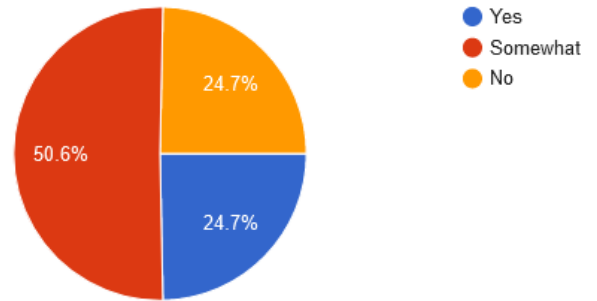


Food Priority in Prince Edward County

In a March 2021 survey of Prince Edward County residents who identify as sometimes being short on food, 4 out of 5 respondents (80.6%) said they use food programs such as food banks, community dinners, Good Food Box, PEC Fresh Market, and Meals on Wheels.



1 in 4 people who use food programs say they are meeting their monthly needs

How else do people get by?

- ✓ Eat cheap, processed, poor quality food (65%)
- ✓ Skip meals (56%)
- ✓ Borrow from friends or family (44%)
- ✓ Go into debt (41%)
- ✓ Skip paying bills (39%)

Top barriers to using food banks

- ✓ Think food banks are for people who are worse off
- ✓ Don't want to admit they could use the help
- ✓ Don't want to be seen going to a food bank

“They provide the basics to the best of their ability but only about two weeks worth and it is very hard to stretch it out. With high cost of rent and utilities there isn't enough left to buy groceries in a month.”

“We all need to eat, we shouldn't be ashamed to ask for help.”

Messaging that supports using food programs

- ✓ Everyone needs help sometimes
- ✓ Affordable food is for everybody
- ✓ Other people's positive experiences
- ✓ Privacy will be protected

Priorities for local food programs

- ✓ Distribute grocery cards so people can buy what they actually need
- ✓ More access to fresh produce at wholesale prices
- ✓ Community gardens: grow more food!

Priorities for community advocacy

- ✓ Universal Basic Income
- ✓ Increase Ontario Works/ODSP payments
- ✓ Support a living wage in PEC

An hourly living wage in Prince Edward County is

\$17.35

“At this point I have never used a food bank or other programs but I am feeling it is getting tougher every day trying to keep it all together and the day I might need these very important programs feels much closer than ever.”

An innovative food program should ...

- ✓ Reflect the wisdom of lived experiences
- ✓ Create opportunities to give back
- ✓ Connect people with community resources
- ✓ Build on best practices: what's working

An innovative food program would offer ...

- ✓ Home delivery options
- ✓ Shopping experience/grocery cards
- ✓ Group cooking sessions
- ✓ Gardening and canning opportunities
- ✓ A community food centre model
- ✓ Satellite food depots/fresh market truck

Local policy priorities for frontline workers

- ✓ Funding that prioritizes food security
- ✓ Centralized food programs under one umbrella
- ✓ No means testing
- ✓ Affordable housing

“an innovative food programme needs to include the clients it serves on a regular basis. Clients should be able to feel as if they are part of the solution to food insecurity and given the chance to give of their time and experience if they want to. Independence and self esteem go a long way to eliminating the stigma and restoring dignity to those who need to use a food bank at a point in their lives”

- frontline worker survey

Community-oriented

- not a hidden, out-of-the-way location or basement
- create a social component
- accessible: one floor, lots of parking

Eliminate proof of need

- means testing perpetuates stigma
- communicate everyone needs help sometimes
- affordable food is for everyone

Improve the experience by normalizing it

Volunteer and staff training

- welcoming atmosphere
- non-judgmental and empathetic
- respect privacy
- nurture client participation

Centralized model with outreach

- cooking classes, markets in one place
- equitable services across the County
- offer programs where target groups are

Give people choice

- offer grocery cards
- extend hours
- expand home delivery