



Ontario
Food Terminal Board

2023 – 2026 Business Plan



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1. Mandate:

The Ontario Food Terminal Board (the “Board”) was established in 1954 by the provincial government and is continued under the Ontario Food Terminal Act R.S.O. 1990, c. O. 15 (the “Act”). Section 4(1) of the Act set out the Board’s objects. They are:

a) To acquire, construct, equip and operate a wholesale market primarily for agricultural products in the City of Toronto or The Regional Municipality of York known in English as the Ontario Food Terminal and in French as Marche des produits alimentaires de l’Ontario and to acquire and operate such facilities for the transportation and handling of agricultural products as may be necessary for the purposes of the Terminal;

a.1) to promote local food within the meaning of the Local Food Act, 2013;

b) To do such other acts as may be necessary or expedient for the carrying out of its operations and undertakings.

The Strategic Objects of the Board are as follows:

a) To try and ensure that the market operates efficiently in order to provide high quality agricultural products to the Ontario consumer at competitive prices.

b) To provide a central marketplace for Ontario growers and produce wholesalers to sell their agricultural products directly to the wholesale and retail trade.

c) To foster, through controlled buying hours and regulated shipping policies, a competitive market place where buyers and sellers can freely negotiate prices and terms of sale.

d) To maintain a good working relationship with the wholesale tenants, growers and buyers.

e) To Ensure that the market is properly maintained so that Ontario retailers and institutions will continue to use the market as a major source of supply for agricultural products.

f) To ensure that the cash flow from operations is sufficient to cover expenses including all capital and maintenance expenditures.

Mandate Letter from the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs:

As part of the Agencies and Appointments Directive (AAD), the Minister of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (the “Minister”) issues an agency mandate letter annually to the Chair, which outlined the Minister’s expectations from the Board to continue to align with the government’s priorities and direction. The mandate letter set out the following Minister’s expectations:

- Working within the Memorandum of Understanding between the Board Chair and the Minister.

- Managing the Ontario Food Terminal (“Terminal”) operations so it operates efficiently to provide access to the Terminal, excellent customer service to Ontario growers, and high quality produce to the Ontario consumer at a competitive price.
- Recognizing the importance to the long term viability and operational success of the Terminal by properly maintaining the Ontario Food Terminal so produce buyers, including Ontario retailers, restaurateurs and food service wholesalers, will continue to use the Terminal as a major source of supply for fresh produce.
- Having cash flow from operations cover all expenses of the Ontario Food Terminal, including capital, maintenance and any Covid-19 related expenditures.
- Continuing the good work in meeting all Agencies and Appointments Directive provisions and reporting requirements including seeking the necessary government approvals on all future proposed expenditures and providing the Ministry with quarterly financial statements.
- Continuing to implement strong prevention and control measures at the Terminal to ensure the health and safety of all users.
- Engaging with Ministry staff and industry organizations by strengthening and improving partnerships to develop and promote the sale of Ontario grown agricultural products through the Ontario Food Terminal.
- Continue to review and determine practices and methods to minimize the carbon footprint of the Ontario Food Terminal.

The Board will measure and address these items in the following manner:

- Continue to investigate and resolve any customer service issues from our tenants or produce buyers that arise on a timely basis to their satisfaction.
- Continue to properly maintain and update the Ontario Food Terminal (“Terminal”) to foster a healthy competitive wholesale produce market.
- Operate a dedicated Farmers’ Market area where Ontario growers have an opportunity to showcase and market their produce to the produce buyers.
- Implement the strategic plan that promotes the growth and success of the Ontario Food Terminal.
- Review monthly the performance of the Board’s financial statements against the established operating and capital budgets. Thereby, ensuring that the cash flow from operations will cover all expenses.
- Identifying and pursuing efficiencies and savings.
- Identifying and pursuing opportunities for revenue generation.
- Explore digitization or digital modernization strategies to provide online services to meet or exceed customer service standards through transition.
- Work together with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs (“OMAFRA”) and Public Appointments Secretariat towards meeting the Ontario government gender diversity target for all appointments.
- Adhere to the requirements of the Agencies and Appointments Directive (AAD).

2. Executive Summary:

The Board was established in 1954 and is currently classified as a Board Governed Provincial Agency. The Board works towards providing a marketplace that stimulates competitive trade of agriculture products within Ontario, specifically agricultural products as defined in the *Act*. The members of the Board are appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council through an Order of Council on the recommendation of the Minister. The Board members are persons from the industry, serve up to three-year terms and are responsible for the operation of the Terminal. The Board is accountable to the Minister in accordance with the Memorandum of Understanding (“MOU”).

The Terminal plays a pivotal role in Ontario’s fresh food distribution system in which it serves as an incubator for early stage startups in fresh food retailing, enables agricultural products to be showcased to buyers, and provides an outlet for Ontario growers to market their products directly to buyers. In addition, the terminal serves a vital role in price setter relative to the shifting supply and demand for fresh produce and agricultural products in which it keeps prices down by checking oligopolistic power that would otherwise be concentrated in the hands of few large buyers to the benefit of Ontario consumers.

Review of Revenue and Expenditures

The Board receives revenue mainly from rents, cold storage fees, and toll fees. The warehouses and annual office spaces are 100% rented and the farmers’ market stalls are 82% rented. Cold storage and toll fee revenue are expected to increase in the year as tenants are cautiously bringing in more produce to fulfill the anticipated demand from the food service industry. The Board continues to identify potential opportunities for additional revenue generation where applicable.

The annual review of the financial operations of the Board reveals the following:

- Revenue from rent has increased an average of 0.5%;
- Revenue from cold storage increased by 19.2%; and
- Revenue from toll fees have increased by 6.0% over last year.

Management has been able to effectively manage expenses through prudent fiscal management over the years while protecting the services provided by the Board. The Board has budgeted an increase in expenses of 4.3% to capture the projected effect of inflation.

The Board experienced a 1.0% increase in salary expenses in the 21/22 fiscal year, maintaining its excellent level of service to the tenants and buyers. The Board benefitted from the low interest rates in the past and saved 6.0% savings compared to the budget. However, increasing interest rates in 2023 will significantly increase this expense for the Board’s 2022/23 and 2023/24 fiscal years. The office expenses reflect the Board’s continued efforts to maintain its promotional and communication efforts for Ontario products and the Terminal as a whole. Legal costs for this fiscal period were higher than normal, due to the necessary legal services required in preparing new Farmers’ Market leases. The Board’s conservation efforts in reducing electricity outpaced price increases. The Board’s waste removal costs have increased due to a higher volume generated by our tenants and inflationary price increases.

With high inflation rates and the rising costs of maintaining the Terminal and infrastructure, the Board has to increase various rents and fees to ensure operational expenses are covered year after year. To maintain future growth in revenue, the Board will continue to investigate renovation and expansion of the Terminal. The Board continues to evaluate the entire Terminal and continues to create a progressive plan to keep the facility current and fiscally sound.

