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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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Spike in national food insecurity data match recent local statistics increase

ROCHESTER, Minn.—With the recent USDA announcement of a 31% to 44% increase among ages groups experiencing food insecurity nationwide, [Channel One Regional Food Bank](#) is experiencing similar trends locally.

In late October, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s Economic Research Service released a [2022 report](#) showing a sobering reality around food insecurity. One in seven people, including one in five children, in the U.S. live in food insecure households, according to the report. This is an increase of 31% and 44% respectively from the previous year, the highest rate and number of people and children since 2014. It is also the largest one-year increase in food insecurity since 2008.

“This news is heartbreaking, but sadly, it is not surprising. People facing hunger have shared with us that the end of pandemic-era relief efforts and the high cost of food have impacted their ability to make ends meet,” said Claire Babineaux-Fontenot, [Feeding America](#) CEO.

The rise in national food insecurity reinforces the increased need Channel One Regional Food Bank is experiencing locally.

Approximately one in six people in Channel One's 14-county region are food insecure, according to [Feeding America Map the Meal Gap](#) data. More than 25,150 households visited area food shelves in September 2023, and it is a 25 percent increase over September 2022. At Channel One Food Shelf, a record 8,079 households visited in October and double the amount experienced during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“The start of the pandemic created an unprecedented demand for food. Now, pandemic-era assistance has ended, and the high costs of both living and groceries have brought more neighbors to our doors,” said Virginia Witherspoon Merritt, Channel One Regional Food Bank executive director. “With this latest news about an increase in food insecurity in the U.S., and even what we're seeing locally, it's more important than ever to lend a hand. Support Channel One, its mission, and partner agencies by donating, volunteering, or spreading the word about food insecurity.”

Channel One offers the following ways of support:

- Donate for [Give to the Max Day](#) through and on November 16. Channel One qualifies to receive additional funds for each donation through [GiveMN.org](#).
- Contribute [monetarily](#) or sponsor a [virtual food drive](#).
- [Volunteer](#) at the food shelf or in the warehouse.
- Advocate for a strong Farm Bill to local lawmakers.

More ways to support Channel One Regional Food Bank can be found at helpingfeedpeople.org.

About Channel One Regional Food Bank

Channel One Regional Food Bank, a member of Feeding America, strengthens food access and builds healthy communities. Channel One operates food programs to serve local and area needs such as: a food bank, a food shelf, mobile pantries, Childhood Hunger Programs, Kitchen Coalition and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). Channel One Regional Food Bank mobilizes organizations, volunteers, and donors to serve the network of over 160 nonprofit programs that provide food for children, adults, and families in need. Channel One serves 14 counties across southeastern Minnesota and western Wisconsin. For more information, call 507.287.2350 or visit helpingfeedpeople.org.

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