

The Episcopal Church in Vermont

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This document, as well as other resources on the topic of food insecurity, can be found on the Diocesan website under the “Resources” tab, then the “For congregations” tab: and then looking under the heading “Poverty Resources”

<http://www.diovermont.org/resources-links/for-congregations>

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<b>Items in separate files at the “Poverty Resources” page of the diocesan website.</b>	
The title on which you click should contain wording which is identical or similar to what is shown here.	
A) Income eligibility guidelines for Vermont state assistance programs	
B) Application form for Food Stamps ( also used for three other programs)	

**\*\*\* Books \*\*\***

Abramsky, Sasha, Breadline USA, Poli Point Press, LLC, Sausalito, California, 2001. Trapped in the triangle of the housing market collapse, rising energy costs and an increasing dysfunctional health care system, America's working poor are now battling the formidable enemy of hunger. It tells the stories of Americana in all types of communities who struggle to put food on the table.

Abramsky, Sasha, The American Way of Poverty- How the Other Half Still Lives, Nation Books, New York, 2013. Chronicles the lives of people excluded from the Age of Affluence bringing the effects of economic inequality to light and provides a way for moving toward a fairer and more equitable social contract.

Berry, Wendell, Bringing It to the Table, Counterpoint, Berkeley, CA, 2009. Mindful eating and land practices that go with food distribution.

Ehrenreich, Barbara, Nickled and Dimed, Henry Holt and Company, LCC, New York, 2001. The author tells of her experiences working in marginal jobs and looks at what we should be doing to change things.

Ehrenreich, Barbara, This Land Is Their Land, Henry Holt and Company, LCC, 2008. The author looks at different aspects of poverty, including food insecurity, the cause and how they could be changed.

Miles, Sarah, Take This Bread, Random House Inc, New York, 2007. After becoming a member of St. Gregory's of Nyssa Episcopal Church, Sarah recognizes the food insecurity in her neighborhood and decides to start a food pantry, etc. in her church. Theology of feeding.

**\*\*\* Films \*\*\***

A Place at the Table, Sundance. Tells the story of three American families trying to maintain their dignity while they struggle to eat. Also tells how the issue of hunger could be solved.

Food, Inc., Sundance About food and the food industry. Tells about the industrialized food system and its effect on our environment, health, economy and workers rights.

**\*\*\* Articles \*\*\***

"The Real Hunger Games", The Nation, October 14, 2013, p 12-17.

**\*\*\* Websites \*\*\***

FRAC Food Research and Action Center <http://frac.org/initiatives/>

Anti-hunger organization that tracks legislative action with an eye to a Plan of Action to end hunger in America. Their newsletter comes weekly via email.

FRAC.org/ A Plan of Action to End hunger in America, updated in October 2015.

FRAC.org/Children's Health document about Food Insecurity among Immigrants, Refugees, and Asylees.

MyBenefits.gov.vt Place one can access the application for 3Squares Vermont and much more. This is the on-line way of applying for benefits

<http://www.Vtfoodbank.org/OurPrograms/FederalNutritionalPrograms/>  
description of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program

The Kernels newsletter from Vermont Foodbank. This link brings up all past quarterly issues  
<http://www.vtfoodbank.org/About/Newsroom/Newsletter>

**\*\*\* Glossary \*\*\*** General Food Insecurity Terms

Terms marked UN FAO are from the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) Glossary of selected terms found in "The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015" (SOFI) report. )

**Food desert** - This is a phrase in search of a solid definition. There are many variations on a definition . They can be areas where there simply are no nearby food stores. They can be areas where there are stores like mom and pop corner stores with goods at high prices or non-healthy fast food stores – but no markets with affordable fresh healthy food.

The USDept of Agriculture says ...

There are many ways to define which areas are considered "food deserts" and many ways to measure food store access for individuals and for neighborhoods. Most measures and definitions take into account at least some of the following indicators of access:

- a) Accessibility to sources of healthy food, as measured by distance to a store or by the number of stores in an area.
- b) Individual-level resources that may affect accessibility, such as family income or vehicle availability.
- c) Neighborhood-level indicators of resources, such as the average income of the neighborhood and the availability of public transportation.

