



Press Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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STUDY SHOWS CHILDREN MORE LIKELY TO FACE HUNGER THAN OVERALL POPULATION ACROSS AMERICA

Child food insecurity rates in Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland service area are higher than overall food insecurity rates

Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland (FAKH) announced the release of *Map the Meal Gap 2019*, the latest report by Feeding America® on food insecurity and the cost of food at both the county and congressional district level. It is the only study that provides food insecurity data at the local level.

Map the Meal Gap 2019 reveals that food insecurity exists in every county, including FAKH's service area. It also shows that children are more likely to be food insecure, with the overall percentage for children at 19%.

"There isn't a single state or county in America free from child hunger, and it is within our collective power to change that and ensure that today's children are tomorrow's leaders," said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, chief executive officer of Feeding America. "The Feeding America nationwide network of food banks is investing in our nation's future by helping to provide over 146 million meals to children every year. Still, *Map the Meal Gap* highlights that more must be done. Together food banks, corporations, policymakers, donors, volunteers and advocates can solve hunger."

The analysis also finds 56% of Kentucky residents who are food insecure are likely ineligible for federal nutrition assistance under current program requirements. This means that many households must rely even more on charitable food assistance, such as FAKH.

"What we're finding are more and more working families who are just scraping to get by, living paycheck to paycheck," said Jamie Sizemore, FAKH Executive Director. "When a household emergency happens, like a car breaking down or an unexpected medical situation, buying food for themselves or their family is the last thing on the list."

FAKH is a member of Feeding America's hunger-relief network comprised of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs which together provides food assistance to more than 40 million people in the U.S. struggling with hunger.

Through a network of over 225 partner agencies in the FAKH 42 county service area, food is distributed to individuals and families in need through various food programs, including The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). In addition, school-age children have food for the weekend through the Backpack program, and income-eligible senior citizens over the age of 60 receive government commodities through the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).

Map the Meal Gap 2019 uses data from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics and food price data and analysis provided by Nielsen, a global provider of information and insights. The study is supported by [The Howard G. Buffett Foundation](#), [Conagra Brands Foundation](#) and [Nielsen](#).

Key local findings:

- **Overall food insecurity in FAKH service area ranges from a low of 11.4% of the population in Nelson County up to 21% in Fulton County.**
- **Number of food insecure individuals in FAKH service area is 14.8% of the total population or 1 in 7 people.**
- **Number of food insecure children in FAKH service area is 19% of the total population or 1 in 5 children.**
- **In the state of Kentucky, 14.9% are food insecure individuals, total for food insecure children is 18.4%.**

The study's findings underscore the extent of need that remains in communities in FAKH and across the U.S., despite national measures from the USDA that indicate overall improvement.

"I encourage everyone to visit the website, map.feedingamerica.org, to find out what hunger looks like in their community and get involved to be part of the solution," Babineaux-Fontenot continued. "One way is to tell Congress to invest in kids during Child Nutrition Reauthorization legislation and increase access to food for kids during the summer. Your voice matters and we can make a difference."

This is the ninth consecutive year that Feeding America has conducted the *Map the Meal Gap* study. The *Map the Meal Gap 2019* interactive map allows policymakers, state agencies, corporate partners, food banks and advocates to develop integrated strategies to fight hunger on a community level. The interactive map, summary of the findings, and full report are available at map.feedingamerica.org.

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About Feeding America

Feeding America® is the largest hunger-relief organization in the United States. Through a network of 200 food banks and 60,000 food pantries and meal programs, we provide meals to more than 46 million people each year. Feeding America also supports programs that prevent food waste and improve food security among the people we serve; educates the public about the problem of hunger; and advocates for legislation that protects people from going hungry. Visit www.feedingamerica.org, find us on [Facebook](#) or follow us on [Twitter](#).

About Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland

Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland is a regional food bank that provides assistance to more than 174,500 people in 42 Kentucky counties each year. Through support from individuals and organizations, such as United Way, FAKH distributes over 14 million pounds of food to more than 225 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters. FAKH also sponsors various hunger relief programs including the BackPack™ Program and Senior Box (CSFP) Program. FAKH's main office and warehouses are located on Peterson Drive in Elizabethtown, Kentucky. For more information or to volunteer, sponsor a fundraiser or a food drive, or to make a secure online donation to Feeding America, Kentucky's Heartland, visit their website at: www.feedingamericaky.org