

An Investigation into the Limitations and Barriers to Growth
Encountered by Food Shelves in Southeastern Minnesota
and La Crosse County, Wisconsin

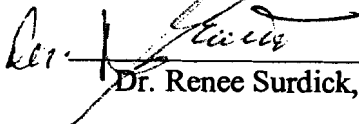
by

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A Research Paper
Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the
Master of Science Degree
in

Applied Psychology

Approved: 4 Semester Credits


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May, 2008

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Title: *An Investigation into the Limitations and Barriers to Growth
Encountered by Food Shelves in Southeastern Minnesota and
La Crosse County, Wisconsin*

Graduate Degree/ Major: MS Applied Psychology

Research Adviser: Dr. Renee Surdick, Ph.D.

Month/Year: May, 2008

Number of Pages: 65

Style Manual Used: American Psychological Association, 5th edition

ABSTRACT

In conjunction with Channel One food bank/shelf, located in Rochester, Minnesota, a research investigation was conducted to determine barriers and limitations to growth for the La Crosse County, Wisconsin and southeastern Minnesota food shelves associated with Channel One. Phone interviews were conducted to discover what is preventing food shelves from growing to match the ever-rising hunger rate. Specific topics of interest include, but are not limited to, refrigerator/freezer space, availability of volunteers, food choice/availability, hours of operation, and staff/board training. Results show that physical space including refrigeration, freezer and square footage is the largest barrier to growth for food shelves affiliated with Channel One.

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Acknowledgments

The author would like to thank Dr. Renee Surdick for her insights and encouragement. Dr. Surdick has a true devotion to her students and it is easily felt when working with her. A thank you is also extended to Dr. Kiki Gorbatenko-Roth, MSAP program director, for her consultation and endless supply of support and knowledge. Finally, the author would like to thank Dr. Sarah Wood for her open door policy and her willingness to listen to the many issues that arose during this project. Dr. Wood has a gift for student interaction and because of this has become a good friend.

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Chapter I: Introduction

The goal of the Channel One food bank/shelf (CH1), located in Rochester, Minnesota, is to help feed people in need (Channel One, 2008). CH1 distributes donated food and food related items to many food shelves in a 13 county area in southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin. They also provide food to many other area programs such as shelters, soup kitchens, and assisted living programs (Channel One, 2008). Due to the increase in hunger in America over the past few decades, but more specifically a sharp increase in the last few years, it is CH1's desire to investigate why their associated food shelves may not be growing to meet the increased need.

Recent research conducted by America's Second Harvest (O'Brien & Aldeen, 2006) and Minnesota Foodshare (Minnesota Foodshare Empowerment Survey Unpublished, 2005) have investigated issues facing food shelves (also known as pantries), but have come up short on providing clarity on the barriers and creating a responsive action plan. It is the goal of this paper to investigate specific characteristics of barriers already identified in previous research (i.e., refrigeration/freezer space, volunteer availability, funding, board/community involvement) to better understand the roots of these problems for the agencies affiliated with CH1. With this information, CH1 will be able to tailor their grant writing to include specific goals to eliminate or reduce these barriers in their affiliates, thus providing better services to communities and individuals in need.

Statement of the Problem

What are the specific barriers and limitations (if any) holding back the growth of the food shelves associated with Channel One food bank?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to conduct an in-depth investigation into the barriers to growth for the food shelves associated with CH1. Information discovered in this study will allow CH1 to better write grants for the purposes of securing funding that will be used to help the associated agencies reduce their barriers.

Assumptions of the Study

It is the assumption of this paper that hunger is a well-recognized and ever-increasing problem in America, and more specifically southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin. It is also assumed that food shelves are a useful tool for providing food resources to the hungry.

Definition of Terms¹

Agency: “The charitable organization that provides the food supplied by a food bank or food rescue organization directly to clients in need through various types of programs” (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

America’s Second Harvest: The nation’s largest domestic hunger-relief charity (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

Food Bank (FB): “A charitable organization that solicits, receives, inventories, and distributes donated food and grocery products pursuant to grocery industry and appropriate regulatory standards. The products are distributed to charitable human-service agencies, which provide the products directly to needy clients through various programs” (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

¹ Many of the definitions are verbatim from the America’s Second Harvest Report on Hunger 2006 (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006) in order to maintain consistency within the literature.

Food Insecurity: “USDA’s measure of lack of access, at all times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members; limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods” (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

Food Insecurity with Hunger: “An involuntary state that results from not being able to afford enough food” (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

Food Shelves (pantries) (FS): An organization that distributes non-prepared food and other grocery products to clients in need, who then prepare and use these items in their homes (Chase & Schauben, 2006).

Hunger: “An individual level physiological condition that may result from food insecurity” (www.ers.usda.gov).

Shelter: “A charitable program whose primary purpose is to provide shelter or housing on a short-term or temporary basis to needy clients and typically serves one or more meals a day” (O’Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

Limitations of the Study include:

Limitations to this study include:

- a. CH1 recently (December 2007) conducted an “Agency Satisfaction Survey” using the same sample as is used in this study. Agencies reported their interactions with CH1 as well as their rated level of priority for needs of their organization (physical space, funds, volunteers, etc.). This information did not become known or available until after the beginning of the current study. This complicated data collection and it was decided that phone interviews would be conducted in place of another survey (which was the method of data collection for the Agency Satisfaction

Survey). This was done with the hopes of reducing potential survey fatigue given such a short time between the current study and the last survey.

b. In light of the recent survey, some respondent agencies were confused and felt that they had already participated in a recent study conducted by CH1. Agencies' answers, although felt by the author to be genuine, could have been altered by this confusion. It should also be noted that the sample had experienced participation in other recent studies including Minnesota Foodshare's *State of Hunger in Minnesota* (Chase & Schauben, 2006) as well as America's Second Harvest's reports on *The Almanac of Hunger and Poverty 2007* (A2H, 2007) & *Hunger in America 2006* (O'Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

c. Further limitations could include the variability of all of the individual food shelves. Many of the programs are very large (for example, CH1) and have many contacts which make it difficult to identify who is best to provide responses to the survey. Also, some of the programs are very small with restricted hours of operation (one of the identified barriers to growth). Not only does this restrict growth, but it also makes it difficult to contact them for the purposes of this study. While frequent attempts were made to contact these smaller food shelves (specifically during provided hours of operation), some of them were unable to be reached. It is recognized that these sites were critical to contact, understanding that restricted hours may be chosen or imposed depending on the FS's situation; a question that needed to be investigated.

Methodology

Thirty-nine food shelves in southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin directly receive donated food from CH1. Due to the limited sample size it was determined that all food shelves would be included in the study. Questions were drafted based loosely on information collected in CH1's Agency Satisfaction Survey distributed in December of 2007, as well as based on information collected during the literature review phase and through discussions with the director of CH1. The questions were specifically designed to investigate detailed aspects of previously identified barriers to growth for food shelves.

Phone calls were conducted to solicit answers from food shelves and allow the researcher to discuss in an open-ended format, the problems of growth for food shelves. This allowed the researcher to probe for more detail when necessary as well as to move on past irrelevant questions and save time for more relevant topics (some questions were follow-ups depending on a response to an initial question). Responses were paraphrased and entered into a spreadsheet during the phone calls for the purposes of data collection. Data was analyzed using qualitative to quantitative conversion techniques for descriptive statistics. Qualitative responses were also used to highlight and supplement key quantitative results.

Chapter II: Literature Review

I. Hunger in the United States

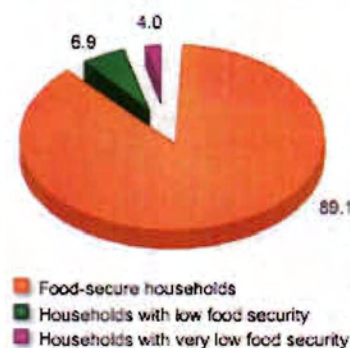
1. Current Statistics

Today, most American families are secure when it comes to obtaining food. The USDA has reported that since 2005, approximately 89% of families in America have no trouble with food security. However, this leaves approximately 11% who have experienced food insecurity at some time during the year.