The original version of the Food Desert Locator implemented a single measure of food deserts—low-income areas where a significant number or share of residents is far from a supermarket, where "far" is more than 1 mile in urban areas and more than 10 miles in rural areas.”

A Google inquiry comes up with ...

A food desert is “an urban area in which it is difficult to buy affordable or good-quality fresh food. Many poor people live in food deserts—where they have plenty of food but none of it healthy”

**Food insecurity** A situation that exists when people lack secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. It may be caused by the unavailability of food, insufficient purchasing power, inappropriate distribution or inadequate use of food at the household level. Food insecurity, poor conditions of health and sanitation and inappropriate care and feeding practices are the major causes of poor nutritional status. Food insecurity may be chronic, seasonal or transitory. (Source UN FAO )

**Food security** A situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life. Based on this definition, four food security dimensions can be identified: food availability, economic and physical access to food, food utilization and stability over time. (source: UN FAO)

**\*\*\* Glossary \*\*\*** General Food Insecurity Terms (continued)

<b>Food security labels</b>	used in US Dept of Agriculture (source USDA)
High food security.....	no reported indications of food-access problems or limitations.
Marginal food security...	one or two reported indications—typically of anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house. Little or no indication of changes in diets or food intake.
Low food security.....	reports of reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet. Little or no indication of reduced food intake.
Very low food security...	Reports of multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.

**Hunger** In this report the term hunger is used as being synonymous with chronic undernourishment. (source: UN FAO )

**Malnutrition** An abnormal physiological condition caused by inadequate, unbalanced or excessive consumption of macronutrients and/or micronutrients. Malnutrition includes undernutrition and overnutrition as well as micronutrient deficiencies. (source: UN FAO )

**Undernourishment** A state, lasting for at least one year, of inability to acquire enough food, defined as a level of food intake insufficient to meet dietary energy requirements. For the purposes of this report, hunger was defined as being synonymous with chronic undernourishment. (source: UN FAO )

**Undernutrition** The outcome of undernourishment, and/or poor absorption and/or poor biological use of nutrients consumed as a result of repeated infectious disease. It includes being underweight for one's age, too short for one's age (stunted), dangerously thin for one's height (wasted) and deficient in vitamins and minerals (micronutrient malnutrition). (source: UN FAO )

**\*\*\* Glossary \*\*\*** Federal and Vermont Food Insecurity Terms and Acronyms**3SquaresVT**

3SquaresVT is Vermont's food stamp program. It is the implementation of the federal SNAP program in Vermont.

**EBT** Electronic Benefit Transfer (VERMONT EXPRESS EBT CARD)

(source: Vt Dept of Children and Families)

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards are a safe and easy way to use the cash and food benefits you get from the following programs: 3SquaresVT, General Assistance, Essential Person Cash Assistance, and Reach Up Cash Assistance.

**How EBT Express Card Works**

You'll get a plastic card called Vermont Express. Each month, your benefits will be automatically added to your account. When you use your card to get cash or buy food, your account balance will decrease accordingly.

**Where You Can Use Your Vermont Express Card**

Many stores accept EBT cards for food purchases (federal USDA website). Many ATM's accept EBT cards for cash if you're authorized to get it. Many farmers' markets in Vermont accept EBT cards for food purchases.

**How to use your Vermont Express Card****At Participating Stores**

1. Know your balance before you go shopping.
2. Swipe your Vermont Express Card through the Point-of-Sale terminal or hand your card to the cashier.
3. Select which account to charge (3SquaresVT or Cash).
4. Enter your four-digit Personal Identification Number (PIN) on the keypad.
5. Press the OK or ENTER key.
6. After the cashier enters the purchase amount, press the YES key if it is correct.
7. When the cashier hands you your receipt, make sure the information on the receipt is correct.
8. Keep the cash register receipt. It tells you how much you have left in your 3SquaresVT account. You can also call 1-800-914-8605 to find out how much money is left on your card.

