



HUNGER STATISTICS

WASHINGTON STATE STATISTICS

Families in rural areas, especially in south central Washington, are twice as likely to experience food insecurity.

Children's Alliance, August 2008

38 percent of all students live in low-income families, qualifying them for free or reduced-price school meals.

Children's Alliance, August 2008

[Washington] food banks had more than 6 million visits by hungry households in 2005-2006.

Children's Alliance, August 2008

15.4 percent of all Washington children (from birth to 17) are living at or below the poverty line. In some parts of the state, as many as 30 percent of all children are living in poverty.

Children's Alliance, August 2008

In Washington State, nearly 300,000 children live in households that struggle to put three nutritious meals on the table each day. Of these children, 35% - 105,000 - kids live in households that experience hunger on a regular basis.

Children's Alliance, August 2008

Washington Governor Christine Gregoire in June 2008 announced the release of \$200,000 from the governor's emergency fund to help food banks offset rising fuel costs. These funds will be distributed to food banks across the state to help them pick up and deliver food for families. Gregoire also noted the recent state legislation to raise the gross income level for the Basic Food Program (food stamps) she is predicted to lead to an increase of 23,000 more Washingtonians receiving food stamps.

Office of Governor Christine Gregoire, August 2008

Washington's population of senior citizens will double by 2020.

Office of Governor Christine Gregoire, August 2008

Record numbers of Washingtonians are turning to the food stamp program. More than 40,000 residents signed up for food stamps in the 12-month period ending in March 2008 according to the state's Department of Social and Health Services food program. That's a 6 percent increase, bringing the number of recipients to 568,909.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, June 26, 2008

The state plans to raise the total household gross income for food stamp eligibility to \$42,400 this fall. The increase is expected to draw another 23,000 families into the program, which currently serves 294,519 households.

Seattle Post-Intelligencer, June 26, 2008

Washington is a prosperous state. We have the 13th highest median household income and the 20th lowest poverty rate in the nation, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. We also have the nation's highest minimum wages of \$8.07 per hour. However, fully 30% of Washington households are described as low-income by the Economic Policy Institute.

NATIONAL STATISTICS

Nearly 11% of American households are food insecure at least some time during the year. About one-third of food insecure households (4.0 percent of all U.S. households) have very low food security—meaning that the food intake of one or more adults was reduced and their eating patterns were disrupted at times during the year because the household lacked money and other resources for food.

USDA, August 2008

More than 35 million people in the U.S. face a constant struggle against hunger. Of these 35.5 million, 22.9 million are adults (10.4 percent of all adults) and 12.6 million are children (17.2 percent of all children). The number of people in the worst-off households increased to 11.1 from 10.8 in 2005. This increase in the number of people in the worst-off category is consistent with other studies and the Census Bureau poverty data, which show worsening conditions for the poorest Americans.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

According to the results of the Census Bureau survey, those at greatest risk of being hungry or on the edge of hunger (i.e., food insecure) live in households that are: headed by a single woman; Hispanic or Black; or with incomes below the poverty line. Overall, households with children experience food insecurity at almost double the rate for households without children. Geographically, food insecurity is more common in central city households. The survey data also show that households are more likely to be hungry or food insecure if they live in states in the Midwest and South.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

FEDERALLY-FUNDED PROGRAMS

About 1 in 5 Americans participates in at least one of USDA's 15 food assistance programs at some point during the year, and Federal outlays for these programs account for over half of USDA's total budget.

USDA, August 2008

The Food Stamp Program is the Nation's largest food assistance program, serving about 27 million low-income Americans in 2005.

USDA, August 2008

Food Stamp Program participation reached a near-record high in May 2008, exceeded only by figures from November 2005 which included those receiving emergency assistance in the wake of the hurricane season.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

Food Stamp Program growth is expected to continue, with the Congressional Budget Office predicting the FY 2009 monthly caseload averaging 28 million persons.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) serves more than 29 million children each day. In fiscal 2006, 9.8 million students participated in the program on a given school day.

USDA, August 2008

In 2006, the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) provided meals to 1.9 million children at 31,224 sites during the program's peak month of July.

USDA, August 2008

The Summer Nutrition Programs continue to fall short in reaching eligible low-income children. Fewer than one of out every five eligible children participated in July 2007. Administrative barriers are high, making it difficult for providers to get the maximum reimbursement.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

In fiscal YEAR 2006, more than 3 million children and 101,264 adults received CACFP (Child and Adult Care Food Program) meals and snacks on an average day.

USDA, August 2008

While the cost of food rose by 6.1 percent from June 2007 to June 2008, the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (the mix of food items on which low income people rely and the government's basis for Food Stamp allotments) rose even faster, by 8.5 percent.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

RIISING COSTS OF FOOD AND FUEL

According to the Department of Labor, the cost of groceries rose 6.1 percent from June 2007 – June 2008. Some food items experienced a double-digit increase in price during the same time period, including cheese (14.7%), eggs (23.2%) and bread (15.9%).

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

In the month of June 2008, prices in four of the major six grocery categories increased, including a 2.8 percent leap in the cost of fruits and vegetables. Prices for other healthy, nutritious food such as lean meats and vegetables increased by 20% over the past two years.

Food Research and Action Center (FRAC), August 2008

April 2008 saw the biggest jump in food prices in 18 years, according to the Labor Department. At the same time, workers' average weekly earnings, adjusted for inflation, dropped for the seventh straight month.

U.S. Department of Labor, May 2008

The price of gas has shot up — from about \$2.89 a year ago to about \$4.06 today — and with it, the cost of food. All this in the midst of a tough economy, with more than 155,000 unemployment claims filed with the state in the first four months of the year, a 15 percent increase over the same period in 2007. And in the thick of a financial crisis, King County's budget office has proposed cutting human services by a third in 2009.

Seattle Times, August 11, 2008