Virginia SNAP-ED

Food Insecurity among Virginia Residents during COVID-19

In partnership with the Virginia Department of Social Services, Virginia SNAP-Ed conducted an online survey to assess the rates of food insecurity among adult residents of Virginia following the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic (spring 2020).

Almost 45% of respondents had annual income less than $25,000.

1,764 Virginians responded to the survey from across the state.

Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) may have been protective against food insecurity.

Preliminary results indicate that 21% of respondents were food insecure, either low or very low, according to USDA definitions.

68% of SNAP participants were considered food secure, compared to only 46% of respondents who did not participate in SNAP.

The COVID-19 pandemic has strained the food system, increased economic uncertainty and unemployment rates, and heightened inequities and health disparities.

For further information and resources go to eatsmartmovemoreva.org

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Eat Smart Move More

Virginia Cooperative Extension - Family Nutrition Program
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To support food sufficiency and food security, Virginia SNAP-Ed adapted and designed new educational programs for a variety of platforms to reach individuals at risk for food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Phone education to assist food insecure individuals with referrals to local food assistance programs, shopping with limited options, starting a container garden and other topics
- Remote programs on food resource management and preparing low-cost, nutritious meals
- Cooking and ingredient kits through a grant from Walmart and the National 4-H
- Technical assistance and support to stores and emergency food systems

Other coordinated statewide efforts are warranted to address food insecurity and food sufficiency among at-risk audiences while supporting social distancing requirements.

For further information and resources go to eatsmartmovemoreva.org

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is an equal opportunity provider and employer. This material is funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program - SNAP which provides nutrition assistance to people with low income. It can help you buy nutritious foods for a better diet. To find out more, contact your county or city Department of Social Services or to locate your county office call toll-free 1-800-552-3431 (M-F 8:15-5:00, except holidays). By calling your local DSS office, you can get other useful information about services.

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High Food Security
Households had no problems, or anxiety about, consistently accessing adequate food

Marginal Food Security
Households had problems or anxiety at times about accessing adequate food, but the quality, variety and quantity of their food were not substantially reduced

Low Food Security
Households reduced the quality, variety, and desirability of their diets, but the quantity of food intake and normal eating patterns were not substantially disrupted

Very Low Food Security
At times during the year, eating patterns of one or more household members were disrupted and food intake reduced because the household lacked money or other resources for food