

the
RAW CARROT
peeling for change



**TOGETHER,
WE'RE GROWING
STRONGER**

Gratitude Report 2022

A Year of Building a Stronger Foundation

*"I would say I witnessed
growth in my staff in
teamwork and leadership."*

— Amberly MacLachlan

The Raw Carrot Kitchen Manager,
Innerkip Presbyterian Church,
Innerkip, Ontario



Growing a Business as a Force for Good

“Forget the former things; do not dwell on the past. See, I am doing a new thing! Now it springs up; do you not perceive it?” (Isaiah 43:19, NIV).

Thanks to your faithful support during the preceding pandemic years, we’re gaining momentum again and see a season of rejuvenation springing up right before our eyes.

In this gratitude report, we will show you all the ways your generosity has helped us grow. You will recognize that despite the challenges of the last few years, and a 40% drop in soup sales during Covid, your commitment helped us exceed our targets, selling close to \$200,000 worth of soup—all handmade by our dedicated Raw Carrot staff, who benefitted from a 10% increase in staff hours. Thanks to the unwavering support of our volunteers, donors and customers, we gained new ground by acquiring new equipment to accommodate all of this growth, hiring more staff, starting a new taste testing event, exploring new products, engaging in meaningful national conversations, initiating new corporate partnerships, considering new site prospects, and continuing to refine our delicious and popular handcrafted soups and coveted gift boxes. That’s a lot of new things!

Foundational to all of this growth is The Raw Carrot staff who are the backbone of our operations. That’s why over the past two years, we’ve been investing in growing our staff and volunteer capabilities so that our Headquarters can provide even more

support to our multiple sites. More support to meet the growing demand of our products means more hours for our loyal staff. We’re excited to spotlight a transformational story and other staff reflections in “Our Essential Workers” section of the report.

With a heightened interest in how the pandemic impacted people with disAbilities and mental illness, we saw the opportunity to expand our community engagement beyond church presentations. We participated in forums that address social justice issues affecting our staff with disAbilities and mental illness.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without all of you, our Raw Carrot champions—our committed supporters, donors and volunteers who co-laboured with us so that we could provide more work for our staff who inspire us to grow stronger each and every single day.

Thank you from the bottom of our hearts for encouraging us to flourish and see more opportunities springing up than ever before to advance our mission on behalf of people with disAbilities and mental illness in communities across Ontario. We look forward to continuing to grow alongside you in the coming year.



Rebecca Sherbino
Co-Director
The Raw Carrot Soup
Enterprise

Rebecca Sherbino at the City of Waterloo's Business as a Force for Good.

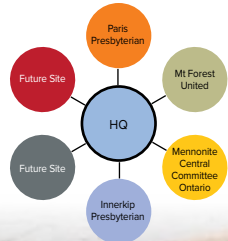
Hub-and-Spoke Support

Headquarters Nurtures New Growth

The Raw Carrot hub-and-spoke model means that the Raw Carrot Headquarters is intimately connected to all of the sites. Each year, we trial and test new initiatives to help all of the sites become more successful. We're continually seeking innovative ways to support our sites to become closer to full financial sustainability and accommodate rising soup sales. We invest in infrastructure, research and taste new products, ensure compliance with food safety regulations, improve our products (new soup stock this year!) and work to grow our sales and organizational visibility in Ontario—all motivated by wanting to create more jobs and more hours of work for all of our staff.

New Equipment

Thanks to The Rotary Club of Brantford - Sunrise, JP Bickell Foundation, the Samuel W. Stedman Foundation and an anonymous donor, we were fortunate to acquire a new walk-in freezer for our Paris Headquarters! Now our industrial freezer is filled with even more soup and new product development like our new Carrot Cakes.



New Product Development Exploration

The Raw Carrot Headquarters supports its sites in a number of important ways—all to benefit and strengthen our overall operations. From researching essential ingredients, like soup stock that provides the basis for all of our delicious soups, to our popular soup-of-the-month club, to new products that our customers are eager to try. We work hard to make it easier for our sites to focus on what they do best and what matters most—soup production, sales and staff training and development.