**Poverty Guidelines** Federal Poverty Guidelines are provided each year by the Department of Health and Human Services. These are the 2016 Poverty guidelines for the 48 contiguous states and the District of Columbia. The figures are persons in a family/household and annual income. For families/households with more than 8 persons, add \$4,160 for each added person.

1 .....	\$11,880	3 .....	\$20,160	5 .....	\$28,440	7 .....	\$36,730
2 .....	\$16,020	4 .....	\$24,300	6 .....	\$32,580	8 .....	\$40,890

**\*\*\* Glossary \*\*\*** Federal and Vermont Food Insecurity Terms and Acronyms (continued)

**Reach Up** - helps families with children by providing case management, cash assistance for basic needs, and services that support work and self-sufficiency. (source: VT DCF)

**Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** is the largest nutrition assistance program administered by the USDA, aka Food Stamp program.

**Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI)**- Short form of definition: SSDI refers to the Social Security Disability Insurance program. It is tied to the Social Security retirement program, but is for workers who become disabled before retirement age. Only workers who have worked and paid Social Security taxes for many years are insured by the SSDI program.

SSDI: Long form of definition: (source Wikipedia) Social Security Disability Insurance (SSD or SSDI) is a payroll tax-funded, federal insurance program of the United States government. It is managed by the Social Security Administration and is designed to provide income supplements to people who are physically restricted in their ability to be employed because of a notable disability, usually a physical disability. SSD can be supplied on either a temporary or permanent basis, usually directly correlated to whether the person's disability is temporary or permanent.

Unlike Supplemental Security Income (SSI), SSD does not depend on the income of the disabled individual receiving it. A legitimately disabled person (a finding based on legal and medical justification) of any income level can theoretically receive SSD. ("Disability" under SSDI is measured by a different standard than under the Americans with Disabilities Act.) Most SSI recipients are below an administratively-mandated income threshold, and indeed these individuals must in fact stay below that threshold to continue receiving SSI; but this is not the case with SSD.

Informal names for SSDI include Disability Insurance Benefits (DIB) and Title II benefits. These names come from the chapter title of the governing section of the Social Security Act, which came into law in August 1935.

**Supplemental Security Income (SSI)** - a United States government program that provides stipends to low-income people who are either aged (65 or older), blind, or disabled. Although administered by the Social Security Administration, SSI is funded from the U.S. Treasury general funds, not the Social Security trust fund. (source Wikipedia )

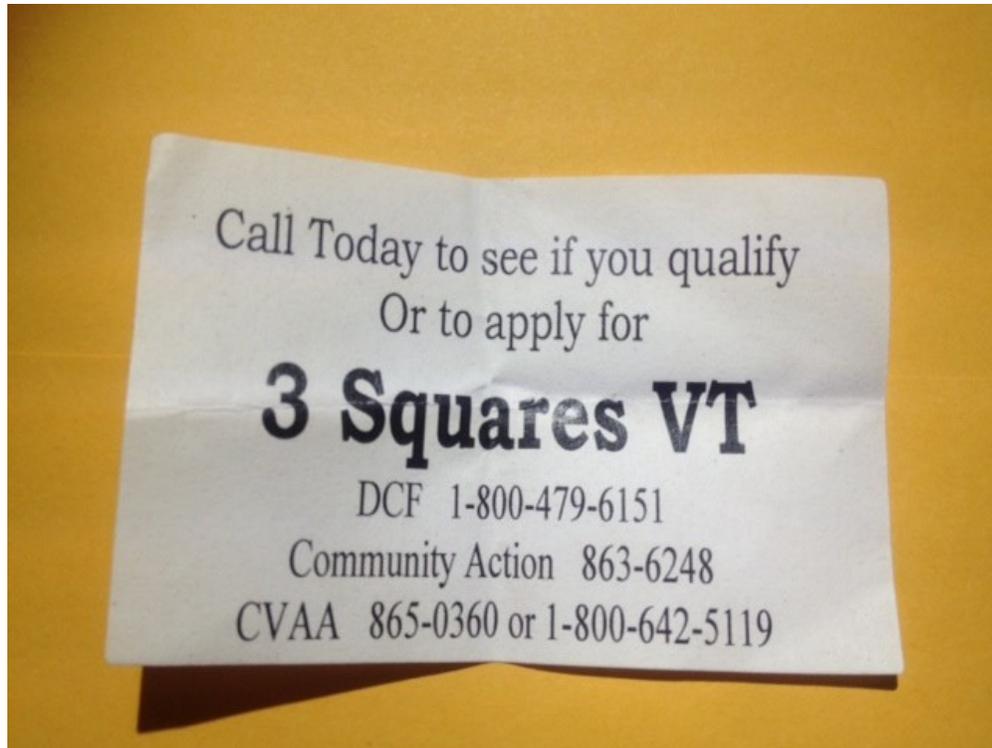
**The Emergency Food Assistance Program.(TEFAP)** A Federal program that helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans, including elderly people, by providing them with emergency food and nutrition assistance at no cost. It provides food and administrative funds to States to supplement the diets of these groups. (source USDA)

