



WECAN
Food Basket
Society

WECAN FOOD BASKET SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

ANNUAL REPORT

April 1st 2024 - March 31st 2025

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OUR TEAM

Executive Directors

Jennifer Scherer – Board Chair
Christine McVea – Vice Chair
Jessica Odyjewski – Secretary

Directors

Carol Reid
Dana Davies
Eliza Odyjewski
Jyening Rose
Keith Kasha
Mildred Ncube

Staff

Alyssa Schroth – Program Manager
Mariam Jamaly – Administrator
Betheiah Storheim – Food Distribution Assistant
Brian Borschowa – Food Distribution Assistant
Christopher Skuse – Food Distribution Assistant

WECAN BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

Dear WECAN Members,

This past year has been busy at WECAN Food Basket Society! There has been lots of change this year, as we have had changes of staff in both our program manager and administrator positions, as well as many new board members. While it is sad to say goodbye to the wonderful people who have worked so hard to make WECAN what it is, it is also exciting to find people who are equally passionate about food security and community engagement to bring new energy and new ideas to WECAN.

The staff and board gathered this fall to develop an updated strategic plan for WECAN, which established a plan for WECAN through to 2028. The plan focuses on three pillars of WECAN- Community, Food Security, and Sustainability. We also reviewed our mission, vision, and values, which will be presented to the members at the AGM.

Local community depots are at the heart of WECAN. The depots are where local communities come together to meet, volunteer, and distribute food baskets. With the wonderful support of our staff, WECAN volunteers have successfully opened new depots this year in St Albert, Beverly, Stony Plain, Norquest, and Greenfield. We have established online meetings for our depot coordinators to provide increased opportunities for our volunteers to connect, support one another, and create community.

Even through times of change, the way WECAN provides its members with opportunities to buy affordable groceries through pre-purchasing and wholesale pricing has not changed. The idea that was developed by WECAN's founders in 1993 continues to this day. WECAN continues to work with our partners at Wholesale Market (formerly known as The Grocery People) to source healthy food- frozen meat and fresh produce. This year, WECAN has been working on sharing with our local communities how our members benefit from monthly food baskets. Our social media accounts on Instagram and Facebook are active and thriving, our program manager Alyssa was interviewed by CBC radio, and WECAN attended several events throughout the year to tell people about WECAN.

WECAN BOARD CHAIR'S MESSAGE

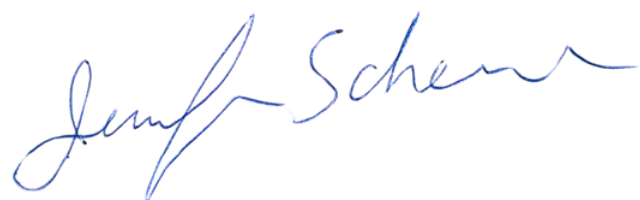
This year, WECAN reviewed its financial policies and procedures and identified areas that required updating. We have carefully reviewed our finances, moved to an online payroll system, and have been formalizing policies to ensure the future sustainability of WECAN. One significant change to our fundraising efforts was to provide members with the opportunity to make an optional donation while completing their online orders. This small step has made a big impact in increasing our donations.

This upcoming year will be very busy for the staff and the board. Our fundraising and social media efforts will be working closely together to continue to get the community excited about WECAN and bring in the resources WECAN needs to continue the work. Our new Occupational Health and Safety committee will be finding ways to keep our staff and volunteers safer on the job. Our board will focus on ensuring our policies and procedures are up to date and in line with our new mission, vision, and values. We will keep building community connections to open new depots in communities where they are needed, while continuing to support our wonderful existing volunteers and depots.

WECAN needs its members and volunteers to continue to make an impact in the community. Thank you for everything you do for your community. Every little bit you do helps make a stronger community- from volunteering to donating or sharing a social media post and even ordering consistently- all these actions help ensure the future of WECAN and our ability to make a difference in food security in your local community.

On behalf of the board,

Jennifer Scherer



WECAN Board Chair



COMMUNITY IMPACT

Food Insecurity in Alberta



PROOF published that “In 2024, 25.5% of people in the ten provinces lived in a food-insecure household. That amounts to approximately 10 million people, including 2.5 million children, living in households that struggled to afford the food they need.

This is the third consecutive increase in the percentage of people living in food-insecure households and another record high level.” (May 2025).

