USDA Economic Research Service
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Economic Research Service

Administrative Publication Number 126

December 2025

Statistical Supplement to Household Food Security in the United States in 2024

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Economic Research Service
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Economic Research Service
www.ers.usda.gov

Recommended citation format for this publication:

Rabbitt, M. P., Reed-Jones, M., Hales, L. J., Suttles, S., and Burke, M. P. (2025). *Statistical supplement to household food security in the United States in 2024* (Report No. AP-126). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service.

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Note to Readers

This supplement provides statistics that complement those in the *Household Food Security in the United States in 2024* report (Report No. ERR-358), a research report that presents the primary national statistics on household food security, food spending, and the use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs by food-insecure households. Additional statistics here cover component items of the household food security measure, the frequency of occurrence of food-insecure conditions, and selected statistics on household food security, food spending, and the use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs.

Keywords: food security, food insecurity, hunger, recent trends, U.S. households

Acknowledgments

The authors thank Jay Variyam, Jessica Todd, Mark Prell and Brandon Restrepo of USDA, Eco-nomic Research Service (ERS) for their reviews of this report. The authors also thank two external reviewers Parke Wilde of Tufts University and James P. Ziliak of the University of Kentucky and reviewers from USDA, Food and Nutrition Service and USDA, Office of the Chief Economist for their insightful feedback. Thanks also to USDA, ERS editors Christopher Whitney and Grant Wall and USDA, ERS designer Jeremy Bell for their work in producing this report.

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Contents

Introduction 1

Food Insecurity in Low-Income Households 1

Number of Persons by Household Food Security Status and Selected Household Characteristics. 3

Food Security During the 30 Days Before the Food Security Survey 6

Household Responses to Questions in the Food Security Scale 11

Frequency of Occurrence of Behaviors, Experiences, and Conditions That Indicate Food Insecurity 14

Monthly and Daily Occurrence of Food-Insecure Conditions 17

Food Spending by Food-Secure and Food-Insecure Households 18

Use of Community Nutrition Assistance 20

Food Spending by Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance 23

Food Security During the 30 Days Before the Food Security Survey in Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance 23

Combined Use of Federal and Community Food and Nutrition Assistance. 25

Statistical Supplement to Household Food Security in the United States in 2024

Introduction

This supplement provides statistics on component items of the household food security measure, the frequency of occurrence of food-insecure conditions, and selected statistics on household food security, food spending, and the use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs. It complements the *Household Food Security in the United States in 2024* report (Rabbitt et al., 2025), which provides the primary national statistics on household food security, food spending, and the use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs by food-insecure households.

The statistics presented here are based on data collected in the Current Population Survey (CPS) Food Security Supplement (FSS) conducted in December 2024. Information about the survey, data, and methods is available in the *Household Food Security in the United States in 2024* report (Report No. ERR-358). All statistics were calculated by applying the FSS weights to the responses of surveyed households to obtain nationally representative prevalence estimates. Unless otherwise noted, statistical differences described in the text are significant at the 90-percent confidence level.[1]

Food Insecurity in Low-Income Households

Table S-1 presents food security statistics for households with annual incomes below 130 percent of the poverty line.[2] By definition, food insecurity results from insufficient household resources. However, many factors that might affect a household's food security (e.g., job loss, divorce, adverse health event, or other unexpected events) are not captured by an annual income measure. Some households experienced episodes of food insecurity, or even very low food security, when their annual incomes were well above the poverty line (Nord & Brent, 2002; Gundersen & Gruber, 2001). Conversely, many low-income households managed to remain food secure. In 2024, 61.7 percent of households with annual incomes below 130 percent of the poverty line were food secure, while 38.3 percent were food insecure.

[1] Standard errors of estimates were calculated using balanced repeated replication (BRR) methods based on replicate weights computed for the supplement by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census.

[2] The Federal poverty line in 2024 was $31,812 annual income for a family of four (two adults and two children). Households with gross monthly income at or below 130 percent of the poverty line are eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), provided they meet other eligibility criteria. The gross monthly income limit does not apply to households with an elderly member or member with a disability. Some States have adopted a broad-based categorical eligibility that provides a higher gross income limit for SNAP applicants who are categorically eligible for SNAP based on participation in other programs or benefits. Children were eligible for free meals in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs if their household income was determined to be at or below 130 percent of the poverty line.

Table S-1

U.S. households with annual income below 130 percent of the poverty line by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2024

Category	Total[1]	Food secure		Food insecure					
				All		With low food security		With very low food security	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All low-income households	16,751	10,341	61.7	6,410	38.3	3,692	22.1	2,718	16.2
Household composition									
With children < 18 years	6,496	3,686	56.7	2,810	43.3	1,834	28.3	976	15
With children < 6 years	2,991	1,784	59.6	1,207	40.4	869	29.1	338	11.3
Married-couple families	2,567	1,666	64.9	901	35.1	660	25.7	241	9.4
Female head, no spouse	3,126	1,525	48.8	1,601	51.2	964	30.8	637	20.4
Male head, no spouse	633	390	61.6	243	38.4	173	27.3	70	11.1
Other household with child[2]	170	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
With no children < 18 years	10,255	6,655	64.9	3,600	35.1	1,858	18.1	1,742	17
More than one adult	3,807	2,551	67	1,256	33	717	18.8	539	14.2
Women living alone	3,809	2,455	64.5	1,354	35.5	657	17.2	697	18.3
Men living alone	2,639	1,650	62.5	989	37.5	484	18.4	505	19.1
With an adult age 65 and older	5,261	3,683	70	1,578	30	934	17.8	644	12.2
Adult age 65 and older living alone	3,052	2,225	72.9	827	27.1	465	15.2	362	11.9
Race/ethnicity of household reference persons:									
White, non-Hispanic	7,203	4,563	63.3	2,640	36.7	1,443	20.1	1,197	16.6
Black, non-Hispanic	3,459	1,900	54.9	1,559	45.1	841	24.3	718	20.8
Hispanic[3]	4,567	2,919	63.9	1,648	36.1	1,101	24.1	547	12
Other, non-Hispanic	1,522	960	63.1	562	36.9	307	20.1	255	16.8
Area of residence[4]									
Inside metropolitan area	13,668	8,472	62	5,196	38	2,984	21.8	2,212	16.2
In principal cities[5]	5,827	3,507	60.2	2,320	39.8	1,354	23.2	966	16.6
Not in principal cities	5,609	3,604	64.3	2,005	35.7	1,092	19.4	913	16.3
Outside metropolitan area	3,083	1,869	60.6	1,214	39.4	709	23	505	16.4
Census geographic region									
Northeast	2,355	1,444	61.3	911	38.7	504	21.4	407	17.3
Midwest	3,461	2,071	59.8	1,390	40.2	796	23	594	17.2
South	7,399	4,569	61.8	2,830	38.2	1,693	22.8	1,137	15.4
West	3,536	2,257	63.8	1,279	36.2	699	19.8	580	16.4

NA = Not reported; fewer than 10 households in the survey with this characteristic had food insecurity or very low food security.

[1]Totals exclude households for which income was not reported (about 21 percent of households) and those for which food security status is unknown because the households did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale (0.4 percent of low-income households).

[2]Households with children in complex living arrangements (e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder).

[3]Hispanic respondents may be of any race.

[4]Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation.

[5]Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 16 percent of low-income households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Number of Persons by Household Food Security Status and Selected Household Characteristics

The survey measures food security status at the household level. While it is informative to examine the number of persons residing in food-insecure households, these statistics should be interpreted carefully (see tables S-2 for all individuals and S-3 for children). Within a food-insecure household, household members may be affected differently by the household's food insecurity. Some members—particularly young children—may experience only mild or no effects, while adults are more severely affected as they try to shield younger children from experiencing food insecurity. It is more precise to describe these statistics as representing "persons living in food-insecure households" rather than as representing "food-insecure persons." Similarly, "persons living in households with very low food security" is a more precise description than "persons with very low food security." "Children living in food-insecure households" are those with low or very low food security among adults or children, or both. "Households with food-insecure children" are those with low or very low food security among children.

Table S-2

Number of individuals by food security status of U.S. households and selected household characteristics, 2024

Category	Total[1]	In food-secure households		In food-insecure households					
				All		In households with low food security		In households with very low food security	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All individuals in households	332,179	284,279	85.6	47,900	14.4	31,368	9.4	16,532	5
Household composition									
With children < 18 years	153,956	125,815	81.7	28,141	18.3	19,891	12.9	8,250	5.4
With children < 6 years	65,208	52,854	81.1	12,354	18.9	9,096	13.9	3,258	5
Married-couple families	107,166	94,619	88.3	12,547	11.7	9,441	8.8	3,106	2.9
Female head, no spouse	32,373	20,255	62.6	12,118	37.4	7,788	24	4,330	13.4
Male head, no spouse	12,500	9,470	75.8	3,030	24.2	2,343	18.7	687	5.5
Other household with child[2]	1,917	1,471	76.7	446	23.3	319	16.7	127	6.6
With no children < 18 years	178,223	158,464	88.9	19,759	11.1	11,477	6.5	8,282	4.6
More than one adult	137,900	124,381	90.2	13,519	9.8	8,362	6.1	5,157	3.7
Women living alone	21,670	18,170	83.8	3,500	16.2	1,725	8	1,775	8.2
Men living alone	18,653	15,913	85.3	2,740	14.7	1,390	7.5	1,350	7.2
With an adult age 65 and older	89,372	79,678	89.2	9,694	10.8	6,611	7.4	3,083	3.4
Adult age 65 and older living alone	16,829	14,925	88.7	1,904	11.3	1,104	6.5	800	4.8
Race/ethnicity of household reference persons									
White, non-Hispanic	197,847	176,967	89.4	20,880	10.6	13,273	6.8	7,607	3.8
Black, non-Hispanic	41,250	30,781	74.6	10,469	25.4	6,325	15.4	4,144	10
Hispanic[3]	62,892	49,865	79.3	13,027	20.7	9,454	15	3,573	5.7
Other, non-Hispanic	30,189	26,665	88.3	3,524	11.7	2,316	7.7	1,208	4
Household income-to-poverty ratio									
Under 1.00	29,948	18,227	60.9	11,721	39.1	7,061	23.5	4,660	15.6
Under 1.30	44,805	27,355	61.1	17,450	38.9	10,970	24.4	6,480	14.5
Under 1.85	73,999	48,956	66.2	25,043	33.8	16,026	21.6	9,017	12.2
1.85 and over	193,682	178,348	92.1	15,334	7.9	10,426	5.4	4,908	2.5
Income unknown	64,498	56,975	88.3	7,523	11.7	4,916	7.7	2,607	4
Area of residence[4]									
Inside metropolitan area	288,459	247,995	86	40,464	14	26,496	9.2	13,968	4.8
In principal cities[5]	89,246	74,072	83	15,174	17	9,475	10.6	5,699	6.4
Not in principal cities	157,528	137,493	87.3	20,035	12.7	13,591	8.6	6,444	4.1
Outside metropolitan area	43,720	36,284	83	7,436	17	4,872	11.1	2,564	5.9
Census geographic region									
Northeast	56,347	49,167	87.3	7,180	12.7	4,525	8	2,655	4.7
Midwest	68,003	58,716	86.3	9,287	13.7	6,074	9	3,213	4.7
South	129,896	109,154	84	20,742	16	13,420	10.4	7,322	5.6
West	77,934	67,243	86.3	10,691	13.7	7,349	9.4	3,342	4.3

[1]Totals exclude individuals in households for which food security status is unknown because the households did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2024, these exclusions represented about 647,000 individuals (0.2 percent of the U.S. population).

[2]Households with children in complex living arrangements (e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder).

[3]Hispanic respondents may be of any race.

[4]Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation.

[5]Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 14 percent of individuals living in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-3

Number of children by food security status of U.S. households and selected household characteristics, 2024

Category	Total[1]	In food-secure households		In food-insecure households[2]		In households with food-insecure children[3]		In households with very low food security among children	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All children	72,179	58,088	80.5	14,091	19.5	7,306	10.1	751	1
Household composition									
With children < 6 years	33,459	26,636	79.6	6,823	20.4	3,389	10.1	362	1.1
Married-couple families	48,768	43,061	88.3	5,707	11.7	2,892	5.9	171	0.4
Female head, no spouse	17,029	10,288	60.4	6,741	39.6	3,683	21.6	533	3.1
Male head, no spouse	5,682	4,185	73.7	1,497	26.3	650	11.4	NA	NA
Other household with child[4]	701	556	79.3	145	20.7	81	11.6	NA	NA
Race/ethnicity of household reference persons									
White, non-Hispanic	38,501	32,948	85.6	5,553	14.4	2,646	6.9	150	0.4
Black, non-Hispanic	10,145	6,706	66.1	3,439	33.9	1,982	19.5	263	2.6
Hispanic[5]	17,070	12,860	75.3	4,210	24.7	2,134	12.5	285	1.7
Other, non-Hispanic	6,463	5,574	86.2	889	13.8	545	8.4	NA	NA
Household income-to-poverty ratio									
Under 1.00	9,640	5,604	58.1	4,036	41.9	2,241	23.2	425	4.4
Under 1.30	14,777	8,513	57.6	6,264	42.4	3,470	23.5	569	3.9
Under 1.85	22,366	13,894	62.1	8,472	37.9	4,640	20.7	656	2.9
1.85 and over	38,278	34,733	90.7	3,545	9.3	1,608	4.2	NA	NA
Income unknown	11,536	9,462	82	2,074	18	1,058	9.2	NA	NA
Area of residence[6]									
Inside metropolitan area	62,929	50,955	81	11,974	19	6,391	10.2	666	1.1
In principal cities[7]	19,176	14,790	77.1	4,386	22.9	2,328	12.1	309	1.6
Not in principal cities	34,879	28,765	82.5	6,114	17.5	3,218	9.2	333	1
Outside metropolitan area	9,251	7,134	77.1	2,117	22.9	915	9.9	85	0.9
Census geographic region									
Northeast	11,333	9,422	83.1	1,911	16.9	919	8.1	112	1
Midwest	14,852	11,946	80.4	2,906	19.6	1,692	11.4	96	0.6
South	29,214	22,838	78.2	6,376	21.8	3,352	11.5	422	1.4
West	16,781	13,884	82.7	2,897	17.3	1,343	8	122	0.7

NA = Not reported; fewer than 10 households in the survey with this characteristic had very low food security among children.

[1]Totals exclude households for which food security status is unknown because the households did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2024, these exclusions represented 103,000 children (0.1 percent).

[2]Food-insecure households are those with low or very low food security among adults or children, or both.

[3]Households with food-insecure children are those with low or very low food security among children.

[4]Households with children in complex living arrangements (e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder).

[5]Hispanic respondents may be of any race.

[6]Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation.

[7]Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 14 percent of children living in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Food Security During the 30 Days Before the Food Security Survey

The annual food security survey was designed to assess households' food security during the 12-month period prior to the survey, but information was also collected for the 30-day period before the survey for the subset of households that reported experiencing food insecurity in the 12 months before the survey.[3] Households that responded affirmatively to each 12-month period question were asked whether the same behavior, experience, or condition occurred during the last 30 days. Researchers used responses to these questions to assess the food security status of households during the 30 days before the survey, following the same protocols used for the 12-month measure.[4] The 30-day food security measurement protocol was revised in 2005, so 30-day statistics for 2024 are directly comparable with those for 2005 and later years but not with those reported for 2004 and earlier years.

An estimated 92.3 percent of households were food secure throughout the 30-day period before the survey, from mid-November to mid-December 2024 (table S-4).[5] An estimated 7.7 percent (10.3 million households) were food insecure at some point during the 30-day period, including 3.0 percent (4.0 million households) experiencing very low food security. The national-level prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security were not statistically significantly different than the corresponding 30-day period in 2023 (7.5 percent and 3.2 percent, respectively) (Rabbitt et al., 2024).[6] Additionally, households with incomes below 130 percent of the Federal poverty line were the only subpopulation to experience a statistically significant increase in prevalence rates of 30-day food insecurity from 2023 to 2024 (21.3 percent to 23.2 percent). There were no statistically significant declines in the prevalence of 30-day food insecurity from 2023 to 2024. See figure S-1 for the percent of households that were food insecure in the 30 days before the survey in 2023 and 2024 and the percentage point changes in the prevalence from 2023 to 2024.

Three subpopulations experienced decreases in the prevalence of 30-day very low food security when compared with the corresponding 30-day period in 2023. Figure S-2 displays the prevalence of very low food security during the 30 days before the food security survey in 2023 and 2024 for all population subgroups and shows the statistically significant decreases (as marked with an asterisk (*)) for the following groups:

- Households with children under age 6 (3.5 percent to 2.4 percent);
- Households with Hispanic reference persons (4.7 percent to 3.6 percent); and
- Households with income under 185 percent of the poverty line (8.9 percent to 8.0 percent).

There were no statistically significant increases in 30-day very low food security from 2023 to 2024.

[3] Households reporting that they were food secure during the 12-month period before the survey were assumed to be food secure for the 30-day period before the survey.

[4] For questions asking about the frequency of conditions or behaviors (items 5, 10, and 17), responses that indicated the described conditions occurred on at least 3 days of the previous 30 days were counted as affirmative. See Nord (2002). Beginning with the 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data collection, all continuous variables for the number of days out of the previous 30 days that food-insecure conditions occurred are only released after being categorized into ranges of number of days. In 2024, all these recoded variables include at least a category for 1 or 2 days so that the 30-day food security prevalence rate can be calculated the same way as in previous years, using 3 or more days as affirmative. One variable, HESSHM5: "In the last 30 days, did children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?" did not meet U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census guidelines for disclosure and no data are provided for that variable. That question was not used in assessing 30-day food security status but is unlikely to affect the estimates because it is the most severe item on the scale and not near the food insecurity or very low food security thresholds.

[5] The 2024 food security survey was conducted December 8–18, 2024.

[6] The 2023 food security survey was conducted December 10–19, 2023.

Just over half (56 percent) of households that were food insecure sometime during the 12 months before the survey (18.3 million households) (Rabbitt et al., 2025) were food insecure at some time during the 30 days from mid-November to mid-December 2024 (10.3 million households; table S-4); the corresponding statistic for very low food security was 56 percent (7.2 million households during 12 months before the survey versus 4.0 million households during the 30 days before the survey). If food insecurity during this 30-day period was like that for other 30-day periods throughout the year, then these comparisons imply the average household that was food insecure at some time during the year experienced this condition in 7 months of the year. Likewise, the average household with very low food security experienced that condition in 7 months of the year.[7] However, analysis of food insecurity in different months suggests that food insecurity is somewhat more prevalent in the summer months (July–September) than in the March–April and November–December periods. The reason is perhaps because of less access to school meal programs during the summer (Cohen et al., 2002; Nord & Romig, 2006; Nord & Kantor, 2006), so typical frequencies may be somewhat higher than the 7 months implied.

[7] The number of months is estimated as the monthly rate, divided by the annual rate, multiplied by 12.

Table S-4

U.S. households by food security status during the 30 days before the food security survey and selected household characteristics, 2024

Category	Total[1]	Food secure		Food insecure					
				All		With low food security		With very low food security	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All households	134,060	123,716	92.3	10,344	7.7	6,344	4.7	4,000	3
Household composition									
With children < 18 years	36,599	32,852	89.8	3,747	10.2	2,620	7.1	1,127	3.1
With children < 6 years	14,767	13,340	90.3	1,427	9.7	1,067	7.3	360	2.4
Married-couple families	24,051	22,620	94.1	1,431	5.9	1,122	4.6	309	1.3
Female head, no spouse	8,696	6,859	78.9	1,837	21.1	1,177	13.5	660	7.6
Male head, no spouse	3,391	2,983	88	408	12	288	8.5	120	3.5
Other household with child[2]	462	390	84.4	72	15.6	NA	NA	NA	NA
With no children < 18 years	97,460	90,863	93.2	6,597	6.8	3,724	3.9	2,873	2.9
More than one adult	57,140	54,131	94.7	3,009	5.3	1,825	3.2	1,184	2.1
Women living alone	21,667	19,565	90.3	2,102	9.7	1,162	5.4	940	4.3
Men living alone	18,653	17,166	92	1,487	8	737	4	750	4
With an adult age 65 and older	44,433	41,955	94.4	2,478	5.6	1,529	3.5	949	2.1
Adult age 65 and older living alone	16,829	15,750	93.6	1,079	6.4	628	3.7	451	2.7
Race/ethnicity of household reference persons									
White, non-Hispanic	84,550	79,877	94.5	4,673	5.5	2,777	3.3	1,896	2.2
Black, non-Hispanic	17,582	15,189	86.4	2,393	13.6	1,373	7.8	1,020	5.8
Hispanic[3]	20,670	18,219	88.1	2,451	11.9	1,716	8.3	735	3.6
Other, non-Hispanic	11,257	10,429	92.6	828	7.4	479	4.3	349	3.1
Household income-to-poverty ratio									
Under 1.00	11,555	8,744	75.7	2,811	24.3	1,536	13.3	1,275	11
Under 1.30	16,751	12,867	76.8	3,884	23.2	2,249	13.4	1,635	9.8
Under 1.85	28,066	22,611	80.6	5,455	19.4	3,220	11.4	2,235	8
1.85 and over	78,257	75,013	95.9	3,244	4.1	2,027	2.5	1,217	1.6
Income unknown	27,736	26,089	94.1	1,647	5.9	1,098	3.9	549	2
Area of residence[4]									
Inside metropolitan area	115,740	107,062	92.5	8,678	7.5	5,329	4.6	3,349	2.9
In principal cities[5]	37,554	34,064	90.7	3,490	9.3	2,191	5.8	1,299	3.5
Not in principal cities	60,579	56,469	93.2	4,110	6.8	2,543	4.2	1,567	2.6
Outside metropolitan area	18,320	16,654	90.9	1,666	9.1	1,015	5.5	651	3.6
Census geographic region									
Northeast	23,305	21,739	93.3	1,566	6.7	1,086	4.6	480	2.1
Midwest	28,324	26,087	92.1	2,237	7.9	1,323	4.7	914	3.2
South	52,337	47,876	91.5	4,461	8.5	2,663	5.1	1,798	3.4
West	30,093	28,012	93.1	2,081	6.9	1,273	4.2	808	2.7

NA = Not reported; fewer than 10 households in the survey with this characteristic had very low food security within the past 30 days.

[1]The 30-day prevalence rates refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8–18, 2024. Totals exclude households for which food security status is unknown because the households did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the 30-day food security scale. In 2024, these exclusions represented 314,000 households (0.2 percent of all households). The 30-day statistics for 2004 and earlier years were based on a different methodology and are not comparable with these statistics.

[2]Households with children in complex living arrangements (e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder).

[3]Hispanic respondents may be of any race.

