

**Annual Report  
2020**

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## **A Word from the AFM Board Chair**

This past year has been a classic for “that was bad, but then, it was actually good”, Alberta Food Matters has encountered many such situations throughout 2020. We started out the year planning a school food symposium, which was good, but it was actually bad in a pandemic year; a lot of teachers were experiencing Zoom fatigue and didn't want to participate! We connected with many teachers who were running amazing school food programs, so that was good, but then it was bad, as the pandemic curtailed a lot of their programming. I won't go on any longer on the good but bad theme, you get my drift. I will say there were surprising benefits that came out of what many would call a terrible, horrible, no good, very bad year!

We made some really good teacher connections across our province last year. We connected with Farm 2 Cafeteria Canada, and Farm 2 School B.C. in a way that is moving us forward in a meaningful direction as our goals dovetail very nicely with what they have already been doing in connecting schools with local producers in the province of B.C. for years!

The pandemic shut down a lot of meetings, but AFM carried on without a hitch, as we have representation on our board from across the province and even as far away as Ottawa and Saskatoon, we have met virtually for years! The uptake of Zoom conferences was right up our alley, and we had a very successful fall working on hosting our virtual School Food Symposium!

Another great thing from last year was, due to the talent of our board members and our practicum student out of the University of Lethbridge, we gained a whole new skill set in hosting a conference! My memories of the terrible pandemic year are going to be forever rose coloured due to the amazing team experience we had on our Alberta Food Matters Board! So that was actually pretty good!

# About us

## Vision

*All people in Alberta have healthy food, as close to home as possible*

## Mission

Working together to foster leadership, relationships, and actions that reconnect people, land, and food in Alberta; Alberta Food Matters grows through community development, research and evidence-based approaches, policy development and skill building, educational projects, programs, and workshops.

## Values

- We value nature as the enduring measure, mentor and model: sustainable, equitable, locale-driven, regenerative and system.
- We believe successful actions and healthy food systems are built on relationships
- We value asset-based approaches that recognize everyone and every group has something to contribute
- We value equity: practices that are participatory and support open source sharing
- We value credible, evidence-based information and practices

# Achievements and Accomplishments for 2020

## **School Food Symposium**

AFM decided 2020 was the auspicious year to finally host the School Food Symposium we had been trying to plan for two years! This turned out to be bad, because teachers and healthcare professionals (who might have been really interested in a school food symposium), were so burdened with online Zoom classes and a health crisis of unimaginable proportions, that many cited Zoom-fatigue as a reason they didn't participate. But, conversely, it was good, as we developed a great deal more of a provincial network in the school food area than we had before. Out of the symposium, AFM developed a plan to continue with educating on school food through monthly webinars.

## **Practicum Student**

Alberta Food Matters was so pleased to have Zahin Mohammed come to us as a Public Health Practicum Student from the University of Lethbridge in the fall. Zahin jumped in with great enthusiasm as we organised our School Food Symposium for November. He developed a sponsorship package and successfully garnered financial support for the symposium. Zahin also did the evaluation of the symposium afterwards which was very insightful. Then, he undertook an evaluation of required Food Literacy in provincial curriculum documents across Canada as his Scholarly Project. It is an extremely useful document of the current literature on provincial mandated food education at this time. He has now joined our board and is working on grant funding for future projects. AFM has benefited greatly from working with a Practicum Student and is actively seeking to continue this kind of partnership with universities!

## **School Food Briefing Note**

Food Secure Canada connected with AFM to do an overview of many examples of school food programs currently being run in the province. Jamie's background in policy development was pivotal in creating a document to reflect what is happening in the province and to recommend suggestions to move school food programming to a more sustainable practice in the future. AFM received an honorarium from the production of that document.

## **Farm2Cafeteria Canada**

Following the School Food Symposium, Claire came to our Board with an interest in working on the Farm2Cafeteria Canada map of existing school food programs. Claire has undertaken to connect with schools across the province to encourage them to post their schools' food programs on the map, or, if they were unaware of the map, to bring it to their attention and perhaps assist them in publishing their programs. This is an ongoing partnership with F2C that AFM feels will help connect practitioners of school food and boost the impact of healthy foods in Alberta schools.

## **Communications**

AFM continues to improve its communications. Jamie and Gbemiro have been keeping our new website current and adopting changes to reflect an even more digital-age reality.