New June Taste Testing Event



What better way to learn about The Raw Carrot mission, sample new products and better understand what our discerning Raw Carrot customers have come to expect than to create a tasting event for them to enjoy!

Thanks to The Brant Community Foundation, we developed, tested and sampled and the results were...well, delicious! The stars of the show were: the “*Just the Right Sweet*” Carrot Cake, the “*Tangy/Sweet*” Apple and Caramelized Onion Chutney, the “*Cherries*



and Nuts” Granola and the “*Sweet with Heat*” Candied Jalapeños (Cowboy Candy). The top-rated products included the Chutney, the Cheese Biscuits and the Granola. We are now working to see how well these potential products work in our kitchens and if we have the margin to offer them ongoing.

Our loyal Raw Carrot customers are in for a real treat when we select the best ones to hit the shelves. So far, our Carrot Cake soft launch sold out when we offered it to our customers for Easter. The response was overwhelming so we plan to trial the production at other sites soon. But don’t take our word for it, see what our customers had to say:

“Oh. Gosh the carrot cake was the best I have ever had. Thank you so much!”

“Thank you so much for the delicious carrot cake!!

And the customer service I received when I picked it up was lovely!”

Back by Popular Demand— Our Raw Carrot Gift Boxes



After piloting our Gift Boxes in 2021, we continued to refine our product in 2022 with the generous support of The United Way and County of Brant. The gift boxes resulted in revenue of over \$11,000, with almost \$5,000 in profit that we were able to roll into more hours of work for our staff. The beautiful Gift Boxes were filled with locally curated items (including our delicious Raw Carrot soups of course!) and distributed to people in communities across southwestern Ontario. The Gift Box initiative provided 1,122 meals for our customers and an additional 100 hours of work for our Raw Carrot staff during the Christmas season.

Managers Training Event



Raw Carrot HQ with Kitchen Site Managers from MCCO, Innerkip Presbyterian Church, Mt Forest United Church and Paris Presbyterian Church.

Another way the Headquarters supports each site is by hosting a yearly managers training event. We believe there's strength in numbers and wisdom to be gained from our shared learnings. It's a time for all of the sites to gather, share, strategize and dream about how to grow the Raw Carrot Soup Enterprise and advance our mission on behalf of people with disAbilities and mental illness.

New Sites on the Horizon

While the pandemic definitely stalled new site initiatives, we're continually seeking new locations and partnerships. Thanks to the River Dali Foundation, we're excited to see new sites on the not-so-distant horizon are about to spring up. Be on the look out for announcements coming your way soon!



New Partnership Possibilities

The Raw Carrot is often approached by other like-minded disability advocacy organizations to consider creating new alliances to catalyze growth. As such we eagerly pursue every possible avenue for expansion to ensure we're growing in the right direction. We're hopeful and expectant to secure new partnerships in the coming year.

New Corporate Partners

One Donation, Double the Impact

The Raw Carrot's "Double Your Impact" Program has been a meaningful way to amplify good deeds by providing healthy meals for people in need while creating more meaningful employment for people who want to and can work—one donation leads to double the impact.

What better time of year

to stretch our giving than at Christmastime! We're grateful to local organizations like the Paris Canadian Tire whose generosity resulted in 85 pouches of soup, 255 meals to the local foodbank and more than 20 additional hours of work. Thanks to the Mount Forest Foodland, their generous Christmas



donations resulted in 300 pouches of soup, 900 meals to the local foodbank and 75 hours of work for staff.

Our Essential Workers



In Their Own Words

The Raw Carrot regularly engages with our staff to ensure we're growing along with them. Using a fresh and innovative interview approach, we conducted detailed staff evaluations and personal interviews. Since you, our trusted supporters, are the catalyst for our staff's transformational stories, we're inviting you to see for yourselves what they have to say about working at The Raw Carrot.

