



What if this was your every meal?



EXPERIENCING A RATION MEAL

Up to **783 million** people globally are experiencing hunger

Uprooted from their homes and communities, millions globally find themselves forced to leave behind their land and culture, and in need of emergency food. Reasons for this include **drought** that destroys crops and livestock, violent **conflict**, **economic disparity** and **flooding**.

Rations are often distributed by aid groups or government agencies at refugee or Internally Displaced People (IDP) camps or to communities who are facing acute food shortages.



A typical **dry ration** is measured for **1 person** for **1 day**, and provides about **2100 calories**. It is made up of:

- 450 grams of cereal (rice, flour, etc)
- 50 grams of pulses (beans, lentils)
- 50 grams of oil
- 5 grams of iodized salt

These are fortified with vitamins and other micronutrients.



MEMBERS: ADRA Canada • Canadian Baptist Ministries • Canadian Lutheran World Relief • The Christian and Missionary Alliance in Canada • Development and Peace—Caritas Canada • ERDO - Emergency Relief & Development Overseas (Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada) • Evangelical Missionary Church of Canada • Mennonite Central Committee Canada • Nazarene Compassionate Ministries Canada • Presbyterian World Service & Development • Primate's World Relief and Development Fund (The Anglican Church of Canada) • The Salvation Army • Tearfund Canada • The United Church of Canada • World Renew

Working through our member agencies and their partners on the ground, in 2022-23 Canadian Foodgrains Bank approved funding of food assistance for 617,008 people experiencing humanitarian emergencies in 21 countries.



Ration Facts



- **Dry rations are generally given out for one month at a time.** A person may eat a little more one day and a little less the next, or share food with others who do not have enough.
- **Rations are one of many important responses.** They are useful for people who are in crisis, who otherwise may not survive or may get very ill.
- **Other solutions are needed.** Projects focusing on food security assist people in growing more food and storing it efficiently. Livelihood projects help raise incomes so individuals can purchase food while tackling problems like conflict resolution or policy changes that cause hunger.



LEARN

Visit foodgrainsbank.ca/education to find educational resources for all ages to help your congregation learn more about hunger and food security and get inspired to create positive change.

Overview of the activity

This activity will help your faith community reflect on the mealtime reality of millions of hungry people in crisis around the world.

Many churches are seeing increasing need at their meal centres and foodbanks. Yet, for the majority of people living in Canada, they are able to find food in regular abundance, with a variety of choices, all readily accessible. This is not the case in many places around the world where people have staple foods which they typically eat frequently—everyday or even for every meal, and especially for people in crisis who are eating meals prepared from emergency food rations.

Prayer expresses faith and hope, and leads us to further action. Participating in the Ration Meal is a simple way to break bread together as an individual or group and bring those in need of emergency food into your prayer focus.



About World Food Day

The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) created World Food Day on October 16, 1945. The goal of the FAO is to free humanity from hunger and malnutrition, and to effectively manage the global food system. World Food Day events are organized in over 150 countries across the world, making it one of the most celebrated days of the UN calendar. These events promote worldwide awareness and action for those who suffer from hunger and help strengthen the link between agriculture and food security.

WorldFoodDay.ca



Option 1

Hold a ration meal for your congregation (60-75 min)

Hosting a ration meal with members of your church can be done after a worship service, or any other time that suits your congregation, on or around October 16th. As followers of Christ, we eat together, both with people we know and people we don't know, because that's what Jesus did. Consider inviting members of the community or neighbourhood around you to join!

1. Prepare the food according to the recipes found on pages 10-11. Be sure to give yourself enough time to prepare the recipe—read the instruction a few days in advance. The beans must be soaked overnight and boiled for at least 2 hours, and the dough must also have time to rise.
2. Make the appropriate number of copies of pages 2, 3 and 9 to use as handouts. Consider using two pages together as a place mat.
3. Set the tables simply with small plates, bowls, spoons, and water glasses, and place mats for each person.
4. Welcome everyone as they come in, keeping an eye out for new people.
5. Serve the food. Each person should receive a meal that represents **one half of a daily food ration**: approximately 3/4 cup of beans, 1/2 cup rice and 1 small flat bread.
6. Optional video: during the meal, show the food assistance video available to stream or download at foodgrainsbank.ca/assistance
7. Distribute the following questions for discussions at each table, or post them at the front for everyone to see:
 - What did you think of the meal?
 - Would have tasted differently if you had not eaten for a long time prior?
 - Would two meals a day like this would be enough to sustain you for a month?
 - Would you be satisfied?
 - Why or why not?
8. Close in prayer using the provided prayer.



Option 2

Hold a ration meal for a smaller group or a family (45-60 min)

Invite 5 or 6 people from your bible study class, small group, or a handful of friends or family to gather together in your home to share a ration meal.

1. Prepare the food according to the recipes found on pages 10-11. Be sure to give yourself enough time to prepare the recipe—read the instruction a few days in advance. The beans must be soaked overnight and boiled for at least 2 hours, and the dough must also have time to rise.
2. Make the appropriate number of copies of pages 2, 3 and 9 to use as handouts. Consider using two pages together as a place mat.
3. Set your table simply with small plates, bowls, spoons, and water glasses, and place mats for each person.
4. Optional bible study: read and reflect on the account of the feeding of the 5,000 in John 6 and Jesus' following teaching on being the bread of life.
5. Serve the food. Each person should receive a meal that represents **one half of a daily food ration**: approximately 3/4 cup of beans, 1/2 cup rice and 1 small flat bread.
6. After the meal, discuss using the following questions as a guide:
 - What did you think of the meal?
 - Would it have tasted differently if you had not eaten for a long time prior?
 - Would two of these meals every day be enough to sustain you for a month?
 - Would you be satisfied?
 - Why or why not?
7. Close using the prayer provided or pray in your own words.



