

Hunger in Eastern Massachusetts 2010

Executive Summary

Compiled by



Funded by



All rights reserved. Short passages from this document, of no more than 250 words, may be reproduced without permission as long as full credit is given to The Greater Boston Food Bank. For permission to use longer excerpts please contact The Greater Boston Food Bank at 617-427-5200.

**The Greater Boston Food Bank
70 South Bay Ave.
Boston, MA 02118-2700**

Tel: (617) 427- 5200 • Fax: (617) 427- 0146 • Web: www.gbfb.org

Hunger in Eastern Massachusetts 2010

Executive Summary

Compiled by The Greater Boston Food Bank

Introduction

The Greater Boston Food Bank (“GBFB”), in cooperation with its national organization, Feeding America, and over 185 other food banks nationwide, has recently participated in the most comprehensive survey of hunger ever undertaken in its service area of eastern Massachusetts. The results of the study, entitled *Hunger in America 2010* provide statistically valid data concerning hunger and the national and local charitable responses to it. The study supplies crucial data regarding the demographics of clients using the emergency food system and the nature of emergency agencies within the system. Data from the 2006 study are compared whenever possible.

There were two areas of data collection: client based information and agency based information. For the **client** data, GBFB staff and volunteers conducted face-to-face interviews with food recipients at emergency pantries, soup kitchens and shelters in the nine counties of eastern Massachusetts. The survey included questions regarding demographic information, health status, food stamp usage, income, and emergency food system usage. Nationally, 62,143 client interviews were conducted, while locally, 543 clients were interviewed in 50 agencies.

A census of all emergency **agency** feeding programs; emergency food providers who are members of GBFB, was undertaken by sending the survey instrument to the agency director. On a national level, 37,098 agency surveys were completed, while in eastern Massachusetts 469 of a possible 575 GBFB member agency programs were completed (82% response rate). The data provided by the agencies includes information on program funding, services, and client satisfaction. (See Appendix 2, Table 1)

The report has been laid out in a manner that intersperses tables with data observations. In some cases, observations are made with additional data not included in the table in the body of the report but in the appendices of the document. In these instances, references to those appendices are made.

Client Data

The entire Feeding America network of emergency food providers serves people all year long. For the purposes of comparison, two “impact” numbers were estimated: the number of people served weekly and the number of people served annually. Annually in eastern Massachusetts, 394,300 unduplicated¹ people receive food that was distributed to GBFB member agencies. This is a 23% increase from 2005 which is a consistent trend in what the hunger relief network has been seeing in the past four years and, in particular in the past 16 months with the worst economic recession experience in the US since the Great Depression. 74,300 unduplicated people are served on a weekly basis (a decrease of 11% from 2005). We believe that this decrease is a reflection of the economic impact on the hunger network; emergency food providers, overall, have reduced their service days during the week from 2.4 days to 1.36 days (based on agency hours of operation data collected by GBFB). Additionally, it could be reflecting new users who do not chronically use the

¹ An unduplicated person is one who utilizes the hunger relief network once or more than once, but who for census purposes is counted only once during that timeframe.

hunger network and so are counted on a weekly basis but are not duplicated in the annual number. If this annual data is compared with the possible number of hungry in E. Massachusetts (total people at 100% of the Federal poverty level, or 461,728 people), more than 85% of the people in need are reached through programs receiving food from GBFB.² A comparable impact rate in 2005 was 75% suggesting that more people are being reached at least once. Even with the higher impact rate, the number of people in need in E. Massachusetts continues to grow at an alarming rate. (See Appendix 2, Table 2)

Client Demographics (Emergency Food Providers Only)

Tables 1, 1a and 2 show general profiles of the clients who are utilizing pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. Areas to note: in Table 1, homeless clients have increased to 27% of all of the clients served; more men are receiving help than four years ago; and the number of college educated clients has increased as have clients with managerial jobs. Employed clients has increased by 10%; nearly one in four people receiving support are employed/hold jobs (25%). More clients than in 2005 are registered voters.

Table 1: Client Demographic Data	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Clients who are female 5.3.1	69%	59%	-14.9%
Clients who are U.S. Citizens 5.3.1	94%	90%	-4.5%
Clients who are married or living as married 5.4.1	23%	23%	1.3%
Clients who are widowed 5.4.1	6%	7%	15.0%
Clients who are divorced 5.4.1	23%	19%	-17.0%
Clients without a place to live 5.9.1.1	16%	27%	68.8%
Clients who are high school graduates 5.5.1	44%	42%	-4.5%
Clients who have some college or two year degree 5.5.1	14%	20%	40.0%
Clients who are college graduates 5.5.1	10%	14%	43.0%
Clients who are currently employed 5.7.2	23%	25%	10.4%
Clients with managerial experience among those who are working 5.7.2	17%	23%	34.1%
Clients who are registered voters 5.2.1	61%	68%	11.3%

The age of clients who utilized these emergency food providers (Table 1a) has changed since the last survey with clients aged 50-64 decreasing 18% and clients aged 65 and older increasing.

Table 1a. Age of client demographics 5.3.1	All sites 2005	All sites 2009	% Change '05 - '09
18-29	14%	17%	20.0%
30-49	46%	44%	-3.9%
50-64	30%	25%	-18.3%
65+	10%	15%	45.0%

Table 2 contains statistics for the racial and ethnic background of clients served by agencies of The Greater Boston Food Bank. There is a significant decrease in the percentage of clients that

² While it is commonly accepted that poverty and hunger are directly correlated, there is not an agreement on what level of poverty as defined by the Federal Government encompasses all of the hungry people. 100% of poverty is often considered to be a low estimator.

are Non-Hispanic White (a 32% decline since 2005) and an increase of 114% since 2005 (from 11% to 24%) in the percentage of clients served who are Latino or Hispanic. We believe that this trend in usage among Hispanics is accurate but we also believe that this population was underrepresented in the last survey owing to language barriers.

Table 2: Client Racial & Ethnic Background 5.6.1	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
White	66%	45%	-32.3%
African American	19%	21%	9.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4%	6%	45.0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	0.1%	-90.0%
Asian	1%	0.7%	-30.0%
Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic	11%	24%	113.6%
Other	5%	7%	40.0%

In table 2b, interviewed clients reported their access to health insurance and medical care. More clients indicated some form of health insurance in 2009 than in 2005. There was a 16% increase in the percentage of clients who have Medicare. And similarly to 2005, almost one third of clients in 2009 reported having outstanding medical or dental bills. Nearly 1 in 7 households report having at least one member in poor health while 10% of all clients report being in poor health themselves.

