

HUNGER EMERGENCY

Status Report

Food Insecurity means that at some point during the month, a family or individual runs out of money, food stamps or other resources for food they would normally eat. Hunger refers to the physical pain that is felt as a result.

According to LA County Department of Health Services, 2001:

- 585,000 LA County residents (5.9% of all households) experience hunger every year (that's 1 in 17 people)
- Nearly one and a half million people who live in LA County experience food insecurity (15% of LA County households)
- LA County's levels of hunger and food insecurity are higher than anywhere else in the US. One out of every fourteen Americans who goes hungry is in LA County
- Families with children report hunger more often than others
- Working people make up the greatest number of new participants at food pantries

Problems leading to Hunger:

- Recent cuts or terrible administration of government programs, especially the Food Stamp program, the largest anti-hunger program ever created
- Lack of living wage jobs
- High housing costs and lack of affordable housing, forcing people to choose between rent or food
- Disabled and elderly persons having to live on a fixed income
- Lack of transportation to affordable food outlets
- Lack of lower-cost supermarkets in many areas of the city

Food Assistance: What's Provided vs. What's Needed:

LA Regional Food Bank distributes 32 million pounds of emergency food to over one thousand charities in LA County. Nearly 500 churches, community centers and other agencies provide food to the hungry in LA County. Assistance is limited, however.

Government Programs:

- Food Stamps
- Child Nutrition Programs
- WIC program for pregnant, breastfeeding women and children up to five
- Adult Day Care Food Program
- Senior Food Programs
- Emergency Food and Shelter Program

While LA County has more food stamp participants than any other county in the country, is still has the lowest food stamp participation rate in the US. Half of the people who are eligible for Food Stamps are not receiving them. Food Stamps benefit level has not been recently adjusted to coincide with the real cost of living.

Solutions:

A comprehensive program for ending hunger in L.A. County has been put together by the Share With the Other LA Campaign and some of our affiliated non-profit agencies, including California Food Policy Advocates, the LA Regional Food Bank and the Coalition to end Hunger and Homelessness.

Essentials of the program include:

- Expansion and reform of the Food Stamp program, including removing much red tape and penalties
- Encourage policies that create jobs and living wages
- Schools should offer a school breakfast program and summer food program in addition to their lunch program
- Enact policies to promote use of farmer's markets
- Facilitate the location of supermarkets in low income area
- Facilitate community gardens and food cooperatives
- Public transportation that serves the needs of low-income people
- Protect programs that serve the elderly and the disabled
- Revise unjust laws that prevent groups from feeding homeless people in public
- Allow hungry people to continue to own cars

What You Can Do

You can become a <http://www.lapoverty.org/whatadvocacy.htm> (click here for details) and help enact public policy changes (which is the greatest need, simply because non-government feeding efforts are overwhelmed and can't possibly keep up with the magnitude of the need) or you can become directly involved in feeding or buying food for the poor. Or you can send Donations to Share With the Other LA <http://www.lapoverty.org/makeadon.htm> by clicking here and thereby help us mobilize your neighbors to step in and help!

To become directly involved, you can call 1-877-NOHUNGER which is the LA Regional Food Bank, and they will help guide you to a pantry near you or you can help the Food Bank itself. Or Go to <http://www.lafoodbank.org>

You can also find other opportunities to help by [Clicking Here for a list of Volunteer Opportunities](#). Some specific other resource groups you might want to link up with are as follows:

Interfaith Food Pantry Coalition

http://www.sfvic.org/Hunger_Meals.htm

Provides food to people on fixed low incomes, the under and unemployed and the homeless. Each pantry has established its own coalition to underwrite their expenses and labor needs.

LOCATIONS

EAST VALLEY LOCATIONS

Glendale Community Center
818-409-3080
North Hollywood Food Pantry
818-980-1657
St. Jane Francis Catholic Church
818-766-7393
Lutheran Social Services
818-901-9480

Loaves & Fishes II, Van Nuys
818-997-0943
M.E.N.D.
818-896-0246
El Mesias
818-899-2317
Loaves & Fishes Santa Rosa
818-365-3195
Sepulveda Methodist Church
818-830-4036
Greater Community Baptist
818-899-9155

MID-VALLEY LOCATIONS

Van Nuys Seventh Day Adventist
818-787-8380
First United Methodist / Reseda
818-344-7135
Sova Kosher Food Pantry
818-342-1320

WEST VALLEY LOCATIONS

Redeemer Lutheran Outreach
818-341-1629
Guadalupe Community Center
818-340-2050
Fish of West Valley
818-882-3474
West Valley Prince of Peace
818-346-6968

Meals on Wheels West

PO Box 7001
Santa Monica, CA 90406-7001
Phone: (310)394-5133
Fax: (310)576-1895

WWW Site: <http://www.meals-on-wheels.net>

A fee-for-service program serving nutritious home delivered meals to the frail, elderly, disabled and anyone in need of temporary assistance because of a medical condition. Volunteers deliver a nutritious hot meal and a cold sack lunch at mid-day, five days a week.

Congregate Meals Programs

Provides a nutritionally balanced hot lunch and lunchtime companionship and activities to senior citizens age 60 and over for a suggested donation. Regular and kosher meals are available.

Meals to the Homebound

<http://www.lapublichealth.org/nut/healthed/nutadult.htm>

Designed to provide proper nutrition in the homes to those seniors who cannot prepare their own meals. This service allows for earlier release from hospital care, helps prevent premature institutionalization or re-hospitalization due to inadequate diet, and temporary relief for caregivers.

The School Lunch Program –

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/nsd/snp/lunch.htm> - The program provides free and reduced-price lunches for needy, participating children at both public and private schools.

The School Breakfast Program <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nsd/foodprograms.htm> - This program provides nutritious morning meals to participating, low-income children.

Summer Food

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/nsd/sfsp/index.html> - This program provides low-income children with nutritious meals during the summer months when school is out and students have limited or no access to the school lunch program.

The Child and Adult Care Food Program <http://www.cde.ca.gov/nsd/foodprograms.htm> - provides reimbursement for nutritious meals and snacks served to needy children in non-profit, licensed or approved day care or after-school programs.

CARE

<http://www.careusa.org/?source=www.care.org> – Charity Aid, Recovery and Empowerment Act of 2002 – encourages charitable giving by creating incentives for individuals, businesses and foundations to donate to charitable causes.

The California Community Food Security Network

<http://www.foodsecurity.org/index.html>

A consortium of organizations working toward a vision of universal access and knowledge to choose healthy food.

Farm to School Program

<http://www.farmtoschool.org/california/index.htm>

A group that forms partnerships between farmers and nearby schools to supply children with tasty fruits and vegetables while connecting them with the source of their food. Additionally, they provide farmers with an additional source of income.

TEFAP

The Emergency Food Assistance Program and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program provide USDA donated commodities to food banks, church pantries, soup kitchens and emergency shelters for distribution to low-income people.

WIC

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children improves the health of pregnant, breast-feeding and postpartum women, infants and children who are at risk of poor nutrition due to low income.