**\*\*\* Glossary \*\*\*** Federal and Vermont Food Insecurity Terms and Acronyms (continued)

Under TEFAP, USDA foods are made available by the U.S. Department of Agriculture to states. States provide the food to local agencies that they have selected, usually food banks, which in turn, distribute the food to soup kitchens and food pantries that directly serve the public. (Source Wikipedia)

**Women Infants and Children (WIC) Vermont WIC**

- 1) Ensuring good nutrition for pregnant women, new mothers, infants & young children
- 2) WIC helps pregnant women, new mothers, and young children eat well, learn about nutrition and stay healthy. WIC is the Federal "Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children." WIC offers nutrition information, breastfeeding support, and nutritious foods to women, infants and children.
- 3) WIC is designed to serve income-eligible pregnant women, women who are breastfeeding or who have a new baby, infants and children up to age 5.
- 4) In addition to providing healthy foods, WIC provides nutrition counseling, breastfeeding support, health education, and connections to other community resources. (Source VT Dept of Health)

**\*\*\* Sources for Help \*\*\*****Getting started on the Application for Food Stamps – (3 Squares )**

Calling one of the above numbers is a good place to start the application process.

The application form for 3 squares Vt ( also used for Reach Up, Home Heating, and Essential Person) is twenty pages long - five of which are instructions and a list of applicant rights. It can be daunting. Someone at one of these agencies can help smooth the way.

The slip of paper shown above is from a pad of these tear-off slips which was attached to a poster in a town office. 3 Squares has an active advertising and "recruiting" program.

Two links to the same application form are shown here. Hopefully, when you are looking at this, at least one of these links will still be active.

<http://www.vermontfoodhelp.com/images/stories/pdf/3svtapplication.pdf>

<http://www.vtlawhelp.org/sites/default/files/3SquaresVT-Reach%20Up-Home%20Heating-Essential%20Person%20application.pdf>

See MyBenefits.gov.vt for a way to apply for these benefits on line.

**\*\*\* Sources for Help \*\*\*** (continued)**3SquaresVT** (source Vt Law website)

3SquaresVT is Vermont's food stamp program. 3SquaresVT helps low income individuals and families buy food. Each month the Department for Children and Families-Economic Services Division (DCF/ESD) deposits money into a debit card like a bank card.

The bank card is called the "Vermont Express card." Most Vermont grocery, convenience stores, and some Farmers' markets accept Vermont Express cards. If you are age 60 or over, or get Supplemental Security Income (SSI), you can get a cash benefit deposited into your bank account.

You can buy most foods with your Vermont Express Card (EBT). You can't buy non-food items like tobacco, soap, toothpaste, pet products, pet food, and alcohol with your 3SquaresVT benefits. Every time you buy food with your card, the amount is taken from the money in your Vermont Express account. Your receipt will show you what is left on your card.

A 3SquaresVT household is the people who live, purchase and prepare food together. There may be only one person in a 3SquaresVT household. Or, there may be more than one 3SquaresVT household in the same home, if people live together but do not buy food and make meals together.

