



WECAN
Food Basket
Society

STRATEGIC PLAN

2024-2028





LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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.



Who We Are

The WECAN Food Basket Society Believes in Healthy Food for All.

We believe every person has the right to enough nutritious food to live a good and healthy life. WECAN is focused on accommodating people with fixed incomes who are struggling at the end of each month to provide enough healthy food for themselves and their families.

The Bulk Buying program is designed to replenish the refrigerator during the month's third week when food and funds are in short supply. Orders are prepaid so members need only go to their neighbourhood depot to pick up their order.



Who We Are

How We Started

After speaking with members of the communities where they worked and lived, City of Edmonton Social Workers, Cathy Vereyken and Alicia D'Elia, realized that families and individuals needed a way to ensure that fresh and nutritious food could be available near the end of the month when finances were running low.



From this small grassroots initiative which started in 1993, the program has grown to include over 20 depots in Edmonton and the surrounding area, serving over 1000 families today.

Who We Are

Who We Serve

Our members are often on a variety of pensions, disability benefits, or monthly pay periods or those with limited incomes. Food is often the necessity in household budget with the most flexibility, so a prepaid model ensures that it is one of the first monthly expenses, not the last.

20 depots are currently hosted by churches, parent link centers, tenant buildings, community leagues, and daycares throughout Edmonton and the surrounding area.



Who We Are



Our Strategic Plan

In October 2024, the board and staff of WECAN Food Basket met to spend a day talking about the future and purpose of WECAN. They discussed the need that WECAN fills in the Edmonton area, how WECAN can continue to meet the need of the communities in Edmonton and surrounding area and made plans for WECAN's future. This strategic plan was developed from those conversations and looks toward WECAN's future, through to 2028.

Our Mission, Vision, & Values



Mission Statement:

WECAN Food Basket Society builds a community of volunteers that uses the power of bulk buying to provide our members with healthy food baskets once a month so that together we can all eat.



Vision Statement:

WECAN Food Basket Society believes every household should have access to enough food to meet their nutritional needs for a good and healthy life.



Values Statement:

WECAN Food Basket Society decisions are guided by the values of Respect, Community, Empowerment, Inclusivity, and Integrity.

Values

taking a closer look



Respect

WECAN believes every person has a worthwhile contribution to make. Membership is available to anyone, and members are valued and treated with respect and appreciation.



Community

WECAN connects with local communities to be accessible to our members. We create connections within communities to build relationships and work towards our common goal of food security.



Empowerment

WECAN supports the ability of people to take steps toward greater food security for themselves and their families.



Inclusivity

WECAN strives to make it easy for people to access healthy and nutritious food. We value the diversity of WECAN members and invite people of all cultures, abilities, and identities to participate.



Integrity

WECAN commits to doing what is right, practicing transparency and honesty, and following through on our commitment to providing healthy and nutritious food to our members.



Food Security

Two key strategies form the foundation of WECAN's model to increase food security for our members- bulk buying and pre-paying. Bulk buying allows WECAN members to pool their resources and leverage their larger buying power to purchase food at warehouse prices and lower their individual grocery bills. Pre-paying allows our members to spend the funds on groceries close to the beginning of the month when resources are more abundant and receive the food near the end of the month when resources are less. This model has been operating since WECAN began in 1993 and has made a difference in the lives of WECAN members to access frozen meat and fresh produce locally in their communities for affordable prices.

Outcome:

WECAN will empower our members to increase their food security and purchasing power through leveraging the advantages of the pre-paid, group purchasing model.

This will be done by:

- ▶ Increasing the demand for bulk buying through increased membership and consistent member participation in monthly orders.
- ▶ Negotiating mutually beneficial relationships with suppliers.
- ▶ Creating communications materials that tell WECAN's story and demonstrate the value WECAN brings to the community and the impact it has for our members.



Community

WECAN Food Basket Society has been rooted in community since its inception in 1993, when the program was developed to meet the needs of community members. Community depots allow members and volunteers to meet, connect, and form a community to make a difference in their local neighbourhood.

Outcome:

WECAN will have a network of thriving community depots where members and volunteers can meet, distribute food, and participate in their communities.

This will be done by:

- ▶ Developing depot locations throughout Edmonton to be locally accessible to the members.
- ▶ Connecting depots to their local neighbourhoods and communities through targeted, depot specific outreach.
- ▶ Increasing connections amongst volunteers by creating spaces for volunteers to connect and collaborate.



Sustainability

WECAN has been in operation for over 30 years and has been resilient through many challenges over the years, such as inflation, recession, changes in funding opportunities, and a global pandemic. Much of that resilience comes from WECAN values and a commitment to sustainability.

Outcome:

WECAN will have diverse funding streams for financial sustainability and operate the program with transparency, accountability, and integrity.

This will be done by:

- ▶ Ensuring WECAN's actions are aligned to our mission, vision, and values.
- ▶ Maintaining relationships with current funders while exploring new revenue opportunities, such as developing a donor and sponsorship program, pursuing grant opportunities, and hosting community fundraising events.
- ▶ Creating a culture of excellence for governance, human resources, and financial procedures.



CONTACT US

☎ 780-413-4525

✉ info@wecanfood.com

🌐 www.wecanfood.com

📘 @WECAN Food Basket Society

📷 @wecanfoodbasketsociety

📍 Jerry Forbes Centre
12122 68 St NW, Edmonton

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



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