



Methods For Refining and Supplementing Food Security Statistics and Importance to Policy

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The findings and conclusions in this presentation are those of the author and should not be construed to represent any official USDA or U.S. Government determination or policy.

Why is measuring food insecurity important?

1. *We cannot fix what we cannot find*

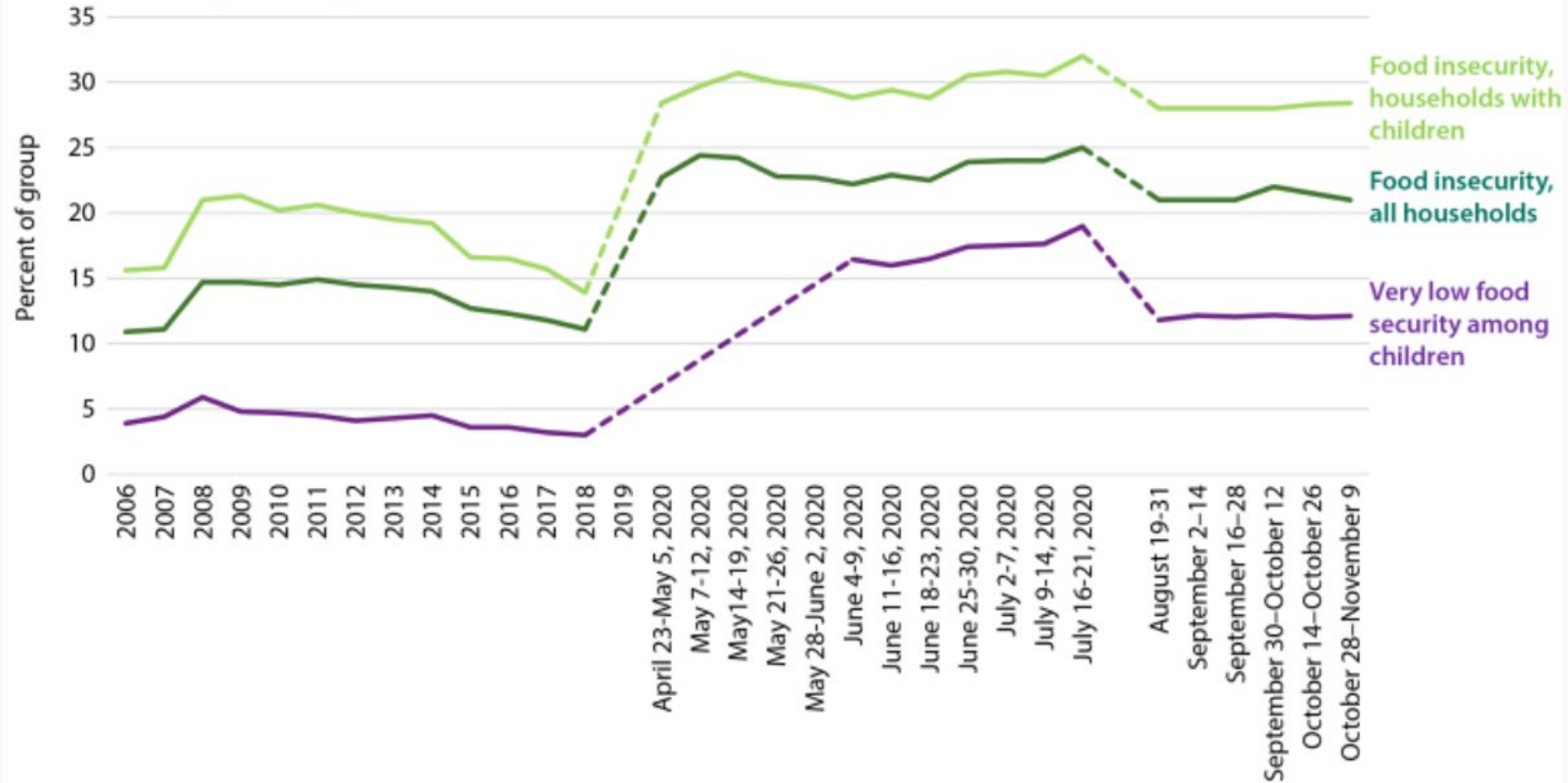
Why is measuring food insecurity important?

