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Société Makivik
Makivik Corporation

Press Release

For immediate release

Enhancements to the Food and Other Essentials Program

Kuujuuaq, Québec, July 9, 2018 – The list of eligible items under the Food and Other Essentials Program has been enhanced to reduce the costs of more food and non-food items purchased from retail stores in the region. Among the changes, a 30% discount will now be applied on all fresh fruit and vegetables. As well, the items covered under many other product categories have been expanded to include all sizes and brands.

“The financial burden faced by families is difficult,” stated Jennifer Munick, Chairperson of the Kativik Regional Government (KRG). “The Food Program is an important regional tool that is helping us to reduce prices as much as possible.”

The Food and Other Essentials Program provides discounts for all Nunavimmiut of between 20 and 40% on over 1500 food, personal care, household, clothing and other products purchased from Nunavik retailers. Items covered under the Program include: tea, butter, lard and flour; vegetable and fruit juice; canned meat, vegetables and fruit; peanut butter, sugar, ketchup and cereal; baby-care products, soap, laundry detergent and toilet paper; clothing and footwear; as well as camping fuel and snowmobile and outboard motor oil.

“Makivik is always proud to be a part of this program to reduce the high cost of living in Nunavik. If not for these kinds of measures, Inuit especially would be struggling even more to put food on the table,” said Charlie Watt, President of the Makivik Corporation.

Participating retail stores are cooperative stores and Northern Stores in the communities, plus Newviq’vi in Kuujuuaq, as well as gasoline distributors for the sale of camping fuel and snowmobile and outboard motor oil. Program display cards on store shelves and blue price stickers are used to identify eligible products. Details on eligible products may also be obtained from local retail store managers and on the KRG website at [Nunavik Cost-of-Living Reduction Measures](#).

On July 15, payments of \$875 will also be made to eligible elders in the communities under the Elders’ Assistance program which is another one of the Nunavik Cost-of-Living Reduction Measures. The biannual payments under this program aim to mitigate some of the difficult socio-economic conditions faced by elders, including low personal incomes and government social security benefits that are not adapted to Nunavik’s high cost of living.

Background information

Funding for the Nunavik Cost-of-Living Reduction Measures is paid by the Québec government pursuant to the *Agreement on the Financing of Measures to Reduce the Cost of Living in Nunavik*. The resource envelope available in 2018–2019 totals \$13 million.

Also under the Agreement, an in-depth study of the consumer patterns of Nunavimmiut has been conducted by Université Laval with a view to developing a comparative cost of living index. Full details on the most recent findings are available at www.nunivaat.org. The KRG and the Québec government are carrying out negotiations (with the Makivik Corporation acting as an intervener) in order to renew long-term funding to help alleviate Nunavik's high cost of living.

The Nunavik Cost-of-Living Measures are determined jointly by the Makivik Corporation and the KRG. The criteria applicable to all the measures are subject to modification or cancellation at any time. The KRG is responsible for administering the implementation of the measures.

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Source:

Jean Barcelo
Communications Officer
Kativik Regional Government
Tel. 819-964-2961, ext. 2400
media@krq.ca
www.krq.ca

William Tagoona
Communications Coordinator and Media
Relations
Makivik Corporation
Tel. 819-964-2925
wtagoona@makivik.org

The KRG is a non-ethnic public organization created in 1978, under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. The organization has jurisdiction over nearly the entire territory of Québec north of the 55th parallel in areas such as municipal matters, transportation, the environment, policing, employment, labour training, income security, childcare services, renewable resources, land-use planning, civil security and economic development.

The Makivik Corporation is the development corporation mandated to manage the heritage funds of the Inuit of Nunavik provided for under the James Bay and Northern Québec Agreement. Makivik's role includes the administration and investment of these funds and the promotion of economic growth by providing assistance for the creation of Inuit-operated businesses in Nunavik. Makivik promotes the preservation of Inuit culture and language as well as the health, welfare, relief of poverty, and education of Inuit in the communities.