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# Statistical Supplement to Household Food Security in the United States in 2019

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United States Department of Agriculture

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## Note to Readers

This Supplement provides statistics that complement those in *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019* (ERR-275). That research report provides the primary national statistics on household food security, food spending, and use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs by food-insecure households. This Supplement provides additional statistics on component items of the household food security measure, the frequency of occurrence of food-insecure conditions, and selected statistics on household food security, food spending, and use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs.

**Keywords:** Food security, food insecurity, food spending, food pantry, soup kitchen, emergency kitchen, material well-being, SNAP, Food Stamp Program, National School Lunch Program, WIC

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# Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Food Insecurity in Low-Income Households</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Number of Persons by Household Food Security Status and Selected Household Characteristics</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Food Security During the 30 Days Prior to the Food Security Survey</b> .....	<b>7</b>
<b>Household Responses to Questions in the Food Security Scale</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Frequency of Occurrence of Behaviors, Experiences, and Conditions That Indicate Food Insecurity</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Monthly and Daily Occurrence of Food-Insecure Conditions</b> .....	<b>17</b>
<b>Food Spending by Food-Secure and Food-Insecure Households</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>Use of Food Pantries and Emergency Kitchens</b> .....	<b>21</b>
<b>Food Spending by Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Food Security During the 30 Days Prior to the Food Security Survey in Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance</b> .....	<b>25</b>
<b>Combined Use of Federal and Community Food and Nutrition Assistance</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>References</b> .....	<b>27</b>

## Statistical Supplement Tables

Table S-1—Households with annual income below 130 percent of the poverty line by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2019 .....	3
Table S-2—Number of individuals by food security status of households and selected household characteristics, 2019 .....	5
Table S-3—Number of children by food security status of households and selected household characteristics, 2019 .....	6
Table S-4—Households by food security status during the 30 days prior to the food security survey and selected household characteristics, 2019 .....	8
Table S-5—Responses to items in the food security scale, 2016-19 .....	10
Table S-6—Percentage of households by food security raw score, 2019 .....	11
Table S-7—Frequency of occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by all U.S. households, 2019 .....	15
Table S-8—Frequency of occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by households with very low food security, 2019 .....	16
Table S-9—Monthly and daily occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by all U.S. households, 2019 .....	18
Table S-10—Weekly household food spending relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2019 .....	20
Table S-11—Use of food pantries and emergency kitchens, 2019 .....	22

Table S-12—Prevalence of food security and food insecurity of households with annual income less than 185 percent of the poverty line by use of food pantries and emergency kitchens, 2019. . . . .	22
Table S-13—Use of food pantries, by selected household characteristics, 2019. . . . .	23
Table S-14—Weekly household food spending relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) by participation in selected Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs, 2019. . . . .	24
Table S-15—Prevalence of food insecurity during the 30 days prior to the food security survey, by participation in selected Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs, 2019. . . . .	25
Table S-16—Combined use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs by low-income households, 2019. . . . .	26

Tables in the main food security report: ***Household Food Security in the United States in 2019***

Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, Matthew P. Rabbitt, Christian A. Gregory, and Anita Singh. 2020. *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019*, ERR-275, USDA, Economic Research Service.

Table 1A—Households and individuals by food security status of household, 1998-2019. . . . .	8
Table 1B—Households with children by food security status and children by food security status of household, 1998-2019 . . . . .	10
Table 2—Households by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2019 . . . . .	15
Table 3—Prevalence of food security and food insecurity in households with children by selected household characteristics, 2019. . . . .	18
Table 4—Prevalence of household food insecurity and very low food security by State, average 2017-19 . . . . .	22
Table 5—Change in prevalence of household food insecurity and very low food security by State, 2017-19 (average), 2014-16 (average), and 2007-09 (average) . . . . .	24
Table 6—Weekly household food spending per person and relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP), 2019 . . . . .	28
Table 7—Weekly household food spending per person and relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) by food security status, 2019 . . . . .	29
Table 8—Percentage of households by food security status and participation in selected Federal nutrition assistance programs, 2019. . . . .	34
Table 9—Participation of food-insecure households in selected Federal nutrition assistance programs, 2019 . . . . .	34

# Statistical Supplement to Household Food Security in the United States in 2019

## Introduction

This supplement provides statistics on component items of the household food security measure, the frequency of occurrence of food-insecure conditions, and selected statistics on household food security, food spending, and use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs. It complements *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019* (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2020), which provides the primary national statistics on household food security, food spending, and use of Federal food and nutrition assistance programs by food-insecure households.

The statistics presented here are based on data collected in the Current Population Survey (CPS) Food Security Supplement conducted in December 2019. Information about the survey, data, and methods is available in *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019*. All statistics were calculated by applying the Food Security Supplement weights to responses of the surveyed households to obtain nationally representative prevalence estimates. Unless otherwise noted, statistical differences described in the text are significant at the 90-percent confidence level.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Standard errors of estimates were calculated using balanced repeated replication (BRR) methods based on replicate weights computed for the Supplement by the U.S. Bureau of the Census.

## Food Insecurity in Low-Income Households

Table S-1 presents food security statistics for households with annual incomes below 130 percent of the poverty line.<sup>2</sup> By definition, food insecurity results from insufficient household resources; 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 very low food security, even though their annual incomes were well above the poverty line (Nord and Brent, 2002; Gundersen and Gruber, 2001). On the other hand, many low-income households manage to remain food secure. In 2019, 67.0 percent of households with incomes below 130 percent of the poverty line were food secure, while 33.0 percent were food insecure.

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<sup>2</sup>The Federal poverty line in 2019 was \$25,926 annual income for a family of four (two adults and two children). Households with gross monthly income at or below 130 percent of the poverty line are eligible to participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly the Food Stamp program, provided they meet other eligibility criteria. Children were eligible for free meals in the National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs if household income was determined to be at or below 130 percent of the poverty line.

Table S-1

**Households with annual income below 130 percent of the poverty line by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2019**

Category	Total <sup>1</sup>	Food secure		Food insecure					
				All		With low food security		With very low food security	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All low-income households	15,848	10,615	67.0	5,233	33.0	3,002	18.9	2,231	14.1
Household composition:									
With children < 18 yrs	6,451	4,192	65.0	2,259	35.0	1,568	24.3	691	10.7
With children < 6 yrs	3,392	2,296	67.7	1,096	32.3	789	23.2	307	9.1
Married-couple families	2,434	1,803	74.1	631	25.9	527	21.6	104	4.3
Female head, no spouse	3,214	1,847	57.5	1,367	42.5	878	27.3	489	15.2
Male head, no spouse	723	478	66.1	245	33.9	155	21.5	90.0	12.4
Other household with child <sup>2</sup>	80	64	80.0	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
With no children < 18 yrs	9,397	6,423	68.4	2,974	31.6	1,434	15.2	1,540	16.4
More than one adult	3,283	2,336	71.2	947	28.8	535	16.3	412	12.5
Women living alone	3,549	2,374	66.9	1,175	33.1	534	15.0	641	18.1
Men living alone	2,566	1,713	66.8	853	33.2	366	14.2	487	19.0
With elderly	4,427	3,197	72.2	1,230	27.8	763	17.3	467	10.5
Elderly living alone	2,550	1,905	74.7	645	25.3	386	15.1	259	10.2
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White, non-Hispanic	7,552	5,155	68.3	2,397	31.7	1,260	16.6	1,137	15.1
Black, non-Hispanic	3,313	2,006	60.5	1,307	39.5	737	22.3	570	17.2
Hispanic <sup>3</sup>	3,644	2,506	68.8	1,138	31.2	761	20.9	377	10.3
Other, non-Hispanic	1,339	949	70.9	390	29.1	243	18.1	147	11.0
Area of residence: <sup>4</sup>									
Inside metropolitan area	12,855	8,675	67.5	4,180	32.5	2,387	18.6	1,793	13.9
In principal cities <sup>5</sup>	5,417	3,565	65.8	1,852	34.2	1,024	18.9	828	15.3
Not in principal cities	5,162	3,654	70.8	1,508	29.2	933	18.1	575	11.1
Outside metropolitan area	2,993	1,939	64.8	1,054	35.2	615	20.5	439	14.7
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	2,384	1,604	67.3	780	32.7	440	18.4	340	14.3
Midwest	3,283	2,175	66.3	1,108	33.7	612	18.6	496	15.1
South	6,757	4,500	66.6	2,257	33.4	1,284	19.0	973	14.4
West	3,424	2,337	68.3	1,087	31.7	665	19.4	422	12.3

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

<sup>1</sup>Totals exclude households for which income was not reported (about 25 percent of households) and those for which food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale (0.5 percent of low-income households)..

<sup>2</sup>Households with children in complex living arrangements, e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

<sup>3</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.

<sup>4</sup>Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are comparable with those for 2014 and 2015 but are not precisely comparable with those of earlier years.

<sup>5</sup>Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 18 percent of low-income households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.



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

The food security survey measures food security status at the household level. While it is informative to examine the number of persons residing in food-insecure households, these statistics should be interpreted carefully (see tables S-2 for all individuals and S-3 for children). Within a food-insecure household, different household members may be affected differently by the household's food insecurity. Some members—particularly young children—may experience only mild effects or none at all, while adults were more severely affected. It is more precise, therefore, to describe these statistics as representing “persons living in food-insecure households” rather than as representing “food-insecure persons.” Similarly, “persons living in households with very low food security” is a more precise description than “persons with very low food security.”

Table S-2

**Number of individuals by food security status of households and selected household characteristics, 2019**

Category	In food-insecure households									
	Total <sup>1</sup>	In food-secure households			All		In households with low food security		In households with very low food security	
		1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All individuals in households	324,235	289,028	89.1	35,207	10.9	23,362	7.2	11,845	3.7	
Household composition:										
With children < 18 yrs	156,387	135,172	86.4	21,215	13.6	15,526	10.0	5,689	3.6	
With children < 6 yrs	70,440	60,087	85.3	10,353	14.7	7,812	11.1	2,541	3.6	
Married-couple families	107,356	98,453	91.7	8,903	8.3	7,294	6.8	1,609	1.5	
Female head, no spouse	34,700	24,769	71.4	9,931	28.6	6,656	19.2	3,275	9.4	
Male head, no spouse	12,170	10,175	83.6	1,995	16.4	1,254	10.3	741	6.1	
Other household with child <sup>2</sup>	2,161	1,775	82.1	386	17.9	NA	NA	NA	NA	
With no children < 18 yrs	167,848	153,856	91.7	13,992	8.3	7,836	4.6	6,156	3.7	
More than one adult	130,262	121,140	93.0	9,122	7.0	5,358	4.1	3,764	2.9	
Women living alone	20,886	18,161	87.0	2,725	13.0	1,386	6.6	1,339	6.4	
Men living alone	16,701	14,556	87.2	2,145	12.8	1,092	6.5	1,053	6.3	
With elderly	81,631	75,129	92.0	6,502	8.0	4,206	5.2	2,296	2.8	
Elderly living alone	15,329	13,996	91.3	1,333	8.7	801	5.2	532	3.5	
Race/ethnicity of households:										
White, non-Hispanic	201,277	185,051	91.9	16,226	8.1	10,338	5.2	5,888	2.9	
Black, non-Hispanic	39,825	32,181	80.8	7,644	19.2	4,869	12.2	2,775	7.0	
Hispanic <sup>3</sup>	56,506	47,562	84.2	8,944	15.8	6,612	11.7	2,332	4.1	
Other, non-Hispanic	26,627	24,233	91.0	2,394	9.0	1,544	5.8	850	3.2	
Household income-to-poverty ratio:										
Under 1.00	28,600	18,619	65.1	9,981	34.9	6,207	21.7	3,774	13.2	
Under 1.30	42,579	28,476	66.9	14,103	33.1	9,064	21.3	5,039	11.8	
Under 1.85	69,675	50,278	72.2	19,397	27.8	12,775	18.3	6,622	9.5	
1.85 and over	176,857	168,090	95.0	8,767	5.0	6,169	3.5	2,598	1.5	
Income unknown	77,702	70,659	90.9	7,043	9.1	4,418	5.7	2,625	3.4	
Area of residence: <sup>4</sup>										
Inside metropolitan area	280,914	251,118	89.4	29,796	10.6	19,822	7.0	9,974	3.6	
In principal cities <sup>5</sup>	92,547	80,689	87.2	11,858	12.8	7,854	8.5	4,004	4.3	
Not in principal cities	145,098	132,652	91.4	12,446	8.6	8,440	5.8	4,006	2.8	
Outside metropolitan area	43,321	37,910	87.5	5,411	12.5	3,540	8.2	1,871	4.3	
Census geographic region:										
Northeast	55,368	49,856	90.0	5,512	10.0	3,704	6.7	1,808	3.3	
Midwest	67,463	60,007	88.9	7,456	11.1	4,880	7.3	2,576	3.8	
South	123,804	109,630	88.6	14,174	11.4	9,214	7.4	4,960	4.0	
West	77,601	69,535	89.6	8,066	10.4	5,565	7.2	2,501	3.2	

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

<sup>1</sup>Totals exclude individuals in households for which food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2019, these exclusions represented about 776,000 individuals (0.2 percent of the U.S. population).

<sup>2</sup>Households with children in complex living arrangements, e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

<sup>3</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.

<sup>4</sup>Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are comparable with those for 2014 and 2015 but are not precisely comparable with those of earlier years.

<sup>5</sup>Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 15 percent of individuals living in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-3

**Number of children by food security status of households and selected household characteristics, 2019**

Category	Total <sup>1</sup>	In food-secure households		In food-insecure households <sup>2</sup>		In households with food-insecure children <sup>3</sup>		In households with very low food security among children	
		1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All children	73,279	62,547	85.4	10,732	14.6	5,332	7.3	361	0.5
Household composition:									
With children < 6 yrs	36,126	30,456	84.3	5,670	15.7	2,605	7.2	125	0.3
Married-couple families	48,943	44,741	91.4	4,202	8.6	1,864	3.8	89	0.2
Female head, no spouse	17,932	12,482	69.6	5,450	30.4	3,061	17.1	262	1.5
Male head, no spouse	5,558	4,641	83.5	917	16.5	386	6.9	NA	NA
Other household with child <sup>4</sup>	846	683	80.7	163	19.3	NA	NA	NA	NA
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White, non-Hispanic	40,513	36,038	89.0	4,475	11.0	2,273	5.6	103	0.3
Black, non-Hispanic	10,240	7,771	75.9	2,469	24.1	1,280	12.5	120	1.2
Hispanic <sup>5</sup>	16,443	13,286	80.8	3,157	19.2	1,491	9.1	NA	NA
Other, non-Hispanic	6,084	5,453	89.6	631	10.4	288	4.7	NA	NA
Household income-to-poverty ratio:									
Under 1.00	9,890	6,277	63.5	3,613	36.5	1,940	19.6	112	1.1
Under 1.30	14,899	9,700	65.1	5,199	34.9	2,819	18.9	139	0.9
Under 1.85	22,361	15,581	69.7	6,780	30.3	3,603	16.1	251	1.1
1.85 and over	36,608	34,582	94.5	2,026	5.5	834	2.3	NA	NA
Income unknown	14,310	12,385	86.5	1,925	13.5	895	6.3	NA	NA
Area of residence: <sup>6</sup>									
Inside metropolitan area	63,495	54,318	85.5	9,177	14.5	4,506	7.1	298	0.5
In principal cities <sup>7</sup>	20,303	16,709	82.3	3,594	17.7	1,776	8.7	158	0.8
Not in principal cities	33,283	29,439	88.5	3,844	11.5	1,883	5.7	NA	NA
Outside metropolitan area	9,784	8,230	84.1	1,554	15.9	825	8.4	62	0.6
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	11,472	9,827	85.7	1,645	14.3	820	7.1	NA	NA
Midwest	15,401	13,080	84.9	2,321	15.1	1,153	7.5	NA	NA
South	28,504	24,294	85.2	4,210	14.8	1,998	7.0	133	0.5
West	17,902	15,347	85.7	2,555	14.3	1,360	7.6	84	0.5

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

<sup>1</sup>Totals exclude households for which food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the food security scale. In 2019, these exclusions represented 181,000 children (0.3 percent).

<sup>2</sup>Food-insecure households are those with low or very low food security among adults or children or both.

<sup>3</sup>Households with food-insecure children are those with low or very low food security among children.

<sup>4</sup>Households with children in complex living arrangements, e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

<sup>5</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.

<sup>6</sup>Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are comparable with those for 2014 and later but are not precisely comparable with those of earlier years.

<sup>7</sup>Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 16 percent of children living in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

## Food Security During the 30 Days Prior to the Food Security Survey

The annual food security survey was designed with the primary objective of assessing households' food security during the 12-month period prior to the survey, but information is also collected with reference to the 30-day period prior to the survey. Households that responded affirmatively to each 12-month question were asked whether the same behavior, experience, or condition occurred during the last 30 days. Researchers used responses to these questions to assess the food security status of households during the 30 days prior to the survey, following the same protocols that were used for the 12-month measure.<sup>3</sup> The 30-day food security measurement protocol was revised in 2005, so 30-day statistics for 2019 are directly comparable with those for 2005 and later years, but not with those reported for 2004 and earlier years.

An estimated 94.5 percent of households were food secure throughout the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December 2019 (table S-4).<sup>4</sup> An estimated 5.5 percent (7.1 million households) were food insecure at some point during the 30-day period, including 2.3 percent (3.0 million households) with very low food security. The national level prevalence rate of food insecurity declined from the corresponding 30-day period in 2018 (5.9 percent).<sup>5</sup> From 2018 to 2019, 30-day food insecurity declined for married couple families with children (from 4.0 percent to 3.0 percent), households headed by Black non-Hispanics (from 11.9 percent to 9.5 percent), and households in metropolitan areas outside principal cities (from 4.8 percent to 4.2 percent).

The number of households that were food insecure at some time during the 30 days from mid-November to mid-December 2019 (7.1 million households; table S-4) was 52 percent of the number of households that were food insecure at some time during the 12 months prior to the survey (13.7 million households; Coleman-Jensen et al., 2020); the corresponding statistic for very low food security was 56 percent (3.0 versus 5.3 million households). If food insecurity during this 30-day period was similar to that for other 30-day periods throughout the year, then these comparisons imply that the average household that was food insecure at some time during the year experienced this condition in 7 months of the year. Likewise, the average household with very low food security experienced that condition in 7 months of the year.<sup>6</sup> However, analysis of food insecurity in different months suggests that food insecurity is somewhat more prevalent in the summer months (July-September) than in March-April and November-December, perhaps due to less access to school meal programs during the summer (Cohen et al., 2002; Nord and Romig, 2006; Nord and Kantor, 2006), so typical frequencies may be somewhat higher than the 7 months implied by the December data.

