

# Rotarians gather 4,000 lbs of potatoes for food drive

Potatoes will be included in packages given out by local food banks

[Kris Sveta](#) Mar 26, 2022 5:15 PM



1 / 2 Rotarian Charlie Baumbach delivering potatoes to 1st Nation Serpent River representative Amber Simpson. Photo provided by Rotary

2 / 2 Blind River Rotarian Joe Connell (left) is joined by fellow Rotarian Charlie Baumbach (right) delivering the potatoes to Blind River Food Bank chairman Steven Wells for distribution in the community. Photo provided by Rotary

The Rotary clubs in Blind River and Elliot are putting together packages of potatoes to hand out to those less fortunate in the communities.

The group recently picked up 4,000 lbs of potatoes as part of the project - 1,500 going to Blind River and 2,500 to Elliot Lake. The potatoes will be included in packages given out by the local food banks.

“This project has been undertaken by our Rotary District which goes from Hearst in the North to Lindsay in the south, Blind River to the West and into Quebec in the east,” Blind River Rotary Club president Bob McAllister said. Locally it is being handled by clubs in Elliot Lake and Blind River. I know Blind River distributed 1500 lbs of potatoes and I think Elliot Lake distributed 2500 lbs.”

“The potatoes initiative is not a regular Rotary Project,” he added. “I believe the federal government purchased these potatoes from PEI. Second Harvest Canada shipped the potatoes free of charge to North Bay. The Rotary Club of North Bay shipped them to Sudbury and we picked them up there for distribution locally.”

Blind River Food Bank chair Steven Wells said the potatoes will help make up suppers for its clients. The Food Bank has seen a dramatic increase in clientele marked by an increase of about 30 percent of households making use of its service.

“In January 2021, the food bank served 62 households. In January 2022, the food bank served 92 households -- 30 more households than the previous January,” Wells said.

It's expected the growing need is due to the rise in the cost of living and the impact it has on the price of food.