

Serving under Stress Post-Recession:

The State of Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens Today

A Hunger Safety Net Report



ABOUT THE FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY



Food Bank For New York City recognizes 29 years as the city's major hunger-relief organization working to end food poverty in the five boroughs. As the city's hub for integrated food poverty assistance, the Food Bank tackles the hunger issue on three fronts — food distribution, income support and nutrition education — all strategically guided by its research.

Through its network of community-based member programs citywide, the Food Bank helps provide 400,000 free meals a day for New York City residents in need. The Food Bank's hands-on nutrition education program in the public schools reaches thousands of children, teens and adults. Income support services, including food stamps, free income tax services for the working poor and the Earned Income Tax Credit, put millions of dollars back in the pockets of low-income New York City residents, helping them achieve greater dignity and independence. Learn how you can help at foodbanknyc.org.

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PART ONE: INTRODUCTION

Hurricane Sandy blew through the northeastern United States and left entire communities underwater, without heat or electricity, and displaced residents from their homes. As Sandy's human toll became known – hundreds of thousands of New York City residents losing access to food and water; tens of thousands left potentially homeless; dozens of lives senselessly and tragically cut short – the public's attention quickly turned to the survival needs of those most deeply affected. Throughout the five boroughs and across the nation, clothing and food drives were organized, donations started pouring in to relief organizations, and the city's disaster response mechanisms sprang into action.

New York City's network of emergency food organizations – including the food pantries and soup kitchens on which an estimated 1.4 million city residents rely¹ – quickly became a key component of this disaster response, leveraging the assets already in place to meet the needs of food-impooverished New Yorkers: facilities at which to prepare hot meals; a dedicated staff and volunteer base to handle distribution of food, water and supplies; and, in some cases, mobile food pantries to venture into hard-hit communities and fill gaps in service.

As of the issuance of this report, the story of New York City's response to this natural disaster is still being written, but it already includes countless such instances:

- Food pantries and soup kitchens in Bushwick, Bedford-Stuyvesant, and Richmond Hill continuing to provide services on-site while sending trucks out to distribute food to residents of Coney Island and the Rockaway Peninsula;
- Dozens of emergency food organizations and houses of worship in Staten Island coming together just days after the storm to coordinate food distribution in the areas of highest need;
- A soup kitchen in Flatbush working round-the-clock to prepare thousands of hot meals for elderly and disabled storm evacuees in the Park Slope Armory.

That these resources existed, ready for mobilization in a moment of crisis, owes precisely to the fact that so many New Yorkers were struggling to secure basic survival needs well before the storm, and would likely continue long after. This report details the state of the food pantries and soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City's emergency food network at the moment it faced Hurricane Sandy: nearly five years after the start of the Great Recession² that plunged hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers into new need; and more than three years after the start of a recovery that has drained resources from the public and private safety net that exists to protect vulnerable New Yorkers from hunger, but failed to put significant numbers of New Yorkers back to work and on the road out of poverty.

Several indicators lend credence to the fact that the number of New York City residents struggling with food poverty remains high. The proportion living below the federal poverty level (approximately \$19,100

¹ This number will be updated in early 2013.

² By economists' definitions, the "Great Recession" began in December 2007 and ended in June 2009.

annually for a household of three) has increased by more than 13 percent since the recession started and is now 21 percent (1.7 million). A basic living expenses measure, created by Columbia University's National Center for Children in Poverty, indicates that these 1.7 million residents have less than half the household income they need to meet basic needs.³

Opportunities to pull out of poverty have been elusive in the post-recession economy. New York City's unemployment rate (9.5 percent) has remained elevated at nearly double pre-recession levels since the recovery was officially announced in June 2009.⁴ The average length of unemployment nationally is nearly 10 months (40.2 weeks), more than double the four-month (16.6 weeks) average at the start of the recession.⁵

With more New Yorkers in poverty and out of work, the rising costs of food and other necessities⁶ have forced difficult sacrifices. In 2011, many New York City residents reported that they had foregone food to pay for other essentials: rent and utilities (18 percent and 20 percent, respectively), medicine and medical care (13 percent), and transportation (17 percent).⁷ To save food or money many New Yorkers reverted to strategies like skipping meals (21 percent), skimping on portion sizes (32 percent), or eating at friends' and relatives' homes (26 percent).⁸

It should come as little surprise, then, that participation in nutrition assistance programs has skyrocketed. Most tellingly, New York City's enrollment in SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program) now hovers above 1.8 million, an increase of more than 62 percent since the start of the recession.⁹

³2011 *American Community Survey* (2012). U.S. Census Bureau. There is broad agreement that the federal poverty level is an outdated calculation that does not adequately reflect need. Developed in 1960, the poverty measure does not take into account the cost of basic necessities such as housing, utilities, clothing or health care, nor does it reflect geographical differences in the cost of living. Research on basic living expenses conducted by Columbia University's National Center for Children in Poverty shows that families throughout the U.S. need an income of approximately twice (200 percent) the federal poverty level (approximately \$38,200 annually for a family of three) to meet basic needs. Reflecting the city's higher costs of living, the average household in New York City needs approximately 250 percent of the federal poverty level (approximately \$47,750 for a household of three).

⁴Analysis of unemployment data as reported by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). New York City's unemployment rate was 4.9 percent in November 2007, before the recession started. With the exception of an eight-month stretch (November 2010-June 2011), it has not dipped below 9.0 percent in more than three years. New York State and City officials have recently challenged the local BLS data as an overestimate of New York City's unemployment. Even if the current figure of 9.5 percent is a full percentage point too high, it would still represent an unemployment rate 94 percent higher than pre-recession levels.

⁵Analysis of unemployment data as reported by BLS.

⁶Analysis of Consumer Price Index data as reported by BLS. Since the start of the recession, the cost of groceries in the New York metropolitan area has risen 15 percent, while the cost of housing has increased 7 percent, and increases for transportation and medical care costs are 16 and 14 percent, respectively.

⁷*NYC Hunger Experience 2011: Sacrifice and Support* (2011). Food Bank For New York City, p. 16.

⁸*Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁹Analysis of SNAP participation data as reported by the New York City Human Resources Administration. Because SNAP is an entitlement program, meaning all eligible applicants receive benefits, SNAP participation is a revealing

And, as noted above, more than 1.4 million New York City residents turn to emergency food¹⁰ – a last resort for those who have no other resources and nowhere else to go for food.

During Fiscal Year 2012 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012), trucks emblazoned with Food Bank For New York City's logo crisscrossed the city's five boroughs, delivering more than 65 million pounds of food to approximately 850 member agencies.¹¹ Ninety percent of these member agencies operated emergency food programs, and 95 percent of these emergency food programs were food pantries and soup kitchens.¹² With the Food Bank's help, these food pantries and soup kitchens provided 136,514,664 million meals in Fiscal Year 2012.¹³

The food pantries and soup kitchens that are part of the Food Bank's agency network are more visible in some neighborhoods than others, but they can be found in all but one of the city's 59 Community Districts.¹⁴ Some provide food for a relatively small number of individuals or families; others serve crowds. Some have the resources to offer visitors simple meals or pantry bags of staples and little else; others pride themselves on their ability to match everyone who walks through their doors with an appropriate set of food and non-food services. Nearly all have had to contend with losses in key sources of emergency food and operating funds in recent years, even as indicators of food poverty have increased.

The immediate public and private response to the recession brought an influx of support to bolster and protect the safety net. SNAP benefits increased, unemployment insurance was extended and the philanthropic community directed additional resources toward the survival needs of vulnerable populations. Much of this support, however, has long since been expended. Over the course of the past year alone, for example, the single biggest source of emergency food for New York City's food pantries and soup kitchens, the federal Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), was drastically reduced, resulting in the loss of approximately 11 million meals for New York City's emergency food programs.

measure of need in a way that budget-constrained safety net programs like TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, commonly called "welfare") or WIC (the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children) are not.

¹⁰ This number will be updated in early 2013.

¹¹ This count of member agencies represents active members of the Food Bank's network as of July 2012.

¹² By definition, non-emergency feeding programs include programs with a regular, expected attendance, like day cares, senior centers and rehabilitation programs. Shelters are also emergency feed programs, but they are not discussed in this report.

¹³ Throughout this report, the number of "meals served" in food pantries represents the number of meals contained in the pantry bags the food pantries distribute. The number of meals contained in a pantry bag reflects the number of household members the bag is designed to serve and assumes that the bag meets a standard of nine meals per household member (*i.e.*, three meals per day for three days). The number of "meals served" in soup kitchens is exactly that – the number of meals the soup kitchen serves.

¹⁴ The only Community District in New York City that does not contain a food pantry or soup kitchen that is part of the Food Bank's agency network is Community District 11 in Queens, which includes the Bayside, Douglaston, Little Neck, Auburndale, East Flushing, Oakland Gardens, and Hollis Hills neighborhoods.

Many private funders, seeing their own resources diminished or perhaps hearing news of recovery and assuming need has abated, have decreased their levels of support from the early days of the recession.

To better understand operational differences between and among food pantries and soup kitchens, and the various ways in which they serve New Yorkers in need, the Food Bank surveyed 571 food pantries and 171 soup kitchens in its agency network during the last two months of 2011 and the first six months of 2012.¹⁵ A remarkable 83 percent (N=474) of surveyed pantries and 85 percent (N=145) of surveyed kitchens responded to our questions. The last time such comprehensive data about New York City's emergency food network was compiled was in Food Bank For New York City's *Hunger Safety Net 2007* report, the findings from which represent a picture of the emergency food network prior to the Great Recession. As such, the current report provides important insights into the changes that a crippled and stagnant economy have wrought for a network that strives to serve the most vulnerable with dignity in moments of disaster and every day.

¹⁵All food pantries and soup kitchens that were active members of the Food Bank's network as of September 2011 were surveyed. Schlesinger Associates, an international survey firm, was commissioned to administer the survey by mail and e-mail. Follow-up phone calls to complete unanswered surveys were made by Food Bank For New York City.

PART TWO: EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

In Hurricane Sandy's wake, entire communities were left underwater, without heat or electricity, and residents were displaced from their homes. Throughout the five boroughs and across the nation, clothing and food drives were organized, donations started pouring in to relief organizations, and the city's disaster response mechanisms sprang into action. New York City's network of emergency food organizations – the hundreds of food pantries and soup kitchens across the five boroughs – quickly became a key component of this disaster response, putting their critical assets to work: facilities at which to prepare hot meals; a dedicated staff and volunteer base to handle incoming shipments of food, water and supplies; and mobile food pantries to venture into hard-hit communities and fill gaps in service.

This network was in place prior to the storm, to meet the needs of an estimated 1.4 million New Yorkers who find themselves with no place else to turn for a meal, except a food pantry or soup kitchen in our network.¹⁶ The Great Recession thrust hundreds of thousands of New Yorkers into financial instability, raising poverty levels, sending unemployment rates skyrocketing, and forcing many to seek food assistance for the first time. Understanding that such financial upheaval would result in a swell of need, support from public and private sources increased as well. But these resources were soon exhausted, and as the economy transitioned from recession to a slow and stagnant recovery, support from public and private sources diminished.

As a result of these opposing pressures, the strain on New York City food pantries and soup kitchens has grown. Nearly all food pantries and soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City's emergency food network have had to contend with losses in key sources of emergency food and non-food resources in recent years, despite the fact that food poverty has increased. Yet, these agencies were an immediate and key component of the disaster response when Hurricane Sandy hit. They utilized all their assets, no matter how few, to provide food to New Yorkers in crisis.

This report examines the state of food pantries and soup kitchens in the Food Bank's network now, nearly five years after the start of the Great Recession and more than three years after the start of the recovery. Survey results from the food pantries and soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City¹⁷ paint a picture of a squeezed and shrunken safety net—one that must be addressed to ensure that these crucial emergency food organizations can continue to provide much-needed food and services to the more than one million vulnerable New Yorkers who rely on them every day.

¹⁶ This number will be updated in early 2013.

¹⁷ Eighty three percent (N=474) of surveyed pantries and 85 percent (N=145) of surveyed soup kitchens responded to our questions.

KEY FINDINGS

The size of the emergency food network in New York City has shrunk.

- There are fewer food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City since the start of the recession. In 2007, there were 989 soup kitchens and food pantries in Food Bank For New York City's network. As of July 2012, there are 742 food pantries and soup kitchens in this network—a decrease of 247, or 25 percent.

The number of New Yorkers seeking emergency food assistance has grown.

- A substantial majority of food pantries and soup kitchens reported that they had experienced an increase in visitors over the previous twelve months. More than three-quarters of both food pantries (79 percent) and soup kitchens (77 percent) reported this increase.
- Among pantries and soup kitchens that experienced an increase in visitors, 90 percent of food pantries and 85 percent of soup kitchens reported an increase in *first-time visitors*, a clear indication that hunger is afflicting more and more New Yorkers.

More food pantries and soup kitchens report running out of food.

- Food shortages have become far more pervasive at food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City since the recession. In 2012, 63 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food needed to produce adequate pantry bags or nutritious meals) at some point during the previous twelve months. This is a considerable increase since 2007, when 49 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported food shortages.
- Food pantries were more than twice as likely as soup kitchens to experience food shortages. Almost three quarters of food pantries (72 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags) at some point during the previous twelve months, while approximately one-third of soup kitchens (35 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce nutritious meals) at some point during the same period.

Pantry bags often don't provide as much food as the ideal standard.

- Ideally, every pantry bag distributed should contain three meals for three days for every member of a participating household. Yet more than two-thirds of food pantries (69 percent) reported that their standard pantry bag contained *less* than the nine-meal standard.

When participants are turned away, it is most commonly due to lack of food.

- While the proportion of food pantries and soup kitchens that turned participants away (40 percent) is similar to findings in 2007 (47 percent), lack of food is more commonly cited as the cause (83 percent in 2011-12, and 70 percent in 2007.)

Greater need has not resulted in longer hours of operation.

- Despite rising demand, a large majority of food pantries (66 percent) and soup kitchens (75 percent) reported that their hours had stayed the same, or gone up and down in the previous twelve months.
- Food pantries were more likely than soup kitchens to report a decrease in their hours of operation over the previous twelve months. Eleven percent of food pantries reported that they were open fewer hours, compared to three percent of soup kitchens.

Emergency food providers are making do with less staff.

- The proportion of food pantries operating without any paid staff has increased since the start of the recession. More than two-thirds of food pantries (68 percent) reported that they had no paid, full-time staff, and more than three quarters (76 percent) reported that they had no paid, part-time staff. By contrast, in 2007, nearly half of food pantries (46 percent) reported having at least one paid staff member.
- The proportion of soup kitchens operating without any paid staff has also increased since the start of the recession. Two-thirds of soup kitchens (66 percent) reported that they had no paid, full-time staff, and approximately three-quarters of kitchens (71 percent) reported that they had no paid, part-time staff. By contrast, in 2007, more than half of soup kitchens (51 percent) reported having at least one paid staff member.

Despite challenges, distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables is on the rise.

- Distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables has increased at food pantries and soup kitchens alike. Among food pantries, 85 percent include fresh fruit (compared to 82 percent in 2007), and 88 percent include fresh vegetables (compared to 80 percent in 2007) in pantry bags. Among soup kitchens, 89 percent use fresh fruit (compared to 82 percent in 2007) and 88 percent use fresh vegetables (compared to 82 percent in 2007) to prepare meals.

Emergency food providers act as important bridges to longer-term support for their visitors.

- More than one-half of food pantries (56 percent) reported having information about the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) available on-site, and one-half (50 percent) indicated that they had made referrals to SNAP offices (or to other organizations processing SNAP applications). Approximately one-half of soup kitchens (51 percent) reported having information about SNAP available on-site; 44 percent indicated that they had made referrals to SNAP offices (or to other organizations processing SNAP applications). Smaller numbers of pantries and soup kitchens reported pre-screening applicants, assisting with applications, or submitting applications.
- A little over one-quarter of food pantries (28 percent) had tax assistance information available on-site, and a little over one-quarter (28 percent) made tax assistance referrals. Nineteen percent of soup kitchens had tax assistance information available on-site, and approximately one-quarter (27 percent) made tax assistance referrals. Smaller percentages of provided tax services on-site.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this research provide evidence of the increased strain food pantries and soup kitchens have borne since the start of the Great Recession, as they've seen lines lengthening outside their doors but their own resources dwindling. Seen in the light of these opposing pressures, the considerable work of this network is all the more remarkable. The research supports the following recommendations:

- **Making Strategic Investments in the Emergency Food Infrastructure**

While diminished in size since the recession, New York City's emergency food network maintains a broad and deep reach into low-income communities, and over the past several years, public and private investments have developed this network into an effective bridge to longer-term sustainable income supports like SNAP and the EITC. Strategic investments in the emergency

food infrastructure can more effectively leverage existing capacity to provide clients' access to benefits, as well as strengthen the emergency food network's disaster preparedness.

- **Ensuring Adequacy and Responsiveness of the Emergency Food Supply**

Emergency food is the last line of defense against hunger. At the federal, state and local level, emergency food funding has been reduced or remained stagnant since the start of the recession despite increased need. These funding levels should be reviewed and adjusted to account for the increases seen in the number of people struggling with food poverty. In particular, TEFAP should be improved in the 2012 Farm Bill so that it can be responsive to emergency food needs. In addition, in order to maximize access to emergency food for all communities, strategies for ensuring an adequate supply of food that meets kosher and halal standards should be developed.

- **Strengthening Income Supports for Low-Income New Yorkers**

Emergency food ensures immediate needs can be met, but it is designed to be a temporary measure. Without resources dedicated to long-term solutions that address the root causes of hunger, emergency food is but a band-aid applied to a hemorrhaging wound. Living-wage jobs, as well as affordable housing and healthcare would do much to improve food access for those with limited means. In particular, cuts to SNAP in existing Farm Bill proposals should be opposed, as they disproportionately target New York City recipients and would have disastrous effects here, particularly in communities most affected by Hurricane Sandy where households may be experiencing other needs.

PART THREE: REPORT HIGHLIGHTS

Size of the Emergency Food Network

- There are fewer food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City since the start of the recession. In 2007, there were 989 food pantries and soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City's network. As of July 2012, there are 742 food pantries and soup kitchens in this network – a decrease of 247, or 25 percent. Probable reasons for this decrease include decreased availability of food and non-food resources due to shortages in public and private funding after an initial response to the Great Recession.

Volume of Visitors

- A substantial majority of food pantries and soup kitchens reported that their overall number of visitors had increased over the previous twelve months. More than three-quarters of food pantries (79 percent) and 77 percent of soup kitchens reported this increase.
- Only three percent of food pantries and one percent of soup kitchens reported that their overall number of visitors had decreased over the previous twelve months.

Food Shortages

- Food shortages have become far more pervasive at food pantries and soup kitchens in New York City since the recession. In 2012, 63 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported they had run out of food (or particular types of food to produce adequate pantry bags or meals) at some time during the previous twelve months. This is a considerable increase since 2007, when 49 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported these food shortages.
- Food pantries were more than twice as likely to experience food shortages than soup kitchens. Almost three quarters of food pantries (72 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags) at some time during the previous twelve months, whereas approximately one-third of soup kitchens (35 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce nutritious, balanced meals) at some time in the same period.

Size of Pantry Bags

- Ideally, every pantry bag distributed should contain three meals for three days for every member of a participating household. Yet more than two-thirds of food pantries (69 percent) reported that their standard pantry bag contained *less* than the nine-meal standard.

Turning Participants Away

- Food pantries are more likely than soup kitchens to have turned participants away at some point during the previous twelve months. Almost one-half of food pantries (45 percent) reported that they had turned away participants at some point during the previous twelve months, whereas over one-quarter of soup kitchens (27 percent) reported that they had turned away participants at some point during the previous twelve months. The overall proportion of food pantries and soup kitchens turning participants away (40 percent) was somewhat higher in 2007 (47 percent).
- Lack of food is cited as the most frequent reason for turning participants away at food pantries and soup kitchens alike, and is more likely to be the cause today than before the recession. Among those reporting having turned participants away over the previous twelve months, 83 percent of food pantries and 79 percent of soup kitchens reported that they had done so because of a lack of food. This compares to 70 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens in this group in 2007.

Hours of Operation

- Despite rising demand, a large majority of food pantries (66 percent) and soup kitchens (75 percent) reported that their hours had stayed the same, or gone up and down in the previous twelve months. Equal proportions of food pantries and soup kitchens (23 percent) reported they had increased the number of hours they were open.
- Food pantries were more likely than soup kitchens to report a decrease in their hours of operation over the previous twelve months. Eleven percent of food pantries reported that their hours had decreased compared to three percent of soup kitchens.

Distribution Schedules

- Overall, distribution schedules have changed little at food pantries since the start of the recession; service at soup kitchens, however, has increased. In 2007, the average food pantry was open 2 days per week, compared to 1.9 today (the median at both times was 1). Soup kitchens have increased to an average of 2.7 days of operation per week from 2 in 2007, and to a median of 2 days per week from 1 in 2007.
- Although the vast majority of food pantries (83 percent) reported being open four weeks per month, only a minority were open more than a few times per week. More than one-half (56 percent) were open only one day per week. Although almost all soup kitchens (96 percent) reported being open four weeks out of every month, the majority (61 percent) reported that they were open just one or two days per week.
- Weekend service is more common at soup kitchens than at food pantries, though not widely available at either. Most food pantries (76 percent) and almost two-thirds of soup kitchens (65 percent) are closed on weekends. This is similar to distribution schedules in 2007.

Staff/Volunteers

- The proportion of food pantries operating without any paid staff has increased since the start of the recession. More than two-thirds of food pantries (68 percent) reported that they had no paid, full-time staff, and more than three quarters (76 percent) reported they had no paid, part-time staff. By contrast, in 2007, nearly half of food pantries (46 percent) reported having at least one paid staff member. As a result, food pantries are facing new challenges recruiting and training volunteers, on which their operations increasingly depend.
- The proportion of soup kitchens operating without any paid staff has also increased since the start of the recession. Two-thirds of soup kitchens (66 percent) reported that they had no paid, full-time staff, and approximately three-quarters of kitchens (71 percent) had no paid, part-time staff. By contrast, in 2007, more than half of soup kitchens (51 percent) reported having at least one paid staff member. Again, as a result, soup kitchens are facing new challenges recruiting and training volunteers, on which their operations increasingly depend.

