

Low Income Survey Results

Summary

The May 2010 *Survey of Household Food Needs and Use in Waushara County* found that **there is a great deal of food insecurity and hunger among low-income residents**. Only 20% reported no food security issues in the last year, while 67% said they often or sometimes either ran out of food and didn't have money to get more or worried about running out of money for food. Of those who were labeled food insecure, 26% also reported that in the last year they were hungry but didn't eat because they couldn't afford to buy food.

Low-income residents of Waushara County are shoppers who stretch their food dollars in a variety of ways, shop primarily at grocery stores an average of 16 miles from their home, mainly choose their primary grocery store based on location and price, and get food from many sources, including growing vegetables, hunting, fishing, purchasing food at farmers markets/farm stands, and receiving donated food at pantries. The vast majority of low-income residents are knowledgeable about how to apply for food benefit programs and where to find food pantries. However, a **significant percent of survey respondents who appear eligible do not participate in the FoodShare and WIC programs (35% and 51% respectively)**. The rate of participation in the free and reduced-cost school lunch program is much greater at 85%.

Strategies to help low-income households get food on the table, such as transportation services, community gardens, and farmers markets, are predicted to be well-received by the target population based on our survey results. Survey respondents are very interested in ways to lower food prices, build the local economy, improve food pantry services, and provide transportation to those in need.