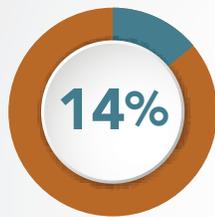




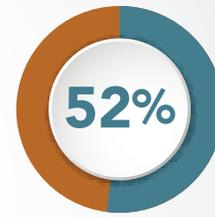
MESA COUNTY BLUEPRINT TO END HUNGER

HUNGER IS A PROBLEM IN MESA COUNTY

Many residents in Mesa County experience food insecurity, defined by the USDA as the lack of consistent access to sufficient food for an active and healthy lifestyle. The *Mesa County Blueprint to End Hunger* is a tool to be used by the community, from City and County elected officials and business leaders, to hunger relief providers, growers and farmers in our region, and individuals who want to see a strong and thriving economy. The *Blueprint* was created as a call to action to build upon the commendable work our community has already done to meet food insecurity needs. The intent is to use the *Blueprint* to understand Mesa County's landscape of hunger relief providers, provide context surrounding the issue of food insecurity, and lay out concrete steps that can help ensure all people receive access to the nutritious foods they need to thrive.



14% of Mesa County residents – 20,500 individuals – are considered food insecure



52% of children in District 51 – **10,500** students – qualified for free or reduced price lunch, a quantifiable measure of food insecurity



GOAL 1

Develop a coordinated emergency and short-term hunger relief system in Mesa County that encourages greater collaboration and increased operating efficiencies and effectiveness in addressing hunger.



GOAL 2

Maximize enrollment in food assistance programs and expand use of federal nutrition programs for hunger relief.



GOAL 3

Increase the amount of high quality, nutritious foods available for people who are hungry.



GOAL 4

Expand and systematize grocery rescue and food recovery efforts so that nutritious food is not thrown away, but directed to hunger relief efforts.



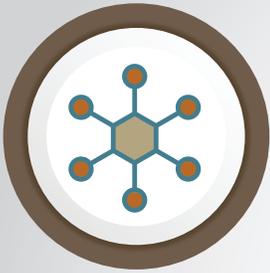
GOAL 5

Increase public awareness that hunger is an issue in western Colorado which affects the larger community.

A LOCAL ACTION PLAN

The goals of the *Mesa County Blueprint to End Hunger* are closely aligned with those of the statewide *Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger* while building on local needs, strengths, and opportunities of organizational partners here in Mesa County. This is a local action plan, as Mesa County has unique assets poised to address hunger relief needs.

MESA COUNTY'S COMMUNITY ASSETS



A **strong history of collaboration** amongst hunger relief providers



A school district that goes beyond basic school meals to provide nutritious, made-from-scratch meals and pilots **creative models to best address hunger needs** that have garnered state and national attention



A **regional branch of Food Bank of the Rockies**, a subsidiary of Feeding America, with their western Colorado operations and distribution center located in Mesa County



A **vibrant farming community**, with Mesa County being the top tree fruit producer in the state



A location that is a mix of **both urban and rural**, serving as the largest population center between Denver and Salt Lake City, with large sections of agricultural and public lands

COMMUNITY VALUES AND COMMITMENTS

1. Preserving and supporting the dignity of all people who are hungry
2. Providing healthy and nutritious food
3. Commitment to collaboration and inter-sector programs and solutions
4. Commitment to innovative and entrepreneurial approaches

FIND THE BLUEPRINT HERE: endhungermesaco.org

A special thanks to the Colorado Health Foundation and the Colorado Blueprint to End Hunger team for supporting Mesa County's development of a local Blueprint to End Hunger.