Types of Food Distributed

- Distribution of fresh fruit and vegetables has increased at food pantries and soup kitchens alike since the start of the recession. Among food pantries, 85 percent include fresh fruit (compared to 82 percent in 2007), and 88 percent include fresh vegetables (compared to 80 percent in

2007) in pantry bags. Among soup kitchens, 89 percent use fresh fruit (compared to 82 percent in 2007) and 88 percent use fresh vegetables (compared to 82 percent in 2007) to prepare meals.

- More food pantries (97 percent) reported the inclusion of bread, cereal, pasta, or rice in their pantry bags than any other item. Ninety percent reported that their bags contained beans, eggs, or nuts; only 87 percent reported that their bags contained meat, poultry, or fish.¹⁸ Ninety-three percent of pantries included frozen or canned fruits in their bags; the same percentage included frozen or canned vegetables.
- More soup kitchens reported using bread, cereal, pasta, or rice (97 percent); meat, poultry, or fish (97 percent);¹⁹ frozen or canned fruit (94 percent); and frozen or canned vegetables (97 percent) to prepare meals than reported using beans, eggs, or nuts (89 percent); fresh fruits (89 percent); fresh vegetables (88 percent); and milk, yogurt, or cheese (83 percent).

Special Foods/Special Meals

- Almost two-thirds of food pantries (61 percent) distributed bags containing low-sodium foods. Almost one-half (46 percent) distributed bags containing low-fat foods, and almost one-third (29 percent) provided bags for vegetarians or vegans. Diets related to specific medical conditions were less readily accommodated by food pantries. Eighteen percent of pantries distributed bags designed for diabetics, and ten percent distributed bags designed for HIV-positive individuals. As regards religious dietary restrictions, more than three times as many pantries (15 percent) offered kosher options as offered halal options (4 percent).
- One-half of soup kitchens (50 percent) reported that they served low-sodium meals, and 40 percent reported that they served low-fat meals. Almost one-third (28 percent) provided meals for vegetarians or vegans. Meals for individuals with more specific health-related concerns were harder to come by in soup kitchens. Nine percent of kitchens reported that they prepared meals for diabetics, and eight percent that they prepared meals for HIV-positive individuals. Very few soup kitchens serve clients with religious dietary restrictions. Only three percent of soup kitchens offered kosher meals, and none offered a halal option.

¹⁸ The meat, poultry, or fish category includes fresh *and* canned items (e.g., tuna, corned beef hash, beef stew).

¹⁹ The meat, poultry, or fish category includes fresh *and* canned items (e.g., tuna, corned beef hash, beef stew).

Other Services (SNAP)

- More than one-half of food pantries (56 percent) reported having information about SNAP available on-site, and one-half (50 percent) indicated that they had made referrals to SNAP offices (or to other organizations processing SNAP applications). Much smaller numbers of pantries reported pre-screening applicants (18 percent), assisting with applications (19 percent), or submitting applications (10 percent). Some food pantries went beyond the initial application process, submitting recertification applications for continued benefits (7 percent) or mediating disputes between SNAP applicants and the Human Resources Administration (HRA), which administers SNAP in New York City and determines program eligibility (6 percent).
- Approximately one-half of soup kitchens (51 percent) reported having information about SNAP available on-site; 44 percent indicated that they had made referrals to SNAP offices (or to other organizations processing SNAP applications). Much smaller numbers of soup kitchens reported pre-screening applicants (21 percent), assisting with applications (17 percent), or submitting applications (8 percent). Some soup kitchens went beyond the application process, recertifying SNAP recipients for continued assistance (5 percent) or mediating disputes between SNAP applicants and HRA, which administers SNAP in New York City and determines program eligibility (9 percent).
- In 2011-12, 55 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported offering participants information on SNAP, and 49 percent reported making SNAP referrals. In 2007, 56 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported offering participants information on SNAP, and 41 percent reported making SNAP referrals.²⁰

Other Services (Tax Assistance)

- A little over one-quarter of food pantries (28 percent) had tax assistance information available on-site, and a little over one-quarter (28 percent) made tax assistance referrals. Smaller percentages of food pantries provided tax services on-site. Eight percent of food pantries provided a coach to assist participants with their own tax preparation; three percent electronically forwarded participants' documents to a site that could process them; and three percent prepared participants' taxes on-site.
- Nineteen percent of soup kitchens had tax assistance information available on-site, and approximately one-quarter (27 percent) made tax assistance referrals. Eight percent of food pantries provided a coach to assist participants with their own tax preparation; three percent

²⁰ NYC Hunger Safety Net 2007. Food Bank For New York City.

electronically forwarded participants' documents to a site that could process them; and four percent prepared participants' taxes on-site.

PART FOUR: FOOD PANTRIES

AGENCY SIZE

For operational purposes, Food Bank For New York City places food pantries in five distinct size categories, based on number of people served: Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large, and Super.²¹

The food pantries to which surveys were sent ranged in size from Small to Super. The food pantries which responded to the surveys they were sent also ranged in size from Small to Super. The distribution of surveyed pantries and of survey-responsive pantries, across size categories, is presented in Table 1. As indicated, almost one-quarter of pantries in the Food Bank's network were Small (22 percent), and approximately one-quarter were Super (24 percent). The rest fell in between these two extremes. Table 1 also indicates that the size distribution of surveyed food pantries resembles that of survey-responsive food pantries. This similarity, and a response rate of 83 percent, makes it extremely unlikely that there are differences between the two groups. In other words, what is said below about the food pantries that responded to our survey can be regarded as true, or close to true, of all food pantries in the Food Bank's network, which includes both responders and non-responders. Technically, the sample estimates for food pantries presented below are, with 95 percent certainty, within 2.0 percentage points (plus or minus) of their value in the food pantry population.

²¹In this context, the number of "people served" in food pantries represents the number of household members benefitting from a pantry bag. For instance, a single pantry bag, distributed to someone belonging to a household of three people, counts as three people served. If a member of this household returned to a pantry ten times, he or she would be counted as 30 people served.

TABLE 1**Size Classification, Food Pantries**

SIZE CLASSIFICATION²²	NUMBER OF FOOD PANTRIES SURVEYED²³	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, FOOD PANTRIES SURVEYED	NUMBER OF FOOD PANTRIES RESPONDING TO SURVEY²⁴	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, FOOD PANTRIES RESPONDING TO SURVEY
SMALL	126	22%	76	19%
MEDIUM	99	18%	69	17%
LARGE	128	23%	93	23%
EXTRA-LARGE	77	14%	63	16%
SUPER	134	24%	102	25%
TOTAL	564	101%²⁵	403	100%

TYPES AND SOURCES OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED

Over the course of Fiscal Year 2012, the food pantries in Food Bank For New York City's network provided a total of 131,643,963 meals.²⁶ As illustrated by Figure 1, the bags they distributed contained a wide range of nutritious foods. However, more pantries (97 percent) reported the inclusion of bread, cereal, pasta, or rice in their pantry bags than any other item. Ninety percent reported that their bags contained beans, eggs, or nuts; only 87 percent reported that their bags contained meat, poultry, or fish.²⁷ Ninety-three percent of pantries included frozen or canned fruits in their bags; the same percentage included frozen or canned vegetables. Fewer pantries, but still the overwhelming majority, included fresh fruits (85 percent) or fresh vegetables (88 percent). Note that these percentages do not

²²A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

²³All food pantries that were active members of the Food Bank's agency network as of September 2011 were surveyed (N=571). Seven active pantries were sent the survey instrument, but were excluded from this analysis, because their "people served" data was missing for Fiscal Year 2012.

²⁴A total of 474 food pantries completed the survey instrument. However, 71 pantries were excluded from this analysis, because their "people served" data for Fiscal Year 2012 was missing, or unavailable due to absent or incomplete identifiers on survey instruments.

²⁵Total is more than 100 percent because of rounding error.

²⁶As noted in footnote 11, the number of "meals served" in food pantries represents the number of meals contained in the pantry bags the food pantries distribute. The number of meals contained in a pantry bag reflects the number of household members the bag is designed to serve and assumes that the bag meets a standard of nine meals per household member (i.e. three meals per day for three days).

²⁷The meat, poultry, or fish category includes fresh *and* canned items (e.g., tuna, corned beef hash, beef stew).

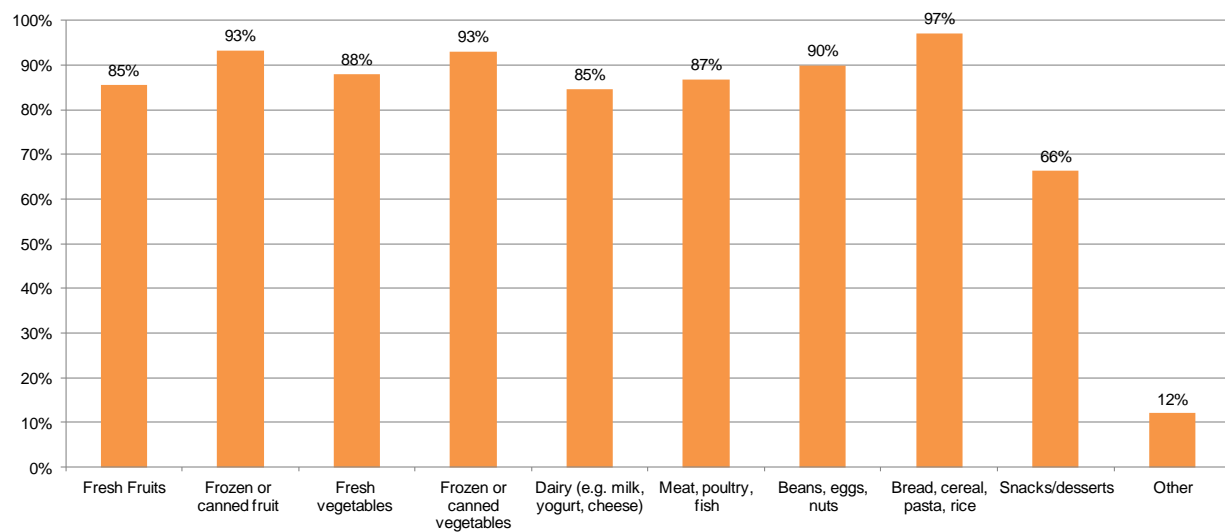
indicate how *often* particular food groups were included in pantry bags, but whether or not they were distributed at all.

- Note that food pantries' use of fresh fruits and fresh vegetables has increased. In 2007, 82 percent of food pantries reported distributing fresh fruits (vs. 85 percent in 2011-12, as noted below), and 80 percent of food pantries reported distributing fresh vegetables (vs. 88 percent in 2011-12, as noted below).²⁸

Two-thirds of pantries (66 percent) added snacks or desserts to their pantry bags. A much smaller proportion (12 percent) offered participants other kinds of food items (e.g., baby food, dog food, cooking oil, spices) or supplied them with non-food articles like cleaning supplies or bottled water.

FIGURE 1

Types of Foods Distributed, Food Pantries



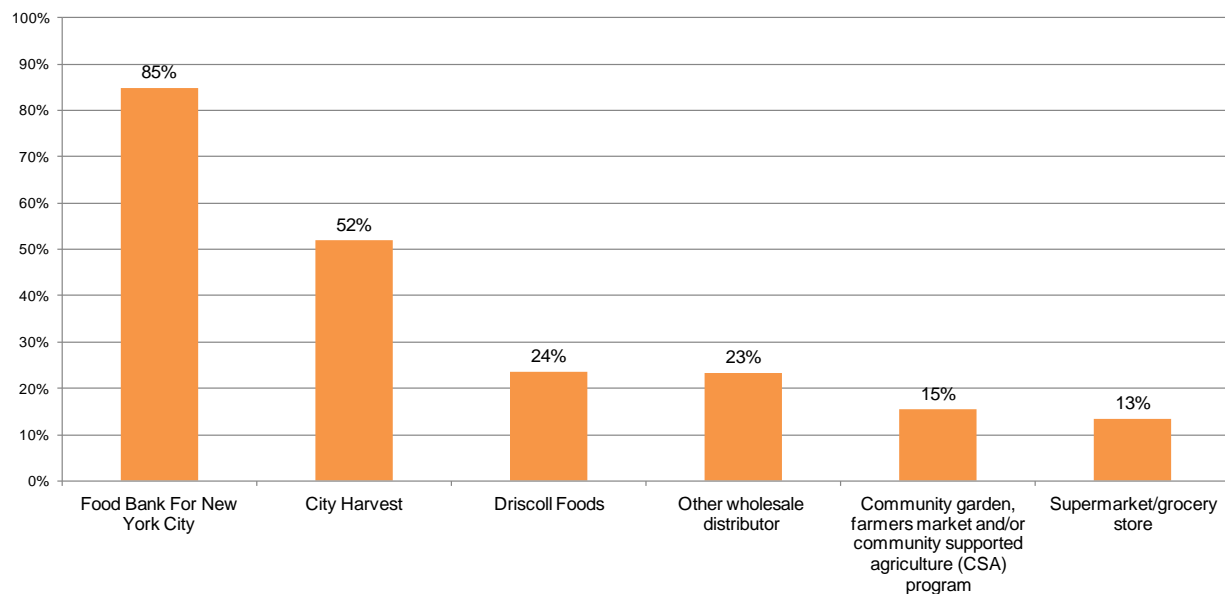
Where did pantries get their fresh fruits and vegetables? As illustrated by Figure 2, a very high percentage (85 percent) received fresh fruits or vegetables from Food Bank For New York City. More than one-half (52 percent) received fresh fruits or vegetables from the citywide food rescue organization City Harvest. One-quarter (24 percent) ordered fresh fruits or vegetables from wholesale distributor Driscoll Foods; another one-quarter (23 percent) ordered from a different wholesale distributor. In what may become a positive trend, more pantries (15 percent) procured fresh fruits and vegetables from a

²⁸ NYC Hunger Safety Net 2007. Food Bank For New York City.

community garden, farmers market, or CSA (community-supported agriculture program) than purchased them from a grocery store (13 percent). Seven percent of pantries received fresh fruits and vegetables from another organization (like the Federation of Protestant Welfare Agencies); and two percent, from the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty.²⁹

FIGURE 2

Sources of Fresh Fruits/Fresh Vegetables, Food Pantries



It is not uncommon for food pantries to run out of food. Indeed, almost three quarters of food pantries (72 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags) at some point during the previous twelve months. More pantries reported running out of meat, poultry, or fish than any other type of food, as illustrated by Figure 3. Pantries were much less likely to report running out of beans, eggs, or nuts. The data show a difference of no less than 28 percentage points between percent of pantries running out of meat, poultry, or fish (64 percent) and percent of pantries running out of beans, eggs, or nuts (36 percent). This difference strongly suggests that pantries were much better stocked with beans, eggs, or nuts (less expensive proteins) than they were with meat, poultry, or fish (more expensive proteins), either in absolute terms or relative to demand. Food pantries were also more likely to run out of fresh fruits (45 percent) or

²⁹ Note that the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty is itself a member of Food Bank For New York City's network and that some of the produce it distributed may have come from the Food Bank.

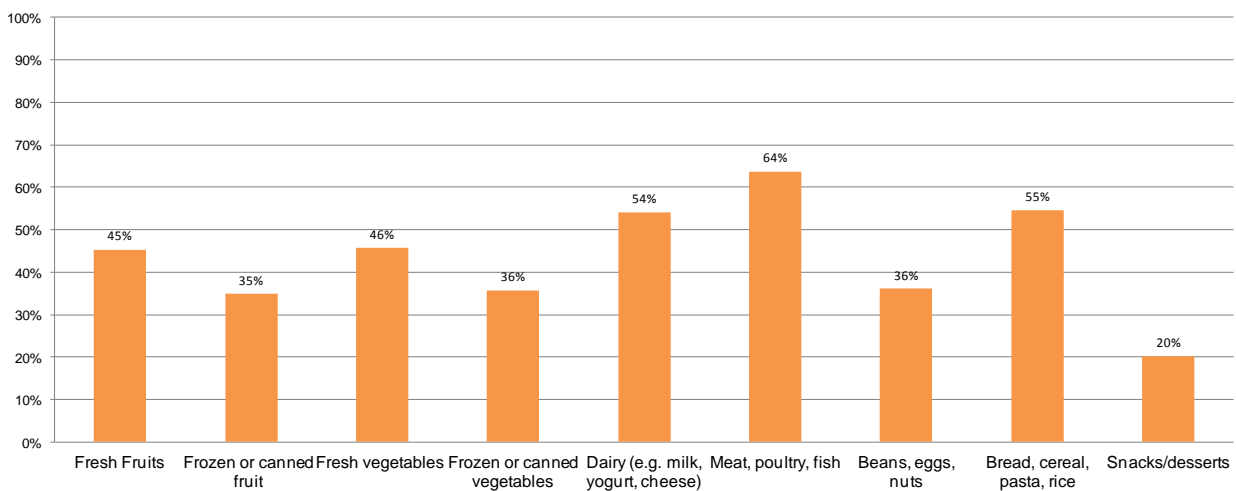
vegetables (46 percent) than they were to run out of canned or frozen fruits (35 percent) or vegetables (36 percent).

Almost three-quarters of pantries (73 percent) reported that they lacked a computerized food inventory system to track the status of their product.

As illustrated by Figure 4, almost two-thirds of food pantries (61 percent) distributed bags containing low-sodium foods. Almost one-half (46 percent) distributed bags containing low-fat foods, and almost one-third (29 percent) provided bags for vegetarians or vegans. Today, low-sodium, low-fat foods are not unusual items. Even vegetarianism has become a mainstream option. (A recent report by *Vegetarian Times* found that 7.3 million Americans identify as vegetarians; and one percent of vegetarians identify as vegans.³⁰) These data indicate that food pantries in Food Bank For New York City's network have been responsive to demand for these kinds of foods.

FIGURE 3

Types of Food Shortages, Food Pantries



Diets related to specific medical conditions were less readily accommodated by food pantries. Eighteen percent of pantries distributed bags designed for diabetics, and ten percent distributed bags designed for HIV-positive individuals, as illustrated by Figure 4. Demand for both types of bags showed a definite

³⁰The "Vegetarianism in America" report was published in 2008. Survey data were collected by the Harris Interactive Service Bureau on behalf of *Vegetarian Times*. The survey was administered to 5,050 respondents, a statistically representative sample of the total U.S. population. RRC Associates, a research firm in Boulder, Colorado, was commissioned to perform the data analysis.

increase. A striking 40 percent of pantries reported that demand for diabetic options had increased over the past twelve months; 13 percent reported that demand for HIV-positive options had increased. (See Figure 5.)

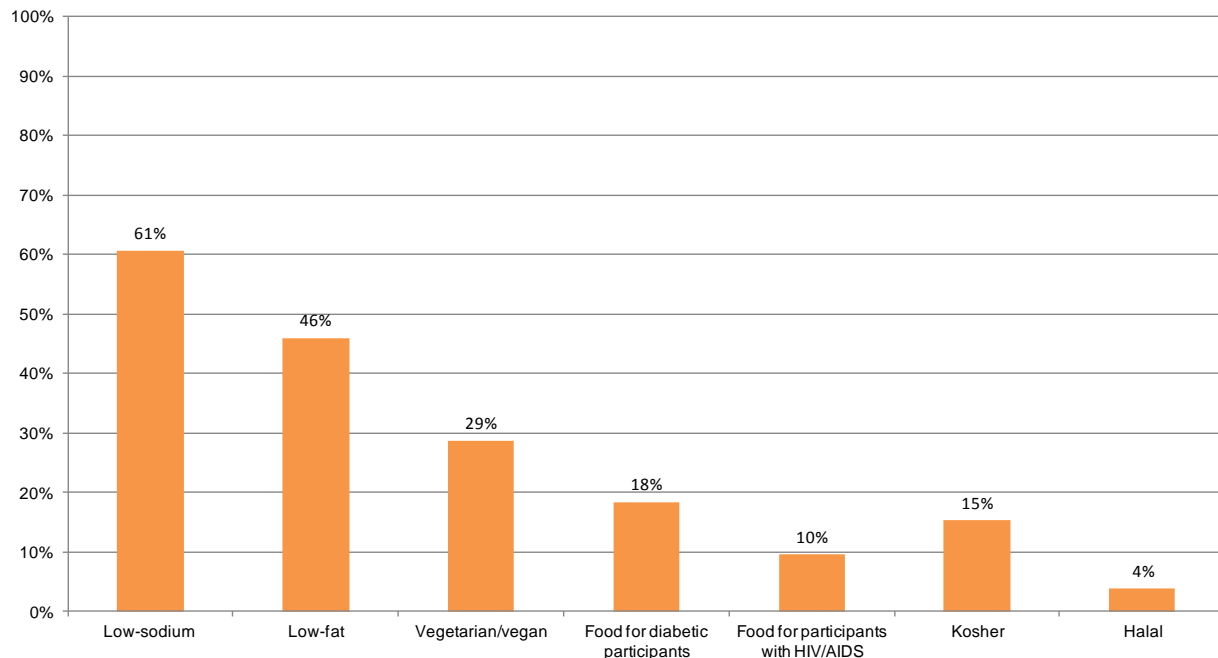
As regards religious dietary restrictions, more than three times as many pantries (15 percent) offered kosher options as offered halal options (4 percent), as illustrated by Figure 4. Some food pantries (17 percent) reported an increase in demand for kosher food, but very few pantries (5 percent) reported an increase in demand for halal food. (See Figure 5.)

With the exception of bags for diabetics, these data indicate that increased demand for special foods is largely consistent with current levels of service.

A handful of pantries reported that they considered other factors when packing bags for participants, such as the absence of gluten or ease of preparation and use.

