

**SUMMARY—FOOD PANTRY NUTRITION PROJECT  
DIRECTORS' MEETING  
NOVEMBER 11.2011  
M. U. Student Center**

This is a summary of the meeting based on handouts provided by Bill McKelvey.

The Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security Missouri “Hunger Atlas” for 2010 was distributed. It provides an overview on food security for all Missouri counties and the City of St. Louis. The full report is on-line at: <http://dass.missouri.edu/ruralsoc/news/missouri-hunger-atlas2010.pdf>

The portion for Cooper County is on-line at: <http://missourifamilies.org/mohungeratlas/counties/cooper.pdf>

County total population 17535 State total population 5,911,605  
County population under 18 years 22.3% State population under 18 years 24%

Obesity: County 34.1% State 29.1%  
Diabetes 8% State 9.3%  
Hypertension 23.6% State 19.6%

The counties are ranked by need and also ranked by performance in addressing that need. Ranks are by percentiles: Top 20% (80<sup>th</sup> to 100<sup>th</sup>) received a very high rating. Lowest 20% (1<sup>st</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup>) received a “very low” rating.

**Cooper County received a very low rating for need.**

% households food uncertain (very low 10.1%) compared to state average of 15.8%

% households with children food uncertain (low 17.3%) compared to state average of 3.4%

% food uncertain with hunger (very low 3.7%) compared to state average of 7.2%

% Total population SNAP (food stamps) income eligible (very low 15.7%) compared to state average of 18.2% ***trend is decreasing***

% under age 18 SNAP (food stamps) income eligible (low 22.2%) compared to state average of 24.7%

% students eligible for free and reduced school lunches (low 42.1%) compared to state average 42.9% ***trend is increasing***

% Women, infants and children program (WIC) eligible (low 44.5%) compared to state average 42.8% ***trend is increasing***

**Cooper County received an average rating for performance.**

**Number of monthly SNAP (food stamp) participants 2018 (trend is increasing)**

**% population receiving SNAP assistance (participation low 11.5%)  
compared to state average 12.8% trend is increasing**

**% income eligible population participation (high 73.3%) compared to state  
average 70.5% trend is increasing**

**# monthly participation of those under age 18 (905) receiving SNAP trend is increasing**

**% monthly participation of those under age 18 income eligible receiving  
SNAP5 total monthly benefits (participation average 24.3%)  
compared to state average 24.7 % trend is increasing**

**Share of population under age 18 eligible and participating in SNAP (high)  
% eligible free and reduced school lunch income eligible and participating  
(low 75.7%) trend is decreasing**

**# sites participating in summer food service program participation (4)**

**Total reimbursements food service programs (\$11,862)**

**# monthly participation Women, Infants and children participation (383)  
trend is increasing**

**# monthly infants and children (284) trend is increasing**

**Share of population under 5 eligible and participating (low)**

**Child and adult care food program participants' reimbursements (\$251,938)  
trend is increasing**

**Total food bank distribution by pounds in county (420,557) trend is increasing**

**Total pounds per capita under 100% poverty (very high 202 ) compared to  
state average of 78 trend is increasing**

**The Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security report “Coping With Hunger: Food Pantry Clients and Households in th Service Region of the Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri” was published last month. (October 2011)**

**This research is a systematic survey of food pantry clients to assist The Food Bank for Central and Northeast Missouri in order to provide the best possible services to regional residents.**

**The survey was taken in the summer of 2010. It includes major sections on food pantry jus, food security, food acquisition strategies, physical and mental health, nutrition and general individual and household demographics.**

**The initial goal was 1200 surveys of the 42 panties in 32 counties eligible for participation. One of the 42 refused permission to recruit participants.**

**Structured interviews lasted 20-30 minutes. Interviewers approach 1520 clients. Of that number 324 refused to participate and 29 began, but did not complete the interviews.**

Neighbors Helping Neighbors had 18 participants. All completed the interview. It was the only pantry in Cooper County to participate.

The report had 84 page of data tables. What follows is a synopsis of the major findings as determined by the reviewer.

**Frequency of pantry use: Usage increased with age**

Roughly one fourth of all clients were regular users 12 months or less. The percent of users 13+ months increased with age-- 27% age 39 and younger; 38% 38% age 40-64, and 56% ag 65 and older. .Not regular users decreased with age-- 48% 38 & younger to 19% 65 and older.

