

FOOD - FARMS - HUNGER

Report on Focus Groups

September 2010

Prepared by *ActionMedia* for
Coalition Against Hunger
The Food Trust
Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission
William Penn Foundation

INTRODUCTION

“It’s not just food, but there’s products that support food, there’s products that are made from food, there’s products that hold food. It’s a whole process. We have an efficient system, but is it the smartest way to go, the best way? Is it the healthiest way?” Phil

“I’d rather buy the locally grown product. I’d feel like I’m helping out that farmer, that worker who picked that fruit or vegetable. It’s just like sometimes, something you want to get fixed in the house, you can go to the little Hack Briar hardware store that’s still open, or you can go to, you know, Lowe’s. I’m glad I went to the local guy.” Laura

Six focus groups were conducted with voters in greater Philadelphia. Detail on the fifty respondents is attached to this report. Each group included a mix of political perspectives, and, in five groups, included people who have a family member who has, or have themselves, received food assistance.

The research was aimed at discovering what values and perspectives are shared about issues relating to hunger, nutrition, and agricultural practices. In particular, the research illuminates how these voters put these issues in relation to each other, and how talking about one may influence perspectives on the others.

Voters are strongly positive about the goals shared by advocates: providing people in the area with enough to eat; reducing the obesity epidemic and improving nutrition; and securing the safety and healthfulness of our food and food supply.

Significantly, they are most positive about these goals when they think about them in relationship to each other. Feeding the poor, for example, is subject to divisive views and unhelpful framing, both in terms of class prejudices and political philosophies, and, more broadly, in assigning personal responsibility as a primary value. But when asked to reason about the availability of nutritious foods, including in poor neighborhoods, and about the role of nutrition in public health, respondents are united in their agreement that societal action is needed, to meet public interests that are shared across class and race. The obesity epidemic is believed to be a threat to everyone’s interests, not least because of its impact on health care costs. And respondents have no difficulty in explaining the relationship between obesity and poverty.

Similarly, respondents are mixed in their views about large vs. small farmers, and about the threat posed by standard agricultural practices. But they share a belief that buying locally produced food is good for the local economy and probably good for the safety and freshness of the food, and are strongly united around the idea of preserving farmland in the region.

Respondents’ core values applied to these issues are security, safety, health and community. The security of the food supply is understood to be a matter of national as well as personal security. The insecurity of not knowing where your next meal is coming from is a condition people empathize with, and believe should not be tolerated. The link between the two – a reliable supply of nutritious food – is recognized as a public interest, in reducing preventable diseases. Buying more local food supports the community, and increases the security of the food supply.

This research suggests that all of the issues relating to food and farming will be stronger if communicated within the context of the food system as a whole, emphasizing the values of security, safety, health and community.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

FARM AND FOOD SECURITY

“My mother, every time I take her to the shore, she always talks about how it was all farms. Right when you left Philadelphia right till you hit the shore. One time she remembers driving down as a teenager and she was old enough to know more about it and there was a big billboard. And it said, “When it’s all asphalt, it’s not our fault.” from the United Farmers or something. And you know what? They were right. That’s like 30, 40 years ago.” Patrick

“I’d just choose the one that was better for me. The one that was more organic, no pesticides, no hormones. Kathleen was saying about cancer - well, if you’re eating vegetables with pesticides on them, it’s not helping you get better. If you’re eating meat with hormones jammed down their throat - that’s why kids develop so much faster these days, because of all the milk that - they’re feeding hormones to the cows and they’re producing all this milk, that’s why 12 year old girls look like they’re full-grown women.” Heather

Most respondents are aware of, and on occasion use, farmers markets or roadside produce stands. The “best” sweet corn or tomatoes come from such places, respondents say, because it is fresher and tastes better. Many also tell stories about loss of local production over their lifetimes, including farms in Lancaster County or New Jersey that have disappeared under development. Respondents report that they shop for convenience and price, but not only for these. They go different places to buy specialty items, including better quality produce.

They are willing to pay a bit more for local produce and they like it when local groceries stock and promote local produce. They would welcome more local produce, more conveniently located farmers markets, and say they will buy it provided pricing is not prohibitive.

They believe local farming and food production is important for several reasons. First among these is the local economy. Respondents express a wish to support local farmers as an end in itself, because it supports the local economy. They believe the products will be fresher, taste better and may be safer because of the shorter transportation time. They also consider environmental effects of food transportation, using less fuel to get produce from the field to the table.

RECOMMENDATION: Talk about local food production in terms of its impact on the local economy as well as delivering benefits of freshness, quality, and food safety. To the extent possible, piggyback policy messages with marketing materials, and use markets as a medium for distributing information.

Recurring news stories about large scale recalls of eggs, meat and produce are high in respondents’ minds. They report that they are careful to wash produce – especially if they know it is imported. They trust US produced food more than imported, but even then they are concerned about safety. When discussing safety in relation to local production most respondents agree that smaller farmers may have more control, and they certainly think that local production would increase accountability for problems. Respondents reason that if a local farmer produces tainted food, the source could be quickly identified, and because the farm is dependent on local markets that the response would be more effective in order to maintain local reputation and markets. Some believe the local farmer would feel a greater obligation to make sure his neighbors don’t receive bad food. In this, and in the primary motivation of supporting the local economy, they are focused on community as a positive value.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

“My five year old granddaughter drinks a lot of apple juice. We bought—on sale—giant apple juice even though I have an apple tree in my back yard. When we drink it halfway down, all of a sudden we notice “Made from concentrate from China.” My wife went ballistic. We pay farmers not to grow food in this country. It’s a shame we have to buy all this equipment and everything else from China. China poisoned our pets. Their quality is not equal and they have no restrictions on their quality.” Irwin

Patrick : “We’re a consumer nation rather than an industrial nation. This country was built as an industrial nation. Once we’re nothing but a bunch of consumers, eventually the money runs out. Food’s just another aspect of it”.

Moderator: But it’s cheaper. We can get it from Argentina, Chile and Thailand?

David : “They could also use that as a weapon against you like the oil embargo. So you’re dependent on somebody else for your viable goods especially to eat for survival, you’re gonna have to have a great relationship with this country.”

William: “Right, exactly.”

Mike: “And I think it would be horrible, honestly, for the whole ecosystem in our country. These things clean the air.”

William: “One coast to coast concrete jungle. You just can’t have it.”

RECOMMENDATION: Talk about local food in terms of an accountable supply line and handling system that improves quality and safety.

National security was mentioned in most groups. The idea that supply lines from foreign countries, or even from Florida or California, could be disrupted through natural disaster, gas shortages, coordinated attack or sabotage is a concern, although not as immediate as food contamination. Respondents readily consider local production as a safety and security issue.

Respondents expressed very broad agreement that preservation of productive local farmlands is an important goal. They believe that use of zoning and conservation easements may be appropriate strategies to protect farms from being lost to development. There is concern whether anyone would want to keep the farm in operation, that perhaps farming in the local area cannot be profitable. Another concern raised was property rights, that farmers would be denied the right to sell their land for development prices. There was some discussion of subsidy or incentives to keep such farms viable.

When read the statement “We regularly set aside land for schools, parks, libraries, hospitals...in the public interest,” respondents generally agree that preservation of farmland could be considered a similar public use. Most respondents say they would support some kind of effort to preserve existing local farmland as productive agricultural resources. These reactions are attributed to supply security, food safety, transportation and efficiency, freshness and quality as well as a more diversified local economy.

RECOMMENDATION: Be specific about farm areas under threat of being lost to agriculture. Talk about efforts to preserve existing productive agricultural lands as a public interest and farmers as performing a public benefit that deserves local support.

Though all respondents in four groups had at least some college, in no groups did more than one respondents have any knowledge of what is meant by “sustainable agriculture”. Guesses included the examples of Israeli desert agriculture which sustains a crop year-round despite the environment, development of artificial tomatoes, and growing food with extended shelf life. In general, people think of the term as meaning keeping the food coming, or keeping the farm economy sustained.