Strength in numbers:

- 32** Staff 
- 67** Volunteers
- 4121** Total Paid Hours
- 10%** Increase in Meaningful Employment

Highlights from Staff Conversations

When staff were asked about the impact that working at The Raw Carrot has made in their lives, their responses were overwhelmingly positive. The word cloud below captures the essence of what staff feel about working at The Raw Carrot:





Darrel thinks there's a lot of discrimination towards people with disabilities and mental illness and a false belief that they don't really want to work—that they're fine with just sitting around and getting a cheque handed to them. *"Working at The Raw carrot is actually allowing people to earn their own money. Because humans aren't meant to sit around and do nothing. We seem to actually get a lot of satisfaction out of creating or doing something or earning, rather than just having things handed to you because it kills your self-worth."*

"It's clear to see that the stagnation is no longer there, and I'm moving forward again

now. – Darrel.

Meet Darrel: He's Moving Forward Again



Staff Spotlight

Darrel believes everyone is meant to work whatever their capacity rather than just sitting around waiting for a cheque from the government. That's why he believes it's important that we find ways to provide jobs for people with disabilities and mental illness.

Darryl, 35, sustained life-altering injuries in an accident in 2004. Having broken multiples bones throughout his body, he suffered from debilitating chronic pain. He used to work with his father installing geothermal systems in houses. "I didn't get out much for over 10 years, it was a lack of interaction with people for years," he says.

In 2012, he developed yet another physical ailment that caused constant nausea and he couldn't do anything. With treatment he returned home and started to think about possibly finding a job one day. In the last 10 years working with a case worker, Darrel doesn't recall any suggestion he could look for a job. "It was more like here's a cheque that's never enough for every month and you can barely get by on," he says.

"I actually feel great most of the time now," Darrel says with hope in his voice, "I look forward to working every week, I just wish I had more shifts—specifically more days a week. I like the people, I like the job and doing something productive. It gives me a sense of normalcy to be working again."

Amberly MacLachlan is the kitchen manager at the Innerkip Raw Carrot site. She recalls when she first interviewed him and remembers thinking how hard it must have been for him to look for work after having been out of the workforce for over a decade.

"This is a story that relays growth," Amberly says, "Darrell has been very consistent, he jokes around now, he has more confidence and his demeanor has improved, his head is lifted up you can say." Amberly continues, "I would say I have witnessed growth for Darrel in both confidence and consistency."

Darrel reflects on his fellow kitchen staffers, "I see a lot of people who seemed to have been in similar situations to mine and they get here and they actually have a good time, and enjoy being here," he says, "When you've not been working for so long, or disabled, or struggling, to actually be here and enjoy it seems quite valuable to everyone I see, including myself."

Darrel's parents have been very understanding about his situation over the years, but they were worried about his future and how he would be able to support himself. "They're both happy that things are very obviously going in the right direction now. It's clear to see that the stagnation is no longer there, and I'm moving forward again now," Darrel says smiling.



Embracing Conversations on Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Thanks to our generous donors at The Charis Foundation, Westminster Foundation, Tenaquip Foundation and Brant Community Foundation, and the lifting of pandemic restrictions, we were able to broaden our community engagement capabilities beyond church gatherings.

Church Engagement



Community Engagement Manager Elena Haskell at church presentation.

We count it a distinct privilege to regularly share our Raw Carrot success story at church and community events. With the re-opening of the economy this past year, we were delighted to hit the road again with our soup coolers in tow, sharing our story and our delicious soup.

With each of our Raw Carrot sites and Headquarters participating in speaking engagements throughout the year, we cover a lot of ground, reach an ever-broadening audience and sell a lot of soup, which ultimately translates into more hours for our staff! Headquarters alone attended more than 10 speaking events, selling 1057 pouches of soup, amounting to \$10,573 in soup sales, and reaching out to close to 500 people!

We welcome any opportunity to speak at community events, church services or social gatherings whenever we can. Each time we're uplifted by the interest in our work and show of support through ongoing soup sales because people resonate with our mission to provide more jobs for people with disAbilities and mental illness.