1. *We cannot fix what we cannot find*
2. *Solutions are selected through proof of progress*

Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Pandemic

FIGURE 1.

Food Insecurity Among Households and Children



Source: U.S. Census Bureau (Household Pulse Survey) 2020b; Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement 2006-2018; Schanzenback and Tomer 2020.

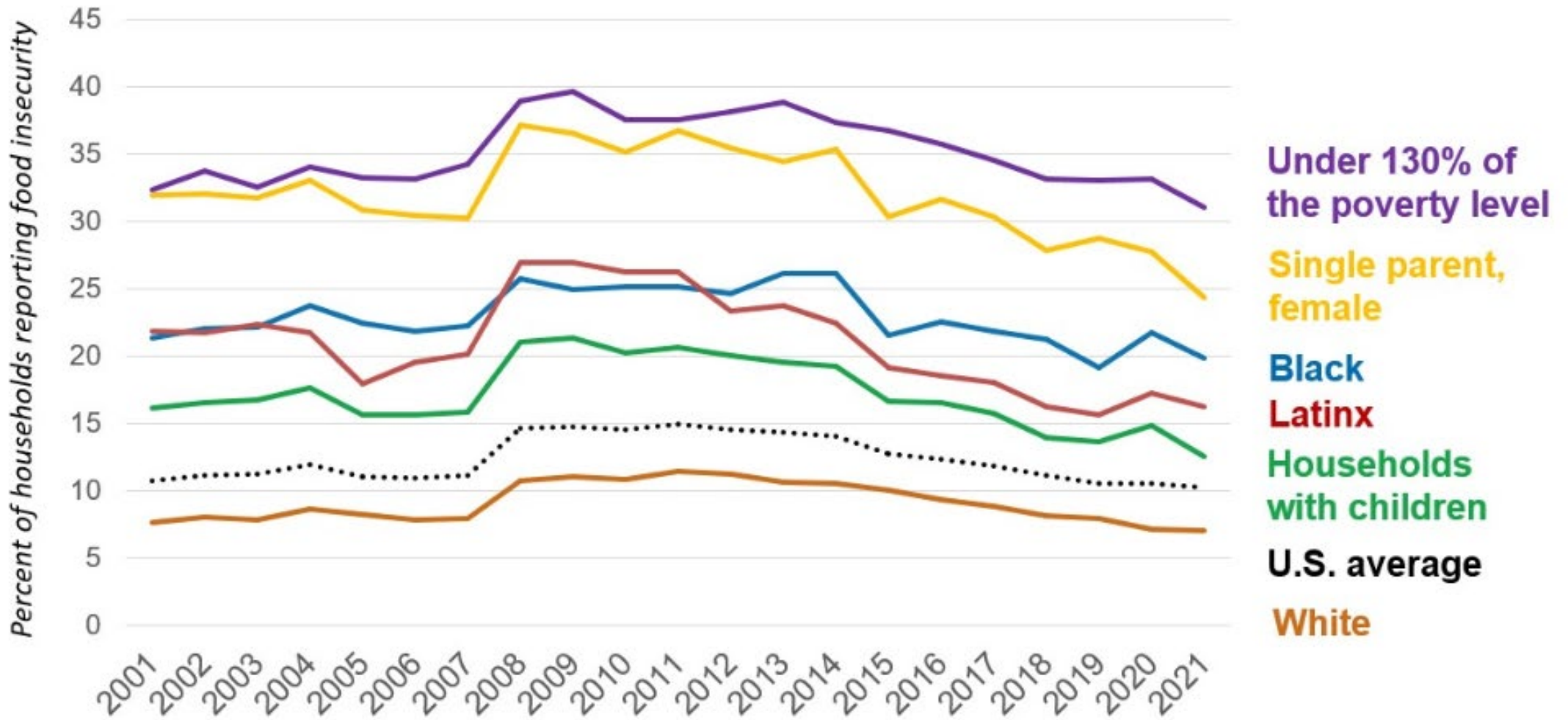
Note: Food insecurity measures assess whether households have enough money for adequate food consumption. For additional details, see the technical appendix to Bauer et al., 2020.

