

Food Security in Guelph and Wellington County

■ The following fact sheet provides information on factors influencing food security in the City of Guelph and Wellington County.

Food Bank Usage in the City of Guelph and Wellington County

- In the County of Wellington (including the City of Guelph) there are over 40 agencies or organizations that offer emergency access to food or assistance to individuals whom may be experiencing barriers to accessing food.ⁱ
- The use of food banks has increased in both Wellington County and the City of Guelph over the past 4 years.ⁱⁱ
- A survey completed by all member agencies of the Ontario Association of Food Banks (OASFB) shows that there was an increase of 28.1% in the number of individuals served through the food banks in all of Wellington County (including the City of Guelph) between March 2005 and March 2008. This was a dramatic difference as the province as a whole has seen a 7.1% reduction in overall number of individuals served during the same time frame.ⁱⁱⁱ

Cost of Food in the City of Guelph and Wellington County

- In Canada the price of key food items have all increased at greater than twice the rate of inflation from September 2007 to September 2008; these food items include pasta (48.1%), bread (16%), baby food (11.5%), milk (8%) and chicken (7.8%).^{iv}
- The greatest increases in food bank usage across Ontario have been felt in mid-sized communities that have witnessed the earliest impacts of the economic downturn.^v

"First introduced to Canada in 1974, the National Nutritious Food Basket (NNFB) is used by stakeholders at various levels of government to monitor the cost and affordability of healthy eating. The NNFB describes the quantity (and purchase units) of approximately 60 foods that represent a nutritious diet for individuals in various age and gender groups. Stakeholders use this information to collect the price of the items and determine the cost of the basket for each age and gender group."

- The cost of a Nutritious Food Basket for a family of 4 is \$149.09 for the Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health Unit coverage area compared to the average cost for Ontario which is \$141.44.^{vi} A Reference Family of Four includes: a man and a woman each aged 25-49 years; a boy aged 13-15 years; and a girl aged 7-9 years.
- A single person on Ontario Works receives \$212 per month for basic needs. To eat a healthy diet as per the NNFB guidelines a single male aged 25-49 years would need to spend approximately 80% of that allocation on food. A woman of the same age would need to spend approximately 59% (based on a 4 week month).

ⁱ Guelph and Wellington Food Roundtable (2009), Community Resource

ⁱⁱ Ontario Association of Foodbanks Annual Survey results. Information retrieved: January 2009.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

^{iv} Ontario Association of Foodbanks (2008). Hunger Report.

<http://www.oafb.ca/assets/pdfs/HungerReport2008.pdf>

^v Ibid.



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FACT SHEET

August 2009

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^{vi} Weekly Cost of a Nutritious Food Basket (NFB), Ontario 2008, Ministry of Health Promotion.