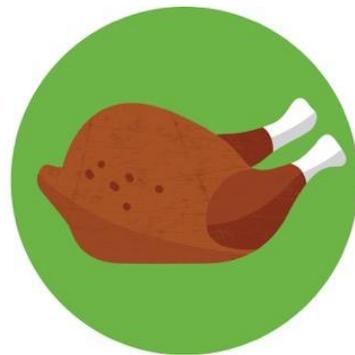




# HUNGER COUNT MONTREAL 2016

January 2017



**Report on Emergency Food Aid Services for the Island of  
Montreal**

# Hunger Count Montreal 2016

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## About Moisson Montréal

Founded in 1984 as a non-profit charity, Moisson Montréal is the largest food bank in Canada, thanks to its food recovery and distribution programs intended as emergency food assistance for the Island of Montreal. More than 250 community organizations receive goods from Moisson Montréal to meet the food needs and demands of the individuals and families they serve.

### Our Mission

- Ensure optimal food supply to community organizations that provide assistance to families and individuals in need on the Island of Montreal;
- Foster the development of sustainable solutions to ensure food security for all residents of Montreal.

### Our Values

- **Respect** the people we help, as well as our coworkers, volunteers and partners;
- **Integrity** in all aspects and actions undertaken by volunteers and staff;
- **Fairness** in the decisions affecting all our partners and in food distribution;
- **Solidarity** to maximize Moisson Montréal's role and impact within the community;
- **Personal** commitment to fight hunger on a daily basis and over the long term.

### Statistics That Speak:

- **254 community organizations** across the Island of Montreal are serviced on a regular basis and 55 additional organizations receive ad hoc assistance;
- **14.2 million kilos of foodstuff** and other essential products were distributed this past year, representing a **value of \$81.5 million**;
- Moisson Montréal works closely with **304 agri-food businesses and 113 supermarkets** to effectively collect donations;
- **8,900 volunteers** put in more than 85,700 hours to help us with our ongoing mission: the equivalent of having 47 full-time employees.

## Our Programs

### Food Recovery Program in Supermarkets (FRPS)

Created in October 2013, the FRPS program is the first of its kind in Canada and offers a unique and sustainable solution to the problem of food insecurity and waste. Moisson Montréal has reached a province-wide agreement with Loblaws, Metro and Sobeys to recover unsold foodstuffs, which are then distributed to community organizations. In two years, nearly **2,182 tons of food** have been recovered, including **1,033 tons of meat**, which represents approximately a value of **\$16 million** for these organizations. Moisson Montréal has won three awards for this program: the **Novae Prize** for the Corporate Citizen of the Year in the Procurement category (2015), the **Élixir Coup de Coeur Prize** from PMI-Montreal (2015) and the Sustainable Development Award from **Mercuriades** (2016).

### Feeding Our Future

Funded in collaboration with the Sodexo Foundation, this program provides free summer lunches for more than 1,000 children during the school year. Moisson Montréal is proud to have participated in the *Feeding Our Future* children who receive subsidized meals program for the past 14 years.

### Social and/or Professional Integration Programs

In collaboration with CRDITED, Moisson Montréal regularly welcomes volunteers with intellectual disabilities or pervasive developmental disorders to work alongside Moisson Montréal's employees every day. The goal is to help them develop autonomy, break their isolation and acquire a diversity of skills.

### Regroupement d'achats des organismes communautaires (RAOC)

Collective shopping for community organizations

The partnership between Moisson Montréal and *Commerce solidaire* has allowed more than 50 RAOC members to save considerably on purchased food items.

## An Investment That Impacts Our Society!

In order to maximize the impact of its donors, Moisson Montréal ensures that the majority of the food distributed comes from foodstuff donations and strives to minimize its expenses significantly. Approximately 95% of all donations are used to provide services to organizations and to enable food distribution. Moisson Montréal's administrative costs are among the lowest in the country (only 1%). Therefore, every dollar invested into our organization is stretched as much as possible. **A \$100 donation has the power to feed 46 children, ages 0 to 5, for one week.\***

\* Based on the calculations from the Montreal Diet Dispensary.

## About the Hunger Count

Conducted in March all across Canada, the Hunger Count is an annual survey to which participate all food banks that are members of the FBC (Food Banks Canada). The purpose of this survey is to ascertain the extent of food assistance provided by community organizations all across Canada. Within this national framework, we at Moisson Montréal produce our very own Hunger Count based on data compiled from the community organizations we serve across the island of Montreal.

- In March 2016, all organizations surveyed as part of the Hunger Count survey, responded, specifically 237 different organizations.
- 7 organizations were closed during the Hunger Count survey.
- 4 accredited organizations, receiving ad hoc assistance, did not qualify to participate in the survey because they did not receive any foodstuffs in March 2016.
- 6 new organizations received their accreditation during or after March 2016.
- The group of 55 organizations receiving ad hoc assistance throughout the year was not required to answer the survey.

The current Hunger Count is divided into three sections:

- I. Overview of food aid as part of the **FOODSTUFF DISTRIBUTION** program;
- II. Overview of food aid as part of the **MEALS AND SNACKS** program;
- III. **RECOMMENDATIONS** from community organizations in order to reduce hunger in Montreal.

## A Few Definitions

### Accredited Organization

Community organization directly supplied by Moisson Montréal on a regular basis, namely at least once per month.

### Foodstuff Distribution Program

The Foodstuff Distribution Program essentially represents the following services offered by accredited organizations:

- Food baskets distributed on set dates (weekly, monthly, bi-monthly etc.);
- Community food shopping;
- Emergency food aid.

### Meals Program

The Meals Program is primarily comprised of the following food assistance services offered by accredited organizations:

- Prepared meals (i.e. Meals on Wheels);
- Snack distribution;
- Cooking collectives and cooking workshops.

### Household

One or more individuals living together under the same roof, who may or may not be members of the same family.

### Caution

The statistical validity of the Hunger Count data is supervised by the Université de Montréal Public Health Research Institute (IRSPUM). In 2016, changes in methodology were implemented in order to improve the accuracy of the data in relation to the Meals Program. This new methodology determines more precisely the number of individuals benefiting from the Meals Program. However, it introduces a distortion compared to the data published in the previous annual Hunger Counts. This new methodology was applied retrospectively to the data from 2015, in order to determine the annual change in the demand for services.

## Hunger Count 2016: Key Results

### Significant Developments

- In 2016, **254 different organizations** were assisted by Moisson Montréal, ten more than the previous year.
- **137,387 individuals received monthly aid** through the vast Montreal food assistance network, specifically 20% more than the previous year.
- In March 2016 alone, a total of **658,256 requests for food aid** were fulfilled by the accredited organizations of Moisson Montréal, an **increase of 8.5%** as compared to 2015.
- Among these requests, **147,046 were recipients of the Foodstuffs Program** and **511,210 were provided with meals and snacks**.
- Nearly **50% of the 254 accredited organizations** offer both the Foodstuffs and the Meals programs.
- **49%** of the work accomplished by the organizations is performed by volunteers.
- **11.9%** of the households participating in the Foodstuffs Program have an employment income, compared to the average of **9.3%** from the other Food Banks of Quebec.

**Table 1: Changes of Recipients by Age Group**

Age group	Number of individuals 2016		Number of individuals 2015		Spread (in percentage)
Children (0-17 years old)	45,320	33%	33,860	30%	<b>+7.1%</b>
Adults (18-64 years old)	78,168	57%	67,873	59%	<b>+15.2%</b>
Adults (65 and over)	13,889	10%	12,409	11%	<b>+11.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>137,387</b>		<b>114,142</b>		<b>+20.3%</b>

## Foodstuffs Program

- The accredited organizations of Moisson Montréal fulfilled **147,046 requests for food aid** in the month of March 2016, i.e. 19,097 more than requested in March 2015, representing an increase of 6.9%.
- **69,735 individuals received monthly** assistance through the vast Montreal Foodstuffs Program, an increase of 7.1% from the previous year.
- The number of elderly people (65+) increased to **1,138**, i.e. **21.8%** more than compared to March 2015 (see Table 5).
- Among those who agreed to disclose information (approximately 30%), we determined an increase of **20%** in the category of **individuals with employment income** (see Table 7).
- The same findings were noted for **students with loans and grants**, they numbered **25% more** than the previous year (see Table 7).

## Meals Program

- **511,210 portions** of food were served in March 2016 by the accredited organizations of Moisson Montréal, as compared to 478,590 in March 2015, **an increase of 6.8%**.
- **Among these portions, 124,602 were snacks and 386,608 were meals.**
- **67,652 elderly people were served monthly** through the vast food aid network in Montreal, namely 38% more than the previous year.
- **81% of individuals** who required this service were **single** (with or without children), an increase noted since 2008.

