MAP THE MEAL GAP

FEEDING AMERICA®
Formerly named
America's Second Harvest®

Food Insecurity and Food Cost Estimates at the Local Level

We are pleased to share these descriptive statistics about your local community. Note that, like poverty or unemployment rates, these data are intended to provide you with more information about the people living in your service area. These data reflect rates for the full population in the US, and are not focused on food bank clients.

Data Overview

The national office has prepared tailored Excel workbooks for each network member and state association.

- **Service area workbooks** contain 2 tabs: 1) Detailed results for every **county served** by the food bank and 2) a summary of service area information with accompanying pie chart.
- **State workbooks** contain 3 tabs: 1) Detailed results for every **county in the state**; 2) detailed results for every **congressional district** in the state; and 3) a summary of state information with accompanying pie chart. Note that the state totals (columns C through H) are an aggregation of food insecurity rates for all congressional districts in that state.

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
	County	ST	Population	Food insecurity rate	Estimated number food insecure individuals (rounded)	Income within the food insecure population[2]			Cost-of-food index	Weekly food-budget shortfall per food insecure person[3]	Total food-budget shortfall reported by the food insecure in 2010[4]	Weighted cost per meal[5]	The "Meal Gap"
						% below SNAP threshold of 130% poverty	% between 130% and 185% poverty	% above Nutrition Pgm threshold of 185% poverty					
Cook County		EX	70,312	27.1%	19,070	63%	22%	15%	0.980	$ 14.02	$ 253,248,780	$ 2.47	102,529,870
Crawford County		EX	131,824	17.7%	23,270	37%	28%	35%	0.980	$ 14.02	$ 8,107,800	$ 2.47	3,282,510
Gila County		EX	53,272	19.1%	10,150	44%	30%	26%	0.968	$ 13.85	$ 15,206,900	$ 2.44	6,232,336
Johnson County		EX	3,751,410	16.1%	605,460	29%	30%	41%	0.964	$ 13.79	$ 10,651,280	$ 2.43	4,383,243
Lonoke County		EX	199,177	18.6%	37,120	36%	32%	32%	0.944	$ 13.51	$ 9,893,480	$ 2.38	4,156,924
Pinal County		EX	107,060	23.9%	25,570	53%	19%	28%	0.960	$ 13.73	$ 24,370,730	$ 2.42	10,070,550
Sharp County		EX	329,297	18.0%	59,240	23%	35%	42%	0.948	$ 13.56	$ 15,359,060	$ 2.39	6,426,385
Washington County		EX	209,260	17.5%	36,720	38%	24%	38%	0.964	$ 13.79	$ 4,262,960	$ 2.43	1,754,305
Service Area Total			4,851,612	16.8%	816,600	31%		39%	0.984	$ 14.07	$ 348,591,420	$ 2.48	140,561,056

General data is shown in columns A, B and C for each county, including state, county name and population of the county (U.S. Census Bureau; ACS, 2010)

Column D shows the percentage of the county population that meets the definition of food insecure (i.e. did not have access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life). Column E shows the estimated number of county residents that are food insecure.

$$\text{Column D} = \frac{\text{FI Pop. (E)}}{\text{Total Pop. (C)}}$$

Columns F, G & H show information about specific subsets of the food insecure population. The thresholds shown will vary by state, based on SNAP and NSLP income cutoffs.

In the above example:

$$\text{Column F} = \frac{\text{FI Pop.} \le 130\%}{\text{Total FI Pop.}}$$

Using actual food sales data, The Nielsen Company created a county-level multiplier (or "index") to reflect the local cost of food. A national average cost of $1 would cost 98¢ in the fictitious Cook County, EX.

In column J, we multiply the index value (I) by $14.30 – the national average of additional money a food insecure person reports needing per week in order to meet his/her food needs.

In column K, we multiply the weekly amount by column E, then by 52 weeks, and finally by 7/12 – the average portion of the year in which a food insecure person experiences food insecurity.

In column L, we multiply the index value (I) by $2.52 – the national average amount spent on a meal by the food secure. When we divide the food-budget shortfall in the county (K) by the cost of a meal in the county (L) , we are able to calculate the "Meal Gap" (M).

Learn more about the [Methodology behind Map the Meal Gap](#)

Questions? Contact the Feeding America Research team at research@feedingamerica.org.