



Food Access and Affordability Survey

State of Florida

May 31, 2023



Haas Center

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About Us

The UWF Haas Center supports the region and the state with workforce and survey research, economic impact modeling, and industrial innovation. We partner with UWF students, faculty, and external experts to deliver optimal results to our customers. We tell stories centered around economic data and human experience.

We are known for the breadth and depth of our data resources and have been for 29 years. We provide textured, meaningful analysis to an array of customers from the public and non-profit sectors to private industry, including manufacturing.

An immersive public manufacturing laboratory, Sea3D in Pensacola's Historic District, showcases what is possible when creative minds intersect with industry leaders in additive and advanced manufacturing.

To learn more about our services, please visit our website: haas.uwf.edu

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Food Insecurity in Santa Rosa County

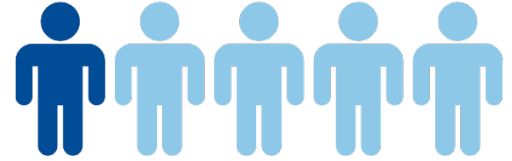
May 2023

Executive Summary

People and communities, including those in Florida's Santa Rosa County, are impacted by the serious issue of food insecurity. Food insecurity is defined in a number of ways. It includes not just the readily available food, but also its quality, safety, and variety. The USDA classifies low food security as a reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet, but no direct indication of a reduction in food intake. Very low food security is considered an indication of hunger in that it reports multiple occasions where food intake was disrupted (<https://www.ers.usda.gov/>). Beyond hunger and malnutrition, food insecurity is a complex issue with wide-ranging side effects. Santa Rosa County, Florida is home to a diverse population struggling with various levels of economic distress. Suburban and rural areas are included in the County, and each has its own set of conditions and vulnerabilities. Food insecurity also has significant social and economic ramifications. For instance, it can further exacerbate existing patterns of insecurity by impeding prospects for employment, education, and general community growth. This report does not provide a solution to food insecurity, rather, it identifies the populations, locations and individuals that suffer from food insecurity in Santa Rosa County.

Almost 1 in 5 adults surveyed in Santa Rosa County reported experiencing food insecurity. The Haas Center's study finds the food insecurity rate among surveyed adults was 18.8 percent. This rate exceeds the estimated national food insecurity rate of 10.2 percent reported by the USDA in 2021. National values reported in 2008, reached 15 percent indicating a higher prevalence of food insecurity in Santa Rosa County. This disparity may be attributed to a new post-pandemic consumer reality and historically high inflation rates, which could have both natural and psychological effects on perceived food insecurity. Among the respondents, 10.6 percent reported skipping at least one meal in the past year due to food scarcity, highlighting the impact of food insecurity on individuals' access to an adequate diet. Food-secure and food-insecure households reported different considerations, shopping behaviors, and barriers when buying food.

Various demographic risk factors were identified: lower levels of education were significantly linked to higher levels of food insecurity; households with more adults were significantly more likely to experience higher levels of food insecurity; households with more children were also significantly more prone to higher levels of food insecurity; divorced and separated respondents exhibited significantly higher levels of food insecurity compared to married respondents; respondents living in higher density neighborhoods reported significantly higher levels of food insecurity than those in suburban and rural areas; respondents residing in rural areas reported significantly higher levels of food insecurity than those in suburban areas; and respondents identifying as Black or Hispanic were significantly more likely to experience higher levels of food insecurity.



Almost ONE in FIVE adults in Santa Rosa County experience food insecurity

Key recommendations

- Fortify infrastructure for providing food assistance.
- Increase accessibility of food options for hungry people and families.
- Promote healthy eating.

Recommendations

By collaborating closely, these parties can combine their resources and knowledge to improve current food aid initiatives and create new ones. It is critical to prioritize education and outreach activities, especially for the roughly 50 percent of food-insecure households facing food poverty for the first time. Focused education is essential to guarantee that these households can obtain their support. These households may need to become more familiar with the available services and programs.

For almost 30 percent of survey participants, transportation accessibility is a significant obstacle to food access. While overcoming this obstacle, it is crucial to look at creative solutions that enhance the transportation choices available to people and families who are food insecure. This could entail finding alternate ways to provide food to those without access to dependable transportation or collaborating with transportation providers to offer free or discounted transportation to food distribution facilities.

Various food distribution options should be used to better meet the requirements of households experiencing food insecurity. A more comprehensive network of food distribution stations can be established by forming relationships with other stakeholders, given that a centralized location may not be practicable or accessible to everyone. This may include neighborhood-based programs that deliver food aid to individuals in need, mobile food pantries that serve underserved regions, community centers that act as distribution hubs, and community centers.

Given that households with food insecurity may need more nutritional content when buying food, efforts should be made to offer highly nutritious food options that are convenient to store and have a longer shelf life. Collaboration with food providers, retailers, and eateries can make it easier to collect and distribute high-quality "ugly" food that might be rejected by consumers who have access to secure food because of its look but can provide essential nutrients to households with access to insecure food.

Locations for food distribution must be chosen with the demographic risk factors for food insecurity in mind. Greater fairness and accessibility can be attained by focusing food distribution operations on multiple groups' unique requirements and situations. Coordination of activities, resource mobilization, and collaborations with key stakeholders is necessary to implement these recommendations. By collaborating, Santa Rosa County can fortify its infrastructure for providing food assistance, increase accessibility for hungry people and families, and promote dietary well-being among those most impacted by food insecurity.

Methodology

The Florida Department of Health in Santa Rosa County engaged the UWF Haas Center to conduct a rigorous survey of adult residents regarding food access. The county-wide assessment resulted in 767 completed surveys, and some additional partial completions. The data collection phase spanned from March 23rd, 2023, to May 8th, 2023. Participants were required to meet specific criteria: residing in Santa Rosa County, FL, and being at least 18 years old. Respondents were sourced through three methods: mailed postcards, email, and social media.

The USDA often employs a 1.85x poverty line screener to quickly remove higher incomes from the group, since they are less likely to experience food insecurity. Researchers utilized the USDA adult food insecurity research methodology, with the inclusion of custom questions. Unlike the USDA approach, this study did not utilize a screener to exclude higher-income households, but for comparability, certain questions have been scaled to reflect such methodology. Unless otherwise stated, the report focuses on the non-screened method's values.

Weighting was applied to reported statistics using 2022 Santa Rosa County household income estimates and poverty rates, while demographic information remained unweighted. The median survey completion time was approximately 5 minutes and 30 seconds. Response rates varied, with higher participation observed among lower-income households, likely due to the personal relevance of the subject matter. References to statistical significance indicate p-values of .05 or less. The margin of error for reported percentage values is +/- 3.6 percent at a 95 percent confidence level. For reported mean values, it is +/- 2.4 percent.

