

Household Food Security

Food security—access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life—is one of several conditions necessary for a population to be healthy and well nourished. This section provides information on food security, food insecurity, and food insecurity with hunger in U.S. households based on the December 2004 food security survey—the 10th annual survey in the Nation’s food security monitoring system.

Methods

The results presented in this report are based on data collected in the Current Population Survey (CPS) food security surveys for the years 1995-2004. The CPS includes about 60,000 households² and is representative, at State and national levels, of the civilian, noninstitutionalized population of the United States. About 48,000 households completed the food security section of the survey in December 2004; the remainder were unable or unwilling to do so. Weighting factors were calculated by the Census Bureau so that, when properly weighted, the food security survey, like the full CPS, is representative at State and national levels.³ All statistics in this report were calculated by applying the food security supplement weights to the surveyed households to obtain nationally representative prevalence estimates. Household supplement weights were used to calculate household-level statistics, and person supplement weights were used to calculate statistics for all individuals, for adults, and for children.

The household food security statistics in this report are based on a measure of food security calculated from responses to a series of questions about conditions and behaviors known to characterize households having difficulty meeting basic food needs.⁴ Each question asks whether the condition or behavior occurred at any time during the previous 12 months and specifies a lack of money or other resources to obtain food as the reason for the condition or behavior. Voluntary fasting or dieting to lose weight are thereby excluded from the measure. The series includes 10 questions about food conditions at the household level and among adults in the household and, if there are children present in the household, an additional 8 questions about their food conditions (see box, “Questions Used to Assess the Food Security of Households in the CPS Food Security Survey”). Responses to the 18 items used to classify households are provided in appendix A.

All interviewed households are classified into one of three categories—food secure, food insecure without hunger, food insecure with hunger—based on the number of food-insecure conditions and behaviors the household reports.⁵ Households are classified as *food secure* if they report no food-insecure conditions or if they report only one or two food-insecure conditions. (Food-insecure conditions are indicated by responses of “often” or “sometimes” to questions 1-3 and 11-13, “almost every month” or “some months but not every month” to questions 5, 10, and 17, and “yes” to the other questions.) They are classified as *food insecure* if they report three or more food-insecure conditions. Households without children are classified as *food insecure with hunger* if they report six or more food-insecure conditions. Households with

²The size of the CPS sample was increased in 2001; it had been around 50,000 households during the 1990s.

³Reweightings of the Supplement takes into consideration income and other information about households that completed the labor force portion of the survey but not the Food Security Supplement. This corrects, to some extent, biases that could result from nonresponse to the Supplement by households that completed only the labor force part of the survey.

⁴The methods used to measure the extent of food insecurity and hunger have been described in several places (Hamilton et al., 1997a, 1997b; Andrews et al., 1998; Bickel et al., 1998; Carlson et al., 1999; Bickel et al., 2000; Nord and Bickel, 2002). Further details on the development of the measure are provided in appendix B.

⁵To reduce the burden on higher income respondents, households with incomes above 185 percent of the Federal poverty line who give no indication of food-access problems on either of two preliminary screening questions are deemed to be food secure and are not asked the questions in the food security assessment series. The preliminary screening questions are as follows:

- People do different things when they are running out of money for food in order to make their food or their food money go further. In the last 12 months, since December of last year, did you ever run short of money and try to make your food or your food money go further?
- Which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household—enough of the kinds of food we want to eat, enough but not always the kinds of food we want to eat, sometimes not enough to eat, or often not enough to eat?

Questions Used To Assess the Food Security of Households in the CPS Food Security Survey

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 you couldn’t afford enough food? (Yes/No)
8. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because you didn’t have 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 are asked only if the household included children age 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 we just couldn’t afford enough 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 but you just couldn’t afford more 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)

children are classified as *food insecure with hunger* if they report eight or more food-insecure conditions, including conditions among both adults and children. Households with children are further classified as *food insecure with hunger among children* if they report five or more food-insecure conditions among the children (that is, in response to questions 11-18).

Thus, households classified as *food insecure without hunger* have reported multiple indications of food access problems, but typically have reported few, if any, indications of reduced food intake. All households classified as *food insecure with hunger* have reported multiple indications of reduced food intake and disrupted eating patterns due to inadequate resources for food, although not all have directly reported that household members were hungry. The methods used to measure households' food security and the language used to describe their food security status are currently being reviewed by the Committee on National Statistics at the request of USDA (see box).

Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Food Insecurity With Hunger—National Conditions and Trends

Eighty-eight percent of U.S. households were food secure throughout the entire year 2004 (fig. 1). “Food secure” means that all household members had access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.⁶ The remaining 13.5 million U.S. households (11.9 percent of all households)

Committee on National Statistics Reviews Food Security Measurement Methods

The Committee on National Statistics of the National Academies, is currently conducting an in-depth review of the methods USDA uses to measure household food security. USDA requested the 2-year study to ensure that its measurement methods and the language it uses to describe households' access—and lack of access—to adequate food are conceptually and operationally sound and that they convey useful and relevant information to policy officials and the public. One of the central issues the panel is addressing is whether the concept and definition of hunger and the relationship between hunger and food insecurity that underlie the current measurement methods are appropriate for the policy context in which food security statistics are used. The expert panel that the Committee on National Statistics has assembled to conduct the review includes economists, sociologists, nutritionists, statisticians, and other researchers.

The panel published a preliminary assessment, *Measuring Food Insecurity and Hunger: Phase I Report*, in February 2005. The report presents the panel's preliminary findings on concepts and definitions and the survey questions and methodology for measuring these concepts. It also provides interim recommendations pending completion of the panel's work. A summary of the report and link to the full text are available at: www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/NASsummary.htm.

Following release of the panel's final report, USDA plans to review its methodology for measuring and describing food insecurity at various levels of severity and make changes as appropriate.

⁶Food security and insecurity, as measured for this report, are based on respondent perceptions of whether the household was able to obtain enough food to meet their needs. The measure does not specifically address whether the household's food intake was sufficient for active, healthy lives. Nonetheless, research based on other surveys has found food security, measured as in this report, to be associated with health, nutrition, and children's development in a manner that generally supports the conceptualized link with sufficiency for active, healthy lives.

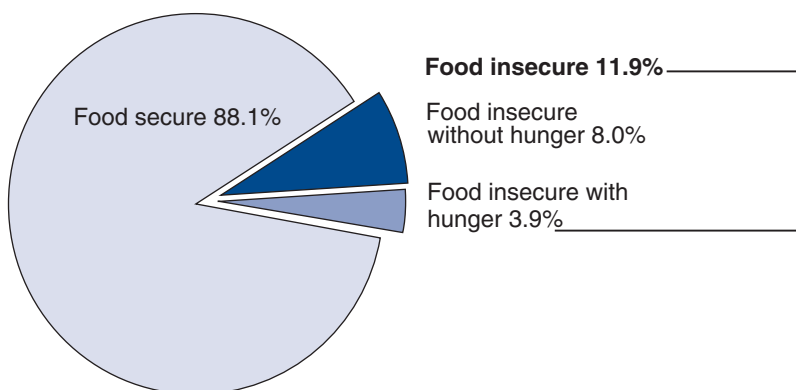
were food insecure at some time during the year. That is, they were, at times, uncertain of having, or unable to acquire, enough food for all household members because they had insufficient money and other resources for food. About two-thirds of food-insecure households avoided hunger, in many cases by relying on a few basic foods and reducing variety in their diets. But 4.4 million households (3.9 percent of all U.S. households) were food insecure to the extent that one or more household members were hungry, at least some time during the year, because they couldn't afford enough food.

