



SPRING 2023

# NEWSLETTER



## PETE'S PEN

Grateful and humble are really the two best descriptive words we could use as we reflect on the mission of Niagara Christian Gleaners (NCG). We can honestly attest to the beauty of God's grace and mercy as He has seen fit to use NCG as a conduit of mercy in a broken world. Through the provision of amazing produce in 2022 we were able to prepare a record 13 million servings of dehydrated food aid. This was an increase of nearly 50% over 2021! Our food was shared globally in 10 different countries including war torn Ukraine. In fact, through the help of our amazing distribution partners we were able to send 4 million servings to Romania and Poland as they struggled (and continue to

struggle) to meet the desperate needs of fleeing Ukrainian refugees. We're thrilled to make such a tangible difference in people's lives and we appreciate our Christian distribution partners who use every means to share the hopeful news of the gospel with life sustaining nutritious food from the Gleaners.

Our volunteers are such an integral and valuable part of our ministry. When we say that we couldn't do this without them - we really do mean it. In fact, in 2022 alone our volunteers contributed 50,456 hours of their time and effort. This number only reflects our weekly production hours, yet, if we count the many hours that our board members, committee members, bookkeeper and transport drivers contribute, then the number would be much higher. Stated otherwise, our army of volunteers

contribute the equivalent of at least 25 full time employees! That's quite an accomplishment! The correlation between the sheer amount of food we process with the number of volunteers can't be understated. Every volunteer matters. We are grateful and we are humbled.

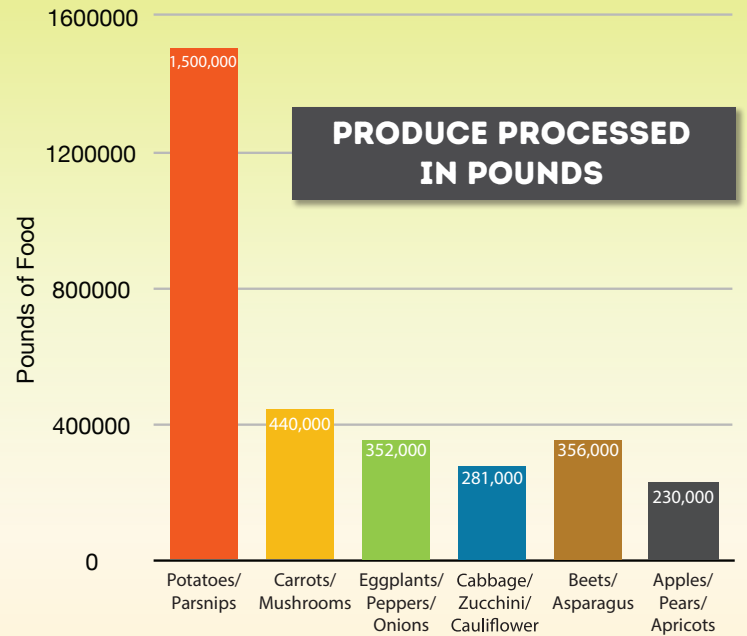
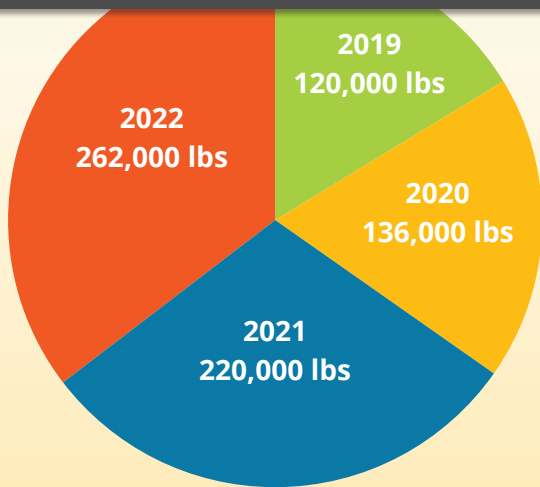
Directly tied to our increase in production is the bountiful provision of great surplus produce coming steadily to us from our grower partners. In 2022 we received a whopping 1,424,982 kg (3,141,548 lbs) of great fruit and vegetables! This included nearly 226,796 kg (500,000 lbs) of #1 PEI Potatoes that we were able to access last winter through a federal government aid program. At times we would receive the equivalent of 3 trailer loads of food in a single week. When that happens we start to look forward to our expansion and the opportunities that will arise once it's completed. Until then we will continue to juggle things around and make the best use of our storage and cooler

space. I believe we'll look back to these times and wonder how we managed - which is often the case. Again, our hearts are grateful and humble.