We also regained administrative access to the Growing Food Sustainably Alberta (GFSA) facebook group and have transitioned it to show AFM's leadership of this network. With its 1.3K users, it is quite powerful to use our facebook group to communicate both our projects and great stuff going on in growing food sustainably.

AFM also continues to release our newsletter on a quarterly basis. Since beginning the newsletter in winter 2020, we have reached 77 subscribers. The newsletter has been a great resource to promote AFM work, share what is happening across the province, and highlight the incredible work of our partners.

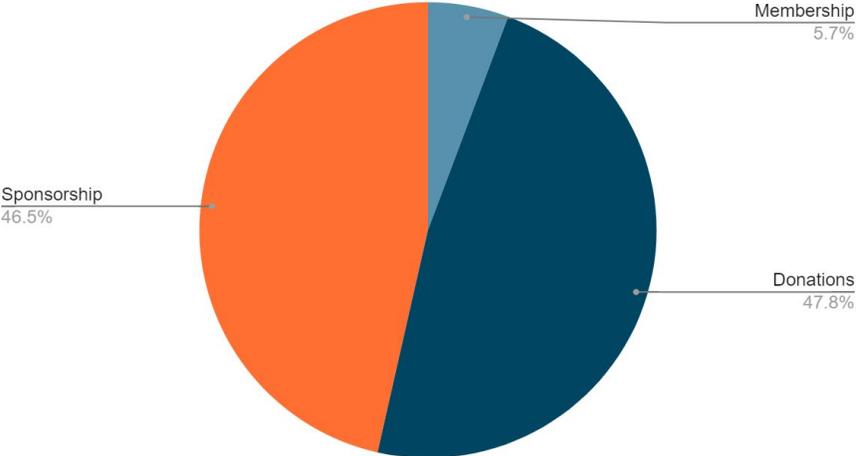
## **Strategic Planning**

AFM undertook a significant strategic planning project starting at the School Food Symposium in November and continuing on into 2021. The strategic plan to this point is a look at achievements and undertakings of AFM, and we are now at a place to look forward and enlist the talents of our new Board to keep AFM delivering on its mandate.

# Financial Report

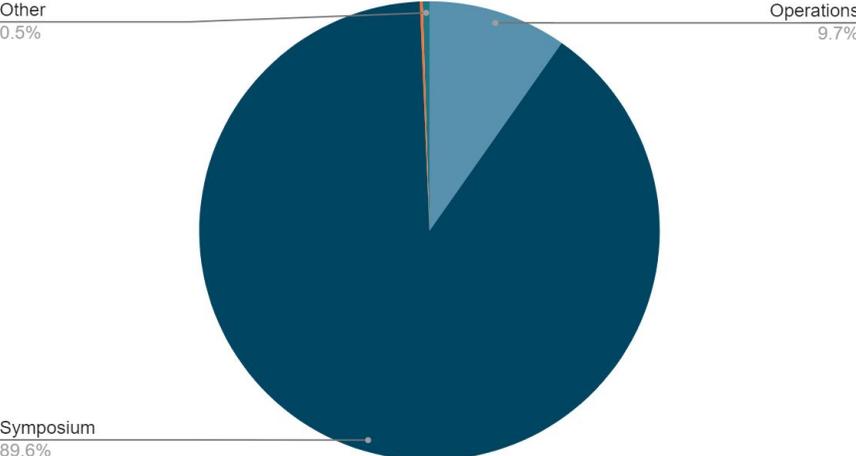
AFM continues to operate on a small budget with very few expenses due to the nature of being a volunteer Board. Total revenues for 2020 were \$2090.72 primarily comprised of donations (47.8%) and sponsorships (46.5%).

2020 Revenue



Expenses (\$10,573.20) exceeded revenues for 2020 due to the high cost of the School Food Symposium. However, profits from the last symposium were able to offset costs in order to maintain a reasonable operating budget for 2021 of \$2,384.19.

2020 Expenses



# Thank You

## Board Members 2020

- Wanda Laurin, Chair
- Gbemiro Adegbuyi, Vice-Chair
- Jamie Desautels, Treasurer
- Scott Hall
- Aleysha Christensen

Farewell to Jamie Desautels as she moves into her new life in Ottawa! She has been truly a dedicated and inspiring person to have on our AFM Board. Jamie has been a rock of dependability and vision. She has kept this Board organised (especially leading up to the School Food Symposium!) Jamie has set up the Treasurer position so that a new Treasurer can easily pick up and carry on. The Board of AFM wishes to thank her so very much for her phenomenal talent and drive. We wish Jamie all the best in her future ventures!