RECOMMENDATION: Whenever this phrase is used, describe it as “sustainable farming methods” starting with replenishing the soil, maintaining clean water, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, etc.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

NUTRITION AND PUBLIC HEALTH

“You know, there was a draft going on in Vietnam? And now, they’re saying in the city, half the kids wouldn’t make the draft because they’re obese. Half the kids.” Ed

“You can get cheap food, but it’s not healthy food. So if you’re looking - you’ve got a dollar to spend - you can get the most calories for that dollar in the least healthy foods.” Mary Lou

“When it comes to hunger, if you can’t afford or you don’t think you can afford to go shopping, you run to fast food. You think that getting a number one Big Mac meal for six bucks is better than going and buying three pounds of ground meat and a box of noodles and making goulash and having leftovers for a couple of days. Obesity is dealing with hunger because you run to the closest thing that is going to get you food.” Adam

All respondents are aware of and concerned about the epidemic of obesity in the US. Although some question the exact formula for determining obesity, all believe the phrase describes a real phenomenon, one that they themselves have observed. Significantly, they believe this problem is a shared problem, not limited to the individuals or families at risk for obesity-related diseases. They point primarily to the shared impact on health care costs, but there is clearly concern about the fitness and health of the next generation as well.

Respondents’ concern about obesity cuts across class divides. They believe obesity is often a result of hunger and poverty. They can easily explain that food without any nutritional value is often cheaper, more filling, and more readily available. However, they believe the epidemic of obesity is more widespread than poverty. They believe obesity is caused by the availability, marketing, and popularity of fast food restaurants, poor individual choices and especially lack of parental oversight, and inadequate exercise, usually ascribed to the popularity of electronic games and devices.

Fast food restaurants are mentioned repeatedly, and in several contexts. They are seen as a major contributor to obesity and poor nutrition. While this can lead to discussion of individuals -- their choices, and their lack of knowledge about nutrition and food preparation -- the dominance of fast food chains is also understood as a response to lack of family time, two worker households, and financial pressure, especially for the poor.

When asked to consider the shortage of quality groceries in Philadelphia’s low income neighborhoods, several respondents point out that there is no such shortage of fast food outlets. While some are skeptical about whether additional retail will actually change people’s individual behavior, no one denies that people, wherever they live, should have the opportunity to get nutritious, affordable food.

The groups were shown a Philadelphia map identifying neighborhoods with below average grocery sales and above average nutrition-related deaths. In each group, some respondents spoke, with evident pleasure, of new groceries going in or recently added to these neighborhoods. People recalled recent media reports, even if they had no connection to the neighborhood.

RECOMMENDATION: Maintain and step up news media efforts on such development and new enterprises. Plan for reporter fatigue (i.e., what’s new about next year’s story?) in continued reporting on success of new stores and new options.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

“There was a grocery store that just opened recently in one of these neighborhoods within the past year, and from what I understand, they’re going to try to open more, because the people in the area have asked for it, and everyone knows they’re not the best neighborhoods, because it’s low-income. It might be a high rate of crime, but the people wanted it, and they interviewed people that were shopping there, and they were happy, pleased that they could buy better groceries, healthier things for their families.”
Barbara B.

Barbara C: “How far can we go with that? I mean, first it’s soda - but who’s to be the judge of what we should put in our mouth and what we don’t?”

Susan M: “I do think it worked on cigarettes. We tell kids in school - look, they took the sodas out of school. Education’s a big thing. When you get these little - you can get little two-year-olds talking, say, “Soda’s no good.” Well, that’s what you want to do. You want to educate your consumers, and you want them - you want to help them along to make better choices so they grow up to be healthy, strong, not-obese people.”

Respondents believe that the lack of grocery stores is primarily a response to crime. They reason that if the risk is too high, no one will start a business. And they believe if it’s a good business decision to open, someone will do it. However, they also recognize that proper support (e.g., adequate policing) and incentives should be applied to make it possible to open more such businesses.

The respondents believe that solutions -- to increasing availability and consumption of nutritious foods, and to reducing obesity -- must be multi-faceted. They all believe that personal responsibility and individual choices are central to solving these problems. This belief can easily come into conflict with virtually any social program: “you can lead a horse to water, but...!” For this reason, education is seen as the most important component of any such efforts. Several respondents who work in schools talked about the success and usefulness of nutrition programs in the school. One respondent mentioned The Food Trust by name (mis-identifying it as a government agency.) Whatever their political orientation, all agree that getting more information and skills to people, and especially to children, will be necessary for a significant shift in public behavior.

