



HUNGERCOUNT2016

A COMPREHENSIVE REPORT ON HUNGER AND FOOD BANK USE IN CANADA, AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGE

ABOUT FOOD BANKS CANADA

Food Banks Canada supports a unique network of over 3,000 food-related organizations in every province and territory, assisting more than 800,000 Canadians each month. Together this network shares over 200 million pounds of essential, safe, quality food annually; provides social programs that help to foster self-sufficiency; and advocates for policy change that will help create a Canada where no one goes hungry. Visit foodbankscanada.ca for more information.

**RELIEVING HUNGER TODAY.
PREVENTING HUNGER TOMORROW.**

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CHOICES, CHOICES

While many of us are free to choose any menu item at our favourite restaurant, relishing the pleasure and freedom of dining out, far too many Canadians are unable to afford even to eat in. For the **863,492 people who accessed a food bank in March** this year, choices take a very different shape. Instead of deciding whether they will have the short ribs or the chicken wings, they must decide whether to buy groceries or pay the rent. No one should have to make such a choice.

TO START

In March 2016, 863,492 people received food from a food bank in Canada. This is 1.3% higher than the same period in 2015, and 28% higher than in 2008.

This year's increase in food bank use was widespread, with eight out of ten provinces experiencing a hike and Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Nova Scotia showing drastic surges of more than 17%.

The unacceptably high need for food banks reported in this year's *HungerCount* report is driven by short-term economic disruption and the long-term failure of governments to provide adequate supports to Canadians who have fallen on hard times. The report paints a distressing picture across broad regions of the country.

Food banks come to the aid of a diverse range of people. More than one-third of individuals helped are children and youth, and more than 40% of households receiving food are families with children. Single people living alone – who face a very high risk of living in poverty – have grown as a proportion of households helped.

A large number of households accessing food banks are on some form of government assistance, including pension, disability-related income supports, and

welfare – a stark indication of the very low level of support provided by these programs. On the other side of the coin, nearly one in six households helped are working, yet still need a food bank to make ends meet.

Food bank use is one aspect of the larger problems of poverty and food insecurity in Canada, and the information offered in the *HungerCount* report provides a timely window into these issues. *HungerCount* shows that, from a policy perspective, little has changed since the economic shocks of the last recession. The number of people working in poorly paid, precarious jobs continues to grow. Large sectors of the population lack the skills necessary to qualify for well-paying work. Those who are unemployed or unable to work must depend on government supports that often drive them deeper into poverty.

The *HungerCount* report puts forward a number of policy recommendations to reduce the need for food banks, under four broad themes:

- 1** A National Poverty Reduction Strategy by October 1, 2017
- 2** Real steps toward a Basic Income in Canada
- 3** A new deal for people on social assistance
- 4** Investment in food security for Northern Canadians

→ MENU ←

FIRST CHOICE: GO HUNGRY OR GO TO THE FOOD BANK

Each and every month, hundreds of thousands of Canadians access food banks to make ends meet

863,492

people were helped by food banks in March

36%

are children and youth

28%

higher than 2008

8 of 10

provinces saw an increase

SECOND CHOICE: LOW-PAYING WORK OR INADEQUATE BENEFITS

Both working and unemployed Canadians are helped by food banks

1 in 6

households helped are currently or recently employed

18%

are on disability-related income supports

45%

are on social assistance

8%

live on a pension

THIRD CHOICE: FOOD OR RENT

The high cost of housing is a key driver of food bank use

66%

pay market-level rents

20%

live in social housing

8%

own their home

5%

are homeless

LABRADOR DINER

STAY OR LEAVE?

WABUSH, NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

WHEN THE JOBS DRY UP

With each passing year, it becomes more difficult for blue collar workers to find and keep well-paying, long-term jobs. The problem is top-of-mind in Wabush and Labrador City, two communities ravaged by declining commodity prices. When two iron-ore mines closed, 1,000 workers (nearly a tenth of the population) were laid off within a few months.¹ Miners who retired before the closings have had pensions reduced and medical benefits rescinded. Home foreclosures have spiked. Many have moved away. Requests for assistance at the Labrador West Ministerial Food Bank quadrupled this year, as layoffs radiated through the community, leading to job losses in other sectors and major municipal budget cuts.

60%

of Newfoundland and Labrador food banks saw an increase in 2016



RESULTS

MAINS

Hunger involves a lot of hard choices. Individuals experiencing food insecurity are forced to choose between buying food and paying other bills. Parents choose between eating dinner and giving their portion to their children.

Choices are made at the group level also. Communities make the choice to offer help. Governments make the choice to offer adequate support for Canadians experiencing hunger and food insecurity, or leave their citizens to fend for themselves.

FOOD BANK USE STEADILY RISING

The *HungerCount* study has been performed annually since 1999, when 718,292 people were helped by a still-growing network in March of that year. Exactly ten years later, near the peak of the 2008-2009

recession, 794,738 Canadians were assisted by a more mature, organized, and diverse network. Now, seven years since the end of the economic downturn, food bank use continues its elevated post-recession plateau (see Figure 1). Today, 188,000 more people need help each month than in 2008.

