



Put Food in the Budget

SUMMER 2011 BULLETIN

Our Message to Campbell Canada

The Put Food in the Budget campaign recognizes that Campbell Canada has developed Nourish as a nutritional food product. Food banks may welcome the Nourish food product as they welcome all donations. Our major concerns are as follows.

Campbell's claim that Nourish can make a 'serious dent in hunger.' Campbell's established an initial donation goal of 200,000 cans of Nourish for all of Canada. 850,000 people use food banks in Canada every month, 400,000 of those in Ontario. 200,000 cans will not be enough for even one meal in a month for every person in Ontario who

goes to food banks. We are not aware of the ultimate donations goal of the Nourish campaign. Given the number of people who go to food banks in Ontario every month we believe an 'impossible' level of public donation of Nourish food products is required to make a 'serious dent in hunger.'

Dignity is the missing ingredient in Campbell's Nourish food product. Campbell's claim that Nourish is a 'complete meal in a can' creates the false impression that it is an adequate substitute for fresh whole foods. It also introduces the idea that 'spe-

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Conversation with President Philip Donne of Campbell Canada

In April the Put Food in the Budget campaign began contacting Campbell Canada to seek a meeting with President Philip Donne to discuss our concerns. For three months they were unresponsive — and therefore we began preparing a public education campaign which we were ready to launch as Nourish was delivered to retail stores and food banks in Ontario in August.

We contacted Campbell Canada one

more time to inform them of our preparations in hopes of initiating a collaborative conversation. President Philip Donne finally responded to the Put Food in the Budget campaign and called Mike Balkwill, campaign co-ordinator. Here are the highlights of that conversation.

President Donne said their campaign was well intentioned and that they had

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What Campbell Canada has said about Nourish

What is Campbell's Nourish?

"Campbell's new 'complete meal' soup [was] developed to address the growing issue of hunger and food security in this country and in disaster zones abroad."

"Each 425 gram Nourish can has a pop-top lid, 24-month shelf-life, can be eaten hot or cold and doesn't require the addition of water, making it a potential food resource in disaster zones, [Campbell Canada president Philip] Donne said."

(Inside Toronto, March 1, 2011)

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Also in this issue...

What has more power to reduce hunger: a donation of canned soup or the equivalent in taxes to support social programs? See the answer on the back page.

What Campbell Canada has said about Nourish

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What is Campbell's goal for its Nourish food product?

Initial objective: 200,000 cans of Nourish donated to Food Banks Canada

Since the launch of Nourish in February 2011, more than 28,000 Canadians have joined Campbell Canada in helping to alleviate hunger through Campbell Canada's Facebook page and on Twitter. These activities have triggered the donation of 90,000 cans of Nourish to Food Banks Canada in addition to Campbell's initial 100,000-can donation.

(Press release published by Reuters, May 17, 2011).

Long-term goal: make a serious 'dent' in hunger

"I'd venture most of Canada's 34 million people could actually afford to buy one of these cans of Nourish. What if that can of Nourish, and the net profits from that can of Nourish, could actually feed those in need in a direct way?" [marketing vice-president Mark] Childs said. "The issue of hunger in this country could get dented in a serious way if 34 million Canadians got involved to strike a major blow to hunger," Childs said.

(Inside Toronto, March 1, 2011).

What is Campbell's motivation in developing Nourish?

A McGill University food and nutrition security conference a few years ago, coupled with a striking black-and-white photograph of a Depression-era soup kitchen line fronting TIME Magazine headlined "The New Hard Times," compelled Campbell Company of Canada to action, said its president.

"What we realized when we saw that TIME magazine article is because of who we are and what we make, we should take a lead role in alleviating hunger," Campbell president Philip Donne said Monday, Feb. 28 as he unveiled 'Nourish' at Campbell Canada headquarters in south Etobicoke.

"Access to healthy food is a right," says Mark Childs, vice-president of marketing. "That runs at the core of the DNA strand of the Campbell's team."

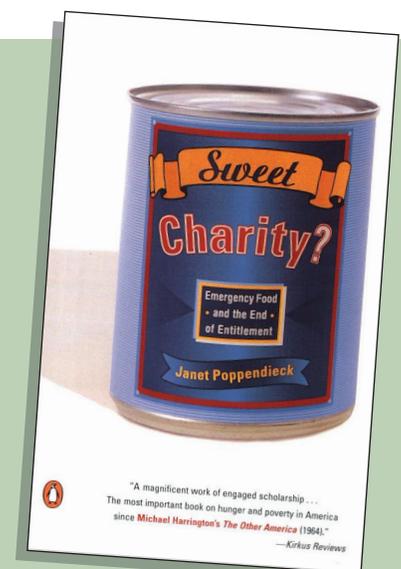
(Inside Toronto, March 1, 2011)

Charity or Justice?

For a critical discussion of the ability of donated food products like Nourish to reduce poverty or even "end hunger", see the Globe and Mail article by Elaine Power titled *It's time to close Canada's Food Banks*

<http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/opinions/opinion/its-time-to-close-canadas-food-banks/article2106989/>

Or, read the book *Sweet Charity: Emergency Food and the End of Entitlement*, by Janet Poppendieck.





Our Message to Campbell Canada

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cial' food can be developed for people with low incomes. This adds further to the social exclusion experienced by people with low incomes. Nourish may be a good food product for humanitarian disasters where normal food distribution is temporarily disrupted. But it is neither a substitute for fresh whole foods, or for the dignity of preparing the food of your own choice.

Campbell's intention to donate Nourish to food banks is positive. We question however the relative effectiveness of asking the public to pay for donations of Nourish in contrast with other strategies. We have done a calculation (see back page) that shows that each taxpayer in Ontario paying a monthly

amount in taxes equal to purchasing 2 cans of Nourish per month, and re-distributing the additional tax revenue to people who use food banks would provide food for

The Nourish campaign may give the mistaken impression that public donations to food banks is 'enough'.

more meals and allow greater choice than the purchase of Nourish.

Finally we are concerned that Campbell's marketing of Nourish may unintentionally contribute to 'rebranding' poverty as

hunger in the eyes of the public. The major reason people go to food banks is because they have little or no money left after paying rent. People on social assistance and people in low wage jobs go to food banks — so either their social assistance or their wage is inadequate to pay for rent and food. The Nourish campaign may give the mistaken impression that public donations to food banks is 'enough'.

The Put Food in the Budget campaign believes the 'hunger' problem is an income/poverty problem, not a food supply problem, and that there is a broad collective responsibility to reduce poverty through adequate incomes, not only through personal charity. ■

Conversation with company President Philip Donne

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consulted with Food Banks Canada, Ontario Association of Food Banks and Daily Bread Food Bank among others.

President Donne allowed our concerns indicated to him that the issue was more complex than he was previously aware.

President Donne described examples of other issues—advertising their products in gay and lesbian magazines, and introducing halal products—where Campbells encountered 'criticism in the marketplace' but where they continued to 'move forward carefully'.

Mike Balkwill said the Put Food in the Budget campaign would also like Campbells to 'move forward carefully' on this issue and include in their future marketing that 1) the root causes of hunger are poverty and inadequate incomes, and 2) to revise their claim that donations of Nourish donations can make a 'serious dent in hunger'.

We also asked that Campbell's donate the product directly to food banks and not ask the public to pay for it.

President Donne said that if Campbells is going to be criticized for their Nourish initiative they may not continue with it.

President Donne concluded by saying that if they roll out a second wave of Nourish food product in the fall they will meet with representatives of Put Food in the Budget leadership to discuss their marketing messages.

President Donne gave the distinct impression that Campbells might cancel their plans to produce and promote a next wave of Nourish, and to place the responsibility for that on the issues raised by the Put Food in the Budget Campaign.

The Steering Committee of the Put Food in the Budget Campaign assessed the outcomes of the conversation with Campbell Canada's President Philip Donne. They concluded the following:

■ Campbell Canada, like other corporations that engage in social issues must recognize that poverty is a political issue resulting from political choices. Efforts to contribute to solutions to pov-

erty must grapple with this as well as the complexity of the issue. Proposing solutions requires talking to the full range of groups working on poverty not only food bank associations.

■ When a corporation engages publicly in addressing social issues it will attract responses from additional stakeholders - and they must be prepared to learn from those responses - in the same way that they are prepared to learn from consumers when they introduce new products into the market.

■ President Philip Donne must decide how to act on what he has learned about the complexity of the issue of hunger and poverty. His commitment to making a genuine contribution to addressing these issues will be reflected in his decision about if and how Campbell produces a second 'wave' of Nourish. The Put Food in the Budget Campaign will continue to advocate for adequate incomes with dignity for people living in Ontario. ■

Charity

Public buys Nourish and donates it to food banks

9 million people in Ontario each purchase 24 cans of Nourish per year to donate to food banks. Each person donates two cans per month.

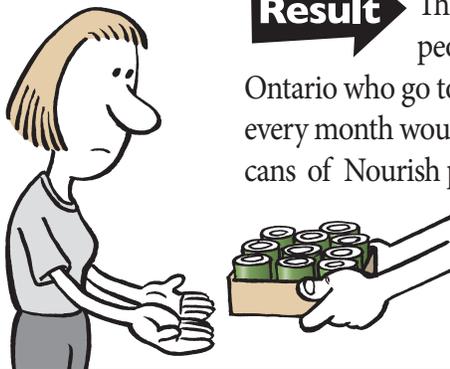


At the suggested retail price of \$2.49 per can, each person would spend \$4.98 per month, or, \$59.76 per year. Let's round up to \$5 a month, or \$60 a year.

Collectively, these nine million Ontarians would purchase and donate 216 million cans of Nourish.

Result

The 400,000 people in Ontario who go to food banks every month would receive 10 cans of Nourish per week.



VS.

Social justice

Same money is raised through a modest tax increase and used to supplement the income of Ontarians who use food banks

There were more than 9 million Ontario tax filers in 2008. If each filer paid \$5 per month more in taxes, or, \$60 per year, total annual tax revenues would increase by \$540 million.



Result

Distributing the tax gain among the 400,000 people in Ontario who go to food banks each month could generate more than \$100 per month (\$1,350 per year) in extra income per person.



Conclusion

Using the tax system to provide adequate incomes for people on social assistance is more efficient, more effective and more just than charity. This would enable people who go to food banks in Ontario to be able to buy more food of their own choice, and buy it with dignity.