

kayla de la haye

COVID-19 work in progress

october 2020

*The impact of COVID-19 on
food insecurity
in Los Angeles County*



PUBLIC EXCHANGE™

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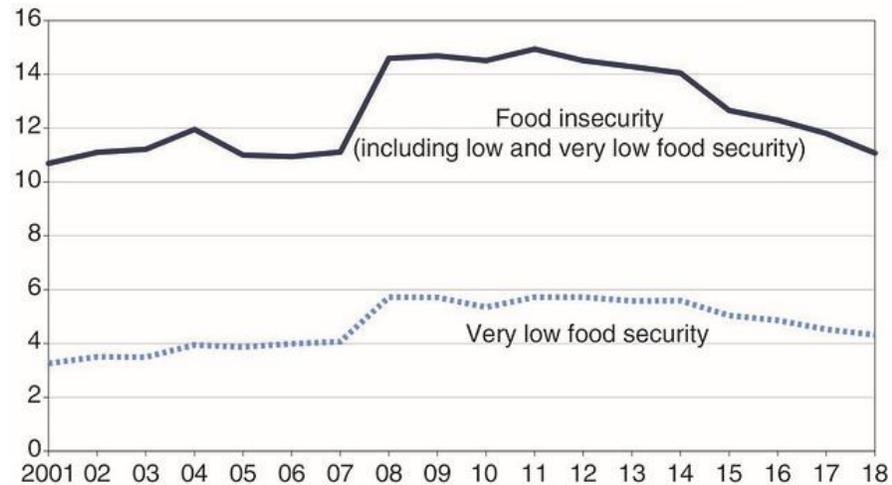
LA County Emergency Food Security Branch

Los Angeles Food Policy Council

Yelp

- **Food insecurity** means disruptions in regular eating patterns because of a lack of money or other resources for food
- In a 'typical' year, food insecurity affects **1 in 10** U.S. households

Percent of U.S. households – in a typical year

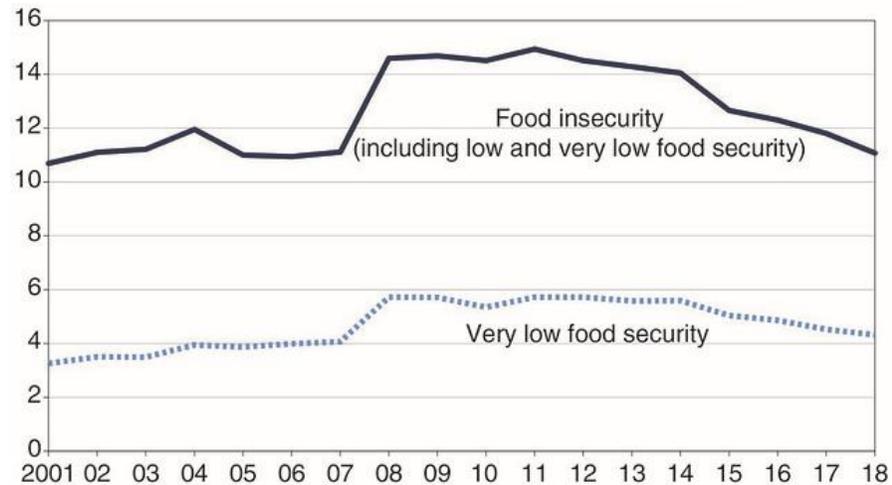


Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Food Security

food insecurity

- **Food insecurity** means disruptions in regular eating patterns because of a lack of money or other resources for food
- In a 'typical' year, food insecurity affects **1 in 10** U.S. households
- COVID-19 has disrupted many aspects of the **food system**

Percent of U.S. households – in a typical year



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey Food Security



covid-19 impacts on the L.A. food system?

What is the impact of COVID-19 on peoples' food access & food security?

What strategies are needed to support food security?

Goals:

- quickly monitor food insecurity in L.A. County
- identify who is food insecure
- identify features of the L.A. food system that impact to food insecurity, to address in programs and policy

'Never Seen Anything Like It': Cars Line Up for Miles at Food Banks

Millions are flooding a charitable system that was never intended to handle a nationwide crisis.



