Food Insecurity among older adults

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Definitions

• **Senior** – the age range for “older adults” which can start as young as 50 but is often 55, 60, or 65.

• **Hunger** – the physical sensation that results from a lack of food

• **Food insecurity** – limited or uncertain access to adequate food

• **Food security** – having, at all times, both physical and economic access to sufficient food to meet dietary needs for a productive and healthy life
Bivins Foundation

Timeline of Senior Hunger Activities

• 2016-2018 Funded pilot projects
• 2018 Senior Hunger Study
• 2018 Healthy Seniors Grant Program
• 2020 Healthy Seniors Grant Program
• 2020 Feeding Program Survey
• 2021 Bivins Village Food Survey
• April 2022 Community Meetings
• August 2022 Senior Food Security Forum
April 2022 Community Meetings

- 30 unique participants
- Food Pantry
- Congregate
- Home delivered

Meeting location
Attendee location
What does food insecurity for older adults in the community look like?

“It [food insecurity] is a complicated problem and there are different groups [of older adults] with different levels of food insecurity.”
Why do you think food insecurity for older adults is a problem?

• Limited income and/or financial resources
• No or extremely limited access to food especially in really rural areas
• Transportation challenges
• Pride and not wanting to ask for help
What do you think is the extent of the problem?

we don’t know.
What do older adults who are food insecure look like?

Older adults who are food insecure are hungry and silent. Many have worked hard their entire lives and are prideful so they will not tell anyone they are struggling. You would never know older adults are food insecure by looking at them.
What factors contribute to the problem of food insecurity for seniors in the community?

- Lack of money
- Fixed income does not cover the cost of living especially in light of inflation.
- Lack of reliable transportation.
- Lack of ability care for self due to physical health challenges or mobility issues.
- Lack of family or other support system.
- Lack of food availability in some communities.
- Some mental health issues including some substance abuse.
How do older adults in the community cope with food insecurity?

- Quietly
- Eat less
- Go hungry
- Eventually ask for help
- Affects mental health
Policies that affect food insecurity

- Paperwork
- Financial Requirements
- Eligibility Requirements
What are the best features of the food assistance programs for older adults in the community?

*Connection includes the interaction with the older adults, the chance to check on the older adult, and the general socialization that occurs between providers and clients.*
What are the challenges or barriers seniors have when trying to access food assistance programs?

- Transportation
- Physical
- Communication
- Knowledge
- Not enough money
- Language/Literacy
- Pride

*Physical challenges include limited mobility, disabilities, limited strength, and illness
**Communication challenges include the fact that society is moving towards electronic communication and older adults are typically not
***Knowledge challenges include knowing what is available to whom, where and when to go, and how to access
What successes has your organization had in addressing food insecurity for older adults?

- Fundraising and other resources
- Feeding people consistently
- Identifying those in need
- Providing the opportunity for connection
- Serving more seniors
- Volunteer engagement
- Nonjudgmental service
- Providing client choice
- Seniors staying at home longer

What successes has your organization had in addressing food insecurity for older adults?
What challenges does your organization have in addressing food insecurity for older adults?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Score</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Access to specific items*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Awareness</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Funding</td>
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<td>Communication</td>
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<td>Stigma</td>
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<td>Partnering</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Space</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*Access to specific items included fresh produce, meat/protein, more variety to give clients more choice, and senior specific items such as Ensure.
What do you see the Foundation's role is in addressing hunger and food insecurity for older adults in the Texas Panhandle?

- Awareness and education
- Information and training on grants
- Funding
- Research and data
- Making connections*
How many older adults in the community are food insecure?
PERCENT OF THE POPULATION EXPERIENCING FOOD INSECURITY

12.9%
Dall.

14.4%
Shelton

15.2%
Kenedy

12.7%
Buchholz

13.8%
Wichita

11.8%
Harvey

11.7%
Meade

16.2%
Austina

14.8%
Nacogdoches

12.1%
Henderson

12.3%
Midland

16.2%
Parker

12.2%
Carrizo

15.7%
Huntsville

16.7%
Wharton

12.7%
Hardin

12.1%
Randall

12.2%
Aransas

15.6%
Eustace

15.4%
Collingsworth

12.5%
Parker

11.8%
Deaf

17.8%
Swisher

15.8%
Brown

19.2%
Bexar

16.1%
Children

TOTAL POPULATION IN THE PANHANDLE
425,333

WHAT IS FOOD INSECURITY AND WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE IN THE PANHANDLE?

Food insecurity refers to USDA’s measure of lack of access, at times, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members and limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate foods. Food-insecure households are not necessarily food insecure all the time. Food insecurity may reflect a household’s need to make trade-offs between important basic needs, such as housing or medical bills, and purchasing nutritionally adequate foods.

POPULATION OF SENIORS
64,595

14.1%
PERCENT OF TEXANS THAT ARE FOOD INSECURE

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FOOD INSECURE SENIORS IN THE TEXAS PANHANDLE
9,108

ESTIMATED NUMBER OF FOOD INSECURE OLDER ADULTS BY COUNTY

MARY E. BIVINS FOUNDATION

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Graphics created using information from:
https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2019/overall/texas
https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/TX/US/PST045221