



John GORDON/Langley Times

Global Aid Network's Peter Koteles loads buckets of Cibo and other food supplies. The shipment is headed off to Haiti to help the victims of last week's devastating earthquake.

'Difference between life and death' comes by the bucket

Shipping container bound for Haiti filled with pails of Cibo

They're not much to look at — just square plastic buckets with colourful labels. But what's inside could mean the difference between life and death for many child-survivors of last week's devastating earthquake in Haiti.

Langley-based Food for Famine is preparing to send a shipping container filled with pails of Cibo, a high-calorie, non-perishable food supplement, to the earthquake-ravaged Caribbean nation.

Cibo — which is the Italian word for food — is made from peanut paste, powdered milk, whey powder, sugar, oil, and 22 vitamins and minerals. It doesn't need refrigeration, is ready to use, and has a shelf life of more than a year. Cibo tastes like peanut butter cookie dough, so children love it and can thrive on 200 grams (1,000 calories) a day.

Complete in both calories and nutrition, it is not meant to merely fill and empty belly.

One eight-kilogram bucket will feed a child for a month and costs \$30 to produce.

In December, 600 buckets of Cibo were sent to North Korean orphanages— home to more than 1,100 Children. GAIN (Global Aid Network) of Langley provided all shipping costs and logistical help.

Food for Famine was starting the process of raising funds for the next shipment, when disaster struck Haiti.

A number of buckets of Cibo have already been provided for local aid workers traveling to the Caribbean nation, but it is the charity's hope they can fill another container and ship it as soon as possible.

Once again, GAIN and Food

for Famine will join forces to transport and distribute the Cibo to those in need.

Although it is a not-for-profit agency, Food for Famine does not yet have tax deductible status. Anyone who would like to make a donation can write a cheque to GAIN or visit GAIN's website at www.globalaid.net. Fill out the form and make sure that the funds are dedicated to the Cibo Acquisition fund.

This will ensure that the donation will be used to purchase Cibo.

Food for Famine is also looking for people who are willing to speak to their church or school about the opportunity to help Haiti by sponsoring buckets (or a pallet of 60 buckets) of Cibo.

Visit foodforfamine.org to learn more or call 604-290-5684.

\$20,000 and counting

BRENDA ANDERSON
Times Reporter

Lower Mainland residents are digging deep to help a local businessman support his sister's humanitarian efforts in Haiti in the aftermath of last week's devastating earthquake.

"I'm thrilled. I'm happy people are responding," said Mike Estrella, who launched a campaign shortly after the disaster hit, to send money and supplies to his sister Danita's orphanage in Ounaminthe, on the border with the Dominican Republic. So far, his grassroots campaign has raised about \$10,000.

It's great, "but I want to do more," said the owner of Estrella's Montreal Deli and Café.

"The blessing is that the government will match us, dollar for dollar, so that puts us up to \$20,000. I'm so grateful, believe me."

Although he hasn't been able to make contact with his sister, Estrella learned from his mother on Monday that Danita, who was in the U.S. when the quake hit, has returned to Haiti as planned, and was making her way to Port au Prince with two school buses, in which she planned to bring back as many orphaned children as possible to her facility in Ounaminthe, about 90 minutes north of the devastated capital city.

Plans to buy food from the Dominican Republic hit a snag, however, when vendors in that country jacked up prices in

response to the disaster. "It's supply and demand," Estrella said. "They know the governments of the world are paying for it."

While the Langley restaurateur has received offers of various food items, he explained that Haitians eat a very specific diet, with a heavy emphasis on rice, pinto beans and chicken.

Since the food is now being purchased locally and shipped, he is sending canned tuna instead of chicken as a source of protein, along with the beans and rice.

Cooking oil, powdered milk and diapers will also be packed up and shipped as soon as possible, along with one container of medical supplies and another filled with hospital mattresses.

Unlike bigger agencies which must use a portion of the funds they raise to cover administrative costs, Estrella promised that 100 per cent of proceeds from his campaign will go to Danita's orphanage.

"We're sending every penny that comes in down there."

Anyone who would like to make a donation to Danita Estrella's Haiti orphanage is invited to drop off their contribution at Estrella's Café at 5932 200 St. To follow Danita's progress through Estrella's blog, or to donate online, visit ismcanada.ca.

For information about the orphanage, visit www.danitaschildren.org.



Mike Estrella