



Food Assistance & Hunger in the Heartland 2021

Report for Southeast Missouri Food Bank

Food Assistance and Hunger in the Heartland 2021 Report for Southeast Missouri Food Bank June 2022

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Finally, we want to extend deep gratitude to each of the clients who agreed to participate in this study and share their stories. We hope this report lifts their voices and highlights the experiences of individuals facing food insecurity in our communities.

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Executive Summary

Food Assistance and Hunger in the Heartland 2021: Report for Southeast Missouri Food Bank includes findings from research conducted in the spring and summer of 2021 by the University of Missouri Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security. The research aimed to better understand the characteristics of food pantries and circumstances of food pantry clients. It involved implementation of 1) an online and telephone survey completed by food pantry directors and 2) in-person interviews with food pantry clients conducted on-site at food pantries.

This report has been prepared for Southeast Missouri Food Bank and includes results obtained from the food bank's 16-county service area. All food pantries included in the study are affiliated with the food bank. Likewise, clients interviewed for the study received services at a food pantry affiliated with the food bank. The study only included food pantries (i.e., grocery programs that distribute food for off-site consumption) and did not collect data related to meal or congregate feeding programs or other types of food bank programs.

A summary of key findings¹ from this study is included directly below. The main body of this report includes [Agency Survey Key Findings](#) and [Client Survey Key Findings](#) that provide more detail. The [Complete Study Findings](#), including all data from the study, are included at the end of the document.

Agency Characteristics

Staffing

- 37% of food pantries have paid staff.
- 26% of all pantries report employing at least one full-time staff person.
- 31% of all pantries report employing at least one part-time staff person.
- 63% of food pantries have no paid staff and rely entirely on volunteers.

Volunteers

- Each food pantry utilizes an average of 39 volunteers each month.
- An average of 273 hours of service are provided by volunteers at each pantry each month.
- 53% of volunteers are 60 years of age or older.

Nutrition assistance programs

- At least 72% of food pantries provide some form of referral, information, or assistance related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
- 53% provide referrals for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC).

¹ Percentages in this section are rounded to the nearest whole number.

Client Counts & Impact of COVID-19

Client counts

- Food pantries vary greatly in terms of the number of households they serve. An average food pantry in the region serves 220 unduplicated (unique) households each month. Households are reached an average of 512 times each month.
- Unduplicated count: Within the Southeast Missouri Food Bank region, 54,553 unduplicated (unique) clients are served in an average month and 79,156 are served annually. An estimated 21,063 unduplicated households are served in a typical month and 30,562 are served annually.
- Duplicated count: Within the Southeast Missouri Food Bank region, clients are reached 56,528 times in an average month and 678,340 annually. Households are reached 21,826 times in a typical month and 261,907 annually.

Changes in client counts

- 44% of pantries report serving more clients in 2021 compared to 2020.
- 16% report serving fewer clients in 2021 compared to 2020.

Impact of Covid-19

- 50% of pantries were serving more people who were impacted by Covid-19 in 2021 compared to 2020 (e.g., from business closures, layoffs).
- 72% of pantries changed the way they distributed food (e.g., changing to drive-thru distribution).

Client & Household Characteristics

Household composition

- 53% of all households have a least one adult over the age of 65.
- 30% have at least one child under 18 years of age.
- 12% have at least one child under six years of age.
- 22% of households with children are headed by a single adult.

Client demographics

- 84% of client respondents identify as Caucasian/White.
- 12% identify as African American/Black.
- 1% identify as Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx.
- 70% of respondents identify as a woman.
- 4% of clients live in temporary housing or are houseless.
- 77% have a high-school degree or higher level of education.

Veteran status

- 17% of households include someone who previously served in the U.S. Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard.

Employment and income

- 36% of households have at least one working adult.
- 23% of all households have a member who is working full-time.
- 58% of all households make \$15,000 or less per year.

Food pantry use

- 32% of households used a food pantry more than once a month in the summer of 2021.
- 51% of households used a pantry every month during the past year.
- 52% reported using a food pantry for more than two years.
- 47% of households get at least half of the food they consume in a typical month from a food pantry.

Food security

- 61% of households experience food insecurity.
- 29% experience very low food security (indicated by disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake).
- 32% experience low food security (indicated by reduced quality, variety, and desirability of diet).
- 39% experience marginal food security (indicated by anxiety over food sufficiency).

SNAP eligibility and use

- 73% of households have incomes making them eligible for SNAP.
- Only 47% of client households have used SNAP in the previous year.

Use of child nutrition assistance programs

- 32% of households with children five and under used WIC in the previous year.
- 57% of households with children under 18 participate in free or reduced-price breakfast or lunch.

Health

- 50% of all households have a member with diabetes or pre-diabetes.
- 72% have a member with high blood pressure.
- 59% have a member with high cholesterol.
- 27% have a member without health insurance of any kind.

Trade-offs

- 28% of households had to choose between paying for food and *medicine/medical care* in the past 12 months.
- 33% had to choose between paying for food and *utilities*.
- 22% had to choose between paying for food and *housing*.
- 24% had to choose between paying for food and *transportation*.
- 5% had to choose between paying for food and *education expenses*.
- 10% of those with children under 18 had to choose between paying for food and *childcare*.

Coping strategies

- 64% of households purchased the least expensive food in the past 12 months, even if it wasn't the healthiest option.
- 54% purchased food in dented or damaged packages.
- 48% consumed food past its expiration date.
- 17% sold or pawned personal items.
- 22% watered down food or drinks.

1 Introduction and Background

Food Assistance and Hunger in the Heartland 2021: Report for Southeast Missouri Food Bank includes findings from research conducted in the spring and summer of 2021 by the University of Missouri Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security. The research aimed to better understand the characteristics of food pantries and circumstances of food pantry clients. It involved implementation of 1) an online and telephone survey completed by food pantry directors and 2) in-person interviews with food pantry clients conducted on-site at food pantries.

This report has been prepared for Southeast Missouri Food Bank and includes results obtained from the food bank's 16-county service area. All food pantries included in the study are affiliated with the food bank. Likewise, clients interviewed for the study received services at a food pantry affiliated with the food bank. The study only included food pantries (i.e., grocery programs that distribute food for off-site consumption) and did not collect data related to meal or congregate feeding programs or other types of food bank programs.

This study was precipitated by a need to update the findings from Feeding America's *Hunger in America 2014*² study and to provide reliable and current information for Southeast Missouri Food Bank. As such, many of the questions used in the study questionnaires closely match those used in Feeding America's 2014 study. However, study questions and study and sample design do differ in some regards. More details can be found in section 2 of this report, [Study and Sample Design](#).

The research team at the University of Missouri Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security was chosen because of their considerable experience in the development and implementation of survey research, including several projects focusing on food pantry clients in central and northeast Missouri. In addition, research team members have developed positive working relationships with numerous food pantries across Missouri through multiple grant-funded nutrition-improvement and capacity-building projects.

The Need for Food Assistance in Missouri

There is a critical need for food assistance of all types in Missouri. The USDA Economic Research Service³ reports that 11.5% of all Missouri households were food insecure in 2020 (the most recent year for which data is available). 6.4% of all Missouri households experienced *low* food security⁴ and 5.1% experienced *very low* food security⁵. In total, this equates to approximately 693,000 people in Missouri who may sacrifice the quality, variety, or desirability of their diet or go hungry at times during the year.

² Feeding America Hunger in America 2014 study at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/hunger-in-america>.

³ USDA Household Food Security in the United States in 2020 report at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=102075>.

⁴ Indicated by "reduced quality, variety, and desirability of diet." From USDA Definitions of Food Security at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/>.

⁵ Indicated by "disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake." From USDA Definitions of Food Security at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/>.

Findings from *Food Assistance and Hunger in the Heartland 2021: Report for Southeast Missouri Food Bank* show that the issue is dramatically worse for those using food pantries. Researchers found that 61% of food pantry client households are food insecure in the Southeast Missouri Food Bank service area. An estimated 32% of food pantry client households have *low* food security and 29% have *very low* food security.

Southeast Missouri Food Bank and local hunger relief organizations play a vital role in providing food assistance. Their role is especially critical for those who are food insecure and may not qualify for federal nutrition assistance programs. Feeding America's *Map the Meal Gap*⁶ shows that only 46% of Missouri's food insecure individuals have incomes below 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (FPL), making them eligible for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and other federal nutrition assistance programs. 17% of Missouri's food insecure individuals have incomes between 130-185% of the FPL, making them ineligible for SNAP but still eligible for the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). An additional 37% have incomes over 185% of the FPL, making them ineligible for SNAP, WIC, and NSLP.

Conducting Research During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Data collection for this study was completed during the spring and summer of 2021, at a time when COVID-19 cases were coming down from a peak in December 2020, but also when a surge in cases due to the Delta variant was starting in June of 2021. As a result, the project team implemented safety protocols for interviewers conducting in-person interviews with food pantry clients. Thankfully, no reported COVID-19 cases occurred among project personnel during their participation in this research.

⁶ Feeding America Map the Meal Gap at <https://map.feedingamerica.org/>.

2 Study and Sample Design

The *Food Assistance and Hunger in the Heartland 2021* study followed the general pattern of previous Feeding America *Hunger in America* studies and regional studies conducted by the University of Missouri (MU) Interdisciplinary Center for Food Security (ICFS). The study involved implementation of an agency survey and a client survey. The agency survey was administered primarily online using Qualtrics, a secure, web-based survey software. The client survey was administered primarily in-person by interviewers on-site at food pantries in the study area.

The study area for the entire research project included the states of Missouri and Kansas, as well as parts of Illinois serviced by the St. Louis Area Foodbank. *The results presented in this report only include those obtained from food pantries operating in the Southeast Missouri Food Bank service area and clients served at those food pantries.* Figure 1 shows the study area for this report.

Figure 1. Southeast Missouri Food Bank service area



Study and sample design were led by the team of ICFS researchers and involved an advisory group composed of the Feeding Missouri State Director and at least one Feeding Missouri-

affiliated regional food bank representative selected by their respective Executive Directors. A representative from the Kansas Food Bank was included as well.

Initial conversations about the study began in August of 2018 and an advisory group was formed in April 2019. Early discussions centered on the concept of conducting a client survey. Later discussions incorporated an agency survey. Planning meetings eventually led to a timeline that included a client survey to be conducted in the summer of 2020 and an agency survey to be conducted in 2021. On March 18, 2020, ICFS researchers received notice from the University of Missouri Office of Research that all person-to-person research had to be paused or discontinued due to COVID-19 concerns. As a result, a new timeline was developed that included an agency survey conducted in the spring of 2021 and a client survey conducted in the summer of 2021.

The study and associated surveys were designed through an iterative process between ICFS researchers and the advisory group. Source materials included previous *Hunger in America* surveys and previous surveys used by ICFS. The agency survey was finalized in March 2021. The client survey was finalized in May 2021.

This study only included agencies that provide grocery programs. These programs might include bricks-and-mortar food pantries, mobile food pantries, or food pantries located in schools or other institutions. Agencies that only offered meal programs were not included in the study.

Agency Survey

The agency survey was developed to be completed by directors at food pantries in the service. The survey obtained information on a host of food pantry activities and attributes ranging from staffing to food sources. The survey was administered primarily online, via Qualtrics. Some surveys were conducted via telephone. The [Agency Survey Key Findings](#) section includes the major themes of the agency survey along with highlights from the results. Complete results from the agency survey can be found in the [Complete Study Findings](#) section.

Instrument Development

The agency survey was developed by ICFS researchers with input from the advisory group. Virtual planning meetings were conducted with the advisory group between the fall of 2020 and spring of 2021. Advisory group members identified key content areas from Feeding America's *Hunger in America 2014*⁷ survey for inclusion in the survey. In addition, they proposed new questions to address any gaps in knowledge or changes in programs and to address issues related to COVID-19 impacts. The survey was finalized and prepared for administration in Qualtrics in March 2021.

Agency Sampling

The project aimed for total participation of food pantries in the study area. Participants were recruited through their connection with Southeast Missouri Food Bank. Participants self-

⁷ Feeding America Hunger in America 2014 study at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/hunger-in-america>.

selected to participate through recruitment emails distributed through the food bank's email listserv. Emails were sent to all agencies and agency contacts included in the email listserv.

To be eligible to participate, respondents needed to be 1) at least 18 years of age, 2) English-speaking, 3) self-identified as a director of a food pantry affiliated with the food bank, and 4) included in the food bank's email listserv.

A link to the survey was sent by the project director to regional food bank staff along with a short message about the survey and instructions for participants. Regional food bank staff then sent the anonymous link and accompanying message to food pantry directors via email at set intervals in March 2021. After an initial email was sent, reminder emails were sent 10 and 20 days later to promote increased response rates. Additional recruitment occurred via telephone calls to agencies that did not respond to the electronic survey. An agency contact list provided by the regional food banks to the project director was cross-referenced with completed surveys to determine which agencies required additional contact. Each agency was called at least twice and at least 3 days apart. Contacts were able to opt-out of the survey, complete the survey by phone, or request that a link to be sent to them to enable them to complete the survey online.

Staffing and Training

Staffing for the agency survey was provided primarily by the project director Darren Chapman, PhD., and Bill McKelvey, M.S., senior project coordinator. Two additional temporary staff were hired to conduct telephone interviews for those participants wishing to complete the survey via telephone and to contact non-respondents to encourage participation in either the online or telephone survey. All staff completed the University of Missouri's Institutional Review Board training (i.e., CITI training). The temporary staff received additional training from the project director related to engaging with potential respondents, tracking contacts, telephone interviewing, and utilizing Qualtrics for survey administration. The project director maintained regular communication with temporary staff to ensure fidelity with research protocols and to address any questions or concerns.

Agency Survey Implementation

The agency survey was conducted from March to May 2021. The survey was primarily self-administered through Qualtrics. A telephone version of the survey was made available for special circumstances when respondents wished to complete the survey over the telephone. As noted previously, email was the primary method of recruitment, followed by phone calls to non-responsive agencies.

Upon initial engagement with the survey, participants were presented with an overview of the study, assurances of anonymity and confidentiality, and the contact information for the project director. If participants chose to proceed, they provided their consent and either completed the survey themselves online or with a telephone interviewer. Upon completion of the survey, participants were once again provided with the contact information for the project director.

All responses were recorded directly in to Qualtrics, regardless of whether participants completed the survey themselves or with a telephone interviewer. The project director monitored the in-flow of surveys and closed the survey in May 2021.

Client Survey

The client survey was developed to survey food pantry clients while on-site during food distributions at local food pantries. The survey obtained information on a host of individual and household characteristics. The survey was administered primarily in-person by trained interviewers under the direction of regional coordinators. Some surveys were conducted via telephone. Every client who completed a survey was entitled to an incentive in the form of a \$10 check from the University of Missouri. The [Client Survey Key Findings](#) section includes the major themes of the client survey along with highlights from the results. Complete results from the client survey can be found in the [Complete Study Findings](#) section.

Instrument Development

Like the agency survey, the client survey was developed by ICFS researchers with input from the advisory group. Virtual planning meetings were conducted with the advisory group between the winter of 2020 and spring of 2021. Advisory group members identified key content areas from Feeding America's *Hunger in America 2014*⁸ survey for inclusion in the survey. In addition, they proposed new questions to address any gaps in knowledge or changes in programs. The survey was finalized and prepared for administration in Qualtrics in May 2021.

Client Sampling

The project aimed to complete approximately 600 face-to-face surveys with food pantry clients in the food bank's service area. This sample size ensured that data could be reported for the entire state of Missouri and for each region at a 95% confidence level and 4% +/- confidence interval.

Within the region, a target sample size was established for each food pantry that served at least 0.75% of all food pantry clients in the region. This minimum threshold was established for practical reasons – with limited time and resources, it was necessary to focus effort on those pantries that served more clients.

Once it was determined which food pantries met the minimum threshold, the target sample size for each pantry was determined. Within the region, the target sample size was calculated using the following steps:

- To determine the percentage of total regional clients served at each pantry, the number of food pantry clients served by each pantry was divided by the total number of food pantry clients served within the region. Note: the total number of food pantry

⁸ Feeding America Hunger in America 2014 study at <https://www.feedingamerica.org/research/hunger-in-america>.

clients served within the region is calculated using *only* numbers from pantries that met the minimum threshold.

- Then, the individual pantry percentage from the step above was multiplied by 600 to establish the target number of surveys for each pantry in the region.

There was a three-step process for recruiting participants. The first involved obtaining verbal permission to recruit participants from a representative at each food pantry included in the study. A regional coordinator carried out this step by contacting food pantry representatives by phone or email. During this communication, the regional coordinators also asked about food distribution logistics and the best time to survey at each site. The second step involved interviewers obtaining written consent to recruit participants from a food pantry representative. This was done on the first day of survey collection at each participating food pantry. The third step, involving recruiting participants on site at food pantries, is described in the [Client Survey Implementation](#) section.

Staffing and Training

Implementation of the client survey required considerable staffing. Project director Darren Chapman provided leadership for the study and was assisted by senior project coordinator, Bill McKelvey. One regional coordinator coordinated on-the-ground research activities in the food bank's service area. The regional coordinator served as the primary contact with local food pantries, created schedules for interviewers, monitored interviewer performance, tracked progress towards meeting pantry and regional target numbers, and at times conducted interviews.

Additional support was provided by an administrative assistant who assisted with human resource and accounting tasks; a temporary technical staff person who assisted with processing incentives; and the University of Missouri Accounting department that processed incentive payments.

Four interviewers were employed during the summer of 2021 to provide coverage throughout the Southeast Missouri Food Bank region. Interviewers were undergraduate and graduate students affiliated with various colleges and universities. Upon being hired, interviewers completed University of Missouri Institutional Review Board training along with training provided by the project director and senior project coordinator. Additional training was provided by the regional coordinator.

Client Survey Implementation

The regional coordinator was responsible for developing a schedule for interviewers to maximize the number of surveys collected at each pantry and minimize the number of trips and miles traveled. Interviewers generally arrived at the food pantry before clients began gathering for food distribution. This allowed them to obtain permission to recruit participants in writing from a food pantry representative, understand the flow of traffic at the pantry, and begin interviewing clients as they arrived for food distribution.

Food pantry clients were systematically recruited by interviewers. Initially, interviewers engaged every third client in line. After two weeks of survey collection and reports that survey collection was going too slow, this was changed to every second client in line. Interviewers introduced themselves, provided a brief explanation of the project, and outlined the \$10 incentive. If the client was willing to participate, the interviewer verbally confirmed that the client was 18 years of age or older and picking up food for their household. With positive responses to those questions, the interviewer then read the informed consent script word-for-word to gain formal consent from the client. Interviewers used a tracking sheet to record whether each contact was ineligible, declined to take the survey, took the survey in person, or took the survey over the phone.

Most of the completed surveys were administered by interviewers on-site and recorded directly in Qualtrics via the Qualtrics off-line application using iPads. In some cases, interviewers used a paper copy of the survey and entered the responses into Qualtrics later. Interviewers were also given the leeway to allow participants to complete the survey themselves using the iPad or a paper copy. In rare cases, interviewers collected phone numbers of participants and later conducted the interview over the phone. These different options were provided primarily to accommodate client choice, enable interviewers to reach their target numbers in a timely manner, and serve as a back-up data collection method in cases where iPads malfunctioned.

Once the survey was completed, interviewers asked whether the participant would like to receive the \$10 incentive for their time. If they agreed, interviewers recorded the name and address of the participant on a separate hard copy tracking sheet. This information was later entered into a unique Qualtrics form. The contact information was securely stored at the University of Missouri and processed for payment according to University of Missouri Accounting policies and procedures. All hard copies of completed surveys, interviewer tracking forms, and incentive tracking forms were given to the senior project coordinator for storage in a secure place.

Client Survey Translation

The client survey was written in English and translated into Spanish. For the entire research project (including the states of Missouri and Kansas, as well as parts of Illinois serviced by the St. Louis Area Foodbank), 97.3% of responses were collected in English and 2.7% in Spanish. Clients were able to take the survey in either English or Spanish when self-administering the survey. In select regions, bilingual interviewers were able to also provide limited opportunities for client interviews to be conducted in Spanish.

3 Agency Survey Key Findings

A total of 35 agencies affiliated with Southeast Missouri Food Bank responded to the agency survey⁹, representing a 43.2% response rate among all agencies affiliated with the food bank. Responding agencies account for 34% of food pantry clients served within the region. Table 1 provides a summary of the number of responses and the response rate for the region.

Table 1. Agency survey respondents and response rates by food bank region

Food Bank Region	Responding Agencies	Total Agencies	Response Rate
Southeast Missouri Food Bank	35	81	43.2%

The majority of food pantries (57.1%) are faith-based operations or located in religious institutions, while 40% of agencies are non-faith-based nonprofits or private organizations. The remainder are governmental agencies (2.9%).

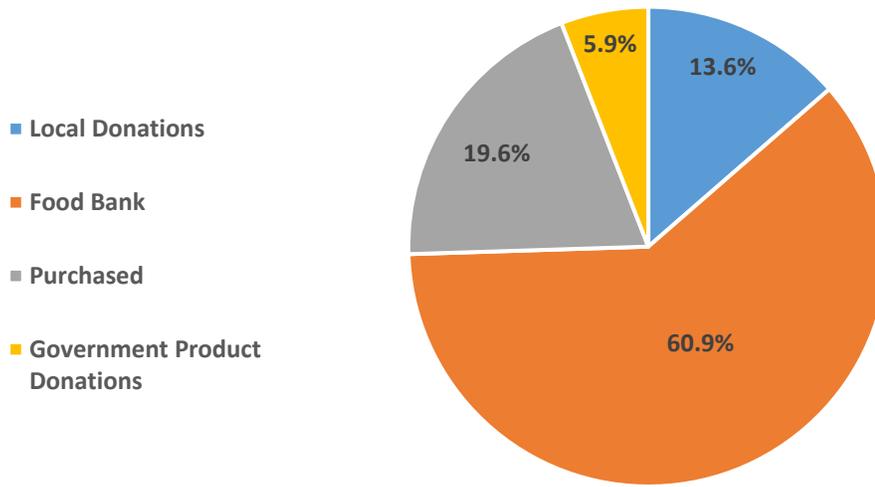
Food Sources

Food pantry directors provided information about where they acquired food, the frequency and quantity of food procured and distributed from all sources, and the overall impact that food acquisition from a regional food bank had on the agency. Additional questions focused on food acquisition logistics and whether agencies had enough food to meet client needs.

Among responding food pantries, food sourced from Southeast Missouri Food Bank makes up the largest portion of food (60.9%) distributed by agencies. Among other food sources, local donations account for 13.6% of food distributed, purchased food accounts for 19.6%, and government product accounts for 5.9%. This breakdown is shown in Figure 2.

⁹ Mention of “the past year” throughout the Agency Survey Findings section refers generally to March 2020 – March 2021.

Figure 2. Share of food distributed by source during the past year (N=35)



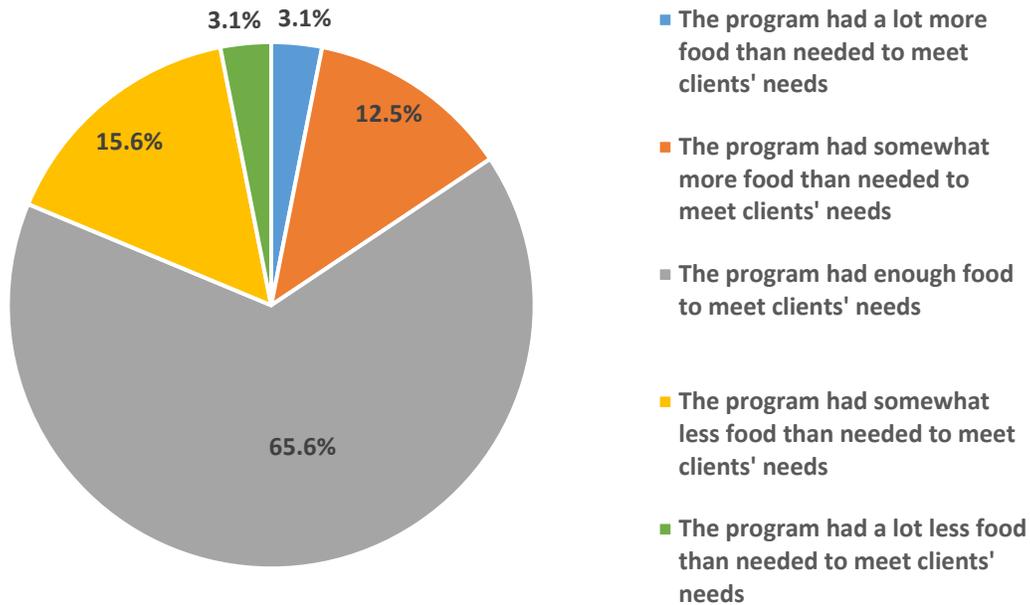
Among donated food sources, three-quarters of agencies (75%) receive local donations from churches or religious organizations. Both local food drives and farmers are each a source of local donations for 43.8% of agencies. Local stores are a source of local donations for 37.5% of agencies. In addition, 56.3% of agencies receive food donations through federal commodity programs like The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP/EFAP). While non-food bank sources are common and important to many pantries, Southeast Missouri Food Bank provides the bulk of total food distributed.

A number of food pantries also purchase a range of foods to fill perceived gaps in food donations and the items received or purchased from the food bank. Three-quarters of the agencies surveyed (75%) purchase bread, rice, cereals, and pastas. Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables are purchased by 75% of agencies as well. Non-meat proteins like beans, eggs, peanut butter, and nuts are purchased by 59.4% of agencies while 56.3% purchase meat protein items.

Given the support provided by regional food banks to their partner agencies, it isn't surprising that 84.4% of agencies report that there would be a "major effect" for their food pantry if they no longer received food from the food bank.

Most food pantries (81.3%) report having enough food to meet client needs. Figure 3 provides a detailed breakdown of how partner agencies describe the adequacy of the amount of food their program had available to meet their needs during the past 12 months (March 2020 – March 2021).

Figure 3. Amount of food available to meet clients' needs during the past year (N=32)



Staffing & Training

Staffing, whether paid or unpaid, is a critical component of food pantry operations. This section explores the types of staff at pantries (including volunteers), the number of staff utilized, and the number of hours contributed by volunteers. Food pantry directors also provided insights on staff and volunteer training needs, the age of volunteers, how volunteers are recruited, and challenges associated with finding and retaining volunteers.

37.1% of agencies report having at least one paid staff to support food pantry operations. Conversely, 62.9% of agencies have no paid staff. For additional details, see Table 2 below which provides a breakdown of full-time staff (working 35 or more hours a week), part-time staff (working less than 35 hours a week), and total paid staff percentages for food pantries in the region.

Table 2. Pantry staffing (N=35)

Number of Staff	Full-Time Staff	Part-Time Staff	Total Paid Staff
0	74.3%	68.6%	62.9%
1	5.7%	11.4%	5.7%
2	0.0%	2.9%	2.9%
3	2.9%	2.9%	2.9%
4	5.7%	0.0%	2.9%
5+	11.4%	14.3%	22.9%
Total	100%	100%	100%

A large volunteer workforce is used each month to serve pantry clients. The number of volunteers providing their time at individual food pantries varies greatly each month. Some smaller pantries may only utilize a handful of volunteers, while others report using 500 volunteers in a month.

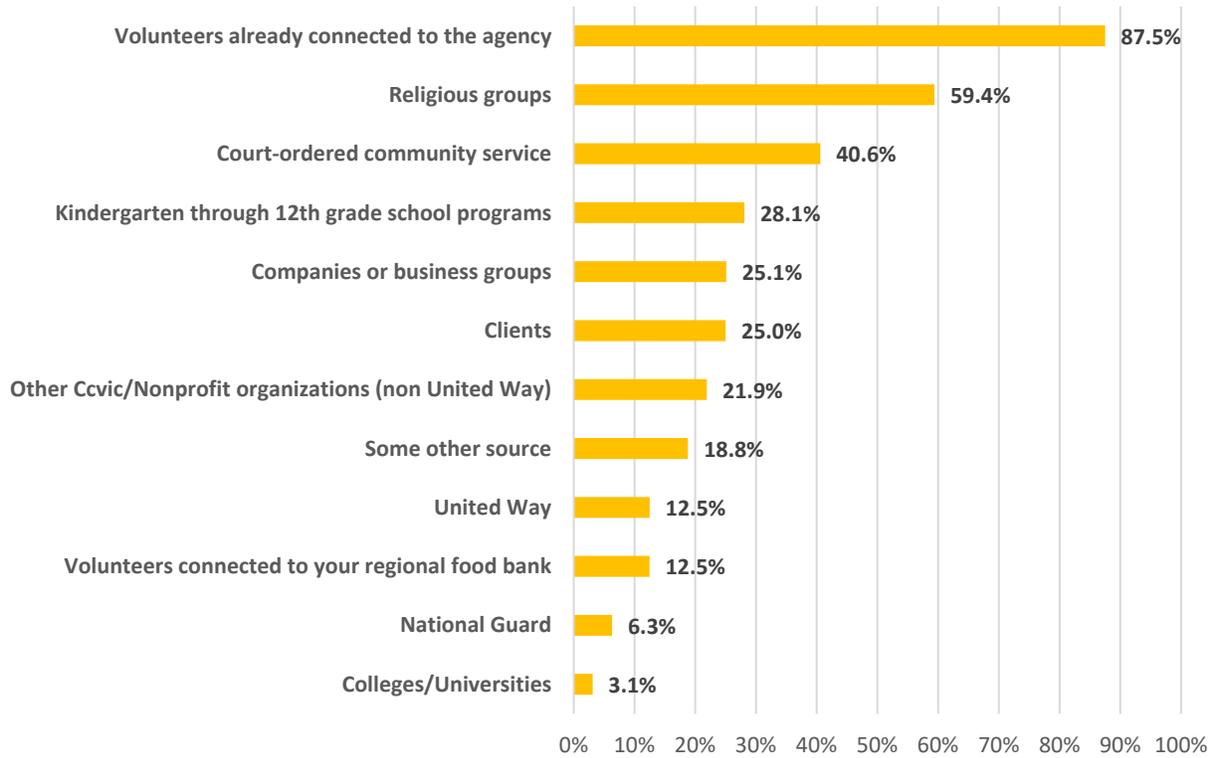
COVID-19 also brought changes to volunteer workforces for some food pantries. A few agencies shifted or shuttered operations, resulting in no volunteers assisting the pantry. Additionally, some agencies were operated entirely by a small number of paid staff. On average, food pantries utilize 39 volunteers each month. These volunteers contribute an average of 273 total hours of service per month. Table 3 provides a more detailed breakdown on the number of volunteers used by food pantries.

Table 3. Volunteer numbers and hours worked (N=30)

Number of Volunteers and Hours Worked	Mean	Max
How many volunteers give time to this program in an average month?	39	500
How many total hours do volunteers give to this program in an average month?	273	5040

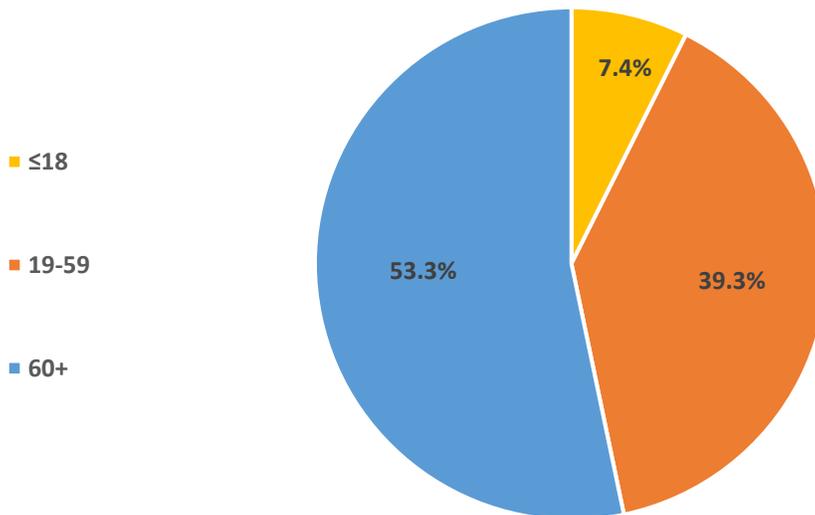
The primary source of volunteers for most food pantries (87.5%) are the food pantries themselves, which rely heavily on recruiting and maintaining volunteers already connected to the agency. 59.4% of food pantries get volunteers from religious groups in their communities. Other sources include court-ordered community service (40.6%), K-12 school programs (28.1%), and companies or business groups (25.1%). Figure 4 provides a more complete breakdown of the sources of food pantry volunteers for agencies.

Figure 4. Sources of volunteers (N=32)



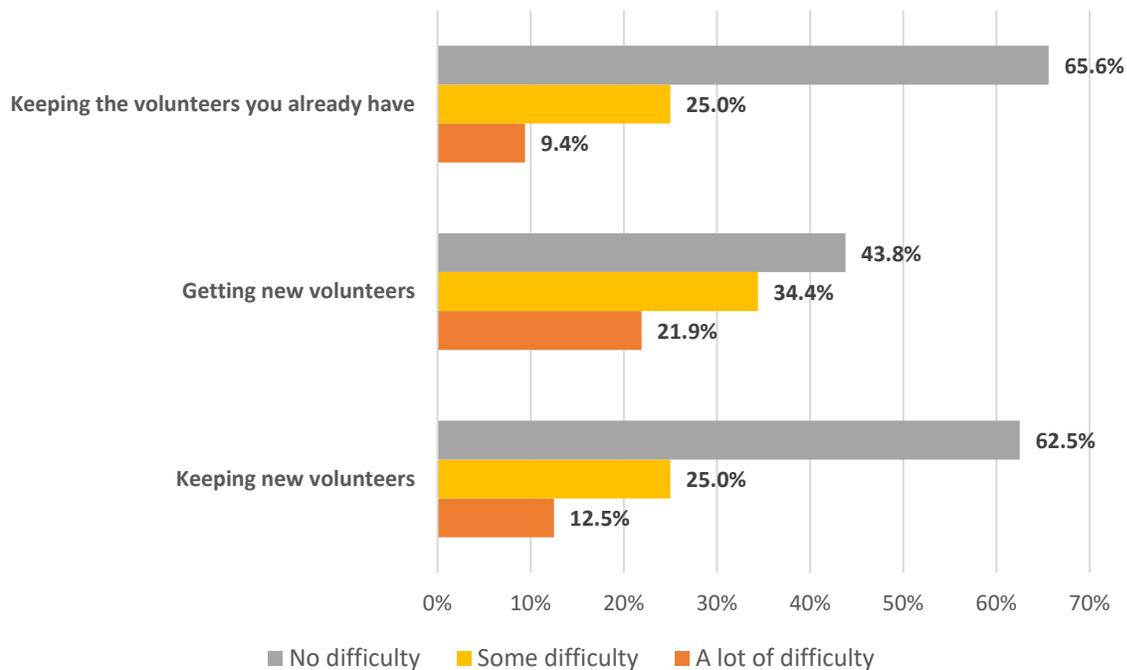
By and large, most food pantry volunteers (53.3%) are 60 years of age or over. Nearly 40% (39.3%) are between 19-59 years of age, with 7.4% under 19 years of age. Figure 5 shows the age distribution of food pantry volunteers.

Figure 5. Percentage of volunteers by age group (N=32)



In terms of volunteer acquisition and retention, most food pantries report that they have little difficulty keeping volunteers who are already involved or new volunteers who come to their organization. In essence, engaged volunteers tend to stay engaged. For many pantries volunteer recruitment, or finding new volunteers, is an issue, with 34.4% of agencies reporting they have “some difficulty” and 21.9% indicating they have “a lot of difficulty” with this task. Despite this difficulty, most pantries (62.5%) felt confident in their ability to keep volunteers engaged.

Figure 6. Volunteer acquisition and retention (N=32)



31.3% of pantries report that COVID-19 has made it more difficult to get and keep volunteers, whereas 68.8% said that volunteer recruitment and retention was “about the same.” No pantries reported that volunteer recruitment and maintenance was easier.

Given that a variety of skills are needed to run an agency, it is important to understand whether agencies perceive the need for additional training. Agencies generally believe their staff and volunteers don’t need training across a range of topics, as noted in Table 4. Fundraising and grant writing was the most needed training topic identified, noted by 41.9% of the agencies.

Table 4. Staff and volunteer training needs (N=31)

Training Topics	A lot of training is needed	Some training is needed	No training is needed
Nutrition education	3.2%	12.9%	83.9%
Training in food safety and sanitation	3.2%	22.6%	74.2%
Accessing local food resources	6.5%	22.6%	71.0%
Advocacy training	3.2%	12.9%	83.9%
Food Stamp (SNAP) application assistance and outreach	6.5%	3.2%	90.3%
Summer feeding programs	3.2%	6.5%	90.3%
Fundraising/grant writing training	12.9%	29.0%	58.1%
Client choice training	9.7%	12.9%	77.4%
Technology assistance	6.5%	16.1%	77.4%
Social media training	9.7%	12.9%	77.4%
Nonprofit management/board governance	9.7%	6.5%	83.9%
Volunteer recruitment/retention/staff succession planning	3.2%	19.4%	77.4%
Disaster training	6.5%	22.6%	71.0%

Even if trainings were to be made available, 44.4% of agencies said they were unsure whether staff/volunteers would have time to participate. 22.2% of agencies said staff/volunteers would not have time to participate in additional training.

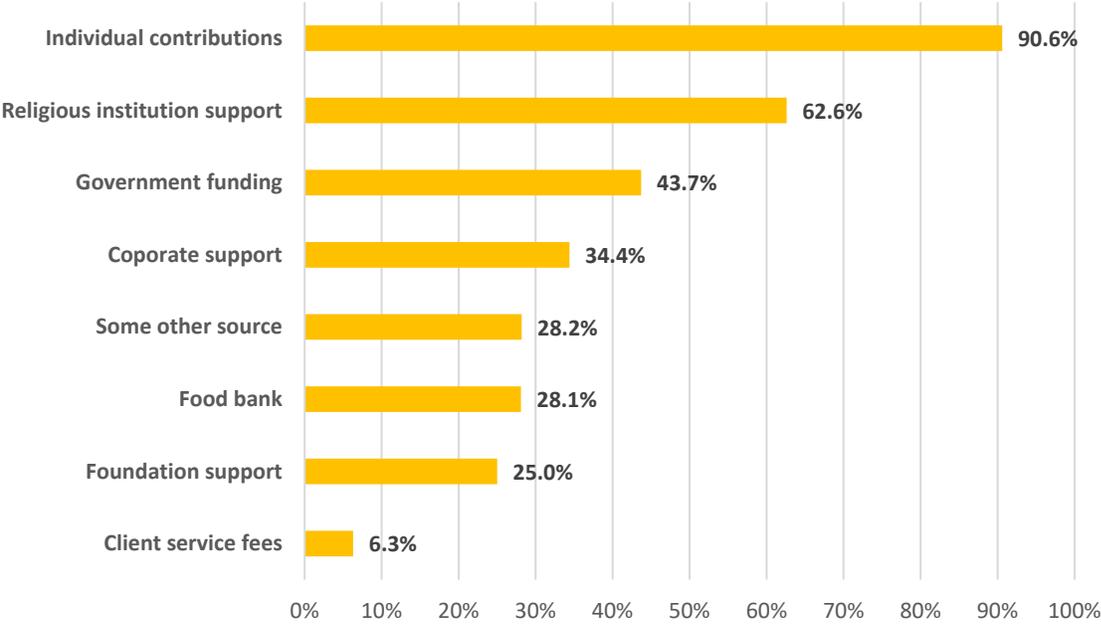
Funding & Strategic Planning

This section includes findings from questions that inquire about food pantry funding, strategic planning, and whether strategic plans include nutrition related goals or policies.

Food pantries require significant resources to carry out food and non-food related programs. Food pantry directors report a diverse range of funding sources, the most common of which is financial contributions from individuals in their communities (reported by 90.6% of agencies). Religious institutions (62.6%) are also a common funding source. The next most common

funding sources for pantries included government sources (43.7%), corporations (34.4%), the regional food bank (28.1%), and foundations (25%). A few food pantries also rely on client service fees (6.3%) to help fund their activities. Figure 7 provides a detailed breakdown of the prevalence of funding sources among responding pantries.

Figure 7. Agency funding sources (N=32)



Strategic plans are important for helping organizations establish organizational values, goals, and priorities. They can also provide direction for how resources are allocated to meet client needs. The largest percentage of pantries (51.4%) do not have a written strategic plan that includes items related to their food pantry. A portion of pantry directors (28.6%) were unsure if their agency has a strategic plan that includes the food pantry. For the 20% of pantries that do have a written strategic plan that includes the food pantry, most (85.7%) have nutrition policy or other nutrition goals included in the strategic plan.

Nutrition Education & Healthy Food

With increasing emphasis on nutrition in food assistance settings, it is important to understand the ways in which agencies incorporate nutrition education and the challenges they face when it comes to providing healthier foods.

63.6% of agencies report that they provide some form of programing or materials to teach clients about nutrition and healthy eating. The most common on-site form of education provided is through fliers and written materials (60.6%) followed by referring clients to activities at other locations (27.3%), workshops/classes on nutrition, health issues, or shopping on a budget (18.2%), and cooking demonstrations or tastings (15.2%). Additional information about nutrition activities at pantries is shown in Table 5.

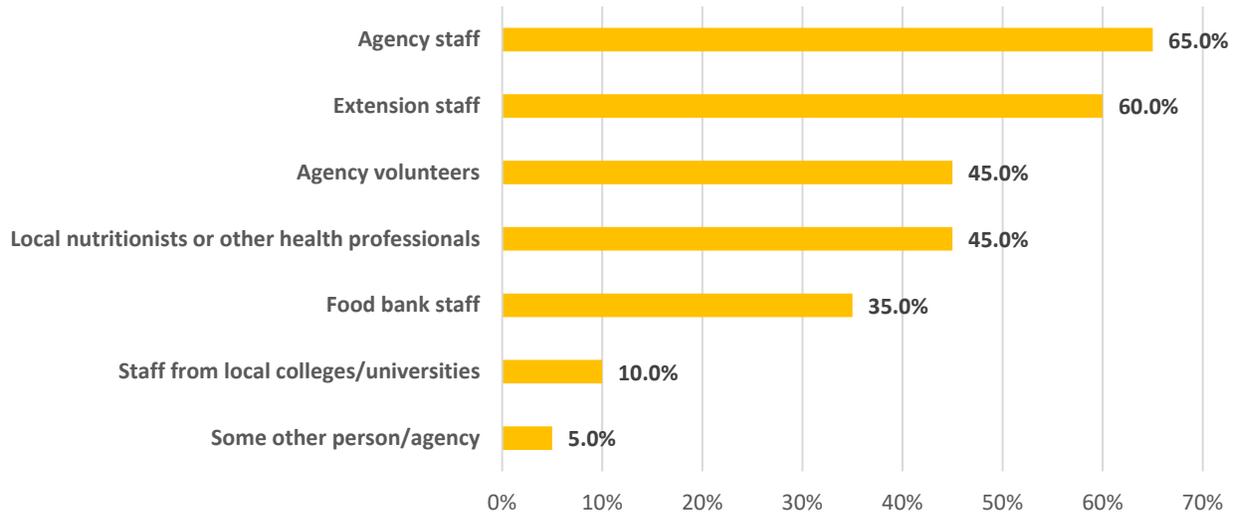
Table 5. Nutrition activities at food pantries (N=33)

Nutrition Activities	Provide	Refer	Neither
Fliers or written materials on nutrition and health	60.6%	0.0%	39.4%
Cooking demonstrations or tasting of healthier foods	15.2%	6.1%	78.8%
Workshops or classes on nutrition, health issues, or shopping on a budget	18.2%	18.2%	63.6%
Cooking classes	15.2%	6.1%	78.8%
Workshops or classes on specific health problems related to nutrition (e.g., diabetes)	15.2%	24.2%	60.6%
Training on gardening skills	3.0%	15.2%	81.8%
One-on-one meetings with dietician or other person trained to help people with nutrition and health	3.0%	15.2%	81.8%
Referring clients to activities related to nutrition or eating better at other locations	27.3%	9.1%	63.6%

Nutrition education activities at food pantries are led by a variety of personnel, with many pantries using more than one source. Among agencies offering nutrition education, 65% use agency staff to lead activities. Extension staff also lead activities at 60% of pantries. Nutrition activities at pantries are also led by other local professionals (45%), Extension staff (45%), or food bank staff (35%). Figure 8 provides a more detailed breakdown of nutrition education implementation.

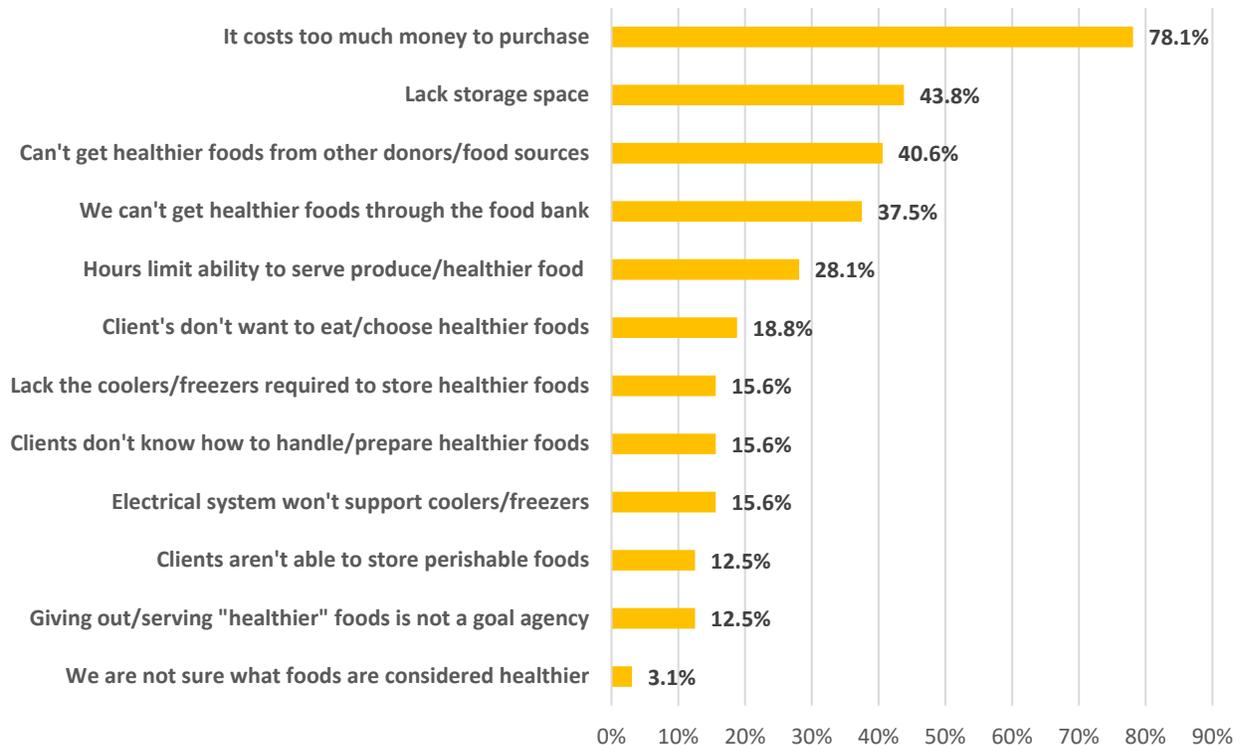
Most food pantry directors surveyed report that it is “very important” (75.8%) to their agency to serve “healthier” foods like fruits, vegetables, milk, whole grains, and lean meats. The remainder (24.2%) report that the ability to serve these “healthier” options is at least “somewhat important.” Despite this acknowledgement of the importance of healthier food options, 56.3% of agencies report that “the most important thing is giving the maximum amount of food we can get to clients, even if some of it is not as nutritious as we might like.”

