



Your Support Makes a Real Difference

Spring is well and truly here, and while things remain difficult as we all struggle with the pandemic, it's a time for hope and fresh beginnings. At FYFB, we've been so fortunate to weather the storm of the past year thanks to your generous donations. Your support has been vital as we saw significant increases in the number of clients we serve.

- We saw a **42.9%** increase in clients from the beginning to the end of 2020.
- The number of clients we serve weekly has increased **35.8%** since the first lockdown.
- We currently serve **950** clients every week.

While the need is great and there have been challenges over the past year, it's important to celebrate our successes. Early this year, we **piloted delivery to seniors in public housing**, and it was so successful we would like to keep it going. Not only did it help us get food to those in need, it was inspiring to see the way community members supported one another through this initiative. We encourage you to take a few minutes to read "*A Pilot Project that Really Delivered*" below to hear about the project's impact from our clients and

volunteers. **We invite you to contribute towards the senior's program so we can keep it going:** <https://donate-can.keela.co/may-2021-newsletter>

Looking ahead, the warmer days mean it's time for our Urban Garden to spring back to life! We're looking forward to being able to provide fresh, FYFB-grown herbs to our clients over the coming months. Be sure to follow us on social media for updates on our garden.

We want to wish all celebrating Ramadan, a Happy Eid! We are grateful to the Ismaili Centre for their virtual food drive; Muslim Welfare Canada and Penny Appeals for the special Eid hampers distributed this past weekend. Thank you.

Thank you for your ongoing support,

Julie and Devi
Co-Chairs, Board of Directors

[Donate](#)

A Pilot Project That Really Delivered



When we speak with participants about the impact of the Senior Food Delivery Project, three things ring clear: this service has been a lifeline for keeping seniors safe during the pandemic; residents are very pleased our hampers contain foods common in Chinese meals, and the project has fostered support and community involvement.

“This is a fantastic thing,” explains Lai Mui San, a resident who receives food hampers through the program. “When the (pandemic) situation got really bad, the food bank supervisor advocated for older folks who were vulnerable to get food at their doorstep. Distributing these items to our doorsteps really helps with preventing infection, and volunteers are really careful when delivering.”

Our goal for the program was to keep vulnerable elderly clients safe during the pandemic, but we’ve found it’s also helped us reach many more than we expected, including homebound seniors in need. “An older lady on the eighth floor

couldn't get groceries," notes Yan Wai King, a client who helps distribute hampers in the building. "I told them about the program, and they're getting groceries and very happy now."

Word-of-mouth has played an important role in ensuring we're reaching those who need our support—something we couldn't do without participants who are champions of the project. "At first, not many people wanted to participate, but more and more and more signed up!" says Xu Hu Ying, a participant who was so inspired by the program that she became a volunteer. "It's very good—others in the community are envious of our building."

One of the reasons the program has been such a success is we've designed it with the community and culture in mind. Participating residents are predominantly Chinese-Canadian, so it's important that hampers include foods that are common in Chinese cuisines. "The food suits our tastes and it is fresh," says Ms. Xu. Ms. Yan echoes this sentiment: "Everyone likes it. The food (options) are right. I've asked a bunch of people, and they've said the foods are really good."

It's important to note that the Senior Food Delivery Project eases the worry of elders living with poverty—a group that's among those at highest risk for severe COVID-19 and death. "When we go out and buy things amidst the pandemic, we are scared," says Ms. Xu. "The volunteers have a great attitude, coming to our doorstep without needing us to come out. I feel very safe, and I hope for this to continue 'til the pandemic is over."

FACES OF FYFB



When Ashley Markowitz noticed a long line of clients outside FYFB, she decided to reach out and see if we needed volunteers. She's been a regular since September 2020, and we're so grateful for her support. We asked Ashley a few questions about the importance of FYFB—here's what she had to say.

What do you do at FYFB?

Anything needed! Mostly, I work in the pantry or hamper pack station. I try to make sure the area is stocked and organized with a good variety of dried goods going into the bags.

What makes FYFB special?

The group of volunteers are so friendly, generous and supportive. Not only are they eager to help the community, but they are quick to help fellow volunteers. It's a fun group that makes the volunteer shift fly by!

FYFB makes a positive difference in the community. People are not only thankful for the food they receive, but also make a point to thank the volunteers. It's a

special place that can ease some worry and pain for those in difficult circumstances.

When did you know FYFB was a fit for you?

From the start, everyone was warm and welcoming. Each week, Rouchen is so appreciative of the volunteers' contributions. It is a busy environment and there are always tasks to be completed. It is a pleasure to be a part of the FYFB team as a volunteer.

Why should supporters donate?

Demand at the FYFB is greater than ever. Some weeks the assortment of produce and non-perishables are very limited, which is tough when visits to the food bank are limited to once per week. If you have the chance to give a small donation, it can make a big difference!

[**Donate Today**](#)



Share



Website



Follow



Tweet

Copyright © 2019 Fort York Food Bank, A Non-Profit Corporation, All rights reserved.

Our mailing address is:

380 College Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada, M5T 1S6