

An Uneven Burden

Examining Disparities in
Food Insecurity in Colorado



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Ethics and Ecological Economics Forum

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COLORADO
HEALTH
INSTITUTE

ABOUT US

We believe that sound evidence and solid analysis lead to better health policy, and that better health policy leads to healthier Coloradans.

That is our work as Colorado's leading nonprofit and nonpartisan health policy research group.

And we are passionate about it.

Our Time Together

METHODS

Colorado Health Access Survey

FINDINGS

Food Insecurity, Health, and
Disparities in Colorado

IMPACTS OF COVID-19

Food Insecurity and the Pandemic

DISCUSSION

Questions & Comments



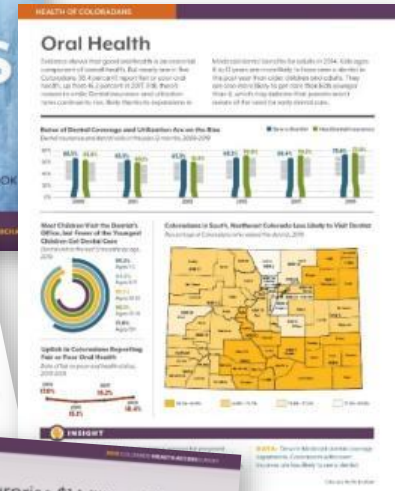


COLORADO
HEALTH
ACCESS
SURVEY

The CHAS

- Colorado Health Access Survey
- 10,000 Households
- Fielded February – June 2019
- Topics include:
 - Access
 - Insurance
 - Use of Care
 - Affordability
 - Health Status
 - Behavioral Health
 - Social Factors

The CHAS is a public good.





