

US food insecurity rate rose to 13.5% in 2023 as government benefits declined and food prices soared

September 7 2024, by Michael Long and Lara Gonçalves



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The official U.S. [food insecurity](#) rate [rose to 13.5% in 2023 from 12.8% in 2022](#), according to data the U.S. Department of Agriculture released on Sept. 4, 2024. That means more than one in eight Americans—about 47 million people—couldn't get enough food for themselves or their families at least some of the time.

This is a significant increase from a recent low of 10.2% in 2021. Food insecurity grew in the two years that followed due to a sharp decline in government benefits, including money for groceries from the [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) and the program that pays for students to get [lunch and breakfast for free at school](#).

Higher food prices, largely driven by [rapid inflation](#), also played a big role, as did [elevated housing costs](#).

[We are sociologists who study food insecurity](#). We're concerned about the growing scale of this problem, which can [happen in many ways](#), in a country where there's enough food for everyone living here—and about [40% of the food produced goes to waste](#).

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0!==a.data["datawrapper-height"]){ var
e=document.querySelectorAll("iframe"); for(var t in a.data["datawrapper-
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