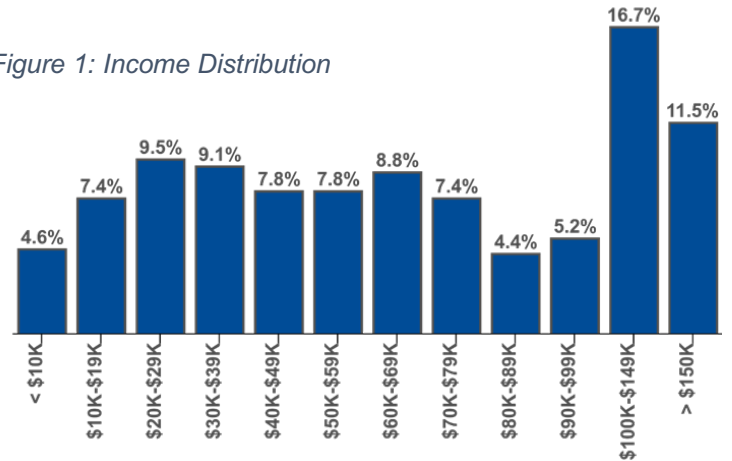
Demographics

The demographic data collected for Santa Rosa County provides valuable insights into the characteristics of the surveyed population. The age of the surveyed group ranged from 18 to 86 years old. The median age was about 42, while the mean age was almost 50 years old. Aggregated income groups are shown in Figure 1, with over a quarter of the sample falling within the two highest household income groups. A large portion of the respondents were female, (68.7 percent). This is typical for survey research that does not include a gender quota. This value does not reflect the actual gender distribution of the county.

Most respondents were married (70.3 percent), with smaller percentages indicating being widowed (4.0 percent), divorced (8.8 percent), separated (1.9 percent), living with a significant other (5.3 percent), or single (9.6 percent). Just below half of the respondents had no children, while almost 30 percent indicated there was at least one child. Over half of respondents had two adults in the household,

40.7%
of households do
not have children

Figure 1: Income Distribution

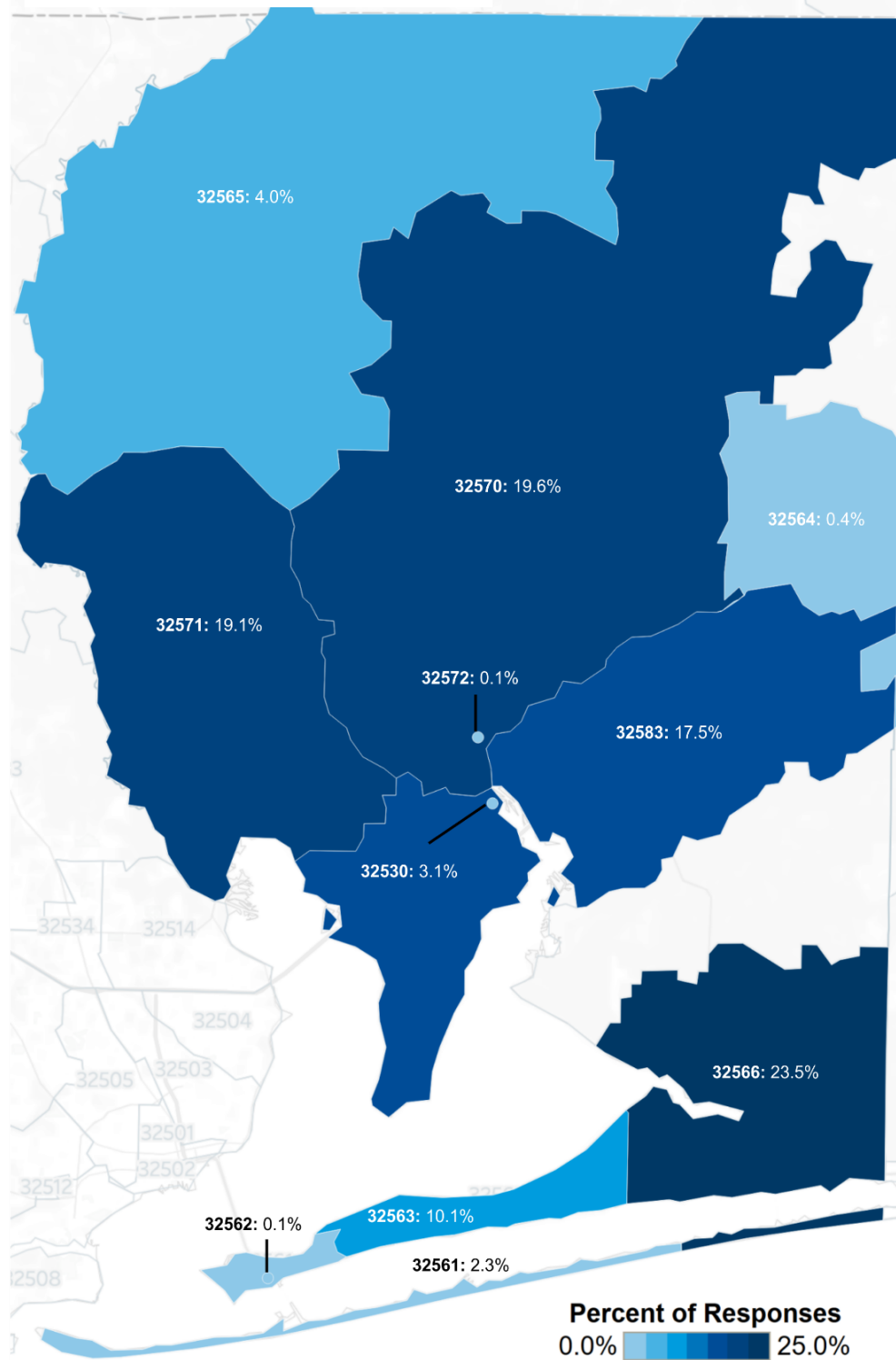


including themselves. Very few respondents had 5 or more adults in their households. Regarding education, 59.1 percent held a college degree or higher; a little more than a quarter had completed some college; and high school grads or below made up another 14.3 percent.

Most respondents identified as White (88.7 percent), followed by smaller percentages identifying as Black (6.4 percent) and Latino or Hispanic (6.7 percent). Asian, Hawaiian, or Pacific Islanders made up about 3.0 percent of the survey sample; 1.9 percent were Native American; and 2.7 percent identified as some other race.

Location also played a vital role in the survey. Suburban and rural areas are included in the County, and each has its own set of conditions and vulnerabilities. Most respondents resided in suburban areas (64.3 percent), while 24.0 percent lived in rural areas and 11.7 percent in urban areas. The ZIP code locations recorded for the survey are on the map in Figure 2. The number of survey responses, as well as the percent of the sample within that ZIP code are also displayed. The top three most represented ZIP codes were 32566, 32570, and 32571.

Figure 2: ZIP Code Representation



30.9% cut the size of meals, or skipped eating last year due to financial challenge

USDA Questions

Worries about being unable to afford healthy meals were more frequently reported than not being able to buy any food. Regression analysis reveals the underlying anxiety around food inflation, suggesting that an inflationary economy may be exacerbating food insecurity. Individuals that cut the size of a meal or skipped meals were asked a follow up question about how often this occurred. Approximately 37.5 percent experienced this almost every month, while 38.0 percent faced hunger more than one month out of the year.

