



## Affordability Challenges Drive Food Insufficiency in the Pandemic

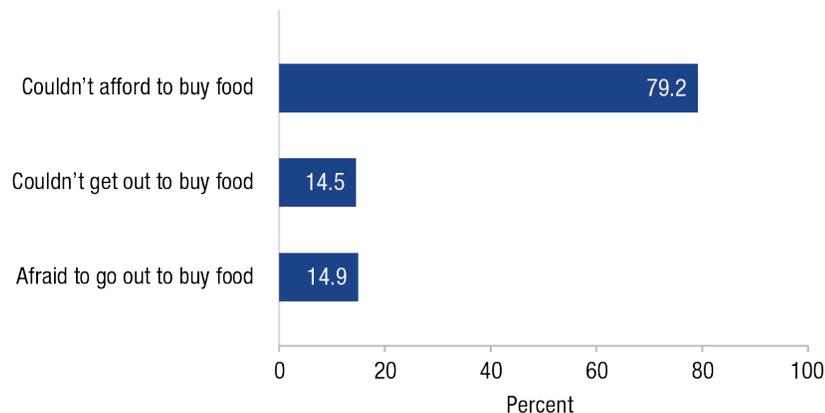
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*Note: Due to an erratum notice released June 17, 2020 by the U.S. Census Bureau regarding their incorrectly reported food insufficiency data, this snapshot replaces a previous Carsey publication with the correct and updated data.*

A new survey from the U.S. Census Bureau finds that between June 4 and June 9, 10 percent of adults faced food insufficiency, reporting that they “sometimes” or “often” did not have enough to eat in the past seven days. When asked why they did not have enough food, 79.2 percent said that they could not afford to buy more. About 15 percent cited access challenges, including being afraid or unwilling to go out, or unable to get out to buy more food (including because of health or transportation challenges). A considerable share of adults without enough food expected the circumstance would be enduring, with 43.7 percent reporting they were not at all confident that they’d be able to afford food in the next four weeks.

These findings show that affordability is the key driver of food insufficiency during the pandemic, a pattern that has persisted across weeks (data not shown). Affordability barriers indicate that bolstering household food spending resources is crucial, either with general supports (like unemployment insurance or housing assistance) that free up money for food or food-specific resources like expanded SNAP benefits. Enhancing the reach and capacity of food banks and food pantries that are filling essential gaps remains important amid persistent pandemic challenges.

### REASON(S) FOR FOOD INSUFFICIENCY AMONG ADULTS EXPERIENCING FOOD INSUFFICIENCY, JUNE 4–JUNE 9



**Note:** Adults experiencing food insufficiency are those who reported “sometimes” or “often” not having enough to eat in the past seven days. Respondents could select multiple options.

**Source:** Carsey School of Public Policy analysis of U.S. Census Bureau Household Pulse Survey data (week 6).



**Getting food is a problem for people experiencing food insufficiency during the pandemic, but *affording* food is the biggest challenge.**

### About the Authors

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