Table 2b Health Insurance and Access to Medical Care 8.2.1	Adult Clients 2005	Adult Clients 2009	% Change '05 - '09
Clients in poor health 8.1.1	10.7%	10%	-10.3%
Clients with someone else in household in poor health 8.1.1	13.7%	14%	1.5%
No Insurance	9%	8%	-15.6%
Medicare Insurance	33%	38%	16.4%
State Insurance	67%	61%	-9.1%
Other	18%	23%	26.1%
Clients have unpaid medical or hospital bills	31%	32%	5.5%
Clients who have been refused medical care in past 12 months	9%	7%	-17.8%

Table 3 contains statistics for all the people in a client's **household**, as opposed to solely individual clients. One in three households receiving help through emergency food providers has at least one child under the age of 18 years. This remains relatively unchanged from the last survey. As in 2005, approximately one in 3 households had one or more working adult within it. There was a 21% increase in the number of households with members 65 years or older since the 2005 study. Additionally, there was a 23% decrease in households with single parents and of those households, a decrease in single parent households with children under 18 years of age.

Table 3: Household Demographic Data 5.2.1	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09	\$ Change
--	-------------	-------------	---------------------------	------------------

Households with one member	52%	50%	-4.0%	
Average household size	2.2	2.3	4.5%	
Households with non-family members	3%	4%	30.0%	
Households with children under 18	34%	33%	-2.4%	
Households with any member 65 years or older	14%	17%	21.4%	
Households with at least one person in poor health 8.1.1	23%	21%	-8.3%	
Households with single parents	15%	12%	-22.7%	
Households with single parents among households with children <18 years	45%	35%	-21.6%	
Households with one or more adults employed	33%	32%	-1.8%	
Full time employment of all adults in client households	12%	11%	-5.0%	
Part time employment of all adults in client households	16%	14%	-12.5%	
Average monthly income 5.8.2.1	\$880	\$990	12.5%	\$110
Median monthly Income 5.8.2.1	\$750	\$800	6.7%	\$50
Average monthly income as percentage of the poverty 5.8.2.1	82%	80%	-2.7%	
Clients that own home (of those with a place to live) 5.9.1.1	11%	10%	-10.9%	
Clients that rent home (of those with a place to live) 5.9.1.1	78%	78%	-0.4%	

As noted earlier, 27% of clients surveyed reported that they were homeless. (Table 1) Of the 77% who did have a place to live; 10% owned their homes while 78% rented their homes. The remainder lived with someone for free. More than 1 in 4 clients were late in paying last month's rent or mortgage. (See Appendix 3, Table 1)

Nearly 18% of all houses served indicated that a job was their primary source of income for the previous month; 42% receive social security, disability worker's compensation (SSDI) or supplemental security income (SSI); 5% reported receiving traditional welfare (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families or General Assistance). (See Appendix 3, Table 1)

About half of the households reported monthly incomes of less than \$800 with 80% of households living below the federal poverty line of \$1,526 for a family of three (average household size reported by emergency service users is 2.3). The average household income for all clients during the previous month was \$990.

Table 4 demonstrates that more clients in 2009 than in 2005 have some basic means available to them such as a place to prepare food, access to a telephone and access to a car. Nevertheless, well over half of the clients report that their household members have to make some difficult choices. Within these choices, choosing between paying for heat and paying for food has remained relatively level since 2005; choosing between rent and mortgage has decreased slightly; but choices between medicine and food show an increase of over 20%. One third of respondents have had to choose between food and transportation; these numbers were not included in the 2005 study.

Table 4: Household Resources and Choices	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Clients with access to a place where they can prepare a meal 5.9.2.1	88%	81%	-8.4%
Clients with a working telephone 5.9.2.1	89%	80%	-10.6%
Clients with a working car 5.9.2.1	48%	38%	-20.4%
Clients who have to make any of the choices below:	55%	64%	16.2%
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or rent/mortgage 6.5.1	39%	34%	-13.1%
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or utilities/heat 6.5.1	45%	44%	-2.7%
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or medical care 6.5.1	30%	37%	21.7%
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or transportation 6.5.1	N/A	33%	N/A
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or gas for a car 6.5.1	N/A	25%	N/A

Food Stamps

Table 5 shows that the number of client households currently receiving food stamps has increased sharply since 2005, from 37% to 48%. During this time period, there has been a 7% increase in state enrollment numbers. In 2006, 61% of those eligible were enrolled in the Food Stamp program or SNAP³ and according to the Program Access Index, the current rate for Massachusetts is 65%⁴. The number of client households that had applied for food stamps in the last year and were currently not receiving them has remained relatively flat, decreasing slightly from 23% to 20%, suggesting that strong community and federal efforts to increase food stamp usage and streamline the process continues to be effective. Some clients do not even apply for food stamps and there has been significant changes since 2005 in the reasons for not applying: those who believe they are ineligible has decreased from 48% in 2005 to 26%; 34% feel it is inconvenient (vs. 16% in 2005), and 27% feel there is a social stigma (vs. 5% in 2005).

Food stamps last for two and a half weeks per month on average for those clients who do receive them; this is unchanged since 2005. The average client household has been receiving food stamps for 142 weeks versus 95 weeks in 2005, suggesting that more households are using food stamps and for longer periods of time than in the past.

Table 5: Food Stamps and Other Feeding Programs	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09

³ USDA: Food and Nutrition Service, "State Food Stamp Participation Rates in 2006", prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, 2008

⁴ USDA: Food and Nutrition Service, "SNAP Program Access Index Calculation: 2008", October 2009

Client or anyone in HH currently receiving food stamps 7.1.1	37%	48%	30.0%
Client or anyone in HH applied but not received in last 12 months	23%	20%	-11.3%
Avg. number of weeks during the month over which food stamps usually last 7.1.1	2.4	2.6	8.3%
Avg. number of weeks clients or their households have currently been receiving food stamps 7.1.1	94.6	141.7	49.8%
Reasons why clients or their households never applied for food stamps 7.2.1			
Ineligibility	48%	26%	-45.4%
Inconvenience	17%	34%	97.1%
No Need	19%	11%	-40.5%
Social Stigma	5%	27%	442.0%
Other	18%	16%	-11.7%
Clients participating in the school breakfast program 7.4.1	51%	49%	-4.3%
Clients participating in the school lunch program 7.4.1	67%	61%	-9.6%
Clients participating in the summer feeding program 7.4.1	15%	21%	38.7%
Did not know about summer feeding program of eligible non-participants 7.4.2	N/A	43%	N/A

In households with children under 18 years of age, 61% participate in school lunch programs (vs. 67% in 2005); 49% in school breakfast programs (vs. 51% in 2005) and 21% participate in summer feeding programs (vs. 15% in 2005). When clients were asked the reason why their children did not participate in summer feeding programs, 43% responded that they did not know about it.

