

CITY SOUP: HUNGER FACTS

Did you know that...

1. **Food insecurity** means one's limited ability to secure adequate and nutritious food for an active and healthy lifestyle.
2. In 2008, 1 in 10 Americans was food insecure. By November 2009, the ratio dropped to **1 in 6, or 49.1 million people**.
3. **1 in 4 children** in the U.S. lives in a food-insecure household.
4. With Philadelphia poverty rates running double the national and state levels, surveys suggest that **More than 1 in 4 Philadelphians, or 440,000 people, are using Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP or Food Stamp Benefits), and another 180,000 persons are eligible but not receiving benefits.** *(Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger)
5. 30% of food-insecure households skip meals, cut portions or otherwise forgo food. 70% choose cheaper, less nutritious options.*
6. Obesity can occur as a consequence of hunger due to consumption of cheaper, higher-calorie foods. Food-insecure persons are three times more likely to suffer from activity-limiting impairments, poorer overall health, depression and psychosocial dysfunction.*
7. Supermarkets and businesses selling fresh food and produce are absent in many of the poorest neighborhoods in the city. These areas are referred to as food deserts.
8. **Over 500,000 Philadelphians** were assisted in our local community food cupboards during 2011, a number that has **more than tripled** over the past five years.*
9. Most food cupboards are housed in church basements and managed by elderly volunteers who have difficulty providing the level of service that they recognize as being needed in their communities.
10. Philadelphia had **25 food cupboards** in 1985; 25 years later, that number stands at **over 800** charitable cupboards and soup kitchens. This food cupboard system is a volunteer, under-resourced and highly used distribution network... **A network never intended or designed to supply food at current levels.**
11. On **February 4, 2009**, Philabundance, the area's largest food bank, was charged by its board to develop and deploy an "Emergency Hunger Response Plan" for Philadelphia and the region. **The Food Bank declared a Food Emergency. We are now over three years into a "Food Emergency" in Philadelphia!**

Demand for assistance is up — Supply of nutritious food is down.

Register now for City Soup

*Data collected by the USDA and The Local Sources:

- Rose, Donald, *Economic Determinants and Dietary Consequences of Food Insecurity in the US.* = Department of Agricultural Economics, Michigan State University, 1999.

- Food Cupboard usage numbers include persons helped through established food cupboards run by faith groups located throughout the Philadelphia, the Salvation Army, and small independent food distribution programs.