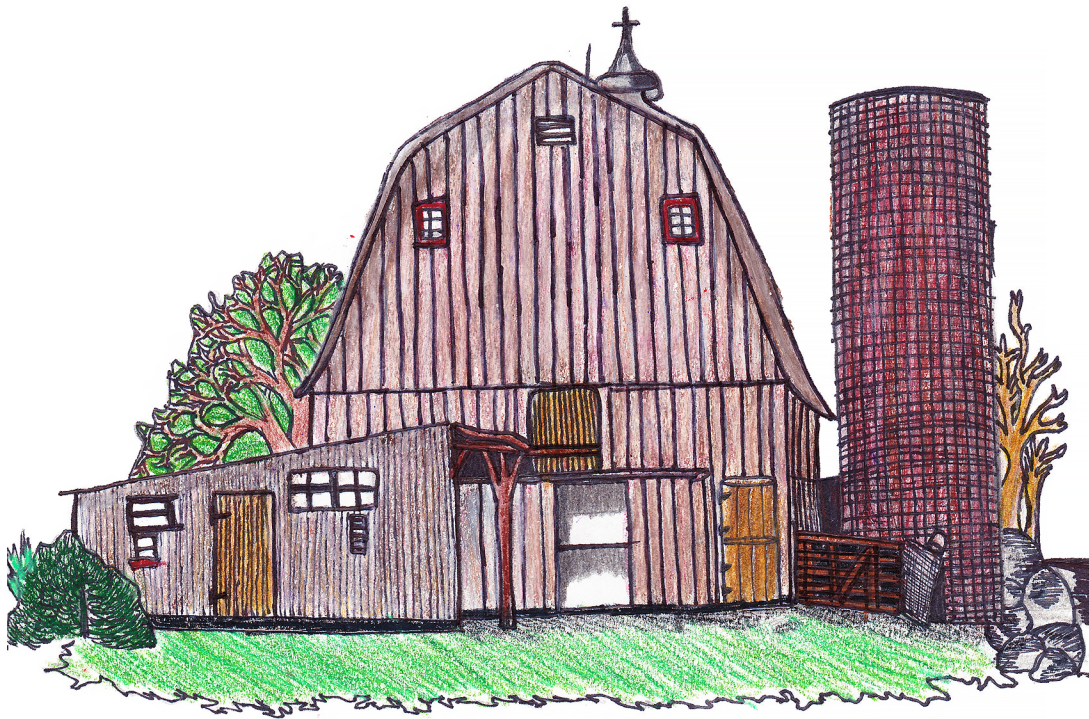


# **FOOD SECURITY**

**In the Michigan Counties of  
Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse,  
Kalkaska and Leelanau**



**A Study by  
Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club  
Beulah, Michigan**

**December 2014**



December 3, 2014

In June 2014, the Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club of Beulah, Michigan initiated and led a study in the Grand Traverse area (Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska and Leelanau counties) to increase the understanding of the food security environment within the five county area and to identify opportunities for increased collaboration and support to hunger relief organizations in the area. The Club's vision was to use the information obtained from the study to assist the community in the development and implementation of a Food Security Plan for the Grand Traverse area. The Food Security Plan would provide the foundation needed to increase food security for residents in our area and to align the efforts being made to address individual food security with a larger vision of community food security. The Food Security Plan would include both near-term and long-term strategies to enhance individual and community food security.

The Club is pleased to share the attached report, which documents the work that was done during the study, the insights that were gained, and the opportunities for action and increased collaboration that were identified to ensure everyone in our five county area has access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious food. We look forward to continuing to support the community's efforts in creating an environment that provides for a food secure future for all of our neighbors and we hope that the information gathered during the study will be of value to these efforts.

Sincerely,

Kris Thomas  
Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club

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An electronic version of this report can be downloaded from the Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club's website at [www.benziesunriserotary.org](http://www.benziesunriserotary.org).

Artwork by Sierra Klein, Empire, MI

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

**Resources exist in the five county Grand Traverse area to create a food secure community which provides for individual food security for all of our neighbors.**

Individual Food Security is a term used to describe a person's confidence in knowing that they will have enough healthy, nutritious food to feed themselves and their household. Community Food Security is a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound diet through an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that promotes community self-reliance.

Roughly 14% of our neighbors in the five county Grand Traverse area live in poverty. 72% of individuals visiting area pantries and emergency meal sites do not always know where their next meal will come from. With low incomes, limited access to affordable housing, and high cost of living, many in our community find it difficult to make ends meet, with little or no money left at the end of the day to feed themselves and their families. From January to August, 2014, area pantries saw client visits rise by roughly 26%. With cuts in government food assistance programs in recent months and additional cuts forecast for the future, the problem will most likely get worse.

In June 2014, the Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club of Beulah, Michigan initiated and led a study in the five county Grand Traverse area to increase the understanding of the food security environment and to identify opportunities for increased collaboration and support to the hunger relief organizations in the area. The Club's vision was to use the information obtained from the study to provide a foundation for the community to develop and implement a Food Security Plan. The plan would provide the actions for increasing food security on an area wide basis along with an expanded vision of community food security. The Plan would include both near and long-term strategies.

Research has shown that there is plenty of healthy, nutritious food available to make sure everyone in our community is food secure. However, information gathered during this study indicates that identifying neighbors in need of food assistance and eliminating the barriers that currently exist to gaining access to that food needs attention. For example, Leelanau Christian Neighbors, in partnership with schools in Leelanau County, identified that nearly 10% of the children in county schools do not receive adequate amounts of food on the weekends while school is in session. The reasons why have not been determined and a similar review has not been done in the other four counties included in this study. The study identified many barriers to gaining access to pantries and emergency meal sites. The three most frequently described



by pantry and emergency meal site clients were lack of information on availability of resources, lack of adequate pantry hours and lack of transportation.

The study revealed that many people in our community who are food insecure suffer serious health issues, with diabetes being the most often mentioned by clients of food pantries. Lack of access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious foods not only contributes to the development of diabetes, resulting quite often in the inability to work, it also contributes to childhood developmental issues and many other health issues as well. The vast agricultural resources in the Grand Traverse area give us the ability to develop both a food secure community and individual food security.

Throughout the area, great work is being done to address both individual food security and a food secure community. Members of the Northwest Food Coalition, which is our network of largely volunteer based area pantries and emergency meal sites, provide emergency and supplemental food to feed the hungry in our area. Programs such as Goodwill's Food Rescue Program and the Michigan Land Use Institute's (MLUI) Farm to School Program are working towards providing healthy, nutritious, locally grown foods to our neighbors in need as well as working towards instilling in them the importance of healthy eating. However, more can be done to make healthy, nutritious, locally grown food available to our low income neighbors. Integrating the Double Up Food Bucks Program into grocery stores will provide greater access to locally grown food for our neighbors that participate in the Bridge Card Program as well as support our local farmers. Working with area farmers to develop a program that allows for the purchase, gleaning, and distribution of locally grown food to pantries and emergency meal sites that would otherwise not be sold would not only support individual food security, but would help build a food secure community. Working collectively to change the focus to cash donations in lieu of donations of processed canned and boxed goods would allow pantries and emergency meal sites to provide healthy, nutritious, locally produced food for neighbors in need. Achieving the Food and Farming Network's goal of developing a more resilient food and farming system that provides at least 20% of our region's food by the year 2020 is one aspect to creating a food secure community.

Actions taken to accomplish these goals need to be well coordinated with many sectors of the community to ensure changes are coordinated, effective and long-lasting. This level of collaboration will require the identification of a lead entity whose mission should include creating and implementing a Food Security Plan that can support the alleviation of hunger and the elimination of its causes in the Grand Traverse area.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The model for this study was based on a food security study performed by Food Gatherers of Ann Arbor, Michigan, an organization whose mission is to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes in Washtenaw County. The study was funded by the United Way and other organizations in southeast Michigan. The result was the development of a Food Security Plan to address the needs of low income residents of Washtenaw County. For more information on Food Gatherers and their Food Security Plan, visit their website at [www.foodgatherers.org](http://www.foodgatherers.org).

