

ASKING QUESTIONS ABOUT FOOD INSECURITY





What is Food Insecurity?

- According to the USDA, food insecurity is defined as “limited or uncertain access to adequate food” at the household level
- While hunger may be an outcome of food insecurity, not all families/individuals who experience food insecurity also experience hunger
- In 2020, 13.8 million households in the US experienced a type of food insecurity at some point during the year

Types of Food Insecurity

- The USDA measures food insecurity at two levels of severity
- In 2022, 12.8% of US households experienced “low food security” and 5.1% experienced “very low food security”

Low Food Security

- Households report reduced diet quality and reduced food variety
- Typically not reporting hunger/reduced food intake

Very Low Food Security

- Report reduced food intake
- Disrupted eating patterns
- Skipping meals
- Hunger





What are Food Deserts?

- According to the Food Empowerment Project, food deserts are “geographic areas where...access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh fruits and vegetables) is restricted or nonexistent due to the absence of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance.”
- The terms “food apartheid” and “food oppression” can also be used to acknowledge the systemic economic, racial, and cultural discrimination that lead to the development of food deserts.

United States Food Insecurity Datasets

- [Food Security in the US, 2001-2022](#)
- [Food Access Research Atlas](#)



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- [Covid-19 Food Insecurity Data, 4/23/2020 to 8/23/2021](#)

*Data Abstracted from United States Census Bureau's Pulse Survey



- [Suite of Food Security Indicators](#)



Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations

Example Research Question



In 2022, was food insecurity experienced more in rural or urban areas in the US?



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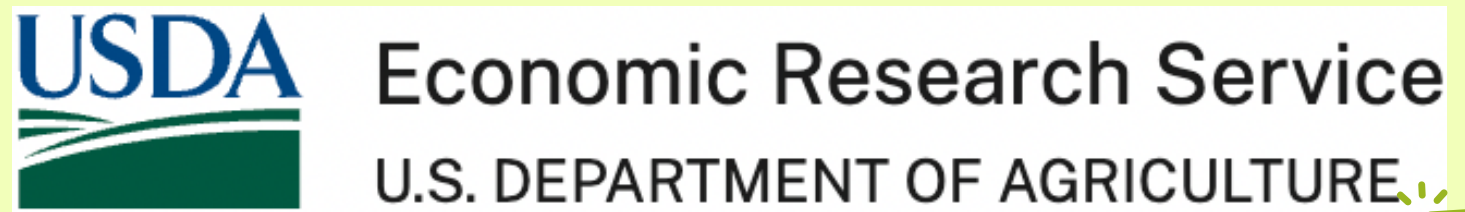
How to Use:

1. From the link above, you can access the main “Food Security in the US” data webpage from the USDA
2. To view and export the raw data, you can click the “Food Security Data file” link to be redirected to a large data table with raw values from 2001-2022 (like the sample seen below) [Food Security Data file](#)  
3. To see the full spectrum of responses from food secure to very low food security, scroll from side to side

Year	Category	Subcategory	Sub-subcategory	Food insecure-1,000	Food insecure-percent
2022	Area of residence	Inside metropolitan area		14319	12.5
2022	Area of residence	Inside metropolitan area	In principal cities	5838	15.3
2022	Area of residence	Inside metropolitan area	Not in principal cities	6202	10.5
2022	Area of residence	Outside metropolitan area		2662	14.7

Example Research Question

Do all low income areas experience food insecurity in the United States?