Of these households, 30.9% of Albertans are living in food insecure homes, compared to 27% in 2023. In 2024, Alberta is reporting as the highest prevalence of food insecurity of the ten provinces. 8.7% of Albertans are reported as severely food insecure. Food insecurity can be considered at three different categories:

- Marginal food insecurity: Worry about running out of food and/or limited food selection due to a lack of money for food.
- Moderate food insecurity: Compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food.
- Severe food insecurity: Miss meals, reduce food intake, and at the most extreme go day(s) without food.

As a paid-for food program, many may think we can only impact marginal or moderate food insecurity. Though our program does create opportunities for individuals and households experiencing worry or compromise in food due to financial stresses, it is important to note that WECAN Food Basket Society of Alberta can also alleviate pressures on free programs, such as food banks, by allowing for more layered safety nets for all Albertans experiencing any level of food insecurity.

Data from PROOF U of Toronto, “New data on household food insecurity in 2024”. May 05 2025

COMMUNITY IMPACT

WECAN Food Basket Society has continued its operations through 2024 - 2025 to be able to impact members in many ways. Throughout a year filled with tariffs, financial and political uncertainty, increasing food insecurity, and increased living costs, WECAN Food Basket Society was able to serve **1568** individuals and households to strengthen their food security by purchasing nutritious food at an affordable price.



"Thank you for this affordable food program. I am recovering from financial abuse and domestic violence. The WECAN program has helped me feel secure again and eat healthy (rather than cutting back on buying fruits and vegetables). It has been a blessing, thank you."

– WECAN Member

"WECAN has been an excellent way to increase food security, both for existing food bank clients and other university staff and students. I've had many conversations with folks who did not want to "take away food from others" by accessing our other food supports. WECAN has been a really great option to offer to those folks. Pick up day is always a chance to also show folks our food bank, as it gives people a reason to come in to our space and ask questions about what other services we offer."

– WECAN Depot Coordinator

WECAN PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

MESSAGE FROM OUR NEW PROGRAM MANAGER

This is a summary of the program between April 1st 2024 and March 31st 2025.

Hello WECAN Members,

I began with WECAN Food Basket Society in October of 2024 as Program Manager. It has been an absolute pleasure to be welcomed by so many wonderful volunteers, staff, and community members into the Society. Thank you for all of your dedication, knowledge, and kindness that you have shown to me as I take on managing this program. I have already learned so much about the unique ways WECAN Food Basket Society serves Edmonton and surrounding areas through bringing access to healthy food. I look forward to the ways in which I can dedicate my time, experience, and passion to this program in this next season.

Thank you,

Alyssa Schroth



WECAN Program Manager



“People are happy that they have the opportunity to purchase at the beginning of the month and know that come towards the end of the month they will have produce and meat coming to them. Our economy is extremely hard for all right now and knowing that there will be food to put on the table helps to alleviate some of the stress.”

– WECAN Depot Coordinator

WECAN PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

2024-2025 OVERVIEW

MEMBERSHIP



- **1568** memberships started and renewed
- Up to **\$329.92** saved by members ordering both produce and frozen meat every month
- **\$425** spent for **12** months of produce and meat, and one membership
- **\$545.56 - \$754.92** for the same groceries in traditional grocery stores

"I am a low income student currently in a PhD program at the U of A. I rely on WECAN for meat! I cannot afford the cost of meat on my monthly student stipend and WECAN makes it so I have a variety of protein options for the month. So grateful! The veggies are great too of course! Also the staff working pick up days are so kind and welcoming."

