



Ohio's **LARGEST**
charitable
response to
hunger!

FOODBANKS SAY SEPTEMBER DATA RELEASES POINT TO NEED FOR CONTINUED FOCUS ON HUNGER RELIEF

***Statement from Lisa Hamler-Fugitt, executive director, Ohio Association of Foodbanks
(September 27, 2012)***

“As national Hunger Action Month comes to a close, there is still much more to be done in Ohio. The month of September 2012 brought some sobering data to the Buckeye State. Poverty, unemployment, high fuel costs and low wages each contribute to the struggles hundreds of thousands of Ohio families are facing.

“In early September the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) released new [data](#) on food insecurity that shows 15.5 percent of Ohio households were food insecure, with 6.4 percent of those experiencing very low security. The USDA reports Ohio ranks 11th overall in food insecurity and eighth overall in very low food security. Less than six years ago, in 1996, food insecurity in Ohio was at 9.7 percent, illustrating the dramatic rise in need in our state.

“Last week, the US Census Bureau released its 2011 [American Community Survey](#), which points toward some reasons for the USDA’s food insecurity data. In Ohio, 12 percent, or nearly three million, families lived below the poverty level in 2011. Of those, 1.36 million families (or 20.6 percent) had children under 18 living at home. Exacerbating the situation further, almost three-quarters of these families had at least one person working in the family, but still were not able to make ends meet.

“These reports only emphasize what Ohio’s foodbanks see each day. From April 1 to June 30, 2012, Ohioans made more than 2.1 million visits to food pantries, seeking help to ensure they could put meals on their family table.

“Hunger is an expansive problem that requires comprehensive solutions. Our hunger-relief network is strained, and state and federal programs face the risk of funding losses that cannot be overcome. The Ohio Association of Foodbanks and our more than 3,000 food pantries, soup kitchens and charitable partners will be asking for support at multiple levels in the coming months to help us in our fight to address hunger in the state. There is no one answer to the problem of hunger.”

*Lisa Hamler-Fugitt is available for print and broadcast interviews on hunger in Ohio and the newly released data.
Please call 614.221.4336 to schedule time to speak with her.*