



## SAN FRANCISCO FOOD BANK

### **Hunger Study Reveals an Unprecedented Number of People Turning to the San Francisco Food Bank for Assistance**

*Nationally, 46 percent Increase in U.S. Citizens Receiving Food  
37 Million Americans, Including 14 Million Children, at Risk of Hunger*

**San Francisco, CA** (February 10, 2010) –A landmark study released from Feeding America, the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization, reports nationwide that more than 37 million people, one in eight Americans - including 14 million children and nearly 3 million seniors - receive food each year through the nation’s network of food banks which includes the San Francisco Food Bank. The findings represent a staggering 46 percent increase on a national level since the organizations previously released study in 2006.

[Hunger in America 2010](#) is the first research study to capture the significant connection between the recent economic downturn and an increased need for emergency food assistance. The number of children and adults in need of food as a result of experiencing food insecurity has significantly increased.

In San Francisco, more than 150,000 people live at or below 150 percent of the Federal Poverty line, experiencing very low food security - or hunger. The San Francisco Food Bank saw a more than 20 percent increase in the number of households requesting food assistance through our food pantry network compared to this time last year.

Many of the people served by the San Francisco Food Bank are struggling with unemployment and underemployment; having to make difficult choices between food and other basic necessities along with the pressures of skyrocketing healthcare costs. While 40 percent of client households in San Francisco have at least one working adult, Hunger in America 2010 reports a 68 percent increase over the previous four years in the number of adults seeking emergency food assistance who have been unemployed for under a year. An independent survey conducted by the San Francisco Food Bank showed that 84 percent of client families with children had at least one person who had lost their job or had hours or pay reduced over a six month period in 2009.

“The current recession and the rise in unemployment is having a profound effect on residents of San Francisco and the San Francisco Food Bank. We have seen a dramatic increase in the number of those turning to the Food Bank for assistance,” said Paul Ash, Executive Director of the San Francisco Food Bank. “Hunger in America 2010 sheds some light on the tragic reality of just how many people in our nation don’t have enough

to eat. Many are families with children finding themselves in need of food assistance for the very first time.”

In addition to those turning to Food Banks for assistance, many Americans are receiving food help in the form of food stamps (SNAP). More than 38 million Americans - one in eight - now receive food stamps, a record high. In fact, over 33 millions Americans received food stamps in 2009. However, in San Francisco, only 46 percent of those eligible to receive food stamps use the program.

Among other key comparative findings in the national report:

- 50 percent increase in the number of children served annually.
- 64 percent increase in the number of client households with seniors facing very low food security - or hunger.
- 64 percent increase in the number of client households receiving food stamp benefits.
- 76 percent (10 Million) of client households served are food insecure, meaning they do not always know where they will find their next meal.

### **About the San Francisco Food Bank**

Hunger is a serious problem in San Francisco – with 1 in 4 children and 1 in 5 adults at risk of hunger. Every day, the San Francisco Food Bank sources, collects, sorts, inspects and repackages thousands of pounds of food, then distributes it to soup kitchens, neighborhood grocery centers, school programs and seniors in need.

The San Francisco Food Bank serves 22,000 households weekly throughout San Francisco and Marin counties, and will distribute 36.5 million pounds of food to the community this year – enough for 78,000 meals every day. Over half of what is distributed is fresh produce. For more information, visit [www.SFFoodBank.org](http://www.SFFoodBank.org).

### **About Feeding America**

Feeding America provides low-income individuals and families with the fuel to survive and even thrive. As the nation's leading domestic hunger-relief charity, our network members supply food to more than 37 million Americans each year, including 14 million children and 3 million seniors. Serving the entire United States, more than 200 member food banks support 61,068 agencies that address hunger in all of its forms. Feeding America is based in Chicago. For more information on how you can fight hunger in your community and across the country, visit <http://www.feedingamerica.org> . Find us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/FeedingAmerica](http://www.facebook.com/FeedingAmerica) or follow our news on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/Feedingamerica>.

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