Of those families who did experience food insecurity, 4% had such low security that it upset their normal eating patterns. The other two-thirds were able to make up their food security through means such as eating a lesser variety of food, participating in Federal food and nutrition assistance programs, or securing food through local food shelves (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2007).

Figure 1

Food security status of U.S. households, 2006



Note: Food-insecure households include those with low food security and very low food security.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2006 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Children appear not to be protected from much of the food insecurity.

Households with children experienced nearly twice the rate of food insecurity (15.6 % of national households) as those who did not have children (8.5 % of national households) (www.ers.usda.gov). The prevalence of food insecurity comes from households who are near or below the Federal poverty line. Also, families lead by single women, African American families, and Hispanic families were more likely to experience food insecurity.

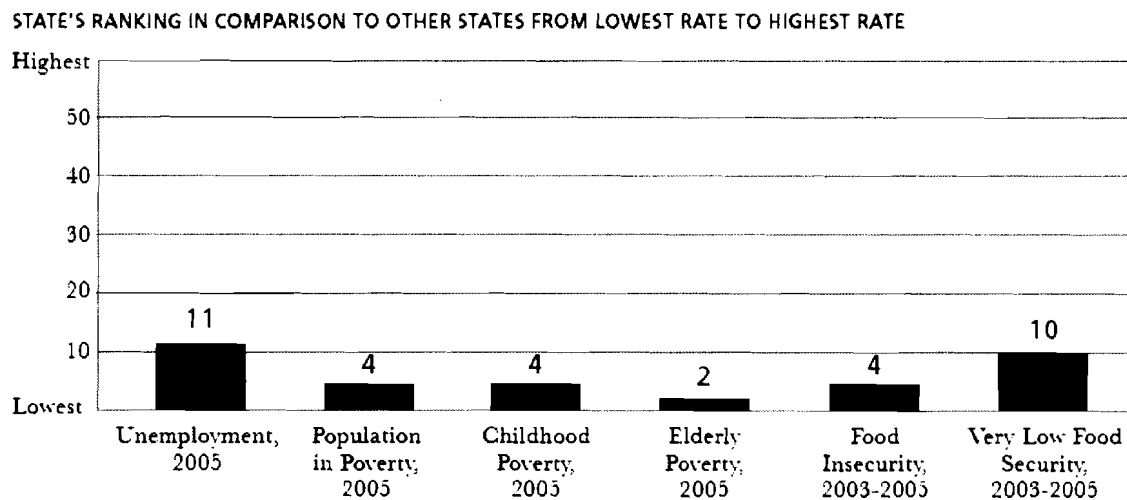
Families experiencing food insecurity reported this condition in 7 months of the year, and for a few days in each of these months (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2007).

In the families who experience food insecurity, as many as half turn to Federal assistance or other emergency food assistance for help during hard times. Families turned to such programs as the National School Lunch Program, the Food Stamp Program, and WIC. Twenty-one percent reported using a food shelf to obtain emergency food; 2.2% ate at their community emergency food kitchen (Nord, Andrews & Carlson, 2007).

a. Hunger in Minnesota

According to the America's Second Harvest Hunger Almanac 2007, Minnesota ranks 4th lowest in the nation for families experiencing food insecurity. This is up one position from the previous year where Minnesota ranked 5th (A2H, 2007).

Figure 2 (America's Second Harvest, 2008)



Minnesota's food insecurity rate has been relatively stable across the last few years. Between 2002 and 2005 the rate has been between 7.2% and 7.7%. Families with

very low food securities rates made up between 2.5% and 3% of the population during that same time period. Minnesota has six food banks servicing the entire state.

A recent study conducted by Hormel Foods in conjunction with America's Second Harvest (2006), revealed some startling trends in perceptions of Minnesotans about hunger and food insecurity. Some of the key findings are highlighted here:

- 63% of Minnesotans believe that the hunger problem is rising in the U.S.
- 89% believe that the problem will not be solved in their lifetime
 - 68% believe it will not be solved in their children's lifetime
- Minnesotans are more pessimistic about hunger than the rest of the nation with 11% of Minnesotans believing that hunger will be solved in their lifetime compared to 19% nationally
- 58% of Minnesotans believe the government is failing at preventing hunger
- 84% of Minnesotans believe that the U.S. hunger problem is equal to or worse than other developed nations
- 69% of Minnesotans believe that hunger in the U.S. is very important
- 86% of Minnesotans believe that those who cannot work or earn money for food should be helped
- 57% of Minnesotans are likely to donate money, products or volunteer for charitable causes (68% nationally)

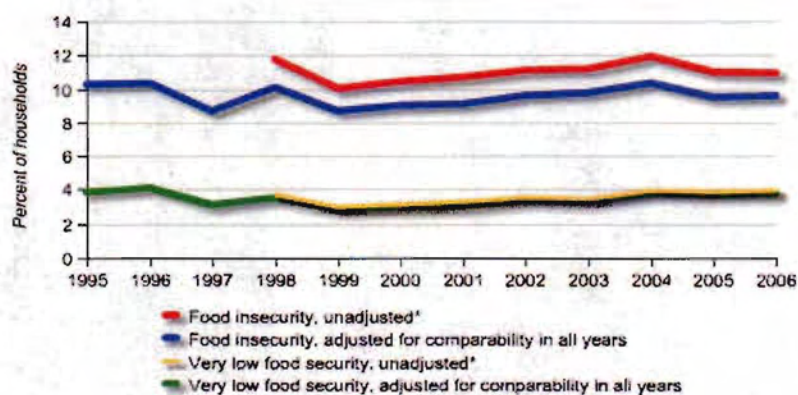
With all of this information about current and local statistics where does this leave us? What are the current national trends when it comes to hunger forecasting? Where can we expect this problem to go in the future?

2. Current Trends

Nationally, there has been a slight yearly increase in the usage of food shelves since the late 1990's. Figure 3 shows that the percentage change across the years from 1999 until 2006 for the very low food security trend line indicates an increase of about 1.5%. Although this may not seem like a big change in food insecurity, with about 115 million households in the U.S. (www.ers.usda.gov), that translates to approximately 1.7 million household increase over those 7 years.

Figure 3 (www.ers.usda.gov)

Trends in prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security in U.S. households, 1995-2006

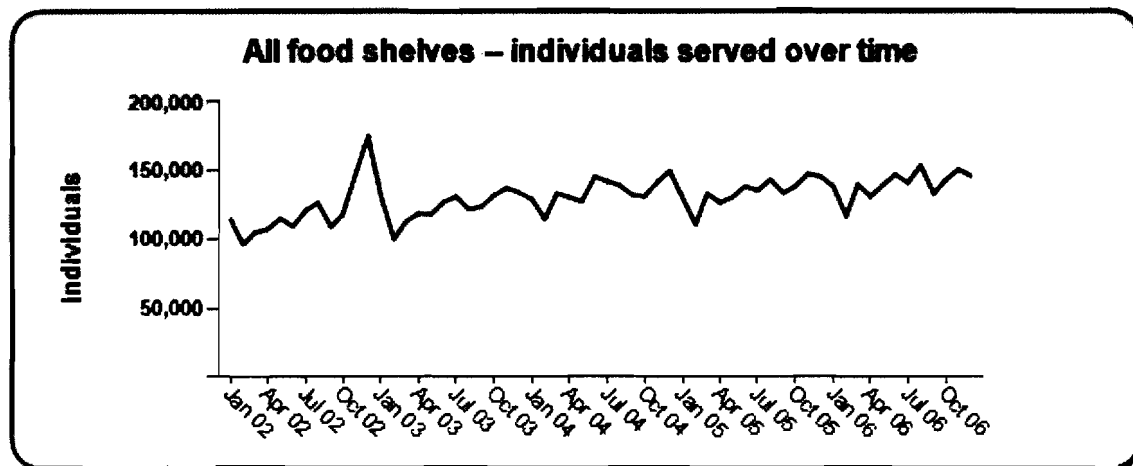


*Data as collected (unadjusted) in 1995-97 are not directly comparable with data collected in 1998-2006.
Source: Calculated by ERS based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data.