Food Security

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has developed the Food Security Core Module, which measures the level of food security in a household. It provides a consistent basis for comparing food insecurity and hunger prevalence over time and across different populations. In the 2009 study, the same battery of questions was asked of clients but the nomenclature was changed in order to more clearly distinguish from the physiological state of hunger and the issues of food availability. The Core Module uses the following definitions to define its populations:

- **Food security** refers to assured access to enough food at all times for an active and healthy life
- **Low food security** households are those that “while faced with food access problems, typically do not experience incidents of reduced food intake.” This compares with the classification of “Food Insecurity” in the 2005 study.
- **Very low food security** is defined as one of more household member experiencing “reductions in food intake or disruption in eating patterns due to lack of adequate resources for food” This compares with the classification of “Hungry” in the 2005 study.⁵

⁵ Mark Nord, Margaret Andrews, and Steven Carlson. “Household Food Security in the United States, 2007.” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, 2008. Economic Research Report No. 66 (ERS-66) November 2008.

The Core Module contains a set of questions about the various aspects of household food sufficiency which provide a measure of the severity and extent of food insecurity. Some results of the questions include: 65% of clients ate less than they felt they should have in the last year (up from 52% in 2005) and 14% of clients with children had their children skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food (unchanged since 2005). (See Appendix 4, Table 2)

Table 6 is a listing of various household types and the percentages that are in each Food Security category. Notably, food insecure households have increased overall from 68% in 2005 to 80% in 2009. This is particularly evident in households with seniors (42% in 2005 to 65% in 2009) and in households with children under 18 (70% in 2005 to 78% in 2009) with one third of these households experiencing extreme lack of consistent access to food. While there appears to be some directional improvement regarding food security in households that are food stamp participants, the number of households with very low food security has increased for both households with food stamps and households without food stamps.

Table 6: Food Security	2005	2005	2005	2009	2009	2009	% Change '05 - '09	% Change '05 - '09	% Change '05 - '09
Household Type	Food Secure	Food Insecure w/o hunger	Food Insecure w/ hunger	Food Secure	Food Insecure With Low Food Security	Food Insecure With Very Low Food Security	Food Secure	Food Insecure Without Hunger / With Low Food Security	Food Insecure With Hunger / Very Low Food Security
All Households 6.1.1.1	32%	38%	30%	20%	35%	45%	-39.1%	-7.1%	50.7%
Households with Children under 18 6.1.1.2	31%	40%	29%	22%	45%	33%	-29.0%	11.8%	14.8%
Households with Seniors over 65 6.1.1.4	58%	33%	9%	36%	43%	21%	-38.1%	30.6%	133.3%
Households with Food Stamp Participants 6.1.2.1	22%	49%	29%	13%	41%	46%	-40.0%	-16.5%	58.3%
Households w/o Food Stamp Participants 6.1.2.1	37%	32%	31%	24%	24%	52%	-34.1%	-25.3%	66.8%

Agency Data

More than three quarters (82%) of The Greater Boston Food Bank members responded to questions regarding 858 distinct programs. In this census of agencies, 55% were emergency food providers or EFPs (up from 47% in 2005): 34% pantries, 11% soup kitchens, and 10% shelters. The results include information on the trend of increasing growth and stabilization of the

emergency food system (Table 7); demographic highlights of the agencies; and feedback for GBFB.

Growth and Stabilization

The Greater Boston Food Bank is crucial to sustaining the emergency food system. From 2005 to the present, the number of pounds that GBFB distributed has increased by 27% from 24,764,467 to 31,496,955. Reliance on GBFB by pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters continues to increase with 91% overall saying that it would be a significant or devastating loss if there were no Food Bank. The amount of food that each program receives from GBFB remains high and overall is consistent with levels reported in 2005: pantries receive 69% of their food from GBFB (up from 64% in 2005); soup kitchens receive 40% (relatively level with 2005 when they reported an average of 44%); shelters receive 41% of their food from GBFB (down slightly from 51% in 2005).

Table 7: Agency Data	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Agency Respondents - (Eastern Massachusetts - GBFB)	405	469	15.8%
Percent Program response in E. Massachusetts	65%	82%	25.5%
Total Pounds Distributed (GBFB Data)	24,764,467	31,496,955	27.2%
Total Agencies (includes programs) (GBFB Data)	673	575	-14.6%
Pantries	41%	53%	29.4%
Kitchens	9%	12%	31.4%
Shelters	18%	18%	1.4%
Number of EFPs (not including programs)	465	480	3.2%
All EFPs (includes Disaster Relief agencies)	69%	84%	21.0%
Average length of operations, in years 10.4.1			
Pantries	19	20	5.3%
Soup Kitchens	17	22	29.4%
Shelters	19	23	21.1%
Average percentage of food received from The Food Bank by program type 13.1.1			
Pantries	64%	69%	7.2%
Soup Kitchens	44%	40%	-9.5%
Shelters	51%	41%	-18.8%
Faith based or religion affiliated non-profit 10.6.1	32%	37%	16.9%
Faith based or religion affiliated non-profit by program type 10.6.1			
Pantries	52%	52%	0.4%
Soup Kitchens	43%	43%	-0.7%
Shelters	14%	14%	1.4%

Agencies that would see a devastating or significant impact if GBFB was eliminated. 14.2.1	93.0%	91%	-2.0%
Pantries	93%	95%	2.4%
Soup Kitchens	91%	83%	-9.2%

Shelters	93%	86%	-8.1%
Client satisfaction with food 9.2.1			
Very or somewhat satisfied with amount of food	90%	85%	-5.9%
Very or somewhat satisfied with quality of food	90%	81%	-10.3%
Very or somewhat satisfied with variety of food	85%	77%	-9.2%

When clients were asked about their satisfaction with the food they received, 80% were “very” or “somewhat” satisfied with the quality; 85% with the amount and 77% with the variety. This statistic is reflective of both GBFB and the agencies.

More than half of the pantries in the emergency food system are run by faith based organizations (52%) while 43% of soup kitchens and 14% of shelters are faith based.

More than nine out of ten pantries and soup kitchens rely on volunteers (vs. 57% of shelters) while half of food pantries and one quarter of soup kitchens have no paid staff at all. Average number of volunteer hours per week varied by program with pantries at 50 hours, soup kitchens at 87 hours and shelters at 19 hours. This has changed from 2005 when pantries averaged 38 hours; soup kitchens 94 hours; and shelters averaged 37 hours. (See Appendix 5, Tables 3-5)

It is clear that the emergency feeding network in eastern Massachusetts has become institutionalized; the average age of all agencies has increased slightly since 2005: a pantry is now 20 years, soup kitchen 22 years and shelter, 23 years. More than 86% of the pantries estimated serving more clients than they were 4 years ago; 74% of soup kitchens and 37% of shelters.