The study led by the Benzie Sunrise Rotary Club included a written survey of the members of the Northwest Food Coalition, survey interviews with clients that visit pantries and emergency meal sites in the five county area, interviews with representatives of organizations in our area whose mission includes addressing hunger and promoting proper nutrition, a review of local statistics pertaining to poverty, and a review of national best practices related to building both individual and community food security within communities. The Club began the study in June 2014 and completed its work in December 2014.

From June through September 2014, 52 of the 57 members of the Northwest Food Coalition participated in a survey designed for pantry and emergency meal site providers. Attachment A identifies the Coalition members that participated in the survey. Attachment E contains the survey given to the Coalition members.

From August through November 2014, survey interviews were conducted with 421 clients during 48 visits to 21 pantries and emergency meal sites in the Grand Traverse Area. Attachment B identifies the pantries and emergency meal sites visited during the study. Attachment F contains the survey given to the clients.

The information obtained from the surveys was used as the basis for the insights, opportunities for action and increased collaboration, and conclusions described in this report.

## **FOOD SECURITY AND ITS ENVIRONMENT IN THE GRAND TRAVERSE AREA**

Individual Food Security is a term used to describe a person's confidence in knowing that they will have enough healthy, nutritious food to feed themselves and their household. Community approaches to ensuring individual food security typically focus on food procurement and distribution through pantry networks and emergency meal sites, as well as access to government programs. In Michigan, the most commonly used government food assistance programs are the Bridge Card Program, which is part of the nationwide Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Program.

From January to August 2014, area pantries saw client visits rise by roughly 26%, going from 15,432 pantry visits in January to 19,511 pantry visits in August. During this same time period, the majority of pantry and meal site visitors having access to the Bridge Card Program reported they experienced cuts in government food dollars. A review of local food assistance program data support client reports, as statistics show the number of people receiving food assistance decreased by an average of 21% from 2011-2014. With additional cuts forecast for the future, more and more people will most likely be hungry and will need support.

Recent data indicates roughly 14% of our neighbors in the five county Grand Traverse area live in poverty. As concerning as that number is, it doesn't tell the whole story. Earning a wage above the poverty line does not mean an individual's income is sufficient to support a healthy lifestyle for themselves and their family. For a single parent with two children living in Grand Traverse County, a living wage (i.e. the hourly rate an individual must earn to support a family) is \$22.86 an hour. At the same time, the same parent would have to earn \$8.80 an hour, or less, to be considered as living in poverty. What happens to our neighbors that obtain employment with wages that fall in between the poverty wage and living wage? Many report that benefits they received previously, such as assistance for healthcare and food, were either reduced or eliminated when they obtained employment, putting themselves and their families in circumstances much worse after obtaining employment. With money tight, most choose to use their earnings to pay the bills needed to keep a roof over their head, with little or no money left at the end of the day to feed themselves and their families. When they look for food assistance in our community, limited pantry hours make it difficult for many to access the food pantries available to them.

Pantry and meal site clients expressed concern regarding the number of neighbors that do not have access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious foods, and shared many barriers that negatively impact individual food security. Limited pantry hours, lack of knowledge of existing programs, lack of transportation, limited food choices at pantries, and pride were the barriers

most often cited. Many people in our community who are food insecure suffer serious health issues, with diabetes being the issue most often discussed by neighbors visiting area food pantries. Lack of access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious foods not only contributes to the development of diabetes, resulting quite often in the inability to work, it also contributes to childhood developmental issues and many other health issues as well.

Community Food Security is a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound diet through an economically and environmentally sustainable food system that promotes community self-reliance. Efforts to enhance the vitality of local food economies, such as those being implemented by members of the Food and Farming Network, frequently include system wide strategies. Areas of concentration often include the development of quality, affordable food outlets, support for small and medium sized farms and protection of the agricultural land needed to support the food needs of the community. The vibrancy of a local food system clearly affects the ability of a community to meet the food needs of low income residents.

The primary goal of the Food and Farming Network is to ensure that by the year 2020, the region's food and farming systems are more resilient and provide at least 20% of our region's food. Achieving this goal is essential to not only achieving community food security, but also to meeting the Network's objective of ensuring 100% of northwest Michigan residents have access to ample, high-quality, healthy, and culturally diverse diet, 20% of which comes from the region.

Efforts to achieve both Individual Food Security and Community Food Security in the Grand Traverse area need to be well coordinated and aligned to ensure actions taken by organizations will serve the community in a coordinated, effective and efficient manner.

## **QUOTES FROM NEIGHBORS THAT VISIT PANTRIES AND EMERGENCY MEAL SITES**

*"My kids fill up on ramen noodles because I can't afford the milk and butter needed to make macaroni and cheese. I hate that I can't provide healthy food for my family."*

*"My kids love fruit but I can't afford to provide it for them. I'm hoping that I'll be able to afford to buy two bushels of apples this fall to have fruit available for them this winter."*

*"Even with the Double Up Food Bucks Program, the produce at the farmers market is still too expensive."*

*"I hate to say this, but we eat off the dollar menu at fast food restaurants a lot because it's cheaper than buying all of the ingredients for a meal and cooking at home."*

*"Even though I'm overweight, I am hungry at times, because sometimes I just get sick and tired of eating ramen noodles and hotdogs."*

*"I'm diabetic and I can't eat much of the food that's available at pantries. I have a huge stock of noodles at home that were given to me at pantries that I can't eat."*

*"I can fill up on coffee. I need to make sure there's enough food for the kids."*

*"I work at the casino, but can't afford the \$3 they charge employees to eat in the restaurant."*

*"I live about two miles from here and can only take what I can carry when I visit the pantry because I don't have a car and I can't afford to take the bus home."*

*"I try to go to the food pantry on a day when the pantry receives a delivery from Food Rescue. When I do, I can get extra bread to drop off at the homes of seven families that are going hungry."*

*"When the pantry moved to a location outside of town, many people lost access to the food because they didn't have transportation. So once a week I visit the pantry, pick up food for 11 households, and deliver it to them."*

*"I wish the community understood how deeply people in our area are suffering."*

## **QUOTES FROM PANTRY AND EMERGENCY MEAL SITE STAFF AND VOLUNTEERS**

*“Many people in our community are genuinely surprised when they learn of the need that exists in the community and respond ‘I had no idea.’ I really don’t know how to spread the word.”*

*“We need fresh food. Period. No more pre-packaged, obesity causing foods.”*

*“A large amount of our volunteers come from our pantry clients.”*

*“We miss Fresh Food Partnership and the fresh produce they provided in the summer. We need more fresh produce weekly and less expensive products to purchase; prices just keep going up.”*

*“We need to encourage other organizations to make ‘food security’ part of their assessments, e.g. jails, schools, hospitals, doctor’s offices, and partner them with food pantry resources.”*

*“We need to develop a more organized effort with local grocery stores and restaurants to capitalize on food that would otherwise be discarded.”*

*“Food insecurity should only be short term. Self-sufficiency is the best answer to meeting people’s needs.”*

*“We need to be responsive to the needs of clients. We need to solicit their input regularly and be prepared to modify our programs as needed.”*

*“We should have people that receive food participate in some way – teaching or even sharing ideas. Let them know how valuable their opinions are.”*

*“I have no idea how many people are truly food insecure and experience hunger.”*



## **SIGNIFICANT INSIGHTS**

The following represents the most informative insights from (1) survey interviews conducted with neighbors visiting pantries and emergency meal sites and (2) surveys completed by members of the Northwest Food Coalition as well as interviews with Coalition members:

### **Pantry Customers**

- 72% of the clients visiting food pantries and meal sites in the five county Grand Traverse area are food insecure, with 36% of the households having the most severe condition of very low food security (i.e. the eating patterns of one or more household members were disrupted and their food intake reduced, at least sometime during the year, because they could not afford enough food.) The following delineates the statistics by county:

<u>County</u>	<u>% of Clients Visiting Pantries that are Food Insecure</u>	<u>% of Clients Visiting Pantries that Reside in Very Low Food Secure Households</u>
Antrim:	65%	27%
Benzie:	63%	28%
Grand Traverse	76%	42%
Kalkaska:	82%	36%
Leelanau:	65%	35%

- Households visiting pantries and/or emergency meal sites have extremely low incomes. 64% of households report incomes less than \$500 per month per household member. 46% of the households were not in the work force, often living on fixed incomes due to age or disability. The following delineates the statistics by county:

<u>County</u>	<u>% of Clients Visiting Pantries Living In Extremely Low Income Households</u>	<u>% of Clients Visiting Pantries Living on Fixed Incomes</u>
Antrim:	60%	44%
Benzie:	67%	48%
Grand Traverse:	64%	44%
Kalkaska:	66%	58%
Leelanau:	61%	35%

- 36% of the clients visiting pantries and/or meal sites reside in households comprised of more than two generations of family members, and/or households that include extended family members, and/or friends. 20% of those interviewed reported their households were

better off than last year, while 33% reported they were worse off and 47% reported their households were about the same.

- Clients' reliance on pantries is long-term. 80% of respondents indicated that they receive food from one or more food pantries on a regular basis. Only 20% use pantries as a short-term or emergency source of food.
- 45% of pantry clients visit more than one pantry. However, of those households that visit more than one pantry, 73% indicated they received benefits from only one additional area pantry. The following delineates the statistics by county:

<u>County</u>	<u>% Visiting One Pantry</u>	<u>% Visiting Two Pantries</u>	<u>% Visiting Three Pantries</u>
Antrim:	73%	25%	2%
Benzie:	57%	26%	17%
Grand Traverse:	44%	38%	18%
Kalkaska:	60%	38%	2%
Leelanau:	78%	22%	0%

- 60% of pantries reported that client need throughout the month is steady, whereas 30% reported they see the greatest need among their clients at the end of the month.
- Pantry and/or emergency meal site clients are generally aware of most government food assistance programs and either receive benefits or have applied for benefits and been denied. Clients are generally aware of the Bridge Card Program, WIC Program, Free and Reduced School Meal Program, and participate when eligible.
- 54% of pantry and/or meal site clients receive benefits under the Bridge Card Program. However, for households using a Bridge Card, the majority have experienced cuts in recent months. The vast majority of clients using a Bridge Card receive benefits that are well below the average per household member benefit in the Grand Traverse area.
- 20% of clients receiving Bridge Card benefits participate in the Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB) Program. 52% of clients receiving Bridge Card benefits didn't participate in the DUFEB Program because they were not familiar with the program. Client participation in the DUFEB program was greatest in the counties that had the largest number of farmers markets participating in the program. The following delineates the statistics by county:

<u>County</u>	<u>DUFB Sites Available in County</u>	<u>% of Bridge Card Users</u>	
		<u>Participating in DUFB Program</u>	
Antrim:	0	14%	
Benzie:	2	29%	
Grand Traverse:	2	16%	
Kalkaska:	0	10%	
Leelanau:	6	54%	

- Clients expressed concern that obtaining employment often negatively impacted their ability to feed their families. Some clients that have found jobs often lost many of their benefits, such as medical coverage and Bridge Card benefits, and can no longer access food pantries due to limited pantry hours. As a result, their economic situation is worse than prior to gaining employment.
- 63% of clients visiting pantries and meal sites shop at outlets that they identify as offering the lowest food prices, with 38% shopping at the outlet that is most convenient. Only 20% of people completing the survey indicated that best selection and/or higher quality was a factor in determining where they did most of their shopping. (Note that clients could identify more than one reason for shopping at their primary outlet.)
- 30% of pantry and meal site clients indicated they never purchased food from a restaurant, including fast food restaurants, while 47% indicated purchases were made only once or twice a month. Lack of affordability was the primary reason for not purchasing food at restaurants.
- In Leelanau County, organizers of the Leelanau Christian Neighbors' Blessings in a Backpack Program identified that nearly 10% of students throughout the county did not have access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious food on the weekends during the school year. Of the 5 counties included in this study, Leelanau County has the lowest poverty level, with 42.9% of students qualifying for free or reduced price breakfast and lunch. The extent of childhood food insecurity could be greater in the other 4 counties evaluated as part of this study where poverty is greater and the percentage of students qualifying for free or reduced price breakfast and lunch is as high as 57.2%.
- Clients frequently offered insights into the lives of themselves and their families that went beyond what was asked. This helped interviewers gain a better understanding of hunger in the area and its causes.

## Access to Healthy Food

- Clients shared several barriers to ensuring they and their families in the Grand Traverse area are food secure: wages that are insufficient to support themselves and their families, high cost of housing, lack of community knowledge of food pantries and emergency meal sites in the area, limited pantry hours, limited quantity of food available to clients each month at some pantries, lack of transportation, high cost of gasoline, and pride. Clients also indicated that because of these barriers, some people in our community do not have access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious food.
- Although 80% of households were either very or somewhat satisfied with the price of fresh produce at their primary grocery store, 58% of the people completing the survey ate less than the recommended 5 or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day because they were too expensive.
- 66% of pantry and meal site clients indicated that they rarely or never purchase produce from a farmers market or produce stand. The two primary reasons given were the high cost of produce at these outlets and lack of transportation/cost of gasoline.
- 13% of pantries always have fresh fruits and vegetables available for their clients, while 29% reported that they only have fresh produce at times during the growing season and 32% indicated they offer fresh produce intermittently throughout the year. 26% rarely or never had fresh fruits and vegetables available for their clients.
- 17% of pantries reported that they purchased food from local farms to distribute at their pantries while an additional 14% indicated they distributed food that was donated by local farmers.
- Some clients indicated that access to healthy, nutritious food at pantries was greatly dependent on the time of day as well as the day of the week they visited a pantry. Specifically, clients indicated that visits to pantries shortly after opening for the day gave them access to a much larger selection of food, and making a visit that coincided with a Food Rescue delivery also gave them greater access to fresh foods. 50% of pantries indicated that they reduce the amount of food given to clients some of the time.

## Pantry Capacity

- Many clients shared that the dissemination of information about available resources and services in the Grand Traverse Area could be improved. 74% indicated that when first faced with the need for food assistance, they learned about available resources from a friend, relative or word of mouth. Clients find it difficult to identify assistance that is available in the community and believe that many people that need help are not receiving help because they're not aware it is available.
- Some clients expressed concern with the length of time it took to access the pantries after arriving at the facilities. Due to long wait times, visiting a pantry during a lunch break from work is not a viable option, and with limited pantry hours, this may be the only time available for people who are employed to make a visit. As a result, many neighbors that work daytime shifts do not have access to pantries.
- Client access to pantries depends greatly on county of residence. For example, in Kalkaska County, clients have access to Kalkaska Area Interfaith Resources only once every thirty days, whereas in Leelanau County, clients have access to Leelanau Christian Neighbors and Empire Food Pantry once every seven days. In addition, certain pantries can only be visited by clients living in the county in which the pantry is located. As a result, clients residing in Grand Traverse country, where more pantries are available, have access to many more food outlets when compared to clients living in the other surrounding counties.
- The philosophy behind the quantity of food distributed by area pantries varies greatly. On one end, it was identified that a pantry provides what it believes is a three day supply of food every 30 days whereas on the other end, a pantry provides what it believes is a three day supply of food twice a week.
- The quantity of food distributed by 65% of pantries is based on the number of members in a household, whereas 23% provide a fixed amount of groceries per household regardless of size of household. 12% of pantries reported no limits on the amount of food available to a household.
- Clients are very grateful for the food assistance they receive from pantries in our area and most were reluctant to provide critical comments about the service they received. However, many indicated that they would greatly appreciate having the opportunity to obtain more fresh foods, such as meat, dairy and produce, especially fruit, that would allow them to create a balanced meal.

