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Hunger Study 2010 Reveals the Face of Hunger in Wisconsin

More than 500,000 People at Risk for Hunger in State

Milwaukee, WI- After extensive research, a new study released today reveals the face of hunger in Wisconsin. *Hunger in Wisconsin 2010* found that hunger knows no race, age or gender. 573,800 people in Wisconsin rely on Feeding America food banks for food each year and 37% of those are children under the age of 18 and 7% are senior citizens.

With the downturn in the economy and the rise of unemployment in recent years, Feeding America food banks have seen a large growth in demand for food in Wisconsin. Overall, emergency food programs are serving more people than they did four years ago and as a result, they're distributing more food. According to *Hunger in Wisconsin 2010*, 72% of pantries, 60% of soup kitchens and 64% of shelters say they're serving more clients than they did in 2006.

Hunger in Wisconsin 2010 reveals that children are at particular risk for hunger in Wisconsin. 71% of households with children seeking food assistance are food insecure, meaning they don't have adequate access to nutritious food. Among households with school-age children, 59% participate in the federal school lunch program and 46% participate in the federal school breakfast program.

People needing supplemental food are making difficult choices:

- 44% choose between food and paying their utilities.
- 35% choose between buying food and paying the rent or mortgage.
- 31% choose between buying groceries and medical care.

"Hardworking Wisconsinites are losing their jobs and their homes. These are tough times for many people. Families and individuals are struggling to put food on the table and they're making tough choices, choices they shouldn't have to make," said Bonnie Bellehumeur, president of Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin. Feeding America Wisconsin food banks are working hard to alleviate hunger in the state. Together we distribute more than 26 million pounds of food through a network of more than 1,700 programs, including pantries, soup kitchens, meal programs and shelters, annually to help feed those in need. To learn how you can help feed those struggling with hunger, visit www.feedingamericawi.org.

Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., a leading policy research firm, in partnership with Feeding America, conducted the research and compiled the data for *Hunger in Wisconsin 2010*. The data is based on individual client interviews and agency surveys.

To find out more about how hunger is affecting your local community, contact the Feeding America food bank in your area. Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin, www.feedingamericawi.org
Second Harvest Food Bank of Southern Wisconsin (southwestern Wisconsin), www.secondharvestmadison.org
Second Harvest Heartland (northwestern Wisconsin), www.2harvest.org
Feed My People (west central Wisconsin), www.fmpfoodbank.org
Second Harvest Northern Lakes, (Douglas, Bayfield, Ashland, and Iron Counties), www.northernlakesfoodbank.org
Channel One Food Bank (LaCrosse County), www.helpingfeedpeople.org

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329,400 people in eastern Wisconsin rely on food supplied by Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin each year. The food bank is the largest, private, non-profit distributor of food in the state. Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin distributes more than 12 million pounds of food annually to 1,100 food pantries, meal programs and shelters throughout eastern Wisconsin. Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin is a member of Feeding America, formerly named America's Second Harvest, which is consistently ranked as one of the most efficient charities, out of the country's 100 largest charities, by *Forbes* magazine. Since 1982, Feeding America Eastern Wisconsin has distributed more than 250 million pounds of food. To learn more about hunger in Wisconsin, visit www.feedingamericawi.org.