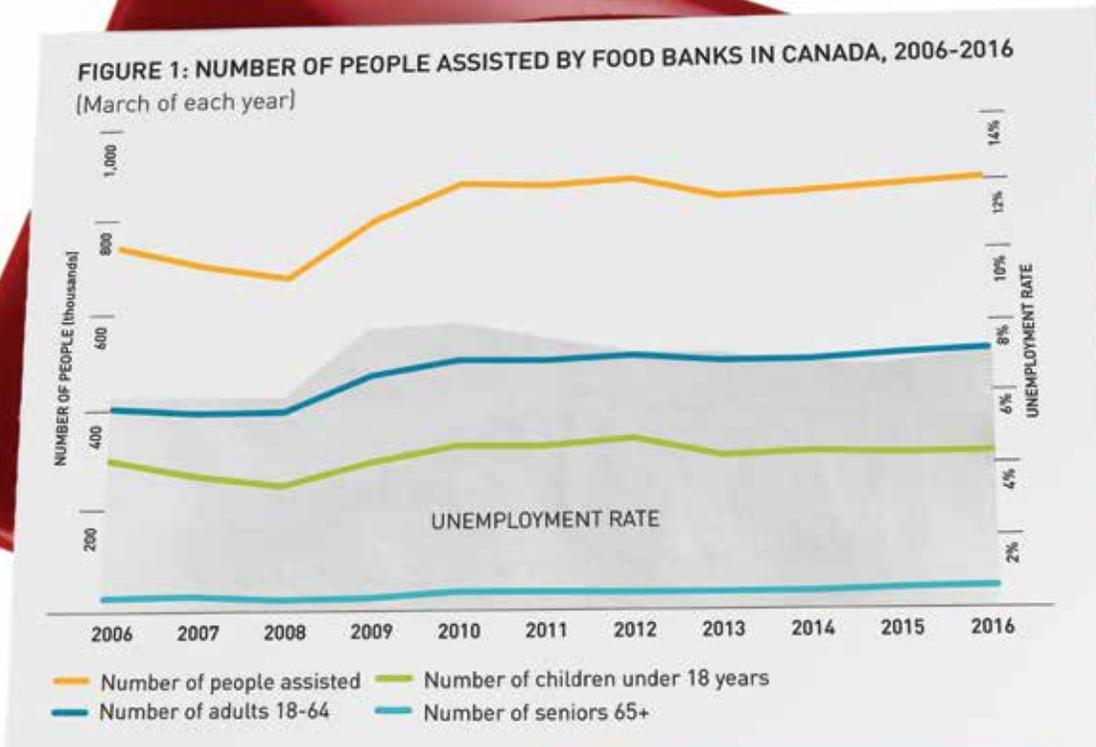


TABLE 1: FOOD BANK USE IN CANADA, BY PROVINCE

Province/Territory	Total Assisted, March 2016	Percent Children, March 2016	Difference, 2015-2016	Difference, 2008-2016	Total Assisted, March 2015	Total Assisted, March 2008
British Columbia	103,464	32.2%	3.4%	32.5%	100,086	78,101
Alberta	79,293	39.4%	17.6%	136.1%	67,443	33,580
Saskatchewan	31,395	45.2%	17.5%	76.9%	26,727	17,751
Manitoba	61,914	42.9%	-2.9%	53.0%	63,791	40,464
Ontario	335,944	33.4%	-6.4%	6.9%	358,963	314,258
Quebec	171,800	34.5%	5.3%	34.7%	163,152	127,536
New Brunswick	19,769	32.5%	4.1%	26.4%	18,986	15,638
Nova Scotia	23,840	30.4%	20.9%	40.9%	19,722	16,915
Prince Edward Island	3,370	35.5%	6.9%	16.5%	3,153	2,892
Newfoundland & Labrador	26,366	37.3%	5.3%	-3.3%	25,040	27,260
Territories	6,337	38.2%	24.9%	-	5,074	1,340
Canada	863,492	35.6%	1.3%	27.8%	852,137	675,735

Since the first annual *HungerCount* report, other national food bank networks have sprung up to join those in North America. These networks exist in Australia, New Zealand, 24 countries in Europe, and across South America. Each of them exists for one overarching reason: to help our most vulnerable citizens make it through the hard times caused by a lack of well-paying jobs and inadequate government supports.

MORE THAN ONE-THIRD ARE UNDER 18

Year after year, and across the country, children and youth are overrepresented among people helped by food banks: while people under age 18 account for 19% of the Canadian population, they make up 36% of individuals receiving food assistance (see page 10).²

It is well-documented that people prefer not to access food banks – they exhaust other avenues of support before taking that step. People struggling to make ends meet move into less expensive (and lower quality) housing, sell their belongings, rack up credit card and payday loan debt, skip bills, eat fewer and cheaper foods, and ask friends and family to help them out before they consider the food bank.^{3,4}

These coping mechanisms can be more difficult for families with children – some sacrifices just aren't possible when kids are involved. Housing options are more limited and therefore more expensive. Food quality and quantity is more important. Heating bills can't go unpaid. Choices become more restricted, and the visit to the food bank becomes unavoidable.

MORE SINGLE PEOPLE ARE ACCESSING FOOD BANKS

As we might expect from the high number of children helped by food banks, families with children (both single and dual-parent) account for two of every five households helped. When we look more deeply at the composition of households accessing food banks, we uncover a map of vulnerability to food insecurity:

- **Lone-parent households** account for 22% of those accessing food banks, though they make up only 10% of all Canadian households.
- **Unattached individuals** account for 44% of households helped by food banks, though they make up 28% of all Canadian households.



DINNER OR RENT?

SURREY, BRITISH COLUMBIA

A SHAKY INTRODUCTION TO A NEW HOME

In the past year, Canada resettled 25,000 Syrian refugees. Nearly 1,700 landed in the Lower Mainland of BC, and more than 40% settled within Surrey.⁵ Because they landed with few resources and could count only on welfare-level benefits to rebuild their lives, many Syrian-Canadians began asking the Surrey Food Bank for help; the organization saw a 17% increase in the number of people requesting assistance, with refugees playing a big part in the jump. The situation in Surrey raises important questions: are we expecting charities to do too much? And how can governments do more to reduce Canadians' dependence on an over-stretched network of social service organizations?

13%

of people helped
by food banks
are immigrants
and refugees





GO INTO DEBT OR GO WITHOUT?

EDMONTON, ALBERTA

CHARITIES PUSHED TO THE LIMIT

In the wake of the plunging global price of oil, Edmonton's unemployment rate grew from 4.9% in March 2014 to 6.9% in March 2016. This translated to a massive 31% increase in food bank use in the city. Edmonton is not alone: incredibly, 80% of Alberta food banks saw an increase in use this year. What sets Edmonton apart is the thousands of people who flocked to the city in May to escape the wildfires further north. This short-term crisis and dislocation, combined with a severe lack of affordable housing and an inadequate safety net for jobless Albertans, have pushed the city's charitable sector to the limits.

Food bank use
in Alberta has
increased
60%
since 2014



Both groups are at very high risk of poverty⁶ and food insecurity.⁷ Among unattached individuals, the need for food banks appears to be a growing problem. Single people have increased from 30% of households helped in 2001, to 39% in 2008 — and now to 44% in 2016.

FOOD BANK USE IS HIGH AMONG BOTH WORKING AND UNEMPLOYED CANADIANS

The need for a food bank often happens suddenly – after the unexpected loss of a job, for example, or in the days and weeks after a family breakup. Every day, people find themselves in situations of distress, with few places to turn for help.

This is reflected in the fact that 7% of households helped by food banks have no income at all. They are accessing assistance while they wait for their first paycheque from a new job, or the first deposit from Employment Insurance or social assistance. A further 15% of households helped are currently or recently employed – receiving a paycheque or on Employment Insurance, yet still unable to make ends meet.

Additionally, many people are struggling on fixed incomes:

- 45% of households assisted are on social assistance.
- 18% receive disability-related income supports.
- 8% receive the majority of their income from a pension.

863,492

people helped in March 2016

1.3%

increase since 2015

28%

increase since 2008

36%

are children

4,426,221

meals served by meal programs in March 2016



FOOD INSECURITY AND FOOD BANK USE

A person or family is “food insecure” when they:

- worry they won’t be able to afford enough food;
- eat suboptimal food because they can’t afford better;
- skip meals because they are unable to purchase enough food.

Poverty is the key driver of food insecurity, and food insecurity is the key driver of food bank use. However, not everyone who is food insecure will want, need, or be able to access charitable food assistance.⁹

It is critical to understand that food bank use is just one aspect of the larger problem of household food insecurity: approximately 1.7 million Canadian households, encompassing 4 million people, experience food insecurity each year. Of these 1.7 million households, 340,000 experience severe food insecurity – in other words, they are quite literally not eating enough food to meet normal energy requirements.⁹ These are the households most likely to access food banks.¹⁰

WHO DO FOOD BANKS HELP?