– WECAN Member

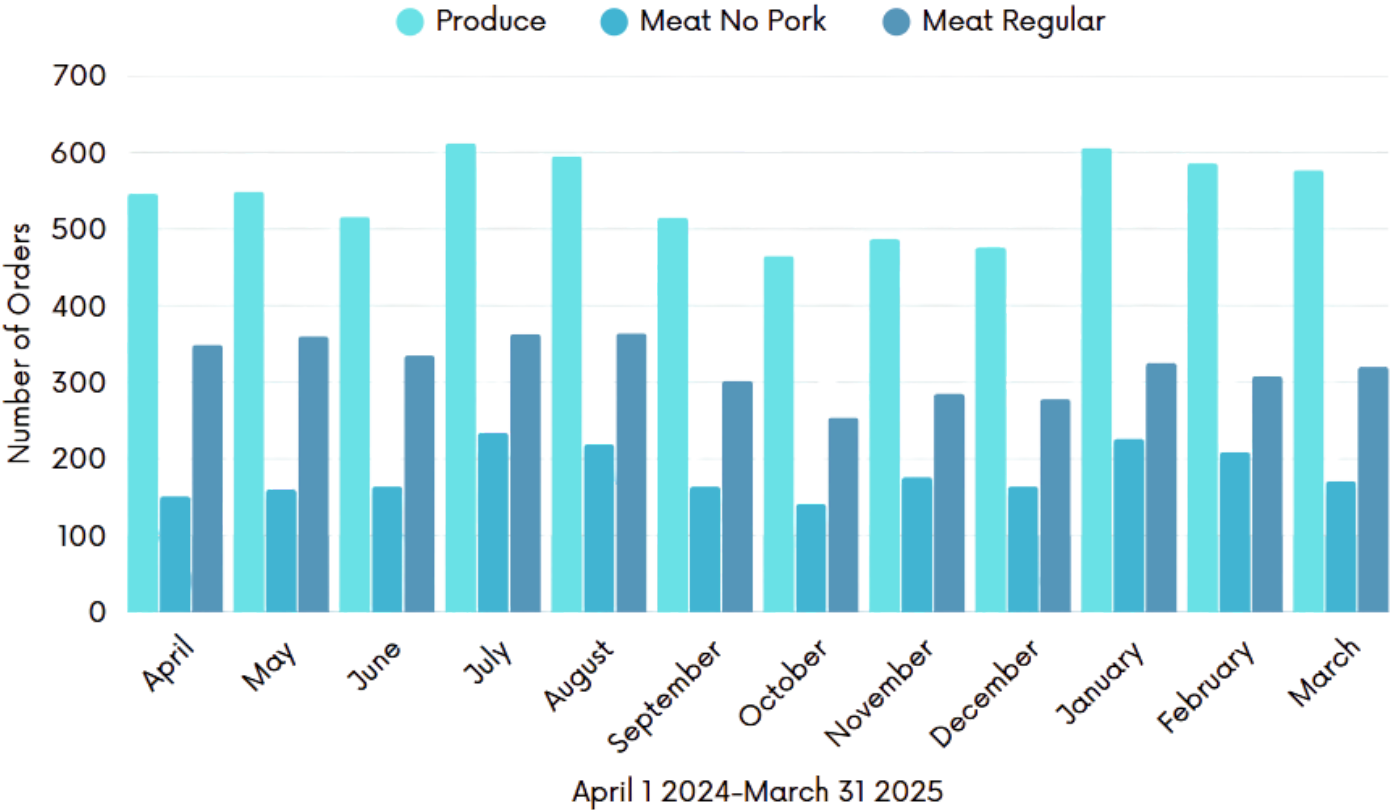
"I appreciate being able to buy groceries at such great prices along with the convenience of a one-stop pick up. This service is a wonderful convenience and so helpful to seniors such as I who are in a fixed income. Your volunteers have to be good people to donate their time as they do as I imagine doing this entails a lot of hard work. Kudos and thank you."

-WECAN Member

WECAN PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

2024-2025 OVERVIEW

FOOD BASKET ORDERS



12552 TOTAL ORDERS

- **6530** produce orders
- **2179** meat regular orders
- **3843** meat no pork orders

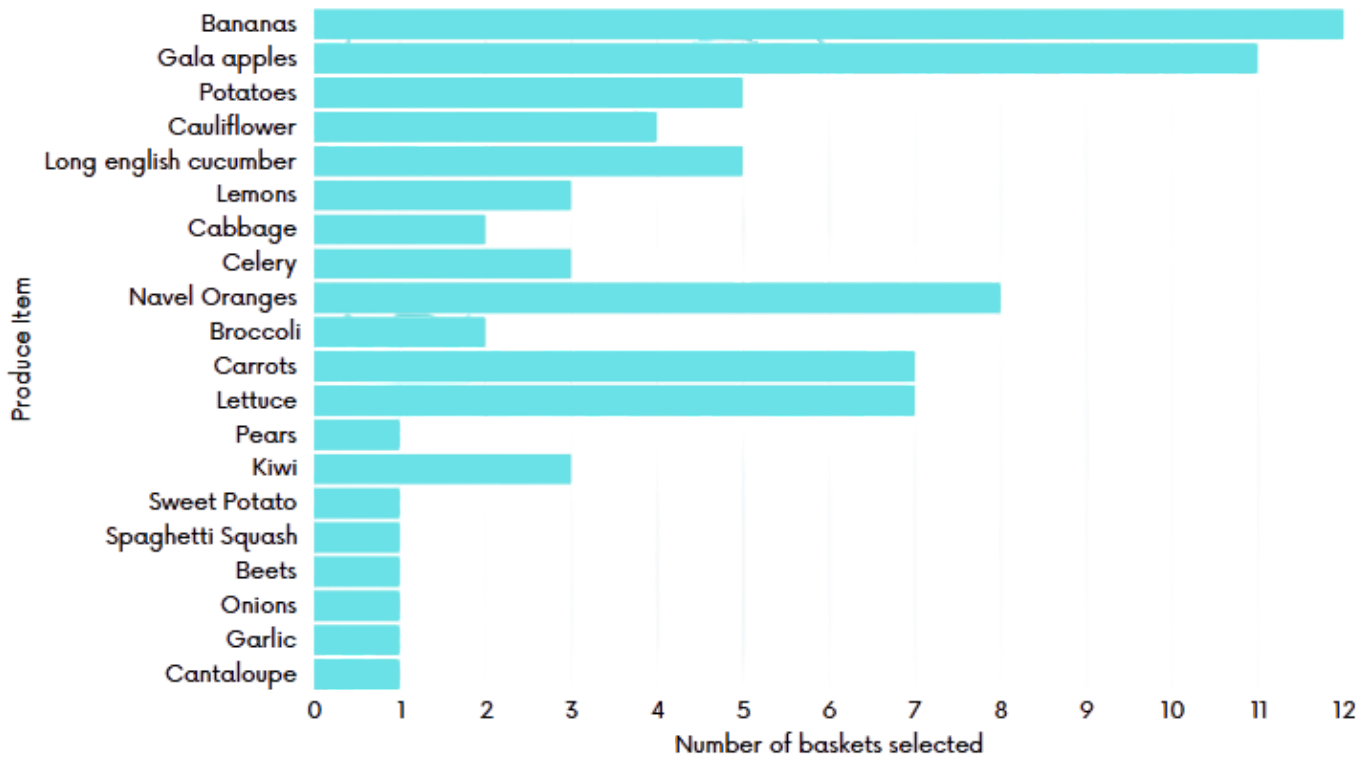
WECAN PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

2024-2025 OVERVIEW

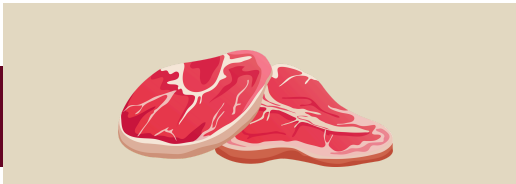
PRODUCE SELECTIONS



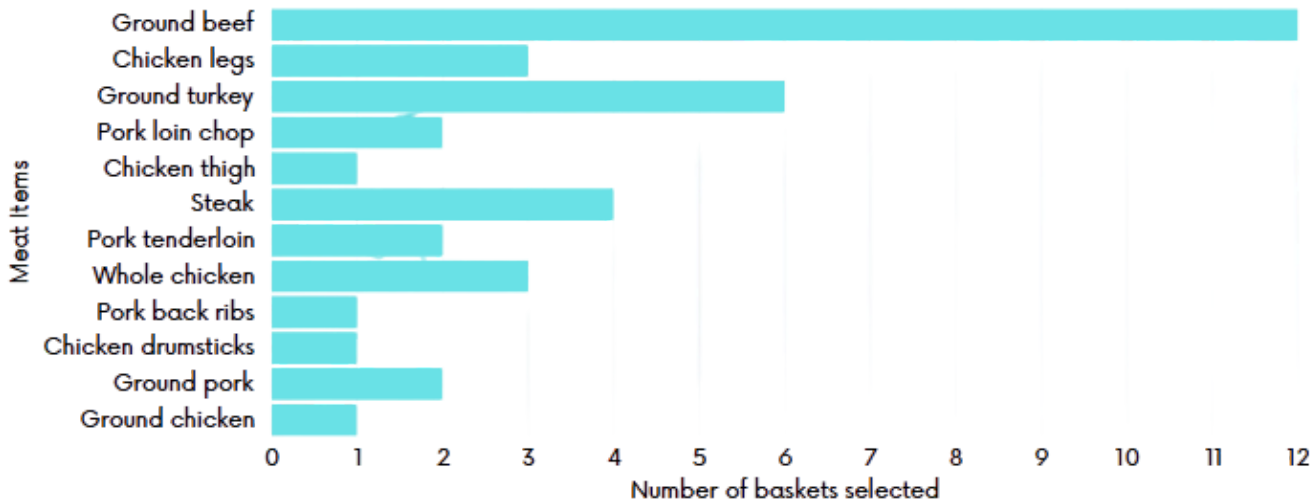
Items in baskets over the year :



MEAT SELECTIONS



Items in baskets over the year :



WECAN PROGRAM MANAGER REPORT

2024-2025 OVERVIEW

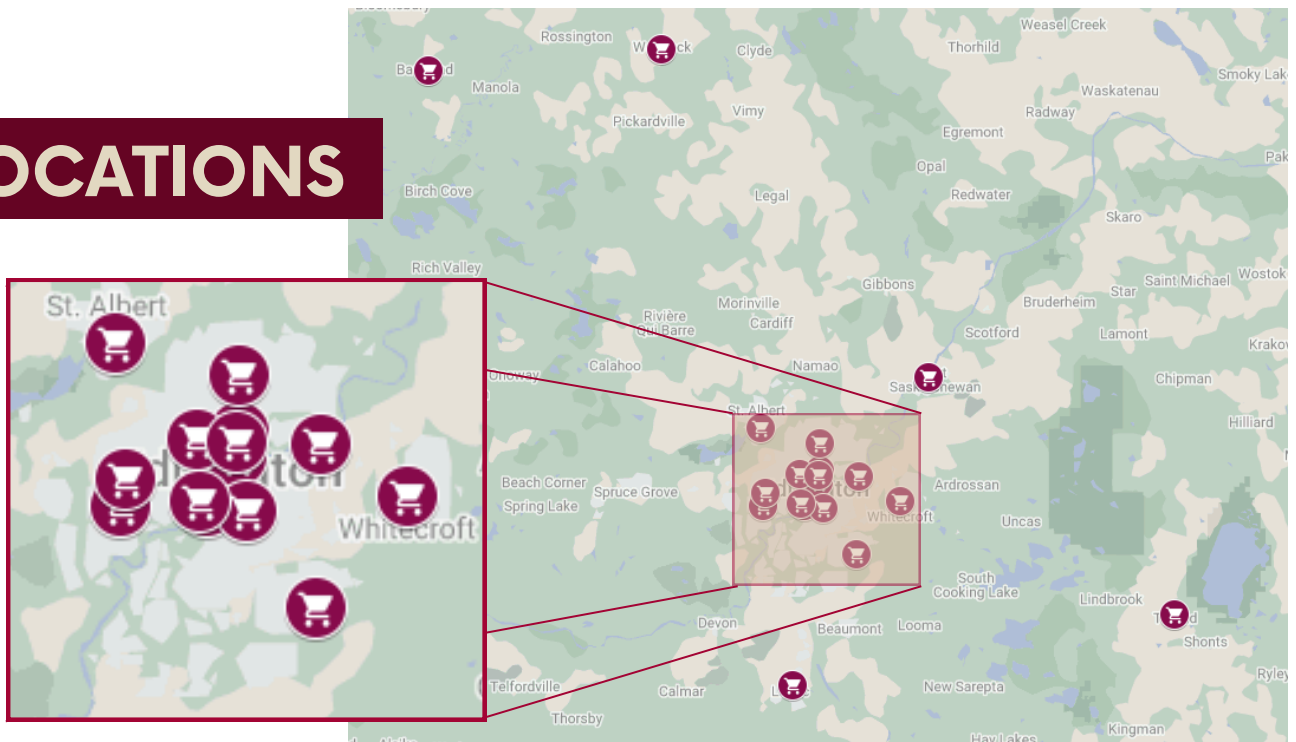
DEPOTS

- Dickinsfield
- Sherwood Park
- Jasper Place
- McCauley
- Fort Saskatchewan
- Barrhead
- Garneau (Bader)
- Beverly
- Strathcona
- Leduc
- University
- Millwoods
- St. Albert
- Alberta Ave
- Tofield
- Westlock
- Mayfield
- Stony Plain (opened February 2025)
- Kidney Foundation Liaison and Deliveries
- Sprucewood
- Prince Rupert (July 2024-September 2024)
- Abbotsfield (Closed October 2024)
- Gibbons (Closed October 2024)
- Terwillegar (Closed September 2024)



22 depots and liaisons at the end of the year in Edmonton and surrounding areas

LOCATIONS



COMMUNITY DEPOT PARTNERS

WECAN Food Basket Society is unique in the way that our community depots are ran within communities and organizations that are already involved within their communities. In 2024, these connections included, but are not limited to:



- e4c
- Columbus Academy, Stony Plain
- Kidney Foundation
- NorQuest College
- Churches
- Daycares
- Dickinsfield Amity House
- Campus Food Bank
- Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society
- Strathcona County Family Resource Network
- Barrhead & District FCSS Society
- Leduc & District Food Bank

Thank you to all our depots for the hard work and dedication it takes to serve your community members, and for leveraging the power of WECAN Food Basket Society to layer your support services to these members!

