



## BY THE NUMBERS

**Food Insecurity: a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food** - U.S. Department of Agriculture

### Food Waste: A National Problem

- In the United States, we produce 430 billion pounds of food, enough to feed far more than our population, yet 40% of the food produced goes to waste
- The retail value of avoidable food waste is estimated at \$165 billion each year
- Food waste is the largest source of solid waste in landfills (up to 20% of solid waste stream)
- Reducing food losses by 15% would feed over 25 million additional Americans annually

### Hunger in America

- 42.2 million Americans, including 13.1 million children, live in food insecure households
- Food insecurity exists in every county in America
- In 2011, 6.1 million households accessed emergency food from a pantry one or more times

### Child Food Insecurity

- Households with children experience higher rates of food insecurity. The rate of food insecurity within households with children under age 6 is 22%
- Food insecurity poses a serious risk to the growth, health, and cognitive and behavioral potential of poor, and near-poor children
- Food-insecure children, between birth and age 4, have a 90% greater chance of being characterized with fair or poor health and a 31% greater chance of hospitalization

### Hunger in Massachusetts

- The food insecurity in Massachusetts is 9.6%, slightly lower than the national average 12.7%
- The number of food insecure residents in Massachusetts is currently more than 600,000, including more than 200,000 children
- \$390,081,680: funds required to meet Massachusetts food needs in 2010

### The Healthy Diet Connection

- 1 out of 5 of all low-income Americans do not purchase any fresh fruits or vegetables
- Only 27.5% of Massachusetts adults meet the USDA-recommended 5 daily servings of fruits and vegetables
- 3 out of every 5 residents in Massachusetts are either overweight or obese, and related medical costs are estimated at \$1.8 billion annually in Massachusetts
- Diabetes rates have jumped 40% over the last decade

### The Environmental Impact

- Annually, 300 million barrels of oil and 25% of total freshwater consumption are used to produce food that is ultimately wasted
- Nearly 34 million tons of food waste is generated in the U.S. annually, nearly all of it sits in landfills where it accounts for almost 25% of U.S. methane emissions
- If integrated into a country ranking of top emitters and the highest carbon footprints, food wastage would appear third, after the U.S. and China