

Food Bank Diet Challenge Itinerary

You can demonstrate your support and play a role in this vital effort by living for 6 days on the limited food options faced by people on social assistance and talking about your experience with members of your organization, friends, family, coworkers and local politicians.

You can take part on your own or encourage others from your organization or from among your family and friends. If they would like to join you in doing the challenge they can contact Kristine at k_carbis@hotmail.com for the particulars. You can also discuss other ways of sharing the experience afterwards.

The basic steps for taking part are listed below.

Step 1 - Tuesday, May 19th – noon

Meet at Trinity United Church (Main Street, Newmarket) L.A.M.P. program for lunch. We will discuss the next steps and answer any questions in a short meeting following lunch.

Step 2 – Wednesday May 20th – 9:30 am – 11:30 am

Go to the local Food Bank – We will contact the local food bank in your area and let them know you are taking the Food Bank Diet Challenge. We will arrange for you to go there to pick up a typical food hamper. We ask that you make a donation to pay for the food hamper. Also please remember to bring bags with you to put your items in. You will need I.D. and we will let you know the particular criteria of the specific food bank that you will be going to so you have everything you need. We are doing it this way so you get to feel the experience of using a food bank. Along with the food you receive from the food bank you can spend up to \$10 on other items that you may need, such as protein, for the 6 days.

Step 3 – Attend at least 1 other meal program in your area during the 6 days. We will give you a list of the meal programs in York Region. This will help you to get through on the limited amount of food that you have.

Step 4 – Post to the Freedom 90 Food Bank Diet Challenge Facebook page regularly during the 6 days about how you are feeling and your thoughts about what those that use food banks have to go through. Throughout the duration of the project, we ask that you share as candidly as possible. Please try to share at least once a day – this can be as simple as writing a sentence, a paragraph, or a photo.

Step 5 – Thursday, May 28th from 6:30 p.m. – 8 p.m. we will attend the post-diet reflection meeting at the CUPE 905 office located at 165 Pony Drive, Newmarket. We are inviting the media to this meeting.

Some discussion questions could include • How long did the food last? • What was the hardest thing for you about the Challenge? • How did the Challenge diet affect your physical or emotional health? • Did you ‘cheat’? How? • What kinds of conversations did you have with friends, family, co-workers? • What do you want people in the community to know from your experience? •

Other things we will be discussing are:

What do you want to tell our local MPP and everyone around you as a result of this experience?

How has this experience changed your way of thinking and looking at our social safety net?

You could write a summary of your experiences describing your experience with the Challenge and raise other issues you feel are relevant about the nature of poverty in your community.

Guidelines for Participants:

Your Challenge: is to rely on a diet that the working poor and those on social assistance might receive from a food bank. If a person on social assistance received this food from a food bank in Ontario, it would be a three day supply. For many, they would usually have to make it last even longer. The challenge is for you to eat this food for 6 days.

We request when going to the food bank and meal programs that you dress in casual attire. We recommend that you inform your family and friends of your participation in this project for the week. You will need their support to stay committed for the duration of the project.

We ask that you only eat meals prepared from contents in the food bank hamper and the Pantry List (see below) with the exception of the meal programs. No eating out, no food or drinks at social gatherings, no coffee or tea or juice at meetings, or alcoholic or non-alcoholic drinks bought for you by others, etc. If you are at a family gathering, dinner party, public event you will need to say 'no' to other food.

The Pantry List consists of: Vegetable oil, flour, salt, sugar, coffee, tea, margarine, soy sauce, ketchup, garlic, spices. Participants can use up to 5 ingredients from this list, provided that they already have these items in their kitchen. We also ask that you keep track of the quantity of each item used from the Pantry List. This is very important.

Lastly, don't forget to celebrate! This is a major accomplishment.