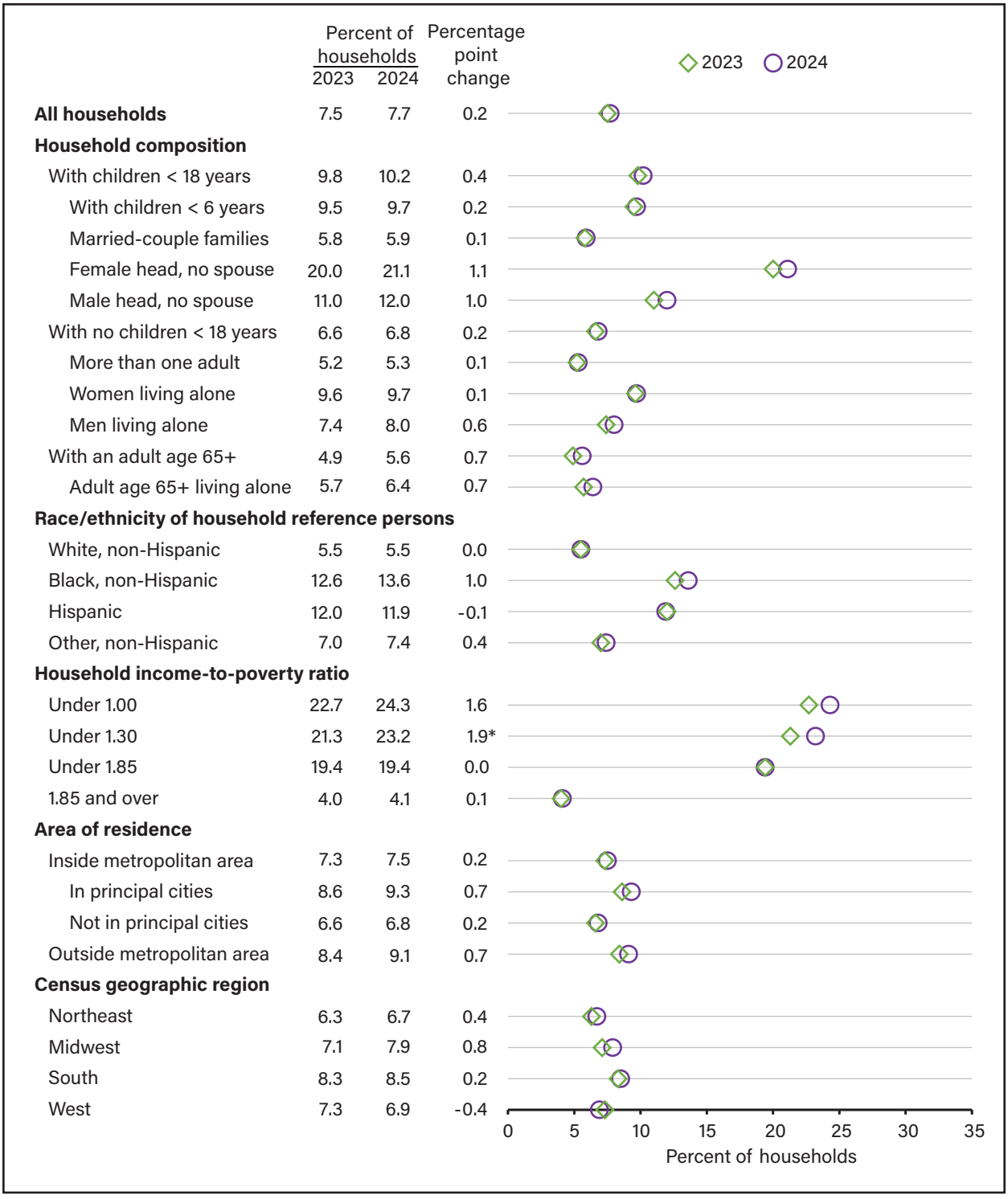
[4]Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation.

[5]Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 15 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Figure S-1

Prevalence of 30-day food insecurity in the United States, 2023 and 2024



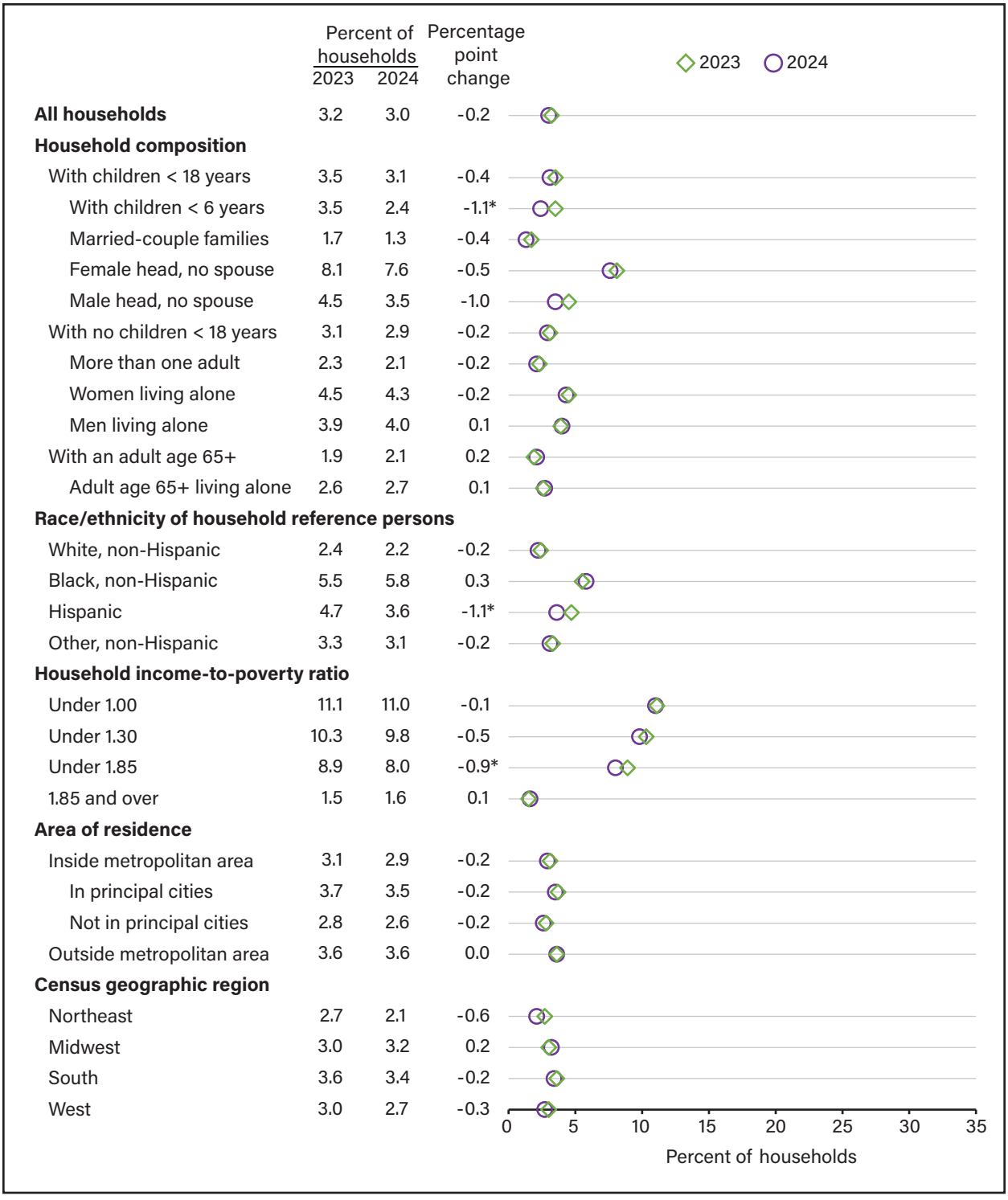
Note: The 30-day prevalence rates refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December each year; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8–18, 2024.

* An asterisk indicates change is statistically different from zero at the 90 percent confidence level (t > 1.645).

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2023 and 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Figure S-2

Prevalence of 30-day very low food security in the United States, 2023 and 2024



Note: The 30-day prevalence rates refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December each year; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8–18, 2024.

* An asterisk indicates that the change is statistically different from zero at the 90 percent confidence level (t > 1.645).

