



Hunger and Older Americans: Idaho

Measures of State Household Food Insecurity:

- USDA Food Insecurity Ranking: 29th for food insecurity¹
- Food Hardship Ranking: 16.6 percent of Idahoans reported that there had been times in the past 12 months when they did not have enough money to buy food that they or their family needed.²

Measures of Older Adult Hunger:

- An estimated 5.69 percent of Idaho seniors are at risk of hunger³
- State ranks 15th for senior risk of hunger⁴

Key Partners in Addressing Idaho Hunger

Anti-Hunger Leaders: Nonprofit groups help address hunger by providing food, connecting people with services, and promoting policies and approaches to aid more people. They also coordinate efforts among an array of stakeholders, from businesses and labor groups, to faith-based and senior organizations.

The Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force (IHRTF) is a statewide group of 21 public-private members dedicated to addressing hunger and food security issues in Idaho.

- Contact: Kathy Gardner, Director, Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force, (<http://www.Idahohunger.org/>), 208-447-8218

Businesses Help to Address Hunger: Private sector partners can help address hunger in myriad ways: contributing in-kind help or technical assistance to anti-hunger groups, donating food, making cash donations, including those to promote enrollment in nutrition safety net programs, and supporting policy improvements. Among businesses donating to the "Dump Hunger" food drive that benefits the Idaho Food Bank are Albertsons, Les Schwab, and Idaho Central Credit Union.

Faith-Based Organizations: Many of Idaho's food pantries and soup kitchens are sponsored by faith-based organizations. Faith-based groups also connect people with services and promote policies and approaches to aid more people. The Idaho Interfaith Roundtable Against Hunger (IIRAH) engages diverse communities of faith and goodwill in developing solutions to the root causes of hunger through education and public policy and by supporting providers of direct hunger relief.

- Contact: Idaho Interfaith Roundtable Against Hunger, 208-362-9579, (idroundtable@yahoo.com)

Older Americans/Aging Network: States and local groups that represent and/or serve seniors address senior hunger by operating congregate feeding and home-delivered meals, by promoting improved policies and outreach, including in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) and other programs, and by raising awareness about senior hunger. For example, the Boise State University Center for the Study of Aging promotes the well being of Idaho's growing population of older citizens through research, partnership facilitation, public awareness activities and support to caregivers.

- Contact: Sarah Toevs, Director, Boise State University Center for the Study of Aging, 208-426-2452, aging.boisestate.edu

¹ See FRAC, Prevalence of Household-Level Food Insecurity and Very Low Food Security by State 2006-2008 (Average)(analyzing USDA/Census data, ranking 1 to 51, with 1 being the highest food insecurity): http://frac.org/pdf/foodinsecurity_2008_rank.pdf and background: http://www.frac.org/html/hunger_in_the_us/hunger_index.html

² See FRAC, Food Hardship: A Closer Look at Hunger (January 2010)(2009 data): http://frac.org/pdf/food_hardship_report_2010.pdf

³ See Meals on Wheels Association of America, Seniors at Risk of Hunger: State by State (data 2001-2007) (ranking 1 to 51, with 1 being the highest food insecurity among seniors): <http://www.mowaa.org/hungerbystate>

⁴ Id.

Area Agencies on Aging provide meal delivery, congregate meal services and senior nutrition programs. For details on nutrition programs, see <http://coaplay.dhw.idaho.gov/IdahoCommissionAging/ICOAPProgramsandServices/NutritionServices/tabid/138/Default.aspx>.

State and Local Governments: State and local governments have important roles to play in ending hunger. They administer federal nutrition programs, can supplement supports to fight hunger, and provide leadership to make ending hunger a priority in the state.

Food Distribution Programs

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): TEFAP provides shelf stable meat, dairy, canned fruits and vegetables, and other food commodities to states, mainly through local food banks. Food banks redistribute the products to faith-based and secular food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters that directly serve the public. TEFAP households, except those receiving prepared meals, must meet the state's income eligibility criteria.

- State Agency: Idaho Department of Health and Welfare

Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR): FDPIR is an alternative to SNAP/Food Stamps for meeting the nutritional needs of Native American households living on or near an Indian reservation or who live in designated service areas in Montana. Households qualify for the program based on their income and resources. Participants receive a monthly food package that contains a variety of commodities to help them maintain a balanced diet.

