

Across the world each day, 795 million people experience hunger; lack of nutrition is an indicator in more than 3.1 million child deaths around the globe (World Hunger, 2015). In the United States, over 49 million people (15.8% of individuals) qualified as food insecure in 2013 (Feeding America, 2015c, p5, 11).

Food insecurity refers to a “lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods” (Feeding America, 2015c, p4). From 2012-2014, 14 states reported having significantly higher food insecurity levels than the United States average, one of which was Texas (Feeding America, 2016b). The following chart shows the food insecurity rates for Texas and the Kronkosky counties of interest:

	Food Insecurity Rate	Food Insecure People
Texas	17.6%	4,653,290
Bandera	16.7%	3,420
Bexar	14.0%	245,760
Comal	14.9%	16,690
Kendall	14.7%	5,150

(Feeding America, 2015a)

Food insecurity is not necessarily tied to income. In fact, “national data reveal that about 55 percent of people struggling with hunger actually have incomes above the federal poverty level and 57 percent of poor households are food secure” (Feeding America, 2015c, p6).

Increased costs for food, transportation, housing, health care, and energy are forcing

many Americans to choose between food and other necessities. Food banks are important resources that provide both short-term and long-term assistance to those needing food across the country.

Food Banks

“Food banks are charitable, nonprofit organizations that solicit and store donated food until it is distributed to charitable agencies that serve people in need in their service areas” (Feeding America, 2014a, p.44-45).

Feeding America represents the United States national food bank network. This organization provides emergency food assistance to more than 46.5 million Americans annually. Those clients included 12 million children and almost 7 million senior citizens (Feeding America, 2015b). Feeding America provides food and monetary resources to its member agencies throughout the country, which in turn allocate those resources to agencies that directly help the hungry.

Agencies which ultimately distribute the various food products operate emergency food programs (programs that provide short-term or emergency assistance including food pantries, soup kitchens, or shelters) and/or non-emergency programs (day and summer camps, senior congregate meals, and various other programs).

In the *Hunger in America 2014* survey, Feeding America (2014a) acquired statistical information about agencies that operated emergency food programs. Agency data from this survey

appears in the following table. San Antonio specific data was reported in 2010.

Characteristics of Food Bank Agencies			
	United States	Texas	San Antonio*
Unduplicated clients served per year	46,500,000	3,513,000	230,900
Number of member agencies who received food bank products [†]	46,000	3,802	500
Percentage of agencies with:			
Emergency food programs	54%	55%	54%
Pantry	71%	73%	76%
Soup kitchen	18%	16%	17%
Shelter	11%	11%	8%
[†] includes only agencies who responded to the survey; *reflects 2010 data (Feeding America, 2014a&b; Obledo & Medina, 2010)			

Clients of Food Banks

The *Hunger in America 2014* survey also gathered information about the clients who utilized food bank services. The tables below present demographic and other pertinent characteristics of emergency food bank clients in the United States, in Texas, and in the San Antonio area.

Demographic Data of Clients Using Emergency Food Programs			
	United States	Texas	San Antonio*
Age (years)			
0-17	28.5%	29.8%	36%
18-64	60.3%	52.2%	50%
65+	11.2%	12.8%	14%
Gender			
Male	33.3%	31%	30%
Female	66.7%	69%	70%
Ethnicity			
White	43%	29%	22%
Black	26%	24.4%	7%
Hispanic	20%	41.3%	69%
Other	11%	5.3%	2%
*reflects 2010 data (Feeding America, 2014a&b; Obledo & Medina, 2010)			

Characteristics of Food Bank Clients			
	United States	Texas	San Antonio*
Food insecure	83.8%	84%	51%
Homeless	10%	10%	8%
At least on employed member within household	54%	54%	46%
At least one household member in poor health	23.9%	26%	29%
*reflects 2010 data (Feeding America, 2014a&b; Obledo & Medina, 2010)			

The people who utilize food bank services often also access other government programs designed to help ease hunger, such as the Food Stamp program (now referred to as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program-SNAP). In 2015, 15% of Americans eligible for food stamp benefits did not receive those benefits (Food Research and Access Center, 2015). The following table provides statistics showing the use of various government food assistance programs by food bank clients.