New Impactful Conversations

One of the few positive outcomes of the pandemic was a growing interest in conversations about how people with disAbilities and mental illness were being impacted. We leaned in and asked more questions, engaged in more conversations than ever before on social media and featured highlights on a new website Advocacy page.



The City of Waterloo's "Business as a Force for Good"



Co-Director Rebecca Sherbino was invited to participate in The City of Waterloo's "Business as a Force for Good" to showcase how The Raw Carrot is meeting several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals to transform our world.

Opportunities like these remind us that we are not the only organization committed to doing this work. These forums reinforce how together we are reaching the broader goals of No poverty; Zero hunger; Good Health and Well-Being; Decent Work and Economic Growth; Reduced Inequalities; Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions.

We are a small organization but we are mighty. We continually strive to do our part to participate with other well-meaning organizations in meeting these important and transformative goals in the world. By removing barriers to employment and enabling people with disabilities and mental illness—who prove they have a desire and a capacity to work—to earn an income, we help them participate in life to the fullest.

National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM 2022)



The Raw Carrot joined the national conversation around employment (and dignity) barriers by participating in National Disability Employment Awareness Month (NDEAM 2022). Light It Up! For NDEAM 2022 is now a national movement. The Canadian Association for Supported Employment and Ontario Disability Employment Network (ODEN) have come together in a joint effort to create a movement that ignites a conversation about disability inclusion and employment. The National Disability Employment Awareness Month campaign looked at how disability inclusion is reshaping the nature of work now, and in the future. We engaged all of our staff and shared what it means to find permanent employment that provides community, income and dignity.

International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPwD)



At the end of the year, we participated in yet another event—International Day of People with Disabilities (IDPwD), a United Nations observed day celebrated on December 3rd each year to increase public awareness, understanding and acceptance of people with disability. This year's theme was *"Transformative solutions for inclusive development: The role of innovation in fuelling an accessible and equitable world."* Once again, we leaned in and engaged in more conversations than ever before on social media and featured highlights on a new website Advocacy Page.

Our Raw Carrot Champions

New Ways to Give

The Raw Carrot has been fortunate to have a faithful following of committed champions who advance our cause in countless ways. In this section, we'd like to highlight just a few champions who are making a difference through their generous support whether it be through volunteering, soup purchases, monthly giving or even leaving a legacy.



An Educational Assistant Continues to Make a Difference

Peg Dixon worked for the Hamilton

Wentworth District School Board as an Educational Assistant (EA) for 25 years. Many of those years were spent working with children with a variety of disAbilities. She's from Binbrook, a small community on the other side of Hamilton.

"As an EA you work directly with the students and you just love to see them succeed and of course you wonder how their lives turn out as they grow up," Peg says, "When The Raw Carrot spoke in church last year it was wonderful to hear that these people with disabilities were successful with the jobs they had. How rewarding for them and for everyone who has helped them."

Peg hopes all the children she worked with over the years had help like The Raw Carrot is providing through offering work. Her church is a regular supporter and plans to continue showing their commitment through ongoing soup sales. "It just touched my heart and I wanted to do something to help so I asked at the church if we

could do a soup sale," she says.

"What I like about The Raw Carrot is that you are supporting and training people with special needs to supplement their income and giving them hope, encouragement, skills, confidence, and they feel they are doing something useful because they are," says Peg, "Also, you are not just asking for money but giving us a quality and tasty product in return."



A Jewel of a Volunteer

Jewel Ross volunteers regularly at The Raw Carrot in Innerkip, Ontario. Now in her second year, she's willing to

volunteer every single day the kitchen is open for work. Her commitment and positive attitude have made an impact on the community.

Kitchen Manager Amberly MacLaughlan says Jewel is a wonderful asset to the Raw Carrot community and helps chop, cook, package, market and helps with anything. "She is cheerful and ambitious," says Amberly, "and another volunteer called her the second boss at one of her shifts."

Jewel fully supports the work The Raw Carrot's mission to provide work for people with disAbilities and has grown personally from the experience, "To be honest, I probably lacked a real understanding of what "non-visible" (invisible) disabilities looked like. Working alongside the staff has given me a bit more insight into the struggles that they deal with daily," she says.