FIGURE 4

Special Foods Distribution, Food Pantries

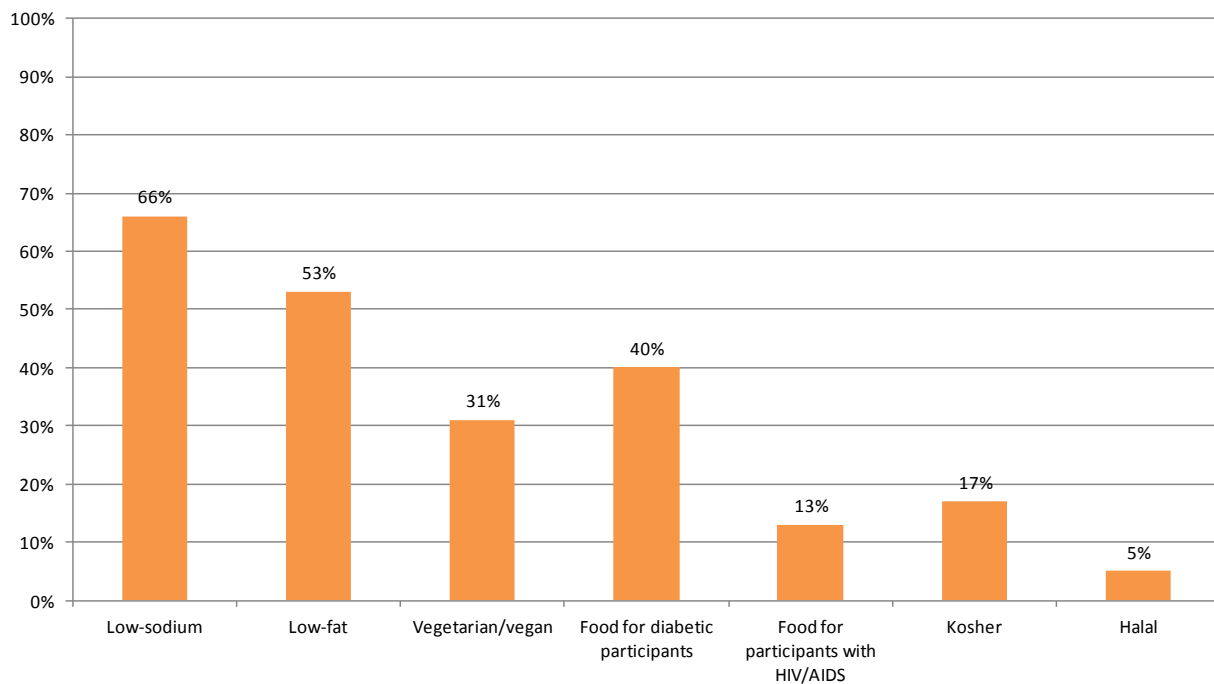


An extra service offered by some pantries was the delivery of food to participants' homes.³¹ Fourteen percent of pantries reported that they had made home deliveries. Twenty-one percent indicated that they had experienced an increase in demand for home-delivered food.

Participants cannot express an interest in receiving special kinds of foods, or comment on any other aspect of pantry operations, if they cannot communicate with food pantry staff. Food pantry staff reported that they spoke a variety of different languages, from English (95 percent) and Spanish (79 percent), to French Creole (17 percent), French (13 percent), and Chinese (11 percent). Other languages were reported spoken in smaller percentages of pantries.³² From an operations point of view, it is not important that every pantry have staff fluent in every language; only that pantries with a large number of participants speaking a particular language can communicate with them in it.

FIGURE 5

Increased Demand for Special Foods, Food Pantries



³¹Throughout this report, persons availing themselves of food pantry or soup kitchen services are referred to as “participants” or “visitors,” not clients.

³²Other languages reported spoken included: American Sign Language (ASL), Arabic, Bengali, Dutch, Farsi (Iran, Afghanistan, Tajikistan), Filipino/Tagalog, Garifuna (Honduras, Guatemala, Belize), Georgian, German, Greek, Hebrew, Hindi, Igbo (Nigeria), Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Slovak, Swahili, Swiss-German, Turkish, Twi (Ghana), Urdu (Pakistan), Yiddish, and Yoruba (Nigeria).

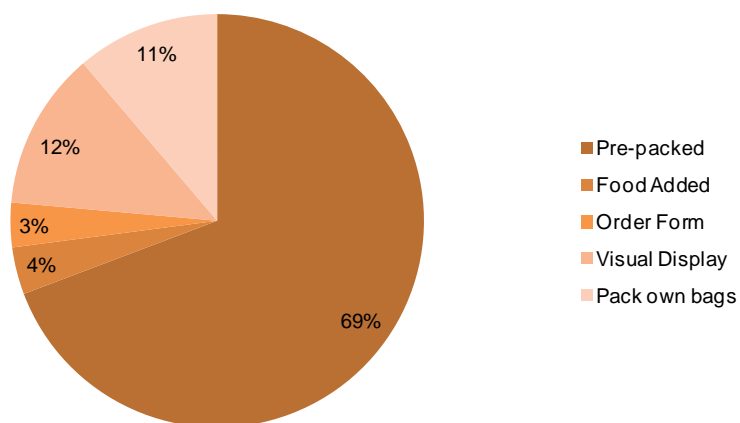
Nutrition education can increase demand for healthy foods and demonstrate how to prepare healthy meals from the staples pantries provide. More than one-half of food pantries (57 percent) reported that they had distributed flyers, brochures, and recipes as a form of nutrition education. Twenty percent reported offering actual classes or individual counseling. A smaller number (14 percent) reported providing information about outside nutrition education programs or referring participants to them.

PANTRY BAGS: CLIENT CHOICE/ADJUSTING FOR FAMILY SIZE

As illustrated by Figure 6, more than two-thirds of food pantries (69 percent) did things the “old-fashioned” way; i.e., they distributed pre-packed pantry bags for participants. However, almost one-third of pantries (30 percent) offered participants an opportunity to select the foods they received.³³ (Four percent allowed participants to add foods to pre-packed bags. Three percent allowed participants to indicate choices on an order form before their bags were packed, and 12 percent allowed participants to select from a visual display. Eleven percent allowed participants to pack their own bags.) Allowing participants to choose food for their households, a system called “client choice,” preserves participants’ dignity and reduces food waste, as participants are not compelled to take food that doesn’t meet their household needs.

FIGURE 6

Client Choice, Food Pantries³⁴



³³ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

³⁴ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

What about the size of the pantry bags food pantries distributed? Ideally, every bag distributed should contain three meals for three days for every member of a participating household. A single adult should get a bag that can produce 9 meals; a couple should get a bag that can produce 18 meals; a couple with one child should get a bag that can produce 27 meals; and so on. Yet more than two-thirds of food pantries (69 percent) reported that their standard pantry bag contained *less* than the nine-meal standard; less than one-third (32 percent) reported that their bag contained the expected nine, or more.³⁵ (See Table 2.) The average number of meals contained in a standard pantry bag was 5.8. (The median was 4.0.)³⁶

- In 2007, the average number of meals contained in a standard pantry bag was 6.0.³⁷

Sixty percent of food pantries reported that they adjusted their pantry bags to account for differences in household size (40 percent reported that they did not). Among the 60 percent of pantries that reported adjusting for size, however, the “three meals for three days for every household member” standard was not consistently applied. Instead, a range of techniques was used, including: adding additional cans to a pantry bag; adding additional fresh fruits and vegetables to a pantry bag; adding additional protein to a pantry bag; adding additional bread or rice to a pantry bag; packing a larger pantry bag (or a smaller one); packing two or more pantry bags; increasing the size of individual items included in a pantry bag; applying a ceiling to family size; and applying an alternate standard (e.g., seven meals for 1-2 people, nine meals for 3-4 people, and eleven meals for 6 people).

TABLE 2

Number of Meals Pantry Bag Contains, Food Pantries

<i>Meals in Pantry Bag</i>	<i>Percent of food pantries</i>	
1 to 2	13%	} 69%
3 to 4	41%	
5 to 6	12%	
7 to 8	3%	
9 or more	32%	
Total³⁸	101%	

³⁵ Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

³⁶ The median divides a range of values into two parts, with each part containing exactly 50 percent of values. Medians are less sensitive to extreme values than averages.

³⁷ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City. Note that, due to possible rounding in 2007, the difference between 5.8 and 6.0 may not represent a real difference.

³⁸ Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

FOOD SHORTAGES

Deviations from the “three meals for three days for every household member” standard at some pantries were likely related to food shortages. When a pantry does not have enough food to serve everyone, it finds itself between a rock and a hard place. It can adhere to the “three meals for three days for every household member” standard when serving some individuals and families, and have nothing left for others, or it can ration differently: skimping on the standard bag for smaller households, and/or modestly supplementing the standard bag for larger households.³⁹

These scenarios are more than hypothetical; as noted earlier, almost three-quarters of food pantries (72 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags) sometime during the previous twelve months. As indicated by Table 3, more than one-half of these pantries (52 percent) reported running out of food (or particular types of food) at least once per month.

In 2011-12, 63 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported running out of food (or particular types of food).

- In 2007, 49 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported running out of food (or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags or nutritious, balanced meals).⁴⁰

³⁹Note that food pantries that deal with food shortages by skimping on the bags they distribute are presumably able to serve more families in the short term, but this does not make them immune to temporary closings and/or reductions in hours.

⁴⁰ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

TABLE 3
Food Shortages, Food Pantries

<i>Number of Times Food (or Particular Types of Food) Ran Short</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries</i>	
Every Day	2%	} 52%
Several times a week	4%	
Once a week	4%	
Several times a month	24%	
Once a month	18%	
Less than once a month	11%	
No typical pattern	37%	
Total	100%	

If pantries were open several times per month, running out of food (or running out of particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags) once per month might not seem like an important event, but few pantries reported being open this often. Although the vast majority (83 percent) reported being open four weeks per month (see Table 4), only a minority were open more than a few times per week. More than one-half (56 percent) were open one day per week; approximately one-quarter (22 percent) were open two days per week; and approximately another one-quarter (22 percent) were open three or more times per week. (See Table 5.)

Most food pantries (76 percent) were not open on weekends. Twenty-two percent of pantries were open one weekend day, and only two percent were open both days. Twenty percent were open on Saturdays, and only six percent on Sundays.

- In 2007, most pantries were not open on weekends. Twenty percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined were open on Saturdays, and nine percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined were open on Sundays.⁴¹

In 2011-12, just as weekend service was not the norm, neither were evening hours. One-quarter of all pantries (24 percent) reported that they were sometimes open past 5 pm.

- In 2007, approximately the same percentage of pantries (26 percent) reported that they were sometimes open past 5 pm.⁴²

⁴¹ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

⁴² *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

TABLE 4

Weeks of Operation, Food Pantries

<i>Number of Weeks Open Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries</i>
One	6%
Two	8%
Three	4%
Four	83%
Total⁴³	101%

The average number of days per week food pantries were open for distribution was 1.9; the median was 1.0.

- In 2007, the average number of days per week food pantries were open for distribution was 2.0; the median was 1.0.⁴⁴

TABLE 5

Days of Operation for Distribution, Food Pantries

<i>Number of Days Open Each Week</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries</i>	
One	56%	
Two	22%	
Three	8%	
Four	5%	
Five	8%	
Six	1%	
Seven	0%	
Total	100%	

} **22%**

As regards food distribution, the typical food pantry day is less than a seven hour day. (During non-distribution hours, staff may be present accepting deliveries, stocking shelves, and performing other service-related tasks.) Just as food pantries are open to participants during particular weeks on

⁴³ Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

⁴⁴ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

particular days, they are only open for distribution at particular hours. In 2011-12, the average number of hours that food pantries were open for distribution, on days that they were operating, was 3.2. (The median number of hours was 3.5.)⁴⁵

Thirty eight percent of food pantries were open for distribution ten hours or less per month. Approximately one-third (31 percent) were open 11-20 hours per month. The remainder (approximately one-third, or 31 percent) were open more than 20 hours per month. (See Table 6.) On average, food pantries were open for distribution 24 hours a month. (The median number of hours food pantries were open for distribution was 14.)

TABLE 6

Hours of Operation For Distribution, Food Pantries

<i>Number of Hours Open Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries</i>	
1 to 5	9%	} 38%
6 to 10	29%	
11 to 20	31%	} 31%
21 to 30	13%	
More than 30	18%	
Total	100%	

In 2011-12, almost all food pantries reported that they did not allow participants to visit every time they were open. More than one-half of pantries (52 percent) reported that they allowed participants to visit less than once per month, or once or twice per month. Another one-half (48 percent) reported that they allowed participants to visit three or four or more times per month. (See Table 7.)

⁴⁵ The median divides a range of values into two parts, with each part containing exactly 50 percent of values. Medians are less sensitive to extreme values than averages.

TABLE 7**Permitted Visits, Food Pantries**

<i>Number of Visits Permitted Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries</i>	
Less than one	7%	} 52%
One	22%	
Two	23%	
Three	4%	} 48%
Four	34%	
More than four	10%	
Total	100%	

- Table 8 compares, for food pantries and soup kitchens combined, the number of days that they were open for food distribution or meals service, in 2007 vs. 2012. As indicated, there was little change in these data.

TABLE 8**Days Open, Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens**

<i>Percent of Days Food Pantries/Soup Kitchens are Open per Week</i>		
	2007	2012
One	54%	53%
Two	18%	21%
Three	8%	8%
Four	5%	4%
Five	12%	11%
Six	2%	1%
Seven	2%	2%

INCREASING DEMAND

Food shortages at pantries can result from decreases in supply related to cuts to government food programs, losses of grants, and declines in donations. Food shortages can also result from increases in demand. There is no doubt that demand for pantry services has been increasing of late. As illustrated

by Figure 7, more than three-quarters of food pantries (79 percent) reported that the overall number of visitors to their pantry had increased over the previous twelve months. Eighteen percent reported that the number of visitors had remained stable, or gone up and down; and only three percent, that it had decreased.

The types of visitor increases (among pantries that reported an increase) appear to reflect the current weakness of the economy. Of particular note is the fact that 90 percent of pantries that reported an increase, reported an increase in first-time visitors, a strong indication that hunger is afflicting more and more New Yorkers. More than three-quarters of pantries (76 percent) that reported an increase reported an increase in households with children, a population traditionally at risk of hunger. While nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of pantries that reported an increase reported increases in unemployed visitors, almost half (46 percent) also saw increases in visitors with jobs. (See Figure 8.)

FIGURE 7

Number of Visitors, Food Pantries

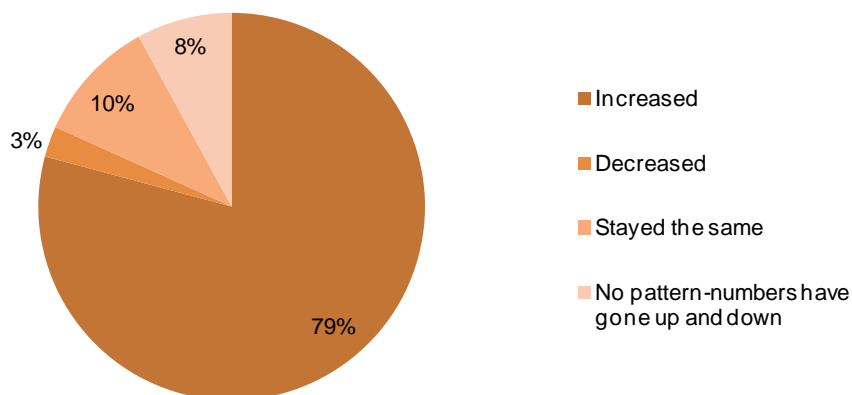
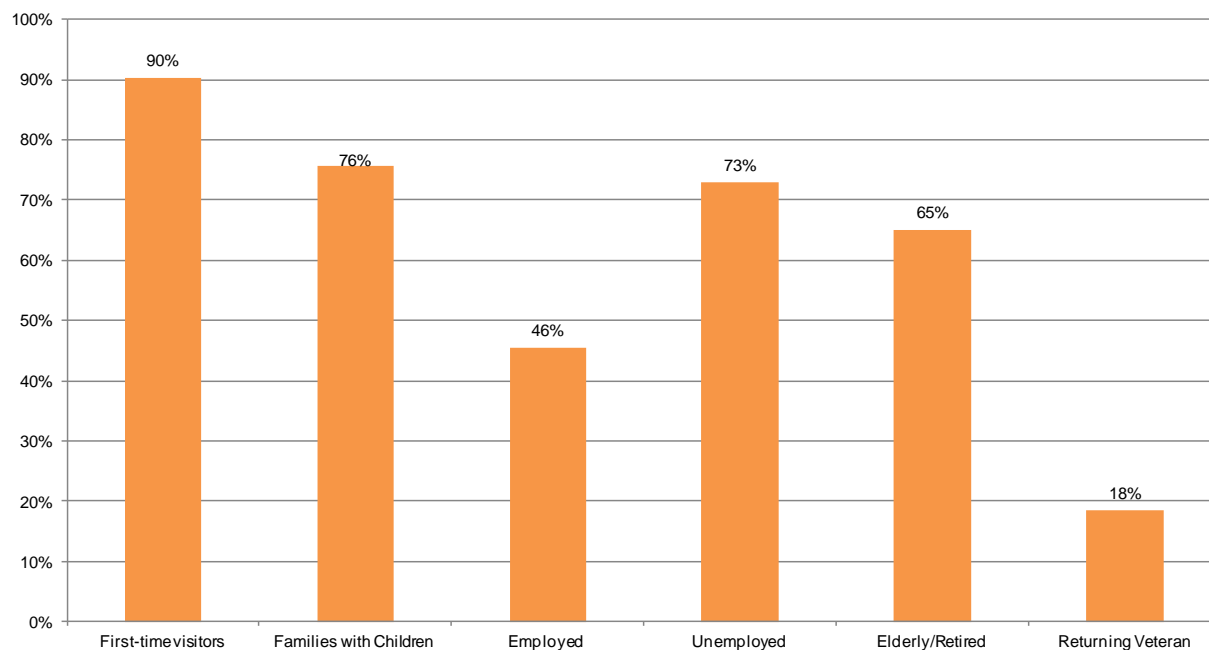


FIGURE 8

Types of Visitor Increases, Food Pantries



Despite rising demand, two-thirds (66 percent) of pantries reported that their hours had stayed the same, or gone up and down; and 11 percent, that their hours had decreased, as illustrated by Figure 9. However, almost one-quarter (23 percent) of food pantries reported that they had increased the number of hours they stayed open. The clear implication is that food pantries are facing new demands with which they cannot keep pace. As a result, almost one-half of food pantries (45 percent) reported that they had turned away participants at some point during the previous twelve months, and 83 percent of this group reported that they had done so because of a lack of food.

In 2011-12, 40 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported turning away participants, and 83 percent reported that they had done so because of a lack of food.

- In 2007, 47 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported turning away participants, and 70 percent reported that they had done so because of a lack of food.⁴⁶

Other reasons for turning away participants in 2011-12 included failure to meet eligibility guidelines (2 percent); more visits than allowed (26 percent); and lack of supplies, volunteers, or staff (5 percent).

⁴⁶ Hunger Safety Net 2007. Food Bank For New York City.

More than two-thirds of food pantries (68 percent) reported that they had no paid, full-time staff. Another one-quarter (23 percent) reported that they had only one or two paid, full-time staff. Only nine percent had three or more. Moreover, the data indicate that pantries are not making up for a lack of paid, full-time staff by hiring part-timers. More than three-quarters of food pantries (76%) reported that they had no paid, part-time staff. Seventeen percent reported that they had only one or two paid, part-time staff. Only seven percent had three or more. (See Figures 10 and 11.)

FIGURE 9

Change in Hours of Operation, Food Pantries

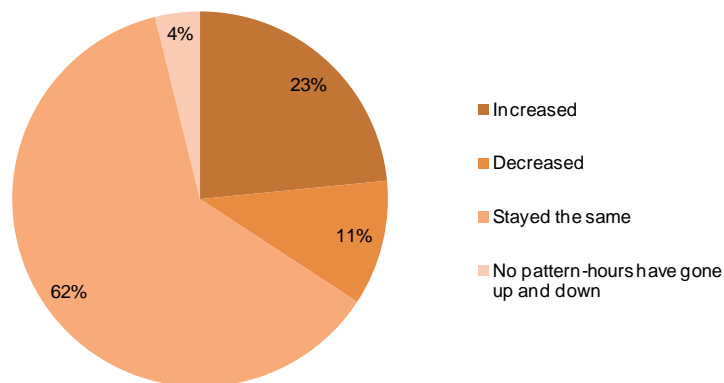


FIGURE 10

Number of Full-Time Paid Staff, Food Pantries

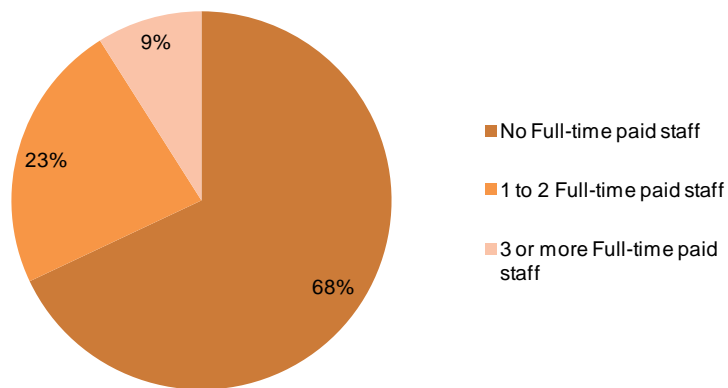
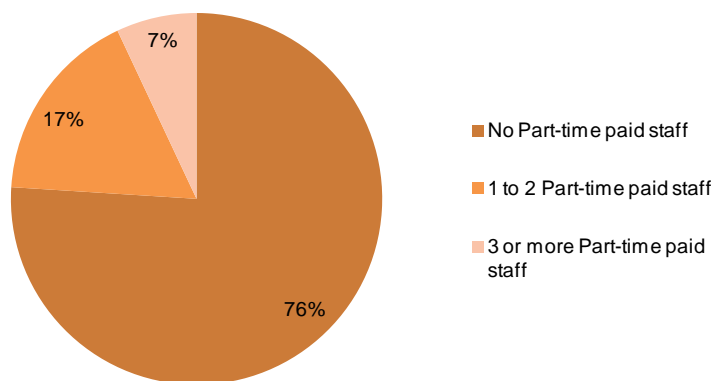


FIGURE 11

Number of Part-Time Paid Staff, Food Pantries



- In 2007, 46 percent of food pantries reported that they had at least one paid staff member (whether full-time or part-time); the average number of paid staff positions for food pantries in 2007 was two.

Clearly, food pantries are facing new challenges recruiting and training volunteers, on which their operations increasingly depend.

OTHER SERVICES

Emergency food can stave off hunger, but it cannot create financially stable families that are no longer *at risk* for hunger. Depending on a family's circumstances, receipt of benefits through programs like SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), WIC (the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) can sometimes make some degree of financial stability, and consequent freedom from hunger, a reality.

Pantry participants are in obvious need of food, so helping participants apply for SNAP is a natural expansion of the pantry mission. After 2004, when Food Bank For New York City research indicated that less than one-third of income-eligible food pantry and soup kitchen participants in New York City were enrolled in SNAP,⁴⁷ government and philanthropic funders made considerable investments training and equipping emergency food providers to do SNAP outreach and enrollment work.

