

# Combating Food Insecurity with Collaboration: Webinar Takeaways

Hosted Thursday, July 21, 2022

by the Office of Nutrition and Health Promotion Programs, Administration for Community Living

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## What is food insecurity?

- Food security defined by USDA: “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active life.”
- Low food security: poor nutrition quality and limited variety; little or no sign of reduced food intake.
- Very low food security: reports of skipping meals or not eating; reduced food availability.

## How Food Insecurity Affects Health

- The 2019 Healthy Aging poll found that of those who reported being food insecure:
  - 45% had fair-to-poor physical health, compared to 14% of those food secure.
  - 24% had fair-to-poor mental health, compared to 5% of those food secure.
  - 43% had a fair-to-poor diet, compared to 20% of those food secure.

## Social Determinants of Health (SDOH)

- SDOH: conditions where people are born, live, learn, work, play, worship, and age.
- Affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes and quality of life.
- SDOH domains are economic stability (includes food insecurity), education, health and health care, neighborhood and build environment, and social and community context.

## Federal Assistance Programs

### *Older Americans Act (OAA) Senior Nutrition Program*

- Program intent: reduce hunger, food insecurity, and malnutrition; promote socialization; promote health and well-being.
- Provides congregate or home-delivered meals; nutrition screening, education, and counseling; supplemental food; and food boxes.
- Target populations: those with low income, members of minority groups, people in rural areas, those with limited English proficiency, and those at risk for institutional care.

### *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)*

- To qualify, households must meet certain income requirements, but older adults can use medical deductions to increase the benefits they are eligible to receive.
- Provides monthly benefits that can be spent locally and online.
- Can apply by phone or online – there are services that can help with application process.

### *Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)*

- Distributes nutritious USDA food to adults 60+. The food contains nutrients older adults typically lack in their diets: calcium; iron; and vitamins A, C, and D.
- To qualify, participants must meet certain income requirements.

### *Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)*

- Increases access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs and the domestic consumption of agricultural products through farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agricultural programs.
- The program is for seniors with low income.
- In some states, the SFMNP and SNAP programs collaborate to increase purchasing power of the benefits they provide (e.g., "Double Up Food Bucks").

### **Collaboration – Why, Who, and How**

- Benefits: eliminate duplicate efforts, improve communication, build networks, avoid burnout, increase impact, engage stakeholders, foster long-term change.
- Potential partners: hunger organizations, coalitions, and task forces; food pantries and feeding centers; schools; faith-based organizations; and more.
- Collaboration key steps:
  - Avoid being territorial.
  - Find your organization's champion.
  - Communicate goals and objectives.
  - Keep a record, including timelines and resources used.
  - Visit partners and enlist specialists.
  - Collect data and share with partners.

### **Increasing Your Program Resources**

- Ensure federal assistance programs are being utilized effectively before adding more services.
- Recruit volunteers, who are a critical part of executing OAA programs.
- Volunteers can help with tasks such as serving/delivering meals, transportation, grocery delivery, creating meal kits, coordinating/staffing food drives, and counseling services.
- Fundraising can be intimidating, but it helps serve more older adults. Try activities like charity walks/runs, auctions, tournaments, book/craft sales.

### **Food Insecurity Resources**

- [Nutrition and Aging Resource Center \(ACL\)](#)
  - [Quick Guide to Title III-Title VI Nutrition Collaboration](#)
  - [Business Acumen Basics for Senior Nutrition Programs](#)
  - [Senior Nutrition Program Meal Services Elements for Sustainability](#)
  - [Options for Contracting Meals](#)
  - [Partnerships with Foodbanks and Other USDA Programs](#)
  - [Volunteer Engagement and Recruitment Resources](#)
- [USDA Definitions of Food Security and Stats \(USDA\)](#)
  - [USDA Screening and Survey Tools](#)
  - [USDA Commodity Supplemental Food Program State/Local Agency Information](#)
- [CDC Food and Food System Resources During COVID-19 Pandemic \(CDC\)](#)
- [Food Research & Action Center](#)
- [Feeding America](#)
- [Defeat Malnutrition Today](#)

- [National Blueprint: Achieving Quality Malnutrition Care for Older Adults](#)
- [Quality Malnutrition Care](#)
- [Malnutrition for Professionals](#) (National Council on Aging)
- [Malnutrition Solution Center](#) (American Society of Parenteral & Enteral Nutrition)
- [Nutrition Focused Physical Exam](#) (Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics)