

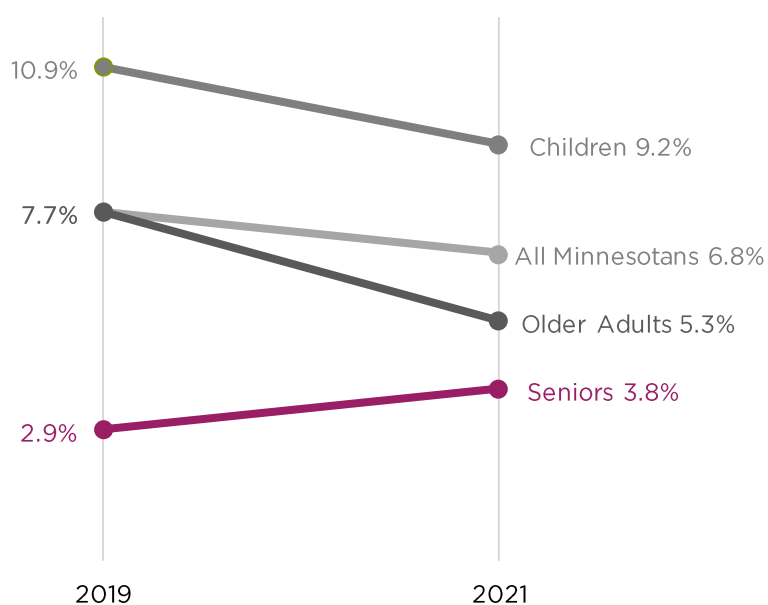
## 2023 Map the Meal Gap Release

### Overview of Map the Meal Gap 2023 Results

Map the Meal Gap 2023 data represents food insecurity rates for 2021. As a result, this year's report helps us understand what was happening during the pandemic. The results show that food insecurity in Minnesota was estimated to be 6.8% in 2021, which means approximately 339,000 people struggled to get enough food. That's enough people to fill Target Field over 8.5 times!! As usual, the problem is more common among Minnesota children. An estimated 9.2% of kids, or 120,650 kids, were food insecure. In comparison, the rates of food insecurity were lower among seniors and older adults. An estimated 3.8% of Minnesotans who were 60 or over experienced food insecurity, as did 5.3% of older adults (50- to 59-year-olds).

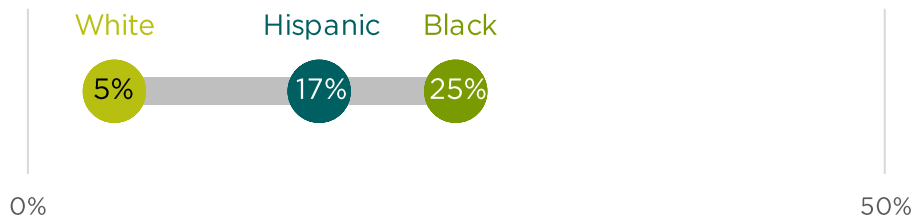
When we compare these numbers to 2019 before the pandemic, there is a clear trend among all groups except seniors, see graph 1. The rates of food insecurity decreased in Minnesota slightly from 2019 to 2021. However, for seniors (60+) the rate of food insecurity increased from 2.9% to 3.8%.

**Graph 1.** Seniors were the only age group with increased rates of food insecurity from pre-pandemic to 2021.



Last year, for the first time, Feeding America also began releasing food insecurity data by three major racial groups: Black, Hispanic, and White (non-Hispanic). This new data shows us how food insecurity is not evenly experienced, see graph 2. Black and Hispanic Minnesotans were much more likely to have challenges meeting their food needs. In 2021, an estimated 25% of Black Minnesotans and 17% of Hispanic Minnesotans experienced food insecurity. For White Minnesotans, that figure was only 5%. These rates are all slightly smaller than they were in 2019 before the pandemic began.

**Graph 2.** Hispanic and Black Minnesotans experience significantly higher rates of food insecurity than White Minnesotans.



Feeding America does not calculate food insecurity rates for Native American communities. However, county-level data show that counties with large Native American communities had high levels of food insecurity in 2021. Across the state rates varied at the county level, from 3.1% to 13.0%. Mahnomon and Clearwater counties, both of which have significant Native American communities, are the only Minnesota counties with food insecurity rates over 10%, at 13% and 10.1%, respectively. This indicates that Native Minnesotans also were disproportionately impacted by food insecurity along with our Black and Hispanic communities. Feeding America’s website has an [interactive map](#) where you can see food insecurity rates for different groups, by state, county, and congressional districts. Not all counties have food insecurity estimates for each population. This is because some populations are too small to create accurate estimations of food insecurity.

Map the Meal Gap data indicate that despite the challenges early in the pandemic, as a state and country we were able to prevent food insecurity rates from increasing as was anticipated. The government supports that were still in place in 2021, along with the increased support of the charitable food network provided for those of us in need. Today we know that need continues to increase. In 2022, a new record was set with over 5.5 million visits to food shelves in Minnesota—an increase of almost 2 million visits from 2021.

### Map the Meal Gap Background

Map the Meal Gap (MMG) is a report and data released annually by Feeding America. It provides helpful information about food insecurity we can use to inform our efforts as a network. MMG includes two primary pieces of data:

- The number and percentage of people that are food insecure, including a breakdown for specific populations, and
- How many meals are being missed by food insecure people.

Feeding America produces estimates at different geographies including state, county, food bank service area, and congressional district. New this year, Feeding America released the results of *The State of Senior Hunger* and *Hunger Among Older Adults, Age 50-59* reports at the same time. This allows us to look at the most recent rates of hunger for all ages together.

Feeding America uses federally available data sets to create these for food insecurity estimates. Therefore, the estimates represent a two-year delay, so data released in 2023 represents estimates of food insecurity in 2021. If you would like to learn more about Map the Meal Gap and the methodology you can read more [here](#). The full report is available [here](#).

For more information or detailed data email Rebecca Mino, Senior Evaluator, at [rmino@2harvest.org](mailto:rmino@2harvest.org). The detailed data available from Feeding America includes food insecurity rates by Census tract and zip codes. This data is useful for identifying need and planning at a local level.