People wait in their cars Thursday, at Traders Village for the San Antonio Food Bank to begin food distribution. 10,000 people seek San Antonio Food Bank help. William Luther/San Antonio Express News/USA

10,000 people line up for a San Antonio Food Bank, April 9

survey findings: food insecurity

1 in 4 L.A. County households experienced food insecurity in the first four months of the pandemic.

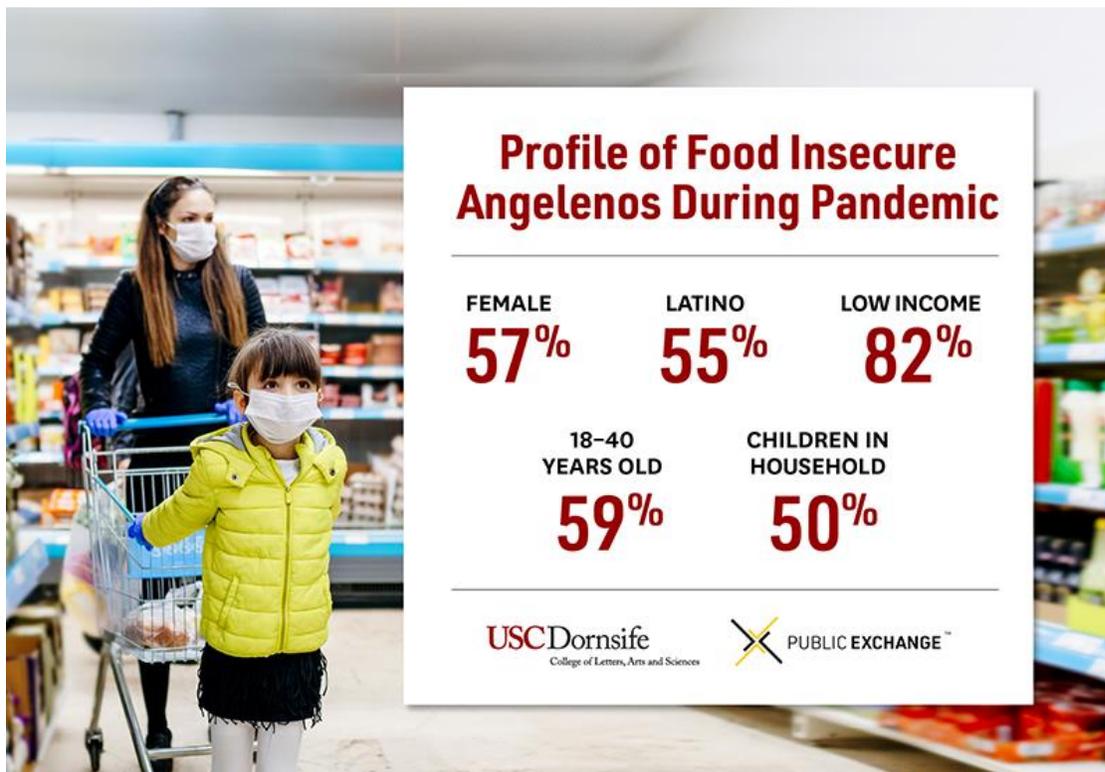


- **26%** of all households (873,000 households)
- **42%** of *low-income* households (260,000 households)