The surveyed groups were asked how various statements applied to their daily lives. The greatest concern within this section is the inability to afford balanced meals. While 42.5 percent of participants expressed worrying sometimes or often that their food would run out before they could buy more, almost two-thirds indicated that they never actually experienced their food running out. A considerable proportion of respondents had to eat less than they felt they should (25.1 percent), experienced hunger without being able to eat (18.8 percent), and even lost weight due to insufficient funds for food (14.4 percent). These findings highlight the financial challenges faced by a significant portion of the population in accessing an adequate and consistent food supply.

The overall responses provide insights into the prevalence of food insecurity within the County. Among the total sample, 41.9 percent of respondents were classified as having high food security. In contrast, 21.6 percent fell into the category of marginal food security, implying some level of vulnerability. Additionally, 14.2 percent of respondents reported low food security, while 22.3 percent report very low food security. These findings highlight the various levels of food security within Santa Rosa County. While a significant portion of the population demonstrates high food security, there is still a notable percentage experiencing marginal, low, or very low food security.

A comparison to national and state measures allows for a broader understanding of the county's food security situation. When comparing national and state measures, the prevalence of food insecurity in 2021 was approximately 10.2 percent, and in Florida, the food insecurity rate is around 10 percent. Given that these metrics were based on the screened values, we can compare the county (screened) score of 18.8 percent (to include those reporting low and very low food security). Even when we remove the “low” group and just look at “extremely low” food secure adults, this still measures 13.8 percent – much higher than state and national levels.

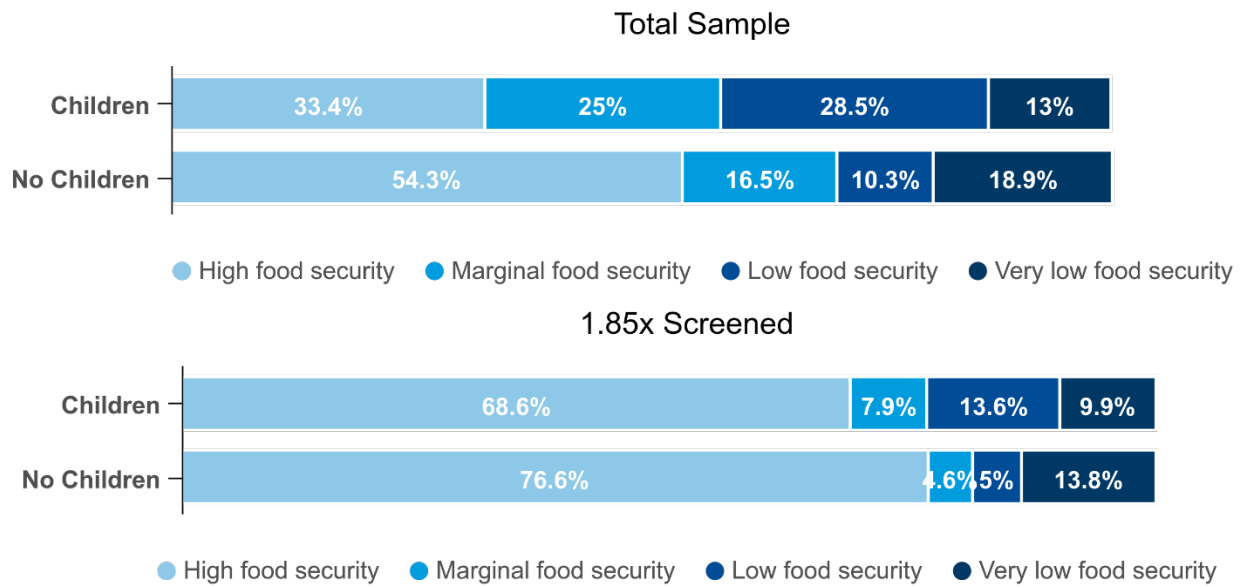
Households with and without Children

The study offers information on the county's levels of food security for households with and without children. In Figure 3, we can see the comparison for the total sample and screened income group. Among those with children, 41.5 percent of households were food insecure, compared to 29.2 without kids. This is a relatively large difference across the two groups. Screened data shows similar results, however the variance in this subset narrows. Screened groups had 23.5 percent of households with kids score low or very low on food security, compared to 18.8 without kids.

Results reveal that 33.4 percent of families with children report high food security, while 25.0 percent indicate marginal food security. In addition, 13.0 percent of homes with children report extremely low food security, while 28.5 percent of households with children report low food security. Regarding homes without children, 54.3 percent indicate good food security, while 16.5 percent report marginal food security.

Additionally, 18.9 percent of homes without children report extremely low food security, while 10.3 percent report low food security.

Figure 3: Food Security for Households with and without Children



Income-Screened Sample

For the screened group, comparison of homes with and without children can also be seen in Figure 3. When considering the entire sample, 68.6 percent of homes with children showed strong food security, whereas 7.9 percent showed moderate food security. Furthermore, 9.9 percent of households with children indicate extremely low food security, while 13.6 percent indicate low food security. Among homes without children, 4.6 percent had marginal food security, whereas 76.6 percent report excellent food security. Additionally, 13.8 percent of homes without children, indicate extremely low food security, while 5.0 percent indicate low food security.

These findings highlight the differences in food security between households with and without children in Santa Rosa County. A more significant proportion of homes with children endure varied food insecurity compared to many without children who exhibit excellent food security. This stresses the requirement for



focused interventions and assistance for families with kids to guarantee access to enough nourishing food. To improve overall food security results in Santa Rosa County, addressing the issues these households experience, such as their limited financial resources and potentially increased childcare costs, may be helpful.

Food Preference

Surveyed participants were asked the number of times they went to a specific store type over the course of the last month. Participants selected a score of 1 to 5 with 1 being never and 5 being daily. This gave valuable insight into consumer preferences, but it also allowed us to analyze the difference between where food insecure and food secure residents shop. Convenience stores, small independent grocers, discount retailers, and food pantries were much more frequently utilized by food insecure households, rather than food secure ones. Compared to food insecure households, food secure households were noticeably more likely to shop at superstores, wholesalers, or grocery stores and dine at fast-casual/sit-down restaurants. The disaggregation of the two groups is represented in Table 1, where values are bolded when they are significantly higher than the comparable group.