COLORADO
**HEALTH
ACCESS**
SURVEY

2021

COMING SOON

Findings





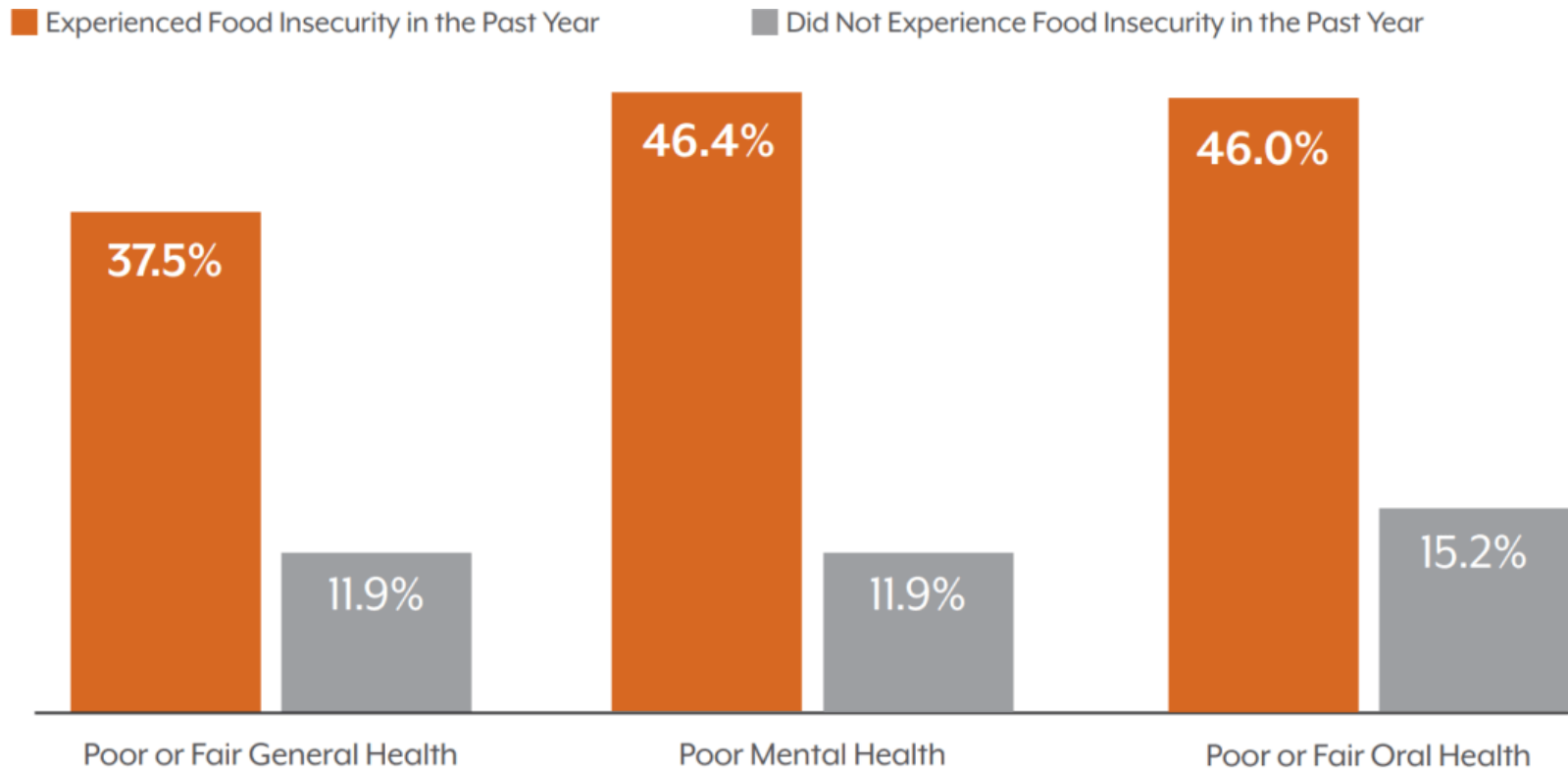
Defining Food Insecurity

In the past 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

In 2019, **one in 10 Coloradans** (9.6%)
reported experiencing food insecurity.

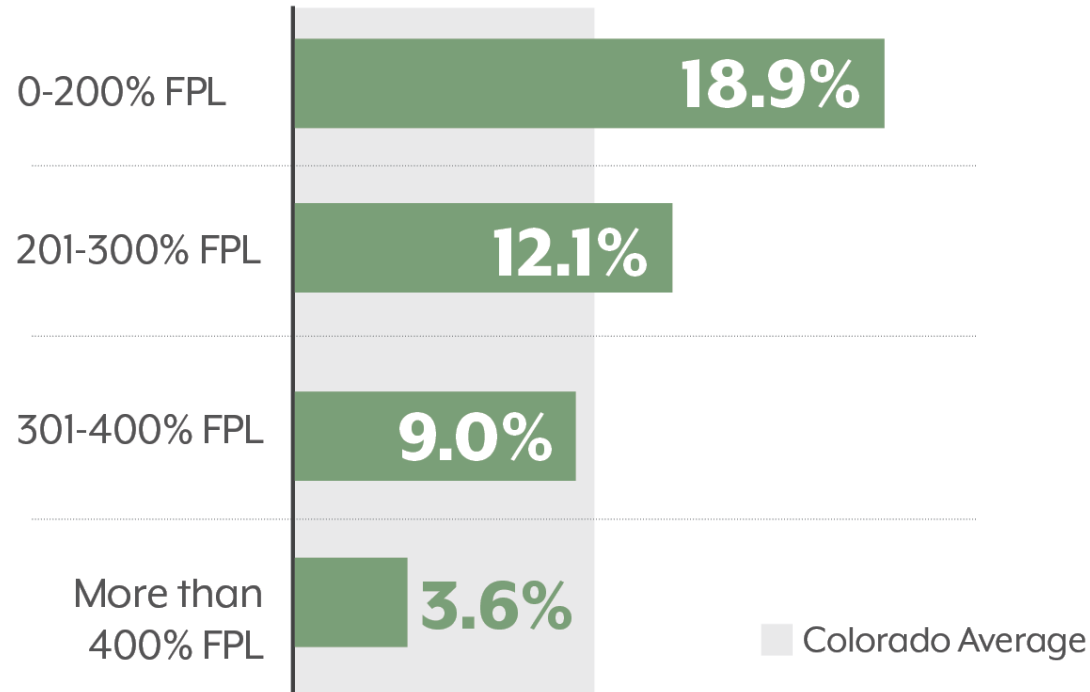


Food Insecurity and Health



Percentage of respondents who reported poor or fair health status by experiences of food insecurity, 2019

Disparities: Income

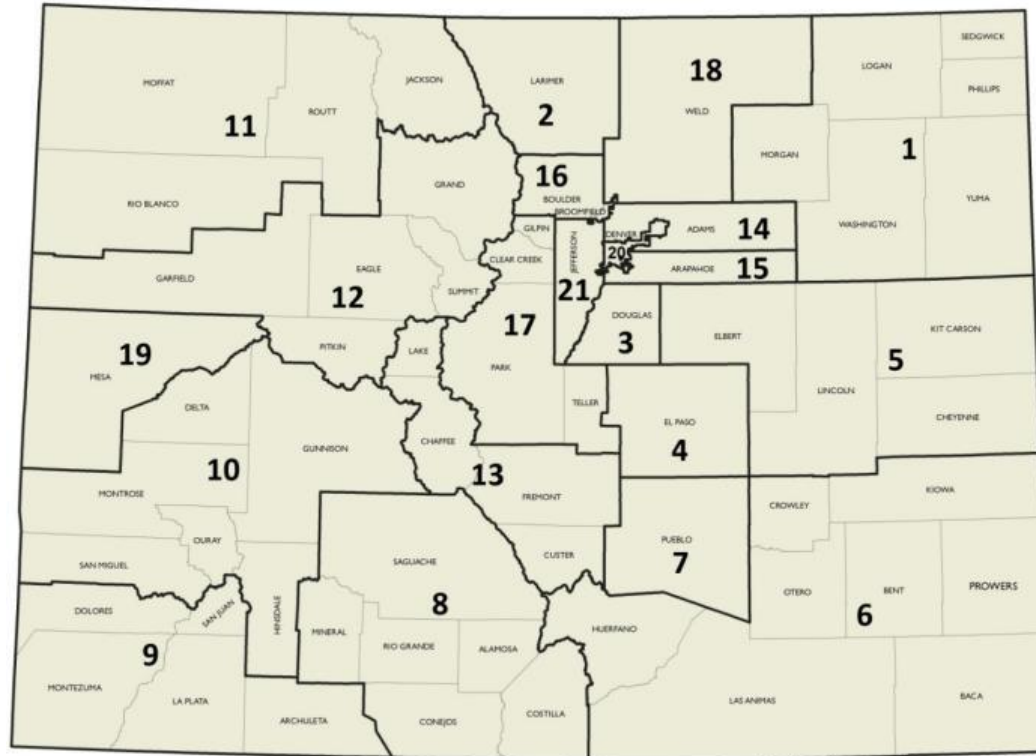


Percentage of respondents who ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the past year, 2019