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<sup>3</sup>For questions asking about the frequency of conditions or behaviors (items 5, 10, and 17), responses that indicated the described conditions occurred on at least 3 days of the previous 30 were counted as affirmative. See Nord (2002). Beginning with the 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data, all continuous variables for the number of days out of the previous 30 days that food-insecure conditions occurred are only released after being categorized into ranges of number of days. All these recoded variables include at least a category for 1 or 2 days so that the 30-day food security prevalence rate can be calculated the same way as in previous years using 3 or more days as affirmative. One variable, HESSHM5: "In the last 30 days, did children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn't enough money for food?", did not meet Census guidelines for disclosure. That question was not used in assessing 30-day food security status, but it is unlikely to impact the estimates since it is the most severe item in the scale. Only 11 households in the survey reported experiencing this condition among children any time in the last 12 months.

<sup>4</sup>The 2019 food security survey was conducted December 8-18, 2019.

<sup>5</sup>The 2018 food security survey was conducted December 9-18, 2018.

<sup>6</sup>The number of months is estimated as the monthly rate divided by the annual rate multiplied by 12.

Table S-4

**Households by food security status during the 30 days prior to the food security survey and selected household characteristics, 2019<sup>1</sup>**

Category	Total <sup>1</sup>	Food secure		Food insecure					
				All		With low food security		With very low food security	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent	1,000	Percent
All households	129,621	122,475	94.5	7,146	5.5	4,142	3.2	3,004	2.3
Household composition:									
With children < 18 yrs	37,614	35,151	93.5	2,463	6.5	1,692	4.5	771	2.0
With children < 6 yrs	16,115	15,064	93.5	1,051	6.5	773	4.8	278	1.7
Married-couple families	24,382	23,644	97.0	738	3.0	554	2.2	184	0.8
Female head, no spouse	9,349	7,948	85.0	1,401	15.0	913	9.8	488	5.2
Male head, no spouse	3,311	3,050	92.1	261	7.9	180	5.5	81	2.4
Other household with child <sup>2</sup>	572	509	89.0	63	11.0	NA	NA	NA	NA
With no children < 18 yrs	92,007	87,323	94.9	4,684	5.1	2,451	2.7	2,233	2.4
More than one adult	54,420	52,455	96.4	1,965	3.6	1,120	2.0	845	1.6
Women living alone	20,886	19,314	92.5	1,572	7.5	796	3.8	776	3.7
Men living alone	16,701	15,554	93.1	1,147	6.9	535	3.2	612	3.7
With elderly	40,220	38,651	96.1	1,569	3.9	962	2.4	607	1.5
Elderly living alone	15,329	14,620	95.4	709	4.6	408	2.6	301	2.0
Race/ethnicity of households:									
White, non-Hispanic	85,196	81,554	95.7	3,642	4.3	2,103	2.5	1,539	1.8
Black, non-Hispanic	16,504	14,937	90.5	1,567	9.5	857	5.2	710	4.3
Hispanic <sup>3</sup>	18,035	16,637	92.2	1,398	7.8	867	4.9	531	2.9
Other, non-Hispanic	9,886	9,346	94.5	540	5.5	315	3.2	225	2.3
Household income-to-poverty ratio:									
Under 1.00	11,208	8,987	80.2	2,221	19.8	1,153	10.3	1,068	9.5
Under 1.30	15,848	12,964	81.8	2,884	18.2	1,530	9.7	1,354	8.5
Under 1.85	26,604	22,614	85.0	3,990	15.0	2,202	8.3	1,788	6.7
1.85 and over	70,457	68,760	97.6	1,697	2.4	1,083	1.5	614	0.9
Income unknown	32,560	31,102	95.5	1,458	4.5	857	2.7	601	1.8
Area of residence: <sup>4</sup>									
Inside metropolitan area	111,547	105,608	94.7	5,939	5.3	3,401	3.0	2,538	2.3
In principal cities <sup>5</sup>	38,411	35,959	93.6	2,452	6.4	1,323	3.5	1,129	2.9
Not in principal cities	55,517	53,162	95.8	2,355	4.2	1,419	2.5	936	1.7
Outside metropolitan area	18,073	16,866	93.3	1,207	6.7	741	4.1	466	2.6
Census geographic region:									
Northeast	22,293	21,208	95.1	1,085	4.9	633	2.9	452	2.0
Midwest	27,894	26,332	94.4	1,562	5.6	947	3.4	615	2.2
South	50,136	47,196	94.1	2,940	5.9	1,604	3.2	1,336	2.7
West	29,298	27,739	94.7	1,559	5.3	958	3.2	601	2.1

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

<sup>1</sup>The 30-day prevalence rates refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8-18, 2019. Totals exclude households for which food security status is unknown because they did not give a valid response to any of the questions in the 30-day food security scale. In 2019, these exclusions represented 306,000 households (0.2 percent of all households). The 30-day statistics for 2004 and earlier years were based on a different methodology and are not comparable with these statistics.

<sup>2</sup>Households with children in complex living arrangements, e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

<sup>3</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.

<sup>4</sup>Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are comparable with those for 2014 and later but are not precisely comparable with those of earlier years.

<sup>5</sup>Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 16 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

## Household Responses to Questions in the Food Security Scale

The 18 questions used for the food security measure ask about conditions, experiences, and behaviors that range widely in severity (items near the top of the lists in table S-5 are relatively less severe, while those nearer the bottom are more severe). Those indicating less severe food insecurity are observed in a larger proportion of households, and the proportion declines as severity increases (table S-5). The two least severe questions refer to uncertainty about having enough food and the experience of running out of food. The remaining 16 items indicate reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diets and increasingly severe disruptions of normal eating patterns and reductions in food intake. (See page 12 for the complete wording of these questions.)