Much higher than historical rates

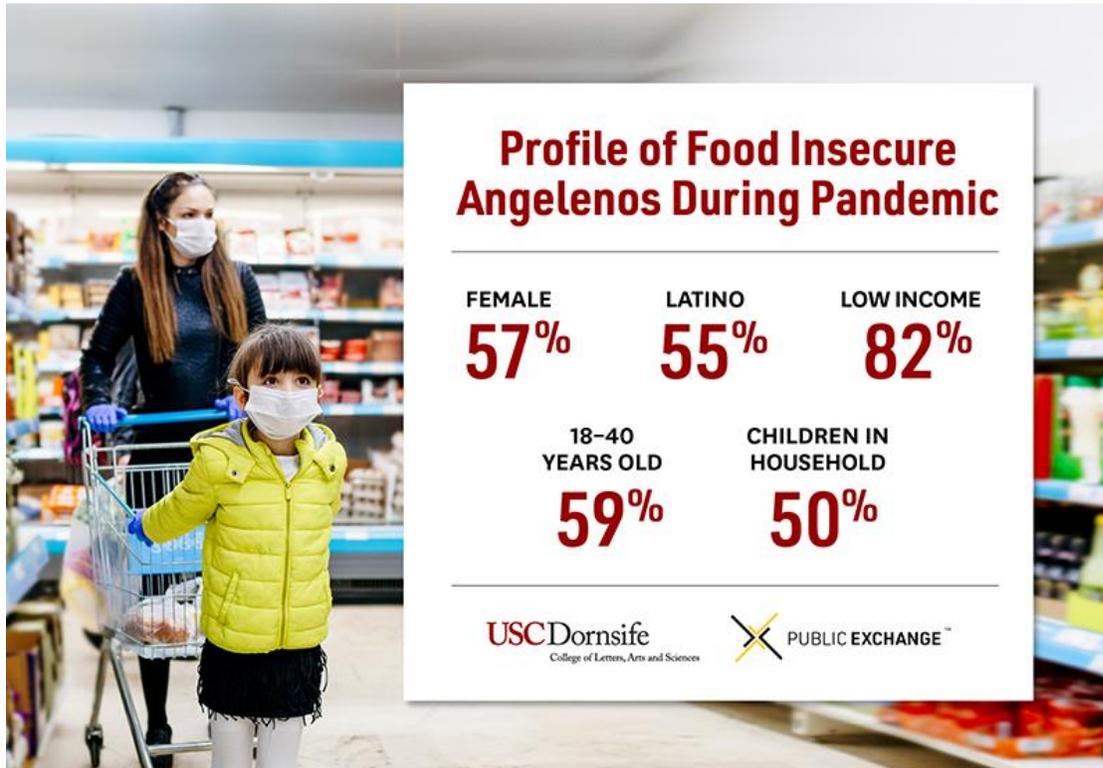
- **27%** of low-income households experienced food insecurity **at some point in 2018** (LAC DPH, 2019)

survey findings: food insecurity



And, 1 in 5 households that experienced food insecurity **were not** low income

survey findings: food insecurity



Key risk factors for food insecurity :

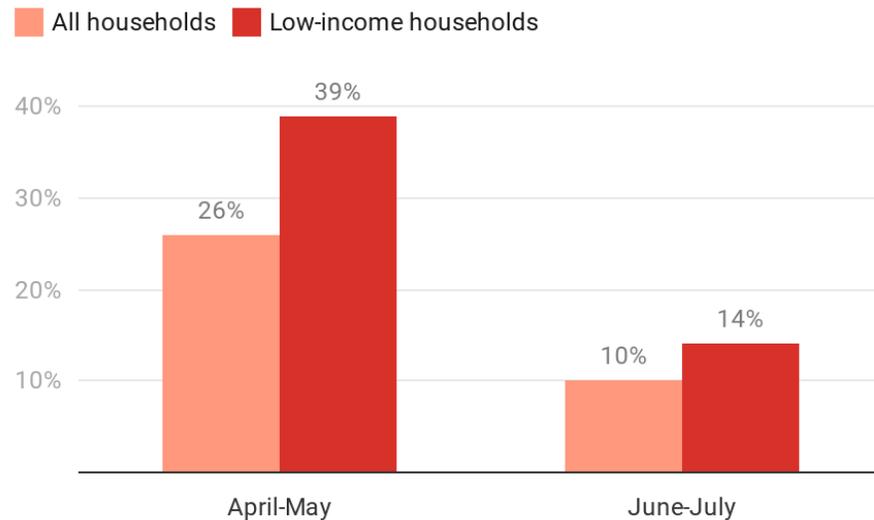
- low income
- unemployment
- 18-50 years old
- being a single parent

And, 1 in 5 households that experienced food insecurity **were not** low income

survey findings: food insecurity

Food insecurity peaked in April-May and improved June-July, but remains higher than pre-pandemic levels.

