



## ***For Immediate Release***

From: United Way Perth-Huron  
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### **Special Ten-Day Fund Drive for Local Food Banks**

Stratford, ON & Centralia, ON — The strength of a community working together brings people through tough times. In the new COVID-19 reality, bringing food to food banks isn't easy, so the Huron County Food Bank Distribution Centre's (HCFBDC) and United Way Perth-Huron (UWPH) are teaming up through UWPH's *COVID-19 Urgent Needs Fund* from April 3 through April 13 to raise funds for bulk purchases to supply food banks across Perth and Huron.

"Individuals and families are under a great deal of stress," said HCFBDC Executive Director Mary Ellen Zielman. "We have already seen an increase in the number of requests for food from food banks in both counties. We spent 25 per cent more than usual on food purchases last month and it's expected to continue increasing. By giving money to the HCFBDC through UWPH's *COVID-19 Urgent Needs Fund*, donors can help inject added resources into the system and ensure food banks and the people that need them get through this."

Community is equally important for the HCFBDC itself. Working to provide food security for all people, the Centre is a major hub and supplier of nutritious food for food banks across Perth and Huron. HCFBDC's collective work allows them to buy larger quantities than individual food banks are able to. This buying power allows the organization to stretch donations further and help more people. The ability to help more local people struggling to put food on the table is especially important now as the pandemic puts pressure on employers and more workers are laid off.

"There is so much uncertainty in the world right now as we come to grips with the pandemic," said UWPH Executive Director Ryan Erb. "To the best of our ability, we want to make sure people get the support they need; that's why we're proud to raise funds for the HCFBDC. Individuals and families who suddenly find themselves struggling need to know there is a safety net to catch them, to make sure their health and the health of the people they care about is the priority, not worrying where their next meal is coming from."

The *COVID-19 Urgent Needs Fund* assists organizations helping individuals and families in need. Organizations like the HCFBDC apply to UWPH and a volunteer committee ensures each application is reviewed quickly to ensure funds are distributed as soon as possible. Applications open today (Friday). To support the HCFBDC through UWPH's *COVID-19 Urgent Needs Fund*, visit [give.unitedway.ca/donate/WSTRAT-UWPH](https://give.unitedway.ca/donate/WSTRAT-UWPH).

#### **About the Huron County Food Bank Distribution Centre**

The HCFBDC's purpose is to support existing food banks with nutritious foods including milk, eggs, meat, fresh fruits and vegetables as well as dry goods. They channel large food donations in a free-flowing fashion to local community food banks. HCFBDC also acts as a clearing house for donations of food from farmers and food producers, dividing donations into usable portions, then distributing to food banks with a need for products. A supported partner of UWPH, HCFBDC's hard-working staff of 40 dedicated volunteers ensures the organization operates efficiently and effectively while fulfilling its mission to provide food security for all people in the region.

#### **About United Way Perth-Huron**

UWPH is a 100% local organization working to address #UNIGNORABLE issues like poverty, homelessness and mental health in our communities. Thanks to United Way and people across the region, over 39,000 of the most

vulnerable in Perth and Huron Counties have a brighter future. To show your #LocalLove by donating or volunteering, call 519-271-7730 or 1-877-818-8867, mail to 32 Erie Street, Stratford, ON N5A 2M4 or visit [perthhuron.unitedway.ca](http://perthhuron.unitedway.ca)

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For more information or to set up an interview with Ryan Erb, Executive Director, contact (519) 276-0097 or email [info@perthhuron.unitedway.ca](mailto:info@perthhuron.unitedway.ca)