COMMITTEE REVIEWS

Finance & Audit



With the turnover experienced in the makeup of the board and of our committee, the first portion of the year was focused on review of current practices and procedures of the organization's finances and related items. In October, the committee finalized updates to the bookkeeper role and, with board approval began to implement changes to streamline and simplify the financial processes. In the second half of the year, the Finance and Audit Committee focused on updating the policies and procedures, completed the budgeting process for fiscal year 2026, and oversaw the compilation engagement of the external accountant.

Communications



In the 2024-25 year, the Communications Committee was successful in increasing its social media presence substantially! We now have regular order reminders, recipes and food tips, event acknowledgements, supporter acknowledgements, and a series of informative posts about WECAN. We have developed a branding guide for WECAN that is attractive and user-friendly. In the next year the committee will develop a communications plan with the goals of supporting depots, increasing WECAN's profile in the community, and engaging with donors.

COMMITTEE REVIEWS

Fundraising



The role of the fundraising committee for the WECAN Food Basket Society is to finance the administration of the existing program, all 22 depots, and to develop new depots in Edmonton communities and in adjacent Alberta towns. This involves staffing costs, office costs, website costs, financial tracking costs and communication expenses. We do this by sourcing grants that support WECAN's operations, organizing Casino events which funds some program and staff costs, and engaging in a variety of in person community resource fairs, food security networking groups and outreach activities by board and staff.

It's a significant responsibility to maintain WECAN and a body of work for each application, grant, event, or casino. Committee members applied for over 12 grants and were successful in a third of our applications. One important grant from ECF (Edmonton Community Foundation) assures continued funding for our administrative position. Overall, local foundations, City of Edmonton grants, and Alberta provincial grants provided substantial operating funds for WECAN.

Private foundations or industry funded grants available Canada wide, were competitive, and often exclude operational cost requests. These operational costs tend to be the majority of WECAN's funding efforts. Relationships with potential funders also offer financial support.

Our food supplier TGP, continues to support volunteer appreciation activities. Similarly, the fund-raising committee can create small local events such as raffles or 50/50's. These events usually require a creative volunteer to organize and to be successful a social media audience. We have developed social media strategies collaborating with our communication committee and hope to increase this area of potential fundraising.

Developing and updating our donor list and implementing a donor request mail-out is another current priority. WECAN added a donation option to the online ordering form for members. As well, Canada Helps provides a direct donation service for all Canadians, which they administer for a small fee. Casinos are an essential funding source for staffing and program costs. Our next Casino opportunity occurs in the second quarter of 2026.

Most importantly we are recruiting for new board or committee members with expertise and interest in fundraising activities. Overall, the past year was a great learning experience for new committee members ready with specific directions for the upcoming year.

COMMITTEE REVIEWS

Governance



This year the Governance Committee completed a comprehensive review of WECAN's bylaws. A comprehensive review of WECAN's policies is underway and will be completed over the next year. We had new policies to review from other committees, which were submitted to the WECAN board for approval. In the fall, a new strategic plan and operational plan was developed with the board and staff, which will support the future of WECAN through to 2028.

Human Resources



The HR Committee had a busy year! In September, our previous program manager Joshua left WECAN due to a move out of province. We were very fortunate to find our new program manager, Alyssa, who has been doing wonderful work in supporting our program and volunteers and reaching out to the community. The HR Committee spent time researching occupational health and safety protocols and proposed establishing an Occupational Health and Safety committee, which was approved by the board. The committee attended the ECVO Volunteer Fair in May, meeting with many new volunteers. Board orientation materials have been updated. This spring, the HR Committee has been recruiting for our Administrator position, after our previous Administrator, Mariam, moved on to new opportunities. This upcoming year the HR Committee will be reviewing and updating our HR policies and procedures, with the goal of ensuring WECAN is a welcoming and safe workplace for all our staff and volunteers.

COMMITTEE REVIEWS

Occupational Health & Safety



WECAN Food Basket Society established an Occupational Health and Safety Committee in 2025. Board members, staff, and volunteers of WECAN were briefed on and invited to join the committee in February. The committee will work over the next couple of years to create an Occupational Health and Safety Program, which includes an extensive list of policies, procedures, and resources to ensure worker safety.

