Most U.S. households have consistent, dependable access to enough food for active, healthy living.

But about 11% of U.S. households were food insecure in 2007, meaning that at times during the year their access to adequate food was limited by a lack of money and other resources.

About one-third of food-insecure households had very low food security. In these households, the food intake of some members was reduced and their normal eating patterns disrupted because of the household’s food insecurity. The other two-thirds of food-insecure households obtained enough food to avoid substantial disruptions in eating patterns and food intake.

Children are usually protected from the worst effects of food insecurity. In 2007, less than 1% of households with children had very low food security among the children.

Food insecurity is least prevalent in households consisting of two or more adults with no children and in households with one or more elderly members.

Rates are substantially higher than the national average for single parents with children, Black and Hispanic households, and households with incomes below the poverty line.

ERS monitors the food security of U.S. households and plays a lead role in research on household food security. Each year ERS publishes a report providing USDA’s annual statistics on the food security of U.S. households at the State and national levels.

For more information, see the ERS Website: