



**LOAVES & FISHES**

Groceries for Neighbors in Need

## 2014 Loaves & Fishes Annual Survey Summary

A Client Survey was developed to better understand **respondents' demographics, needs and realities, and thoughts about the services they receive at Loaves & Fishes** food pantries in the Mecklenburg County. The Client Survey was conducted across 17 pantries in October, 2014. Surveys were completed by adults only and thus reflect a household. Respondents were asked to respond to the survey voluntarily and received no incentive for their participation. A total of 893 surveys representing households were completed across 17 pantries.

**Findings indicate** that pantries serve a critical need in the lives of their clients, given the following:

- A third (n=304, 34.0%) of heads of households are looking for work whereas 232 (26.0%) are disabled. Of those who indicated that they were unemployed (not retired or disabled), a third had been so for a year or less whereas 96 (49.2%) had been so for at least one year.
- On average, respondents' monthly income was \$983.77, with almost a third (n=274, 30.7%) indicating that they have friends or other relatives besides spouses and children living with them for whom they are responsible for feeding.
- Close to 95% of respondents (n=846, n=94.7%) indicated that they will be able to prepare healthy meals from the groceries that they received through Loaves & Fishes.

### **“Because I received groceries...”**

Additionally, because they received groceries, 31.7% (n=283) will use the money that they saved to pay rent; 20.2% (n=180) will use the money they saved to pay electric and/or gas bills; 7.7% (n=69) will use the money they saved to pay for medicine, and 16.5% (n=148) gave other reasons including, make a car payment, to put gas in their car, and to cover the costs of public transportation. For some there was just enough money in the household to pay the bills, but not purchase food. As a result, the answer was frequently, “My family will eat”.

### **“When I run out of food...”**

When respondents run out of food, 50.4% (n=450) indicated that they ask family for food, 28.7% (n=256) indicated that they ask friends for food, and over a quarter of respondents (n=254, 28.4%) indicated that they don't eat. Eight percent (n=78) indicated other responses such as they ask for help from their church, visit food pantries, and feed their children before they feed themselves.

## Food Insecurity

As is shown below, for a large majority of respondents access is an issue such that they have worried about food running out, had food run out, ate less due to lack of food/money to buy food, and didn't eat due to lack of food/money to buy food.

	Often	Sometimes	Never
In the last 12 months, did you worry that your food would run out before you got money to buy more?	386 (43.2%)	445 (49.8%)	37 (4.1%)
In the last 12 months, did the food you buy just not last and you didn't have money to get more?	336 (37.6%)	447 (53.4%)	50 (5.6%)
In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less at a meal because there wasn't enough money to buy food?	255 (28.6%)	513 (57.4%)	102 (11.4%)
In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?	145 (16.2%)	453 (50.7%)	261 (29.2%)

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