As illustrated by Figure 12, more than one-half of pantries (56 percent) reported having information about SNAP available on-site, and one-half (50 percent) indicated that they had made referrals to SNAP offices (or to other organizations processing SNAP applications). Much smaller numbers of pantries reported pre-screening applicants (18 percent), assisting with applications (19 percent), or submitting applications (10 percent). Some food pantries went beyond the initial application process, submitting recertification applications for continued benefits (7 percent) or mediating disputes between SNAP recipients and the Human Resources Administration, which administers SNAP in New York City and determining program eligibility (6 percent).

In 2011-12, 55 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported offering participants information on SNAP, and 49 percent reported making SNAP referrals.

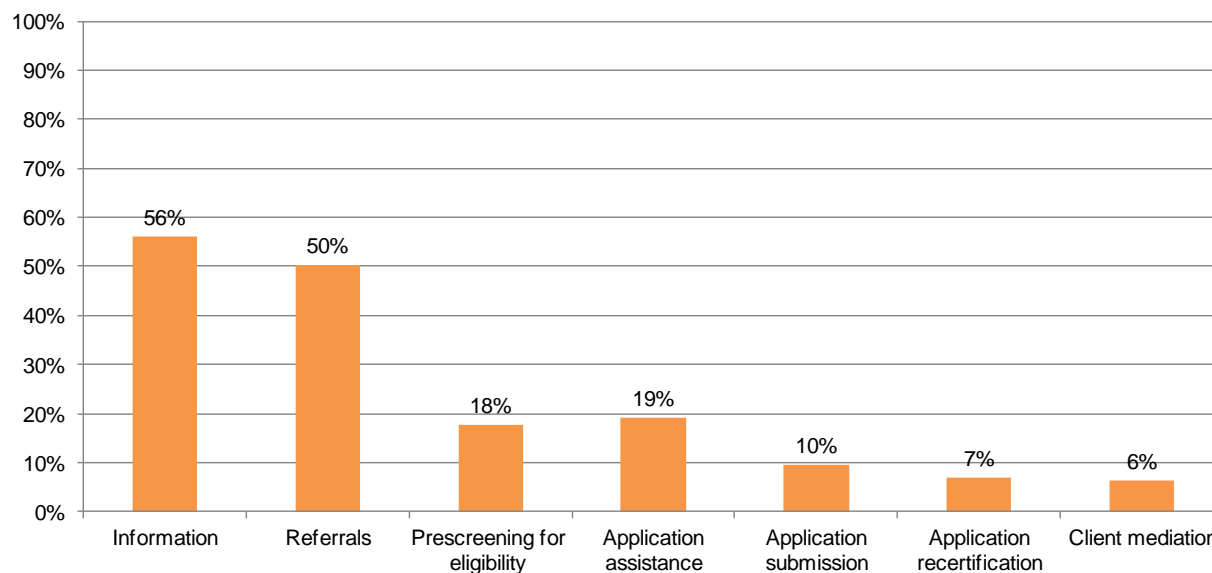
- In 2007, 56 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported offering participants information on SNAP, and 41 percent reported making SNAP referrals.⁴⁸

⁴⁷ *NYC Hunger Safety Net 2004*. Food Bank For New York City.

⁴⁸ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

FIGURE 12

SNAP Assistance, Food Pantries



Program size does not appear to be a barrier to offering participants SNAP assistance, even though larger proportions of Extra-Large and Super food pantries were able to offer most forms of SNAP assistance than other-sized pantries. (See Table 9.) For instance, more than half of Small, Medium, and Large pantries offered participants information on SNAP. Significant proportions of Small, Medium, and Large pantries also reported making SNAP referrals. Small pantries offered prescreening for eligibility almost as often as Extra-Large and Super pantries. Although a higher proportion of Super pantries offered application assistance and application submission than other-sized pantries, the proportion of other-sized pantries offering these services did not increase as size increased (from Small to Medium to Large to Extra-Large). With the exception of Large pantries, fewer than ten percent of pantries of any size offered application recertification or client mediation.

TABLE 9

SNAP Assistance by Size⁴⁹, Food Pantries

SNAP Assistance					
	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	EXTRA-LARGE	SUPER
Information	51%	52%	53%	60%	69%
Referrals	43%	38%	56%	52%	66%
Prescreening for eligibility	21%	6%	18%	22%	23%
Application assistance	17%	9%	19%	19%	29%
Application submission	13%	3%	11%	5%	15%
Application recertification	8%	3%	13%	8%	7%
Client mediation	7%	3%	9%	3%	9%

Information on WIC was provided on-site by almost one-third of pantries (30 percent). Referrals to the WIC program were made by more than one-quarter of pantries (27 percent).

Combined, 28 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported providing participants with information on WIC in 2011-12; 26 percent reported making referrals.

- Combined, 29 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported providing participants with information on WIC in 2007; 19 percent reported making referrals.

Information on school lunch programs was provided at 28 percent of pantries; and information on school breakfast programs, at 21 percent of pantries. Pantry operators may assume that households with school-aged children will be provided any necessary information about these programs by the schools themselves. Information on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was more frequently available, as almost one-third of pantries (32 percent) reported having information about this program on-site.

In 2011-12, 27 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported providing information on school lunch programs; 20 percent, on school breakfast programs; and 31 percent, on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

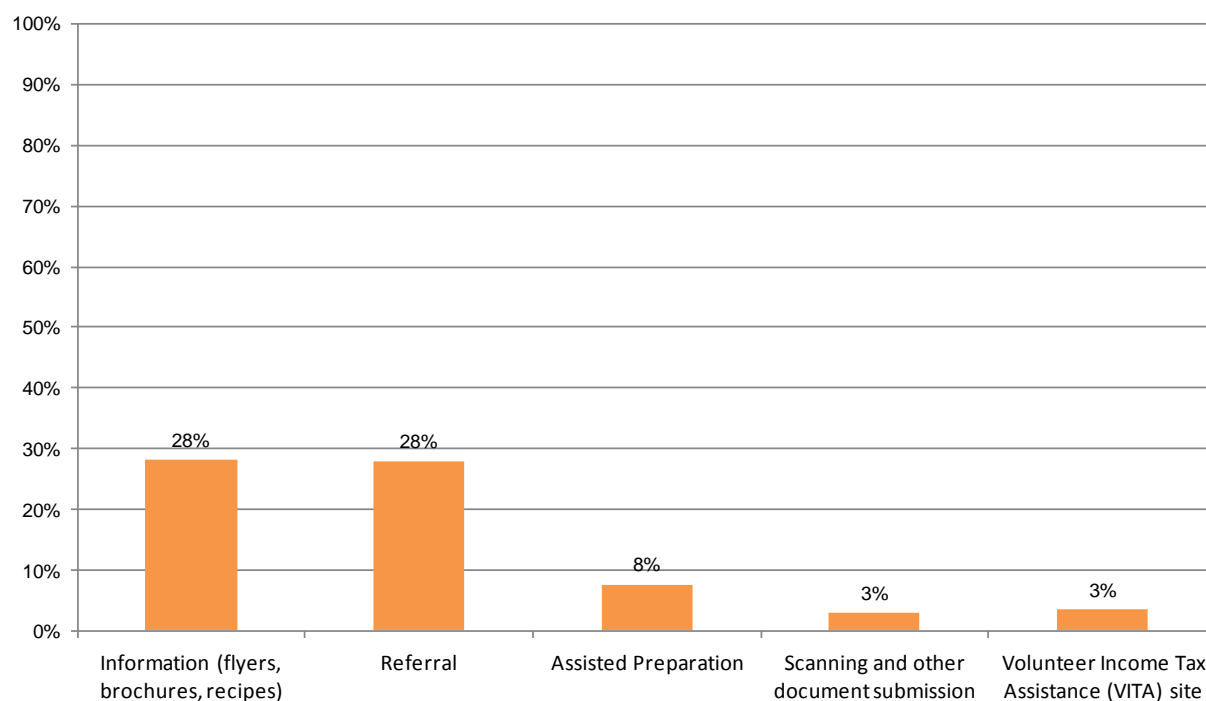
⁴⁹A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

- In 2007, 33 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported providing information on school lunch programs; 30 percent, on school breakfast programs; and 40 percent, on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is one of the most significant benefits available to low-income working households, and New York City government, in collaboration with community-based partners, engage in public education efforts every tax season to encourage low-income workers to file their taxes and claim their EITC. The percentage of food pantries reporting on-site information on tax assistance was one-half the percentage reporting on-site information on SNAP. A little over one-quarter of pantries (28 percent) had tax assistance information available on-site, and a little over one-quarter (again, 28 percent) made tax assistance referrals, as illustrated by Figure 13.

FIGURE 13

Tax Assistance, Food Pantries



Smaller percentages of food pantries provided tax services on-site. Eight percent of food pantries provided a coach to assist participants with their own tax preparation; three percent electronically forwarded participants' documents to a site that could process them; and three percent prepared

participants' taxes on-site. Pantry operators that did not offer any kind of tax assistance may have assumed that their participants had no earned income, or they may have seen value in a tax program, but lacked the resources to implement one or to find a partner to help them do so. (Again, see Figure 13.)

Although Super pantries reported offering tax assistance information and referrals more often than other-sized pantries, significant proportions of Small and Medium pantries also offered tax assistance information and referrals. (See Table 10.) With the exception of Super pantries, ten percent or fewer of pantries of any size offered assisted preparation, scanning and other document submission, or operated as a Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site.

TABLE 10

Tax Assistance by Size⁵⁰, Food Pantries

<i>Tax Assistance</i>					
	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	EXTRA-LARGE	SUPER
Information	24%	17%	31%	35%	35%
Referral	20%	26%	33%	30%	35%
Assisted Preparation	7%	9%	4%	5%	10%
Scanning and other document submission	4%	4%	1%	2%	3%
Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site	0%	3%	3%	2%	7%

One resource required for an effective tax program that most food pantries did not lack was computer technology and Internet access. Over two-thirds of pantries (69 percent) reported on-site access to a computer and approximately the same percentage (70 percent) reported on-site access to the Internet. Anecdotal evidence indicate that it is likely that pantries that did not report on-site access had access off-site at home, or through a staff member or volunteer.

In 2011-12, 68 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined had access to a computer on-site; 69 percent had on-site access to the Internet.

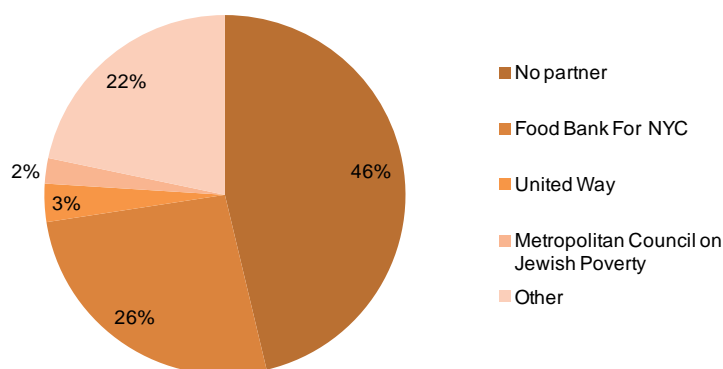
⁵⁰A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

- In 2007, 73 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined had access to a computer; 64 percent had on-site access to the Internet.

As illustrated by Figure 14, in 2011-12, almost one-half of food pantries (46 percent) reporting some involvement with tax assistance (including the simple provision of information or referrals) reported that their activities did not include a partner; 26 percent, that they had partnered with Food Bank For New York City; three percent, that they had partnered with United Way; and two percent, that they had partnered with the Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty. Twenty-two percent reported partnering with some other organization (like Catholic Charities or the Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union.)⁵¹

FIGURE 14

Partners in Tax Assistance Programs, Food Pantries⁵²



Information on TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) was provided by more than one-quarter of pantries (27 percent). A similar percentage (26 percent) made referrals to TANF application sites. Similarity between the proportion of pantries offering tax information and referrals and the proportion of pantries offering TANF services and referrals helps underscore the fact that both the employed and the unemployed use food pantries. (Note, however, that TANF is not an entitlement, and, when granted, has mandated work requirements. These factors may depress pantries' interest in doing TANF outreach.) As seen above in Figure 8, pantries reporting an overall increase in visitors were more likely

⁵¹ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

⁵² Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

to report an increase in unemployed participants (73 percent) – most likely, a reflection of current economic conditions – than they were to report an increase in employed participants (46 percent).

PART FIVE: SOUP KITCHENS

AGENCY SIZE

For operational purposes, Food Bank For New York City places soup kitchens in five distinct size categories, based on number of people served: Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large, and Super.⁵³

The soup kitchens to which surveys were sent ranged in size from Small to Super. The soup kitchens which *responded* to the surveys they were sent also ranged in size from Small to Super. The distribution of surveyed kitchens and of *survey-responsive* kitchens, across size categories, is presented in Table 11. As indicated, approximately 18 percent of kitchens in the Food Bank's network were Small, and approximately 20 percent were Super. The rest fell in between these two extremes. Table 11 also indicates that the size distribution of surveyed soup kitchens resembles that of *survey-responsive* soup kitchens, with some moderately-sized percentage point differences between Small kitchens and between Super kitchens. A response rate of 85 percent makes it extremely unlikely that surveyed soup kitchens differ from *survey-responsive* soup kitchens in any major respect. In other words, what is said below about the soup kitchens that responded to our survey can be regarded as true, or close to true, of all soup kitchens in the Food Bank's network, which includes both responders and non-responders. Technically, the sample estimates for soup kitchens reported below are, with 95 percent certainty, within 3.0 percentage points (plus or minus) of their value in the soup kitchen population.

⁵³ In this context, the number of "people served" in soup kitchens represents the number of visits people make to soup kitchens, *not* the number of separate and distinct individuals receiving service. For instance, one person visiting a soup kitchen ten times would be counted as ten people served, not one.

TABLE 11**Size Classification, Soup Kitchens**

SIZE CLASSIFICATION⁵⁴	NUMBER OF SOUP KITCHENS SURVEYED⁵⁵	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, SOUP KITCHENS SURVEYED	NUMBER OF SOUP KITCHENS RESPONDING TO SURVEY⁵⁶	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, SOUP KITCHENS RESPONDING TO SURVEY
SMALL	29	18%	15	13%
MEDIUM	45	28%	36	31%
LARGE	36	22%	23	20%
EXTRA LARGE	19	12%	14	12%
SUPER	33	20%	28	24%
TOTAL	162	100%	116	100%

TYPES AND SOURCES OF FOOD SERVED

Over the course of Fiscal Year 2012, soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City's network served a total of 4,870,701 meals.⁵⁷ Kitchens reported using a wide range of foods in meal preparation, but they relied on some foods more than others. As illustrated by Figure 15, more soup kitchens reported using bread, cereal, pasta, or rice (97 percent); meat, poultry, or fish (97 percent);⁵⁸ frozen or canned fruit (94 percent); and frozen or canned vegetables (97 percent) to prepare meals than reported using beans, eggs, or nuts (89 percent); fresh fruits (89 percent); fresh vegetables (88 percent); and milk, yogurt, or cheese (83 percent). Nevertheless, the vast majority of soup kitchens used fresh fruits (89 percent) and fresh vegetables (88 percent). Even dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, or cheese), the food type reported used least frequently in meal preparation (with the exception of snacks/desserts) was used by more than

⁵⁴A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

⁵⁵All active soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City's agency network were surveyed (N=171). Nine active soup kitchens were sent the survey instrument, but are excluded from this analysis, because their "people served" data was missing for Fiscal Year 2012.

⁵⁶A total of 145 soup kitchens completed the survey instrument. However, 29 kitchens are excluded from this analysis, because their "people served" data for Fiscal Year 2012 was missing, or unavailable due to absent or incomplete identifiers on survey instruments.

⁵⁷As noted in footnote 11, the number of "meals served" in soup kitchens is exactly that – the number of meals the soup kitchen serves.

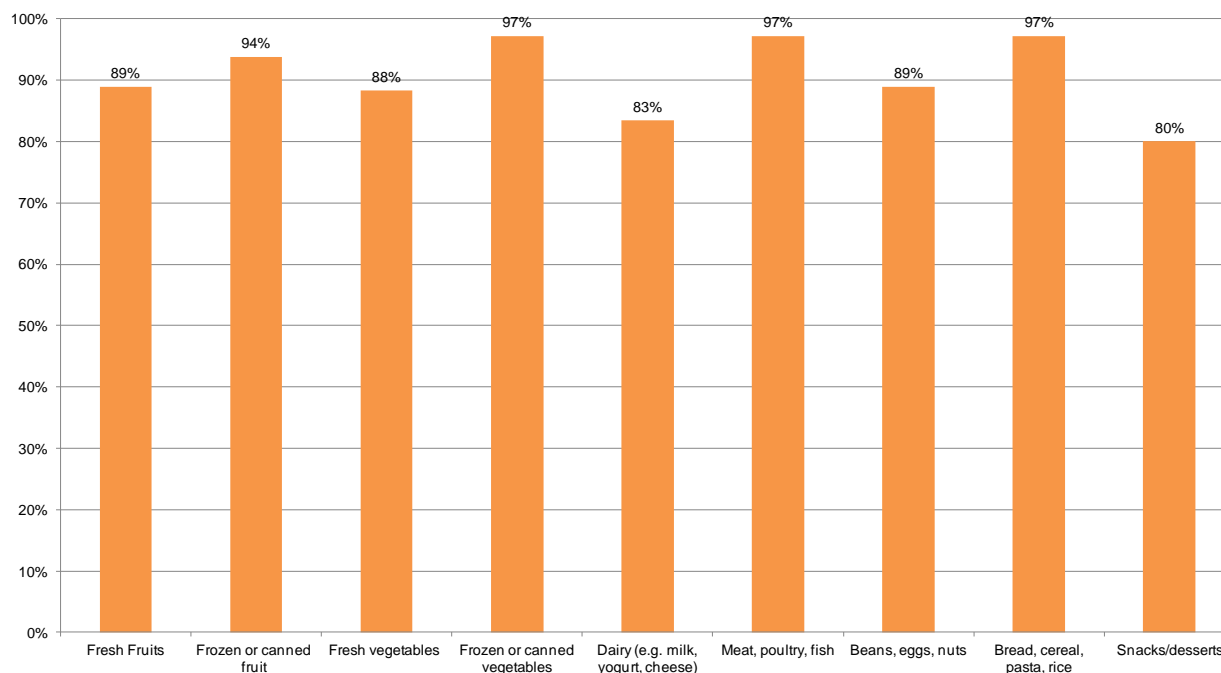
⁵⁸The meat, poultry, or fish category includes fresh *and* canned items (e.g., tuna, corned beef hash, beef stew).

three-quarters of kitchens (83 percent). These data indicate that soup kitchens are using a range of ingredients, and have the potential, if these ingredients are regularly available, to produce well-balanced meals. Eighty percent of soup kitchens also served desserts with their meals or offered snacks between the meals they served.

- Note that soup kitchens' use of fresh fruits and fresh vegetables has increased. In 2007, 82 percent of soup kitchens reported distributing fresh fruits (vs. 89 percent in 2011-12, as noted below), and 82 percent of soup kitchen reported distributing fresh vegetables (vs. 88 percent in 2011-12, as noted below).⁵⁹

FIGURE 15

Types of Foods Used in Meal Preparation, Soup Kitchens



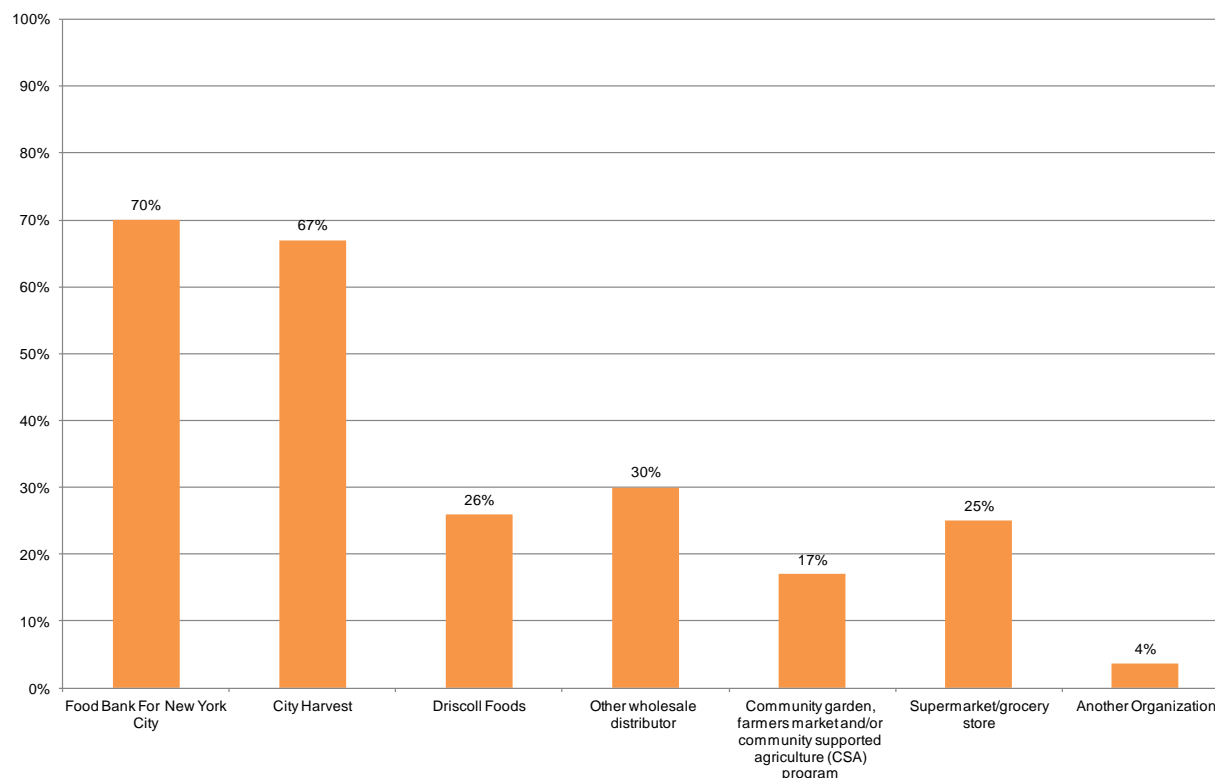
Where did soup kitchens get their fresh fruits and vegetables? Seventy percent received fresh fruits or vegetables from Food Bank For New York City, and 67 percent received fresh fruits or vegetables from citywide food rescue organization City Harvest, as illustrated by Figure 16. Approximately one-quarter (26 percent) used wholesale distributor Driscoll Foods, and approximately one-third (30 percent) used

⁵⁹ NYC Hunger Safety Net. Food Bank For New York City.

another wholesale distributor. A surprising 25 percent used supermarkets or grocery stores. Only 17 percent used a community garden, farmers market, or CSA (community-supported agriculture program). Other organizations from which fresh fruits and vegetables were procured included Friendly Hands Ministry Inc. and Lutheran Social Services.

