

# Moosomin Food Share launches 12 Days of Christmas

BY RYAN KIEDROWSKI

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This is the busiest time of year for food banks across the country, when donations are typically at their peak. Food banks are always appreciative of those generous donations, but sometimes it may difficult to know what the most-needed items are for those on the receiving end.

Enter the Moosomin Food Share's newest initiative, the 12 Days of Christmas Food Drive, which officially began Dec. 1. Essentially, the food drive lists a Top 12 of items most utilized by food share clients. People can donate items on the list that correspond to which day it happens to fall on, or even donate all 12 of the desired items.

"We put our staples on, the most popular items that people choose for themselves," explained Samantha Campbell, Moosomin Food Share Manager. "We're just encouraging people to collect these items and bring them down to the food bank. They can bring it down at the end of the Day 12, or they can bring it down daily—whatever works for them."

Some of the most popular items include pasta; canned meat, vegetables, and fruit; cereal; peanut butter; meal kits; pancake mix and syrup; juice and juice boxes; hygiene products; rice; and oatmeal. Hampers go out once a month from the Moosomin Food Share, reaching people locally and also in Wapella, Welwyn, and Fleming. Usually hampers are distributed on the 17th and 18th of the month, but Campbell says they'd be more than happy to receive donations after the December hampers are out.

"Even if you drop off on the 20th, we need that food to last us all year," she said. "So it's not necessarily geared towards the holidays, we want it to try to last as many months as possible."

While the Christmas season is a busy time for donations, the need for food doesn't stop after the holidays.

"We find that more people donate towards the month of December," Campbell



Moosomin Food Share volunteers Orey and Audrey Hudym helping to stock shelves at the food share last week.

said. "We're averaging 65 hampers for the month of December, for the Christmas ones, which is more than usual. And our donations are down—we're not seeing the

donations, and it doesn't help that Canada Post is on strike. Every little bit of food helps."

While people may not be able to send a financial donation through traditional

mail, e-transfers are still an option and can be directed to [sehas2018@sasktel.net](mailto:sehas2018@sasktel.net).

"Anything over \$20 we give tax receipts for, and even food items," Campbell explained. "If someone brought \$200 worth of Co-op gift cards, or \$200 worth of ground beef, we can do a gift card or a tax receipt for those items as well. It's not necessarily monetary."

With many contributing factors such as the continuing increased cost of living affecting more people, reliance on food banks has also followed suit in terms of numbers.

"Last year we were at 40 to 45 hampers—that was at Christmas time, and obviously we're up to 65," Campbell said, adding that the month of January usually averages around 55 hampers. "It's definitely more than doubled in the last couple of years."

There have also been some heart-warming donations from local businesses and service clubs.

"We've had the Moosomin Dental Clinic, they donated toothbrushes and dental floss for all of our clients," she said. "The Elks made a monetary donation to cover our hams for the Christmas hampers, Co-op is donating the potatoes and egg salad, P&H is donating pancake mix, and then Nutrien is donating the toys for the children, because we give a present for each child that's utilizing our services, and they're also giving a monetary donation to help cover food costs as well."

It's the season for major food drives also, with the annual CPKC Holiday Train as a perfect example. Campbell also explained how MacLeod Elementary School's food drive included a friendly competition between classrooms, yielding 10 boxes filled so far donated to the Moosomin Food Share.

For those who are in need of a food hamper, registrations can be made online or in person at the Moosomin Thrift Store & Food Share, located at 609 Gordon Street in Moosomin.

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