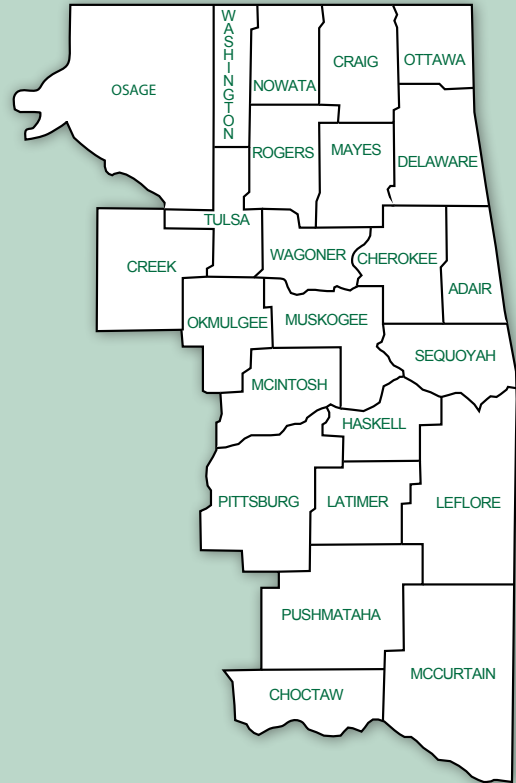




The Many Faces of Hunger in Eastern Oklahoma



Fighting Hunger, Feeding Hope

FOOD BANK

Community **FOOD BANK** of Eastern Oklahoma



Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma:

- Is the largest, private hunger-relief organization in Eastern Oklahoma.
- Distributes more than 13 million pounds of food annually.
- Helps feed 60,000 Oklahomans each week the equivalent of 621,000 meals per month.
- Serves 460 Partner Programs in 24 counties of Eastern Oklahoma, including food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters, low-income after-school programs and senior citizen centers.



It's hard to believe that hunger exists in our own backyard, but it does.

You can see it in the face of little boy who leaves school on Fridays and doesn't eat another substantial meal until he comes back Monday morning for his school's free or reduced-price breakfast.

It's a factor every month when the retired widow has to choose between paying for nutritious food or paying for her medication.

The father who was laid off last year feels the hunger every time he skips a meal to ensure his children are adequately fed.

Hunger does exist right here in Eastern Oklahoma and what follows is what we know about it.

Hunger, Food Insecurity and Poverty

According to the USDA, Oklahoma ranks fourth in the nation in "very low food security," what used to be referred to as "food insecurity with hunger," and sixth in food insecurity. Food insecurity means that at times during the year a household has difficulty providing enough food for all its members due to lack of resources.

In the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma's 24-county service area:

- One in four Oklahomans (25.4%) living in U. S. Congressional District 2, the majority of the Food Bank's service area, reports that at times during the year they do not have enough money to buy food that their family needs.
- 34% of households that use emergency food programs have at least one employed adult.
- 81% of client households using emergency food programs have incomes below the federal poverty level which, for a family of four, is \$22,050 annually.
- The average household income in 2008 was \$11,190 annually.
- 65% of all client households had monthly incomes of less than \$1,000.
- A Tulsa County household consisting of one adult, one preschooler and one school-aged child would need to make \$39,978 annually to be considered self-sufficient, meaning basic needs are met without public or private assistance.
- More than 38% of the children 18 years or younger living in Cherokee, Choctaw, Delaware and McCurtain Counties live below the federal poverty level, with the highest being Cherokee at 39.7% .
- 11.4% of our service area has used an emergency food program at least once in the last year.
- 57% of the emergency food programs report an increase in the number of clients coming to their sites for assistance since 2006.
- 72% of client households of emergency food programs stated that they sometimes or often could not afford to eat balanced meals.

The Food Bank is by far the single most-important source of food for hunger relief agencies in Eastern Oklahoma, accounting for 70% of the food distributed by food pantries.

The Faces of Hunger in Eastern Oklahoma

- 44% of clients seeking emergency food assistance are children under 18 years old.
- 37% are single-parent households.
- 17% of households have at least one member age 65 or older.
- 58% are white, 13% are black, 19% are Native American and 13% are Hispanic.
- Only 10% are homeless.

Client Health

- 32% of client households report having at least one household member in poor health.
- 23.1% of clients seeking emergency food assistance do not have health insurance.
- 61% of clients at emergency food programs have unpaid medical or hospital bills.

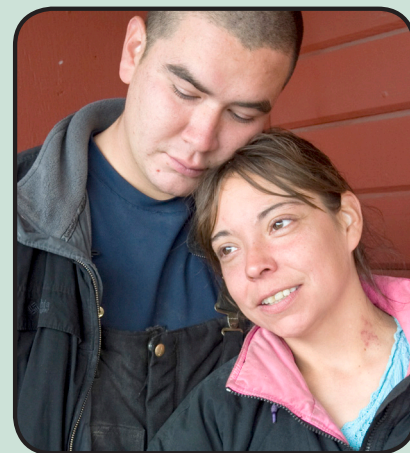
Tough Choices

- 48% of clients using emergency food programs report having to choose between paying for food and paying for utilities.
- 45% of seniors report having to choose between paying for food and paying for medical care or medicine.
- 44% had to choose between paying for food and paying for gas for a car.
- 36% had to choose between paying for food and paying rent or mortgage.
- 34% had to choose between paying for food and paying for transportation.

Government Assistance Programs

- 16% of all Oklahomans are enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp Program.
- 28% of McCurtain County and 29% of Adair County receives SNAP benefits.
- SNAP benefits typically last an average of 2.8 weeks each month.
- 44% of Oklahoma children qualify for free or reduced-price school meals.
- 31% of the state relies on state and federal health programs, such as Sooner Care, Medicaid and Medicare.
- 37% of households rely on the government for their main source of income, such as Social Security, Unemployment Compensation, Disability or SSI.

This information was drawn from these sources: *Hunger in America 2010 for the Community Food Bank of Eastern Oklahoma*, Feeding America; *Household Food Security in the United States, 2008*, United States Department of Agriculture; *Food Hardship: A Closer Look at Hunger 2010*, Food Research and Action Center; *Health Insurance of the Total Population (2007-2008)*, Henry J. Kaiser Family Foundation; American Community Survey 2008; U.S. Census Bureau (2006-2008); and *The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Oklahoma 2009*, Oklahoma Asset Building Coalition; Oklahoma Department of Human Services.



- Oklahoma is the fourth hungriest state in the nation.
- One in five Oklahoma children is at risk of going to bed hungry.
- More Oklahomans are enrolled in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as Food Stamps, than ever before.
- Oklahoma's unemployment rate is higher than it's been in years.

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