*You are a citizen of a developed nation such as the United States or Canada. You like in a nation of wealth and plenty. You have access to a free education through high school, work, transportation, quality health care, constant electricity, sanitation — all the things that money can buy… including food. You are the voice of some of the most affluent and resource consuming people on the planet. Food is plentiful, right? Here are some things you should know.*

**Background Information:**

* 16% of the current U.S. population deals with some sort of lack of food or food insecurity every day. That equates to 1 out of 6 people!
* In 1968, only 5% of Americans went hungry. That was 1 out of 20, which related closely to the national unemployment rate.
* 50% of more of these Americans living with food insecurity are white, employed full-time, and struggle to provide a full month’s worth of food to their families.
* The 3 greatest predictors of food insecurity are A) unemployment or under employment B) inflation C) rising food prices
* With a rise in inflation and food prices, the spending power of wages decreases and there is a dramatic rise in food insecurity in middle class America.
* There is a 57% increase since 2007 in Americans seeking help through government food programs like SNAP, the federal food stamp program, and food banks.
* The average allotment of money in food stamp programs is $1.50 per meal, and the money is generally gone by week 3 of a month when trying to feed the average family of 4.
* Even at that, Americans enjoy a food supply that is abundant, affordable and one of the world’s safest for consumers.
* The increase in food insecurity correlates directly with the increase in obesity in the U.S.
* Some factors contributing to the obesity epidemic include: 1) stress and 2) poor nutrition. The highly processed, salty, prepackaged food is quick and easy to prepare and is filling, though it lacks nutritional value.
* It takes resources like having a garden plot available, the time to work a garden and harvest the food, as well as the knowledge of how to prepare and preserve foods that are nutritionally better, but most people do not have the resources or knowledge to do so.
* It is estimated that the average American household spends 7% of their income on food. This number is low compared to other countries.
* **Vocabulary**

*affluent:* (especially of a group or area) having a great deal of money; wealthy.

*food insecurity:* the state of being without reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food.

*inflation:* a general increase in prices and fall in the purchasing value of money.

*subsidies:* a sum of money granted by the government or a public body to assist an industry or business so that the price of a commodity or service may remain low or competitive.