Agency Demographics

Below are some of the highlights of the demographic information detailed in Appendix 5 and changes from the 2005 survey:

Pantries: N=304 (non-composite demographics)

- Female (69%; vs. 73% in 2005)
- 30 – 49 years old (49%; vs. 44% in 2005)
- Never been married (30% vs. 36% in 2005)
- Completed High School (34% vs. 45% in 2005)
- Currently employed (18% vs. 30% in 2005)
- Homeless (6% vs. 2% in 2005)
- In HH where at least one adult is employed (35% vs. 42% in 2005)
- White (50% vs. 65% in 2005); African American (21% unchanged since 2005); Hispanic (21% vs. 10% in 2005)

Soup Kitchens: N=95 (non-composite demographics)

- Male (45% vs. 47% in 2005)
- 30 – 49 years old (49% unchanged since 2005)
- Never been married (62% vs. 37% in 2005)
- Completed High School (40% vs. 52% in 2005)
- Currently employed (9% vs. 11% in 2005)
- Homeless (52% vs. 16% in 2005)
- In HH where at least one adult is employed (23% vs. 18% in 2005)

- White (48% vs. 59% in 2005); African American (25% vs. 18% in 2005); Hispanic (2% vs. 13% in 2005)

Shelters: N=77 (non-composite demographics)

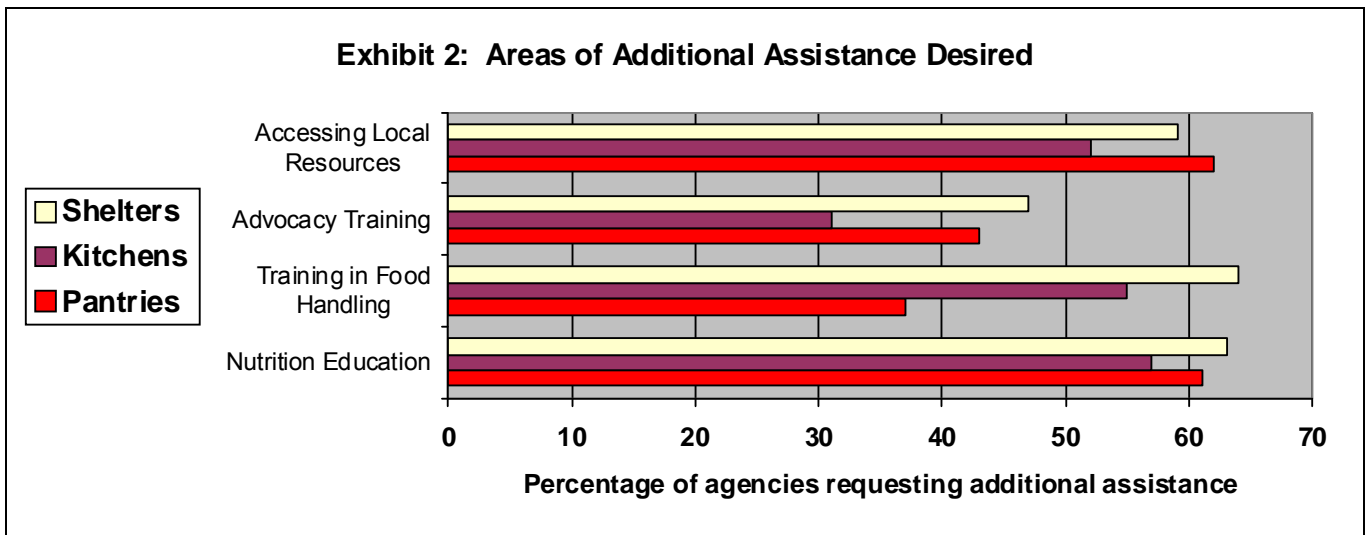
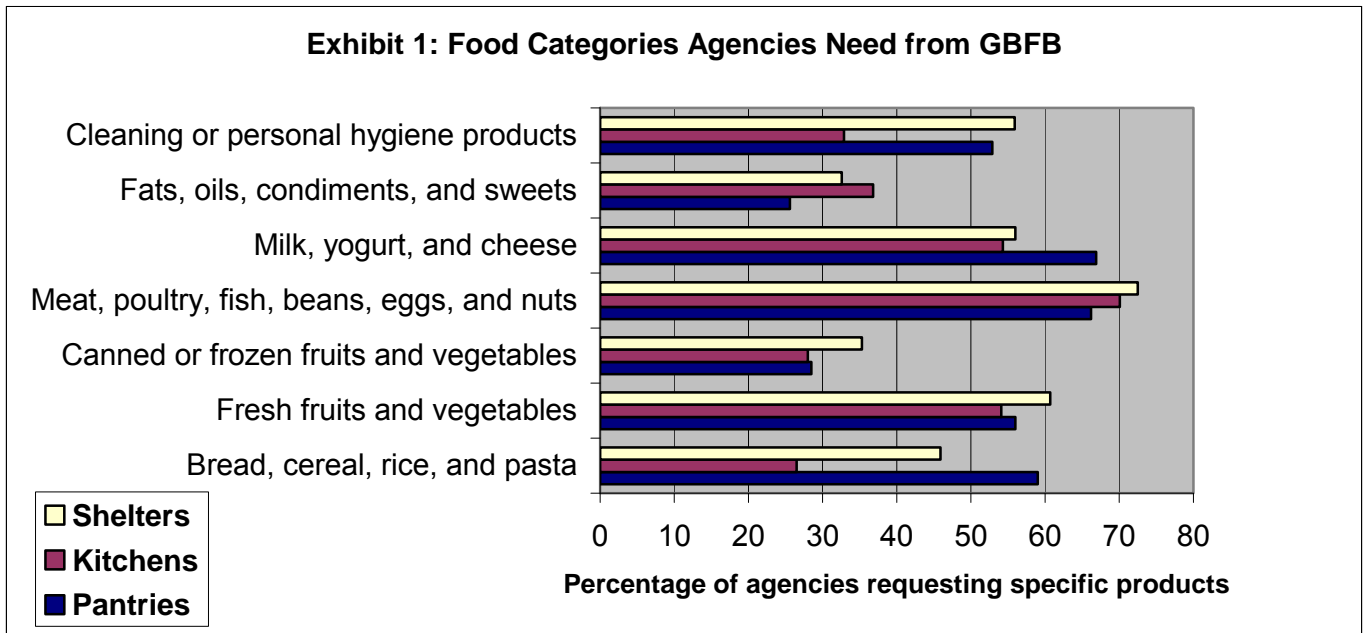
- Male (83% vs. 30% in 2005)
- 18-29 years old (69% vs. 38 in 2005)
- 30 – 49 years old (22% vs. 57% in 2005)
- Never been married (82% vs. 72% in 2005)
- Completed High School (84% vs. 28% in 2005)
- Currently working (34% vs. 7% in 2005)
- Homeless (91% vs. 83% in 2005)
- Is in HH where at least one adult is employed (34% - no data available in 2005)
- White (18% vs. 82% in 2005); African American (16% vs. 13% in 2005); Hispanic (34% vs. 5% in 2005)

Pantries distributed an average of 310 bags or boxes of food in a typical week. The last time soup kitchens served a meal, they averaged 136 meals served. Shelters averaged 109 meals served. (Appendix 5, Table 3-5)

Overall, fewer agencies are reporting that they have had to turn away clients over the past year. (See Appendix 5, Tables 3-5) 17% of all pantries had to turn clients away in the past year, down from 30% in 2005; 5% of soup kitchens (down from 15% in 2005); and 30% of shelters (down from 44% in 2005). Reasons given most often for turning away clients in pantries were that there was a lack of food resources (41%); clients lived outside the service area (20%); clients abused the program or came too often (15%); or clients could not prove eligibility (15%). Reasons given by soup kitchens for turning away clients include clients were ineligible or could not prove eligibility (27%); and clients exhibited drug, alcohol or a behavior problem (24%). And within shelters, 28% exhibited drug, alcohol or behavioral problems, 22% were due to a lack of resources, and 33% of clients turned away were not eligible or could not prove eligibility.