Figure 8. Who leads nutrition activities at food pantries? (N=20)



Agencies were also asked about the challenges they face when trying to provide healthier food. Cost is the issue noted by most agencies (78.1%), followed by a general lack of storage space (43.8%), and difficulty getting healthier food from donors (40.6%). Additional barriers are noted in Figure 9 below.

Figure 9. What prevents agencies from giving out healthier foods? (N=32)



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach

This section contains the results from questions that inquire about food pantry services related to SNAP. Specifically, food pantry directors reported if and how SNAP-related services are provided and who provides the services. Findings also highlight some of the barriers to providing SNAP-related services at agencies.

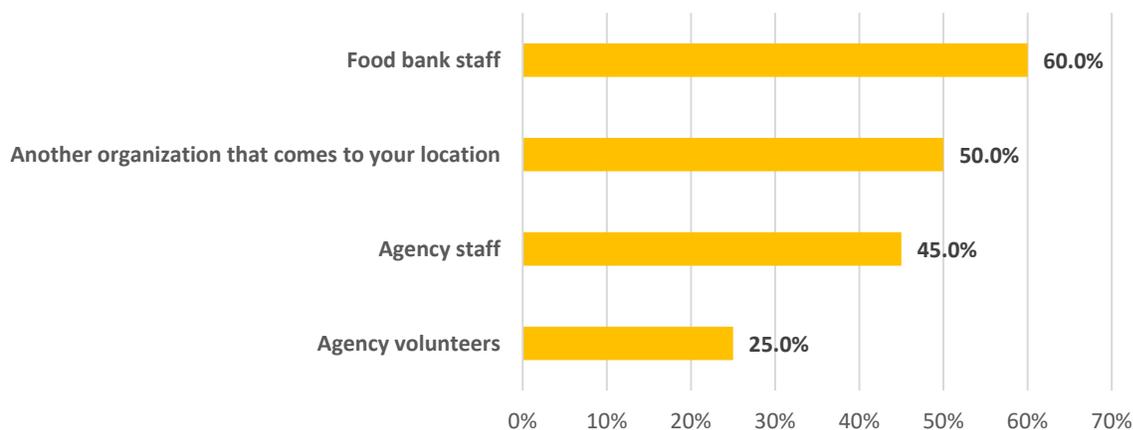
The primary method of SNAP assistance comes in the form of education to let clients know about SNAP. Over four-fifths of agencies (81.2%) provide education or refer clients elsewhere to get education about SNAP. 78.1% of agencies provide referrals or onsite assistance with SNAP applications or recertifications. Other forms of SNAP assistance are shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. SNAP-related services at agencies (N=32)

SNAP-related Services	Provide	Refer	Neither
Education to let clients know about SNAP	40.6%	40.6%	18.8%
Refer to the food bank for SNAP Application Assistance	46.9%	25.0%	28.1%
Screening to help clients figure out if they are eligible for SNAP	31.3%	40.6%	28.1%
Assistance filling out applications for SNAP	25.0%	53.1%	21.9%
Help re-certifying for SNAP benefits	21.9%	56.3%	21.9%

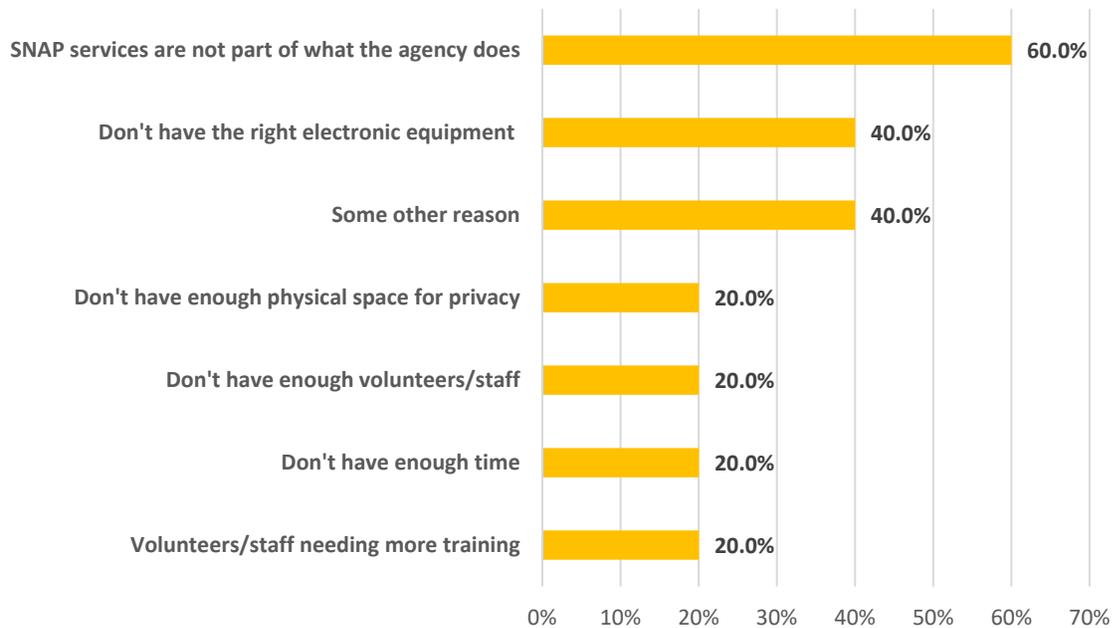
When SNAP related services are provided on site, they may be provided by a range of individuals. SNAP related services are provided by food bank staff at 60% of pantries. Other organizations provide services at 50% of pantries. Agency staff (45%) and agency volunteers (25%) also provide services on-site at pantries.

Figure 10. Personnel or agency responsible for providing SNAP-related services (N=20)



Among the 35.4% of pantries that do not provide SNAP-related services, most agencies (60%) report that SNAP services are not part of the agency’s activities or priorities. Many agencies (40%) face limitations related to technology and equipment. Other capacity limitations include not having enough physical space for private SNAP counselling (20%), lack of volunteers or staff (20%), not having enough time (20%), and not having enough training (20%).

Figure 11. Reasons for not providing SNAP-related services (N=5)



Involvement with Other Federal Support Programs

Food pantries often provide services or referrals for safety net programs other than SNAP. Agencies were asked about their involvement in a host of federal programs along with USDA commodity food programs.

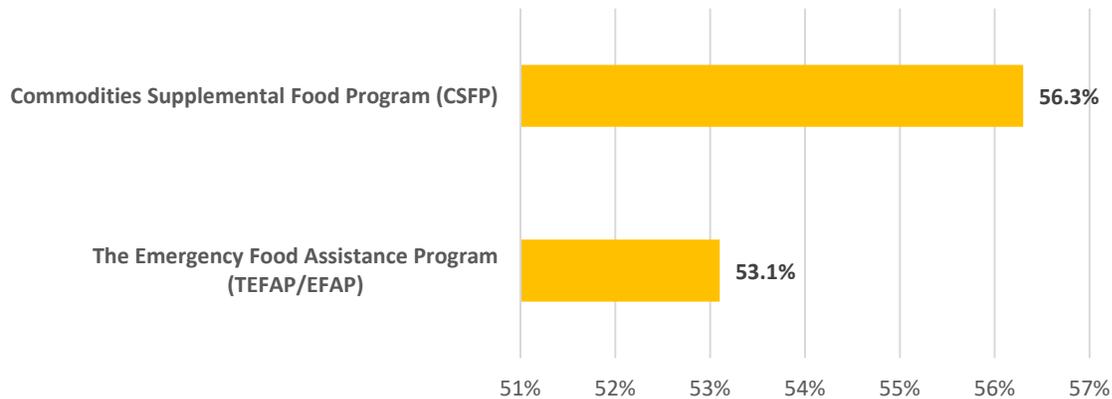
Most pantries had some involvement in providing assistance related to Medicaid or other health programs, whether they provided direct assistance (12.5%) or referrals (43.8%) to other agencies. Other programs that at least half of pantries had some involvement with included utility assistance programs (53.1%) and the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program (50%). Table 7 provides a more complete breakdown of pantry engagement with other federal programs.

Table 7. Federal program assistance provided (other than SNAP) (N=32)

Federal Programs	Direct Assistance	Referral	Neither
Utility Assistance	15.6%	37.5%	46.9%
Medicaid or other health care programs	12.5%	43.8%	43.8%
The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program	9.4%	40.6%	50.0%
Housing assistance like Section 8	6.3%	37.5%	56.3%
Tax preparation or earned income tax credit (EITC) assistance	15.6%	21.9%	62.5%
Supplemental Security Income	6.3%	37.5%	56.3%
WIC, the federally funded health and nutrition program for women, infants, and children	9.4%	53.1%	37.5%

56.3% of pantries provided food through the USDA Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP/EFAP). 53.1% of agencies provided food from the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP).

Figure 12. USDA commodity food program participation (N=32)

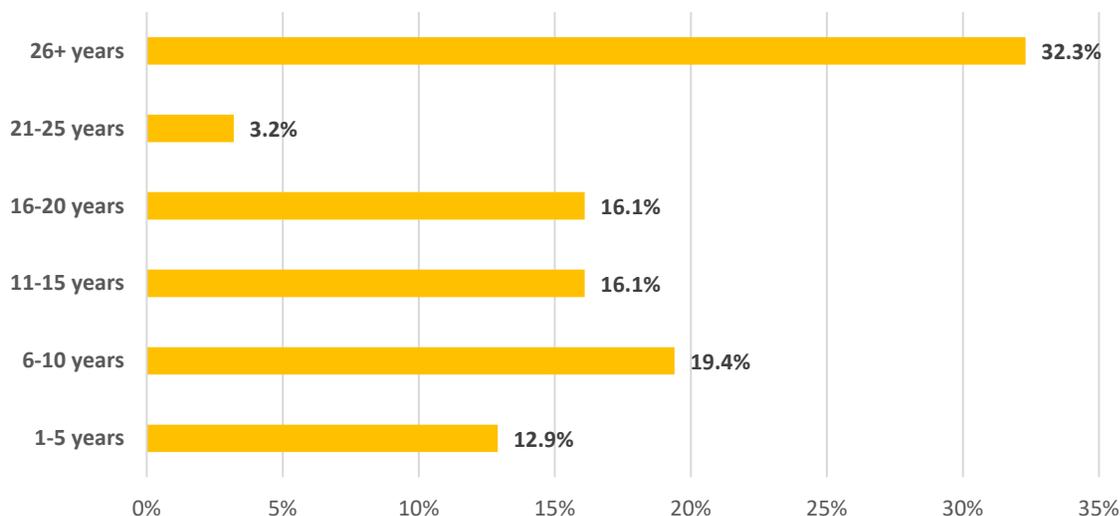


Operations

Given the diversity of food pantry operations, it is important to understand how food pantries operate to be aware of any gaps that clients may face while trying to receive services. This section includes results from questions asking agencies how many distribution sites they operate (including mobile sites), the number of years they have provided food, and the number of hours and days the pantry is open each month. This section also covers other types of grocery and non-food programs agencies may provide.

Most pantries (87.5%) operate a single distribution site. Many pantries are also long-established entities, having served their communities for many years. Agencies surveyed had been in operation for an average of 19 years. Figure 13 shows the distribution of years of operation among responding food pantries.

Figure 13. Years of operation (N=31)



Pantries are open for an average of 7 days each month, with range from one to 20 days. Pantries are open for an average of 31 hours each month, with range from two to 160 hours.

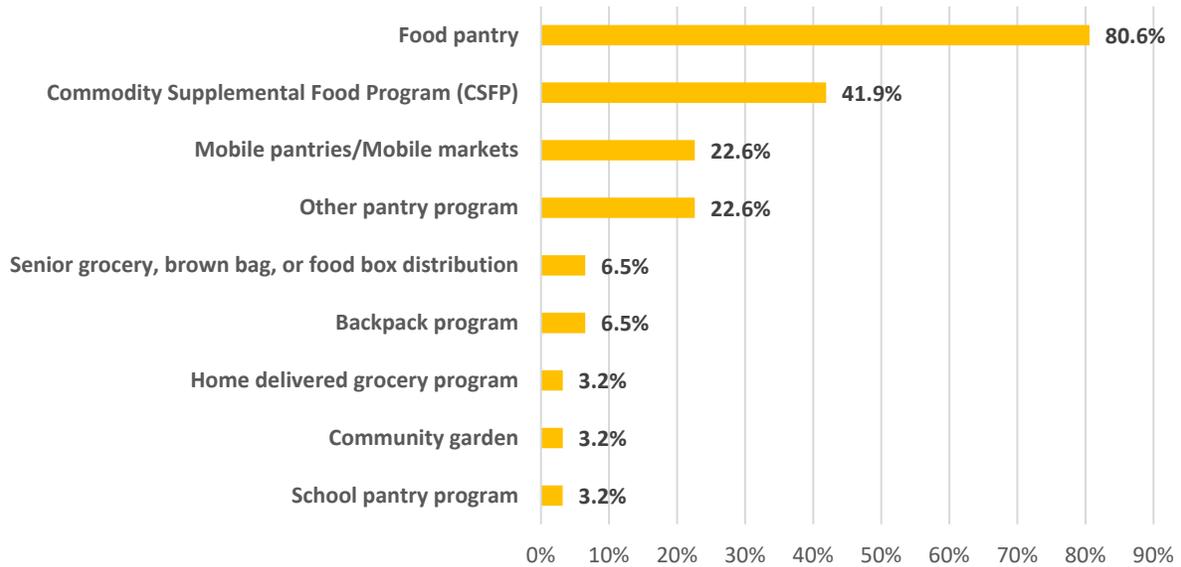
Table 8. Hours of operation (N=26)

Hours of Operation	Mean	Min	Max
Average open days each month	7	1	20
Average open hours each month.	31	2	160

Most food pantries don't offer evening (71.9%) or weekend (72.4%) food distribution options. Agencies most commonly noted they didn't have enough staff or volunteers to support food distributions during these times.

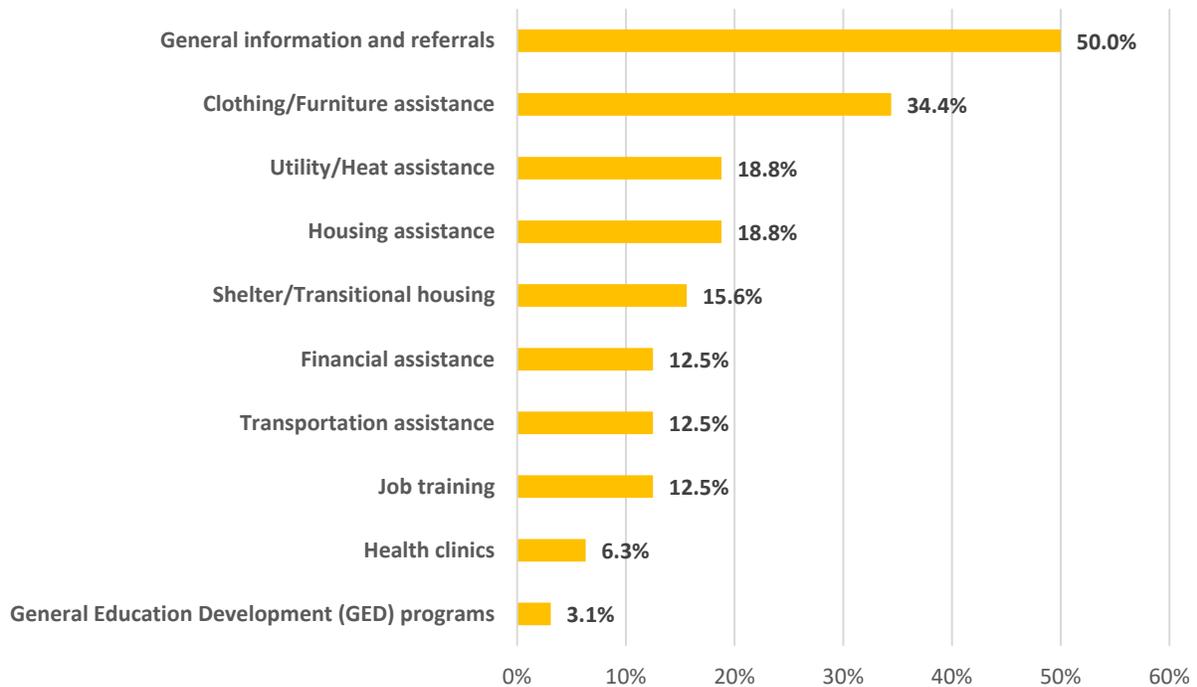
When asked about the types of grocery programs provided by agencies, the vast majority (80.6%) said they provide a food pantry. 41.9% provide CSFP foods and 22.6% offer food through mobile pantries or mobile markets. Figure 14 shows the range of other grocery programs offered at the agencies surveyed.

Figure 14. Types of grocery programs (N=31)



The two primary ways that agencies incorporate general non-food programs is through providing general information and referrals (50%) and offering clothing and furniture assistance (34.4%). Utility assistance and housing assistance are offered by 18.8% of pantries. Figure 15 shows the additional non-food programs offered by agencies.

Figure 15. Types of non-food programs (N=32)

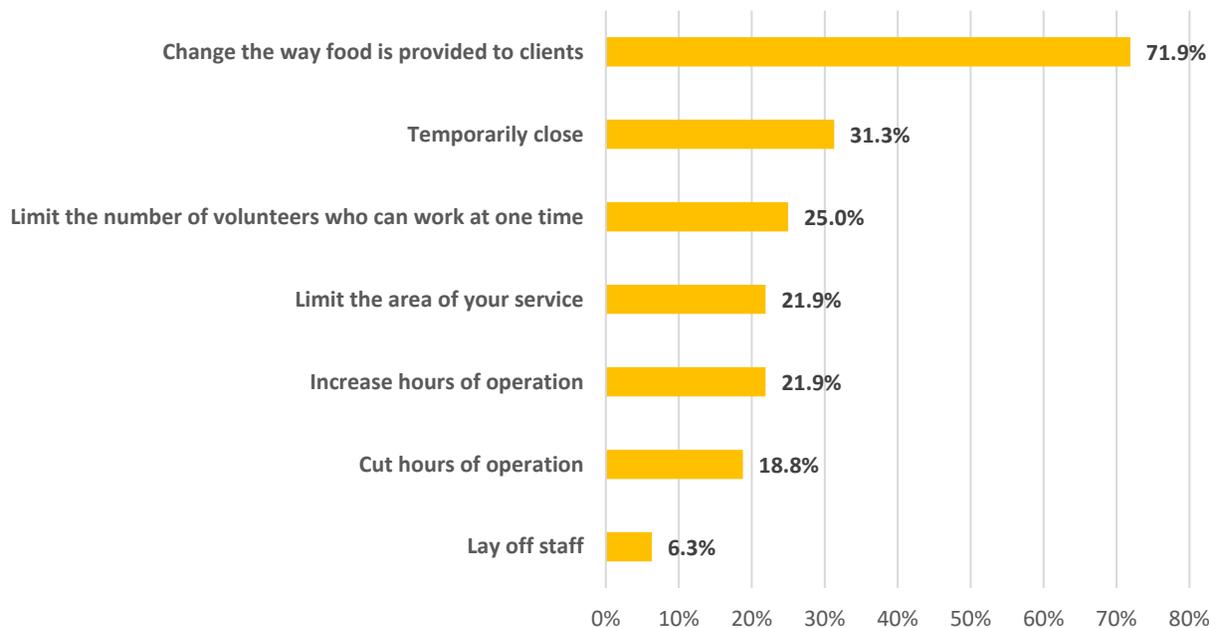


Recent Operational Changes

This section includes findings related to how and why an agency may have made changes to their operations during the past year (March 2020 - March 2021) and is intended to provide information on possible impacts of COVID-19 on food pantry operations.

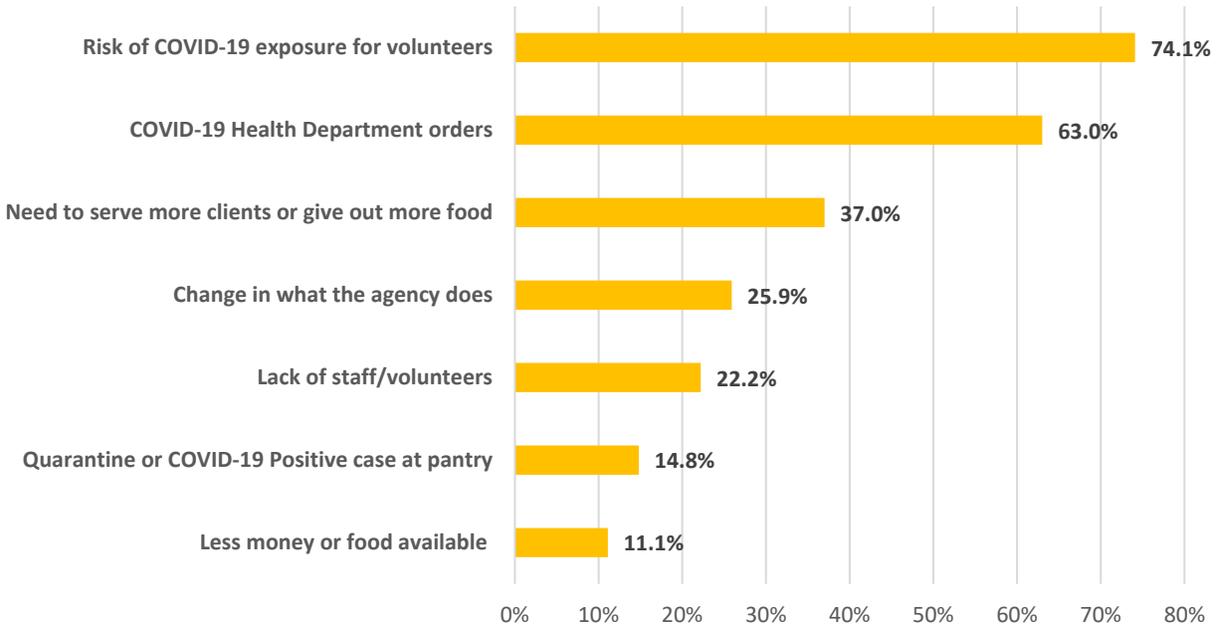
Most agencies (71.9%) changed the way they provided food to clients during the past year. Some (31.3%) had to temporarily close, while others (25.6%) limited the number of volunteers allowed to work at one time. Figure 16 provides additional information about operational changes made at pantries.

