



April 9, 2026

Economic Research Service
1400 Independence Avenue SW, Mail Stop 1800
Washington, DC 20250-1800
Attention: Nisha Murray

Re: [Request for Information: Opportunities, Challenges, and Emerging Areas in Statistical Data, Analysis, and Research](#)

Dear Ms. Murray,

The Alliance to End Hunger shares these comments in response to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) *Request for Information (RFI): Opportunities, Challenges, and Emerging Areas in Statistical Data, Analysis, and Research*.

The Alliance to End Hunger is a coalition of over 100 organizations including corporations, faith-based organizations, universities, nonprofits, and international organizations. Alliance members share the conviction that ending hunger is both essential and possible. The AEH is focused on promoting policies to alleviate hunger, address malnutrition needs, and solve the root causes of hunger at home and abroad. We believe that it takes the combined effort of all sectors to end hunger including the public sector, in which the U.S. Department of Agriculture plays a crucial role.

Members of the AEH find deeply troubling the USDA decision to cease production of the *Household Food Security in the United States* report and USDA sponsorship of the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS). The Alliance urges USDA to reconsider this decision and to continue to provide this critical data, which is the only nationally representative federal measure of U.S. household food insecurity, is necessary to improve people's health and lives, support local and the national economy, and strengthen communities across the country.

It is worrying that this decision comes amid forecasts that food insecurity and hunger may increase in the coming months and years with significant changes and cuts to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), on top of continuing food inflation. We are concerned that agency reorganization plans together with drastic staff reductions will put at risk the review, oversight, and approval of and technical assistance on many important agriculture and food programs and projects.

The USDA's food insecurity survey data and reports is shared freely and broadly in a transparent fashion and available to all. There is no substitute. The data and reports help to show

- if food security is improving or getting worse;
- where and how to direct efforts to reduce food insecurity;
- which groups of people struggle the most to put food on the table;
- if and how many children, seniors, people with disabilities, and households are experiencing food insecurity;
- the locations where hunger and food security are higher or lower, in cities or suburban areas, or rural or frontier areas.

Which ERS research or analytical products are most valuable to your work, and how do you use them?

The Alliance to End Hunger and nearly all of our members utilize data from the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement and the report *Household Food Security in the United States* along with data visualizations, reports such as *Amber Waves*, data features such as [Interactive Charts and Highlights](#) and summaries. We use the information to understand and explain the number of people impacted by food insecurity and to help move people and organizations to take action to end hunger and food insecurity.

The [SNAP Community Characteristics Dashboard Congressional District Explorer](#) is useful for many Alliance member organizations and for members of Congress and their constituents to get a detailed, localized report on the status of hunger and food insecurity by Congressional District.

The food insecurity data collected and analyzed and reported by the USDA ERS is broadly used across multiple sectors.

- **Elected officials**, including members of Congress, use the data in order to make informed policy decisions on health, education, and social policies. The Congressional Research Service report, [Domestic Food Assistance: Summary of Programs](#), utilizes the data and frequently updates it to educate members and staff on the state of hunger and food insecurity and the federal food and nutrition programs. Members of Congress also link to Census data on their own websites to help members and staff understand constituent needs, for example, Rep. G.T. Thompson's [website](#) references this information for Pennsylvania's District 15.
- **Businesses** that sell food use the data to help plan for amount of food sold, business operations, and location of retail stores.
- **Farmer and rancher organizations** use it to help know that there will be a stable domestic market for the foods they produce.
- For **charitable organizations that provide food assistance** including **faith-based organizations**, food insecurity data is crucial information for planning, purchasing and projecting the number of people they will need to serve, identify current or future gaps, and where more effort is needed.
- **Healthcare providers and public health professionals** utilize the data to inform Community Health Needs Assessments to plan community programs to ameliorate the core drivers of chronic health conditions such as heart disease, anemia and diabetes.
- **Education providers, schools and universities**, rely on the food security data to plan, make decisions about where to direct resources, and determine how many students and families could benefit from food assistance programs.
- **Researchers** use this survey to be able to track trends and changes, analyze how federal nutrition programs help to reduce food insecurity, identify the causes of food insecurity, test

and evaluate solutions, and more. Researchers at all stages and levels need data that is widely available, consistent, long-running, and comparable from year to year and state to state.

What geographic granularity (e.g., national, state, county) for data best supports your work?

For the CPS-FSS, national, state, county and congressional district data are all important.

How often should data and information be released or updated?

The data needs to continue at least on an annual basis for continuity and consistency. The ability to monitor food insecurity over time is very important to the analysis and comprehension of the persistence of food insecurity, as households move in and out of food insecurity over months and years.

When using ERS or OCE-WAOB forecasts or research, are you more likely to use raw data files, written analysis, or both?

Both raw data files and written analysis are used and needed by all the groups noted above.

Thank you for the consideration of these comments. There are at least 47 million reasons, one for each of the more than 47 million people facing food insecurity in the United States at last count, to continue the survey and reporting.

Sincerely,



Eric P. Mitchell
President
Alliance to End Hunger