

CREATING A FOOD SECURE NATION

AARP Foundation focuses on sustainable, long-term public health and market-driven solutions to help meet the dietary needs of older adults, especially those of the nine million food insecure. The sheer number of those aged 50 and older deserves attention on its own as a population with distinct nutrition and health needs, and one that, to-date, has garnered little recognition among researchers, program experts, industry, government agencies and other key stakeholders.

The 50+ population is the fastest growing consumer group in the U.S., with control over 80 percent of the financial assets and 50 percent of discretionary income.¹ Baby boomers alone are expected to explode—by 2030, approximately one in five of the nation’s population will be 65 and older.²

Yet food insecurity among older adults remains a serious problem, and it is getting worse. Rates of food insecurity among this population have more than doubled since 2001.³ Compared to food secure older adults, food insecure older adults are 60 percent more likely to experience depression, and over 50 percent more likely to report a heart attack and develop asthma.⁴

Not surprisingly, inadequate dietary habits and poor health leads to increased health care costs. In 2010, older adults spent 13.2 percent of their total expenditures on health—more than twice the proportion spent by consumers overall. Additionally, people 65 and older accounted for one-third of U.S. health spending but made up only 13 percent of the population.⁵ With a population that’s expected to double⁴ by 2040, these costs will continue to rise unless we take collective action to help improve dietary consumption patterns and address the systemic issues that lead to poor health.

IT BEGINS WITH A SOLUTIONS-ORIENTED APPROACH.

That’s why AARP Foundation is expanding its work to move beyond awareness and focus on the core pillars of:

1. HUNGER AS A HEALTH ISSUE

2. MAXIMIZING VALUE FOR THE LOW INCOME CONSUMER THROUGH THE EXISTING FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN

We’re seeking to better leverage the food supply chain—and the nutritional quality of foods available and consumed—to meet the needs of vulnerable older adults.

¹ <http://www.atkearney.com/documents/10192/682603/Understanding+the+Needs+and+Consequences+of+the+Aging+Consumer.pdf/6c25ffa3-0999-4b5c-8ff1-afdca0744fdc>

² http://www.aoa.gov/Aging_Statistics/

³ <http://www.nfesh.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Senior-Hunger-Research.pdf>

⁴ <http://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/impact-of-hunger/senior-hunger/senior-hunger-fact-sheet.html>

⁵ <http://www.chcf.org/publications/2014/07/health-care-costs-101#ixzz3Akd8KVhJ>

OUR PATH FORWARD: EDUCATE. EXTEND. ELEVATE.



EDUCATE: INCREASE AWARENESS AND UNDERSTANDING OF OLDER ADULT HUNGER AND FOOD INSECURITY.

Older adult hunger and food insecurity may seem invisible, but it exists in every community in our nation. Through research, programs and strategic alliances, we can foster and raise knowledge about Hunger as a Health Issue, the consequences of food insecurity and how to leverage market-driven solutions that achieve both positive public health and business objectives.



EXTEND: PROMOTE, STRENGTHEN AND ENHANCE EXISTING PROGRAMS AND POLICIES.

There is an opportunity to consolidate, integrate and coordinate action among organizations, industry and government agencies to leverage national infrastructure and address gaps and challenges in a more efficient, focused and prioritized manner.



ELEVATE: BUILD AND ACT ON IDENTIFIED NEEDS BY SERVING AS A CONVENER.

By bringing together key experts who work across the food supply chain, it is our intention to develop new market-driven pathways that increase access to safe, affordable and nutritious food.

MAKING AN IMPACT

AARP Foundation strives to be a leader in the movement to promote thoughtful, market-driven, sustainable strategies that address hunger and food insecurity for older adults. Although an ambitious undertaking, we have historically embraced pragmatism to meet the immediate food needs of older adults.

Since 2011, we:

- Donated 29,490,518 meals to hungry older adults;
- Connected 35,000 older adults to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), generating \$33.8 million in benefits and \$61.3 million in local economic activity;
- Awarded 10 organizations a cumulative \$1.9 million to develop and scale innovative and sustainable solutions to hunger;
- Released the first-ever report, Food Insecurity Among Older Adults; and
- Raised \$24.6 million through organizational partnerships and individual donations.

To learn more about our programs, research and work, please visit www.aarpfoundation.org/foodsecurity.



AARP Foundation is working to win back opportunity for struggling Americans 50+ by being a force for change on the most serious issues they face today: housing, hunger, income and isolation. By coordinating responses to these issues on all four fronts at once, and supporting them with vigorous legal advocacy, the Foundation serves the unique needs of those 50+ while working with local organizations nationwide to reach more people, strengthen communities, work more efficiently and make resources go further. AARP Foundation is the charitable affiliate of AARP. Learn more at www.aarpfoundation.org.