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2023 and 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Household Responses to Questions in the Food Security Scale

The 18 food security questions asked about conditions, experiences, and behaviors that range widely in severity (items near the top of the lists in table S-5 are relatively less severe, whereas those nearer the bottom are more severe). Those indicating less severe food insecurity were observed in a larger proportion of households, and the proportion declined as severity increases (table S-5). The two least severe questions refer to uncertainty about having enough food and the experience of running out of food. The remaining 16 items indicate reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diets, as well as increasingly severe disruptions of normal eating patterns and reductions in food intake (for the complete question wording, box "Questions Used to Assess the Food Security of Households in the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement" on page 26).

Table S-5
U.S. responses to items in the food security scale, 2021–24[1]

	Households affirming item[3]			
Scale item[2]	2021	2022	2023	2024
	Percent			
Household items				
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	13.9	16.7	17.1	17.2
Food bought didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	11.0	14.0	14.3	14.7
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	11.3	14.2	15.3	15.5
Adult items				
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	6.0	7.7	7.9	8.4
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	6.2	7.9	8.4	8.5
Adult(s) cut size or skipped meals in 3 or more months	4.6	6.0	6.2	6.5
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford food	3.4	4.0	4.4	4.7
Respondent lost weight	2.2	2.8	3.0	3.1
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	1.3	1.6	1.6	1.8
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day in 3 or more months	0.9	1.1	1.2	1.3
Child items				
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	10.1	13.1	14.0	14.5
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	6.8	9.5	9.9	9.6
Child(ren) were not eating enough	3.0	3.9	4.1	4.3
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	1.5	2.4	2.0	2.0
Child(ren) were hungry	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.2
Child(ren) skipped meals	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.9
Child(ren) skipped meals in 3 or more months	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.7
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	0.1	0.2	0.1	0.3

[1]Survey responses are weighted to population totals.

[2]The full wording of each question includes explicit reference to resource limitation, e.g., "... because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food" or "... because there wasn't enough money for food." For the complete question wording, see box "Questions Used to Assess the Food Security of Households in the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement" on page 26.

[3]Households not responding to an item are omitted from the calculations of percentages for that item. Households without children are omitted from the calculation of child-referenced items.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2021–24 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.

Three or more affirmative responses were required for a household to be classified as food insecure. All households in that category affirmed at least one item indicating reduced diet quality, disruption of normal eating patterns, or a reduction in food intake. Most food-insecure households reported multiple indicators of these conditions. A large majority of households (71.1 percent of households with children and 80.3 percent of those without children) reported no problems or concerns in meeting their food needs (table S-6). Households that reported only one or two indications of food insecurity (10.5 percent of households with children and 7.9 percent of households without children) are also classified as food secure. Most of these households affirmed one or both of the first two items, indicating uncertainty about having enough food or about exhausting their food supply, but did not indicate actual disruptions of normal eating patterns or reductions in food intake. Although these households were classified as food secure, the food security of some households may have been marginal at times, especially in the sense that they lacked "assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways," a condition that the Life Sciences Research Office includes in its definition of food security (Anderson, 1990, p. 1,598).[8] Research examining health and children's development in these marginally food-secure households generally has indicated that outcomes were either intermediate between those in highly food-secure and food-insecure households or more closely resembled those in food-insecure households (Radimer & Nord, 2005; Winicki & Jemison, 2003; Wilde & Peterman, 2006).

[8] The Life Sciences Research Office (LSRO) was a nonprofit organization in Bethesda, MD. Concepts and definitions of food security and related conditions developed by LSRO for the American Institute of Nutrition (Anderson, 1990) provided key parts of the theoretical underpinnings of the household food security measure.

Table S-6

Percentage of U.S. households by food security raw score, 2024

Panel A: Households with children—18-item household food security scale			
Raw score (number of food-insecure conditions reported)	Percent of households[1]	Cumulative percent of households[1]	Food security status
0	71.12	71.12	Food secure (81.59 percent)
1	6.23	77.35	
2	4.24	81.59	
3	3.51	85.1	Low food security (12.95 percent)
4	2.37	87.47	
5	2.47	89.94	
6	2.61	92.55	
7	1.99	94.54	
8	1.56	96.1	Very low food security (5.46 percent)
9	1.14	97.24	
10	0.81	98.05	
11	0.65	98.7	
12	0.39	99.09	
13	0.26	99.35	
14	0.17	99.52	
15	0.19	99.71	
16	0.08	99.79	
17	0.14	99.93	
18	0.07	100	

Panel B: Households with children—8-item child food security scale			
Raw score (number of food-insecure conditions reported)	Percent of households[1]	Cumulative percent of households[1]	Food security status
0	83.76	83.76	Children food secure (90.95 percent)
1	7.19	90.95	
2	4.62	95.57	Low food security among children (8.19 percent)
3	2.73	98.3	
4	0.84	99.14	
5	0.23	99.37	Very low food security among children (0.86 percent)
6	0.16	99.53	
7	0.25	99.78	
8	0.22	100	

Panel C: Households with no children—10-item adult food security scale			
Raw score (number of food-insecure conditions reported)	Percent of households[1]	Cumulative percent of households[1]	Food security status
0	80.25	80.25	Food secure (88.10 percent)
1	4.74	84.99	
2	3.11	88.1	
3	3.35	91.45	Low food security (6.56 percent)
4	1.68	93.13	
5	1.53	94.66	
6	1.69	96.35	Very low food security (5.34 percent)
7	1.51	97.86	
8	0.91	98.77	
9	0.58	99.35	
10	0.65	100	

[1]Survey responses are weighted to population totals.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Frequency of Occurrence of Behaviors, Experiences, and Conditions That Indicate Food Insecurity

Most of the questions used to calculate the food security scale also elicited information about how often the food-insecure behavior, experience, or condition occurred. The food security scale does not take all this frequency-of-occurrence information into account, but analysis of these responses can provide insight into the frequency and duration of food insecurity. Frequency-of-occurrence information is collected in the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS) using two different methods:

- **Method 1:** A condition was described, and the respondent was asked if this condition was often, sometimes, or never true for their household during the past 12 months.
- **Method 2:** Respondents who answered "yes" to a question were asked, "How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?"

Table S-7 presents responses to each food security question, broken down by reported frequency of occurrence for all households interviewed in the December 2024 survey. Questions using method 1 are presented in the top panel of the table, and those using method 2 are presented in the bottom panel. Most households that responded affirmatively to method 1 questions reported that the behavior, experience, or condition occurred "sometimes," whereas 17–26 percent (depending on the specific question) reported that it occurred "often."

In response to method 2 questions (i.e., conditional on affirming the general question) 32–39 percent of respondents reported that the behavior, experience, or condition occurred "in almost every month." Additionally, 37–44 percent reported that it occurred in "some months, but not every month," and 20–26 percent reported that it occurred "in only 1 or 2 months."

Table S-8 presents the same frequency-of-occurrence response statistics for households classified as having very low food security.

Table S-7

Frequency of occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by all U.S. households, 2024[1]

Condition[2]	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence			
		Often	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
	- - - Percent of all households - - -			Percent of "ever during the year"[3]	
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	17.2	4.4	12.8	26	74
Food bought didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	14.7	3.2	11.5	22	78
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	15.5	4.1	11.4	26	74
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	14.5	3.1	11.4	21	79
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	9.6	1.6	7.9	17	83
Child(ren) were not eating enough	4.3	0.8	3.5	20	80

Condition[2]	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence					
		Almost every month	Some months but not every month	In only 1 or 2 months	Almost every month	Some months but not every month	In only 1 or 2 months
	- - - Percent of all households - - -				Percent of "ever during the year"[3]		
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	8.4	2.8	3.6	1.9	34	43	23
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	8.5	2.7	3.7	2.1	32	44	24
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford food	4.7	1.5	2	1.2	32	43	24
Respondent lost weight	3.1	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	1.8	0.6	0.7	0.5	35	39	26
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	2	0.6	0.8	0.5	33	43	24
Child(ren) were hungry	1.1	0.4	0.5	0.2	38	42	20
Child(ren) skipped meals	0.9	0.4	0.3	0.2	39	37	24
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	0.3	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC

NC = Frequency of occurrence information was not collected for these conditions.

