

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

A Healthier Future Served-Up for 140,000 Children in Ontario One Million Donation Helps Close Widening School Nutrition Funding Gap

Toronto, October 25, 2011 – One in six children in the province live below the poverty line and far too many of them wake without certainty of their next meal. Today, The Grocery Foundation, an Ontario-based not-for-profit representing the province's grocery industry, announced a \$1 million donation to Breakfast for Learning (BFL), Canada's leading child nutrition charity. The grant will provide for over 448,594 meals per week and will help school communities fund equipment needs. The Foundation has also made an additional \$500,000 investment for capital equipment. Nearly 140,000 Ontario children from 392 schools in 132 cities will benefit from this donation according to the partners. The Grocery Foundation donation represents 34 per cent of the total number of schools across the province which will be funded by Breakfast for Learning in 2011 school year.

"Despite their best efforts, food scarcity is a reality for many families across the province. And, the gap in funding is growing," says Wendy Wong, President and CEO, Breakfast for Learning. "While there are many novel initiatives underway to help address the underlying issue in the long-term, we have an urgent immediate need. In some cities, this grant will cover more than 50% of the necessary funding for meals served in child nutrition programs and urgently needed capital. It's quite significant."

There is extensive literature documenting the detrimental long-term effects of poverty. The numbers reveal the persistence of high levels of poverty among children and youth and food insecurity are considerable issue:

- Approximately 8.4% of Ontario residents are food insecure¹
- There are approximately 2.1 million students attending 4,931 schools in Ontario. Of these schools, 3,600 have access to a student nutrition program. Approximately one third of these programs (1,137) are supported by BFL
- BFL has seen the need quadruple over the past decade

"We can't downplay what it means to feed our children. They are our future entrepreneurs, our business and political leaders," says Michelle Scott Executive Director, The Grocery Foundation, a not for profit which provides funding to community groups across the province. "We need to think much more holistically about this issue. When we nourish a child, we are not only meeting their basic need for food, we are in essence supporting the prosperity of our province and our collective futures."

Breakfast for Learning helps to start and sustain over 5,000 child nutrition programs across Canada, serving healthy breakfasts, lunches and snacks to more than 425,958 children and youth in a nurturing environment. Over 2,395 of those programs are in the province of Ontario.

Studies show that well-nourished students show improved memory, problem-solving skills and creative abilities – overall, they perform better in school.

Breakfast by the Numbers: The Impact of the Donation to Local Ontario Communities

A total of 392 schools will benefit from The Grocery Foundation donation including schools in Hamilton, London, Ottawa, Sudbury and Toronto. The balance will be divided in cities across the province.

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City	Student Enrolment	# of BFL Funded Schools	Schools Funded by TGF	# Meals TGF Funded & Total	Food Insecurity by Region
Hamilton	79,766	40	25 schools 63%	8,313 TGF 14,759 Total	Hamilton food banks continue to grapple with system capacity issues. In March, 2011, 18,432 people used Hamilton Food Share services ²
London	60,010	29	15 schools 52%	2,424 TGF 3737 Total	40 % of Children and Youth use the local food Bank
Ottawa	140,373	56	36 65%	2,360 TGF 3228 Total	On average 43,000 people per month rely on help from the local food bank -- 37 per cent of whom are children ³
Sudbury*	20,608*	18	6 schools 34%	1,350 TGF 3658 Total	In 2005, 8.4% of the families in the Sudbury area were estimated to be food insecure
Toronto - GTA	351,000	93	51 schools 55%	18,255 TGF 28,316 Total	A recent Toronto District School Board (TDSB) survey revealed that 41% of children come to school without having eaten breakfast ⁴

* Does not include Sudbury French Catholic School Board. Additional information may be available per city.

About Breakfast for Learning

Working to ensure every child in Canada attends school well-nourished and ready to learn, Breakfast for Learning helps to educate and empower communities to start and sustain school-affiliated child nutrition programs through the provision of: grants, equipment, child nutrition resources, and access to a team of registered dietitians. In the 2011-2012 school year, Breakfast for Learning will provide funding to over 4,683 programs, helping to serve healthy meals and snacks to over 459,458 children and youth.

For more information, visit www.breakfastforlearning.ca.

About the Grocery Foundation

The Grocery Foundation is an Ontario-based not-for-profit, representing leaders from Canada's grocery industry. It was established in 1979 to enrich the lives and wellbeing of children; providing them a hand up so that they can learn and succeed. To date, The Grocery Foundation has raised in excess of \$75 million which has gone toward over 250 organizations across the province meeting a number of health and wellness needs including providing nutritious breakfasts and snacks for school-aged students across the province. Many Grocery Foundation companies and their employees also work as volunteers alongside countless community groups nourishing dreams, abilities, and brighter futures. To learn more about The Grocery Foundation, visit:

www.groceryfoundation.com On Facebook: www.facebook.com/pages/Grocery-Foundation/188431637845168.

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Editors Note: A Photo is available upon request.

¹ (Source: Statistics Canada, Canadian Community Health Survey, Cycle 2.2, 2004 - Share File, Household Weights)

² (Source: Escott S. Food banks already feeling the effects of summer. The Hamilton Spectator. June 22, 2011.

³ (Source: Ottawa Food Bank website <http://ottawafoodbank.ca/face-of-hunger>)

⁴ (Source: Toronto Foundation for Student Success website, 2011)