

# PANDEMIC UPDATE

APRIL 2021

It has been a year since the pandemic was declared by the World Health Organization. As we recognize the passing of this milestone, we celebrate the warmth of spring and hope the vaccine rollout brings us closer to normalcy.

Throughout the year, Edmonton's Food Bank stayed open to serve the community. Thanks to our amazing donors our warehouse shelves are stocked, funds are available for us to respond to the changing needs of the community, and dedicated volunteers continue to help move food out to vulnerable neighbours.



We distribute your donations to many agencies in Edmonton including Metis Child and Family Services. Representatives pick up food hampers from us to help improve the well being of Metis children and families.



## MOBILE FOOD DEPOT

- Edmonton's Food Bank introduced a Mobile Food Depot which will expand our capacity to provide food directly to underserved communities and ensure accessibility throughout our city.
- Like all food hamper arrangements, clients call in to prearrange their food hamper. The hampers are packed and clients collect their hampers from the vehicle at a specific location (i.e. a vacant lot) and at a specific time.
- Six Mobile Food Depot locations are scheduled to be in operation by May 1.

## THE NEED FOR DATA

- Providing food to people in need is good in and of itself; however, there is more to it. Food insecurity is a symptom of poverty and while providing food helps an immediate need, it does not create long-term impact or change.
- Edmonton's Food Bank collects client information to understand who has been impacted by food insecurity and poverty.
- Aggregate data is shared with elected officials and the public to create positive change for the people we are serving. When we meet with government decision makers, we use reliable data to explain what we are seeing on the front line, such as needed change to income security, affordable housing and childcare, etc.

## BY THE NUMBERS FOR 2021

Edmonton's Food Bank...

- answers an average of 350 to 500 phone calls each day by our Client Service team to coordinate a food hamper. We have responded to as many as 80 emails and 619 phone calls in one day.
- provided food hampers to 75,531 people in the first three months of 2021.
- served 439 people through the new Mobile Food Depot and 817 through our home delivery service with Drive Happiness.
- provides food to agencies, shelters, schools, soup kitchens in Edmonton. More than 1.2 million kilograms of food has already been shared with our partners.



Because of you, we are able to continue to do what we do best - feeding people and serving those in need, as we have since 1981. If you have any questions please contact Tamisan Bencz-Knight, Manager of Strategic Relationships & Partnerships, at 780.425.2133 ext. 232.



EDMONTON'S FOOD BANK

# PANDEMIC UPDATE

JANUARY 2021

As the government implemented new restrictions in December 2020, and news of a vaccine provided a dose of hope, Edmonton's Food Bank has adapted and remains open.

We continue to distribute food and resources throughout our community thanks to our determined volunteers, dedicated staff, and committed donors.



## EDMONTON'S FOOD BANK...

- partnered with Drive Happiness to complete home food deliveries to our most vulnerable. Between June and December of 2020, 615 households benefitted from this service which helped 1,108 people.
- provided 6,239 households with a Thanksgiving meal that included a frozen turkey or ham in their food hamper. In addition, we gave 252 turkeys and 21 hams to our agency partners like Our House Addiction Recovery, Boyle Street Community Services, and Bissell Centre.
- shifted when key annual events like the Heritage Festival (August long weekend), Tackle Hunger (summer), and City Wide Door-to-Door (September) were cancelled. Thankfully, community members gave food at major grocery stores and financially online.
- adjusted to last minute changes to major events like ETS Stuff A Bus, Citadel Theatre's A Christmas Carol, and Candy Cane Lane as they encouraged online contributions and nonperishable food donations at grocery stores. Due to COVID-19 restrictions, most festive community events at schools and businesses that typically support the Food Bank were cancelled. Edmontonians pivoted flawlessly and ensured the Food Bank met its campaign goals of 250,000 kilograms of food and \$1.7 million dollars.
- dedicated volunteers gave over 75,000 hours of their time despite COVID-19 restrictions and operational changes.
- received over one million disposable masks from MedSup Canada and distribution of these resources continues throughout our network and to partners. Handmade reusable masks from community members and businesses like GiveAMask.ca provide other tools to share with people in need.
- distributed over 5,000 COVID-19 kits from the Government of Alberta and Canadian Red Cross. Each kit contains masks, sanitizer, and instructions (in many languages) on self-isolation and keeping people safe.
- is pleased that our community stepped up and helped us distribute 3,900 turkeys and 3,068 hams to people to celebrate Christmas. This represents over 9,000 households. Our December hamper client numbers were the highest in our 39 year history - 26,606 people were assisted.
- creatively handled the surge in food requests in December. In response, the Food Bank's first ever, drive through hamper pick-up on December 18 supported 400 households. A follow-up drive through on December 23 helped 300 households. The contactless drive through provided a safe means for people to get food.



