

***HungerCount 2010* SURVEY GUIDE**

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1. What is the *HungerCount* Survey?

The *HungerCount* survey is the only annual national survey of food bank use in Canada. With the information the survey provides, Food Banks Canada is able to share corporate food donations, through our National Food Sharing System, fairly across the country.

Just as important, the *HungerCount* is crucial for describing the persistent problem of hunger in Canada. It allows food banks and food bank associations to advocate at the municipal, provincial and federal levels of government for policies that will serve to reduce the need for emergency food assistance.

Every year since 1997, Food Banks Canada, in partnership with provincial associations, regional food distribution centres, community food banks and other hunger-relief organizations, has coordinated the survey, and published results in the annual *HungerCount* report.

HungerCount 2009 reported that, in March 2009, 794,738 individuals used a food bank in that month alone.

2. Gathering and Recording Client Information

We are asking your organization to record information about your clients **during the month of March 2010**.

Please count all individuals who have received groceries/food hampers, including their spouse or partner, children, and other related adults who are sharing assistance. This may include, for example, a grandparent in a three-generation household.

In addition to information on the number people helped by your food program, the *HungerCount* asks for other kinds of information, for example number of meals served, number of seniors, number of children, household source of income, family type, housing situation, etc.

**** We understand that it may not be feasible to collect all of this information about all of your clients. *The most important thing to count is the number of clients assisted by your organization and affiliated agencies in March 2010, which includes the individuals who walk through your doors as well as their family members.***

To record client information, you can create a simple spreadsheet on a blank piece of paper or a computer. If you do not have an existing client intake system, you can use **Appendix C: Client Survey Worksheet** to record your *HungerCount* client information.

**** Please note that you are not required to complete the Client Survey Worksheet – it is merely a tool to be used if you need it.**

3. Using the Client Survey Worksheet (Appendix C, page 12)

The Client Survey Worksheet may help you collect information for the *HungerCount* survey. Below are two examples of how it is meant to work.

Using the Client Survey Worksheet - EXAMPLE #1:

If Client A is an adult single male and has no children, add “1” to the ‘Adults (Age 18+)’ category, but leave ‘Women (Age 18+)’ blank. Add “X” to the ‘Single individual’ category.

If Client A identifies as First Nations, Métis or Inuit, add “1” to the First Nations/Métis/Inuit’ category.

If Client A is currently attending post-secondary school (e.g. college, university, certificate program etc.), add “1” to the ‘Post-secondary student’ category.

If Client A reports that their primary source of income is from student loans, add an “X” in the corresponding column. If they report living in private rental accommodation, add an “X” in the ‘Private rental’ column.

Please see the client survey worksheet, EXAMPLE 1, page 12 of this guide. (Note that each row represents one household.)

Using the Client Survey Worksheet - EXAMPLE #2:

If Client B tells you she is an adult woman with 3 children, and is married to an adult male, add “2” to ‘Adults (Age 18+)’ – i.e. there are two adults in the household. Also add “3” to ‘Children (less than 18 years)’ – i.e. there are 3 children in the household.

Also add “1” to ‘Women (Age 18+)’ to account for the female partner in the household. Add ‘X’ to “Two-parent family.”

If Client B reports her household’s primary source of income is from a private disability plan, add “X” to ‘Private disability plan.’ If she owns her own home, add “X” to ‘Own home.’

Please see the client survey worksheet, EXAMPLE 2, page 12.

4. Description of HungerCount 2010 Survey Questions

A. Basic service information

Question #1: Main services

Please indicate in the check boxes provided if you are a warehouse and distribution centre, if you provide groceries/food hampers to clients (grocery program), and if you run a meal program.

Question #2: Partnerships

Please indicate if you receive food from another food bank or warehouse/distribution centre, and provide the name of that organization.

Question #3: Affiliated agencies

Please indicate if your food bank provides food to other food banks or social service agencies. **If your food bank is reporting for other agencies, please complete Appendix A: Affiliated Agency Worksheet (page 10 of this guide), or attach a list of your own.** Please list all those agencies on behalf of which you are completing the survey.

Question #4: Other services provided

Please indicate what other services your organization offers.

Question #5: Number of adults and children assisted – counting each person only once

Please count all individuals coming to your food bank for groceries/hampers, including their spouse or partner, children, and other related adults who are sharing assistance. This may include, for example, a grandparent in a three-generation household. For this question, count each person once, regardless of the number of times they were assisted during the month.

