

NEW MEXICO
Association of Food Banks

Hunger in New Mexico

An Executive Summary 2010



DEFINITIONS

AGENCY A charitable organization that provides food supplied by a food bank or food-rescue organization directly to clients in need through various types of programs.

EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

Charitable feeding programs whose services are provided to clients who are typically in short-term need of emergency assistance. Hunger in America 2010 only measures emergency food assistance usage by client households of the Feeding America network. Emergency food programs include food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters.

FOOD BANK A charitable organization that solicits, receives, inventories, and distributes donated food and grocery products pursuant to industry and appropriate regulatory standards. The products are distributed to charitable human-service agencies, which provide the products directly to clients through various programs.

FOOD INSECURITY USDA's measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members; limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods.

KITCHEN (SOUP KITCHEN, COMMUNITY DINING ROOM)

A charitable program whose primary purpose is to provide prepared meals; served in the kitchen to clients in need.

NON-EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE

Charitable feeding programs that have a primary purpose other than emergency food distribution, but also distribute food. Non-emergency food programs include after school meals to low-income children, senior congregate meal programs, child day care programs, and backpack programs.

PANTRY (FOOD PANTRY, FOOD SHELF)

A charitable distribution agency that provides client food and grocery products for home preparation and consumption.

SHELTER (EMERGENCY SHELTER, HOMELESS SHELTER)

A charitable program with a primary purpose to provide shelter or housing on a short-term or temporary basis to clients and typically serves one or more meals a day.

VERY LOW FOOD SECURITY (ALSO SOMETIMES REFERRED TO AS FOOD INSECURITY WITH HUNGER)

An involuntary state that results in eating patterns of one or more household members being disrupted and food intake reduced, because the household could not afford enough food.

ABOUT HUNGER IN NEW MEXICO

Hunger is a constant in the lives of many New Mexicans. Every day, thousands of people around the state struggle to put food on their tables. Those people look to member food banks of the New Mexico Association of Food Banks (NMAFB) and their statewide network of partner agencies for assistance.

HOW WE WORK

DONORS

Growers / Processors / Restaurants / Manufacturers / Distributors / Retailers / Convenience Stores / Wholesalers / Food Industry Associations / Food Service Operators / Food Drives / USDA / Feeding America



NMAFB & OUR MEMBER FOOD BANKS

Distribute food to all 33 counties in New Mexico through our network of more than 500 agencies



AGENCIES

Food Pantries / Youth Programs / Soup Kitchens / Senior Centers / Day Care Centers / Rehabilitation Centers / Homeless Shelters / Domestic Violence Shelters / Mobile Pantries / Residential Shelters / Other Charitable Organizations



40,000 HUNGRY NEW MEXICANS SEEK FOOD ASSISTANCE EVERY WEEK!

Working Poor / Children / Single Parent Families / Elderly / Newly Unemployed / Underemployed / Mentally Ill / Physically Disabled / People in Poor Health / Homeless / Victims of Disaster



WHO SEEKS EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE?

- Every week, nearly 40,000 New Mexicans seek food assistance. That's the equivalent of a city almost the size of Farmington needing emergency assistance.
- 40% of the members of households seeking food assistance are children under the age of 18.
- 7% of those children are under the age of five.
- 13% of the people seeking food assistance in New Mexico are senior citizens.
- 41% of households needing food assistance report having at least one member in poor health.
- 70% of food pantry programs in New Mexico rely entirely on volunteers.
- 75% of the food pantries surveyed reported an increase in the number of people needing assistance from 2005 to 2009.
- 20% of current food pantries in New Mexico were not in existence in 2007.
- The average monthly income for a household seeking food assistance is \$900/month.
- 83% of the food distributed by food pantries in New Mexico is provided by food banks.



DIFFICULT CHOICES FACING NEW MEXICANS

54%

percentage of clients who choose between paying for food and paying for utilities or heating fuel

45%

percentage of clients who choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care

38%

percentage of clients who choose between paying for food and paying for rent or mortgage

**For Emergency Assistance
visit www.nmfoodbanks.org**



SENIOR HUNGER

Thousands of New Mexico's seniors are faced with terrible choices every day. Many live on low fixed incomes that do not cover their expenses. Seniors may have outlived their retirement and savings or are primarily dependent on Social Security or disability income. All are at risk of hunger as they struggle to pay for their rent, utilities, medical care, medicines and food.

Seniors are among the most physically vulnerable to hunger. With age comes unique nutritional needs and medical conditions. Hunger and the lack of access to nutritious foods compromises their health. Hunger deteriorates their mental and physical well being. Chronic illnesses worsen with hunger and leave seniors at risk for increased long-term care and hospitalization.

