



Media Release
For Immediate Release

SCHOOL LUNCH ASSOCIATION WORKS WITH COMMUNITY TO DELIVER \$300,000 WORTH OF FOOD TO ORGANIZATIONS SERVING YOUTH & VULNERABLE POPULATIONS

St. John's, NL, April 20, 2020:

With the sudden closure of schools in Newfoundland and Labrador as a result of COVID-19, the School Lunch Association was challenged to act fast to get their stockpile of food out of schools and into the hands of those who need it. The result was a coordinated effort in the collection of \$300,000 worth of goods from 27 schools to the St. John's Farmers' Market, where it is now available ([on an application basis](#)) for community-serving organizations.

The School Lunch Association is a registered charity whose mission is to operate a non-stigmatizing program that offers a hot, nutritious lunch for school children, regardless of a families' financial situation. The School Lunch Association operates in 36 schools across eastern Newfoundland and serves approximately 6,300 meals daily when schools are in normal operation. During the 2018-2019 academic year, over one million meals were served to children in grades K-8. While children are currently not in school, the needs remain the same.

In response to the indefinite closure of schools due to COVID-19, the School Lunch Association formed a partnership with the St. John's Farmers Market, Choices for Youth and Food First NL to obtain and distribute its sizeable food inventory to community organizations serving children and vulnerable populations. Following the formation of this partnership, Household Movers and Shippers Ltd. and Akita Equipment came on board to help with moving the food, while the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary stepped up to offer their support.

"The strength of our community is demonstrated by how many non-profit, business, and government organizations partnered on this project", said John Finn, Executive Director of the School Lunch Association. Finn says, "The School Lunch Association has served the community for 30+ years, and when the school bell rings again, we will be there."

"The St. John's Farmers' Market is honored to be part of such a worthwhile project," said Pamela Anstey, Executive Director of the St. John's Farmers' Market. "The COVID-19 pandemic has illuminated just how pervasive food insecurity is within this province. Through this distribution hub, we will be able to get a tremendous amount of commercial-sized dry-goods and frozen products to food-serving community organizations, leading to thousands of meals for the most vulnerable of our region."

The School Lunch Association wishes to thank all those who donated their time and labour to this endeavor. We want to recognize:

- Chief Joe Boland and Sgt. Ken Jackson of the Royal Newfoundland Constabulary, as well as the RNC Cadets, Steve Young and Paul Harris of Household Movers & Shippers Ltd., and Chris Howlett of Akita Equipment.
- The many other businesses and government entities that played a vital role in this effort include: F.J. Wadden's and Sons, Leon's Home Furnishings, Ches's Fish and Chips, Ice Block Ltd., the City of St. John's, Premier Dwight Ball, Minister Brian Warr and the Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Tony Stack and the staff of Newfoundland and Labrador English School District, Peter Smith of the Conseil Scolaire Francophone Provincial, and Minister Lisa Dempster and the Department of Children Seniors and Social Development.

Those interested in learning more about this initiative or in supporting the work of the School Lunch Association, can visit <https://schoollunch.ca/>.

For more information about this initiative or to schedule an interview, please contact:

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