Participation of Food Bank Clients in Government Food Assistance Programs			
	United States	Texas	San Antonio*
Food stamps (SNAP)	55%	49%	33%
Women, Infants, Children (WIC)	24%	61%	69%
School lunch	94%	72%	57%
School breakfast	46%	50%	42%
*reflects 2010 data (Feeding America, 2014a&b; Obledo & Medina, 2010)			

Food Banks serving Texas

Nineteen food banks are members of the Texas Food Bank Network and service the state of Texas. The table at the end of this document provides general information about the various Texas food banks included within the current Feeding America Food Bank locator database (Feeding America, 2014b).

San Antonio Food Bank

The San Antonio Food Bank (n.d.) serves nearly 530 agencies in 16 Texas counties, including Banderá, Bexar, Comal, and Kendall Counties. This organization manages a variety of in-house programs, collaborative programs, and

programs that directly support its member agencies. Current food bank programs include:

General Programs

Warehouse Distribution Program

Houses, inspects, and inventories unprepared food products. Allocates food products to member agencies for pick-up after receiving their food orders. Member agencies then provide the food directly to the people served in their programs.

Second Servings Program

Distributes pre-prepared food from restaurants, hotels, and other organizations to shelters and congregate feeding sites.

Community Kitchen

Teaches culinary skills to the homeless.

Food Fair

Along with the Texas Department of State Health Services, this program provides vouchers to the most needy in the San Antonio area. The participants receive large quantities of perishable and non-perishable food at food fairs on the south, east, and west sides of the city.

Mobile Pantry

In the summer of 2009, the San Antonio Food Bank became one of seven food banks nationwide to operate a mobile food pantry. The Mobile Pantry has distributed more than 1.6 million pounds of groceries and food items to over 37,000 individuals and member agencies, especially those situated the furthest from the food bank.

Nutrition Education Programs

Offers classes throughout its service area on nutrition, food safety, food budgeting, obesity, and diabetes. This program also boasts the 5.5 acre Spurs Community Garden used to educate and provide food to member agencies.

Fresh Produce Program

Distributes 2 to 3 million pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables each year to member agencies. The food bank also offers weekly farmer's markets with local products. Qualifying seniors are eligible to receive fresh produce.

Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

A voucher program that provides families on WIC with a \$30 voucher to spend at local Farmers' Markets for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Texas Second Chance Program

Provides work and training opportunities at the food bank for 22 inmates incarcerated at Dominguez State Jail.

Daisy Cares Pet Food Program

Seeks pet food donations to aid struggling families in providing food for their pets.

Food Stamp Education and Outreach Program

Educates and assists people through the Food Stamp application process. Also maintains a Food Stamp program that specifically targets seniors.

Youth Programs

Kids Cafe

Along with 34 local youth centers, this program provides after-school meals, tutoring, and mentoring to at-risk youth.

Summer Food Service Program

Provides breakfasts and lunches to at-risk kids during the summer months.

Back Pack Program

Provides children at-risk of hunger with food to take home throughout the school year.

Project H.O.P.E.

Called the "Healthy Options Program for the Elderly," this program gives food to 72 senior nutrition sites in Bexar County. This food is distributed directly to the seniors, allowing them to use their extra money for other necessities. (San Antonio Food Bank, n.d.)