NMAFB food banks provide supplemental food boxes to food pantries, low income senior housing sites, senior centers, and other food assistance locations that provide services to the elderly. The boxes contain an assortment of non-perishable food, fresh fruits and vegetables and bread to provide up to 30 additional meals. The boxes and food assistance that is provided fills a critical dietary need in the lives of thousands of New Mexico's seniors.

AGE OF CLIENTS SERVED BY NEW MEXICO ASSOCIATION OF FOOD BANKS

47% Adults

40% Children Under 18

13% Seniors

CHILDHOOD HUNGER

In children, hunger leaves lasting physical and emotional effects. Research suggests that consistently hungry children experience developmental delays and have difficulty learning. A child who has difficulty learning because of hunger is more likely to face poverty as an adult. NMAFB members partner with schools and agencies across the state to get food to children in need. The Food for Kids program involves providing backpacks full of "child friendly" food directly to children who are hungry. One school that participates in this program is Mountainair Elementary, and Principal Nicole Henderson shares this story:



“Nathan is a wonderful 5th grade boy who cares for his four younger siblings. Nathan is the only “adult” in the household. A few weeks ago, we had a Friday holiday, and Nathan met me in the parking lot early in the week at about 6:30 am. He wanted to know if we would pass out backpacks on Thursday instead of Friday that week. He said if that wasn't possible, he would have to find another way to feed his siblings that weekend. I assured him that he and his siblings would get their backpacks on Thursday that week. Until now, I had no idea how valuable this program was to our students and how much they depend on those backpacks. Thank you from all of us at Mountainair Elementary. You are making a difference in the lives of children and families. ”



EMERGENCY FOOD PROGRAMS

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is a Federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income people, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) buys food and ships it to each state. The amount of food received by each state is determined by the number of unemployed persons and the number of people with incomes below the poverty level in the state. The food goes to food banks, which in turn distribute the food to local organizations, such as soup kitchens and food pantries that directly serve the public, and households that meet State eligibility criteria.

Providing Healthy Foods – Fresh Produce Initiative

Healthy foods are important for everyone, including vulnerable populations such as children and seniors.

Many believe that food banks only distribute canned/dry good items, but more than half of our annual distribution is fresh perishable food. With funds from the State of New Mexico and other public and private donors, the New Mexico Association of Food Banks is able to purchase and distribute millions of pounds of fresh produce around the state every year.

Mobile Food Pantry Brings Food to the Underserved

The Mobile Food Pantry is a traveling food pantry that delivers nutritious and much needed food directly to hungry people in need. The program allows food banks to serve areas that have little access to grocery stores or food assistance resources. Each year, mobile pantries deliver food to thousands of New Mexicans in rural and underserved communities across the state. For information on mobile pantries in your area, contact your local food bank.

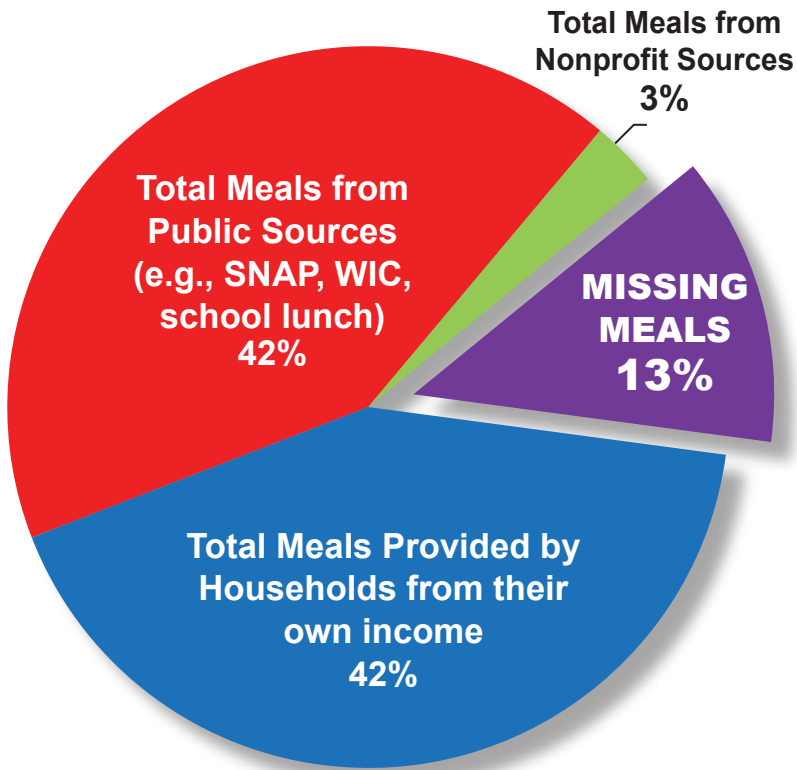


Doris is a 73 year old retiree living on a fixed income. When she picked up her first Senior Helping Box at the community center, she looked inside and burst into tears. The volunteer was concerned and asked if everything was alright. Doris said,

