Feeding America & Second Harvest Food Bank
of Orange County

Hunger in America 2014

A Report on Charitable Food Distribution in 2013
Orange County Data Summary

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In 2013 Second Harvest Food Bank of Orange County (SHFBOC) participated research for the Hunger in America 2014 (HIA 2014) study. Trained researchers were sent out from April through August of 2013 to selected food assistance non-profits to interview clients who were seeking food.

The study consisted of two surveys – an Agency Survey and a Client Survey. The Agency Survey yielded responses from 218 eligible agencies (75%). Of the 424 eligible clients sampled, 225 (53%) responded to the Client Survey.

The Need – Local
- Although agencies and their program employ creative strategies to manage their clients' needs, 53% of programs saw an increasing need for their service areas.
- Among the programs affiliated with SHFBOC, 25% report having somewhat less or a lot less food than needed to meet clients' needs.
- Among food programs that reported turning away clients during the past 12 months, 18% of food programs did so "frequently" or "occasionally" because they ran out of food.

The Need - National
- This assessment occurs during historically high demand for food assistance in a persistently weak economy
- The nation's poverty rate reached 15.1% in 2010, the highest rate since 1993
- The poverty rate remained at 15% in 2012 with 46.5 million people living in poverty, the largest number since statistics were first published more than 50 years ago

Unduplicated Number Of Unique Clients Served
- 277,300 unique clients are served annually
- 33,500 unique clients are served weekly

Unduplicated Number of Unique Households Served
- 67,800 unique households are served annually
- 9,400 unique households are served weekly

Duplicated Number Of Clients Served
- 2,445,400 times annually
- 46,900 clients are reached in a typical week

Duplicated Numbers of Households Served
- 774,800 times annually
- 14,900 times in a typical week

Agencies & Programs
- 53% of programs saw an increase in clients in the past 12 months
- 38% of programs had a stable number of clients in the last 12 months
- 8% of programs saw a decrease in the number of clients in the last 12 months
- 42% of programs had less food than they needed to meet the demand

Food Insecurity
- 80% of client households are food insecure (Some level of inability to access enough food)
- 20% of client households are food secure (can access enough food at all times for a healthy, active life. Note: some clients may have categorized themselves as food secure because of the food that they receive from a feeding program.)

Income and Poverty
- 45% of client households have incomes of $1 to $10,000
- 36% have incomes of $10,001 to $20,000
- 73% have incomes that fall at or below the federal poverty level (in 2013 that was $23,550 for a family of 4)
- 2% of client households have no income

Health
- 51% of client households chose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care at least once in the past 12 months
- 41% of client households report at least one family member with high blood pressure
- 31% of client households have members with no health insurance of any kind (including Medicaid)
- 31% of client households have medical bills to pay
- 25% of client households at least one member with diabetes
- In 18% of households the respondent reported being in "poor health"
- In 20% of households the respondent reported being in "fair health"

Coping Strategies and Spending Trade-offs
- 58% households reported that they had to choose between paying for food and rent at least once in the past 12 months; 26% face this choice every month
- 59% households reported that they had to choose between paying for food and utilities at least once in the past 12 months; 19% face this choice every month
- 51% households reported that they had to choose between paying for medicine or medical care at least once in the past 12 months; 28% face this choice every month
- 70% of households chose between paying for food and transportation or gas for a car at least once in the past 12 months; 36% face this choice every month
- 74% of households reported using multiple strategies for getting enough food, including eating food past its expiration date, growing food in the garden, pawning or selling personal property and watering down food or drinks
- 79% of households reported purchasing inexpensive, unhealthy food because they couldn't afford healthier options

Employment
- o For 71% of client households, the most-employed person worked for pay in the past 12 months
- o For 52% of client households, the most employed person worked for pay in the last 4 weeks
- o For 48% of client households the most-employed person is currently not working. 23% of these persons are actively looking for work
- o Among client households where the most-employed person is not working and not actively seeking work, 86% are disabled, in poor health or act as a caretaker for another, and 8% are retired

Military Personnel
- o 7% of households have a member who has served in the military
- o 5% of households have a member who is currently serving in the military

Housing
- o 79% of households reside in non-temporary housing – a house or apartment
- o 21% of households reside in temporary housing, such as a shelter or a mission, a motel or hotel, or on the street
- o 45% of respondents lived in at least two places in the last 12 months
- o 25% of respondents started living with another person or family in the last 12 months
- o 9% of respondents have experienced a foreclosure or eviction in the past 5 years

Cal Fresh or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation
- o 37% of client households currently receive SNAP benefits
- o 38% of client households neither currently receive SNAP benefits nor have ever applied for SNAP benefits
- o An estimated 29% of agencies provide some services to assist clients in accessing benefits through the Cal Fresh/SNAP program

Education
- o 33% of all clients have post-high school education (including license or certification, some college, or a four-year degree)
- o 82% of clients have attained a high school degree or a GED
- o 14% of clients have a four-year college degree or higher
- o 15% of adult clients are in school full time
- o 15% of adult clients are in school part time

Client Demographics (self-identified)
- o 49% White
- o 34% Hispanic
- o 3% Black or African American
- o 32% are children under 18
- o 10% are seniors age 60 or older
- o (14% "Some other race")

Program Types

109 Programs were sampled for the Client Survey data collection, and 56 program visits were completed - 38 Meal Programs and 18 Grocery Programs. At these program visits, 424 eligible clients were sampled and 53% responded to the Client Survey.

o *Meal Programs* provide prepared meals or snacks on site or in the client's home to clients in need who may or may not reside on the agency's premises. This category includes all congregate-feeding programs along with all other kitchens and shelter programs. Each eligible individual served was sampled and counted separately.

o *Grocery Programs* distribute non-prepared foods, groceries, and other household supplies for off-site use, usually for preparation in the client's home. This includes all types of pantries, home delivered groceries, mobile grocery pantries, and Commodity Supplemental Food Programs (CFSP). Every member of a household may benefit from the food that is brought home, so the entire household is a client.

Children's Program

The HIA 2014 study generally underestimates the services provided to children because children were not eligible respondents for the client survey. The Hunger Study cannot count and survey children at child programs because they cannot consent to participate, nor were parents present at the programs to consent to answer on their behalf.

- 32% or 86,300 of the total number of clients served annually are children. This is an underestimate of the number of children served because the programs that serve only children such as Kids Cafes, Kid Pack, School Boxes and the soon-to-come School Pantry are not counted in the study.

Here is an estimate of the number of additional children served through those programs:
- 2,400 unduplicated children are served through Kids Cafes per month
- 200 unduplicated children are served through Kid Pack per month
- 300 unduplicated children receive School Boxes per month
- Approx. 2,000 children will be served through the new School Pantry program

General Terms

Food Insecurity: As defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), a household is food insecure if they lacked access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members at some point in the previous year. Food insecurity is the closest metric to "hunger," since "hunger" is an individual-level, physiological sensation that would be very challenging to quantify. The Hunger Study uses the same methodology as the USDA to determine the degree of food insecurity among Feeding America client households.

Food Security: is defined as an individual or all people in a household having enough food for an active, healthy lifestyle at all times.

Unduplicated client count measures the number of unique individuals or households who access food from the charitable food assistance network. This estimate accounts for a client's repeated use of services. That is, if a particular client visits a food program every month of the year, they are counted only one in the annual unduplicated client count. Additionally, if a client frequents both a grocery and a meal program, they are counted only once.

Duplicated client: Duplicated counts are estimates of the number of times clients are reached through food distributions during a given time period. These estimates count a client each time they receive food: for meal programs, that is each time an individual receives a meal and for grocery programs, each time an individual and their household members receive groceries. At grocery programs, the counts include each member of a household for each grocery distribution. By including the duplicated client count, we are able to understand whether individuals are regularly frequenting food assistance programs to make ends meet.

When considered in relation to the unduplicated count, the duplicated count conveys the frequency and extent to which clients are regularly using services.

Non-temporary Housing: includes apartments, houses or townhouses, military housing, mobile homes or house trailers, rented rooms in a rooming or boarding house.

Temporary Housing: includes abandoned buildings, bus or train stations, parks, campgrounds, airports, vehicles, on the street, temporary hotels or motels, residential treatment facilities, supervised housing, shelters, missions, or transitional living situations.