



African American Hunger Facts

May 2017

While hunger has no boundaries, it does impact some communities more than others. African Americans are disproportionately affected by hunger and poverty.

Feeding America touches every county in the nation, and we work hard to help ensure that no American – no matter what community they belong to – goes without the food they need to feed their family.

FOOD INSECURITY AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS

- The food insecurity rate among African-American households is more than double that of white, non-Hispanic households.
- An estimated 1 in 5 (22%) African-American households is food insecure as compared to 1 in 10 (10%) Caucasian households and 1 in 8 (13%) households overall.¹
- An estimated 1 in 4 (27%) African-American children live in food-insecure households as compared to 1 in 7 (14%) Caucasian children.²
- While the 105 counties in 2015 with a majority African-American population represent only 3% of all U.S. counties, 92% of African-American majority counties fall into the top 10% of counties with the highest rates of food insecurity. Majority African-American counties, however, have an average unemployment rate (9%) and poverty rate (29%) that, while substantially higher than the national average (6% and 17%, respectively) are roughly the same as other high food-insecurity rate counties (8% and 27%, respectively).³
- Of the 10 counties with the highest food-insecurity rates in the nation, they are all at least 65% African American. Seven of the 10 counties are located in Mississippi.⁴
- Four out of the 97 majority African-American counties that fall into the top 10% of counties with the highest rates of food insecurity also fall into the top 10% of counties with the highest food costs; the average cost per meal in these counties is \$3.37, as compared with the national average of \$2.94.⁵





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CHARITABLE FOOD ASSISTANCE AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS

- African American households are disproportionately represented within the charitable food assistance client population.
- More than 1 in 4 (31%) African Americans in the U.S. are served by the Feeding America network each year, totaling 12 million African American adults, seniors and children.^{7 8}
- Ten percent of the white non-Hispanic population in the U.S. are people Feeding America serves, meaning African Americans are three times as likely to receive assistance through the Feeding America network as compared to their white, non-Hispanic peers.

POVERTY AMONG AFRICAN AMERICANS

- African American households experience disproportionate levels of poverty and have lower household income than their white, non-Hispanic counterparts.
- Median income for African American households (\$36,898) is significantly lower than their non-Hispanic White counterparts (\$62,950).⁹
- Poverty rates for African Americans (24%) in 2015 were more than twice that of non-Hispanic whites (9%).¹⁰
- Eleven percent of African Americans live in deep poverty (less than 50% of the federal poverty threshold), compared to 6% of all people in the United States.¹¹



Appendix

1. Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbitt, M., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. (2016). [*Household Food Security in the United States in 2015, Table 2*](#). USDA ERS.
2. Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbitt, M., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. (2016). [*Household Food Security in the United States in 2015, Statistical Supplement Table S-3*](#). USDA ERS.
3. Gundersen, C., A. Dewey, A. Crumbaugh, M. Kato & E. Engelhard. [*Map the Meal Gap 2017: Food Insecurity and Child Food Insecurity Estimates at the County Level*](#). Feeding America, 2017.
4. Ibid.
5. Ibid.
6. [*CPS Table 3*](#). (2015). Employment status of the civilian noninstitutional population by sex, age, and race. Household data annual averages. Bureau of Labor Statistics.
7. Feeding America, *Hunger in America 2014*, National Report. August 2014.
8. US Census Bureau, 2012 American Community Survey (ACS) Table B03002.
9. Proctor, B.D., Semega, J.L., & Kollar, M.A. (2016). [*Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015*](#). U.S. Census Bureau.
10. Ibid.
11. Ibid.