Jewel recognizes that the positives staff experience working at The Raw Carrot far outweigh the challenges, "We all work well together and I believe that each staff member is made to feel that the part they play there really matters."

Since joining the team, Jewel's witnessed how staff and volunteers flourish on the job, "People who may have felt a bit apprehensive, or quiet at the start, soon become more relaxed and comfortable to join in the conversation and laughter that we all share there."

Jewel is thankful for her volunteer role, "This has been such a joy and blessing for me to be part of this wonderful community, and I am extremely grateful for The Raw Carrot and am happy to help out in any way I can."

In the News

The Raw Carrot is regularly featured in the local mainstream and other Christian media. It's always encouraging to read about the impact we're making in our communities and how readers further engage through letters to the editor.

Soup to Change the World

When the Canadian Mennonite paper featured a story about The Raw Carrot being sold at The Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) Christian Benefit Shop in St. Catharines, a reader responded with enthusiasm.

Soup to change the world

January 25, 2023 | [View](#) | [Thomas G. Jones, J.](#)
Marie St. Wimmer | Special to *Canadian Mennonite*
St. Catharines, Ont.



Comments

Submitted by Jan C. Steven on Thu, 2023-02-02 14:10

Greetings! I love everything about this article. The "everything" includes but is not limited to:

- Providing meaningful work.
- Using existing facilities.
- Hiring folks with disabilities and mental illness.
- Using locally sourced products as available.
- Having a variety of soups for a variety of tastes and cultures.
- Selling soups through MCC Thrift shops.

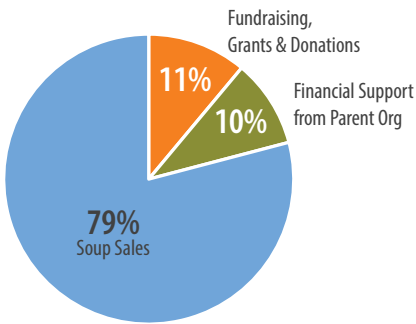


Four Communities, One Large Impact

The Raw Carrot operates using a hub-and-spoke model: The Headquarters supports the growth, vision, high level procedures and health and safety of all the sites, while the sites are owned and operated by partner churches and non-profits.

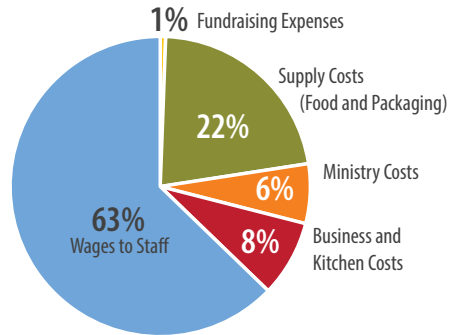
Income – This Is Where Our Money Comes From:

Raw Carrot Sites

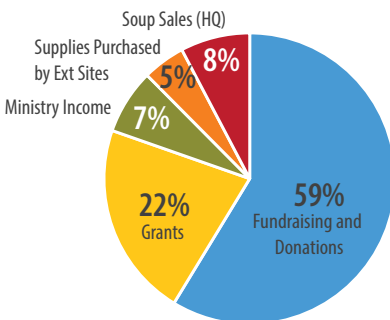


Expenses – This Is How Our Money Is Spent:

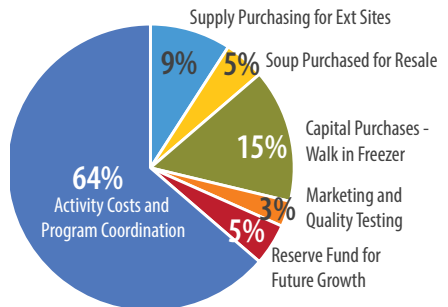
Raw Carrot Sites



Raw Carrot Headquarters

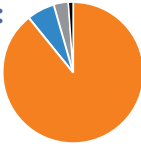


Raw Carrot Headquarters



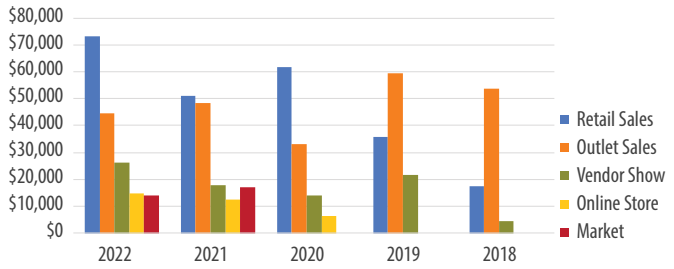
All Sites – More Info

Sales:

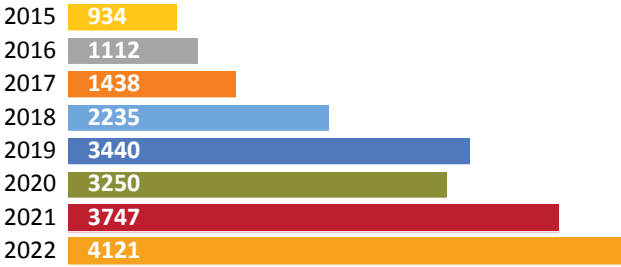


Soup Sales	\$172,644
Gift Boxes	\$13,431
Soup Club Membership	\$7,477
Merchandise	\$902
Total	\$194,455

Sales Distribution:



Hours Worked

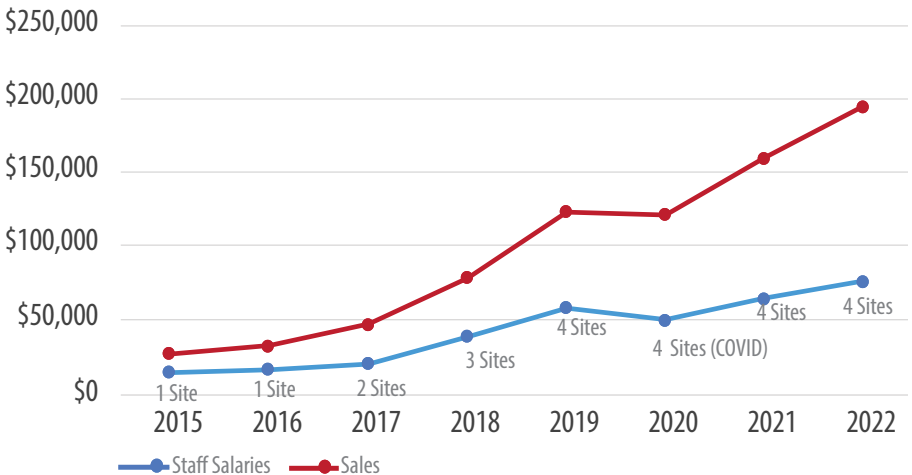


Staff

Sites

5.5	1
7	1
12	2
17.5	3
24	4
29	4 (COVID)
29	4
32	4

Staff Salaries Vs. Sales Income



the RAW CARROT

peeling for change



Let's Keep Growing Together!



Thank you to all of The Raw Carrot Soup Enterprise supporters!

Made possible by our corporate sponsors and the generous supporters, donors, champions and other anonymous donors too numerous to list.

The McCauley Family

Samuel W. Stedman Foundation



THE TENAQUIP FOUNDATION

FOODLAND

THE CHARIS FOUNDATION

Brant Community Foundation

Rotary Brantford Sunrise



Innovation Guelph



United Way Brant



J.P. Bickell FOUNDATIONS

Russell at The Raw Carrot in Kitchener is thankful for supporters like you who help make this work possible. Check out his story on our website.

To thank you for helping us grow, please accept this promo code from BigYellowBag: CARROT23 to help you plant "seeds of change" in your community!



This past year's accomplishments were possible because of the many remarkable partners, donors, supporters, volunteers and staff who believe in this cause.

We look forward to continuing to work alongside you to break down attitudinal and employment barriers for people with disabilities and mental illness.

