

**Alberta Conservation Association
2023/24 Project Summary Report**

Project Name: Harvest Your Own

Information, Education, and Communications Program Manager: Tara Holmwood

Project Leader: Todd Zimmerling

Primary ACA Staff on Project: Charmaine Brunes, Colin Eyo, Amanda Gill, Cassandra Hewitt, and Tara Holmwood

Partnerships

Not applicable

Key Findings

- 707 new audience members across all platforms
- 93,673 page views on the harvestyourown.ca website
- Four paid advertising campaigns
- Four contests
- Harvest Your Own provides new or aspiring hunters in Alberta with timely and relevant resources and content so they can work toward success in the field and in the kitchen.
- The target audience skews younger (under 45), including Alberta men and women who are new to or interested in hunting. The secondary audience is existing hunters looking to expand and share their knowledge and experience with other Alberta hunters.

Details

Alberta is one of the few jurisdictions in North America seeing a growth in the number of hunters. This increase is often attributed to an interest in organic and local food, and hunting as an empowering way to actively and ethically source your own protein. The gap is that new hunters, particularly those from urban areas, may not have a network of family and friends to help them learn to hunt. Harvest Your Own aims to provide new hunters with timely and relevant

content that will help them get started and have success in the field and kitchen. This ultimately will help make harvesting, preparing, and enjoying wild game more socially acceptable amongst Albertans—particularly in the urban population under the age of 45—and contribute to a steady increase in the number of hunters in our province.

Harvest Your Own is a multi-platform media property managed and delivered by the Information, Education, and Communications Program. Project staff develop content for multiple platforms, and subject matter experts and writers are contracted to contribute content. Content is guided by a high-level calendar that identifies seasonal subject areas and general timing of content by week and month (e.g., article, video, contest, experience), which is then used to create the social media and podcast schedules.

In 2023/24, Harvest Your Own continued to expand its online presence by increasing its post frequency on social media, increasing the number of podcast episodes, and hosting four contests: Feast, Sip, Share – Mother’s Day (April 26–May 10, 2023); Links and Drinks – Father’s Day (May 24–June 7, 2023); Smokin’ Cool (July 13–27, 2023); and Fill the Freezer (September 13–October 11, 2023). Harvest Your Own increased its digital audience as follows:

- 93,673 page views on the harvestyourown.ca website
- 3,768 (+134) Facebook followers
- 1,911 (+449) Instagram followers
- 18 (+119) TikTok followers
- 187 (+56) YouTube subscribers
- all-time podcast downloads of 21,448 (+6,817)
- 2,035 e-newsletter subscribers
- Twitter is no longer an active platform for Harvest Your Own.

In 2023/24, the overall social media audience grew by 707, which is gradual and sustainable year by year. We are pleased to see engagement and questions from new hunters, and comments from experienced hunters sharing their expertise.

Proactive advertising and consistent messaging are key to increasing Harvest Your Own brand recognition, promoting hunting as part of a contemporary and healthy lifestyle, and supporting stakeholders in a province with growing and shifting demographics.

Photos



Photo 1. Harvest Your Own website header for Smokin' Cool Contest (July 13–27, 2023).

Photo: ACA



Photo 2. Harvest Your Own website header for Time to Fill the Freezer Contest (September 13–October 11, 2023). Photo: ACA