

# MANAGEMENT REPORT OF FUND PERFORMANCE

## **Harvest Brand Leaders Enhanced Income ETF**

December 31, 2022



The Fund's proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure, can be obtained at your request, and at no cost, by calling us at 1-866-998-8298; by writing to us at Harvest Portfolios Group Inc., 610 Chartwell Road, Suite 204, Oakville, Ontario, L6J 4A5; by visiting our website at www.harvestportfolios.com; or on SEDAR at www.sedar.com.

#### **CORPORATE OVERVIEW**

Harvest Portfolios Group Inc. ("Harvest" or the "Manager") is a Canadian Investment Manager founded in 2009. Harvest is focused on developing investment products that follow three investment criteria.

We (i) endeavor to develop investment products that are clear in their mandate and easy for investors to understand, (ii) strive to be transparent so that our investors can review their financial reports and know exactly what they own and (iii) seek to provide investors with consistent monthly or quarterly income by investing the fund portfolios in well managed companies that have a steady cash flow and dividend-paying history.

#### INVESTMENT PRODUCT

Harvest Brand Leaders Enhanced Income ETF will invest, on a levered basis, in Harvest Brand Leaders Plus Income ETF, an exchange traded mutual fund managed by the manager.

Harvest Brand Leaders Enhanced Income ETF is considered an alternative mutual fund within the meaning of NI 81-102 and is permitted to invest in asset classes or use investment strategies that are not permitted for other types of mutual funds. As an alternative mutual fund, under National Instrument 81-102, Harvest Brand Leaders Enhanced Income ETF is permitted to use strategies generally prohibited by conventional mutual funds, including the ability to invest in other alternative mutual funds, borrow cash to use for investment purposes and increased ability to invest in commodities.



#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

**Unitholder letter March 2023** 

Dear Valued Investor,

Thank you for taking the time to read about Harvest ETFs & Funds in 2022 and our look ahead to 2023.

The past year reminded us of key lessons as investors, advisors, and fund managers. At Harvest Portfolios Group Inc., we were reminded of the importance of our core philosophy for wealth creation and preservation: own great businesses, hold them for the long-term, and generate steady income.

2022 saw central banks hiking key interest rates higher and faster than we, and many others, expected. These were among the highest and fastest rate increases in modern history, driven largely by central banks' goal to tame high and persistent inflation.

It was also a year of high volatility. Interest rate increases played a role, as did geopolitical instability and global economic uncertainty.

In an environment of persistent inflation, rising rates and high volatility, our focus on leading businesses and selling covered call options remained highly effective. Our Equity Income ETFs' defensive characteristics and ability to monetize volatility to generate high yields proved attractive in a turbulent year.

With bonds and equities both underperforming, the reliability of attractive income became a key component of total returns for many investors.

Even as investors have found success with our strategies, there is still a great deal of uncertainty around markets. The U.S. Federal Reserve claims they are trying to combat inflation without pushing the economy into recession. History shows that goal is very rarely achieved, but perhaps lightening up on the brakes early in 2023 could achieve the desired results.

We know that these rate increases will plateau at some point, and we believe we are nearing the end of that cycle. When that time comes, markets will react appropriately and likely move higher. We expect that 2023 will finish positive as rate hikes end and markets process these changes in the economy.

Markets are forward looking indicators, and the economic impact of rate increases are often delayed. This generally means markets recover and begin a growth trajectory before their underlying economies do.

As optimists and believers in the longer-term value of great businesses, we will continue to do what we always have at Harvest. We construct ETFs that hold solid businesses in their sector and use active & flexible covered call strategies to generate income where appropriate. We do that because we believe owning great businesses in the long-term is the best way to build and preserve wealth.

On behalf of Harvest, I would like to thank you for your continued trust and investment in our products.

Sincerely,

Signed "Michael Kovacs"

Michael Kovacs

Founder

President and Chief Executive Officer



#### MANAGEMENT DISCUSSION OF FUND PERFORMANCE

The annual management report of fund performance contains financial highlights but does not contain the complete annual financial statements of the Fund. For your reference, the annual financial statements of the Fund are attached to the annual management report of fund performance. You may obtain additional copies of these documents at your request, and at no cost, by calling toll free at 1-866-998-8298; by writing to us at Harvest Portfolios Group Inc., 610 Chartwell Road, Suite 204, Oakville, Ontario, L6J 4A5; or by visiting our website at www.harvestportfolios.com; or on SEDAR at www.sedar.com.