When it comes to needing help from a food bank, no age group is exempt. However, children and youth are consistently overrepresented.



0 - 2 YEARS

3.2% of the Canadian population

5.8% of people assisted by food banks



3 - 5 YEARS

3.2% of the Canadian population

6.9% of people assisted by food banks



6 - 11 YEARS

6.4% of the Canadian population

12.4% of people assisted by food banks



12 - 17 YEARS

6.5% of the Canadian population

10.4% of people assisted by food banks



18 - 30 YEARS

17.7% of the Canadian population

17.0% of people assisted by food banks



31 - 44 YEARS

18.8% of the Canadian population

19.4% of people assisted by food banks



45 - 64 YEARS

28.0% of the Canadian population

22.7% of people assisted by food banks



65+ YEARS

16.1% of the Canadian population

5.3% of people assisted by food banks

RURAL AND NORTHERN FOOD BANKS

The national picture of food bank use tends to be strongly influenced by the larger urban centres, where the majority of the population is located. This picture can obscure the reality in small towns, rural areas, and northern regions, where food bank use shows distinct trends.

Rural trends:

HungerCount includes data from 624 food banks located in small towns and rural areas.¹¹ These food banks provided food to 155,756 people in March 2016 – an increase of 2.3% since last year.

In small towns and rural areas, people accessing food banks tend to be slightly older (30% of individuals are over age 45), and slightly more likely to be living on a pension (10% of households, versus 8% nationally). The proportion of people identifying as First Nations, Métis, or Inuit in rural areas, at 29% of the total, is significantly higher than the national average.

(For additional information about rural food banks, please see the Detailed Findings section.)

Northern Canada trends:

HungerCount also includes information from 67 food banks and 24 meal programs in the territories and northern British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, Manitoba, Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador.¹² These organizations (of which three-quarters would be considered “rural”) provided food bank assistance to 20,657 people in March 2016. Thirty-nine percent of those helped were children. Additionally, these organizations served 58,488 meals through various meal and snack programs.

In Yukon, the Northwest Territories, and Nunavut, 14 food banks provided food to 6,337 individuals in March, of whom 38% were children. Territorial food banks helped more than 5% of the regional population in the month of March alone – the highest of any region in Canada. Territorial organizations also served 24,509 meals through a number of meal and snack programs.

While First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people accounted for 14% of people receiving food from food banks nationally in March 2016, this figure jumps to 29% in small towns and rural areas, and to more than 70% in Northern Canada.

(For our recommendations on northern food security, please see page 16.)



155,756

people helped in rural Canada

2.3%

increase in rural food bank use

20,657

people helped in Northern Canada

WE RECOMMEND

In the spring of 2016, the new Liberal federal government announced four important policy changes that reflect recommendations Food Banks Canada has made over the past several years:

1. The creation of the new Canada Child Benefit (CCB), a cash payment to families that offers up to \$6,400 for children under age 6, and up to \$5,400 for children age 6 to 17. It is tax-free and highly targeted to low-income families.
2. A new investment of \$574 million for renovations to social housing, as well as increased funding for the Affordable Housing Initiative and for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit housing.
3. A 10% increase to the Guaranteed Income Supplement for single seniors who have little or no private income.
4. The expansion of Nutrition North Canada in communities that were not benefiting from this federal food transportation subsidy.

While these changes will have a positive impact, this year's *HungerCount* findings show that there is still much more to be done.

A FORK IN THE ROAD

The Prime Minister has acknowledged this by tasking the Minister of Employment and Social Development with a truly extensive mandate: to develop a national poverty reduction strategy, a national affordable housing strategy, a federal-provincial-territorial child care framework, and a National Disabilities Act.

There is real possibility in these plans – and also a real danger that they, like many plans before them, will sit on a shelf collecting dust. The federal government has a choice to make: allow these initiatives to devolve into consultations that go nowhere, or work to make them an important part of its legacy.

A PATH TO POSITIVE CHANGE

Our policy recommendations offer guidance to federal, provincial, and territorial governments; they also stress that time is of the essence. More than 860,000 Canadians will need a food bank just to make ends meet this month – they cannot wait years for change to come.

- 1**
Fast track poverty reduction strategy
- 2**
Mandate a basic liveable income
- 3**
Rethink welfare
- 4**
Invest in food security for the North



RECOMMENDATION 1

FAST TRACK

Prioritize the national poverty reduction strategy

The federal government is currently developing a national poverty reduction strategy, with public input taking place via parliamentary committee. This federal effort follows the implementation of poverty reduction strategies in all provinces and territories except British Columbia.

Provincial and territorial governments have primary responsibility for social policy and poverty reduction, given their mandates in education, health, and social services. The federal government must therefore walk a complex line within its jurisdiction. There is the added complexity of a new federal affordable housing strategy, child care framework, and ongoing policy and program changes following the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

Given this complexity, time is of the essence if real change is to happen within the federal government's current mandate (2015–2019). The ability to make substantive changes to federal policy will effectively end in late 2018, when federal parties begin to look toward the 2019 election.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ We urge the Standing Committee on Human Resources, Social Development and the Status of Persons with Disabilities to **report on its consultations no later than May 1, 2017.**
- ▶ We call on the Minister of Employment and Social Development to **present Parliament with a National Poverty Reduction Strategy no later than October 1, 2017.**
- ▶ We recommend that the strategy be **enshrined in legislation with clear milestones** for review and renewal, and be accompanied by **sufficient funding to meet its stated objectives.**



RECOMMENDATION 2

A LEVEL FIELD

Ensure everyone has a basic liveable income

The idea of a Basic Income has gained a great deal of traction in the past year. A non-judgemental, low-bureaucracy income floor was voted on in Switzerland, a pilot is underway in Finland, and another is planned for Ontario. It has moved from an unconventional idea to a serious policy option.

Basic Income presents an alternative to Canada's existing last-resort income system (variously known as welfare, social assistance, income assistance, etc.), in which people facing hard times are forced to open every corner of their lives to an invasive government bureaucracy just to access a grossly inadequate monthly income.

Social assistance fails to offer even a basic level of support to our most vulnerable citizens. It also fails to transition Canadians into training or jobs that offer a way into a better life. These failures were set in motion by cuts to federal cash transfers for social programs in 1995 – drastic cuts that have never been repaired.

The following recommendations, as well as those in the next section, present a two-fold strategy: first and foremost, a push for a full-fledged Basic Income in Canada; second, short-term changes that will help to create a more respectful, supportive, and rational last-resort income system in the meantime.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ **In five years or less, dismantle existing provincial/territorial social assistance bureaucracies and create a Basic Income** administered through the tax system. Ensure that Basic Income has a logical relationship to the level of earnings offered through work.

In the short term:

- ▶ **Allow all low-income households to have access to the non-cash benefits that are currently available exclusively to households on social assistance** (e.g. child care subsidies, affordable housing supplements, drug and dental insurance).
- ▶ **Immediately bolster the Working Income Tax Benefit (WITB)** by increasing maximum benefit amounts, and by raising the maximum income levels at which individuals and families are eligible.
- ▶ **Convert federal non-refundable tax credits into refundable tax credits**, where appropriate. These include but are not limited to the Disability Tax Credit, credits for family caregivers, and the credit for public transit users.



