



REPORT

From the office of the...

MacBreadBin Coordinator

TO: Members of the Executive Board
FROM: Rachel Fleming Sullivan
SUBJECT: MacBreadBin Report #1
DATE: October 17th, 2014

UPDATE

MAC Bread Bin has been able to tackle quite a few things since the start of the year as well as over the summer. We've been focusing on promoting our service, engaging students with our upcoming events, and training our new volunteers and executive team. This year we have had incredible interest in the service and have a much larger volunteer base than in previous years and we spent the first few weeks of October familiarizing them with canned good safety (something that was missed in previous years) and administrative procedures. So far, we are happy to report that everything is functioning quite well.

SERVICE USAGE

The Bread Bin general volunteer team has filled 25 food vouchers requests since the beginning of the term. We've gone through a series of stages in request volume: initially there was a large influx (9 requests within the first two weeks of September), then the volume began to fluctuate week by week. Regardless of volume, we have been focusing on filling our food voucher requests in a systematic and timely manner. Every request is filled within a maximum of 72 hours. We are continuing to serve clients with dietary restrictions which include helping individuals with dependents, allergies, and halal and kosher food needs. We attempt to educate our volunteers about these circumstances in order to better meet client needs. Something that we have also been keeping track of for the first time this year is the type of foods that are most frequently requested so we can make sure we always have them in stock, this includes peanut butter, cereal(hot and cold), canned meats other than tuna, canned veggies, and larger items like rice and flour. These items are also donated less frequently in our large scale events so we have reached out to specific campus groups to help us fill our shelves. We have also had an increase in the usage of our Good Food Box in comparison to last year. Our October box was ordered by 32 people and last year's October box was ordered by 15 people, we hope to grow the Good Food Box and have already seen a tremendous interest in the program (i.e. people posting pictures of their box on the "Accepted 2018 FB groups etc.).

PAST EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

- Filling Weekly vouchers from mid-summer and on, as well as holding a well-attended general meeting and weekly meetings.
- Promoting service through Spark booklets, Maroons training, Horizons Success fest, Clubsfest, “Spotlight” in Rez for end of year, Science society event, partnered with iSci and Eng student society for faculty food drives as well as MSU member donations.
- Gave out tomato plants during clubsfest in collab with MACgreen.
- Created new promo items including stickers with social media links and “business cards” for service.
- Cleared out all expired food (lots thrown away, must not have been done in a while).
- Used \$500 ‘donation’ from hospitality services to get hygiene products.
- Sent MX coordinator to National Food Summit to work with students from all over Canada & hired GFB and MX coordinators.
- Began plan/got materials to grow lettuce in MSU office.
- Began revising Operating Policy and have met with services commissioner and will bring to services committee/SRA soon (adding GFB coordinator description).
- Working with McMaster Community Poverty Initiative (very excited to finally have BreadBin on board).

UPCOMING EVENTS, PROJECTS & ACTIVITIES

Two big events are coming up for MacBreadBin, this includes Local Food Day, happening on Thursday Oct 16th where we worked with MACGreen, MacFarmstand , Diversity Services(Bridges) and University Affairs, promoting local food on campus, we will have taste tests, games, mini Local Food Bags and surveys. We are also planning for Trick or Eat, happening on Oct 28th, getting clubs, faculties and campus groups involved and money/food collected will go 10% to MacBreadBin, 90% to Living Rock in Hamilton. We will also begin planting lettuce in MSU office soon, also partnering with EWB to bring fair trade items to Trick or Eat. We are also going to be partnering with SHEC and working with their Nutrition & Active Living Committee and will be putting in a recipe from them into our Good Food Boxes. We are also planning on working with the McMaster Muslim students association and speaking at an event they are holding about Poverty Education and we will also be accepting the donations that they collect at the event.

BUDGET

The main line that I will be using from the budget is for Advertising and Promo. So far I have spent:

BREAD BIN - ADV. & PROMO.	1,500.00	Use for general promo
	17.50	soil/cups/seeds
	125.99	stickers and business cards
	15.00	clubs fest table
Remaining	1,341.51	
How much can I spend per month	149.06	
Percent Remaining	89%	

The budget for promo is significantly smaller than last years (\$3802) because they bought a larger number of promo items including stress balls and buttons. The bulk of my budget will be going to large posters for our big events like Feed the Bus, Skip a Meal etc., materials for Trick or Eat are usually given to us by the national Meal Exchange office.

CURRENT CHALLENGES

Some of our challenges include filling food requests that include generally larger sized items, for example when multiple people ask for flour and we only have one bag, it is difficult to give it to one person and not the others. I am also not sure how to approach a situation when I receive an email after filling a voucher that thanks me for the food for the week”, this is a very difficult thing to hear as what we are able to give is not enough for a week. Another issue I have had is how to handle requests that come in more frequently than our ‘mandate’ and not sure what other campus services are available to students for long term needs. It has also been difficult to get all volunteers to meet at a time that everyone can attend. We have also had to turn away donations that could be very beneficial i.e. eggs, milk bread, growth of service is very much hindered by space (confidentiality, refrigeration, bending metal shelves, filing cabinet etc.)

SUCSESSES

We were able to successfully build a strong volunteer base who are all excited to be able to help out their peers. I’ve been getting emails regularly from other students who are interested in volunteering for both BreadBin and GFB. Having the 2 paid positions hired will also be a huge help and I am excited to see what they have planned.