Table 1: Store Preference

Store Type with Example of Grocer	Secure	Insecure
Superstore, Wholesaler, or Grocery Store (<i>Walmart, Publix, Aldi</i>)	3.22	3.0
International Grocer (<i>Asian market, Latino grocer</i>)	1.47	1.59
Convenience Store, Carryout, Corner Store or partial market (<i>Gas station, Dollar General</i>)	1.98	2.34
Small Independent Grocer or specialty grocer	1.91	2.18
Discount Store (<i>Deals and Steals, Big Lots</i>)	1.68	2.11
Fast Food Restaurant (<i>McDonalds, Whataburger, Arby's, Taco Bell</i>)	2.54	2.41
Fast Casual/Sit-in Restaurant (<i>Chipotle, Olive Garden, Texas Roadhouse, Moe's</i>)	2.26	1.97
Food Pantry, meals on wheels or Free Meal (<i>Senior Center, church meal</i>)	1.13	1.95
Seasonal Markets (<i>Farmers' Markets or Produce Stands, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), Personal, Community, or School Garden</i>)	1.75	1.89

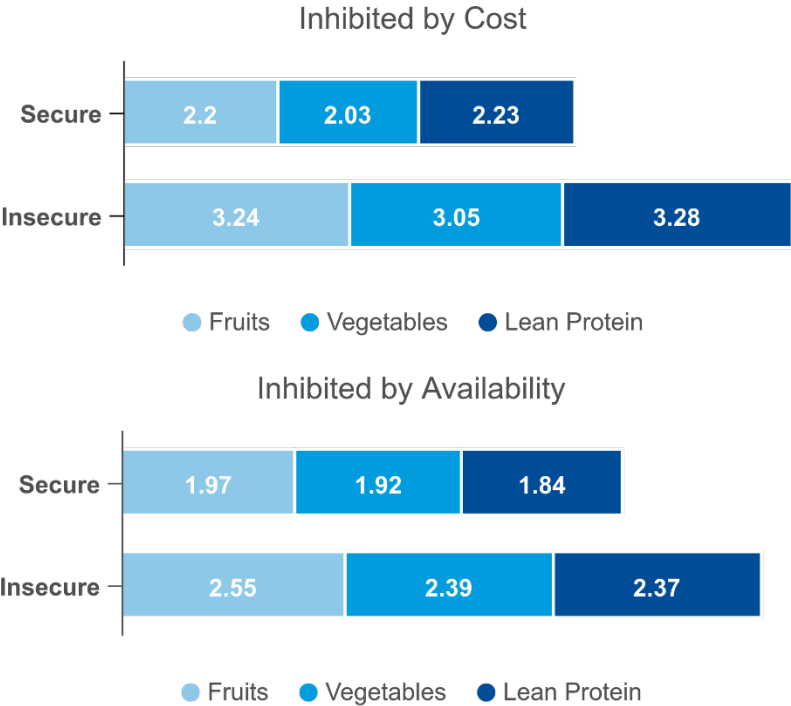
Table 2: Barriers to Food Access

	Secure	Insecure
Due to higher prices, I have cut back on the amount of food I buy.	3.49	4.21
I haven't changed my food shopping habits due to price increases.	2.67	2.13
A lack of transportation sometimes keeps me from buying the food I want.	1.51	2.36
Sometimes I don't know where to find the food I want.	2.04	2.56
A lack of free time prevents me from getting/making healthy food.	2.54	2.93
A lack of cooking equipment prevents me from making the food I want.	1.61	2.34
It would require too much travel time to get healthy food.	1.91	2.62
Risks to my personal safety prevent me from getting the food I want.	1.53	2.07

We asked participants to rank factors that influence their decisions on whether to buy food from 1 – being not important at all to 5 – being extremely important. Compared to food secure households, food insecure households were significantly more likely to base decisions on factors including cost, cultural/religious identity, convenience of storage, and how filling it is. Compared to insecure homes, food secure households were substantially more likely to base decisions on flavor, nutritional value, and appearance. Cost was the #1 factor that influenced food insecure households to purchase food, compared to the secure group, which ranked taste as the top factor. The biggest differences between food secure and food insecure households include higher pricing, a lack of transportation, a lack of cooking equipment, and excessive trip time. The biggest obstacle in terms of the severity of food insecurity is increased prices, followed by a lack of free time to purchase or prepare healthy meals. A lack of mobility is a significant barrier for almost 30 percent of the sample, according to cluster analysis, while the remaining 70 percent are indifferent. The results from this section are shown in Table 2, where bolded values represent significantly higher measures than the comparable group.

Cost limitations and accessibility were major concerns for the food insecure group, comparable values are present in Figure 4. When prompted about the way these factors limited their ability to buy fruits, vegetables and lean proteins, cost had a larger impact than availability, but in both cases, food insecure homes identified greater challenges than those with food security. Cost played the greatest factor on purchasing lean proteins for both groups, while availability impacted their capacity to purchase fruit across both groups.

Figure 4: Cost Limitations





Subsample: Responses from Postcards

This analysis provides valuable insights for designing targeted interventions and strategies to improve food security outcomes among respondents sourced via postcards in Santa Rosa County. The difference among those within the full sample and screened group can be viewed in Table 3. Among this subsample, 50.8 percent indicate high food security, while 18.5 percent fell into the category of marginal food security. Additionally, 13.3 percent of the postcards sub-sample report low food security, and 17.5 percent indicate very low food security.

Considering the total sample, after screening those above the 1.85x Poverty Line, the Postcards Sub-Sample reveals that 79.2 percent of respondents report high food security. Additionally, 4.1 percent fell into the category of marginal food security. Furthermore, 4.9 percent of the sub-sample report low food security, and 11.8 percent indicate inadequate food security.

Table 3 Post Card Subsample

Post Card Subsample Scores	Full Sample	1.85x Subsample
0 Points (High food security)	50.8%	79.2%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	18.5%	4.1%
3 - 5 Points (Low food security)	13.3%	4.9%
6 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	17.5%	11.8%

These findings suggest that respondents sourced via mailed postcards generally exhibit higher food security levels than the overall sample. The higher proportion of respondents indicating high food security from this subsample may reflect different levels of non-response bias between sample methodologies or the increased difficulty of sharing the survey link compared to electronic methods. It may also suggest that consumers with an address of record are less likely to be food insecure. However, it is still essential to address the needs of those within the categories of marginal, low, and very low food security within the postcards sub-sample.

Conclusion

Santa Rosa Department of Health will utilize the information in this report to work with stakeholders already engaged in food distribution to improve understanding of food insecurity in Santa Rosa County. Their team hopes to shed light on the struggles our families and residents face to create discussion around potential solutions not just for programs and organizations, but for potential policies as well.

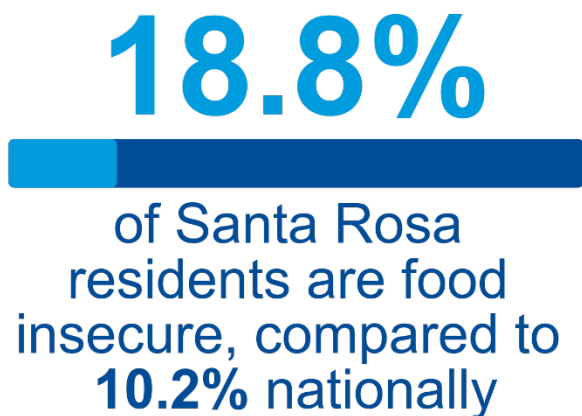
The results of the survey reveal that the county needs to further explore interventions related to food access and food security. In this report, we have defined some key determinants that influence whether an individual identifies as food secure or food insecure, found the ways in which residents are food insecure and identified some unique challenges for our community.