Food Selection



The food selection committee focused on enhancing our practice by updating the workflow of food selection processes, including updated working sheets and selection meeting procedures. The committee was focused on keeping WECAN food baskets at high savings through changes in pricing and potential impacts of tariffs. Through member surveys we refocused on the priorities of high volume, variety in food selection, and keeping nutritious options while staying within the budget of \$15 for 3-6 selections of fruits and vegetables and \$20 for 2-3 selections of frozen meat. We continue to build and maintain our relationship with Edmonton Wholesale Market to bring consistent savings compared to traditional grocery stores to our members each month on selected items.

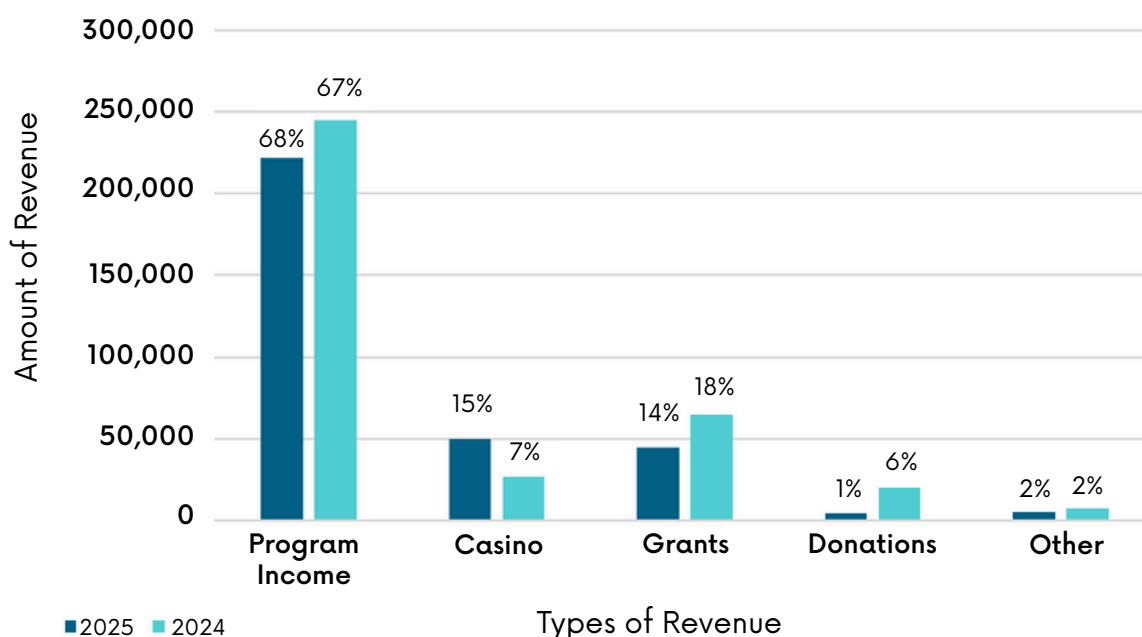
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

REVENUE

As in prior years, the majority of WECAN revenue (68%) came from program income - which consists of purchases of food baskets and membership fees. The remainder of revenue was from Casino, Grants, Donations, and Other.



WECAN Revenue (April 1st 2024 - March 31st 2025)



COST OF GOODS SOLD

Costs of Goods Sold is made up of purchases of food for the food baskets, supplies (bins, etc.), and overhead costs (printing, etc.).