- 31% of the pantries offer produce to their clients from local farms, however, the amount of produce either donated or purchased from local farmers represented a very small percentage of the food available to clients.
- 46% of pantries always offer frozen meat for their clients, whereas 24% make it available most of the time, 12% some of the time, and 18% never have frozen meat available.
- Fresh dairy or perishable prepared food items are not readily available at many pantries. Only 6% reported always having these items available, 21% offer them most of the time, 58% some of the time, and 15% never offered fresh dairy or perishable prepared food items.
- Homeless individuals visiting pantries have difficulty utilizing many of the food products offered by pantries due to their limited ability to prepare food.
- The type of qualifying information requested from clients prior to obtaining food varies greatly among pantries. As a result, analysis of any significance cannot be done with the information that is currently being collected.
- Roughly one third of pantries indicated they provide referrals for government food assistance programs or help clients apply for assistance. However, only 4% of pantry and meal site clients indicated they were provided assistance in accessing government food assistance programs.
- Roughly two thirds of pantries are funded by donations alone, with the remaining one third having access to small grants from foundations or funding from the state and/or federal government.

### **Additional Information from Northwest Michigan Food Coalition**

- Information contained in the surveys completed by 25 coalition members indicated that the majority of food available to clients at pantries and meal sites is purchased either locally or from Feeding America, with over \$1,100,000 spent in 2013. The actual amount spent was greater, as not all area pantries and emergency meal sites reported their figures. Roughly 50% of pantries see value in collaborating to purchase food and other products for clients.



- The vast majority of the pantries supply many of the same items (e.g.; peanut butter, cereal, canned fruits and vegetables, tuna, spaghetti and spaghetti sauce, beans, boxed dinners, pasta, rice, macaroni and cheese, etc.)
- 72% of pantries believe organizing collective cash/food drives, which would allow the public to donate to the overall effort or to a specific organization, would be of value to their organizations.
- The majority of pantries would like to see increased collaboration and communication among members of the Northwest Food Coalition and with organizations that promote health and nutrition.
- 65% of pantries would support either expansion of the Northwest Food Coalition or identification/creation of another organization that would serve as the lead entity in our five county area for hunger relief efforts and provide the support needed to its partners.
- 82% of pantries believe that developing a Food Security Plan for our five county area would make a greater impact on individuals and communities becoming more food secure.
- 76% of pantries believe engaging local churches to establish community gardens to grow produce for food pantries is worth pursuing.
- 70% of pantries believe establishing a meal/grocery delivery program for vulnerable individuals is worth pursuing. Many pantries indicated that transportation is a barrier for many people with regard to access to pantries.
- 73% of pantries would like to participate in the development and implementation of any changes that are planned in the future.

## **OPPORTUNITIES FOR ACTION AND INCREASED COLLABORATION**

New collaborative efforts to (1) identify food insecure neighbors, (2) eliminate barriers to accessing food outlets, (3) collect and distribute purchased and gleaned food, and (4) align efforts to achieve individual food security with efforts to achieve community food security, are among the things that can be done to help ensure access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious food for all of our neighbors.

The following opportunities for action and increased collaboration that could make a positive impact on addressing food insecurity in the Grand Traverse area were identified during the study:

### **Coordination of Collaborative Efforts**

- Establish a Food Security Council for the five county Grand Traverse area to assist in the development of a Food Security Plan and to provide advice on the implementation of the Plan. The Council should include individuals from organizations whose mission includes promoting individual and/or community food security (i.e., Northwest Food Coalition, TBAISD, MLUI, Farm Bureau, medical community, etc.) The goals of the Plan would be to achieve a food secure community which supports individual food security for all of our neighbors.
- Identify a lead entity from the Food Security Council whose mission would include developing and implementing the Food Security Plan. The entity would monitor the development and implementation of existing programs in our area that are vital to addressing hunger and nutrition, as well as capitalize on new ideas for collaboration. For example, Food Gatherers ([www.foodgatherers.org](http://www.foodgatherers.org)) and Orange County Food Access Coalition ([www.ocfoodaccess.org](http://www.ocfoodaccess.org)) are organizations that develop innovative, community-based strategies to end hunger and deliver nutrition to the underserved in their communities.

### **Identification of Neighbors Needing Food Assistance**

- Provide expanded support to the Northwest Food Coalition that would allow for greater community awareness and support of the available food outlets in the Grand Traverse area. Consideration should be made, as a minimum, to (1) develop a plan that would clearly delineate the goals for the Coalition, (2) develop and promote a Coalition website and

increased use of other social media outlets, and (3) develop a marketing plan for the Coalition. Consideration should be made to developing a rack card, providing a centralized contact for people needing assistance, as well as contact information for individual communities, that could be distributed by organizations throughout the Grand Traverse area. Examples of distribution points would include medical personnel, schools, senior centers, churches, etc.

- Develop and implement a standardized method for Northwest Food Coalition members to collect client data. The method should include the identification of data to be collected that would support analysis needed to improve individual and community food security. Such a system could also be designed to allow for shorter intake times during pantry visits.
- Develop a partnership among organizations in the Grand Traverse area to aid in the identification of food insecure neighbors in our communities. A collaboration with the hunger relief organizations, the medical community, schools, senior centers, and religious communities to identify and reach out to neighbors that do not have access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious food could be of value. Consideration should be made to providing DHS kiosks, along with support personnel, in areas that provide the greatest access to the community (i.e. major medical facilities, medical library, community libraries, schools, senior centers, etc.)
- Collaborate to develop a regional Blessings in a Backpack program that could benefit from joint marketing and organizational efforts. Uniform implementation of the program could help ensure that all area students who reside in households experiencing food insecurity are both identified and have access to adequate amounts of healthy, nutritious food on the weekends. Consider opportunities for ensuring children receive adequate nourishment during school recesses.

### **Collection and Distribution of Healthy, Nutritious Foods to Neighbors in Need**

- Develop a system to work with the farming community to provide for the purchase and gleaning of fruits, vegetables and proteins from area farms for distribution to food insecure families in our area. Consider developing a core group of volunteers that could be mobilized to assist in the effort. Consider using existing Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs that would allow for the purchase and distribution of CSA shares to pantries and/or pantry clients. Rotary First Harvest in Seattle, Washington, ([www.firstharvest.org](http://www.firstharvest.org)), Salvation Farms in Hardwick, Vermont ([www.salvationfarms.org](http://www.salvationfarms.org)), Northern Girl in Caribou,

Maine ([www.northerngirlmaine.com](http://www.northerngirlmaine.com)), and D-Town Farm in Detroit ([www.d-townfarm.org](http://www.d-townfarm.org)) provide national best practices for these types of efforts.

- Develop a collective purchasing program for area pantries and emergency meal sites.
- Engage Feeding America West Michigan in discussion on obtaining access to greater quantities of healthy, nutritious foods.
- Collaborate to promote cash donations in lieu of food donations for area pantries and meal sites to support the effort to provide greater amounts of healthy, nutritious food to neighbors in need.
- Identify opportunities in the area to support storage of fresh items in need of a temperature controlled environment. Consider collaboration between pantries and organizations such as area school systems, churches, restaurants, etc. that might have space available for storage certain times of the year.
- Expand the Food Rescue program. Opportunities for expansion include working with current supporters to expand the types of food items they provide, as well as investigating opportunities to gain support from food outlets not currently involved in the program, such as restaurants that have an excess of prepared foods.
- Perform a review of existing food outlet practices and procedures and make adjustments as needed to provide greater support for neighbors in need of assistance. Review should include hours of operation and procedures for distribution of food.
- Integrate Double Up Food Bucks program in area grocery stores most frequented by low income residents. The majority of low income residents shop at outlets they believe provide the lowest cost, such as Save A Lot. As a minimum, offer the program at all farmers markets or pantries serving the largest populations in all five counties.
- Consider the benefits of establishing mobile food pantries in our area to support greater access to food for neighbors in need.
- Establish grocery delivery program that would provide support to neighbors with limited access to pantries.

