



OTTAWA VALLEY FOOD CO-OPERATIVE

Annual Report For 2023



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A MESSAGE FROM THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Thank you for your continuing support to local food, local farmers, and local producers! We could not do it without you and our dedicated team of volunteers. In 2023, we celebrated 15 years in business as the Ottawa Valley Food Cooperative (OVFC)!

This year, we continued to focus on efforts to increase our outreach and marketing. While inflation and food prices remained high in 2023, we continued to meet demand for locally produced and grown products. We were also able to host and participate in some local events and fund raisers which helped us to generate revenues and market the OVFC.

Our move to a new sorting depot in September 2023 is allowing us to better meet our distribution needs and provides us with access to an event and meeting space.

We continue to look forward to supporting the growth of the local food market in the years to come!



Janice Bell
President, Board of Directors, OVFC

OUR MISSION and VISION

To connect local producers and consumers through a marketing network in the Ottawa Valley for locally grown or processed foods and other locally made products.



We support our mission and vision by providing farm-to-neighborhood access to local food and products, benefiting the local economy, building food security and sustainable agricultural practices.



We inspire healthier, economically viable communities by connecting people to real food and products.

HIGHLIGHTS OF 2023 AT A GLANCE



5

outreach /
fundraiser events

50+

volunteers

10,200 +

products
delivered

29 new

consumer
members

2,600

follows on
Facebook

4 new

producer
members

PROGRAM UPDATES

In addition to continuing to provide local food and products to our members, we participated in local events to help raise funds and build awareness of the benefits of local food to consumers, producers, the environment and to the local economy. Some examples:

Harvest Soiree



We celebrated the autumn harvest with a dinner at our new distribution centre in Eganville. Guests enjoyed a fabulous meal prepared by Chef Paul Brennan and enjoyed entertainment provided by Jon Park-Wheeler

Farms Open

We organized our second Farms Open event for Renfrew County. Visitors were treated to all kinds of interactive experiences including adorable baby goat-holding, sheep-petting, pig-naming, taste-testing, and the opportunity to buy products grown and created by OVFC producers. Hundreds of visitors visited the 12 participating sites



Seedy Sunday

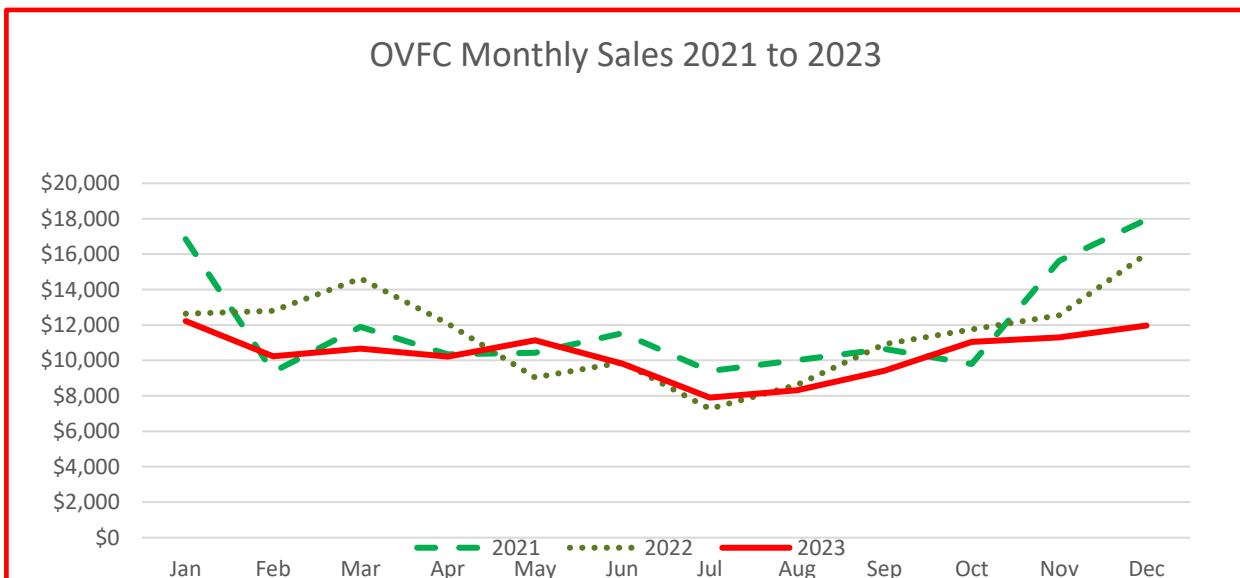


Chef Tristan Hertzog and students enrolled in the Hospitality Tech Program at Fellowes High School Pembroke, were invited to prepare a menu of hors d'oeuvres sourced using ingredients from members of the OVFC. The delicious treats were offered free of charge to attendees at Seedy Sunday, sponsored by the National Farmers Union. It was a perfect opportunity to showcase the great products available from the Co-op, literally connecting the dots from seed to fork.

