



FACTUM

Food Support Organizations Report Growing Demand

One-Third Face Waitlists or Turn People Away

Toronto, Canada, October 7, 2026 — Nine in ten (89%) responding organizations in [*The State of Food Charity in Canada*](#) survey report that their location experienced an increase in the need for food in the past 12 months, according to an Ipsos survey conducted on behalf of Second Harvest. At the same time, 33% say their organization has a waitlist of people requesting support and services, with an average of 878 people waiting for assistance, and 35% report turning people away because of a lack of food or resources.

Growing Demand Leaves Organizations Under Pressure

Waitlists and service restrictions highlight the growing gap between need and available support. Among organizations that have turned people away, 41% estimate they have been unable to serve more than 50 individuals in the past year, with organizations reporting an average of 269 individuals turned away.

Second Harvest Supports Organizational Capacity

Responding organizations reported that, on average, 36% of the food available through their programs comes from Second Harvest. Most respondents agreed that Second Harvest helps their organization offer more food to program participants (91%), while 85% agreed that Second Harvest helps their organization save money.

Organizations Access Support Through Diverse Channels

Nearly half (49%) of responding organizations report that they do not access food or other supports through federal, provincial or regional food bank networks. Organizations participating in the survey included food banks and pantries, shelters, community development organizations, faith-based organizations, public institutions, and food recovery and redistribution organizations, among other organization types.





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About the Study

These are the findings of the Ipsos The State of Food Charity in Canada survey conducted on behalf of Second Harvest that was fielded between May 26 and July 13, 2026. A total of n=1,610 out of 2,468 Canadian organizations in Second Harvest's partner network participated in the survey, which was scripted and hosted by Ipsos and distributed by Second Harvest to its partner network, representing a 65% response rate. The findings reflect the organizations that responded to the survey.

For more information on this Factum, please contact:

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