

Hunger In America – Alaska – (report available [here](#))

The Information below comes from the Alaska Food Coalition

- [www.foodbankofalaska.org](http://www.foodbankofalaska.org)
- [www.alaskafood.org](http://www.alaskafood.org)
- [www.feedingamerica.org/mapthegap/](http://www.feedingamerica.org/mapthegap/)

We are excited to share with you some fascinating new information about hunger in Alaska.

In 2011, Feeding America, the national network of food banks, created ‘Map the Meal Gap’ to better understand the face of hunger at the community level. Prior to this report, the number of people falling below the federal poverty threshold had been the indicator most typically used for identifying the need for food at the local level.

The methodology used by Feeding America analyzed the relationship between food insecurity and indicators of food insecurity (poverty, unemployment, median income, etc.) at the state level. They then use the coefficient estimates from their analysis plus information on the same variables defined at the county level to generate estimated food insecurity rates for individuals at the county level.

Data came from the US Census Bureau American Community Survey, 2009. In House District 4, results show:

Census District	Juneau
Food Insecurity	10.7%
# People with Food Insecurity	3,310
People Rate Food Insecurity Living Below Food Stamp Threshold (130% of Federal Poverty Level)	31%

[http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap/~media/Files/research/TechnicalBrief\\_Updated.ashx?.pdf](http://feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/hunger-studies/map-the-meal-gap/~media/Files/research/TechnicalBrief_Updated.ashx?.pdf)

All census district information provided by the Census Bureau was included in the analysis with a very small number of exceptions. For two census districts (Petersburg and Prince of Wales) in Alaska, the Bureau of Labor Statistics did not provide 2009 Unemployment data. For three additional counties (Skagway, Wrangell and Hoonah) the area-defined area changed between 2008 and 2009. Because the model relies on data over time, Feeding America elected to exclude them from the analysis.<sup>2</sup> A complete map of all county-level food insecurity and food cost in the U.S. can be found at [www.feedingamerica.org/mapthegap/](http://www.feedingamerica.org/mapthegap/).

Food insecurity in rural Alaska affects the entire community. It can happen in epidemic proportions, as we have seen in southwestern Alaska communities. According to Map the Meal Gap, five census districts in Alaska have food insecurity rates over **19%**; meaning in these communities, one of every five residents is food insecure:

	Census District Food Insecurity Rate (2009)	Poverty Rate (2009)
Wade Hampton	30.4%	30.9%
Yukon-Koyuk	24.1%	22.7%
Bethel	21.1%	20.7%
Nome	21.1%	21.3%
Northwest Arctic	19.8%	15.0%

In Alaska, Food Bank of Alaska provides food for an estimated 74,000 different people annually. Map the Meal Gap estimates 90,300 people are food insecure in Alaska, 13.5% of the population.

**In other words, too many Alaskans are worried about how to feed themselves and their families.**

We also know from the 2010 Alaska Hunger Study that hunger disproportionately affects children. The Study identified:

- 43% of the members of households served by food pantries are children under 18 years old
- Among all clients with children, 15.4% stated that, during the previous 12 months, their children were often not eating enough because they just could not afford enough food
- 16.7% of the clients experienced such a situation sometime during the previous 12 months
- 19.9% of the clients with children said that their children skipped meals because there was not enough money for food during the previous 12 months
- 19.9% of the clients with children said that their children were hungry at least once during the previous 12 months, but they could not afford more food