



SPRING 2024

NEWSLETTER



PETE'S PEN

2023 finished strong at Niagara Christian Gleaners (NCG) and we were once again humbled by all that the Lord is doing through NCG. Countless lives are being impacted through this ministry. A record 1,466,253 Kg (3,232,534 lbs) of fresh food was processed at NCG in 2023. This translated into 13.1 million servings of food aid which landed in 9 different countries, including Canada. None of this could be accomplished without the support of our army of dedicated volunteers. In fact, over 60,000 volunteer hours were needed in 2023 in order to transform all of this great, fresh produce into life giving nourishment for those who need it most. Praise God!

Our expansion project is moving along rather nicely. We certainly have a myriad of remaining details to attend to. It does feel like we are in the home stretch though, and we can begin to imagine in our minds what it will look like when the entire project is finally completed. The simple fact that we have been completely closed in and fully

connected to our existing building this winter has allowed us to make good use of the additional floor space. Our second floor mezzanine, although not completed yet either, is far enough along for us to begin storing some of our finished goods up and out of the way. On the horizon is the installation of our new and expanded holding room as well as the installation of our two new coolers and equipment. There are other production related changes in the works as well. We're excited about how our facility improvements and equipment upgrades will make a difference. Our desire is for our volunteers to have a safe and enjoyable experience as they serve at NCG.

We are always mindful of our operating expenses. With rising energy costs in particular, we are continually looking for ways to ensure that we are running our equipment as efficiently as possible. One significant upgrade has been the installation of a heat recovery system on Dryer #2. These recovery units are designed to capture available heat from our exhaust air and reroute it to our incoming air as a way of preheating the air before the air enters our dryers. We are

