

FirstOntario invests \$260,000 in student nutrition programs across local communities

Ongoing support helps combat food insecurity and ensure students are ready to learn

Hamilton, ON, November 24, 2025 – FirstOntario Credit Union has donated close to \$260,000 in 2025 to student nutrition programs in our communities.

Since 2014, FirstOntario has invested close to \$2.9 million into student nutrition programs and has proudly worked with dedicated partners that include: Brant Food for Thought, Halton Food for Thought, Haldimand-Norfolk REACH (Child Nutrition Network), Hamilton Tastebuds, Niagara Nutrition Partners and Ontario Student Nutrition Program - Southwest Region.

Recent reports highlight the growing strain on student nutrition programs across Ontario and Canada. Rising food prices and reduced donations have forced many programs to scale back — offering smaller portions, fewer food groups, and in some cases, cancelling services altogether. With food insecurity affecting 1 in 5 children nationwide, access to healthy snacks and meals at school is more critical than ever. These programs help ensure students have the energy and focus needed for a full day of learning and engagement, especially in communities where families are struggling to afford groceries. Last year, more than 123,000 students in more than 1,200 schools located in 15 communities directly benefited from FirstOntario's support.

In addition to dollars, FirstOntario employees actively lend a hand to student nutrition programs through their Blue Wave employee volunteer program, offering assistance within school programs and with the delivery of local produce.

“FirstOntario is committed to supporting our student nutrition partners, delivering school nutrition programs that help students and ultimately strengthen the communities our credit union calls home,” said Joanne Battaglia, senior vice-president, Marketing, Communications & Community Partnerships, FirstOntario Credit Union. “We know food insecurity is a growing concern, and these programs deliver needed nutritious food to students who otherwise would go without. Our hope is that other community-minded organizations will join us and support these agencies in their important work.”

About FirstOntario Credit Union

FirstOntario is a full service cooperative financial institution, serving members for 86 years throughout the Golden Horseshoe, Niagara Region and Southwestern regions of Ontario. With \$7.6 billion in assets under management, FirstOntario is one of Canada's largest credit unions. Everyone is welcome to be part of FirstOntario for financial services including daily transactions, mortgages, lines of credit, loans and investments. FirstOntario profits are invested into the communities we serve through support for entrepreneurs, competitive rates and charitable pursuits, including our award-winning student nutrition program. Learn more about us today at [FirstOntario.com](https://www.FirstOntario.com).

Media contact:

Tony Iavarone
AVP, Communications and Public Relations
FirstOntario Credit Union
Tony.Iavarone@FirstOntario.com