However, once this is established, respondents are prepared to consider other solutions. The proposed sugary beverage tax, for example, is actually (if quietly) supported by significant portions of each group. These supporters are conditional, and say that it would have to be accompanied by educational programs and disease prevention to make sense. Several also believe it should be applied to a larger jurisdiction to work.

But their support, conditional and quiet in the first place, is almost snuffed out by the first reactions to the topic in each group: unfair, intrusive, and ineffective government over-reach. This viewpoint is expressed with conviction and heat. It doesn’t dissuade those who do or might support the tax. But its emotional appeal neutralizes more moderate views.

RECOMMENDATION: Emphasize multi-faceted strategies to reduce obesity and prevent disease, importantly including education and proven disease prevention programs. Package tax proposals and other specific policy changes as components of those strategies.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

HUNGER AND ECONOMIC SECURITY

“I think hunger here is a lot more hidden, because in these third world countries everybody’s hungry. There’s just a terrible lack of food, but here, you don’t know if your neighbor doesn’t have food. I mean, it’s - It’s just not that visible.” Sandie

“We’ve had hunger problems for years, but I think now, last couple years, there’s this whole perfect storm of high unemployment, the housing markets to hell, the financial markets are - you know. And now, you have so many people out of jobs trying to look after themselves. They can’t be taking care of or looking for the guy who’s hungry on the corner because they’re worried about their own family.” Vince

“There’s no guidance in the household because the streets are raising the kids today” Keith (D-African American)

“Why are children hungry? Unfit parents. I know ‘cause I’ve lived it. I’ve been hungry because my mom sold all her food stamps. So, part of it is

In a post-discussion survey, twenty of fifty respondents reported that they or a family member have received food assistance at some time. Many report that they have volunteered in a food drive or other assistance effort, and all say they have donated food or money for food drives. All of these activities were raised by respondents during the discussion. They are unanimous in their agreement that there are people who do not have enough to eat in the greater Philadelphia area, and they say this makes them feel sad, and especially so in abundant America. Several point out that hunger in the US is “hidden”, unlike areas of vast famine or misfortune.

Although no respondents were familiar with the terms “food insecurity” or “food hardship”, the phrase “food insecurity” resonated strongly, and although it was suggested several times that it meant emotional insecurity about or expressed in eating, it was readily defined in context as “not knowing where your next meal is coming from.”

RECOMMENDATION: Use variations on the term “food insecurity”, with the phrase “not knowing where your next meal is coming from” both as a way to generate empathy, and to evoke the values related to security.

When asked to discuss the causes of hunger, in every group some people spoke about the economy and people being thrown out of work, and in every group some spoke about negligent or impaired parents, unwilling or unable to take care of their children. Respondents approach this question from two different perspectives – that of the shared economy, and of personal responsibility. These are not mutually exclusive frames. When respondents speak about the worsening economy, those who talk about social responsibility acknowledge that as a contributing factor. When others speak about bad, ill-qualified or drug-addicted parents, no one denies that that is part of the picture.

Significantly, those who are most vocal in characterizing the bad moral qualities of the poor include those who have themselves received food assistance, have incomes at or below average median income, and are Democrats. In fact, when these respondents speak about the moral failings or lack of knowledge of the poor, their remarks have special authority for the group, apparently being from first-hand knowledge.

Moreover, these same respondents were often the first to raise the subject of food stamp abuse, which came up spontaneously, with conviction, and was met with group agreement in five of the six groups. Several respondents in each group were in agreement that 20-50% of food stamp recipients are abusing the system. Types of abuse discussed were people who have too much, and shouldn’t be getting assistance; people who sell their food assistance for drug or liquor money; and people who don’t budget their money

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

and/or don't care what they feed their children. The abuse is usually described in terms of first-hand knowledge – many people in these groups claim to have seen food stamp recipients driving off in a very expensive Mercedes. In each group several respondents were aware that the program now uses an electronic card instead of paper stamps, but that alone does not persuade people that there is less abuse. All respondents used the term “food stamps”, and none named the program with any variation of “supplemental nutritional assistance.”