Unitholders may also contact us using one of these methods to request a copy of the Fund's proxy voting policies and procedures, proxy voting disclosure record, or quarterly portfolio disclosure.

#### INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES AND STRATEGY

The Fund's investment objectives are to provide unitholders with high monthly cash distributions and the opportunity for capital appreciation by investing, on a levered basis, in the Harvest Brand Leaders Plus Income ETF ("Underlying ETF" or "HBF") an exchange traded mutual fund managed by the Manager that is listed on a recognized Canadian stock exchange and that engages in covered call strategies.

HBF's investment objective is to provide unitholders with (i) monthly cash distributions; (ii) the opportunity for capital appreciation; and (iii) lower overall volatility of portfolio returns than would otherwise be experienced by owning Equity Securities<sup>1</sup> of the Brand Leaders<sup>1</sup> directly. To achieve lower overall volatility of portfolio returns, HBF will generally write covered call options on up to 33% of the portfolio securities. The level of covered call option writing may vary based on market volatility and other factors.

The Fund is considered an alternative mutual fund within the meaning of NI 81-102 and is permitted to invest in asset classes or use investment strategies that are not permitted for other types of mutual funds. As an alternative mutual fund, under NI 81-102, the Fund is permitted to use strategies generally prohibited by conventional mutual funds, including the ability to invest in other alternative mutual funds, borrow cash to use for investment purposes and increased ability to invest in commodities. While these specific strategies will be used in accordance with the Fund's investment objectives and strategies, during certain market conditions they may accelerate the pace at which an investment decreases in value.

#### **RISK**

The risks associated with investing in the Fund are as described in the prospectus. There were no material changes to the Fund over the period that affected the overall level of risk of the Fund.

#### **RESULTS OF OPERATIONS**

The Fund began trading following the listing of its units on October 25, 2022 consisting of 100,000 units at \$10.00 for proceeds of \$1,000,000. Performance information is not available for periods less than one year.

Below is a discussion of the result of operations of HBF during the period.

U.S. equity markets declined sharply during 2022 as several factors began to weigh on investor sentiment following strong performance in the previous two years. Inflation rates rose sharply and remained elevated throughout the year leading to an increasingly hawkish U.S. Federal Reserve and rising interest rates. This rise in interest rates put downward pressure on all stocks however growth stocks, such as those found in the technology sector, were particularly impacted early in the year because the valuation of these companies tends to be more dependent on future earnings. In late February the Russian invasion of Ukraine and the sanctions enacted by NATO countries in response led to a temporary but sharp increase in commodity prices that further exacerbated global inflation pressures and added an additional element of uncertainty for market participants. Finally, in the second half of the year signs began to emerge that a slowdown in the economy was unfolding faster than previously expected which in turn led to rising fears that corporate earnings may be at risk due to falling demand and weakening profit margins.

Looking forward, we expect that market volatility will remain high during 2023, driven largely by ongoing uncertainty related to inflation and economic growth and the related impact on monetary policy by the U.S. Federal Reserve. Although the probability of a cataclysmic event stemming from the war in Ukraine appears low at this time, it seems unlikely that a resolution to end the conflict will be reached in the near term and the potential for escalation remains elevated.

Relative to the benchmark, key factors that negatively impacted the underlying performance of HBF included its positions in Information Technology and Communication Services sectors, which underperformed the broader market in a weak

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> As defined in HBF's prospectus dated June 6, 2022.

environment for growth stocks. Weak performance in its allocation to Financials stocks also hurt performance as bank stocks held in HBF such as Bank of America Corporation and JPMorgan Chase & Co. were laggards while insurance stocks in the benchmark that are not held in HBF generally outperformed the broader index. Additionally, HBF's relative performance was also negatively impacted by a lack of exposure to the Utilities sector and underweight in Health Care stocks. Due to the nature of HBF's mandate, Utilities are not represented in its investable universe, while the Health Care sector is under-represented relative to the benchmark.

