

2015 Client Survey Findings

Prepared for



LOAVES & FISHES

Groceries for Neighbors in Need

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Executive Summary

This report summarizes the findings from the Loaves & Fishes' Client Survey conducted from October 1 to October 24, 2015. The survey was developed with input from Loaves & Fishes' Director of Development and Public Relations, was intended to collect data from a convenience sample of respondents to better understand the demographic profile, needs and realities, and thoughts about the services they receive at Loaves & Fishes food pantries in the Charlotte area. Respondents were asked to respond to the survey voluntarily and received no incentives for their participation. A total of 775 individual heads of household adults responded to the survey.

Key Findings

- The majority of those who responded to the survey was female; is between the ages of 35 and 54; is at least a high school graduate; and own or rent their home.
- Food access is an issue such that they have often or sometimes worried about food running out (n=699, 93.6%), had food run out (n=694, 93.5%), ate less due to lack of food/money to buy food (n=657, 88.4%), and did not eat due to lack of food/money to buy food (n=739, 70.9%).
- When respondents run out of food, the majority (n=355, 52.3%) indicated that they ask family for food, while the remaining respondents indicated that they ask friends for food (n=155, 24.2%) or that they do not eat (n=151, 23.6%).
- Respondents indicated that because they received groceries provided by Loaves & Fishes, they will use the money saved to pay rent (n=260, 43.9%), pay electric and/or gas bills (n=182, 30.7%), pay for medicine (n=114, 19.3%), and other things that would allow them to work or to look for work (n=36, 6.1%).
- An overwhelming majority of respondents (n=734, 98.8%) reported that they would be able to prepare healthy meals with the groceries they received at Loaves & Fishes. Respondents also indicated that they would like to have the following healthy foods available at Loaves & Fishes: fresh produce (n=206, 77.7%), meats (n=20, 7.5%), chicken (n=18, 6.8%), milk (n=14, 5.3%), and turkey (n=7, 2.6%).

Overview

This report provides findings from the 2015 Loaves & Fishes Client Survey. The Client Survey was designed to gather data from a convenience sample of respondents to understand better respondents' demographics, needs and realities, and thoughts about the services they receive at Loaves & Fishes food pantries in the Charlotte area. A total of 775 client surveys were conducted across 17 pantries in October 2015. Data gathered via these surveys will provide greater insights to Loaves & Fishes staff and volunteers regarding how to better serve their communities to ensure that Loaves & Fishes is doing all that it can to meet the grocery needs of those at risk of hunger.

Methodology

The Client Survey was developed with input from the Loaves & Fishes Director of Development and Public Relations. The Client Survey relied upon a convenience sample to gather information from respondents and was conducted across the various pantries in October 2015. Respondents were asked to participate in the survey voluntarily and received no incentive for doing so. A total of 775 individual heads of household adults responded to the survey.

Given that Charlotte Loaves & Fishes expects to serve 73,000 persons (24,000 households) by the end of the year, to ensure a confidence level of 95% with a margin of error of ± 3.46 , a sample size calculator indicated that 776 unique households (or 3.2% of the population served) would need to be surveyed. The threshold was almost met, and thus survey findings should be fairly close if the entire population served by the Charlotte pantries responded to the survey.

Findings

Respondent Demographics

As shown in Table 1a “Heads of Household: Respondent Demographics I,” over a quarter of respondents (n=200, 26.8%) were male and 73.2% (n=546) were female. Nearly a quarter (n=170, 22.8%) are not working, but looking for work whereas nearly a third (n=229, 30.7%) are disabled. Of those who indicated that they were unemployed (not retired or disabled), over half (n=78, 54.5%) had been so for a year or less while 45.5% (n=65) had been so for at least one year. Some respondents provided reasons for unemployment such as medical issues, taking care of children or family members, and relocation. The ages of respondents varied greatly with close to half (n= 354, 46.7%) in the 35-54 years old range, while a third (n=252, 33.3%) were 55 years of age or older. Nearly three-fourths of respondents (n=546, 72.9%) were Black or African-American, while 14.8% were White, and 8.4% were Hispanic.

**Table 1a.
Heads of Household: Respondent Demographics I**

Gender	n	%
Male	200	26.8
Female	546	73.2
Total	746	100.0
Employment Status	n	%
Employed full-time	109	14.6
Employed part-time	77	10.3
Employed part-time, looking for full-time work	32	4.3
Working a temporary job	31	4.2
Not working, looking for work	170	22.8
Not working and not looking for work	34	4.6
Disabled	229	30.7
Retired	64	8.6
Total	746	100.0
Time Unemployed¹	n	%
Laid off 1 year or less	78	54.5
Laid off 1- 2 years	28	19.6
Laid off 2+ years	20	14.0
Other	17	11.9
Total	143	100.0
Age Group	n	%
18-24	30	4.0
25-34	121	16.0
35-44	175	23.1
45-54	179	23.6
55-62	146	19.3
63 or older	106	14.0
Total	757	100.0
Race/Ethnicity	n	%
Black / African-American	546	72.9
Latino / Hispanic	63	8.4
White / Caucasian	111	14.8
Native American / Indian American	15	2.0
Asian / Pacific Islander	5	0.7
Other	9	1.2
Total	749	100.0

¹ These respondents (n=143) are a subset of those who indicated that they were not working (excludes disabled or retired).

Table 1b “Heads of Household: Respondent Demographics II,” shows that over a third of respondents (n=349, 34.9%) have a high school education, while a third (n=246, 33.1%) have some college education. The majority of respondents (n=569, 76.5%) currently own or rent their home or apartment. Nearly a fifth (n=143, 19.9%) reported that they are raising their grandchildren.

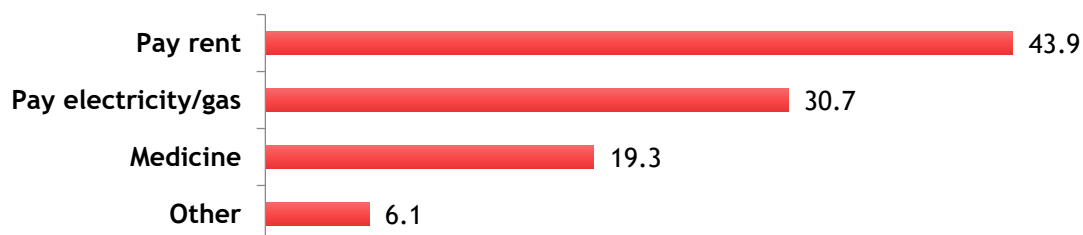
Table 1b.
Heads of Household: Respondent Demographics II

Educational Attainment	n	%
Less than high school	131	17.6
High school graduate	259	34.9
Some college	246	33.1
College graduate or higher	107	14.4
Total	743	100.0
Living Situation	n	%
Own or rent	569	76.5
Living with friends or relatives	103	13.8
Homeless	55	7.4
Friends or relatives living with respondent	17	2.3
Total	744	100.0
Raising Grandchildren	n	%
Yes	143	19.9
No	577	80.1
Total	720	100.0

Impact of Pantries

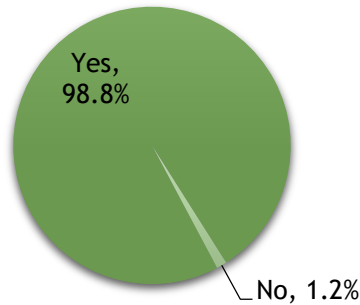
As recipients of groceries at Loaves & Fishes, respondents were asked to describe what they would do with the money saved. Over two-fifths of respondents (n=260, 43.9%) indicated that they will use the money saved to pay rent, while nearly a third will pay electric and/or gas bills (n=182, 30.7%) and 19.3% will pay for medicine (n=114). The remaining respondents (n=36, 6.1%) will pay for other things, which include such things as using the money to put gas in their car, to cover the costs of public transportation, and to pay for an ID, to name a few.

Figure 1: What will respondent use the money saved



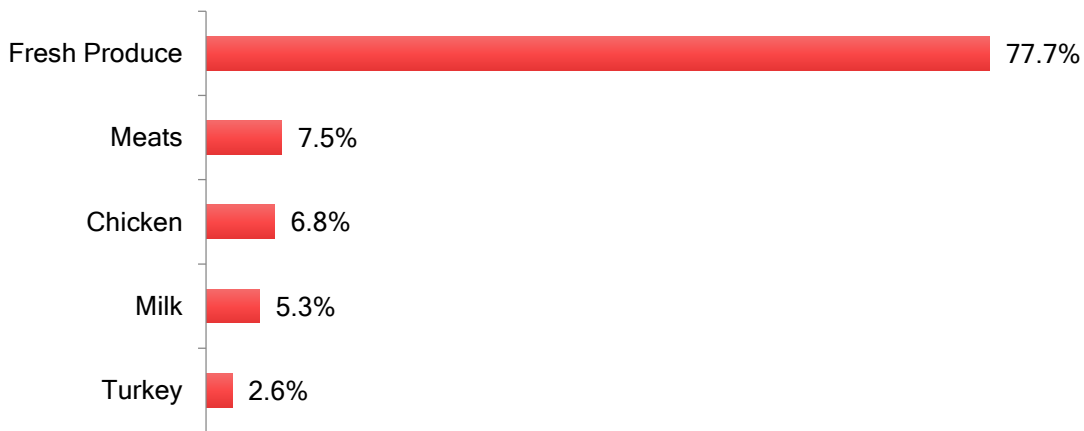
Additionally, an overwhelming majority of respondents (n=734, 98.8%) reported that they would be able to prepare healthy meals with the groceries they received at Loaves & Fishes.

Figure 2: Percentage of respondents that would be able to prepare healthy meals with groceries received at Loaves & Fishes (Yes/No)



When asked what healthy foods they would like to have available at Loaves & Fishes, 265 respondents took the opportunity to provide their preference. Of those who responded, three-fourths said fresh produce (n=206, 77.7%), followed by meats (n=20, 7.5%), chicken (n=18, 6.8%), milk (n=14, 5.3%), and turkey (n=7, 2.6%).

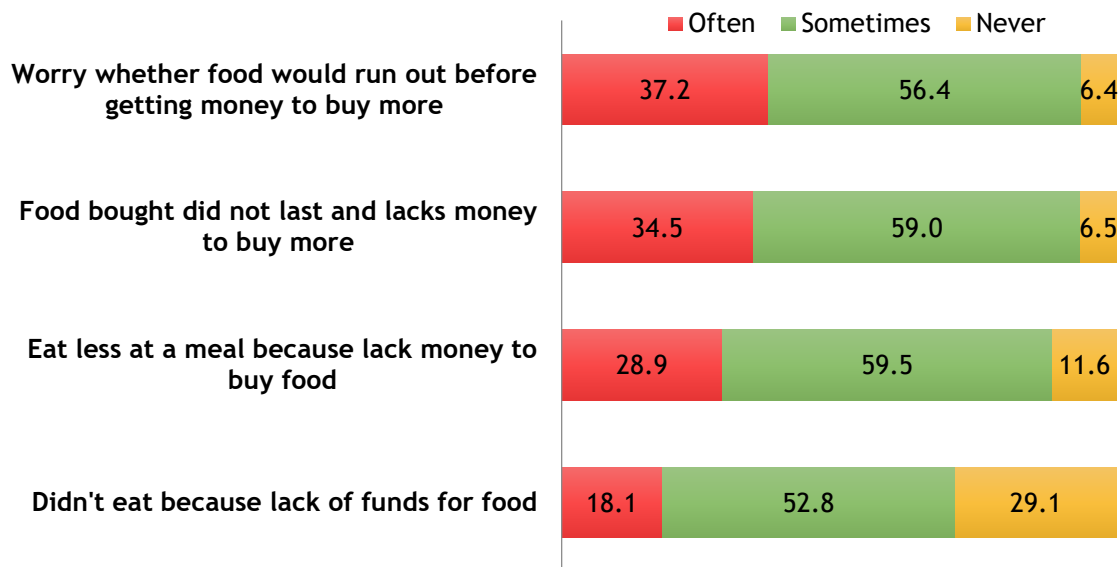
Figure 3: Healthy foods that respondents would like to have available at Loaves & Fishes



Access to Food

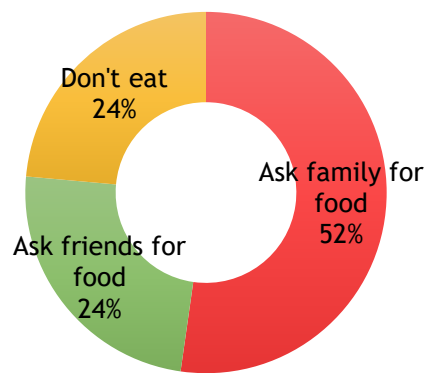
The figure below shows how frequent in the past year respondents had issues with accessing food. For a large majority of respondents, access is an issue such that they have worried often or sometimes about food running out (n=699, 93.6%), had food run out (n=694, 93.5%), ate less due to lack of food/money to buy food (n=657, 88.4%), and didn't eat due to lack of food/money to buy food (n=739, 70.9%).

