

Save-On-Foods launches \$1 million campaign to feed kids in need across Western Canada

(April 2, 2020 – Langley, B.C.) Save-On-Foods has committed \$500,000 toward their \$1 million fundraising goal aimed at giving kids easier access to school meal supports during the COVID-19 pandemic.

With an estimated one in five school-aged kids in Canada relying on school-based nutrition programs, school closures mean many Canadian kids are unsure where their next meal will come from. Schools and community groups throughout Western Canada are working with parents to ensure vulnerable kids get the support they need, and Save-On-Foods and its partners are stepping up to help.

Over the last three years, by participating in [The Grocery Foundation's](#) Toonies for Tummies program, Save-On-Foods and its customers have made donations which have enabled over 250,000 meals to kids at school made possible through programs delivered by Breakfast Club of Canada.

Now, customers can donate \$2 or 500 More Rewards points at the till of any Save-On-Foods, PriceSmart Foods or Urban Fare store, and the company will match up to a total of \$500,000. Donations can be made in-store, or online through Breakfast Club of Canada, Backpack Buddies or I Can for Kids digital platforms.

Funds raised will be donated to **Breakfast Club of Canada (the Club)**, which helps feed more than 243,500 children and youth in 1,809 schools across the country each year. The Club will in turn distribute funding and support to schools, community organizations, and other partners mobilized to get food supports to these kids as quickly and efficiently as possible.

All money raised locally stays local—that means each community will be helping kids right in their local areas. *“As we ramp up efforts to support an increasing number of Canadian families facing food insecurity, this generous commitment to raise \$1 million is a timely blessing,” said **Breakfast Club of Canada President & Founder, Daniel Germain**. “We are grateful for the continued support from Save-On-Foods, and we look forward to supporting their efforts to accelerate true community partnerships to solve this problem. We are proud that we have been entrusted with ensuring these funds and resources are put to their best and highest use.”*

To support this work, and in response to requests for guidance, programming support, donations and food from a growing number of schools and grassroots community partners, Save-On-Foods has mobilized the talent of partner organizations known for their skills and well-established best practices in delivering these services in British Columbia year-round. From procurement to program delivery to logistics, the team has assembled quickly to assist in accelerating the delivery of a sustainable solution.

In addition to Breakfast Club of Canada, partners in this coordination effort include Food Banks BC, Backpack Buddies, I Can for Kids in Calgary, BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation, The Grocery Foundation, and Food Mesh.

*“We know that kids need nutritious meals and we are absolutely committed to helping these organizations continue their critical mission despite school closures. The work our community partners do to feed young Canadians is so important,” said **Save-On-Foods President Darrell Jones**. “We are grateful to Breakfast Club of Canada and our other partners who have joined forces with us to support our schools and students. I know our customers share our commitment to our communities and will blow us away with their generosity.”*

QUOTES FROM SUPPORTING PARTNERS

*“Right now needs are surging and we can't let our kids down,” said **Backpack Buddies Co-Founder Emily-anne King**. “Backpack Buddies is uniquely positioned to get food into the hands of those who need it most, on the ground, through our dozens of partnerships with local schools. These funds will ease the fears of hungry families, who know we'll be there to help them through the COVID-19 pandemic.”*

*“We appreciate the long-time support of Save-On Foods, who understood our mission and have supported us from the beginning,” said **I Can for Kids Executive Director Bobbi Turko**. “I Can for Kids was formed to help feed hungry kids during the summer months when they can no longer access school nutrition programs, and because of this global crisis, their summer break has started months ahead of schedule. With help from Save-On-Foods and Breakfast Club of Canada, I Can for Kids and our agency partners can safely deliver more support to kids in need wherever they are in our community today, and in the weeks and months ahead.”*

*“These exceptional times have prompted an exceptional response from grocery retailers to help hungry kids, including this current effort by Save-On-Foods which will help them continue to access vital nutrition. There's every likelihood we will also have an even greater number of hungry children who will require support when school resumes. We're grateful to the public that have supported efforts to date and will continue to prioritize children at this time of need,” said **Shaun McKenna, Executive Director, The Grocery Foundation**.*



A Jim Pattison business

“BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation has developed a strong collaborative approach with farmers, distributors, health and education partners for sustainable delivery of healthy BC grown fruit, vegetables and milk to over 90% of schools around the province for over 15 years,” remarked **Executive Director Pat Tonn**. “Kids need nutrition to grow, learn and prosper, and we are proud to partner with organizations and people who make that happen.”

“Every month in BC close to 100,000 individuals regularly need the services of our community food banks,” said **Laura Lansink, Executive Director, Food Banks BC**. “Of these 1 in every 3 is a child. Healthy nutritious food is vital to every child to give them the best chance of success in life. Food banks are working to ensure no child ever has to face hunger and we are pleased to be able to lend our resources, including advice and programming support, to this coordinated effort to get immediate relief to school children facing a new, urgent and unique need.”