[1]Survey responses are weighted to population totals. Households not responding to an item or not responding to the follow-up question about frequency of occurrence are omitted from the calculation of percentages for that item. Households without children are omitted from the calculation of percentages for child-referenced items.

[2]The full wording of each question includes explicit reference to resource limitation, e.g., "...because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food," or "...because there wasn't enough money for food."

[3]Columns labeled "Percent of 'ever during the year'" show the distribution by frequency of occurrence for households that indicate they experienced the condition "ever during the year" (shown in the first column of statistics).

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-8

Frequency of occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by U.S. households with very low food security, 2024[1]

Condition[2]	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence			
		Often	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
	- - - Percent of all households with very low food security - - -			Percent of "ever during the year"[3]	
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	97.9	47.6	50.2	49.0	51.0
Food bought didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	96.6	38.4	58.1	40.0	60.0
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	95	43.4	51.7	46.0	54.0
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	89.6	30.7	58.8	34.0	66.0
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	77.9	22.5	55.4	29.0	71.0
Child(ren) were not eating enough	49.1	12.5	36.6	25.0	75.0

Condition[2]	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence					
		Almost every month	Some months but not every month	In only 1 or 2 months	Almost every month	Some months but not every month	In only 1 or 2 months
	- - - Percent of all households with very low food security - - -				Percent of "ever during the year"[3]		
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	96.7	42.1	45.3	9.3	43.0	47.0	10.0
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	94.1	41.4	41.6	11.1	44.0	44.0	12.0
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford food	68.5	26.8	30.0	11.7	39.0	44.0	17.0
Respondent lost weight	49.1	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	32.1	11.8	12.9	7.4	37.0	40.0	23.0
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	27.7	10.6	12	5	38.0	43.0	18.0
Child(ren) were hungry	19.6	8	7.8	3.8	41.0	40.0	19.0
Child(ren) skipped meals	15.2	6.5	6.2	2.5	43.0	41.0	17.0
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	6.2	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC

NC = Frequency of occurrence information was not collected for these conditions.

[1]Survey responses are weighted to population totals. Households not responding to an item or not responding to the follow-up question about frequency of occurrence are omitted from the calculation of percentages for that item. Households without children are omitted from the calculation of percentages for child-referenced items.

[2]The full wording of each question includes explicit reference to resource limitation, e.g., "...because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food," or "...because there wasn't enough money for food."

[3]Columns labeled "Percent of 'Ever during the year'" show the distribution by frequency of occurrence for households that indicate they experienced the condition "Ever during the year" (shown in the first column of statistics).

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Monthly and Daily Occurrence of Food-Insecure Conditions

Respondents also reported whether the behaviors and experiences that indicate food insecurity had occurred during the 30 days before the survey.[9] For seven of these behaviors and experiences, respondents also reported how many days the condition had occurred during that period. Table S-9 summarizes responses to these questions.[10]

Table S-9
Monthly and daily occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by all U.S. households, 2024[1]

Condition[2]	Ever during previous 30 days	For households reporting condition at any time during previous 30 days				
		Number of days out of previous 30 days			Monthly average occurrence	Average daily prevalence
		1–7 days	8–14 days	15–30 days		
	Percent[3]				Days[3]	Percent[3]
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	8.61	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Food bought didn't last, and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	7.81	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	8.81	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	5.57	67	14	19	7.9	1.46
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	5.16	57	18	25	9.5	1.63
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford food	2.97	62	15	23	8.5	0.84
Respondent lost weight	1.92	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	1.16	70	13	17	6.9	0.27
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	7.52	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	5.07	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Child(ren) were not eating enough	2.39	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	1.18	66	16	19	7.8	0.31
Child(ren) were hungry	0.81	71	13	16	7.6	0.21
Child(ren) skipped meals	0.60	76	NA	24	7.2	0.14
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	NA	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC

NC = Number of days of occurrence was not collected for these conditions.

NA = Number of days of occurrence was not reported because there were fewer than 10 households in the survey with responses for that question and category.

[1]Survey responses are weighted to population totals. The 30-day and daily statistics refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8–18, 2024.

[2]The full wording of each question includes explicit reference to resource limitation, e.g., "...because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food," or "...because there wasn't enough money for food."

[3]Households without children are excluded from the denominator of child-referenced items.

Note: Beginning with the 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data and continuing in 2024, the variables for the number of days out of the previous 30 days in which food-insecure conditions were experienced are now reported in categories. The midpoint of the categories was used to estimate the average daily prevalence. The category ranges enable reporting of the conditions in 1–7-day, 8–14-day, and 15–30-day increments as in previous annual reports.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

[9] Beginning with the 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data collection and continuing in 2024, all continuous variables for the number of days out of the previous 30 days that food-insecure conditions occurred are only released after being categorized into ranges of the number of days that a condition occurred. The result was a less precise estimate of the average daily prevalence of food-insecure conditions. The midpoint of the range is used to calculate the average daily prevalence. The average daily prevalence for each condition is still calculated as the product of the 30-day prevalence and the average number of days experienced divided by 30. In the past annual food security reports, these estimates were then used to approximate the average daily prevalence of very low food security. That approximation for the daily prevalence of very low food security is no longer presented, given the less precise estimates of average daily prevalence for the conditions.

[10] Average daily prevalence for these questions was calculated as the product of the 30-day prevalence and the average number of days divided by 30.

Food Spending by Food-Secure and Food-Insecure Households

Usual food spending was adjusted for household size and composition in two ways. First, researchers divided each household's usual weekly food expenditure by the number of household members, yielding the "usual weekly food spending per person" for that household. The second adjustment more precisely accounted for the different food needs of households by comparing each household's usual food spending with the estimated cost of the USDA Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) for that household in December 2024 (for a complete discussion of these methods, see Rabbitt et al., 2025). Each household's reported usual weekly food spending was divided by the household-specific cost of the TFP based on the age- and gender-specific cost of the TFP for each household member and the number of persons in the household (U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, 2025).

Food-secure households typically spent more on food than food-insecure households of similar age-gender composition. The pattern of higher median food spending relative to the cost of the TFP by food-secure households was consistent for many groups across household structure, race, ethnicity, residence, and geographic region (table S-10).[11]

[11] Estimates of median weekly food spending relative to the household cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) for December 2024 were not comparable with estimates for years before 2021. The cost of the TFP was revised in 2021 to reflect updated data on food prices, food composition, consumption patterns, and current dietary guidance.

Table S-10

Weekly U.S. household food spending relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2024

Category	Median weekly food spending, relative to December 2024 TFP[1]	
	Food secure	Food insecure
	Ratio (Cost of TFP = 1.0)	
All households	1.18	1.06
Household composition		
With children < 18 years	1.07	0.97
At least one child < 6 years	1.07	1.01
Married-couple families	1.09	0.93
Female head, no spouse	1.02	1.01
Male head, no spouse	1.02	0.91
Other household with child[2]	NA	NA
With no children < 18 years	1.26	1.14
More than one adult	1.18	0.97
Women living alone	1.44	1.42
Men living alone	1.39	1.19
With an adult age 65 and older	1.15	1.01
Adult age 65 and older living alone	1.19	1.15
Race/ethnicity of household reference persons		
White, non-Hispanic	1.22	1.07
Black, non-Hispanic	1.08	1.1
Hispanic[3]	1.11	1.07
Other, non-Hispanic	1.15	0.94
Household income-to-poverty ratio		
Under 1.00	0.94	0.95
Under 1.30	0.93	0.95
Under 1.85	0.95	0.95
1.85 and over	1.28	1.23
Income unknown	1.11	1.01
Area of residence[4]		
Inside metropolitan area	1.2	1.07
In principal cities[5]	1.26	1.11
Not in principal cities	1.21	1.06
Outside metropolitan area	1.08	1.01
Census geographic region		
Northeast	1.24	1.12
Midwest	1.15	1.12
South	1.18	1.03
West	1.26	1.05

NA = Median not reported; fewer than 100 interviewed households in the category.