Specifically to Minnesota, from 2000 through 2004 there was a 45% increase in the number of visits to food shelves. Since 1990, there has been a 90% increase (from 303,000 to 576,000). Figure 4 shows about 110,000 individuals served in January of 2002. October of 2006 shows about 148,000 individuals served. Although there is quite a bit of variability in the monthly data points, an overall trend of increasing visits becomes apparent. Women, children and minority groups continue to be the highest

served populations. Interestingly, food stamp usage continues to decline, as well, being down 58% since 1990 (Chase & Schauben, 2006).

Figure 4 (www.gmcc.org)



With statistics like these, it is easy to see that the state of hunger and assistance in the U.S. and Minnesota is strikingly poor. People continue to find themselves unable to consistently secure food. So what has been done in the past, and what is currently being done to combat this epidemic of hunger in our country?

I. The Emergency Food Network

1. Brief History

The Emergency Food Network has a long and sordid history. There are many journals available to researchers about the evolution and the explanations of how things came about. One of the most comprehensive journals was written in 2006 by Daponte and Bade. Their succinct chronological description of the history of the food assistance programs in the U.S. serves as one of the best summations available. The following section entitled “Brief History” and its subsequent subsections are drawn from this

journal. For a complete list of references for the history of the Private Food Assistance Network please see Daponte and Bade (2006).

There are many terms used to describe food assistance throughout the history of such programs in the United States. The Food Stamps Program (FSP) is traditionally what comes to mind in individuals when thinking about the history of food assistance. The FSP, in its infant state, formed in the 1930s when the federal government attempted to protect farmers from volatility in the markets by implementing price supports for agriculture. Many problems arose out of this program and in 1939 government economists proposed a new subsidized cash purchase (food stamp) plan to help to reduce problems with assistance.

Similar to the initial FSP, problems quickly became apparent with this new program and as of 1943, while experiencing competition for food resources with World War II, the program collapsed. It was not long after this that politicians began to realize that 40% of potential draftees were being rejected due to poor health. This was quickly recognized as a national security risk and, in lieu of these insights, Congress enacted the National School Lunch Act.

During the 1950s and throughout the Eisenhower administration, focus shifted back to farmers and agriculture and away from food assistance. John F. Kennedy would refocus the nation and bring food assistance back to the public's mind. Kennedy's first executive order in February of 1961 doubled food assistance and directed the secretary of Agriculture to pilot a new FSP. In 1964, the Food Stamp Act was passed and the program was made permanent (Daponte & Bade, 2006).

a. Modern Food Stamps

Throughout the 1960's the FSP grew, but not without problems. Issues such as nonparticipation, fraud, locally determined eligibility requirements, lump-sum purchase requirements and inflated food prices plagued the program. By the late 1960s it was obvious that the current program was not eliminating hunger in the U.S., and hearings were held to address the problems. The media attention surrounding these hearings led to cries for changes to the program from the public.

In 1970 the Food Stamp Reform Bill attempted to fix some of the problems with the FSP and get the program back on track. The bill mandated that families were given enough stamps to purchase a "nutritionally adequate diet". It also called for national standards of eligibility and capped the purchase price for FS at 30% of a families' income. It also provided free FS when a families' income was less than \$30 a month.

Shortly after enactment of the bill, participation in the program skyrocketed from 4.3 million clients in 1970, to 9.4 million in 1971. After the program became available across the nation, participation jumped gain to 16.3 million. With all of this participation came more problems.

In 1977 Congress again reformed the program under the Food Stamp Act of 1977 and eliminated the FS purchase requirement thus eliminating out-of-pocket expenses for families in the program. This was done in order to remove more barriers to participation in the program and assumed that if families did not have to pay for their food stamps they would be able to save that money to purchase food above and beyond what they were getting from the FSP. This plan backfired and the government quickly realized that people were not budgeting money for food at all anymore. Clients were beginning to

become entrenched in the FSP and were not becoming better off because of the assistance (Daponte & Bade, 2006).

b. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

With the election of President Reagan in 1980 came a shift in support for Federal assistance to hunger. In 1981 and 1982 the Reagan administration passed legislation designed to re-establish the boundaries of eligibility while also reducing benefits to the recipients. The restriction of services drew the attention of anti-hunger activists and in response Congress enacted the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1982. This act mandated that the government distribute surplus commodities to soup kitchens and other programs that provided free food to "indigent people." This was the establishment of the private food assistance network in America.

The first emergence of the food pantry was seen during this time as well. The USDA food donations were first released (mainly cheese) in 1981 and were intended to be a one-time event. The food was distributed to the states, which in turn distributed the food to agencies and nonprofits. These agencies and nonprofits began to develop the role of distribution to the needy via established sites which eventually evolved into the modern day food shelf. This one-time delivery of food was seen by the Reagan administration as such a success that in 1983 a bill was passed establishing the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

Over the next few years TEFAP was seen as a tremendous success by the Reagan administration. It succeeded in stabilizing food prices for farmers, it pleased the anti-hunger activist community, and it also provided a route for food producers to dispose of

food that it would have otherwise had to pay to get rid of. TEFAP would continue to see evolutions including highs and lows throughout the rest of the 1980s and into the 1990s.

TEFAP changed the way the government dealt with the issue of hunger. It began to provide funding for purchasing and distributing food as opposed to paying for people to purchase their own food. TEFAP essentially institutionalized the private food distribution network in America. In 1990 Congress made TEFAP permanent and changed the name from the Temporary Emergency Food Assistance Program to The Emergency Food Assistance Program dropping the “temporary” portion of the name (Daponte & Bade, 2006).

d. America’s Second Harvest

i. History

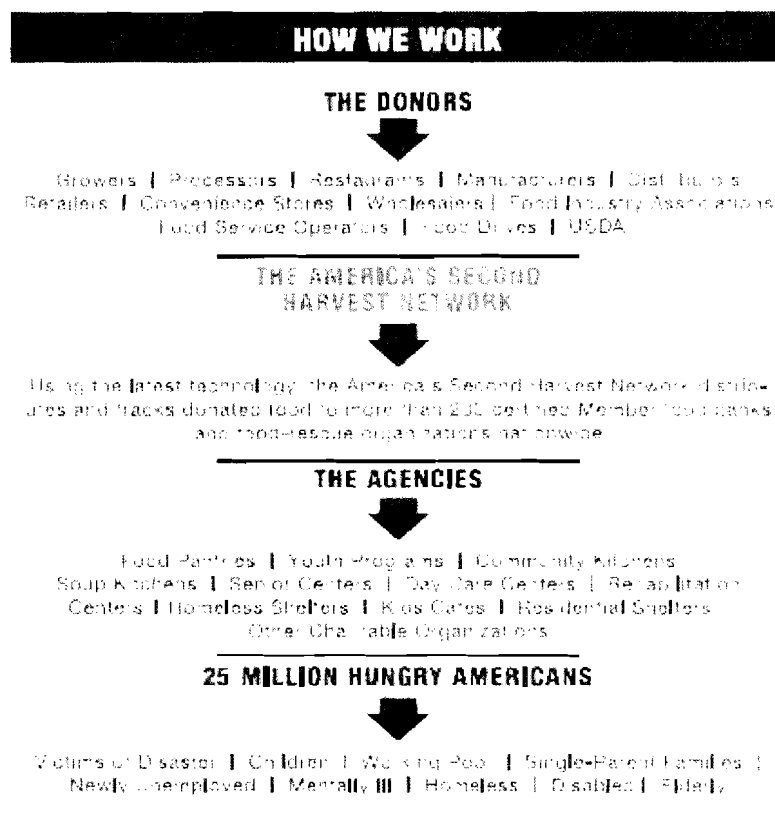
TEFAP is well known as the program that established the private food assistance network in the U.S., but a discussion about the network would not be complete without a thorough review of an organization known as America’s Second Harvest (A2H). A2H formed in 1979 after “Good Samaritan” laws made it easier for private food manufacturers to donate their unsalable foods to private food banks. A2H is an organization of member food banks and accounts for more than 95% of all food banks nationally.

ii. Operations

A2H imposes standards on its member food banks such as food quality, sanitation, warehouse and storage capacities, staffing standards, inventory, finances and management practices. This system allows donors the comfort of not having to worry that their donations will be used for anything beyond its donated intent. A2H serves as a

liaison between the network of food banks and shelves and the many donors in the food industry. A2H does not operate a warehouse of food however, they simply act as a system to implement organization and stability into the food assistance network (Daponte & Bade, 2006).

Figure 5 (www.secondharvest.org)



America's Second Harvest Logic Model

A few statistics about A2H's operations:

- In 2004, A2H managed 301 million pounds of food (Daponte & Bade, 2006)
- In 2005, A2H's budget was \$493 million (Daponte & Bade, 2006)
- As of 2008, A2H had over 200 member food banks (America's Second Harvest, 2008)

- A2H is based out of Chicago so that it can be centered nationally (Daponte & Bade, 2006)
- Each year A2H provides food assistance to as many as 25 million Americans (America's Second Harvest, 2008)
- A2H operates in all 50 states including Washington, D.C. and Puerto Rico (America's Second Harvest, 2008)

iii. A2H Hunger Studies

A2H not only provides leadership and guidance for the 200 plus member organizations, it is also heavily involved in researching hunger and the hunger network in America. In 2001 and 2006, A2H conducted the largest ever studies of their kind, seeking to provide data about the nation's charitable response to the hunger problem and the people affected by hunger. Through 52,000 interviews and 30,000 survey responses, A2H describes in detail the current state of hunger in America. These results are critical for refining the system and providing much needed data to those who work directly with the many issues related to hunger (America's Second Harvest, 2007).

Both the 2001 and 2006 hunger reports can be found online at A2H's website. They are well organized and easy to use and are also free to download for anyone interested. It is believed by this researcher that this is the premier report on hunger in America. Many of the other sources of literature used in this journal have cited A2H's hunger reports frequently. Much of the information for this journal was also taken from A2H's reports. A2H is by far the premier authority on everything and anything hunger related in the United States and should be consulted as the ultimate authority for any research question related to food assistance and hunger.

iv. A look to the future

Second Harvest is tackling hunger with action and initiation. A2H is currently focused on attempting to continue to secure more food by soliciting donations from food manufacturers and grocers. They are attempting to secure more funding through the states in order to purchase some of the items that are not commonly donated, such as milk. A2H is also working with food shelves to increase their dry, refrigerator and freezer capacities so that FSs have a more storage space and can therefore accept more food for distribution. Finally, A2H is working with federal nutrition program administrators to identify and eliminate participation barriers for families in need (A2H, 2008).

e. Channel One

i. Program description

The specific purpose of this research article is to explore a portion of A2H's network operated by an organization out of Rochester, Minnesota known as Channel One, Inc. Food Bank and Food Shelf. Channel One (CH1) formed in 1980 as a local human service program. CH1 gained its 501 (c) (3) tax-exempt status as a nonprofit in 1982. In 1983 CH1 went from being a simple food shelf to adding a warehouse and becoming a food bank. CH1's mission is to "help feed people in need" (Channel One, 2008). They services 14 counties in southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin. CH1 has membership in multiple organizations including A2H, Hunger Solutions Minnesota, and are partners with the United Way of Olmsted County. Just this past year, CH1 distributed 4.6 million pounds of food (Channel One, 2008).

CH1 is unique in that it is both a food bank as well as one of Minnesota's largest food shelves. CH1 operates over 200 programs ranging from its own food shelf, disaster relief, and assistance to 30+ other food shelves; they aid in shelters and soup kitchens, as well as unique programs such as "Green Gardens" which provides growing space for families who wish to grow their own produce (Channel One, 2008).

ii. Stats, demographics, budget, agencies affiliated

- In 2006-2007 CH1 received and distributed over 4.8 million pounds of product (Channel One, 2007)
- The food was distributed through 180 member agency programs in 91 non-profit organizations (Channel One, 2007)
- CH1 operated on a budget of just over \$5 million in 2006-2007 (Channel One, 2007)
 - This is an increase of approximately \$1 million from 2005-2006 (Channel One, 2007)
- CH1's annual estimated number of clients is 38,400 (A2H, 2006)
- CH1's weekly estimated number of clients is 7,900 (A2H, 2006)
- CH1's percentage of clients who are food insecure: 62% (A2H, 2006)
- CH1's percentage of clients who are food insecure with children: 55% (A2H, 2006)
- CH1's percentage of clients who are food insecure with hunger: 31% (A2H, 2006)
- CH1's percentage of clients with hunger and with children: 20% (A2H, 2006)

iii. Current state of the organization

CH1 is currently in a transition state for a couple of reasons. First, in October of 2007, CH1's director Carla Johnson took a new position with Second Harvest Heartland (Midwest branch of A2H) and thus a new director was brought in, Cynthia Shaffer (Channel One, 2007). CH1 also saw changes in other positions throughout the staff making for many new faces within the organization. CH1 also recently completed a new 3600 sq. ft. addition to the warehouse including a new coding system (Gossman, 2008). With all of these changes within the organization, CH1 remains committed to providing quality service to those in need.

f. The Modern Food Shelf

There is very little in the literature that attempts to create a profile of the modern food shelf. This is understandable given the diversity of populations served and geographic placement of the nation's many food shelves. However, consistencies do apply across the board. The following section attempts to describe (in general) what the modern food shelf experiences. Much of this information was taken from the A2H Hunger in America 2006 study; information retrieved elsewhere is cited as appropriate.

Of the 25,654 non-emergency programs being operated by the agencies affiliated with A2H, 71.9% of them are food shelves. The average food shelf has been in operation for 15 years. Many offer services beyond food assistance including nutrition counseling, WIC, food stamp eligibility counseling, soup kitchens, client employment training, legal services, tax preparations, budget and credit counseling, language translation, housing services, and health services. On average, a food shelf will provide 3 of the aforementioned services along with food assistance. Also, many of today's food shelves

are faith-based. In fact, 73.6% of FSs report that they are run by faith-based or religious affiliated nonprofits.

i. Community Impact

The strain on the modern FS is growing though. When asked about the volume of clients that FSs see, 64.6% of them say that they serve more clients than they did in 2001. On average, shelves distribute 140 boxes or bags of food during a typical week. The average weight of the box or bag is 22 pounds. Certainly this number is heavily influenced by the variability in the types of food shelves that exist (large, small, rural, urban, etc); taking this into consideration, the median number of boxes or bags of food distributed in a typical week is 46. By calculating out the yearly average we can see that the typical FS is moving over 52,000 lbs of food a year to those in need.

ii. Difficulties

Food shelves obviously have a tremendous impact on the communities they reside in. The programs, services and food assistance they offer are critical to the state of a community's citizens. However, recent economic troubles in the U.S. have led more and more individuals to seek help. FSs are experiencing large increases in client visits and decreases in donations. But why?

An increase in client visits can be attributed to family economic strains. Oil prices are up, home heating costs are up, food prices are up, rent and foreclosures are up, and families who may have otherwise been able to donate to causes such as food assistance have to spare their money in order to survive themselves; so monetary donations are down (Zezima, 2007). Other factors such as job losses, slashed work hours, medication costs, and auto repairs also have a big impact (Kim, 2006).

Contributing to the difficulties, food manufacturers and distributors have revised their operations since the technology boom of the late 1990s. According to an article by Etter (2007), manufacturers and retailers have had greater supply-chain efficiency. They are able to produce food in quantities that more closely matches the retail customer's individual needs. Because of this, there is less excess food produced. Also, new technologies have helped to eliminate many production errors such as labeling errors, and cereal boxes with up-side-down text (Etter, 2007).

Further, grocery stores that used to donate damaged or past-date products are now putting them on discount racks or are selling these products to discount stores. Grocery stores are also utilizing changes in technology that allow them to monitor their inventories more efficiently as well. All of this efficiency and productivity for the nation's food industry translates into better profits and cheaper prices, but it drastically cuts the donations that FBs and FSs were so accustomed to (Etter, 2007).

iii. Barriers to Growth

Food supply is only one of the many issues that FSs have to deal with. With an increase in community demand, focus changes to not only securing more food, but eliminating other barriers that prevent a FS from providing services and growing to match the ever rising client demand. Very little exists in the scholarly literature about the barriers that food shelves (and food programs in general) experience. The majority of information about barriers comes from, again, the A2H Hunger in America 2006 study where a section of questions asks about barriers and threats to operation. The following is a summary of their findings:

- Shelves receive on average 74.2% of their food from food banks
 - 68.7% of shelves receive food from programs such as TEFAP or CSFP
 - 76.2% of shelves receive food from churches or religious congregations
 - 40.8% of shelves receive food from local merchants or farmer donations
 - 49.9% of shelves receive food from local food drives
- 61.9% of shelves believe they are facing one or more problems that threaten their operations
- Of the programs facing threats, 42.3% of shelves report funding as a threat
- Of the programs facing threats, 30.7% of shelves report food supplies as a threat
- Of the programs facing threats, 18% of shelves report volunteer-related problems as a threat
- Of the programs facing threats, only 1.9% of shelves report community resistance as a threat
- 18.1% of shelves reported having to stretch food resources sometimes or always
- Shelf programs had to turn away clients 32.9% of the time during 2005, reasons include:
 - Lack of food resources (34.4%)
 - Services needed not provided by program (22.3%)

- Clients were ineligible or could not prove eligibility (36.3%)
- Clients abused the program/came to often (50.9%)
- Clients exhibited drug, alcohol, or behavior problems (18.2%)
- Clients lived outside of the service area (40.2%)
- Clients had no proper identification (25.7%)
- Client's income exceeded the guidelines (20.7%)
- 45% of shelves reported needing some level of additional food for distribution
 - Shelves needed a median of 200 additional pounds of food per week
- 66.2% of shelves have no paid staff
 - 15.6% of shelves have 1 paid staff; the percentage steadily declines from there
- The average number of volunteers for a shelf is 9
- The average number of volunteer hours in a given week is 35 across all volunteers
- The value of volunteer time in a shelf for a typical week is almost \$8.2 million
- 88.9% of shelves say that elimination of support from their food bank would have a significant or devastating impact on their operation
- Shelves were asked where they needed additional assistance
 - Nutritional education (28.6%)
 - Training in food handling (16.1%)

- Accessing local resources (41.8%)
- Advocacy training (16.3%)

As we can see, FSs face significant barriers to growth. Factors such as funding, volunteer help, storage space, securing food sources, and education/training continue to prevent growth and expansion of services to be provided. Based on information gathered from the A2H Hunger in America 2006 report as well as other sources of literature, and through discussions about specific regional barriers perceived by staff at CH1, an investigation was drafted in order to specifically identify the major barriers to growth in the food shelves affiliated with CH1. Ten specific barrier areas were identified including:

- | | |
|----------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Non-refrigeration space | 6. Product Availability /Selection |
| 2. Refrigeration space | 7. Product Deliver/Pickup |
| 3. Freezer space | 8. Volunteers |
| 4. Funding | 9. Training |
| 5. Product Quality | 10. Board Involvement |

Chapter III: Methodology

An investigation into thirty-eight food shelves in southeastern Minnesota and La Crosse County in Wisconsin who directly receive donated food from CH1's FB was conducted in order to determine how previously identified barriers have an impact on CH1's affiliated food shelves. The following section describes methodological issues such as subject selection, instrumentation, data analysis, and limitation.

Subject Selection and Description

Subjects were identified as all food shelves affiliated with the CH1 FB in Rochester, MN. Due to the limited sample size ($n=38$) it was determined that all food shelves would be included in the study. The food shelves ranged from very rural to metropolitan.

Instrumentation

A survey was written in order to investigate barriers and how they have an impact on FSs. Questions were drafted based loosely on information collected in CH1's Agency Satisfaction Survey distributed in December of 2007, as well as more directly based on information collected during the literature review phase and through discussions with the director of CH1. The questions were specifically designed to investigate detailed aspects of the 10 previously identified (found at the end of Chapter II) barriers to growth for food shelves.

Data Collection Procedures

A survey (see Appendix B) with potentially 32 questions was administered via phone calls in order to solicit answers from food shelves. This allowed the researcher to

discuss in an open-ended format, the problems of growth for food shelves. Questions were drafted so that certain key questions had follow-up questions (probes). Participants would receive no fewer than 17 questions, but not more than 32. This allowed the researcher to probe for more detail when necessary as well as to move on past irrelevant questions (relevance determined by previous answers) and save time for more applicable topics.

A letter was sent out approximately 3 weeks prior to data collection from CH1 informing the affiliated FSs about the study and that they would be solicited for participation. The letter described the project and informed the participants that the research was being conducted for CH1. Three weeks later, participants were called, greeted, made aware of the researcher's affiliation with CH1, asked if they had received the letter about the project, and then asked if they had time to participate. If they did not, a time to call back was setup. If they did, the researcher read the implied consent form (Appendix A) and began questioning. Phone calls typically took about 10 minutes with some lasting up to 20 minutes. Upon completion of the phone call, the participant was thanked, read the debriefing form (Appendix C) and the call was concluded. Certainly, not all of the FSs were contacted on the initial phone call. FSs that proved difficult to reach were called no fewer than 4 times before it was determined that they were unavailable to participate.

Responses were paraphrased and entered into a spreadsheet during the phone calls for the purposes of data collection. Immediately upon completing the phone call, the researcher reviewed all answers and filled in any information that may have been missed during the phone call.

Data Analysis

Data was analyzed by converting applicable questions from qualitative to quantitative for the purposes of creating descriptive statistics. For example, question number 1 asks about whether the participant feels they have enough non-refrigeration storage space at their facility. Answers were received as either “yes”, “no”, or “yes/no” answers. The “yes/no” answers indicated that there were times throughout the year when both answers were applicable. This response was essentially a “sometimes” answer. These responses were then categorized as yes=1, no=2, yes/no=3. This allowed the researcher to quickly count frequencies of responses for the questions that operated in this format.

Other questions that could not be converted from qualitative to quantitative were simply coded by response and frequencies were tallied. A complex qualitative coding structure was not necessary for this type of material. The range of answers was very limited thus making it very easy to identify themes and trends in the qualitative data. Qualitative responses were also used to supplement and support certain quantitative results (as will be seen in Chapter IV).

Limitations

CH1 recently (December 2007) conducted an “Agency Satisfaction Survey” using the same sample as is used in this study. Agencies reported their interactions with CH1 as well as their rated level of priority for needs of their organization (physical space, funds, volunteers, etc.). This information did not become known or available until after the beginning of the current study. This complicated data collection and it was decided that phone interviews would be conducted in place of another survey (which was the

method of data collection for the Agency Satisfaction Survey). This was done with the hopes of reducing potential survey fatigue given such a short time between the current study and the last survey.

In light of the recent survey, some respondent agencies were confused and felt that they had already participated in a recent study conducted by CH1. Agencies' answers, although felt by the author to be mostly genuine, could have been altered by this confusion. It should also be noted that the sample had experienced participation in other recent studies including Minnesota Foodshare's *State of Hunger in Minnesota* (Chase & Schauben, 2006) as well as America's Second Harvest's reports on *The Almanac of Hunger and Poverty 2007* (A2H, 2007) & *Hunger in America 2006* (O'Brien & Aldeen, 2006).

The process of conducting interviews proved challenging with respect to standardizing the questioning. At times, the questioning began to feel more conversational and less like a structured interview. Upon reviewing the data, certain responses received probes and some did not. This can be attributed to the experience of the interviewer and the perceptions of the amount of available time of the respondent. Certain respondents were willing to elaborate on answers, while others were a bit reluctant. Part of these procedural issues would have arisen if a pilot study would have been conducted. It would have proved helpful to sit down with a local FS and pilot the questions in order to forecast potential answers and identify necessary follow-ups. Future replications of this study would require a more strict procedure. In light of this, the data that is available is not invalid; it just may be incomplete in limited areas.