These negative factors were offset in part by investments in McDonald's Corporation which has benefited from a combination of a reopening of the global economy in the wake of the coronavirus ("COVID-19") pandemic as well as a perception among investors that the company will be relatively insulated from rising inflation and slowing demand for goods and services generally as consumers "trade down" from higher cost alternatives. Additionally, HBF benefited from its position in Shell PLC, which represented a modest overweight in the energy sector relative to the benchmark. The Energy sector was the best performing group this year as prices for oil and natural gas rose dramatically, particularly in the first half. Growth in demand for oil and natural gas as the global economy rebounds from the pandemic has outpaced supply growth following several years of underinvestment in production capacity. This supply/demand imbalance has been exacerbated by the Russia-Ukraine conflict and resulting sanctions impacting Russia's Energy sector.

HBF used covered calls to generate additional income.

#### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

The spread of COVID-19 over the last couple of years has had a significant impact on the global economy. Although COVID-19 continues to exist, most countries have largely lifted COVID-19 related restrictions and the world has returned to a more normal level of activity. The lasting impact of COVID-19 has been significant supply chain issues which have begun to subside however persist in some industries, and a significant rise in inflation. Inflationary pressures have been exacerbated by the war in Ukraine and continue to impact global commodity supplies and costs. Central banks globally have quickly raised interest rates to address inflation although increasing the likelihood for a global recession. The above factors continue to impact global economies and financial markets, and uncertainty of the impact on financial performance of the Fund's investments persists. The Fund's future investment results may be materially adversely affected as a result.

#### **RELATED PARTY TRANSACTIONS**

There were no related party transactions during the reporting period, except for management fees and other expense reimbursements paid to Harvest, as noted below in Management and Other Fees.

#### MANAGEMENT AND OTHER FEES

The Manager is responsible for managing the Fund's overall business and operations and provides key management personnel to the Fund. The Fund does not pay management fees directly to the Manager. However, the Underlying ETF held by the Fund will pay management fees and incur operating and trading expenses. The Fund intends to invest in an ETF that is managed by the Manager. With respect to such investment, no management fees or incentive fees are payable by the Fund that, to a reasonable person, would duplicate a fee payable by such Underlying ETF for the same service. The Underlying ETF in which the Fund invests will pay applicable management fees. As a result, the actual aggregate management fees indirectly payable to the Manager in respect of an investment in the Fund will be greater than nil.

#### **Operating expenses**

The Fund is responsible for operating expenses relating to the carrying on of its business, including custodial services, interest, taxes, legal, audit fees, transfer agency services relating to the issue and redemption of units, and the cost of financial and other reports, costs and expenses for the Fund's Independent Review Committee ("IRC"), including fees and expenses of the IRC members and compliance with applicable laws, regulations and policies. The Manager pays for such expenses on behalf of the Fund, except for certain expenses such as interest, and is then reimbursed by the Fund.

#### Other expenses

The Manager will be reimbursed by the Fund for all reasonable costs, expenses and liabilities incurred by the Manager for performance of services on behalf of the Fund in connection with the discharge by the Manager of its duties hereunder. Such costs and expenses may include, without limitation: mailing and printing expenses for reports to unitholders and other unitholder communications; a reasonable allocation of salaries and benefits; and other administrative expenses and costs incurred in connection with the Fund's continuous public offering and other obligations. These expenses are allocated by the Manager on a reasonable basis, across all the Harvest Portfolios Group Inc. funds, and series of each applicable fund. These expenses were \$55 for the period ended December 31, 2022 and are included in the unitholder reporting costs on the Statement of Comprehensive Income (Loss) in the financial statements.



#### Waivers and absorptions

At its sole discretion, the Manager may waive management fees or absorb expenses of the Fund. There were no management fee waivers for the period ended December 31, 2022. The Manager absorbed \$39,216 of expenses of the Fund and there were no expense absorptions of the Underlying ETF for the period ended December 31, 2022. The Manager may cease doing so at any time without notice to unitholders. The management expense ratios of the Fund with and without the waivers and absorptions are reported in the Ratios and Supplemental Data table below.