Figure 16. Operational changes in the past year (N=32)



Operational changes occurred at pantries for a variety of reasons. COVID-19 was the primary reason given by most pantries who made the changes noted above. Agencies were forced to adapt because of concerns about exposing volunteers to COVID-19 (74.1%), health department orders (63%), and the need to serve more clients (37%). Other factors are shown in Figure 17.

Figure 17. Reasons for operational changes in past year (N=27)



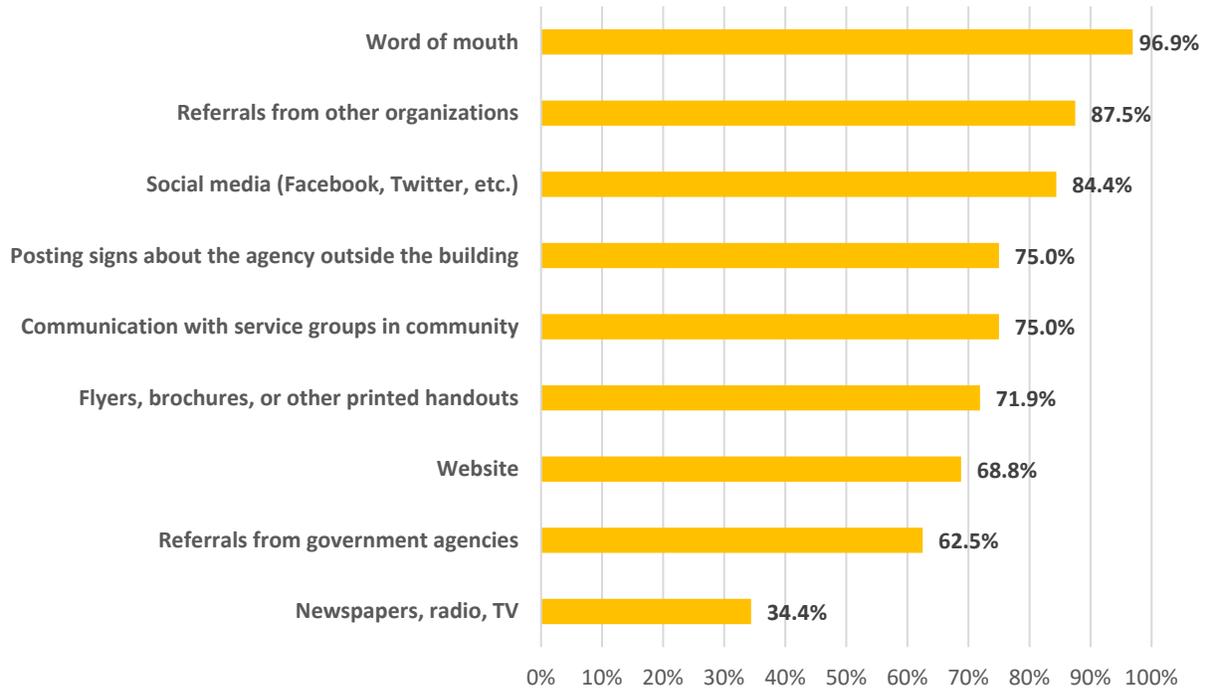
Despite the struggles that pantries faced to keep staff and volunteers safe, navigate changing COVID-19 protocols, and meet the need of their clients, the majority of pantries (81.3%) were generally confident in the agency's ability to continue to provide services in the future.

Use of Communications & Technology

Food pantries connect with their communities through a variety of means. This section covers agency communication methods, messages, and use of technology.

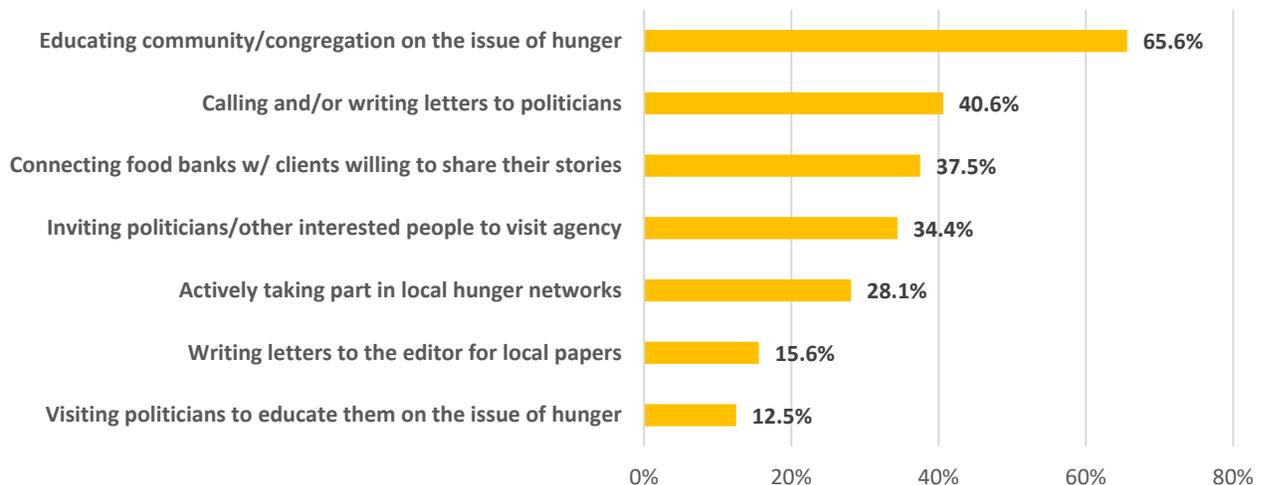
To communicate within their communities, nearly all agencies (96.9%) use word-of-mouth to get the word out about their services. Referrals from other organizations (87.5%), social media (84.4%), and signage at the food pantry (75%) are other, higher-ranked methods. Only a few pantries (34.4%) use newspaper, radio, and TV. Figure 18 below includes all response options and their relative use by agencies.

Figure 18. Methods used by agencies to let people know about services (N=32)



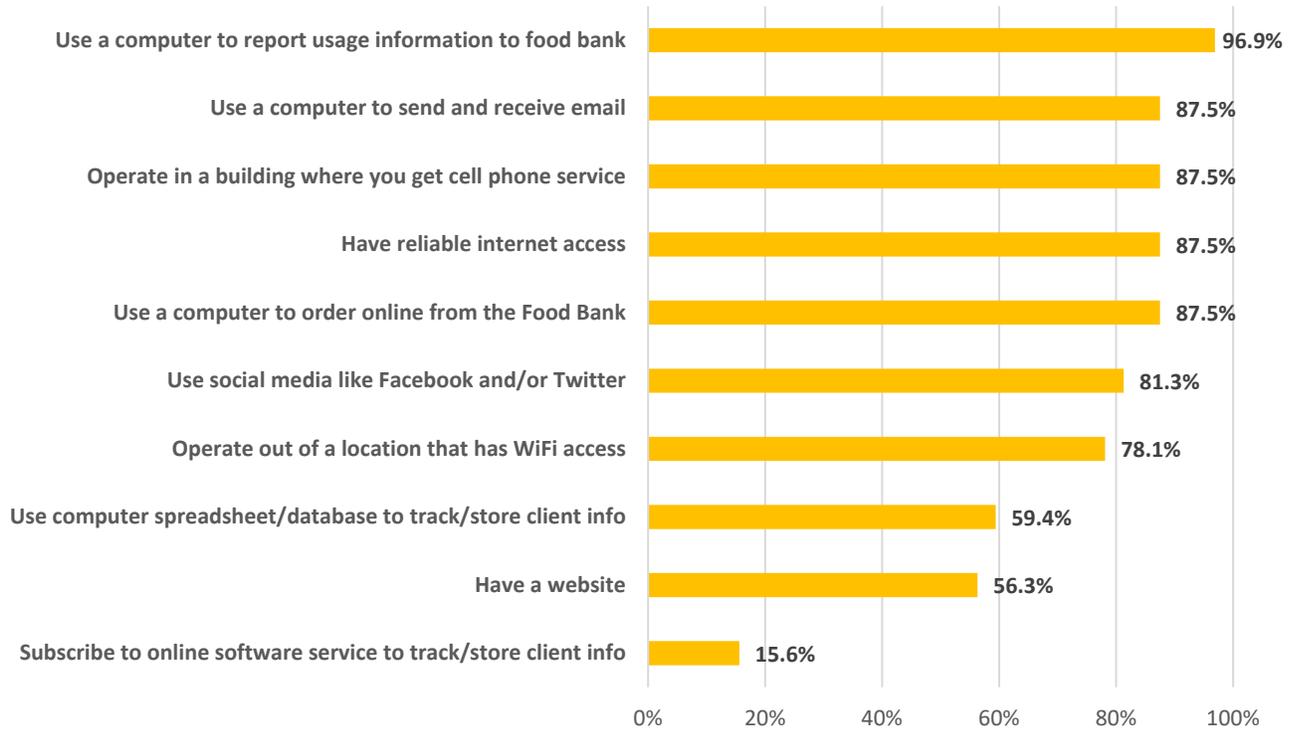
Agencies also have an opportunity to communicate about the issue of hunger to a broader audience. When asked, most agencies (65.6%) said they take part in some form of education about hunger to their community or congregation. Beyond general education aimed at their communities, 40.6% of pantries call or write letters to politicians. Other activities include helping regional food banks connect with clients willing to share their stories (37.5%), inviting politicians or other interested people to visit their agency (34.4%), and participating in local hunger networks (28.1%). Other activities are noted in Figure 19.

Figure 19. Methods used by agencies to communicate about the problem of hunger (N=32)



By and large, most agencies have embraced the internet age. They typically use computers for reporting information to their regional food bank (96.9%), email (87.5%) and ordering food from their food bank (87.5%). Additional ways that agencies use technology are shown in Figure 20.

Figure 20. How agencies use technology (N=32)



Client Intake

Many food pantries require their clients to go through an intake process before receiving services. This section includes findings on client identity verification, client eligibility requirements, and how agencies track client usage.

Most agencies (68.8%) said that clients are required to register, or to go through an intake process, before they can receive food or services. Most often, agencies require a driver's license (41.9%) or other state issued ID (32.3%), and/or a utility bill, telephone bill, or other proof of residency (38.7%). For clients that don't have necessary documentation to receive services, all pantries (100%) allow one-time service to these individuals, with some agencies (28.6%) also referring clients to another program in the community for similar services.

Many pantries (71.9%) require clients to meet specific eligibility conditions to receive services. These eligibility requirements are typically based on where the client lives (65.6%) and client household income (46.9%). Other eligibility conditions for services may include age (18.8%), citizenship (21.9%), or another condition (9.4%).

Almost all agencies (90.6%) keep track of client visits in some capacity. Most food pantries (44.8%) rely exclusively on manual records (e.g., paper/pencil, notebook, index cards). 34.5% use a combination of manual records and computer programs to keep track of client visits. The remainder of agencies use a custom designed computer program (20.7%).

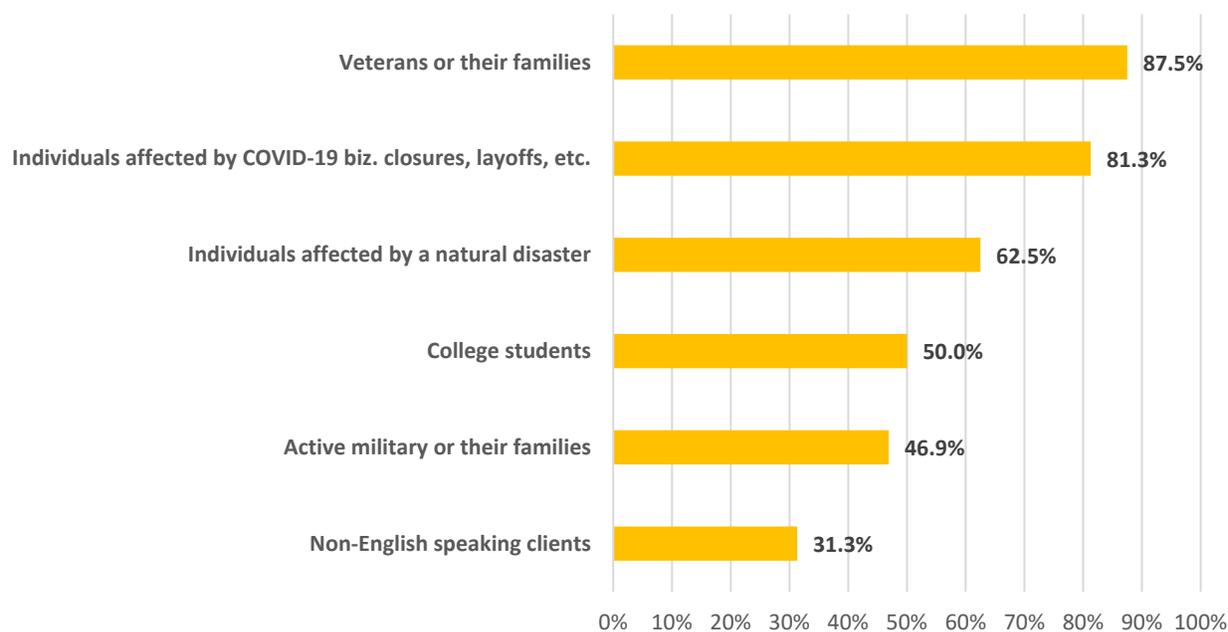
Client Characteristics

This section explores the different groups of clients served at food pantries, along with client counts. Agencies were asked about client household characteristics and changes in the number of people served compared to the previous year.

Agencies serve a wide range of food pantry clients including families with children under the age of 18 (84.4%), non-elderly adults without children (87.5%), and seniors over the age of 60 (87.5%). Some agencies (15.6%) also work specifically to address child hunger, serving only children under the age of 18 through their pantry or through a school-based program.

Agencies also served a variety of groups over the 12 months preceding the survey (March 2020 - March 2021). In particular, agencies noted veterans or their families (87.5%), individuals affected by COVID-19 (81.3%), individuals affected by natural disasters (62.5%), college students (50%), active military personnel or their families (46.9%), and non-English speaking clients (31.3%).

Figure 21. Specific groups served by agencies in the past year (N=32)



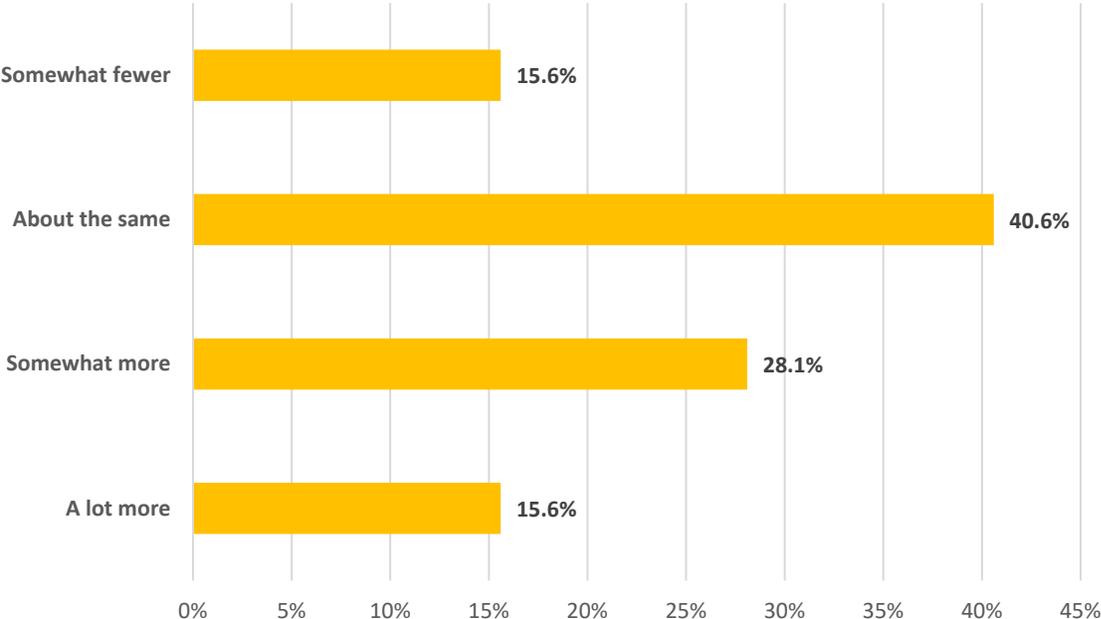
Agencies were asked to indicate the language diversity among the clients that they serve. Among responding agencies, 100% serve English speaking client households and 28.1% serve Spanish speaking households. 87.5% of agencies offer information about services in a language other than English.

Food pantries vary greatly in terms of the number of households they serve. An average food pantry in the region serves 220 unduplicated (unique) households each month. Households are reached an average of 512 times each month.

Within the Southeast Missouri Food Bank region, 54,553 unduplicated (unique) clients are served in an average month and 79,156 are served annually. An estimated 21,063 unduplicated households are served in a typical month and 30,562 are served annually. Clients are reached 56,528 times in an average month and 678,340 annually. Households are reached 21,826 times in a typical month and 261,907 annually.¹⁰

Compared to the previous year (March 2020 - March 2021), 43.8% of food pantries reported providing food to more clients, 40.6% served about the same number of clients, and 15.6% served fewer clients.

Figure 22. Client counts in March 2021 compared to the previous year. (N=32)



The impact of seasonal and COVID-19 related factors on client counts was also noted by food pantry directors, with 40% of pantries seeing greater need during school breaks (e.g., summer, long holidays, COVID-19 closures). The most attributed cause (50%) to the rise in client counts was households affected by COVID-19 business closures and layoffs.

¹⁰ This study only included food pantries (i.e., grocery programs that distribute food for off-site consumption) and did not collect data related to meal or congregate feeding programs or other types of food bank programs.

Client Service Limits

This section explores limits agencies may place on food distribution, including how often a household can get food and whether households must live within certain geographic boundaries to receive food.

Many food pantries (65.6%) limit the number of times a client or household can get food in a given period of time. Among pantries that impose restrictions, the most common reported limitation (85.7%) is that households can only receive food pantry services once per month. The COVID-19 pandemic did cause some agencies (15.4%) to change their rules and allow people to get food more frequently.

Geographic service limits are in place for 65.6% of responding agencies. Most often (66.7%) these limits are based on county boundaries.

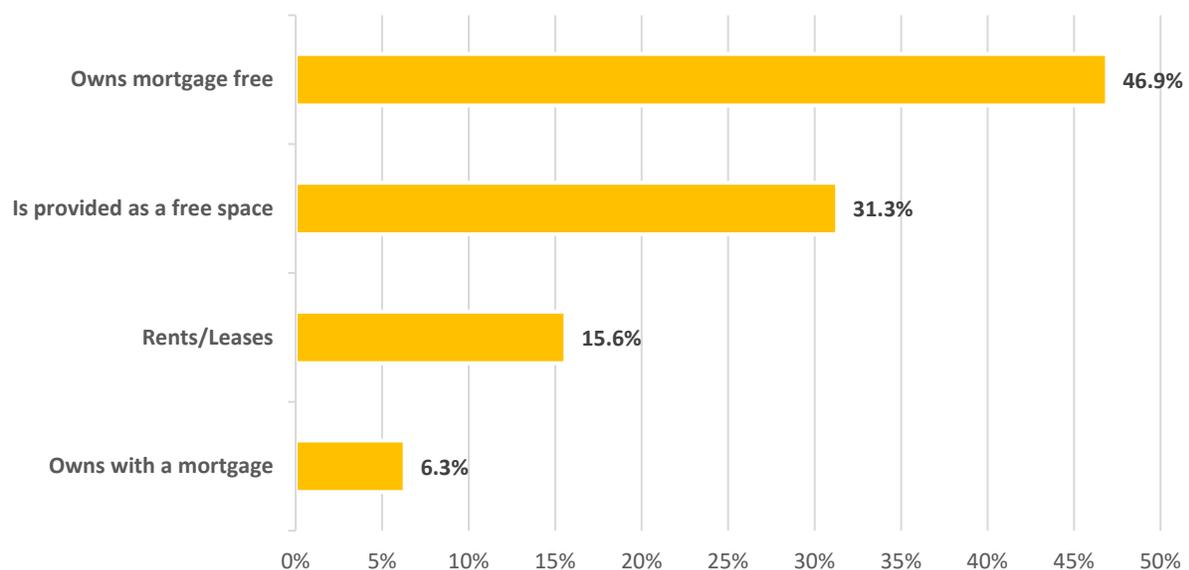
21.9% of agencies reported they turned clients away from receiving services in the past 12 months. The most common reasons for refusing services included clients seeking services who lived outside the program's service area (100%) and clients coming more often than program rules allowed (57.1%).

Facilities

Food pantry facilities and infrastructure vary among agencies. This section explores whether agencies rent or own the structure that houses their food pantry and the types of infrastructure and equipment present within a facility.

Just over three-quarters of agencies (78.1%) either own their building mortgage-free or operate in a space that is provided for free. 15.6% rent their space and 6.3% own the space with a mortgage.

Figure 23. Ownership of the facility that houses the food pantry (N=32)



Most commonly, 50% of agencies operate in a building owned by a church, mosque, synagogue, or other religious institution. Others (21.9%) are located in a retail, office, or commercial building. Most agencies (78.1%) also noted that their current location meets their needs.

The majority of agencies have freezers (93.8%) and coolers (87.5%). However, 34.4% of agencies said they don't have an adequate number of freezers while 50% reported they don't have an adequate number of coolers or refrigerators.

Table 9. Equipment and space present at the facility (N=32)

Pantry Infrastructure	Yes	No
An area where you give out food or serve meals	87.5%	12.5%
A storage area for large amounts of food that don't need refrigeration	87.5%	12.5%
A freezer	93.8%	6.3%
Adequate number of freezers	65.6%	34.4%
A cooler or refrigerator	87.5%	12.5%
Adequate number of coolers or refrigerators	50.0%	50.0%
Office space to meet with clients (to complete intake or provide referrals), like a reception area, cubicle, or office	84.4%	15.6%

Food Bank Assistance

Agencies were asked to consider what was most helpful to them in terms of what food banks currently provide. Food delivery (23.3%), general food availability (20%), and no or low-cost food (16.7%) were noted most frequently. Additional items that accounted for at least 1% of total responses are shown in Table 10 below. (Note: While agencies were asked to identify the single most important service, many mentioned multiple activities.)

