

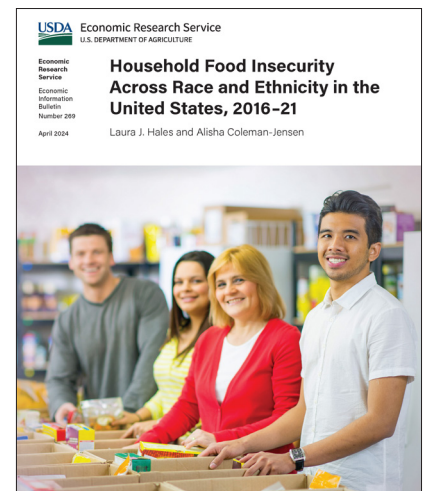


Household Food Insecurity Across Race and Ethnicity in the United States, 2016–21

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What Is the Issue?

Some U.S. households experience food insecurity at times during the year, meaning the households' ability to acquire adequate food is limited by a lack of money and other resources. Food insecurity is an important measure of well-being for the U.S. population. The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) monitors the extent and severity of food insecurity in U.S. households. This report is an extension of information provided annually by USDA, ERS on food insecurity across four racial and ethnic groups: White, non-Hispanic; Black, non-Hispanic; Hispanic; and other, non-Hispanic. This study includes American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, Hawaiian and Pacific Islander, and multiracial groups—including individuals identifying as both American Indian and White, individuals identifying as both Black and White, and other multiracial combinations.



What Did the Study Find?

The report presents the prevalence of food insecurity (those with low and very low food security) within each of the nine race and ethnic groups by household and individual characteristics. Some common themes emerge; however, considerable differences across racial and ethnic groups exist even when comparing similar household characteristics. For example, having low household income is related to a higher prevalence of food insecurity for all racial and ethnic groups. However, the prevalence of food insecurity for households below the Federal poverty line varies from 18 percent (Asian households) to 47.8 percent (Multiracial, American Indian-White households) across racial and ethnic groups.

- The prevalence of food insecurity ranges from a low of 5.4 percent for Asian households to a high of 23.3 percent for American Indian and Alaska Native households. Food-insecure households had difficulty at some time during the year providing enough food for all household members because of a lack of resources.
- The prevalence of very low food security ranges from 1.6 percent for Asian households to 11.3 percent for Multiracial, American Indian-White households. Very low food security is the more severe range of food insecurity where the food intake of some household members was reduced, and normal eating patterns were disrupted at times during the year because of limited resources.

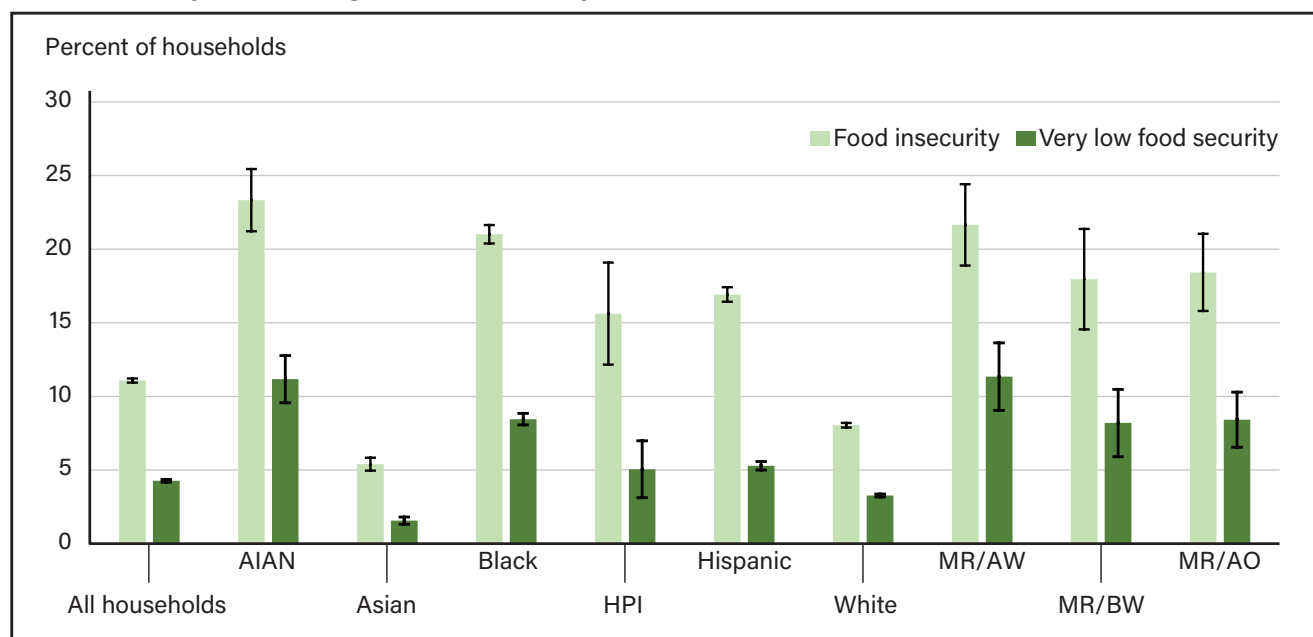
ERS is a primary source of economic research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.

- Food insecurity varied substantially by country of origin. Among Hispanic origin subgroups, food insecurity varied from 11.4 percent in Cuban households to 21.0 percent in Dominican households. Food insecurity among Asian origin subgroups ranged from 1.7 percent in Japanese households to 11.4 percent in other Asian households.

How Was the Study Conducted?

Data for this report come from an annual survey conducted by the U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, as the December Supplement to the monthly Current Population Survey. USDA, ERS sponsors the annual Food Security Supplement and analyzes the data. This report shows the prevalence of food insecurity across nine race and ethnic groups and economic and demographic characteristics. Households are classified into racial and ethnic groups based on the race and ethnicity of the household reference person in the survey (an adult household member in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented). Examining multiple years of data was necessary to overcome limitations from small sample sizes for some race and ethnic groups. This report combines 6 years of data from 2016–21; 214,370 households are included in the combined 6-year sample. Even with the 6 years of data, some statistics are suppressed due to small sample sizes, and standard errors are large for some groups, meaning there is less precision associated with these estimates.

Food insecurity varies along race and ethnicity



AIAN = American Indian Alaska Native; HPI = Hawaiian Pacific Islander; MR/AO = Multiracial, All Other Combinations; MR/AW = Multiracial, American Indian-White; MR/BW = Multiracial, Black-White.

Note: Prevalence rates are 6-year average estimates (2016–21). Food insecure includes low food secure and very low food secure. Black lines represent 90-percent confidence intervals. Respondents who identify as Hispanic or Latino are classified as Hispanic, regardless of the racial category selected. All other racial categories are non-Hispanic.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, 2016–21 Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements.