

# PRESS RELEASE

## FOOD BANK OF SOUTH JERSEY TO PARTICIPATE IN NATIONAL HUNGER STUDY

*The Food Bank of South Jersey will be participating in the national Hunger in America 2009 study designed to better understand the distribution of food assistance services to low-income Americans.*

**Pennsauken, NJ February 20th, 2009:** Over the next several months, the Food of South Jersey along with 205 other food banks from across the country will take part in the *Hunger in America 2009* national survey. *Hunger in America 2009* is the fifth national hunger study conducted by Feeding America (formerly known as America's Second Harvest—The Nation's Food Bank Network) and its member food banks including the Food Bank of South Jersey. The purpose of the study is to conduct research into the distribution of food assistance services to low income Americans through food banks' network of agencies.

"We are happy to announce that the Food Bank of South Jersey will be participating in the *Hunger in America 2009* national survey. It is imperative that we continue to learn more about the problem of hunger both on a national and local level so that we can better understand how the Food Bank of South Jersey can best assist those people suffering from food insecurity in Southern New Jersey," commented Val Traore, CEO of the Food Bank of South Jersey.

The Hunger study is unique in that it surveys both hunger relief organizations in local communities and compares those findings with agencies from other communities across the country, and surveys the clients who access these agencies' services to determine the reasons they need food assistance. This two-pronged study enables the food bank community to better quantify the needs of its communities and analyze the capacity of the charitable food distribution system to meet those needs.

This research is one of the most in-depth surveys of its size assessing the problem of hunger in America. The 2005 study amassed over 52,000 personal interviews with individuals who received food assistance and from 31,000 food distribution agencies. The Hunger Study has been cited as authoritative research in various public events and legislative hearings over the last few years by the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives, the House and Senate Budget Committees, the House and Senate Agriculture Committees, and the Senate Finance and House Ways and Means Committees.

Utilizing staff and volunteers, the Food Bank of South Jersey will traverse the four counties in Southern New Jersey it serves, Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem counties, meeting with charitable feeding programs and learning more about the people it serves to better understand the problem of hunger in South Jersey.

Kristin Valente, the Food Bank of South Jersey Volunteer Coordinator, has appealed to members of the community for their help saying, "If any member of the South Jersey community is interested in helping the Food Bank of South Jersey in this meaningful undertaking, please contact the Food Bank of South Jersey. Volunteers will travel to program sites throughout Southern New Jersey and conduct interviews for the *National Hunger Study 2009*."

To learn more about the hunger-relief work the Food Bank of South Jersey is doing in Southern New Jersey, visit [www.foodbanksj.org](http://www.foodbanksj.org)

### **About the Food Bank of South Jersey**

The Food Bank of South Jersey is a 501 (C) (3) nonprofit hunger-relief organization founded in 1985. Focused solely on the South Jersey region, the organization serves Burlington, Camden, Gloucester, and Salem counties. Now in its 23rd year of community service, the organization continues to serve as an agent for effective food rescue and charitable food distribution and has provided nearly 70 million pounds of food—the equivalent of 56 million meals—to thousands of families, seniors, individuals and children in need. The Food Bank of South Jersey is a member of the nation's largest domestic hunger relief organization - America's Second Harvest®, the Nation's Food Bank Network™ as well as an affiliate of the United Way of Burlington, Camden, Gloucester and Salem counties.

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