

# HUNGER IN AMERICA



Regardless of a person's circumstance, no one deserves to be hungry. MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger works to strengthen the nutrition safety net to ensure that everyone can feed themselves and their families with dignity, end the stigma surrounding those who rely on social safety net programs, and elevate the unique needs of vulnerable populations to ensure everyone has access to the resources they need to put food on the table.



## What is "food insecurity"?

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) defines food insecurity as a lack of access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.

MORE THAN **12%**  
of Americans — nearly 44 million people — face food insecurity.



ABOUT **1 in 8**



Americans relies on SNAP (formerly food stamps) to buy their groceries.

## Hunger by the Numbers

- 33% of households headed by a single mother struggle with hunger.
- Black, Indigenous, and Hispanic households disproportionately experience food insecurity.
- 24% of active-duty servicemembers experience food insecurity, and food pantries operate on or near every military base in the U.S.
- Approximately 1 in 3 college students faces hunger.
- Nearly 25% of all Native American and Alaska Native households are food insecure.
- People in Puerto Rico receive about 25% less in nutrition benefits compared to those who receive SNAP.
- LGBTQ older adults are 60% more likely to experience food insecurity than other older adults.

# ENDING HUNGER IN AMERICA

There is enough food to feed everyone in the United States. But we need to strengthen and expand the policies and programs that ensure every person has access to adequate nutrition.

## Long-term solutions require government action.

- › The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the most widely used nutrition assistance program with over 40 million participants — SNAP is our country's most effective defense against hunger.
- › SNAP recipients receive only about \$2.00 per person, per meal.
- › It is essential that we improve and expand SNAP to remove barriers that restrict access for struggling individuals and families, and increase access to affordable, nutritious foods for vulnerable populations.

## Charity alone cannot end hunger.

- › Charitable programs were never conceived to feed entire communities or to end hunger — they are important parts of alleviating temporary and emergency situations, but they are not equipped to keep up with the full scope of food insecurity in America.
- › **The overwhelming majority of food assistance comes from federal programs** — only about 5% is provided by the charitable sector — and they are not designed to solve systemic problems.



Average SNAP benefit  
per person, per meal



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from federal programs.

# MAZON

A Jewish Response  
To Hunger

[mazon.org](https://mazon.org)