RECOMMENDATION 3

NEW DEAL

Let's rethink social assistance

There are a number of programs targeted to Canadians with low incomes that follow basic and easily-understood economic principles, including the Canada Child Benefit and the Working Income Tax Benefit. As noted in Recommendation 2, social assistance is not one of them.

In many provinces and territories, one must be virtually penniless to even apply for social assistance. In others, households are allowed to have a small cushion of liquid assets – between \$627 (Alberta) and \$4,000 (Manitoba) for single people.¹³

Benefits are far below poverty levels. The average yearly welfare income for a single person in 2014 was \$8,189, more than \$10,000 *below* the poverty line.¹⁴

Households on social assistance are not allowed to earn their way above the poverty line. In Alberta, for example, a person receiving welfare who also works to earn \$750 in a given month (after payroll taxes) will keep only \$360 of that income – the rest will be taxed back in the form of reduced welfare payments.

This is a system that Canadians fall into for countless reasons: sudden illness, job loss in a difficult economy, the inability to work because of chronic health problems, or the need to provide care to a family member. Less than 40% of unemployed Canadians receive Employment Insurance benefits, which leaves only welfare (along with help from family, food banks, and other charities) as a last resort.

Social assistance traps Canadians in poverty rather than helping them to escape it. It is punitive and counterproductive. It is based in a culture of suspicion and distrust rather than one of support and mutual aid.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ **Provide support to households *before* they hit bottom** by increasing the level of liquid assets a household is allowed to have when applying for and receiving social assistance.
- ▶ **Allow households on welfare to earn higher levels of income through work**, without having their benefits reduced.
- ▶ **End clawbacks of child support payments** in provinces and territories that continue this detrimental practice, as has recently been accomplished in Ontario and British Columbia.
- ▶ At the provincial and territorial level, **implement ongoing processes for regular consultations with people on social assistance.**



RECOMMENDATION 4

NORTHERN SOLIDARITY

Invest in food security for Northern Canadians

Few social issues have received as much attention in the past year as the high cost of food in Northern Canada, where groceries for a family of four cost more than \$400 per week,¹⁵ and where one in every five households is food insecure.

The problem is particularly pronounced in Nunavut, which “has the highest documented rate of food insecurity for any Indigenous population living in a developed country.”¹⁶

The federal government has moved to address the problem by expanding the reach and budget of the Nutrition North Canada transportation subsidy. This will have a positive impact in newly eligible communities. However, while this change will moderate food prices, it will not actually make food *affordable* in the North.

Food will not become broadly affordable for Northerners unless we combine our attention to the cost of food with action on social assistance, access to traditional foods, and the infrastructure deficit in Northern Canada.

OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

- ▶ **Replace the current system of last-resort social assistance with a Basic Income** that is connected to the true cost of living in various regions of Canada (see Recommendation 2).
- ▶ **Strengthen the objective of Nutrition North Canada:** from “providing Northerners in isolated communities with improved access to perishable nutritious food”¹⁷ to *ensuring that Northerners are food secure*. This can only be achieved if Northern Canadians are able to access and have control over, through purchasing and hunting, enough of the types of foods that meet their dietary needs and cultural preferences.
- ▶ As part of this strengthened objective, **set targets for the average cost of a representative basket of food** (e.g. the Revised Northern Food Basket) in isolated northern communities, and increase investment to meet these targets through various means.
- ▶ **Drastically enhance federal, provincial, and territorial initiatives to support and expand access to country foods**, including programs that increase access to the tools required for hunting on the land.
- ▶ With respect to the Nutrition North Canada transportation subsidy, **support the transportation of food by sealift, rather than only by air**. This would, among other things, increase equity of the program for communities that are poorly served by air transportation.¹⁸

DETAILED FINDINGS

CANADA

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	863,492	852,137	841,191	833,098	872,379	861,775	867,948	794,738	675,735
% change, 2008-2016	27.8%								
% change, 2015-2016	1.3%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	56.4%	54.3%	53.5%	49.3%	47.9%	48.8%	70.7%	78.4%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	35.6%	35.8%	36.9%	36.4%	38.4%	37.9%	37.8%	37.2%	37.1%
% of national population assisted	2.40%	2.39%	2.38%	2.38%	2.54%	2.48%	2.56%	2.37%	2.04%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	5.8	5.0
% 3 - 5 years	6.9	7.0
% 6 - 11 years	12.4	12.6
% 12 - 17 years	10.4	11.1
% 18 - 30 years	17.0	16.0
% 31 - 44 years	19.4	18.0
% 45 - 64 years	22.7	24.4
% 65+ years	5.3	6.0

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	11.1	11.8
% Employment Insurance	4.3	5.4
% Social assistance	45.0	49.4
% Disability-related income support	17.5	13.8
% Pension	7.9	10.3
% Student loans/scholarships	1.8	0.7
% No income	6.7	4.2
% Other	5.7	4.3

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	49.0	46.0
% Aboriginal persons	14.2	29.1
% Immigrants or refugees	12.5	2.8
% Post-secondary students	3.1	2.0

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	7.5	16.5
% Rental market tenants	65.8	56.9
% Social housing tenants	19.6	13.9
% Band-owned housing	1.8	7.0
% Shelter or group home	1.4	0.8
% Living on the street	0.7	0.4
% Living with family or friends	3.1	4.5

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	21.7	20.5
% Two-parent families	22.1	19.3
% Couples with no children	11.9	12.7
% Single people	44.3	47.4



Since 2008,
food bank use
in Canada is

+27.8%

CANADA

863,492 people assisted
35.6% are children
+1.3% change, 2015-2016
+27.8% change, 2008-2016

BRITISH COLUMBIA

103,464 people assisted
32.2% are children
+3.4% change, 2015-2016
+32.5% change, 2008-2016

