

Hunger Reduction in the United States of America: Analysis of Factors Contributing to Hunger

Cathleen Jo Faruque
Winona State University

M. Rezaul Islam
University of Malaya

As the United States is considered a highly developed nation, researchers often overlook it when examining world hunger. However, food insecurity has been a significant problem in the United States with one in six or 50.2 million people residing in food insecure households. The main objective of this paper is to review the literature on food insecurity in the United States and to analyze some of the pragmatic factors related to hunger. Food insecurity in the United States is correlated to a complex combination of factors including poverty, unemployment, single parent households and demographics such as gender, ethnicity and age. An economic recession in 2008 resulted in one of the highest poverty and food insecurity rates in the United States of the past fifteen years. Despite an official ending of the recession, many American households remain in poverty and in hunger with little change in the statistics. Recent legislation by the United States government which allows for significant cuts in the government supplemental nutrition assistance program (SNAP) indicate that food insecurity will continue to rise.

The total population of the United States was 317,297,938 people as of the start of 2014 (U.S. News & World Report, 2013). The United States is comprised of 4.5 percent of the total world population or one in twenty people globally. The United States is the third most populated country in the world, behind China at 1.35 billion and India at 1.23 billion. Overall, the world's population is just over 7.1 billion as of 2014 (U.S. & World Populations, 2014). Sixty-five percent of the U.S population is Caucasian, with seventeen percent Latino, thirteen percent Black, five percent Asian and four percent other minorities (United States Census, 2014).

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2014) defines food security access by all people at all times to mean having enough food for an active, healthy life. It was estimated in 2013 that 14.3 percent of American households were food insecure at least some time during the year, meaning they lacked access to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members. This was a change from 2012 when food insecurity was at 14.5 percent,

however, the change was not statistically significant. The prevalence of very low food security in the United States from 2012 and 2013 was essentially unchanged at 5.6 percent.

In 2009, 50.2 million people in the United States resided in food insecure households. This means that nine percent of the total U.S. population were living in food insecure households and almost six percent were living in very low food insecure households. In 2009, there were nine million children, or 12.1 percent of the U.S. child population living in households with food insecurity as an issue (USDA, 2014).

Causes of Hunger in the United States

In some countries there is a scarcity of food, resulting in widespread hunger. This is not the case in the United States where there is a surplus of food. There is more than enough food to feed everyone. The United States even has an adequate infrastructure to deliver food to every household. The U.S. has a vast network of interstate highways and a large trucking industry ready to move massive amounts of food daily to even the most remote areas of the country.

Wherever poverty exists around the globe, hunger is sure to exist as well. Governments around the world recognize the two as inseparable. The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), a set of human development targets, put reducing hunger and poverty together at the top of the list. The MDGs, introduced at the United Nations (UN) in 2000, have been accepted by all UN member countries, including the United States. The deadline for meeting these goals was set for this year (2015). The United States joined 189 countries in a commitment to achieve the MDGs at the United Nations Millennium Summit of 2000. The MDGs are a set of eight goals aimed at halving global poverty and hunger, ensuring universal primary education, promoting gender equality and empowering women, vastly reducing child mortality, improving maternal health, halting and reversing the spread of HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases, ensuring environmental sustainability, and creating a global partnership for development by 2015. These goals were identified by all UN member countries as important. As a UN member country, the United States is committed to the Millennium Development Goals.

The United States has been collecting and measuring data on hunger, or food insecurity since 1995. It is clear that the ups and downs in food insecurity line up closely with the changes in poverty. The United States has done a much better job fighting hunger than it has poverty. Hunger does have simpler solutions than does poverty in some ways. The United States runs the Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP formally known as the Food Stamp Program), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC), and the National School Lunch Program as an integral part of alleviating food insecurity through the USDA, which serves millions of U.S. residents every day. All of these resources are needed, and when government programs are not enough, there is also a robust network of emergency food providers to fill the gaps (InterAction, 2007).