FIGURE 16

Sources of Fresh Fruits/Fresh Vegetables, Soup Kitchens



Sometimes, soup kitchens run out of food. Approximately one-third of soup kitchens (35 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce nutritious, balanced meals) sometime during the previous twelve months. More kitchens reported running out of meat, poultry, or fish than any other type of food. They were much less likely to report running out of beans, eggs, or nuts. The data show a difference of no less than 42 percentage points between percent of kitchens running out of meat, poultry, or fish (69 percent) and percent of kitchens running out of beans, eggs, or nuts (27 percent). This difference is consistent with the typical availability of meat, poultry, or fish products in the emergency food supply (such items are among the least often donated

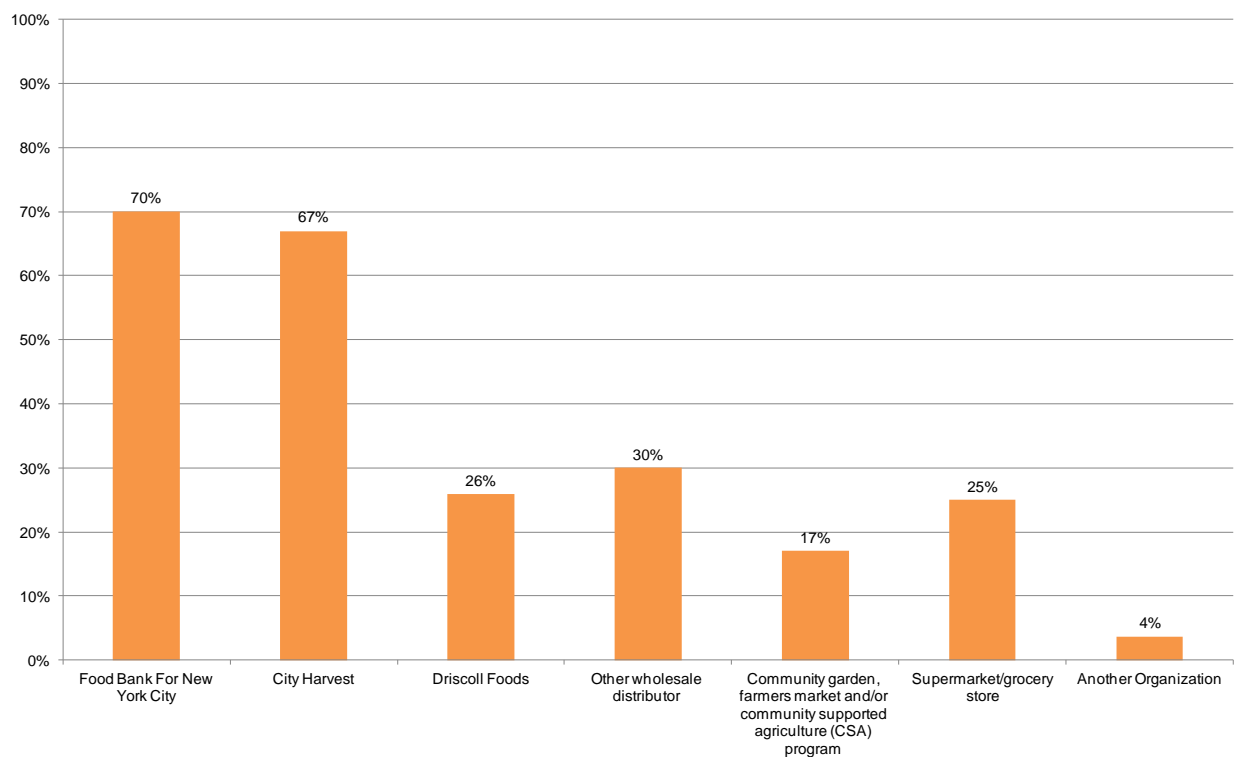
and the most expensive to purchase). This difference also implies that soup kitchens, although they use a wide range of ingredients in their meal preparation, have to use more expensive proteins (like meat, poultry, or fish) less frequently than staples like beans, eggs, or nuts, and cannot keep much of the former on hand.

Soup kitchens were also more likely to run out of fresh fruits (43 percent) or vegetables (37 percent) than they were to run out of canned or frozen fruits (20 percent) or vegetables (22 percent). (See Figure 17.)

Three quarters of soup kitchens (76 percent) reported that they did not have a computerized food inventory system to keep track of available product.

Figure 17

Types of Food Shortages, Soup Kitchens



One-half of soup kitchens (50 percent) reported that they served low-sodium meals, and 40 percent reported that they served low-fat meals, as illustrated by Figure 18. Almost one-third (28 percent) provided meals for vegetarians or vegans. By offering participants these kinds of special meals, soup kitchens demonstrate that they are working to keep pace with many of the dietary needs and preferences of participants trying to live healthier lives.⁶⁰

Meals for individuals with more specific health-related concerns were harder to come by in soup kitchens. Nine percent of kitchens reported that they prepared meals for diabetics, and eight percent, that they prepared meals for HIV-positive individuals. Religious dietary restrictions were taken into account by very few soup kitchens. Only three percent of soup kitchens offered kosher meals, and none offered a halal option. (Again, see Figure 18.)

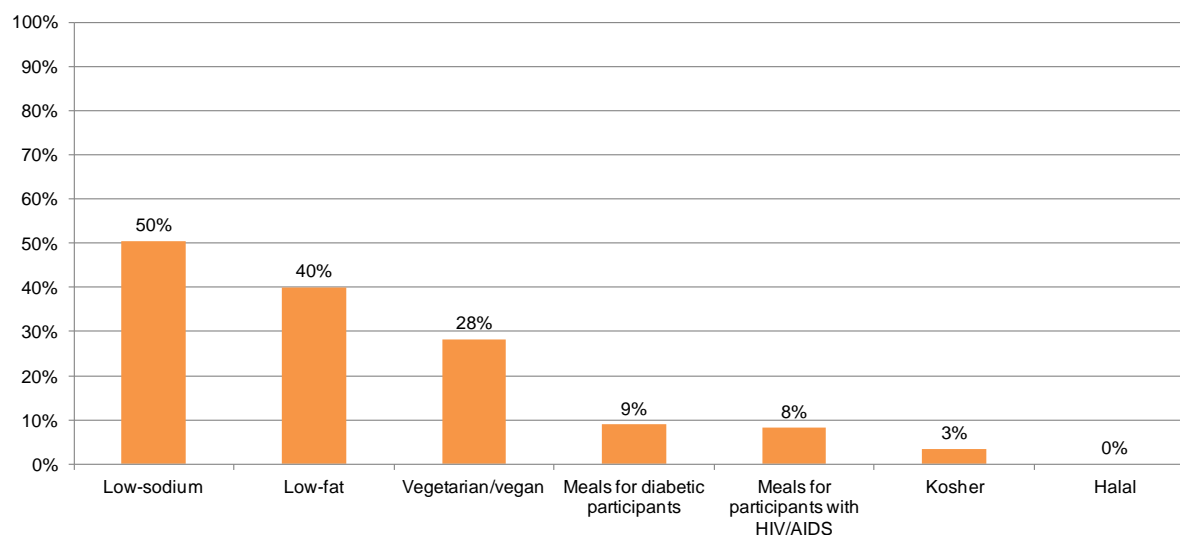
An extra service offered by some soup kitchens was the delivery of food to participants' homes. Nine percent of kitchens reported that they made home deliveries.

As illustrated by Figure 19, 59 percent of soup kitchens reported an increased demand for low-sodium meals; 44 percent, an increased demand for low-fat meals; and 37 percent, an increased demand for vegetarian/vegan meals. Approximately one-quarter of soup kitchens (22 percent) reported that demand for diabetic options had increased; 16 percent reported that demand for HIV-positive options had increased. Very few kitchens reported an increase in demand for kosher food or an increase in demand for halal food (six percent and three percent, respectively).

⁶⁰Throughout this report, persons availing themselves of food pantry or soup kitchen services are referred to as "participants" or "visitors," not clients.

FIGURE 18

Special Meals Preparation, Soup Kitchens



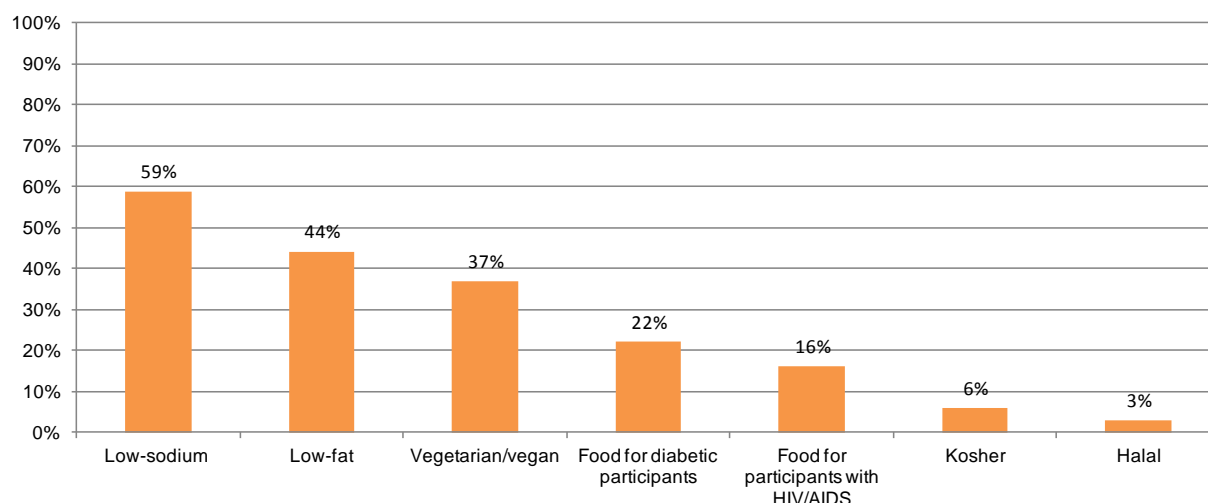
Approximately one-quarter (22 percent) of soup kitchens reported an increase in demand for home-delivered food. Compared to the proportion of soup kitchens currently offering home delivery service, this represents a significant increase in interest.

It is difficult for soup kitchen staff to respond to special meal requests, or any kind of feedback on agency operations, if they do not speak the languages their participants do. Soup kitchen staff reported that they spoke a variety of different languages, from English (96 percent) and Spanish (79 percent), to French Creole (11 percent), French (11 percent), and Chinese (11 percent). Other languages were spoken in smaller percentages of kitchens.⁶¹ This does not imply that participants speaking other languages were not well-served; it may very well be the case that the proportion of kitchens reporting fluency in particular languages reflects the proportion of the participant population speaking those languages, and that soup kitchens located in those neighborhoods where other languages were spoken had staff or volunteers that were fluent in them.

⁶¹Other languages reported spoken included: American Sign Language (ASL), Arabic, Danish, Dutch, Filipino/Tagalog, Finnish, German, Hebrew, Italian, Korean, Polish, Portugese, Russian, Swahili, and Swedish.

FIGURE 19

Increased Demand for Special Meals, Soup Kitchens



Nutrition education helps increase participants' appreciation of healthy meals. More than one-half of soup kitchens (52 percent) reported that they had distributed flyers, brochures, or recipes as a form of nutrition education. Eighteen percent reported offering actual classes or individual counseling. A smaller number (15 percent) reported that they either provided information about outside nutrition education programs or referred participants to them.

FOOD SHORTAGES

As noted earlier, approximately one-third of soup kitchens (35 percent) reported that they had run out of food (or particular types of food required to produce nutritious, balanced meals) sometime during the previous twelve months. As indicated in Table 12, more than one-half (54 percent) of these kitchens reported running out of food (or particular types of food) at least once per month.

In 2011-12, 40 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported running out of food (or particular types of food required to produce nutritious, balanced meals).

- In 2007, 47 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined, reported running out of food.⁶²

⁶² *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

TABLE 12
Food Shortages, Soup Kitchens

<i>Number of Times Food (or Particular Types of Food) Ran Short</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens</i>	
Every day	4%	54%
Several times a week	4%	
Once a week	8%	
Several times a month	24%	
Once a month	14%	
Less than once a month	20%	
No typical pattern	26%	
Total	100%	

Most soup kitchens do not offer three meals per day every day, so running out of food (or particular types of food) can cause participants who regularly depend upon soup kitchen service to miss meals that may already be infrequent, or to receive incomplete nutrition from the meals they do consume. Although almost all soup kitchens (96 percent) reported being open four weeks out of every month, the majority (61 percent) reported that they were open just one or two days per week, and when they were open, over two-thirds (69 percent) reported that they could offer participants only one meal a day. Fifty-eight percent of soup kitchens reported that they scheduled only one or two mealtimes per week. (See Tables 13 to 16.) Clearly, the typical soup kitchen does not have the resources to provide participants with more than a small portion of a healthy person's weekly food requirements.

TABLE 13
Weeks of Operation, Soup Kitchens

<i>Number of Weeks Open Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens</i>
One	2%
Two	1%
Three	1%
Four	96%
Total	100%

In 2011-2012, the mean number of days soup kitchens were open for meal service was 2.7; the median was 2.0.

- In 2007, the mean number of days soup kitchens were open for meal service was 2.0; the median was 1.0.⁶³

TABLE 14

Days of Operation for Meal Service, Soup Kitchens

<i>Number of Days Open Each Week</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens</i>	} 61%
One	44%	
Two	17%	
Three	6%	
Four	4%	
Five	21%	
Six	3%	
Seven	5%	
TOTAL	100%	

TABLE 15

Mealtimes per Day, Soup Kitchens

<i>Number of Mealtimes per Day</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens</i>
Once a day	69%
Twice a day	13%
Three Times a day	5%
Other	13%
TOTAL	100%

⁶³Hunger Safety Net 2007. Food Bank For New York City.

The mean number of mealtimes offered by soup kitchens per week was 3.6; median number of meals was 2.0.⁶⁴

- In 2012, 19 percent of soup kitchens served breakfast (vs. 20 percent in 2007); 83 percent served lunch (vs. 79 percent in 2007); and 30 percent served dinner (vs. 31 percent in 2007).

TABLE 16

Mealtimes per Week, Soup Kitchens

<i>Number of Mealtimes per Week</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens</i>
1 to 2	58%
3 to 4	13%
5 to 6	16%
More than 6	13%
Total	100%

Almost two-thirds of soup kitchens (65 percent) were closed on weekends. Thirty percent of kitchens were open one weekend day, and five percent were open both days. Twenty-three percent were open on Saturdays, and 18 percent were open on Sundays.

- In 2007, most pantries were not open on weekends. Twenty percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined were open on Saturdays, and nine percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined were open on Sundays.⁶⁵

Table 17 compares, for food pantries and soup kitchens combined, the number of days that they were open for food distribution or meal service, in 2007 vs. 2012. As indicated, there was little change in these data.

⁶⁴ The median divides a range of values into two parts, with each part containing exactly 50 percent of values. Medians are less sensitive to extreme values than averages.

⁶⁵ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

TABLE 17**Days Open, Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens**

<i>Percent of Days Food Pantries/Soup Kitchens are Open per Week</i>		
	2007	2012
One	54%	53%
Two	18%	21%
Three	8%	8%
Four	5%	4%
Five	12%	11%
Six	2%	1%
Seven	2%	2%

INCREASING DEMAND

The overwhelming majority of soup kitchens reported that demand for their services had increased. As illustrated by Figure 20, more than three-quarters of soup kitchens (77 percent) reported that the overall number of visits to their kitchen had increased over the previous twelve months. Twenty-one percent reported that the number of visits had remained stable, or gone up and down; and only one percent, that they had decreased.⁶⁶ Soup kitchens serve the most vulnerable – they address immediate food needs with a single hot meal. It is therefore of particular note that among kitchens reporting an increase in visitors, 85 percent reported a rise in *first-time* visitors, a clear indication that hunger is touching a growing number of New York City residents. In addition, approximately six in ten soup kitchens (61 percent) reported an increase of visits by families with children – a population traditionally not seen on soup kitchen lines. Seventy-one percent reported a rise in unemployed participants. (See Figure 21.)

⁶⁶ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

FIGURE 20

Number of Visitors, Soup Kitchens

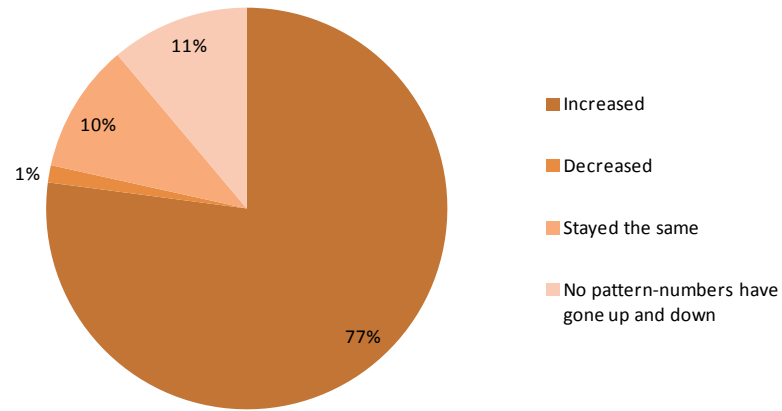
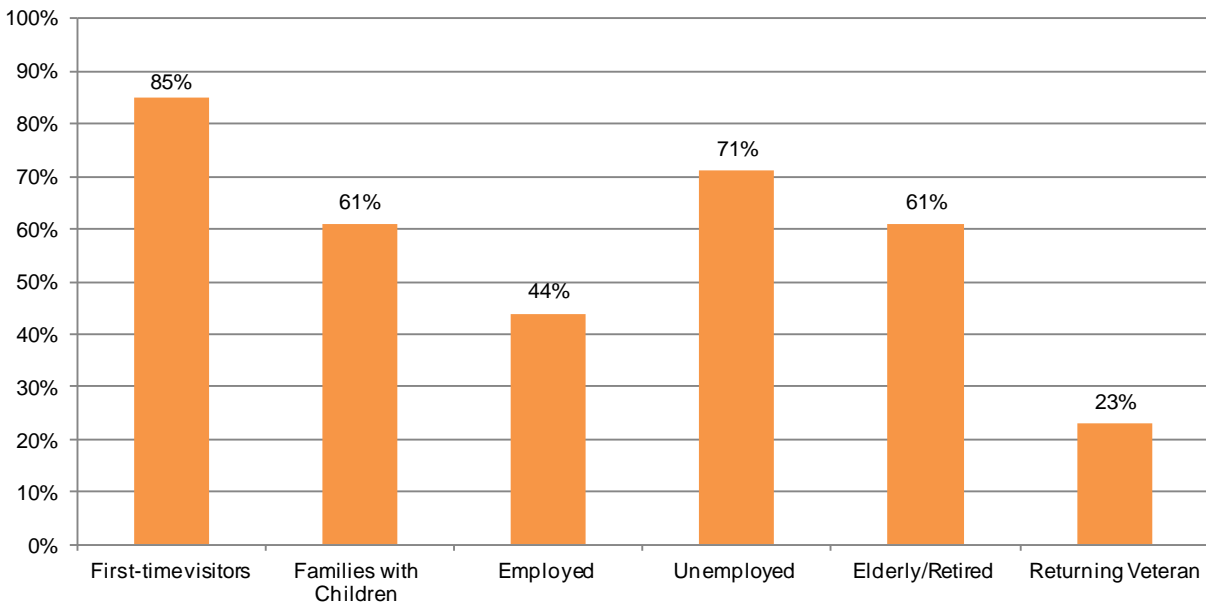


FIGURE 21

Types of Visitor Increases, Soup Kitchens



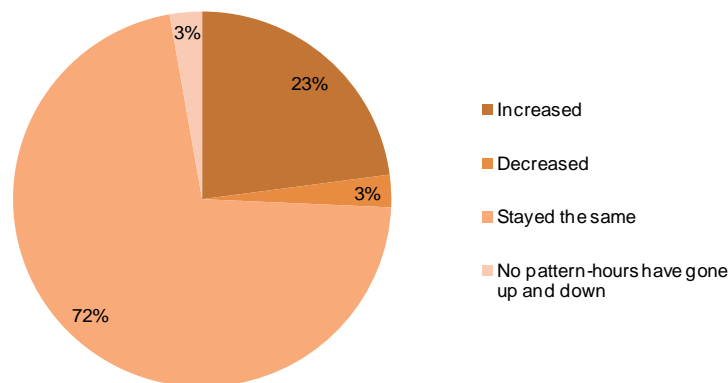
Despite the increase in demand, three-quarters (75 percent) of soup kitchens reported that their hours had stayed the same, or gone up and down, as illustrated by Figure 22. However, almost one-quarter (23 percent) of soup kitchens reported that they had increased the number of hours they were open. Three percent reported that their hours had decreased.⁶⁷ These data indicate that soup kitchens have not been able to respond to escalating need by increasing access to their services. Over one-quarter of soup kitchens (27 percent) reported that they had turned away participants at some point during the previous twelve months, and 79 percent of this group reported that they had done so because of a lack of food. Other reasons for turning away participants included making more visits than allowed (11 percent) and lack of supplies, volunteers, or staff (5 percent).

In 2011-12, 40 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported turning away participants, and 83 percent reported that they had done so because of a lack of food.

- In 2007, 47 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported turning away participants, and 70 percent reported that they had done so because of a lack of food.⁶⁸

FIGURE 22

Change in Hours of Operation, Soup Kitchens⁶⁹



Three quarters of soup kitchens (76 percent) reported that they did not have a computerized food inventory system.

⁶⁷Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

⁶⁸*Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

⁶⁹Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

Two-thirds of soup kitchens (66 percent) reported that they had no paid, full-time staff. Seventeen percent reported that they had only one or two paid, full-time staff. Seventeen percent had three or more. Paid, part-time staff were also in short supply. Approximately three-quarters of kitchens (71 percent) had no paid, part-time staff; 18 percent had only one or two paid, part-time staff; and the remainder (11 percent) had three or more. (See Figures 23 and 24.)