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# EDMONTON'S FOOD BANK PANDEMIC UPDATE

SEPTEMBER 2020

Because of your ongoing support of Edmonton's Food Bank, we wanted to share how donations of time, food and funds have helped us during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Using creativity and resiliency, we have successfully responded and implemented numerous organizational changes.

Of course, none of this would have been possible without our dedicated volunteers, determined staff, and committed donors. Thank you.



## FURTHER TO OUR ORGANIZATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS SHARED IN MAY 2020, EDMONTON'S FOOD BANK HAS:

- Established a delivery service for our most vulnerable clients. With the help of the YEGCommunityResponse Facebook group of volunteers, the process was developed at the onset of the pandemic. The service is now fully integrated within our client service food hamper programs. Thank you to Drive Happiness for their continued commitment to this service for clients who cannot pick up their food hampers and who do not have other supports to pick up the food on their behalf. Clients must meet specific criteria such as testing positive with COVID-19. Between March 2020 to August 2020, 1,134 households benefited from this specific assistance.
- Allocated federal and provincial funding support for food purchases to ensure continued and consistent access to food for our clients and agency partners.
- Remained open and served our community throughout the pandemic. Since January 1, 2020, 46,807 different people have received a food hamper with fresh and packaged food.
- Resumed small group volunteer opportunities (with restrictions), bringing us one step closer towards normalcy.
- Continued to pivot with our agency partners throughout Edmonton. Soup kitchens, shelters and other social service groups have ample, quality food resources from our warehouse.
- Completed our freezer upgrades thanks to the Alberta Government CFEP grant. This expansion was instrumental in accepting and distributing frozen food.
- Shared PPE (hand sanitizers & face masks) with our agency and community partners with the City of Edmonton and other donors. Additionally, face masks are being distributed to clients through hampers.
- ANAWIM Place, our largest inner city depot, had to stop distributing food because of physical spacing. To support the re-opening of this essential service, we helped with renovations to follow COVID-19 protocols. These partnerships with our community depots like ANAWIM Place, allow for broad food services & community distribution.



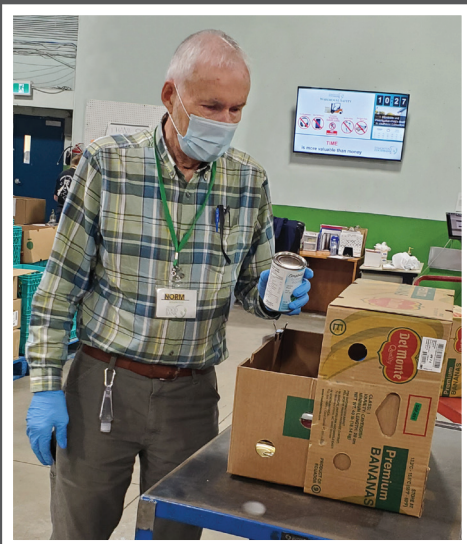
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# EDMONTON'S FOOD BANK PANDEMIC UPDATE

MAY 2020

Because of your ongoing support of Edmonton's Food Bank, we wanted to share how donations of time, food, and funds have helped us during the COVID-19 Pandemic. Edmonton's Food Bank has remained open and serving our community. Even as companies and organizations closed around us to adjust to public health guidelines, we were able to keep services and food available to people in need.



## OUR OPERATIONAL ADJUSTMENTS INCLUDE:

- Hand sanitizer, face masks, and gloves available for staff and volunteers;
- Installed touchless faucets for hand washing and additional nightly disinfecting;
- Plexiglass barriers installed around reception and client intake areas;
- Physical distancing implemented throughout our facilities and work areas. This includes reception areas, food sorting, and the hamper line along with widened lanes for staff and volunteers working;
- Manage the number of people in the building and increased distance between seats in communal areas;
- Non-food resources moved to donated warehouse space;
- Adjusted food purchases to reflect the need of our shelter and soup kitchen agency partners like single serving items and deli meat for “easy to go” meals;
- We have changed our Volunteer Program. Individual and long term volunteers have remained consistent supporting our operations;
- Staff assignments and adjustments were made to focus on emerging priorities; hired extra support in client services and warehouse to handle changing community needs;
- Between March 11 and April 30, we purchased \$323,718 worth of food.

## OTHER CHALLENGES:

- January, February and March 2020 were on a trajectory of increased need with the organization helping 25,028 people in March alone. This was an increase of 18% when compared to March 2019.
- Initial closures and processes for our food depots in March meant that about 5,000 clients needed to be reassigned to a different community food depot for a hamper. Thankfully, community food depots have begun to return following AHS guidelines.

As COVID-19 is affecting the lives of people worldwide, we are seeing people turn to Edmonton's Food Bank for the first time. These are people who have lost their jobs or incomes and who have exhausted all other resources. This new group of people who are reaching out to Edmonton's Food Bank are in addition to those who are already food insecure.

Because of our community, we are able to continue to do what we do best – feeding people and serving those in need, as we have since 1981.



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