

Nutritional Security: Integrating local food systems, nutrition and food security

Jaime S. Foster, PhD, RD



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Community Food Security

- ▶ *Food security is access by all people at all times to enough nutritious food for an active, healthy life.* [United States Department of Agriculture]
- ▶ *Household food security is measured at the household level by questionnaire in Current Population Survey.*
- ▶ *Community food security is a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and social justice.* [Mike Hamm and Anne Bellows, from Community Food Security Coalition]



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2012 Town-level rankings:

1. At-risk of food insecurity ranking (the likelihood that a resident is food insecure)
2. Used 12 town level variables of:
 - ▶ Poverty
 - ▶ Unemployment
 - ▶ Age
 - ▶ Children
 - ▶ Car ownership
3. Other rankings in report:
 1. Retail
 2. Food Assistance



Authors:

Adam N. Rabinowitz
Jiff Martin

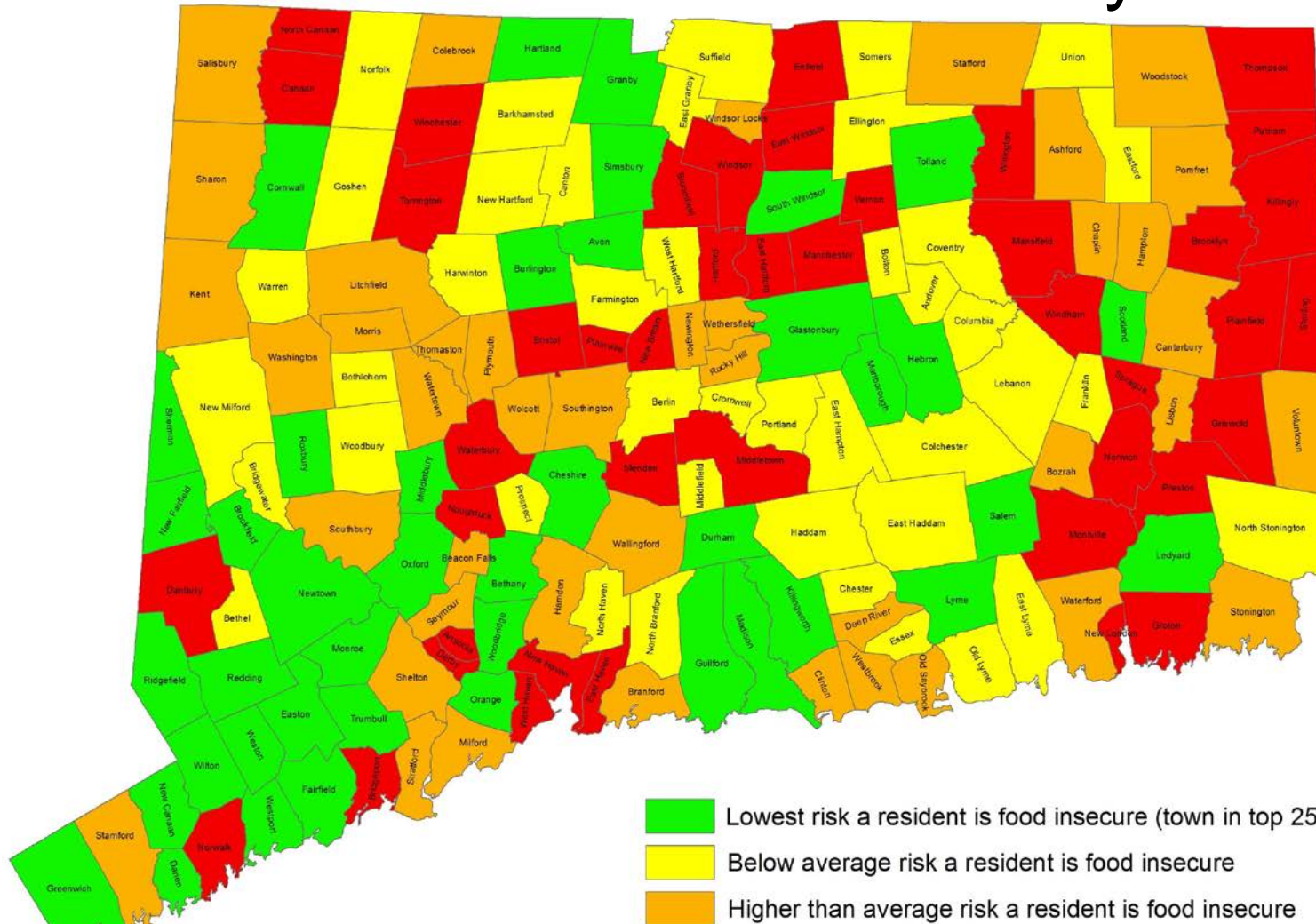
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A joint Study by the
Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy and the
Cooperative Extension System at the University of Connecticut