The Board continues to maintain a positive cash flow every year.

Reference: Appendix I – Annual Financial Statement and Projected Budget

Highlight of Strategies for Next Three Years

In response to the Ontario consumer, the Terminal tenants and the policies of the Board in the next three years will continue to bring awareness of the Terminal's role within the food distribution system for Ontario, especially as the lifeline for Ontario growers, small grocers and restaurants. The Board will stay committed to the effective use of all resources and to enhancing methods of evaluation and planning for future activities at the Terminal.

It is expected in the next three years efforts will be made to build on the Board's past successes of highlighting agricultural products that have originated in Ontario. The overall look and feel of the wholesale Farmers' Market area is being reviewed with increased marketing of this sector occurring. Currently, the Board is consulting and having discussions with stakeholders on a design of a new Farmers' Market building, consisting of an open concept farmers stalls layout. To facilitate the increased promotion and distribution of Ontario grown produce and agricultural products. The Board needs to ensure that the new building is feasible and there is sufficient demand for this new proposed space and rented accordingly. Challenges exist due to the seasonal fluctuations of product availability sold within this building, but it is hoped that by creating maximum exposure and featuring Ontario grown produce to the wholesale food industry will spark increased demand and year- round occupancy. At this time, the Board is still in discussions with stakeholders regarding the future construction and feasibility of this building.

3. Strategic Direction

Vision Statement of the Board:

To aspire to be a recognized global leader in facilitating wholesale distribution of agricultural products enabling Ontario consumers the benefit of competitive prices and safe, high-quality supply year-round while providing Ontario growers with an effective and efficient marketplace.

Mission Statement of the Board:

To facilitate the exchange of wholesale trade in perishable food and agricultural products in a manner that is efficient, safe, competitive and responsive to market needs.

Core Values:

The Board is committed to delivering outstanding service to growers, dealers, wholesalers, and buyers so that their businesses can thrive and grow.

- Value the people we serve and employ, treating all with fairness and respect.
- Conduct our business in an open, transparent and accountable way.
- Hold sufficient reserves to provide for stability and confidence.
- Deliver services that are efficient and cost effective.
- Stay independent of any commercial or political interest and therefore act only in the public interest.
- Enable our customers, and therefore consumers, to access more agricultural products at lower costs than would be available if the Ontario Food Terminal did not exist.
- Strive to anticipate future trends and needs for which we plan through consultation.
- Proactively take steps to enable the volume traded to grow.
- Be good neighbours in our community.

Mandate:

The Board's mandate continues to be relevant to government goals and priorities as it is vital to the success of the agri-food sector, supports and promotes Ontario grown and/or produced agricultural products and will work to improve the facility in its existing location. The Board remains the most appropriate organization to carry out all aspects of its mandate given the agency has the expertise needed to fulfill its mandated functions. The Board governed operational enterprise agency model offers an appropriate and suitable framework for public accountability and provides for oversight to ensure that the public interest is maintained in the operation of the Terminal.

The Board's operating policies are as follows:

- To operate in accordance with all administrative policies established and specified in Management Board of Cabinet's Directives and Guidelines, ensuring transparency and accountability.
- To follow the *Act* and all other applicable acts; their regulations and the MOU with the Ontario Government in its relationship with all who use the Terminal.
- To promote best management practices for all operations of the Board. These will be implemented towards having goals of positive cash flow from operations, efficient costs of operation, maximizing all tenant occupancy rates while still providing well maintained, reasonably priced and relevant facilities.
- To provide a safe and reliable food supply.
- To use best management practices to monitor operational logistics to maximize efficiency of operations and delivery of produce.
- To promote an equitable, inclusive, accessible, anti-racist and diverse workplace.

- To maintain good working relationships with all tenants, subsidiary businesses, agricultural organizations, community, government and others through maintaining a responsive ‘open dialogue’ philosophy by creating a representative user advisory committee to obtain strategic advice.
- To actively respond to tenants’ needs, the economic environment and changing markets.
- To operate the Terminal in a manner that will facilitate superior facility security, cleanliness, food safety, and a safe work environment.
- To actively seek and embrace new technologies for methods of operation to enable the Board to fulfill its role in facilitating the competitive trade of fresh products delivery so the Board remains as a leader within its industry.
- To promote the facility through effective communications as an essential distribution centre for fresh produce and agricultural products.
- To actively review and determine ways on how to minimize the carbon footprint of the Ontario Food Terminal. Such as, replacing lights, where possible, with energy efficient LED lighting and motion sensors.

4. Organizational Structure:

The Board members are accountable to the Minister, through the Chair, for setting goals and strategic direction for the Board. The Board may consist of a minimum of five members up to a maximum of thirteen members appointed by the Lieutenant Governor in Council. Members of the Board are recognized as leaders, with many years of experience, in the produce industry. Currently, there are six members appointed to the Board. All positions are posted on Ontario’s Public Appointments Secretariat website.

The Board must comply with provincial government directives that guide the Board in its delivery of services. The AAD is a Management Board of Cabinet Directive and sets out the requirements for the Board as a board governed provincial agency.

The Board is responsible for appointing, upon the approval of the Minister, the General Manager for the Terminal. The General Manager, in turn, appoints two operational Managers to look after the Terminal’s operations. The Managers head five service departments. They are: (1) administration, (2) cold storage, (3) police, (4) maintenance and (5) sanitation. This structure has proved to provide a more responsive service to our stakeholders in a very efficient manner.

The Board employs a total of forty-five non-union employees, which includes two student staff. Staff resources are used across all core businesses and their time is allocated to nine cost centres. Costing for staff requirements is closely controlled by the annual operating budget and maximum efficiencies are achieved through the existing hierarchy structure.

Reference: Appendix II – Board Members

Reference: Appendix III – Organizational Structure

5. Environmental Scan

The Board is mandated to operate a wholesale market primarily for agricultural products for the transportation and handling of agricultural products in an economical and efficient manner. The Board relies solely on revenues generated within the Terminal and does not receive government funding unless the Ministry provides a grant for a specific project.

The external and internal factors below could impact the Board both operationally and financially.

External:

Leasing Competition

- In 2021/22, the Board experienced a 3.8% increase in produce tonnage volume distributed from the Terminal compared to the previous fiscal year. The Board is expecting that volume will rebuild to more normal levels over the next two years as food inflation stabilizes and consumers return to normal activities post the Covid-19 pandemic.
- In the past few years, a number of tenants' businesses have outgrown their operation at the Terminal. Some of them have accommodated their business growth by building offsite warehouses for the purpose of storage and distribution. However, all their sales and contacts are continued to be made at the Terminal. This can have a negative effect on the Board's revenues, particularly in the cold storage and road and gate cost centres due to reduced business activity.
- This reduced activity would provide an opportunity for the smaller tenants to use extra cold storage space and expand their product lines, thus having lessened the effect of lost cold storage business.
- The Board is issuing new updated modern Farmers' Market stall leases to all of the leaseholders in order to capture the tenant's current information and comply to changes in commercial lease laws.
- Future warehouse expansion at the Terminal will be required to accommodate tenants with growing businesses as well as demand from new tenants.

