

Scotiabank Climate Action Challenge

Challenge Report



ACADEMIC INSTITUTION Okanagan College

PROJECT NAME Unusually Good Food Company

NEED AND AUDIENCE

5.5 million Canadians struggle to find enough to eat every year with 1.15 million of those people being children (Statistics Canada, 2019). Meanwhile, 1/3 food crops around the world go to waste with every harvest (UN Environment Programme, 2022). Fruit that doesn't meet grocery store standards is often left to rot in landfills releasing harmful methane gas and carbon dioxide into the atmosphere. Sadly, food waste contributes to 20% of the world's total greenhouse gas emissions (Climate Watch, The World Resource Institute, 2020). Not only does this unwanted food release greenhouse gasses but also waste the resources that went into growing them. A single apple requires about 125 liters of water to grow (Mekonnen & Hoekstra, 2011). By saving these apples from going to waste we are also saving the water and energy that it took to grow them. An alarming amount of food is not making it to those who need it. The Unusually Good project was founded in 2018 to combat all these issues. Apples that normally get left behind are bought from the farmers and diced and dehydrated to be turned into delicious apple bites. These snacks are then distributed to those in need, including food banks, schools, daycares, and people in developing countries. To make the project more financially sustainable, we have also begun selling apple juice. The revenue from these sales allows us to increase our operation and the impact we have on the community.

ACTION TAKEN

Using a facility owned by the North Okanagan Gleaners Society, a charity group dedicated to supplying food worldwide, we produced 29,000 servings of apple bites to distribute to food banks, schools, daycares, and developing countries. Working alongside local elementary schools, we invited 80 grade 5 elementary school students who picked 5,000 pounds apples in the fall. During the field trip we taught the students about protecting the environment and how they were helping to reduce food insecurity. Later in the year we revisited their classrooms to teach them our social entrepreneurship module. Currently, the students are selling our apple juice to help raise funds for their school lunch programs, enabling them to run their own social enterprise. This year, our project underwent a rebranding from Fruit Snaps to Unusually Good. The product line now includes a line of fresh pressed orchard apple juice which we have doubled our production to 892 units compared to last year. To date, we have secured 10 retailers in 5 cities across the Okanagan, and have sold 661 units, generating a revenue of \$12,559. The profit from our juice sales is funneled back into the project to support local orchards in maintaining the apple trees and expanding our social enterprise. To increase our sales, we have developed a marketing plan alongside a new website that accurately reflects our mission to help reduce food insecurity while promoting environmentally sustainable practices. Our target for next year is to expand our juice production by 25%, using a new method and expand our retail distribution by 50% through securing advanced contracts. We also plan to include two more schools in our learning modules so that we can empower the next generation of change makers.

IMPACT

This year we prevented 11.5 million liters of water from being wasted (822 kiloliters of water per tonne of apples according to institute of water education), diverted 62 tonnes of CO2 emissions (based on the National Zero Waste Council model), prevented 31,000 pounds of apples going to waste, while donating 29,000 servings of Apple Bites. Our apple juice sales generated \$12,559 in revenue. This revenue source will allow us to reach our goal of distributing 60,000 servings and generating \$17,000 in revenue by May 2022. We plan to continually develop our brand and increase the number of partnerships we have within our community. Our core belief is to increase every child's accessibility to healthy and delicious food. This project increases the food supply and distributes aid to vulnerable populations. Unusually Good protects our environment by preventing greenhouse gas emissions and by investing in the conservation of local orchards.

STANDARD METRICS			
(These metrics are related only to the project presented and represent work done since March 1, 2021)			
Individuals educated on climate action	80	Businesses educated on climate action	12
Litres of water conserved	11.5 million	Metric tonnes of waste diverted	14.1
GHG emissions diverted	62 Tonnes	Dollar value of waste diverted in CAD \$	\$10,505

PROJECT START DATE 2018

IS THIS PROJECT WHOLLY-OWNED AND OPERATED BY THE TEAM? Yes