In most households, children were protected from substantial reductions in food intake and ensuing hunger. However, in some 274,000 households (0.7 percent of households with children) food insecurity was sufficiently severe that one or more children in each household were also hungry on one or more days during the year because the household lacked money for enough food. In some of these households with more than one child, not all the children experienced hunger. Younger children, in particular, may have been protected from hunger.

When interpreting food security statistics, it is important to keep in mind that households are classified as food insecure or food insecure with hunger if they experienced the condition at any time during the previous 12 months. The rates of food insecurity and hunger on any given day are far below the annual rates. For example, the prevalence of hunger on an average day during the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December 2004 is estimated to have been about 14-19 percent of the annual rate (see box), or 0.5-0.8 percent of households (614,000-854,000 households).

The prevalence rates of food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger increased somewhat from 2003 to 2004 (table 1). The prevalence of food insecurity increased from 11.2 percent of households in 2003 to 11.9 percent in 2004, and the prevalence of food insecurity with hunger rose from 3.5 percent to 3.9 percent. The prevalence of food insecurity with hunger among children, however, has remained in the range of 0.5 to 0.7 percent of households (with no statistically significant changes) since 1999.

Figure 1
U.S. households by food security status, 2004



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table 1

Prevalence of food security, food insecurity, and food insecurity with hunger, by year

Unit	Total ¹	Food secure		Food insecure						
		1,000	Percent	All	Without hunger	With hunger	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
Households:										
1998	103,309	91,121	88.2	12,188	11.8	8,353	8.1	3,835	3.7	
1999	104,684	94,154	89.9	10,529	10.1	7,420	7.1	3,109	3.0	
2000	106,043	94,942	89.5	11,101	10.5	7,786	7.3	3,315	3.1	
2001	107,824	96,303	89.3	11,521	10.7	8,010	7.4	3,511	3.3	
2002	108,601	96,543	88.9	12,058	11.1	8,259	7.6	3,799	3.5	
2003	112,214	99,631	88.8	12,583	11.2	8,663	7.7	3,920	3.5	
2004	112,967	99,473	88.1	13,494	11.9	9,045	8.0	4,449	3.9	
All individuals (by food security status of household):²										
1998	268,366	232,219	86.5	36,147	13.5	26,290	9.8	9,857	3.7	
1999	270,318	239,304	88.5	31,015	11.5	23,237	8.6	7,779	2.9	
2000	273,685	240,454	87.9	33,231	12.1	24,708	9.0	8,523	3.1	
2001	276,661	243,019	87.8	33,642	12.2	24,628	8.9	9,014	3.3	
2002	279,035	244,133	87.5	34,902	12.5	25,517	9.1	9,385	3.4	
2003	286,410	250,155	87.3	36,255	12.7	26,622	9.3	9,633	3.4	
2004	288,603	250,407	86.8	38,196	13.2	27,535	9.5	10,661	3.7	
Adults (by food security status of household):²										
1998	197,084	174,964	88.8	22,120	11.2	15,632	7.9	6,488	3.3	
1999	198,900	179,960	90.5	18,941	9.5	13,869	7.0	5,072	2.5	
2000	201,922	181,586	89.9	20,336	10.1	14,763	7.3	5,573	2.8	
2001	204,340	183,398	89.8	20,942	10.2	14,879	7.3	6,063	3.0	
2002	206,493	184,718	89.5	21,775	10.5	15,486	7.5	6,289	3.0	
2003	213,441	190,451	89.2	22,990	10.8	16,358	7.7	6,632	3.1	
2004	215,564	191,236	88.7	24,328	11.3	16,946	7.9	7,382	3.4	
Households with children:										
1998	38,036	31,335	82.4	6,701	17.6	6,370	16.7	331	.9	
1999	37,884	32,290	85.2	5,594	14.8	5,375	14.2	219	.6	
2000	38,113	31,942	83.8	6,171	16.2	5,916	15.5	255	.7	
2001	38,330	32,141	83.9	6,189	16.1	5,978	15.6	211	.6	
2002	38,647	32,267	83.5	6,380	16.5	6,115	15.8	265	.7	
2003	40,286	33,575	83.3	6,711	16.7	6,504	16.1	207	.5	
2004	39,990	32,967	82.4	7,023	17.6	6,749	16.9	274	.7	
Children (by food security status of household):²										
1998	71,282	57,255	80.3	14,027	19.7	13,311	18.7	716	1.0	
1999	71,418	59,344	83.1	12,074	16.9	11,563	16.2	511	.7	
2000	71,763	58,867	82.0	12,896	18.0	12,334	17.2	562	.8	
2001	72,321	59,620	82.4	12,701	17.6	12,234	16.9	467	.6	
2002	72,542	59,415	81.9	13,127	18.1	12,560	17.3	567	.8	
2003	72,969	59,704	81.8	13,265	18.2	12,845	17.6	420	.6	
2004	73,039	59,171	81.0	13,868	19.0	13,323	18.2	545	.7	

¹Totals exclude households whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2003, these represented 404,000 households (0.4 percent of all households.)

²The food security survey measures food security status at the household level. Not all individuals residing in food-insecure households are appropriately characterized as food insecure. Similarly, not all individuals in households classified as food insecure with hunger, nor all children in households classified as food insecure with hunger among children, were subject to reductions in food intake or experienced resource-constrained hunger.

Sources: Calculated by ERS using data from the August 1998, April 1999, September 2000, December 2001, December 2002, December 2003, and December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.

How often were people hungry in households that were food insecure with hunger?

When food insecurity with hunger occurs in the United States, it is, in most cases, occasional or episodic, not chronic. The food security measurement approach used in this report is designed to register these occasional or episodic occurrences. Most of the questions used to assess households' food security status ask whether a condition, experience, or behavior occurred at any time in the past 12 months, and households can be classified as food insecure with hunger based on a single, severe episode during the year. It is important to keep this aspect of the scale in mind when interpreting food insecurity and hunger statistics. Analysis of additional information collected in the food security survey on how frequently various food-insecure conditions occurred during the year, whether they occurred during the 30 days prior to the survey, and, if so, in how many days provide further insight into the frequency and duration of hunger in U.S. households. These analyses reveal that in 2004:

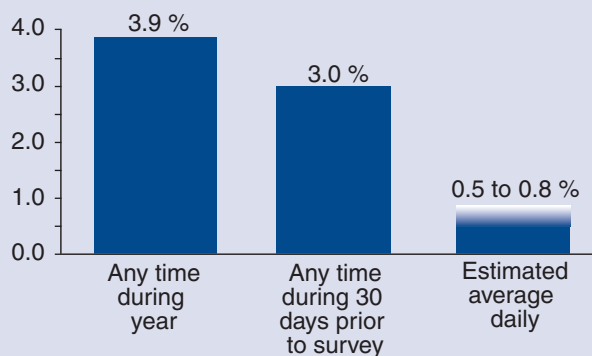
- About one-third of the households that were food insecure with hunger at any time during the year experienced the condition rarely or occasionally—in only 1 or 2 months of the year. For two-thirds, the condition was recurring, experienced in 3 or more months of the year.
- For about one-fifth of households classified as food insecure and 30 percent of those classified as food insecure with hunger, occurrence of the condition was frequent or chronic. That is, it occurred often, or in almost every month.

