



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Indiana Sees Increase in Food Insecurity

According to a new study released yesterday by the U.S. Department of Agriculture, while the national rate of food insecurity is down, Indiana has seen an increase in households reporting low or very low food security. The study found 14.8% of Hoosier households face inconsistent access to nutritious, high quality food: up from 13.5% in 2010-2012 and up 3.7% in the last decade.

“We welcome the news that nationally, food insecurity has declined,” said Cindy Hubert, President/CEO of Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana. “However, the fact that Indiana has not seen that decline and has, in fact, seen an increase, is concerning.”

Gleaners continues to see large number of families - especially those with children - at the pantries it supports. Families with children living at or below the Federal poverty line have rates of food insecurity at substantially higher than the national average, according to the USDA report.

“Children are particularly vulnerable to the effects of poor or inadequate nutrition,” said Hubert. In response, Gleaners developed a BackSack program, sending at risk children home with enough food for the weekend to provide 6 small meals and a snack. Over 9,000 BackSacks are distributed each week. Food pantries located in high schools throughout the 21-county service area are another effort toward combating this issue.

The USDA found that 59% of the households reporting food insecurity had participated in one or more Federal nutrition assistance programs. Hubert added that organizations like Gleaners strive to fill the gap between need and available government assistance.

Gleaners monitors this gap to adjust and deploy resources to areas of greatest need. In addition, it plays a critical role in monitoring and maintaining the quality and safety of food distributed not just by Gleaners’ programs and pantries, but also by its agency partners. “Food quality and safety assurance is one of the vital services we provide to agencies and pantries throughout our service area,” Hubert noted.

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About Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana, Inc.

On a yearly basis, hundreds of thousands of hungry Hoosiers depend on food and other critical grocery products provided by Gleaners Food Bank of Indiana. Gleaners supplies items to

hunger relief agencies and schools throughout 21 counties in central and southeastern Indiana.

Gleaners was founded in 1980 and is a member of Feeding America, the nation's food bank network. Charity Navigator has recognized Gleaners as a 4-Star organization for six consecutive years, the highest rating for charity demonstrating fiscal management and accountability. Since its inception, Gleaners has distributed over 455 million pounds of food and critical grocery products to over 500 hunger relief agencies and schools serving needy Hoosiers. In addition to food distribution to hunger relief agencies, Gleaners serves our most vulnerable populations - seniors, veterans and children - through specialty programs such as the *BackSacks: Weekend Food for Kids*, *School-Based Pantry*, *Mobile Pantry*, *Summer Meals for Kids*, and *Senior Hunger Initiative* Programs. To learn more, visit gleaners.org.

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