Food insecurity in the United States is caused by a complex combination of factors. There is not a single cause attributed to hunger and there remains much speculation over what is responsible for the prevalence of hunger in the United States. Researchers commonly focus on the link between hunger and poverty. The federal poverty level is defined as “the minimum amount of income that a household needs to be able to afford housing, food, and other basic necessities” (Borger et al., 2014). As of the year 2014, the federal poverty level for a family of four was \$23,850. Based on her research on poverty, Pennsylvania State University economic geographer Amy Glasmeier claims that when individuals live at slightly above or below the poverty line, unexpected expenses contribute to individuals reducing their food intake (Valentine, 2005). These expenses can include medical emergencies which have a significant impact on poor families due to the high cost of medical care and hospital visits. Also, urgent car repairs reduce a family’s ability to provide food since the issue must be addressed in order to allow individuals to travel to and from work. Although income cannot be labeled as the sole cause of hunger and food insecurity for people in the United States, it does play a key role in determining if people have the resources to provide basic needs for themselves and their family. Unemployment reflects a core issue that contributes to food insecurity. People who live in areas with higher unemployment rates and who have a minimal or very low amount of liquid assets are shown to be more likely to experience hunger or food insecurity. The complex interactions between a person’s job status, income and benefits and the number of dependents they must provide for does influence the impact of hunger on a family.

Regardless of extensive research on the correlation between poverty and food insecurity in the United States, comparison of data from the December Supplement of the 2009 Current Population Survey illustrated that poverty is not a direct causation of hunger. Of all household incomes near the federal poverty line, 65 percent were identified as food secure while 20 percent above the poverty line with an income-to-poverty ratio of approximately two were labeled as food insecure (Gundersen et al., 2011). The income-to-poverty ratio is a common measure used when analyzing poverty. In this particular case, it means that these households’ total family income was approximately twice that of the federal poverty line for their specific family size. As this data illustrates, the factors which contribute to hunger are interrelated and complex.

Hunger, Ethnicity and Gender in the United States

Although hunger is not viewed as a gender-specific problem in the United States more women with children go hungry than any other demographic group. A 2009 report released by the United States Department of Agriculture found hunger in the U.S. had a great deal to do with gender. More than one in three single mothers struggle daily to feed their children and more than one in seven women report that at least one member of the family does not get enough to eat on a regular basis (USDA, 2014). Compared to the national average of 14.7 percent food insecurity in U.S. households, some are clearly at greater risk. Gender is identified as a key in food insecurity in the U.S. More than one third of single

women with children (36.6%) are food insecure. In comparison, the rate of households with children headed by a single male is 27.8 percent food insecure. The USDA (2014) further identified race as an issue in food insecurity. Their report shows almost 25 percent of Black households and 27 percent of Latino households were food insecure. Over one in ten families in the United States with a single mother and children face hunger in any given year. In 2009, there were almost 13 percent of U.S. household comprised of single women with children that had very low food security, meaning that one or more of the family members had to cut back on meals, skip meals, or went an entire day without food.

There are two major factors that contribute to food insecurity in the United States. The first factor is poverty. An estimated 43 percent of households in the U.S. that live below the poverty line are food insecure. The second factor is the presence of children (Lowen, *n.d.*). Food insecurity is almost twice the rate for families with children as for those without children (21.3% with children as compared to 11.4% without children). There were 45.3 million people (14.5%) of Americans living in poverty in 2013. Of these, 26.4 million (13.6%) were adults aged 18 to 64 years, 14.7 million (19.9%) were children under age 18 years, and 4.2 million (9.5%) were seniors aged 65 years and over. While poverty and food insecurity are related, they are not the same thing. Poverty is only one of many factors associated with food insecurity. Unemployment, lower household assets, and demographic characteristics can also lead to food insecurity.

U.S. Hunger and the Great Recession

Food insecurity was on the decline in the United States up until the mid-2000's. Then rates increased significantly in 2008 and remained high through 2009. In 2013, 17.5 million households in the United States (14.3%) were reported as food insecure as they were unable to acquire adequate food for one or more household members because they had insufficient money and other resources to acquire food. Food insecurity had remained between 10 to 12 percent from 1995 to 2001. Despite a recession in 2001, food insecurity remained stable. However, the onset of the Great Recession in 2008 resulted in an increase in food insecurity from 11.1 percent in December 2007 to 14.6 percent by start of 2008 (Lowen, *n. d.*). The U.S. food insecurity has continued at this higher level ever since, even with a decline in unemployment from its peak at 10 percent in October 2009 to its current low at near 2004 levels at 5.6 percent in December of 2014 (See Table 1).

