USDA Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

A report summary from the Economic Research Service

Household Food Security in the United States in 2024

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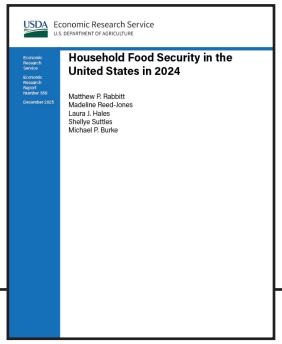


Key Points

- In 2024, 86.3 percent of U.S. households were food secure. The remaining 13.7 percent (18.3 million households) were food insecure. Food-insecure households (those with low and very low food security) had difficulty at some time during the year providing enough food for all their members because of a lack of resources. The 2024 prevalence of food insecurity was not statistically significantly different from the 13.5 percent in 2023 nor the 12.8 percent in 2022.
- In 2024, 5.4 percent of households had very low food security, statistically similar to the 5.1 percent in both 2023 and 2022. In this more severe range of food insecurity, the food intake of some household members was reduced and normal eating patterns were disrupted at times during the year because of limited resources.
- Children were food insecure at times during 2024 in 9.1 percent of U.S. households with children (3.3 million households), statistically similar to the 8.9 percent in 2023 and 8.8 percent in 2022. These households with food insecurity among children were unable at times to provide adequate, nutritious food for their children.
- Children are usually shielded from the conditions that characterize very low food security. However, in 2024, children, along with adults, experienced instances of very low food security in 0.9 percent of households with children, statistically similar to the 1.0 percent in both 2023 and 2022. These 318,000 households with very low food security among children reported that, at times in 2024, children were hungry, skipped a meal, or did not eat for a whole day because there was not enough money for food.

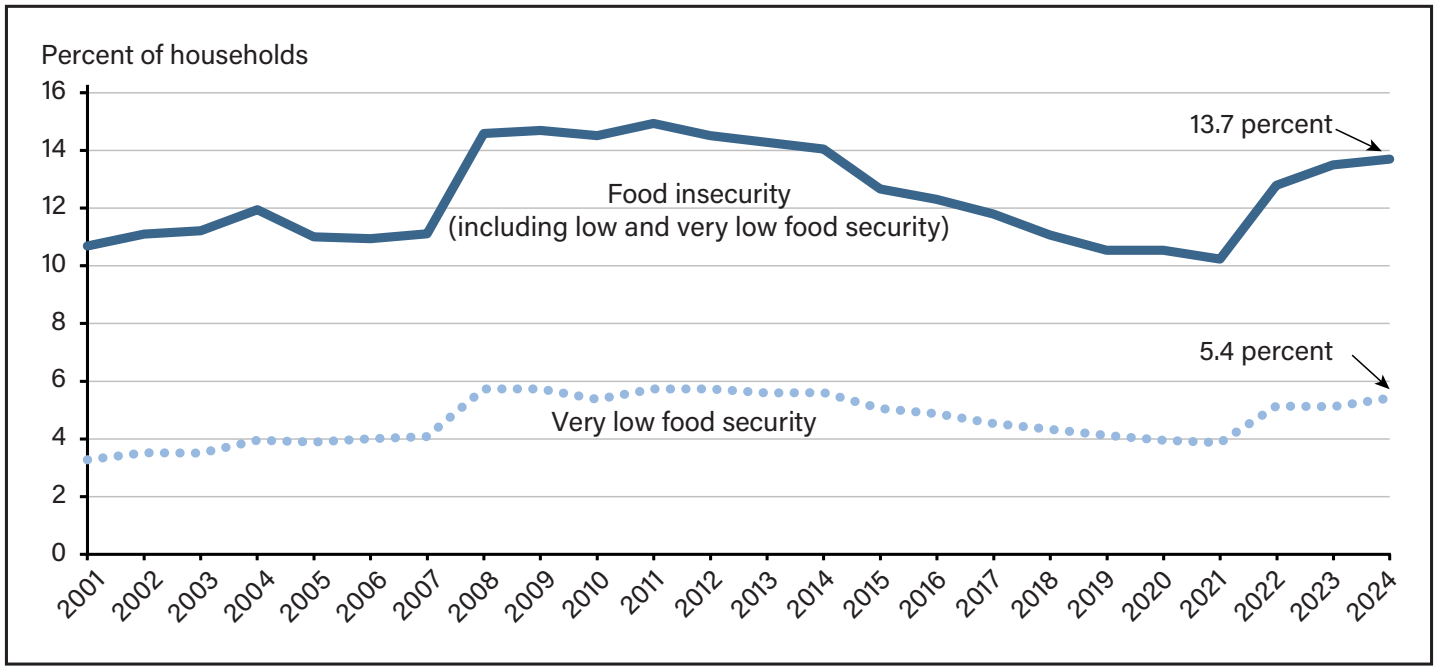
Why Does This Matter?

Most U.S. households have consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living, meaning they are food secure. However, some households experience food insecurity at times during the year, meaning their ability to acquire adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources. The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) food and nutrition assistance programs aim to increase food security by providing low-income households access to food for a healthful diet, as well as nutrition education. USDA monitors the extent and severity of food insecurity in U.S. households through an annual, nationally representative survey sponsored and analyzed by USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS). This report presents statistics from the survey that cover household food security, food expenditures, and the use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs in 2024. The prevalence of food insecurity is determined by many factors, including household circumstances, the economy, and Federal, State, and local policies. This report does not provide an analysis of the factors that determine the prevalence of or trends in food insecurity.

A Few More Details

Data for the USDA, ERS food security reports come from an annual survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census as the December supplement to the monthly Current Population Survey. USDA, ERS sponsors the annual Food Security Supplement (FSS) and compiles and analyzes the responses. The 2024 FSS included 32,719 households, which comprised a representative sample of the U.S. civilian population of about 134 million households. The FSS asked one adult respondent per household about experiences and behaviors that indicate food insecurity during calendar year 2024, such as being unable to afford balanced meals, cutting the size of meals, or being hungry because of too little money for food. The food security status of the household was assigned based on the number of food-insecure conditions reported.

Prevalence of food insecurity in 2024 similar to 2023 prevalence



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements data.

ERS is a primary source of economic research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.