



Latino Hunger Fact Sheet

May 2017

The Latino population in the United States has nearly doubled in the past decade and continues to grow. Currently, Latino communities are disproportionately affected by food insecurity, poverty and unemployment.

They are also less likely to receive support through federal nutrition programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and are at greater risk of developing diet-related illnesses. Consequently, the Feeding America network understands the urgency of reaching Latino populations with interventions targeted to meet their specific needs.

FOOD INSECURITY AND POVERTY AMONG LATINOS

Latinos are more than twice as likely to be food insecure and twice as likely to live in poverty as white, non-Hispanics.

- 1 in 5 (21%) Latinos are food insecure as compared to just 1 in 10 (10%) white, non-Hispanics and 1 in 8 (13%) Americans overall.¹
- 1 in 4 Latino children (24%) live in a food-insecure household as compared to 1 in 7 (14%) white, non-Hispanic children.²
- The 94 counties in 2015 with a majority Hispanic population compose 3% of all U.S. counties. Twenty-one percent of these majority-Hispanic counties fall into the top 10% of counties with the highest rates of childhood food insecurity.³
- Of the top 20 counties in the nation with the highest food-insecurity rates for children, three have a population that is majority Hispanic.⁴
- Median income for Hispanic households (\$45,148) is significantly lower than their white, non-Hispanic counterparts (\$62,950).⁵
- Poverty rates for Hispanics (21%) were more than double that of non-Hispanic whites (9%).⁶
- Nine percent of Latinos live in deep poverty (with incomes below 50% of the federal poverty threshold), compared to 6% of all people in the United States.⁷





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FOOD ASSISTANCE AMONG LATINOS

Latino households are disproportionately represented among people who receive food assistance. Latinos are nearly two times as likely to receive charitable food assistance as their white, non-Hispanic peers.

- More than 1 in 6 (17%) Latinos in the U.S. are served by the Feeding America network each year, totaling 9 million Latino adults, seniors and children. In contrast, 10% of the white non-Hispanic population in the U.S. are people Feeding America serves, meaning Latinos are almost two times as likely to receive assistance through the Feeding America network as their white, non-Hispanic peers.⁸
- Among households Feeding America serves, Latino households with children are more likely to have one or more members working (81%) than are all households with children (73%).⁹
- Despite the fact that they are more likely to be working, Latino households with children that Feeding America serves may struggle more because they have greater food budget needs. Among Latino households with children that are served by the Feeding America network, 82% have four or more members. For comparison, among all households with children that Feeding America serves, 70% have four or more members. Additionally, among Latino households with children that are served by the Feeding America network, 32% have six or more members, compared to 23% of all households with children that Feeding America serves.¹⁰
- Latino households with children served by Feeding America are more likely to have incomes below the federal poverty threshold (82%) than are all households with children that Feeding America serves (77%).¹¹
- Among households Feeding America serves, Latino households with children are less likely to have ever applied for SNAP (the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) (77%) than are all households with children (84%). Latino households we serve with children are also less likely to be receiving SNAP benefits currently (55%) than are all households with children that we serve (59%).¹²
- Among heads of SNAP-receiving households, 11% were Hispanic compared to 39% who identified as white, non-Hispanic.¹³



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NUTRITION AND OBESITY

Latinos are at greater risk of obesity and diabetes than their white, non-Hispanic peers. Diabetes and other chronic health conditions can further complicate the issue of food insecurity.

- Hispanics are at greater risk of obesity than other racial and ethnic groups. In 2015, Hispanic Americans were 1.1 times more likely to be obese than non-Hispanic whites (32% versus 29%).¹⁴
- Prevalence of diagnosed diabetes is higher for Hispanics overall (8.7%) than for whites (5.8%). Hispanic males are not only at greater risk of diabetes than white males (9.1% versus 6.3%), but also Hispanic females (8.4%) and white females (5.3%).¹⁵



Appendix

1. Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbot, M., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. (2016). Food Security in the United States in 2015. Table 2. USDA ERS..
2. Coleman-Jensen, A., Rabbot, M., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. (2016). [Food Security in the United States in 2015, Statistical Supplement. Table S-3](#). USDA ERS.
3. Gundersen, C., A. Dewey, A. Crumbaugh, M. Kato & E. Engelhard. *Map the Meal Gap 2017: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2015*. Feeding America, 2017.
4. Ibid
5. Proctor, B.D., Semega, J.L., & Kollar, M.A. (2016). [Income and Poverty in the United States: 2015](#). U.S. Census Bureau.
6. Ibid
7. Ibid
8. Feeding America, *Hunger in America 2014*, National Report. August 2014.
9. Ibid.
10. Ibid
11. Ibid
12. Ibid
13. Gray, K.F., Fisher, S., and Lauffer, S.. (2016). U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support. Table A.21: Distribution of participating households with selected household characteristics by race and Hispanic status of household head. [Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2015](#). Alexandria, VA.
14. Blackwell, D.L., Lucas, J.W., Clarke, T.C. (2014). Table 29: Age-adjusted percent distribution of body mass index among adults aged 18 and over, by selected characteristics: United States, 2012. [Summary health statistics for U.S. adults: National Health Interview Survey, 2012](#). National Center for Health Statistics. Vital Health Stat 10(260). 2014. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
15. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. [Diabetes Public Health Resource](#).