Some of the sampled FSs indicated that they had just completed their March drives. It was not known by the researcher, nor conveyed by CH1 that this was a common practice for affiliates of CH1. Many of the FSs were stocked well with food just received from this food drive. Answers could have been vastly different if the same questions were asked when FSs were experiencing more difficult times.

Further limitations could include the variability of all of the individual food shelves. Many of the programs are very large (for example, CH1) and have many contacts which make it difficult to identify who is best to provide responses to the survey. Also, some of the programs are very small with restricted hours of operation (one of the identified barriers to growth). Not only does this restrict growth, but it also makes it difficult to contact them for the purposes of this study. While frequent attempts were made to contact these smaller food shelves (specifically during provided hours of operation), some of them were unable to be reached. It is recognized that these sites were critical to contact, understanding that restricted hours may be chosen or imposed depending on the FS's situation; information that needed to be investigated.

Chapter IV: Results

Respondents (n=31, 82% response rate) were asked in over-the-phone interviews their perceptions of how previously identified barriers affected their FS's ability to operate and potentially grow to meet the ever rising hunger rates in the U.S.

Respondents' answers were paraphrased as they were entered into the data sheet.

Quantitative results are shown below in Table 1. Quantitative and qualitative results are discussed in the following section.

Non-refrigeration storage space

When asked whether participants felt that their FS had enough non-refrigerated food space, 58% felt that they had enough. Nineteen percent of respondents said they did not have enough non-refrigerated food space; 23% answered yes/no indicating sometimes they had enough and sometimes they did not. Qualitative responses indicate that of those who said that they do not have enough non-refrigerated food space, funding and the size of the facility in which the FS is housed were major barriers to being able to store more non-refrigerated FS materials. Eleven (35%) of the respondents indicated space issues in some way in the qualitative portion of their answer (regardless of yes or no to initial question). For example (answers have been paraphrased):

- we only order what we can store
- size of the space doesn't allow for more storage space
- do the best with what we have; in a church basement with two rooms, its tight but we make it work

Two respondents indicated funding as a barrier to securing more non-refrigerated storage space. Two respondents indicated that they were searching for larger building

Table 1

Frequencies and Percentages of Responses from Phone Survey

	Response Frequency*			Percentage*		
	Yes	No	Yes/No**	Yes	No	Yes/No**
Q1a: Food Storage Space (non-refrig)	18	6	7	58%	19%	23%
Q2a: Refrigeration Space	23	7	1	74%	23%	3%
Q3a: Freezer Space	23	7	1	74%	23%	3%
Q4a: Funding	25	3	3	81%	10%	10%
Q5a: Product Quality	31	0	0	100%	0%	0%
Q6a: Product Availability/Selection	26	2	3	84%	6%	10%
Q6b: FS Availability	29	0	1	97%	0%	3%
Q6c: FS Selection Choice	25	3	3	81%	10%	10%
Q7a: Product Delivery/Pick-up Issues	1	26	3	3%	87%	10%
Q8a: Volunteers	25	3	3	81%	10%	10%
Q9a: Training	30	0	1	97%	0%	3%
Q10a: Board Involvement	25	1	2	89%	4%	7%
Q10b: Board Support	21	0	4	84%	0%	16%
Q10c: Board Issues	0	20	0	0%	100%	0%

*Based on valid responses.

**The Yes/No category was allowed due to the nature of the questions. Often, yes applies at one time while no applies at another. The response is essentially a “sometimes” response.

space (which would allow for more refrigeration space) but were having trouble finding places that met their needs.

Refrigeration Space

When asked whether participants felt that their FS had enough refrigerated food space, 71% felt that they had enough. Twenty-two percent of respondents said they did not have enough non-refrigerated food space; 6% answered yes/no indicating sometimes they had enough and sometimes they did not. Qualitative responses indicate that of those who said that they do not have enough refrigerated storage space, funding and physical space were again cited as the main reasons for not having more refrigerated space. For example (answers have been paraphrased):

- space not conducive to increasing refrigeration space; because of this, we limit the refrigerated food we request
- physical space/cost
- real need for refrigeration; requesting donations without any responses

Of the responses, one indicated that they had refrigeration, but that it “finally died.” One of the respondents indicated that they have worked out a deal with the local grocery store whereby the FS provides a voucher for milk or chicken and the client picks it up at the grocery store.

Freezer Space

When asked whether they felt that their FS had enough freezer space, 74% of respondents indicated that they did have enough freezer space. Twenty-three percent indicated that they did not have enough freezer space; 3% responded yes/no indicating that sometimes they had enough and sometimes they did not. Of those who responded

that they did not have enough freezer space, funding and physical space of the FS were cited as the main barriers to expanding freezer space capacity. For example, some of the responses included (answers have been paraphrased):

- real need for them (freezers); requesting donations
- physical space/cost barriers
- funding preventing securing more freezer space

Some FSs indicated that they did have enough freezer space, however, they discussed less than ideal situations that allow them to categorize themselves as having enough freezer space. For example (answers have been paraphrased):

- little space; sharing space with church; physically not enough room for a walk-in freezer or fridge
- someone with a home freezer can step in and help

The majority of FSs seem to be operating with chest freezers and/or refrigerator freezers. Most seem to be satisfied with this capacity. A couple of FSs indicated that they are fine “for now” but fear that they will need to seek more freezer space in the future due to either expansion or because their current freezers stop working.

Funding

Respondents were prefaced for this question with a statement explaining that all FSs wish they had more funding. They were asked to think of this question in the context of their current operations. When asked whether they felt that their FS had enough funding, 80% of respondents indicated that they did have enough funding. Ten percent indicated that they did not have enough funding; 10% responded yes/no indicating that sometimes they had enough and sometimes they did not. Of those who responded that

they did not have enough funding, limited church sponsorship was cited for one FS as a reason for FS funding deficiency. Another FS indicated that they were completely funded through out-of-pocket personal money, and the FSs funding depended on that individual's ability to pay for things. They also indicated that the FS was entirely volunteer run and that the out-of-pocket expenses were minimal. Most FSs, regardless of whether they indicated that they had enough funding or not, seemed to have adapted and learned how to operate on the funding they have.

Product Quality

When asked whether they felt that their product was sufficient to earn the trust of the clients coming to them for help, 100% indicated yes. Four FSs indicated that they have had complaints in the past about expiration dates on products but that they were able to explain to clients that the product is safe for a period of time beyond the expiration date.

Product Availability/Selection

When asked whether respondents felt that their FS had enough food available, 84% of respondents indicated that they did have enough food available. Six percent indicated that they did not have enough food; 10% responded yes/no indicating that sometimes they had enough and sometimes they did not. Of those respondents who said they did not have enough food, increase in demand was cited as the reason for not having enough food. An example of responses includes (answers are paraphrased):

- the summer migrant workers use a lot of the food; not enough donations to meet need
- numbers are growing faster than the food intake numbers

Of those who said yes/no, food seems to be cyclical based on monthly deliveries, or based on yearly times. For example (answers are paraphrased):

- several months where we run out [of food]; at the end of months we get a surge of people because they are running out of food; there are times when there is more food available but we seem to lack food frequently
- at certain times, day before the order the food is low; cycle of ups and downs; when there is a big drive then we are set for a while but before that we are slow

When asked if respondents felt that their food shelf is open and available frequently enough, 97% felt that they were open and available frequently enough. Three percent indicated yes/no meaning sometimes they are and sometimes they are not. A majority of FSs indicated that they are willing to setup times by appointment if a client is unable to come during FSs standard hours.

When asked whether respondent felt that their FS provides adequate selection choices for their clients, 80% indicated that they did provide adequate selection choices. Ten percent felt that they did not offer adequate selection choices; 3% indicated yes/no meaning sometimes they did and sometimes they did not. Those indicating no or yes/no reported missing certain key items including, tuna, peanut butter, soups, pastas, canned fruits. Some FSs indicated that they purchase these items in order to supplement the available food. Other FSs indicated that they would like to provide more culturally or dietary sensitive items.