## Hunger: An Ever-Present Concern

Moisson Montréal recovers and redistributes foodstuff to different community organizations across the Island of Montreal on a regular or ad hoc basis. We do not provide direct services to individuals, but only intervene through our accredited organizations, which, in turn, help individuals in need. The various services offered by these organizations include: emergency food aid, social integration, welcoming new immigrants, assistance finding employment, support for pregnant women, helping families in need, and so on. Therefore, in partnership with the vast food aid network, Moisson Montréal was able to accommodate **658,256 requests for food aid** in March 2016 alone, an increase of 8.5% as compared to 2015.

At Moisson Montréal, we believe that access to basic food is necessary for social reintegration. This is but one of several measures to be implemented in order to support individuals and families who seek a better quality of life and greater independence.

**Table 2: Primary Service Offered by Partner Organizations**

Primary Service	Organizations	Percentage %
Food-related services (e.g. food counter/emergency food aid/foodstuffs, cooking collectives, soup kitchens, etc.)	139/237	58.6%
Non-food-related services (e.g. shelter, day center, other services, etc.)	98/237	41.4%

### Active Throughout the Area through Partner Organizations

Table 3 (page 8) represents a geographical distribution of the 237 accredited organizations across the Island of Montreal. These organizations seek our services at various intervals, depending on their capacity to store or to distribute the foodstuffs supplied. On a more ad hoc basis, Moisson Montréal also meets a specific need by supporting all organizations, accredited or not, that plan cultural or recreational activities so as to bring certain groups out of their isolation.

**Table 3: Analysis of Organizations Served by Moisson Montréal, per borough, March 2016**

<b>Boroughs</b>	<b>Number of Organizations</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Ahuntsic-Cartierville	10	4.2
Anjou	2	0.8
Côte-des-Neiges–Notre-Dame-de-Grâce	17	7.2
Lachine	9	3.8
Lasalle	7	3.0
Mercier	11	4.6
Hochelaga-Maisonneuve	11	4.6
Montréal Nord	9	3.8
Pierrefonds–Roxboro	5	2.1
Plateau Mont-Royal	15	6.3
Rivière-des-Prairies–Pointe-aux-Trembles	7	3.0
Rosemont–Petite-Patrie	8	3.4
St-Laurent	10	4.2
St-Léonard	5	2.1
Southwest Montreal	24	10.1
Verdun	10	4.2
Ville-Marie	39	16.5
Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension	19	8.1
Dorval	1	0.4
Pointe-Claire	2	0.8
Westmount	2	0.8
Confidential/Others	14	6
<b>Total</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Note: The greatest concentration of organizations is in Ville-Marie (39 organizations), in Southwest Montreal (24 organizations) and in Villeray–St-Michel–Parc-Extension (19 organizations).

The table below presents the number of organizations in relation to the specific food-related programs they offer.

**Table 4: Breakdown of Organizations based on the services offered, March 2016**

Service offered	Only Foodstuffs	Only meals or snacks	Foodstuffs and Meals
Number of organizations	74/237	46/237	117/237
Percentage %	31.2%	19.4%	49.4%

### **A Colossal Workload that Requires the Contributions of Volunteers**

It has often been said that due to the significant donations of foodstuffs by Moisson Montréal, accredited organizations are able to save their financial resources and allocate them to services that directly help individuals in need. Moreover, these organizations reported that nearly **49% of their workload was accomplished by volunteers**, evidence that the vitality of organizations operating in the social and community sectors depends not only on adequate financing, but also on the social commitment and solidarity of Montrealers as well.

## Section I: Foodstuffs Distribution Program

The table below presents an overview of individuals who received assistance in the form of food aid in March 2016. The total number of individuals who used the **Foodstuff Distribution Program in March 2016 is 69,735**, an increase of 4,627 individuals compared to 2015.

**Table 5: Age Range of Individuals Using the Foodstuff Program in 2015-2016**

Age group	Number of individuals 2016		Number of individuals 2015		Spread (in percentage)
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Children (0-17 years old)	24,649	35.3%	25,220	38.7%	-2.2%
Adults (18-64 years old)	40,398	58%	36,338	55.8%	11.1%
Adults (65 and over)	4,688	6.7%	3,550	5.5%	32.18%
<b>Total</b>	<b>69,735</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>65,108</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>7.1%</b>

*Comments on Table 5: The number of elder people (65 years of age or more) increased significantly. This age group presents the highest growth in percentage in the Foodstuff Program since the previous year.*

## Household Statistics

The following tables focus on the composition, sources of income and housing conditions of households seeking assistance from the Foodstuffs Program.

