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For Immediate Release

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Study Shows Food Insecurity Rate on Rise in Connecticut
Map the Meal Gap study reveals 14.5% of state residents at risk of hunger

East Haven, CT – June 7, 2013 --- Feeding America, the nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief organization, is releasing the 2013 “Map the Meal Gap” study on Monday, June 10, 2013, which offers a look at food insecurity for the general population, and separately for children, in Connecticut.

According to the study, 14.5 percent, or 520,350 of Connecticut’s residents are food insecure, and it would take more than \$239 million to meet the needs of Connecticut’s food insecure population, or \$15.16 per week for each food insecure person. Those figures are an increase over last year’s data which showed a 13.8 percent food insecurity rate, with a \$231 million budget shortfall in Connecticut.

Middlesex County has among the highest food costs in Connecticut (\$3.26 per meal), with New Haven County having the highest (14.4%) food insecurity rate in the state. In Connecticut Food Bank’s service area, 48 percent of the food insecure population does not qualify for food stamps or other federal food assistance program. In Connecticut, the overall number is 57 percent, up 5 percent over last year’s data.

Child Food Insecurity rate on rise

In Connecticut Food Bank’s service area, which includes Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham Counties, the child food insecurity rate is 19.2 percent, or 99,670 children. Connecticut’s county-level data of child food insecurity ranges from a low of 14.2 percent in Tolland County, to a high of 20.9 percent in Windham County. The state’s overall rate is 157,550 children, or 19.8 percent. Nationally, the child food insecurity rate is 22 percent.

“These numbers are no surprise to Connecticut Food Bank and our network of soup kitchens and pantries who continue to see an increase in demand for their services,” said Nancy L.

Carrington, Connecticut Food Bank's President and CEO. "If food insecure people do not qualify for federal assistance, they often must rely on sources such as Connecticut Food Bank's member programs to feed themselves and their families. For example, of the 107,010 food-insecure residents of Fairfield County, 50 percent are ineligible for food stamps because they earn over the income limit to qualify. This means that their primary source of emergency food is a local food pantry or soup kitchen."

Map the Meal Gap provides the following data by state and county in an [interactive map format](#):

- ✓ The percentage of the population that is **food insecure**.
- ✓ The percentage of the food insecure population that qualify based on income for **SNAP (Foods Stamps)** and other federal nutrition programs.
- ✓ The percentage of the food insecure population who **do NOT qualify for federal nutrition programs** and often must rely on charitable food assistance programs and who also need better wages and employment opportunities to help them meet their basic needs.
- ✓ The average price per meal based research by The Nielsen Company.

The interactive map provides policy makers, state agencies, corporate partners and individual advocates to develop integrated strategies to fight hunger on a community by community level. Map the Meal Gap shows the food budget shortfall represents more than 51 million meals in Connecticut Food Bank's service area on an annual basis.

Map the Meal Gap also provides food insecurity rates for Congressional District. The study further analyzes each district's food insecure population to determine their income eligibility for federal nutrition assistance.

This is the third year that Feeding America has conducted the "Map the Meal Gap" study. The findings of "Map the Meal Gap" are based on statistics collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; food price data and analysis were provided by Nielsen (NYSE: [NLSN](#)), a global information and measurement company providing insights into what consumers watch and buy. The study was generously supported by the [Howard G. Buffett Foundation](#), [Nielsen](#) and [The ConAgra Foods Foundation](#).

Prior to the study's first release in March 2011, food insecurity data was only available at the state level in the U.S. Department of Agriculture's annual report. The study further analyzes each county's food insecure population to determine their income eligibility for federal nutrition assistance, and also provides meal cost estimates for every county in the nation.

A summary of the findings, an interactive map of the United States, and the full report are available on Feeding America's website at www.feedingamerica.org

For more information on Connecticut Food Bank's response to hunger in the state, visit www.ctfoodbank.org.

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Connecticut Food Bank serves approximately 600 local emergency food assistance programs in six of Connecticut's eight counties: Fairfield, Litchfield, Middlesex, New Haven, New London and Windham. Connecticut Food Bank distributes an average of 34 tons of food every business day.

About Feeding America

Feeding America is a nationwide network of more than 200 food banks that leads the fight against hunger in the United States. Together, we provide food to more than 37 million people through 61,000 food pantries, soup kitchens, and shelters in communities across America. Feeding America also supports programs that 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. Individuals, charities, businesses and government all have a role in ending hunger. Donate. Volunteer. Advocate. Educate. Together we can solve hunger. Visit <http://www.feedingamerica.org/>. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FeedingAmerica or follow us on Twitter at www.twitter.com/FeedingAmerica.