REFERENCES

Feeding America. (2014a). *Hunger in America 2014: National report*. Retrieved from http://help.feedingamerica.org/HungerInAmerica/hunger-in-america-2014-full-report.pdf?s_src=W162REFER&s_referrer=map.feedingamerica.org%2Fcounty%2F2013%2Foverall&s_subsrc=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.feedingamerica.org%2Fhunger-in-america%2Four-research%2Fmap-the-meal-gap%2Foverall-executive-summary.html&_ga=1.72363667.162466228.1454348017

Feeding America. (2014b). *Hunger in America 2014: State report for Texas*. Retrieved from <https://s3-us-west-2.amazonaws.com/assets.feedingtexas.org/pdf/Hunger-In-America-2014-Texas-Report.pdf>

Feeding America. (2015a). *Map the meal gap 2015: Overall food insecurity in Texas by county in 2013*. Retrieved from http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/map-the-meal-gap/2013/TX_AllCounties_CDs_MMG_2013.pdf

Feeding America. (2015b). *Feeding families, feeding hope: 2015 Annual report*. Retrieved from http://www.feedingamerica.org/about-us/about-feeding-america/annual-report/?_ga=1.218818716.408730990.1453149659

Feeding America. (2015c). *Map the Meal Gap 2015: Highlights of findings for overall and child food insecurity*. Retrieved

from <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/our-research/map-the-meal-gap/2013/map-the-meal-gap-2013-exec-summ.pdf>

Feeding America. (2016a). *Food bank locator: Texas food banks*. Retrieved from <http://www.feedingamerica.org/find-your-local-foodbank/>

Feeding America. (2016b). *Hunger and poverty statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger/hunger-and-poverty/hunger-and-poverty-fact-sheet.html>

Food Research and Action Center. (2015, November). *SNAP over-the-year participation dropped by more than 800,000 people in November 2015*. Retrieved from <http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/snapfood-stamp-monthly-participation-data/#oct>

Obledo, M., & Medina, M. (2010). *Hunger in America 2010: San Antonio and southwest Texas*. Retrieved from <http://safoodbank.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/12/Hunger-safb-execsummary-2010-web.pdf>

San Antonio Food Bank. (n.d.). *Programs*. Retrieved February 8, 2016, from <http://safoodbank.org/programs/>

World Hunger. (2015). *2015 World hunger and poverty facts and statistics*. Retrieved from <http://www.worldhunger.org/articles/Learn/world%20hunger%20facts%2002.htm>

Food Banks in Texas (as of February 2016)						
Location	Food Bank*	# of Counties served	Pounds of food distributed annually	Number of Agencies who receive food from the bank		
				Emergency	Youth	Senior
Abilene	Food Bank of West Central Texas	13	3,110,221	67	0	14
Amarillo	High Plains Food Bank	29	6,397,022	91	0	16
Austin	Capital Area Food Bank, Inc.	21	33,000,000	175	34	1
Beaumont	Southeast Texas Food Bank	8	4,074,916	79	2	7
Corpus Christi	Food Bank of Corpus Christi	11	5,935,911	79	17	12
Dallas	North Texas Food Bank	13	46,614,048	155	34	6
Ft. Worth	Tarrant Area Food Bank	13	25,240,948	158	90	1
Houston	Houston Food Bank	18	69,161,179	318	1	6
Laredo	South Texas Food Bank	8	9,579,358	81	11	1
Lubbock	South Plains Food Bank	20	6,700,00	163	4	22
McAllen	Food Bank of the Rio Grande Valley, Inc.	3	23,052,919	163	22	0
Odessa	West Texas Food Bank	19	7,473,000	151	5	6
San Antonio	San Antonio Food Bank	16	62,000,000	249	67	112
Texarkana	Harvest Texarkana Regional Food Bank	10	2,400,000	80	1	3
Tyler	East Texas Food Bank	26	16,220,078	134	43	7
Victoria	Food Bank of the Golden Crescent	11	3,600,000	60	24	5
Wichita Falls	Wichita Falls Area Food Bank	12	4,200,000	56	64	17

*Brazos Valley Food Bank in Bryan/College Station (a subsidiary of the Houston Food Bank) and the Concho Valley Regional Food Bank in San Angelo also serve Texas, but their individual data was not included within this database

(Feeding America, 2016a)