Option 3

Display to invite reflection

Another way to encourage people to learn about emergency food assistance without doing a group ration meal, is to set up a small display in the church foyer before or after the service; or place the components of the ration on a table at the front of the worship space.

1. Measure out the following elements of the ration:
 - 450 grams of dry rice
 - 50 grams of pulses (dry beans, lentils)
 - 50 grams of oil
 - 5 grams of iodized salt
2. Place them in clear containers. Glass jars, spice containers and other vessels with lids work best to preserve the contents, although small bowls work if necessary.
3. Make copies of pages 2, 3 and 9 and place them near the display.
4. Where possible, set up a screen near the display to show on a loop the video available to stream or download at foodgrainsbank.ca/assistance.
5. In the church bulletin or during announcement time use the following to invite others to join:
“Global hunger is increasing. Conflict and climate change are leading causes for the up to 783 million people who are facing hunger. This display presents the amount of emergency food provided as a daily ration to our global neighbours in need. Could you imagine living on this? Please take a handout with you and join with churches across Canada in praying together for an end to global hunger.”



Until
ALL
Are Fed



For videos related to a ration meal and other worship resources, please visit UntilAllAreFed.ca





Spread the word

There are a number of ways you can share your experience with others, and encourage them to pray for the women, men and children living with hunger.

- Invite others to join you in praying regularly for the millions of people facing hunger in the world today.
- Talk to other people in your community about what it was like to do this activity. Encourage them to experience it. If you did this at church, try hosting your own for a small group.
- Share a copy of this booklet with them, and encourage them to take part.
- If you use social media, post about your experience, and share this link: foodgrainsbank.ca/ration

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Praying Together

Prayer

When Jesus told the disciples to give the crowd something to eat, they found only a few loaves and two small fish. But they brought what they had to Jesus.

We thank you, God, for the abundance of food we receive from your hand, and we remember today those people in crisis who are not sure of when their next meal may come.

We ask your blessing on those working to save lives and end hunger in the world, especially now at a time when the high cost of food makes meeting those needs an even greater challenge.

We pray for the leaders of the nations, especially our own leaders, that they will act with wisdom, generosity, and compassion, bring relief to those who are hungry now, and help move us all toward a world without hunger.

Lord, finally, we pray for ourselves, that you will show us the ways your church can be an instrument of grace to hungry people, and give us the courage to act in your name, sharing generously what you have so freely given to us.

We offer these prayers in the name of Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life.
Amen

Adapted from Prayer of Intercession from Bread for the World website www.bread.org

Prayer Points

- For every child, man and woman who has gone without food today.
- For the farmers who are battling erratic weather such as prolonged droughts and/or flooding to grow food.
- For families and individuals who live with the fear of conflict and the fear of hunger.
- For the parents who go hungry and whose hearts are filled with worry for how they will feed their children.
- For children who are too weak to play because they do not have nutritious food.
- For the helpers who do their best to provide access to food for people who are hungry.
- For government leaders, that their hearts will be moved to act with compassion.
- For us, that we will be grateful for what we have and share when we can.



foodgrainsbank.ca/pray





Recipes

BEANS OR LENTILS

2 cups dried red beans
4 cups of water
1 large onion, chopped (optional)
1 bay leaf or a pinch of spices
pepper, to taste
salt, to taste
1 tablespoon of vegetable oil
3 cups rice, plus water for soaking (cooked separately)

Method

- Soak the beans overnight in cold water; drain.
- Heat the beans in about 4 cups of water, add all ingredients except salt, and boil for at least 2 hours.
- When beans are tender, mash them up with a tablespoon of oil and the salt.
- Serve on boiled rice or with flat bread.

Serves 5-6





FLAT BREAD

2 cups whole-wheat flour
2 tablespoons oil
3/4 to 1 cup warm water
1/2 teaspoon salt

Method

- Mix the flour and oil together using your hands.
- Stir the salt into the water and add the water to the flour a little at a time, until you have a soft, kneadable ball.
- Remove to a floured surface and knead for 8-10 minutes, or until smooth and elastic.
- Remove the dough to a lightly greased bowl, cover, and rest for at least 30 minutes (and up to 2 hours).
- Return the dough to a floured work surface. Roll the dough into a long piece and cut it into 12 separate balls.
- Dust the dough balls with a little flour and roll each one out into a very thin round about 6 inches in diameter.
- Heat an ungreased, heavy skillet over medium heat. Add a dough round and press down gently with a spatula or the back of a spoon.
- Cook until lightly browned, flip and brown on the second side. Repeat with all rounds.



WORKING TOGETHER TO END GLOBAL HUNGER

Canadian Foodgrains Bank is a partnership of 15 Canadian churches and church-based agencies working together to end world hunger by: providing emergency food in times of crisis, helping people improve their access to food in the longer-term, and engaging Canadians and governments toward meaningful change.

Get Involved



PRAY

Prayer expresses faith and hope, and leads us to further action. As you gather together, use this activity to help raise congregational awareness on the issue.



GIVE

Giving your time and money is a practical way to respond to the needs of others and support people around the world who have fewer resources. This is a way to invest in others and then see your investment truly make a difference. Visit foodgrainsbank.ca/give to explore ways to give money, time, expertise and energy to raise funds toward the vision of a world without hunger.



LEARN

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ADVOCATE

Visit foodgrainsbank.ca/advocate for ideas on how to get involved by sending a message to elected officials letting them know that you care about Canada's role in ending hunger.



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