

United We Serve

SERVE.GOV

FEED A NEIGHBOR

“Hunger is a problem that we can solve together.”
President Barack Obama, November 2009

President Obama is calling on all of us to come together to solve hunger in our communities. In this spirit, the Corporation for National and Community Service is launching the *United We Serve: Feed a Neighbor* initiative in collaboration with the White House and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

The purpose of the initiative is to raise public awareness of hunger issues and ask Americans to help ensure that their neighbors have access to nutritional food this winter and throughout the year. By focusing the national spotlight on hunger this holiday season, the Corporation and USDA continue their year-round commitment to support anti-hunger programs in communities across the country.

The Challenge

- Seventeen million households, or 14.6% of all households in America, were food insecure in 2008 and had difficulty putting enough food on the table at times during the year.¹
- About 1 in 5 Americans participates in nutrition assistance programs.²
- In 2008, an estimated 1.1 million children lived in households that experienced hunger multiple times throughout the year.³
- Requests for emergency food assistance are up 30% compared to last year and over half of the nation's food banks have had to turn people away.⁴

The Opportunity

There are many ways for you to help combat hunger through service. Go to Serve.gov to search for local volunteer opportunities. Serve.gov links to a database, managed by All for Good, that allows you to find service activities based on your location or interests.

Or consider getting involved in the following anti-hunger projects in your community. Detailed information and resources for each of these service projects, among others, can be found in our anti-hunger volunteer toolkit at Serve.gov:

Help Hungry Older Adults

Every day seniors in America go to bed hungry, which negatively impacts their health and well-being. Make a difference by preparing, serving, or delivering meals to seniors in your community.

Ensure Children Have Food in the Summer Months When School is Out

Nearly 19 million children depend on free and reduced-price school meals for nine months out of the year. However, only about 2.3 million children participate in the Summer Food Service Program, primarily because of a lack of host sites for the program. This winter sign up your community center or congregation to be a summer feeding site.



Support Food Banks and Food Pantries

Many low-income families rely on emergency food assistance from our nation's network of food banks, charitable agencies, and programs. You can make a difference by donating food to your local food bank or food pantry, or offering your time as a skilled volunteer – food pantries need accountants to help keep the books, writers to help draft grants, and volunteer managers to make the operation run smoothly.

Increase Access to Fresh Produce

Many families live in neighborhoods without access to fresh produce. Make a difference by planting a community garden at your school, church, or community center and sharing the produce with your neighbors or local food pantries. If you sell produce at a farmers market, make sure your booth accepts WIC and Seniors Farmers Market Vouchers, as well as EBT cards.

Develop a Plan to End Hunger

There are many factors that contribute to hunger and they often differ from community to community. A key step towards ending hunger is to understand the unique challenges and opportunities where you live. Work with local stakeholders to analyze the hunger situation in your community and help develop a plan of action.

United We Serve

United We Serve, President Obama's national service initiative led by the Corporation for National and Community Service, successfully launched this summer. The online home of *United We Serve* – Serve.gov – links to a database of local volunteer opportunities and provides tools for people to develop their own service projects, share their stories of service and impact, and encourage others to participate.

The initial phase of *United We Serve* culminated on September 11, 2009, a new National Day of Service and Remembrance established by the bipartisan Edward M. Kennedy Serve America Act. But the call to service didn't end in September. *United We Serve* continues to engage all Americans in sustained, impactful service that strengthens communities and helps tackle some of our toughest national challenges.

Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service is a federal agency that engages 5.5 million Americans in service through its Senior Corps, AmeriCorps, and Learn and Serve America programs, and leads President Obama's national call to service initiative, *United We Serve*. For more information, visit NationalService.gov.

U.S. Department of Agriculture

Established in 1862, President Abraham Lincoln called the United States Department of Agriculture the "People's Department." Today, the work that takes place at USDA to provide leadership on food, agriculture, and natural resources, still touches the life of every American. As the 21st century begins, USDA is working to help provide a sustainable, safe, sufficient, and nutritious food supply for the American people, to help rural communities generate wealth, and to conserve the nation's natural resources.

¹⁻³ USDA's "Household Food Security in the United States, 2008," <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Publications/Err83/>

⁴ Feeding America's "September 2009 Economic Impact Survey," <http://tinyurl.com/ybqxepv>