- On average, households that were food insecure with hunger at some time during the year experienced this condition in 8 or 9 months during the year (see appendix E). During the 30-day period ending in mid-December 2004, 3.0 percent of U.S. households were food insecure with hunger—about 77 percent of the number that were food insecure with hunger at any time during the year.
- Most households that were food insecure with hunger at some time during a month experienced the condition in 1 to 7 days of the month. The average daily prevalence of food insecurity with hunger during the 30-day period ending in mid-December 2004 was probably between 614,000 and 854,000 households (0.5-0.8 percent of all households)—about 14-19 percent of the annual prevalence.
- The daily prevalence of food insecurity with hunger among children during the 30-day period ending in early December 2004 was probably between 41,000 and 50,000 households (0.10-0.13 percent of households with children)—about 15-18 percent of the annual prevalence.

(Appendix A provides information on how often conditions indicating food insecurity and hunger occurred as reported by respondents to the December 2004 food security survey. See Nord et al., 2000, for more information about the frequency of food insecurity and hunger.)

Prevalence of food insecurity with hunger, by reference period

Percent of households



Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Prevalence rates of food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger trended upward from 1999 to 2004, returning to about the same levels at which they were first measured in 1995 (fig. 2).⁷ The year-to-year deviations from a consistent downward trend from 1995-2000 included a substantial 2-year cycle that is believed to result from a seasonal influence on food security prevalence rates (Cohen et al., 2002a). The CPS food security surveys over this period were conducted in April in odd-numbered years and August or September in even-numbered years. Measured prevalence of food insecurity was higher in the August/September collections, suggesting a seasonal response effect. Beginning in 2001, the survey has been conducted in early December. Data collection is planned for December in future years, which will avoid further problems of seasonality effects in interpreting annual changes.⁸

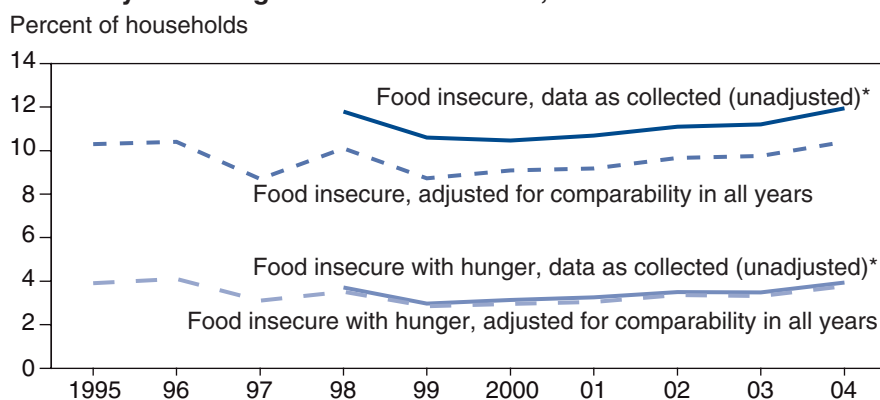
Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Food Insecurity With Hunger—Conditions and Trends, by Selected Household Characteristics

The prevalence rates of food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger varied considerably among household types (table 2). Rates of food insecurity were well below the national average of 11.9 percent for households with more than one adult and no children (6.7 percent) and for households with elderly persons (6.5 percent).⁹ Rates of food insecurity substantially higher than the national average were registered by the following groups:

- Households with incomes below the official poverty line (36.8 percent),¹⁰
- Households with children, headed by a single woman (33.0 percent) or a single man (22.2 percent),
- Black households (23.7 percent), and
- Hispanic households (21.7 percent).

Overall, households with children reported food insecurity at about double the rate for households without children (17.6 vs. 8.9 percent).¹¹ Among households with children, those with married-couple families showed the lowest rate of food insecurity (11.6 percent).

Figure 2
Trends in prevalence of food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger in U.S. households, 1995-2004



*Data as collected in 1995-97 are not directly comparable with data collected in 1998-2004. Source: Calculated by ERS based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data.

⁷Because of changes in screening procedures used to reduce respondent burden, food security statistics from 1995-97 are not directly comparable with those from 1998-2004. Figure 2 presents statistics for the years 1995-2004, adjusted to be comparable across all years, as well as statistics for 1998-2004 based on data as collected. See Andrews et al. (2000) and Ohls et al. (2001) for detailed information about questionnaire screening and adjustments for comparability.

⁸A smaller food security survey was also conducted in April 2001 to provide a baseline for assessing seasonal effects of data collection in December. Comparison of food security statistics from the April 2001 survey with those from April 1999 and December 2001 suggest that seasonal effects in early December were similar to those in April (Nord et al., 2002a).

⁹“Elderly” in this report refers to people ages 65 and older.

¹⁰The Federal poverty line was \$19,157 for a family of four in 2004.

¹¹The higher rate of food insecurity for households with children results, in part, from a difference in the measures applied to households with and without children. Responses to questions about children as well as adults are considered in assessing the food security status of households with children, but for both types of households, a total of three indications of food insecurity is required for classification as food insecure. Even with the child-referenced questions omitted from the scale, however, households with children were 55 percent more likely to be food insecure than were households without children. This measurement issue does not bias comparisons at the hunger threshold because a higher threshold is applied to households with children consistent with the larger number of questions taken into consideration.

Table 2

Prevalence of food security, food insecurity, and food insecurity with hunger by selected household characteristics, 2004

