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MAY 4, 2017

Feeding America, in collaboration with the *Howard G. Buffett Foundation* and *The Nielsen Company* released an update to their landmark analysis of local food insecurity and food costs in the United States, providing an updated look at:



- **Food insecurity rates by county and Congressional District.**
- **Percent of food insecure population likely ineligible for federal nutrition programs by county and Congressional District.**
- **Number of food insecure people by county and Congressional District.**
- **Food cost variation for every county across the nation.**

The study takes a look at 'meals' in a whole new way, using county-level data on food costs from The Nielsen Company to break down the food budget shortfall of our residents into an approximation of the meals missing from the tables of people at risk of hunger on the Treasure Coast each year- **an estimated \$55 million or 17 million meals.**

Treasure Coast Food Bank is one of the 200 members of Feeding America, the nation's largest hunger relief charity. For more information, please contact Krista Garofalo at 772-489-3034 or kgarofalo@tcofoodbank.org.

On the Treasure Coast,

- ✓ **15.1%** of the Treasure Coast population is food insecure, with **94,150** people not knowing where their next meal is coming from.
- ✓ **73%** of the food insecure population on the Treasure Coast qualify based on income for **SNAP (Foods Stamps)** and other federal nutrition programs.
- ✓ **27%** of the food insecure population on the Treasure Coast **do NOT qualify for federal nutrition programs** and often must rely on charitable food assistance programs and need better wages and employment opportunities to help them meet their basic needs.
- ✓ **\$3.25** is the average price per meal on the Treasure Coast, based on new research by The Nielsen Company. This is well above the **\$2.94** national average cost spent on a meal by food secure persons.
- ✓ The food budget shortfall per person per week is **\$19.23**, with a total shortfall of **\$54,932,000** or **16,882,700** meals.

St. Lucie County has the largest number of food insecure individuals on the Treasure Coast (46,670) and the worst ranking for food insecurity levels in our area (30th).

Martin County has the highest food cost index in our area at \$3.71 per meal and the highest percentage of food insecure people on the Treasure Coast who do not qualify for federal nutrition programs (37%).

Okeechobee County has the highest percentage that qualify for SNAP and other federal nutrition programs (87%).

After 7- years, the most significant change has been the increase in people who qualify for SNAP and other federal nutrition program, not the number of people overall who are food insecure (62% in 2009 to 73% in 2015).

Map the Meal Gap Breakdown by County

St. Lucie County

- ✓ **16.2%** of the St. Lucie County population is food insecure, with **46,670** people not knowing where their next meal is coming from. St. Lucie County ranks 30th in the state for food insecurity levels.
- ✓ **76%** of the food insecure population in St. Lucie County qualify based on income for **SNAP (Foods Stamps)** and other federal nutrition programs.
- ✓ **24%** of the food insecure population in St. Lucie County **do NOT qualify for federal nutrition programs** and often must rely on charitable food assistance programs and need better wages and employment opportunities to help them meet their basic needs.
- ✓ **\$3.08** is the average price per meal in St. Lucie County, based on new research by The Nielsen Company. This is above the \$2.94 national average cost spent on a meal by food secure persons.
- ✓ The food budget shortfall per person per week is **\$18.23**, with a total shortfall of **\$25,810,000** or **8,368,700** meals.

Okeechobee County

- ✓ **15.9%** of the Okeechobee population is food insecure, with **6,230** people not knowing where their next meal is coming from. Okeechobee County ranks 35th in the state for food insecurity levels.
- ✓ **87%** of the food insecure population in Okeechobee County qualify based on income for **SNAP (Foods Stamps)** and other federal nutrition programs.
- ✓ **13%** of the food insecure population in Okeechobee County **do NOT qualify for federal nutrition programs** and often must rely on charitable food assistance programs and need better wages and employment opportunities to help them meet their basic needs.
- ✓ **\$3.01** is the average price per meal in Okeechobee County, based on new research by The Nielsen Company. This is just below the \$2.94 national average cost of spent on a meal by food secure persons.
- ✓ The food budget shortfall per person per week is **\$17.78**, with a total shortfall of **\$3,360,000** or **1,117,100** meals.

Martin County

- ✓ **12.9%** of the Martin County population is food insecure, with **19,600** people not knowing where their next meal is coming from. Martin County ranks 61st in the state for food insecurity levels.
- ✓ **63%** of the food insecure population in Martin County qualify based on income for **SNAP (Foods Stamps)** and other federal nutrition programs.
- ✓ **37%** of the food insecure population in Martin County **do NOT qualify for federal nutrition programs** and often must rely on charitable food assistance programs and need better wages and employment opportunities to help them meet their basic needs.
- ✓ **\$3.71** is the average price per meal in Martin County, based on new research by The Nielsen Company. This is above the \$2.94 national average cost spent on a meal by food secure persons.
- ✓ The food budget shortfall per person per week is **\$21.92**, with a total shortfall of **\$13,030,000** or **3,514,600** meals.

Indian River County

- ✓ **15.2%** of the Indian River County population is food insecure, with **21,650** people not knowing where their next meal is coming from. Indian River County ranks 43rd in the state for food insecurity levels.
- ✓ **73%** of the food insecure population in Indian River County qualify based on income for **SNAP (Foods Stamps)** and other federal nutrition programs.
- ✓ **27%** of the food insecure population in Indian River County **do NOT qualify for federal nutrition programs** and often must rely on charitable food assistance programs and need better wages and employment opportunities to help them meet their basic needs.
- ✓ **\$3.40** is the average price per meal in Indian River County, based on new research by The Nielsen Company. This is above the \$2.94 national average cost spent on a meal by food secure persons.
- ✓ The food budget shortfall per person per week is **\$20.13**, with a total shortfall of **\$13,217,000** or **3,882,200** meals.