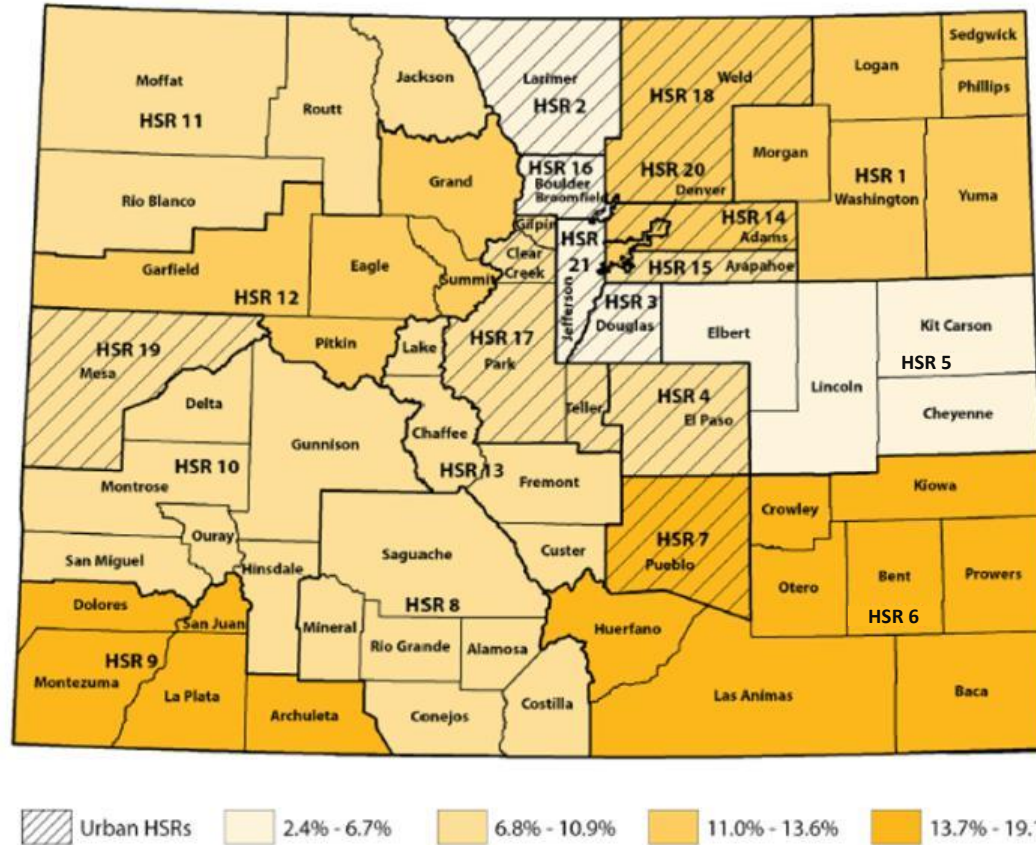
Disparities: Region



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Disparities: Region



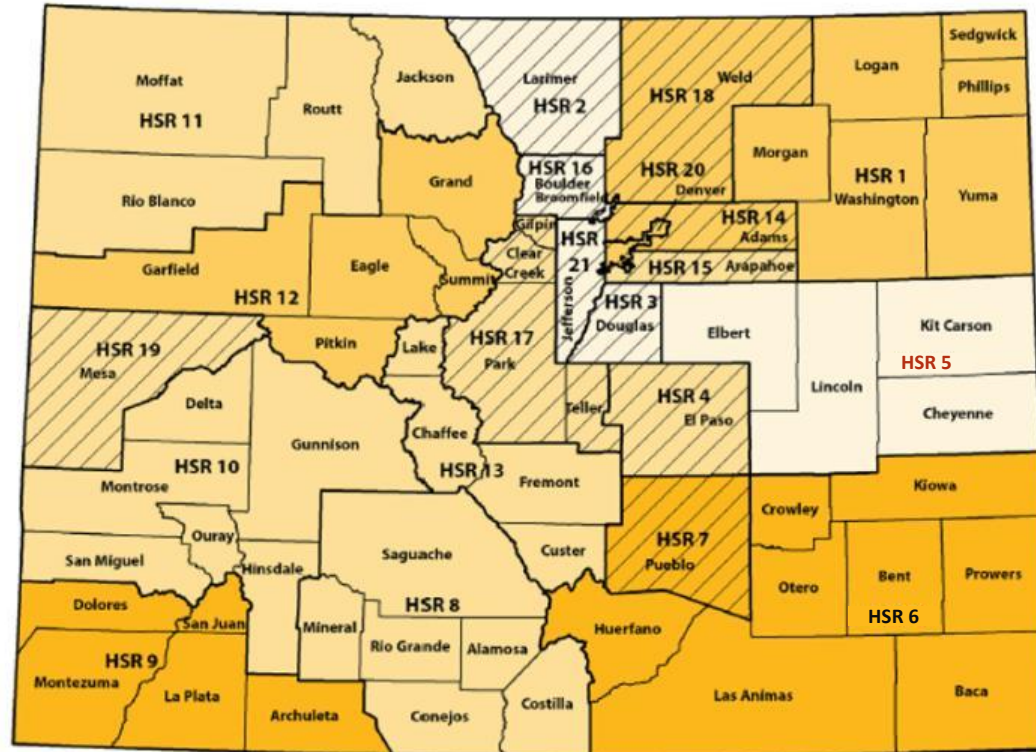
Percentage of respondents who experienced food insecurity:

Urban
9.3%

Rural
12.0%

Percentage of respondents who ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the past year, 2019

Disparities: Region



Percentage of respondents who experienced food insecurity:

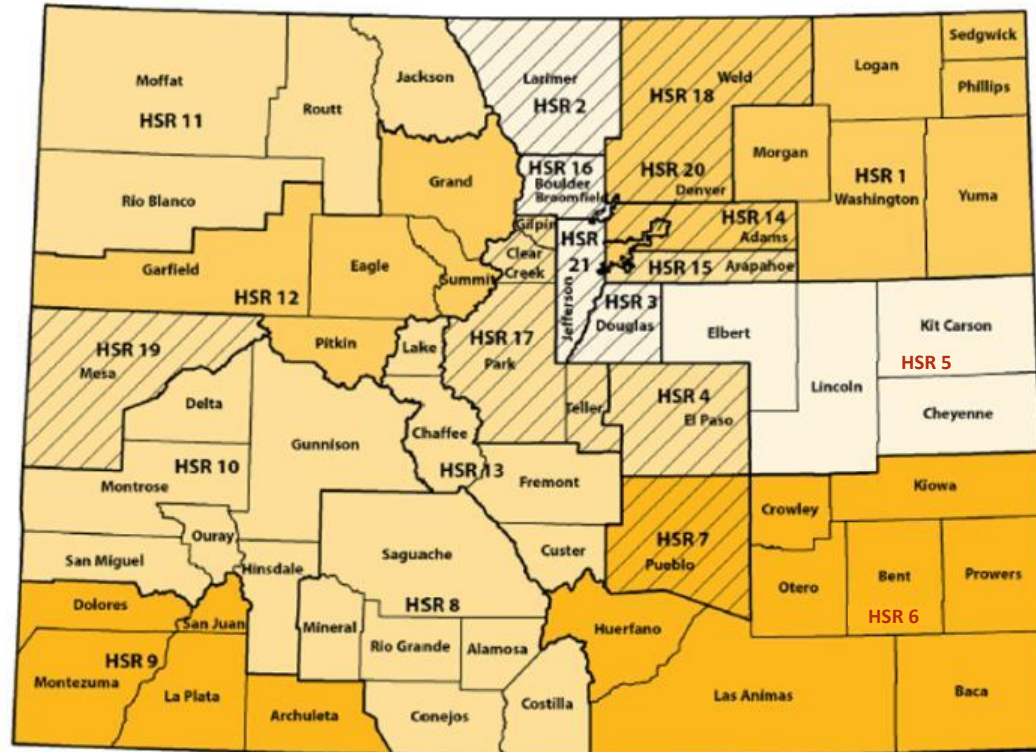
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Percentage of respondents who ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the past year, 2019

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Percentage of respondents who experienced food insecurity:

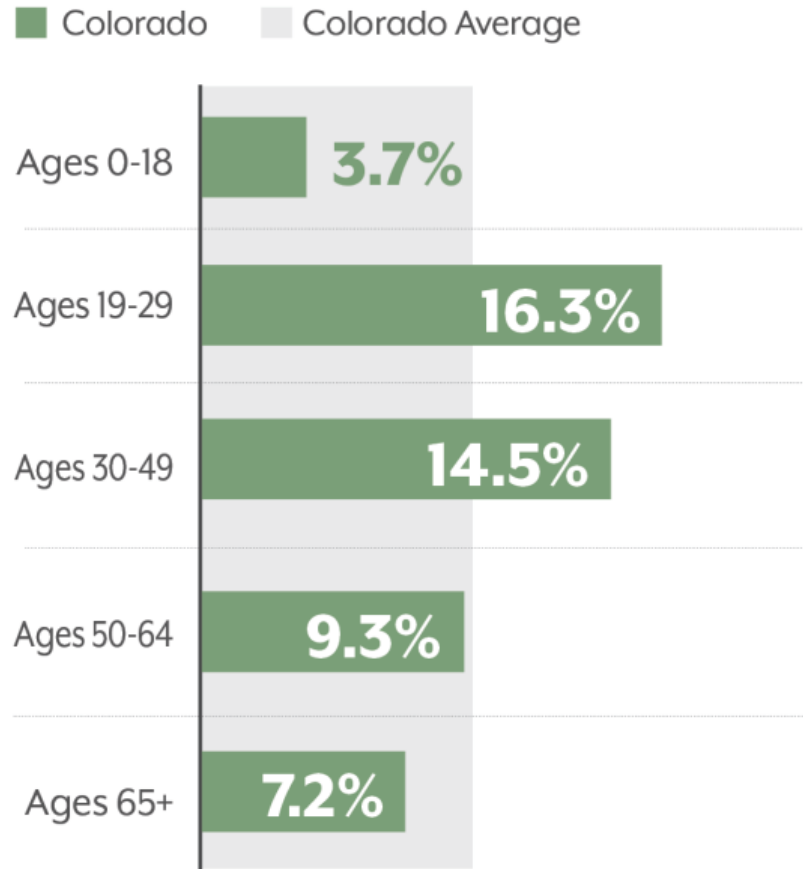
Urban
9.3%

Rural
12.0%

Urban HSRs
 2.4% - 6.7%
 6.8% - 10.9%
 11.0% - 13.6%
 13.7% - 19.1%

Percentage of respondents who ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the past year, 2019

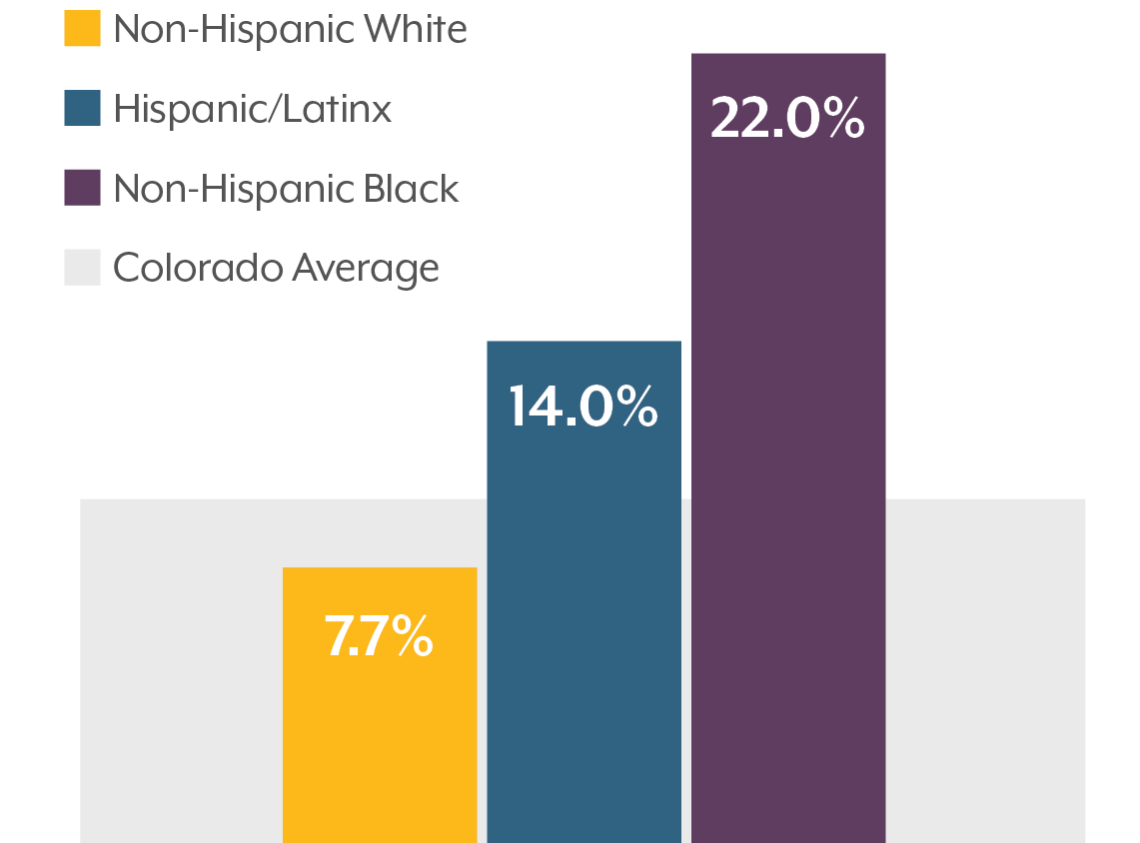
Disparities: Age



Percentage of respondents who ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the past year, 2019