#### **LOAN FACILITY**

The Fund has entered into prime broker agreements with two wholly owned subsidiaries of Canadian chartered banks (the "Prime Brokers") in order to facilitate borrowing for the purpose of investing in accordance with its investment strategy. The Fund may borrow against collateral on deposit with the Prime Brokers with such borrowing being repayable on demand. Interest is payable on any borrowings at a variable rate of interest that has ranged from 4.30% to 4.80% during the period and is calculated daily and payable monthly. During the period the minimum amount borrowed under the agreement was \$nil and the maximum amount borrowed was \$453,466. The Fund incurred \$2,538 of interest which is presented as interest expense on the Statement of Comprehensive Income (Loss) in the financial statements.

The Fund may borrow up to 33% but intends to borrow approximately 25% of its net asset value at any given time. As at December 31, 2022 the amount of borrowing was \$453,466 which is equal to 25.7% of the net asset value of the Fund on that date.

#### RECOMMENDATIONS OR REPORTS BY THE INDEPENDENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

The Independent Review Committee tabled no special reports and made no extraordinary material recommendations to management of the Fund during the period ended December 31, 2022.



#### **FINANCIAL HIGHLIGHTS**

The following tables present selected key financial information about the Fund and are intended to help you understand the Fund's financial performance for the period ended December 31, 2022. This information is derived from the Fund's annual audited financial statements.

THE FUND'S NET ASSETS PER UNIT		2022
Net assets - beginning of the period <sup>2</sup>	\$	10.00
Increase (decrease) from operations	·	
Total revenue		0.03
Total expenses		(0.02)
Realized gains (losses) for the period		-
Unrealized gains (losses) for the period		(0.06)
Total increase (decrease) from operations <sup>1</sup>	\$	(0.05)
Distributions <sup>3</sup>		
From net investment income		(0.01)
Return of capital		(0.15)
Total annual distributions <sup>3</sup>	\$	(0.16)
Net assets - end of the period <sup>1</sup>	\$	10.09

RATIOS AND SUPPLEMENTAL DATA	2022
Total net asset value	\$ 1,765,043
Number of units outstanding	175,000
Management expense ratio <sup>4</sup>	1.95%
Management expense ratio excluding the costs of	
financing <sup>4</sup>	1.09%
Management expense ratio before waivers or	
absorptions <sup>4</sup>	18.12%
Trading expense ratio <sup>5</sup>	0.22%
Portfolio turnover rate <sup>6</sup>	0.00%
Net asset value per unit	\$ 10.09
Closing market price (HBFE)	\$ 10.09

#### **Explanatory Notes:**

- 1. Net assets and distributions are based on the actual number of units outstanding at the relevant time. The increase (decrease) from operations is based on the weighted average number of units outstanding over the reporting period. It is not intended that the Fund's net assets per unit table act as a continuity of opening and closing net assets per unit.
- 2. Net assets, at the commencement of operations on October 20, 2022 was \$10.00.
- 3. Distributions were paid in cash or reinvested in additional units of the Fund. The Fund may pay additional year end distributions in the form of reinvested units that are subsequently consolidated. There is no impact on NAV per unit, however such reinvested distributions increase the cost base of units held.
- 4. Management expense ratio ("MER") is based on total expenses (excluding commissions and other portfolio transaction costs) and the proportionate share of the Underlying ETF's related expenses of the stated period and is expressed as an annualized percentage of the daily average net asset value during the period.
- 5. The trading expense ratio represents total commissions and other portfolio transaction costs and the proportionate share of the Underlying ETF's related expenses expressed as an annualized percentage of daily average net asset value during the period.
- s. The Fund's portfolio turnover rate indicates how actively the Fund's portfolio advisor manages its portfolio investments. A portfolio turnover of 100% is equivalent to the Fund buying and selling all of the securities in its portfolio once in the course of the period. The higher a Fund's portfolio turnover rate, the greater the trading costs payable by the Fund and the greater the chance of an investor receiving taxable capital gains. There is not necessarily a relationship between a high turnover rate and the performance of a Fund.



