



# Impact of seasonal patterns of food insecurity on the diet and growth status of children in Alamosa County, Colorado

Project Information Sheet – October 2004

## Project Overview

This project studies the impact of family food insecurity on the diets and growth of children in Alamosa County. Elizabeth Adams, formerly of Colorado State University, designed this study. Interviews will be conducted with 300 families, each of which has at least one child between the ages of 2 and 6 years. The interviews will include a 24-hour diet recall, household food inventory, and information to ascertain food security status. Height and weight measurements will be done on each eligible child. Participants will be recruited from Women, Infant, and Children (WIC) and Head Start families. Each family will participate in two interviews six months apart to determine seasonal variation. The rate of food insecurity in Alamosa and its impact on children's diets will be assessed.

## Research Questions:

- Do families with children in Alamosa have enough of the kinds of food they need to eat?
- Does this change with the seasons?
- Does the availability of food affect the kind and amount of food children eat?
- Is food availability related to how children in Alamosa grow?

## Why? A description of the health problem

- Food insecurity is “the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods.”
- Food insecurity affected 8.8% of Colorado households in 1996-1998
- Food security is likely to be more prevalent in the San Luis Valley and in Alamosa than in other areas of Colorado.

## Benefits to the community

Findings from the research will be useful to community leaders in planning how to reduce food insecurity and improve nutrition for children. Low-income families would be likely to benefit from any improvements made.

## Timeline

Summer / winter 2003 Recruitment and interviews of families  
Summer / winter 2004: Recruitment and interviews of families  
2005 Completion of family interviews; begin data analysis

## Funding

Colorado Agriculture Experiment Station. RMRPC has an interagency agreement with CSU to do recruitment and data collection.

## Investigator

Jennifer Anderson, PhD, Colorado State University.

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