Disparities: Race and Ethnicity



Percentage of respondents who ate less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food in the past year, 2019

Impact of COVID-19



COVID Food Insecurity Survey



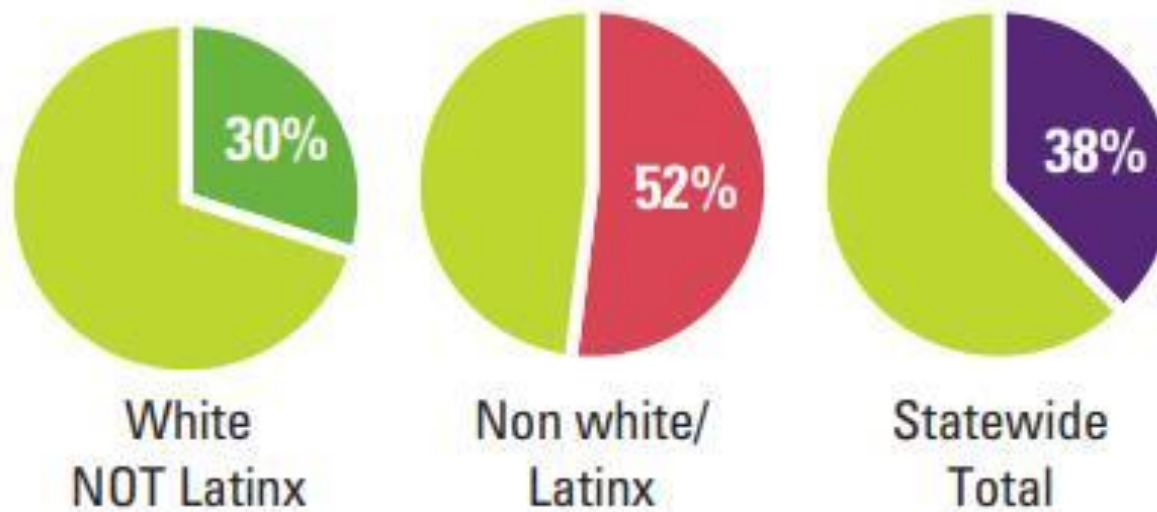
In December 2020, **38% of Coloradans reported experiencing food insecurity.**

...the highest rate reported since the onset of the pandemic.

...compared with 13% during the Great Recession.