- Develop a program to encourage community and church gardens to support pantries and meal sites, as well as encouraging area residents to plant a row for donation.
- Collaborate to promote fresh produce donations to area pantries in lieu of canned produce.
- Expand the Farm to Freezer Program to process local foods for pantries and meal sites.
- Coordinate an area fishing tournament, with catch cleaned and donated to area food pantries and meal sites.
- Create farmers markets at area schools or other community based locations, which operate on a “pay if you can” donation system.
- Establish donation-only community cafes to provide for greater access to meals for those in need. Front Porch Restaurant in Ellsworth is a best practice ([www.frontporchellsworth.org](http://www.frontporchellsworth.org)).
- Make meal vouchers available for purchase by the public, for donation to homeless neighbors and other neighbors in need, to provide them with access to meals from the MI Fresh Start Food Truck.
- Offer fruit and vegetable plants to pantry clients.
- Provide for greater access to meals provided by the Goodwill Emergency Meal Program throughout the Grand Traverse area. Possible distribution locations include area hospitals, schools, and pantries.
- Consider working with local meat processors to acquire a license to participate in the Sportsmen Against Hunger campaign. The 2014-2015 licensed processor list includes three processors in the Grand Traverse area; two in Grand Traverse County and one in Leelanau County. Consider widespread promotion of the program to solicit greater quantities of venison donations to area pantries and meal sites. The Petoskey Rotary Sunrise Club ([www.petoskeyrotarysunrise.org](http://www.petoskeyrotarysunrise.org)) implements a best practice to support this effort in their community. Consider expanding program to include other protein sources, such as duck and turkey, and to provide funding to process the portion of the protein that is donated.
- Consider collaboration to promote greater community support of the purchase and donation of proteins from the county fair for area meal sites and food pantries.

- Promote more aggressively the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and Emergency Food Assistance Program offered by the Northern Michigan Community Action Agency.
- Offer food items appropriate for homeless people at area pantries.
- Offer “meal kits” with recipes for clients visiting area pantries. Benzie Area Christian Neighbors implements a best practice for offering “meal kits” to their clients.



## **CONCLUSION**

Throughout the five county Grand Traverse area, great work is being done to address both individual food security and community food security. However, despite these efforts, many of our neighbors are going hungry. Several barriers prevent them from gaining access to adequate quantities of healthy, nutritious food to feed themselves and their families.

Increased community collaboration, providing for greater alignment of efforts to improve community food security and individual food security, is needed to alleviate hunger and eliminate its causes in the Grand Traverse area. Any collaborative effort will need to be well coordinated with many sectors of the community to ensure actions taken are effective and long-lasting. This level of collaboration will require a lead entity whose mission includes creating a food secure community that supports the alleviation of hunger and the elimination of its causes in the Grand Traverse area. Identification of a lead entity, as well as the development and implementation of a Food Security Plan for the Grand Traverse area, could provide the path needed to create a food secure community that provides healthy, nutritious food for all of our neighbors.

## **Thank You**

A special thank you to Val Stone and the members of the Northwest Food Coalition for working with our team on this study. Your support was critical to its success!

### **Benzie Sunrise Rotary Team Members**

Bill Anderson  
Kris Thomas  
Peter Van Nort

### **Individuals and Organizations Supporting the Study**

Tom Emling, MSU  
Food Gatherers  
Northwest Food Coalition  
Todd Sanders, NorthSky  
Marsha Smith, Rotary Charities  
Cecil Thomas  
Mary Walker, Antrim County Baby Pantry

## Attachment A: Northwest Food Coalition Members Participating In Survey

### Antrim County

Antrim County Baby Pantry  
Bellaire Community Food Pantry  
Central Lake Food Pantry  
Front Porch Ministries - Ellsworth  
Good Samaritan Family Services – Ellsworth  
Good Samaritan Moms & Tots Center - Ellsworth  
Mancelona Community Lighthouse  
Mancelona Food Pantry  
Mancelona United Methodist Community Meal  
New Horizons Clubhouse – Rapid City

### Benzie County

Advent Lutheran Church “The Table” – Lake Ann  
Benzie Area Christian Neighbors (BACN) – Benzonia  
Benzie County Baby Pantry - Beulah  
Benzie Food Partners – Honor  
Benzie Recovery Center – Benzonia  
Fresh Wind Christian Community – Honor  
Lake Ann Pantry – Lake Ann  
Unveiling Truth Christian Fellowship – Honor

### Grand Traverse County

Acme Christian Thrift Store and Food Pantry (ACTS) – Williamsburg  
Addiction Treatment Services (ATS) – Traverse City  
Bayview Wesleyan Church – Traverse City  
Blessings In A Backpack – Traverse City  
Central United Methodist Church Community Outreach – Traverse City  
Father Fred Foundation – Traverse City  
Faith Reformed Church – Traverse City  
Grace Episcopal Church Food Pantry  
Grand Traverse Baby Pantry – Traverse City  
Immaculate Conception Emergency Food Pantry – Traverse City  
Kandu Island Drop-In Center – Traverse City  
Kingsley United Methodist Church  
Northwest Michigan United Labor Food Bank – Traverse City

Peninsula Bible Church Pantry – Traverse City  
Prayerfyre – Traverse City  
Redeemer Lutheran Church – Interlochen  
Resurrection Life Mobile Food Pantry – Traverse City  
St. Francis Church – Traverse City  
St. Michael Lutheran Church – Traverse City  
St. Patrick Church Pantry – Traverse City  
Salvation Army – Traverse City  
Seventh-Day Adventist Food Pantry – Traverse City  
Traverse City Church of the Nazarene aka Grace Point Cafe  
Traverse House – Traverse City  
Trinity Lutheran – Traverse City  
West Bay Baby Pantry – Traverse City  
Women’s Resource Center – Traverse City

#### Kalkaska County

Kalkaska Area Interfaith Resources (KAIR) – Kalkaska  
Rapid City Community Food Pantry

#### Leelanau County

Grand Traverse Band – Suttons Bay  
Leelanau Christian Neighbors (LCN) – Suttons Bay & Northport  
Leelanau Christian Neighbors (LCN) Blessings In A Backpack – Suttons Bay  
Leelanau Christian Neighbors (LCN) Baby Pantry – Suttons Bay

#### Wexford County

Minar Bible Church - Mesick

## Attachment B: Pantries and Emergency Meal Sites Visited For Client Surveys

### Antrim County

Antrim County Baby Pantry  
Bellaire Community Food Pantry  
Good Samaritan Family Services – Ellsworth  
Mancelona Community Lighthouse  
Mancelona Food Pantry

### Benzie County

Benzie Area Christian Neighbors (BACN) – Benzonia  
Benzie County Baby Pantry - Beulah  
Fresh Wind Christian Community – Honor

### Grand Traverse County

Acme Christian Thrift Store and Food Pantry (ACTS) – Williamsburg  
Central United Methodist Church Community Outreach – Traverse City  
Father Fred Foundation – Traverse City  
Immaculate Conception – Traverse City  
Redeemer – Interlochen  
St. Michael Lutheran Church – Traverse City  
St. Patrick Church Pantry – Traverse City  
Salvation Army – Traverse City  
Women’s Resource Center – Traverse City

### Kalkaska County

Kalkaska Area Interfaith Resources (KAIR) – Kalkaska  
Rapid City Community Food Pantry

### Leelanau County

Empire Area Food Pantry – Glen Arbor  
Leelanau Christian Neighbors (LCN) – Suttons Bay

