



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

FOOD BANK USE STILL AT HISTORIC HIGH IN NOVA SCOTIA

Halifax, NS (November 18, 2019) – The number of Nova Scotians getting help from a food bank is about as high as Feed Nova Scotia has seen in the past decade.

According to HungerCount, a national survey compiled by Food Banks Canada, Nova Scotians visited food banks 25,629 times in March 2019. While this is down 0.9% from March 2018, the number of people making those visits (23,290 distinct individuals) is up 5% over last March, and consistent with record numbers seen in March 2016.

Children are still overrepresented, making up 30% of those accessing support. Single adults are also a serious concern. They represent 43% of those visiting a food bank, but only 33% of the population in Nova Scotia. Nick Jennery, Feed Nova Scotia's executive director, highlights a need for better support for single individuals, a group that seems to be often ignored by government.

"We've seen where enhanced support for children has made a difference," Jennery says. "We need government to make this group a priority and implement measures specifically designed to help lift them out of poverty."

Increase support for single individuals is just one recommendation made by Food Banks Canada in the 2019 HungerCount report. Recommendations also include investing in affordable early learning and childcare across the country, implementing a Canada Housing Benefit, developing a federal basic income pilot, and reduced Northern food insecurity.

Locally, Feed Nova Scotia is still looking to the provincial government to dramatically raise Income Assistance rates to a level that will provide dignity for those who rely on it.

"Food insecurity is widespread across Canada, but Nova Scotia is still among the worst in class," says Jennery. "Far too many people are being left behind, and that shouldn't sit well with anyone."

- 30 -

For more information, contact:

Karen Theriault, Feed Nova Scotia
902-457-1900
ktheriault@feednovascotia.ca