- Coeur D'Alene Tribe of Idaho; The Nez Perce Tribe of Idaho; The Shoshone Bannock Tribes

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP): CSFP is a federally-funded program available in some states that provides "food boxes" that include shelf stable meat, dairy, canned fruits and vegetables, and other food commodities to low-income seniors (age 60 or over) and to low-income pregnant and postpartum women, infants, and children up to six.

- Idaho is not authorized to participate in CSFP.

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP): SFMNP provides low-income, eligible seniors with coupons that can be used to purchase fresh fruit, vegetables and herbs at approved farm stands and farmers' markets.

- Idaho does not have SFMNP.

Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP): NSIP, which is operated under the Older Americans Act, and other efforts funded privately or through state and local governments provide food to vulnerable seniors via congregate meals in settings such as senior centers and via home-delivered meals. Nutrition is one of many services provided under OAA. Thirty percent of senior nutrition recipients utilize OAA transportation services to access congregate meal sites.

- State Agency: Idaho Department of Health & Welfare, Idaho Commission on Aging

Food Banks: Food banks recover food from government and nongovernment sources (such as from manufacturers, retailers and individuals) and distribute food to local agencies such as food pantries, soup kitchens and shelters.

- Contact: Karen Vauk, President, Idaho Food Bank, (<http://www.idahofoodbank.org/>), 208-336-9643 ext. 248, kvauk@idahofoodbank.org

Volunteer and National Service Organizations: Volunteers play important roles in addressing senior hunger, from delivering Meals on Wheels and making food donations, to screening seniors for SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly known as food stamps) benefits and supporting policies to address the problem. For example, Post Falls Food Bank offers pantry services to seniors and people with

disabilities once per month, provides referral services to agencies that can meet their needs, and operates a Senior Blankets program for the cold winter months.

The federal Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) “improves lives, strengthens communities, and fosters civic engagement through service and volunteering.” Initiatives include Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, Learn and Serve America, and United We Serve.

- Contacts: V. Kent Griffiths, CNCS State Office, 208-334-1701, [id@cns.gov](mailto:vk@cns.gov); Kelly Houston Staskey, State Commission on Service and Volunteerism, 208-332-3578, Kelly.Staskey@labor.idaho.gov

Multicultural Organizations: Hunger is often more acute in Latino, African-American and Native American low-income communities. Nearly 27 percent (26.9 percent) of Latino households and 25.7 percent of African-American households experienced food insecurity in 2008.⁵ Efforts to address hunger among people of color range from direct feeding, to SNAP outreach.

For example, Native American tribal organizations and immigrant groups in Idaho support seniors in their community. The Idaho Hunger Relief Task Force (IHRTF) and partners implement a monthly Community Food Market Distribution so that Somali Bantu African Refugees can purchase culturally appropriate food items at farmers’ markets. An upcoming IHRTF collaboration with Meals on Wheels and community-based refugee agencies will incorporate indigenous foods into prepared meals for elder refugees. Catholic Charities Idaho operates the Coeur d’Alene Family Strengthening Center, which provides culturally sensitive services for the whole family.

- Contact: Jud Leifheit, North/North Central Regional Director, Coeur d’Alene Family Strengthening Center, (www.ccidaho.org), 208-676-1974

Maximizing SNAP Enrollment by Older Adults

Maximize SNAP Enrollment to Address Hunger: The Supplemental Food Assistance Program (SNAP) provides low-income people with benefits on an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card that they can use to obtain food at most grocery stores and other food outlets. The federal government funds 100 percent of SNAP benefits and provides approximately half of a state’s costs to administer the program.

Who can get SNAP in this state? Income tests (see below), largely determine Idahoan’s SNAP eligibility. Asset tests were eliminated temporarily for all households starting in June 2009. Many legal immigrants and children of immigrants may qualify. For details, see <http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/>.

Idahoans under age 60 may be income eligible 1) if the household gross income is at or below 130 percent of the federal poverty line (e.g., about \$1,174 a month for a one-person household or \$1,579 for a two-person household), and 2) the household net income after subtracting from gross income certain expenses (such as housing and medical costs, child care, and eldercare) is at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty line (e.g., about \$903 for a one-person household or \$1,215 for a two-person household). Temporarily, for most Idaho households, assets are not considered.

Idahoan seniors who are 60 or older may be income eligible regardless of gross income if their net income after subtracting gross income certain expenses (such as housing and medical costs, child care, and eldercare) is at or below 100 percent of the federal poverty line. There are no work requirements for people age 60 or older.

