



Food Justice: Hunger & Obesity

In 2014, Food Day has a special focus on issues related to food justice. Food Day envisions food that is healthy, affordable, and produced with care for the environment, farm animals, and the people who grow, harvest, and serve it.

The Facts:

- In 2013, Congress cut funds for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other nutrition entitlements in the Farm Bill by \$8 billion over a decade. Because of the cuts, **850,000 families will lose about \$90 per month** in nutrition-assistance benefits.¹ SNAP benefits in 2014 will average less than **\$1.40 per person per meal**.²
- Even though unemployment numbers have started to slowly decline since the 2008 recession, labor market conditions are lagging behind and many Americans still need help feeding themselves and their families. High rates of joblessness and underemployment due to a weak national economy meant an **increase in enrollment in SNAP benefits of about 20% from 2007-2009**, and an even greater increase in the following years.³
- Can food insecurity cause similar health problems to obesity? According to a 2010 review of the 1994-2004 NHANES study that included 5,094 **low-income adults** ages 18-65, **food insecurity was also associated with cardiovascular risk factors** such as hypertension and diabetes.⁴
- Obesity disproportionately affects low-income Americans. According to trend data analyzed in 2013, more than **31 percent of adults (ages 18 and above) who earn less than \$25,000 per year were obese**, compared with 25.4 percent of those who earn at least \$50,000 per year.⁵



1 The Editorial Board. New York Times online. January 30, 2014. <http://www.nytimes.com/2014/01/30/opinion/the-farm-bill-could-have-been-worse.html>.

2 Rosenbaum, Dorothy and Brynne Keith-Jennings. "November 1 SNAP Cuts Will Affect Millions of Children, Seniors, and People With Disabilities." January 9, 2014. Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Accessed online 3-27-14. <http://www.cbpp.org/files/10-24-13fa.pdf>

3 Fitzgerald, Kathleen, Emily Holcomb, et al. "The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program." April 2012. Congressional Budget Office. <http://www.cbo.gov/sites/default/files/cbofiles/attachments/04-19-SNAP.pdf> (accessed 3-27-14).

4 Seligman, Hilary K., Barbara A. Laraia and Margot B. Kushel. "Food Insecurity Is Associated with Chronic Disease among Low-Income NHANES Participants." J. Nutr. February 2010 vol. 140 no. 2 304-310. http://jn.nutrition.org/content/140/2/304.abstract?ijkey=f4ed00bd3ef06ffb53598c914e-2401876b95c851&keytype2=tf_ipsecsha

5 Trust for America's Health & Robert Wood Johnson Foundation. (2013). "F as in Fat: How Obesity Threatens America's Future," Washington, DC. <http://www.rwjf.org/content/dam/farm/reports/reports/2013/rwjf407528> (accessed March 27, 2014).