Three or more affirmative responses are required for a household to be classified as food insecure. All households in that category affirmed at least one item indicating reduced diet quality or disruption of normal eating patterns or reduction in food intake, and most food-insecure households reported multiple indicators of these conditions. A large majority of households (76.6 percent of households with children and 84.4 percent of those without children) reported no problems or concerns in meeting their food needs (table S-6). Households that reported only one or two indications of food insecurity (9.7 percent of households with children and 6.4 percent of households without children) are also classified as food secure. Most of these households affirmed one or both of the first two items, indicating uncertainty about having enough food or about exhausting their food supply, but did not indicate actual disruptions of normal eating patterns or reductions in food intake. Although these households are classified as food secure, the food security of some of them may have been marginal at times, especially in the sense that they lacked “assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways,” a condition that the Life Sciences Research Office includes in its definition of food security (Anderson, 1990, p. 1598).<sup>7</sup> Research examining health and children’s development in these marginally food-secure households generally indicates that outcomes are either intermediate between those in highly food-secure and food-insecure households or more closely resemble those in food-insecure households (Radimer and Nord, 2005; Winicki and Jemison, 2003; Wilde and Peterman, 2006).

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<sup>7</sup>The Life Sciences Research Office (LSRO) is a nonprofit organization in Bethesda, MD. Concepts and definitions of food security and related conditions developed by LSRO for the American Institute of Nutrition (Anderson, 1990) provided key parts of the theoretical underpinnings of the household food security measure.

Table S-5

**Responses to items in the food security scale, 2016-19<sup>1</sup>**

Scale item <sup>2</sup>	Households affirming item <sup>3</sup>			
	2016	2017	2018	2019
	<i>Percent</i>			
<b>Household items:</b>				
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	16.2	15.6	14.6	13.9
Food bought didn't last and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	13.3	12.8	12.2	11.4
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	12.9	12.7	12.2	11.8
<b>Adult items:</b>				
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	7.5	7.0	6.7	6.4
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	7.7	7.2	6.6	6.7
Adult(s) cut size or skipped meals in 3 or more months	5.7	5.3	5.1	4.9
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford	4.0	3.7	3.7	3.5
Respondent lost weight	2.4	2.4	2.2	2.2
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	1.7	1.4	1.4	1.5
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day in 3 or more months	1.3	1.1	1.1	1.2
<b>Child items:</b>				
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	13.0	13.0	11.9	11.3
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	8.3	8.2	7.4	6.8
Child(ren) were not eating enough	3.6	3.3	3.0	2.9
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	1.7	1.5	1.3	1.2
Child(ren) were hungry	1.0	0.8	0.8	0.8
Child(ren) skipped meals	0.6	0.5	0.4	0.5
Child(ren) skipped meals in 3 or more months	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.4
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	0.1	0.1	0.1	0.2

<sup>1</sup>Survey responses weighted to population totals.

<sup>2</sup>The full wording of each question includes explicit reference to resource limitation, e.g., "... because (I was/we were) running out of money to buy food" or "... because there wasn't enough money for food." See box on page 12 for the complete wording of these questions.

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

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-6

**Percentage of households by food security raw score, 2019**

<b>Panel A: Households with children—18-item household food security scale</b>			
Raw score (number of food-insecure conditions reported)	Percent of households <sup>1</sup>	Cumulative percent of households <sup>1</sup>	Food security status
0	76.62	76.62	Food secure (86.35 percent)
1	5.72	82.34	
2	4.01	86.35	
3	3.01	89.36	Low food security (9.78 percent)
4	2.20	91.56	
5	2.10	93.66	
6	1.47	95.13	
7	1.00	96.13	
8	0.88	97.01	Very low food security (3.87 percent)
9	0.81	97.82	
10	0.71	98.53	
11	0.54	99.07	
12	0.34	99.41	
13	0.17	99.58	
14	0.11	99.69	
15	0.13	99.82	
16	0.05	99.87	
17	0.06	99.93	
18	0.07	100.00	
<b>Panel B: Households with children—8-item child food security scale</b>			
0	87.56	87.56	Children food secure (93.53 percent)
1	5.97	93.53	
2	3.50	97.03	Low food security among children (5.90 percent)
3	1.79	98.82	
4	0.61	99.43	Very low food security among children (0.57 percent)
5	0.23	99.66	
6	0.14	99.80	
7	0.10	99.90	
8	0.10	100.00	
<b>Panel C: Households with no children—10-item adult food security scale</b>			
0	84.37	84.37	Food secure (90.73 percent)
1	3.63	88.00	
2	2.73	90.73	
3	2.66	93.39	Low food security (5.07 percent)
4	1.34	94.73	
5	1.07	95.80	
6	1.39	97.19	Very low food security (4.20 percent)
7	1.02	98.21	
8	0.80	99.01	
9	0.34	99.35	
10	0.65	100.00	

<sup>1</sup>Survey responses weighted to population totals.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.



## 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 there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
8. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
9. In the last 12 months did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
10. (If yes to question 9) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?

### *(Questions 11-18 were 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)

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

### Coding of Responses

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

### Assessing Food Security Status in Households Without Children

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

### Assessing Food Security Status in Households with Children Age 0-17

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

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

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

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

- **Method 1:** A condition is described, and the respondent is asked whether this was often, sometimes, or never true for his or her household during the past 12 months.
- **Method 2:** Respondents who answer “yes” to a yes/no question are asked, “How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?”

Table S-7 presents responses to each food security question broken down by reported frequency of occurrence for all households interviewed in the December 2019 survey. Questions using Method 1 are presented in the top panel of the table, and those using Method 2 are presented in the bottom panel. Most households that responded affirmatively to Method 1 questions reported that the behavior, experience, or condition occurred “sometimes,” while 17 to 25 percent (depending on the specific question) reported that it occurred “often.”

In response to Method 2 questions, conditional on affirming the general question, 28 to 39 percent of respondents reported that the behavior, experience, or condition occurred “in almost every month”; 40 to 43 percent reported that it occurred in “some months, but not every month”; and 21 to 30 percent reported that it occurred “in only 1 or 2 months.”

