



What Is Household Food Security? Definitions From the Life Sciences Research Office (Anderson 1990)

Food security—Access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Food security includes at a minimum

- The ready availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods.
- An assured ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

Food insecurity—Limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

Hunger—The uneasy or painful sensation caused by a lack of food. The recurrent and involuntary lack of access to food.

What Is Community Food Security?

Community food security is a relatively new concept with roots in a variety of disciplines, including community nutrition, nutrition education, public health, sustainable agriculture, and anti-hunger and community development. As such, no universally accepted definition exists.

Community food security can be viewed as an expansion of the concept of household food security. Whereas household food security is concerned with the ability to acquire food at the household level, community food security focuses on the underlying social, economic, and institutional factors within a community that affect the quantity and quality of food available and its affordability or price relative to the sufficiency of financial resources available to acquire it.

Policies and programs implemented under the community food security label address a diverse range of issues, including participation in and access to Federal food assistance programs, economic opportunity and job security, community development and social cohesion, ecologically sustainable agricultural production, farmland preservation, economic viability of rural communities, direct food marketing, diet-related health problems, and emergency food assistance access.

Communities may be considered to be food insecure if

- There are inadequate resources from which people can purchase foods;
- The available food purchasing resources are not accessible to all community members;
- The food available through the resources is not sufficient in quantity or variety;
- The food available is not competitively priced and thus is unaffordable to low-income households;
- There are inadequate food assistance resources to help low-income people purchase foods at retail markets;
- There are no local food production resources;
- Locally produced food is not available to community members;
- There is no support for local food production resources; and
- There is any substantial level of household food insecurity within the community.