SASKATCHEWAN

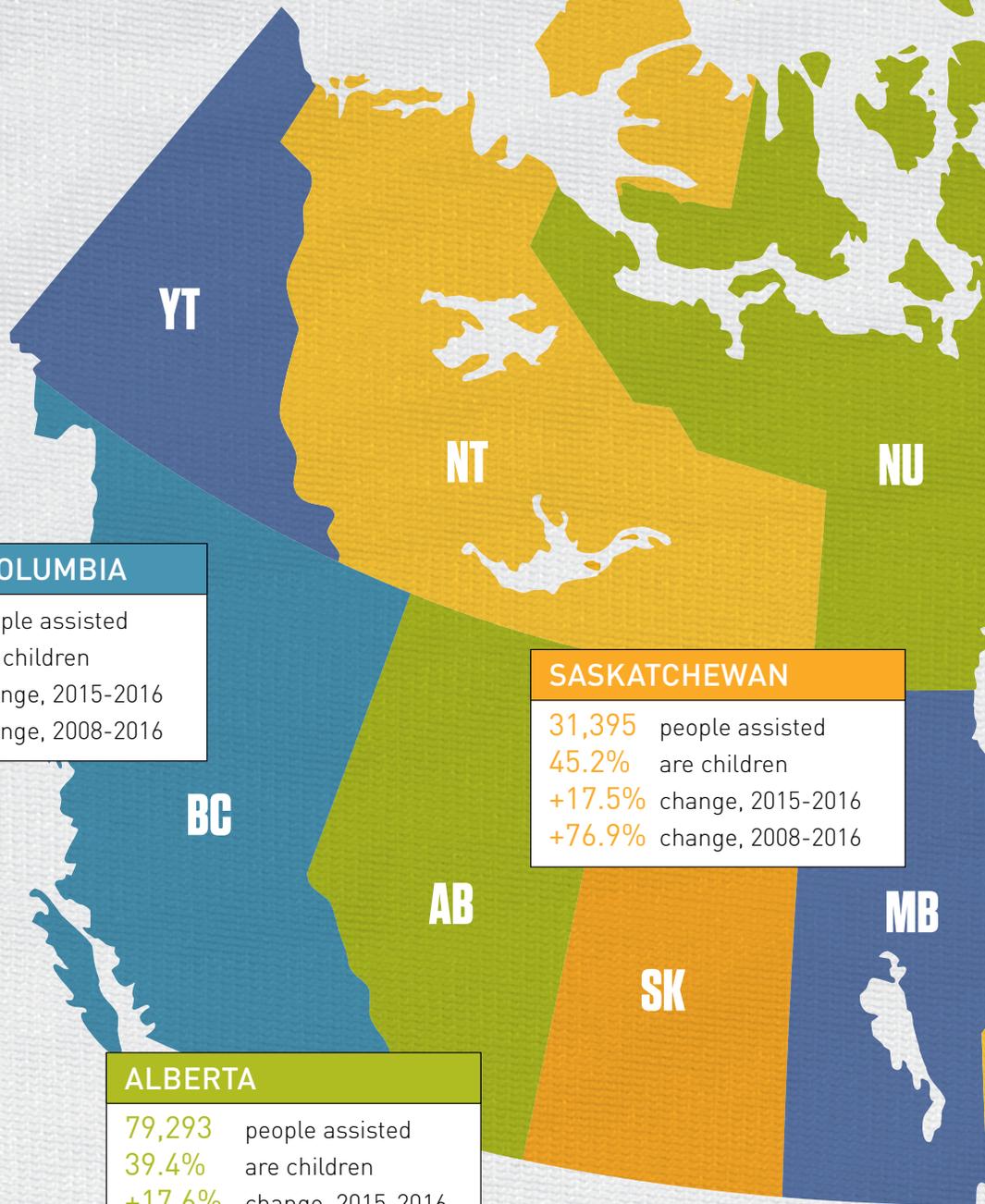
31,395 people assisted
45.2% are children
+17.5% change, 2015-2016
+76.9% change, 2008-2016

ALBERTA

79,293 people assisted
39.4% are children
+17.6% change, 2015-2016
+136.1% change, 2008-2016

MANITOBA

61,914 people assisted
42.9% are children
-2.9% change, 2015-2016
+53.0% change, 2008-2016



FOOD BANK USE IN CANADA BY THE NUMBERS

MARCH, 2016

YUKON, NORTHWEST TERRITORIES, NUNAVUT

6,337 people assisted
38.2% are children
+24.9% change, 2015-2016
n/a change, 2008-2016

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

26,366 people assisted
37.3% are children
+5.3% change, 2015-2016
-3.3% change, 2008-2016

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

3,370 people assisted
35.5% are children
+6.9% change, 2015-2016
+16.5% change, 2008-2016

QUEBEC

171,800 people assisted
34.5% are children
+5.3% change, 2015-2016
+34.7% change, 2008-2016

ONTARIO

335,944 people assisted
33.4% are children
-6.4% change, 2015-2016
+6.9% change, 2008-2016

NEW BRUNSWICK

19,769 people assisted
32.5% are children
+4.1% change, 2015-2016
+26.4% change, 2008-2016

NOVA SCOTIA

23,840 people assisted
30.4% are children
+20.9% change, 2015-2016
+40.9% change, 2008-2016

DETAILED FINDINGS

BRITISH COLUMBIA

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	103,464	100,086	97,369	94,002	94,966	90,193	94,359	89,866	78,101
% change, 2008-2016	32.5%								
% change, 2015-2016	3.4%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	54.3%	59.3%	51.6%	45.8%	44.4%	52.9%	60.2%	80.8%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	32.2%	31.5%	30.8%	29.5%	29.5%	31.9%	29.7%	31.4%	31.2%
% of provincial population assisted	2.20%	2.15%	2.11%	2.03%	2.07%	1.98%	2.10%	2.03%	1.77%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	5.5	4.3
% 3 - 5 years	5.7	5.9
% 6 - 11 years	10.7	11.6
% 12 - 17 years	10.2	10.4
% 18 - 30 years	17.2	16.0
% 31 - 44 years	18.5	18.5
% 45 - 64 years	25.4	25.3
% 65+ years	6.7	8.0

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	43.5	42.5
% Aboriginal persons	28.9	38.4
% Immigrants or refugees	2.2	1.0
% Post-secondary students	1.4	1.1

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	11.7	11.3
% Employment Insurance	3.8	4.0
% Social assistance	30.3	36.1
% Disability-related income support	30.7	25.8
% Pension	10.4	13.9
% Student loans/scholarships	0.3	0.1
% No income	7.1	5.6
% Other	5.8	3.1
Number of food banks reporting	66	41

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	9.3	17.0
% Rental market tenants	67.1	55.7
% Social housing tenants	11.2	8.0
% Band-owned housing	4.6	10.6
% Shelter or group home	1.2	0.4
% Living on the street	1.9	1.2
% Living with family or friends	4.7	7.1
Number of food banks reporting	63	42

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	19.2	16.8
% Two-parent families	15.7	16.7
% Couples with no children	11.6	14.8
% Single people	53.5	51.6
Number of food banks reporting	72	46

2016
103,464

2008
78,101



Since 2008, food bank use in British Columbia is

+32.5%

DETAILED FINDINGS

ALBERTA

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	79,293	67,443	49,766	48,653	53,512	58,735	59,311	53,976	33,580
% change, 2008-2016	136.1%								
% change, 2015-2016	17.6%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	80.2%	75.0%	48.7%	38.9%	40.8%	35.6%	72.5%	78.4%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	39.4%	41.2%	42.9%	44.1%	44.1%	43.7%	43.1%	43.1%	42.0%
% of provincial population assisted	1.88%	1.62%	1.22%	1.24%	1.40%	1.57%	1.60%	1.40%	0.96%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	7.3	6.1
% 3 - 5 years	7.8	8.9
% 6 - 11 years	13.7	15.4
% 12 - 17 years	10.5	13.7
% 18 - 30 years	18.8	17.4
% 31 - 44 years	20.5	17.6
% 45 - 64 years	18.0	14.8
% 65+ years	3.4	6.1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	49.4	50.6
% Aboriginal persons	33.5	63.7
% Immigrants or refugees	4.9	0.6
% Post-secondary students	2.4	1.1

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	25.1	22.7
% Employment Insurance	5.9	6.0
% Social assistance	26.0	26.5
% Disability-related income support	12.7	15.0
% Pension	6.2	12.8
% Student loans/scholarships	1.4	0.8
% No income	13.1	9.2
% Other	9.5	7.1
Number of food banks reporting	82	38

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	6.6	9.0
% Rental market tenants	63.7	37.0
% Social housing tenants	16.9	13.0
% Band-owned housing	6.7	29.0
% Shelter or group home	1.6	2.0
% Living on the street	1.0	1.0
% Living with family or friends	3.7	8.0
Number of food banks reporting	84	38

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	25.3	23.7
% Two-parent families	22.1	26.6
% Couples with no children	9.5	11.2
% Single people	43.0	38.5
Number of food banks reporting	99	47

2016
79,293

2008
33,580

Since 2008,
food bank use
in Alberta is

+136.1%

DETAILED FINDINGS

SASKATCHEWAN

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	31,395	26,727	26,820	22,465	24,621	25,432	22,662	18,875	17,751
% change, 2008-2016	76.9%								
% change, 2015-2016	17.5%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	72.7%	73.6%	63.6%	48.1%	17.6%	52.0%	52.0%	78.0%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	45.2%	45.0%	45.8%	43.8%	47.5%	46.3%	44.1%	44.4%	45.6%
% of provincial population assisted	2.75%	2.36%	2.40%	2.06%	2.30%	2.42%	2.18%	1.80%	1.73%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	7.8	6.1
% 3 - 5 years	8.9	9.2
% 6 - 11 years	16.2	17.6
% 12 - 17 years	12.3	13.5
% 18 - 30 years	17.1	15.4
% 31 - 44 years	18.9	18.3
% 45 - 64 years	15.8	15.0
% 65+ years	3.0	5.1

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	51.3	49.9
% Aboriginal persons	59.0	68.6
% Immigrants or refugees	6.7	2.7
% Post-secondary students	2.4	1.0

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	14.7	10.0
% Employment Insurance	3.7	4.1
% Social assistance	50.5	60.8
% Disability-related income support	7.6	6.4
% Pension	5.6	8.5
% Student loans/scholarships	2.8	0.5
% No income	11.3	3.9
% Other	3.8	5.8
Number of food banks reporting	28	18

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	6.8	14.8
% Rental market tenants	68.1	26.1
% Social housing tenants	14.2	19.4
% Band-owned housing	4.8	33.1
% Shelter or group home	0.8	0.2
% Living on the street	0.3	1.0
% Living with family or friends	5.0	5.4
Number of food banks reporting	27	19

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	29.6	29.2
% Two-parent families	21.8	29.2
% Couples with no children	7.6	10.0
% Single people	41.0	31.6
Number of food banks reporting	33	23

2016
31,395

2008
17,751

Since 2008, food bank use in Saskatchewan is

+76.9%

DETAILED FINDINGS

MANITOBA

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	61,914	63,791	61,691	60,229	63,482	55,575	57,966	47,925	40,464
% change, 2008-2016	53.0%								
% change, 2015-2016	-2.9%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	41.7%	61.7%	51.1%	60.0%	59.1%	42.4%	73.0%	66.0%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	42.9%	41.9%	44.3%	44.7%	47.6%	50.4%	50.5%	48.7%	45.7%
% of provincial population assisted	4.75%	4.95%	4.85%	4.72%	5.05%	4.47%	4.72%	3.89%	3.30%

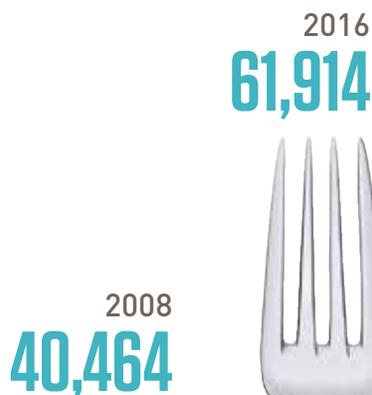
AGE*	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	6.5	6.3
% 3 - 5 years	9.6	11.0
% 6 - 11 years	14.8	15.5
% 12 - 17 years	12.0	14.3
% 18 - 30 years	17.3	15.0
% 31 - 44 years	17.3	14.3
% 45 - 64 years	17.6	17.1
% 65+ years	4.9	6.6

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	52.0	50.0
% Aboriginal persons	n/a	47.1
% Immigrants or refugees	n/a	4.0
% Post-secondary students	2.3	0.7

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	14.9	12.8
% Employment Insurance	5.8	4.7
% Social assistance	47.3	49.8
% Disability-related income support	14.0	11.2
% Pension	9.7	12.4
% Student loans/scholarships	0.6	0.5
% No income	3.5	3.5
% Other	4.2	5.1
Number of food banks reporting	30	24

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	15.5	21.7
% Rental market tenants	40.1	32.4
% Social housing tenants	30.0	32.0
% Band-owned housing	8.2	7.2
% Shelter or group home	0.7	0.0
% Living on the street	0.1	0.0
% Living with family or friends	5.4	6.7
Number of food banks reporting	28	21

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	18.1	28.4
% Two-parent families	27.4	21.6
% Couples with no children	16.3	9.9
% Single people	38.2	40.1
Number of food banks reporting	40	33



Since 2008, food bank use in Manitoba is

+53.0%

* Information relating to age, demographic characteristics, primary source of income, and housing type do not include information from Winnipeg.

DETAILED FINDINGS

ONTARIO

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	335,944	358,963	374,698	375,814	404,373	400,360	402,056	374,230	314,258
% change, 2008-2016	6.9%								
% change, 2015-2016	-6.4%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	49.3%	48.6%	54.2%	47.2%	48.1%	46.4%	73.6%	76.2%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	33.4%	33.6%	35.0%	35.0%	38.7%	37.0%	37.1%	37.6%	37.6%
% of provincial population assisted	2.42%	2.61%	2.76%	2.77%	3.01%	2.97%	3.06%	2.90%	2.40%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	5.5	5.2
% 3 - 5 years	6.0	5.9
% 6 - 11 years	11.8	11.4
% 12 - 17 years	10.1	10.3
% 18 - 30 years	18.3	17.9
% 31 - 44 years	18.3	17.6
% 45 - 64 years	24.2	26.2
% 65+ years	5.9	5.4

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	49.3	47.2
% Aboriginal persons	5.6	7.9
% Immigrants or refugees	4.4	1.2
% Post-secondary students	2.6	2.6

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	8.2	8.2
% Employment Insurance	2.1	2.3
% Social assistance	32.1	26.6
% Disability-related income support	32.6	38.7
% Pension	8.3	10.1
% Student loans/scholarships	0.9	0.2
% No income	7.3	6.5
% Other	8.4	7.4
Number of food banks reporting	198	60

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	5.5	13.0
% Rental market tenants	69.8	66.2
% Social housing tenants	19.6	17.6
% Band-owned housing	0.3	0.3
% Shelter or group home	1.4	0.4
% Living on the street	0.3	0.0
% Living with family or friends	3.0	2.3
Number of food banks reporting	209	63

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	26.9	19.0
% Two-parent families	17.1	18.1
% Couples with no children	10.8	13.3
% Single people	45.2	49.6
Number of food banks reporting	116	35

2008 **314,258**

2016 **335,944**



Since 2008, food bank use in Ontario is

+6.9%

DETAILED FINDINGS

QUEBEC

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	171,800	163,152	156,895	156,750	155,574	156,279	154,364	137,464	127,536
% change, 2008-2016	34.7%								
% change, 2015-2016	5.3%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	54.6%	55.5%	55.8%	50.0%	47.1%	51.9%	-	-	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	34.5%	36.4%	37.3%	37.1%	37.2%	36.0%	37.9%	33.9%	37.1%
% of provincial population assisted	2.07%	1.98%	1.92%	1.95%	1.94%	1.97%	1.96%	1.77%	1.97%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	5.3	4.4
% 3 - 5 years	7.3	6.3
% 6 - 11 years	11.9	12.2
% 12 - 17 years	9.9	10.4
% 18 - 30 years	15.6	14.6
% 31 - 44 years	21.4	18.9
% 45 - 64 years	23.0	26.9
% 65+ years	5.6	6.2

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	47.5	43.6
% Aboriginal persons	1.9	6.3
% Immigrants or refugees	25.2	5.6
% Post-secondary students	4.3	2.8

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	10.8	11.4
% Employment Insurance	5.1	5.7
% Social assistance	61.1	63.6
% Disability-related income support	3.7	4.2
% Pension	7.2	7.8
% Student loans/scholarships	3.7	1.4
% No income	5.0	1.8
% Other	3.5	4.1
Number of food banks reporting	654	172

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	7.3	16.6
% Rental market tenants	68.7	64.5
% Social housing tenants	17.3	11.6
% Band-owned housing	1.1	2.8
% Shelter or group home	1.8	1.2
% Living on the street	1.1	0.2
% Living with family or friends	2.7	3.2
Number of food banks reporting	646	169

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	19.9	20.0
% Two-parent families	23.0	17.2
% Couples with no children	11.6	12.3
% Single people	45.5	50.4
Number of food banks reporting	673	174

2016
171,800

2008
127,536

Since 2008,
food bank use
in Quebec is

+34.7%

DETAILED FINDINGS

NEW BRUNSWICK

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	19,769	18,986	19,590	19,989	19,524	18,539	18,517	17,889	15,638
% change, 2008-2016	26.4%								
% change, 2015-2016	4.1%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	53.7%	37.3%	54.0%	59.6%	51.9%	54.2%	66.0%	70.6%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	32.5%	32.3%	33.9%	33.2%	32.0%	34.4%	34.3%	33.8%	33.2%
% of provincial population assisted	2.62%	2.52%	2.59%	2.64%	2.58%	2.46%	2.46%	2.39%	2.09%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	5.2	5.0
% 3 - 5 years	6.2	6.2
% 6 - 11 years	11.3	10.5
% 12 - 17 years	9.7	9.4
% 18 - 30 years	18.4	16.5
% 31 - 44 years	19.4	17.9
% 45 - 64 years	25.4	29.0
% 65+ years	4.3	5.0

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	48.2	47.4
% Aboriginal persons	4.2	3.3
% Immigrants or refugees	4.0	0.9
% Post-secondary students	1.1	1.1

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	10.9	11.2
% Employment Insurance	6.2	8.4
% Social assistance	58.7	53.1
% Disability-related income support	7.4	9.4
% Pension	8.3	10.5
% Student loans/scholarships	0.3	0.2
% No income	4.1	4.8
% Other	4.2	2.4
Number of food banks reporting	34	25

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	21.8	26.0
% Rental market tenants	56.9	51.7
% Social housing tenants	14.3	14.2
% Band-owned housing	1.8	1.2
% Shelter or group home	0.2	0.3
% Living on the street	0.1	0.2
% Living with family or friends	4.9	6.4
Number of food banks reporting	32	27

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	18.7	16.9
% Two-parent families	18.2	18.5
% Couples with no children	13.0	15.6
% Single people	50.1	49.0
Number of food banks reporting	37	29



Since 2008, food bank use in New Brunswick is

+26.4%

DETAILED FINDINGS

NOVA SCOTIA

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	23,840	19,722	19,664	21,760	23,561	22,505	22,573	20,344	16,915
% change, 2008-2016	40.9%								
% change, 2015-2016	20.9%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	65.4%	58.0%	32.5%	37.0%	55.6%	41.5%	68.1%	57.4%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	30.4%	31.2%	29.2%	32.0%	32.6%	31.5%	33.0%	34.1%	35.0%
% of provincial population assisted	2.52%	2.09%	2.09%	2.30%	2.49%	2.39%	2.40%	2.17%	1.81%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	4.6	4.3
% 3 - 5 years	6.0	6.0
% 6 - 11 years	10.5	9.4
% 12 - 17 years	9.3	9.1
% 18 - 30 years	17.4	18.9
% 31 - 44 years	17.7	17.7
% 45 - 64 years	28.5	28.7
% 65+ years	5.9	5.9

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	50.5	51.0
% Aboriginal persons	5.5	8.3
% Immigrants or refugees	3.5	0.9
% Post-secondary students	1.5	1.4

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	9.9	10.6
% Employment Insurance	4.4	5.6
% Social assistance	56.5	53.8
% Disability-related income support	10.7	10.4
% Pension	12.4	13.8
% Student loans/scholarships	0.4	0.3
% No income	4.7	4.6
% Other	1.1	0.9
Number of food banks reporting	65	31

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	9.9	13.1
% Rental market tenants	69.7	68.5
% Social housing tenants	15.7	10.7
% Band-owned housing	1.9	4.4
% Shelter or group home	0.1	0.1
% Living on the street	0.1	0.1
% Living with family or friends	2.5	3.0
Number of food banks reporting	36	12

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	n/a	n/a
% Two-parent families	n/a	n/a
% Couples with no children	n/a	n/a
% Single people	n/a	n/a
Number of food banks reporting ¹⁹		

2016
23,840

2008
16,915



Since 2008, food bank use in Nova Scotia is
+40.9%

DETAILED FINDINGS

PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	3,370	3,153	3,432	3,502	3,406	3,095	3,068	2,706	2,892
% change, 2008-2016	16.5%								
% change, 2015-2016	6.9%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	66.7%	16.6%	40.0%	66.7%	66.7%	66.7%	100.0%	50.0%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	35.5%	35.1%	38.0%	35.8%	34.1%	35.3%	35.5%	35.8%	35.4%
% of provincial population assisted	2.29%	2.15%	2.36%	2.40%	2.33%	2.16%	2.17%	1.93%	1.95%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	5.7	5.2
% 3 - 5 years	8.0	8.8
% 6 - 11 years	12.6	11.2
% 12 - 17 years	9.1	10.1
% 18 - 30 years	18.6	18.6
% 31 - 44 years	18.7	16.4
% 45 - 64 years	21.6	24.7
% 65+ years	5.7	4.9