Category	Total ¹	Food secure		Food insecure					
		1,000	Percent	All	Without hunger	With hunger	1,000	Percent	1,000
All households	112,967	99,473	88.1	13,494	11.9	9,045	8.0	4,449	3.9
Household composition:									
With children < 18	39,990	32,967	82.4	7,023	17.6	5,311	13.3	1,712	4.3
With children < 6	17,922	14,606	81.5	3,316	18.5	2,573	14.4	743	4.1
Married-couple families	27,065	23,926	88.4	3,139	11.6	2,509	9.3	630	2.3
Female head, no spouse	9,641	6,459	67.0	3,182	33.0	2,291	23.8	891	9.2
Male head, no spouse	2,693	2,096	77.8	597	22.2	428	15.9	169	6.3
Other household with child ²	592	487	82.3	105	17.7	83	14.0	22	3.7
With no children < 18	72,977	66,506	91.1	6,471	8.9	3,734	5.1	2,737	3.8
More than one adult	43,177	40,278	93.3	2,899	6.7	1,834	4.2	1,065	2.5
Women living alone	17,012	15,010	88.2	2,002	11.8	1,084	6.4	918	5.4
Men living alone	12,788	11,219	87.7	1,569	12.3	816	6.4	753	5.9
With elderly	26,202	24,510	93.5	1,692	6.5	1,227	4.7	465	1.8
Elderly living alone	10,693	9,911	92.7	782	7.3	517	4.8	265	2.5
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White non-Hispanic	81,388	74,383	91.4	7,005	8.6	4,632	5.7	2,373	2.9
Black non-Hispanic	13,509	10,303	76.3	3,206	23.7	2,108	15.6	1,098	8.1
Hispanic ³	12,014	9,404	78.3	2,610	21.7	1,903	15.8	707	5.9
Other	6,056	5,382	88.9	674	11.1	403	6.7	271	4.5
Household income-to-poverty ratio:									
Under 1.00	13,347	8,438	63.2	4,909	36.8	3,098	23.2	1,811	13.6
Under 1.30	18,367	12,118	66.0	6,249	34.0	3,994	21.7	2,255	12.3
Under 1.85	28,081	19,700	70.2	8,381	29.8	5,443	19.4	2,938	10.5
1.85 and over	63,575	60,138	94.6	3,437	5.4	2,443	3.8	994	1.6
Income unknown	21,311	19,636	92.1	1,675	7.9	1,158	5.4	517	2.4
Area of residence: ⁴									
Inside metropolitan area	92,474	81,661	88.3	10,813	11.7	7,246	7.8	3,567	3.9
In principal cities ⁵	30,312	25,650	84.6	4,662	15.4	3,114	10.3	1,548	5.1
Not in principal cities	46,444	42,279	91.0	4,165	9.0	2,865	6.2	1,300	2.8
Outside metropolitan area	20,492	17,811	86.9	2,681	13.1	1,799	8.8	882	4.3
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	21,038	19,006	90.3	2,032	9.7	1,430	6.8	602	2.9
Midwest	25,957	23,126	89.1	2,831	10.9	1,889	7.3	942	3.6
South	41,157	35,693	86.7	5,464	13.3	3,605	8.8	1,859	4.5
West	24,815	21,648	87.2	3,167	12.8	2,121	8.5	1,046	4.2

¹Totals exclude households whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2004, these represented 404,000 households (0.4 percent of all households).

²Households with children in complex living arrangements—e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

³Hispanics may be of any race.

⁴Metropolitan area residence is based on 2003 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are not precisely comparable with those of previous years.

⁵Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 17 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

The prevalence rates of food insecurity for households located in principal cities of metropolitan areas (15.4 percent) and nonmetropolitan areas (13.1 percent) substantially exceeded the rate for households in suburbs and other metropolitan areas outside principal cities (9.0 percent).¹² Regionally, the prevalence of food insecurity was higher in the South and West (13.3 and 12.8 percent, respectively) than in the Northeast and Midwest (9.7 and 10.9 percent).

The prevalence rates of food insecurity with hunger in various types of households followed a pattern similar to that observed for food insecurity. Hunger rates were lowest for married couples with children (2.3 percent), multiple-adult households with no children (2.5 percent), and households with elderly people (1.8 percent). Rates of food insecurity with hunger were higher than the 3.9 percent national average among families with children headed by single women (9.2 percent), men living alone (5.9 percent), Black and Hispanic households (8.1 and 5.9 percent, respectively), households with incomes below the poverty line (13.6 percent), and households living in principal cities of metropolitan areas (5.1 percent).

The prevalence of food insecurity with hunger among children was lowest in married-couple households, White non-Hispanic households, and households with higher incomes (table 3). Children living with a single mother were more likely to be affected by hunger, as were children in low-income households.

The increase in prevalence rates of food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger from 2003 to 2004 appears to have affected most regions and most types of households (figs. 3 and 4). The prevalence of food insecurity increased by statistically significant increments for households with children, households without children, women living alone, men living alone, households with incomes both above and below 185 percent of the poverty line, and for the Midwest and South Census Regions. The prevalence of food insecurity with hunger increased by statistically significant increments for households without children, Black households, "other" race/ethnic groups,¹³ households with incomes higher than 185 percent of the poverty line, and in the South and West Census Regions. Changes in other categories were within a range that could have resulted from sampling variation, but observed changes in almost all categories were upward.

¹²Revised metropolitan statistical areas (MSAs) and principal cities within them were delineated by the Office of Management and Budget in 2003 based on revised standards developed by the U.S. Census Bureau in collaboration with other Federal agencies. Food security prevalence statistics by area of residence are not precisely comparable with corresponding statistics from earlier years. Principal cities include the incorporated areas of the largest city in each MSA and other cities in the MSA that meet specified criteria based on population size and commuting patterns.

¹³This category consists of households in which the reference person was non-Hispanic and either Native American, Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, or reported multiple races.

Table 3

Prevalence of food security, food insecurity, and food insecurity with hunger in households with children by selected household characteristics, 2004

Category	Total ¹	Food secure		Food insecure					
		1,000	Percent	All	Without hunger among children	With hunger among children	1,000	Percent	1,000
All households with children	39,990	32,967	82.4	7,023	17.6	6,749	16.9	274	0.7
Household composition:									
With children < 6	17,922	14,606	81.5	3,316	18.5	3,240	18.1	76	.4
Married-couple families	27,065	23,926	88.4	3,139	11.6	3,036	11.2	103	.4
Female head, no spouse	9,641	6,459	67.0	3,182	33.0	3,037	31.5	145	1.5
Male head, no spouse	2,693	2,095	77.8	598	22.2	577	21.4	21	.8
Other household with child ²	592	487	82.3	105	17.7	100	16.9	5	.8
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White non-Hispanic	25,117	21,929	87.3	3,188	12.7	3,077	12.3	111	.4
Black non-Hispanic	5,653	4,001	70.8	1,652	29.2	1,587	28.1	65	1.1
Hispanic ³	6,708	4,909	73.2	1,799	26.8	1,733	25.8	66	1.0
Other	2,512	2,128	84.7	384	15.3	352	14.0	32	1.3
Household income-to-poverty ratio:									
Under 1.00	5,816	3,138	54.0	2,678	46.0	2,541	43.7	137	2.4
Under 1.30	7,835	4,435	56.6	3,400	43.4	3,229	41.2	171	2.2
Under 1.85	12,334	7,695	62.4	4,639	37.6	4,414	35.8	225	1.8
1.85 and over	21,576	20,037	92.9	1,539	7.1	1,508	7.0	31	.1
Income unknown	6,080	5,235	86.1	845	13.9	827	13.6	18	.3
Area of residence: ⁴									
Inside metropolitan area	33,138	27,435	82.8	5,703	17.2	5,473	16.5	230	.7
In principal cities ⁵	10,277	7,851	76.4	2,426	23.6	2,337	22.7	89	.9
Not in principal cities	17,462	15,194	87.0	2,268	13.0	2,177	12.5	91	.5
Outside metropolitan area	6,852	5,532	80.7	1,320	19.3	1,276	18.6	44	.6
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	7,229	6,179	85.5	1,050	14.5	1,015	14.0	35	.5
Midwest	8,996	7,532	83.7	1,464	16.3	1,411	15.7	53	.6
South	14,563	11,833	81.3	2,730	18.7	2,619	18.0	111	.8
West	9,202	7,422	80.7	1,780	19.3	1,705	18.5	75	.8
Individuals in households with children:									
All individuals in households with children	158,626	130,875	82.5	27,751	17.5	26,696	16.8	1,055	.7
Adults in households with children	85,587	71,703	83.8	13,884	16.2	13,374	15.6	510	.6
Children	73,039	59,171	81.0	13,868	19.0	13,323	18.2	545	.7

¹Totals exclude households whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2004, these represented 144,000 households with children (0.4 percent).