*Note: The total number of **households surveyed is estimated at 26,902**. Households whose questionnaires were incomplete were excluded, in order to present a more accurate picture of the actual situation. We are not in a position to confirm that this subgroup of 26,902 households is representative of the overall target population.*

**Table 6: Composition of Households Using the Foodstuffs Program in March 2016**

Household composition	2016	2015
Two-parent families	31.9%	27.9%
Single-parent families (Single individuals with children)	20.7%	22.5%
Childless couples	11.5%	11.6%
Single individuals	35.9%	38.1%
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Comments on Table 6: Following the trend since at least 2008, single individuals (with or without children) remain the largest group of respondents who made use of this Program in 2016, representing 56.6%.*

**Table 7: Main Sources of Income for Households Using the Foodstuffs Program in March 2016**

Sources of Income	Percentage 2016	Percentage 2015
Employment	11.9%	10.6%
Other income	4.5%	2.9%
Employment insurance	4.3%	4.3%
Private plan or CNESST	3.1%	2.5%
Student loan and/or bursary	6.0%	5.1%
Pension income	8.1%	7.2%
Social assistance	53.8%	56.3%
No income	8.3%	11.1%
<b>Total household respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Comments on Table 7: Even if there has been a slight decrease in the percentage of recipients, the largest group of individuals who benefitted from the Foodstuffs Program is made up of social assistance beneficiaries and individuals with no income. Therefore, the number of recipients decreased from 67.4% to 62.1% from 2015 to 2016. Consequently, we have ascertained an increase in the number of individuals with income who have benefitted from the Foodstuffs Program over the past few years.*

**Table 8: Conditions of the Households Using the Foodstuff Programs in March 2016**

<b>Housing Conditions</b>	<b>Percentage 2016</b>	<b>Percentage 2015</b>
Homeowners	2.5%	1.8%
Rental housing	66.7%	67.6%
Social/subsidized social housing	22.5%	21.4%
Band-owned housing	0.2%	0.2%
Group home or youth centre	1.1%	1.3%
Temporarily staying with friends or family	3.1%	2.8%
Emergency shelter	1.5%	2.5%
Living on the street	2.4%	2.4%
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Comments on Table 8: There have been some definite changes in housing conditions between 2015 and 2016. There has been a slight increase in households presenting more favourable conditions who have benefitted from the Foodstuffs Program in March 2016.*

## Section II: Meals Program

Some organizations provide their clients with prepared meals on a daily or ad hoc basis, delivered by volunteers or employees working for the Meals Program. Clients are occasionally required to pay a token amount for the meal. In some cases, the meal provided by the community centre is the only nutritious meal they will eat all day. As per the framework agreed upon for the Hunger Count, other services are grouped together under the Meals Program, which include: snack distribution, cooking workshops, cooking collectives, etc.

**Table 9: Age Range of Individuals Using the Meals Program in 2015-2016**

Age group	Number of individuals 2016		Number of individuals 2015		Spread (in percentage)
	Number	Percentage	Number	Percentage	
Children (0-17 years old)	20,671	30.5%	8,640	17.6 %	<b>139.32%</b>
Adults (18-64 years old)	37,770	55.9%	31,536	64.3 %	<b>20.5%</b>
Adults (65 and over)	9,211	13.6%	8,858	18.1 %	<b>39.9%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>67,652</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>49,034</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>38%</b>

### CAUTION

In 2016, changes in methodology were implemented in the data compilation for the Hunger Count in order to more precisely determine the number of individuals who received a meal. In fact, in previous years, the data regarding the number of individuals who benefitted from the Meals Program was established based on the number of meals, rather than measured literally. While this new methodology is more accurate, it also introduces a bias in the historical data.

