

## Senior Hunger and Food Insecurity in Nevada and Washoe County

March 2018

### FOOD INSECURITY FACTS

- Washoe County Nevada Population Estimate (2017) = 458,808
- 15.1% of residents of Washoe County Nevada are 65 years and over = 69,280
- 14.7% of Washoe County seniors are food insecure = 10,184 (food insecurity means lack of access to enough food for a healthy, active life)
- About 20% of those eating lunches provided by Washoe County Seniors Services report that meal is the only meal they will have that day.
- Food-insecure seniors have limitations in activities of daily living comparable to those of food-secure seniors fourteen years older
- Food-insecure adults are more likely to be diagnosed with diabetes, hypertension, and high blood pressure; are more likely to report mental health problems (including anxiety and depression) and poor general health.
- Seniors who are food insecure have a decreased capacity to maintain independence with aging.
- A growing body of research suggests that the detrimental impact of food insecurity on health has important consequences for U.S. healthcare expenditures. Over the long term, prevention of food insecurity is likely to be more cost-effective than treating the consequences of food insecurity.

### Food Bank of Northern Nevada Programs Serving Seniors:

- 144 partner agency network providing groceries and prepared meals through food pantries and congregate meal programs.
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), a USDA program designed to supplement the food needs of seniors (60+) with a monthly box of food distributed to eligible seniors at neighborhood sites. The Food Bank supplements the CSFP boxes with fresh fruits and vegetables. Food Bank's CSFP caseload is 2,475 seniors each month.
- Food Bank's own Senior Box Program serves seniors who barely exceed the CSFP income threshold but still struggle with food insecurity. This program is currently distributing about 85 boxes/month; the box contents mirror those of the CSFP box.
- SNAP Outreach team assists SNAP-eligible clients in completing applications for (food stamp) benefits, conducting the required interview, and forwarding the applications to the local welfare office for approval. FBNN helped submit 2,929 applications last year, with an 89% approval rate.
- Mobile Harvest distributes a variety of seasonal fresh produce year-round into 26 Washoe County neighborhoods at no charge for the client. Food Bank nutrition educators provide information, recipes, samples to help clients learn to use and serve the fresh fruits and vegetables they receive through Mobile Harvest.