Steve P (R): “People that are on welfare or on assistance, they're getting food stamps, but then they turn around and sell it for crack or something.”

Moderator: Really? Does that actually happen?

Steve P: “Yes. I mean, come on. It happens all the time. It's probably a billion dollar industry.”

Ed (D): “My daughter works in welfare, a case worker. What she sees - one of the security guards came up to one of the women that had the access card and he offered to buy her food stamps off of her for the month. She might have gotten two hundred and he'll say, “Hey, I'll give you fifty bucks.” And she'll say, ‘You know what, I need that money.’ If she's doing drugs or alcohol - whatever.”

RECOMMENDATION: Develop ways to inoculate against food stamp “abuse”, anticipating that it will be raised or is in listeners' minds. Inoculations might include statistics on people receiving assistance who are not qualified, controls on making sure assistance is only used for its intended purposes, or even a visible commitment by community members (including retailers) to watch for and report suspected abuse.

Some of the respondents who describe food stamp abuse clearly are basing their views in a political perspective that consistently blames the poor, and government assistance, for poverty, and opposes governmental programs intended to reduce economic disparities. The problem is, people who do not share these perspectives agree about the existence of abuse, as they agree about the importance of personal responsibility. This dynamic gives the anti-government speaker a powerful advantage in setting the terms of discussion and tends to shut out more moderate views.

However, the moral indignation about the depravities of the poor seems to be exclusively focused on food stamps. No respondents characterized school lunch and breakfast program as being abused or unnecessary; no one spoke ill of food pantries or soup kitchens; and many of the most vociferous also spoke about their own charity work to help the poor. Moreover, the WIC program is held in very high regard, and is distinguished from food stamps both by the limitations on foods available through the program, and, primarily, by the targeted recipients being pregnant women and young children.

RECOMMENDATION: Emphasize the diverse delivery mechanisms by which neighbors help feed those in need. Make visible as characters or messengers the volunteers and staff at churches, food shelves, benevolent associations and businesses (including supermarkets) as persons who can stand in for, or represent the perspective of, the thousands of others who donate.

RECOMMENDATION: These institutions should be characterized as part of our food system, helping make sure that people in the area are getting the nutrition they need. Emphasize nutrition and nutritional assistance over food stamps, and emphasize the range of participants, and of activities, including education, community gardening, etc, in this aspect of our shared food system.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

THE REGIONAL FOOD SYSTEM

"I think it's one system. Like Joyce was saying, it's all connected, and I think it all creates jobs. The more farmland you have, the more workers you have, the more food you produce, the more truckers you need to get it places. Even though it's maybe grown locally, it still needs to be transported, and packaged, and - it helps, in a way, because it's creating jobs. Not that a strip mall doesn't too, but it's better for the environment. It's better for people, especially if the government regulates and says, "You can't use any pesticides, hormones, it all has to be natural." You ship it to your local stores, then people like us, we have six or seven local farms within 100 miles, the prices are going to go down, so therefore we can afford it. And it's healthier for us, our children, the environment, less pollution. Things like that. So I think it is part of the whole picture."
Heather

No respondents were familiar with the phrase "food system", which was introduced near the end of all discussions. When the concept was described by the moderator as encompassing "the things we talked about", respondents quickly latched on to the idea, comparing it to and describing it as a fundamental part of the economic system. This is not to say they respondents are unaware of the environmental aspects of the food system. They view the issues of food transportation, processing, and contamination as essential to the general health and safety.

In other research, we have found that voters are uncomfortable thinking in terms of "the region", and think of themselves less as living in "the region" than in their town or neighborhood. But when reasoning about shared resources, such as water, transportation, or major facilities, voters do think in regional terms, and are prepared to engage in discussion of solutions from that perspective.

These focus groups suggest that the regional food system (once established in people's minds) is among those shared resources. Certainly, the region's farmland, and maintaining land in agriculture, is viewed as being in everyone's interest. Preventing disease is a recognized public interest, though not particularly on a regional scale. Providing adequate nutrition to mothers and children, to the elderly and disabled, is seen as a public interest, but can easily be derailed, as described above, by debate about the unworthy poor.

Respondents agree that the security, safety and health of our shared food supply is the objective of a well-functioning food system. Issues of affordability, nutrition, and nutritional education are readily understood as part of that broad story.

RECOMMENDATION: Advocate for different kinds of policies from within the broad perspective of the food system, and describe the pertinent choices, policies and institutions as components of that system.

RECOMMENDATION: Invest in communications designed to put the phrase and concept of "the food system" into common use. Repeat the phrase at every opportunity, with a simple accompanying explanation such as "how we grow, package, transport and distribute our food."

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research was conducted to inform the development, by advocates in the greater Philadelphia area, of a unified frame, or foundational story, that strengthens their separate advocacy efforts for the different issues discussed, while making communications about each mutually reinforcing for the others. We recommend that process begin as soon as possible, and be tested in a variety of communications to a range of audience.

- The key recommendation from these findings is to build that foundational story around the concept of “the food system.”
- Advocate for different kinds of policies from within the broad perspective of the food system, and describe the pertinent choices, policies and institutions as components of that system.
- Invest in communications designed to put the phrase and concept of “the food system” into common use. Repeat the phrase at every opportunity, with a simple accompanying explanation such as “how we grow, package, transport and distribute our food.”
- In all communications, evoke the values of security, safety, health and community. “Community” values include local pride, local economy, and local self-reliance.
- Emphasize the diverse delivery mechanisms by which neighbors help feed those in need. Make visible as characters or messengers the volunteers and staff at churches, food shelves, benevolent associations and businesses (including supermarkets) as persons who can stand in for, or represent the perspective of, the thousands of others who donate.
- These institutions should be characterized as part of our food system, helping make sure that people in the area are getting the nutrition they need. Emphasize nutrition and nutritional assistance over food stamps, and emphasize the range of participants, and of activities, including education, community gardening, etc, in this aspect of our shared food system.
- Use variations on the term “food insecurity”, with the phrase “not knowing where your next meal is coming from.”, both as a way to generate empathy, and to evoke the values related to security.
- Develop ways to inoculate against food stamp “abuse”, anticipating that it will be raised or is in listeners’ minds. Inoculations might include statistics on people receiving assistance who are not qualified, controls on making sure assistance is only used for its intended purposes, or even a visible commitment by community members (including retailers) to watch for and report suspected abuse.
- Emphasize multi-faceted strategies to reduce obesity and prevent disease, importantly including education and proven disease prevention programs. Package tax proposals and other specific policy changes as components of those strategies. Refer to and use images of fast food to represent the growing obesity epidemic.
- Maintain and step up news media efforts on development of new supermarkets and options for nutritious food in underserved neighborhoods. Plan for reporter fatigue (i.e., what’s new about next year’s story?) in continued reporting on success of new stores.
- Talk about local food production in terms of its impact on the local economy as well as delivering benefits of freshness, quality, and food safety. To the extent possible, piggyback policy messages with marketing materials, and use markets as a medium for distributing information.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

Food Farms & Hunger September 2010

- Talk about local food in terms of an accountable supply line and handling system that improves quality and safety.
- Be specific about farm areas under threat of being lost to agriculture. Talk about efforts to preserve existing productive agricultural lands as a public interest and farmers as performing a public benefit that deserves local support.
- When using the phrase “sustainable agriculture”, describe it as “sustainable farming methods” starting with replenishing the soil, maintaining clean water, reducing dependence on fossil fuels, etc.

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org

RESPONDENTS

Fifty people participated, 24 men and 26 women. All respondents vote, follow the news somewhat or very closely, and reside in Philadelphia (27) or Montgomery County (23). Four were African-American, and 3-4 were other non-caucasians.

Two groups were screened for income, to include respondents with household incomes of less than \$50,000 (9), \$50-99,000 (6), or over \$100,000 (2).

The other four groups were screened to include only people with at least some college education, and only people who are active participants in a voluntary, community or professional organization. In general because of the education component, this screen tends to skew toward higher incomes. However, these four groups included 9 of the 20 respondents who reported that they or a family member have received food assistance.

Political preference:

Democrat – 25

Republican – 15

Independent – 10

ActionMedia

720 3rd Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 554134

(612) 331-6466

actionmedia@actionmedia.org