Agency Feedback

Agency directors also provided information regarding how GBFB could assist them more effectively. The following two exhibits detail the types of food agencies requested and the areas of additional assistance that they would like.



Survey Implications

While GBFB has increased the amount of food distributed to emergency food providers throughout E. Massachusetts decreasing the amount of clients that agencies, are forced to turn away, food stamp usage on the other hand has increased and the overall need continues to outpace the ability of these organizations to provide all of the help that is required. In four years, the number of people served has increased 23%. Household food insecurity has risen from 65% to 80%. Homelessness has increased significantly. Clearly the weakened economy has had a continued, deleterious impact on low income households in eastern Massachusetts.

Additionally, emergency food providers are more dependent than ever on the Food Bank network. There is a high reliance on volunteer help and an admission that if The Food Bank were not able to provide food, the effect would be “devastating” on the network, particularly pantries which comprise the vast majority of the hunger relief network. Furthermore, the agencies are looking for more types of food and services to be provided by the Food Bank.

With respect to the clients themselves, significantly more people are availing themselves of the emergency food system in eastern Massachusetts. In fact, four out of five clients are living in what are classified as “food insecure” households. The decrease in weekly usage could indicate many things but we believe that it shows the decrease in days that facilities are open to clients as well as the lack of sustained usage of the system by many clients (recall that the number measures “unduplicated” usage on a weekly basis so if agencies are able to accommodate fewer people during the week owing to their own hours but each week these are different people, the annual number would show an increase while the weekly a decrease) that if there is multiple usage by one client, that client is only counted once). Overall, hunger is not an issue that can be tied neatly to any particular demographic class. There are significant numbers of whites, blacks and Hispanics; there is representation at all age levels. Nine out of ten clients are US citizens while two-thirds are registered voters. There is no disproportionate gender usage. Average household income is low although one third of households reported at least one working adult and eight out of ten have at least a high school education. More people are using food stamps than four years ago and yet the usage rate is still under 50%. Fewer households with children under 18 are participating in school breakfast and lunch programs while more are participating in summer feeding programs.

At any given time, at least one third of clients have had to make choices between food and other critical survival factors such as heat, housing, medical care or transportation. The number of homeless clients has risen to more than one in four while three quarters of those who have homes rent (with one quarter of those clients receiving public housing assistance) and one in ten own their own homes. One in seven households report having someone in poor health, meanwhile more than nine in ten do indicate having some sort of health insurance.

Hunger does not have a neat profile. But it continues to grow and the need for emergency services is as strong as ever.

Appendix 1: Overview of the Feeding America Network⁶

A **food bank** is a charitable organization that solicits, receives, inventories, stores, and distributes donated food and grocery products to charitable agencies that directly serve needy clients.

Food banks distribute food to qualifying [Internal Revenue Code 501(c) (3)] charitable **agencies**, most of which provide food directly to needy clients through food programs. Some agencies operate single-type and single-site food programs, while others operate food programs at multiple sites and may operate multiple types of food programs.

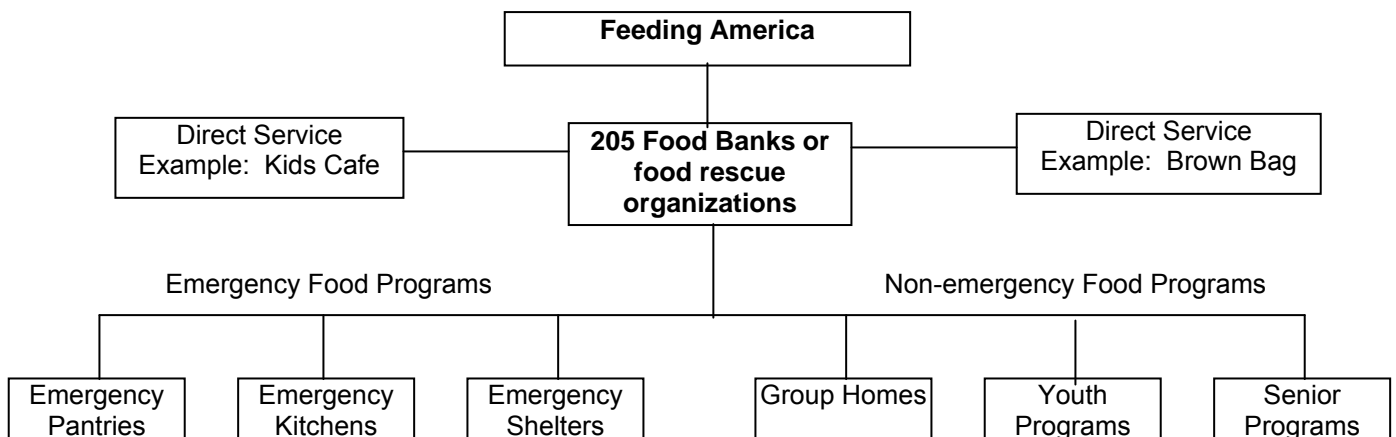
There are two general categories of the food programs served by Feeding America food banks: **emergency** food programs and **non-emergency** food programs. Emergency food programs include food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. The people the emergency agencies feed typically need short-term or emergency assistance.

Emergency **food pantries** distribute non-prepared foods and other grocery products to needy clients, who then prepare and use these items where they live. Food is distributed on a short-term or emergency basis until clients are able to meet their needs.

Emergency **soup kitchens** provide prepared meals served at the kitchen to needy clients. These clients do not reside on the premises. In some instances, kitchens may also provide lighter meals or snacks, such as sandwiches, for clients to take with them for use when the kitchen is closed.

Emergency **shelters** provide shelter services and serve one or more meals a day on a short-term basis to low-income clients in need. Shelter may be the primary or secondary purpose of the service. Examples include homeless shelters, shelters with substance abuse programs, and transitional shelters such as those for battered women. Residential programs that provide services to the same clients for an extended time period are not categorized as shelters for the purpose of this study. Other examples of programs that are not included as shelters are mental health/mental retardation group homes and juvenile probation group homes.

Non-emergency organizations refer to any programs that have a primary purpose other than emergency food distribution but also distribute food. Examples include day care programs, senior congregate-feeding programs, and summer camps



⁶ Overview adapted from *Hunger in America 2010 National Report*.

Appendix 2: Overview

Table 1	2005	2009	05-'09 Change
Agency Respondents (National - FA) n=	31,342	37,098	18.4%
Agency Respondents - (Eastern Massachusetts - GBFB) n=	405	469	15.8%
Percent Program response in E. Massachusetts	65%	82%	25.5%
Client Respondents (National - FA) n=	52,887	62,143	17.5%
Client Respondents (Eastern Massachusetts - GBFB) n=	443	543	22.6%
GBFB People Served - Annually p38	321,500	394,300	22.6%
GBFB People Served - Weekly p38	83,100	74,300	-10.6%
*All people and households served are unduplicated numbers.			

Table 2	2004	2008	Change	% Change
Massachusetts Population*	6,416,505	6,497,967	81,462	1.3%
Eastern Massachusetts Population (9 GBFB Counties)*	4,816,558	4,897,208	80,650	1.7%
Massachusetts People in Poverty (%) (SAIPE**)	9.35%	9.7%		0.0%
Massachusetts People in Poverty (#) (SAIPE**)	600,318	632,158	31,840	5.3%
People in GBFB Counties in Poverty (SAIPE**)	430,557	461,728	31,171	7.2%
Eastern MA population served by GBFB	6.7%	8.1%		0.0%
People in poverty served by GBFB	75%	85.4%		13.9%
*From Supplementary Survey 2004 & 2008 Annual Census Estimates.				
** U.S. Census Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (Intercensal) - Actual people in poverty and percentages of people in poverty vary due to estimation methods.				

Appendix 3: Client Demographics			
Table 1: Household Observations	2005	2009	Change '05 - '09
Clients without a place to live 5.9.1.1	16%	27%	68.8%
All members of all households - female 5.3.2	58%	54%	-6.7%
Households with 1 member 5.2.1	52%	50%	-4.0%
Households with 2-3 members 5.2.1	27%	27%	0.0%
Households with children younger than 18 5.2.1	34%	33%	-2.9%
Households with any children younger than 5 5.2.1	13%	14%	3.8%
Households with single parents 5.2.1	15%	12%	-22.7%
Households with any member 65 years or older* 5.2.1	14%	17%	21.4%

People over 65 living in HH (8% of people served in HH receiving support are 65+) 5.3.2	7%	8%	17.1%	
Clients late paying last month's rent or mortgage 5.9.1.1	17%	29%	71.8%	
Clients who are high school graduates 5.5.1	44%	42%	-4.5%	
Clients who are college graduates 5.5.1	10%	14%	43.0%	
Clients who are employed 5.7.2	23%	25%	10.4%	
Households with one or more adults employed 5.2.1	33%	32%	-1.8%	
Clients with managerial experience among those who have or are working 5.7.2	17%	23%	34.1%	
Households with at least one person in poor health 8.1.1	23%	20%	-11.3%	
Average monthly income 5.8.2.1	\$880	\$990	\$110	12.5%
Median monthly Income 5.8.2.1	\$750	\$800	\$50	6.7%
Average monthly income as percentage of the poverty 5.8.2.1	82%	80%	-2.7%	
Average annual income 5.8.4.1	\$12,210	\$13,090	7.2%	
Primary source of household income				
Job	19%	18%	-7.9%	
Social Security, Disability Worker's Compensation (SSDI), or Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	48%	46%	-5.0%	
Traditional Welfare (TANF or General Assistance)	4%	5%	17.5%	
Clients that own home (of those with a place to live) 5.9.1.1	11%	10%	-10.9%	
Clients that rent home (of those with a place to live) 5.9.1.1	78%	78%	-0.4%	
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or rent/mortgage 6.5.1	39%	34%	-13.1%	
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or utilities/heat 6.5.1	45%	44%	-2.7%	
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or medical care 6.5.1	30%	37%	21.7%	
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or transportation 6.5.1	N/A	33%	N/A	
Clients who had to choose between paying for food or gas for a car 6.5.1	N/A	25%	N/A	
Percent of clients that had to choose at least one of above 6.5.1	55%	64%	17.1%	

Clients with access to a place where they can prepare a meal 5.9.2.1	88%	81%	-8.4%
Clients with a working telephone 5.9.2.1	89%	80%	-10.6%
Clients with a working car 5.9.2.1	48%	38%	-20.4%

Table 2: Ethnicity of clients (Not of Households) 5.6.1	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Non-Hispanic White	66%	45%	-32.3%
African-American	19%	21%	9.5%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4%	6%	45.0%
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	1%	0.1%	-90.0%
Asian	1%	0.7%	-30.0%
Spanish, Latino, or Hispanic	11%	24%	113.6%
Other	5%	7%	40.0%

Table 3: Program Usage 7.4.1	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Senior Nutrition Sites	30%	21%	-29.7%
Home Delivered Meals	6%	11%	86.7%
Brown Bags	8%	8%	-2.5%
WIC	71%	70%	-1.5%
Day Care	21%	50%	136.7%
School Lunch	67%	61%	-9.6%
School Breakfast	51%	49%	-4.3%
Summer Feeding	15%	21%	38.7%
General Assistance, Welfare, TANF 7.5.1	11%	18%	66.4%

Appendix 4: Food Stamps and Food Security Issues			
	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Table 1			
Client or anyone in HH currently receiving 7.1.1	37%	48%	30.0%
Client or anyone in HH applied but not received in last 12 months	23%	20%	-11.3%
Avg. number of weeks during the month over which food stamps usually last 7.1.1	2.4	2.6	8.3%
Avg. number of weeks clients or their households have currently been receiving food stamps 7.1.1	94.6	141.7	49.8%
Reasons why clients or their households never applied for food stamps 7.2.1			

Ineligibility	48%	26%	-45.4%
Inconvenience	17%	34%	97.1%
No Need	19%	11%	-40.5%
Social Stigma	5%	27%	442.0%
Other	18%	16%	-11.7%

Table 2	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Percentage of clients who agreed with the following (all in the last 12 months):			
Ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money to buy food 6.3.1	52%	65%	24.4%
Their children skipped meals because there wasn't enough money for food 6.4.1	13%	14%	3.8%
Their children were hungry at least once but couldn't afford more food 6.4.1	22%	15%	-31.8%
Their children were often or sometimes not eating enough because they couldn't afford enough food 6.4.1	29%	28%	-4.1%
Table 1 reads: 48% of GBFB agency clients' households are currently receiving food stamps, up from 37% in 2005.			
Table 2 reads: 65% of all GBFB agency clients agreed that at some point in the last 12 months they ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money to buy food.			