Updated November 26th, 2020: Incorporated additional multipliers for the sufficiency to security conversion, so that respondents with children are using different multipliers than respondents overall. In effect, food insecurity rates for respondents overall have changed.

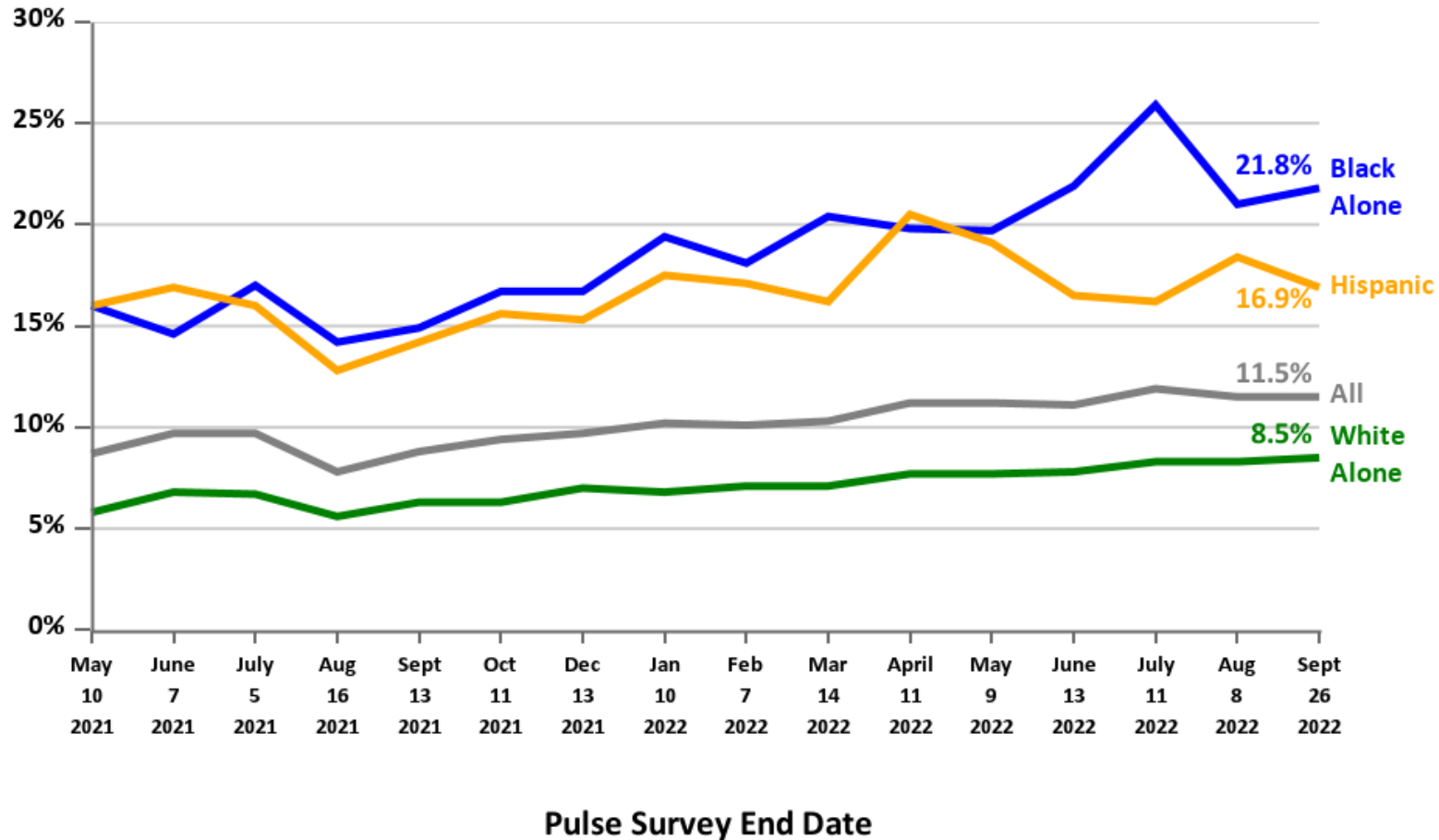
Food Insecurity During the COVID-19 Pandemic