²Households with children in complex living arrangements—e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

³Hispanics may be of any race.

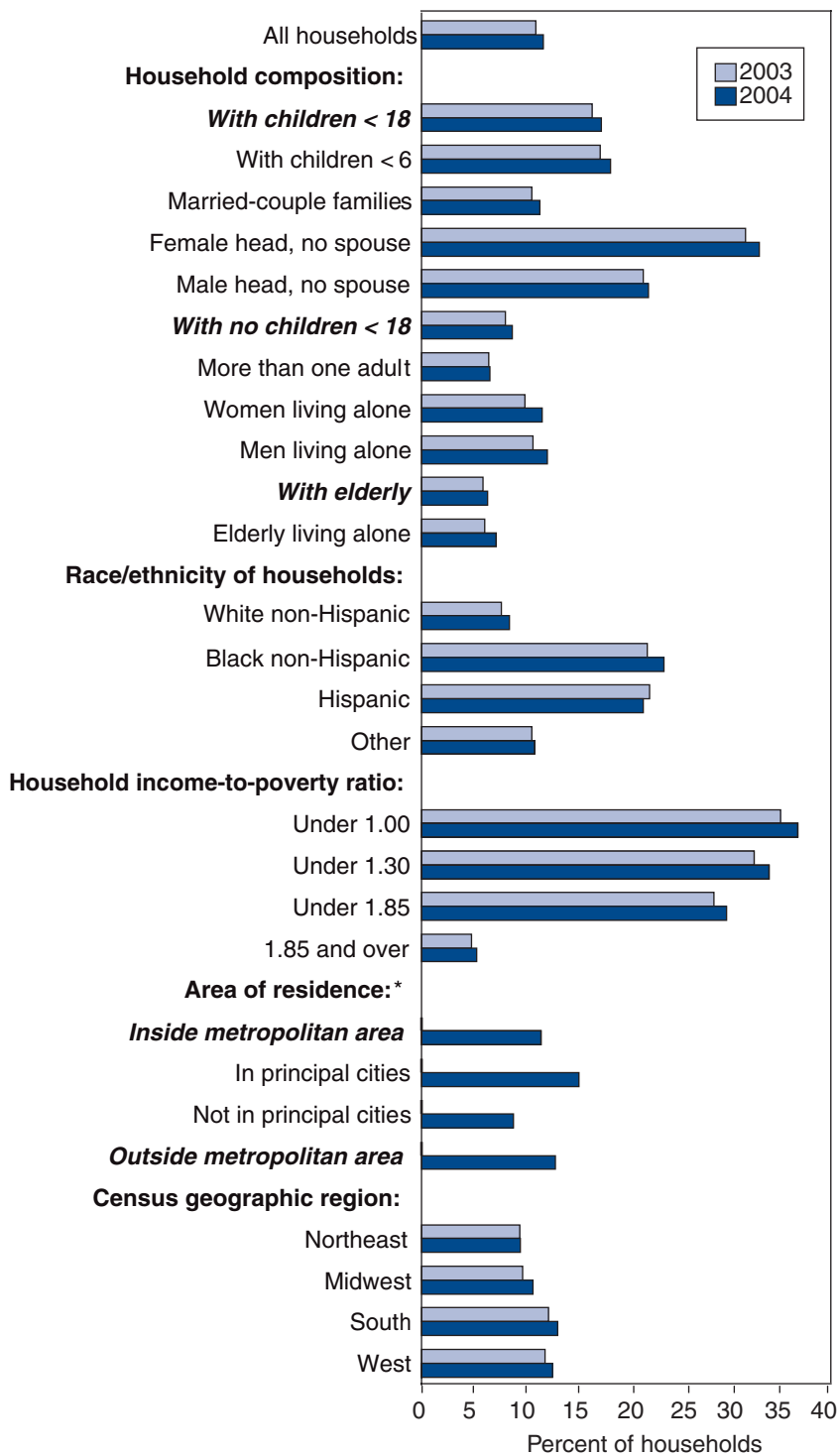
⁴Metropolitan area residence is based on 2003 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are not precisely comparable with those of previous years.

⁵Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 17 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Figure 3