While the prevalence of food insecurity in 2013 was lower than the prevalence of 14.9 percent in 2011, food insecurity rates remain above pre-Great Recession levels (USDA, 2013). As shown in Table 2, the states with the highest food insecurity include: Mississippi (21.1%), Texas (18%), Tennessee (17.4%), North Carolina (17.3%), Missouri (16.9%), Alabama (16.7%), and Georgia (16.6%). The states with the lowest levels of food insecurity include: North Dakota (8.7%), Virginia (9.5%), New Hampshire (10.2%), and Minnesota (10.8%).

Table 1

U.S. UNEMPLOYMENT RATES 2004 TO 2014

YEAR	JAN	FEB	MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL	AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC	ANNUAL
2004	5.7	5.6	5.8	5.6	5.6	5.6	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.5	5.4	5.4	5.5
2005	5.3	5.4	5.2	5.2	5.1	5.0	5.0	4.9	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.9	5.2
2006	4.7	4.8	4.7	4.7	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.6
2007	4.6	4.5	4.4	4.5	4.4	4.6	4.7	4.6	4.7	4.7	4.7	5.0	4.4
2008	5.0	4.9	5.1	5.0	5.4	5.6	5.8	6.1	6.1	6.5	6.8	7.3	5.8
2009	7.8	8.3	8.7	9.0	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.6	9.8	10.0	9.9	9.9	9.3
2010	9.8	9.8	9.9	9.9	9.6	9.4	9.4	9.5	9.5	9.4	9.8	9.3	9.6
2011	9.2	9.0	9.0	9.1	9.0	9.1	9.0	9.0	9.0	8.8	8.6	8.5	8.9
2012	8.3	8.3	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.2	8.0	7.8	7.8	7.7	7.9	8.1
2013	8.0	7.7	7.5	7.6	7.5	7.5	7.3	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.0	6.7	7.4
2014	6.6	6.7	6.6	6.2	6.3	6.1	6.2	6.1	5.9	5.7	5.8	5.6	6.2

Source from United States Department of Labor, 2014

Table 2

PREVALENCE OF HOUSEHOLD-LEVEL FOOD INSECURITY: AVERAGE 2011-13

STATE	NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS		LOW OR VERY LOW FOOD SECURITY		VERY LOW FOOD SECURITY	
	AVERAGE (N)	INTERVIEWED (N)	PREVALENCE (%)	MARGIN OF ERROR (PP)	PREVALENCE (%)	MARGIN OF ERROR (PP)
U.S.	121,203,000	129,433	14.6	0.23	5.7	0.14
AK	272,000	1,575	11.8	2.12	4.5	1.10
AL	1,865,000	1,472	16.7	2.87	7.0	1.39
AR	1,172,000	1,527	21.2	3.02	8.4	1.58
AZ	2,645,000	1,557	15.6	1.89	6.3	1.15
CA	13,339,000	9,999	15.0	0.71	5.6	0.45
CO	2,056,000	2,867	13.9	1.35	5.5	0.87
CT	1,369,000	2,626	13.4	1.29	5.0	0.83
DC	303,000	2,097	13.4	1.74	5.2	1.02
DE	356,000	1,939	12.9	1.55	5.1	0.88
FL	7,892,000	4,895	14.1	1.08	5.9	0.71
GA	3,888,000	2,694	16.6	1.68	6.0	0.93
HI	457,000	1,777	12.9	1.69	4.7	0.93
IA	1,239,000	2,471	11.9	1.43	4.4	0.53
ID	596,000	1,504	15.1	2.02	5.9	1.18
IL	4,926,000	4,127	12.5	0.99	4.4	0.65
IN	2,644,000	2,088	14.1	2.27	6.1	1.16
KS	1,177,000	2,069	15.2	1.42	6.0	0.95
KY	1,812,000	2,064	16.4	2.17	6.7	1.21
LA	1,807,000	1,372	16.5	2.57	5.5	1.71
MA	2,591,000	1,968	10.6	1.58	3.9	0.91
MD	2,242,000	2,887	13.3	1.23	4.9	0.71
ME	547,000	2,466	15.1	1.62	7.1	1.15
MI	3,909,000	3,094	13.9	1.25	5.7	0.73
MN	2,139,000	3,255	10.8	1.19	4.4	0.68
MO	2,418,000	2,134	16.9	1.78	8.1	1.02
MS	1,126,000	1,291	21.1	2.80	7.2	1.73
MT	422,000	1,398	11.8	1.88	4.9	1.27
NC	3,852,000	2,784	17.3	1.89	6.3	1.07
ND	299,000	1,726	8.7	2.15	3.1	0.70

NE	756,000	1,907	13.8	1.73	5.2	0.97
NH	518,000	2,776	10.2	1.31	4.6	0.82
NJ	3,270,000	2,373	11.4	1.38	4.8	0.85
NM	814,000	1,026	13.2	2.11	5.1	1.62
NV	1,058,000	1,880	16.2	1.68	6.9	1.12
NY	7,647,000	5,167	14.0	0.97	5.2	0.59
OH	4,667,000	3,688	16.0	1.23	7.2	0.79
OK	1,493,000	1,557	15.5	1.93	6.7	1.22
OR	1,527,000	1,973	15.2	1.74	6.1	1.24
PA	5,122,000	3,863	11.9	1.20	4.8	0.63
RI	422,000	2,216	14.4	1.48	4.6	0.83
SC	1,895,000	1,878	14.1	1.61	5.3	0.73
SD	337,000	2,198	12.6	1.85	4.6	0.86
TN	2,594,000	1,864	17.4	1.75	7.0	1.19
TX	9,417,000	6,622	18.0	1.30	6.3	0.60
UT	949,000	1,374	14.3	1.87	4.6	1.17
VA	3,109,000	2,778	9.5	1.52	3.8	0.81
VT	260,000	2,027	13.2	1.50	6.1	1.25
WA	2,661,000	2,363	14.3	1.28	5.6	0.86
WI	2,324,000	2,886	11.6	1.36	5.0	0.84
WV	764,000	1,568	14.4	1.82	5.1	1.15
WY	239,000	1,726	14.6	2.13	5.5	1.16

Source. Prepared by ERS using data from the December 2011, December 2012, and December 2013 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.

Note. *t < 1.645.

Poverty in the United States

Across the globe, the United States is viewed as a country of great wealth. However, a significant and growing number of households in poverty exist. The United States Census Bureau publishes the official poverty measure. According to the U.S. Census, there were 46.5 million Americans living in poverty as of 2012. This was up from 37.3 million living in poverty for 2007. The number of people living in poverty is near to the largest number in the 52 years that poverty statistics have been published by the U.S. Census. Currently there are 20.4 million Americans (6.8%) living extreme poverty. This means their household income is less than half the United States poverty line level (DeNavas-Walt et al., 2013). This averages out to about US\$10,000 annually for a family of four. The supplemental poverty measure was first published in 2011 by the U.S. Census (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). This new measure addresses concerns that have been raised regarding the official poverty measure, including the fact that the official poverty measure does not reflect the effects of key government policies that alter the disposable income of families and thus their poverty status, such as SNAP (government food stamp program), the school lunch program, and taxes.

When taking the adjustments into account, the supplemental poverty measure for 2012 (Short, 2013) show 2.7 million more people in poverty in 2012, compared to the official poverty rate. Who is poor under the two measures shows some definite differences. The percentage of children in poverty is 18.3 percent of the total population in poverty with the supplemental measure and 22.3 with the official measure; while people over 65 are 14.8 percent of the total population in poverty in the supplemental measure and 9.1 percent in the

official measure (Short, 2013). The supplemental poverty measure does measure poverty more accurately, and substantiates that programs to reduce poverty and hunger amongst children have had a positive impact.

Food Security and the United States Government

The USDA identifies four levels of food security in U.S. households: (1) High food security indicates no reported food-access problems, (2) Marginal food security indicates one or two reported problems that are typically anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house, but with little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake, (3) Low food security indicates reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet and indicates little or no reduced food intake, and (4) Very low food security indicates reports of multiple disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

The U.S. government has several federal food assistance programs help to alleviate hunger and poor nutrition for millions of food insecure families. These programs are targeted at low-income households, with specific government programs targeting vulnerable populations like children, seniors, and pregnant or post-partum women. About six in ten food insecure households participate in one or more of the three largest federal food and nutrition assistance programs: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP).

SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), is the largest nutrition assistance program in the United States. Participating low-income households receive monthly SNAP benefit allotments in the form of electronic debit cards (also referred to as EBT or electronic benefit transfer). While SNAP is intended for low-income households, it is not targeted to any specific subgroup within that population. SNAP benefits can be redeemed only at authorized retailers and are limited to the purchase of food items for use at home as well as seeds and plants to produce food. The WIC program offers nutrition education and supplemental foods to low-income pregnant and post-partum women, and children up to age five who are at nutritional risk. The National School Lunch Program (NSLP) is a federal meal program that provides a nutritionally balanced free or reduced-price lunch to eligible children at school. These programs are part of a national safety net on food security that are designed to alleviate hunger and to improve nutrition and health outcomes. Despite providing critical assistance, federal nutrition assistance programs do not reach everyone at risk of hunger in the United States. Further, the services do not necessarily meet all the nutritional needs of the food insecure. There are an estimated 27 percent of the food-insecure population in 2012 that had household incomes above the standard eligibility thresholds for federal nutrition assistance programs. For these individuals and families, charitable food assistance may be the only available source of support (Feeding America, 2014).

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) was signed in to law by President Obama in response to the economic recession. ARRA increased SNAP benefits across the board as a way of delivering an eco-

conomic stimulus and easing of family hardships from unemployment. ARRA increased the SNAP maximum monthly benefits by 13.6 percent beginning in April 2009. All U.S. participant households received a benefit increase at the same amount by household size. For example, for a one-person household, the added benefit was US\$24 a month; for two persons, it was US\$44 a month; for three persons, it was US\$63 a month; and for four persons, it was US\$80 a month. The minimum benefit (which is available to eligible one and two person households that otherwise qualify for a small benefit or no benefit) rose from US\$14 to US\$16. Since households that received less than the maximum benefit received the same fixed dollar increase, the increase to *average* benefits was larger in percentage terms or roughly 20 percent (Dean & Rosenbaum, 2013). The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 ended in 2013 and after lengthy debates in the House and Senate, President Obama signed the 2014 Farm Bill in to law which would cut US\$8.7 billion in SNAP benefits over the next decade. This legislation would affect over 850,000 American households with an average monthly loss of US\$90 per month in SNAP benefits per household.

Most SNAP beneficiaries already face extreme hardship in acquiring food and the lost benefits equals about ten meals a month for an average SNAP household. Because SNAP households spend 97 percent of their benefits by the end of the month, the reduction will likely cause more households to run out of money for food. News reports indicate that non-profit agencies running food banks have seen a rise in need since the cut took effect. Research conducted by the USDA shows that a drop in SNAP benefits can raise the number of households with very low food security which means that one or more persons have to skip meals or otherwise eat less because of lack of financial resources to purchase food. The total benefit cut exceeded US\$400 million in November of 2014 and will be approximately US\$5 billion over the rest of fiscal year 2014. To put this in to perspective, US\$400 million equals roughly the fiscal year 2014 federal funding for emergency food assistance delivered through non-profit food pantries and other sites. Because SNAP recipients spend their benefits quickly, the loss in benefits will ripple through state economies. It is estimated that every dollar in SNAP benefits generates at least US\$1.70 in economic activity in a weak economy (Keith-Jennings, 2014).

Conclusion

The main objective of this paper was to explore data on hunger in the United States and analyze what strategies the country follows for hunger reduction. We have seen that the present trend of hunger reduction strategies are associated with a number of components. Hunger is correlated to single parent households, poverty, food insecurity, unemployment, and the political climate of the government. Poverty, gender, and race were seen as one of the principal dimensions and are interlinked with many other dimensions. We have identified several strategies for hunger reduction including the Supplement Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and the National School Lunch Program. Addition-

al food programs are found at regional food banks and food shelf programs offered by non-profit organizations. We faced a number of limitations in writing this paper. One of the principal limitations was the lack of literature particularly on hunger reduction strategies for Americans in particular. We collected much of this data from government reports. Considering these limitations we still believe that this paper provides a snapshot of food security in the United States.

In any country, there are both economic and moral reasons for striving to end hunger and under-nutrition. Research supports that food insecurity limits people in their educational achievements and productivity, which in turn leads to large global economic losses (Horton & Steckel, 2013). In addition to these economic considerations, ending hunger and under-nutrition implies ending an important dimension of human suffering. It is thus an ethical task globally that should be given top priority (Fan & Polman, 2013). As mentioned, the United States has several federal programs that serve as a safety net for the food insecure. These programs target low income families to ensure a certain level of food security. Private charitable organizations are key players in helping to supplement food where the federal government is lacking. The current climate in the U.S. government has resulted in legislative changes that resulted in cuts for SNAP benefits. This results in some serious hardship for extremely low income families.