“ Since I’ve been on Social Security, I haven’t been able to afford fresh vegetables. The lettuce, tomatoes and carrots in this box will be the first salad I’ve had in nine years. ”

Fresh produce is all too often a luxury item for low income New Mexicans. Your support of the NMAFB allows us to purchase and deliver millions of pounds of fresh, healthy produce to families across the state.

MISSING MEALS IN NEW MEXICO



This circle represents all of the meals eaten by those New Mexicans who have incomes so low that they are likely to have a hard time putting food on the family table. These New Mexicans get their food in several different ways.

The vast majority of them have income such as wages or Social Security. This income helps put many of their meals on the table. The blue wedge represents those meals.

Since income obviously doesn't provide all of the meals families need, people turn next to a variety of safety net programs like SNAP (formerly called food stamps), Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and free and reduced cost school breakfasts and lunches. These government programs provide another important source of household meals. The meals provided by those programs are represented by the red wedge.

For thousands of New Mexicans, income and government programs are still not enough. These families often turn to some of New Mexico's hundreds of faith and community based food assistance programs. New Mexico food banks play a critical role in providing food and services to those programs. The green wedge shows the percentage of meals that are provided by community food assistance programs.

Unfortunately, all of these sources of meals are just not enough. The purple wedge – the **Missing Meals** wedge – represents millions of meals each year and is far more than a statistic. This wedge represents the parents who skip meals so their children can eat, the mothers who are forced to water down their children's milk, the seniors who often live on a bowl of cereal for an entire day.

Number of Missing Meals:

117,140,870

Number of Individuals Represented:

805,878**

** For purposes of the Missing Meals study, the population in need was presumed to be those living at less than 185% of the Federal Poverty Level (or an annual household income of less than \$31,000 for a family of three).

Detailed methodology for the study available upon request.

Your help has never been more needed. Donate time, donate food, donate money – your contribution will change lives.

Funding for the Missing Meals study provided by **PNM** and the **New Mexico Collaboration to End Hunger** with in-kind support from Roadrunner Food Bank. Data collection by Bevin Moon, MS, with consultation from Maurice Moffett, PhD. Fall 2010.

How You Can Help

Working together, we can close the gap on hunger in New Mexico. Below are some of the ways you can get involved to end hunger.

Educate

Educate yourself and others about hunger. Tour your local food bank or pantry. Invite your local food bank representative to give a presentation about hunger at your organization, workplace, school or place of worship. Send a letter to the editor of your local paper. Develop financial and budget management courses for people with limited resources.



Volunteer

Volunteer at your local food bank, soup kitchen or food pantry. Volunteer to help low-income people fill out Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) applications. Lend your professional expertise to your food bank or community agency. Help your elderly neighbors with transportation or food shopping. Volunteer to teach cooking, shopping or nutrition classes.

Donate

Donate money to your local food bank or hunger relief agency. Donate needed food items to a food bank, food pantry, or soup kitchen. Organize a food and funds drive at your place of employment, civic organization or place of worship. Plant an extra row in your garden, or harvest extra fruit from your trees, and donate the produce to a local food pantry. To donate, contact the New Mexico Association of Food Banks or your local food bank.

Support

Support your local farmers by shopping at the farmers market. Support community agencies. Organize a community garden so neighbors can grow their own food.

Advocate

Advocate in matters of public policy that impact poverty and access to food. Call your elected representative and express your support for improved food assistance programs. Visit your elected representative to discuss food policies, hunger and nutrition issues.

For more information about hunger in New Mexico, visit www.nmfoodbanks.org

HUNGER MYTHS

MYTH

NO ONE GOES HUNGRY IN AMERICA

FACT

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, 17.4 million American families – almost 15% of U.S. households – are now “food insecure.”

MYTH

PEOPLE SEEKING FOOD ASSISTANCE ARE HOMELESS OR OUT OF WORK

FACT

32% of households seeking emergency food assistance include at least one employed adult, only 8% are homeless.