Product Deliver/Product Pick-up

When asked whether respondents felt they had any issues related to product delivery/product pick-up that impacted their ability to provide food, 87% responded no,

there were no issues related to product deliver/product pick-up. Three percent indicated that there were issues related to product delivery/product pick-up; 10% indicated yes/no meaning that sometimes they do have issues while at other times they do not. Of those who indicated that they did have troubles (“yes” and “yes/no” answers) with product deliver/product pickup, examples of responses included (answers are paraphrased):

- CH1 delivers once a month; when FS is real busy they go pick it up; grocery store in Albert Lea will deliver if needed; have driven over with a pick-up when needed, and CH1 has delivered when needed
- pick up has been a problem, availability with CH1 has been tough, not much flexibility; she has to work with her volunteer drivers and it doesn't match sometimes with CH1's delivery times
- not with CH1; we utilize 2 sites to store food so there is sometimes not enough staff to transport back and forth

Most FSs seem to have an available truck for pick-ups either from CH1 when it is not delivered or for pick-ups from places wishing to make a donation. Trucks are either owned by the FS, are owned by volunteers, or are owned by companies willing to allow the FS to use the vehicle.

Volunteers

When asked whether respondent felt that their FS has enough volunteer help, 81% indicated that they did have adequate volunteer help. Ten percent felt that they did not have adequate volunteer help; 10% indicated yes/no meaning sometimes they did and sometimes they did not. Of those indicating that either they did not have enough, or they

sometimes had enough, most stated that twice as many volunteers would be ideal for their organization.

When asked what their FS does to solicit volunteer help, respondents indicated that advertising, word-of-mouth, and solicitations through church bulletins were the most common methods of securing volunteer help. Other methods and their frequencies can be seen in Table 2 below.

Table 2

Methods for Solicitation of Volunteer Help (based on n=31)

Method	Frequency	Percentage
Advertise (Newsletter, Newspaper, Radio, Website, Media)	14	45%
Church Bulletins	12	38%
Colleges	3	10%
Community Service	2	6%
Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP)	3	10%
Unsolicited Help	8	26%
Word-of-Mouth	13	42%

A third question was asked to respondents about volunteer help. The question asked if there were any other ways that they could solicit volunteer help that they may not do already. This question was designed to amass any and all ideas that respondents may have for soliciting and securing volunteer help. The complete list of responses can be found in Appendix D. Some responses overlap with already identified methods of volunteer solicitation, but all answers are included in order to create a comprehensive list. Answers included such examples as creating an organization website, using the United

Way website to solicit and register volunteers, volunteer fairs, going to community organizations and doing a presentation about the FS, and using workforce development.

It should be noted that a couple respondents indicated that they do not allow clients to offer volunteer hours at the FS in which they receive help. Clients may desire to give back to the organization that offers them help. A conflict of interest can quickly arise and it is suggested that this be avoided to prevent any problems from developing.

Training

When asked whether respondents felt that the staff at the FS was adequately trained, 97% believed their staff was adequately trained. Three percent (n=1) responded that they were unsure of whether their staff was adequately trained.

Board/Sponsoring Agency

When asked whether respondents felt that their board/sponsoring agency understands the needs of the community, 89% reported that they felt that the board does understand the needs of the community. Four percent indicated that they did not feel that the board understands the needs of the community; 7% indicated yes/no meaning that sometimes the board does understand while at other times they may not. A few respondents indicated that those who serve on the board are also volunteers or staff, or make donations to the FS. They see firsthand the impact they have on the community.

When asked whether the respondents felt that the board does everything they can to help the FS achieve its goals, 84% indicated that they felt that the board does do everything they can to help the FS achieve its goals. Sixteen percent indicated yes/no. These respondents felt that the board occasionally dragged their feet on issues, or that the board could be more hands on offering volunteer hours and help at the FS.

Largest Barrier to Growth

For the final question of the phone survey, respondents were asked what they felt was the largest barrier to growth for their organization. Results can be seen in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Reported Largest Barrier to Growth (n=30)

Barrier	Frequency	Percentage
FS Use Stigma	1	3%
Product Pick-up	2	7%
Space (refrigeration, freezer, square footage)	12	40%
Financial Security/Funding	7	23%
No Need for Growth; Meeting Community Need	3	10%
Availability of Food	3	10%
Food Allowance Restrictions	1	3%
Community Awareness of FS services	1	3%
Volunteers	3	10%

*Some respondents gave multiple largest barriers, therefore frequency does not add up to 30; percentage is a function of reporting FSs (n=30), not frequency total.

**All Largest Barriers reported are included in table.

Physical space including refrigeration, freezer and square footage is the reported largest barrier to growth for the FSs affiliated with CH1. Financial stability and security is the second largest barrier to growth. All other reported barriers constitute 10% or less of the sample. Regardless, these barriers do have a major impact on the FSs who've reported them and should not be overlooked.

Comments

Respondents were asked if they had any final comments that they would like CH1 to be made aware of. Many of the comments were appreciative in nature. Some suggested improvements or issues that FSs have had with CH1. A complete list of itemized comments can be found in Appendix E.

Chapter V: Discussion

Food insecurity is an ever growing problem in our country. A history of considerable attempts to resolve this problem indicates a country that is aware and conscious of hunger in our communities. Programs such as food stamps, TEFAP and food shelves have made great strides in combating hunger, but ever increasing pressures from our economy make it difficult to make substantial headway. Organizations such as America's Second Harvest and their affiliates including Channel One are on the frontlines doing everything they can to provide assistance to those in need. But this problem does not appear to be going away anytime soon. The research conducted in this study attempts to identify barriers to potential growth for the food shelves affiliated with CH1.

None of the identified barriers overwhelmingly stood out as the main barrier to growth. There is simply too much variability in the surveyed FSs to believe that one problem hangs everyone up the same way. Physical space did show to be a major barrier, however. Many FSs operate in the basement of churches, or in donated community spaces which restrict their ability to even begin to look elsewhere for a larger facility.

Spaces are typically donated at little to no cost. Leaving these spaces would bring on the burden having to search for a larger donated space (likelihood of finding gets smaller as size gets larger), secure funds to purchase a space, or to pay for renting a facility. These options just are not possible for many of the very small FSs included in this survey. Even if they could secure the funding, many of the FSs would rather spend the money on food to provide to those in need. After all, a larger space requires more

food to fill, which requires more money to purchase the food, which requires securing more funding. The communities simply can't offer enough financial support to allow the FS to branch out on its own.

Another issue compounding the difficulty of overcoming these barriers is the cyclical nature of donations and yearly operations. Many of the FSs participate in a yearly March drive. Many FSs also receive heavy donations during other organizational food drives (boy scouts) and around Christmas. Food stocks are adequate in the days and weeks following these events; but what happens when weeks and months go by? What about during seasonal changes?

Frequently during conversations, participants would discuss things as being good "for now." This gave the researcher the impression that things in the FS world are very cyclical in nature. This cycle of ups and downs makes it very difficult for a FS to justify expansion if for months out of the year the shelves will be bare only to be full for a few weeks following periods of community giving. Future research needs to consider these cycles and identify exactly where they come from and how much of an impact they have on FSs.

Throughout this research wonderful ideas born out of coping with these barriers arose. For example, the FS who, in order to deal with its lack of refrigeration and freezer space, worked out a deal with the local grocery store to accept food vouchers stood out as a brilliant solution. Another example came from the FS whose director setup presentations with community groups to discuss the FS program and encourage volunteering was yet another. These proactive approaches are often times the thinking that best breaks the barriers and creates the advancement that others can follow.

So many of the identified barriers are intertwined in such a way that to isolate them is to not fully understand them. For the example, the largest identified barrier of space is very heavily dependent on securing funding. Securing funding is often difficult if there aren't the volunteers who can help with soliciting donations or writing grants. Securing volunteers is heavily dependent on the community's involvement and its willingness to donate time and energy.

The good thing is that by working on all of the barriers little by little, their impact on each other is also reduced. By increasing community awareness (about both the problem of hunger and the lack of volunteers) more volunteers may come forth. The FS may then have more resources to attempt to secure more funding and food resources. By securing more funding it may be possible to someday expand into facilities that are able to match the impact hunger has on a community.

This may seem like an idealistic and oversimplified view of the barriers scenario, but the point is that the barriers frequently cannot be separated from each other. Future research needs to focus on the interactions of these barriers.