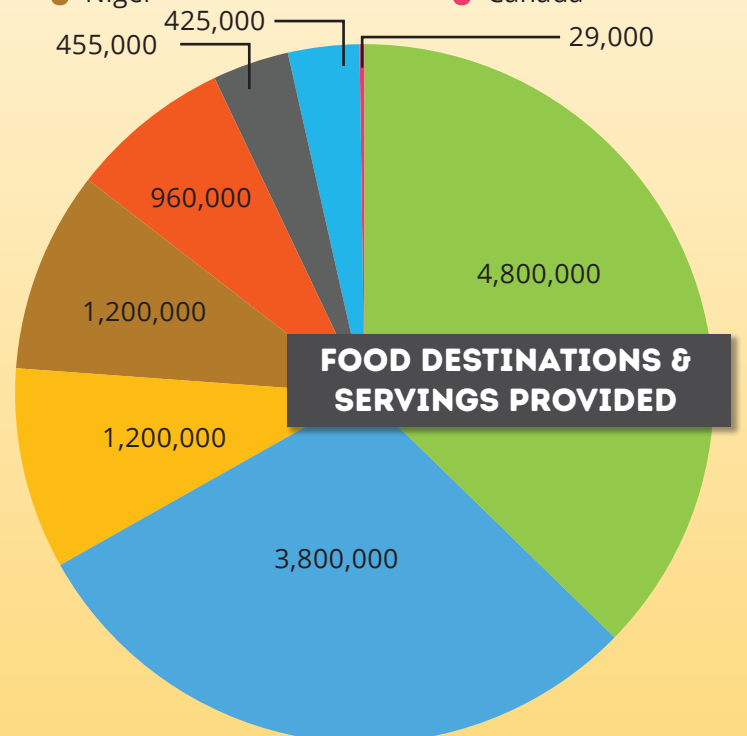
Blessings to all of you. If you're keen on learning more about the Gleaners then I invite you to come join one of our upcoming open houses. It's a wonderful way to get a firsthand experience and we can promise you that you'll be rather impressed with what God is doing and how many lives are being touched by the Gleaners. PW



**PRODUCT RECEIVED ON AVERAGE/MONTH**



- Eswatini, Africa
- Ukraine Refugees
- Jordan
- Niger
- Haiti
- Philippines
- Guatemala/Dominican
- Canada



**OPEN HOUSE TOURS**  
*April 19, May 17 and June 21*  
**TIME: 8:30-11:30AM**  
 Please notify us that you are coming at:  
[INFO@NIAGARAGLEANERS.ORG](mailto:INFO@NIAGARAGLEANERS.ORG)

# DEDICATED DONORS • GROWER PROFILE

SANDY SHORES FARMS



**It's here! Spring is in the air, and with its arrival we know that asparagus season is right around the corner. Soon volunteers will be handling this nutritious little vegetable as they prepare literally thousands of trays of diced product for our dehydrators! It's the perfect time to feature one of our long-time Dedicated Donors. Sandy Shores Farms, a 750 acre vegetable farm is located in Port Burwell, Ontario and is the largest grower and shipper of fresh asparagus. Sandy Shores Farms is owned and operated by the Konrad and Wall families and has been in operation for over 60 years. Their motto is "Family Owned/Community Powered", and the company is continually shifting and focusing on "growing community" by "providing and creating value", whether it's on a local or a global effort.**

Marc Wells, co-owner, talked briefly about the beginning of the partnership between SSF and NCG. He heard there was going to be a Gleaners operation in the Niagara Area so they contacted Pete at NCG and, 6 months later in May of 2019, at the height of asparagus season, the NCG started receiving produce from Sandy Shores Farms. They have shipped every May and June since. "We really like and support what the Niagara

Christian Gleaners is doing," Marc says.