Note: Beginning with the 2015 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, food spending amounts are categorized in public-use data.

[1]Statistics exclude households that did not answer the questions about spending on food or reported zero usual food spending and those that did not provide valid responses to any of the questions on food security. These exclusions represented 7.0 percent of all households. Estimates of median weekly food spending relative to the household cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) for December 2024 were not comparable to estimates for years prior to 2021. This is because the cost of the TFP was revised in 2021 to reflect updated data on food prices, food composition, and consumption patterns, and current dietary guidance.

[2]Households with children in complex living arrangements (e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder).

[3]Hispanic respondents may be of any race.

[4]Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation.

[5]Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 15 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Use of Community Nutrition Assistance

The December 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS) included questions about the use of two types of community-based food and nutrition assistance programs (for more information, see box on page 27 "Community Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs"). All households with incomes below 185 percent of the Federal poverty threshold were asked these questions. To minimize the burden on respondents, households with incomes above that range were not asked the questions unless they indicated some level of difficulty in meeting their food needs on preliminary screener questions.

The questions analyzed in this supplement are:

- "In the last 12 months, did you or anyone in your household ever get free groceries from a food pantry, food bank, church, or other place that helps with free food?"

The use of these resources any time during the last 12 months is referred to as "receipt of free groceries." Households that reported receiving free groceries in the last 12 months were asked, "How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?" Households reporting that they did not receive free groceries in the last 12 months were asked, "Is there a food pantry, food bank, church, or other place in your community where you could get free groceries if you needed it?"

- "In the last 12 months, have (you/you or anyone in your household) received a free meal from a church, shelter, home-delivered meal service like Meals on Wheels, or other place that helps with free meals?"

The use of this resource is referred to as "receipt of free meals" in the following discussion.

Table S-11 presents estimates of the number of households that obtained free groceries from food pantries or other organizations or ate free meals from charitable organizations one or more times during the 12-month period ending December 2024. Estimates of the proportion of households receiving free meals based on CPS-FSS almost certainly understate the proportion of the population that uses these providers. The CPS selects households to interview from an address-based list and, therefore, interviews only persons who occupy housing units. People who were homeless at the time of the survey were not included in the sample, and those in tenuous housing arrangements (e.g., temporarily doubled-up with another family) also may have been missed. These two factors (exclusion of the homeless and underrepresentation of those who are tenuously housed) biased the estimates of receipt of free meals use downward, especially among certain population subgroups. The downward bias is likely lessened by the changes to the question wording since it is more inclusive of different types of free meals received. However, the address-based sampling for CPS-FSS would still exclude some users. The effect of these factors is much less true for receipt of free groceries because cooking facilities are needed to use most items.[12]

Table S-12 compares the food security of low-income households that received free groceries and free meals from charitable organizations with that of low-income households that did not use these charitable organizations. Table S-13 shows receipt of free groceries by household composition, race, ethnicity, income, and residence.

[12] Previous studies of emergency kitchen or shelter users and food pantry users confirm these assumptions. For example, a nationally representative survey of people who use food pantries and emergency kitchens found that about 36 percent of emergency kitchen clients and 8 percent of households that received food from food pantries were homeless in 2001 (Briefel et al., 2003).

Table S-11

Use of community food and nutrition assistance in the United States, 2024

Category	Received free groceries			Received free meal		
	Total households[1]	Users		Total households[1]	Users	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	1,000	Percent
All households	133,356	9,616	7.2	133,211	3,284	2.5
All persons in households	330,251	25,167	7.6	329,869	7,242	2.2
Adults in households	258,651	18,089	7.0	258,351	5,691	2.2
Children in households	71,599	7,078	9.9	71,517	1,551	2.2
Households by food security status						
Food-secure households	115,295	4,050	3.5	115,173	1,525	1.3
Food-insecure households	17,985	5,561	30.9	17,964	1,754	9.8
Households with low food security	10,922	3,046	27.9	10,922	856	7.8
Households with very low food security	7,063	2,515	35.6	7,042	898	12.8

Note: Statistics for free groceries and free meals are not comparable to years prior to 2022 for use of food pantries and emergency kitchens because of changes in question wording.

[1]Total weighted number of households exclude households that did not answer the question about receipt of community food and nutrition assistance. Totals in the bottom section also exclude households that did not answer any of the questions in the food security scale.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-12

Prevalence of food security and food insecurity of U.S. households with annual incomes of less than 185 percent of the poverty line, by use of community food and nutrition assistance, 2024

Category	Food secure	Food insecure		
		All	With low food security	With very low food security
	Percent			
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line				
Received free groceries in the previous 12 months	42.4	57.6	30.0	27.6
Did not receive free groceries in the previous 12 months	74.1	25.9	16.5	9.4
Received free meal in the previous 12 months	47.6	52.4	24.5	27.9
Did not receive free meal in the previous 12 months	68.9	31.1	19.0	12.1

Note: Statistics for free groceries and free meals are not comparable to years prior to 2022 for use of food pantries and emergency kitchens because of changes in question wording.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-13

Receipt of free groceries, by selected U.S. household characteristics, 2024

Category	Total[1]	Free grocery recipients	
	1,000	1,000	Percent
All households	133,356	9,616	7.2
Household composition			
With children < 18 years	36,268	3,188	8.8
At least one child < 6 years	14,629	1,214	8.3
Married-couple families	23,870	1,241	5.2
Female head, no spouse	8,574	1,553	18.1
Male head, no spouse	3,368	331	9.8
Other household with child[2]	457	64	14.0
With no children < 18 years	97,088	6,428	6.6
More than one adult	56,990	3,071	5.4
Women living alone	21,547	2,163	10.0
Men living alone	18,552	1,193	6.4
With an adult age 65 and older	44,272	3,377	7.6
Adult age 65 and older living alone	16,767	1,608	9.6
Race/ethnicity of household reference persons			
White, non-Hispanic	84,250	4,285	5.1
Black, non-Hispanic	17,420	2,424	13.9
Hispanic[3]	20,515	2,236	10.9
Other, non-Hispanic	11,172	670	6.0
Household income-to-poverty ratio			
Under 1.00	11,386	2,976	26.1
Under 1.30	16,502	4,226	25.6
Under 1.85	27,736	5,886	21.2
1.85 and over	78,027	2,243	2.9
Income unknown	27,593	1,488	5.4
Area of residence[4]			
Inside metropolitan area	115,055	7,775	6.8
In principal cities[5]	37,248	3,020	8.1
Not in principal cities	60,318	3,406	5.6
Outside metropolitan area	18,301	1,842	10.1
Census geographic region			
Northeast	23,137	1,481	6.4
Midwest	28,184	2,227	7.9
South	52,086	3,846	7.4
West	29,949	2,063	6.9

Note: Statistics for free groceries are not comparable to years prior to 2022 for use of food pantries because of changes in question wording.

[1]Totals exclude households that did not answer the question about receiving free groceries. These exclusions represented 0.8 percent of all households.

[2]Households with children in complex living arrangements (e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder).

[3]Hispanic respondents may be of any race.

[4]Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation.

