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## Working South Dakotans Among Hungry

BY PETER HARRIMAN  
The Argus Leader

SIoux FALLS — A new report underscores how many South Dakotans are going hungry every day, including rising numbers of working poor in the state.

The Feeding America report estimates 78,400 South Dakotans require emergency food assistance annually, about 20,800 in any given week.

South Dakota's working poor slipping into food insecurity is a phenomenon emergency food agency heads already have recognized.

"We are seeing more people coming in where one or both parents have a job," says Tamera Jerke-Liesinger, executive director of The Banquet. The Banquet fed notably more people in 2009 than previously.

"Overall, our numbers were up approximately 15 percent last year," Jerke-Liesinger says. "That's one of the more significant jumps in Banquet history."

At the Salvation Army, Chastity Davidson is seeing the same thing.

"We have more people coming in than we have food," she says. Typically, about 10 families will come to the Salvation Army for food on a daily basis.

Before last year, "we would see roughly four or five families a day," Davidson says.

"In a lot of cases, both parents are working, but with all their other bills, they have to put their food off."

South Dakota's participation for the first time in the national study on hunger provides useful baseline information that will help those who feed the poor track how well the state is doing in the future,

according to Matt Gassen, executive director of the Community Food Banks of South Dakota.

But it doesn't tell those people anything about the present they don't already know anecdotally - 2009 was a tough year.

And 2010 isn't starting off much better.

Children younger than 18 made up 36 percent of the members of households in the state requiring emergency food assistance last year, the elderly 9 percent.

"We know we've got kids not getting enough to eat. We've got seniors living off fixed incomes cutting their food budget to the bone to pay bills," Gassen says.

Almost 60 percent of the families served in South Dakota were tribal members.

"As we look at reservation counties, we find we distribute 45 to 50 percent of our food there," Gassen says. "That tells me we're doing a good job with what we have. The other thing it tells me is we don't have enough."

"We literally could dedicate all our resources to try to meet that hunger need on Indian reservations. We continue to try to do better there, but we also can't forget other parts of the state," he says.

A new warehouse in Pierre will help in the effort. WP Beverages of Windsor, Wis., and Community Food Banks last week agreed on a deal for Community Food Banks to buy the former Pepsi warehouse.

Pierre Mayor Laurie Gill says the new Pierre Community Food Bank also will be supplied regularly by Wal-Mart.

## Patrol: Ruling Won't Spur Policy Change

BY JEAN ORTIZ  
Associated Press Writer

OMAHA, Neb. — The Nebraska State Patrol will not change its vehicle checkpoint policy, despite a court ruling that such an operation in Lincoln County was unconstitutional.

But the patrol will review how the October checkpoint was carried out as it works to ensure officers continue to comply with the policy, spokeswoman Deb Collins said.

For years, police across the nation have set up such checkpoints to catch drunk drivers and drug traffickers.

Earlier this month, however, Lincoln County District Judge John Murphy ruled in a drug case that the way the patrol carried out an October checkpoint along Interstate 80 near Brady violated the U.S. Constitution.

The case involved 40-year-old Alfonso Johnson of Milwaukee, who was arrested and subsequently charged after the patrol said it found marijuana in his car.

In his order, Murphy cited a U.S. Supreme Court ruling that determined random stops at checkpoints — letting some cars pass while inspecting others — are unconstitutional.

"The failure to stop every vehicle, therefore, interjects the randomness which was disapproved of in (the Supreme Court ruling)," Murphy wrote. "Thus, the procedure used by the Nebraska State Patrol in this case, in not stopping every vehicle, violates the U.S. Supreme Court holding on random stops."

Collins stressed that the patrol's checkpoint policy has withstood a review by the Nebraska Court of Appeals. She cited a 2004 ruling that upheld the drunken-driving conviction and sentence of a western Nebraska man who was stopped at a checkpoint in Scotts Bluff County in 2001.



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