For example:

20 individuals assisted once = 20 total
30 individuals assisted twice = 30 total
15 individuals assisted three times = 15 total

Question #6: Number of adults and children assisted – counting each visit

For this question, please count each individual, spouse, child, other relative etc. as many times as they were assisted during the month.

For example:

300 individuals assisted once = 300 total
200 individuals assisted twice = 400 total
100 individuals assisted three times = 300 total
20 individuals assisted once + 10 individuals assisted twice = 20 + 20 = 40

Question #7: Number of meals served

Provide a response to this question only if you run a meal program. For this question, we are looking for the **total # of individual meals that you served, including lunches, dinners, snacks etc.** in the month of March 2010.

For a sample worksheet to help keep track of meals, please see **Appendix B: Meals Worksheet.**

B. Client information

Question #8: Number of adult women assisted

Please count the number of women age 18+ assisted in March 2010.

Question #9: Number of seniors

Please count the number of seniors age 65+ assisted in March 2010.

Question #10: Number of adults who identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit

Please count those age 18+ who self-identify as First Nations, Métis or Inuit.

Question #11: Number of post-secondary students

Please count those who reported being enrolled in post-secondary education in March 2010.

Question #12: Number of new immigrants and refugees

A “new immigrant or refugee” is defined as an immigrant or refugee who has entered Canada within the past 10 years.

Question #13: Number of households assisted

Both families and unattached individuals are counted as households. A single-parent family, a two-parent family, a couple without children, and a single person are each counted as one household.

Question #14: Percentage of households by household composition

If you collect information on the household composition of those you assist, please report this information here. If you do not collect this information, please provide an estimate.

The following example will help you calculate percentages:

EXAMPLE – Calculating household composition percentages

A food bank reports the following information: **74 adults and 64 children (138 total individuals) in 50 households** were assisted in March.

The 50 households were broken down as follows:

- 13 single parent households
- 16 dual parent households
- 8 couples without children
- 13 single individuals
- = **50** total households

TO CALCULATE PERCENTAGES:

<u>single parent households</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{13}{50}$	=	0.26	x 100	=	26 %
<u>dual parent households</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{16}{50}$	=	0.32	x 100	=	32 %
<u>couples without children</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{8}{50}$	=	0.16	x 100	=	16 %
<u>single individuals</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{13}{50}$	=	0.26	x 100	=	26 %
						=	100%

Question #15: Percentage of households by primary source of income

If you collect information on the income sources of those you assist, please report this information here. If you do not collect this information, please provide an estimate.

** “No income” includes those households receiving only the National Child Benefit Supplement, or who are living on savings or cash from family or friends.*

The following example will help you calculate percentages:

EXAMPLE – Calculating primary source of income percentages

The food bank from Example 3 (74 adults, 64 children, 50 households) reports the following:

- 15 households report employment as the primary source of income
- 8 households report Employment Insurance as the primary source of income
- 20 households report social assistance as the primary source of income
- 0 report provincial disability support
- 0 report a private disability plan
- 7 households report pension as the primary source of income
- 0 report student loans or scholarships
- 0 report having no income
- 0 report having other income
- = **50** total households

<u>households reporting employment</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{15}{50}$	=	0.30	x 100	=	30 %
<u>households reporting E.I.</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{8}{50}$	=	0.16	x 100	=	16 %
<u>households reporting welfare</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{20}{50}$	=	0.40	x 100	=	40 %
<u>households reporting pension</u> total # of households	=	$\frac{7}{50}$	=	0.14	x 100	=	14 %
						=	100%

Since no households reported other sources of income, these will each equal 0 %.

Question #16: Percentage of households by housing type.

This question asks for information on housing type (for example, own home, private rental, social housing etc.) and is calculated using the same process as shown for questions #14 and #15.

Definitions:

In a home they own: the household owns their home, or currently has a mortgage or payment plan to buy the home in which they are currently living

In private rental housing: the household is paying market rent in a privately-owned house/apartment building, etc.

In social (public) rental housing: the household is living in a government-owned or otherwise rent-controlled situation **OR** the household is receiving a rent subsidy while residing in a privately-owned house/apartment building, etc.

In band-owned housing: band-owned housing is owned by an Indian band or band council and generally rented to residents.

In an emergency shelter: the household (whether a single adult, couple, or family) is currently living temporarily in an emergency shelter. This could include a dormitory-style shelter or, more likely, temporary accommodation in a hotel or motel financed by a municipal or provincial social service agency.

In a group home or shelter for youth: the household (most likely a single individual) is currently living in a private and/or government-financed group living situation or emergency shelter.

On the street: the household (possibly a single individual) is without shelter during the time of their visit to the food bank.

