

## **How Many New Yorkers Are Hungry?**

- From 2007 to 2009, 12.4% of New York State residents struggled with hunger. This was a significant increase from the 9.4% classified as food insecure from 2004-2006.<sup>1</sup>
- In 2008, nearly 2.7 million New Yorkers lived in poverty, making the poverty rate 14.2% of the population. The poverty rates in Buffalo, Syracuse, Rochester, and Albany are all above 25%.<sup>2</sup>
- 1 out of 5 New York City residents lives below the federal poverty level, which is about \$18,300 for a family of three. That's 36% higher than the poverty rate in both New York State and nationwide.<sup>3</sup>
- Nearly half of NYC households with children had difficulty affording needed food in 2009.<sup>4</sup>
- Statewide, 2.3 million residents rely on emergency food assistance annually. That breaks down to approximately 570,000 different people turning to emergency food programs for weekly assistance, an increase of 70,000 people since 2006.<sup>5</sup>
- Among all client households that receive emergency food 70% are food insecure, 31% of which have very low food security.<sup>6</sup>

## **Who Are The Hungry?**

- Of the number of people receiving assistance from charitable food programs in 2010, 42% are black, 27% are Hispanic, 23% are white.<sup>7</sup>
- Children are less than a fourth (23%) of the New York City's total population but they represent 33% of city residents living below the federal poverty level.<sup>8</sup>
- EFP clients are made up of people from varying economic backgrounds: 66% of New Yorkers using EFPs have incomes below the poverty line; additionally 36% of EFP clients come from households where one or more adults are employed and 7% are counted as homeless.<sup>9</sup>
- Of women, 46% had difficulty affording food in 2009, a 64% increase since 2003 compared to 32% of men, a 45% increase during that same time.<sup>10</sup>

## **Is the Level of Hunger Increasing in New York?**

- The number of households in New York State participating in the federal food stamp program was 2,874,189 in August 2010, an increase of 365,305 households since August 2009.<sup>11</sup>
- 40% of New York City residents are having difficulty affording food, a 60% increase since 2003.<sup>12</sup>
- 93% of food pantries and soup kitchens in the city have seen an increase in first-time visitors over the past year.<sup>13</sup>
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## **Why Do We Need Emergency Food Programs?**

- 1 in 4 low income households or 23% of New York City has reported losing their job in the pass year.<sup>14</sup>
- A total of 39% of residents or almost 3.3 million people would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their household income.<sup>15</sup>
- More than half of New Yorkers who live between 100% and 200% poverty reported facing one hardship in terms of meeting their food, economic, housing or health needs. Low-income families with children are at greater risk for facing multiple hardships: nearly half reported facing more than three hardships.<sup>16</sup>
- Research consistently shows that, on average, families need an income of about twice the federal poverty level to meet their most basic needs. While 25% of income should be spent on food, 14% is spent on food with costs of housing, child care, health care, transportation and other items using up far more income.<sup>17</sup>
- 47% of households with children experienced difficulty affording needed food for themselves and their families in 2009, a 15% increase since 2003.<sup>18</sup>

- In the past year, 4 in 10 blacks and 3 in 10 Latinos in New York City either lost a job or had their hours, wages or tips reduced—or both.<sup>19</sup>
- Of New Yorkers who are eligible to receive assistance through the Food Stamp Program, only 53% actually take advantage of this federal program.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> “Food Security in the United States.” *United States Department of Agriculture*. 2010.

<sup>2</sup> “Hunger in America: The New York City and State Report.” *Food Bank for New York City and City Harvest*. 2006.

<sup>3</sup> “2009 American Community Survey.” *Food Bank for New York City*

<sup>4</sup> “Contrary to Reports of Recovery, Recent Data Reveal High Poverty in New York City.” *Food Bank of New York 2010*

<sup>5</sup> Hunger in America 2010. *Feeding America*.

<sup>6</sup> Hunger in America 2010. *Feeding America*.

<sup>7</sup> Hunger in America 2010. *Feeding America*.

<sup>8</sup> “Contrary to Reports of Recovery, Recent Data Reveal High Poverty in New York City.” *Food Bank for New York 2010*

<sup>9</sup> Hunger in America 2010. *Feeding America*.

<sup>10</sup> NYC Hunger Experience 2009: A Year in Recession. *Food Bank for New York City*.

<sup>11</sup> “Temporary and Disability Assistance Statistics: Monthly Caseload Statistics.” *Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance*. 2009, 2010.

<sup>12</sup> NYC Hunger Experience 2009: A Year in Recession. *Food Bank for New York City*.

<sup>13</sup> NYC Hunger Experience 2009: A Year in Recession. *Food Bank for New York City*.

<sup>14</sup> Unheard Third 2010: No Recovery in Sight: The Job Crisis for Low-Income New Yorkers.” *Community Service Society*. Oct 2010.

<sup>15</sup> NYC Hunger Experience 2009: A Year in Recession. *Food Bank for New York City*.

<sup>16</sup> “Unheard Third 2008: Economic Insecurity and Federal Priorities.” *Community Service Society*.

<sup>17</sup> “Contrary to Reports of Recovery, Recent Data Reveal High Poverty in New York City.” *Food Bank for New York 2010*

<sup>18</sup> NYC Hunger Experience 2009: A Year in Recession. *Food Bank for New York City*.

<sup>19</sup> Unheard Third 2010: No Recovery in Sight: The Job Crisis for Low-Income New Yorkers.” *Community Service Society*. Oct 2010.

<sup>20</sup> USDA Economic Research Service, *New York Data Sheet*, 2008