LA County food insecurity: April to July



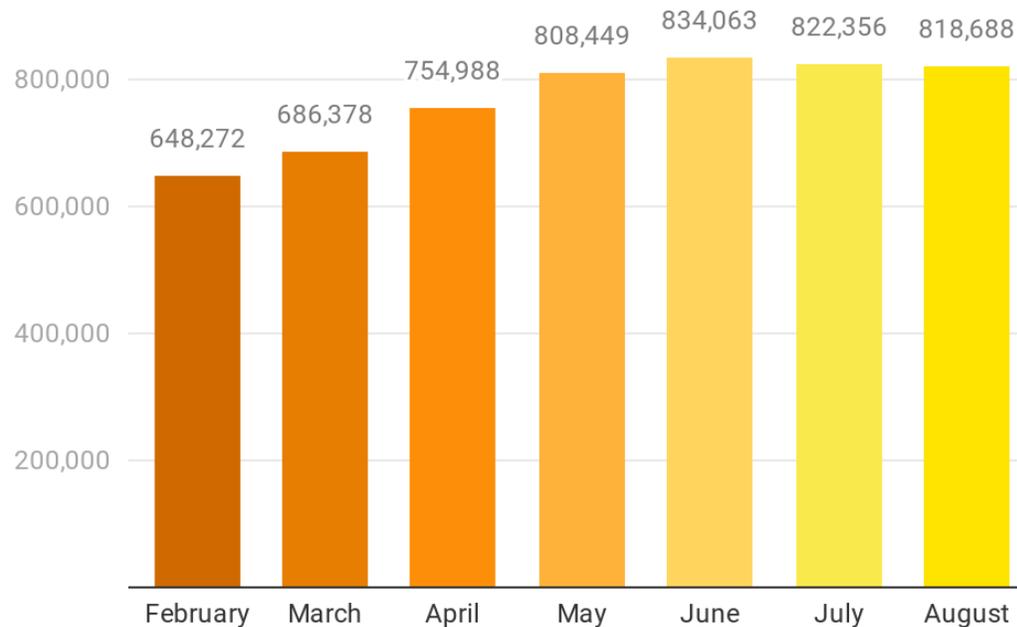
vs. 5% of low-income households/month in 2018
(LAC DPH, 2019)

People who **remained food insecure** often:

- lived in poverty
- had children under the age of 5
- lacked social support and financial assistance
- had more barriers to accessing food

From April to July, the decline in food insecurity in L.A. County paralleled an increase in use of food assistance.

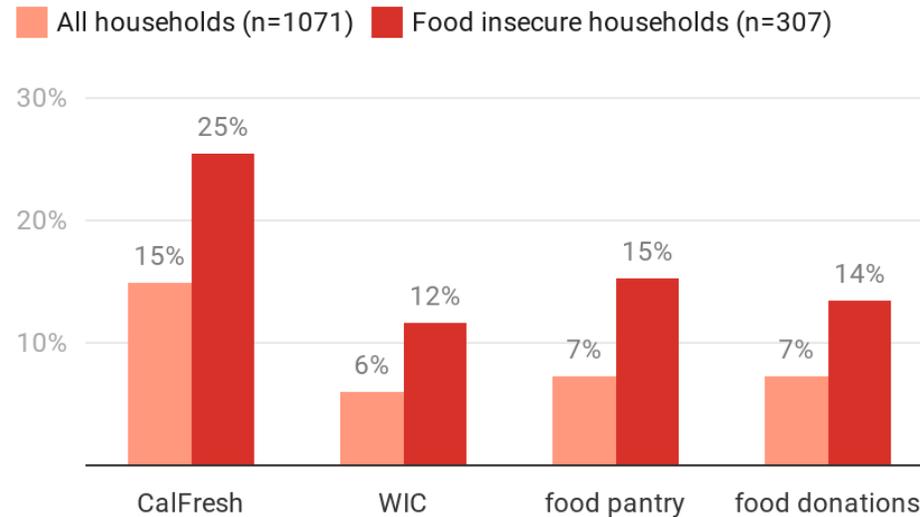
CalFresh Cases in L.A. County



- 20% increase in use of CalFresh
- households that received CalFresh were more likely to transition from **food insecurity** to **food security**