**Body mass index: Overweight and obese increased with length of client usage.**

It was similar for those using the pantry for a year or less. 43% not regular users had normal body mass index. Those using 13 months or more had higher rates of obesity—33% overweight an 40% obese.

**Health conditions: Higher rates as length of client usage increased..**

Roughly one fourth of those using the pantry 12 months or less had no health conditions. For users of 13+ months, higher rate were shown for diabetes (47%), high blood pressure (38%), high cholesterol (42%)

Children under age 18 at home: **Highest rates were for those with one or two adults with children and not regular pantry users.**

Roughly one fourth had one or two children and 29% no children who used the pantry for 12 months or less. Not regular users with single adults with children child (43%) and two adults with children (45%). Of those with o children, 41% used the pantry 13+ months or more.

Employment status: **The highest percentage was long time clients not working followed by working adults under or over 35 hours a week and not regular pantry users.**

Roughly one fourth of those not working, working 35 hours or less or more than 35 hours a week regularly used the pantry 12 or fewer months.. Highest rates ere no working adult using th pantry 13+ months regularly (42%), and hose not using the pantry regularly (41%) working fewer than 35 hours a week or working more than 35 hours a wk (45%).

Income level: **At all income levels, the highest percentage of users were clients who did not use the food pantry regularly.**

For those at less than 50% the poverty level, only 27% had used the pantry regularly 1 to 12 months, compared to 25% having 51% to 100% poverty level income, and 29% with incomes at 101% or more above the poverty level.. More than a third of all income levels used th pantry 13+ months o not regularly.

Food security: **Food security with and without hunger was highest with long-term users and those who did not use th pantry regularly.**

More than a third of long term users and not regular users reported being food secure, food insecure with and without hunger. Among regular users about one fourth fell, in each category

Health by age: **In general, health quality self reports showed a decline with age.**

Only 32% of those age 18 through 39 reported health being poor or fair compared to 61% age 40 through 64 and 63% ag 65 and older.

Health by body mass. **Those reporting poor health were much more likely to be overweight or obese.**

Those with normal or overweight body mass had twice the percentage who rated their health as excellent compared to the obese while those reporting poor health and obese were twice the percentage with normal body mass and 20% more than those overweight.

Health by conditions of diabetes, high blood pressure and cholesterol: **Those with these health conditions had 2.5 to 3 times the percentage of those with no health conditions.**

**Of those who reported** excellent health, 12% had no health conditions, 4% diabetes, 3% high blood pressure and 2% high cholesterol. Of those reporting

poor health conditions, 9% had no health conditions, 32% diabetes, 25% high blood pressure, and 28% high cholesterol.

Children in home and health: **Those with no children were less likely to report excellent health and more likely to report poor health.**

Only 5% of adults without children in the home reported excellent health compared to 11% with children and one adult and 10% with children and two adults. Adults with no children in home had 21% reporting poor health compared to 10% of single adults with children and 14% of two adults.

Health by employment status: **Not working adults generally reported poorer health.**

Not working reported the lowest percentage having excellent or very good health (14%) compared to 24% working less than 35 hours a week and 25% working 35 or more hours a week. Only 9% of those working 35 plus hours a week reported poor health compared to 3% less than 35 hours of work a week and 23% not working.

Health and food security: **Those with food security or food insecure without hunger had the highest health rate.**

Only 11% food insecure with hunger reported excellent/very good health compared with 25% food secure and 23% food insecure without hunger. Rating health as fair/poor were 65% food insecure with hunger compared to 45% food insecure without hunger and 37% food secure.