Partnering with a Gleaners organization (they also send some of their product to Ontario Christian Gleaners in Cambridge) completes a thought Marc's Dad and Uncle had years ago. "Is there a way we can use what is destined to be thrown away in the fields?" they wondered. "The wasting of food is just something you don't want to do," Mark says. There may be short or crooked stalks that don't make the grade, so this is what the Gleaners can salvage for the dehydrator. In a way, it's a second gleaning. If the company can use just the tips of the asparagus and they look good, they sell packages of them at St. Jacob's Market. They're a good seller. About 2%-3% of the Sandy Shores Farms asparagus makes its way to Niagara Christian Gleaners in Smithville and volunteers are happy to work through the quick preparation of this unique vegetable.

We thank Sandy Shores Farms for providing so much hope to those around the globe that need food aid. We really appreciate their generosity. To learn more about Sandy Shores Farms, and the great work they are doing, not only in their community, but specifically in Guatemala through "The Cause", visit their website at [sandyshore.ca](http://sandyshore.ca). It's packed full of information and, who knows, you might even learn a thing or two about asparagus!

# BOARD REPORT

Where does the time go? We have already progressed 25% of the way through 2023. It reminds me of the saying, "Only one life will soon be past; only what's done for Christ will last." This proverb also embodies the spirit of many of our volunteers as they share from our abundance to those in need. This spirit is also evident on our board, where we welcome new members Pete Feenstra, and Jake Janzen as our secretary. Both have served the NCG as either a committee member or as a volunteer. We want to thank retiring member Ed Feenstra, one of the Gleaners' founding members, and Wilma Jansen, our secretary for the past 3 years. Your contributions will be missed.

Thank you also to our committees and their members, who are all links in the chain that makes up the NCG, for their work and dedication to the cause. In the pages of this newsletter, you will find more information on how the NCG has been blessed, as well as how it has been and continues to be a blessing.

2022 was another year of increased production due to the fine produce received from our growers, the work of our volunteers in various areas, and the support received from our local community. Even though we had increased costs, especially in natural gas and packaging, we were blessed with meeting our budget and covering all our expenses.

Our last newsletter led off our capital campaign to raise the funds for our planned addition. We are pleased and thankful to acknowledge that the required \$1.2 million in funding has been raised, our permits are in place, and foundational work will be starting in June. The added 5,000 square feet (about the area of a basketball court) will be put to exceptionally beneficial use once it is completed.

We are looking forward to holding our spring fundraising dinners on April 14 and April 15 to help meet our budget of \$600,000. We will have room for 600 guests. You can reserve your place at [ncgdinners@gmail.com](mailto:ncgdinners@gmail.com). We welcome you to join us for a delicious meal and to hear about the impact the nutrition we send out has and to help support our budgetary needs for 2023. Dr. Echo and

Harry Vanderwal, founders of The Luke Commission, will be sharing with us in person how the Lord is working in the challenged country of Eswatini in Africa, and the role that the NCG plays in their mission. The Luke Commission is an organization that serves the most isolated and underserved populations of Eswatini free of charge, many of whom have no access to health services, in the name of Christ. Eswatini has been devastated by HIV/aids, with 28% of its citizens infected, and 25% of its children as orphans. The TLC includes a campus hospital, healthcare, a farm, an oxygen factory, and mobile treatment teams. Come join us at the fundraising dinner to hear more about this worthwhile outreach on April 14 or 15.

May the Lord continue to bless the endeavours of all His people who serve in His name!

Arthur Struyk  
Board chairman

*"Let the name of the LORD be praised, both now and forevermore. From the rising of the sun to the place where it sets, the name of the Lord is to be praised."*  
**Psalm 113: 2,3**



## FUNDRAISING DINNERS

Friday **APRIL 14, 2023**

Saturday **APRIL 15, 2023**

West Niagara Agricultural Centre & Fairgrounds

... GUEST SPEAKERS ...

Dr. Echo and Harry Vanderwal from The Luke Commission, Eswatini

... SILENT AUCTION ...

Doors Open at 5:00 pm • Dinner Starts at 6:00 pm

... LIMITED SEATING ...

Reserve your spot at [ncgdinners@gmail.com](mailto:ncgdinners@gmail.com)

Proceeds for NCG's 2023 Operating Budget

## YOUR DONATION MAKES AN IMPACT!

As a non-profit organization, we rely on donations from people just like you.

### 3 WAYS TO GIVE:

#### DONATE ONLINE

[niagaragleaners.org/donate](https://niagaragleaners.org/donate)

#### E-TRANSFER

[givingncg@gmail.com](mailto:givingncg@gmail.com)

#### CHEQUE BY MAIL

TO: Niagara Christian Gleaners