



[Nutritional quality and price of food hampers distributed by a campus food bank: a Canadian experience.](https://arctichealth.org/en/permalink/ahliterature104051)

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Abstract:

Food insecurity is a mounting concern among Canadian post-secondary students. This study was conducted to evaluate the content of food hampers distributed by University of Alberta Campus Food Bank (CFB) and to assess the cost savings to students, using these hampers. Contents of hampers distributed among 1,857 students and their dependants since 2006 were evaluated against Canada's Food Guide (CFG) recommendations and Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI). Hampers were aimed at serving university students and one to five members of their households located in Edmonton, Western Canada. One thousand eight hundred fifty-seven clients in Alberta, Canada, were included in the study. Although all hampers provided adequate energy, their fat and animal protein contents were low. Compared to the CFG recommendations, the requirements of milk and alternatives and meat and alternatives were not sufficiently met for clients using ≥ 3 -person hampers. None of food hampers (i.e. one- to five-person hampers) met the DRI recommendations for vitamin A and zinc. Clients of CFB received Canadian dollar (CN\$) 14.88 to 64.3 worth of non-perishable food items in one- to five-person hampers respectively. Hampers provided from the CFB need improvement. Nutrients missing from the food hampers could be provided from fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, and meat products; however, these foods are more expensive than processed food items. The CFB provides a significant amount of savings to its clients even without considering the additional perishable donations that are provided to clients. Interpretation of our data required the assumption that all clients were consuming all of their hampers, which may not always be the case. Clients that do not fully consume their hampers may benefit less from the food bank.

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