Outside of the socioeconomic factors at play, there are also varying preferences among those considered to be food secure and those experiencing food insecurity. Food secure households tended to base their purchases on taste preferences, and they were more likely to shop at superstores.

Food insecure households were significantly more likely to shop at convenience stores, small independent grocers, discount stores, and food pantries than food secure households. Food secure households were significantly more likely to shop at superstores, wholesalers, or grocery stores, and eat at fast casual/sit-in restaurants than food insecure households. Higher prices, a lack of transportation, a lack of cooking equipment, and too much travel time represent the factors with the greatest differences between food secure and food insecure households. In terms of the magnitude of the issue, higher prices is the greatest barrier, followed by a lack of free time to get/make healthy food. Transportation played a large part in blockading food insecure individuals from food.

Key recommendations

- Fortify infrastructure for providing food assistance.
- Increase accessibility of food options for hungry people and families.
- Promote healthy eating.



**Appendix A
Survey**

Food Insecurity

Start of Block: Screener

Q35 Electronic Survey Informed Consent

You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by Dr. James Mead, a UWF Associate Professor in the Department of Commerce, for the UWF Haas Center. The purpose of this research is to survey Santa Rosa County residents about food accessibility and food shopping habits.

PARTICIPATION

The Principal Investigator is asking adult Santa Rosa County residents to complete this electronic survey. More specifically, you will be asked to answer questions related to food accessibility and food shopping habits in your household. It will take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete the survey. Your participation in this survey is voluntary. You may refuse to take part in the research or exit the survey at any time without penalty. To be eligible to complete this survey you must be an adult living in Santa Rosa County, Florida.

BENEFITS & RISKS

Some of the questions in this survey are related to adult food insecurity, which may be a sensitive topic for some people. You will receive no direct benefit from participating in this research study. However, your responses may help us learn more about food accessibility and shopping habits in Santa Rosa County, which may help decision-makers improve policy choices in the context of food accessibility and shopping habits.

There are no foreseeable risks involved in participating in this study other than those encountered in day-to-day life using the internet.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Your responses will be automatically compiled in a spreadsheet. All data will be stored in a password-protected electronic format. The results of the study will be used to inform local policy choices in Santa Rosa County.

CONTACT

If you have questions concerning the study, contact the principal investigator at (850) 474-2324 or by email at jmead@uwf.edu. If you have further questions or concerns about your rights as a participant in this study, contact the UWF Institutional Research Board at (850) 474-3484 or irb@uwf.edu.

By clicking to advance the survey you acknowledge that you have read this information, are

over the age of 18, and agree to participate in this research. Permission to participate is given voluntarily and without coercion or undue influence.

You may print/download a copy of this consent form for your records.

Page Break

Q37 Click to write the question text

Browser (1)

Version (2)

Operating System (3)

Screen Resolution (4)

Flash Version (5)

Java Support (6)

User Agent (7)



Q20 What is your age?

Q30 Do you currently live in Florida?

No (1)

Yes (2)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If Do you currently live in Florida? = Yes

Q31 In what county do you live?

▼ Alachua County (1) ... Washington County (67)



Q32 What is your ZIP code?

End of Block: Screener

Start of Block: Default Question Block

Q1 These next questions are about the food eaten in your household in the last 12 months, since March of last year and whether you were able to afford the food you need.

End of Block: Default Question Block

Start of Block: HH Block

Q3 Now we are going to show you several statements that people have made about their food situation.

For these statements, please tell me whether the statement was often true, sometimes true, or never true for the people in your household in the last 12 months—that is, since last March.

HH2 “We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.”

Was that often true, sometimes true, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true (1)
 - Sometimes true (2)
 - Never true (3)
-

HH3 “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/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true (1)
 - Sometimes true (2)
 - Never true (3)
-

HH4 “We couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals.”

Was that often, sometimes, or never true for (you/your household) in the last 12 months?

- Often true (1)
- Sometimes true (2)
- Never true (3)

End of Block: HH Block

Start of Block: AD1 Block

AD1 In the last 12 months, since last March, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Page Break

Display This Question:

If In the last 12 months, since last March, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut... = Yes

AD1a How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month (1)
 - Some months but not every month (2)
 - Only 1 or 2 months (3)
-

Display This Question:

If In the last 12 months, since last March, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut... = Yes

AD2 In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Display This Question:

If In the last 12 months, since last March, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut... = Yes

AD3 In the last 12 months, were you every hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Display This Question:

If In the last 12 months, since last March, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut... = Yes

AD4 In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?

Yes (1)

No (2)

End of Block: AD1 Block

Start of Block: AD 3

AD5 In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?

Yes (1)

No (2)

Page Break

Display This Question:

*If In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole d... =
Yes*

Ad5a How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

- Almost every month (1)
- Some months but not every month (2)
- Only 1 or 2 months (3)

End of Block: AD 3

Start of Block: Food Habits

Q23 In the last month, how often have you or someone in your household used each of the following sources to get food?

	Never (1)	Once or twice a month (2)	About once a week (3)	A few times a week (4)	Everyday (5)
Superstore, Wholesaler, or Grocery Store (e.g., Walmart, Publix, Aldi) (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Small Independent Grocer or specialty grocer (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
International Grocer (e.g. Asian market, Latino grocer) (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Discount Store (e.g., Deals and Steals, Big Lots) (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Convenience Store, Carryout, Corner Store or partial market (e.g., gas station, Dollar General) (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fast Food Restaurant (e.g., McDonalds, Whataburger, Arby's, Taco Bell) (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Fast
Casual/Sit-in
Restaurant
(e.g.,
Chipotle,
Olive Garden,
Texas
Roadhouse,
Moe's) (7)

Food Pantry,
meals on
wheels or
Free Meal
(e.g., Senior
Center,
church meal)
(8)

Seasonal
Markets such
as Farmers'
Markets or
Produce
Stands,
Community
Supported
Agriculture
(CSA),
Personal,
Community,
or School
Garden (9)

Page Break

Q24 Please rate how important the following are in your decisions about what food to buy:

	Not at all important (1)	Slightly important (2)	Moderately important (3)	Very important (4)	Extremely important (5)
Taste (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Nutritional value (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Appearance (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Price (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Locally grown (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Organically grown/grown without pesticides (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessibility (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Cultural or Religious identity (8)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Easy to store/doesn't spoil quickly (9)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It is filling (10)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fits my diet restrictions (11)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q25 How often does cost stop you from buying the types of food listed below?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
Fruits (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vegetables (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lean proteins (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q26 How often does a lack a availability where you shop stop you from buying the types of food listed below?