Appendix 5: Agency Data			
	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Faith based or religion affiliated non-profit 10.6.1	32%	37%	16.9%

Table 1: Emergency Food Provider (EFP) Information (GBFB Data)	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09	% of lbs Distributed (based on FY 2009 Dist. Lbs.)
Pantries	41%	53%	29.4%	73.6%
Kitchens	9%	12%	31.4%	7.1%
Shelters	18%	18%	1.4%	8.0%
All EFPs (includes Disaster Relief agencies)	69%	84%	21.0%	88.7%
Number of EFPs (not including programs)	465	480	3.2%	

Table 2 Distribution and Programs (GBFB Data)	2005	2009	Change '05 - '09	% Change '05 - '09
Total Pounds Distributed	24,764,467	31,496,955	6,732,488	27.2%
Total Agencies(includes programs)	673	575	-98	-14.6%

Table 3: Pantries	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Average length of operations, in years 10.4.1	19	20	5.3%
Faith-based or religion-affiliated nonprofit 10.6.1	52%	52%	0.4%
Estimated serving more clients when compared to previous study year 10.8.1	80%	87%	8.2%
Average number of bags or boxes of food distributed in a typical week 11.1.1	235	310	31.9%
Average percentage of food received from the food bank 13.1.1	64%	69%	7.2%
Pantries turning away clients	30%	16.5%	-45.0%
Reasons for turning away clients			
Lack of food resources	39%	53.3%	36.7%
Clients lived outside service area	37%	30.3%	-18.5%
Clients abused program or came too often	58%	51.3%	-11.6%
Clients were not eligible or could not prove eligibility	26%	32.6%	25.4%
Agencies who would see a devastating or significant impact if GBFB were eliminated	93%	95%	2.4%
No paid staff 13.2.1	51%	53%	4.3%
Use of volunteers	90%	95.8%	6.4%
Average volunteer hours	38	50	31.6%
Typical Pantry Client (non-composite demographics):			
Female	73%	69%	-5.8%
30-49 years old	44%	49%	10.2%
Never been Married	36%	30%	-16.9%
Completed High school	45%	34%	-25.3%
Currently Employed	30%	18%	-40.3%
Homeless	2%	6%	195.0%
White	65%	50%	-23.7%
African American	20%	21%	3.5%
Hispanic	11%	21%	88.2%

Table 4: Soup Kitchens (Congregate Meal Programs)	2005	2009	% Change '05 - '09
Average length of operations, in years. 10.4.1	17	22	29.4%
Faith-based or religion-affiliated nonprofit. 10.6.1	43%	43%	-0.7%

Estimated serving more clients when compared to 2005. 10.8.1	60%	74%	24.0%
Average number of meals served last time kitchen was open 11.2.1	135	136	0.7%
Average percentage of food received from the food bank. 13.1.1	44%	40%	-9.5%
Soup kitchens turning away clients	15%	4.7%	-68.7%
Reasons for turning away clients			
Clients were not eligible or could not prove eligibility	13%	50.0%	284.6%
Clients exhibited drug, alcohol, or behavior problem	87%	50.0%	-42.5%
Agencies that would see a devastating or significant impact if GBFB was eliminated. 14.2.1	91%	83%	-9.2%
No paid staff	31%	27%	-13.9%
Use of volunteers	95%	92.2%	-2.9%
Average volunteer hours	94	87	-7.4%
Typical Kitchen Client (non-composite demographics):			
Male	47%	45%	-4.3%
30-49 years old	48%	49%	1.0%
Never been Married	37%	62%	68.1%
Completed High school	52%	40%	-23.8%
Currently Employed	11%	9%	-15.5%
Homeless	16%	52%	225.0%
White	59%	48%	-19.2%
African American	18%	25%	37.8%
Hispanic	13%	2%	-82.3%

Table 5: Shelters	2005	2009	% Change '05-'09
Average length of operations, in years. 10.4.1	19	23	21.1%
Faith-based or religion-affiliated nonprofit. 10.6.1	14%	14%	1.4%
Estimated serving more clients when compared to 2005. 10.8.1	50%	37%	-25.6%
Average number of meals served last time shelter was open. 11.2.1	118	109	-7.6%
Average percentage of food received from the food bank. 13.1.1	51%	41%	-18.8%
Shelters turning away clients	44%	29.8%	-32.3%
Reasons for turning away clients			
Clients exhibited drug, alcohol, or behavior problem	33%	62.0%	87.9%
Lack of food resources	14%	20.8%	48.6%

Clients needed services not provided by program	28%	42.5%	51.8%
Clients were not eligible or could not prove eligibility	44%	32.7%	-25.7%
Clients abused program or came too often	10%	15.2%	52.0%
Agencies that would see a devastating or significant impact if GBFB was eliminated. 14.2.1	93%	86%	-8.1%
No paid staff	2%	0%	-100.0%
Use of volunteers	73%	56.7%	-22.3%
Average volunteer hours	37	19	-48.6%
Typical Shelter Client (non-composite demographics):			
Male	30%	83%	177.0%
18-29 years old	38%	69%	79.8%
30-49 years old	57%	22%	-62.3%
Never been Married	72%	82%	13.5%
Completed High school	28%	84%	198.6%
Currently Working	7%	34%	388.6%
Homeless	83%	91%	9.6%
White	82%	18%	-78.7%
American Indian or Alaskan Native	4%	32%	N/A
African American	13%	16%	22.3%
Hispanic	5%	34%	588.0%

Appendix 6: Survey Methodology and Statistical Significance⁷

PRECISION OF REPORTED ESTIMATES: SURVEY ERROR AND SAMPLING ERROR

Users of these should be aware that many of the estimates in the report are based on relatively small sample sizes and are subject to survey error, which includes statistical sampling error and error from the operational components of the survey (non-sampling error), such as non-response, reporting error and measurement error. While the sampling design and sample sizes can impose some control on the sampling error (and while this error can be quantified), the non-sampling error reflects the degree of success in designing the questionnaire and data collection procedures and in conducting the data collection activities at all stages. Unfortunately, the non-sampling error cannot be quantified. The exact amount of variation (both sampling error and non-sampling error) will be different for different food banks, and the relative contribution of sampling error and non-sampling error to the total survey error will also vary by food bank.

In general, users should be aware that, at a minimum, most of the percentages in the report are measured with sampling variation in the range of +/- 8 points. For instance, if food stamp participation rates among households served by a food bank are estimated to be—say—43%, it is very likely that the margin of error at a minimum extends from 35% to 51% around the 43% estimate. The “margin of error” is likely to be much higher with smaller sample sizes.

⁷ Description from Hunger in America: 2010 Local Report Prepared for The Greater Boston Foodbank. Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

For estimates of annual numbers of clients, the margin of error tends to be in the range of about 25% of the estimates. For instance if a food bank's providers are estimated to serve—say—100,000 different clients annually, the margin of error around this estimate would extent from about 75,000 to 125,000. In general, sampling error can depend on such factors as:

- Overall number of clients interviewed
- The number of different providers of each type at which clients were interviewed
- The specific variable(s) being considered

The ranges of precision highlighted above focus only on sampling variation due to statistical sampling and the number of completed interviews. As noted previously, other forms of survey error (the non-sampling error) will increase overall survey error. These other forms of error include:

- **Non-response.** When completed interviews is obtained from only a portion of the clients selected for the survey
- **Response Error.** When the client interviewed does not provide an accurate answer to a question because the client either misunderstands the question or chooses not to provide an accurate answer
- **Reporting Error.** When counts or other information used in the sampling and other data collection activities are in error or missing
- **Measurement Error.** When the question in the questionnaire is not worded effectively to obtain the desired information from the client.

