

Hunger is a big problem.  
Together, we can solve it.



## About Food Insecurity

"Food insecurity" is a term we use a lot at the Food Bank of Iowa, but what does it actually mean? The definition is surprisingly simple: food insecurity is the lack of reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

### Pop Quiz

Which of these people is struggling with food insecurity?

- A. A homeless woman who is unsure how to find her next meal.
- B. A retired couple who must use SNAP benefits to supplement their food budget.
- C. A young family who can afford packaged meals like macaroni and cheese, but can't afford fresh fruits and vegetables or meat.
- D. A veteran who can provide breakfast and lunch for himself, but must attend a local congregate meal site for dinner.

The answer? All of the above. Food insecurity affects different people in different ways, from a stretched grocery budget to no budget at all. For everyone struggling with food insecurity, however, the impacts can be tremendous.

### Impacts

Without adequate nutrition, we can't function at our best. For adults, that can mean that their health suffers (food insecure Americans are more likely to suffer from diabetes and high blood pressure) or they might struggle to perform at work. For children, that can mean growth, development, and behavioral issues that can last for their entire life. No matter the severity, food insecurity is a tough thing to live with.

Questions? Email [contactus@foodbankiowa.org](mailto:contactus@foodbankiowa.org) or call 515.564.0330.

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### How We Fight

Providing adequate nutrition for those struggling with food insecurity isn't a one-time fix. It's a challenge that requires three good meals a day for every Iowan. To provide these meals, we work with a vast network of over 500 partner agencies (food pantries, meal sites, shelters, and others) to distribute more than 1 million lbs. of food per month. But that's not enough; to fully meet the need within our service area, we must double our distribution. With your help, we can.

### What's the difference between a food bank and a food pantry?

Food banks and food pantries work closely together to fight hunger, but they fulfill different roles. A food bank is like a wholesaler; we bring in huge quantities of food to help stock many food pantries. A food pantry is a direct distribution program, where food insecure Iowans can receive free food to help sustain them. The two types of organizations are commonly confused, especially because many food pantries actually have "food bank" in their name.



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