	Never (1)	Sometimes (2)	About half the time (3)	Most of the time (4)	Always (5)
Fruits (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Vegetables (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Lean proteins (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Page Break

Q27 Please agree or disagree with the following statements.

	Strongly disagree (1)	Somewhat disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Somewhat agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
Due to higher prices, I have cut back on the amount of food I buy. (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I haven't changed my food shopping habits due to price increases. (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A lack of transportation sometimes keeps me from buying the food I want. (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Sometimes I don't know where to find the food I want. (4)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A lack of free time prevents me from getting/making healthy food. (5)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
A lack of cooking equipment prevents me from making the food I want. (6)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
It would require too much travel time to get healthy food. (7)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Risks to my personal safety prevent me from getting the food I want.
(8)

End of Block: Food Habits

Start of Block: Demos

Q14 What is your current level of education?

- Less than high school (1)
 - High school graduate (2)
 - Some college (3)
 - College or more (4)
-

Q15 How many children less than 18 years old live in your household?

- 0 (1)
 - 1 (2)
 - 2 (3)
 - 3 (4)
 - 4 (5)
 - 5+ (6)
-

Q19 Including you, how many how many adults live in your household?

- 1 (1)
 - 2 (2)
 - 3 (3)
 - 4 (4)
 - 5+ (5)
-

Q16 Which of the following best describes your race and/or ethnicity? Please select all that apply.

- Black (1)
 - White (2)
 - Hispanic (3)
 - Asian, Hawaiian or Pacific Islander (4)
 - Native American (5)
 - Other, please specify (6) _____
-

Q17 What is your gender?

- Male (1)
 - Female (2)
 - Non-binary / third gender (3)
 - Prefer not to say (4)
-

Page Break

Q21 What is your current marital status?

- Married (1)
 - Widowed (2)
 - Divorced (3)
 - Separated (4)
 - Living with a significant other (5)
 - Single (6)
-

Q18 What best describes your area of residence?

- Urban (i.e., areas with tall buildings, densely populated, homes and offices mixed together) (1)
 - Suburban (i.e., areas dominated by single-family or townhomes, apartments with 3-floors or less, and strip malls nearby) (2)
 - Rural (i.e. areas of low population density where farming may take place nearby, apartments and condominiums are not common) (3)
-

Q22 What is your total household income?

- Less than \$10,000 (1)
- \$10,000 to \$19,999 (2)
- \$20,000 to \$29,999 (3)
- \$30,000 to \$39,999 (4)
- \$40,000 to \$49,999 (5)
- \$50,000 to \$59,999 (6)
- \$60,000 to \$69,999 (7)
- \$70,000 to \$79,999 (8)
- \$80,000 to \$89,999 (9)
- \$90,000 to \$99,999 (10)
- \$100,000 to \$149,999 (11)
- \$150,000 or more (12)

End of Block: Demos

Start of Block: Hidden

Q33 Would you like to provide your email address to receive a \$10 incentive for completing this survey?

The UWF Haas Center will separate your email address from your responses to this survey to keep your answer choices as private and confidential as possible.

- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
-

Display This Question:

If Would you like to provide your email address to receive a \$10 incentive for completing this surve...
= Yes



Q34 Please enter your email address below.

A representative from Santa Rosa County will contact you via email after the survey closes with instructions to claim your incentive.

We estimate that this survey will be open for approximately one month, but the length of time that it is open will depend on survey response rates.

End of Block: Hidden

Appendix B
Power Point with Results

Food Insecurity in Santa Rosa County

2023 Survey Results Prepared for the Florida Department of Health



Haas Center

UNIVERSITY *of* WEST FLORIDA

Survey Methodology

- 767 electronic surveys were completed (several additional partial completes). Respondents were sourced via mailed post cards (258), email (296), and social media (217).
 - This research adopts the [USDA adult food insecurity research methodology](#), plus several custom questions. The USDA methodology often employs a 1.85x poverty line screener to quickly screen households with higher incomes from the larger survey (they are less likely to experience food insecurity). However, that screener measure was not used in this data collection. The purpose was to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of food insecurity across households of all income levels in the county. To enable comparisons with historical national-level data, this report also provides alternative numbers that reflect what the overall food insecurity score would have been if the screening measure had been implemented. **Unless otherwise noted, non-screener method values are reported in this research.**
 - Data were collected from March 23rd, 2023, to May 8th, 2023.
 - To qualify to participate, respondents must live in Santa Rosa County FL (screened based on county selection and zip code) and be at least 18 years old.
 - The median survey completion time was approximately 5 minutes and 30 second.
 - Reported statistics are weighted by 2022 Santa Rosa County household income estimates and poverty rates (reported demographic information is not weighted).
 - Survey response rates skewed higher for lower income households, likely due to personal relevance in the subject.
 - References of statistical significance indicate p-values of .05 or less.
 - Margin of error for reported percentage values is +/- 3.6% (at 95% CL) for the overall sample.
 - Margin of error for reported mean values is +/- 2.4% (at 95% CL) for the overall sample.
-

Key Findings

- Overall, 18.8% of surveyed adults in Santa Rosa County were food insecure (based on the 1.85 poverty line screen method, non-screened results also reported).
 - A 2021 report from the USDA estimated the overall U.S. food insecurity rate as 10.2%. For reference, national values last approached 15% in 2008.
 - Despite weighting for household income/likely poverty in Santa Rosa County, this result is higher than historic national values. This elevated value may be the result of a new post pandemic consumer reality and/or historically high inflation rates (which could have both a real and psychological affect on perceived food insecurity).
 - 10.6% of respondents reported skipping at least one meal in the past year due to food scarcity.
 - Food secure and food insecure households report different considerations, shopping behaviors, and barriers when buying food (see slides 12-15).
 - There are several demographic risk factors for food insecurity (see slide 11).
-

Recommendations

- Work with community organizations and government partners to increase food aid in Santa Rosa County.
 - Nearly 50% of food insecure households may be newly food insecure (based on historic national values). These households may be less familiar with available aid/programs. Education/outreach may be needed to best assist this group.
 - A lack of transportation is a meaningful barrier to food access for ~30% of the respondents.
 - Providing food aid at a central location may not be very helpful to his group.
 - Seek partners for wider food distribution.
 - Food insecure households may be missing some degree of nutritional value compared to food secure households as food insecure households are more likely to prioritize other attributes when buying food. When possible, provide highly nutritious food that is easy to store/doesn't spoil quickly.
 - Work with grocers and restaurants to collect good quality “ugly” food for distribution as food aid. Food secure customers are less interested in “ugly” food, while food insecure households are less likely to place a high value on the food's appearance.
 - Consider the demographic risk factors for food insecurity when selecting food distribution locations (see slide 11).
-

The slide features a dark blue horizontal bar at the top. The main background is light blue with abstract, overlapping shapes in various shades of blue and white, including a prominent white spiral on the right side. A thin dark blue horizontal line is positioned near the bottom of the slide.

