

**P R E S S   R E L E A S E****Major Toronto and GTA Foods Banks Launch Joint Thanksgiving Food Drive**

September 18, 2018

As the holidays draw near, and more and more families face food insecurity, six major food banks in Toronto and the GTA have come together to launch a joint Thanksgiving Food Drive aimed at bringing awareness to the need of the region.

“This is a critical time of year for families facing food insecurity,” said Daily Bread Food Bank CEO, Neil Hetherington. “Community participation is key when it comes to food banks being able to best serve the communities that need them the most. All of the organizations taking part in this campaign work passionately to shine a light on the ongoing challenges around hunger. We ask that those in Toronto and the GTA take action and donate food or funds during this giving season.”

Alex Bilotta, Executive Director of The Food Bank of York Region, confirmed that the food bank now supports over 60 community organizations across the nine municipalities of York Region. “These community partners serve people who are impoverished, homeless, neglected, abused, hungry and otherwise marginalized.” Mr. Bilotta added, “Collecting and delivering surplus food to local food banks and community organizations that provide meals and food to their clients is a very effective and efficient means to address food insecurity in our region.”

The 4-week campaign seeks to achieve an ambitious donation goal of 1,080,000 pounds of food. The public is being asked and encouraged to take part in the effort.

The six food banks taking part in the Thanksgiving Food Drive includes:

- Daily Bread Food Bank
- The Mississauga Food Bank
- North York Harvest
- Knights Table
- The Food Bank of York Region
- Feed the Need Durham

Food donations can be dropped off at participating fire stations and grocery stores across Toronto and the GTA. Most needed items include: canned fruits, canned vegetables, rice, pasta, and high protein goods such as peanut butter.

The Thanksgiving campaign – which wraps up on October 14 – also has a monetary donation goal set at \$860,000. With every dollar donated, participating foods banks will be able to provide meals to those struggling with hunger.

- 30 -

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## BACKGROUND

### Quotes:

"The joint food drive announcement serves two objectives – bring awareness to the severity of hunger in the GTA and provide information to anyone in the community who wishes to support families who rely on their local food banks to put food on the table each week."

- Ryan Noble, Executive Director, North York Harvest Food Bank.

"It's shocking that anyone goes hungry in our community. Yet every day, here in Brampton, many individuals are impacted by hunger and food security issues. Faced with poverty and complex social challenges, hundreds of vulnerable individuals and families find the Knights Table to be the only alternative to feeding themselves and their families. Community support of our local food drive campaign is critical to our work to ensure a food secure community."

- Annie Bynoe, Executive Director, Knights Table

"There are hungry families in neighbourhoods across every part of the GTA - from the downtown core to cities like Mississauga," said Meghan Nicholls, Executive Director of The Mississauga Food Bank. "During Thanksgiving - when so many of us come together to celebrate abundance - it's going to take all of us, in every region of the GTA, to provide wholesome meals to these neighbours. I hope that we can count on your support."

### Most Needed Items:

**The Mississauga Food Bank:** lentils, canned fruits, vegetables and proteins. A full list of items can be found [here](#).

- Key drop-off locations include any Mississauga Fire Stations and Local Grocery Stores

**Daily Bread Food Bank:** canned fruit, canned vegetables, canned soup, canned fish, canned stew, canned and dried beans, peanut butter, pasta, pasta sauce, baby food and baby formula and 100% fruit juices

- Key drop-off locations including all Toronto Fire Stations and Local Grocery Stores