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## Report 2024-096

**Report Title:** Hunger Action Month 2024

**Committee Name:** Social Services

**Committee Meeting Date:** July 31, 2024

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Community and Social Services

**Reviewed by:** Lisa Horne  
Director  
Community and Social Services

**Approved by:** Jennifer Moore, CAO

**Council Meeting Date:** August 14, 2024

**Strategic Plan Priorities:**  Innovate for Service Excellence  
 Ignite Economic Opportunity  
 Foster a Thriving Community  
 Propel Sustainable Growth  
 Champion a Vibrant Future

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### Recommendation

“**That** the Social Services Committee, having considered Report 2024-096 ‘Hunger Action Month 2024’, recommend that County Council proclaim September 2024 as Hunger Action Month in Northumberland County at the August 14, 2024 Council Meeting.”

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### Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide information regarding Hunger Action Month, including local plans for this year and to seek Council’s support by proclaiming September 2024 as Hunger Action Month in Northumberland.

### Background

At the national level, Food Banks Canada supports food banks and raises awareness about food bank usage in Canada. At the provincial level, this work is done by Feed Ontario. In

Northumberland, Food 4 All and 12 local food banks help to provide food support to local individuals and promote national and provincial initiatives across our communities. Each year during the month of September these national, provincial, and local organizations promote Hunger Action Month to help raise awareness about the issues that contribute to food insecurity throughout local communities in Canada.

During Hunger Action Month, Food Banks Canada, provincial food bank associations including Feed Ontario, and community food banks across the country, tell the story of the individuals and families that turn to food banks for help. People helped by food banks may be seniors, people with disabilities, children or even people with full time jobs who need help to make ends meet

Between April 1, 2022, and March 31, 2023, more than 800,800 unique individuals accessed a food bank in Ontario. These individuals accounted for more than 5.88 million visits to food banks during that time. Locally in 2023, there were 5297 unique individuals throughout Northumberland that were assisted by local food banks; 29% of which were aged 17 or younger. In total, these individuals made 74,168 visits to local food banks during the year. When compared to 2022 data, there was a 32% increase in total food bank visits in 2023.

Feed Ontario recognizes that hunger is a symptom of poverty. Food banks exist across this province, not because there is a lack of food, but because many individuals do not have access to a sufficient income that allows them to afford all of their basic necessities.

Long-term policy solutions are a key piece to not only ending hunger, but alleviating poverty – but these require time and collaboration from community leaders and all levels of government. Feed Ontario regularly meets with community stakeholders and political representatives to discuss its policy recommendations for addressing hunger and poverty. Food Security is also a priority in Northumberland and the County's Community and Social Services department, through the Food 4 All/Food Security and Community Services divisions are taking the lead in developing and coordinating initiatives that further support this work.

In 2017, Northumberland County Council recognized our 13 local food banks during Hunger Awareness Week, for their efforts in helping improve food security in Northumberland.

Since 2018, Food 4 All and local food banks have been promoting Hunger Action Month in Northumberland County during the month of September each year.

In 2024, Food 4 All and local food banks will once again promote Hunger Action Month and will participate in and promote various initiatives that will take place in September including:

- Having County Council proclaim September as Hunger Action Month in Northumberland County
- Sharing our **2024 Feed Change** report detailing food distribution and usage data, local food bank and school nutrition program statistics
- Continuing to promote our [foodhelpnorthumberland.cioc.ca](http://foodhelpnorthumberland.cioc.ca) web link tool to identify where people can find food assistance throughout Northumberland County
- Releasing and promoting our “30 Ways in 30 Days 2024” calendar to help raise awareness about food security in Northumberland County and asking residents to take action to help.

- The calendar will focus on education of local food security statistics and data, and encouraging donations of time (volunteering), product or funds to local food assistance programs.
- Supporting awareness through social media during Hunger Action Month to share local information regarding food security in Northumberland County
- Working with the County's Communications and Waste departments to share educational information regarding food waste reduction

### **Consultations**

The Food Security Division has ongoing communications with staff from Food Banks Canada and Feed Ontario regarding Hunger Action Month. Additional work is being done at a local level with staff and volunteers at 12 food banks located throughout Northumberland County to coordinate and plan annual activities leading up to/during Hunger Action Month in the County.

### **Legislative Authority / Risk Considerations**

N/A

### **Discussion / Options**

Input was provided by staff in the Community and Social Services Department. As in past events, communications will be sent out to local food banks to encourage them to participate in activities and share our messaging during Hunger Action Month in September 2024.

### **Financial Impact**

There will be no financial impact from this promotional event.

### **Member Municipality Impacts**

By continuing to raise awareness and providing support and education about food security throughout Northumberland County, Food 4 All and local food banks will continue to make a positive impact that helps to improve food security across all our member municipalities.

### **Conclusion / Outcomes**

Staff recommend that Council proclaim September 2024 as Hunger Action Month in Northumberland County at the August 14, 2024 County Council meeting.

### **Attachments**

- 1) Report 2024-096 ATTACH 1 - Proclamation 'Hunger Action Month 2024'