USDA Food Insecurity Questions

Household Stage 1 Questions: Indicate Relatively High Levels of Food Insecurity (Food Access Stress)

In the past 12 months...				
		Often true	Sometimes true	Never true
HH2	We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more	11.6%	30.9%	57.4%
HH3	The food we bought just didn't last, and we didn't have money to get more	10.0%	25.6%	64.4%
HH4	We often couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	19.0%	28.9%	52.1%

Worry about food insecurity and an inability to afford to eat balanced meals were more likely to be cited than running out of money to purchase food.

Regression analysis indicates that concern about food inflation (Q26_1) is significantly associated with HH2 and HH4, suggesting the past year's inflationary environment may be increasing real or perceived food insecurity. This could partially account for higher-than-expected food insecurity rates compared to recent national estimates.

Questions HH2, HH3, HH4

Adult Stage 2 Questions: ~30% of Respondents Report Cutting/Skipping Meals in the Last Year (Limited Food Access)

In the last 12 months, since last X, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food? (AD1)

Yes - 30.9%. No - 69.1%.

How often this this happen? (AD1a)

- **Almost every month – 37.5%**
- **Some months but not every month – 38.0%**
- **Only 1 or 2 months – 24.5%**

(Follow-up question to AD1 only those who answered YES)

		In the past 12 months...(Total Sample)	
		Yes	No
AD2	In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn't enough money for food?	25.1%	74.9%
AD3	In the last 12 months, were you every hungry but didn't eat because there wasn't enough money for food?	18.8%	81.2%
AD4	In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn't enough money for food?	14.4%	85.6%

Questions AD1, AD1a, AD2, AD3, AD4

Adult Stage 3 Questions: ~10% of Respondents Reported Extreme Food Insecurity (Drastic Food Scarcity)

In the last 12 months, did (you/you or other adults in your household) ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food? (AD5)

Yes - 10.6%. No – 89.4%.

How often this this happen? (AD5a)

- **Almost every month – 32.7%**
- **Some months but not every month – 43.7%**
- **Only 1 or 2 months – 23.7%**

(Follow-up question to AD1, only those who answered YES)

When analyzed from the perspective of the total sample, the results are as follows:

How often this this happen? (AD5a)

- Almost every month – 3.5%
- Some months but not every month – 4.6%
- Only 1 or 2 months – 2.5%

Overall Santa Rosa County Food Insecurity Scores Are Higher than the National Average (Last Reported 2021)

Total Sample

Overall Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023	
0 Points (High food security)	41.9%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	21.6%
3 - 7 Points (Low food security)	14.2%
8 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	22.3%

Screened out those 1.85x above the Poverty Line

Overall Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023	
0 Points (High food security)	76.6%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	4.6%
3 - 7 Points (Low food security)	5.0%
8 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	13.8%

Comparison to National and State Measures (**Use 1.85x Poverty Line Screened data**)

- The prevalence of food insecurity nationally is ~10.2, as reported in 2021.
 - In Florida overall, food insecurity is ~10%

Food insecure households are defined as those with low or very low food security

[More on reporting standards for households with and without children and the 1.85x poverty line screener rule here.](#)

Santa Rosa County Food Insecurity Scores among Households with and without Children

Total Sample

Households with Children Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023

0 Points (High food security)	33.4%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	25.0%
3 - 7 Points (Low food security)	28.5%
8 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	13.0%

Households without Children Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023

0 Points (High food security)	54.3%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	16.5%
3 - 5 Points (Low food security)	10.3%
6 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	18.9%

Screened out those 1.85x above the Poverty Line

Households with Children Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023

0 Points (High food security)	68.6%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	7.9%
3 - 7 Points (Low food security)	13.6%
8 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	9.9%

Households without Children Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023

0 Points (High food security)	76.6%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	4.6%
3 - 5 Points (Low food security)	5.0%
6 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	13.8%

[More on reporting standards for households with and without children and the 1.85x poverty line screener rule here.](#)

Overall Santa Rosa County Food Insecurity Scores Among Mailed Post Cards ONLY

Total Sample

<u>Post Cards Sub-Sample Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023</u>	
0 Points (High food security)	50.8%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	18.5%
3 - 5 Points (Low food security)	13.3%
6 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	17.5%

Screened out those 1.85x above the Poverty Line

<u>Post Cards Sub-Sample Santa Rosa Food Security Score - 2023</u>	
0 Points (High food security)	79.2%
1 - 2 Points (Marginal food security)	4.1%
3 - 5 Points (Low food security)	4.9%
6 - 10 Points (Very low food security)	11.8%

An analysis of variance found that estimated food insecurity mean scores were significantly lower for respondents recruited by mailed post card.

However, these scores are still notably higher than national and Florida averages reported in 2021 (use 1.85x poverty line screened data)

Respondents recruited via email or social media reported statistically similar mean scores for food insecurity.

Risk Factors for High Levels of Food Insecurity

- Respondents with lower household incomes were significantly more likely to report high levels of food insecurity.
- Respondents with lower levels of education were significantly more likely to report high levels of food insecurity.
- Households with more adults were significantly more likely to report higher levels of food insecurity.
- Households with more children were significantly more likely to report higher levels of food insecurity.
- Divorced and separated respondents were significantly likely to report high levels of food insecurity than married respondents.
- Respondents living in urban areas reported the significantly more food insecurity than those in suburban and rural areas.
- Respondents living rural areas reported the significantly more food insecurity than those in suburban.
- Respondents who identified as Black or Hispanic were significantly more likely to report higher levels of food insecurity.

Statistical analysis via regression and ANOVA.



Custom Questions

Food Secure and Food Insecure Households Report Different Shopping Behavior

Food insecure households were significantly more likely to shop at convenience stores, small independent grocers, discount stores, and food pantries than food secure households.

Food secure households were significantly more likely to shop at superstores, wholesales, or grocery stores, and eat at fast casual/sit-in restaurants than food insecure households.

Bold text indicates a value significantly higher than the comparison group.

Q23 1 = Never, 5 =Everyday

In the last month, how often have you or someone in your household used each of the following sources to get food?		
	Food Secure	Food Insecure
Superstore, Wholesaler, or Grocery Store (e.g., Walmart, Publix, Aldi)	3.22	3.00
International Grocer (e.g., Asian market, Latino grocer)	1.47	1.59
Convenience Store, Carryout, Corner Store or partial market (e.g., gas station, Dollar General)	1.98	2.34
Small Independent Grocer or specialty grocer	1.91	2.18
Discount Store (e.g., Deals and Steals, Big Lots)	1.68	2.11
Fast Food Restaurant (e.g., McDonalds, Whataburger, Arby's, Taco Bell)	2.54	2.41
Fast Casual/Sit-in Restaurant (e.g., Chipotle, Olive Garden, Texas Roadhouse, Moe's)	2.26	1.97
Food Pantry, meals on wheels or Free Meal (e.g., Senior Center, church meal)	1.13	1.95
Seasonal Markets such as Farmers' Markets or Produce Stands, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), Personal, Community, or School Garden	1.75	1.89

Food Secure and Food Insecure Households Report Different Considerations When Buying Food

Food insecure households were significantly more likely to make decisions based on price, cultural/religious identity, ease of storage, and whether the food is filling than food secure households.