WECAN's Costs Over 2024-2025

	2025	2024
Food Purchases	222,255	248,793
Other	2,105	2,110

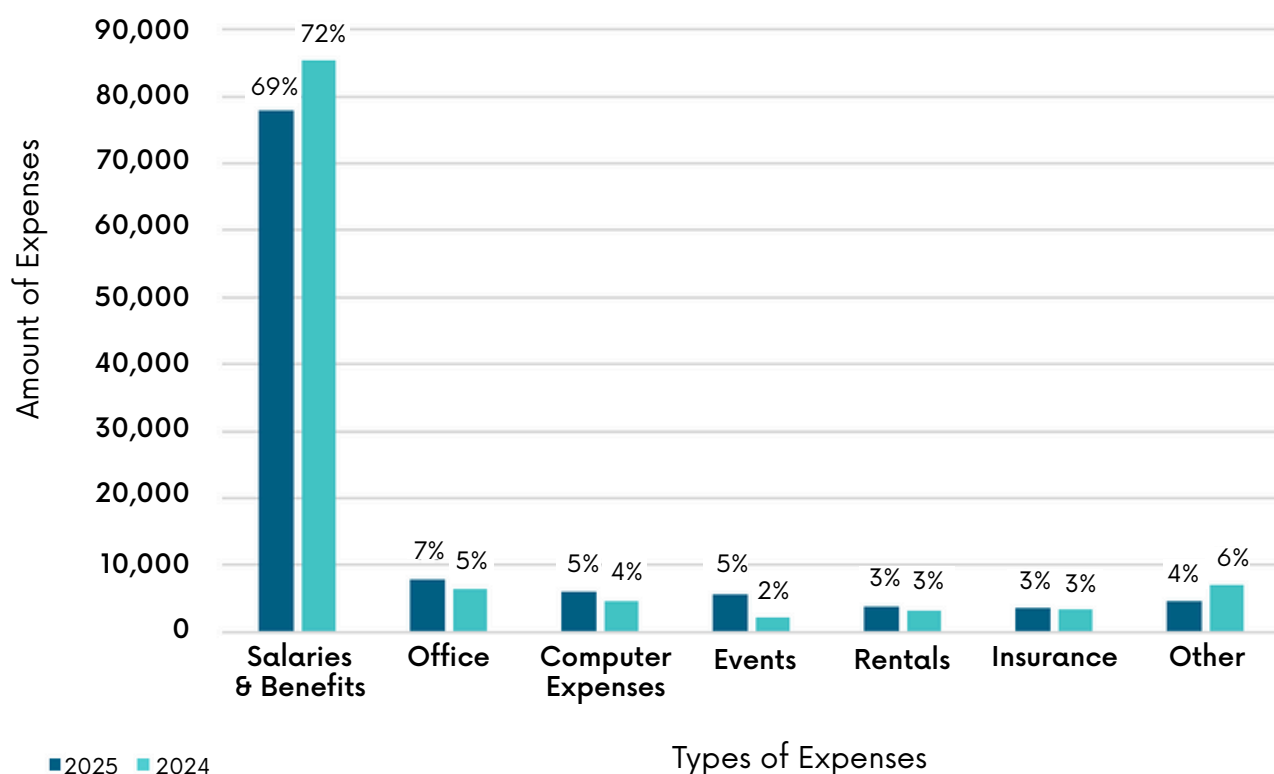
FINANCIAL OVERVIEW

EXPENSES



The majority of expense are related to Salaries and Benefits (69%) as shown in the chart below. Remaining expenditures include office expenses, computer expenses, events, rentals, insurance, and other.

WECAN Expenses (April 1st 2024 - March 31st 2025)



Note:

Other, includes professional fees, WCB expense, interest and bank charges, meals & entertainment, and advertising & promotion.

SPONSORS



- Jerry Forbes Centre
- Edmonton Wholesale Market
- Alberta Gaming & Liquor Commission
- Servus Credit Union
- 100 Women Who Care
- Government of Alberta
- City of Edmonton
- ATB
- Edmonton Community Foundation

**Thank you to our
sponsors, donors, and
partners that allow
WECAN Food Basket
Society of Alberta to
continue serving
communities!**

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

LAND



WECAN Food Basket Society operates in the Traditional Territories of many Indigenous Peoples, including Cree, Saulteaux, Niisitapi (Blackfoot), Metis, and Nakota Sioux.

We not only operate on the lands that have been used to sustain Indigenous Peoples for centuries, but we also are grateful for the depth of knowledge shared by traditional and cultural values that are incorporated into our foodscapes and WECAN's program such as cooperation, sharing, nutrition, celebration, and so much more.

Colonization negatively affected the traditional eating patterns, nutrition, and health status of Indigenous Peoples, ultimately leading to physical, social, economic, and psychological disadvantages, which is important to acknowledge as our work in creating affordable healthy food options for ALL is impacted and will continue to be impacted by these historical events.

APPRECIATION



**Thank you to everyone who makes
WECAN Food Basket Society of
Alberta possible, so that,
together, we can all eat!**

CONTACT

WECAN FOOD BASKET SOCIETY OF ALBERTA

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✉ info@wecanfood.com

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📘 @WECAN Food Basket Society

📷 @wecanfoodbasketociety

📍 Jerry Forbes Centre
12122 68 St NW, Edmonton

> TUESDAY - FRIDAY
from 9:00 am to 2:00 pm



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