

Orangeville Food Bank holding 9th Annual Summerlicious Food Drive next Saturday

By Sam Odrowski

As the Orangeville Food Bank grapples with a sharp rise in usage, it is holding a yearly fundraiser to keep its shelves stocked.

The 9th Annual Summerlicious Food Drive is returning on August 17 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. across several locations. They include Zehrs, Metro, No Frills, Fresh Co., Sobeys and all three Shoppers Drug Mart locations in Orangeville.

Life is challenging enough, imagine facing it on an empty stomach or with the added stress of wondering how you are going to put your next meal on the table, said Carrie-Anne DeCaprio, donor engagement and outreach manager at the Orangeville Food Bank.

There has been a 46 per cent rise in demand at the Orangeville Food Bank from July 2023 to July 2024, as it now serves over 1,400 clients per month, of which nearly 500 are children, making community donations more important than ever before.

During July this year, the food bank distributed nearly 50,000 lbs of food.

Part of the reason for the rise in food bank usage this year over last year is that working Ontarians are just not earning enough income to be able to afford today's cost of living such as the increased cost of food and lack of affordable housing, said DeCaprio.

The food bank's goal for the Summerlicious Food Drive is to collect 8,900 lbs of food and \$4,200 in cash to help offset the rise in demand it's currently facing.

Because of the ongoing generous donations from our community, we are able to open our doors and serve our clients in a safe, respectful and inclusive space, said DeCaprio.

The Orangeville Food Bank believes in dignified food assistance and uses a shopping system where patrons choose their own food. The Orangeville Food Bank is a member of Feed Ontario, one of the organizations in the Food Banks Canada network.

The Orangeville Food Bank is located at 3 Commerce Rd., Orangeville.