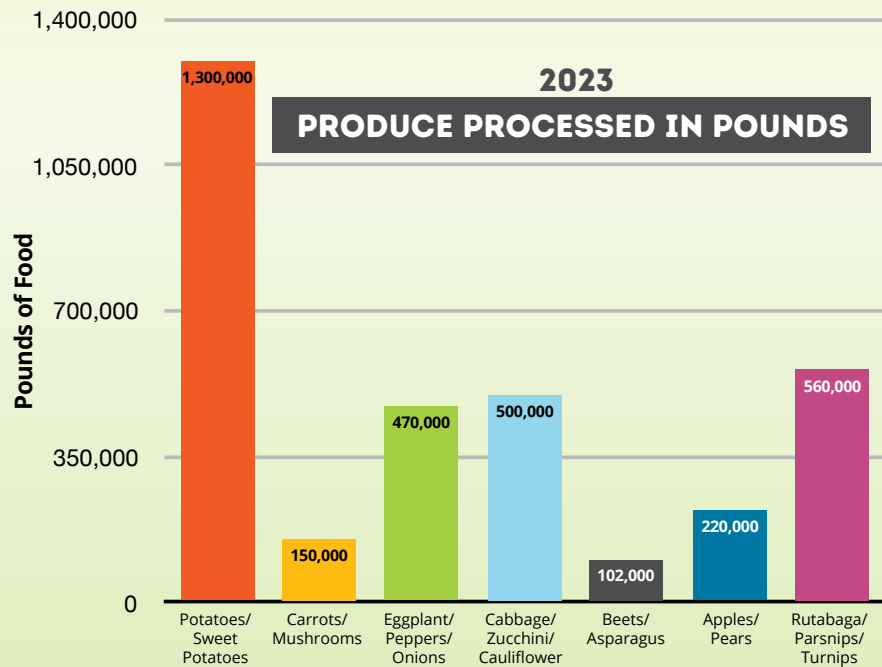
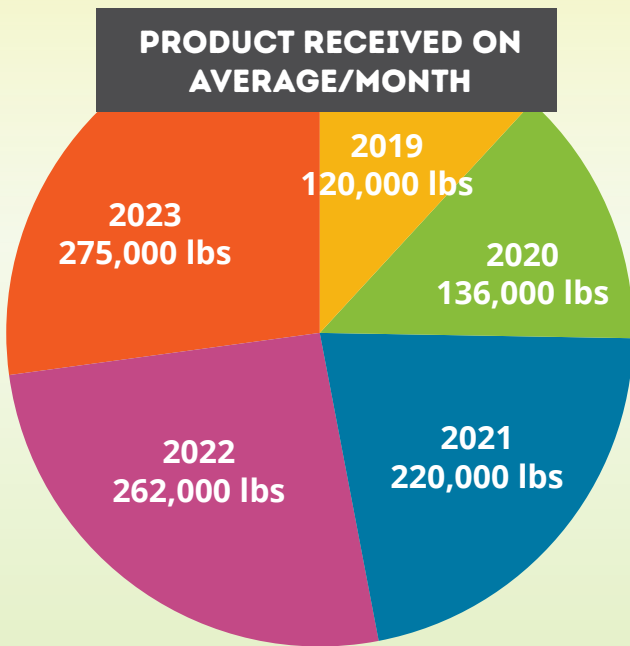
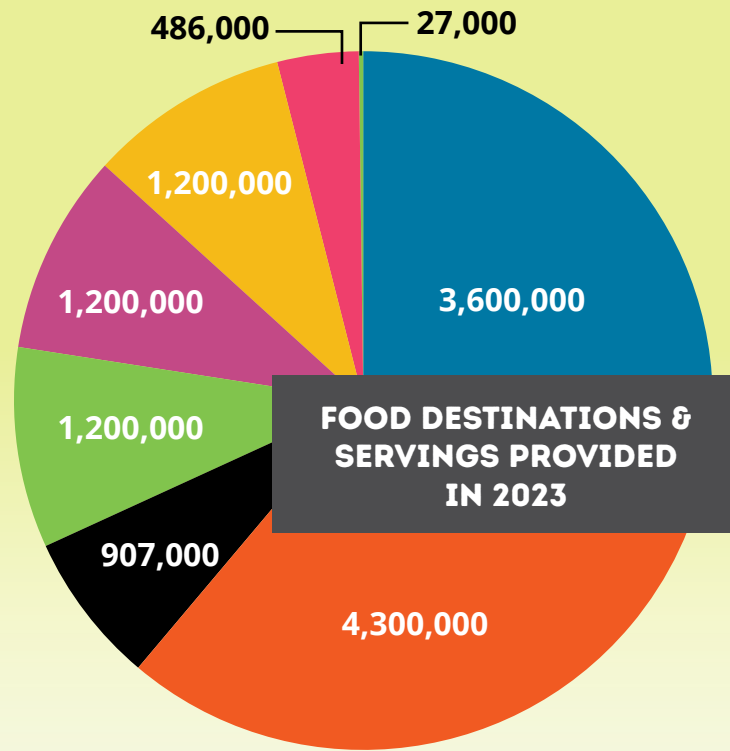
fortunate to be running two identical commercial food dehydrators which allows us to perform real time performance comparisons - one dryer with the recovery unit installed and the other dryer without. Almost immediately we noticed a significant efficiency improvement. We plan to complete a similar upgrade to dryer #1 soon. This is just one example of steps that we are taking to be wise stewards of all that is entrusted to us.



Good things continue to happen at NCG. If you have never checked us out, I encourage you to drop by on a weekday morning and see for yourself what we are all about. I am certain that you will be amazed.

PW

- Eswatini, Africa
- Namibia
- Ukraine Refugees
- Chad
- Romania
- Cuba
- Kenya
- Canada



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BOUNTIFUL BLESSINGS

FOOD RECIPIENT • CHAD

Chad is a landlocked African country in a region mired with conflict, making it the fifth largest refugee-hosting country in the world. Over one million refugees have fled to Chad to find a haven from the conflicts that plague their home nations. In April of 2023, conflict arose in Sudan. Within months, more than 850,000 refugees poured across the eastern border, many of them children, creating a humanitarian crisis and a massive burden on local agriculture and food systems. With this large influx of refugees, the number of hungry has risen to 2.1 million, with 1.3 million children facing malnutrition. Due to continued conflict across its borders, vulnerability to extreme weather events, and limited economic opportunities, the hunger crisis is only expected to worsen for all living within and near the boundaries of Chad.