Food secure households were significantly more likely to make decisions based on taste, nutritional value and appearance than food insecure households.

Bold text indicates a value significantly higher than the comparison group.

Q24 1 = Not at all important, 5 = Extremely important

Please rate how important the following are in your decisions about what food to buy.		
	Food Secure	Food Insecure
Taste	3.99	3.40
Nutritional value	3.79	3.46
Appearance	3.38	2.99
Price	3.80	4.25
Locally grown	2.71	2.59
Organically grown/grown without pesticides	2.53	2.57
Accessibility	3.41	3.50
Cultural or Religious identity	1.57	1.91
Easy to store/doesn't spoil quickly	3.07	3.46
It is filling	3.19	3.55
Fits my diet restrictions	3.12	3.05

Food Insecure Households Report More Challenges Buying Fruit, Vegetables, and Lean Protein in Terms of both Cost and Availability Where they Shop

While food insecure households were significantly more likely to higher levels of difficulty buying the listed foods due to cost and availability than food secure households, cost was a larger issue in terms of the magnitude of the values.

Bold text indicates a value significantly higher than the comparison group.

Q25 & Q26 1 = Never, 5 = Always

How often does cost stop you from buying the types of food listed below?		
	Food Secure	Food Insecure
Fruits	2.20	3.24
Vegetables	2.03	3.05
Lean proteins	2.23	3.28
How often does a lack a availability where you shop stop you from buying the types of food listed below?		
	Food Secure	Food Insecure
Fruits	1.97	2.55
Vegetables	1.92	2.39
Lean proteins	1.84	2.37

Food Insecure Households Report Significantly Greater Barriers to Accessing Food Across Spectrum of Issues

Higher prices, a lack of transportation, a lack of cooking equipment, and too much travel time represent the factors with the greatest differences between food secure and food insecure households.

In terms of the magnitude of the issue, higher prices is the greatest barrier, followed by a lack of free time to get/make healthy food.

Please agree or disagree with the following statements.		
	Food Secure	Food Insecure
Due to higher prices, I have cut back on the amount of food I buy.	3.49	4.21
I haven't changed my food shopping habits due to price increases.	2.67	2.13
A lack of transportation sometimes keeps me from buying the food I want.	1.51	2.36
Sometimes I don't know where to find the food I want.	2.04	2.56
A lack of free time prevents me from getting/making healthy food.	2.54	2.93
A lack of cooking equipment prevents me from making the food I want.	1.61	2.34
It would require too much travel time to get healthy food.	1.91	2.62
Risks to my personal safety prevent me from getting the food I want.	1.53	2.07

Based on cluster analysis, a lack of transportation is a meaningful barrier for ~30% of the sample. It is a non-issue for the remaining ~70%.

Bold text indicates a value significantly higher than the comparison group.

Q26 1 = Never, 5 = Always



Demographic Questions

Respondents' Demographics (unweighted)

What is your current level of education? (Q14)	
Less than high school	2.3%
High school graduate	12.0%
Some college	26.6%
College or more	59.1%

What is your annual household income from all sources? (Q22)	
Less than \$10,000	4.6%
\$10,000 - \$19,999	7.4%
\$20,000 - \$29,999	9.5%
\$30,000 - 39,999	9.1%
\$40,000 - 49,999	7.8%
\$50,000 - \$59,999	7.8%
\$60,000 - \$69,999	8.8%
\$70,000 - 79,999	7.4%
\$80,000 - \$89,999	4.4%
\$90,000 - \$99,999	5.2%
\$100,000 - \$149,000	16.7%
More than \$150,000	11.5%

Likely Poverty Households	
Yes	No
21%	79%

What is your Gender? (Q17)			
Male	Female	Non-binary	Prefer not to say
29.40%	68.70%	0.50%	1.40%

Calculated based on household size and income.

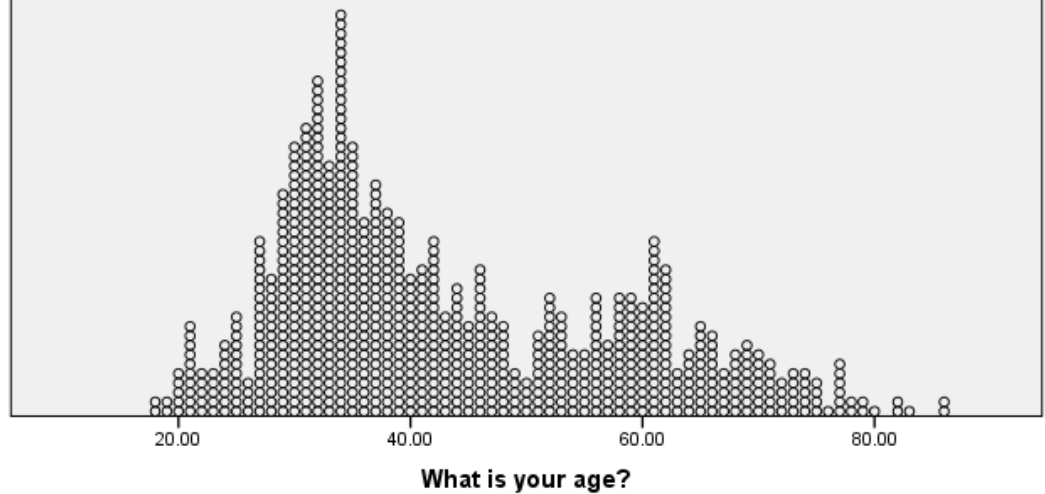
Respondents' Demographics (unweighted)

What is your Zip Code? (Q32)

	Counts	Percent
32566	181	23.5%
32570	151	19.6%
32571	147	19.1%
32583	135	17.5%
32563	78	10.2%
32565	31	4.0%
32530	24	3.1%
32561	18	2.4%
32564	3	0.3%
32562	1	0.2%
32569	1	0.1%
32572	1	0.2%

What is your age? (Q20)

Mean	Median	Range	SD
44.9	41.8	18-86	14.8



Respondents' Demographics

(unweighted)

	Number of adults in household? (Q19)	Number of children in household? (Q15)
0	0.0%	40.7%
1	11.8%	29.4%
2	63.0%	17.9%
3	16.1%	8.4%
4	7.0%	2.2%
5	2.1%	1.5%

What is your race/ethnicity? (Select all that apply) (Q16)

White	88.7%
Black	6.4%
Latino or Hispanic	6.7%
Asian/Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	3.0%
Native American	1.9%
Other (Specify)	2.7%

What best describes your area of residence? (Q18)

Urban	Suburban	Rural
11.7%	64.3%	24.0%

What is your current marital status? (Q21)

Married	Widowed	Divorced	Separated	Living with Significant Other	Single
70.3%	4.0%	8.8%	1.9%	5.3%	9.6%