Climate Change

Global climate changes are having an impact around the world by disrupting food availability, food access and food quality resulting in reduced agricultural productivity. Ontario growers are also affected by changes in climate conditions affecting their crop yields and nutritional quality.

The Ontario government and agri-food sector will need to invest in water, energy efficient systems and soil health to build flexibility and competitiveness into production and processing.

Technology Adoption

Agri-food businesses are focusing on technology to reduce labour requirements in response to the increasing labour costs and the difficulty in attracting and retaining staff. Businesses have struggled with the capital costs, access to technically skilled workers and the rapid pace of technological advancements. Many food service businesses that purchase from the Terminal have, however, adapted and pivoted their businesses to include direct to home deliveries in addition to deliveries to retailers with the use of new technologies.

Open Data

Ontario's Open Data Directive maximizes access to government data by requiring all data to be made public, unless it is exempt for legal, privacy, security, confidentiality or commercially-sensitive reasons. It sets out key principles and requirements for publishing open data, and applies to data created and managed by Ontario ministries and provincial agencies. The Board will strive to improve how it uses data in decision making, information sharing with the Ministry and reporting.

Open For Business Government Initiative

The Ontario government is creating the right conditions to make Ontario open for business by establishing a business environment that will help the Ontario economy to prosper and create and protect jobs. The Board will conduct business in an open, transparent and accountable way for the people of Ontario which is in line with Ontario's open for business government initiative.

Economic Forecasts for Ontario

The Ontario economy seems to have rebounded positively from the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, but showed signs of slowing, with a 3.2% growth in 2022 and the Ontario's economy is estimated to grow only 0.5% in 2023, due to low business confidence, high inflation, higher debt carrying costs, weakened investments and reduced consumer spending.

Businesses in the hospitality sector, restaurants, hotels, recreation and other services are beginning to recover with positive employment growth with the favourable unemployment rate stabilizing between 5–6%.¹

The new Canadian Food Guide included the increased recommended consumption of “vegetables and fruits” and to “choose protein foods that come from plants more often.” Expected outcomes will include steady employment and growth in both income and consumer spending including fresh food items. Therefore, the Terminal tenants will see higher demands for their produce and agricultural products. This is positive for the operation of the Terminal, as more buyers may utilize the Terminal more frequently.

Monetary Policies

¹ Ontario Chamber of Commerce: Ontario Economic Report 2023

Interest rates play a significant part in the Board's operating costs as they fluctuate over time. The Bank of Canada has recently increased interest rates from historic lows to combat inflation pressures, an overheated housing market and geopolitical uncertainties. Major Canadian financial institutions have forecasted that the Bank of Canada may maintain the current interest rate each quarter of 2023/24.² The Board's borrowing costs are expected to be high during the 2023/24 fiscal year. The Board's strategies for long term debt would be to lock in at lower rates if interest rates begin to increase significantly.

Location and Access

The Terminal's location was at its inception well situated on the outskirts of the downtown Toronto area. This provides easy daily access through major highways and well-maintained roads for local producers, Ontario growers, large international distributors and for the buyers travelling from all directions in the Ontario.

Several factors have been emphasized to management and the Board that they must constantly evaluate the efficiency of the Terminal's location and the ease of access. The location is still relevant to international distributors; so, tenants have centred their warehouse locations near the Terminal when they required additional storage space. Due to off hour travel time of most transport, easy access is still available to vendors. The majority of the buyers are located in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) which is Canada's largest market.

The Terminal being located in Toronto, near downtown and in a major urban centre, affords a considerable number of employees employed at the Ontario Food Terminal rely on the TTC to get to work. Without public transit, it would be difficult to get employees to their place of employment.

The Province and the City of Toronto has recognized the Terminal as a vital component of the delivery of fresh fruits and vegetables to all of Ontario, parts of Canada and specifically to the GTA. The Terminal is the keystone of Toronto's food distribution network; it's of optimal size, proper location, transportation connections, sustainable infrastructure and other key points of operation of the Ontario Food Terminal compared to other sources of food within the GTA. Which was further strengthen by the province declaring that the Terminal lands as provincially significant employment zone.

The Board recognizes that the Terminal is landlocked with a footprint that cannot be expanded; any future expansion will need to be planned carefully to make best use of available land. In practice, several warehouse tenants and growers operate facilities off site thereby growth has not been constrained by the physical capacity limitations of the Terminal at this time.

Transportation

² RBC Economic Outlook 2023

Currently, the Terminal does not experience transportation issues, as the majority of vehicles enter the Terminal before 6:00 am and leave after 9:00 am thereby not contributing to Toronto's morning or afternoon rush hour traffic.

Further investigation is needed to identify any future external transportation issues that may arise and affect the Terminal. Potential volume issues could affect the ability of transports and small producers to reach the Terminal, the Board will work closely with the City of Toronto to assist with the projection of future traffic rates as well as future planning projects in the area.

Growing consumer and advocate concerns about the environmental costs of importing food products will be investigated by the Board. The Board is aware of the social and economic concerns over Ontario's dependence on food imports. Management will increase communications to fully reveal the role and purpose of the Terminal within the overall food supply system in Ontario and how it responds to demands and offers the ability to provide buyers with a free market environment.

Consumer Trends, Ethnic Diversity

- Younger consumers are not pushing a cart through the produce department and have shifted to buying fresh produce and grocery items online. Online grocery will be growing rapidly and is estimated to account for 25% of total grocery sales by 2025.
- With high food inflation, consumers' shopping behaviours are changing as many are now visiting and shopping at multiple stores in search of value with 63% are eating the food they have on hand before buying more food.
- Consumers prefer grocery store apps to receive promotions compared to a physical flyer.
- Consumers trust branded produce more and the brand are poised to share their story.
- Consumers that shop at stores are looking for cleanliness, hygiene, quick shopping and check out experience and good prices.
- Food safety concern is driving consumers demand for packaged produce and the challenge for growers will be balancing product quality, branding and sustainability.
- Social media influence continues to drive consumers purchasing decisions. Especially for younger consumers that want to try a recipe that went viral resulting in a higher demand for the food ingredients listed in the recipe.
- Consumers continue to look for the freshest and newest produce varieties.
- The demand for mushrooms has increased as consumers believe eating mushrooms improves immune health and sustainability.
- A demographic change in terms of new Canadians has historically meant many of the new immigrants will become buyers to service their ethnic community thus increasing the demand for world crops. This is positive for the Terminal.
- The baby boomers and millennials have shown a trend toward a healthier diet. As such, they are going to purchase more fresh fruits and vegetables. This is apparent even at the fast food restaurants that are now offering salads and lighter meals which are supplied from the Terminal. Thus, the food service sector is becoming more significant and their reliance on the Terminal vital.

