

How Many New Yorkers Are Hungry?

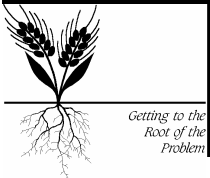
- 10.5% (768,000) of New York households experience food insecurity, or are at risk of hunger: they have lower quality diets or must resort to emergency food because they cannot always afford the food they need. 3.2% (238,000) experience food insecurity with hunger: they frequently skip meals or eat too little, sometimes going without food for a whole day. ¹
- Over two million (2.1) New Yorkers rely on Emergency Food Programs (EFPs), or soup kitchens and food pantries, each year. More than one million (1.2) people in New York City rely on EFPs each year. ²
- There are approximately 3,000 soup kitchens, food pantries, and shelters providing food to low-income people in New York State. ³
- According to the U.S. Census Bureau, an estimated 2,660,000 individuals in New York State are currently living below the poverty level. This is equivalent to 14.3% of the total population. ⁴

Who Are the Hungry?

- Women and people of color are over represented at EFPs. Approximately half of those utilizing EFPs are women. 27% of those utilizing EFPs are white, while 45% are African American and 24% are Hispanic, and 5% are American Indian, Alaskan Native, Pacific Islander or Asian. More than 11% of EFP clients are elderly. ²
- An high percentage of EFP guests are the working poor: 35% of EFP client households have one or more members that are employed. Over 75% of EFP guests have incomes below 130% of the poverty level and more than two thirds of people (67%) using EFPs are living at or below the federal poverty level. ²
- While 20% of New York State's children are living below the poverty level, 11% of these children are considered to be in extreme poverty because the household's income is below 50% of the poverty level. These statistics are higher than the national levels which are 17% of children in poverty and 7% in extreme poverty. ⁵

Is the Level of Hunger Increasing in NY?

- The number of New Yorkers suffering from hunger or food insecurity jumped by nearly 200,000 people over the past six years, rising to 10.5 percent in the period 2002-2004 from 9.6 percent in the period 1999-2001. ⁶
- Statewide programs reported a 20.4% increase in demand when comparing Sept. 2002 to Sept. 2003. ⁷
- While 25% of New York State's children lived in high poverty neighborhoods in 1990, 30% lived in high-poverty neighborhoods in 2000. ⁵



References

Hunger in New York State

Why Do We Need Emergency Food Programs?

- While demand for emergency food is increasing, the Food Stamp Program is sorely under-utilized. Only 53% of eligible people participate in the program in NYS. 8
- The percentage of the workforce in low-income jobs (32%) is the fourth worst in the nation. One out of every four families (more than 500,000) are low-income even though at least one household member has a job. More than 150,000 working families live below the poverty level, putting New York in the bottom half of all US states. 9
- Wages have not risen to meet the cost of living, particularly in NYC. New York City accounted for 3/4 of statewide job loss since 2001 and experienced a 4% decline in median hourly wages in 2002. Yet, over 1/4 of NYC residents must pay more than 50% of salary in rent. 9
- An increasing number of New Yorkers lack sufficient health care coverage. More than a third of the state's working families include a parent without health insurance. 9
- Currently, less than half of private sector workers have employer provided pension coverage and approximately 45% do not have employer provided health insurance. 10
- Many people have to choose between paying for rent, utilities, medicine, or other living expenses and putting food on the table.

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Getting to the
Root of the
Problem

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