“We believe food insecurity in BC is avoidable, and fixable when we all work together. Our role at **FoodMesh** is devoted to using technology to safely match good food to where it's needed most, helping an online network of 500+ businesses rescue and distribute more than 350,000+ meals each month via our platform,” said **Jessica Regan, CEO, FoodMesh**.

- end -

About Save-On-Foods

Save-On-Foods is committed to Going the Extra Mile for customers in every community served, every day. Known for its unique approach in customizing each store to best suit the needs of the neighbourhood by carrying more than 2,500 locally-made products from more than 2,000 local growers and producers, the company has been innovating and putting customers first for over 100 years. Save-On-Foods, its supplier partners, team members and generous customers have donated more than \$30 million to children's hospitals, contribute more than \$3 million in donations to food banks and children's nutrition programs across Western Canada each year and is a founding partner in the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program.

Save-On-Foods customers regularly donate to food banks through the company's existing channels, including coupons at the till and by converting their More Rewards points to cash for charities and through its surplus Food Diversion programs. This year, amid the pandemic, donations to food banks at Save-On-Foods are up 25 per cent over 2019.

For more information, contact:

Julie Dickson, Managing Director, Corporate Responsibility
mediarelations@saveonfoods.com (604) 992 2538

About Breakfast Club of Canada

Accredited by [Imagine Canada](#) for its effective governance, the Club provides much more than breakfast: its approach is based on commitment, self-esteem and capacity development using an optimal formula adapted to local needs. Breakfast Club of Canada helps feed more than 243,500 children and youth in 1,809 schools across the country. To learn more, visit breakfastclubcanada.org.

For more information:

Nathalie Rochette, Communications Director, Breakfast Club of Canada
nathalie.rochette@breakfastclubcanada.org (514) 404-5660

About The Grocery Foundation

The Grocery Foundation is a registered not for profit charity committed to fundraising for student nutrition programs (SNPs) and to elevating the public's awareness around the importance of providing nutritious breakfasts and mid-morning meals for at-risk students in stigma-free environments. Over 40 years, with the support of a community of industry partners and public donations, The Foundation has raised over \$90M including over \$22M through its Toonies for Tummies campaign benefiting over 1.1M school-aged children.

About I Can for Kids (IC4K)

I Can for Kids supports children and youth impacted by hunger over the summer break. By working closely with our frontline agency partners and other local experts, we have developed a unique understanding of local kids' evolving needs and a unique approach to meet their needs. We are thoughtful in our approach, committed to quality, and focused on giving kids better access to the food they need with a greater sense of dignity and belonging. Our 'CAN-do' attitude is part of who we are, as is our passion to help ensure local kids are fed, stay healthy, and have the opportunity to reach their full potential. To learn more visit www.icanforkids.ca

About Backpack Buddies

[Backpack Buddies](#) is a B.C. charity that helps hungry children by filling the 'weekend hunger gap'. The organization discreetly provides backpacks full of meals to young students over weekends, when they typically can't take advantage of school-based meal programs. Operations began in 2012 when a mother-daughter duo joined forces to provide 20 backpacks to children in need. Since then, Backpack Buddies has expanded into partnerships with more than 72 recipient schools, delivering more than 1450 backpacks per week to hungry families in Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island. Learn more at www.backpackbuddies.ca.



A Jim Pattison business

About BC Agriculture in the Classroom Foundation

BCAIRC is a non-profit, charitable organization that works with educators to bring local agriculture to B.C.'s students. Together with farmers, teachers, and agriculture specialists, we teach students about the story of our food in B.C. With support from its partners in industry and government, BCAIRC delivers the BC School Fruit and Vegetable Nutritional Program of locally grown fruit and vegetable snacks to Kindergarten to grade 12 students in 90% of B.C. schools. The program also delivers milk to students in Kindergarten to grade 5 and is unique in many respects, including how it increases access, knowledge and awareness of locally grown foods for B.C. students; supports BC's economy; and builds relationships between industry partners. To learn more about BCAIRC, visit www.bcairc.ca.

About Food Banks BC

Our Vision: a hunger-free future

Our Mission: inspire, empower and support our food bank members to achieve hunger-free communities

We exist to support and assist and empower our 100 BC member food banks. Each year we facilitate the delivery of over \$4 million dollars of donated food to our food banks across the province. As well we run the Food Banks BC Sharing Coupons—a partnership with grocery stores that gets fresh, healthy, perishable food to the hungry. The program raises close to \$1 million dollars and 100% of the donation stays with each local food bank too. Plus, with close to half of our food banks being run solely by volunteers, our education and instruction on topics like food safety, volunteer recruitment, fundraising, means that they have the best tools possible to assist people in their own communities.

About FoodMesh

Mesh Exchange (dba FoodMesh) is a Vancouver based tech social enterprise building scalable food recovery solutions. We build apps and programs for food businesses and organizations to safely connect, coordinate and track the sale or donation of surplus food, helping reduce waste, save money and feed more. www.foodmesh.ca