- Consumers are more interested in food and supporting local farmers, small independent stores, local communities and economy rather than purchasing from big box retailers.
- Canadians are continuing to increase the per capita consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables consistent to recent changes made to Canada's food guide.
- There is a growing movement in North America to move away from the traditional primary meat (protein) based meal to focusing more on a vegetable and legume (protein) based meal, thereby, making the Terminal highly relevant and necessary to consumers today and in the future.
- Reducing food waste is top of mind and important to consumers as they are planning meals and grocery shopping every 2 to 3 days rather than for the full week. This approach works well for people who enjoy eating freshly prepared meals.
- Ontario's population continues to increase, particularly in the GTA and with municipal governments' efforts in increasing population densities in cities.

Buy-Local Campaigns and Farm Markets, Regional Distribution

There is strong demand and interest from consumers to spend within their communities, especially millennials looking to support local Ontario growers and neighbourhood green grocers.

Increases in the number of retail local farmers markets in Ontario will result in more growers/buyers from those markets coming to the Terminal to purchase supplementary produce. Large and small retail farmers markets and even farm gate markets operators must supplement what they grow with what their customers are requesting. It is possible that increased regular use of farmers markets will expand sales at the Terminal due to limited availability of primary producers at all local markets, consistent supply and consumer demand for efficiency in food purchasing.

It would be beneficial if Ontario product can be easily identified as such since the consumer and industry have claimed products purchased and sold by 'resellers' are threatening Ontario's primary producers. Lack of identification of product origins has led to some misrepresentation of product origin to consumers in retail farmers' markets in Ontario. All produce sourced through the Terminal and 'resold' has not originated in Ontario. It would be beneficial to highlight that Ontario produce sourced through the Terminal is still supporting an Ontario primary producer but is being distributed in a different manner. Overall, the Terminal's role in secondary distribution is supporting and enhancing the retail farmers' market efforts and providing a distribution option to Ontario primary producers and continue to support the buy local movement.

Growing trends in the interest of food origins, sustainability, social media and environmental impact of product delivery will influence marketing efforts by the farmers' market section of Ontario Food Terminal.

Fuel Supply, Environmental Hazards, Biochemical Terrorism

The Board in the past has responded to needs and trends in waste management and energy conservation. Actions have been taken to investigate the feasibility of the source or management

procedure that will maximize the efficiencies within these areas. Constant review of new procedures and available resources will continue.

The changing world has brought new potential external threats to consider and plan for. The Board will continue to strive to keep up and respond to these challenges. Investigations into alternative fuel supplies, emergency procedures responding to power outages; bioterrorism threats and identification of any environmental hazards will be monitored throughout normal management procedures and will develop any strategies that are required in response.

Internal:

HR Management

The Board has established a governance and human resources committee to ensure a highly competent, committed and effective general manager leads the management team with high standards of integrity and service. The governance and human resources committee will be responsible for the annual performance and compensation reviews for the General Manager.

Succession Planning

Board members bring a variety of skills and experience to the organization and appointment tenures are mostly staggered to promote continuity.

The Board annually reviews the management's succession and executive development plan. The organizational structure of the Board supports strong '*hands on*' central management. Long term dedicated employees currently holding these positions therefore minimalizing instability during any transitions of staff. As reflected in the Board's organizational structure there are two operational managers that are potential replacements for the General Manager in case, he/she leaves the position for any reason.

Employee Retention and Development

The Board is known as an outstanding employer and a place of choice for work. The Board values the unique qualities and diversity of all its employees and has a respectful and inclusive workplace that leverages the wide range of skills their staff possesses. The Board's employee health and safety committee assists in ensuring the health and safety of its employees, with in all aspects of its functions by providing first aid and CPR training and equipment training including lift truck training, working at heights training; scissor lift and boom lift training. Employees are engaged and updated regularly on the progress of our annual goals throughout the year resulting in increased loyalty and reduced employee turnover.

Constant assessment and support by managers of employee skills have led to a proactive system of cross training between facility departments that promote understanding and backing between the departments and allow efficient use of labour resources.

The Board's skilled and knowledgeable workforce allows it to respond to the immediate needs of the Terminal and maintain high quality of customer service.

Labour Issues

Senior management is constantly aware and actively progressive on any labour issues that affect their employees and/or any external third-party relationship within the facility. Where employee contributions are valued, creativity and openness in giving and receiving feedback are also encouraged.

As a result of the Board's organizational structure of staff, positions of responsibility are helping staff work together to achieve stated goals.

Reference: Appendix III – Organizational Structure

Terminal Improvements

The Board will develop a long-term asset management and capital improvement growth plan, including exploring technology improvement at the Terminal. This will ensure the Ontario Food Terminal can continue to meet stakeholders needs and continue to support the agri-food sector. The Board will also review the Terminal's operating hours to see if changes could benefit buyers and sellers to make it more convenient and enhance their purchasing experience.

Future Expansion of the Ontario Food Terminal Facility

The Board has been evaluating its entire site and buildings and will continue to do so in 2023/24. The Board has designed a new open farmer stall layout building in the Farmers' Market area, and is currently consulting stakeholders on this potential project.

Summary

There are many positive indicators that the Board is moving forward despite the recent challenges presented to the Board, but is well positioned to overcome them in due course. With proper management and strategic planning, the cost of maintaining the facility can be absorbed into normal business operations. At this time, the environmental assessment does not lead the Board to believe there are any factors that will cause the Board and its staff not to deliver its stated mandate for the next fiscal period or in the foreseeable future. Continued assessments of any environmental issues will give the Board relevant information for future operational decisions.

6. Corporate Plan

Outline of Board objectives:

The Board will achieve a high level of director engagement in strategy and policy while maintaining effective accountability from management for operations.

It is a strategy of the Board that management work within the Operating and Capital Budgets each fiscal year. That management continues to examine the operation of the Terminal and to report to the Board for approval and subsequent implementation of all strategic plans that are developed.

Allowable risk and risk management:

- Board decision making – conflict of interest
- Failure to comply with AAD requirements
- Financial tolerances
- Leasing rate tolerances (demand included)
- Tenant approval rating
- Staffing and workplace health and safety
- Facility location and accessibility
- Disruption of service
- Communications (emergency and negative response)
- Energy, food safety and biosecurity tolerance levels

Description of Implementation Plan activities:

Improved Allocation of Leased Space:

- The Board will be issuing a new updated modernized Farmers' Market lease to all leaseholders.
- In the Farmers' Market, the Stall Point System works well. Our tenants' requests for stall changes, from their current location to a better location in the market are moving forward. This program recognized our tenants who use the Terminal regularly and thereby encourage them to continue to market their produce at the Terminal;
- The Board has allocated additional stalls to tenants requiring more space to sell their products to accommodate their growing businesses;
- The Board has provided larger stalls in the 100 and 800 rows to accommodate tenants' requirement of more space in the open section of the Farmers' Market;
- The allocation of additional stalls to tenants in the 100 row to meet the demands of their businesses;
- The Board will continue to work with Ontario growers and promote local produce and assist them in being successful.

Improved Worker Safety Policies

- The Board is active in continuing the creation of a safer work environment in conjunction with the Terminal wide Safety Committee. We will implement any recommendation brought forth by the committee and continue to enforce all existing safety rules at the Terminal through our police department. We must provide a safe workplace by also advising our tenants and buyers of both our and their responsibilities as employers to comply with all the laws to ensure worker safety.

Food Safety Policies

- The warehouse tenants and the Board have achieved and completed HACCP Food Safety certification and comply with the *Safe Food for Canadians Act*. A food safety audit of the

facility is conducted annually and a passing grade is required to maintain the certification. The HACCP certification will allow buyers at the Terminal to have confidence in sourcing and purchasing their fresh fruit and vegetables.

- The Board has an enclosed building dock system to maintain the cool chain.
- The canopy cover over the buyer loading area in the buyers' court and Farmers' Market will protect buyers and their purchased produce from the weather while loading their vehicles in that area.
- Management and the Board work with both federally and provincial Food Safety Inspectors as required.

Maintain a Profitable Cold Storage Facility

The Board has a number of strategies in maintaining the profitability of the cold storage:

- Responding quickly, and thoroughly when investigating any claim for product damage or loss.
- Improving inventory controls.
- Providing a HACCP certified facility that includes a quality control room for inspection of product.
- Providing labour when and where needed.
- Encouraging all Terminal tenants to use the cold storage.
- Increasing the storage rates when required.

Increased Communications

- Consult with the Farmers' Market and Warehouse stakeholder advisory committees with regards to activities at the Terminal.
- Increased collaboration, communication and exchange of information with the Ontario Fruit and Vegetable Growers Association, Canadian Produce Marketing Association, Ontario Produce Marketing Association, Foodland Ontario and other agri-food organizations.
- Expansion of messaging and awareness for the Terminal via the use of our webpage, twitter account, instagram and other social media avenues.

Increased Technology

- The Board will embrace information technologies that enable it to fulfill its role in facilitating the trading of fresh products, where and when feasible.
- The Board will embrace energy efficient, low carbon footprint technologies that reduce emissions and noise levels while providing the energy required for cold chain management, lighting and movement of goods.

7. Overview of Current Activities and Forthcoming Activities

Leased Space

It is essential that management and the Board continues to evaluate the needs of our tenants in light of the type of facility we currently offer so that we do not lose our tenants to alternative facilities.

In the Farmers Market, our goal is to ensure the allocation of leased space is compliant with Board directives and policies. The Board recognizes that tenants who consistently use the Farmers' Market should be considered when additional space becomes available with a goal of 90% occupancy.

The Board is consulting with the Farmers' Market advisory committee working towards a potential new Farmers' Market building in the Terminal.

In the warehouse and office areas, the Board's goal is to ensure all space is 100% leased at all times and that the Terminal meets the needs of tenants.

To ensure, for the purposes of orderly marketing, all tenants abide by the terms of their leases.

Cold Storage Facility

To provide a 100,000 square foot central cold storage facility for the warehouse and grower tenants; that contains 18 rooms with varying temperatures to accommodate the wide variety of produce available and to ensure the best quality produce for the buyers.

Market Place for Ontario Growers and Shippers

- The maintenance of a viable Farmers' Market and warehouse section of the Terminal can continue to make certain there is viable outlet for Ontario growers and shippers of produce and agricultural products to market their products in Ontario.

Competitive Marketplace for the Independent Retailers:

- Maintaining an active, safe marketplace by providing facilities at a reasonable cost along with a strong buyer base fosters the competitive market. This market provides the major source of agricultural products supply for the independent retailers of Ontario and beyond.
- New technology has fostered quick and easy access via gate systems.
- Clearly marked roadways, buyer parking spaces and leased areas allow buyers and sellers to conduct business efficiently with little disruption and congestion.
- Maintaining the south east buyer loading building, whereby buyers are able to receive their purchased fruits, vegetables and agricultural products, assembly their products and load their trucks in an indoor climate controlled facility. Thereby, improving the buyer experience at the Terminal.

Forefront of the Produce Industry in Ontario

- Efforts are being made to attract new buyers to the Terminal by print media, social media and trade show exhibits and tours.

The Board will succeed in keeping the Terminal in the forefront only if stakeholders succeed. We need to focus on this concept and meet the stakeholders needs. This in turn will provide a better facility for our buyer customers and the continuation of the Terminal as being the leading distribution centre for agricultural products in Ontario.

8. Resources Needed to Meet Goals and Objectives:

- The Board develops and operates on an annual budget and its revenue sources are entirely generated within the Terminal through rental of space (warehouses, offices and farmers' market stalls), cold storage fees, toll fees and parking fees.
- The Auditor General of Ontario audits the Board annually.
- The Board has approved the enclosed Operating Budget for the 2023/24 fiscal year and that Management is to operate the facility within the confines of the resources provided within the approved budget. Constant monthly monitoring of expenses to budget as well as monitoring the capital budget during the year assists the Board in meeting its financial obligations. By having such a system, where we monitor actual results to budget, allows management to more accurately forecast our financial position and ensures the financial resources are available to meet the annual needs. The Board's strong relationship with its bank has allowed the Board to finance major capital projects.
- The Board strives to align its goals and objectives with Ontario's "Buy Ontario" initiatives and build awareness of fresh, high quality fruits, vegetables and agricultural products grown in Ontario;
- Support and involvement of Foodland Ontario to promote the consumption of local food, the wholesale activities of the Terminal Farmers' Market to the Ontario consumer, food retailers and the primary producer.
- Quick access to any policy change of food safety or biosecurity issues from both federal and provincial sources.
- Collaboration on energy conservation proposals with industry and the Ontario government to minimize the Terminal's carbon footprint.

9. Implementation Plan

The business plan reflects the Board's mandate as per the *Act* and the Minister through the MOU and mandate letter. The business plan is submitted to the Minister for review and approval.

The business plan is communicated to Board employees and made publicly available on the Board's website after Ministerial approval.

The Board's management and staff align its activities to the Board's mandate and objectives. The Board monitors the implementation and performance quarterly.