**Table 10: Number of meals and snacks served in March 2016**

Portions served	Number of portions 2016	Number of portions 2015	Spread 2015-2016 (%)
Meals	334,923	316,372	5.9%
Snacks	124,602	108,434	14.9%
Cooking collectives	16,772	18,151	-7.6%
Meals on wheels	17,577	12,516	40.3%
<b>Total*</b>	<b>511,210</b>	<b>478,590</b>	<b>6.8%</b>

*\*Several organizations only provided the total number of meal portions served, which explains why the amount of portions does not match the total.*

*Comments on Table 10: There was a 6.8% increase in the number of meals served. The Food Recovery Program in Supermarkets enabled 87 accredited organizations to collect meat in order to cook meals, compared to only 59 organizations in 2015.*

**Table 11: Composition of Households Using the Meals Program in 2015-2016**

Household Composition	Percentage in 2016	Percentage in 2015
Two-parent families	11.4%	15.2%
Single-parent families (Single individuals with children)	14%	17.2%
Childless couples	7.9%	8.7%
Single individuals	66.7%	58.9%
<b>Total respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

*Comments on Table 11: Following the trend since at least 2008, single individuals (with or without children) remain the largest group of respondents who made use of the Meals and Snacks Program. This group constitutes about 81% of all people who called on the Meals and Snacks Program in 2016. There has also been a 4.6% decrease in the number of couples (with or without children).*

**Table 12: Main Sources of Income for Households Using the Meals Program in March 2016**

Sources of Income	Percentage 2016	Percentage 2015
Employment	7.8%	8.2%
Other income	2%	1.2%
Employment insurance	4.8%	7.1%
Private plan or CNESST	2%	2.2%
Student loan and/or bursary	4.1%	8.2%
Pension income	21%	17.2%
Social assistance	53.3%	51.8%
No income	5%	4.1%
<b>Total household respondents</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Comments on Table 12: Similar to the Foodstuffs Program, the largest group of individuals who benefitted from the Meals Program is made up of social assistance beneficiaries. The representativeness of recipients receiving a pension income increased nearly 22% as compared to 2015, rising from 17.2% to 21%.

## Section III: Recommendations from Organizations

Every year, we collect feedback from food banks and community organizations about government initiatives and public policies that could have a great impact on the fight against hunger in Greater Montreal. **The organizations have once again expressed their views on the subject and here are the six (6) issues they consider to be a priority:**

1. Increase the provincial minimum wage;
2. Increase the amount of affordable housing;
3. Develop a national strategy to reduce poverty;
4. Increase the availability/accessibility of rental housing;
5. Develop a national food strategy;
6. Increase support for people with mental health issues.

According to Hunger Count 2016, increasing the minimum wage and providing additional affordable housing remain the two recommendations most frequently mentioned by the organizations, mainly because of the rising cost of living.

## Conclusion

The changes in methodology implemented during the compilation of the 2016 Hunger Count introduce a slight distortion in the data when comparing one year to the next. The great tendency to exaggerate food insecurity in Montreal is nevertheless confirmed in terms of the number of people who require our services, the number of services provided (food aid and meals), the number of accredited organizations of Moisson Montreal, as well as the total quantity of foodstuffs distributed in the Greater Montreal Area. More specifically, we have noted an 8.5% increase in requests for food aid on the Island of Montreal, going from 606,539 to 658,256 in a single month.

The Hunger Count remains the most adequate tool at our disposal to portray food insecurity in Montreal. However, it is not perfect. The Hunger Count describes the situation of recipients from 237 of the 254 accredited organizations of Moisson Montreal in one typical month. Nevertheless, we are able to state that the hunger problem is most likely more widespread than indicated here. In truth, the fact that Moisson Montréal is the largest Canadian food bank reflects the scale of poverty and misery in which thousands of people live.

The sheer status of Moisson Montréal also emphasizes the vastness and strength of the community network in place: a support network made up of 254 accredited organizations, individuals involved on a daily basis, as well as elected municipal officials with a relentless drive to assume the leadership necessary in order to improve the quality of life of all Montreal residents. Facing the increasing demand for food assistance, Moisson Montréal can only reiterate its support of its 254 community organizations across the Island of Montreal. Moisson Montreal would also like to thank all individuals, companies and private foundations, which have demonstrated a remarkable commitment to the fight against food insecurity, be it through voluntary work, monetary contributions or food donations.

Despite the fact that the clientele of food banks has traditionally consisted of either the homeless or beneficiaries of social assistance, we are increasingly identifying young families, students and workers who are unable to make ends meet and are forced to resort to food assistance. The face of hunger is changing and food insecurity is no longer limited to a few isolated groups, but is becoming increasingly inclusive of individuals from a diversity of backgrounds.

In this context, innovation and partnerships between socially-minded organizations and businesses are more vital than ever. Investments in sustainable solutions to food insecurity, such as the Food Recovery Program with Supermarkets, is necessary in order to increase the services offered by each organization if we wish to meet the growing demand.

We believe that it is up to each one of us to contribute and make the world a better place, one based on equality where no one goes hungry and everyone has enough to eat.