

## Handout

### FOOD INSECURITIES IN MINNESOTA

Minnesota has been relatively successful in addressing food insecurity, being the 6th least food insecure state in the nation. Mississippi, New Mexico and Texas are the top three states in the nation in prevalence of food insecurities.

However, food shelf use is at a record high for the State of Minnesota. It has grown 52% since 2000 and 90% in 20 years. Minnesota has more than 300 food shelves across the state and, in 2006, clients visited food shelves 1.8 million times and these food shelves distributed more than 42 million pounds of food. Of Minnesota's food shelf users, 47% of adults and 14% of children skip meals to stretch their budgets. Contrary to common stereotypes, most of the Minnesotans who use food shelves and on-site meal programs are employed, disabled, or retired. Unaffordable housing is a major factor in Minnesota hunger.

Poverty is the largest cause of food insecurity in Minnesota and in the nation. According to the last US Census 380,000 people in Minnesota live in poverty. Poverty means that a woman with two children has to earn less than \$15,670. (The cost of her basic needs would be \$33,480 in greater Minnesota and \$40,476 in the metro region.) Earning a minimum wage of \$6.15 an hour, she would actually earn \$12,792 annually. A recent report showed that 2/3 of Minnesota food shelf clients make less than \$1,000 a month and 3/4 live in subsidized housing. Women, children, and people of color are disproportionately among the hungry.

The data is based on the following documents:

1. The state of hunger in Minnesota. Survey of food shelf and on-site meal program recipients in 2005 February 2006: Richard Chase, Laura Schauben
2. Right to Food Fact Sheet, The Right to Food in Minnesota and the United States, Advocates for Human Rights

<http://discoverhumanrights.org/6d8e33f1-5716-4ead-a96a-d59358bae00b.html?NodeId=>

3. 2007 Almanac of Hunger and Poverty in America. America's Second Harvest, Children and Elderly Hunger Facts.

[http://www.secondharvest.org/learn\\_about\\_hunger/fact\\_sheet/poverty\\_stats.html](http://www.secondharvest.org/learn_about_hunger/fact_sheet/poverty_stats.html)