

Setting the Table

MISSOURI ASSOCIATION FOR SOCIAL WELFARE (MASW) AND LEGAL SERVICES OF EASTERN MISSOURI (LESM) PRESENT CHANGES IN STATE'S FOOD STAMP PROGRAM



Christine Woody of MASW and James Frost of LSEM visited the Foodbank on Tuesday, November 18, 2008 detailing the recent changes to Missouri's food stamp program due to the recent passing of the federal Farm Bill.

More than 30 people for various social service organizations were in attendance for the 2-hour presentation.

Some of the highlighted changes include:

Standard Deduction: *The standard deduction is a deduction that is applied to the income of every applicant for Food Stamp benefits. It is important because it is designed to help reflect the cost of "non-food" expenses such as housing, clothes, transportation, etc.*

The change: In the 2002 Farm Bill, the standard deduction was indexed to inflation for households with more than 3 members. As a result, households with 3 or fewer members continued to lose purchasing power over the last six years. To address this inequity, the 2008 Farm Bill raises the

standard deduction for households of 3 or fewer members to \$144 and indexes it to inflation as of October 1, 2008.

It is estimated that this change will help 243,000 additional Missourians receiving Food Stamps in the 2012 and inject approximately \$140 million in additional federal dollars into the State between FY 2009 and 2017. "Studies have shown that for every dollar spent on food stamps, \$9 is spent stimulating the economy," stated James Frost of LSEM.

Minimum Benefit: *The minimum benefit is designed to provide a "floor" to ensure that even working families who are near the income cut off line and need some help can get help. Over nearly 30 years, (since 1979), the minimum benefit remained unchanged at \$10. In today's economy it would take \$25 to purchase what \$10 could in 1979.*

The change: The 2008 Farm Bill raised the minimum benefit from \$10 to \$14 and indexes it to inflation (effective October 1, 2008). It is estimated that this change will help 26,000 additional Missourians in 2012 and inject approximately \$9 million in additional federal dollars into the State's economy.

To see the full presentation, please visit:
www.stlfoodbank.org/members/farmbill

WAL-MART FOUNDATION DONATES \$250,000 TO FEEDING ILLINOIS FOR FOOD PURCHASES

In response to a sharp statewide increase in the need for food and groceries in Illinois food banks, the Wal-Mart Foundation today announced a \$250,000 donation to Feeding Illinois (an association of 8 food banks serving Illinois).

This grant of \$250,000 will allow Feeding Illinois to purchase and distribute approximately 500,000 pounds of food statewide. It will also help the organization build capacity in food purchasing, coordinating statewide food donations and executing state-wide programs. A stronger organization would put Feeding Illinois in a position to provide leadership and a voice among state and federal organizations, with the ultimate goal of increasing the availability of quality food to hungry individuals and families in Illinois.

Feeding Illinois includes the following food banks:

Central Illinois Foodbank | Eastern Illinois Foodbank | Greater Chicago Food Depository Northern Illinois Food Bank | Peoria Food Bank Riverbend Foodbank | St. Louis Area Foodbank Tri-State Foodbank

The St. Louis Area Foodbank will keep Illinois agencies updated as the purchased items become available. For questions, please call your agency relations coordinator.

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FOODBANK CLOSED THE FOLLOWING UPCOMING DAYS

Nov. 27	Thanksgiving
Nov. 28	Thanksgiving (Day after)
Dec. 25	Christmas
Dec. 26	Christmas (Day after)
Dec. 29	Year-end inventory*
Dec. 30	Year-end inventory*
Dec. 31	Year-end inventory*
Jan. 1	New Year's Day
Jan. 2	New Year's Day (Day after)

*The Foodbank will be open, however we will not be distributing food during these times in order accurately count physical inventory.