Health concerns: **Those least likely to have health concerns were those with no health conditions and food secure. Those most likely to have health concerns were those with Diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, no children, and food insecure with or without hunger.**

Adults over age 18 in household—**One-fourth of households had three or more adults present.**

Children under age 17 in household: **Sixteen percent reported three or more children and 51% no children.**

USDA food security and insecurity definitions: **Twenty-four percent reported food secure, 37% food insecure without hunger, and 39% food insecure with hunger.**

Could not pay for all essential services during past 12 months: **Seventy-seven percent reported “yes.”**

Looking at level of food security, **only 53% of food secure answered “yes,” with 77% food insecure without hunger and 92% food insecure with hunger.**

Could not pay full amount of utility bills last 12 months: **The results mimicked findings for essential services.**

**In the next several items, I looked at the variables—including poverty and health condition an employment status. Non stood out like the food security responses.**

Could not pay full amount of rent or mortgage past 12 months. **Only 45% reported “yes.”**

**Strikingly, only 28% of those food secure could not pay full amount compared to 45% food insecure without hunger and 56% food insecure with hunger.**

Could not pay for gas or transportation costs past 12 months. **Seventy-two % reported “yes.”**

**Only 46% of food secure answered “yes,” compared to 70% food insecure without hunger and 88% food insecure with hunger.**

Could not afford to seek dental services past 12 months: **Sixty-nine percent reported “yes.”**

**Only 48% of food secure answered “yes,” compared to 68% food insecure without hunger and 82% food insecure with hunger.**

Could not afford to seek medical services past 12 months **Forty-nine percent “yes.”**

**Only 25% of food secure answered “yes,” compared to 47% food insecure without hunger and 66% food insecure with hunger**

Could not afford medicine past 12 months: **Fifty-six reported “yes.”**

**Only 29% of food secure answered “yes,” compared to 53% food insecure without hunger and 74% food insecure with hunger**

Had to choose between buying food and paying utilities past 12 months: **Fifty-six percent reported “yes.”**

**Only 26% of food secure answered “yes,” compared to 51% food insecure without hunger and 80% food insecure with hunger**

Had to choose between buying food and paying mortgage or rent past 12 months: **Forty-two percent reported “yes.”**

**Seventeen percent food secure answered “yes,” compared to 37% food insecure without hunger and 62% food insecure with hunger**

Had to choose between buying food or gas or transportation costs past 12 months; **Sixty percent "yes."**

**Twenty-seven percent food secure answered "yes," compared to 57% food insecure without hunger and 83% food insecure with hunger.**

Best description of food eaten in your household in past four months: **Enough of kinds we want (14%), enough but not the kind we want ( 54%), Sometimes not enough to eat (24%), and often not enough to eat (8%).**

**Food secure ranked highest (40%) with enough of the kinds w want" followed by 12% food insecure and no hunger and 2% food insecure and hunger.**

.Amount of money household spends in an average week on food at home and at a restaurant: **\$0 to \$25 (17%), \$26 to \$50 (27%), \$51 to \$75 (16%), \$76-\$100 (17%, \$1-01 plus (23%). Median was \$83 a week.**

**Those most likely to spend \$25 or less a week were the elderly(42%), obese (15%), no health condition (14%), not a regular pantry user (13%) children under 18 with two adults (4%) working 35 or more hours a week (8%), less than 50% of the poverty level (13%).**

Usage of SNAP (food stamp program): **Forty-five percent said "no." The least .likely increased with age and income. Having children under age 18 at home with one adult ( 30%), two or more adults (35%), and no children (55%).**

Did recipient use WIC? **Eighty-two percent said "no."**

Did you use wheels on meals" **Ninety-seven percent "no." For those age 65 and older, 89% reported "no."**

Did you get food assistance from a relative over the past year? **"No" reported by 61%.**

**Lowest was those 18 through 39 (55%) and one adult with children in the home (52%).**

Did you get food assistance from a friend over the past year? **"No" was reported by 77%.**

Did you get food assistance from a neighbor or co-worker over the past year? **"No" was reported by 90%.**

Did you hunt or fish to get food you needed over the past year? **"yes" was reported by 33%. Least likely to hunt or fish were the elderly (81%).**

Did you use gardens to get food you needed over the past year? **“Yes” by 39%. Most likely to garden were the elderly (44%) and those food secure (43%)**

I encourage other to use food pantries if they need assistance: **ninety-eight percent agree.**

I avoid food pantries where I see someone I might know. **Nine percent agree..**

I tell people I use a pantry: **Eighty-eight percent agree, Lowest were elderly at 83%.**

Many people who visit a food pantry do not want other people to know: **Forty-eight percent agree.**

Food pantry users are not respected: **Fifty-nine percent agrees, no opinion (18%) and disagree (23%)**

Lowest was those with no health condition **(54% agree) and highest was those with diabetes (68%) and the food insecure with hunger (65%).**

In a normal week, how many times do you get fresh or frozen fruits (not including juices)? **Zero times (28%), 1-2 times (39%), 3-6 times (20%) and 7+ times (14%). Lowest for 7+ times were those food insecure and hungry (7%).**

How many times in a typical week do you use canned fruits? **Zero (35%), 1-2 times (40%), 3-6 times (18%) and 7+ times (8%).**

**The lowest rate among 7+ times were by home with children and on adult (4%) and seven percent for food pantry users of more than 12 months, 51% to more than 101% of poverty, and food insecure with hunger.**

In a normal week, how many times do you get fresh or frozen vegetables (not including juices)? **Zero (24%), 1-2 times (29%), 3-6 times (26%) and 7+ times (20%).**  
**Least likely to use 7+ times a week were those food insecure and hungry (14%). Most likely were adults working 35 or more hours a week.**

How many times in a typical week do you use canned vegetables? **Zero (12%), 1-2 times (24%), 3-6 times (33%) and 7+ times (26%).**

In a typical week, how many times do you drink milk or use it on your cereal? **Zero (23%), 1-2 times (16%), 3-6 times (18%) and 7+ times (43%).**

What type of milk do you typically consume? **Whole milk (32%), 2%(55%), and other (13%). Normal body mass was th highest percent to use whole milk (46%). Those with the lowest “other milk” category were normal body mass (8%), working adults les than 35 hours a week (9%) and those at less than 50% of poverty income (9%).**

In a normal week, how many times do you eat dried beans? **Do not include green beans, soybeans, kidney/red beans pinto bans garbanzo beans, lentils, black-eyed peas, lima beans. Refried beans? Zero times (43%),1 time (30%), 2 times (16%), and 3+ times (11%). Zero times dropped with age.**

How many times do you do at last 30 minutes of exercise, like brisk walking, bicycling. Gardening, etc...? Zero days (27%), 1-3 days (23%), 4-6 days (8%), and 7 days (42%). Highest were obese and diabetics at 33% zero days Lowest for seven days were 65 and older (36%), obese (35%), high blood pressure (37%), no children (37%), an 101% or higher of poverty income level (39%).

Have you been to se a doctor or nurse for your own health in the past year? **Yes (79%). High likelihood were those with diabetes (93%), 65 & older and those having high blood pressure (89%), Least likely were those with normal body mass (30%).**

Have you been told by a doctor you have diabetes? Twenty-two percent said “yes.” The highest rates were for those with high cholesterol (44%), high blood pressure (35%), age 65 and older (34%) and the obese (31%).

Are you taking insulin? **Nineteen percent reported “yes.”**

Are you taking diabetes pills? **Forty-four percent of the 402 with diabetes report “yes.” Highest were those older than 65 (61%), those with diabetes (69%), high cholesterol (60%), high blood pressure (52%).**

Have you had your blood pressure checked by a health worker? **Ninety-four reported “yes.”**

Were you ever told you had high blood pressure? **Ninety-four reported “yes.” Highest were those with high cholesterol (72%) diabetes (69%).**

### **NOTE BELOW:**

**Combined body mass (weight and height): 21% normal, 27% overweight, 52% obese. Obese was highest among those with diabetes (73%), high blood pressure (63%) and high cholesterol (62%).**

Asked if health professional had advised losing weight for health reasons, **42% said “yes.” Obese was the highest with 63%.**

Tried to lose weight in the past 12 months? **Sixty-two percent said “yes.” Seventy-nine per cent of obese , 68% high blood pressure, and 71% high cholesterol reported trying to lose weight.**

What is the first thing you do or try to do to los weight? **Change quality of food (19%), change type of food (11%), exercise (54%), other (17%).One adult with children at home was least likely to change quantity if food (13%).**

Have you had your blood cholesterol checked by a health worker? **Sixty-nine percent reported “yes.” Outside of those with cholesterol, high was seniors (91%) and diabetics (93%).**

Were you ever told you had high blood cholesterol? **“Yes” by 45%. Diabetics were highest with 65% followed by high blood pressure (62%)**

Are you taking a prescribed medicine for high cholesterol? **“Yes” by 64%. Highest by percentage were diabetics (83%), 65 & older 80%, o children in home 70% ad o working adults 70%.**