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

Table S-7

**Frequency of occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by all U.S. households, 2019<sup>1</sup>**

Condition <sup>2</sup>	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence			
		Often	Sometimes	Often	Sometimes
		—— Percent of all households ——		Percent of “ever during the year”	
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	13.9	3.3	10.7	23.0	77.0
Food bought didn't last and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	11.4	2.5	8.9	22.0	78.0
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	11.8	3.0	8.8	25.0	75.0
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	11.3	2.3	9.0	20.0	80.0
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	6.8	1.3	5.5	19.0	81.0
Child(ren) were not eating enough	2.9	0.5	2.4	17.0	83.0

Condition <sup>2</sup>	Frequency of occurrence						
	Ever during the year	Almost every month	Some months but not every month	In only 1 or 2 months	Almost every month	Some months but not every month	In only 1 or 2 months
	—— Percent of all households ——				Percent of “ever during the year”		
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	6.3	2.2	2.7	1.5	34	43	23
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	6.7	2.0	2.9	1.8	30	43	26
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford	3.5	1.2	1.4	0.9	35	40	25
Respondent lost weight	2.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	1.5	0.6	0.6	0.3	39	40	21
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	1.2	0.3	0.5	0.3	28	42	30
Child(ren) were hungry	0.8	0.3	0.3	0.2	32	40	28
Child(ren) skipped meals	0.5	0.2	0.2	0.1	38	40	22
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	0.2	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

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

<sup>1</sup>Survey responses weighted to population totals. Households not responding to an item or not responding to the followup question about frequency of occurrence are omitted from the calculation of percentages for that item. Households without children are omitted from the calculation of percentages for child-referenced items.

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

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-8

**Frequency of occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by households with very low food security, 2019<sup>1</sup>**

Condition <sup>2</sup>	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence			
		Often		Sometimes	
		Percent of all households		Percent of "ever during the year"	
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	97.4	48.0	49.4	49	51
Food bought didn't last and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	96.0	40.1	55.9	42	58
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	94.2	43.3	50.8	46	54
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	92.6	36.9	55.7	40	60
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	81.0	24.2	56.9	30	70
Child(ren) were not eating enough	49.5	10.2	39.3	21	79

Condition <sup>2</sup>	Ever during the year	Frequency of occurrence					
		Almost every month		Some months but not every month		In only 1 or 2 months	
		Percent of all households		Percent of "ever during the year"		Percent of "ever during the year"	
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	97.0	44.3	44.8	7.9	46	46	8
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	95.6	42.1	42.6	10.9	44	45	11
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford	68.9	28.6	28.3	12.1	41	41	18
Respondent lost weight	48.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	35.5	14.4	14.4	6.7	41	41	19
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	23.7	7.8	10.4	5.5	33	44	23
Child(ren) were hungry	20.1	6.9	8.3	4.9	34	41	24
Child(ren) skipped meals	11.6	4.7	4.2	2.7	41	36	23
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	4.3	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA

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

<sup>1</sup>Survey responses weighted to population totals. Households not responding to an item or not responding to the followup question about frequency of occurrence are omitted from the calculation of percentages for that item. Households without children are omitted from the calculation of percentages for child-referenced items.

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

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

## Monthly and Daily Occurrence of Food-Insecure Conditions

Respondents also reported whether the behaviors and experiences that indicate food insecurity had occurred during the 30 days prior to the survey.<sup>8</sup> For seven of these behaviors and experiences, respondents also reported how many days the condition had occurred during that period. Table S-9 summarizes responses to these questions.<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup>Beginning with the 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement data, all continuous variables for the number of days out of the previous 30 days that food-insecure conditions occurred are only released after being categorized into ranges of the number of days that a condition occurred. The result is less precise estimates of the average daily prevalence of food-insecure conditions. The midpoint of the range is used to calculate the average daily prevalence. The average daily prevalence for each condition is still calculated as the product of the 30-day prevalence and the average number of days experienced divided by 30. In prior annual food security reports, these estimates were then used to approximate the average daily prevalence of very low food security. That approximation for the daily prevalence of very low food security is no longer presented, given the less precise estimates of average daily prevalence for the conditions.

<sup>9</sup>Average daily prevalence for these questions is calculated as the product of the 30-day prevalence and the average number of days divided by 30.

Table S-9

**Monthly and daily occurrence of behaviors, experiences, and conditions indicating food insecurity reported by all U.S. households, 2019<sup>1</sup>**

Condition <sup>2</sup>	For households reporting condition at any time during previous 30 days					Monthly average occurrence Days <sup>3</sup>	Average daily prevalence Percent <sup>3</sup>	
	Ever during previous 30 days	Number of days out of previous 30 days			Monthly average occurrence Days <sup>3</sup>			Average daily prevalence Percent <sup>3</sup>
		1- 7 days	8-14 days	15-30 days				
----- Percent <sup>3</sup> -----					Days <sup>3</sup>	Percent <sup>3</sup>		
Worried food would run out before (I/we) got money to buy more	6.22	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Food bought didn't last and (I/we) didn't have money to get more	5.43	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Couldn't afford to eat balanced meals	6.46	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Adult(s) cut size of meals or skipped meals	4.12	67	14	19	7.9	1.08		
Respondent ate less than felt he/she should	3.78	55	18	27	9.7	1.23		
Respondent hungry but didn't eat because couldn't afford food	2.22	60	14	26	9.3	0.69		
Respondent lost weight	1.42	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Adult(s) did not eat for whole day	0.93	68	15	17	7.4	0.23		
Relied on few kinds of low-cost food to feed child(ren)	5.71	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Couldn't feed child(ren) balanced meals	3.58	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Child(ren) were not eating enough	1.52	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		
Cut size of child(ren)'s meals	0.78	73	NA	NA	7.7	0.20		
Child(ren) were hungry	0.54	80	NA	NA	6.4	0.12		
Child(ren) skipped meals	0.31	81	NA	NA	6.2	0.06		
Child(ren) did not eat for whole day	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA		

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

<sup>1</sup>Survey responses weighted to population totals. The 30-day and daily statistics refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8-18, 2019.

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

<sup>3</sup>Households without children are excluded from the denominator of child-referenced items.

