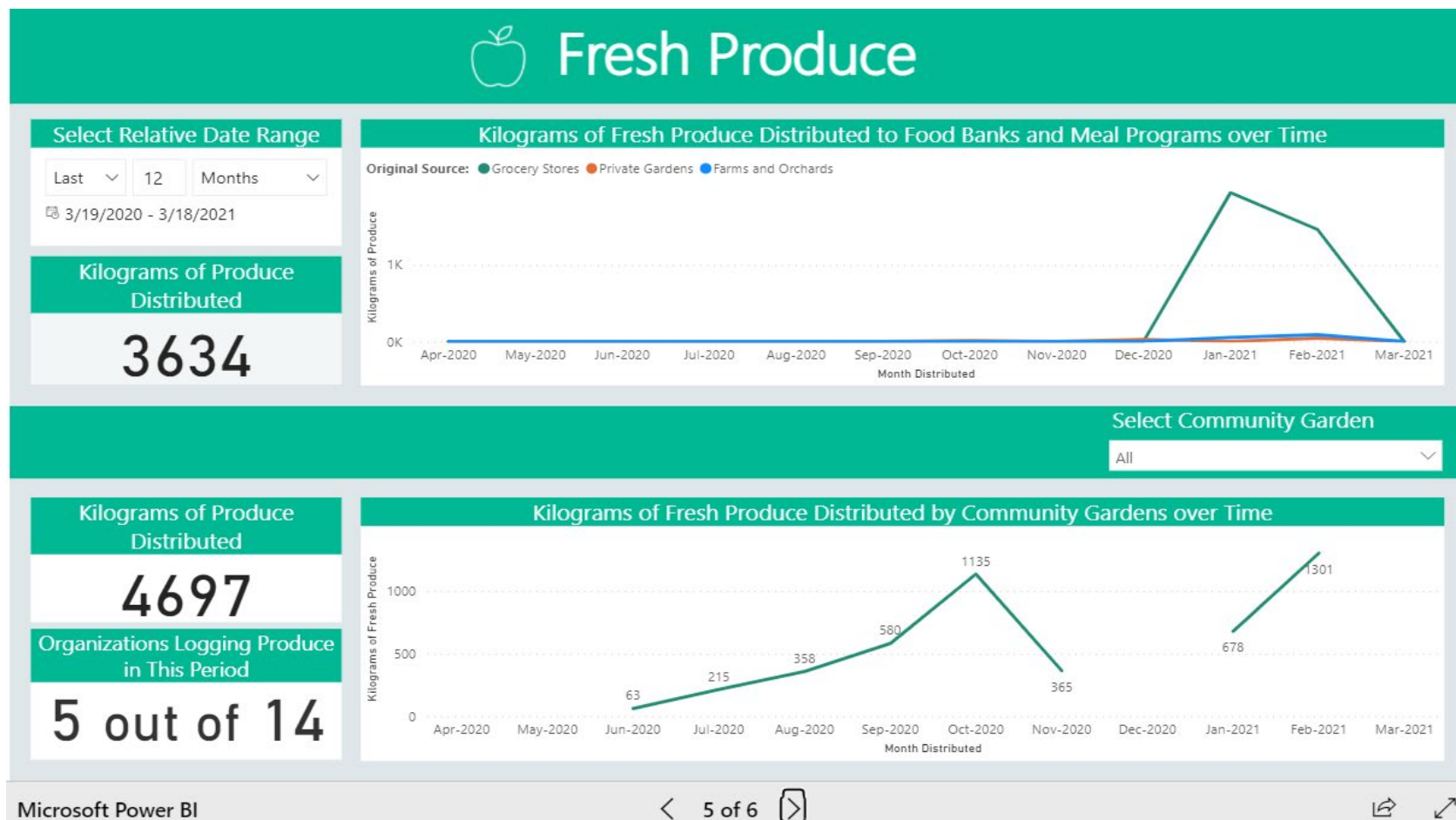


The data that Food Banks collect helps to provide useful trends on who is needing help in our region.





In 2020 the Pandemic precautions didn't permit Community Gardens on public lands to open until well after the start of the growing season and as a result few gardens operated. In 2021, everyone is hoping for much more of a significant contribution from the gardens and gleaning for the meal programs and food banks.

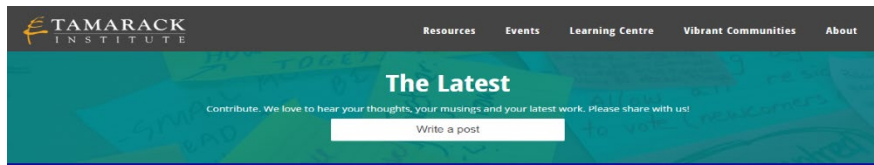


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The volunteers from all of the food programs deserve our thanks. Many are in vulnerable age categories. Fortunately with the support of Public Health they continue to deliver an incredible service to our communities. Most groups, have only recently begun to track their hours.





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

Posted on December 17, 2020
By Natasha Pei

[Twitter](#) [LinkedIn](#) [StumbleUpon](#) [Facebook](#) [Google+](#)

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 featured the app drawing attention at a national level.
- ❑ TVO mentioned that app when it featured Chesley Baptist Church's weekly meal program
- ❑ Edmonton and Windsor/Essex have received a briefing on the food app and each has asked us to address their council.
- ❑ 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 anyone and everyone who is interested in building awareness of Food Insecurity.



HOW IS THE DATA ALREADY BEING USED?

- ☐ The data helped 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 created a permanent link 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 for 2021

- ☐ 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. For example: OSHaRE and the way they share data and food with all organizations.
- ☐ Expanding Food Rescue to more area retailers, using the model OSHaRE has created.
- ☐ 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?