

Household Food Insecurity in British Columbia



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

In 2023/2024, the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC) published 3 reports relating to household food insecurity. This infographic highlights some key messages from the reports which are available on the [BCCDC website](#).

May 2023

FOOD COSTING IN BC 2022 ¹

[Report](#)
[Infographic](#)

\$1,263



= the average monthly cost of a nutritious diet for a BC family of four in May-June 2022 and has likely increased since then.

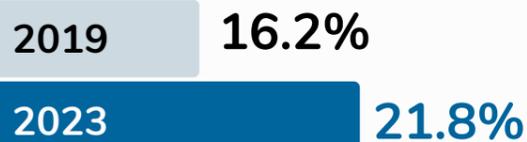
After paying for housing and other basic needs, many people in BC cannot afford food, especially if living on income and disability assistance.

October 2023

HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY ²

[Report](#)

Food insecurity is rising.



21.8% of people lived in food insecure households in 2023, compared to 16.2% in 2019.³



Food banks and other charitable food assistance **do not** effectively address the root causes of household food insecurity.

Household food insecurity disproportionately affects racialized and Indigenous people due to structural inequities.

June 2024

FOOD COSTS AND CLIMATE CHANGE IMPACT STORIES FROM REMOTE BC ⁴

[Report](#)
[Website](#)

6 remote Indigenous and non-Indigenous BC communities share their experiences of food access in a changing climate.

“When I moved here, potatoes were \$18. Then it was \$54, then \$88 for a box of potatoes. The other day, two big bags of potatoes were \$175!”

- participant from Southern Stl’atl’imx



Food and related costs are very high. Selection is limited and of poor quality.



Many travel far, up to 6-8 hours, to get to a grocery store.



Extreme weather events impact travel, food supply and access to traditional foods.



Communities strongly value connection to each other, to land, and to culture.



Illustration by Moe Butterfly

Key messages

Household food insecurity is a serious public health issue.

HEALTHCARE COSTS

76%

higher for severely food insecure households compared to food secure households.²



Household food insecurity is primarily an income-based issue requiring income-based solutions.

ADDITIONAL FACTORS that influence food insecurity

- Household composition
- Education
- Immigration status
- Colonization
- Racism
- Many more...



Food insecurity in remote Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities is more complex.

EXAMPLE HOPES FOR THE FUTURE from different remote BC communities

- Reliable and safe communal transportation, a cultural centre, and a larger community market where people can share, trade and/or sell traditional and local foods.
- Develop programs for teaching about Indigenous (traditional) foods.
- Develop youth food literacy as one way of strengthening community growth and development.⁵

Individuals, communities, and governments all have a role in making BC food secure.

What can you do?

- **Collaborate across all sectors** to develop equity-informed strategies that address the root causes of household food insecurity, such as ensuring adequate income to meet basic needs.
- **Work with rural, remote, and Indigenous communities** to collect and share food cost and household food insecurity data.
- **Share this infographic and its key messages** with your colleagues and networks and identify how you will act to influence these issues.

READ THE REPORTS

bccdc.ca/our-services/programs/food-security



COMMUNITY STORIES WEBSITE

foodcostingstories.bccdc.ca

1. BC Centre for Disease Control. (2023). Food Costing in BC 2022: Assessing the affordability of healthy eating. Vancouver, B.C.: BC Centre for Disease Control, Population and Public Health Program.
2. BC Centre for Disease Control. (2023). Priority Health Equity Indicators for British Columbia: Household Food Insecurity Update Report. Vancouver, B.C.: BC Centre for Disease Control, Population Public Health.
3. PROOF. (2024). New data on household food insecurity in 2023. <https://proof.utoronto.ca/2024/new-dataonhousehold-food-insecurity-in-2023/>
4. BC Centre for Disease Control. (2024). Food Costs and Climate Change Impact Stories From Remote Communities in BC. Vancouver, B.C.: BC Centre for Disease Control, Population and Public Health Program.
5. BC Centre for Disease Control. (2024). Food access in a changing climate: stories from seven remote communities in BC. <https://foodcostingstories.bccdc.ca>



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