Limitations

This study encountered a few limitations that, if replicated, would need to be addressed *a priori*. Issues related to transitions at CH1 created complications with regards to existing documents and data. All materials and information should have been secured prior to any drafts of methods or materials. This information would allow the researcher consider methods that secure information in the most effective way possible while reducing confusion on the part of the respondents. Further, information on cycles

and natural yearly occurrences should have been discussed with the site in order to prevent any history effects.

This study also encountered limitations with regards to the variability in the many FSs included in the sample. It is the nature of applied problems to encounter these sorts of issues. Future research should investigate demographic information such as community size, number of clients served, and operations budget related to the FSs in order to compare large versus small FSs and which barriers affect them as groups.

Conclusions

Hunger in America will continue to be a problem for some time to come. Only by identifying barriers that prevent us from delivering more help to people can we hope to make an impact. Physical space (including refrigeration and freezer) play a critical role in restricting a FSs ability to request and distribute food. Space, however, is not an isolated barrier and understanding how space is restricted by problems such as a lack of funding and volunteer help will be key in reducing barriers faced by food shelves.

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Appendix A

Implied Consent Script

First of all, I would like to thank you for taking the time out of your day to speak with me. This research is being conducted in order to better understand the limitations and barriers that food shelves experience when trying to provide a valuable community service. It is important that you understand that by answering any of the questions in the survey, that you are giving your consent to participate in this research study.

If at any time you feel that you would not like to answer a question, or would like to stop participating in this study, you always have the option to do this without fear of repercussion from either myself or Channel One. Information collected in this process will be used to generate a report for Channel One describing the needs, limitation and barriers of their affiliated food shelves. Confidentiality is ensured through myself and Channel One, although your answers will be connected with your organization's information for the purposes of informing Channel One of specific needs you may have.

If you have any questions please feel free to email me at nicholasj@uwstout.edu. Again, thank you for your time and let's begin.

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Appendix B

**Questions for Phone Interviews with CH1 Agencies
Barriers to Service Growth in Food Shelves****1. Food Storage Space (non refrigeration)**

- a. Do you feel that you have enough space to store all of the food you request or receive?

Yes No

- i. If no, what makes you feel this way?

2. Refrigeration Space

- a. Do you feel that you have enough refrigeration space to store all of the food you request or receive?

Yes No

- i. If no, how much more space would you need to meet your needs (i.e., twice as much, 3x, 4x, etc.)

- b. Other than cost, is there anything else that is keeping you from finding more refrigerator space?
Please explain.

3. Freezer Space

- a. Do you feel that you have enough freezer space to store all of the food you request or receive?

Yes No

- i. If no, how much more space would you need to meet your needs (i.e., twice as much, 3x, 4x, etc.)

- b. Other than cost, is there anything else that is keeping you from finding more freezer space?
Please explain.

4. Funding

- a. Do you receive enough funding to adequately achieve the current goals of your food shelf?
Yes No
- i. If no, realistically how much more funding would you need to meet your needs (i.e., twice as much, 3x, 4x, etc.)

5. Product Quality

- a. We know that product quality can have a major impact on whether those in need seek a program for help. Do you feel that your program provides product that is sufficient to earn the trust of those coming to you for assistance?
Yes No
- i. If no, why do you feel that your product quality is sub-par? Is it the source of the product? Is it how long it sits on your shelves? What about the product makes you feel that this is a barrier to expanding your service availability?

6. Product Availability and Selection

- a. Do you feel that your food shelf has enough food available to your community members in need?
Yes No
- i. If no, please explain.

- b. Do you feel that your food shelf is open and available frequently enough to provide food to those community members in need?

Yes No

- i. If no, why is your shelf not open more frequently?

- c. Do you feel that your food shelf provides adequate selection choices for your community members in need?

- i. If no, please explain.

7. Product delivery/pick-up issues

- a. Are there issues related to product deliver/pick-up that have a major impact on your ability to provide food to those in your community who are in need?

Yes No

- i. If no, please explain.

8. Volunteers

- a. Do you feel that your food shelf has enough volunteers to adequately maintain operations?

Yes No

- i. If no, how many more volunteers do you feel you would need to operate properly? (i.e., twice as many, 3x, 4x, etc.)

- b. What does your organization do to solicit volunteer help?

- c. Are there other ways that your organization could solicit help from the community?

9. Training

- a. Do you feel that your staff is adequately trained to provide the services of your organization?

Yes No

- ii. If no, what sort of training do you feel could be provided to better educate your staff and volunteers?

10. Board involvement

- a. Do you feel that your board (or sponsoring agency) adequately understands the needs of your community?

Yes No

- i. If no, why not?

- b. Do you feel that your board does everything they can to help you achieve your goals?

Yes No

- i. If no, why not?

- c. Are there any other board related issues that you would like CH1 to be aware of?

Yes No

11. Of all of the topics that we've covered, what would you say is the biggest barrier to growth for your food shelf?

Thank you so much for your participation!!!

Appendix C

Debriefing

I would just like to thank you for your participation in this study. It is important to Channel One that they understand the needs of their food shelves. This information will be used to better understand the limitations and barriers that food shelves experience so that Channel One can better serve you, and in turn, so you can better serve your community. Thanks again for your participation.

Appendix D

List of Suggested Methods For Securing Volunteer Help

1. Ask if People Want to Volunteer When They Create a Membership
2. Contact the Local Sheriff's Office About People Seeking Community Service Hours
3. Create a Call-List
4. Give Building Tours and Ask for Help at the End
5. Have the Local Media Do a News-Story About the Organization
6. Have the Organization Director Do Talks and Presentations Throughout the Community
7. Hire a Volunteer Coordinator
8. Put an Advertisement in a Newsletter
9. Put an Advertisement in the Newspaper
10. Retired Seniors Volunteer Program (RSVP)
11. Seek Groups Looking for Community Projects (Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, 4H, National Honor Society, Community Service Groups)
12. Seek Corporate Donors (Monetary & Volunteer Hours)
13. Solicit through the Local Churches (bulletins, groups, etc)
14. Solicit through the Local Colleges and Universities and the Many Affiliated Groups
15. Word-of-Mouth
16. Workforce Development

Appendix E

Comments from Survey Respondents

(responses have been paraphrased)

Where necessary, FS identification has been provided

Positive Comments

- we think they are wonderful and they always have a wonderful experience with them.
- CH1 has been really good to work with.
- inventories are usually pretty good; CH1 does a wonderful job
- CH1 does a fabulous job of meeting the needs of the FS. Friendly and helpful.
- they've been very good.
- pretty easy to work with CH1;
- feel they have a real good food bank in CH1; available and easy to talk with; fortunate
- CH1 takes real good care of them.
- CH1 has been helpful; have helped with operations
- CH1 is excellent; great relationship
- Really appreciate CH1, excellent org, always been a tremendous help to them. They would not be able to do what they do without CH1.
- CH1 is very helpful.

Issues

- Some of the descriptions in the order forms are ambiguous and make it difficult to know what it is; descriptions could be written better. – Mower County Seniors
- Make aware the commodity distribution formula; make it so that those being served can go to other counties for help. When food is solicited it is important that the donators know where the food is going (food bank), be clearer about where the donations are going. – Steele County FS
- only issue with CH1 is the coordination; the things he needs vs. doesn't need isn't being communicated well; gets way too much of some product and not enough of others – Zion Lutheran FS
- a lot of product that is not available through CH1; many items that used to be on inventory list that are not now – Northfield Community Action Center
- don't like the silver cans; often the Hispanic population cannot read them – St. Charles Area FS
- income guidelines-been a while since anyone asked about that; county resident #1, income #2; qualifications; not calculated realistically – Waseca Area Neighborhood Service Center
- Could be made more aware of potential grants. Updates about available grants or funding opportunities. Had an "adopt a shelf" program similar to the "adopt a highway" program. – Salvation Army FS Austin
- facilities with steps can be a barrier; accommodations for facilities barriers help resolve these issues.

- a lot of people don't know that they are eligible to use the food shelf; some know they are eligible but think that others need it more; potential barrier to growth