Performance measures and targets (Appendix IV) are part of the Board's continuous improvement process. Goals to achieve its objectives in addition to its implementation plan.

10. Performance Measures and Targets

The Board's audit and finance committee is provided with a quarterly report on the financial position as compared to budget for the period and this report is monitored for results. Directors are also provided with statistics as to usage of the Terminal throughout the fiscal year.

The Board's governance committee provides the organization's oversight of its delivery of its services; the implementation of its policies, plans and projects; and the monitoring and mitigation of its key risks.

The Board uses these measures to review the operational effectiveness, efficiency, customer satisfaction and accountability to government.

Reference: Appendix IV – Performance and Target Plan

11. Initiatives Involving Third Parties

- The Board has, working with staff and architects, completed a design plan for possible expansion at the Terminal within the Terminal's footprint. The expansion would include the possibility of new open farmer stall layout building within the farmers' market for the marketing of Ontario produce and agricultural products.
- The Board and its tenants encourage interaction and support of various social support food distribution groups within the GTA, such as the Daily Bread Food Bank, Foodshare, Second Harvest and the Ontario Christian Gleaners.
- Increased communications and collaboration with the City of Toronto concerning transportation planning will be encouraged.

12. Planned Capital Expenditures

The Board has planned for the following main capital expenditures for 2023-2024.

- Repairs to the elevated Parking Deck.
- Replacement of an electrical substation cable.
- Upgrade the Farmers' Market electrical distribution system and capacity.
- Retrofit the cold storage lights and fixtures in the original building area.

13. Risk Assessment and Management

The Board is classified as a board governed provincial agency of the government and has a MOU with the Minister. The MOU outlines the roles and responsibilities of both parties and how legislation and regulations apply to the Board.

OMAFRA and the Board review the agency's risk assessment quarterly and make any necessary adjustments as required.

The Board has a risk management strategy that operates within the economic climate of Ontario in accordance with the Ontario Broader Public Service risk management process. The budget is prepared based on forecasts for that environment. The Board has taken into account, staffing requirements, interest rates, inflation, and demand which have a major impact on the Board's operating costs. It has also considered existing volume of activity and we have reviewed the overall health of the economy when we prepared our annual budget. Based on these costs, the Board knows what the rental rates would have to be to cover the Terminal costs. The Board carefully examined the current rental rates paid and compared them to rates at outside facilities, and looked at the tenants' ability to pay the higher rates. According to this analysis, the Ontario Food Terminal Board is confident the budget is reasonable and as such does not expose the operation to undue risk that will not meet the Board's targets.

The risk of employees having a labour dispute with their employer and potentially closing down the Terminal is a great concern to the Board. In the past, the Board has been successful in mitigating the complete shutdown of the Terminal by negotiating a strike protocol with the labour union involved to allow access to the Terminal. However, there risk of a Terminal shutdown can't be completely eliminated. Therefore, a labour disruption can effectively halt the local distribution of produce and agricultural products in Ontario.

Reference: Appendix V – Risk Assessment

14. Communications Plan

As part of the communication plan, the Board is committed to maintain strong communications, building relationships and is in constant communication and consultation with its growers, warehouse tenants and buyers. Various methods are used, such as verbal conversations, letters, bulletins, email, and social media. The Board provides tours of the Terminal to government, agricultural educational and industry groups. It also targets potential tenants and buyers directly by participating in industry trade shows and keeps an open line of communication with community groups such as the Daily Bread Food Bank, Second Harvest and Mississauga Food Bank.

The Minister communicates to the Chair when new directions for the Board are provided and if required, will meet to discuss any important matters.

Once the Board receives the Minister's approval, the Board posts its three year business plan, annual report and MOU as required by the AAD on the Board's website. As well as, through the direction of the Management Board of Cabinet Directive, the Board posts its travel, meal and hospitality expenses on its website.

Summary of Communication Plan

Management Activities

- Effective communication with industry, government, tenants and public, the important contribution the Terminal contributes to Ontario's agriculture/agri-food sector which is one of province's leading economic engines.
- Maintain a reception centre at the general office, main gate building and at the police office within the farmers' market, where staff is available to answer questions from farmer and warehouse tenants, buyers and visitors.
- During market hours, there is no less than two management staff available to answer enquiries and resolve disputes resulting from the operation of the Terminal. This is our most practical and efficient means of communicating with our customers.
- Liaison with the Farmers' Market Tenants Advisory Committee and the Warehouse Tenants' Advisory Committee to ensure the flow of information and the response to issues is addressed.
- Provide timely, accessible and easy to understand materials to our buyers and stakeholders.
- A phone system provides as much detailed information about the Terminal as possible in order to assist people seeking information.
- A website, twitter and instagram account to quickly inform buyers of various activities at the Terminal.

Board Activities

- The Board is committed to communicate and building relationships with the warehouse and farmer tenants of the Terminal on matters relating to its operation via individual letter, mass mailing letters and/or memos, email, conference calls, monthly newsletter, website or by bulletin. The budget information and rate information are provided to the tenants as required.
- The Board will undertake stakeholder and community relations to increase awareness of the Terminal's role and promote the opportunity to do business to prospective users.
- The Board is committed to responding to media inquiries effectively, accurately and in a timely manner.
- The Board is a member of the Ontario Produce Marketing Association.
- The Board is a member of the Canadian Produce Marketing Association.

Appendix I:		Annual Financial Statement and Projected Budget				
INCOME STATEMENT	PROVISIONAL					
For the year ended	MARCH 2023	MARCH 2023	Variance	MARCH 2024	MARCH 2025	MARCH 2026
	Total	Budget	to Budget	Budget	Budget	Budget
REVENUE:						
RENTS	10,122,815	10,317,490	- 194,675	10,915,516	11,024,671	11,245,165
COLD STORAGE	2,922,856	2,791,560	131,296	3,027,449	3,057,723	3,100,532
TOLL FEES	1,170,234	1,184,109	- 13,875	1,139,359	1,150,753	1,173,768
OTHER	420,000	241,730	178,270	277,700	280,477	286,087
COVID-19 GRANT	5,197	12,610	- 7,413	-	-	-
TOTAL REVENUE	14,641,102	14,547,499	93,603	15,360,024	15,513,624	15,805,550
EXPENSES:						
BOARD EXPENSES	43,000	80,872	- 37,872	58,450	59,035	59,625
SALARIES	3,731,000	4,077,883	- 346,883	4,290,997	4,376,817	4,464,353
INTEREST EXPENSE	688,650	440,712	247,938	757,788	710,000	690,000
REALTY TAXES	710,000	726,484	- 16,484	721,382	718,000	710,000
DEPRECIATION	2,151,022	2,173,139	- 22,117	2,113,787	2,134,925	2,156,274
OPERATING SUPPLIES	182,000	147,750	34,250	157,750	160,116	162,518
REPAIRS & MAIN	578,000	596,850	- 18,850	642,850	655,707	672,100
WASTE REMOVAL	2,025,000	1,995,140	29,860	2,141,247	2,184,072	2,227,753
MISC CONTRACTS	173,000	167,540	5,460	171,880	175,318	178,824
ELECTRIC POWER	2,015,000	2,317,897	- 302,897	2,227,832	2,238,971	2,250,166
WATER	72,200	69,855	2,345	71,946	74,104	76,328
FUEL	212,534	209,400	3,134	280,438	287,449	290,323
INSURANCE	416,500	418,921	- 2,421	444,359	457,690	478,286
OFFICE	114,975	125,000	- 10,025	128,900	130,000	130,000
LEGAL	68,404	75,000	- 6,596	75,000	75,000	75,000
MISCELLANEOUS	39,025	15,000	24,025	25,000	25,000	30,000
RENT - HYDRO LAND	75,200	74,820	380	106,424	110,000	110,000
COVID-19 EXPENSE	1,740	108,090	- 106,350	-	-	-
TOTAL EXPENSES	13,297,250	13,820,353	- 523,103	14,416,030	14,572,203	14,761,550
NET INCOME	1,343,852	727,146	616,706	943,994	941,421	1,044,000

