

# Food Insecurity in Louisiana

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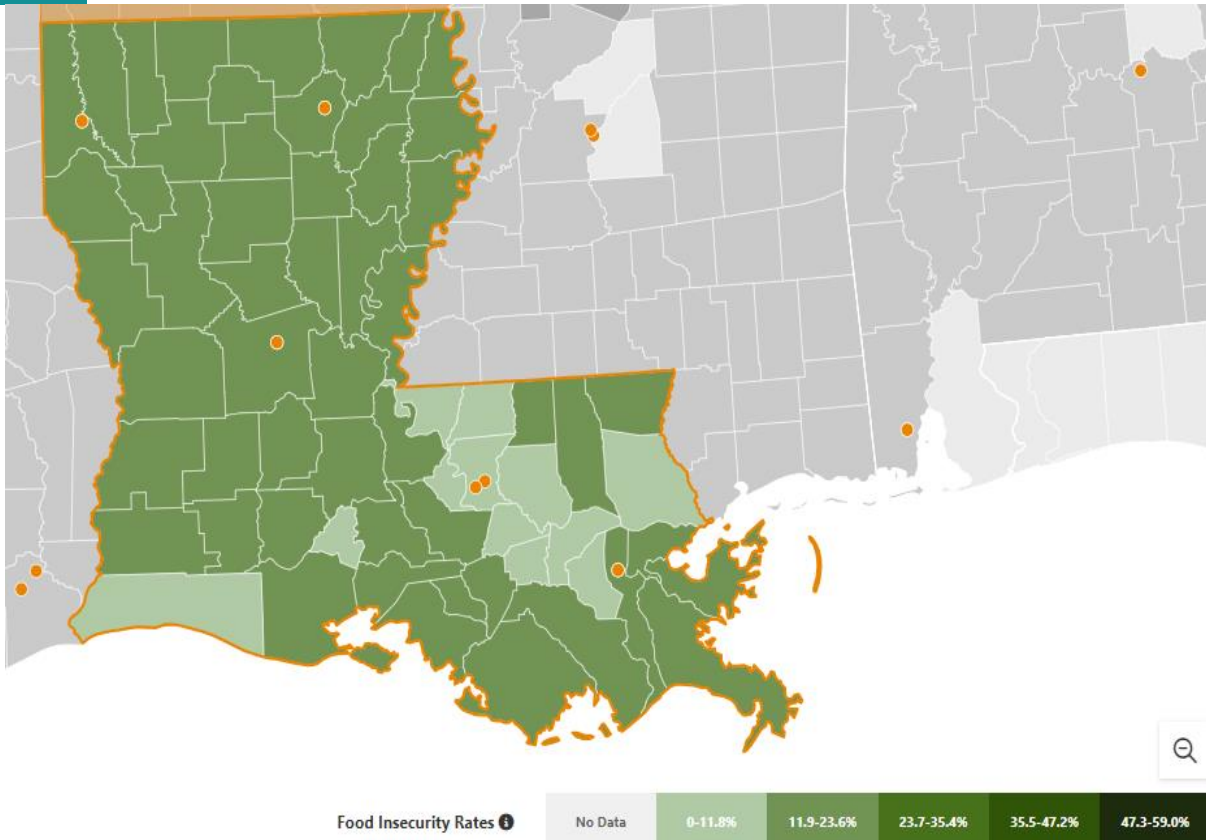
Director, LDH/OPH Bureau of Nutrition Services (WIC and CSFP)



# Food Insecurity in Louisiana

- In 2020, it was reported that Louisiana has the **3<sup>rd</sup> highest food insecurity rate** (15.8%)
  - National Average is 10.5%
- The Agenda for Children estimated in 2020 that 24% of Louisiana's children live in poverty
  - This results in the **2<sup>nd</sup> highest rate of childhood hunger** in the US
- Louisiana ranks in the **top 5** for having the highest senior food insecurity at 9.9%
  - New Orleans-Metairie area had the highest rate of senior food insecurity

# Food Insecurity in Louisiana

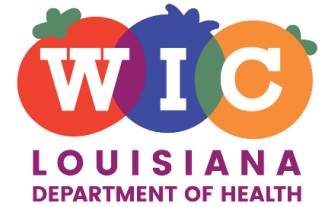


\*Orange dots represent locations of Food Banks; Source: Feeding America

- Food insecurity is most prevalent in rural areas of our state
  - Often live far away from grocery stores and food pantries (food deserts)
  - Lack of public transportation
  - Jobs often pay lower wages and do not offer full-time hours
- In the US, 9 out of 10 counties (parishes) with the highest food insecurity rates are rural

# Federal Feeding Programs in Louisiana

# Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)



- Funded by: United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS)
- State Agency: Louisiana Department of Health (LDH) Office of Public Health (OPH) Bureau of Nutrition Services
- Average Monthly Participation: 94,640 (calendar year 2023)
- Serves: pregnant, breastfeeding and post-partum women, infants and children up to 5 years of age who are at or below 185% of the federal poverty line
- Provides nutrient dense food packages based on nutritional risks, nutrition education, and breastfeeding support

# Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: LDH OPH Bureau of Nutrition Services
- Average Monthly Participation: 38,076 (calendar year 2023)
- Serves: seniors (60 years or older) living below 130% of the federal poverty line
- Provides nutritious food boxes to seniors monthly, in addition to nutrition education and referrals to other programs and services

# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS) Division of Family Services
- Average Monthly Participation: 864,775 recipients/month (state fiscal year 2020)
- Serves: households who meet specific income guidelines
- Provides monthly benefits on an EBT card that help eligible households purchase the food they need for good health

# National School Lunch Program (NSLP)



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)
- Average Monthly Participation: 8,772,000 lunches/month (state fiscal year 2020)
- Serves: children 5-18 years of age
- Provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day
  - School Breakfast Program (SBP) also administered by LDOE



# Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) – At Risk Afterschool Meals



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)
- Average Monthly Participation: 120,000 lunches or snacks/month (calendar year 2021)
- Serves: children 0-18 years of age
- Provides meals and snacks to infants, children, teens, and adults in a variety of care settings, including afterschool care programs

# Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) - Daycares



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: Louisiana Department of Education (LDOE)
- Average Monthly Participation: 496,000 lunches/month (state fiscal year 2020)
- Serves: children 0-5 years of age
- Provides meals and snacks to infants and children in an established daycare or daycare home setting

# Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: Louisiana Department of Education
- Average Monthly Participation: 211,000 lunches served/month (state fiscal year 2020)
- Serves: children 0-18 years of age
- Provides free meals to children and teens in low-income areas during the summer months when school is not in session

# The Emergency Feeding Assistance Program (TEFAP)



- Funded by: USDA FNS
- State Agency: Louisiana Department of Agriculture and Forestry (LDAF)
- Average Monthly Participation: 220,534 individuals/month (federal fiscal year 2021)
- Serves: households under 130% of federal poverty line
- Provides emergency food assistance at no cost to low-income individuals
  - Foods given to local food banks or soup kitchens who in turn distribute to the public

# Food Banks in Louisiana



- In 2021, Louisiana Foodbanks distributed 117.6 million pounds of food
  - Equates to enough food to prepare 98 million meals
- The food bank network includes partnerships with nearly 1,000 community- and faith-based organizations statewide

# Call to Action

- What can rural healthcare providers do?
  - Screen for food insecurity at each visit
    - Food is a physiological need that should be considered when treating and working with individuals and families
    - Universal screening tools for food insecurity are available
  - Stay up-to-date and aware of programs and resources available in and for your community
  - Make referrals to available resources and programs based on need and potential eligibility

# Questions?

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