



# TUNGASUVVINGAT INUIT (TI) PARTNERS WITH NTI TO DISTRIBUTE COUNTRY FOOD TO URBAN INUIT IN ONTARIO.

OTTAWA, ON - OCTOBER 5, 2020



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During the week of September 28th, 2020, [Tungasuvvingat Inuit](#) (TI) distributed country food to more than 200 households in Ottawa with another 200 Inuit households in Toronto and Southern Ontario are set for distribution in October. The distribution was a successful partnership with [Nunavut Tunngavik Inc.](#) (NTI).

The country food was harvested in the north and shipped to Ottawa for distribution and then prepared and packaged by TI volunteers. NTI supplied maktaaq (whale blubber) and TI provided the tuktu (caribou). The community response in receiving traditional foods has been overwhelming. Upon releasing the information on the TI social media pages, the website server crashed as a result of hundreds of people submitting their names in a matter of minutes to receive the food.

TI Executive Director Amanda Kilabuk shared, "This is a very proud day for TI to have the ability to provide country food and lift the spirits of urban Inuk families in Ontario. This was not an easy endeavour to plan and prepare for due to COVID-19.

Consequently, we consulted with [Ottawa Public Health](#), by-law officers and the [Ottawa Police Service](#) to ensure that our distribution plan was COVID-19 compliant. All regulations were followed for physical distancing and sanitizing and we took extra measure to mark spaces six feet apart in the parking lots. Extra volunteers were brought in to monitor and drive through lanes were setup for ease of distribution. The collection of personal information was also obtained for the purpose of contact tracing. The distribution was a complete success and the gratitude from community has been amazing."

Safety was the top priority during the distribution and the Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ) Principles of Pijitsirniq (serving and providing for family, or community, or both), Inuuqatigiitsiarniq (respecting others, relationships and caring for people), and Qanuqtuurniq (being innovative and resourceful) were utilized.

Sharing free country food is a significant event for the Inuit community, from a cultural as well as a pragmatic perspective. In a time, such as COVID-19 where access is limited and increased food security is especially significant, the importance is magnified. The execution of the event went extremely well as TI was aware of the recommended COVIDwise practices and protocols. TI has an elaborate, evidence-informed Pandemic and Service Reopening Plan that has been reviewed by public health. The organization has worked closely with [provincial health agencies](#) to develop individual re-opening plans for our programs and to facilitate PPE training for all employees.

TI thanks our partners, stakeholders, staff and our community for their great work and for allowing TI to continue to be there for our urban Inuit community through culture, programs and in service.