The following people are always considered to be part of the same household if they live together, even if they do not purchase and prepare food together:

Spouses , Civil union partners

Couples who live together and share resources and income

Parents and their children under age 21

Adults and any child under age 18 the adult takes care of, even if they aren't their biological children

**Vermont Foodbank - Food Distribution Program** (source – VT Food Bank website)

The core function of the Vermont Foodbank is to provide fresh produce, shelf-stable food, and prepared meals to our 225 network partners. Those network partners include food shelves, meal sites, senior centers and after-school programs.

Food is initially gathered from grocery stores, food manufacturers, farms, businesses, restaurants, individuals, and Feeding America, the national network of food banks. We also partner with Vermont farms and orchards to obtain more fresh, local produce through gleaning and Pick for Your Neighbor.

Distributes 9 million pounds of food from four regional distribution facilities. In addition to directly distributing food to network partners, manages two federal food distribution programs: the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) and The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). Food is also distributed through two youth programs: Backpack and School Food Pantry To-Go.

**\*\*\* Sources for Help \*\*\*** (continued)

**Food Shelves and Community Meals in Vermont**     Here are three sources to find locations.

- 1) Vermont Foodbank Find A Food Shelf  
We work with 225 food shelves, meal sites, and food programs to get you and your family the nutrition you need. Find a food shelf in your community.  
[www.vtfoodbank.org/FindFoodShelf.aspx](http://www.vtfoodbank.org/FindFoodShelf.aspx)
- 2) Vermont Food Pantries “There are several food pantries and food banks in the Vermont. With help from users like you we have compiled a list of some.”  
(quoted from their site. A national site with state pages)  
<http://www.foodpantries.org/st/vermont>
- 3) Vermont 211 The Vermont 211 site also shows where general community meals and senior community meals are served.  
<http://www.referweb.net/vermont211/>

**\*\*\* Information \*\*\***

**Hunger Free Vermont** program areas (source: Hunger Free Vermont website)

- a) School Meals: assists schools with establishing school breakfast and lunch programs and has advocated for the passage of key school meals legislation
- b) Out-of-School Time: establishes and expands opportunities for after school hours and summer lunch programs
- c) The Learning Kitchen:. Classes are designed to improve food security for families with limited budgets. Classes are taught by area chefs and trained nutrition educators. The Learning Kitchen is available for middle-school youth, young adults, and adults in low-income areas and at sites that serve low-income populations.
- d) 3SquaresVT Outreach and Education:
  - 1) maintains vermontfoodhelp.com, a comprehensive resource for 3SquaresVT applicants and advocates that includes an eligibility calculator and outreach tools.
  - 2) offers the 3SquaresVT "Envelope Stuffer" for use with school or business mailings to inform recipients about getting food assistance with the 3SquaresVT program.
- e) The Early Childhood Nutrition Outreach Program provides educational materials about the Childhood and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) which provides federal aid to child and adult care institutions and family or group day care homes for the provision of nutritious foods
- f) Education and Advocacy <http://www.hungerfreevt.org/what/education-and-advocacy> An example would be having a Hunger Free Vermont person give an educational presentation for a group of clergy folks gathered at a Clergy Day
- g) Hunger Councils Local leaders grouped by county who are committed to learning about hunger and improving community and household food security. The Hunger Councils coordinate efforts and build strong nutrition safety nets at the community level and statewide. Membership in the Hunger Councils is open to anyone with an interest in furthering the Council's vision that all Vermonters in each community in our state have access to an adequate supply of nutritious food.
- h) Hunger Education for Health Professionals
- i) Senior Hunger Outreach & Education.

11% of Vermont seniors face the threat of hunger. Food insecure seniors are more likely to be diabetic, suffer from depression and have limited daily activities, and are far less likely to be considered in excellent or good health. Younger seniors (aged 60-69) are particularly vulnerable to hunger and inadequate nutrition because they are often not yet eligible for other safety net programs such as Medicare.

HFVt works with Area Agencies on Aging, health care providers, community volunteers, senior centers, state agencies, senior housing sites, and seniors to ensure that all eligible seniors have the information they need to access the 3SquaresVT program with ease, and that vibrant home-delivered meals programs and senior meal sites are available throughout the state.