Table 10. What is the most helpful good, service, benefit, or product the food bank currently provides to your agency? (N=30)

Response	%
Food delivery	23.3%
General food availability	20.0%
No/Low-cost food	16.7%
Variety of food available	13.3%
Food bank support/information	10.0%
Food item – Proteins	10.0%
Quantity of food available	10.0%
Senior specific supplies/commodities	10.0%

Food item – Non-perishable foods	6.7%
Infant care items	6.7%
Non-food items	6.7%
Food bank staff	3.3%
Food item – Frozen foods	3.3%
Food item – Sweet treats	3.3%
Mobile food pantry	3.3%
Public food assistance programs	3.3%

In terms of the most important good, service, benefit, or product the food bank could provide in the future, the most common response (23.1%) was more proteins, followed by more dairy products (15.4%), and more nutritious food (15.4%). Additional items that accounted for at least 1% of total responses are included in Table 11 below. (Note: While agencies were asked to identify the single most important service, many mentioned multiple activities.)

Table 11. What is the most important good, service, benefit, or product the food bank could provide to your agency that would allow you to better serve your clients? (N=26)

Response	%
More proteins	23.1%
More dairy products	15.4%
More nutritious food	15.4%
More food generally	11.5%
More fresh produce	11.5%
More non-perishable foods	11.5%
Nothing	11.5%
Grant writing assistance	7.7%
Improved or additional refrigeration/freezers	7.7%
Food pick-up vehicle	3.8%
Improved food quality	3.8%
Lower food pricing	3.8%
More frozen foods	3.8%

4 Client Survey Key Findings

During the period of mid-May 2021 through mid-August 2021¹¹, a total of 630 food pantry client households receiving food at a food pantry affiliated with the Southeast Missouri Food Bank responded to the client survey. The completion rate among those who were approached to take a survey was 62%. Table 12 provides details about completed surveys within the region, including the number and percent of surveys completed at each pantry.

Table 12. Client survey responses by food pantry

Food Bank Region	n	%
Black River Baptist Pantry	14	2.2%
Bread Shed MFP - Poplar Bluff	30	4.8%
Caruthersville SEMO Pantry	9	1.4%
Catholic Social Ministries	46	7.3%
Celebrate Recovery/ FBC of Perryville	10	1.6%
Doniphan First Baptist Church MFP	18	2.9%
Faith Family Worship	36	5.7%
Flame of Hope	14	2.2%
Good Neighbor Pantry (GNP)	32	5.1%
Helping Hand	22	3.5%
Jackson R-2 MFP	13	2.1%
Jonah's Java	7	1.1%
Ladies of Charity	12	1.9%
Lake Wappapello Methodist Pantry	14	2.2%
Lean on Me Pantry	27	4.3%
Lighthouse Tyson MFP	19	3.0%
Madison County Food Pantry	16	2.5%
Marble Hill Pantry	30	4.8%
New Madrid Food Pantry	14	2.2%
Open Door Food Pantry	14	2.2%
Piedmont MFP (Clearwater Youth Center)	22	3.5%
Portageville R.A.I.N. MFP	22	3.5%
Qulin Food Pantry	8	1.3%
Red Star Pantry	19	3.0%

¹¹ Mention of “the past year” in this section is meant to generally include the summer 2020 – summer 2021.

Reynolds Co Food Pantry	8	1.3%
Shining Light Food Pantry	21	3.3%
St. Vincent DePaul - PB	58	9.2%
St. Vincent DePaul Society	7	1.1%
Stoddard County Gospel Rescue	33	5.2%
Twin Rivers Fisk MFP	20	3.2%
United Voice of Zion	15	2.4%
Total	630	100.0%

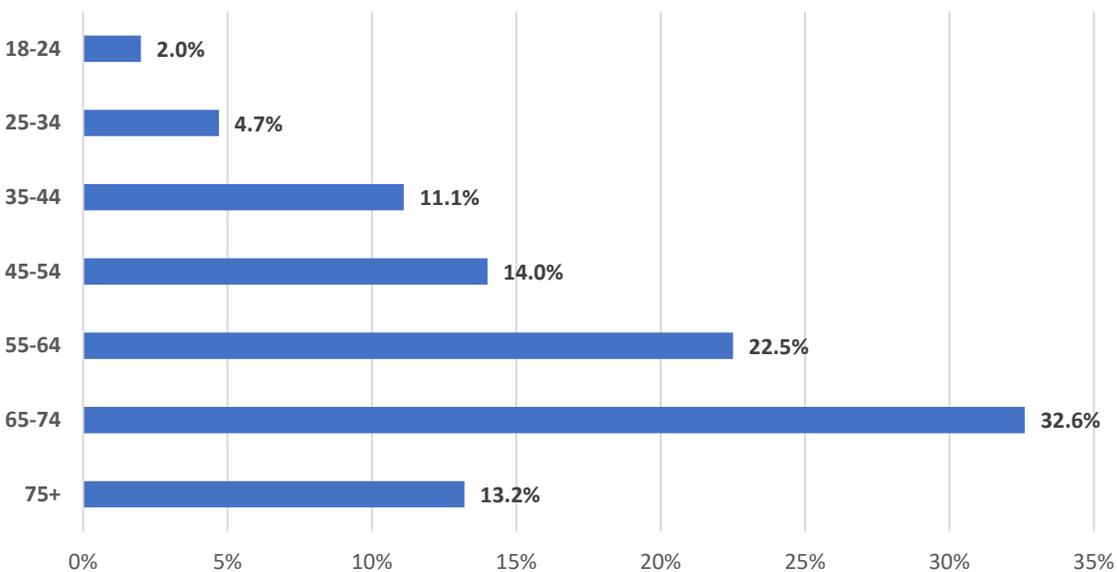
Client Characteristics

This section provides information about the age, gender, education level, race, living situation, primary language spoken at home, and marital status of food pantry client households. Information about the presence of an active military member or veteran in the home is also included.

A majority of clients (69.9%) identify as a woman, 29.8% identify as a man, and 0.3% identify as gender non-conforming/non-binary or another identity. Nearly four-fifths (77.3%) have achieved a high school diploma or higher level of education.

68.2% of food pantry clients who participated in the survey were 55 years of age or older, with 45.8% of respondents 65 years of age or older. Figure 24 provides a detailed breakdown of client survey respondent ages.

Figure 24. Age of client survey respondents (N=614)



Over four-fifths of clients surveyed (83.5%) identify as Caucasian/White. 11.6% identify as African American/Black. 0.6% identify as Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx. Additional races and ethnicities of clients are noted in Table 13.

Table 13. Race and ethnicity of client survey respondents (N=619)

Race and Ethnicity	%
African American/Black	11.6%
Asian American/Asian	0.2%
Caucasian/White	83.5%
Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	0.6%
Native American or Alaskan Native	1.3%
Pacific Islander	0.0%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.0%
Another identity	0.3%
Multiple identities	2.4%

The majority of clients (88.5%) live in their own home. Some (6%) live in a household with other people or have a roommate and 3.7% report being unsheltered or living in a temporary living situation.

English is the primary language spoken at home for 99.4% of clients. The next most common language spoken in 0.3% of homes is Spanish.

The largest percentage of clients (34.1%) report they are either married or in a domestic partnership. 22.1% say they are currently divorced. Others report their status as single and never married (14.1%), widowed (20%), not married but currently living with a partner (4.4%), or separated (5.2%).

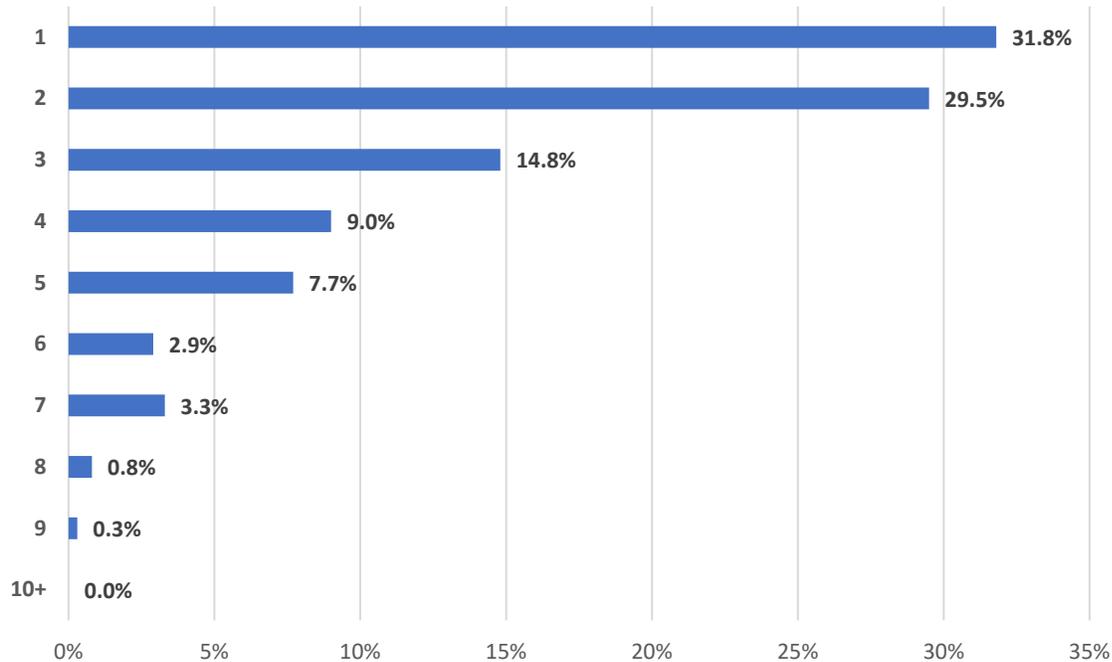
A very limited number of client households (0.7%) include someone who is currently serving in the military, while 17.2% of households include someone who had served in the US Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard in the past.

Household Composition

This section includes information about client household size along with children and adults (including seniors) living in households.

Client households include 2.6 people on average, with 76.1% including three or fewer people. Figure 25 below includes additional details about the size of client households.

Figure 25. Household size (N=614)



In terms of the number of adults present in households, 38.4% have one adult and 40.8% have two adults. 53.4% of households include an adult who is over the age of 65.

Just under one-third of households (30%) include at least one child under 18 years of age. Of those households, 44.9% have at least one child under six years of age. Among all households with at least one child under 18, 21.6% are headed by a single adult.

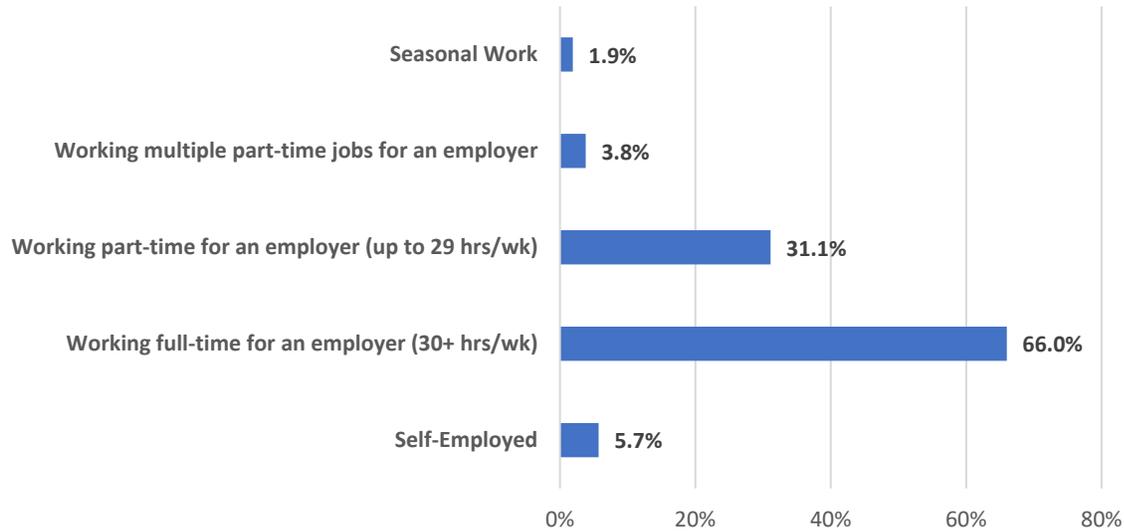
Employment & Income

This section includes findings on the employment status of adults in households. Food pantry clients also provided information about their monthly and annual household income and additional sources of household income beyond employment.

Among all client households surveyed, 35.5% have at least one employed adult in the house. 5.8% of households have an adult in the household who is currently a student.

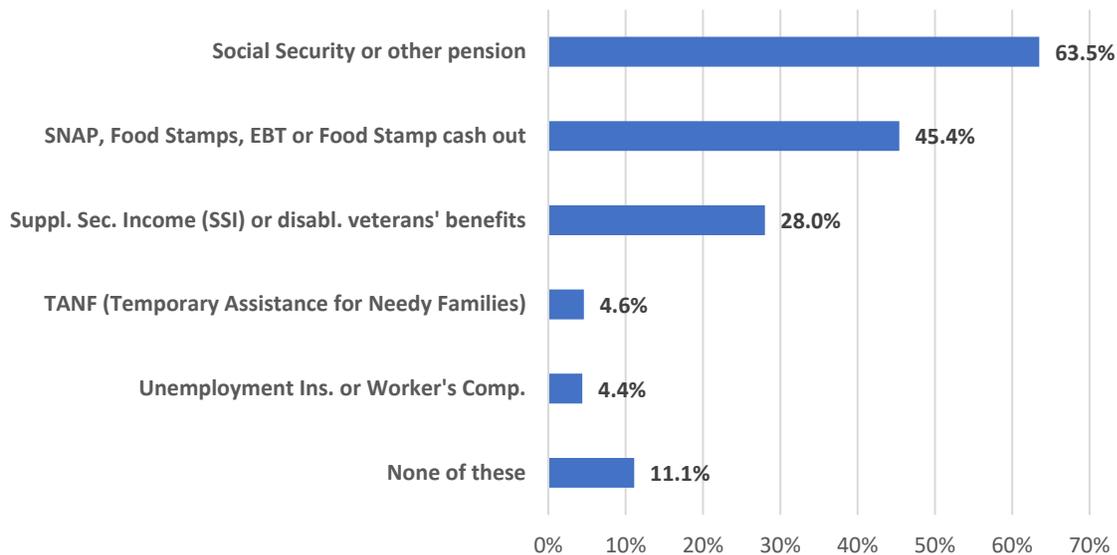
A closer look at the employment status of adult household members shows that 66% of households with a working adult have a member who is working full-time (30 or more hours per week). 31.1% of households with a working adult have a member who is working part time (less than 30 hours per week). The remainder of households with a working adult include someone who is self-employed (5.7%), employed in seasonal work (1.9%), or working multiple part-time positions (3.8%).

Figure 26. Types of employment for adults during the past year (N=212)



Food pantry client households rely on a variety of income sources other than employment. 63.5% receive income through Social Security or other types of pensions, 45.4% receive income through SNAP, and 28% receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disabled veteran’s benefits. Only a small fraction receives unemployment insurance or worker’s compensation (4.4%) or support through the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program (4.6%).

Figure 27. Additional sources of household income received during the past year (N=614)



87.4% of households make \$25,000 or less in combined annual household income (from all income sources) while 10.9% of households make \$5,000 or less a year. 82.1% of households make \$2000 or less per month. Figure 28 and Figure 29 show more details about annual and monthly income of food pantry client households. For information about monthly income

relative to household size, and how that impacts SNAP eligibility, see the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\) Use](#) section below.

Figure 28. Combined annual household income (N=523)

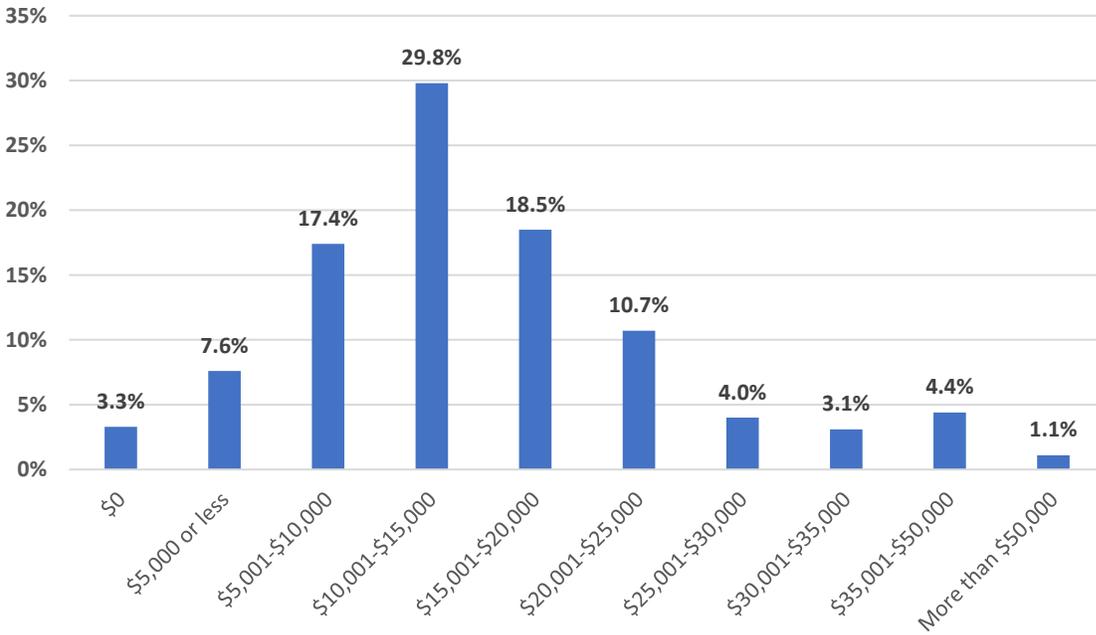


Figure 29. Combined monthly household income (N=565)

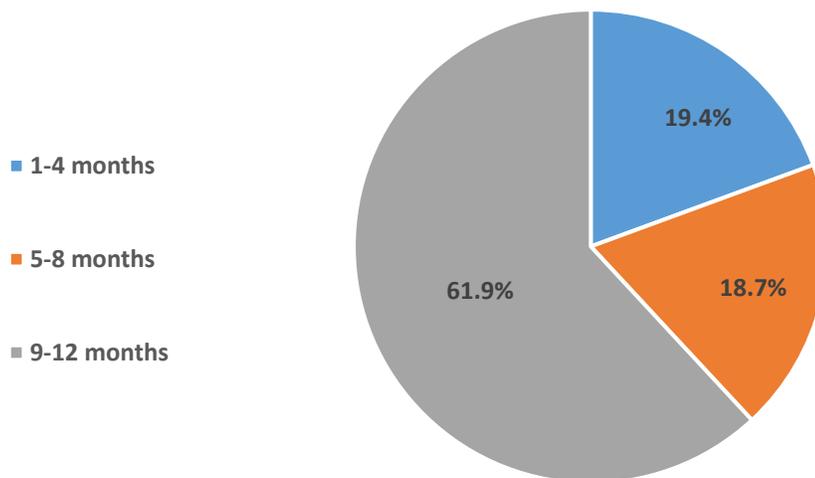


Food Pantry Use & Preferences

The findings in this section show how often households used a pantry in the past year, how long they have used a pantry, and what may have prevented them using a pantry as often as they desired. In addition, people were asked how long food from the pantry lasts for their household and what programs or services other than food would be most useful to access at a pantry.

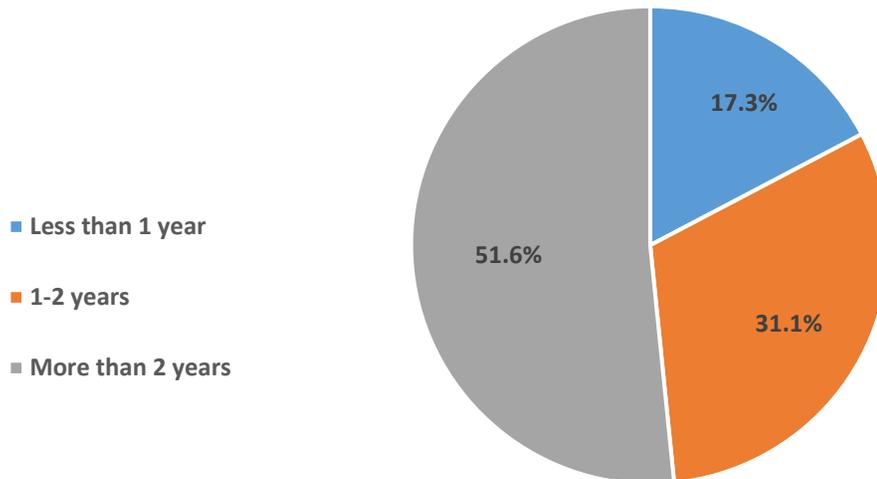
During the past year, 61.9% of respondent households utilized a food pantry nine or more months. A closer look shows that 51.1% households utilized a food pantry every month during the previous year. Figure 30 provides a complete breakdown of the frequency of pantry use during the past year. Study findings also show that just under one-third of households (32.3%) utilized a food pantry more than once during the previous month.

Figure 30. Number of months households used a food pantry during the past year (N=609)



In terms of the duration of food pantry use, 51.6% of households have used a food pantry for more than 2 years. 31.3% have used a pantry for one to two years. 17.3% are new food pantry users, have used a pantry for less than a year, and started using a pantry during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Figure 31. How long households have used a food pantry (N=614)

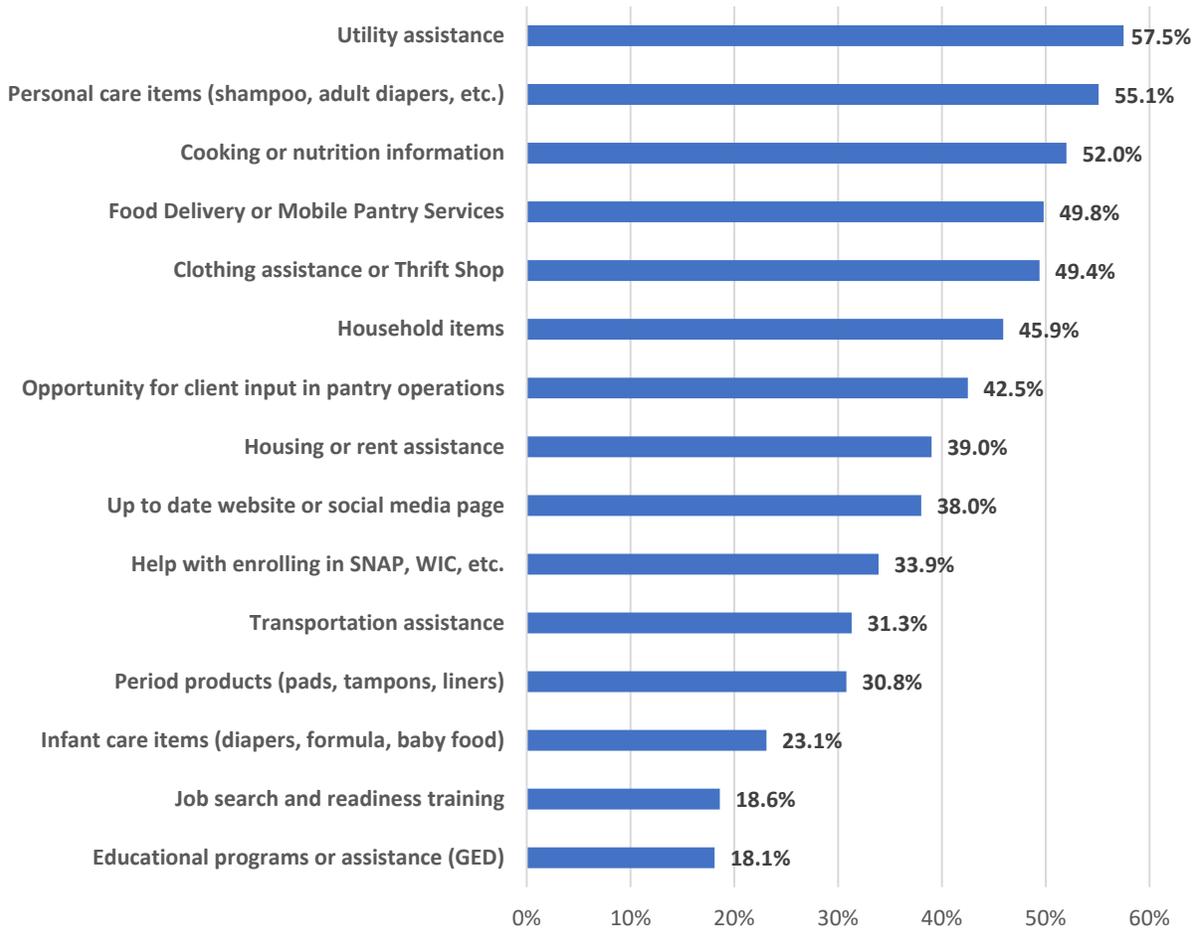


Clients also highlighted the role that pantry provisions play in the food consumed by their household during an average month. For 86.1% of households, at least a quarter of food consumed by the household in a typical month is obtained from a food pantry. For 47.1% of households, at least half of the food consumed in a typical month is obtained from a food pantry.

