

Orangeville Food Bank aims to collect 150,000 pounds of non-perishables for holiday food drive

By **Sam Odrowski**

With the season of giving underway, the Orangeville Food Bank is inviting the community to take part in its Festive Food Drive.

The food drive runs from now until Jan. 3, 2025, and its goal is to raise 150,000 pounds of food to ensure individuals struggling with food insecurity in the community are fed.

"The food drive aims to collect non-perishable food items and essential supplies to ensure that every family in Orangeville can enjoy a warm meal this holiday season. With rising costs impacting many households, the demand for support from the Orangeville Food Bank has never been greater," said the Orangeville Food Bank in a press release.

The local food bank requires a steady flow of donations to replenish outgoing supplies.

"Last month, we distributed nearly 55,000 pounds of food within our community. While our shelves may appear to be adequately stocked today, organizing a food drive allows us to ensure a continuous supply without any gaps," said Carrie-Anne DeCaprio, outreach manager at the Orangeville Food Bank.

She added that it's anticipated the food bank's demand will only grow as the seasons change, making the Festive Food Drive an essential fundraiser.

"As we approach the winter months, we do anticipate an increase in demand," DeCaprio noted. "With the departure of sunny days, many individuals that work in outdoor jobs, such as construction workers and landscapers, often face unemployment and need to access our service."

A key event to help generate donations is the Orangeville Food Bank's High Five Festive Food Drive. It's taking place at Zehrs (50 4th Ave.), Metro (150 First St.), Sobeys (500 Riddell Rd.), FreshCo (268 Broadway) and No Frills (90 C Line) on Nov. 23 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

High-priority items encouraged to be dropped off during the High Five Festive Food Drive include peanut butter, canned tomatoes and fruits, pasta sauce, dry pasta, cereal, oatmeal, toiletries and hygiene products.

DeCaprio said the donations dropped off during the High Five Festive Food Drive will play a crucial role in maintaining a stable and diverse supply to distribute to those in need. It will allow the food bank to meet both regular demands and any unforeseen needs that may arise.

"We are excited to bring the community together for this meaningful cause," said DeCaprio. "It's amazing to see how much we can achieve when we all come together."

It's important to note that in addition to the food drive on November 23, donations can be dropped off at any time at Orangeville's Zehrs, Metro, FreshCo, Sobeys and No Frills through their donation bins.

Donations are also accepted at the Orangeville Food Bank on 3 Commerce Rd., where hundreds of individuals and families receive food, hygiene products and essential supplies.

The Orangeville Food Bank does not receive government funding and relies on the community to keep its shelves stocked and operational.

?We are incredibly grateful to the community for their generosity,? said DeCaprio. ?Every donation, big or small, makes a meaningful difference in the lives of families facing food insecurity.?