How many eligible seniors participate in this state? USDA SNAP participation rates by age group currently are available only at the national, but not at the state level. Nationally, in 2007, only 32 percent of seniors eligible for SNAP participated, compared with 66 percent of SNAP eligible people overall.⁶

⁵ USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Participation Rates: 2000 to 2007: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/snap/FILES/Participation/Trends2000-2007.pdf>

⁶ Id. USDA FNS release of SNAP national participation rate data for 2008 is expected as early as June 2010.

Conducting SNAP Outreach and Application Assistance

State Outreach Plan Funding: The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) reimburses states for up to 50 percent of allowable outreach and application assistance costs conducted under state outreach plans submitted to USDA by state SNAP agencies. The funding to leverage the federal reimbursement may come from the state budget or from city agencies, nonprofit groups, community foundations and others. See http://www.frac.org/pdf/snap_outreach_access_toolkit_2010.pdf#page=9

Indicators	Description	State Position/Progress
SNAP Participation Rate ⁷	% of eligible individuals of all ages who participate	50%
Idaho SNAP Caseload ⁸	Share of state population enrolled # % caseload increase between February 2009 and 2010	12.4% of all Idahoans receive SNAP benefits 44.4% caseload increase
SNAP Social Return on Investment ⁹	Each dollar in federal SNAP benefits generates \$1.84 in economic activity.	Value of SNAP Benefits in FY 2009: \$200,937,001 Estimated Economic Stimulus Value: \$369,724,081.84
Elimination of Asset Test ¹⁰	State has adopted broad-based categorical eligibility policy	Temporary
Heat and Eat ¹¹	State coordinated with LIHEAP to get SNAP recipients maximum Standard Utility Allowance and higher SNAP benefit allotments	No
SSI Combined Application Project ¹²	State has program to seamlessly enroll SSI participants onto SNAP	Invited to submit proposal
Standard Medical Deduction ¹³	State has waiver from USDA to standardize SNAP medical deduction	No
Telephone interview ¹⁴	State has waiver from USDA to offer SNAP applicants telephone interviews rather than in person	Yes

Idaho SNAP Outreach Plan: Idaho does not have a formal SNAP outreach plan.

SNAP Outreach to Seniors: SNAP outreach to seniors is important to raise their awareness, combat stigma they may perceive about program benefits, and help them submit application and recertification forms and documents.

SNAP Agency Contact: Rosie Andueza, Food Stamp Program Manager, Idaho Department of Health and Welfare, (<http://www.healthandwelfare.idaho.gov/>), 208-334-5553, anduezar@idaho.gov

Idaho Care Line: The 211 Idaho CareLine is a program of the Idaho Department of Health and Welfare. It is a free, statewide community information and referral service. For online information see <http://www.idahocareline.org/>.

⁷ USDA FNS, Reaching Those in Need: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/snap/FILES/Participation/Reaching2007.pdf> USDA FNS release of SNAP state participation rate data for 2008 is expected in November 2010.

⁸ FRAC Press Release and Charts (May 4, 2010): http://www.frac.org/html/news/fsp/2010.02_FSP.htm and http://www.frac.org/data/FSPparticipation/2010_02.pdf#page=4

⁹ USDA FNS: [http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/17SNAPfyBEN\\$.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/17SNAPfyBEN$.htm) (FY 2009 benefits by state) and FRAC calculation of stimulus effect of benefit dollars. For background on SNAP and economic stimulus, go to www.realstimulus.org

¹⁰ For background on Categorical Eligibility and seniors, see FRAC, Smart Choices in Hard Times (February 2010): http://www.frac.org/pdf/smartchoices_2010.pdf#page=11

¹¹ For background on "heat and eat" strategies, see FRAC, Smart Choices in hard Times (February 2010): http://www.frac.org/pdf/smartchoices_2010.pdf#page=17

¹² For background on SSI/CAPs, see FRAC, Smart Choices in Hard Times (February 2010): http://www.frac.org/pdf/smartchoices_2010.pdf#page=15

¹³ For background on standard medical deductions, see FRAC, Smart Choices in Hard Times (February 2010): http://www.frac.org/pdf/smartchoices_2010.pdf#page=13

¹⁴ For background on alternatives to in-person, in-office interviews, see FRAC, SNAP/Food Stamps Outreach and Access Toolkit (May 2010): http://www.frac.org/pdf/snap_outreach_access_toolkit_2010.pdf#page=29

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