These forms of error exist in all surveys, but the size of the non-sampling error (relative to the sampling error) depends on the design of the data collection activities and implementation of these by all persons involved in the survey.

SAMPLING ERROR UNDER DIFFERENT CIRCUMSTANCES

The food bank reports contain a wealth of information and an extensive number of estimates based on the survey data. While in general it is desirable and useful to provide detailed information on the sampling variation for all variables for each specific food bank and in the multiple food bank-level reports, this is not feasible and would potentially detract from the usefulness of the reports. To provide a useful measure of the extent of sampling error in the estimates, we have computed estimates of the statistical variation for selected variables to identify the general range of sampling variation⁷. Based on those calculations, we provide below some general guidelines that can be useful in helping food banks assess how much statistical variation is present in their estimates. The guidelines follow.⁸

Guidelines for Estimated Percentages for All Clients or Only Pantry Clients

The largest sample sizes at the food bank level are for the overall client sample and for the subsample of pantry users. Following are guidelines for sampling variation for these groups:

⁷ As noted before, the measures of sampling variation do not account for non-sampling error.

⁸ Estimates of the sampling variation are based on estimates computed using data analysis software design for complex surveys (SUDAAN) to estimate standard errors for selected estimates for each individual participating food banks. The estimates in this appendix reflect average standard errors across food banks. The calculations take into account clustering, differential sampling rates, and other aspects of the sampling design. The confidence intervals reported in the text are 90% confidence intervals.

Guideline 1. If you are considering a percentage estimate in the range of 30% to 70% and if the estimate is based on between 300 and 500 observations, then the margin of error is likely to be plus-or-minus about 8 percentage points.

Example 1. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank estimates the percentage of pantry households that include at least one working member as 30%. Also, suppose the sample size for pantry clients at that food bank is 330. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 22% and 38%.

Guideline 2. If you are considering a percentage estimate below 30% or above 70%, and if the estimate is based on between 300 and 500 observations, then the margin of error is likely to be plus-or-minus about 5 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 1 but with a different percentage range.)

Example 2. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank estimates the percentage of all households that include at least one member who is 65 years old or older. Suppose the estimate is 10%, and suppose the sample size for pantry clients at that food bank is 316. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 5% and 15%.

Guideline 3. If you are considering a percentage estimate in the range of 30% to 70% and if the estimate is based on 100 to 300 observations, then the margin of error is plus-or-minus about 9 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 1 but with a different sample size.)

Example 3. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank estimates the percentage of pantry households that are food insecure to be 60%, and suppose the sample size for pantry clients at that food bank is 122. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 51% and 69%.

Guideline 4. If you are considering a percentage estimate below 30% or above 70%, and if the estimate is based on about 100 to 300 observations, then the margin of error is likely to be about plus-or-minus about 6 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 2 but with a different sample size.)

Example 4. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank has an estimate of 15% for the percentage of all households that include at least one member who is 65 years old or older. Suppose too that the sample size for pantry clients at that food bank is 220. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 9% and 21%.

Guidelines for Estimated Percentages for Clients at Kitchens or Shelters

The numbers of completed interviews at kitchens and shelters tend to be smaller and the estimates from these providers also inherently have greater statistical variation because of the frequency of operation. Following are guidelines for sampling variation for these groups:

For Kitchens

Guideline 5. If you are considering a percentage estimate for kitchens in the range of 30% to 70% and if the estimate is based on between 30 and 50 observations, then the margin of error is approximately plus-or-minus about 18 percentage points.

Example 5. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank include an estimate that 40% of the kitchen households include at least one working member. Also, suppose the sample size for kitchen clients at that food bank is 45. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 27%and 63%.

Guideline 6. If you are considering a percentage estimate for kitchens that is below 30% or above 70%, and if the estimate is based on between 30 and 50 observations, then the margin of error is plus-or-minus about 10 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 5 but with a different percentage range.)

Example 6. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank includes an estimate of the percentage of all households that include at least one member who is 65 years old or older. Suppose the estimate is 20%, and suppose the sample size for kitchen clients at that food bank is 43. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 10% and 30%.

Guideline 7. If you are considering a percentage estimate for kitchen clients in the range of 30% to 70% and if the estimate is based on more than 50 observations, then the margin of error is plus-or-minus about 16 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 5 but with a different sample size.)

Example 7. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank estimates the percentage of kitchen households that are food insecure to be 60%, and suppose the sample size for kitchen clients at that food bank is 87. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 44% and 76%.

Guideline 8. If you are considering a percentage estimate for kitchen clients that is below 30% or above 70%, and if the estimate is based on more than 50 completed interviews, then the margin of error is plus-or-minus about 10 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 6 but with a different sample size.)

Example 8. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank has an estimate of 22% for all kitchen households include at least one member who is 65 years old or older. Suppose too that the sample size for kitchen clients at that food bank is 58. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 12% and 32%.

For Shelters

Guideline 9. If you are considering a percentage estimate for a shelter in the range of 30% to 70% and if the estimate is based on more than 30 completed interviews, then the margin of error is plus-or-minus about 19 percentage points.

Example 9. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank estimates the percentage of shelter households which food insecure as 65%. Also, suppose the sample size for shelter clients at that food bank is 45. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 46% and 84%.

Guideline 10. If you are considering a percentage estimate for shelters that is below 30% or above 70%, and if the estimate is based on more than 30 observations, then the margin of error

is plus-or-minus about 11 percentage points. (This is like Guideline 9 but with a different percentage range.)

Example 10. Suppose that the report for a specific food bank, there is the estimate of the percentage of shelter households that include at least one working member. Suppose the estimate is 20%, and suppose the sample size for shelter clients at that food bank is 43. Then we can be 90% confident that the true value lies between 9% and 31%.

Guidelines for Estimates of Numbers of Annual Clients

The food bank reports also include estimates of the numbers of *different* clients served by the food banks in a year. For the typical food bank with about 400 overall client observations, the margin of error is approximately plus-or-minus 25% of the estimate. For instance, if a food bank is estimated to have approximately 20,000 different clients annually, then the statistical margin of error extends between approximately 15,000 and 25,000 clients.

Other Information

For more information regarding the study, please call (617) 427-5200 or visit our Web site at www.gbfb.org. A copy of the Feeding America national report can be found at <http://www.hungerinamerica.org>.

This survey data is the property of The Greater Boston Food Bank and may be published in part or in whole with attribution to The Greater Boston Food Bank. For national figures, attribution must be given to Feeding America.

Data analysis and Executive Summary prepared by GBFB Chief Operating Officer Carol J. Tienken.