Temporarily with family or friends: the household (possibly a single individual) is staying with a family member or friend, but only until they can find something more permanent. This is often referred to as “concealed homelessness” or “couch surfing.”

Question #17: First-time clients

To the best of your knowledge, how many of the households you assisted in March were visiting your food bank for the first time? Though this is not a perfect question – households may have visited a different food bank in the past – it will provide a baseline for measurement in future years.

C. Operational information

Question #18: Amount of food distributed per person

Some food banks have criteria for deciding how much food they will provide to people coming through their doors - family size, for example. Other food banks will provide different size hampers depending on their supply of food. If you do not always provide the same amount of food to clients, please estimate how many days' worth of food you provide on average for each person.

Question #19: Access to your food bank

If you have a rule about how often people are allowed to access your food bank, please respond to this question by indicating this rule. If your organization is more flexible about how often people are allowed to access your food bank, please estimate how often your clients visit your food bank on average.

Question #20: Number of paid staff

Please include all paid staff who worked for your organization and, if possible, your affiliated agencies.

Question #21: Staff Hours

Please include all staff hours dedicated to running your organization. If possible, please also include the staff hours of those agencies for which you are reporting. The purpose of this question is to understand the staff resources required to support the work of food banks in Canada.

Question #22: Number of volunteers

Please include all unpaid staff who volunteered at your organization and, if possible, your affiliated agencies.

Question #23: Volunteer Hours

The purpose of this question is to understand the volunteer resources, including your board of directors, required to run hunger-relief organizations in Canada. If you are reporting for other agencies, please also include the total volunteer hours of those agencies for which you are reporting.

Question #24: Weighing of Food

Please indicate whether or not you weigh the food you distribute.

Question #25: Keeping Track of Food

This question will help us to understand if and how food banks track the food that travels in and out of their buildings.

Question #26: Total Food Distributed

Your response to this question will help us to understand the amount of food distributed by food banks in Canada in March. Please answer using the measurement scale reported in question #25.

Question #27: Shortage of Food Resources

Please check all that apply. The purpose of this question is to understand whether the need for food in your region or province is greater than the supply of food that is available.

Question #28: Months when stocks of food are lowest

Question #29: Resources Your Food Bank is Most Lacking

Please check all that apply. The purpose of this question is to understand those resources that food banks in Canada are most in need of.

Question #30: Three food items most lacking

Question #31: Policy Positions

Please pick FIVE policy positions – or write in your own suggestions – that you believe would make a real difference in alleviating hunger and the need for food banks in your community. Your answers to this question will help guide Food Banks Canada policy positions in the coming year.

5. Privacy Concerns

We have received feedback from several food banks about the kind of information we are asking you to collect. They expressed concern that the questions might be too personal, and that the information might get into the wrong hands. Food Banks Canada shares these concerns, and works to protect the information of food banks and those they assist. For example:

- *HungerCount* surveys are processed only by your provincial coordinator, the research team at Food Banks Canada, and a research contractor (the Institute for Social Research at York University) – where all employees will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement before working with surveys.
- Food Banks Canada will not release *HungerCount* information from a single food bank unless we have permission from that food bank to do so. We may, in the case of large cities or regions, release information about regional food bank use in general.
- No information provided in the *HungerCount* can be used to identify a particular food bank client.

Many food banks help to protect their clients' privacy by asking *HungerCount* questions in a private area rather than, for example, while clients are waiting in line to pick up a food hamper.

Most importantly, **clients are not required to answer *HungerCount* survey questions. It is their choice whether or not to participate.**

Appendix A: Affiliated Agency Worksheet

If you are reporting for other organizations or agencies please list them on a copy of this worksheet (or provide your own list), and return with your completed survey to your *HungerCount* Provincial Coordinator.

Organization	Address (Street, Town / City)	Main Activity		
		Grocery Program	Meal Program	Distribution Centre
<i>e.g. Sunshine Day Care</i>	<i>32 Main Street, Small Town</i>		x	

Appendix B: Meals Worksheet

(Please count all meals including breakfasts, lunches, dinners and snacks)

Date	Meals Served	Date	Meals Served
		March 16	
March 1		March 17	
March 2		March 18	
March 3		March 19	
March 4		March 20	
March 5		March 21	
March 6		March 22	
March 7		March 23	
March 8		March 24	
March 9		March 25	
March 10		March 26	
March 11		March 27	
March 12		March 28	
March 13		March 29	
March 14		March 30	
March 15		March 31	
TOTAL		TOTAL	