MYTH

PEOPLE CAN GET ENOUGH FOOD FROM SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITIONAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

FACT

While thousands of New Mexicans receive assistance through SNAP, those funds only provide 2.3 weeks of groceries.

MYTH

HUNGER IS ABOUT FOOD

FACT

Hunger isn't about food. It's about jobs and wages.

MISSION

Enhance the capacity of New Mexico's Food Banks in order to build a well-nourished New Mexico.

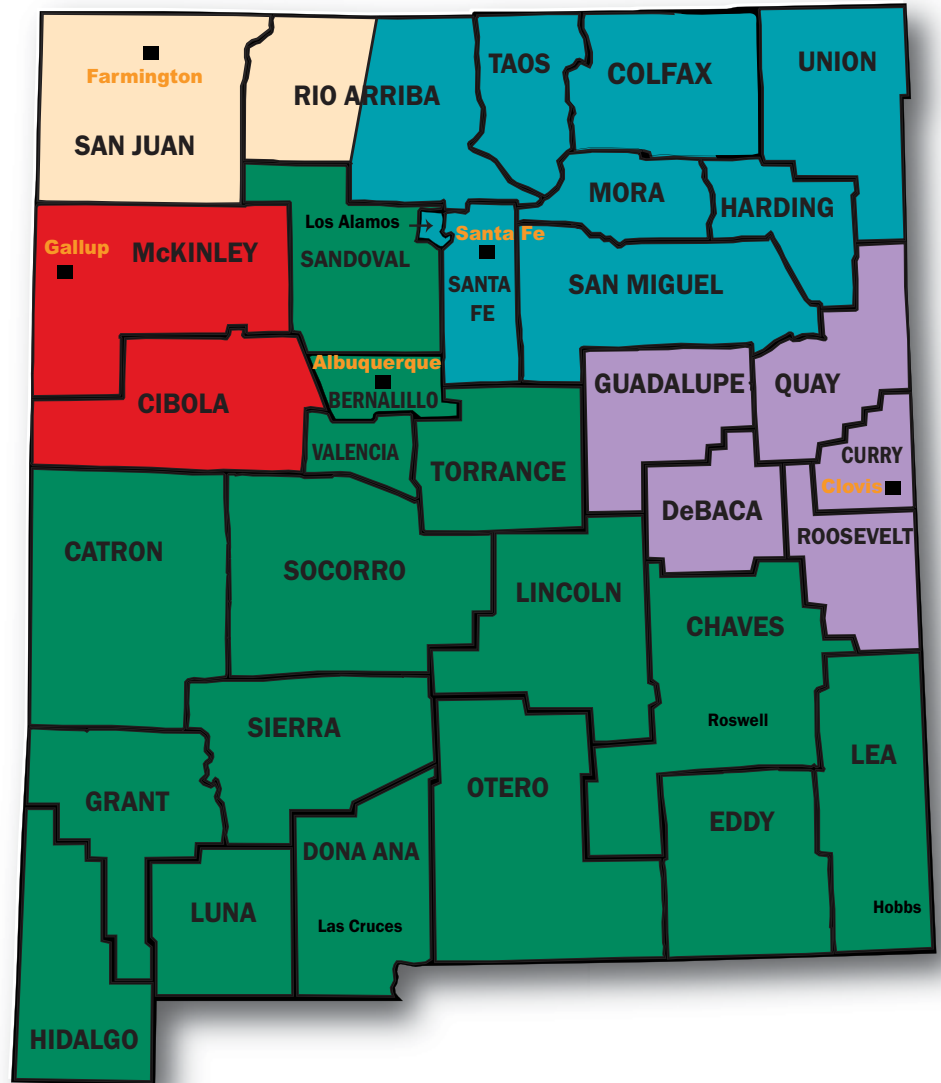
**The Community Pantry
Gallup**
PO Box 520
Gallup, NM 87305-0520
505-726-8068
505-726-9022 (fax)
www.communitypantry.org

**ECHO, Inc.
Farmington**
401 S. Commercial
Farmington, NM 87401
505-325-8222
505-324-6502 (fax)
[www.echoinc.org/
food_bank.php](http://www.echoinc.org/food_bank.php)

**Food Bank of Eastern
NM / Clovis**
2217 E. Brady
PO Box 1476
Clovis, NM 88101
575-763-6130
575-763-2240 (fax)
www.foodbanknm.org

**The Food Depot
Santa Fe**
1222 Siler Rd.
Santa Fe, NM 87507
505-471-1633
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www.thefooddepot.org

**Roadrunner Food Bank
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