FOOD INSECURITY BY RACE/ETHNICITY

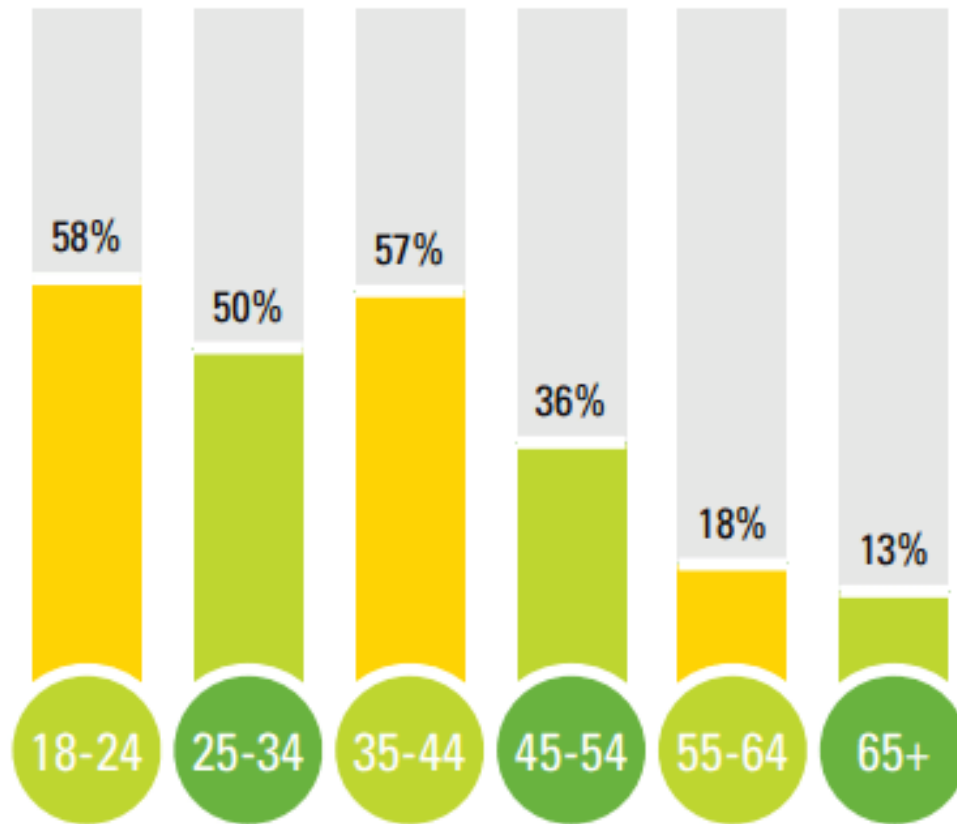


Percentage of respondents who were food insecure Oct. – Dec. 2020, based on the USDA 6-question food insecurity survey. Source: Hunger Free Colorado COVID Food Insecurity Survey, Dec. 2020

Source: Hunger Free Colorado, December 2020



FOOD INSECURITY BY AGE



Percentage of respondents who were food insecure Oct. – Dec. 2020, based on the USDA 6-question food insecurity survey. Source: Hunger Free Colorado COVID Food Insecurity Survey, Dec. 2020

Source: Hunger Free Colorado, December 2020



An Uneven Burden

Food Insecurity in Colorado

JUNE 2020

Although a healthy diet is a critical component of a healthy life, many Coloradans struggle to afford food, according to new data from the Colorado Health Access Survey (CHAS).

In 2019, one in 10 Coloradans (9.6%) experienced food insecurity, defined as eating less than they felt they should in the past year because there was not enough money for food.

Putting food on the table was not the only challenge for Coloradans who struggled with food insecurity. They were also more likely to report unstable housing and difficulties paying their medical bills. And they were more likely to be in poor health than those who could always afford enough food.

Some Coloradans were more likely to experience food insecurity than others. A quarter of young adults in rural areas (25.4%) and a fifth of black Coloradans (22.2%) experienced food insecurity in 2019. People with lower incomes, Hispanic/Latinx Coloradans, and women were also disproportionately affected.

By promoting equitable access to affordable, nutritious food, policymakers and community leaders have the power not only to fight hunger but to advance health equity in Colorado.



Key Takeaways:

- Food insecurity is a problem in Colorado. In 2019, one in 10 Coloradans did not have enough money to afford the food they needed.
- While Coloradans across the state experienced food insecurity, people with lower incomes, rural residents, young adults, black/African American and Hispanic/Latinx people, and women were disproportionately affected by food insecurity.
- Food access is complex, and context matters: The extent of disparities in rates of food insecurity differed between rural and urban Colorado.

About the CHAS

The Colorado Health Access Survey (CHAS) is the premier source of information about health insurance coverage, access to health care, and use of health care services in Colorado. The biennial survey of more than 10,000 households has been conducted since 2009. The 2019 CHAS was conducted between February 26 and July 14, 2019. Survey data are weighted to reflect the demographics and distribution of the state's population. The survey was conducted in English and Spanish.

The 2019 CHAS was administered mostly online — a change from the telephone surveys of previous years. A small random sample of respondents was surveyed by phone, to confirm data from the online survey could be compared to phone-based data from previous years. In 2019, new questions were added to the survey, including questions on social factors such as housing and food security.



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Questions?

