

2010 Hunger Study Highlights and Comparisons

The Hunger Study is done every four years and is sponsored by Feeding America. Each of the six regional food banks in Arkansas participate. Data is gathered from each food bank's member agencies and data is compiled from a survey to tell us how much, how many and what kind of services people received. Then individual client interviews are done to help put a face on hunger in the state and the nation. This data is used to help us refer to who is hungry and what is happening to them. This report has become critical to those organizations in Arkansas who are trying to reduce hunger in the state.

Highlights

- An estimated 433,900 people received assistance from Feeding America food banks annually in Arkansas. This is a startling increase from 2006 where it was estimated that 291,500 received assistance annually. This means that about 72,300 different people receive emergency food assistance in any given week in Arkansas.
- 35% of the people receiving assistance from Feeding America food banks are children and 14% are elderly.
- 52% of clients in Arkansas report having to choose between paying for food and paying for utilities or heating fuel.
- 42% had to choose between paying for food and paying for medicine or medical care.
- Only 29% of the client households in Arkansas are receiving SNAP benefits and only 31% are on WIC.
- Of the agencies that were in existence in 2006, 78% of pantries, 77% of kitchens and 69% of shelters reported increases since 2006. The 2006 study showed only 55% of pantries, 62% of kitchens and 54% of shelters reported increases.
- Of those being served 67% are food insecure compared to 81% in 2006, and 34% are experiencing hunger compared to 40% in 2006.

It is clear that the demographics of those needing help have changed since 2006. Many more people needed help but they are not necessarily the sick or disabled. They are those who may have recently lost jobs or unexpectedly needed help.

