

Rural Nutrition



Food insecurity affects
15.4%
of rural households
compared to **13.7%**
of the general
population.

Many rural areas are USDA-designated food deserts, which is defined as communities where residents live more than **10 miles** from a full-service grocery store



These rural food deserts must rely on gas stations or convenience stores that offer a limited range of higher-cost, lower-nutrition items

1 in 7



Rural households rely on the USDA-administered Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP), compared to 1 in 8 in metropolitan areas.

Population-specific nutrition facts:

- **12.9%** of **rural children** living in households report insufficient access to nutritious food.
- **Rural veterans** experience higher rates of disability and fixed incomes that increase vulnerability to food insecurity.
- About **7.3%** of **older adults** in rural communities are food insecure, compared to 6.7% in metro areas.
- **Rural communities of color** (Black, Hispanic, and American Indian or Alaska Native households) experience **two to three times higher** rates of food insecurity.

In FY 22, **94.2%** of SNAP-eligible rural residents participated in the program, compared to 86.4 % of their urban counterparts.

NRHA Supported Legislation

H.R. 1538 - Delivering for Rural Seniors Act

Reps. Nunn (R-IA) & Crockett (D-TX)

Directs the Food and Nutrition Service to award competitive grants to state agencies for a home delivery pilot program for participants in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, prioritizing participants in rural communities.

S. 2834/H.R. 5439: Medically Tailored Home-Delivered Meals Program Pilot Act

Sens. Booker (D-NJ), Smith (D-MN), Cassidy (R-LA), Marshall (R-KS) & Reps. McGovern (D-MA), Malliotakis (R-NY), Pingree (D-ME); Fitzpatrick (R-PA), Rep. Evans (D-PA)

Establishes a Medicare pilot program to address the critical link between diet, chronic illness, and the health of older adults and people with disabilities. Ensures that medically vulnerable individuals get access to lifesaving medically tailored meals in their home, while providing the outcomes data we need to build a more resilient and cost-effective health care system.