Nearly one-third of food pantry clients (31.4%) said there was a time they needed assistance but were not able to use the food pantry. A lack of transportation was the most common issue mentioned by clients (60.1%), followed by hours of operation (28.2%), and having already used the food pantry during a given period (13.8%).

Food pantry clients were given the chance to identify programs or services beyond food that would be helpful at an “ideal food pantry.” Figure 32 includes the results from this question. The top three results included utility assistance (57.5%), personal care items (55.1%), and cooking or nutrition information (52%).

Figure 32. Most helpful programs or services other than food that could be offered (N=623)



Food Security Status

This section includes a summary of results from the USDA-Economic Research Service U.S. *Household Food Security Module: Six-Item Short Form*¹² that was utilized for the study.

Findings show that rates of food insecurity are dramatically higher among food pantry client households when compared to all Missouri households. Based on this study's findings, 60.9% of food pantry client households are food insecure (noted in yellow in Figure 33 below). In contrast, the most recent data from the USDA¹³ shows that 11.5% of all Missouri households are food insecure. The remainder of food pantry client households (39.1%) are considered to

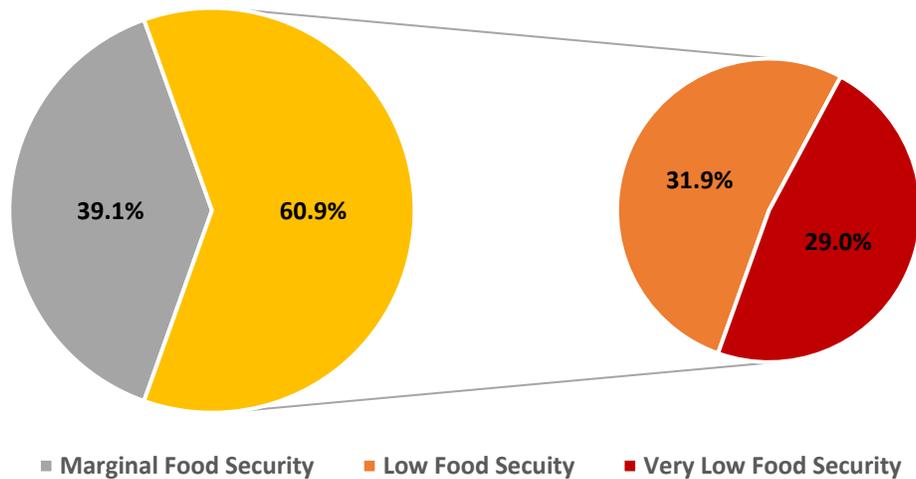
¹² USDA Survey Tools at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/survey-tools/#six>.

¹³ USDA Household Food Security in the United States in 2020 report at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=102075>.

have marginal food security¹⁴, indicated by households having “anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house¹⁵.”

Of the 60.9% of food insecure households, nearly half (47.7%) have *low* food security, indicated by “reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet”, and half have *very low* food security, indicated by “disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake¹⁶.” This latter group of *very low* food secure households – those who truly don’t have enough food to meet their needs – make up 29% of all food pantry client households surveyed. By comparison, the *very low* food security rate for all Missouri households is 5.1%.

Figure 33. Food insecurity among food pantry client households (N=568)



Trade-offs

People who are food insecure often struggle with affording other necessities of life. This section highlights the tough decisions that food pantry clients must make when it comes to paying for food or paying for essentials including medicine, utilities, housing, transportation, education expenses, and childcare. Table 14 below includes responses to the question, “In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household ever had to choose between paying for food and paying for...?”

¹⁴ The remaining 39.1% of non-food insecure households may have reported 0, 1, or 2 indications of food insecurity. All were assigned to the “marginal food security” category by virtue of their presence at a food pantry, even if 0 indications of food insecurity were noted. According to USDA, food secure households have an “[a]ssured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways (that is, without resorting to emergency food supplies, scavenging, stealing, or other coping strategies).” See USDA Food Security in the U.S. Measurement page at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/measurement/>.

¹⁵ USDA Definitions of Food Security at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/#ranges>.

¹⁶ USDA Definitions of Food Security at <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/definitions-of-food-security/#ranges>.

Paying for utilities poses the greatest trade-off challenge for most households (32.6%). This is followed by paying for medicine/medical care (28.1%), housing (21.7%), transportation (23.5%), and education expenses (4.5%). For households with children, 10.2% report having to choose between paying for childcare and food.

Table 14. Food pantry client household trade-offs

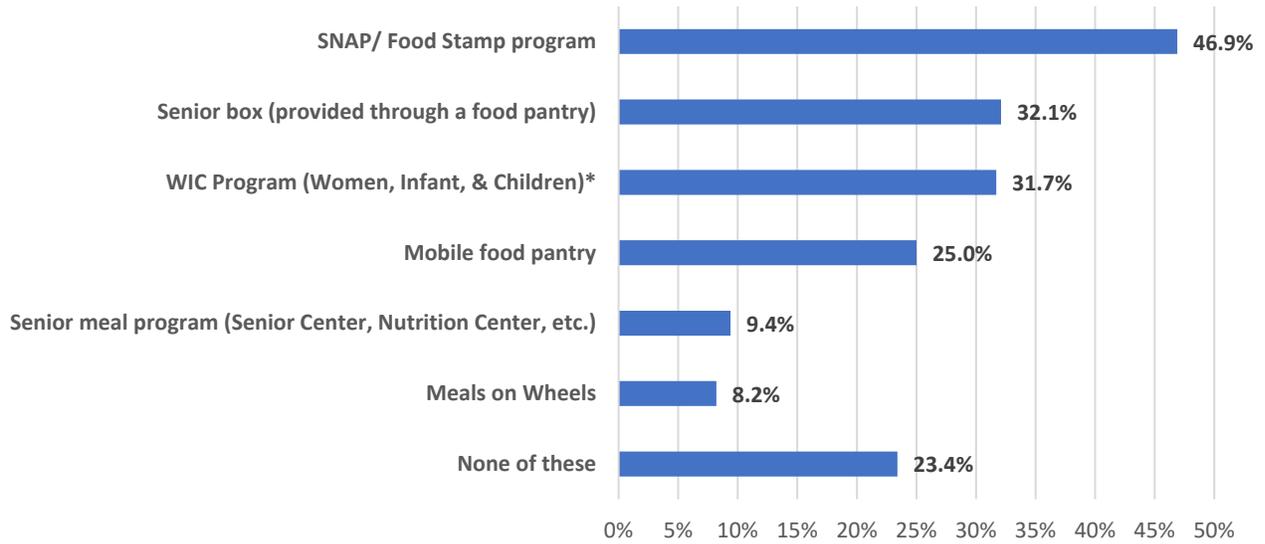
Trade-off	%	N
Medicine/Medical care	28.1%	602
Utilities	32.6%	602
Housing	21.7%	600
Transportation	23.5%	599
Education expenses	4.5%	594
Childcare (among HHs with children)	10.2%	176

Additional Food Sources & Coping Strategies

Those facing food insecurity use food pantries along with other programs and strategies to meet their food and nutrition needs. This section explores peoples’ use of federal and other food assistance programs in the past 12 months, including those focused on children. Findings also highlight the strategies clients use to make their food budget go farther.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is utilized by the most households (46.9%). Other programs such as senior boxes (32.1%) the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) (31.7%), and mobile food pantries (25%) were noted as well. Just under one-quarter of households (23.4%) do not use any of the listed programs. Figure 34 provides additional details about the use of additional food assistance programs.

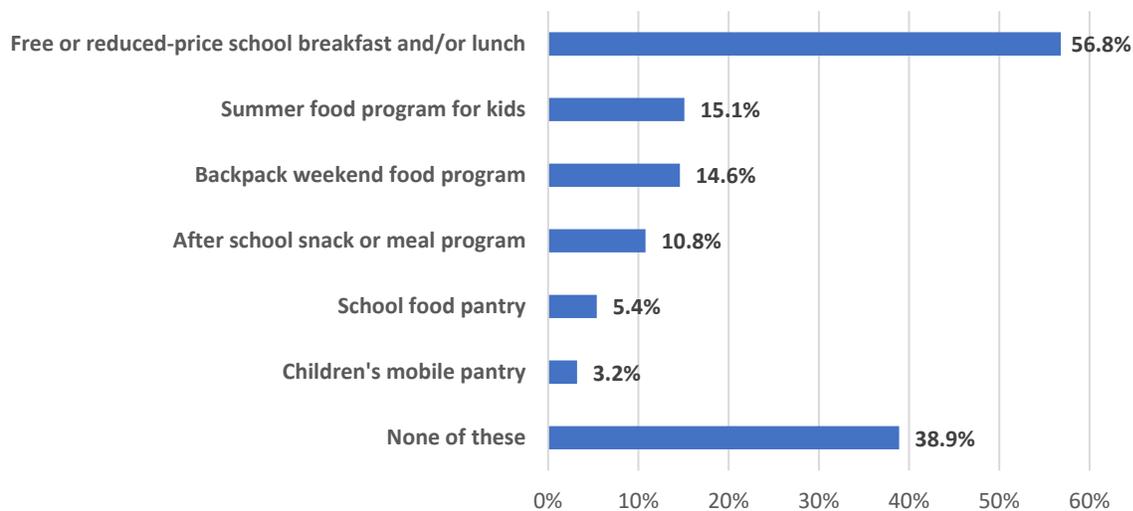
Figure 34. Additional food assistance programs used by households in the past year (N=603)



* Percent of WIC participants among households with children under 5 years of age

Child nutrition programs provide important sources of food for households with children. For example, 56.8% of households with children participate in the free or reduced-price breakfast or lunch programs. Summer food programs for children (15.1%), backpack programs (14.6%), after school snacks or meals (10.8%), and school food pantries (5.4%), and children’s mobile pantries (3.2%) were noted as well. 38.9% of households with children do not use any of the listed programs.

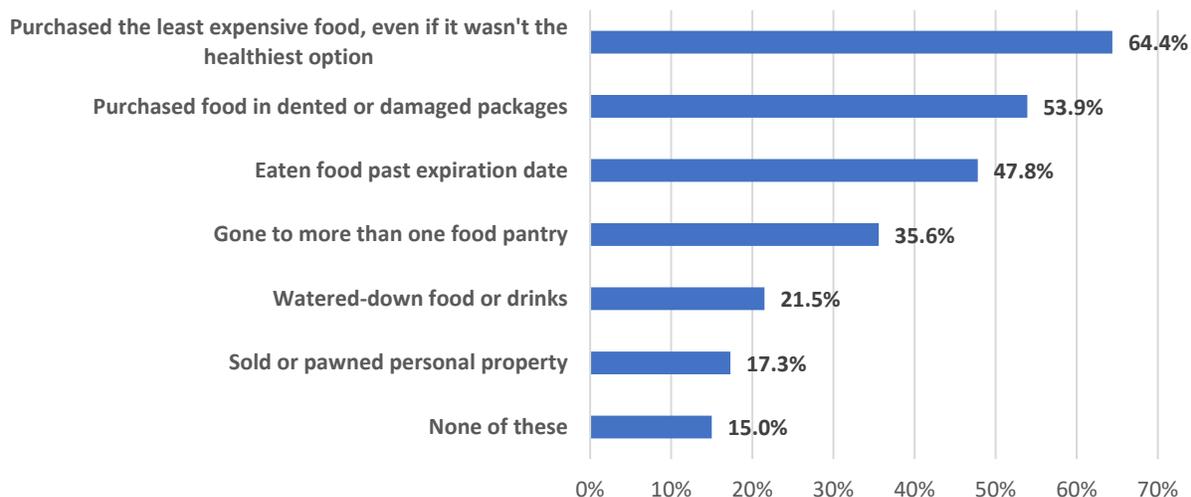
Figure 35. Child nutrition program participation among households with children (N=185)



Households use a variety of coping strategies to stretch their food budget. A majority of households (64.4%) noted purchasing the least expensive food, even if it wasn’t the healthiest

option. 53.9% purchased food in dented or damaged packages, 47.8% ate food past its expiration date, and 35.6% had gone to more than one food pantry. Households also watered-down food or drinks (21.5%) or sold or pawned personal property (17.3%). Only 15% had not used any of the strategies listed.

Figure 36. Coping strategies utilized by households (N=595)



Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Use

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance program provides essential benefits to people facing or living with food insecurity. This section explores SNAP use among client households in detail. The findings center on household income eligibility for SNAP and reasons households may not use SNAP.

As noted in the previous section, 46.9% of households surveyed utilized SNAP at some point in the past 12 months. However, findings from this study indicate that an estimated 72.6% of households are income eligible for SNAP. It is important to note that income is not the only qualification for SNAP. In Missouri, other qualifications include having (or applying for) a Social Security number for all household members, not owning more than \$2,500 in resources (or \$3,750 if everyone in the household is over 60 years of age or disabled), and not having a felony drug conviction¹⁷.

In Table 15 below, monthly household income is shown by household size. The orange boxes show the number of households who are income eligible for SNAP, using 130% of the Federal Poverty Level (the income threshold for SNAP) as the threshold. The table then tallies the number of SNAP eligible households and divides that number by the total number of

¹⁷ Missouri Department of Social Service SNAP eligibility criteria at <https://mydss.mo.gov/food-assistance/apply-for-snap>.

households to provide the percentage of food pantry client households (72.6%) who are income eligible for SNAP.

Table 15. Estimated percentage of SNAP-eligible households (N=558)

Monthly Income	Household Size										Total HHs	SNAP Eligible HHs
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+		
\$0	7	5	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	18	18
<\$500	10	10	4	2	3	1	3	1	0	0	34	34
\$501-\$1000	87	28	16	7	11	3	3	1	0	0	156	156
\$1001-\$2000	75	74	39	22	22	8	6	2	1	0	249	174
\$2001-\$3000	3	27	19	7	5	3	6	0	0	0	70	21
\$3001-\$4000	0	6	5	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	18	2
>\$4000	2	7	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
Total											558	405
												72.6%

Among all food pantry clients who don't use SNAP, 54.3% had applied but didn't or no longer qualify for benefits. For those who didn't qualify for SNAP, 60.3% said their income was too high to qualify and 7.9% said their assets were too high qualify. Some reported application issues (6%), exhausting the time period to receive benefits (1.3%), another reason (15.9%), or not being sure about why they didn't qualify (8.6%).

Among food pantry clients who hadn't applied for SNAP, 56.5% said they didn't think they were eligible. Others noted personal reasons (6.9%), an application process that is too difficult (6.9%), unfamiliarity with the program (4.6%), or another reason (25.2%).

Health

Chronic health conditions and inadequate or no access to health insurance impact the overall quality of life of hundreds of thousands of Missourians. In addition, social and economic factors can exacerbate health disparities. This section includes findings on the percent of households and household members who have diabetes, high blood pressure or hypertension, high cholesterol, and who lack health care coverage.

Among all food pantry client households surveyed, 50.5% percent of households include at least one individual with diabetes, 71.5% have a member with high blood pressure, and 59.2%

have a member with high cholesterol. 26.9% have a household member who lacks health insurance. Table 16 provides a summary of this information.

Table 16. Health conditions among households (N=598)

Health Condition/Circumstance	Households with Condition Present
Diabetes	50.5%
High blood pressure/hypertension	71.5%
High cholesterol	59.2%
Lack of health insurance	26.9%

Findings from this study presented in Table 17 allow for a comparison with Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) data¹⁸ to understand how rates of health conditions among food pantry clients compare to all Missourians. For all of the health conditions explored, adults in food pantry client households fare worse than the general public. Diabetes impacts 30.4% of adults in food pantry client households, compared to 10.8% of all Missouri adults. Similarly, high blood pressure/hypertension impacts 46.5% of adults in client households, compared to 30.9% of all Missouri adults. Rates of high cholesterol impact 38.1% of adults in food pantry client households compared to 34.4% of all Missouri adults (34.4%).

While not directly comparable to BRFSS data, it is important to note that 21.4% of people in food pantry client households lack health care coverage.

Table 17. Health conditions among adults (N=605)

Health Condition	Adults in Food Pantry Client HHs	Missouri Average ¹⁹
Diabetes	30.4%	10.8%
High blood pressure/Hypertension	46.5%	30.9%
High cholesterol	38.1%	34.4%

¹⁸ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention BRFSS Prevalence & Data at <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/brfssprevalence/>.

¹⁹ Missouri average is from CDC BRFSS Prevalence & Trends Data. Data are from most recent years available (2019 for high blood pressure and high cholesterol; 2020 for diabetes).

5 Complete Study Findings

This section includes the complete study findings for all questions asked in the agency and client surveys.

Agency Survey

Region Breakdown & Agency Type

Responding agencies and response rate			
	Responding Agencies	Total Agencies in Region	Response Rate
Southeast Missouri Food Bank (Sikeston, MO)	35	81	43.2%
Percent of total clients served by responding agencies			34.0%

What best describes your agency? N=35	
	%
Faith-based or located in a religious institution	57.1%
A governmental agency	2.9%
A Community Action Program (CAP)	0.0%
Nonprofit or private organization (non-faith-based, governmental, or CAP)	40.0%
Other	0.0%
Total	100.0%

Food Sources

Thinking about the total pounds of food that your agency gave out or served during the past 12 months, please estimate the percentage (%) of that food your agency got through each of the following sources. N=35	
	Average
Food bank (including coordinated food rescue & retail pick-up program)	60.9%
Local product donations the agency obtained on its own (e.g., donations directly from retailers, food drives, etc.)	13.6%
Buying food from retail stores or food service companies	14.9%
Buying food from local manufacturers	1.4%
Buying food from other sources (e.g., food coop, direct purchases from farmers/growers, Internet, wholesalers)	3.3%
Government product donations not obtained from the food bank (e.g., USDA Food Boxes, Farmers to Families)	5.9%
Total	100.0%

During the past 12 months did this program get donations of food and grocery products from...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Churches or religious congregations	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Local restaurants	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%
Other local stores	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Local manufacturers	28.1%	71.9%	100.0%
Farmers	43.8%	56.3%	100.0%
Local food drives (e.g., Boy Scouts, Letter Carriers, etc.)	43.8%	56.3%	100.0%
Federal commodities, such as The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP/EFAP)	56.3%	43.8%	100.0%
Emergency Food and Shelter Program	6.3%	93.8%	100.0%
State funded food purchase program	6.3%	93.8%	100.0%
Some other donated source	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%

During the past 12 months, how often did this agency BUY each of the following food and grocery products from sources other than the food bank? How often did this program purchase...?						
	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never	N	Total
Bread, rice, cereals, and pasta	12.5%	40.6%	21.9%	25.0%	32	100.0%
Fresh fruits and vegetables	9.7%	12.9%	32.3%	45.2%	31	100.0%
Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables	25.0%	34.4%	15.6%	25.0%	32	100.0%
Meat, poultry, and fish	21.9%	21.9%	12.5%	43.8%	32	100.0%
Non-meat proteins - beans, eggs, peanut butter, and nuts	15.6%	37.5%	6.3%	40.6%	32	100.0%
Milk, yogurt, and cheese	15.6%	12.5%	18.8%	53.1%	32	100.0%
Fats, oils, condiments, and sweets	6.3%	18.8%	28.1%	46.9%	32	100.0%
Paper plates, napkins, plastic silverware	15.6%	28.1%	9.4%	46.9%	32	100.0%
Personal care products (e.g., soap, toothpaste, deodorant)	25.0%	25.0%	9.4%	40.6%	32	100.0%
Household products (e.g., laundry detergent, cleaning products)	18.8%	21.9%	9.4%	50.0%	32	100.0%
Baby products (e.g., laundry detergent, cleaning products)	12.5%	15.6%	15.6%	56.3%	32	100.0%
Senior products (e.g., adult diapers, meal replacement drinks, prepared foods)	6.3%	9.4%	18.8%	65.6%	32	100.0%

What would the effect be on this program if you no longer got food from the food bank? N=32	
	%
Major effect	84.4%
Minor effect	15.6%
No effect at all	0.0%
Total	100.0%

How would you describe how much food this program had available to meet your clients' needs during the past 12 months? N=32	
	%
The program had a lot more food than needed to meet clients' needs	3.1%
The program had somewhat more food than needed to meet clients' needs	12.5%
The program had enough food to meet clients' needs	65.6%
The program had somewhat less food than needed to meet clients' needs	15.6%
The program had a lot less food than needed to meet clients' needs	3.1%
Total	100.0%

Please indicate the ways that this program obtains food and grocery products from the food bank. N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Agency owns the truck(s), van(s), or car(s) used for pickups	40.6%	59.4%	100.0%
Agency rents/leases the truck(s), van(s), or car(s) used for pickups	6.3%	93.8%	100.0%
Agency depends on the personal truck(s), van(s), or car(s) of staff or volunteers for pickups	53.1%	46.9%	100.0%
Agency works with other programs to share the responsibility for pickups	9.4%	90.6%	100.0%
Food and groceries are delivered to our agency	68.8%	31.3%	100.0%

Staffing & Training

Does your agency have paid staff? N=35	
	%
Yes	37.1%
No	62.9%
Total	100.0%

Number of paid staff N=35						
	Full-Time Paid Staff	% (w/ # Full-Time Staff)	Part-Time Paid Staff	% (w/ # Part-Time Staff)	Total Paid Staff	% Total Paid Staff
0	26	74.3%	24	68.6%	22	62.9%
1	2	5.7%	4	11.4%	2	5.7%
2	0	0.0%	1	2.9%	1	2.9%
3	1	2.9%	1	2.9%	1	2.9%
4	2	5.7%	0	0.0%	1	2.9%
5+	4	11.4%	5	14.3%	8	22.9%
Total	35	100.0%	35	100.0%	35	100.0%