#### **Past Performance**

The performance information presented herein assumes all dividends of the Fund during the periods presented were reinvested in additional securities of the Fund. The performance information does not take into account sales, redemptions, or other charges that would have reduced returns or affected performance. Past performance of the Fund is not necessarily indicative of how it will perform in the future.

#### YEAR-BY-YEAR RETURNS

The Fund's performance is not shown as National Instument 81-106, the regulatory guideline for Continuous Disclosure, does not permit reporting of performance for any investment fund that has been in existence less than one year.

#### ANNUAL COMPOUND RETURNS

The Fund's performance is not shown as National Instument 81-106, the regulatory guideline for Continuous Disclosure, does not permit reporting of performance for any investment fund that has been in existence less than one year.

## **SUMMARY OF INVESTMENT PORTFOLIO**

Information displayed is for the Underlying ETF in which the Fund primarily invests.

#### As at December 31, 2022

Top Holdings	% of Underlying ETF
NIKE, Inc., Class B	5.5
JPMorgan Chase & Co.	5.4
Verizon Communications Inc.	5.3
Shell PLC ADR	5.3
Visa Inc., Class A	5.3
Caterpillar Inc.	5.2
United Parcel Service, Inc., Class B	5.1
Johnson & Johnson	5.1
Morgan Stanley	5.1
McDonald's Corporation	5.0
The Procter & Gamble Company	5.0
PepsiCo, Inc.	5.0
UnitedHealth Group Incorporated	4.9
Intel Corporation	4.8
Microsoft Corporation	4.7
Accenture PLC, Class A	4.7
Bank of America Corporation	4.6
Apple Inc.	4.2
Alphabet Inc., Class A	4.2
The Walt Disney Company	4.1
Foreign currency forward contracts	1.1
Cash and other assets and liabilities	1.0
Options	(0.6)
Total	100.0
Total net asset value	\$421,288,624

This summary of investment portfolio may change due to the ongoing portfolio transactions of the Fund. Quarterly updates of the Fund's investment portfolio are available from Harvest Portfolios Group Inc. at <a href="https://www.harvestportfolios.com">www.harvestportfolios.com</a>.



## **SECTOR ALLOCATION**

Information displayed is for the Underlying ETF in which the Fund primarily invests.

Sector	% of Underlying ETF
Information Technology	23.7
Financials	15.1
Communication Services	13.6
Consumer Discretionary	10.5
Industrials	10.3
Consumer Staples	10.0
Health Care	10.0
Energy	5.3
Foreign currency forward contracts	1.1
Cash and other assets and liabilities	1.0
Options	(0.6)
Total	100.0

## **GEOGRAPHIC ALLOCATION**

Information displayed is for the Underlying ETF in which the Fund primarily invests.

Country of Risk	% of Underlying ETF
United States	93.2
Netherlands	5.3
Foreign currency forward contracts	1.1
Cash and other assets and liabilities	1.0
Options	(0.6)
Total	100.0





## **Head Office**

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#### CAUTION REGARDING FORWARD-LOOKING STATEMENTS

This document may contain forward-looking statements relating to anticipated future events, results, circumstances, performance or expectations that are not historical facts but instead represent our beliefs regarding future events. By their nature, forward-looking statements require us to make assumptions and are subject to inherent risks and uncertainties. There is significant risk that predictions and other forward-looking statements will not prove to be accurate. We caution readers of this document not to place undue reliance on our forward-looking statements as a number of factors could cause actual future results, conditions, actions or events to differ materially from the targets, expectations, estimates or intentions expressed or implied in the forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from management expectations as projected in such forward-looking statements for a variety of reasons, including but not limited to market and general economic conditions, interest rates, regulatory and statutory developments, the effects of competition in the geographic and business areas in which the Fund may invest and the risks detailed from time to time in the Fund's prospectus or offering memorandum. We caution that the foregoing list of factors is not exhaustive and that when relying on forward-looking statements to make decisions with respect to investing in the Fund, investors and others should carefully consider these factors, as well as other uncertainties and potential events, and the inherent uncertainty of forward-looking statements. Due to the potential impact of these factors, the Fund does not undertake, and specifically disclaims, any intention or obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise, unless required by applicable law.