Do you or members of your current household have diabetes? **“No” to 79%. Using 27% as low benchmark, those having household member with diabetes were 34% age 65 ad older, 27% with high cholesterol, no children under age 18 in home 28%, no working adults 27%, and 21% at 101 percent of poverty level or higher.**

Do members of household have high blood pressure? **Thirty-seven percent “yes.” Highest were elderly with 54%, those at 101% or more of poverty level income 53%. Only one category was single digit, that of one adult with children 6%.**

Age of respondents: **Age 18-39 (37%), age 40-64 (51%), age 65+ 12%).**

How many hours a week working? **None (69%), 1-15 (4%), 16-34 (11%) and 35 or more hours (16%). Using 80% as the cutoff, those not working were 65 & older (89%), diabetic (83%), and having high cholesterol (81%). In single digits we find those who are working 35 or more hours a week were: 65 & older (3%), diabetics (9%), and under 50% of poverty level (8%).**

Sex of respondent: **76% female.**

Highest level of education completed: **Less than high school (26%), high school graduate (42%), some college (26%), and college graduates (6%).** **Notably higher were single college graduates with children under age 18(12%).** **Notably different with less than high school education were age 65 and older (44%).**

Marital status: **married (37%), living with partner (13%), widowed (8%), divorced/separated (27%) and never married (15%)** Notably higher were **married with two or adults an children in household at 54%**. Four percent were married with child under age 18 and th marital partner not living in th household.

Have you had to leave a residence over the past 24 months due to a loss of income or foreclosure? **“Yes” by 13%**

How ,many months have you lived in your current place? **1-11 months (25%) 12-23 months (13%), 24-47 months (18%) and 48 or more months (44%)**.

**These percentages are based upon the 442 participants who moved in the last two years.** How many times have you moved in the past two years? One time (48%), 2 or 3 times (41%) 4 or more (11%).

Why did you move out of previous residence? **Family reason (23%), work reason (10%), housing reason (51%) and other reason (17%)**.

Race? **White (86%), black (9%) and other (5%)**.

Hispanic or Latino: **“Yes” three percent**.

Last month’s earnings (minus taxes and other deductions) from all jobs: **\$0 (49%), \$1 to \$500 (10%), \$501 to \$1000 (17%), \$1001 to \$1500 (11%), and %1501+ (13%)**. Outside of no working adults, elderly had highest percent of zero earnings (77%). .

For the 799 respondents with one or two more adults in the household, **71% reported one or neither worked full time..**

For the 799 respondents with one or two more adults in the household, **85% reported one or neither worked part-time..**

Participation in Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF): **Only 5% participated—highest was those with 50% or less than poverty income (11%)**

Participation in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP once known as “food stamps”). **Fifty-three percent participated. Lowest was age 65 and older (35%) and highest was under 50% of poverty level income.**

Child support from father or court child welfare: **9% “yes.” One person age 65 and older received this.**

Disability (supplemental income or veteran disability): **Thirty-one percent said “yes.” Highest were obese (38%), diabetes (44%), 13 or more months regular pantry use (40%), no working adults (45%), and between 51% and 100% of poverty level income (40%).**

Receive social security or pension: **28% yes.**

Unemployment benefits: **Nine percent “yes.”**

Over last 30 days felt so sad nothing could cheer you up? **51% said none of the time, 36% said a little or some of the time, and 13% most are all of the time..**

Over the past 30 days, how often have you felt nervous. **None of the time (34%), a little or some of the time (45%) or most of the time (21%).**

Over the past 30 days, how often have you felt restless or fidgety? **None of the time (35%), a little or some of the time (40%) or most of the time (25%).**

Over the past 30 days, how often have you felt hopeless? **None of the time (58%), a little or some of the time (30%) or most of the time (13%).**

Over the past 30 days, how often have you felt everything was an effort? **None of the time (35%), a little or some of the time (37%) or most of the time (28%).**

Over the past 30 days, how often have you felt worthless? **None of the time (68%), a little or some of the time (21%) or most of the time (11%).**

Size of household: **1 person (21%), 2 people (24%), 3 people (17%), four or more (39%).**

Income poverty level: **0-50% (33%), 51-100% (40%), and 101+ percent: (28%).**