- Legislation allowed FNS to Respond:
 - **Families First Coronavirus Response Act of March 2020**
 - SNAP Emergency Allotments - max allotment
 - Access to P-EBT (Pandemic-EBT)
 - **American Rescue Plan Act of 2021**
 - Increase in SNAP benefits by 15%
 - Expansion of SNAP online purchasing
- Additional ARPA assistance:
 - Increase in Child Tax Credit, Earned-Income Tax Credit, and Child and Dependent Care Tax Credit
 - Extension of unemployment benefits
- Did this assistance make a difference?

COVID-19 Stopped Long Decline in U.S. Food Insecurity



**Chart 1: Percent of Adults Reporting Food Insufficiency
By Race/Ethnicity**



Equity and Food Security

Note: Food Insufficiency refers to sometimes or often not having enough food in the household in the last 7 days.

Source: Census Pulse Data Brief; Oct 5, 2022

FNS Studies Measuring Food Security

- ***Summer Electronic Benefits Transfer for Children demonstration project***

- Compared \$30 vs \$60 benefit (per child per month)
- \$30 benefit as effective as \$60 benefit at reducing VLFS-C
- \$60 benefit more effective at reducing FI-C, and VLFS and FI in households and adults

- ***Effect of SNAP on Food Security***

- Compared FS in new SNAP participants vs those on SNAP for 6 months
 - Cross-sectional comparison: FI 4.6% lower in those on SNAP for 6 months
 - Longitudinal comparison: FI decreased 10.6% after 6 months
 - Also saw decreases in VLFS and in FI-C

Sources: Collins et al., 2014;
Mabli et al., 2013

White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health (Sept. 28, 2022)

- First since **1969**
- Coordinated strategy to *“end hunger, improve nutrition and physical activity, and close the disparities surrounding them”*
- Five pillars:
 - 1) Improve Food Access and Affordability
 - 2) Integrate Nutrition and Health
 - 3) Empower All Consumers to Make and Have Access to Healthy Choices
 - 4) Support Physical Activity for All
 - 5) Enhance Nutrition and Food Security Research

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What's next for Food Insecurity Measurement?

- Tools that can be adapted to populations that have additional access challenges
 - Older adults, people with disabilities
- Food Insecurity screenings in healthcare settings (Pillar 2 of White House strategy)
- Broader equity for those with limited English proficiency (refugees, immigrants)
- Real-time monitoring of food insecurity
- Application of continuous food security scales

The image features three white reusable shopping bags filled with a variety of fresh groceries. The bags are arranged in a row against a dark grey background. The leftmost bag contains a loaf of bread, a bunch of grapes, a red bell pepper, and some leafy greens. The middle bag is filled with a loaf of bread, a bunch of grapes, a red bell pepper, a yellow bell pepper, and several carrots. The rightmost bag contains a loaf of bread, a bunch of grapes, a red bell pepper, a yellow bell pepper, and some leafy greens. The text "THANK YOU!" is centered over the middle bag in a white, sans-serif font. A white rectangular border is drawn around the three bags.

THANK YOU!

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