The United States is one of the world's wealthiest nations. Despite its great wealth, 14.5 percent of U.S. households (nearly 49 million Americans) including 15.9 million children, struggle with hunger every day. In the United States, hunger is not caused by a scarcity of food, but rather the continued prevalence of poverty, unemployment and single parent households. The most direct way to reduce hunger in the U.S. is through government programs. While national food assistance to those in hunger is vital, it is not enough. Current literature on food insecurity in the United States can directly link with a number of national, regional, and international agendas, such as poverty alleviation, food insecurity, social and economic inequality, gender disparity and women empowerment, health care system, child care system, and human development indicators. The United States is a wealthy nation and has the resources to feed all its people. Hunger can be resolved with federal legislation and programs that ensure the rights of all people to food security.

References

- Borger, C., Gearing, M., Macaluso, T., Mills, G., Montaquila, J., Weinfeld, N., & Zedlewski, S. (2014). *Hunger in America 2014 Executive Summary*. Retrieved January 30, 2015 from <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger/hunger-and-poverty/hunger-and-poverty-fact-sheet.html?gclid=CKnmiMugisUCFYVFaQodulsADA>

- Dean, S., & Rosenbaum, D. (2013, August 2). Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved January 21, 2015 from <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=3899>
- DeNavas-Walt, C., Proctor, B., & Smith, J. (2013, September 1). Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012. Retrieved January 21, 2015 from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-245.pdf>
- Fan, S. & Polman, P. (2013). *2013 Global Food Policy Report Ending Hunger and Undernutrition by 2025*. Washington, D.C.: International Food Policy Research Institute.
- Feeding America. (2014). Hunger in America: National Report. Retrieved January 14 2015 from <http://help.feedingamerica.org/HungerInAmerica/hunger-in-america-2014-full-report.pdf?src=W151DIRCT>
- Gundersen, C., Kreider, B., & Pepper J., (2011). The Economics of Food Insecurity in the United States. *Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy*, 33(3), 281-303.
- Horton, S. & Steckel, R.H. (2013). Global Economic Losses Attributable to Malnutrition 1990-2000 and Projections to 2050, in B. Lomborg (Ed). *How Much Have Global Problems Cost the World? A Scorecard from 1900 to 2050*. (pp. 201-203). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Keith-Jennings, B. (2014, March 11). Off the Charts Blog | Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Retrieved January 21, 2015 from <http://www.offthechartsblog.org/snap-benefit-cut-has-worsened-hardships-for-low-income-families/>
- Lowen, L. (n. d.). Hunger in America - How Many Women and Children Go Hungry in the US? Retrieved January 14, 2015 from http://womensissues.about.com/od/thepoliticalarena/a/How-Many-Women-And-Children-Go-Hungry-In-US.htm?utm_term=hunger%20in%20the%20us
- Short, K. (2013, November 1). The Research Supplemental Poverty Measure 2012. Retrieved January 21, 2015 from <http://www.census.gov/prod/2013pubs/p60-247.pdf>
- The United States and the MDG's: U.S. Contributions to Reducing Global Poverty. (2007, November 1). Retrieved January 20, 2015 from <http://www.interaction.org/sites/default/files/USandtheMDGs-Nov2007.pdf>
- U.S. News and World Report. (2013, December 31). The 2014 U.S. and World Populations. Retrieved January 14, 2015 from <http://www.usnews.com/opinion/blogs/robert-schlesinger/2013/12/31/us-population-2014-317-million-and-71-billion-in-the-world>.
- USDA., 2014-09-04T15:04:11. (2014). Retrieved January 29, 2015 from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err173.aspx>.
- USDA., 2014-07-08T11:17:54. (2014). Retrieved January 29, 2015 from <http://ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err167.aspx>
- USDA. (2013). Key Statistics and Graphics. Retrieved January 14, 2015 from <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/key-statistics-graphics.aspx>
- United States Census Bureau. (2014, December 3). Retrieved January 14 2015 from <http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/states/00000.html>
- U.S. Department of Labor. (2014, December). Databases, Tables and Calculators by Subject. Retrieved January 15 2015 from <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LNS14000000>

Valentine, V. (2005, November 22). Q & A: The Causes Behind Hunger in America. Retrieved January 20, 2015 from <http://www.npr.org/2005/11/22/5021812/q-a-the-causes-behind-hunger-in-america>