[5]Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 15 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Food Spending by Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance

Table S-14 presents median food spending, relative to the cost of the December 2024 Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), by households that received food and nutrition assistance and by nonparticipant households in similar low-income ranges.[13]

Table S-14
Weekly U.S. household food spending relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan by participation in selected Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs, 2024

Category	Median weekly food spending relative to cost of the December 2024 TFP[1]
	Ratio (cost of TFP = 1.0)
Income less than 130 percent of poverty line	
Received SNAP benefits in the previous 30 days	0.93
Did not receive SNAP benefits in the previous 30 days	0.94
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; school-age children in household	
Received NSLP free or reduced-price school lunch in the previous 30 days	0.88
Did not receive NSLP free or reduced-price school lunch in the previous 30 days	0.92
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; children under age 5 in household	
Received WIC in the previous 30 days	0.97
Did not receive WIC in the previous 30 days	0.93
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line	
Received free groceries in the previous 12 months	0.82
Did not receive free groceries in the previous 12 months	0.99

TFP = Thrifty Food Plan. SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program. NSLP = National School Lunch Program. WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

Note: Beginning with the 2015 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement, food spending amounts are categorized in public use data. Statistics for food spending by receipt of free groceries are not comparable to years prior to 2022 for food spending by food pantry use because of changes in question wording.

[1]Estimates of median weekly food spending (relative to the household cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) for December 2024) are not comparable to estimates of years prior to 2021 because the cost of the TFP was revised in 2021 to reflect updated data on food prices, food composition, consumption patterns, and current dietary guidance.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Food Security During the 30 Days Before the Food Security Survey in Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance

Table S-15 presents prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security during the 30-day period before the food security survey for households that received selected types of food and nutrition assistance and

[13] Food purchased with SNAP benefits is included in household food spending as calculated here. However, the value of school lunches and food obtained through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is not included. Food from these sources supplemented the food purchased by many of these households.

for nonparticipant households in similar low-income ranges. This complements table 8 of the *Household Food Security in the United States in 2024* report (Rabbitt et al., 2025), which is based on the 12-month measure. Measured food insecurity and reported use of food and nutrition assistance programs are more likely to refer to contemporaneous conditions when both are referenced to the previous 30 days than when one or both is referenced to the previous 12 months. From 2023 to 2024, there were no significant changes for 30-day food insecurity for households that received selected types of food and nutrition assistance and for nonparticipant households in similar low-income ranges (table S-15).

From 2023 to 2024, the prevalence of 30-day very low food security decreased for households that received SNAP benefits the previous 12 months but not the previous 30 days (SNAP leavers) (from 22.5 percent to 11.3 percent), households that did not receive WIC benefits in the previous 30 days (from 8.7 percent to 3.9 percent) and households that received emergency food from food pantry the previous 30 days (from 23.2 percent to 18.3 percent). From 2023 to 2024, there were no significant increases for 30-day very low food insecurity for households that received selected types of food and nutrition assistance and for nonparticipant households in similar low-income ranges.

Table S-15
Prevalence of food insecurity in the United States during the 30 days before the food security survey, by participation in selected Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs, 2024[1]

Category	Food insecure in 30 days before survey (low or very low food security)	Very low food secure in 30 days before survey
	Percent	
Income less than 130 percent of poverty line		
Received SNAP benefits in the previous 30 days	31.6	14.5
Received SNAP benefits every month during the previous 12 months	30.4	14.4
Received SNAP benefits in the previous 12 months but not previous 30 days (SNAP leavers)	32.2	11.3
Did not receive SNAP benefits in the previous 12 months	16.8	6.3
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; school-age children in household		
Received NSLP free or reduced-price school lunch in the previous 30 days	25.7	8.4
Did not receive NSLP free or reduced-price school lunch in the previous 30 days	16.5	5.8
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; children under age 5 in household		
Received WIC in the previous 30 days	27.6	7.3
Did not receive WIC in the previous 30 days	16.6	3.9
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line		
Received free groceries in the previous 30 days	42.0	18.3
Did not receive free groceries in the previous 30 days	16.0	6.4

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program. NSLP = National School Lunch Program. WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

Note: Statistics for free groceries and free meals are not comparable to years prior to 2022 for use of food pantries and emergency kitchens because of changes in question wording.

[1]The 30-day prevalence rates refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8–18, 2024.

Combined Use of Federal and Community Food and Nutrition Assistance

Both Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs are potential resources for food insecure and low-income households. Designing and managing these programs to function effectively together as a nutrition safety net requires knowing how they complement and supplement each other. The extent to which households that participate in Federal food and nutrition assistance programs also receive assistance from community food assistance programs provides information about these relationships (table S-16).

Table S-16
Combined use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs by low-income U.S. households,[1] 2024

Category	Share of category that obtained free groceries	Share of free grocery recipients in category	Share of category that obtained free meal	Share of free meal recipients in category
		Percent		
Received SNAP benefits in the previous 30 days	34.8	47.7	12.8	49.9
Received NSLP free or reduced-price school lunch in the previous 30 days	27.8	29.6	6.5	19.5
Received WIC benefits in the previous 30 days	21.7	6.1	6.2	4.9
Participated in one or more of the three Federal programs	30.7	63.5	10.3	60.1
Did not participate in any of the three Federal programs	13.8	36.5	5.3	39.9

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program. NSLP = National School Lunch Program. WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

Note: Statistics for free groceries and free meals are not comparable to years prior to 2022 for use of food pantries and emergency kitchens because of changes in question wording.

[1]Analysis is restricted to households with annual incomes less than 185 percent of the poverty line because most households with incomes above that range were not asked whether they participated in food and nutrition assistance programs.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2024 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Questions Used to Assess the Food Security of Households in the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement

1. "We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
2. "The food that we bought just didn't last and we didn't have money to get more." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
3. "We couldn't afford to eat balanced meals." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
4. In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in the household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
5. (If yes to question 4) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
6. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
7. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry, but didn't eat, because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
8. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
9. In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
10. (If yes to question 9) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

(Questions 11–18 were only asked if the household included children ages 0–17)

11. "We relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed our children because we were running out of money to buy food." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
12. "We couldn't feed our children a balanced meal, because we couldn't afford that." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
13. "The children were not eating enough because there wasn't enough money for food." Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
14. In the last 12 months, did you ever cut the size of any of the children's meals because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
15. In the last 12 months, were the children ever hungry because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
16. In the last 12 months, did any of the children ever skip a meal because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)
17. (If yes to question 16) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
18. In the last 12 months, did any of the children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food? (Yes/No)

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Questions Used to Assess the Food Security of Households in the Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement

Coding of Responses

Questions 1–3 and 11–13 are coded as affirmative (i.e., possibly indicating food insecurity) if the response is "often" or "sometimes." Questions 5, 10, and 17 are coded as affirmative if the response is "almost every month" or "some months but not every month." The remaining questions are coded as affirmative if the response is "yes."

Assessing Food Security Status in Households Without Children

Households without children are classified as food insecure if they report 3 or more indications of food insecurity in response to the first 10 questions; they are classified as having very low food security if they report 6 or more food-insecure conditions out of the first 10 questions.

Assessing Food Security Status in Households with Children Ages 0–17

Households with children are classified as food insecure if they report 3 or more indications of food insecurity in response to the entire set of 18 questions; they are classified as having very low food security if they report 8 or more food-insecure conditions in response to the entire set of 18 questions.

The food security status of children in the household is assessed by responses to the child-referenced questions (questions 11–18). Households reporting two or more of these conditions are classified as having food insecurity among children. Households reporting five or more are classified as having very low food security among children.

Community Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs

Community food and nutrition assistance programs include food pantries and emergency kitchens or shelters and other organizations. These agencies are locally based and rely heavily on volunteers. Most of them are affiliated with faith-based organizations (Feeding America, 2014; Ohls et al., 2002). Organizations providing free groceries, such as food pantries, and organizations providing free meals, such as shelters or Meals on Wheels programs, play different roles. Food pantries distribute unprepared foods for offsite use, and free meal providers can provide individuals with prepared food to eat onsite or deliver meals to clients' homes. Most of the food distributed by these organizations comes from local resources, but USDA supplements these resources through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). USDA supplied more than 1.6 billion pounds of USDA Foods to TEFAP in fiscal year 2024. This food was provided to community emergency food providers for distribution to the public.

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