

will offer participants one hot meal per month, offering up a variety of dishes from lasagna, soups, pot roasts and more. The team is unable to accommodate those with allergies at this time.

"It's an amazing experience to see the difference you're bringing, to really understand how some people are trying to survive, I wanted to do something," said Ferguson. "If I can help 20 families, that's 20 more that won't be hungry."

According to Kate Dorotheou, Community Engagement Coordinator at the Kawartha Lakes Food Source, the number of those using food banks in the Kawartha Lakes has gone up since the summer months.

The Kawartha Lakes Food Source does not serve the public but offers assistance to various schools, social service agencies as well as ten food banks, all within the Kawartha Lakes.

Generally, the ten food banks that have assistance from the Kawartha Lakes Food Source see approximately 900 to 1,000 individuals through their doors per month, added Dorotheou.

But during the summer months that number dropped significantly.

"That number had gone down through the summer months, we were excited to see the numbers go down," she said.

According to Dorotheou, the decline in numbers was verification that the various government aids that were offered through the pandemic were working.

"People were able to pay their bills and put food on the table, that was a good thing," she said. "Now over last two months with summer aids changing or no longer being available, our numbers have jumped."

During the summer months, the ten food banks saw a reduction of visitors that amounted to approximately 650 to 700 people. In October, the numbers were already on the rise, reaching 1,000, she added.

"We were really happy about it going down but we were not as excited to see the numbers jump back up but we are bracing for the future and the coming uncertainty," said Dorotheou. "We can't say the numbers will continue to jump, but we are aware of the economic factors right now, small businesses are closing, jobs have been lost and savings only last for so long. It is unfortunate but we are preparing for the future."

And as the numbers do climb with many people unsure of when their next meal will be available, there are many ways to help.

As the Community Engagement Coordinator, those looking to organize their own event, fundraiser or food drive can contact Dorotheou for assistance, 705-324-0707.

Donations are also always welcome and can be dropped off at the Kawartha Lakes Food Source distribution centre, 164 Needham St., Lindsay. Those who wish to donate can also find the Canada Helps page on the Kawartha Lakes Food Source website, kawarthalakesfoodsource.com.

"We do rely heavily on donations, when it comes to bulk purchasing, we have to have the funds needed to do that," Said Dorotheou. "Unfortunately there's a lot of people in our community that