The cost of eating well in Waterloo Region

10% of households in Waterloo Region struggle to put food on the table.

When money is limited, people reduce their food budget to pay for other expenses, like rent. This may result in skipping meals or using charitable food programs. Food insecurity increases the risk of chronic diseases (e.g. heart disease, diabetes) and poor mental health.

The following are monthly costs for individuals living in different scenarios:

Family of four
Median income (after tax): $7983

- 11% of income is required to purchase healthy food
- 16% is required for rent
- Funds remaining: $5853

Family of four
Ontario Works income and other qualifying tax credits and benefits: $2623

- 33% of income is required to purchase healthy food
- 48% is required for rent
- Funds remaining: $493

One adult
Ontario Disability Support Program (ODSP) and other qualifying tax credits and benefits: $1272

- 23% of income is required to purchase healthy food
- 80% is required for rent
- Funds remaining: -$42

Emergency food services may help those experiencing immediate hunger, but they do not permanently address the root cause of food insecurity, which is poverty.

What can you do?
- Vote - put food insecurity on the agenda
- Support local advocacy efforts
- Talk to others about the issue