## Attachment C: Individuals and Organizations Contacted During Study

### Individuals:

Norm Bamberg, Father Fred  
Jennifer Berkey, MSU Extension Educator  
Al Bonney, District Governor, Rotary District 6290  
Laurie Borysiak, Traverse City Blessings In A Backpack Coordinator  
Mark Coe, Goodwill Farm to Freezer Program  
Diane Connors, MLUI  
Betty Cramer, Benzie Food Partners  
Bob Cullen, Goodwill Food Rescue Program  
Sarah Eichberger, MSU Extension Educator  
Tom Emling, MSU Department of Community Sustainability  
Rosemary Hagan, Father Fred  
Carol Hockin, ACTS  
Mary Hoffstetter, LCN  
Len Hower, Goodwill Food Rescue Program  
Jason Jeffries, TBAISD Assistant Superintendent  
Jeffie Lynch Jones, Benzie Food Partners  
Cecil McNally, Goodwill Executive Director  
Lenda McQueer - Peninsula Bible Church  
Katie Menestra, Good Samaritan  
Laura Miller, Leland Public Schools  
Michelle Northrup, BACN  
Christi Nowak, Munson Community Health Manager  
Cindy Ooley, DHS  
Bill Palladino, MLUI  
Mary Peterson, Good Samaritan  
Jim Rowlett, Poverty Reduction Initiative  
Tony Ryan, DHS Community Resource Coordinator  
Brandon Seng, Goodwill Director of Food Programs  
Evan Smith, Cherry Capital Foods  
Marsha Smith, Rotary Charities Executive Director  
Mary Stanton, LCN Executive Director  
Val Stone, NW Food Coalition Coordinator  
Gerry VanAntwerp, BACN Executive Director  
Mary Walker, Antrim County Baby Pantry

Organizations:

Antrim County Community Collaborative

Benzie County Community Collaborative

Food and Farming Network

Kalkaska County Community Collaborative

NMC SOC 201, Modern Social Problems Class

## Attachment D: References

Department of Human Services Green Book  
Food Gatherers, Ann Arbor, Michigan  
Michigan League for Public Policy  
Poverty In America Living Wage Calculator  
Rebuilding The Foodshed, Philip Ackerman-Leist  
U.S. Census Bureau, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates

## Attachment E

# **Food Security Survey – Pantry & Emergency Meal Sites**

### **Agency Information**

Agency Name:

Agency Address:

Agency Phone Number:

Agency Fax:

Agency E-mail Address:

Agency Contact:

Type of Program(s):

Hours of Operation:

### **Agency Questions**

This section focuses on 5 major areas: (1) Client Identification, (2) Food Collection, (3) Food Pantry and Other Non-Meal Food Distribution, (4) Meal Distribution, and (5) Training/Education.

#### **Identification of Individuals and Families that are Food Insecure**

1. What methods are used by your organization to identify individuals and families in your service area that are food insecure? Address people of all age groups (i.e. birth to 5, 5-18, 18-65, 65+).
2. On a scale of 1 to 5, how effective do you believe your methods are in identifying neighbors that are food insecure? (1 is not effective at all and 5 is very effective)
3. What information do you collect from people seeking food assistance?
4. Does your organization identify individuals and families that qualify for government assistance programs (i.e. WIC, Bridge Cards, etc.)? If so, please identify the programs?
5. What ways do you believe organizations in our area that play a role in hunger relief can work collectively to make a greater impact on identifying those who are food insecure in our 5 county region?

#### **Food Collection** (The following questions pertain to organizations that have pantries and/or meal service):

1. How is your organization funded? Provide each source of funding and the percentage the source provides to your overall budget.



2. Does your organization have a food purchase budget? If so, what was your most recent 12 month budget for making food purchases? What percentage of your overall budget is used for the purchase of food?
3. What methods does your organization use to solicit cash donations to be used to purchase food?
4. What methods does your organization use to solicit food donations?
5. What percent of food that you make available for your clients is purchased and what percent of food is donated?
6. What items does your organization try to make available for your clients at all times? (ex: green beans, rice, etc.)
7. What are your sources of food (i.e. food donated by the public, food donated from Food Rescue, food donated from local farmers, purchased food, etc?) Approximately what percent of food that you make available to your clients comes from each food source?

_____ % Donated by public	_____ % Donated by Local Merchants
_____ % Donated by Food Rescue	_____ % Purchased
_____ % Donated by Local Farmers	_____ % Other (please explain) _____

8. Where do you purchase food? What percent of the food that you purchase is from each supplier? (ex: Feeding America – 50%, Meijer – 25%, etc.)

_____ % Local Merchants (please list stores)	_____ % Local Farmers
_____ % Feeding America West Michigan	_____ % Other (please explain)

9. Does your organization receive food directly from local farmers? If so, please provide a list of the farmers, the food products they provide, and if the food is donated or purchased.
10. Does value exist in collaboratively purchasing food and other products with other pantries in our 5 county region?
11. What ways do you believe hunger relief organizations can work collectively to have a greater impact on food collection in our 5 county area?
12. Would organizing collective cash/food drives (i.e. organizations working together, several times a year, to advertise cash/food drives that would allow the public to donate to the overall effort or to a specific organization) be of value to your organization? If so, how would your organization benefit from this?

### **Food Pantry and other Non-Meal Food Distribution**

1. What is your organization's schedule for providing food from your pantry (i.e. pantry hours) or by other means (ex: blessings in a backpack program) for your clients?
2. On average, how many unduplicated families/households do you serve each month?
3. Do you see any fluctuation in demand for food during a month?

☐ Yes, highest demand at end of the month  
☐ Yes, highest demand at beginning of the month  
☐ Yes, highest demand in the middle of the month  
☐ No, demand is steady

4. In the past year, how often did your program use any of the following methods to handle a shortage of food or resources?

	Never	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always
Turn clients away without food	_____	_____	_____	_____
Reduce amount given to each household	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ask client to return another day to receive food	_____	_____	_____	_____
Purchase additional food	_____	_____	_____	_____
Refer to another agency	_____	_____	_____	_____

5. Please indicate the average quantity of food you provided to each client for 2013. You may answer in either pounds or bags of food, and per person or per household. Please enter the quantity in only one category below:

\_\_\_ bags per person \_\_\_ bags per household \_\_\_ pounds per person \_\_\_ pounds per household

6. Please identify the guidelines your pantry uses in determining the amount of food allowed for each person or household (check only one).

☐ No limits on the amount of food a person/household can take  
☐ Amount allowed is based on number of people in household  
☐ Fixed amount of groceries per person/household regardless of size of household  
☐ Other, please describe \_\_\_\_\_

7. How frequently do you have fresh fruits and vegetables available during scheduled distribution times?

- ☐ Always
- ☐ Only in the growing season, but very regularly during the growing season
- ☐ Only in the growing season and only sometimes during the growing season
- ☐ Intermittently throughout the year, but usually yes
- ☐ Intermittently throughout the year, but usually not
- ☐ Never

8. How frequently do you have frozen meat available during scheduled distribution times?

- |                                           |                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always           | <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> Never            |

9. How frequently do you have fresh dairy or perishable prepared foods available during scheduled distribution times?

- |                                           |                                           |
|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Always           | <input type="checkbox"/> Some of the time |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Most of the time | <input type="checkbox"/> Never            |

10. From your perspective, what percent of people using your food pantry fall into each of the categories below:

- |                                                                            |                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------|
| The food pantry is their only source of food on a regular basis.           | <input type="text"/> % |
| The food pantry provides a large portion of their food on a regular basis. | <input type="text"/> % |
| The food pantry provides supplemental food on a regular basis.             | <input type="text"/> % |
| The food pantry provides emergency food on a temporary basis.              | <input type="text"/> % |
| Total: 100%                                                                |                        |

11. From your perspective, how far do most people travel to access your food pantry?

- |                                                |                                                  |
|------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 5 miles     | <input type="checkbox"/> Between 10 and 20 miles |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Between 5 to 10 miles | <input type="checkbox"/> More than 20 miles      |

12. From your perspective, of the ways in which people travel to access your food pantry, please rank the following methods from that used by the largest number of people (1) to that used by the smallest number of people (8). If one of the following options is not used by anyone, please mark "NA".