Appendix II:

Current Board Members

Christy McMullen – Chair

Christy McMullen is the Vice President of Summerhill Market. Her community involvement includes as a former Chair for the Canadian Federation of Independent Grocers. Tenure: August 31, 2020 – October 13, 2024

Vacant – Vice Chair

Len Turkevics – Director

LEN TURKEVICS is currently principal at Turkevics & Associates. Former employment includes roles as serving as a Senior Policy Advisor with the Ministry of Agriculture, Food & Rural Affairs and as a Researcher for the PC Caucus at the Legislative Assembly. Mr. Turkevics holds a Bachelor of Arts from University of Toronto. Tenure: January 31, 2019 – January 30, 2025

Larry Kieswetter - Director

Larry Kieswetter is a former Senior Director of Produce with Burnac Produce Limited and with Loblaws. His community involvement includes serving as Chairperson and director with Laurel Church Centre and as a team member for outreach to the South Sudan with Christian Network Ministries. Mr. Kieswetter is also a conference speaker relating to fresh produce. Tenure: November 30, 2016 – November 27, 2025

John Den Boer – Director

John Den Boer is President of Den Boer Family Farm Inc, President of the Toronto Farmers Association and a former Store Manager for Albert-Heijn. Tenure: August 31, 2020 - August 30, 2023

Steve Bamford – Director

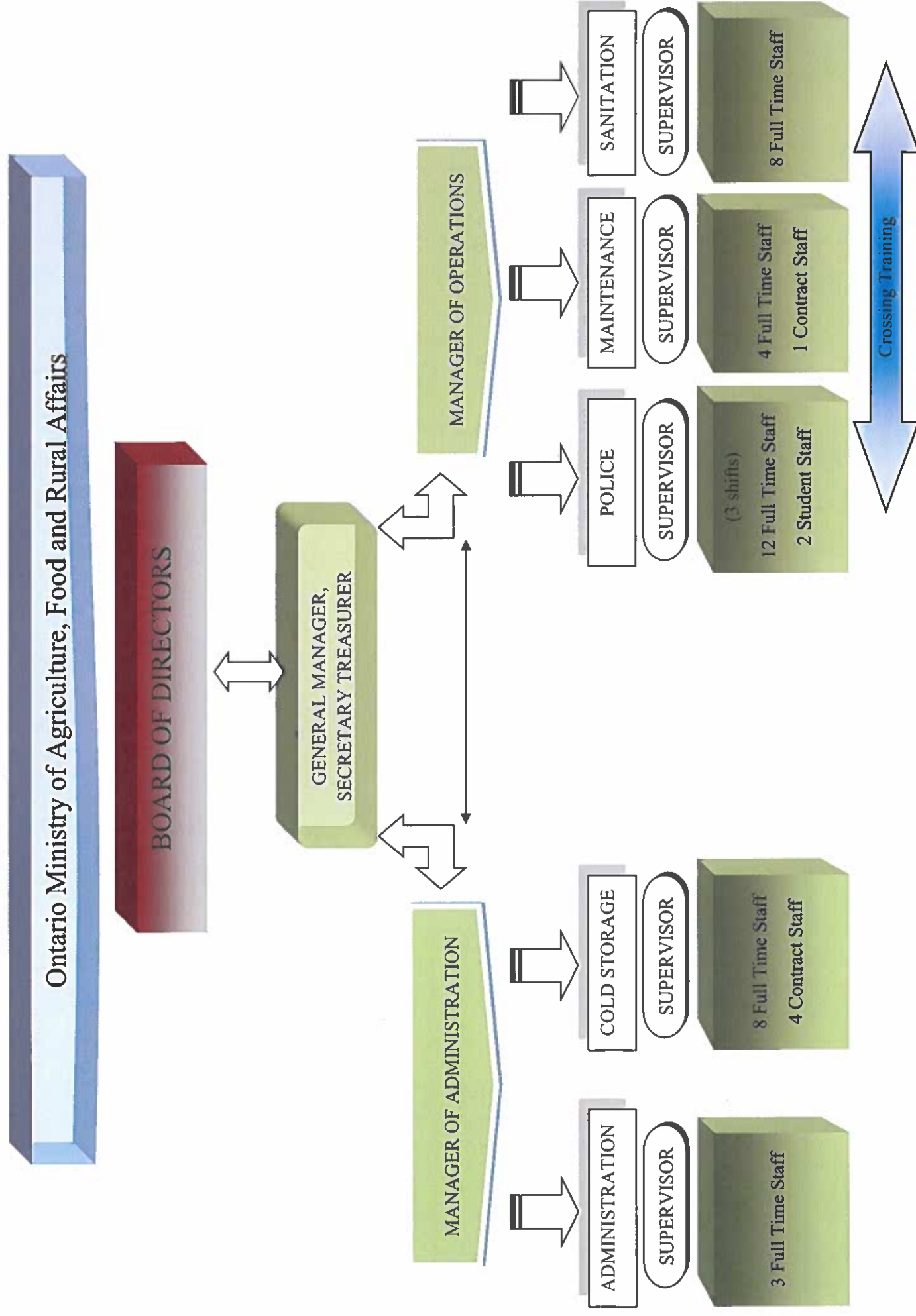
Steve Bamford is a Chief Executive Officer for Fresh Advancements, and President of Bay Growers, and a former President of Freshline Foods Inc. Tenure: October 4, 2020 – October 3, 2023

