

The Hunger Index 2017

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Summary

“Second Harvest of Silicon Valley Leading Dramatic Improvement in the Hunger Index.”

For over a decade, the Center for Food Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Santa Clara University has worked closely with Second Harvest of Silicon Valley to measure the need for food in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. The Hunger Index is a result of this collaboration.

The Hunger Index is a combination of several measures of our community’s need for food. The main components are the meals required by vulnerable households in the two counties, the meals purchased by vulnerable households, and the food assistance provided by organizations like Second Harvest. The difference between the need for food and the food purchased or acquired through assistance is the missing meals – the unmet need for food. The ratio of the missing meals to the need for food is the Hunger Index. Of course, our goal as a community is zero missing meals.

The Great Recession saw an increase in the number of vulnerable households and, as a result, an increase in the need for food. Heroic efforts on the part of Second Harvest and the many other food assistance organizations sought to keep up with the demand for food. Tragically, the index reached 50% in 2010. That is, half of the need for food was unmet.

The economic recovery led to a significant decline in the Hunger Index and by 2017, the index fell to 23.4%. There are two reasons for this improvement. First, between 2013 and 2017, the number of vulnerable households in the two counties fell by almost 25%. As a result, the total number of meals needed by vulnerable households also declined. Second, food assistance by Second Harvest of Silicon Valley increased by 30% over this period. Second Harvest is the second largest source of food assistance in Silicon Valley and without the food bank’s efforts, many more people would be hungry. As a comparison, the largest source of food assistance in the two counties is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), also known as food stamps. SNAP food assistance declined more than 20% between 2013 and 2017.

While this is a significant improvement in the index, it is not a justification for complacency. A hunger index of 23.4% means that we still need 66 million meals to meet the needs of vulnerable households in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties. That is enough food to meet the need of 60,000 people for a year. Many economists are forecasting an economic slow-down in the next few years. As the economy slows,

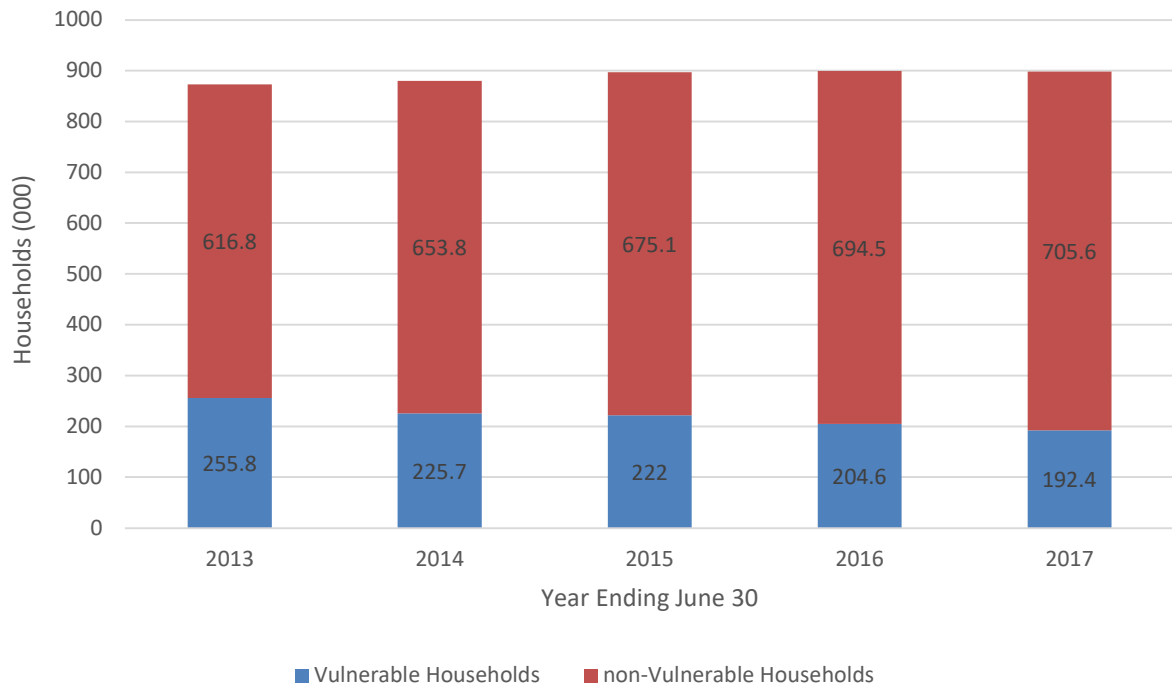
we expect larger numbers of people in need and an increase in the hunger index. Now is the time to prepare for the inevitable slowdown.