Prevalence of food insecurity, 2003 and 2004

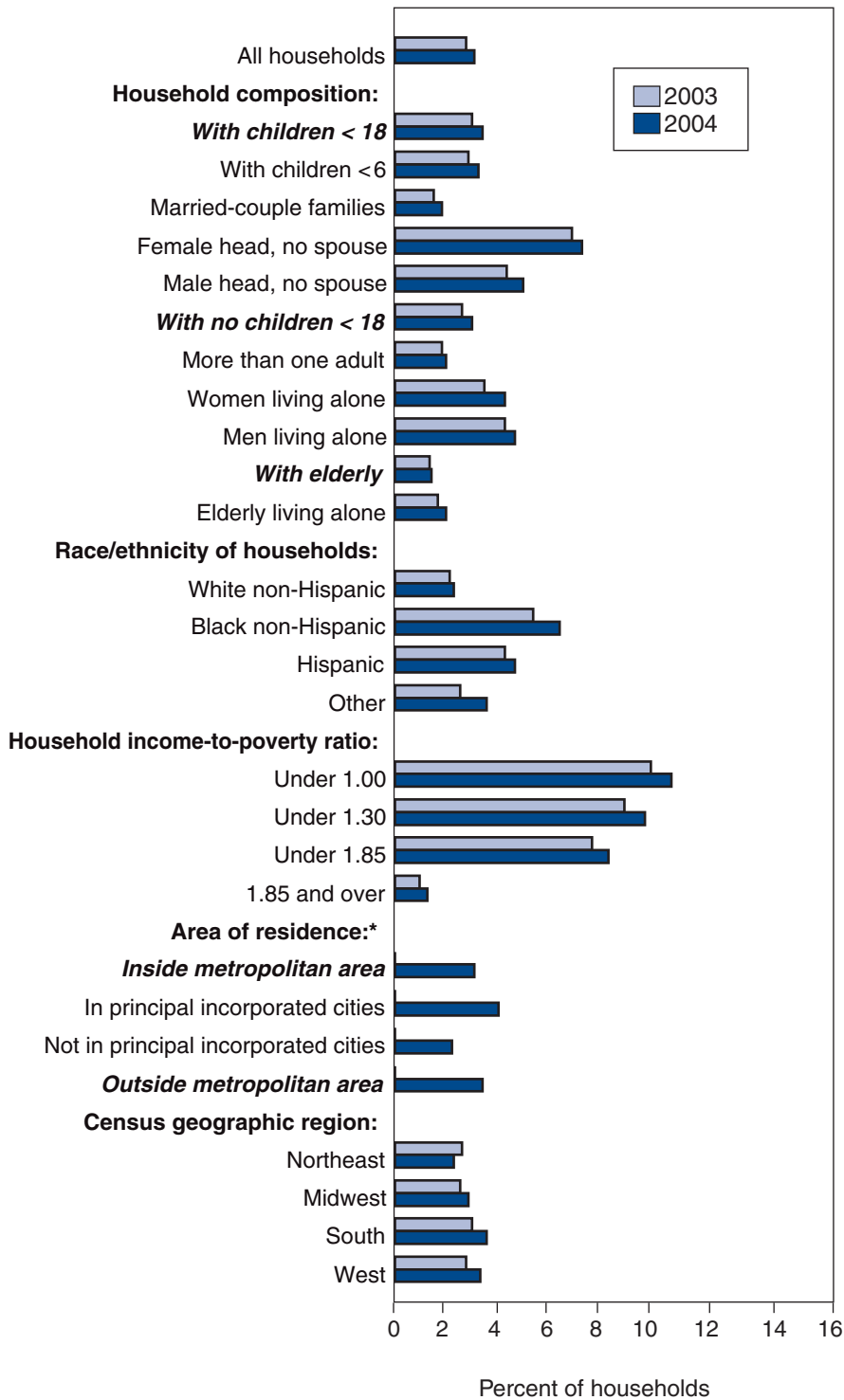


*Prevalence rates by area of residence in 2004 are not comparable with those for 2003 and earlier years because they represent somewhat different geographic areas. The 2004 survey classified metropolitan area residence based on revised metropolitan statistical areas delineated by the Office of Management and Budget in 2003.

Source: Calculated by ERS based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data, December 2003 and December 2004.

Figure 4

Prevalence of food insecurity with hunger, 2003 and 2004



*Prevalence rates by area of residence in 2004 are not comparable with those for 2003 and earlier years because they represent somewhat different geographic areas. The 2004 survey classified metropolitan area residence based on revised metropolitan statistical areas delineated by the Office of Management and Budget in 2003.

Source: Calculated by ERS based on Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data, December 2003 and December 2004.

Food Insecurity and Food Insecurity With Hunger in Low-Income Households

Food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger, as reported here, are, by definition, conditions that result from insufficient household resources. In 2004, food insecurity was more than five times as prevalent in households with annual incomes below 185 percent of the poverty line as in households with incomes above that range (table 2). However, many factors that might affect a household's food security (such as job loss, divorce, or other unexpected events) are not captured by an annual income measure. Some households experienced episodes of food insecurity, or even hunger, even though their annual income was well above the poverty line (Nord and Brent, 2002; Gundersen and Gruber, 2001). On the other hand, many low-income households (including almost two-thirds of those with incomes below the official poverty line) were food secure.

Table 4 presents food security and hunger statistics for households with annual incomes below 130 percent of the poverty line.¹⁴ One in three of these low-income households was food insecure, and in 12.3 percent, household members were hungry at times during the year. Low-income households with children were more affected by food insecurity than low-income households without children (43.4 percent vs. 27.1 percent), although the prevalence of food insecurity with hunger was about the same in the two groups. Low-income single mothers with children were especially vulnerable to both food insecurity and hunger; 47.9 percent of these households were food insecure, including 14.2 percent in which one or more people, usually the mother, was hungry at times during the year because of lack of money or other resources for food.

¹⁴Households with income below 130 percent of the poverty line are eligible to receive food stamps, provided they meet other eligibility criteria. Children in these households are eligible for free meals in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs.

Table 4

Prevalence of food security, food insecurity, and food insecurity with hunger in households with income below 130 percent of the poverty line by selected household characteristics, 2004

Category	Total ¹	Food secure		Food insecure					
			Percent	All	Without hunger	With hunger			
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All low-income households	18,367	12,118	66.0	6,249	34.0	3,994	21.7	2,255	12.3
Household composition:									
With children < 18	7,835	4,435	56.6	3,400	43.4	2,465	31.5	935	11.9
With children < 6	4,213	2,448	58.1	1,765	41.9	1,325	31.5	440	10.4
Married-couple families	3,243	2,013	62.1	1,230	37.9	939	29.0	291	9.0
Female head, no spouse	3,825	1,994	52.1	1,831	47.9	1,289	33.7	542	14.2
Male head, no spouse	637	335	52.6	302	47.4	211	33.1	91	14.3
Other household with child ²	131	94	71.8	37	28.2	27	20.6	10	7.6
With no children < 18	10,532	7,682	72.9	2,850	27.1	1,529	14.5	1,321	12.5
More than one adult	3,887	2,878	74.0	1,009	26.0	595	15.3	414	10.7
Women living alone	4,256	3,149	74.0	1,107	26.0	610	14.3	497	11.7
Men living alone	2,390	1,656	69.3	734	30.7	324	13.6	410	17.2
With elderly	5,070	4,147	81.8	923	18.2	660	13.0	263	5.2
Elderly living alone	3,152	2,637	83.7	515	16.3	340	10.8	175	5.6
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White non-Hispanic	9,557	6,769	70.8	2,788	29.2	1,713	17.9	1,075	11.2
Black non-Hispanic	3,952	2,211	55.9	1,741	44.1	1,070	27.1	671	17.0
Hispanic ³	3,781	2,374	62.8	1,407	37.2	1,018	26.9	389	10.3
Other	1,077	763	70.8	314	29.2	193	17.9	121	11.2
Area of residence: ⁴									
Inside metropolitan area	13,817	9,030	65.4	4,787	34.6	3,101	22.4	1,686	12.2
In principal cities ⁵	6,089	3,872	63.6	2,217	36.4	1,449	23.8	768	12.6
Not in principal cities	4,884	3,325	68.1	1,559	31.9	1,038	21.3	521	10.7
Outside metropolitan area	4,550	3,089	67.9	1,461	32.1	892	19.6	569	12.5
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	2,783	1,949	70.0	834	30.0	579	20.8	255	9.2
Midwest	3,776	2,523	66.8	1,253	33.2	765	20.3	488	12.9
South	7,720	5,059	65.5	2,661	34.5	1,679	21.7	982	12.7
West	4,088	2,588	63.3	1,500	36.7	970	23.7	530	13.0
Individuals in low-income households (by food security status of household):									
All individuals in low-income households	48,124	30,125	62.6	17,999	37.4	12,500	26.0	5,499	11.4
Adults in low-income households	31,695	20,906	66.0	10,789	34.0	7,202	22.7	3,587	11.3
Children in low-income households	16,429	9,219	56.1	7,210	43.9	5,298	32.2	1,912	11.6

¹Totals exclude households whose income was not reported (about 19 percent of households), and those whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale (0.9 percent of low-income households).

²Households with children in complex living arrangements—e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

³Hispanics may be of any race.

