

Hunger Facts

MINNESOTA



- Feeding America reports that 390,000 Minnesotans are facing hunger. 30% of these individuals are under the age of 18.¹
- Minnesotans made a record-breaking 7.5 million visits to food shelves in 2023.² This is up 36.4% from the previous record of 5.5 million visits in 2022³, and up 102% from 3.7 million visits in 2021⁴. Annual visits to food shelves are now more than double the rates of pre-pandemic visits.⁵
- Food insecurity is present in all 87 Minnesota counties, but is highest in the counties of Mahnommen, Ramsey, Beltrami, and Blue Earth.⁶
- Only six counties in Minnesota saw their food shelf visits decrease in 2023 (Nobles, Itasca, Lincoln, Faribault, Cook, and Dakota). Food shelf visits in 2023 rose most dramatically in Kittson, Benton, Grant, Pipestone, and Crow Wing Counties.⁷
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) enrollment by Minnesotans in 2023 was the highest it has been since 2016.⁸
- Due to federal cuts to SNAP funding in 2023, 235,000 Minnesota households saw their food stamp benefits reduced by an average of \$82 per month.⁹ Cuts to E-SNAP funding saw recipients of that program receive \$100 less per person per month compared to 2022.¹⁰
- Pounds of food distributed by Minnesota food shelves rose by 10% in 2023.¹¹
- In 2023, food prices increased by 5.8% nationally. Foods most impacted by inflation included beef, fresh fruits, fats and oils, and cereal and bakery items.¹² Across the board, food prices are now 25% higher than they were pre-pandemic.¹³

¹ <https://www.feedingamerica.org/hunger-in-america/minnesota>

² <https://www.publicnewsservice.org/2023-11-22/hunger-food-nutrition/mn-food-shelves-navigate-record-high-demand/a87376-1>

³ <https://www.hungersolutions.org/data-posts/2022-food-shelf-visits-hit-record-high-up-almost-2-million-visits-over-previous-year/>

⁴ <https://www.startribune.com/minnesota-food-shelf-visits-slightly-under-record-high-in-2020-but-edging-up-again/600118145/>

⁵ <https://www.hungersolutions.org/data-posts/2019-food-shelf-visits-hit-record-high-10-years-after-recession/>

⁶ <https://hfhl.umn.edu/fooddashboard>

⁷ <https://www.hungersolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Food-shelf-visits-2023-Presentation.pdf>

⁸ <https://www.startribune.com/minnesota-records-a-new-record-for-food-shelf-visits-as-more-residents-look-out-food-assistance/600338095/>

⁹ <https://www.iatp.org/what-nutrition-title-farm-bill>

¹⁰ <https://www.hungersolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Food-shelf-visits-2023-Presentation.pdf>

¹¹ <https://www.startribune.com/minnesota-records-a-new-record-for-food-shelf-visits-as-more-residents-look-out-food-assistance/600338095/>

¹² <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-price-outlook/summary-findings/#:~:text=In%202023%2C%20food%20prices%20increased,prices%20increased%20by%207.1%20percent.>

¹³ <https://www.hungersolutions.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/Food-shelf-visits-2023-Presentation.pdf>

Minnesota’s charitable food system (food shelves and food banks, meal programs, etc.) continues to run at capacity. Increased food prices, growing inflation rates, and slowing wage growth have put a significant financial strain on Minnesotans, making it increasingly difficult to maintain food security throughout the year. Though the state has taken measures to decrease hunger in 2024—including an additional \$5 million in funding for Minnesota’s seven food banks¹⁴ and implementation of the Free School Meals bill¹⁵—massive leaps in food shelf attendance over the last five years suggest emergency food assistance providers will continue to be a critical resource to communities across the state.

Food security is “access by all people at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.”¹⁶

Food insecurity means access to adequate food is inconsistent and limited by a lack of money and other resources throughout the year. Food insecure households report their diets to be of reduced quality, variety, or desirability and/or experience disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake.¹⁷

Equitable access to food means all individuals have “a voice in and access to a nourishing food system,” regardless of race, socioeconomic class, location, gender, and other social identities.¹⁸

Food justice is the concept that communities have the right to grow, sell, and eat healthy, affordable, culturally appropriate food whose production supports the well-being of the land, workers, and animals.” Food justice is based on the idea that “access to nourishing food is a basic human right.”¹⁹

¹⁴<https://www.startribune.com/minnesota-records-a-new-record-for-food-shelf-visits-as-more-residents-seek-out-food-assistance/600338095/?ref=esh=true>

¹⁵ <https://education.mn.gov/MDE/dse/FNS/SNP/free/>

¹⁶ US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service

¹⁷ US Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service

¹⁸ <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods/resources-2/food-systems-equity/>

¹⁹ <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/localfoods/resources-2/food-systems-equity/>