With these expected numbers of hunger growing and fears over dwindling humanitarian aid resources, there is an air of defeat. As work continues, many are asking:

How are we going to feed so many?

How are we going to help them cope with the trauma that they have seen?

How do we bring help when it feels that all hope is lost?

The answer can be found in a hot bowl of Gleaners soup and 1 Kings 19:1-9.

Elijah, fearing for his life, had fled from Samaria into



the wilderness, alone, with only the clothes on his back. In the story, Elijah cries out to God, saying, "I have had enough, LORD ... Take my life, for I am no better than my ancestors who have already died" (1 King 19:4). This line may sound familiar. Many of those finding refuge in Chad have fled their homes in fear, with only the clothes on their backs. Many, like Elijah, feel frustrated, tired, and hopeless. And yet, God has not abandoned them. In 1 Kings 19, the story continues with God providing Elijah with a hot meal and rest, stating, "Get up and eat some more, or the journey ahead will be too much for you" (1 Kings 19: 7). The story concludes with Elijah mustering the energy to complete his journey, finding refuge at Mount Sinai.

So, what can we take from this story?

When all feels hopeless, when one is exhausted and fearful, the greatest ministry to body and soul can be a place to rest and a hot meal.

This simple hope and mission drove Samaritan's Purse Canada, through the partnership of the Niagara Christian Gleaners, to respond to the humanitarian crisis in Chad. In 2023, the Gleaners vegetable mix was included in 2,606 food kits providing meals to 8,335 people, with enough food to last each family several weeks. Our partner who distributed the food kits continued to meet with the families after the distributions to provide them with encouragement and spiritual nourishment.

Though this food aid is temporary, we pray that as these families enjoy a hot meal together, like Elijah, they will have the strength and endurance to move forward another day. Through the generous support of the Niagara Christian Gleaners, families facing trauma and hardship are being provided with a warm meal and the knowledge that God has seen their suffering and will give them hope to endure the journey ahead.



BOARD REPORT

With the start of the new year, there were several changes at the board level. Retiring board members are Pat Vander Wier and Arthur Struyk, while incoming board members are Donna Feddema and Martin Otten. We thank the retiring members for their input into the welfare of the Gleaners, and seek the Lord's blessing on the board with its decisions in 2024.

On a personal note, after serving as chairman for 6 years, my term as an NCG board member is coming to an end. Jack Smit has been elected as chairman for the coming year. I will still be part of the board meetings in an advisory role as past chairman for the current year.

Looking back from our start as NCG, it has been a great pleasure to work with so many diligent people in all areas of the organization as well as with our supporters, striving that all be done in service to our triune God. It is a privilege to serve in an organization that endeavors to love God and, in doing that, showing love to our neighbour.

Looking back at 2023, our growers stepped up to the plate again by providing us with an abundance of quality fresh produce. The Lord provided a bumper crop in many areas and these growers feel blessed to share their excess where it will do the most good in affecting human lives. Our volunteers also show up in increasing numbers, eager to participate in serving the Lord with their hands and minds, preparing from our abundance the nutrition necessary for those in need.

We also thank various area schools who provide a class of students on occasion to help with our production. It was indeed a delight to see the wonder and excitement in the eyes of a kindergarten class this past week and to see the youthful exuberance of a 6th grade class being channelled into more food for the needy. In the summer we see many grandparents with their grandchildren. Teaching our children to volunteer

from an early age is a blessing that will follow them through their entire lives.

Thank you to all our supporters, for providing support in prayer, in financial giving, in providing of your time for this kingdom work. We are grateful that the Lord continues to provide what is needed in every area of this organization.

Here at the Gleaners, so many show us not only their delight in using the work of their hands each morning, but also the gifts given in their hearts to share with those around them. It is a community of sanctified saints.

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning"
James 1:17

**Arthur Struyk,
Board Chairman**



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