- |                                                |                                                       |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> In their own vehicle  | <input type="checkbox"/> Public Transportation        |
| <input type="checkbox"/> In a borrowed vehicle | <input type="checkbox"/> Bike                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Ride with a friend    | <input type="checkbox"/> Walk                         |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Taxi                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (please explain) _____ |

13. What ways do you believe hunger relief organizations can work collectively to have a greater impact on food pantry and other non-meal food distribution in our 5 county area?

## **Community Meal Distribution**

1. What is your organization's schedule for providing meals to your clients? (ex: breakfast, 7 days a week, 7 am – 9 pm)
2. How many unduplicated individuals do you serve each month? \_\_\_\_\_
3. On average, how many people do you serve at each meal? (ex: 25 for breakfast, 50 for lunch, etc.)
4. Do you see any fluctuation in demand for meals during a month?

- ☐ Yes, highest demand at end of the month  
☐ Yes, highest demand at beginning of the month  
☐ Yes, highest demand in the middle of the month  
☐ No, demand is steady

5. In the past year, how often did your program use any of the following methods to handle a shortage of food or resources?

	Never	Some of the time	Most of the time	Always
Turn clients away without food	_____	_____	_____	_____
Reduce amount given to each person	_____	_____	_____	_____
Ask client to return another day to receive food	_____	_____	_____	_____
Purchase additional food	_____	_____	_____	_____
Refer to another agency	_____	_____	_____	_____

6. How frequently do your meals include fresh fruits or vegetables? (ex: 100%, 50%, etc.)
7. How frequently do the meals provided include meat? (ex: 100%, 50%, etc.)
8. From your perspective, what percent of the people using your meal program fall into each of the categories below:

The meal program is their only source of food on a regular basis.	_____
The meal program provides a large portion of their food on a regular basis.	_____
The meal program provides supplemental food on a regular basis.	_____
The meal program provides emergency food on a temporary basis.	_____
	Total 100%

9. From your perspective, how far do most people travel to access your meal program?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Less than 5 miles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Between 5 to 10 miles
- \_\_\_\_\_ Between 10 to 20 miles
- \_\_\_\_\_ More than 20 miles

10. From your perspective, of the ways in which people travel to access your meal program, please rank the following methods from that used by the largest number of people (1) to that used by the smallest number of people (8). If one of the options is not used by anyone, mark N/A.

- |                             |                              |
|-----------------------------|------------------------------|
| _____ In their own vehicle  | _____ Public Transportation  |
| _____ In a borrowed vehicle | _____ Bike                   |
| _____ Ride with a friend    | _____ Walk                   |
| _____ Taxi                  | _____ Other (please explain) |

11. What ways do you believe hunger relief organizations can work collectively to have a greater impact on meal distribution in our 5 county area?

### **Training & Education**

1. Does your organization aid individuals and families in obtaining access to government food assistance programs, such as WIC coupons and Bridge cards? If not, would you be willing to provide this service to your clients if your organization received the support it needed to provide this service?
2. Does your organization provide training on meal preparation for themselves and/or their families?
3. Does your organization provide job training for the food industry?
4. Does your organization provide training on growing food?
5. What ways do you believe hunger relief organizations can work collectively to have a greater impact on training and education in our 5 county area?

### **Other**

1. Please share your thoughts on the importance of either expanding our coalition or identifying/creating another organization that would (1) serve as the lead agency in our 5 county area for hunger relief efforts and to (2) provide the support needed to its partners. Please provide what you believe would be the benefits and the drawbacks of either expanding our coalition or identifying/creating another organization to serve in the capacity.

2. Please share your thoughts on whether or not you believe that developing a Food Security Plan for our 5 county region, with emphasis on hunger relief organizations working collectively, would make a greater impact on individuals and our communities becoming more food secure.
3. From your perspective, if it's decided that a Food Security Plan is of value to our 5 county area, would there be benefit to hiring a consultant to help us collaborate in developing the plan?
4. Please share your thoughts on how everyone involved in hunger relief in our 5 county region can better focus our energy to make individuals and our communities food secure.
5. From your perspective, what are the barriers that keep individuals and families in our area from becoming food secure? Please address issues such as availability of food, access to food, etc.
6. Please share your thoughts on the best way to reach out to clients/potential clients to get them involved in the discussion on food security to better understand the causes of food insecurity and the most effective and efficient ways to reduce it in individuals and communities.
7. Do you think engaging local churches to establish community gardens to grow produce for food pantries is worth pursuing?
8. Please share your thoughts on establishing a meal/grocery delivery program for other vulnerable individuals, such as infants and children, in our 5 county area.
9. Please share your thoughts on ways that the 10 Rotary Clubs in our 5 county area can join together to make the greatest impact of food security in our region.
10. Please share other thoughts and ideas on ways in which we can work collectively to make a greater impact on food security in our 5 county region.
11. In a world you control, how would you make individuals and communities food secure?
12. Would you be interested in participating in this project as we move forward?
13. What are your thoughts on the benefits of surveying your clients as part of this study? If it is decided that surveying clients would be of value, would you be willing to assist in the survey process at your facility?
14. What do you think makes your organization unique?

## Attachment F

### **Food Security Survey - Clients**

Thanks so much for taking the time to chat with me for a few minutes. I'm \_\_\_\_\_ and I'm working with pantries and meal providers in our area, including \_\_\_\_\_, to do a study to gain a better understanding of the availability and access of adequate, healthy, nutritious food for all of our neighbors. We're doing the study throughout the 5 county Grand Traverse region. (Antrim, Benzie, Grand Traverse, Kalkaska, Leelanau) The information we gather from the study will be used to identify new ways in which our community can work together to try to make sure no one in our community has to worry about going hungry.

Your answers to the survey will be anonymous, and will only be used in summary fashion. You will not be personally identified in any way. You don't have to answer questions if you don't want to, but we'd appreciate as much information as you can give. Thank you for participating.

1. Where do you do most of your grocery shopping? Primary Store Name \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why do you shop at your primary grocery store? (INDICATE ALL THAT APPLY)  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Lower prices than other stores    \_\_\_\_\_ Most convenient location  
\_\_\_\_\_ Higher quality than other stores    \_\_\_\_\_ Best selection of foods  
\_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_
3. How far is your primary grocery store from your home?  
  
\_\_\_\_\_ Less than 1 mile    \_\_\_\_\_ Greater than 1 but less than 5 miles  
\_\_\_\_\_ Greater than 5 but less than 10 miles    \_\_\_\_\_ Greater than 10 miles
4. At your primary store, how satisfied are you with:
  - a. Selection of fresh produce and healthy food choices  
very satisfied    somewhat satisfied    somewhat dissatisfied    very dissatisfied
  - b. Quality of fresh produce  
very satisfied    somewhat satisfied    somewhat dissatisfied    very dissatisfied
  - c. Price  
very satisfied    somewhat satisfied    somewhat dissatisfied    very dissatisfied
  - d. Ease of access/location in relation to home  
very satisfied    somewhat satisfied    somewhat dissatisfied    very dissatisfied

5. How do you usually travel to do your grocery shopping?

\_\_\_\_\_ In my own vehicle \_\_\_\_\_ In a borrowed vehicle \_\_\_\_\_ Ride with a friend

\_\_\_\_\_ Walk \_\_\_\_\_ Public transportation \_\_\_\_\_ Taxi \_\_\_\_\_ Bicycle

\_\_\_\_\_ Other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

6. How many servings of fruits and vegetables do you eat each day?

\_\_\_\_\_ 0-1 \_\_\_\_\_ 2-4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 9 or more

7. If you eat less than 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day, what are the reasons that contribute to this. (INDICATE ALL THAT APPLY)

\_\_\_\_\_ Too expensive \_\_\_\_\_ Not available where I shop \_\_\_\_\_ Don't like

\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know how to prepare \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please describe: \_\_\_\_\_

8. Do you grow any of your own food (in your own garden, or in a community or school garden)?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ No, but I would like to

9. How often do you purchase food from a Farmer's Market or produce stand?

\_\_\_\_\_ Weekly during the season \_\_\_\_\_ Monthly during the season

\_\_\_\_\_ Occasionally/Less often than monthly \_\_\_\_\_ Never

10. How many meals per month do you purchase at a restaurant (including fast food)?

\_\_\_\_\_ 0 \_\_\_\_\_ 1-2 \_\_\_\_\_ 3-4 \_\_\_\_\_ 5-7 \_\_\_\_\_ 8 or more

**The following are statements that people have made about their food situation. For these statements, please indicate whether the statement was often true, sometimes true, or never true for your household in the last 12 months:**

11. "The food that we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for your household in the last 12 months?