FIGURE 23

Number of Full-Time Paid Staff, Soup Kitchens

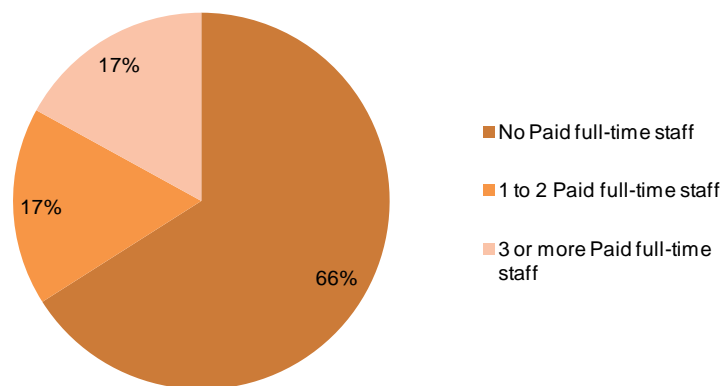
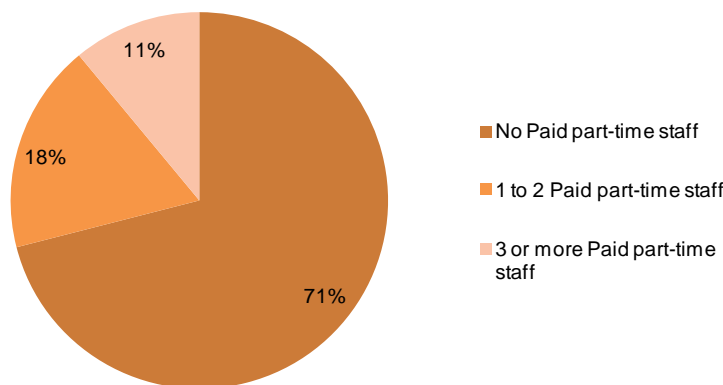


FIGURE 24

Number of Part-Time Paid Staff, Soup Kitchens



- In 2007, 51 percent of soup kitchens reported that they had at least one paid staff member (whether full-time or part-time); the average number of paid staff positions for soup kitchens in 2007 was three.

Obviously, food pantries are facing new challenges recruiting and training volunteers, on which their operations increasingly depend.

One of the tasks that staff and volunteers perform at soup kitchens is keeping track of the number of people served and recording basic demographic information on participants. Total number of people served (and subtotals of adults, children, and seniors) is submitted electronically to government agencies on a monthly basis.⁷⁰ How do soup kitchens collect the data they submit? More than one-half (54 percent) use a paper form developed by Food Bank For New York City; another one-quarter (25 percent) use a paper form they developed themselves. The remainder (21 percent) observe traffic in and out of their dining areas, distribute and collect tickets from participants, use some sort of inventory method (for instance, counting plates), or another method altogether.

Some soup kitchens play a special role in the lives of children by hosting a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) designed especially for them. Twelve percent of soup kitchens participated in this program in Summer 2011; the vast majority (88 percent) did not.

⁷⁰Food pantries are subject to these same reporting requirements.

- Participation has increased since Summer 2007, when only five percent of soup kitchens hosted a Summer Food Service Program.⁷¹

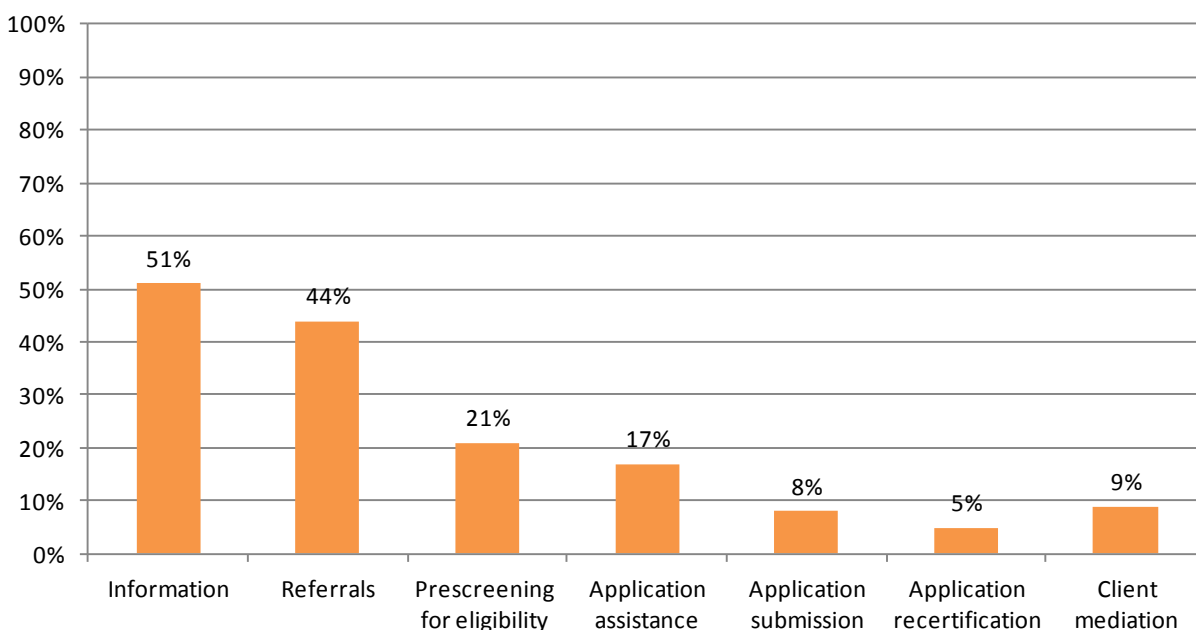
OTHER SERVICES

Soup kitchens can fill some of an individual or family's emergency food needs, but they cannot, on their own, eliminate food insecurity. Depending on a family's circumstances, receipt of benefits through a program like SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), WIC (the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), or TANF (Temporary Assistance for Needy Families) can lessen the risk of hunger.

In 2004, when Food Bank For New York City research indicated less than one-third of income-eligible food pantry and soup kitchen participants in New York City were SNAP enrollees,⁷² government and philanthropic funders invested in training and equipping emergency food providers to do SNAP outreach and enrollment work.

FIGURE 25

SNAP Assistance, Soup Kitchens



⁷¹NYC Hunger Safety Net, 2007. Food Bank For New York City.

⁷² NYC Hunger Safety Net 2004. Food Bank For New York City.

In 2011-12, as illustrated by Figure 25, approximately one-half of soup kitchens (51 percent) reported having information about SNAP available on-site; 44 percent indicated that they had made referrals to SNAP offices (or to other organizations processing SNAP applications). Much smaller numbers of soup kitchens reported pre-screening applicants (21 percent), assisting with applications (17 percent), or submitting applications (8 percent). Some soup kitchens went beyond the application process, recertifying SNAP recipients for continued assistance (5 percent) or mediating disputes between SNAP recipients and the Human Resources Administration, which administers SNAP in New York City and determines program eligibility (9 percent).

In 2011-12, 55 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported offering participants information on SNAP, and 49 percent reported making SNAP referrals.

- In 2007, 56 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported offering participants information on SNAP, and 41 percent reported making SNAP referrals.⁷³

Program size does not appear to be a barrier to offering participants SNAP assistance, even though Super soup kitchens were more often able to offer participants SNAP information and referrals than other-sized kitchens. (See Table 18.) Significant proportions of Small, Medium, Large, and Extra-Large soup kitchens also offered participants SNAP information and referrals. However, Large, Extra-Large, and Super soup kitchens were more likely to report pre-screening for eligibility and application assistance than Small and Medium soup kitchens. Super kitchens were more likely to report offering application submission, application recertification, and client mediation services.

⁷³ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

TABLE 18

SNAP Assistance by Size⁷⁴, Soup Kitchens

SNAP Assistance					
	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	EXTRA-LARGE	SUPER
Information	53%	39%	57%	50%	67%
Referrals	20%	31%	52%	43%	67%
Prescreening for eligibility	7%	11%	35%	29%	33%
Application assistance	13%	8%	22%	21%	33%
Application submission	7%	0%	9%	0%	26%
Application recertification	0%	0%	9%	0%	15%
Client mediation	0%	3%	9%	14%	22%

Information on WIC was provided on-site by approximately one-quarter of soup kitchens (23 percent). Referrals to the WIC program were made by another one-quarter (23 percent).

Combined, 28 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens reported providing participants with information on WIC; 26 percent reported making referrals.

- In 2007, 29 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported providing information on WIC to participants, and 19 percent reported making referrals.⁷⁵

Information on school lunch programs was provided at 22 percent of soup kitchens; and information on school breakfast programs, at 17 percent. Information on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) was somewhat more frequently available, as 27 percent of soup kitchens reported having information about this program on-site. (Note that families with children are generally more likely to visit food pantries than soup kitchens when they need food, so outreach for school-based programs is unlikely to be a top priority for soup kitchens.)

In 2011-2012, 27 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported providing information on school lunch programs; 20 percent, on school breakfast programs; and 31 percent, on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

⁷⁴A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

⁷⁵ *Hunger Safety Net 2007*. Food Bank For New York City.

- In 2007, 33 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined reported providing information on school lunch programs; 30 percent, on school breakfast programs; and 40 percent, on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

One of the most significant benefits available to low-income working households is the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC). New York City government, in partnership with community-based partners, therefore engages in public education efforts every tax season to encourage low-income workers to file their taxes and claim their EITC. As illustrated by Figure 26, the percentage of soup kitchens reporting on-site information on tax assistance (19 percent) was much smaller than the percentage reporting on-site information on SNAP (51 percent). Nineteen percent had tax assistance information available on-site, and approximately one-quarter (27 percent) made tax assistance referrals. Eight percent of food pantries provided a coach to assist participants with their own tax preparation; three percent electronically forwarded participants' documents to a site that could process them; and four percent prepared participants' taxes on-site. Soup kitchen operators that did not offer any kind of tax assistance may have assumed that their participants had no earned income, or they may have seen the benefit of a tax program, but lacked the resources necessary to implement one or to find a partner to help them do so.

TABLE 19

Tax Assistance by Size⁷⁶, Soup Kitchens

<i>Tax Assistance</i>					
	SMALL	MEDIUM	LARGE	EXTRA-LARGE	SUPER
Information	7%	11%	17%	14%	44%
Referral	20%	14%	30%	43%	52%
Assisted Preparation	0%	0%	4%	7%	22%
Scanning and other document submission	0%	0%	0%	7%	11%
Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site	0%	0%	4%	0%	11%

⁷⁶A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

Super soup kitchens were much more likely than other-sized soup kitchens to report offering all kinds of tax assistance: information, referrals, assisted preparation, scanning and other document submission, and operation as a Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site.

Most soup kitchens reported that they had the technology they would need to operate a tax assistance program on-site. Almost two-thirds of soup kitchens (65 percent) reported on-site access to a computer, and the same percentage reported on-site access to the Internet. It is possible, and even likely, that those without access on-site had access off-site, at their homes or through a friend or family member.

In 2011-12, 68 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined had access to a computer on-site; 69 percent had on-site access to the Internet.

- In 2007, 73 percent of food pantries and soup kitchens combined had access to a computer; 64 percent had on-site access to the Internet.

Thirty-six percent of soup kitchens reporting some involvement with tax assistance (including the simple provision of information or referrals) reported that their activities did not include a partner. One-quarter (25 percent) reported partnering with the Food Bank, and 7 percent reported partnering with United Way. Approximately one-third (32 percent) reported that they partnered with another organization (like H&R Block, the Lower East Side People's Federal Credit Union, or the New York City Financial Network Action Consortium). (See Figure 27.)

FIGURE 26

Tax Assistance, Soup Kitchens

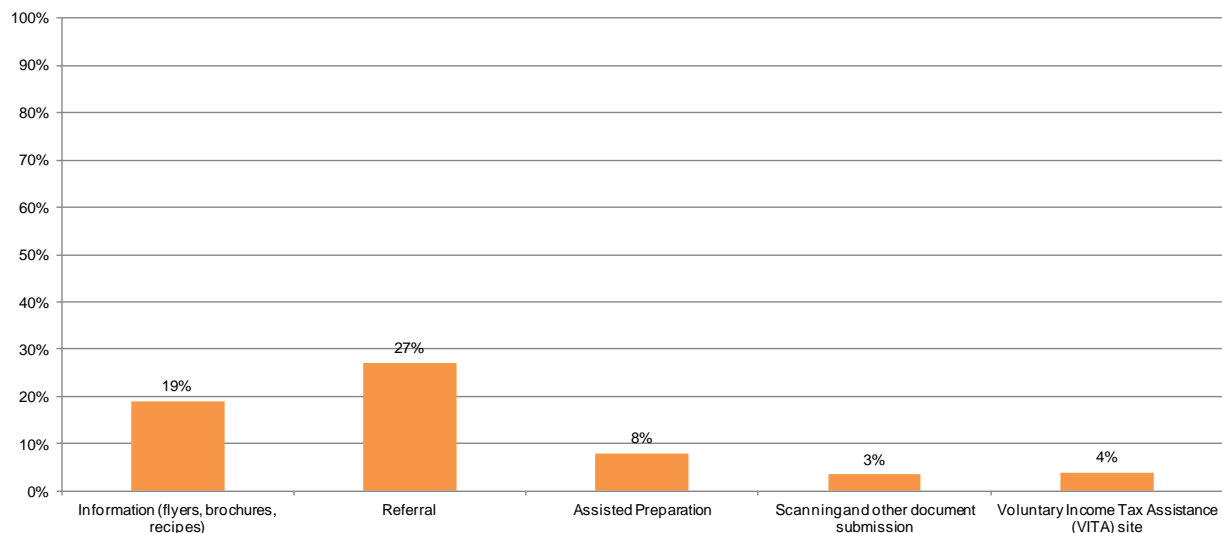
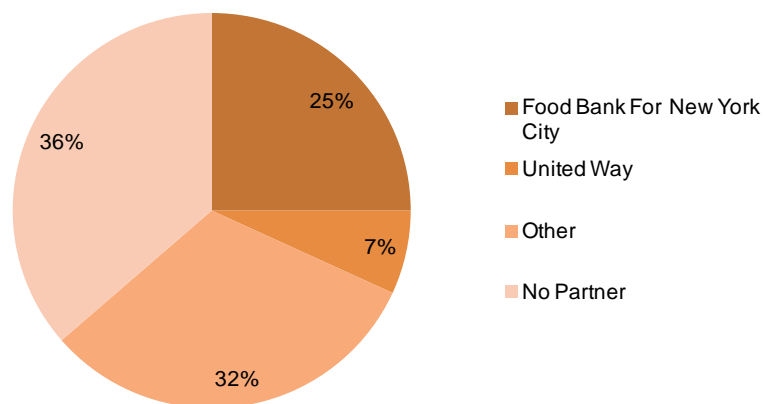


FIGURE 27

Partners in Tax Assistance Programs, Soup Kitchens



Information on TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families) was provided on-site by more than one-quarter of soup kitchens (26 percent). A similar percentage (27 percent) made referrals to the TANF program. (Note that TANF is not an entitlement, and, when granted, has mandated work requirements. These factors may reduce pantries' interest in doing TANF outreach.)

PART SIX: DIFFERENCES BETWEEN FOOD PANTRIES AND SOUP KITCHENS

AGENCY SIZE

The distribution of food pantries across size classifications closely resembles that of soup kitchens. Differences between percentages of food pantries in particular classifications, and percentages of soup kitchens in these same classifications, were less than five percentage points, with the exception of Medium – proportionately, fewer food pantries fell into this category than soup kitchens. Still, more than one-half of both food pantries and soup kitchens were considered, on the basis of people served, Large, Extra-Large, or Super, as indicated by Table 20.

TABLE 20

Size Classifications, Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens

SIZE CLASSIFICATION⁷⁷	NUMBER OF FOOD PANTRIES SURVEYED⁷⁸	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, FOOD PANTRIES SURVEYED	NUMBER OF SOUP KITCHENS SURVEYED⁷⁹	PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, SOUP KITCHENS SURVEYED
SMALL	126	22%	29	18%
MEDIUM	99	18%	45	28%
LARGE	128	23%	36	22%
EXTRA-LARGE	77	14%	19	12%
SUPER	134	24%	33	20%
TOTAL	564	101%⁸⁰	162	100%

⁷⁷A program classified as *Small* served less than 5,000 people in Fiscal Year 2012; *Medium* served between 5,000 and 9,999; *Large* served between 10,000 and 19,999; *Extra-Large* served between 20,000 and 29,999; and *Super* served 30,000 or more.

⁷⁸All food pantries that were active members of the Food Bank's agency network as of September 2011 were surveyed (N=571). Seven active pantries were sent the survey instrument, but were excluded from this analysis, because their "people served" data was missing for Fiscal Year 2012.

⁷⁹All active soup kitchens in Food Bank For New York City's agency network were surveyed (N=171). Nine active soup kitchens were sent the survey instrument, but are excluded from this analysis, because their "people served" data was missing for Fiscal Year 2012.

⁸⁰ Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

If the five-category classification system of Small, Medium, Large, Extra-Large, and Super is replaced by a simpler three-category classification system of only Small, Medium, and Large, created by conflating Small/Medium and Large/Extra-Large, distributions are slightly less similar, with differences of up to six percentage points between food pantries and soup kitchens, as indicated in Table 21. Also, more food pantries than soup kitchens fall into the Large category, and fewer into the Small category. Interestingly, the majority of both kinds of services fall outside the middle range, and into the extremes. It therefore appears that the “average” food pantry or soup kitchen is not so average after all, and that soup kitchens are somewhat more likely to be found at the lower end of the size spectrum than are food pantries.

TABLE 21

Alternative Size Classifications, Food Pantries and Soup Kitchens

<i>SIZE CLASSIFICATION</i>	<i>NUMBER OF FOOD PANTRIES SURVEYED</i>	<i>PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, FOOD PANTRIES SURVEYED</i>	<i>NUMBER OF SOUP KITCHENS SURVEYED</i>	<i>PERCENT DISTRIBUTION, SOUP KITCHENS SURVEYED</i>
SMALL	225	40%	74	46%
MEDIUM	128	23%	36	22%
LARGE	211	37%	52	32%
TOTAL	564	100%	162	100%

A possible explanation for the larger proportion of soup kitchens in the new Small category might be the fact that in order for a soup kitchen to “grow,” it must increase the number of diners it can accommodate at particular mealtimes. This increase could require a physical expansion of dining and cooking facilities. Food pantries are not as constrained when it comes to physical space – in order for a food pantry to “grow,” more storage might be required, but outside lines can always get longer, and hours of service can always extend over larger portions of the day or week. However, soup kitchens can also lengthen mealtimes – the same space now open once a week for two hours could stay open an additional hour, or open an additional day. The factor which may constrain the growth of soup kitchens most may be the availability of staff and volunteers who can cook and who have the requisite food safety/handling certifications to pass Department of Health and Mental Hygiene inspections. Clearly, soup kitchen operations are more labor-intensive and require more specific skills than food pantry operations.

TYPES OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED

Soup kitchens were more likely than food pantries to offer participants meat, poultry, or fish. Ninety-seven percent of soup kitchens served meat, poultry, or fish, but only 87 percent of food pantries included these items in their bags. Soup kitchens were also more likely than food pantries to offer participants fresh fruit (89 percent vs. 85 percent), and as likely as food pantries to offer participants fresh vegetables (88 percent). Eighty percent of soup kitchens ended meals with dessert, or offered participants between-meal snacks, but only 66 percent of food pantries put snacks or desserts in their bags.

Food pantries were more likely than soup kitchens to offer low-sodium (61 percent vs. 50 percent) and low-fat (46 percent vs. 40 percent) foods. Food pantries were also twice as likely as soup kitchens to accommodate diabetic participants (18 percent vs. 9 percent). Interestingly, food pantries were also more likely than soup kitchens to report an increase in demand for foods for diabetics (40 percent vs. 22 percent).

SOURCES OF FOOD DISTRIBUTED

As regards procurement of fresh fruits and vegetables, food pantries were more likely than soup kitchens to get their produce from Food Bank For New York City (85 percent vs. 70 percent). Conversely, soup kitchens were more likely than food pantries to use City Harvest (67 percent vs. 52 percent). Most likely, this reflects the fact that City Harvest's primary mission is food rescue – and that only soup kitchens can properly and safely distribute prepared food. Interestingly, soup kitchens were about as likely to use Food Bank For New York City (70 percent) as they were to use City Harvest (67 percent). Soup kitchens were also more likely than food pantries to go to supermarkets or grocery stores for these items (25 percent vs. 13 percent).

FOOD SHORTAGES/INCREASING DEMAND

Food pantries were more likely than soup kitchens to run out of fresh vegetables (46 percent vs. 37 percent). Food pantries were also more likely than soup kitchens to run out of frozen or canned vegetables (36 percent vs. 22 percent) and frozen or canned fruit (35 percent vs. 20 percent). When it came to proteins, food pantries were almost as likely as soup kitchens to run out of meat, poultry, or fish (64 percent vs. 69 percent), but food pantries were more likely to run out of dairy (54 percent vs. 37 percent) and more likely to run out of beans, eggs, or nuts (36 percent vs. 27 percent). Food pantries were even more likely than soup kitchens to run out of staples like bread, cereal, pasta, and rice (55 percent vs. 39 percent).

Overall, food pantries were much more likely to report running out of food (or particular types of food) than soup kitchens. Almost three-quarters (72 percent) of food pantries reported that they had run out of food sometime during the last twelve months, but only about one-third (35 percent) of soup kitchens did so. Food pantries were also more likely than soup kitchens to report that they had turned away

participants sometime during the last twelve months (45 percent vs. 27 percent). However, food pantries and soup kitchens were equally likely to report a recent increase in visitors (79 percent vs. 77 percent), and an increase in hours (23 percent vs. 23 percent). Also, both food pantries and soup kitchens frequently reported an increase in first-time visitors (90 percent vs. 85 percent). Food pantries were more likely than soup kitchens to report an increase in visiting families with children (76 percent vs. 61 percent). Still, the reported increase in families with children visiting soup kitchens is remarkable, considering that families with children have historically been more willing to frequent food pantries than soup kitchens.

OTHER SERVICES

Similar proportions of food pantries and soup kitchens reported providing various forms of SNAP assistance and tax assistance, although food pantries were somewhat more likely to report providing information on tax assistance (28 percent vs. 19 percent). (This difference may be related to food pantries' ability to add flyers or other information to their pantry bags.) Food pantries were also more likely than soup kitchens to report that they operated tax assistance programs without a partner (46 percent vs. 36 percent). Similar proportions (26 percent and 25 percent, respectively) reported partnering with Food Bank For New York City.