⁴Metropolitan area residence is based on 2003 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are not precisely comparable with those of previous years.

⁵Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 17 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

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

The food security survey is designed to measure food security status at the household level. While it is informative to examine the number of people residing in food-insecure households, these estimates should not be used to characterize the number of individuals affected by food insecurity and hunger. Not all people in food-insecure households are necessarily food insecure. Similarly, people who live in households classified as food insecure with hunger are not all subject to reductions in food intake and do not all experience hunger. Young children in particular are usually protected from hunger in these households

In 2004, 38.2 million people lived in food-insecure households (table 1). They constituted 13.2 percent of the U.S. population and included 24.3 million adults and 13.9 million children. Of these individuals, 7.4 million adults and 3.3 million children lived in households where someone experienced hunger during the year. The number of children living in households classified as food insecure with hunger among children was 545,000 (0.7 percent of the children in the Nation; table 1). Tables 5 and 6 present estimates of the number of people and the number of children in the households in each food security status and household type.

Table 5

Number of individuals by food security status of households and selected household characteristics, 2004

Category	Total ¹ 1,000	Food secure		Food insecure					
		1,000	Percent	All		Without hunger		With hunger	
				1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All individuals in households	288,603	250,407	86.8	38,196	13.2	27,535	9.5	10,661	3.7
Household composition:									
With children < 18	158,626	130,875	82.5	27,751	17.5	21,281	13.4	6,470	4.1
With children < 6	74,401	60,271	81.0	14,130	19.0	11,149	15.0	2,981	4.0
Married-couple families	114,646	100,335	87.5	14,311	12.5	11,448	10.0	2,863	2.5
Female head, no spouse	32,624	21,669	66.4	10,955	33.6	8,026	24.6	2,929	9.0
Male head, no spouse	9,167	7,081	77.2	2,086	22.8	1,479	16.1	607	6.6
Other household with child ²	2,188	1,789	81.8	399	18.2	328	15.0	71	3.2
With no children < 18	129,977	119,533	92.0	10,444	8.0	6,254	4.8	4,190	3.2
More than one adult	100,177	93,304	93.1	6,873	6.9	4,354	4.3	2,519	2.5
Women living alone	17,012	15,010	88.2	2,002	11.8	1,084	6.4	918	5.4
Men living alone	12,788	11,219	87.7	1,569	12.3	816	6.4	753	5.9
With elderly	49,775	46,006	92.4	3,769	7.6	2,922	5.9	847	1.7
Elderly living alone	10,693	9,911	92.7	782	7.3	517	4.8	265	2.5
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White non-Hispanic	196,967	179,023	90.9	17,944	9.1	12,734	6.5	5,210	2.6
Black non-Hispanic	34,832	26,164	75.1	8,668	24.9	6,104	17.5	2,564	7.4
Hispanic ³	39,654	30,251	76.3	9,403	23.7	7,261	18.3	2,142	5.4
Other	17,150	14,969	87.3	2,181	12.7	1,436	8.4	745	4.3
Household income-to-poverty ratio:									
Under 1.00	35,066	21,055	60.0	14,011	40.0	9,643	27.5	4,368	12.5
Under 1.30	48,124	30,125	62.6	17,999	37.4	12,500	26.0	5,499	11.4
Under 1.85	74,896	50,715	67.7	24,181	32.3	17,041	22.8	7,140	9.5
1.85 and over	162,073	152,897	94.3	9,176	5.7	6,887	4.2	2,289	1.4
Income unknown	51,634	46,795	90.6	4,839	9.4	3,607	7.0	1,232	2.4
Area of residence: ⁴									
Inside metropolitan area	237,911	207,111	87.1	30,800	12.9	22,148	9.3	8,652	3.6
In principal cities ⁵	75,102	62,029	82.6	13,073	17.4	9,456	12.6	3,617	4.8
Not in principal cities	124,002	111,681	90.1	12,321	9.9	8,985	7.2	3,336	2.7
Outside metropolitan area	50,692	43,297	85.4	7,395	14.6	5,387	10.6	2,008	4.0
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	53,705	48,026	89.4	5,679	10.6	4,162	7.7	1,517	2.8
Midwest	64,610	56,923	88.1	7,687	11.9	5,458	8.4	2,229	3.4
South	103,753	88,638	85.4	15,115	14.6	10,743	10.4	4,372	4.2
West	66,535	56,818	85.4	9,717	14.6	7,173	10.8	2,544	3.8

¹Totals exclude individuals in households whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2004, these represented 986,000 individuals (0.3 percent of all individuals).

²Households with children in complex living arrangements—e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

³Hispanics may be of any race.

⁴Metropolitan area residence is based on 2003 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are not precisely comparable with those of previous years.

⁵Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 17 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table 6

Number of children by food security status of households and selected household characteristics, 2004

Category	Total ¹	Food secure		Food insecure					
			Percent	All	Percent	Without hunger among children		With hunger among children	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All children	73,039	59,171	81.0	13,868	19.0	13,323	18.2	545	0.7
Household composition:									
With children < 6	36,240	28,776	79.4	7,464	20.6	7,284	20.1	180	.5
Married-couple families	51,108	44,466	87.0	6,642	13.0	6,407	12.5	235	.5
Female head, no spouse	17,117	10,993	64.2	6,124	35.8	5,860	34.2	264	1.5
Male head, no spouse	4,015	3,051	76.0	964	24.0	924	23.0	40	1.0
Other household with child ²	799	662	82.9	137	17.1	131	16.4	6	.8
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White non-Hispanic	44,759	38,948	87.0	5,811	13.0	5,636	12.6	175	.4
Black non-Hispanic	10,882	7,492	68.8	3,390	31.2	3,246	29.8	144	1.3
Hispanic ³	12,980	9,134	70.4	3,846	29.6	3,694	28.5	152	1.2
Other	4,418	3,598	81.4	820	18.6	747	16.9	73	1.7
Household income-to-poverty ratio:									
Under 1.00	12,085	6,396	52.9	5,689	47.1	5,386	44.6	303	2.5
Under 1.30	16,429	9,219	56.1	7,210	43.9	6,836	41.6	374	2.3
Under 1.85	24,940	15,459	62.0	9,481	38.0	9,013	36.1	468	1.9
1.85 and over	37,094	34,435	92.8	2,659	7.2	2,620	7.1	39	.1
Income unknown	11,005	9,277	84.3	1,728	15.7	1,690	15.4	38	.3
Area of residence: ⁴									
Inside metropolitan area	60,826	49,453	81.3	11,373	18.7	10,905	17.9	468	.8
In principal cities ⁵	19,096	14,130	74.0	4,966	26.0	4,797	25.1	169	.9
Not in principal cities	32,195	27,688	86.0	4,507	14.0	4,293	13.3	214	.7
Outside metropolitan area	12,213	9,719	79.6	2,494	20.4	2,418	19.8	76	.6
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	12,836	10,954	85.3	1,882	14.7	1,824	14.2	58	.5
Midwest	16,238	13,380	82.4	2,858	17.6	2,751	16.9	107	.7
South	26,459	21,127	79.8	5,332	20.2	5,099	19.3	233	.9
West	17,505	13,710	78.3	3,795	21.7	3,648	20.8	147	.8

¹Totals exclude children in households whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2003, these represented 267,000 children (0.4 percent).