\_\_\_\_\_ Often true \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes true \_\_\_\_\_ Never true \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know

12. "We couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for your household in the last 12 months?

\_\_\_\_\_ Often true \_\_\_\_\_ Sometimes true \_\_\_\_\_ Never true \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know



13. In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No (SKIP TO 15)

14. If you responded "Yes" to 13, how often did this happen?

\_\_\_\_\_ Almost every month \_\_\_\_\_ Some months but not every month  
\_\_\_\_\_ Only 1 or 2 months \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know

15. In the last 12 months, did you or anyone else in your household ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know

16. In the last 12 months, were you or anyone in your household ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know

**The following questions pertain to a number of available food assistance programs.**

17. Did you or anyone in your household receive assistance from any food programs in the last month?  
(INDICATE ALL THAT APPLY)

a. Bridge Card \_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If yes, enter the number of months in a row that you have been receiving food stamps/bridge card: \_\_\_\_\_

If No, please check the reason(s) for not participating

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not think I'm eligible \_\_\_\_\_ I have applied for this program and been denied

\_\_\_\_\_ I am unaware of this program \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want assistance

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not need assistance \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

b. Women, Infant and Children Program (WIC) **(for children 5 and under)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, enter the number of months in a row that you have been receiving WIC: \_\_\_\_\_

If No, please check the reason(s) for not participating

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not think I'm eligible \_\_\_\_\_ I have applied for this program and been denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ I am unaware of this program \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want assistance  
\_\_\_\_\_ I do not need assistance \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

c. Free or reduced price school breakfast and lunch program

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, enter the number of school years receiving free or reduced price school breakfast and lunch: \_\_\_\_\_

If No, please check the reason(s) for not participating:

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not think I'm eligible \_\_\_\_\_ I have applied for this program and been denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ I am unaware of this program \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want assistance  
\_\_\_\_\_ I do not need assistance \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

d. Blessings in a Backpack program **(only available in Leelanau County & a few in TC area)**

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

e. Free meal programs

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, enter the number of months in a row that you have been regularly visiting emergency meal programs: \_\_\_\_\_

If Yes, what emergency meal program(s) do you visit: \_\_\_\_\_

If No, please check the reason(s) for not participating:

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not think I'm eligible \_\_\_\_\_ I have applied for this program and been denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ I am unaware of this program \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want assistance  
\_\_\_\_\_ I do not need assistance \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

f. Meals on Wheels

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, enter the number of months in a row that you have been participating: \_\_\_\_\_

If No, please check the reason(s) for not participating:

\_\_\_\_\_ I do not think I'm eligible \_\_\_\_\_ I have applied for this program and been denied  
\_\_\_\_\_ I am unaware of this program \_\_\_\_\_ I do not want assistance  
\_\_\_\_\_ I do not need assistance \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

g. Food Pantries

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

If Yes, please answer the following questions:

Which emergency food pantry is you PRIMARY food pantry? \_\_\_\_\_

How far is you PRIMARY food pantry from your home?

\_\_\_\_\_ Less than 1 mile \_\_\_\_\_ Greater than 1 but less than 5 miles

\_\_\_\_\_ Greater than 5 but less than 10 miles \_\_\_\_\_ Greater than 10 miles

At your primary food pantry, have you received information and/or help in any of the following areas: (CHECK ALL THAT APPLY)

\_\_\_\_\_ Referrals for bridge card

\_\_\_\_\_ Assistance for securing bridge card

\_\_\_\_\_ Referrals for food assistance programs other than bridge card

\_\_\_\_\_ Job training \_\_\_\_\_ Job referrals

\_\_\_\_\_ Nutrition education or healthy cooking classes

\_\_\_\_\_ Referrals for non-food assistance programs (such as health insurance and cash assistance)

What is your level of satisfaction with the following at your PRIMARY pantry:

Selection of fresh produce and healthy food choices:

Very satisfied   Somewhat satisfied   Somewhat dissatisfied   Very dissatisfied

Quality of fresh produce:

Very satisfied   Somewhat satisfied   Somewhat dissatisfied   Very dissatisfied

Ease of access (ex: hours of operation)/location in relation to home:

Very satisfied   Somewhat satisfied   Somewhat dissatisfied   Very dissatisfied

How do you usually travel to your PRIMARY pantry?

\_\_\_\_\_ In my own vehicle \_\_\_\_\_ In a borrowed vehicle

\_\_\_\_\_ Ride with a friend \_\_\_\_\_ Walk \_\_\_\_\_ Public transportation \_\_\_\_\_ Taxi

\_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

Please indicate how you use the food from your PRIMARY pantry:

- \_\_\_\_\_ As my only source of food on a regular basis
- \_\_\_\_\_ As a large source of food on a regular basis
- \_\_\_\_\_ As a supplemental source of food on a regular basis
- \_\_\_\_\_ As emergency food on a temporary basis

h. Do you participate in the Double Up Food Bucks Program?

Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No \_\_\_\_\_ If NO, why not? \_\_\_\_\_

i. Other sources of food, including other pantries:

If you receive food from any other sources, please identify them:

\_\_\_\_\_

j. When you first faced the need for food assistance, how did you learn of available food programs? \_\_\_\_\_

k. Would you accept assistance in applying for food assistance programs?

**IF YES, PUT CONTACT INFO ON SEPARATE SHEET OF PAPER AND INDICATE WHICH PROGRAMS THEY'D LIKE ASSISTANCE. DO NOT PUT IDENTIFYING INFO ON THIS SURVEY!**

### About your household

1. Which of the following best describes your household?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Two adults, no children \_\_\_\_\_ Single adult, no children
- \_\_\_\_\_ Two parent household, with children \_\_\_\_\_ Single parent, with children
- \_\_\_\_\_ Grandparent(s), with children \_\_\_\_\_ Other, please explain: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Please enter the total number of people in your household: \_\_\_\_\_

3. How many members of your household are children under 18? \_\_\_\_\_

4. How many members of your household are age 65 or older? \_\_\_\_\_

5. What is your employment status?

- \_\_\_\_\_ Unemployed
- \_\_\_\_\_ Not in labor force (retired, disabled, student, not looking for work)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Working, part time (less than 35 hours per week)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Working, full time (35-40 hours per week)
- \_\_\_\_\_ Working, more than full time (41 or more hours per week)

6. Do you or someone in your household own a working vehicle?

\_\_\_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No

7. What was your household's total take-home income for last month?

\_\_\_\_\_ Less than \$500 \_\_\_\_\_ \$500 - \$999 \_\_\_\_\_ \$1000 - \$1499 \_\_\_\_\_ \$1500 - \$1999  
\_\_\_\_\_ \$2000 - \$2499 \_\_\_\_\_ \$2500 - \$2999 \_\_\_\_\_ \$3000 - \$3999 \_\_\_\_\_ \$4000 or more  
\_\_\_\_\_ Don't know

8. Compared to last year, how would you consider your household?

\_\_\_\_\_ Better off than last year \_\_\_\_\_ Worse off than last year  
\_\_\_\_\_ About the same \_\_\_\_\_ Don't know

9. If you were able to change how our community work towards ensuring all of our neighbors have access to adequate levels of healthy food, what changes would you make?

Is there anything else you'd like to share with me pertaining to the study that we haven't discussed or anything that you'd like to discuss in greater detail?