Volunteer breakdown (# and hours by week and month)				
	Mean	Min	Max	N
How many volunteers give time to this program in an average week?	9	0	35	26
How many volunteers give time to this program in an average month?	39	0	500	30
How many total hours do volunteers give to this program in an average week?	38	0	175	25
How many total hours do volunteers give to this program in an average month?	273	0	5040	30

For each of the sources listed below, please estimate the percentage of this program's volunteers who come from that source. N=32						
	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	Total
Volunteers already connected to the agency	12.5%	9.4%	12.5%	3.1%	62.5%	100.0%
Religious groups	40.6%	21.9%	3.1%	3.1%	31.3%	100.0%
United Way	87.5%	9.4%	0.0%	3.1%	0.0%	100.0%
Other Civic/Nonprofit organizations (excluding United Way)	78.1%	21.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Companies or business groups	75.0%	18.8%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Kindergarten through 12th grade school programs	71.9%	28.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Colleges/Universities	96.9%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Court-ordered community service	59.4%	34.4%	3.1%	3.1%	0.0%	100.0%
Clients	75.0%	18.8%	3.1%	0.0%	3.1%	100.0%
Volunteers connect your regional food bank	87.5%	6.3%	3.1%	0.0%	3.1%	100.0%
National Guard	93.8%	6.3%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Some other source	81.3%	18.8%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Percentage of volunteers by age group: N=32	
	Mean
≤18	7.4%
19-59	39.3%
60+	53.3%

In the past 12 months, how much difficulty has your agency had...? N=32				
	A lot	Some	None	Total
Keeping the volunteers you already have	9.4%	25.0%	65.6%	100.0%
Getting new volunteers	21.9%	34.4%	43.8%	100.0%
Keeping new volunteers	12.5%	25.0%	62.5%	100.0%

How does your current ability to get and keep volunteers compare to your efforts before COVID-19 (i.e., March 2020)? N=32	
	%
Much more difficult now	15.6%
A bit more difficult now	15.6%
About the same	68.8%
A bit easier now	0.0%
Much easier now	0.0%
Total	100.0%

Do the staff/volunteers of this program need training in any of the following specific areas? N=31				
	A lot of training is needed	Some training is needed	No training is needed	Total
Nutrition education	3.2%	12.9%	83.9%	100.0%
Training in food safety and sanitation	3.2%	22.6%	74.2%	100.0%
Accessing local food resources	6.5%	22.6%	71.0%	100.0%
Advocacy training	3.2%	12.9%	83.9%	100.0%
Food Stamp (SNAP) application assistance and outreach	6.5%	3.2%	90.3%	100.0%
Summer feeding programs	3.2%	6.5%	90.3%	100.0%
Fundraising / grant writing training	12.9%	29.0%	58.1%	100.0%
Client choice training	9.7%	12.9%	77.4%	100.0%
Technology assistance	6.5%	16.1%	77.4%	100.0%
Social media training	9.7%	12.9%	77.4%	100.0%
Nonprofit management / board governance	9.7%	6.5%	83.9%	100.0%
Volunteer recruitment / retention / staff succession planning	3.2%	19.4%	77.4%	100.0%
Disaster training	6.5%	22.6%	71.0%	100.0%

Do staff/volunteers have the time needed to dedicate to participating in and implementing the identified trainings? N=18	
	%
Yes	33.3%
No	22.2%
Don't Know	44.4%
Total	100.0%

Nutrition Education & Healthy Food

Does your agency do anything to teach clients about nutrition or how to eat better? N=33	
	%
Yes	63.6%
No	36.4%
Total	100.0%

Which of the following activities about nutrition or eating better does your agency do with clients? N=33				
	Provide at pantry	Refer to another agency	Neither	Total
Fliers or written materials on nutrition and health	60.6%	0.0%	39.4%	100.0%
Cooking demonstrations or tasting of healthier foods	15.2%	6.1%	78.8%	100.0%
Workshops or classes on nutrition, health issues, or shopping on a budget	18.2%	18.2%	63.6%	100.0%
Cooking classes	15.2%	6.1%	78.8%	100.0%
Workshops or classes on specific health problems related to nutrition (e.g., diabetes)	15.2%	24.2%	60.6%	100.0%
Training on gardening skills	3.0%	15.2%	81.8%	100.0%
One-on-one meetings with dietician or other person trained to help people with nutrition and health	3.0%	15.2%	81.8%	100.0%
Referring clients to activities related to nutrition or eating better at other locations	27.3%	9.1%	63.6%	100.0%

Who leads these activities related to nutrition or eating better? Are they led by...? N=20			
	Yes	No	Total
Agency staff	65.0%	35.0%	100.0%
Agency volunteers	45.0%	55.0%	100.0%
Local nutritionists or other health professionals in partnership with the agency	45.0%	55.0%	100.0%
Food bank staff	35.0%	65.0%	100.0%
Extension staff	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Staff from local colleges/universities	10.0%	90.0%	100.0%
Farm Bureau	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Some other person/agency	5.0%	95.0%	100.0%

How important is it that your agency gives out/serves "healthier" foods like fruits, vegetables, milk, whole grains, lean meats, etc.? N=33	
	%
Very Important	75.8%
Somewhat Important	24.2%
Not Important	0.0%
Total	100.0%

Which statement would you say best describes your agency's beliefs about getting food products and giving them to clients? N=32	
	%
The most important thing is giving the maximum amount of food we can get to clients, even if some of it is not as nutritious as we might like.	56.3%
The most important thing is giving healthier foods to clients, even if this means having fewer items than we might like or having to limit donations or purchases of some types of foods.	43.8%
Total	100.0%

The following list includes things that may prevent you from giving out or serving "healthier" foods (like fruits, vegetables, low-fat milk, whole grains, lean proteins, etc.). For each, please indicate if it prevents you from giving out or serving healthier foods. N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
It costs too much money to purchase	78.1%	21.9%	100.0%
We can't get healthier foods through the food bank	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Hours of operation limit ability to serve produce and other healthier food items	28.1%	71.9%	100.0%
Lack the coolers/freezers required to store healthier foods	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%
Electrical system won't support coolers/freezers needed to store healthier foods	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%
Lack storage space	43.8%	56.3%	100.0%
Clients don't want to eat/choose healthier foods	18.8%	81.3%	100.0%
Clients don't know how to handle/prepare healthier foods	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%
Clients aren't able to store perishable foods	12.5%	87.5%	100.0%
We are not sure what foods are considered healthier	3.1%	96.9%	100.0%
Giving out and serving "healthier" foods is not a goal of our agency	12.5%	87.5%	100.0%
We can't get healthier foods from other donors/food sources (e.g., food drives, retailers)	40.6%	59.4%	100.0%

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Outreach

Does this agency provide or refer any of the following services related to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps)? N=32				
	Provide	Refer	Neither	Total
Screening to help clients figure out if they are eligible for SNAP	31.3%	40.6%	28.1%	100.0%
Assistance filling out applications for SNAP	25.0%	53.1%	21.9%	100.0%
Education to let clients know about SNAP	40.6%	40.6%	18.8%	100.0%
Help re-certifying for SNAP benefits	21.9%	56.3%	21.9%	100.0%
Refer to the food bank for SNAP application assistance	46.9%	25.0%	28.1%	100.0%

Who gets these Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) related services? N=26	
	%
All clients in conjunction with the intake process	23.1%
Only clients who wish to receive these additional services	76.9%
Total	100.0%

Who provides Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) related services at the pantry? N=20			
	Yes	No	Total
Agency staff	45.0%	55.0%	100.0%
Agency volunteers	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Food bank staff	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Another organization or agency that comes to your location	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%

Agencies may not provide or refer Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) related services for a variety of reasons. Please indicate any particular reasons why your agency doesn't provide SNAP related services. N=5			
Reason	Yes	No	Total
Don't have enough volunteers/staff	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Don't have enough time	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Staff are not aware of this program	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Volunteers/staff needing more training on SNAP rules and processes	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Don't have enough physical space to allow for private counseling about SNAP	20.0%	80.0%	100.0%
Don't have the right electronic equipment (e.g., computer, fax machine, scanner, etc.)	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%
SNAP services are not part of what the agency does	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%
Some other reason	40.0%	60.0%	100.0%

Involvement with Other Federal Assistance Programs

Does your agency provide education, referrals, or help filling out applications for any of the following programs? N=32				
	Direct Assistance	Referral	Neither	Total
WIC, the federally funded health and nutrition program for women, infants, and children	9.4%	53.1%	37.5%	100.0%
The Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) program	9.4%	40.6%	50.0%	100.0%
Medicaid or other health care programs	12.5%	43.8%	43.8%	100.0%
Supplemental Security Income	6.3%	37.5%	56.3%	100.0%
Tax preparation or earned income tax credit (EITC) assistance	15.6%	21.9%	62.5%	100.0%
Housing assistance like Section 8	6.3%	37.5%	56.3%	100.0%
Utility Assistance	15.6%	37.5%	46.9%	100.0%

Are the following USDA commodities given out by your agency? N=32				
	Yes	No	Don't know	Total
Commodities Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	56.3%	43.8%	0.0%	100.0%
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP/EFAP)	53.1%	43.8%	3.1%	100.0%
Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservation (FDPIR)	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%

There are some federal child nutrition programs your agency might take part in, either because your agency runs a site of its own or sponsors other sites. Does your agency take part in...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)	3.1%	96.9%	100.0%
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)	6.3%	93.8%	100.0%

Does your agency take part in the Child Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) because your agency runs a site of its own, sponsors other sites, or does your agency do both? N=1	
	%
Run CACFP site	0.0%
Sponsor other CACFP sites	100.0%
Both run and sponsor CACFP sites	0.0%
Total	100.0%

Does your agency take part in the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) because your agency runs a site of its own, sponsors other sites, or does your agency do both? N=2	
	%
Run SFSP site	0.0%
Sponsor other SFSP sites	50.0%
Both run and sponsor SFSP sites	50.0%
Total	100.0%

Operations

Does your program operate multiple sites for picking up food or groceries (including mobile programs)? N=32	
	%
Yes	12.5%
No	87.5%
Total	100.0%

How many distribution sites (including mobile sites) does this program have? N=4	
	%
1	0.0%
2	50.0%
3	50.0%
4	0.0%
5+	0.0%
Total	100.0%

How many years has your agency provided food? N=31	
	Years
Mean	19
	%
1-5 years	12.9%
6-10 years	19.4%
11-15 years	16.1%
16-20 years	16.1%
21-25 years	3.2%
26+ years	32.3%
Total	100.0%

What types of grocery programs does your agency operate? N=31	
	%
Food Pantry	80.6%
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	41.9%
Mobile Pantries / Mobile Markets (including ABC Mobile, Veterans Mobile, Senior Mobile, etc.)	22.6%
Backpack Program	6.5%
Senior Grocery, Brown Bag, or Food Box Distribution	6.5%
Home Delivered Grocery Program	3.2%
Other Pantry Program	22.6%
Community Garden	3.2%
School Pantry Program	3.2%

How often does your agency offer groceries to clients? N=31	
	%
One day a week	12.9%
Certain days each week	22.6%
Seven days per week	6.5%
Once a month	25.8%
Certain days each month	9.7%
Certain months of the year	0.0%
Once a year	0.0%
Irregular or as needed schedule	22.6%
Total	100.0%

How many months of the year does your agency offer groceries? N=29	
	%
12 months	93.1%
8-11 months	0.0%
4-7 months	3.4%
1-3 months	3.4%
Total	100.0%

Average number of days and hours agencies are open each month				
	Mean	Min	Max	N
Average open days each month	7	1	20	27
Average open hours each month.	31	2	160	26

Does your agency offer groceries during evening hours (after 5:00 p.m.) at some point during the typical month? N=32	
	%
Yes	28.1%
No	71.9%
Total	100.0%

Agencies may not offer groceries during evening hours for a variety of reasons. What are the reasons your program doesn't offer groceries during evening hours? N=23			
	Yes	No	Total
My budget doesn't allow for evening hours	26.1%	73.9%	100.0%
My agency does not have enough staff / volunteers for evening hours	65.2%	34.8%	100.0%
I can't use the building during evening hours	17.4%	82.6%	100.0%
Staff and volunteers wouldn't be safe working in the evenings	17.4%	82.6%	100.0%
Other organizations offer groceries to clients in the evening	8.7%	91.3%	100.0%
My agency does not offer groceries during evening hours for some other reason	43.5%	56.5%	100.0%

Does your agency offer groceries during weekend hours at some point during the typical month? N=29	
	%
Yes	27.6%
No	72.4%
Total	100.0%

Agencies may not offer groceries on the weekend for a variety of reasons. What are the reasons your program doesn't offer groceries on the weekend? N=21			
	Yes	No	Total
My budget doesn't allow for weekend hours	38.1%	61.9%	100.0%
My agency does not have enough staff / volunteers for weekend hours	81.0%	19.0%	100.0%
I can't use the building during weekend hours	19.0%	81.0%	100.0%
Staff and volunteers wouldn't be safe working on the weekend	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Other organizations offer groceries to clients on the weekend	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
My agency does not offer groceries during the weekend for some other reason	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%

How many days would you expect the groceries that you distribute during a typical distribution to last a household?	
	Days
Mean	7
N	31

Please identify any additional food programs that your agency operates. (Select all that apply) N=32	
	%
Community kitchen	0.0%
Food bank-operated meal program	3.1%
Soup kitchen	12.5%
After-school snack	0.0%
Child congregate feeding program	3.1%
Kids café	0.0%
Senior congregate meal program	6.3%
Other (e.g., emergency relief supports)	28.1%

Please identify any non-food programs your agency operates. (Select all that apply) N=32	
	%
General Information and Referrals	50.0%
Clothing/Furniture Assistance	34.4%
Utility/Heat Assistance	18.8%
Financial Assistance	12.5%
Housing Assistance	18.8%
Transportation Assistance	12.5%
Shelter/Transitional Housing	15.6%
Health Clinics	6.3%
Job Training	12.5%
Legal Assistance	0.0%
Dental Clinics	0.0%
General Education Development (GED) Programs	3.1%
Medicaid/Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP)	0.0%

Recent Operational Changes

During the past 12 months, has your agency had to do any of the following? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Cut hours of operation	18.8%	81.3%	100.0%
Temporarily close	31.3%	68.8%	100.0%
Lay off staff	6.3%	93.8%	100.0%
Limit the area of your service	21.9%	78.1%	100.0%
Increase hours of operation	21.9%	78.1%	100.0%
Limit the number of volunteers who can work at one time	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%
Change the way food is provided to clients	71.9%	28.1%	100.0%

Did you do this because of the following changes? (Identify all that apply) N=27			
	Yes	No	Total
Less money or food available (e.g., monetary donations, donated food, federal commodities, etc.)	11.1%	88.9%	100.0%
Need to serve more clients or give out more food (e.g., more clients)	37.0%	63.0%	100.0%
Change in what the agency does	25.9%	74.1%	100.0%
COVID-19 Health Department orders	63.0%	37.0%	100.0%
Quarantine or COVID-19 Positive case at pantry	14.8%	85.2%	100.0%
Lack of staff/volunteers	22.2%	77.8%	100.0%
Risk of COVID-19 exposure for volunteers	74.1%	25.9%	100.0%

How worried are you about your agency's ability to continue to provide services? N=32	
	%
Very Worried	0.0%
Somewhat Worried	18.8%
Not Worried	81.3%
Total	100.0%

The list below includes problems that might threaten an agency's ability to keep running. For each one, please rate how much it threatens your agency's ability to keep running. N=6

	Major threat	Somewhat of a threat	Minor threat	Not a threat	Total
Not enough money	16.7%	66.7%	16.7%	0.0%	100.0%
Not enough food supplies	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Not enough paid staff or personnel	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	100.0%
Not enough volunteers	0.0%	33.3%	50.0%	16.7%	100.0%
Not enough money for transportation or unreliable transportation to pick up products at the food bank	16.7%	33.3%	33.3%	16.7%	100.0%
Building or location problems (too small, lease expense, electrical problems, etc.)	0.0%	66.7%	0.0%	33.3%	100.0%
Equipment problems or needs (coolers, freezers, etc.)	33.3%	16.7%	16.7%	33.3%	100.0%
Not enough leadership/board support	0.0%	16.7%	33.3%	50.0%	100.0%
Not enough support from community	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
Community doesn't need this program	0.0%	0.0%	33.3%	66.7%	100.0%
Safety concerns related to COVID-19	0.0%	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%

Which of these problems pose the greatest threat to your agency's ability to keep running? N=6

	%
Not enough money	50.0%
Not enough food supplies	0.0%
Not enough paid staff or personnel	0.0%
Not enough volunteers	0.0%
Not enough money for transportation or unreliable transportation to pick up products at the food bank	16.7%
Building or location problems (too small, lease expense, electrical problems, etc.)	0.0%
Equipment problems or needs (coolers, freezers, etc.)	33.3%
Not enough leadership/board support	0.0%
Not enough support from community	0.0%
Community doesn't need this program	0.0%
Safety concerns related to COVID-19	0.0%
Total	100.0%

Use of Communications & Technology

How does your agency let the community know about its services? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Word of mouth	96.9%	3.1%	100.0%
Official emails, phone calls, office visits, or other communication with other social service groups in the community	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Flyers, brochures, or other printed handouts	71.9%	28.1%	100.0%
Newspapers, radio, TV	34.4%	65.6%	100.0%
Referrals from other organizations	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Referrals from government agencies (city, county, or state)	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
Website	68.8%	31.3%	100.0%
Posting signs about the agency outside the building	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Social Media (Facebook, Twitter, etc.)	84.4%	15.6%	100.0%

Does your agency provide information about your services in more than one language? N=32	
	%
Yes	12.5%
No	87.5%
Total	100.0%

Does your agency take part in any of the following activities that bring attention to the problem of hunger? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Helping food banks by connecting them with clients who are willing to tell their stories to the press/media	37.5%	62.5%	100.0%
Actively taking part in local hunger networks (i.e., Local food policy coalitions, United Way, Human Services Coalitions, etc.)	28.1%	71.9%	100.0%
Calling and/or writing letters to politicians (local, state, & federal)	40.6%	59.4%	100.0%
Inviting politicians and other interested people (i.e., chamber members, farm bureau representatives, etc.) to visit your agency	34.4%	65.6%	100.0%
Visiting your politicians to educate them on the problem of hunger (local, state, & federal)	12.5%	87.5%	100.0%
Writing letters to the editor and opinion columns for your local newspapers	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%
Educating your community or congregation on the problem of hunger	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%

What companies provide cell phone service in your local area? (Select all that apply) N=35	
	%
AT&T	82.9%
Sprint/T-Mobile	31.4%
Verizon	51.4%
Other	22.9%
Don't Know	2.9%

How does your agency use technology? Does your agency...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Have reliable internet access	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Use a computer to order online from the food bank	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Use a computerized spreadsheet or database to track and store client information	59.4%	40.6%	100.0%
Subscribe to an online software service to track and store client information	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%
Use a computer to report usage information to the food bank	96.9%	3.1%	100.0%
Have a website	56.3%	43.8%	100.0%
Use social media like Facebook and/or Twitter	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%
Operate in a building where you get cell phone service	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Use a computer to send and receive email	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Operate out of a location that has Wi-Fi access	78.1%	21.9%	100.0%

Client Intake

Client intake procedures				
	Yes	No	N	Total
Does this program require clients to register or go through an intake process before they can get services?	68.8%	31.3%	32	100.0%
Does this program require clients to show identification before they can get services?	45.2%	54.8%	31	100.0%
Does this program have specific eligibility conditions in order for clients to receive services?	71.9%	28.1%	32	100.0%
Does this program keep track of client visits?	90.6%	9.4%	32	100.0%

What type of identification does this program require clients to use? Are clients required to use...? N=21			
	Yes	No	Total
Driver's license	41.9%	58.1%	100.0%
Other State ID	32.3%	67.7%	100.0%
Social Security number	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Voter's registration	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%
Utility bill, telephone bill, or other proof of residency	38.7%	61.3%	100.0%
Passport	6.5%	93.5%	100.0%
Some other form of identification	12.9%	87.1%	100.0%

What happens if a client does not have the right type of identification? Do you...? N=14			
	Yes	No	Total
Allow one-time service to the client	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Refer the client to another program in the community for similar services	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
Not provide any services at all to the client	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%

What are the eligibility conditions for this program? Are the eligibility conditions based on...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Income	46.9%	53.1%	100.0%
Age	18.8%	81.3%	100.0%
Where the client lives	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%
Citizenship or being in the country legally	21.9%	78.1%	100.0%
Some other condition	9.4%	90.6%	100.0%

How does your agency track client use of this agency? Do you...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Track the number of unique (unduplicated) households this program serves at any time in a year, month, or week	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
Track the total number of times clients visit this program at any time in a year, month, or week	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%
Check to see if a client has already been served during registration/intake (i.e., Charity Tracker, Mac Link, etc.)	25.0%	75.0%	100.0%

Please choose the option below that best describes how you track client visits for this program.	
N=29	
	%
We use a standard computer program (e.g., Microsoft Office) to keep track of client visits	0.0%
We use a custom designed computer program to keep track of client visits	20.7%
We keep manual records (e.g., paper/pencil, notebook, index cards) of client visits	44.8%
We use a combination of manual records and computer programs to keep track of client visits	34.5%
Total	100.0%

Client Characteristics

Households served each month				
	Mean	Min	Max	N
How many unique (unduplicated) households did programs serve each month	220	1	1120	19
How many total (duplicated) households did programs serve each month	512	0	2930	20

Please describe the type of clients you served during the past 12 months. Did you serve...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Families with children under the age of 18	84.4%	15.6%	100.0%
Non-elderly adults without children	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Seniors (adults aged 60 and older)	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Only children under the age of 18	15.6%	84.4%	100.0%

Did you serve specific groups of people during the past 12 months? Did you serve...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
Non-English-speaking clients	31.3%	68.8%	100.0%
College students	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Veterans or their families	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Active military or their families	46.9%	53.1%	100.0%
Individuals affected by a natural disaster (e.g., fire, flood, tornado, etc.)	62.5%	37.5%	100.0%
Individuals affected by COVID-19 (e.g., business closures, layoffs, etc.)	81.3%	18.8%	100.0%

What is your best estimate for the percentage of the people you serve that fall into each of the following groups? N=32						
	0%	1-25%	26-50%	51-75%	76-100%	Total
Families with children under the age of 18	15.6%	25.0%	43.8%	3.1%	12.5%	100.0%
Non-elderly adults without children	12.5%	46.9%	31.3%	3.1%	6.3%	100.0%
Seniors (adults aged 60 and older)	9.4%	18.8%	34.4%	28.1%	9.4%	100.0%
Non-English-speaking clients	65.6%	34.4%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
College students	53.1%	46.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Veterans or their families	12.5%	81.3%	0.0%	3.1%	3.1%	100.0%
Active military or their families	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Individuals affected by a natural disaster (e.g., fire, flood, tornado)	34.4%	62.5%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Individuals affected by COVID-19 (e.g., business closures, layoffs, etc.)	18.8%	56.3%	9.4%	9.4%	6.3%	100.0%

Which of the following are the languages primarily spoken at home by the clients you serve? (Select all that apply) N=32	
	%
English	100.0%
Spanish	28.1%
Chinese - (Mandarin, Cantonese, Other)	0.0%
French	0.0%
Tagalog	0.0%
Vietnamese	0.0%
Korean	0.0%
Russian	0.0%
German	0.0%
Polish	0.0%
Japanese	0.0%
Persian	0.0%
Serbo-Croatian	0.0%
Armenian	0.0%
Somali	0.0%
Haitian Creole	0.0%
Arabic	0.0%
Some other language	0.0%

Percent of households served whose primary language spoken at home is: N=32	
	Mean
English	98.3%
Spanish	1.7%
Chinese - (Mandarin, Cantonese, Other)	0.0%
French	0.0%
Tagalog	0.0%
Vietnamese	0.0%
Korean	0.0%
Russian	0.0%
German	0.0%
Polish	0.0%
Japanese	0.0%
Persian	0.0%
Serbo-Croatian	0.0%
Armenian	0.0%
Somali	0.0%
Haitian Creole	0.0%
Arabic	0.0%
Some other language	0.0%

Compared to last year, have you seen changes in the number of clients this program provides food to? N=32	
	%
This program provides food to a lot more clients compared to last year	15.6%
This program provides food to somewhat more clients compared to last year	28.1%
This program provides food to about the same number of clients compared to last year	40.6%
This program provides food to somewhat fewer clients compared to last year	15.6%
This program provides food to a lot fewer clients compared to last year	0.0%
Total	100.0%

During the last 12 months, did this program experience any seasonal changes in demand? Specifically, has there been a change in the number of...? N=25				
	We see more	About the same	We see fewer	Total
Children seeking food assistance during school breaks, like during summer and long holidays, or due to COVID-19 closures	40.0%	60.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Seasonal workers, like farm laborers or tourism workers, seeking food assistance	4.0%	96.0%	0.0%	100.0%

During the last 12 months, did this program experience any other changes in the types of clients it serves? Specifically, has there been a change in the number of...? N=28				
	We see more	About the same	We see fewer	Total
Non-English speaking clients seeking food assistance	0.0%	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%
College or community college students seeking food assistance	0.0%	92.9%	7.1%	100.0%
Veterans or their families seeking food assistance	3.6%	92.9%	3.6%	100.0%
Active Military or their families seeking food assistance	0.0%	96.4%	3.6%	100.0%
Individuals affected by a natural disaster (e.g. fire, food tornado)	3.6%	96.4%	0.0%	100.0%
Individuals affected by COVID-19 (e.g., business closures, layoffs, etc.)	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Client Service Limits

Some programs limit the number of times a client or household can get food in a given time period. Do you put any limits on the number of times a client or household can get food from this program? N=32	
	%
Yes	65.6%
No	34.4%
Total	100.0%

What type of limits do you put on the number of times a client or household can get food from this program? Clients or families may get food no more than once a... N=21	
	%
Day	4.8%
Week	9.5%
Month	85.7%
Quarter or Season	0.0%
Year	0.0%
Total	100.0%

During the past 12 months, has this program... N=26			
	Yes	No	Total
Changed the number of times a client can get food such that clients get food more frequently	15.4%	84.6%	100.0%
Changed the number of times a client can get food such that clients get food less frequently	0.0%	100.0%	100.0%

During the past 12 months, did this program turn away any clients for any reason? N=32	
	%
Yes	21.9%
No	78.1%
Total	100.0%

During the past 12 months, how often did this program turn away clients for any of the reasons listed below? N=7					
	Frequently	Occasionally	Rare	Never	Total
The program ran out of the food or other things the client(s) needed	0.0%	28.6%	14.3%	57.1%	100.0%
Clients came more often than program rules allow	0.0%	42.9%	14.3%	42.9%	100.0%
Clients behaved violently or in other ways that worried staff	0.0%	0.0%	28.6%	71.4%	100.0%
Clients lived outside the program's service area	0.0%	42.9%	57.1%	0.0%	100.0%
Clients did not have the right identification	0.0%	0.0%	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%
Clients' income was too high for program	0.0%	28.6%	14.3%	57.1%	100.0%
Clients were turned away for some other reason not listed	0.0%	0.0%	42.9%	57.1%	100.0%

Does this program only serve people from a particular area, like those who live inside city, town, or county limits? N=32	
	%
Yes	65.6%
No	34.4%
Total	100.0%

Please describe how these limits on your service area were decided. N=21	
	%
Based on streets or roads	4.8%
Based on ZIP Code	9.5%
Based on city or village limits	9.5%
Based on county limits	66.7%
Based on school system/district	4.8%
Based on some other physical area or limit	4.8%
Total	100.0%

Facilities

Does this program operate out of a location that the agency...? N=32	
	%
Owns with a mortgage	6.3%
Owns mortgage free	46.9%
Rents / Leases	15.6%
Is provided as a free space	31.3%
Total	100.0%

What best describes the building in which this program is located? N=32	
	%
Church, mosque, synagogue, or other religious building	28.1%
Other building owned by church, mosque, synagogue, or other religious institution	21.9%
Retail, office or commercial building	21.9%
Apartment building or other building where people live	0.0%
School	0.0%
Truck, van, or car, like a food truck or mobile pantry	0.0%
Indian Reservation Tribal building	0.0%
Farm or farmer's market stand	0.0%
Other	28.1%
Total	100.0%

Does the current location meet this program's needs? N=32	
	%
Yes	78.1%
No	18.8%
Not Sure	3.1%
Total	100.0%

Does this program's location have...? N=32			
	Yes	No	Total
An area where you give out food or serve meals	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
A storage area for large amounts of food that don't need refrigeration	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
A freezer	93.8%	6.3%	100.0%
Adequate number of freezers	65.6%	34.4%	100.0%
A cooler or refrigerator	87.5%	12.5%	100.0%
Adequate number of coolers or refrigerators	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%
Office space to meet with clients (to complete intake / or provide referrals), like a reception area, cubical, or office	84.4%	15.6%	100.0%

Food Bank Assistance

What is the single most helpful good, service, benefit, or product that the food bank currently provides to your agency? N=30*	
	%
Food Bank Staff	3.3%
Food Bank Support/Information	10.0%
Food Delivery	23.3%
Food Item – Frozen Foods	3.3%
Food Item – Non-perishable Foods	6.7%
Food Item – Proteins	10.0%
Food Item – Sweet treats	3.3%
General Food Availability	20.0%
Infant Care items	6.7%
Mobile Food Pantry	3.3%
No/Low-Cost Food	16.7%
Non-food items	6.7%
Public Food Assistance Programs	3.3%
Quantity of Food Available	10.0%
Senior specific supplies/commodities	10.0%
Variety of Food Available	13.3%

** Note: While agencies were asked to identify the single most important service, many mentioned multiple activities.*

What is the single most important good, service, benefit, or product that the food bank could provide to your agency that would allow you to better serve your clients? N=26 *	
	%
More proteins	23.1%
More dairy products	15.4%
More nutritious food	15.4%
More food generally	11.5%
More fresh produce	11.5%
More non-perishable foods	11.5%
Nothing	11.5%
Grant writing assistance	7.7%
Improved or additional refrigeration/freezers	7.7%
Food pick-up vehicle	3.8%
Improved food quality	3.8%
Lower food pricing	3.8%
More frozen foods	3.8%

** Note: While agencies were asked to identify the single most important service, many mentioned multiple activities.*

Client Survey

Region Breakdown

Responses by Food Pantry		
	n	%
Black River Baptist Pantry	14	2.2%
Bread Shed MFP - Poplar Bluff	30	4.8%
Caruthersville SEMO Pantry	9	1.4%
Catholic Social Ministries	46	7.3%
Celebrate Recovery/ FBC of Perryville	10	1.6%
Doniphan First Baptist Church MFP	18	2.9%
Faith Family Worship	36	5.7%
Flame of Hope	14	2.2%
Good Neighbor Pantry (GNP)	32	5.1%
Helping Hand	22	3.5%
Jackson R-2 MFP	13	2.1%
Jonah's Java	7	1.1%
Ladies of Charity	12	1.9%
Lake Wappapello Methodist Pantry	14	2.2%
Lean on Me Pantry	27	4.3%
Lighthouse Tyson MFP	19	3.0%
Madison County Food Pantry	16	2.5%
Marble Hill Pantry	30	4.8%
New Madrid Food Pantry	14	2.2%
Open Door Food Pantry	14	2.2%
Piedmont MFP (Clearwater Youth Center)	22	3.5%
Portageville R.A.I.N. MFP	22	3.5%
Qulin Food Pantry	8	1.3%
Red Star Pantry	19	3.0%
Reynolds Co Food Pantry	8	1.3%
Shining Light Food Pantry	21	3.3%
St. Vincent DePaul - PB	58	9.2%
St. Vincent DePaul Society	7	1.1%
Stoddard County Gospel Rescue	33	5.2%
Twin Rivers Fisk MFP	20	3.2%
United Voice of Zion	15	2.4%
Total	630	100.0%

Client Characteristics

Age of respondent N=614	
	%
18-24	2.0%
25-34	4.7%
35-44	11.1%
45-54	14.0%
55-64	22.5%
65-74	32.6%
75+	13.2%
Total	100%

How would you describe your gender identity? N=618	
	%
Woman	69.9%
Man	29.8%
Gender non-conforming / non-binary	0.3%
Another identity	0.0%
Total	100%

What is the highest level of education you have completed? N=611	
	%
Less than a high school diploma	22.7%
High school diploma or equivalent (GED)	46.0%
Some college, no degree	19.3%
Associate/Technical degree (AA, AS)	6.2%
Bachelor's degree (BA, BS)	4.3%
Master's degree or Graduate certificate (MA, MS, MPH, MEd)	1.0%
Professional or Graduate degree (MD, DDS, DVM, PhD, EdD)	0.5%
Total	100%

I identify as: N=619	
	%
African American/Black	11.6%
Asian American/Asian	0.2%
Caucasian/White	83.5%
Hispanic/Latino/Latina/Latinx	0.6%
Native American or Alaskan Native	1.3%
Pacific Islander	0.0%
Middle Eastern or North African	0.0%
Another Identify	0.3%
Multiple identities	2.4%
Total	100%

Which of the following best describes your current living situation? N=615	
	%
Live in my own home (house, apartment, condo, trailer, etc.)	88.5%
Live in a household with other people (i.e. roommates)	6.0%
Live in a residential facility, nursing home, or supervised housing	1.8%
Temporarily staying with a relative or friend	3.3%
Temporarily staying in a motel or hotel	0.2%
Temporarily staying in a shelter or transitional living situation	0.0%
Live in car, van, or recreational vehicle/RV	0.3%
Living on the street, abandoned building, camping, or houseless	0.0%
Total	100%

What is the primary language spoken at home? N=621	
	%
English	99.4%
Spanish	0.3%
German	0.0%
Russian	0.2%
Chinese	0.2%
Vietnamese	0.0%
Korean	0.0%
Bosnian	0.0%
Hmong	0.0%
Arabic	0.0%
Another language	0.0%
Total	100%

Are you currently...? N=610	
	%
Married/ in a domestic partnership	34.1%
Not married but currently living with a partner	4.4%
Widowed	20.0%
Divorced	22.1%
Separated	5.2%
Single (never married)	14.1%
Total	100%

Have you, or anyone in your household, ever served in the US Armed Forces, Reserves, or National Guard? N=605	
	%
Currently serving	0.7%
Served in the past, but not now	17.2%
Never served in the military	82.1%
Total	100%

Household Composition

How many adults, 18 and older, live in your household? N=620	
	%
1	38.4%
2	40.8%
3	13.7%
4	5.2%
5+	1.9%
Total	100%

How many adults, over the age of 65, live in your household? N=620	
	%
0	46.6%
1	39.0%
2	14.2%
3	0.2%
4	0.0%
5+	0.0%
Total	100%

How many children, 17 years of age or younger, live in your household? N=617	
	%
0	70.0%
1	9.9%
2	10.0%
3	5.3%
4	2.6%
5+	2.1%
Total	100%

Single Adult Headed Household w/ Children 17 and under		
	n	%
Yes	40	21.6%
No	580	
<i>Single adult household percentage taken in proportion to households with children 17 years of age and under</i>		

How many children, 5 years of age or younger, live in your household? N=185	
	%
0	55.1%
1	30.8%
2	11.4%
3	2.2%
4	0.5%
5+	0.0%
Total	100%

Total Household Size N=614	
	%
1	31.8%
2	29.5%
3	14.8%
4	9.0%
5	7.7%
6	2.9%
7	3.3%
8	0.8%
9	0.3%
10+	0.0%
Total	100%

Average Household		
	Mean	N
Total person in household	2.6	614
Adults in household	1.9	620
Adults over 65 in household	0.7	620
Children under 18 in household	0.7	617
Children under 6 in household	0.6	185

Employment & Income

How many adults in the household are currently employed? N=617	
	%
0	64.5%
1	24.6%
2	9.4%
3	1.0%
4	0.5%
5+	0.0%
Total	100%

Are any adults in the household currently students? N=617	
	%
Yes	5.8%
No	94.2%
Total	100%

What category best represents the employment status of the adults in your household during the past 12 months? (Select all that apply) N=212	
	%
Self-Employed	5.7%
Working full-time for an employer (30 or more hours per week)	66.0%
Working part-time for an employer (up to 29 hours per week)	31.1%
Working multiple part-time positions for an employer	3.8%
Seasonal Work	1.9%

Please identify any additional sources of income that you, or anyone in your household, received during the last year? (Select all that apply) N=614	
	%
TANF (Temporary Assistance to Needy Families)	4.6%
SNAP, Food Stamps, EBT or Food Stamp cash out	45.4%
Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or disabled veterans' benefits	28.0%
Social Security, or any kind of private, government, or military pension	63.5%
Unemployment Insurance or Worker's Compensation	4.4%
None of these	11.1%

Which category best represents the combined monthly income of all members of your household who are 15 years of age or older during the last month? N=565	
	%
\$0	3.5%
\$500 or less	6.0%
\$501-\$1000	27.8%
\$1001-\$2000	44.8%
\$2001-\$3000	12.4%
\$3001-\$4000	3.2%
More than \$4000	2.3%
Total	100%

Combined Monthly Household Income during the last month by Household Size												
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10+	Total	SNAP Eligible HH
\$0	7	5	2	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	18	18
\$500 or less	10	10	4	2	3	1	3	1	0	0	34	34
\$501-\$1000	87	28	16	7	11	3	3	1	0	0	156	156
\$1001-\$2000	75	74	39	22	22	8	6	2	1	0	249	174
\$2001-\$3000	3	27	19	7	5	3	6	0	0	0	70	21
\$3001-\$4000	0	6	5	3	2	0	1	0	1	0	18	2
More than \$4000	2	7	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	13	0
Total											558	405
												72.6%

Which category best represents the combined annual income for your household from all sources during the last year? N=523	
	%
\$0	3.3%
\$5,000 or less	7.6%
\$5,001-\$10,000	17.4%
\$10,001-\$15,000	29.8%
\$15,001-\$20,000	18.5%
\$20,001-\$25,000	10.7%
\$25,001-\$30,000	4.0%
\$30,001-\$35,000	3.1%
\$35,001-\$50,000	4.4%
More than \$50,000	1.1%
Total	100%

Food Pantry Use & Preferences

In the last month, how many times did your household get food from any food pantry? N=610	
Mean	1.5
	%
1	67.7%
2	19.5%
3	6.7%
4	3.8%
5+	2.3%
Total	100.0%

In how many of the past 12 months did your household get food from a food pantry? N=610	
Mean	8.9
	%
1	4.8%
2	4.3%
3	4.4%
4	5.9%
5	3.8%
6	7.7%
7	1.8%
8	5.4%
9	2.8%
10	6.7%
11	1.3%
12	51.1%
Total	100.0%

How long have you or your household used a food pantry? N=614	
	%
Less than 1 year	17.3%
1-2 years	31.1%
More than 2 years	51.6%
Total	100.0%

During an average month, how many weeks does the food from the food pantry last you or your household? N=606	
	%
1 week or less	26.1%
2 weeks	40.9%
3 weeks	15.2%
4 weeks or more	17.8%
Total	100.0%

In a typical month, how much of the food consumed in your household do you get from food pantries? N=599	
	%
At least half the food we consume	47.1%
Less than half, but more than a quarter	14.2%
Around a quarter	24.7%
Less than a quarter	9.2%
Only a tiny piece of what we consume	4.8%
Total	100.0%

Has there ever been a time that you needed assistance getting food but were not able to use the food pantry? N=606	
	%
Yes	31.4%
No	68.6%
Total	100%

What prevented you from being able to access the food pantry? (Select all that apply) N=188	
	%
Hours of operation	28.2%
Lack of transportation	60.1%
Already used the food pantry during a given period	13.8%
Didn't have necessary documents	3.2%
Embarrassed to use food pantry	6.4%
Wait time is too long at pantry	4.8%
Other	20.2%

At an ideal food pantry, what programs or services would be provided that you would find most useful? N=623	
	%
Cooking or nutrition information	52.0%
Clothing assistance or Thrift Shop	49.4%
Food Delivery or Mobile Pantry Services	49.8%
Help with enrollment in assistance programs (SNAP, WIC, Medicaid, etc.)	33.9%
Utility assistance	57.5%
Housing or rent assistance	39.0%
Transportation assistance	31.3%
Job search and readiness training	18.6%
Educational programs or assistance (GED)	18.1%
Household items	45.9%
Infant care items (diapers, formula, baby food)	23.1%
Period products (pads, tampons, liners)	30.8%
Personal care items (shampoo, adult diapers, toothpaste)	55.1%
Up to date website or social media page	38.0%
Opportunity for client input in pantry operations	42.5%

What type of food products do you most want or need, but do not usually get from the food pantry? (Select up to THREE) N=537	
	%
Fresh fruits and vegetables	64.6%
Prepared ready to eat foods (e.g., salads & sandwiches)	11.9%
Protein food items (meat/poultry/fish)	68.0%
Grains (bread, pasta, etc.)	19.0%
Dairy products (milk, cheese, yogurt)	48.2%
Savory snack foods (chips, cheese puffs, pretzels)	4.7%
Sweet snack foods (cakes, candy, pastries)	6.3%
Frozen meals	6.1%
Non-perishable packaged meal options (e.g., Beefaroni, mac & cheese, Hamburger Helper)	9.1%
Soups	5.2%
Sweetened beverages	3.0%
Baby food &/or formula	1.9%
Water	6.0%

Food Security Status

Food Insecurity Rates N=568	
	%
Marginal Food Security	39.1%
Low Food Security	31.9%
Very-low Food Security	29.0%
Total	100.0%

How often were the following statements true for you or your household in the last 12 months?					
	Often true	Sometimes true	Never true	N	Total
"The food that I/we bought just didn't last, and I/we didn't have money to get more."	30.8%	36.6%	32.6%	598	100%
"I/we couldn't afford to eat balanced meals."	26.1%	31.9%	41.9%	601	100%

In the last 12 months, did you or anyone in your household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn't enough money for food? N=604	
	%
Yes	39.6%
No	60.4%
Total	100%

How often did this happen? N=238	
	%
Almost every month	51.7%
Some months, but not every month	39.1%
In only 1 or 2 months	9.2%
Total	100%

In the last 12 months, did you or anyone in your household ever eat less than they felt they should because there wasn't enough money for food? N=595	
	%
Yes	38.0%
No	62.0%
Total	100%

In the last 12 months, were you or anyone in your household ever hungry but didn't eat because you couldn't afford enough food? N=604	
	%
Yes	27.6%
No	72.4%
Total	100%

Trade-offs

In the past 12 months, have you or anyone in your household ever had to choose between paying for food and paying for...??				
	Yes	No	N	Total
Medicine/Medical Care	28.1%	71.9%	602	100%
Utilities	32.6%	67.4%	602	100%
Housing	21.7%	78.3%	600	100%
Transportation	23.5%	76.5%	599	100%
Education Expenses	4.5%	95.5%	594	100%
Child Care*	10.2%	89.8%	176	100%

*Rates based on households with children under 17

Additional Food Sources & Coping Strategies

Do any children in your household currently participate in any of the following? N=185			
	Yes	No	Total
Free or reduced-price school breakfast &/or lunch program	56.8%	43.2%	100%
After school snack or meal program	10.8%	89.2%	100%
Summer food program for kids	15.1%	84.9%	100%
Backpack weekend food program	14.6%	85.4%	100%
School food pantry	5.4%	94.6%	100%
Children's mobile pantry	3.2%	96.8%	100%
None of these	38.9%	61.1%	100%

People may use different sources to get the food they need. In the past 12-months, which of these resources have you or anyone in the household used to get the food you need?				
	Yes	No	N	Total
SNAP/ Food Stamp program	46.9%	53.1%	608	100%
WIC Program (Women, Infant, & Children)*	31.7%	68.3%	82	100%
Senior Box (provided through a food pantry)	32.1%	67.9%	608	100%
Meals on Wheels	8.2%	91.8%	608	100%
Senior meal program (Senior Center, Nutrition Center, etc.)	9.4%	90.6%	608	100%
Mobile food pantry	25.0%	75.0%	608	100%
None of these	23.4%	76.6%	603	100%

*Based on households with children under the age of 5

What strategies have you, or anyone in your household, used to make your food budget go further over the past 12 months?				
	Yes	No	N	Total
Sold or pawned personal property	17.3%	82.7%	596	100%
Eaten food past expiration date	47.8%	52.2%	596	100%
Purchased food in dented or damaged packages	53.9%	46.1%	596	100%
Purchased the least expensive food, even if it wasn't the healthiest option	64.4%	35.6%	596	100%
Watered down food or drinks	21.5%	78.5%	596	100%
Gone to more than one food pantry	35.6%	64.4%	596	100%
None of these	15.0%	85.0%	595	100%

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Use

During an average month, how many weeks do your SNAP benefits typically last you or your household? N=270	
	%
1 week or less	11.9%
2 weeks	26.3%
3 weeks	28.1%
4 weeks or more	33.7%
Total	100%

You indicated that you don't use SNAP/Food Stamps. What is the main reason you don't use this program? N=293	
	%
Haven't applied	45.7%
Applied, but didn't/no longer qualify	54.3%
Total	100%

What is the main reason for not applying for SNAP/Food Stamps? N=131	
	%
Didn't think I was eligible	56.5%
Never heard of the program	4.6%
Personal reasons	6.9%
Too hard to apply	6.9%
Another Reason	25.2%
Total	100%

What is the main reason for not qualifying for SNAP/Food Stamps? N=151	
	%
Application issues/ application too difficult	6.0%
Assets too high	7.9%
Income too high	60.3%
Exhausted qualification	1.3%
Not sure	8.6%
Another reason	15.9%
Total	100%

Health

Would you say that in general your health is...? N=606	
	%
Excellent	3.3%
Very Good	9.9%
Good	30.9%
Fair	40.8%
Poor	15.2%
Total	100.0%

Presence of Health Condition/Circumstance in Households		
	%	N
Diabetes	50.5%	606
High Blood Pressure or Hypertension	71.5%	600
High Cholesterol	59.2%	605
Uninsured	26.9%	598

Presence of Health Condition/Circumstance in Adults*	
	%
Diabetes (among 1160 adults in client households)	30.4%
High Blood Pressure or Hypertension (among 1154 adults in client households)	46.5%
High Cholesterol (among 1162 adults in client households)	38.1%
Uninsured (among 1554 adults & children in client households)	15.3%
<i>*Rates of uninsured include adults and children in the household</i>	