



**SAN FRANCISCO FOOD BANK
MARIN FOOD BANK**

Could You Eat For Less Than \$5 a Day?

San Francisco Food Bank's Hunger Challenge asks participants to live on a Food Stamp budget, September 11-17

San Francisco, CA (September 8, 2011) – What is it like for low-income people struggling to feed their families? Participants in the San Francisco Food Bank's Hunger Challenge are about to find out first-hand.

Bloggers, community leaders, journalists, food activists and other concerned individuals are signing up to take the Hunger Challenge, by agreeing to spend just \$33.04 per person for their entire food budget for the week of September 11-17. This is the fourth year for the Hunger Challenge, which invites participants to live on the same food budget as the average California food stamp recipient – currently just \$4.72 per day.

The Hunger Challenge is about experiencing first-hand what it's like to shop and eat on a limited budget, then sharing those impressions with others. Participants are invited to use their voice, blogs, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube and other social media to share their experiences and the insights they gain.

This year, more than 165 people have signed up to participate in the challenge. Many taking part are food bloggers and recipe developers, who are creating low-cost recipes that can be shared with Food Bank clients [recipes from past years are available for publication upon request].

This year, CBS news reporter Juliette Goodrich as well as radio personalities from KGO radio will be participating in the challenge and will share their experiences with a mass audience. They will experience first hand what it's like to shop with just \$33 in their pockets; share how it feels to give up healthy – but expensive – fresh produce; how they try to make tasty, filling meals with limited resources and attempt to explain to their kids that some children go to bed hungry every night.

Registration details, budgeting tips, low cost recipes, as well as more information about food stamps, are available at www.HungerChallenge.com.

Food Stamp Facts:

- Approximately 2.3 million Californians receive Food Stamp benefits in 2009.
- The average monthly benefit in California is \$146.52 (\$4.72/day).
- In the United States, a single person is eligible to receive Food Stamps, only if their yearly gross income is \$14,157 or less. A two-person household is eligible only if they make \$18,330 or less. And a family of four can't have more than \$29,055 in income. In San Francisco, where the cost of living is particularly high, there are many people scraping by on extremely low incomes who still aren't eligible for Food Stamps.
- California is among the worst states in terms of participation with nearly fifty percent of the people who qualify not receiving benefits
- In 2009 30,800 San Francisco residents and 4,900 Marin residents participated in the Food Stamp program (More than 60 percent of those that qualify for Food Stamps are not participating).
- In 2010, approximately 14 percent of the US population was receiving Food Stamp benefits (42.3 million people).
- The government estimates that for every \$1 of Food Stamp money spent in California, it generates \$1.84 in business for the state's economy.

About the San Francisco and Marin Food Banks

Hunger is a serious problem in our community – with 1 in 5 children and 1 in 5 adults at risk of hunger in San Francisco and Marin. Every day, the 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 Food Bank serves over 225,000 people each year throughout San Francisco and Marin counties, and will distribute 44 million pounds of food to the community this year – enough for 104,000 meals every day. More than 50% of what is distributed is fresh fruits and vegetables. For more information, visit www.SFFoodBank.org

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