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

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

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

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



Table S-10

**Weekly household food spending relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP)  
by food security status and selected household characteristics, 2019**

Category	Median weekly food spending relative to December 2019 TFP <sup>1</sup>	
	Food secure	Food insecure
	<i>Ratio (cost of TFP = 1.0)</i>	
All households	1.31	1.06
Household composition:		
With children < 18 yrs	1.18	0.99
At least one child < 6 yrs	1.17	1.01
Married-couple families	1.21	0.97
Female head, no spouse	1.08	1.00
Male head, no spouse	1.17	1.00
Other household with child <sup>2</sup>	1.11	NA
With no children < 18 yrs	1.38	1.09
More than one adult	1.30	0.95
Women living alone	1.53	1.10
Men living alone	1.70	1.28
With elderly	1.20	1.06
Elderly living alone	1.32	1.13
Race/ethnicity of households:		
White, non-Hispanic	1.36	1.09
Black, non-Hispanic	1.11	0.95
Hispanic <sup>3</sup>	1.18	1.04
Other, non-Hispanic	1.27	1.09
Household income-to-poverty ratio:		
Under 1.00	1.04	0.90
Under 1.30	1.04	0.91
Under 1.85	1.07	0.96
1.85 and over	1.45	1.19
Income unknown	1.20	1.04
Area of residence: <sup>4</sup>		
Inside metropolitan area	1.34	1.07
In principal cities <sup>5</sup>	1.36	1.10
Not in principal cities	1.35	1.06
Outside metropolitan area	1.17	1.01
Census geographic region:		
Northeast	1.36	1.09
Midwest	1.21	1.07
South	1.30	1.03
West	1.36	1.09

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

<sup>1</sup>Statistics exclude households that did not answer the questions about spending on food or reported zero usual food spending and those that did not provide valid responses to any of the questions on food security. These exclusions represented 8 percent of all households

<sup>2</sup>Households with children in complex living arrangements, e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

<sup>3</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.

<sup>4</sup>Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are comparable with those for 2014 and later but are not precisely comparable with those of earlier years.

<sup>5</sup>Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 16 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

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

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

## Use of Food Pantries and Emergency Kitchens

The December 2019 CPS food security survey included questions about the use of two types of community-based food and nutrition assistance programs (see box, “Community Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs,” on page 22 for descriptions of these facilities). All households with incomes below 185 percent of the Federal poverty threshold were asked these questions. To minimize the burden on respondents, households with incomes above that range were not asked the questions unless they indicated some level of difficulty in meeting their food needs on preliminary screener questions. The questions analyzed in this supplement are:

- “In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever get emergency food from a church, a food pantry, or food bank?” The use of these resources any time during the last 12 months is referred to as “food pantry use.” Households that reported using a food pantry in the last 12 months were asked, “How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?” Households reporting that they did not use a food pantry in the last 12 months were asked, “Is there a church, food pantry, or food bank in your community where you could get emergency food if you needed it?”
- “In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in your household ever eat any meals at a soup kitchen or shelter?” The use of this resource is referred to as “use of an emergency kitchen” in the following discussion.

Table S-11 presents estimates of the number of households that obtained emergency food from food pantries or ate at an emergency kitchen one or more times during the 12-month period ending in December 2019. Estimates of the proportion of households using emergency kitchens based on the CPS food security surveys almost certainly understate the proportion of the population that actually uses these providers. The CPS selects households to interview from an address-based list and, therefore, interviews only persons who occupy housing units. People who are homeless at the time of the survey are not included in the sample, and those in tenuous housing arrangements (for instance, temporarily doubled-up with another family) also may have been missed. These two factors—exclusion of the homeless and under-representation of those who are tenuously housed—bias estimates of emergency kitchen use downward, especially among certain subgroups of the population. This is much less true for food pantry users because they need cooking facilities to use most items from a food pantry.<sup>10</sup>

Table S-12 compares the food security of low-income households that used food pantries and emergency kitchens with that of low-income households that did not use those facilities. Table S-13 shows use of food pantries by household composition, race and Hispanic ethnicity, income, and residence.

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<sup>10</sup>Previous studies of emergency kitchen users and food pantry users confirm these assumptions. For example, a nationally representative survey of people who use food pantries and emergency kitchens found that about 36 percent of emergency kitchen clients and 8 percent of households that received food from food pantries were homeless in 2001 (Briefel et al., 2003).

## Community Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs

Food pantries and emergency kitchens are the main direct providers of emergency food assistance. These agencies are locally based and rely heavily on volunteers. The majority of them are affiliated with faith-based organizations (see Ohls et al., 2002, for more information). Pantries and kitchens play different roles. Food pantries distribute unprepared foods for offsite use, and emergency kitchens (sometimes referred to as soup kitchens) provide individuals with prepared food to eat on-site. Most of the food distributed by food pantries and emergency kitchens comes from local resources, but USDA supplements these resources through The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). In fiscal year 2019, TEFAP supplied nearly 1.7 billion pounds of commodities to community emergency food providers.

Table S-11

### Use of food pantries and emergency kitchens, 2019

Category	Pantries			Kitchens		
	Total <sup>1</sup>	Users		Total <sup>1</sup>	Users	
	1,000	1,000	Percent	1,000	1,000	Percent
All households	129,194	5,684	4.4	129,222	693	0.5
All persons in households	323,212	14,368	4.4	323,205	1,363	0.4
Adults in households	250,226	10,118	4.0	250,249	1,055	0.4
Children in households	72,986	4,250	5.8	72,956	308	0.4
Households by food security status:						
Food-secure households	115,667	1,952	1.7	115,672	191	0.2
Food-insecure households	13,461	3,733	27.7	13,491	502	3.7
Households with low food security	8,236	1,735	21.1	8,236	215	2.6
Households with very low food security	5,225	1,997	38.2	5,255	286	5.4

<sup>1</sup>Totals exclude households that did not answer the question about food pantries or emergency kitchens. Totals in the bottom section also exclude households that did not answer any of the questions in the food security scale.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-12

### Prevalence of food security and food insecurity of households with annual income less than 185 percent of the poverty line by use of food pantries and emergency kitchens, 2019

Category	Food secure	Food insecure	
		All	With very low food security
		Percent	
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line:			
Received emergency food from food pantry previous 12 months	34.6	65.4	32.7
Did not receive emergency food from food pantry previous 12 months	78.8	21.2	7.6
Ate meal at emergency kitchen previous 12 months	29.9	70.1	36.6
Did not eat meal at emergency kitchen previous 12 months	73.3	26.7	10.6

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

Table S-13

**Use of food pantries, by selected household characteristics, 2019**

Category	Total <sup>1</sup>	Pantry users	
	1,000	1,000	Percent
All households	129,194	5,684	4.4
Household composition:			
With children < 18 yrs	37,470	1,925	5.1
At least one child < 6 yrs	16,051	801	5.0
Married-couple families	24,337	583	2.4
Female head, no spouse	9,261	1,141	12.3
Male head, no spouse	3,301	164	5.0
Other household with child <sup>2</sup>	572	38	6.6
With no children < 18 yrs	91,724	3,759	4.1
More than one adult	54,290	1,613	3.0
Women living alone	20,813	1,207	5.8
Men living alone	16,621	939	5.6
With elderly	40,097	1,433	3.6
Elderly living alone	15,267	691	4.5
Race/ethnicity of households:			
White, non-Hispanic	84,973	2,710	3.2
Black, non-Hispanic	16,366	1,615	9.9
Hispanic <sup>3</sup>	17,988	976	5.4
Other, non-Hispanic	9,867	383	3.9
Household income-to-poverty ratio:			
Under 1.00	11,095	2,229	20.1
Under 1.30	15,690	2,929	18.7
Under 1.85	26,401	3,773	14.3
1.85 and over	70,393	854	1.2
Income unknown	32,400	1,057	3.3
Area of residence: <sup>4</sup>			
Inside metropolitan area	111,185	4,615	4.2
In principal cities <sup>5</sup>	38,218	1,924	5.0
Not in principal cities	55,378	1,823	3.3
Outside metropolitan area	18,010	1,069	5.9
Census geographic region:			
Northeast	22,196	835	3.8
Midwest	27,804	1,412	5.1
South	50,003	2,095	4.2
West	29,191	1,342	4.6

<sup>1</sup>Totals exclude households that did not answer the question about getting food from a food pantry. These exclusions represented 0.6 percent of all households

<sup>2</sup>Households with children in complex living arrangements, e.g., children of other relatives or unrelated roommate or boarder.

<sup>3</sup>Hispanics may be of any race.

<sup>4</sup>Metropolitan area residence is based on 2013 Office of Management and Budget delineation. Prevalence rates by area of residence are comparable with those for 2014 and later but are not precisely comparable with those of earlier years.

<sup>5</sup>Households within incorporated areas of the largest cities in each metropolitan area. Residence inside or outside of principal cities is not identified for about 16 percent of households in metropolitan statistical areas.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

# Food Spending by Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance

Table S-14 presents median food spending relative to the cost of the December 2019 Thrifty Food Plan by households that received food and nutrition assistance and by nonparticipant households in similar low-income ranges.<sup>11</sup>

Table S-14

## Weekly household food spending relative to the cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) by participation in selected Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs, 2019

Category	Median weekly food spending relative to cost of the December 2019 TFP <i>Ratio</i> (cost of TFP = 1.0)
Income less than 130 percent of poverty line:	
Received SNAP <sup>1</sup> benefits previous 30 days	0.95
Did not receive SNAP <sup>1</sup> benefits previous 30 days	1.04
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; school-age children in household:	
Received free or reduced-price school lunch previous 30 days	0.91
Did not receive free or reduced-price school lunch previous 30 days	0.98
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; children under age 5 in household:	
Received WIC <sup>2</sup> previous 30 days	0.96
Did not receive WIC <sup>2</sup> previous 30 days	1.00
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line:	
Received emergency food from food pantry previous 12 months	0.90
Did not receive emergency food from food pantry previous 12 months	1.07

<sup>1</sup>SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program.

<sup>2</sup>WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

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

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

<sup>11</sup>Food purchased with SNAP benefits is included in household food spending as calculated here. However, the value of school lunches and food obtained through the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is not included. Food from these sources supplemented the food purchased by many of these households.

## Food Security During the 30 Days Prior to the Food Security Survey in Households That Received Food and Nutrition Assistance

Table S-15 presents prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security during the 30-day period just prior to the food security survey for households that received selected types of food and nutrition assistance and for nonparticipant households in similar low-income ranges. This complements table 8 of *Household Food Security in the United States in 2019* (Coleman-Jensen et al., 2020), which is based on the 12-month measure. Measured food insecurity and reported use of food and nutrition assistance programs are more likely to refer to contemporaneous conditions when both are referenced to the previous 30 days than when one or both is referenced to the previous 12 months.

Table S-15

### Prevalence of food insecurity during the 30 days prior to the food security survey, by participation in selected Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs, 2019<sup>1</sup>

Category	Food insecurity (low or very low food security)	Very low food security
	Percent	
Income less than 130 percent of poverty line:		
Received SNAP <sup>2</sup> benefits previous 30 days	29.04	13.87
Received SNAP <sup>2</sup> benefits in every month during the previous 12 months	28.90	13.65
Received SNAP <sup>2</sup> benefits previous 12 months but not previous 30 days (SNAP leavers)	26.85	10.85
Did not receive SNAP <sup>2</sup> benefits previous 12 months	11.54	5.37
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; school-age children in household:		
Received free or reduced-price school lunch previous 30 days	18.57	6.23
Did not receive free or reduced-price school lunch previous 30 days	8.76	2.96
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line; children under age 5 in household:		
Received WIC <sup>3</sup> previous 30 days	15.20	3.52
Did not receive WIC <sup>3</sup> previous 30 days	13.87	4.60
Income less than 185 percent of poverty line:		
Received emergency food from food pantry previous 30 days	51.28	26.71
Did not receive emergency food from food pantry previous 30 days	11.70	4.91

<sup>1</sup>The 30-day prevalence rates refer to the 30-day period from mid-November to mid-December; the survey was conducted during the week of December 8-18, 2019. The number of interviewed households reporting use of emergency kitchens during the previous 30 days was too small to provide reliable food security prevalence estimates.

<sup>2</sup>SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program.

<sup>3</sup>WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

## Combined Use of Federal and Community Food and Nutrition Assistance

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

Table S-16

### Combined use of Federal and community food and nutrition assistance programs by low-income households,<sup>1</sup> 2019

Category	Share of category that obtained food from food pantry	Share of food pantry users in category	Share of category that ate meal at emergency kitchen	Share of emergency kitchen users in category
	<i>Percent</i>			
Received SNAP <sup>2</sup> benefits previous 30 days	31.6	55.3	4.3	53.9
Received free or reduced-price school lunch previous 30 days	20.0	28.5	1.6	16.8
Received WIC <sup>3</sup> previous 30 days	21.8	10.4	NA	NA
Participated in one or more of the three Federal programs	24.9	69.0	3.1	62.6
Did not participate in any of the three Federal programs	7.3	31.0	1.2	37.4

NA = Not reported; fewer than 10 households in the survey reported receipt of WIC and use of an emergency kitchen.

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

<sup>2</sup>SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly the Food Stamp Program.

<sup>3</sup>WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program for Women, Infants, and Children.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2019 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement.

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