It is important to note that the impact of hunger is pervasive and difficult to see. It manifests itself in poor performance in school, declining health, and feelings of despair. We have made great strides since 2010 and we must never stop developing resources that address the needs of our neighbors facing food insecurity.

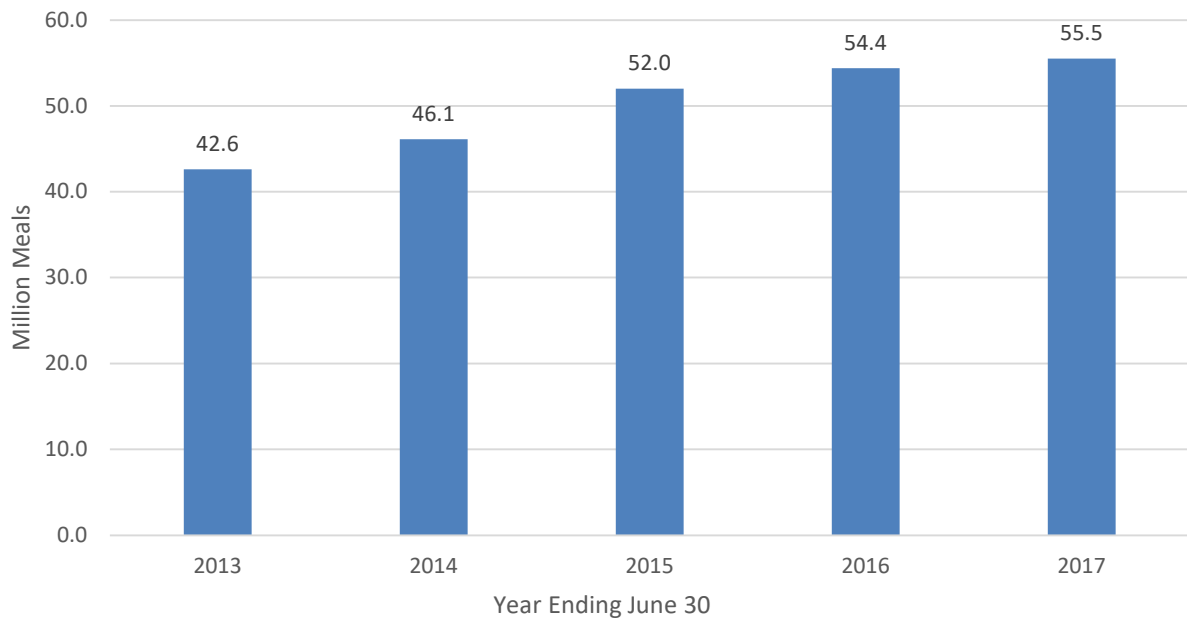
Five Year Trends related to Hunger in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, 2013-2017



Vulnerable and non-Vulnerable Households in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, 2013-2017



Food Assistance Provided by Second Harvest of Silicon Valley 2013-2017



Five Year Trends related to Hunger in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties, 2013-2017

Data Tables

HOUSEHOLD AND MEAL STATISTICS

Santa Clara County

<i>Measure</i>	<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>5-year % change</i>
Households (000)	613.8	622.0	633.8	635.7	633.8	3.26%
Vulnerable households (000)	178.7	162.0	157.6	147.1	138.1	-22.72%
Proportion of households that are vulnerable	0.2911	0.2604	0.2487	0.2315	0.2178	
Meals Required by vulnerable households (millions)	575.3	530.3	512.5	476.9	453.5	-21.17%
Meals purchased by vulnerable households (millions)	278.6	235.9	235.6	217.3	239.3	-14.11%
Food assistance provided to vulnerable households (millions)	171.3	169.9	179.7	176.0	165.1	-3.62%
Missing meals for vulnerable households (millions)	125.4	124.6	97.2	83.6	49.2	-60.77%
Hunger Index	0.4227	0.4231	0.3512	0.3221	0.2295	

