

Food Insufficiency During the COVID-19 Pandemic

In the wake of job loss and financial insecurity triggered by the pandemic, more Kansans may not have access to enough food. This fact sheet shows which Kansans age 18 and older experienced food insufficiency before and during the pandemic (Figure 1), and how their experience with food insufficiency changed compared to the pre-pandemic period (Figure 2). This analysis uses the US Department of Agriculture (USDA) definition of [food insufficiency](#) as “household did not have enough food to eat sometimes (or often) in the last seven days.”

Figure 1. Race/Ethnicity and Presence of Children in Household Among Those Experiencing Food Insufficiency, Kansas Adults, Age 18 and Over, August-December, 2020

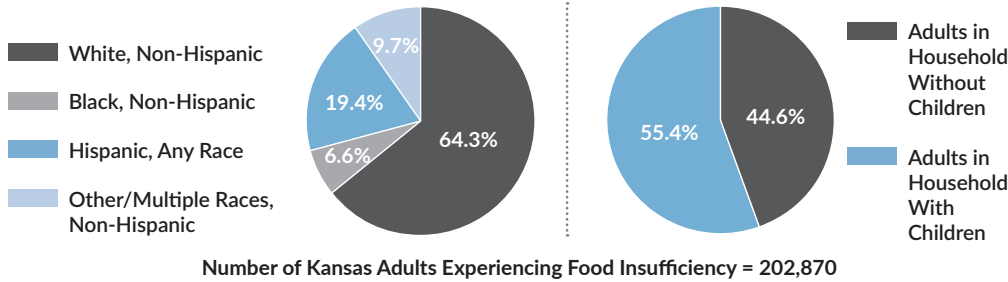
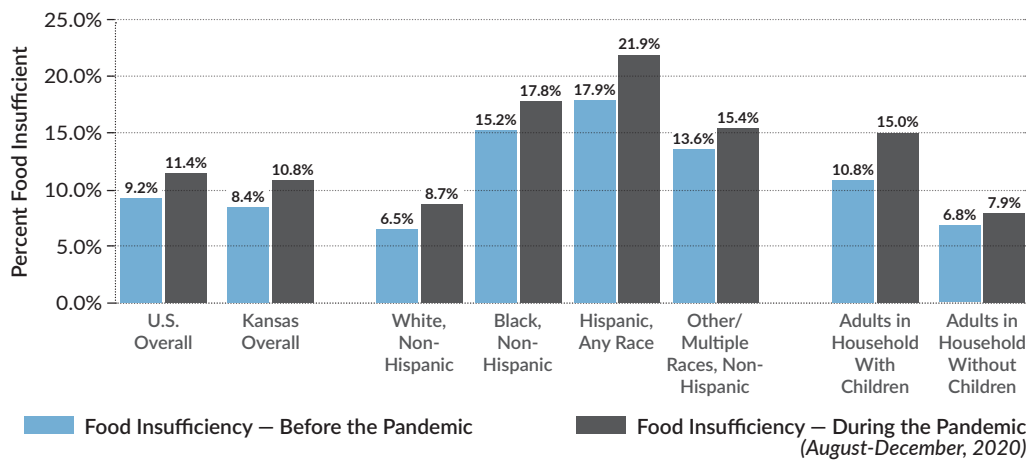


Figure 2. Food Insufficiency Before and During the Pandemic by Race/Ethnicity and Presence of Children in Household, Kansas Adults, Age 18 and Over, August-December, 2020



Note: Kansas Adults, Age 18 and Over, average weekly weighted population = 1,885,279. Food insufficiency defined by US Department of Agriculture (USDA) as “household did not have enough food to eat sometimes (or often) in the last seven days.” Because the data did not fluctuate significantly in the August-December 2020 surveys, all weeks of data were combined for the analysis. Pre-pandemic food insufficiency based on survey respondents’ experience before March 13, 2020. Race and ethnicity are reported for the head of household.

Source: [Kansas Health Institute analysis of Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the U.S. Census Bureau’s Household Pulse Survey Public Use File.](#)

Conclusions

Even with federal economic relief and additional flexibility in federal nutrition programs during the pandemic, food insufficiency increased across all races and in households both with and without children. Racial and ethnic minority Kansas adults were more likely than non-Hispanic Whites to experience food insufficiency both before and during the pandemic. Adults in households with children also were more likely than those in households without children to experience a food insufficiency both before and during than pandemic. As the health and economic toll of the pandemic continues, additional solutions and relief may be needed to address food insufficiency across the board and narrow the gap among population groups.

Key Points

- More than 200,000 Kansas adults – or one in every 10 (10.8 percent) has experienced food insufficiency during the pandemic. The rate of food insufficiency among adults rose during the pandemic both in Kansas (from 8.4 to 10.8 percent) and in the U.S. (from 9.2 to 11.4 percent).
- More than one in every five (21.9 percent) Hispanic, Any Race, Kansas adults, and 17.8 percent of non-Hispanic Black Kansas adults, experienced food insufficiency during the pandemic. These rates are more than two times higher than the rate among non-Hispanic White Kansas adults (8.7 percent).
- Food insufficiency increased during the pandemic among Kansas adults of all races and ethnicities.
- Adults in households with children were almost twice as likely to experience food insufficiency during the pandemic compared to households without children (15.0 percent compared to 7.9 percent), and were about 1.4 times more likely to lack food during the pandemic than in the months before the pandemic (15.0 percent compared to 10.8 percent).



The Household Pulse Survey is an ongoing federal survey that

provides policy makers with valuable near real-time information about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kansas and across the United States. This valuable resource allows for a deeper, data-driven understanding of the impact that the pandemic is having on our communities. This Pulse on Kansas is one in a series of reports on the economic, social and health impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic in Kansas.



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The Kansas Health Institute supports effective policymaking through nonpartisan research, education and engagement. KHI believes evidence-based information, objective analysis and civil dialogue enable policy leaders to be champions for a healthier Kansas. Established in 1995 with a multiyear grant from the Kansas Health Foundation, KHI is a nonprofit, nonpartisan educational organization based in Topeka.

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