

Donation of Food

Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Today I would like to talk about the Food Rescue program and highlight some of what it has accomplished within Yellowknife over the last 15 months.

The *Donation of Food Act* that was passed in 2008 ensures that those who donate food, or who distribute donated food, are not liable for possible harm unless it was a result of intent to harm or reckless behaviour. This Act has allowed the Food Rescue program to increase as it serves a pressing need within our community.

In particular, I would like to highlight the work of Ruby Trudel, a champion and facilitator of the program, and all of the volunteers who have helped her since the beginning of this program. They have done a lot of work and are a great resource for individuals in other communities who are interested in doing the same thing.

From the end of June 2008 until September 2009, the Food Rescue program has rescued 125,000 pounds of food. Of that, they have donated 119,000 pounds of various food products. A breakdown of this includes some 7,000 pounds of meat; 16,000 litres of dairy products; 3,000 litres of juice; 876 dozen eggs; and 1,700 sandwiches. Food Banks across North America value each pound of food at \$2.00. This means that within 15 months of operation, Food Rescue, along with those people and companies supporting it, has donated and delivered around \$238,000 worth of food to the community that would have otherwise been unavailable or ended up in a landfill.

Mr. Speaker, the Food Rescue program is performing a valuable service to the community and is seeking to expand even further. The

program is on the verge of moving into a larger, but temporary, facility on Old Airport Road. I would like to acknowledge the partners who have helped make this possible. First, Central Mechanical for providing the location and power; Matrix Aviation for providing the shelter itself; and Ryfan Electric for wiring and getting the facility operational. This is an important step for the longevity of Food Rescue in Yellowknife.

Ultimately, the Food Rescue Program's long-term goal is to establish itself somewhere on a permanent basis. This would allow easier access to the clients the program serves. Over the long term, being within walking distance, or on public transportation routes, is an important advantage the program is working toward. Achieving this goal would allow Food Rescue to begin limited daily distributions to selected groups within the community on a weekly rotation – operating like a mini-food bank. Due to this, Mr. Speaker, the Food Rescue program requires continued support from various levels of government and the larger community.