

# Fresh Routes Mobile Grocery Store

*Improving Food Security in Edmonton*

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“All people, at all times, have **physical** and **economic access** to **sufficient, safe, and nutritious food** to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an **active and healthy life.**”

(Food and Agriculture Organization [FAO] 2008)

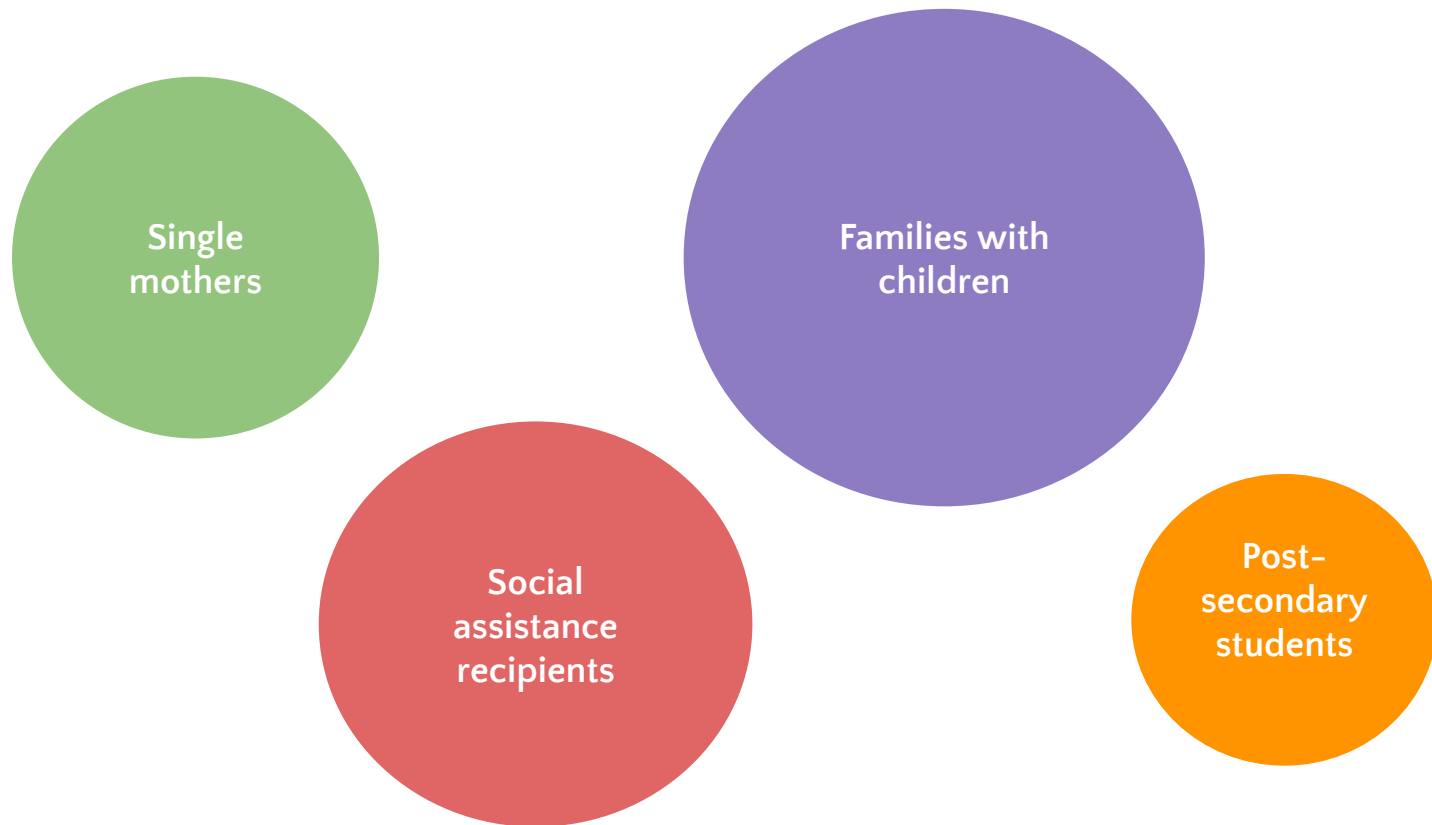
Despite Canada being one of the wealthiest countries in the world, **4 million Canadians** (1.5 million **children**) are experiencing **food insecurity**\*.

*\*limited or inadequate access to food due to insufficient finances.*

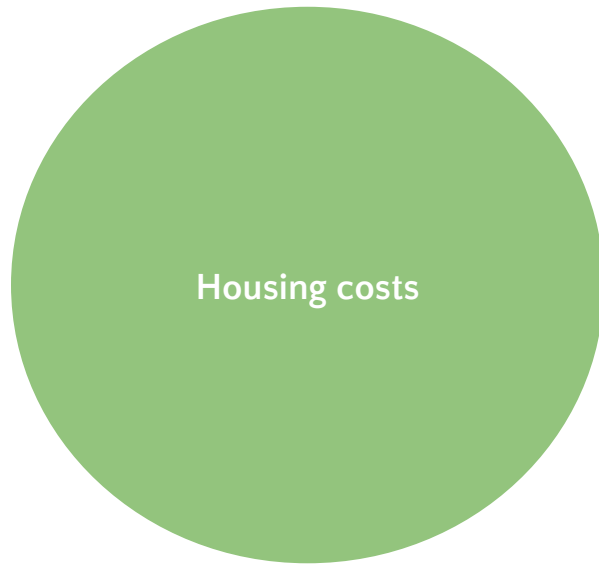
(FAO 2016)

- Negatively impacts physical, mental, and social health
- Results in **chronic health conditions**
- Costs our **healthcare system considerably**

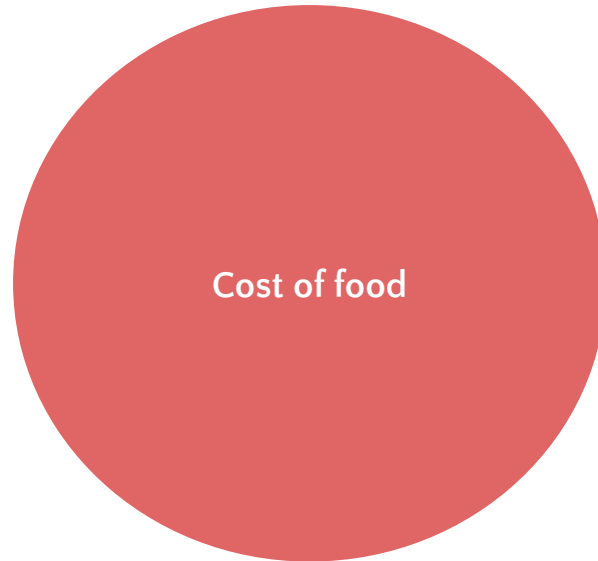
(PROOF 2018)



(PROOF 2018)



Housing costs



Cost of food

(PROOF 2018)

## So, what is a Mobile Grocery Store?



Fresh Routes Mobile Grocery Store

# Social Enterprise: A Model for Change

A social enterprise is a revenue generating business which aims to achieve social, cultural, community economic, and/or environmental outcomes while also generating revenue.

(bc centre for social enterprise, 2019)





## Objectives

- 1) Increase access (financial, geographic, educational) to fresh, high-quality, culturally-appropriate foods.
- 2) Reduce social isolation and increase a sense of belonging in communities.
- 3) Enhance food literacy and skills.



# Increasing access to food

- **Financial access.** \$10 will purchase enough food per week for one person (~60% discount).
- **Physical access.** Bring food directly into community to bridge the gap for those struggling to access grocery stores due to physical restrictions, lack of transportation, and/or the presence of a food desert.
- **Educational access.** Partnerships with community organizations to integrate programming around food skills and nutrition.



# Increasing access to food

- **Sustainability.** Social enterprise model allows us to generate revenue (not dependant on ongoing grants and funding).
- **Reliability.** Weekly operation means people can rely on this service to replace other food access methods.
- **Dignity & Empowerment.** Offering a hand-up rather than a hand-out; people get to *choose* the foods that they want to eat, and then *purchase* that food within their financial means.



## Stories of Success: *Food Access*

One senior reported that she used to rely on eating at A&W for most of her meals since there were no other options close to her home.



Now, she purchases nutritious food through the Mobile Grocery Store in her community every week!



# Reducing Isolation & Building Community

- **Collaboration.** Strong emphasis on partnerships with existing community organizations (programming, outreach, awareness of other services).
- **Everyone is Welcome.** Vibrant spaces for people from all walks of life to gather and connect each week.
- **Participation.** Each location engages local community members to participate as volunteers (3 per site); they receive \$15 voucher to purchase food each week.



# Stories of Success: *Building Community*

Examples of community-building include:

- Reports from seniors that participation has made them feel like they *were part of a community* again by helping them meet their neighbours.
- High volunteer engagement levels (excess of volunteers, always asking about about sales and turnout).
- Purchasing groceries for other community members when they cannot make it out.



## Stories of Success: *Building Community*



**Fresh Routes Mobile Grocery Store**

## Learning from Calgary

- **Pilot funding.** City of Calgary, host locations, community partners.
- **Growth.** In May 2018 we started with 4 locations per month and this grew to over 60 locations per month by May 2019.
- **Demand.** High demand among low income housing, post-secondary and indigenous communities as word spread.
- **Profitability.** Average market transaction is \$9.45; over ¼ million in sales over 11 months.

*Now, it's time to expand into Edmonton!*





# Operations: Collaboration is key!

Fresh Routes is responsible for:

- Owning and managing mobile grocery store
- Managing staff and volunteers
- Working with community to develop evaluation plan
- Providing market data to community



# Operations: Collaboration is key!

Community Partners (host locations) are responsible for:

- **Location.** Provide reliable weekly location.
- **Engagement.** Dissemination of marketing materials; reaching vulnerable individuals; identifying volunteers.
- **Pilot Funding.** Can be collaborative across partners.
- **Feedback.** Act as liaison between Fresh Routes and community.
- **Collaboration.** Engage other organizations and services within the community to provide programming and outreach at markets.



## What's Next?

- Confirming locations and schedule
- Securing pilot funding for each location
- Preparing the community (volunteers, awareness, stakeholder engagement)

*Launch September 24, 2019!*





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# Thank you!

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