Emergence of food assistance programs

Receipt of food assistance (July 2020)



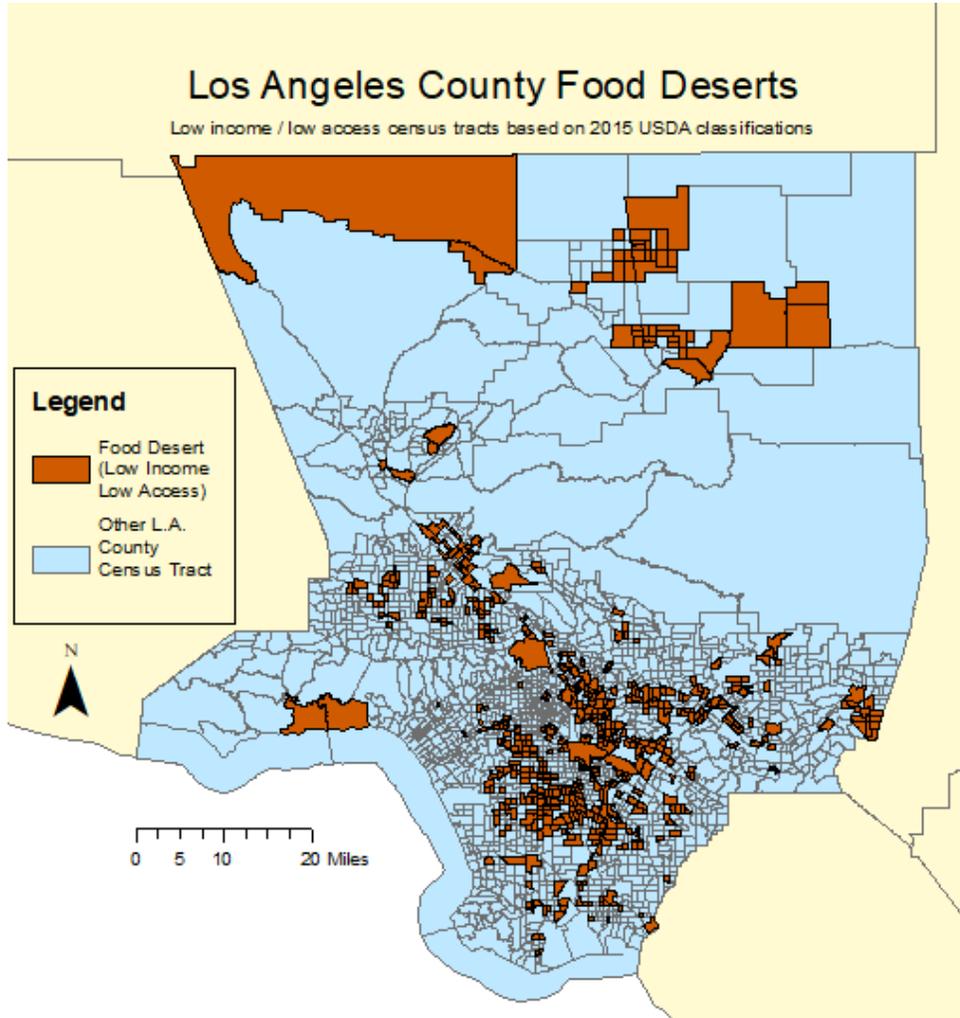
Source: Understanding America Study



LA Regional Food Bank:

- 70% increase in food distribution
- 22 million meals distributed April-June

Source: www.lafoodbank.org



About 1 in 4 (24%) of L.A. County residents live in a “food desert”

(American Community Survey, 2013-2017)

Of people with **regular food insecurity** during the pandemic (UAS, 2020):

- 80% said their primary source of food was within 2 miles of home
- 32% had difficulty accessing food because food stores *were closed or had limited hours*
- 33% had difficulty getting food because they had *no personal transportation*
- they were more likely to live in a food desert with low vehicle access (12%)

(1) Has the pandemic made food environments less accessible?