Figure 4: Access to Food Issues
(In the last 12 months, respondent...)



When respondents run out of food, the majority (n=355, 52.3%) indicated that they ask family for food, while the remaining respondents indicated that they ask friends for food (n=155, 24.2%) or that they do not eat (n=151, 23.6%).

Figure 5: When respondents run out of food, they...



Summary

The majority of those who responded to the survey was female; is between the ages of 35 and 54; is at least a high school graduate; and own or rent their home.

Survey results suggest that respondents who receive groceries from Loaves & Fishes are faced with food access issues. The majority of respondents reported that:

- They have often or sometimes worried about food running out (n=699, 93.6%), had food run out (n=694, 93.5%), ate less due to lack of food/money to buy food (n=657, 88.4%), and did not eat due to lack of food/money to buy food (n=739, 70.9%).
- Over a third of respondents (n=349, 34.9%) have a high school education, while a third (n=246, 33.1%) have some college education, and (n=107, 14.4%) are college graduates.
- Nearly a fifth (n=143, 19.9%) reported that they are raising their grandchildren.

The benefits that clients receive through the services provided by Loaves & Fishes are evident in the survey findings. Respondents indicated that because they received groceries, they will use the money that they saved to pay rent (n=260, 43.9%), pay electric and/or gas bills (n=182, 30.7%), pay for medicine (n=114, 19.3%), and to pay for other things that would allow them to work or to look for work (n=36, 6.1%).

The majority of respondents (n=734, 98.8%) also said that they would be able to prepare healthy meals with the groceries they received at Loaves & Fishes.

Finally, respondents (n=265, 77.7%) reported that they would like fresh produce to be available at Loaves & Fishes, followed by meats (n=20, 7.5%), chicken (n=18, 6.8%), milk (n=14, 5.3%), and turkey (n=7, 2.6%).

Appendix: Survey Questionnaire

For each question, please fill in the circle next to the answer that best fits you.

1. What is the work status of the primary wage earner, head(s) of household or breadwinner:
 - Working full-time
 - Working part-time
 - Working part-time but looking for full-time work
 - Working a temporary job
 - Not working, but looking for work
 - Not working and not looking for work
 - Disabled and cannot work
 - Retired, on a fixed income

- If not working, not disabled or not retired**
 - were you laid off in the last year
 - were you laid off in the last 1 – 2 years
 - were you laid off over 2 years ago
 - Other reason why you are not working _____

2. What is your age group?
 - 18-24
 - 25-34
 - 35-44
 - 45-54
 - 55-62
 - 63 and above

3. What is your race/ethnicity?
 - Black/African-American
 - Native American or Indian American
 - Latino/Hispanic
 - Asian/Pacific Island
 - White/Caucasian
 - Other _____

4. Are you Male or Female

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?
 - Less than high school
 - High school graduate
 - Some college
 - College graduate or higher

6. What is your living situation?
 - I own/rent a house or apartment
 - I live with friends or relatives (other than my children or spouse)
 - I am homeless
 - Friends or relatives (other than my children or spouse) live with me

7. Are you raising your grandchildren? Yes No

8. Because you received groceries today at Loaves & Fishes, which of the following describes you. (Choose One)
 - I will use the money saved to help pay my rent.
 - I will use the money saved to help pay my electric or gas bill.
 - I will use the money saved to help pay for medicine.
 - Other (Please Specify) _____

9. With the groceries received today at Loaves & Fishes will you be able to prepare healthy meals?
 - Yes
 - No

10. What healthy foods would you like to have available at Loaves & Fishes?

11. In the last 12 months, did you worry about whether your food would run out before you got money to buy more?

Often Sometimes Never

12. In the last 12 months did the food you buy just not last and you didn't have money to get more?

Often Sometimes Never

13. In the last 12 months did you ever eat less at a meal because there wasn't enough money to buy food?

Often Sometimes Never

14. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

Often Sometimes Never

15. What do you do when you run out of food and cannot visit Loaves & Fishes? (Please select all that apply.)

- I don't eat
- I ask family for food
- I ask friends for food
- Other _____

16. What does Loaves & Fishes mean to you? _____