## Volunteers

Thank you to all those who have volunteered and helped Alberta Food Matters in 2020!

- Committee members Susan Roberts, Shelby Rowein , and Karli Ochitwa
- AFM Practicum Student, Zahin Mohammed, University of Lethbridge
- School Food Symposium Planning Committee (Wanda Laurin, Gbemiro Adegbuyi, Jamie Desautels, Susan Roberts, Shelby Rowein, Zahin Mohammed, Sandra Ciurysek)
- School Food Symposium Speakers (Kim Raine, Mary McKenna, Julie Fisher, Kathryn Wagner, Nicholas Hounsenga, Michael Lavorato, Neil Lamont, Kevin Van Lagen, Sarah Halton, Matthew Mitschke, Debbie Field, Daniel Neuman, Lorne Dach, Christian Wright, Scott McMillan, Daniel Chappell, Christiane Guilbeault, Claudia Bolli, Rachel Engler-Stringer, Shari Hanson, Marjorie Bencz, Annie McKittrick, Jaime White, Jesse Veenstra, Laura La-Valley, Alison Van Dyke, Scott Hall, Lindsay MacCharles, Clifford Gladue, Danie Martin, Erin MacDonald, Samantha Gambling, Debbie Madore, Jared Jorstad, Hyeyoung Joo, Kirsten Scmaus, Kelly Bickford )
- Strategic Planning Facilitator, Shari Hanson, Alberta Culture, Multiculturalism and Status of Women, Government of Alberta
- F2C Canada Mapping, Claire Kee

## **Donors & Sponsors**

Thank you to our donors who supported our School Food Symposium!

- AA Pediatric Medical
- O'Brien Institute from the University of Calgary

## **Partners**

### **Coalition for Healthy School Food**

Debbie Fields who has worked tirelessly with the Coalition for Healthy School Food to get School Food on the Federal Government's platform and to have them take action to ensure our school age children receive an universal and nutritious food program in this nation's schools. They have achieved their goal of getting it into the Federal Liberal's spring 2019 budget. The next step is to have all 5 federal political parties also make a nation-wide nutritious school food program part of their policy platform. The Coalition now has membership from across the country, coast to coast to coast. Debbie and Carolyn are truly doing an amazing job on this!

### **Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention (APCCP)**

The Alberta Policy Coalition for Chronic Disease Prevention (APCCP) consists of member organizations, including Alberta Food Matters, that work towards advocating for policy change to reduce chronic disease. In 2020, the APCCP's strategic priorities were affordable childcare and nutrition/physical activity in the childcare setting, social policy to reduce household food insecurity, policies that support active transportation, and investment in prevention. To advance their strategic priorities, the APCCP's leadership has met with provincial and federal government members, and released research and resources advancing chronic disease prevention efforts in Alberta. Dr. Kim Raine, the co-lead of the APCCP, provided the keynote address at AFM's School Food Matters Symposium and discussed how Alberta is doing when it comes to school food environments for children and youth in Alberta.

# **Looking Ahead to 2021**

## **New members**

We are excited to consider applications from people around the province who wish to join us in our vision, mission and values! Our website has the link to tell us about yourself.

## **Coalition For Healthy School Food - Alberta Chapter, lead by AFM**

AFM are gathering a vibrant school food group in Alberta. We are sharing information (best practices, school food ideas, government policy that reflects educating children on their food), and connecting food producers in the province with food consumers who are trying to eat local.

## **Floor display at conferences and events**

Gbemiro has the AFM with GFSA logo floor display and can relay it to members who are attending various events. Once we are again going to in-person gatherings. AFM may consider purchasing a new floor display with the new logo in the future.

## **Monthly AFM Board meetings**

The AFM Board has a monthly Zoom meeting to manage our activities and continue to share the activities of the board in their various agencies, and develop our School food arm.

## **Strategic Planning**

As mentioned above, AFM has embarked on a strategic planning visioning session. With a new Board, we are planning to schedule a final session with Shari Hanson to decide where we want to put our energy and time, both in the short-term (one to three years), and also the long term (five years and out).