Fred Koornneef – Director

Fred Koornneef is the President of Koornneef Produce Ltd. and President of the Toronto Wholesale Produce Association. Tenure: April 7, 2022 – April 6, 2025

Appendix III:

Ontario Food Terminal Board's Organizational Structure



Appendix IV: Performance Measures and Target Plan 2023-2026				
			Target	Actual
Performance Measure	Goals	Measurement	2023/24 - 2024/25 - 2025/26	
Provide New Board Members with Orientation Manual	Within One Month of Being Appointed	As Required	As Required	Within 30 Days of Appointment
Maintenance of OFT Facility	Building facilities pass safety inspections	100% Compliance	100% Compliance	20/21 - Dec. 22, 2020 21/22 - Nov 28, 2021
To provide a safe workplace for staff	Provide a incident free safe working environment	Less than 8 incidents	Less than 8 incidents	19/20 - 2 Incidents 20/21 - 2 Incidents 21/22 - 1 Incident 22/23 - 3 Incidents
Maintain a positive budget	Meet or exceed budget projections	Meet Budget Targets	Meet Budget Targets	20/21 - 4.12% rent increase 21/22 - 1.6% rent increase 22/23 - 8.8% Rent Increase 23/24 - 6.4% Rent Increase
	Meet or exceed volume throughput projections	Greater 1,000,000 Tonnes	Greater 1,000,000 Tonnes	18/19 - 0.004% increase to 1,058,039 tons 19/20 - 0.008% decrease to 1,049,065 tons 20/21 - 15.6% decrease to 885,446 tons 21/22 - 3.8% increase to 919,278 tons
Provide a market for wholesale fruit and product	Maintain or exceed 5,000 Registered Buyers	# of Buyers	> 5,000 Buyers	19/20 - 4,812 Registered Buyers 20/21 - 4,103 Registered Buyers 21/22 - 4,268 Registered Buyers
Arrangements of Lease Agreements	Warehouse Space Vacancy Rate	100% Occupancy	100% Occupancy	18/19 - 100% Occupied 19/20 - 100% Occupied 20/21 - 100% Occupied 21/22 - 100 % Occupied
	Farmers' Market Stall Vacancy Rate	90% Occupancy	90% Occupancy	18/19 - 90% Occupied 19/20 - 85% Occupied 20/21 - 80% Occupied 21/22 - 82% Occupied
	Office Space Vacancy Rate	100% Occupancy	100% Occupancy	18/19 - 100% Occupied 19/20 - 100% Occupied 20/21 - 100% Occupied 21/22 - 100% Occupied
Support the exposure of Ontario produce	Increase awareness of farmer's market	# of Tours	> 8 Tours	18/19 - 24 Tours 19/20 - 28 Tours 20/21 - 0 Tours 21/22 - 3 Tours
To promote the facility	Increase awareness of role of OFT	# of Trade Shows	>2 Trade Shows	18/19 - OFVC Trade Show 19/20 - OFVC Trade Show 20/21 - Not Applicable 21/22 - Not Applicable
To respond to all external inquires	Response rate within 24 hours	95% Success Rate	95% Success Rate	94% Response Rate
To maintain good working relationships	Maintain or lower # of complaints	Less than 20/year	Less than 20/year	18/19 - 2 Complaints 19/20 - 1 Complaint 20/21 - 3 Complaints 21/22 - 2 Complaints
	Tenant Satisfaction With Rented Space	85% Satisfaction Rate	85% Satisfaction Rate	18/19 - 91% Satisfied 19/20 - 90% Satisfied 20/21 - 87% Satisfied 21/22 - 89% Satisfied

Appendix V:

Ontario Food Terminal Board Risk Assessment 2023

Risk	Residual risk score	Mitigation Strategy	Likelihood	Impact Strategic	Risk Tolerance	Rationale for prioritization
There is potential for board members to have conflict of interest situations arise that could cause the Board decisions to make bias or perceived as bias or ineffective.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conflict of interest is considered during the appointment process. - Provide training to new board members on what conflict of interest is and how to manage it. - Board chair is ethics executive for the OFTB and is responsible for managing potential conflict of interest situations. - Board members are required to report any conflict of interest impacting their role on the Board to the Board Chair 	3	3	3	Existing mitigation activities reduce the inherent risk.
Failure of the Board to comply with all AAD governance and reporting requirements.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - MOU is in place. - Regular communication with Ministry Agency Liaison. 	1	2	3	The agency has a history of compliance. There is an excellent working relationship between the agency and the Ministry.
Decrease in the demand for terminal services could cause loss of revenue for the OFTB and the tenants.	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain flexibility in budgeting. - OFTB keep abreast of upcoming market issues and identify them in three year business plan and risk assessment. - OFTB promote the terminal with tours, at trade shows and conventions. 	1	4	3	Risk is being adequately managed with current procedures. The OFTB has been in operation since 1954 and continues to thrive and grow.
Unforeseen events that causes a disruption in services (i.e. road closures, pandemics, border closure, power failure, labour disruption, infrastructure failure) resulting in business disruptions and loss of revenue to tenants.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OFTB maintains business continuity and contingency plans. - OFTB holds insurance against claims of losses and business interruptions. - OFTB facility is properly maintained, upgraded and refurbished as needed. 	1	4	1	Risk is being adequately managed with current procedures.
Workplace health and safety is an ongoing issue for all market participants.	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Regular safety committee meetings. - Safety bulletins posted around the facility. - OFTB employs own Police force to monitor the situation. - Terminal staff work with Ministry of Labour to identify potential safety concerns and address in a timely manner. - Security cameras installed across the facility which are monitored by terminal staff. - OFTB has 9 staff holding a valid First Aid and CPR Certificate. 	3	3	3	Due to the nature of the facility Health and Safety is always a concern and actively managed.
The OFTB facility covers a large geographic area and as a result is difficult to secure. Food security (i.e. safety and tampering) is an issue since buyer access is allowed on the dock system, in the farmers' market area and the cold storage. Due to the nature of the facility, food safety in the farmers' market areas is always a concern (i.e. the farmers' market is an open air outdoor market with no refrigeration).	Medium	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OFTB Police monitor the situation 24/7 using video camera surveillance and in-person. Police have the power to take action if required. - Food safety information and training is provided to tenants, the OFTB and all of its warehouse tenants are HACCP Certified. - Several food safety programs, policies and equipment are in place to support food safety (e.g. pest control programs, floor sweepers, etc.) 	3	3	3	Food Safety is always top of mind for the OFTB. Facility security cameras and police monitoring the situation. Adequate management with current procedures.
Lack of quorum for the Board	Low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - OFTB member transition is monitored and appointment recommendations are sought and forwarded to the Ministry prior to vacancies. This reduces the impact to the Board as experienced members leave and new members are appointed. 	1	3	2	Existing mitigation activities reduce the inherent risk.