Study: Food insecurity in Canada, 2007 to 2012

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About 1.1 million Canadian households experienced food insecurity in 2011–2012, meaning that they did not have the variety or the quantity of food they needed, because of a lack of money. Each year, between 2007 and 2012, household food insecurity rates fluctuated between 7.6% and 8.5%.

The territories had higher rates of food insecurity than the provinces. In 2011–2012, Nunavut had the highest rate at 36.7%, more than four times the Canadian average (8.3%). The Northwest Territories had the second highest rate at 13.7%, followed by Yukon at 11.4%.

Among the provinces, Nova Scotia (11.9%), Prince Edward Island (10.6%) and New Brunswick (10.2%) had the highest rates of food insecurity in 2011–2012.

Households whose main source of income was government benefits (21.4%) were more than three times as likely to experience food insecurity as those with an alternate main source of income (6.1%).

Households with children experienced a higher rate of food insecurity than those without children. In 2011–2012, 10.3% of households with children were food insecure compared with 7.5% of households without children.

Among various types of households, food insecurity was highest in lone-parent families with children under 18 years old at 22.6%; and lowest in couples with no children at 3.5%.

Note to readers

This release presents data from the 2007 to 2012 cycles of the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). Every year, the survey collects data from approximately 65,000 respondents aged 12 or older, residing in households in all provinces and territories.

The CCHS is an ongoing survey that collects a wide range of information about the health status of Canadians, the factors determining their health status and their use of health care services.

Residents of Indian reserves, health care institutions and some remote areas as well as full-time members of the Canadian Forces were excluded.

Definitions, data sources and methods: survey number 3226.

For more statistics and analysis on the health of Canadians and the health care system, visit the *Health in Canada* module, accessible from the homepage of our website under *Features*.

The article "Food insecurity in Canada" in *Health at a Glance* (**82-624-X**), is now available from the *Browse by key resource* module of our website under *Publications*.

For more information, or to enquire about the concepts, methods or data quality of this release, contact us (toll-free 1-800-263-1136; 514-283-8300; **infostats@statcan.gc.ca**) or Media Relations (613-951-4636; **mediahotline@statcan.gc.ca**).