2012 Town's at-risk of food insecurity



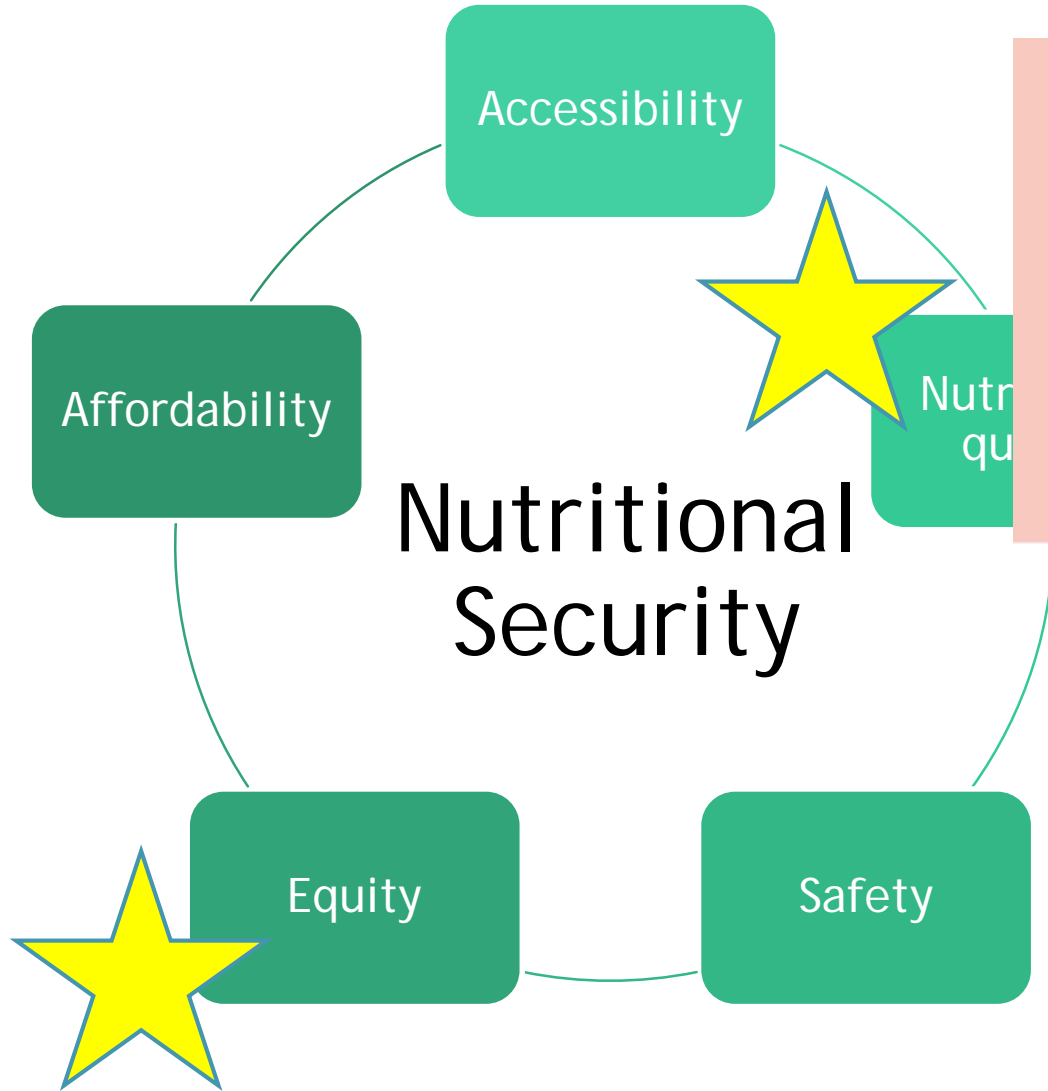
- Lowest risk a resident is food insecure (town in top 25%)
- Below average risk a resident is food insecure
- Higher than average risk a resident is food insecure
- Greatest risk a resident is food insecure (town in bottom 25%)