OUR FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS

We finished the year with a small operating loss. Our orders and memberships this year were slightly lower than 2022 and our costs for rent, banking fees, mileage and supplies all increased. We held a number of events that helped us offset most of our delivery day operating costs. For 2024 we will need to focus on increasing revenues while continuing to manage our costs.

Statement of Operations: Revenue/Expense Dec 31 2023				Statement of Financial Position 2023		
		<u>2023</u>	<u>2022</u>		2023	2022
Revenues				ASSETS		
	Operating \$		Operating \$	Cash	\$11,181	\$9,363
Revenue from Operations				Accounts Receivable	\$522	\$165
Order Commissions	\$24,354	\$25,977		Prepaid Expenses	\$570	\$570
Membership	\$2,000	\$2,700			\$12,273	\$10,098
Donations	\$1,156	\$3,243		LIABILITIES		
Event Revenue/Other	\$5,278	\$100		Accounts Payable & Accrued Liabilities	\$2,622	\$264
Operating Revenue	\$32,788	\$32,020		Deferred Contributions - Grant/Donations	\$2,309	\$2,309
Grants/Cost Sharing		\$17,560		Deferred Contributions - Gift Certificates	\$300	\$0
Total Revenue	<u>\$32,788</u>	<u>\$49,580</u>			\$5,231	\$2,573
Expenses				FUND BALANCES (Equity)		
Delivery Day/Operations	\$26,466	\$27,576		Retained Earnings		
Other Activities & Events	\$2,481	\$22,634		Retained Earnings (Previous Year)	\$7,525	\$12,976
Administration	\$4,324	\$4,821		Current Earnings/(loss)	-\$483	-\$5,451
Total expenses	\$33,271	\$55,031		UNRESTRICTED NET ASSETS	\$7,042	\$7,525
Excess of Revenues Over Expenses	-\$483	<u>-\$5,451</u>		TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY		
					<u>\$12,273</u>	<u>\$10,098</u>



OUR TEAM

Our Volunteers

There were over 50 volunteers who helped out the OVFC in 2023. Most worked at the distribution locations. Others drove, wrote, helped us to move, managed volunteers and coordination and managed our social media.

Our Board of Directors

The board of directors was made up of 10 directors in 2023 as follows:

Producers

- Janice Bell (president)

Consumers

- Michael Bashford (vice president)
- Perri-Rae Boell
- Nicole Brennan
- Ashleigh Anne Cluff
- Lynne Epps
- Dianne Isaacs
- Joanne McManus (treasurer)
- Cameron Montgomery
- Cheryl St-Elier
- Chris Tanner (secretary)

Our Key Support and Donors

Cheryl Keetch (Coordinator)

Natalie Robinson (Facebook Marketing and Communications)

Connie Matthews-Cull (Newsletter)

Lynn Epps (Volunteer Coordinator)

Perri-Rae Boell, Co-operators Insurance (Donations)

Without the tremendous commitment from our volunteers, board and staff the OVFC would not be possible. It really is a team effort!

A special shout out to Perri-Rae Boell/ Co-operators Insurance for her generous support to Farms Open and other OVFC activities



WHAT'S AHEAD



We expect to continue to grow and support the local food movement in the Ottawa Valley. Our sales platform is enabling us to better serve members and we continue to look for opportunities to partner and grow within our community. The current economic conditions and high prices for food may hinder our growth in the short term.

Farms Open Day – Ottawa Valley Agri-tourism

The purpose of this event is to bring more value to OVFC members, promote local food, improve education about agriculture and artisanal foods and to take advantage of the desire for urban people to have “Earth Day” on a farm. Based on the success of the 2022 and 2023 events, we are looking to develop a formal plan to continue this event on an annual basis. Strong support has been offered from the County of Renfrew Economic Development Office, Ottawa Valley Tourism Association, the National Farmers Union, and others and we are looking to expand the number of participant farms and increase the number of participant visitors.

Community Outreach/Events

Building relationships with community and wellness partners will help the OVFC be more socially engaged and gain visibility as an organization that is an integral part of a local food system. This may include farm to fork dinners, an on-line auction, cooking demonstrations, OVFC product sampling and other outreach activities.

Update Our Strategic Plan

We will work on our 5 year strategic plan and explore opportunities such as:

- Expansion of delivery area and delivery methods
- Continuing to expand our product line
- Looking for ongoing partnerships and grants
- Survey consumers to determine ongoing and future needs

We look forward to continuing to meet the needs of both our consumer and producer members in 2024!



THANK YOU!

From the beginning, it's been our mission to support local farmers, producers, consumers and our local communities. We strive to provide consumers with sustainably grown/made, ecologically friendly and healthy products.

Today, thanks to our incredible community of generous volunteers, producer members and consumers, we are continuing to support the needs of local consumers. From our first delivery day in March 2008 we have grown from a handful of members to the success story that we are today.

We are grateful for the lessons we've learned over the years that make us stronger today. And we are more determined than ever to see the day when everyone, everywhere, has access to locally produced sustainable, eco-friendly foods and products

Here's to the next 15 years!