HOUSEHOLD AND MEAL STATISTICS

San Mateo County

<i>Measure</i>	<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>5-year % change</i>
Households (000)	258.8	257.5	263.3	263.4	264.2	2.09%
Vulnerable households (000)	77.1	63.7	64.4	57.5	54.4	-29.44%
Proportion of households that are vulnerable	0.2979	0.2475	0.2447	0.2182	0.2058	
Meals Required by vulnerable households (millions)	238.2	203.1	202.5	180.0	171.5	-28.00%
Meals purchased by vulnerable households (millions)	138.5	103.6	108.9	95.1	103.0	-25.63%
Food assistance provided to vulnerable households (millions)	49.4	49.9	53.5	53.9	51.6	4.45%
Missing meals for vulnerable households (millions)	50.4	49.5	40.1	31.0	16.9	-66.40%
Hunger Index	0.5055	0.4978	0.4282	0.3652	0.2469	

HOUSEHOLD AND MEAL STATISTICS

Santa Clara and San Mateo County

<i>Measure</i>	<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>5-year % change</i>
Households (000)	872.6	879.5	897.1	899.1	898.0	2.91%
Vulnerable households (000)	255.8	225.7	222.0	204.6	192.5	-24.75%
Proportion of households that are vulnerable	0.2931	0.2566	0.2475	0.2276	0.2144	
Meals Required by vulnerable households (millions)	813.5	733.4	715.0	656.9	625.0	-23.17%
Meals purchased by vulnerable households (millions)	417.1	339.5	344.5	312.4	342.3	-17.93%
Food assistance provided to vulnerable households (millions)	220.6	219.8	233.2	229.9	216.7	-1.81%
Missing meals for vulnerable households (millions)	175.8	174.1	137.3	114.6	66.1	-62.38%
Hunger Index	0.4435	0.4419	0.3706	0.3327	0.2337	

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Santa Clara County

<i>Program / Agency Program (000 meals)</i>	<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>5-year % change</i>
Senior Nutrition	1244	1262	1383	1416	1413	13.59%
Summer Meals	452	513	513	627	505	11.73%
School Meals (Breakfast, Lunch) Free and Reduced	20721	20440	21159	20594	19971	-3.62%
SNAP (CALFRESH)	86748	82926	81624	75907	68394	-21.16%
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)	11326	10283	10149	8230	7591	-32.98%
Second Harvest Food Bank	31863	35410	39020	40325	41432	30.03%
Food from Other Sources (FOS)	15694	15176	21011	23683	20407	30.03%
CACFP	3235	3863	4800	5098	5383	6.40%
Total FAP (Food Assistance Provided)	171283	169873	179659	175951	165096	-3.61%

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

San Mateo County

<i>Program / Agency Program (000 meals)</i>	<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>5-year % change</i>
Senior Nutrition	242	242	243	266	205	-15.29%
Summer Meals	222	294	458	488	476	114.41%
School Meals (Breakfast, Lunch) Free and Reduced	6509	6334	6571	6113	5967	-8.33%
SNAP (CALFRESH)	22731	22926	22297	20934	18708	-17.70%
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)	4057	3764	3676	3684	3350	-17.43%
Second Harvest Food Bank	10719	10703	12987	14117	14122	31.75%
Food from Other Sources (FOS)	3965	4587	5566	6050	6052	52.64%
CACFP	917	1082	1711	2250	2685	192.80%
Total FAP (Food Assistance Provided)	49361	49932	53507	53905	51567	4.47%

FOOD ASSISTANCE PROVIDED

Santa Clara and San Mateo County

<i>Program / Agency Program (000 meals)</i>	<i>2012-2013</i>	<i>2013-14</i>	<i>2014-15</i>	<i>2015-16</i>	<i>2016-17</i>	<i>5-year % change</i>
Senior Nutrition	1486	1504	1626	1682	1618	8.88%
Summer Meals	674	807	971	1115	981	45.54%
School Meals (Breakfast, Lunch) Free and Reduced	27230	26774	27730	26707	25938	-4.75%
SNAP (CALFRESH)	109479	105852	103921	96841	87102	-20.44%
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children)	15383	14047	13825	11914	10941	-28.88%
Second Harvest Food Bank	42582	46113	52007	54442	55554	30.46%
Food from Other Sources (FOS)	19659	19763	26577	29733	26459	34.59%
CACFP	4152	4945	6511	7348	8068	94.32%
Total FAP (Food Assistance Provided)	220644	219805	233166	229856	216663	-1.80%