²Households with children in complex living arrangements—e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

³Hispanics may be of any race.

⁴Metropolitan area residence is based on 2003 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are not precisely comparable with those of previous years.

⁵Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 17 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: Calculated by ERS using data from the December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Food Insecurity With Hunger by State, Average 2002-04

Prevalence rates of food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger varied considerably from State to State. Data for 3 years, 2002-04, were combined to provide more reliable statistics at the State level (table 7). Measured prevalence rates of food insecurity during this 3-year period ranged from 6.3 percent in North Dakota to 16.4 percent in Texas; measured prevalence rates of food insecurity with hunger ranged from 1.8 percent in Delaware to 5.6 percent in Oklahoma.

The margins of error for the State prevalence rates should be taken into consideration when interpreting these statistics and especially when comparing prevalence rates across States. Margins of error reflect sampling variation—the uncertainty associated with estimates that are based on information from only a limited number of households in each State. The margins of error presented in table 7 indicate the range (above or below the estimated prevalence rate) within which the true prevalence rate is 90 percent likely to be. In some States, margins of error were nearly 2 percentage points for estimated prevalence rates of food insecurity and larger than 1 percentage point for estimated prevalence rates of food insecurity with hunger. For example, considering the margin of error, it is not certain (statistically significant) that the rate of food insecurity was higher in Texas than in the States with the next nine highest prevalence rates of food insecurity.

Taking into account the margins of error of the State and U.S. estimates, the prevalence of food insecurity was higher than the national average in 10 States and lower than the national average in 20 States. In the remaining 20 States and the District of Columbia, differences from the national average were not statistically significant. The prevalence of food insecurity with hunger was higher than the national average in 11 States, lower than the national average in 18 States, and not significantly different from the national average in 21 States and the District of Columbia.

The 2002-04 State-level food security statistics are compared with those for 1999-2001 and 1996-98 in appendix D. The 1996-98 statistics originally published by ERS in *Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Hunger, by State, 1996-1998* (Nord et al., 1999) cannot be compared directly with those for later years because of changes over the years in screening procedures used to reduce respondent burden in the food security surveys. The 1996-98 statistics presented in appendix D have been adjusted for these screening differences.

Table 7

Prevalence of household-level food insecurity and food insecurity with hunger by State, average 2002-04¹

State	Number of households		Food insecure (with or without hunger)		Food insecure with hunger	
	Average 2002-04 ²	Interviewed	Prevalence	Margin of error ³	Prevalence	Margin of error ³
	<i>Number</i>	<i>Number</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percentage points</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Percentage points</i>
U.S. total	111,260,000	144,829	11.4	0.29	3.6	0.14
AK	234,000	1,893	11.7	1.73	4.6*	.86
AL	1,844,000	2,048	12.2	1.27	2.9*	.65
AR	1,095,000	1,789	14.8*	1.37	5.3*	1.18
AZ	2,046,000	1,953	12.7	1.55	3.5	.56
CA	12,722,000	9,373	12.4*	.56	3.9	.33
CO	1,768,000	2,938	11.3	.85	3.5	.56
CT	1,309,000	2,486	8.6*	.81	3.0*	.57
DC	275,000	1,839	10.2	1.25	2.9	.75
DE	311,000	1,924	6.8*	.96	1.8*	.62
FL	6,754,000	6,128	10.8	.62	3.6	.39
GA	3,323,000	2,273	12.3	1.63	3.8	.89
HI	420,000	1,625	8.5*	1.39	2.6*	.69
IA	1,191,000	2,681	10.2	1.16	3.1	.68
ID	512,000	1,825	14.6*	1.58	3.7	.74
IL	4,879,000	5,016	9.0*	.58	3.0*	.42
IN	2,442,000	2,835	10.1*	1.13	3.6	.56
KS	1,072,000	2,576	12.3	1.38	4.8*	.62
KY	1,667,000	2,057	12.2	1.49	3.3	.61
LA	1,698,000	1,507	11.8	1.34	2.6*	.88
MA	2,535,000	2,736	7.1*	1.21	2.7*	.51
MD	2,102,000	2,462	8.6*	1.19	3.2	.63
ME	539,000	2,877	9.8*	.97	3.1*	.48
MI	3,916,000	3,909	11.3	.76	3.8	.58
MN	1,953,000	2,922	7.2*	1.11	2.5*	.75
MO	2,312,000	2,371	11.3	1.26	3.9	.70
MS	1,078,000	1,408	15.8*	1.42	4.5*	.74
MT	383,000	1,784	12.2	1.41	4.7*	.88
NC	3,288,000	3,113	13.8*	1.14	4.9*	.63
ND	263,000	2,290	6.3*	.94	1.9*	.43
NE	678,000	2,403	10.7	1.36	3.7	.71
NH	503,000	2,517	6.4*	.78	2.4*	.56
NJ	3,161,000	3,200	8.5*	1.09	2.9*	.54
NM	716,000	1,592	15.8*	1.74	4.9*	.92
NV	811,000	2,662	8.5*	.73	2.9*	.50
NY	7,332,000	6,685	10.5*	.61	3.2	.42
OH	4,489,000	4,564	11.4	.90	3.4	.58
OK	1,404,000	1,927	15.2*	1.38	5.6*	.77
OR	1,405,000	2,276	11.9	1.01	3.8	.65
PA	4,813,000	5,219	10.2*	.93	2.9*	.47
RI	414,000	2,535	12.1	1.11	4.2	.58
SC	1,601,000	1,909	14.8*	1.43	5.5*	.97
SD	306,000	2,436	9.2*	1.17	2.8*	.60
TN	2,345,000	1,833	11.5	1.40	3.5	.91
TX	8,004,000	5,943	16.4*	.91	4.9*	.43
UT	761,000	1,800	14.8*	1.51	4.6	1.16
VA	2,781,000	2,475	8.5*	.64	2.6*	.51
VT	255,000	2,221	9.0*	1.01	3.6	.66
WA	2,421,000	2,690	12.0	1.25	4.3*	.55
WI	2,191,000	3,077	9.0*	1.06	2.8*	.53
WV	733,000	2,138	8.8*	.81	2.9*	.49
WY	205,000	2,089	11.0	1.17	4.2	.89

*Difference from U.S. total was statistically significant with 90-percent confidence ($t > 1.645$).

¹Prevalence rates for 1996-98 reported in *Prevalence of Food Insecurity and Hunger, by State, 1996-1998* (Nord et al., 1999) are not directly comparable with the rates reported here because of differences in screening procedures in the CPS Food Security Supplements from 1995-98. Comparable statistics for the earlier period are presented in appendix D.

²Totals exclude households whose food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. These represented about 0.3 percent of all households in each year.

³Margin of error with 90-percent confidence (1.645 times the standard error of the estimated prevalence rate).

Source: Prepared by ERS using data from the December 2002, December 2003, and December 2004 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.