# Letter From Lucy: A Year in Recession

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Dear Friends, The past year presented many challenges for the Food Bank For New York City. Unemployment reached a 26-year high. And 93 percent of our member soup kitchens and food pantries saw an increase in first-time visitors, as reported in *NYC Hunger Experience 2009*.

Responding to increased need, the Food Bank focused on our core strengths — food procurement, warehousing and a citywide network of approximately 1,000 food assistance programs that help meet our neighbors' immediate needs. Working toward long-term solutions, additional Food Bank efforts continue addressing issues including nutrition and health education, tax assistance, food stamps and public policy.

While the country's response to the recession appears to have had a real impact on hunger, **most of the government increases in support were designed as temporary measures — and will soon end.**

Over 2009, the Food Bank brought hunger awareness into new arenas. Social marketing campaigns encouraged healthy eating and Food Stamp enrollment, while online efforts — the launch of *Bank on It*, the Food Bank's blog; our Twitter presence; and a YouTube channel — spread the word to new online communities.

In the coming year, the Food Bank is committed to providing meals and services for New Yorkers who continue to struggle in difficult times, while strengthening the safety net for those in need. **And we will continue to rely on supporters like you.** Whether you donate, volunteer or spread the word — every action helps keep our neighbors well fed. Thank you!

Sincerely,

Lucy Cabrera, Ph.D., CAE
President and CEO