

Press Release



Food Insecurity and Food Insufficiency: Assessing Causes and Historical Trends

ALLISON EDWARDS | MARCH 4, 2021

Regular access to healthy food is a central aspect to wellbeing, but the COVID-19 pandemic has put this access at risk. The government describes this access in two ways, food insecurity and food insufficiency, but what do these terms mean? In a new analysis, AAF's Director of Human Welfare Policy Tara O'Neill Hayes examines how food insecurity and insufficiency are measured, food insecurity trends over time, and the factors that contribute to food insecurity.

Her central points:

- Food insecurity is not only defined by having insufficient amounts of food, but also a diet that is lacking in quality, variety, or desirability;
- Food insecurity is highly correlated with financial challenges but may also be caused by physical or logistical challenges in accessing or cooking nutritious food; and
- Over the past 25 years, food insecurity was highest in the years immediately following the 2008 financial crisis but had been steadily declining since 2014—at least until the COVID-19 pandemic.

[Read the analysis.](#)