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Rabinowitz, A.N. and Martin, J. 2012 *Community Food Security in Connecticut: An Evaluation and Ranking of 169 Towns*. Zwick Center Outreach Report #12, Storrs, CT: University of Connecticut.

Building on Food Security....



STATE OF CONNECTICUT
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICES
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SAMPLE EBT CARD
ISSUE DATE: 04 01 2014

**YOU SNAP.
WE MATCH.**

Buy 1 Get 2

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It's the healthy way to stretch your SNAP.

CONNECTICUT
PUT LOCAL ON YOUR TRAY
FARM TO SCHOOL



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Using qualitative data to conceptualize household food insecurity, an individual's experience by gender

Under review, Journal of Public Affairs:

Foster, JS, Schwartz, MB, Grenier, RS, Burke, MP, Taylor, EA, Mogley AR; A qualitative investigation into the USDA 18-item Household Food Security Survey Module: Variations in interpretation, understanding and report by gender

Measuring food insecurity using the standard measure relies on jargon

A household

A balanced meal

Balanced meals for a child

Low cost foods

Worry

The food just didn't last



"A balanced meal"

- Mothers defined balanced meals consistently with The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (though often referencing historic models, i.e. the food guide pyramid)

M04: "a meal is like I said, a meat, a starch, a vegetable. Even better if you

M012: "your meats, your vegetables, your starches, and that, I really think a well-balanced meal."

- Fathers had three types of responses:

*D01:
Nutritional
guidelines*

*D08: More about
amount, variety and
quality, less about
food groups*

*D04: I don't
know, to me,
food is food*

*D014: potatoes,
rice, pasta... you
know different
things to choose*



Discussion on balanced meals

- Perhaps... men are not reacting to impairment in diet quality because to they define healthy eating differently than mothers
- OR... they would be eating similarly with financial restraint or not
 - Women have greater nutrition knowledge, eating more fruits, vegetables and low fat dairy
 - Men's eating is more often driven by pleasure and weight loss attempts are often attempted through exercise before dietary changes



Racially concentrated levels of affluence and poverty

- ▶ In our state, 27% of top-earning households live in predominantly white neighborhoods (compared to 10% in other similar metro regions)
- ▶ In our state, there are twice as many affluent -- and segregated - neighborhoods as there are poor, segregated neighborhoods.
- ▶ In a state where towns are the primary government unit, this has implications for resource concentration and regional problem-solving

Buchanan, M. and Abraham, M. *Concentrated Wealth & Poverty in Connecticut's Neighborhoods*. DataHaven (2015).

Implications of the report

- ▶ Creation of Nutritional Security measure
- ▶ Can be used by NGOs, researchers, and policymakers in Connecticut
 - ▶ Refine/develop new policies
 - ▶ Target programs and develop new ones

Acknowledgements and Contact Information

- ▶ The qualitative work has been supported by:



Institute for Collaboration on Health, Intervention, and Policy
University of Connecticut | 2006 Hillside Road, Unit 1248 | Storrs, CT
06269-1248

- ▶ You can reach me for more questions at:

Jaime.foster@uconn.edu or (860)380-1013

Questions?