Similar proportions of food pantries and soup kitchens reported providing information on TANF (27 percent and 26 percent, respectively) and making TANF referrals (26 percent and 27 percent, respectively). Somewhat higher proportions of food pantries than soup kitchens reported providing information on WIC (30 percent vs. 23 percent); making WIC referrals (27 percent vs. 23 percent); providing information on school lunch programs (28 percent vs. 22 percent); providing information on school breakfast programs (21 percent vs. 17 percent); and providing information on the Summer Food Service Program (32 percent vs. 27 percent). Again, some of these differences may be related to food pantries' ability to "stuff" their bags with information. Most likely, another important factor at work is that food pantries are more likely to serve families with children than are soup kitchens and therefore less likely to spend time marketing services that exclusively serve children.

PART SEVEN: FOOD PANTRY RESULTS BY BOROUGH

NOTE: Of the 474 food pantries that responded to the survey, borough was identified for 418. Borough sample sizes are as follows: Bronx (85), Brooklyn (143), Queens (97), Manhattan (77), and Staten Island (16). The sample estimates presented below, are, with 95% certainty, within the following percentage points of their value in the food pantry population: Bronx (± 6), Brooklyn (± 4), Queens (± 5), Manhattan (± 6), Staten Island (± 16). Results for Staten Island should be interpreted with extreme caution.

<i>Types of Foods Distributed, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Fresh Fruits	88%	92%	76%	82%	88%
Frozen or canned fruits	93%	95%	94%	91%	94%
Fresh vegetables	93%	93%	80%	81%	94%
Frozen or canned vegetables	93%	94%	95%	94%	88%
Dairy	84%	84%	87%	84%	88%
Meat, poultry, fish	91%	90%	84%	82%	81%
Beans, eggs, nuts	89%	94%	89%	87%	81%
Bread, cereal, pasta, rice	94%	99%	99%	99%	88%
Snacks/desserts	67%	69%	68%	62%	56%
Other	11%	9%	12%	18%	25%

- Higher percentages of food pantries in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Staten Island distribute fresh fruits and fresh vegetables than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Higher percentages of food pantries in the Bronx and Brooklyn distribute meat, poultry, or fish than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Comparatively low percentages of food pantries in Queens distribute fresh fruits or fresh vegetables.
- Very high percentages of food pantries in all boroughs distribute frozen or canned fruit; frozen or canned vegetables; and bread, cereal, pasta, or rice.

<i>Sources of Fresh Fruits/Fresh Vegetables, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Food Bank For New York City	91%	84%	78%	81%	93%
City Harvest	41%	59%	50%	52%	67%
Driscoll Foods	24%	24%	29%	25%	27%
Other wholesale distributor	14%	24%	15%	36%	53%
Community garden, farmers market and/or community supported agriculture (CSA) program	8%	19%	15%	19%	27%
Supermarket/grocery store	4%	16%	15%	10%	27%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in all boroughs obtain fresh fruits and fresh vegetables from Food Bank For New York City than from any other organization, including City Harvest, Driscoll Foods, and other wholesale distributors.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in all boroughs obtain fresh fruits and fresh vegetables from City Harvest than from Driscoll Foods.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in the Bronx obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from community gardens, farmers markets and/or community supported agriculture (CSA) programs than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in the Bronx obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from grocery stores than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Types of Food Shortages, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Fresh Fruits	40%	48%	45%	46%	36%
Frozen or canned fruits	45%	31%	35%	30%	36%
Fresh vegetables	46%	43%	52%	36%	46%
Frozen or canned vegetables	48%	32%	25%	32%	46%
Dairy (e.g. milk, yogurt, cheese)	52%	58%	53%	57%	64%
Meat, poultry, fish	63%	71%	55%	52%	73%
Beans, eggs, nuts	46%	35%	33%	32%	27%
Bread, cereal, pasta, rice	61%	50%	57%	50%	64%
Snacks/desserts	27%	17%	17%	27%	9%

- Less than one-half of food pantries in every borough report running out of fresh fruits; frozen or canned fruits; fresh vegetables (with the exception of Queens); and frozen or canned vegetables.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Queens report running out of fresh vegetables than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Less than one-half of food pantries in every borough report running out of beans, eggs, or nuts.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in the Bronx report running out of beans, eggs, or nuts than food pantries in other boroughs.
- One-half or more of food pantries in every borough report running out of meat, poultry, or fish and bread, cereal, pasta, or rice.
- Lower percentages of food pantries in Queens and Manhattan report running out of meat, poultry, or fish than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Special Foods Distribution, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Low-sodium	58%	66%	54%	54%	81%
Low-fat	47%	52%	39%	41%	75%
Vegetarian/vegan	27%	31%	29%	25%	31%
Food for diabetic participants	21%	16%	18%	16%	38%
Food for participants with HIV/AIDS	13%	6%	9%	16%	6%
Kosher	14%	24%	10%	4%	31%
Halal	5%	2%	5%	3%	6%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island provide bags of low-sodium and low-fat foods than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island provide bags for diabetic participants than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Higher percentages of food pantries in the Bronx and Manhattan provide bags for participants with HIV/AIDS than food pantries in other boroughs.

- Higher percentages of food pantries in Brooklyn and Staten Island provide kosher bags than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Increased Demand for Special Foods, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Low-sodium	69%	70%	61%	59%	73%
Low-fat	56%	58%	55%	31%	73%
Vegetarian/vegan	29%	30%	31%	21%	64%
Food for diabetic participants	49%	40%	38%	28%	64%
Food for participants with HIV/AIDS	18%	12%	11%	13%	9%
Kosher	9%	22%	18%	5%	27%
Halal	4%	3%	7%	5%	0%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report increased demand for bags of low-fat foods than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in Manhattan report increased demand for bags of low-fat foods than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report increased demand for vegetarian/vegan bags than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in Manhattan report increased demand for vegetarian/vegan bags than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report increased demand for bags for diabetic participants than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in Manhattan report increased demand for bags for diabetic participants than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in the Bronx report increased demand for bags for participants with HIV/AIDS than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Higher percentages of food pantries in Brooklyn, Queens, and Staten Island report increased demand for kosher bags than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Food Pantry Offers Home-Delivered Food, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Home-delivered food	8%	16%	21%	8%	6%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Queens provide home-delivered food than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Increased Demand for Home-Delivered Food, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Home-delivered food	11%	28%	20%	13%	9%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Brooklyn report increased demand for home-delivered food than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Languages Food Pantry Staff or Volunteers Can Use, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Arabic	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%
Chinese	1%	9%	12%	21%	6%
English	98%	97%	93%	96%	75%
Filipino/Tagalog	0%	0%	7%	3%	13%
French	8%	17%	10%	12%	13%
French Creole	6%	26%	21%	7%	13%
German	1%	2%	4%	1%	13%
Hebrew	0%	12%	6%	3%	13%
Italian	2%	1%	7%	4%	19%
Korean	0%	0%	6%	0%	0%
Polish	0%	4%	6%	0%	0%
Portuguese	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Russian	1%	16%	11%	1%	19%
Spanish	88%	73%	76%	90%	81%
Swahili	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%
Yiddish	1%	8%	3%	1%	6%
Other	6%	4%	10%	3%	0%

- Approximately three quarters or more of food pantries in every borough have the capacity to communicate with participants in Spanish.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Manhattan have the capacity to communicate with participants in Chinese than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Nutrition Education Programs, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information (flyers, brochures, recipes)	52%	62%	59%	52%	81%
Nutrition education or counseling	12%	25%	17%	21%	31%
Information/referral to nutrition education program	15%	11%	15%	12%	25%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island provide information about nutrition, nutrition education or counseling, and referrals to outside nutrition education programs than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in the Bronx provide nutrition education or counseling than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Client Choice, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Pantry Bags are pre-packed	82%	72%	65%	65%	44%
Participants are permitted to add foods to pre-packaged bags	2%	4%	6%	3%	6%
Participants indicate choices on an order form before their bags are packed for them	2%	4%	3%	3%	6%
Participants select from a visual display before their bags are packed for them	9%	11%	12%	13%	19%
Participants pack their own pantry bags	4%	9%	14%	17%	25%

- In every borough except Staten Island, the majority of food pantries pre-pack their pantry bags.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in the Bronx pre-pack their pantry bags than food pantries in any other borough, offering participants little in the way of client choice.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in Staten Island pre-pack their pantry bags than food pantries in any other borough, offering participants a significant degree of client choice.

<i>Number of Meals Pantry Bag Contains, Food Pantries by Borough</i>		
	Mean	Median
Bronx	5.3	3.8
Brooklyn	5.5	3.3
Queens	6.2	5.0
Manhattan	6.3	5.0
Staten Island	7.3	7.5

- Food pantries in Staten Island provide participants with larger pantry bags than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Food pantries in the Bronx and Brooklyn provide participants with smaller pantry bags than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Meals in Pantry Bag</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
1 to 2	15%	15%	9%	9%	6%
3 to 4	45%	41%	40%	38%	31%
5 to 6	13%	12%	15%	10%	13%
7 to 8	4%	2%	3%	1%	0%
9 or more	23%	30%	33%	42%	50%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- Higher percentages of food pantries in Manhattan and Staten Island provide nine or more meals in their pantry bag than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in the Bronx provide nine or more meals in their pantry bag than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Adjust Pantry Bags for Family Size, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	45%	66%	51%	76%	81%
No	55%	34%	49%	24%	19%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island adjust their pantry bags for family size than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in the Bronx adjust their pantry bags for family size than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Food Pantry Has Run Out of Food in the Past 12 Months, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	81%	74%	63%	60%	69%
No	19%	26%	37%	40%	31%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- Food pantries in the Bronx are more likely to report running out of food, or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags, than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Times Food Ran Short</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Every day	1%	4%	0%	2%	0%
Several times a week	9%	4%	0%	0%	0%
Once a week	3%	6%	5%	2%	9%
Several times a month	29%	22%	20%	16%	37%
Once a month	22%	15%	25%	16%	27%
Less than once a month	8%	10%	12%	21%	9%
No typical pattern	28%	39%	38%	43%	18%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely to report running out of food, or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags, at least once a month, than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Food pantries in Manhattan are less likely to report running out of food, or particular types of food required to produce adequate pantry bags, at least once a month, than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Weeks Open Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
One	10%	5%	6%	5%	0%
Two	11%	8%	8%	4%	0%
Three	4%	4%	3%	7%	6%
Four	76%	84%	82%	84%	94%
TOTAL	101%⁸¹	101%⁸²	99%⁸³	100%	100%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in the Bronx are open just one to two weeks every month than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island are open four weeks every month than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Days Open Each Week</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
One	64%	56%	67%	44%	40%
Two	23%	23%	19%	17%	27%
Three	7%	7%	8%	11%	13%
Four	4%	4%	2%	8%	13%
Five	1%	9%	4%	15%	7%
Six	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%
Seven	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	99%⁸⁴	100%

- Higher percentages of food pantries in the Bronx and Queens are open just one or two days a week than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Manhattan are open five or more days a week than food pantries in other boroughs.

⁸¹ Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

⁸² Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

⁸³ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

⁸⁴ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

<i>Days Food Pantry is Open on Weekends, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
0	82%	78%	74%	79%	69%
1	18%	20%	24%	20%	31%
2	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- The majority of food pantries in all boroughs are not open on weekends.
- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely to be open on weekends than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Food Pantry is Open Past 5 pm, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	20%	28%	23%	24%	19%
No	80%	72%	77%	76%	81%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- Food pantries in Brooklyn are more likely to schedule some closings after 5 pm than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Hours Food Pantry is Open a Day, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Mean Hours Open a Day	3.2	3.1	3.2	3.9	3.2
Median Hours Open a Day ⁸⁵	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5

- On days they are open, food pantries in Manhattan are open, on average, for longer periods of time than food pantries in other boroughs.

⁸⁵The median divides a range of values into two parts, with each part containing exactly 50 percent of values. Medians are less sensitive to extreme values than averages.

<i>Hours of Operation, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Mean hours open a month	15.6	24.5	18.5	37.8	30.2
Median hours open a month ⁸⁶	7	14	12	14	22

- On average, food pantries in Manhattan and Staten Island are open more hours a month than food pantries in other boroughs.
- On average, food pantries in the Bronx are open fewer hours a month than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Hours Open Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
1 to 5	18%	7%	10%	7%	7%
6 to 10	33%	29%	37%	20%	20%
11 to 20	30%	29%	32%	32%	20%
21 to 30	11%	17%	9%	11%	13%
More than 30	8%	18%	12%	30%	40%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in the Bronx are open only five hours or less a month than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island are open more than thirty hours a month than food pantries in other boroughs.

⁸⁶The median divides a range of values into two parts, with each part containing exactly 50 percent of values. Medians are less sensitive to extreme values than averages.

<i>Number of Visits Permitted Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Less than one	6%	6%	3%	8%	12%
One	26%	17%	14%	37%	56%
Two	23%	27%	25%	17%	13%
Three	6%	3%	4%	7%	6%
Four	24%	39%	44%	20%	12%
More than four	15%	8%	9%	11%	0%
TOTAL	100%	100%	99%⁸⁷	100%	99%⁸⁸

- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to allow participants to visit once a month or less.
- Food pantries in the Bronx are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to allow participants to visit four or more times a month.

<i>Number of Visitors, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Increased	85%	81%	76%	70%	87%
Decreased	0%	4%	2%	3%	12%
Stayed the same	10%	8%	14%	16%	0%
No pattern-numbers have gone up and down	5%	6%	8%	11%	0%
TOTAL	100%	99%⁸⁹	100%	100%	99%⁹⁰

- Large majorities of food pantries in all boroughs report an increase in overall number of visitors.

⁸⁷ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

⁸⁸ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

⁸⁹ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

⁹⁰ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

<i>Types of Visitor Increases, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
First-time visitors	94%	93%	88%	90%	100%
Families with Children	79%	77%	73%	71%	79%
Employed	52%	44%	45%	37%	64%
Unemployed	76%	77%	74%	58%	86%
Elderly/Retired	68%	72%	64%	50%	64%
Returning Veteran	20%	12%	21%	19%	43%

- Large majorities of food pantries in all boroughs report an increase in the number of first-time visitors, visiting families with children, and unemployed visitors.
- Food pantries in Manhattan are less likely to report an increase in elderly/retired visitors than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely to report an increase in visits by returning veterans than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Change in Hours of Operation, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Increased	22%	30%	21%	16%	25%
Decreased	22%	8%	9%	11%	12%
Stayed the same	55%	56%	65%	72%	62%
No pattern-hours have gone up and down	1%	5%	5%	1%	0%
TOTAL	100%	99%⁹¹	100%	100%	99%⁹²

- Food pantries in Brooklyn are more likely to report an increase in the number of hours they are open than food pantries in other boroughs.
- Food pantries in the Bronx are more likely to report a decrease in the number of hours they are open than food pantries in other boroughs.

⁹¹ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

⁹² Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

<i>Food Pantry has Turned Away Participants in the Past 12 Months, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
<i>Yes</i>	65%	42%	33%	34%	38%
<i>No</i>	35%	58%	67%	66%	62%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in the Bronx report that they turned away participants than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Reason Food Pantry Turned Away Participants, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Lack of food	80%	93%	72%	72%	83%
Lack of non-food resources (staff/volunteers, supplies)	4%	7%	6%	4%	17%
Participants' income exceeded eligibility guidelines	0%	0%	6%	4%	0%
Participants came more often than program rules allowed	26%	22%	34%	40%	33%
Other	19%	3%	22%	12%	0%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Brooklyn report that they turned away participants because of a lack of food than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Manhattan report that they turned away participants because they came more often than program rules allowed than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Full-Time Paid Staff</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
No Full-time paid staff	71%	71%	77%	52%	53%
1 to 2 Full-time paid staff	21%	21%	16%	31%	41%
3 or more Full-time paid staff	8%	8%	7%	17%	6%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- Higher percentages of food pantries in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens report no full-time paid staff than food pantries in Manhattan and Staten Island.
- Higher percentages of food pantries in Manhattan and Staten Island report one or more full-time paid staff than food pantries in the Bronx, Brooklyn, and Queens.

<i>Number of Part-Time Paid Staff</i>	<i>Percent of Food Pantries by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
No Part-time paid staff	84%	82%	76%	62%	47%
1 to 2 Part-time paid staff	12%	12%	15%	31%	29%
3 or more Part-time paid staff	3%	6%	9%	7%	24%
TOTAL	99%⁹³	100%	100%	100%	100%

- A lower percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report no part-time paid staff than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report one or more part-time paid staff than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Food Pantry Uses a Computerized Food Inventory System, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	35%	30%	28%	8%	31%
No	65%	70%	72%	92%	69%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- The majority of food pantries in every borough do not have computerized food inventory systems.
- Fewer food pantries in Manhattan have computerized food inventory systems than food pantries in other borough

⁹³ Total is less than 100% because of rounding error.

<i>SNAP Assistance, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	45%	62%	53%	65%	75%
Referrals	47%	53%	46%	55%	88%
Prescreening for eligibility	11%	20%	17%	17%	38%
Application assistance	18%	20%	17%	23%	31%
Application submission	11%	12%	8%	7%	13%
Application recertification	8%	8%	9%	4%	6%
Client mediation	7%	4%	6%	11%	13%

- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information about SNAP benefits, to make referrals to SNAP application sites, to prescreen participants for SNAP eligibility, to provide SNAP application assistance, and to offer client mediation services.
- Food pantries in the Bronx are less likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information about SNAP benefits and to prescreen participants for SNAP eligibility.

<i>WIC Programs, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	33%	29%	22%	37%	44%
Referrals	26%	25%	28%	31%	38%

- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information about WIC benefits and to make referrals to WIC application sites.
- Food pantries in Queens are less likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information about WIC benefits.

<i>Meal Programs for Children, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information on the School Lunch Program	29%	28%	20%	37%	31%
Information on the School Breakfast Program	26%	19%	18%	28%	31%
Information on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	34%	34%	28%	41%	31%

- Food pantries in Manhattan are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information on the School Lunch Program.
- Food pantries in Brooklyn and Queens are less likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information on the School Breakfast Program.
- Food pantries in Manhattan are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to provide information on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP).

<i>Tax Assistance, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	27%	31%	24%	32%	31%
Referral	29%	31%	22%	37%	19%
Assisted Preparation	2%	8%	10%	8%	0%
Scanning and other document submission	1%	3%	5%	1%	0%
Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site	5%	2%	1%	3%	6%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Manhattan provide tax referrals than food pantries in other boroughs.
- The percentage of food pantries reporting that they assist in the preparation of participants' taxes, scan or otherwise submit required documents for participants, or operate a Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site, is ten percent or less in every borough.

<i>On-Site Access to a Computer, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	68%	71%	74%	64%	88%
No	32%	29%	26%	36%	12%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- In every borough, majorities of food pantries report on-site access to a computer.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report on-site access to a computer than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>On-Site Access to the Internet, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	68%	71%	73%	64%	88%
No	32%	29%	27%	36%	12%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

- In every borough, majorities of food pantries report on-site access to the Internet.
- A higher percentage of food pantries in Staten Island report on-site access to the Internet than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Partners in Tax Assistance Programs, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
No partner	41%	51%	50%	42%	25%
Food Bank For New York City	24%	26%	19%	29%	50%
Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty	0%	2%	6%	0%	13%
United Way	0%	8%	3%	3%	0%
Other	35%	14%	22%	26%	13%

- Food pantries in Staten Island are less likely than food pantries in other boroughs to report that they offer tax assistance services without a partner.
- Food pantries in Staten Island are more likely than food pantries in other boroughs to report that they offer tax assistance services in partnership with Food Bank For New York City.

- Food pantries in Queens are less likely than food pantries in other boroughs to report that they offer tax assistance services in partnership with Food Bank For New York City.

<i>TANF Programs, Food Pantries by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	25%	32%	24%	28%	25%
Referrals	26%	30%	21%	33%	31%

- A higher percentage of food pantries in Brooklyn provide TANF information than food pantries in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of food pantries in Queens provide TANF referrals than food pantries in other boroughs.

PART EIGHT: SOUP KITCHEN RESULTS BY BOROUGH

NOTE: Of the 145 food pantries that responded to the survey, borough was identified for 123. Borough sample sizes are as follows: Bronx (20), Brooklyn (43), Queens (18), Manhattan (39), and Staten Island (3). The sample estimates presented below, are, with 95% certainty, within the following percentage points of their value in the food pantry population: Bronx (± 13), Brooklyn (± 7), Queens (± 13), Manhattan (± 8), Staten Island (± 40). Results for the Bronx and Queens should be interpreted with caution. Results for Staten Island are not presented below, because of the borough's extremely small sample size and extremely large margin of error.

<i>Types of Foods Used in Meal Preparation, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Fresh Fruits	70%	93%	83%	95%	N/A
Frozen or canned fruits	95%	98%	100%	85%	N/A
Fresh vegetables	65%	98%	94%	90%	N/A
Frozen or canned vegetables	95%	100%	100%	92%	N/A
Dairy (e.g. milk, yogurt, cheese)	70%	81%	72%	90%	N/A
Meat, poultry, fish	100%	100%	100%	95%	N/A
Beans, eggs, nuts	80%	98%	89%	90%	N/A
Bread, cereal, pasta, rice	95%	98%	100%	95%	N/A
Snacks/desserts	65%	74%	83%	82%	N/A
Other	10%	100%	100%	13%	N/A

- Almost all soup kitchens in every borough use meat, poultry, or fish.
- Very high percentages of food pantries in all boroughs use bread, cereal, pasta, or rice.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx report using fresh fruits less often than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx report using fresh vegetables less often than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Queens report using dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese) less often than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Manhattan.

<i>Sources of Fresh Fruits/Fresh Vegetables, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Food Bank For New York City	86%	81%	71%	59%	N/A
City Harvest	64%	69%	59%	69%	N/A
Driscoll Foods	14%	33%	18%	31%	N/A
Other wholesale distributor	36%	21%	12%	41%	N/A
Community garden, farmers market and/or community supported agriculture (CSA) program	7%	17%	6%	26%	N/A
Supermarket/grocery store	14%	24%	29%	23%	N/A

- With the exception of Manhattan, more soup kitchens in all boroughs obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from Food Bank For New York City than from any other organization, including City Harvest, Driscoll Foods, and other wholesale distributors.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in all boroughs obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from City Harvest than from Driscoll Foods.
- Soup kitchens in Queens are less likely to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from City Harvest than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Queens are less likely to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from Driscoll Foods than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Queens are less likely to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from community gardens, farmers markets and/or community supported agriculture (CSA) programs than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Manhattan.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are less likely to obtain fresh fruits and vegetables from grocery stores than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Types of Food Shortages, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Fresh Fruits	8%	67%	67%	18%	N/A
Frozen or canned fruits	25%	20%	33%	18%	N/A
Fresh vegetables	17%	73%	67%	9%	N/A
Frozen or canned vegetables	17%	33%	17%	18%	N/A
Dairy (e.g. milk, yogurt, cheese)	17%	53%	33%	36%	N/A
Meat, poultry, fish	67%	67%	100%	64%	N/A
Beans, eggs, nuts	17%	27%	50%	18%	N/A
Bread, cereal, pasta, rice	42%	33%	33%	36%	N/A
Snacks/desserts	0%	20%	17%	27%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are much less likely to report running out of fresh fruits than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Manhattan are less likely to report running out of fresh vegetables than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are less likely to report running out of dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese) than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Brooklyn are more likely to report running out of dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese) than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Queens are more likely to report running out of meat, poultry, or fish than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Queens are more likely to report running out of beans, eggs, or nuts than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Special Meals Preparation, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Low-sodium	45%	58%	61%	46%	N/A
Low-fat	35%	54%	39%	36%	N/A
Vegetarian/vegan	15%	28%	22%	36%	N/A
Food for diabetic participants	15%	9%	0%	5%	N/A
Food for participants with HIV/AIDS	10%	9%	6%	10%	N/A
Kosher	5%	5%	11%	0%	N/A
Halal	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A

- Higher percentages of soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Queens serve low-sodium meals than soup kitchens in the Bronx and Manhattan.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Brooklyn serve low-fat meals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan serve vegetarian/vegan meals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in the Bronx serve meals for diabetic participants than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Queens serve kosher meals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Soup Kitchen Offers Home-Delivered Food, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Home-delivered food	5%	9%	28%	0%	N/A

- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Queens offer home-delivered food than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Increased Demand for Special Meals, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Low-sodium	50%	57%	78%	56%	N/A
Low-fat	50%	48%	67%	22%	N/A
Vegetarian/vegan	38%	26%	56%	44%	N/A
Food for diabetic participants	13%	22%	44%	11%	N/A
Food for participants with HIV/AIDS	13%	17%	11%	22%	N/A
Kosher	0%	13%	0%	0%	N/A
Halal	0%	4%	0%	0%	N/A

- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Queens report increased demand for low-sodium and low-fat meals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Queens report increased demand for vegetarian/vegan meals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Queens report increased demand for meals for diabetic participants than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan report increased demand for meals for participants with HIV/AIDS than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Brooklyn report increased demand for kosher meals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Increased Demand for Home-Delivered Food, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Home-delivered food	13%	13%	56%	11%	N/A

- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Queens report increased demand for home-delivered food than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Languages Soup Kitchen Staff or Volunteers Can Use, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Arabic	5%	2%	0%	3%	N/A
Chinese	5%	9%	17%	18%	N/A
English	95%	98%	100%	97%	N/A
Filipino/Tagalog	0%	2%	6%	5%	N/A
French	5%	14%	22%	5%	N/A
French Creole	0%	16%	22%	8%	N/A
German	0%	2%	0%	3%	N/A
Hebrew	0%	5%	6%	5%	N/A
Italian	0%	0%	0%	3%	N/A
Korean	0%	2%	11%	3%	N/A
Polish	0%	2%	6%	8%	N/A
Portuguese	0%	7%	0%	3%	N/A
Russian	5%	2%	0%	5%	N/A
Spanish	75%	72%	72%	92%	N/A
Swahili	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A
Yiddish	0%	2%	0%	3%	N/A
Other	5%	2%	6%	5%	N/A

- Approximately three quarters or more of soup kitchens in every borough have the capacity to communicate with participants in Spanish.
- Higher percentages of soup kitchens in Queens and Manhattan have the capacity to communicate with participants in Chinese than soup kitchens in the Bronx or Brooklyn.

<i>Nutrition Education Programs, Soup Kitchen by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information (flyers, brochures, recipes)	40%	65%	39%	51%	N/A
Nutrition education or counseling	5%	21%	6%	26%	N/A
Information/referral to nutrition education program	10%	12%	11%	18%	N/A

- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Brooklyn provide information about nutrition than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Manhattan provide nutrition education or counseling than soup kitchens in the Bronx or Queens.

<i>Soup Kitchen has Run Out of Food in the Past 12 Months, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
<i>Yes</i>	60%	35%	33%	29%	N/A
<i>No</i>	40%	65%	67%	71%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are more likely than soup kitchens in other boroughs to run out of food, or particular types of food, required to produce nutritious meals.

<i>Number of Times Food Ran Short</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Every day	8%	0%	0%	0%	N/A
Several times a week	0%	0%	0%	18%	N/A
Once a week	17%	7%	0%	0%	N/A
Several times a month	17%	29%	50%	18%	N/A
Once a month	25%	7%	17%	9%	N/A
Less than once a month	8%	14%	0%	46%	N/A
No typical pattern	25%	43%	33%	9%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Queens are more likely than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Manhattan to run out of food, or particular types of food, required to produce nutritious meals, at least once a month.

<i>Number of Weeks Open Each Month</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
One	10%	0%	0%	0%	N/A
Two	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A
Three	0%	2%	6%	0%	N/A
Four	90%	98%	94%	100%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- The Bronx is the only borough in which some soup kitchens are open only one week every month.

<i>Number of Days Open Each Week</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
One	55%	42%	61%	32%	N/A
Two	15%	19%	17%	16%	N/A
Three	5%	9%	11%	5%	N/A
Four	0%	7%	0%	5%	N/A
Five	20%	21%	11%	24%	N/A
Six	0%	2%	0%	8%	N/A
Seven	5%	0%	0%	10%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are less likely to be open only one or two days a week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are more likely to be open five to seven days a week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Queens are less likely to be open five to seven days a week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Mealtimes per Day</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Once a day	79%	69%	78%	66%	N/A
Twice a day	5%	19%	17%	11%	N/A
Three Times a day	0%	2%	0%	13%	N/A
Other	16%	10%	5%	10%	N/A
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Queens are more likely than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Manhattan to provide no more than one meal per day.

<i>Number of Mealtimes per Week</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
1 to 2	65%	58%	78%	45%	N/A
3 to 4	10%	19%	11%	10%	N/A
5 to 6	10%	16%	11%	21%	N/A
More than 6	15%	7%	0%	24%	N/A
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Queens are more likely to serve only one to two meals per week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are less likely to serve only one to two meals per week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Queens are less likely to serve more than six meals per week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are more likely to serve more than six meals per week than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Days Soup Kitchen is Open on Weekends, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
0	55%	67%	67%	66%	N/A
1	40%	33%	33%	24%	N/A
2	5%	0%	0%	11%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	101%⁹⁴	N/A

- The majority of soup kitchens in all boroughs are not open on weekends.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are more likely to be open on weekends than food pantries in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Visitors, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Increased	80%	82%	67%	84%	N/A
Decreased	0%	2%	0%	0%	N/A
Stayed the same	10%	9%	11%	11%	N/A
No pattern-numbers have gone up and down	10%	7%	22%	5%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Queens are less likely than soup kitchens in other boroughs to report an increase in overall number of visitors.

<i>Types of Visitor Increases, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
First-time visitors	81%	89%	92%	91%	N/A
Families with Children	75%	69%	75%	38%	N/A
Employed	38%	49%	33%	41%	N/A
Unemployed	63%	83%	67%	63%	N/A
Elderly/Retired	50%	69%	50%	59%	N/A
Returning Veteran	13%	29%	33%	19%	N/A
Other	13%	14%	17%	22%	N/A

⁹⁴ Total is more than 100% because of rounding error.

- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are less likely than soup kitchens in other boroughs to report an increase in visits by families with children.
- Soup kitchens in Brooklyn are more likely than soup kitchens in other boroughs to report an increase in visits by the unemployed.

<i>Change in Hours of Operation, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Increased	20%	33%	28%	21%	N/A
Decreased	10%	5%	0%	0%	N/A
Stayed the same	65%	60%	72%	79%	N/A
No pattern-hours have gone up and down	5%	2%	0%	0%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Manhattan are less likely to report an increase in hours of operation than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Queens.

<i>Soup Kitchen has Turned Away Participants in the Past 12 months, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	47%	28%	11%	24%	N/A
No	53%	72%	89%	76%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are more likely to report that they turned away participants than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Reason Soup Kitchen Turned Away Participants, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Lack of food	89%	75%	100%	78%	N/A
Lack of non-food resources (staff/volunteers, supplies)	0%	8%	50%	0%	N/A
Participants income exceeded eligibility guidelines	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A
Participants came more often than program rules allowed	0%	25%	50%	0%	N/A
Other	33%	8%	0%	56%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Queens are more likely to report that they turned away participants due to lack of food than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Soup Kitchen Uses a Computerized Food Inventory System, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	10%	29%	39%	21%	N/A
No	90%	71%	61%	79%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are less likely to report that they use computerized food inventory systems than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Full-Time Paid Staff</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
No Full-time paid staff	70%	80%	85%	42%	N/A
1 to 2 Full-time paid staff	20%	11%	5%	30%	N/A
3 or more Full-time paid staff	10%	9%	10%	28%	N/A
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan report no full-time paid staff than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan report one or more full-time paid staff than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Number of Part-Time Paid Staff</i>	<i>Percent of Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>				
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
No Part-time paid staff	85%	73%	95%	53%	N/A
1 to 2 Part-time paid staff	15%	18%	0%	32%	N/A
3 or more Part-time paid staff	0%	9%	5%	15%	N/A
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan report no part-time paid staff than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan report one or more part-time paid staff than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Method Soup Kitchen Uses to Track Number of Participants, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Food Bank For New York City's guest count form	55%	69%	55%	40%	N/A
A form developed by the soup kitchen itself	35%	17%	22%	26%	N/A
Estimates based on observation of traffic in and out of the dining area	0%	2%	6%	5%	N/A
Tickets distributed to participants and collected from them	10%	2%	11%	13%	N/A
Inventory method (e.g., number of plates used)	0%	5%	6%	11%	N/A
Other	0%	5%	0%	5%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are less likely to use Food Bank For New York City's guest count form than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Soup Kitchen was a Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) site in Summer 2011, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	20%	7%	11%	3%	N/A
No	80%	93%	89%	97%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are less likely to operate as Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) sites than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>SNAP Assistance, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	35%	58%	50%	55%	N/A
Referrals	40%	40%	33%	53%	N/A
Prescreening for eligibility	10%	26%	17%	29%	N/A
Application assistance	20%	19%	6%	26%	N/A
Application submission	10%	7%	0%	16%	N/A
Application recertification	5%	5%	0%	8%	N/A
Client mediation	5%	7%	6%	16%	N/A

- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in the Bronx provide SNAP information than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan provide SNAP referrals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Lower percentages of soup kitchens in the Bronx and Queens provide prescreening for SNAP eligibility than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Manhattan.
- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Queens provide SNAP application assistance than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A higher percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan provide SNAP client mediation services than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>WIC Programs, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	20%	21%	6%	29%	N/A
Referrals	25%	29%	11%	24%	N/A

- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Queens provide information on WIC than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Queens provide WIC referrals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Meal Programs for Children, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information on the School Lunch Program	25%	33%	11%	16%	N/A
Information on the School Breakfast Program	20%	21%	17%	16%	N/A
Information on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	30%	37%	28%	16%	N/A

- Higher percentages of soup kitchens in the Bronx and Brooklyn provide information on the School Lunch Program than soup kitchens in Queens and Manhattan.
- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Manhattan provide information on the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>Tax Assistance, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	25%	30%	0%	18%	N/A
Referral	30%	28%	11%	40%	N/A
Assisted Preparation	0%	9%	6%	8%	N/A
Scanning and other document submission	0%	5%	0%	5%	N/A
Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site	0%	2%	6%	8%	N/A

- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Queens offer tax assistance referrals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- The percentage of food pantries reporting that they assist in the preparation of participants' taxes, scan or otherwise submitted required documents for participants, or operate a Voluntary Income Tax Assistance (VITA) site, is less than ten percent in every borough.

<i>On-Site Access to a Computer, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	65%	71%	72%	61%	N/A
No	35%	29%	28%	39%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx and Manhattan are less likely to report on-site access to a computer than soup kitchens in Brooklyn and Queens.

<i>On-Site Access to the Internet, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Yes	68%	72%	72%	63%	N/A
No	32%	28%	28%	37%	N/A
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%	100%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in Manhattan are less likely to report on-site access to the Internet than soup kitchens in the Bronx, Brooklyn and Queens.

<i>Partners in Tax Assistance, Soup Kitchens by Borough</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
No partner	20%	43%	33%	31%	N/A
Food Bank For New York City	40%	21%	33%	25%	N/A
Metropolitan Council on Jewish Poverty	0%	0%	0%	0%	N/A
United Way	0%	14%	0%	6%	N/A
Other	40%	21%	33%	38%	N/A

- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are less likely to report that they have no partner in their tax assistance efforts than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- Soup kitchens in the Bronx are more likely to report that they partner with Food Bank For New York City in their tax assistance efforts than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

<i>TANF Programs</i>					
	Bronx	Brooklyn	Queens	Manhattan	Staten Island
Information	20%	33%	6%	34%	N/A
Referrals	25%	36%	6%	32%	N/A

- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Queens provide information on TANF than soup kitchens in other boroughs.
- A lower percentage of soup kitchens in Queens provide TANF referrals than soup kitchens in other boroughs.

PART NINE: METHODOLOGY

The Food Bank For New York City surveyed 571 food pantries and 171 soup kitchens in its agency network during the last two months of 2011 and the first six months of 2012. Eighty three percent (N=474) of surveyed pantries and 85 percent (N=145) of surveyed kitchens responded to our questions. The last time such comprehensive data about New York City's emergency food network was compiled was in the Food Bank For New York City's *Hunger Safety Net 2007* report . The 2011-12 survey omitted some questions contained in the 2007 survey and added new questions not previously asked.

All food pantries and soup kitchens that were active members of the Food Bank's network as of September 2011 were surveyed. Schlesinger Associates, an international survey firm, was commissioned to administer the survey by mail and e-mail. Follow-up phone calls to complete unanswered surveys were made by Food Bank For New York City.

The sample estimates for food pantries presented are, with 95 percent certainty, within 2.0 percentage points (plus or minus) of their value in the food pantry population.

The sample estimates for soup kitchens reported are, with 95 percent certainty, within 3.0 percentage points (plus or minus) of their value in the soup kitchen population.

Of the 474 food pantries that responded to the survey, borough was identified for 418. Borough sample sizes are as follows: Bronx (85), Brooklyn (143), Queens (97), Manhattan (77), and Staten Island (16). The sample estimates presented below, are, with 95% certainty, within the following percentage points of their value in the food pantry population: Bronx (± 6), Brooklyn (± 4), Queens (± 5), Manhattan (± 6), Staten Island (± 16). Results for Staten Island should be interpreted with extreme caution.

PART TEN: POLICY IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this research provide evidence of the increased strain food pantries and soup kitchens have borne since the start of the Great Recession, as they've seen lines lengthening outside their doors but their own resources dwindling. In illustrating this strain, however, this report also underscores the considerable accomplishments of the emergency food network in spite of these opposing pressures, among them: hundreds of thousands of meals provided daily to meet the immediate food needs of 1.4 million New Yorkers; tens of thousands of low-income New Yorkers connected to longer-term income supports like SNAP and the EITC; and most recently and dramatically, mobilization of a disaster response that has provided food, water and clothing communities affected by Hurricane Sandy.

It also suggests that the lessons learned in the response to the Great Recession may have too quickly been forgotten. Admirably, the federal government's response in the face of those troubling circumstances was to bolster measures that address food poverty, including the federal Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), monthly SNAP benefits, WIC funding, the Emergency Food and Shelter Program (EFSP). In addition, the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA, known commonly as the federal stimulus package) extended unemployment benefits, increased the Earned Income Tax Credit and expanded eligibility criteria for the Child Tax Credit. Private-sector donors – including foundations, corporations and individuals – responded to increasing demand at soup kitchens and food pantries with new and/or increased donations and support for emergency food.

The impact was immediate. Recipients of SNAP, unemployment benefits and tax credits saw their ability to purchase food expand. As food and funds flowed into the emergency food network, soup kitchens and food pantries had more resources to meet the increasing demand across the city. And while the problem of turning participants away empty-handed was not completely solved, more families in need were able to receive emergency food assistance in 2009, even as almost all (93 percent) food pantries and soup kitchens witnessed an increase in the number of first-time visitors that year.⁹⁵ Research by the Food Bank and Marist College Institute for Public Opinion showed that in 2009, the first year after the onset of the Great Recession, the proportion of New York City residents experiencing difficulty affording food actually *decreased* by 20 percent from crisis levels in 2008 – despite the fact that several economic indicators (including poverty rates and unemployment) showed that need remained high.⁹⁶

The lesson learned from the Great Recession was that the tools in place to address food poverty can work, and when government and the private sector combine forces to recognize and address a problem, it is possible to have an effect. However, most of the measures put into place when the recession struck were time-limited, and the absence of longer-term, more sustainable solutions to take their place upon their expiration has put the last line of defense against hunger at serious risk.

⁹⁵ *NYC Hunger Experience 2009: A Year in Recession* (2009). Food Bank For New York City.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*

In the wake of Hurricane Sandy, an additional lesson is being learned: the emergency food infrastructure is a valuable asset in New York City's disaster response. At the time of the issuance of this report, Food Bank For New York City and the organizations that make up the emergency food network are still meeting disaster needs in affected communities, and there is much to be learned programmatically and operationally when the emergency response phase has passed. Preliminarily, however, it is clear that the infrastructure that exists to meet New Yorkers' poverty-associated emergency food needs – not just the sites, facilities and equipment, but also the talent, expertise and commitment of thousands of staff and volunteers – is a valuable asset that can be better leveraged in responses to disaster and crisis. If, as government officials and scientists have warned, major storms and natural disasters should be expected to occur with greater frequency, the lessons learned from the emergency food network's experience as part of the overall response to Hurricane Sandy will be relevant and consequential.

The research supports the following recommendations:

Making Strategic Investments in the Emergency Food Infrastructure

Conceptually, emergency food is an important component of the work to end food poverty, as it ensures that families have access to immediate assistance while longer-term solutions are put in place. While diminished in size since the recession, New York City's emergency food network maintains a broad and deep reach into low-income communities, and over the past several years, public and private investments have developed this network into an effective bridge to longer-term sustainable income supports like SNAP and the EITC. The diversity of resources and capacity among emergency food providers, however, risks creating disparities in access for emergency food participants based on where they turn to access needed food.

Strategic investments in the emergency food infrastructure can reduce this risk, and can more effectively leverage existing capacity for access to benefits. By creating linkages and relationships between emergency food providers, the capacity of one agency to make SNAP referrals can connect directly with the capacity of a nearby agency to provide application assistance. With philanthropic support, Food Bank For New York City has begun creating those linkages. By coordinating and connecting the SNAP outreach and application work of nearby agencies, the Tiered Engagement Network, as it is called, more effectively directs the existing resources of emergency food providers.

The conceptual framework behind leveraging and linking the resources of emergency food programs to strengthen programmatic outcomes can also be applied to strengthening the emergency food network's disaster preparedness. Developing capacity and providing training in key areas, such as volunteer management, can enable the emergency food network to more readily and effectively respond to crisis.

Ensuring Adequacy and Responsiveness of the Emergency Food Supply

Emergency food is the last line of defense against hunger. When cash, benefits and the generosity of family and friends have been exhausted, the emergency food network is the resource of last resort for

those struggling to put food on the table. At the federal, state and local level, emergency food funding has been reduced or remained stagnant since the start of the recession despite increased need. These funding levels should be reviewed and adjusted to account for the increases seen in the number of people struggling with food poverty. In addition, in order to maximize access to emergency food for all communities, strategies for ensuring an adequate supply of food that meets kosher and halal standards should be developed.

In particular, the current year brings an opportunity to correct TEFAP's structure so that it can become more responsive to need. TEFAP alone accounts for approximately half the food distributed by the Food Bank For New York City in recent years. It is made up of two funding components: mandatory baseline funding set by the Farm Bill; and discretionary funding used by the United States Department of Agriculture to purchase food from farmers when agricultural markets are weak in order to stabilize prices. Over recent years, the discretionary component of TEFAP has roughly equaled (and, in some years, exceeded) the baseline funding.

As a result of strong agricultural markets in the past year, however, the USDA has not exercised its administrative authority to purchase food. As a result of these cuts, New York City's emergency food network lost nearly 11 million meals in the past fiscal year – a one-year loss of almost 40% of New York City's TEFAP supply. The Farm Bill, scheduled for reauthorization in Congress this year, is an opportunity to correct the program's design so that the USDA's discretionary purchases can be made on the basis of emergency food needs in addition to the existing market triggers.

Strengthening Income Supports for Low-Income New Yorkers

Emergency food ensures immediate needs can be met, but it is designed to be a temporary measure. Without resources dedicated to long-term solutions that address the root causes of hunger, emergency food is but a band-aid applied to a hemorrhaging wound.

Research shows that housing, health care and transportation eat into the food budgets of low-income New Yorkers. Living-wage jobs, as well as affordable housing and healthcare would do much to relieve the strain on those with limited means. A full-time job at the current minimum wage puts an individual slightly above the federal poverty level but well below the income necessary to afford basic needs anywhere in the United States, let alone New York City.

Federal nutrition assistance programs play a key role in the fight against food poverty, and should be strengthened and protected. New York City public schools should maximize participation in the Community Eligibility model, authorized in the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, to provide universal, free school meals in high-need schools. The current deficit reduction agreement threatens to reduce funding for WIC, the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), and other discretionary nutrition assistance programs at the beginning of 2013, even as it protects SNAP and baseline funding for TEFAP. All nutrition assistance programs should be protected from cuts under any new deficit reduction agreement Congress reaches.

Likewise, current Farm Bill proposals that threaten to cut SNAP benefits and disproportionately target New York City recipients would have disastrous effects here, particularly in communities most affected by Hurricane Sandy where households may be experiencing other needs. SNAP is our nation's first line of defense against hunger. Available to any household that meets the eligibility criteria (most importantly, income and immigration status), SNAP is an entitlement program and is *countercyclical*, meaning when the economy shrinks, it has the flexibility to grow to meet rising need. In New York City, with its current enrollment of more than 1.8 million, SNAP benefits increase the food purchasing power of low-income New Yorkers by approximately \$3.5 billion every year⁹⁷ – an amount irreplaceable by other sources.

⁹⁷ Analysis of SNAP data as reported by the New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance (OTDA).