



Local Impact Survey Results Summary

- 160 food banks responded
- 100% reported increases in demand for emergency food assistance over the last year
- The rate of estimated increases in demand ranged from 28.6% - 37.7%
- When food banks were asked what were the most prominent contributors to increases in demand:
 - 91% cited rising cost of food
 - 90.5% cited increasing unemployment
 - 67% cited increasing underemployment
 - 63% cited the cost of fuel
 - 62% cited mortgage/rent costs
 - 52% cited inadequacy of food stamp benefits
- When food banks were asked what populations they and their agencies were seeing:
 - 99.4% reported seeing more first-time users
 - 74% reported seeing more newly unemployed persons
 - 73% reported seeing increased need among existing clients (more repeat visits)
 - 59% reported seeing more employed persons
 - 48% reported seeing more children
- 72% of food banks do not feel as though they are able to adequately meet the needs of their communities without adjusting the amount of food distributed

ANECDOTES

Food Banks and Agencies Are Struggling to Keep Pace with Demand

"This has been a very difficult time for our organization and agencies. I have been in this business for over 26 years and am not sure how we will continue to operate without additional food from Feeding America and financial support."

-Southwestern Virginia Second Harvest Food Bank

"While we believe positively that needs will be met, the need continues to grow. The pressure and stress level on our agencies to provide services continues to grow. Food sourcing has become an increasingly complex task as both product and transportation costs have risen."

-Central Missouri Food Bank

"It is moving at a pace so fast our staff cannot catch a breath."

-Cleveland Foodbank

"Our agencies are seeing a drastic increase in new clients that they are having a hard time getting enough money to acquire the food they need. Other agencies are burning out and we have seen a number of agencies closing their doors."

-Food Bank of Corpus Christi

"Emergency food organizations within our network have regularly reported over the past year that their shelves are bare and they have had to turn people away due to their lack of food. Increased costs and funding cuts have contributed to the decreased supply which is exacerbated by the rise in demand."

-Food Bank For New York City

"Several of our agencies have ask that we not refer any clients because they are running out of food and turning people away. Also, several agencies are limiting distribution within their immediate community."

-Second Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Tennessee

New Clients Are Entering the System

"We are seeing new faces and young families--young people who have lost their jobs."

-Fredericksburg Area Food Bank

"Those seeking emergency food assistance are becoming much more diverse demographically. Those pre-existing clients are struggling ever more as the economy continues to falter."

-MANNA FoodBank

"Just one example: the largest soup kitchen in one of our counties with a higher per capita income reported serving 60 people per month on their site visit last year. This year that number had jumped to 700 people."

-Hoosier Hills Food Bank

People Who Never Thought They Might Need Assistance Have Turned into Supplicants

"One of our retired volunteers told me a couple weeks ago he is now looking for a part-time job because his retirement portfolio is going down."

-Arkansas Foodbank Network

"Hurricane Gustav created a situation where people that had advanced and no longer needed our assistance were thrust back into a situation of need. Being out of work for several weeks, facing substantial loss of refrigerated food and even the loss of jobs created a slippery slope for those individuals to fall back into the category of needing assistance. As the economic downturn continues, the number of people coming for assistance is increasing."

-Greater Baton Rouge Food Bank

"What we are seeing is new people who are having difficulty navigating how to access food. We are seeing people who might have at one time been supporters of the food bank; now some are seeking food."

-Second Harvest Santa Clara & San Mateo Counties

"We are seeing an increased need among middle class people making \$40,000-\$70,000 who are recently unemployed, having health problems, having difficulty managing mortgage payments, and going to soup kitchens and pantries for emergency food assistance. Because of this increased need and the amount of calls and emails to the food bank for assistance, the food bank is going to open an emergency food pantry for the community located at the food bank."

-Long Island Cares, Inc.

"We are seeing an increasing number of people coming to us who have never been part of our system and never thought they would need food assistance."

-Food Bank of Contra Costa and Solano

"When you hear a client tell you that "I never thought that I would have to come to the pantry to get food" or to have someone say that "I used to donate to the pantry and now I am using it," that is when you realize how tough things are."

-Community Food Banks of South Dakota

The Need is Unprecedented

"I have been here 6 full years and have never seen or heard anything like what is happening now!"

-Food Bank of the Rockies

"The number of people calling in for food referrals is unprecedented in our history. A key indication of new arrivals to food insecurity is their disoriented nature at food distributions. They don't know where to stand, or how the whole thing works."

-Redwood Empire Food Bank

This Is Only the Beginning...

"I think we are only seeing the beginning of it. It could be a hard winter."

-Northeast Iowa Food Bank

"We're seeing some agencies close as a result of lack of funding. So far two large agencies have closed, and others are reporting teetering on the edge. We feel we haven't seen the bottom yet of the economic downturn, and while giving is up right now, we're very concerned about what will come several months down the road."

-Food Lifeline

In Heartbreaking Times, There Is Hope

"It is truly heartening to see the outpouring of support from our community which has made it possible for us to increase our distribution and serve more families. At the same time we struggle with the reality that with few local food donors and increasing needs across the country the food may not be available to help our friends and neighbors in need as we move into 2009."

-Second Harvest Food Bank of North Central Ohio

"Our agencies are reporting they are having people come for assistance that have never had to ask before. Our office has experienced an increase in phone calls needing to be referred to pantries. They state they have never had to ask for assistance before but for one reason or another they need it now. On the other hand, I have had more people from organizations and the local community call and want to volunteer their services from packing boxes to serving at a soup kitchen."

-Peoria Area Food Bank

"We have great community support. People seem to be trying harder to make sure we have what we need.

Recently received an unsolicited grant of \$25,000 from local Community Foundation, specifically to meet current needs."

-Chattanooga Area Food Bank

