

# New food insecurity data show level of need in Rochester, other communities

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Newly released food insecurity statistics illustrate an overwhelming level of need within the City of Rochester, where many residents live in a household that struggles to feed everyone enough nutritious food.

Feeding America's annual [Map the Meal Gap report](#)<sup>1</sup>, which studies food insecurity across the country, publishes its findings each spring and distributes it to all member food banks. The data, culled from 2016 — the most recent year available — is presented by county, Congressional district, and by each food bank's service area. For example, the overall food-insecurity rate for Foodlink's 10-county region is 11.7 percent (147,420 people), and the child food insecurity rate in that same region is 18.3% (48,960 children).

Foodlink, with support from Common Ground Health, sought sub-county data this year for the first time to better understand the needs of various communities, particularly the City of Rochester. The elevated need in large cities such as Rochester, and smaller cities such as Geneva and Batavia, were often masked behind county-level statistics for Monroe, Ontario and Genesee counties, respectively.

## **More from Common Ground Health: [The food and health connection](#) [Feeding America: The Map the Meal Gap report](#)**

In Rochester, three zip codes were among the state's highest food-insecure communities (see table below). In 14608, 40.6 percent of residents are food-insecure — second highest in the state behind the 13202 zip code in downtown Syracuse. Two other Rochester zip codes cracked the top 10, with 14605 measuring at 34.8% and 14611 measuring at 34.3% — fifth and seventh, respectively.

“Rochester's food-insecurity rates were by no means surprising,” said Foodlink Executive Director Julia Tedesco. “They are illustrative of the deep connection between poverty and hunger and reveal that there is much work to be done by Foodlink and other mission-based organizations to eradicate both.”

Of all the metro areas in the state, Rochester's collective food-insecurity rate was highest at 25.9%. Syracuse (24.8) and Buffalo (24%) were not far behind. A few rural communities also showed high food-insecure rates. The zip code 14480 (Lakeville, Livingston County) at the north end of Conesus Lake was 30.7%, albeit with a small sample size of 808 residents. The zip code 14802 (Alfred, Allegany County) was 24.5%.

On the county level, all 10 counties saw improvements in their food-insecurity rates, as the overall rate dropped from 12.4% to 11.7%. Monroe County had the highest food-insecurity rate at 12.5%, which translates to 1 out of every 8 people. The county with the highest child food insecurity rate remained Allegany County at 22.4%. Ontario County possesses the lowest overall and child food-insecurity rates among the 10 counties, at 9.2 and 16.2, respectively.

Researchers derived food-insecurity estimates by examining data for unemployment, poverty, median income and home ownership using the American Community Survey’s 5-year estimates (2012-2016).

### Highest food insecurity (FI) zip codes in New York:

Zip code	Population	FI rate	City/County
13202	5,840	40.9%	Syracuse
14608	12,399	40.6%	Rochester
12952	578	39.9%	Clinton Co.
14135	114	35.1%	Chautauqua Co.
14605	13,199	34.8%	Rochester
14208	11,514	34.7%	Buffalo
14611	16,531	34.3%	Rochester
14211	22,017	34.1%	Buffalo
11212	86,469	33.9%	NYC
12307	6,615	33.3%	Schenectady

County statistics (FI = overall food insecurity; CFI = child food insecurity)

	Total pop.	FI rate	Estimated FI pop.	Pop. under 18	CFI	Estimated CFI pop.
<b>Allegany</b>	47,700	12.4	5,900	9,758	22.4	2,180
<b>Genesee</b>	59,053	10.3	6,070	12,317	18.5	2,280
<b>Livingston</b>	64,622	10.9	7,080	12,081	18.7	2,260
<b>Monroe</b>	749,236	12.5	93,790	160,974	18.1	29,190
<b>Ontario</b>	109,450	9.2	10,090	22,952	16.2	3,730
<b>Orleans</b>	41,938	11.7	4,890	8,489	20.6	1,750
<b>Seneca</b>	35,036	10.7	3,740	7,091	17.7	1,250
<b>Wayne</b>	91,874	9.8	9,020	20,381	18	3,670
<b>Wyoming</b>	41,239	10.4	4,300	8,142	18.8	1,530
<b>Yates</b>	25,106	10.1	2,540	5,761	19.4	1,120

Congressional District statistics:

	Total pop.	FI rate	Estimated FI pop.	Pop. under 18	CFI	Estimated CFI pop.
<b>NY-23 (Reed)</b>	703,717	12.3	86,840	142,670	20.6	29,390
<b>NY-24 (Katko)</b>	707,479	12.4	87,610	150,052	19.1	28,660
<b>NY-25</b>	720,963	13.3	96,030	151,947	19	28,870
<b>NY-27 (Collins)</b>	720,133	8.2	59,280	145,629	15.1	21,990

<sup>1</sup> Gundersen, C., A. Dewey, A. Crumbaugh, M. Kato & E. Engelhard. *Map the Meal Gap 2018: A Report on County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2016*. Feeding America, 2018.