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	44.6	35.6
% Aboriginal persons	12.9	15.6
% Immigrants or refugees	7.0	0.0
% Post-secondary students	0.5	0.0

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	16.8	13.5
% Employment Insurance	19.6	24.9
% Social assistance	37.8	31.2
% Disability-related income support	8.3	9.6
% Pension	12.1	13.2
% Student loans/scholarships	0.1	0.0
% No income	3.5	6.0
% Other	1.7	1.6
Number of food banks reporting	5	3

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	17.2	24.5
% Rental market tenants	53.3	46.4
% Social housing tenants	20.7	20.3
% Band-owned housing	7.1	7.6
% Shelter or group home	0.0	0.0
% Living on the street	0.2	0.0
% Living with family or friends	1.6	1.3
Number of food banks reporting	5	3

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	24.9	25.7
% Two-parent families	26.9	26.2
% Couples with no children	13.0	10.9
% Single people	35.2	37.1
Number of food banks reporting	5	3

2016
3,370

2008
2,892



Since 2008, food bank use in Prince Edward Island is

+16.5%

DETAILED FINDINGS

NEWFOUNDLAND & LABRADOR

KEY HUNGERCOUNT FINDINGS	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008
Individuals assisted by food banks	26,366	25,040	26,617	26,412	27,044	28,642	30,800	30,014	27,260
% change, 2008-2016	-3.3%								
% change, 2015-2016	5.3%								
% of food banks reporting an increase	59.4%	38.2%	60.6%	37.9%	51.9%	40.7%	67.9%	70.4%	-
% assisted who are under 18 years of age	37.3%	37.4%	37.7%	37.9%	38.8%	37.3%	37.3%	37.4%	38.4%
% of provincial population assisted	4.99%	4.76%	5.05%	5.14%	5.29%	5.63%	6.03%	5.90%	5.36%

AGE	All	Rural
% 0 - 2 years	4.9	3.5
% 3 - 5 years	7.7	6.1
% 6 - 11 years	13.6	10.3
% 12 - 17 years	11.2	10.2
% 18 - 30 years	12.7	12.9
% 31 - 44 years	19.0	21.7
% 45 - 64 years	24.2	26.7
% 65+ years	6.9	8.7

DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS	All	Rural
% Women	57.4	50.9
% Aboriginal persons	12.7	16.7
% Immigrants or refugees	0.7	1.0
% Post-secondary students	2.7	2.9

PRIMARY SOURCE OF INCOME	All	Rural
% Job Income	9.4	7.2
% Employment Insurance	12.7	5.6
% Social assistance	69.8	72.3
% Disability-related income support	1.0	2.5
% Pension	6.5	7.6
% Student loans/scholarships	0.0	0.5
% No income	0.2	1.4
% Other	0.4	2.9
Number of food banks reporting	20	13

HOUSING TYPE	All	Rural
% Homeowners	12.5	19.0
% Rental market tenants	21.6	55.8
% Social housing tenants	65.3	22.9
% Band-owned housing	0.0	0.0
% Shelter or group home	0.1	0.3
% Living on the street	0.1	0.3
% Living with family or friends	0.3	1.7
Number of food banks reporting	22	15

HOUSEHOLD TYPE	All	Rural
% Single-parent families	35.9	25.8
% Two-parent families	25.6	21.9
% Couples with no children	10.8	14.0
% Single people	27.7	38.4
Number of food banks reporting	25	19

2008
27,260

2016
26,366

Since 2008,
food bank use
in Newfoundland
and Labrador is

-3.3%

ENDNOTES

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- 11 For the purposes of this report, "rural" is defined as any municipality with a population of less than 10,000 people.
- 12 For the purposes of this report, we define "northern" as follows: (i) located in any of the three territories; (ii) near to or above the 55th parallel in the four western provinces; (iii) near to or above the 50th parallel in Ontario, Quebec, and Newfoundland and Labrador.
- 13 Caledon Institute (2015). *Welfare in Canada 2014*. Ottawa: Caledon Institute.
- 14 Unless otherwise noted, "poverty line" refers to the Market Basket Measure of low income, developed by Employment and Social Development Canada.
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- 19 Due to anomalies in data related to household type in Nova Scotia, we have chosen not to include this information in the 2016 report.
- 20 In the *HungerCount 2015* report, the "No. of agencies included" and "Total no. of organizations" for Ontario should read "594" and "1,294" respectively. Due to changes in reporting structure, only "Total no. of organizations" is comparable for Ontario in 2015 and 2016.

METHODOLOGY

The primary purpose of the annual *HungerCount* study is to provide a national and provincial snapshot of food bank and meal program use in Canada. This is accomplished by counting the number of individuals who receive groceries from food banks during the month of March and by counting the number of meals and snacks prepared and served by a variety of organizations.

Information is collected on the number of unique individuals that receive food from food banks, the total number of visits to food banks, and total meals and snacks prepared and served by meal programs.

March has been chosen as the study period because it is an unexceptional

month, without predictable high or low use patterns. Since March is used consistently, we are able to make relevant comparisons in use patterns over time.

The *HungerCount* survey additionally asks participating organizations to record information on several characteristics of those assisted by their respective food banks including (at the individual level) age category, gender, Aboriginal identity, immigration/refugee status, and student status and (at the household level) primary source of income, household composition, and housing type. The survey also collects information on various operational aspects of participating organizations.

In 2016, survey data was collected via three main avenues: (1) paper surveys were sent to food banks and meal programs in February; (2) in Ontario and Nova Scotia, the majority of food banks submitted reports for the month of March using a common information management software; (3) in a small number of cases, information was collected via telephone interview.

Survey data were entered into a database, checked for accuracy, and analyzed by Food Banks Canada staff. In cases where surveys were not completed by operating food banks, conservative estimates were produced in consultation with Provincial Coordinators using 2015 figures as a guide.

TABLE 2 – HUNGERCOUNT SURVEY PARTICIPATION 2016

Province/Territory	No. of organizations reporting food bank information (no meal program)	No. of organizations reporting meal program information (no food bank)	No. of organizations reporting food bank & meal program information	No. of agencies included	Total no. of organizations
British Columbia	51	1	48	324	424
Alberta	101	19	53	387	560
Saskatchewan	29	0	6	55	90
Manitoba	48	2	6	297	353
Ontario	321	28	69	916	1,334 ²⁰
Quebec	264	292	426	0	982
New Brunswick	41	4	15	24	84
Nova Scotia	86	64	0	25	175
Prince Edward Island	2	0	4	6	12
Newfoundland & Labrador	31	0	4	70	105
Territories	9	3	5	4	21
Canada	983	413	636	2,108	4,140

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Food Banks Canada thanks the hundreds of thousands of people accessing food programs, and the thousands of staff and volunteers who, every year, contribute information to the *HungerCount* report. Without their efforts and participation this research would not be possible.

HungerCount 2016

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