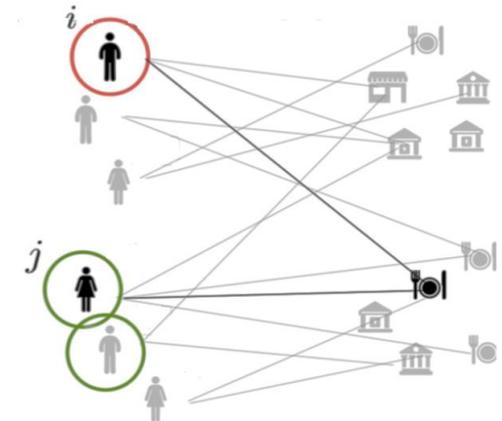
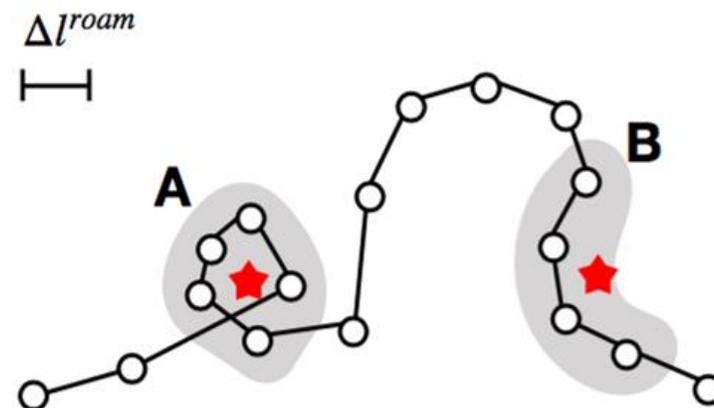
Change to food outlets & environments:

- monitor closures, limited hours, access to delivery



Food outlet visits:

- big data from phone mobility traces (L.A. residents)
- identify visits to food outlets (billions of geolocations, ~5 min.)



(1) Has the pandemic made food environments less accessible?

- **Change to food outlets & environments:**
 - monitor closures, limited hours, access to delivery
- **Food outlet visits:**
 - big data from phone mobility traces (L.A. residents)
 - identify visits to food outlets (billions of geolocations, ~5 min.)

(2) Identify features of the food system that impact food security, to inform food programs and policy

- continue to monitor food insecurity (October, December)
- share with government and community partners



The Impact of COVID-19 on Food Insecurity in Los Angeles County: April to July 2020

September 23, 2020

[View the Report](#)

The Challenge

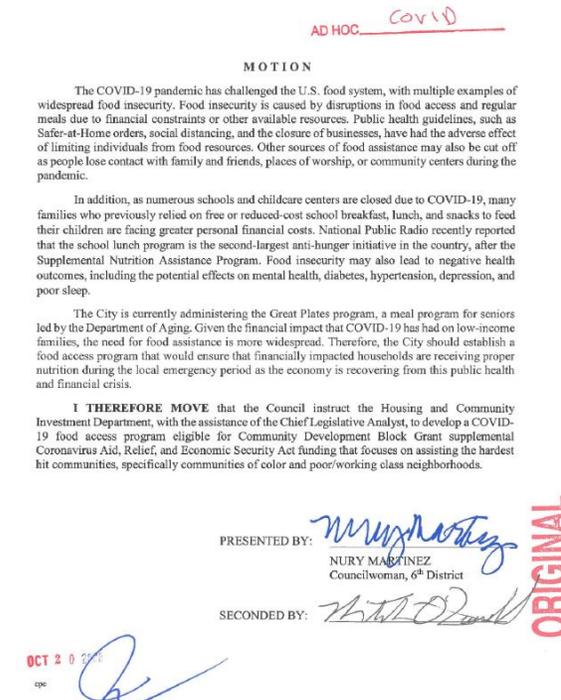
The COVID-19 pandemic continues to unfold, leaving in its wake major economic, social, and health crises. As our last [report](#) published on July 27, 2020 documented, almost one million households in Los Angeles County experienced food insecurity between early April and early May

[Report 1 \(July\)](#)

[Report 2 \(September\)](#)



[Supervisor Solis briefing](#), September 23 2020



LA City Council Motion for “COVID- 19 food access program”
October 20 2020

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Thank you.