

# MY

Who faces hunger in Arizona?

# STORY

I was born in Casa Grande, Arizona, in 1953 and have lived in Pinal County most of my life so that I could take care of my mother. Today, I live in Eloy, just east of Casa Grande. I came here about five years ago, when my mother passed away, to work at a seed plant. It paid good money, but it ended.

I live by myself. I'm a bit lonely because I really don't know many people in Eloy. I'd like to make it back to Casa Grande, but rent is too expensive. My income on Social Security is low, and I have to pay all my bills with it.

I receive \$16 in SNAP each month because I didn't report that I am on Social Security. It's a long story, but basically I messed up! I was on unemployment and received \$193 a month in SNAP. I became eligible for Social Security and I didn't report my Social Security income. I thought DES would know because they're the government. I now have to pay back seven months of SNAP, around \$1,350. Right now, I am eligible for \$16 of SNAP, but I only get \$6 on my card because they keep \$10 as part of my payment plan. I guess this is better for me, because I really don't have the money to pay it back.

I don't eat that much, so I really don't go hungry. I don't use the \$6 SNAP payment when I receive it, I let it roll over until I have enough on the card to buy groceries. There is not much you can buy with \$6. I come to CAHRA [*Community Action Human Resources Agency*] once a month to get a food box, which is good. It has mostly canned food and vegetables. When I need it, I can get the CSFP food box for seniors [*Commodity Supplemental Food Program*].

I really wish there was a way for me to move back to Casa Grande. It's where I grew up, where I have friends.



**Art Vasquez**

Eloy, Arizona