



# Rural Hunger Fact Sheet

September 2017

Rates of food insecurity among rural households are generally higher than urban households. The irony is that many of these food-insecure households are in the very rural and farm communities whose productivity feeds the world and provides low-cost wholesome food for American consumers.

According to USDA data, challenges facing rural areas differ from metro/urban areas in several significant ways. Read below to learn more about these ways and other rural hunger and poverty facts.

## CHALLENGES FACING RURAL AREAS COMPARED TO URBAN<sup>1</sup>

- Employment is more concentrated in low-wage industries;
- Unemployment and *underemployment* are greater;
- Education levels are lower;
- Work-support services, such as flexible and affordable child care and public transportation, are less available;
- The rural marketplace offers less access to communication and transportation networks<sup>2</sup>; and
- Offers companies less access to activities that foster administration, research and development.

## RURAL FOOD INSECURITY

- Fifteen percent of households (2.7 million) located in rural (nonmetropolitan) areas are food insecure.<sup>3</sup>
- Rural (nonmetro) counties make up 63% of all 3,142 U.S. counties, but account for 67% of counties with higher-than-average food-insecurity rates, and 76% of counties with food-insecurity rates that rank in the top 10% of all U.S. counties.<sup>4</sup>





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## RURAL FOOD INSECURITY CONT.

- Counties with higher rates of child food insecurity tend to be even more disproportionately rural; 70% of counties with higher-than-average child food-insecurity rates are nonmetro, as are 86% of counties whose child food-insecurity rates fall into the top 10%.<sup>5</sup>

## RURAL POVERTY

- 6.9 million Americans (15.8%) living in rural areas live in poverty.<sup>6</sup>
- Compared to all regions, the South continues to have the highest poverty rate among people in families living in rural areas (25% versus 20%).<sup>7</sup>
- Among people in families with a single female head of household living in rural areas, 44% live in poverty, as compared to 32% in the suburbs.<sup>8</sup>



## References

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