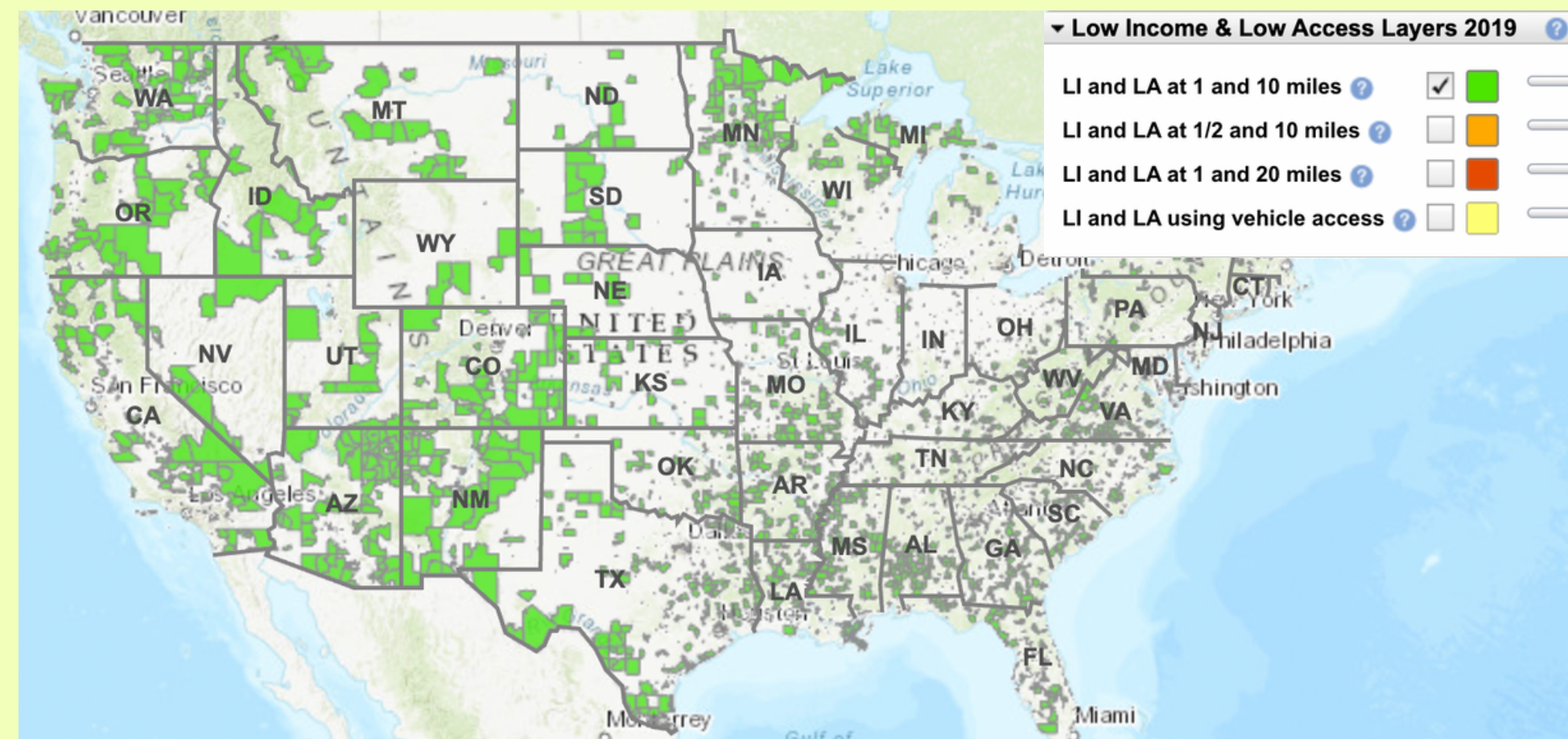
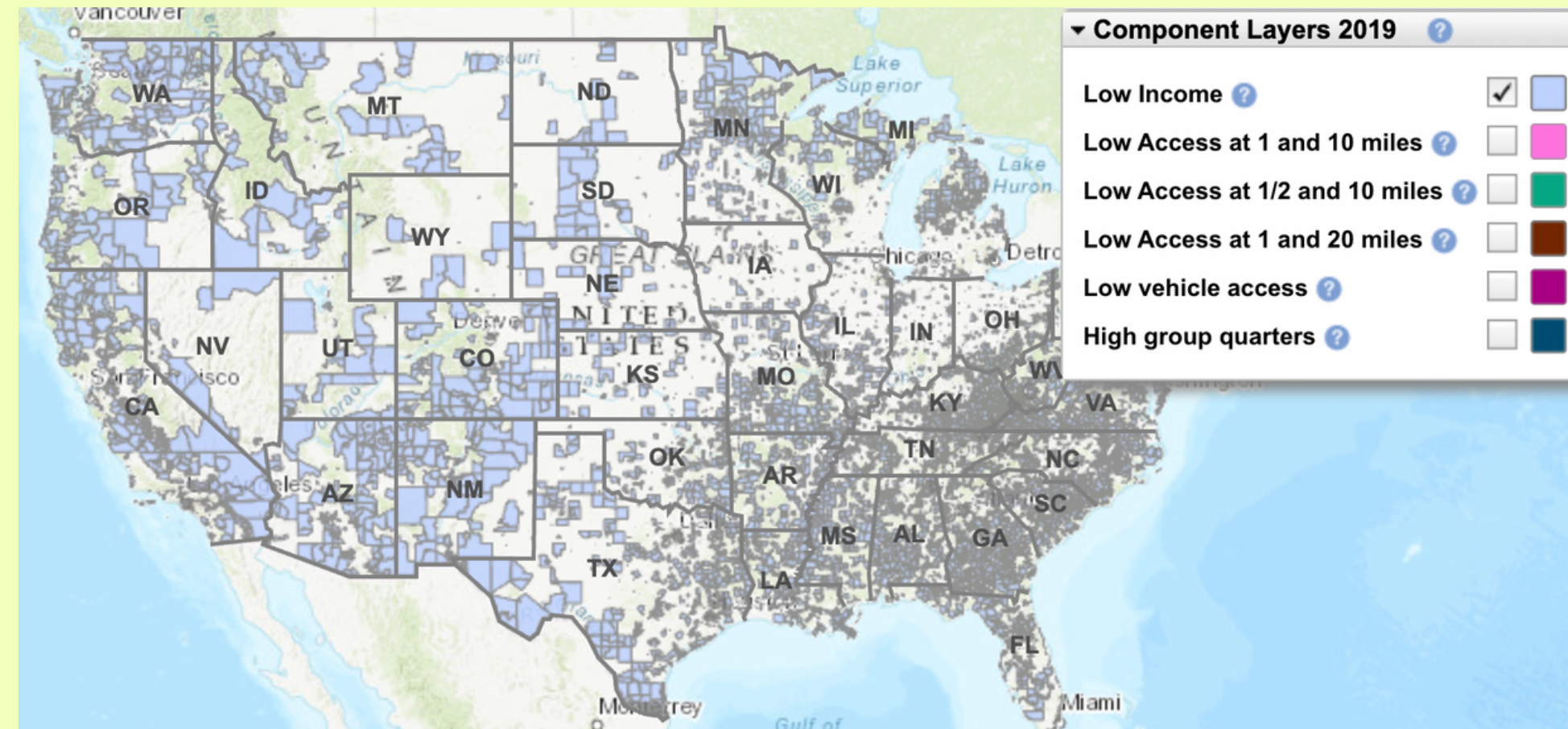
How to Use:

1. To view/export the raw data files, click the “Food Access Research Atlas Data Download 2019” link on the “Download the Data” page:

[Food Access Research Atlas Data Download 2019](#)  

2. To view the interactive data map, click the “Go to the Atlas” link in the menu on the left side of the screen: [Go to the Atlas](#)

3. On the map, you can toggle the variables using the color coded buttons as seen in the example



Example Research Question

Was race/ethnicity related to food insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic?

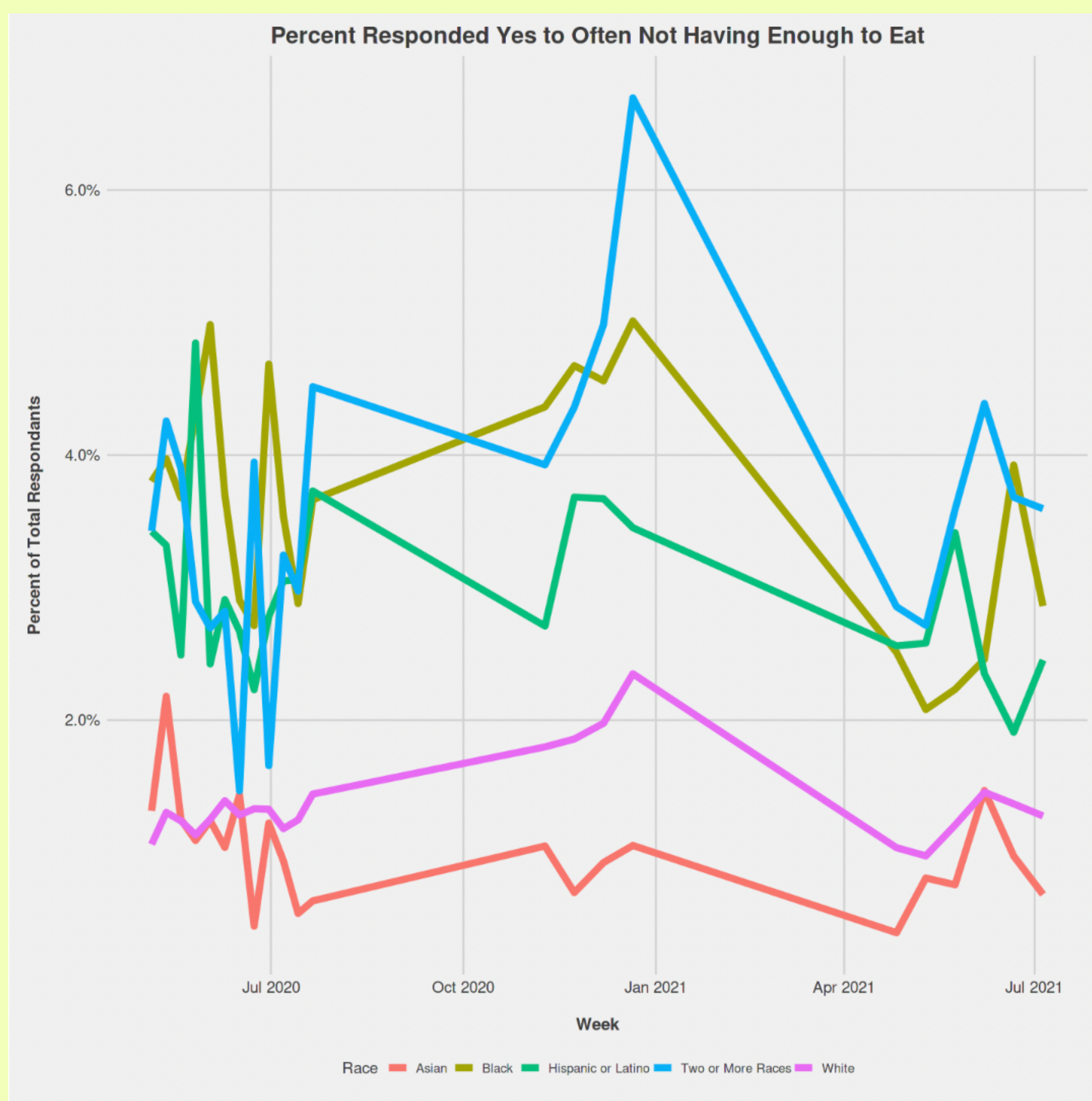


How to Use:

1. On the "Data Card" tab, click "Detail" to see the raw values collected from the survey:



2. Each column represents a different survey question
3. If you want to view data per participant characteristic (i.e. race/ethnicity, age, etc.), scroll to the right to see which row represents which characteristic
4. Data can be exported by clicking download: [Download \(6 MB\)](#)




Example Research Question

Is prevalence of undernourishment related to prevalence of food insecurity in the US?



How to Use:

1. Select country of interest (you can also select Region and/or Special Groups i.e. low-income countries)
2. Select “Value” from the “Elements” section for the raw data values
3. Select variables of interest from the “Items” section
4. Select the time range you are interested in researching in the “Years” section
5. You can export/download the data by clicking the “Download Data” button: 

The screenshot shows the FAO data selection interface. At the top, there are three tabs: 'DOWNLOAD DATA', 'VISUALIZE DATA', and 'METADATA'. Below the tabs, there are four main sections: 'COUNTRIES', 'ELEMENTS', 'ITEMS', and 'YEARS'. Each section has a search bar and a list of options with radio buttons. The 'COUNTRIES' section has 'United States of America' selected. The 'ELEMENTS' section has 'Value' selected. The 'ITEMS' section has several options selected, including 'Prevalence of undernourishment (percent)'. The 'YEARS' section has '2022 / 2021-2023' selected. There are 'Select All' and 'Clear All' buttons for each section. A green cursor points to the 'Download Data' button at the bottom left of the interface.

International Datasets



- On data.world, there are currently 304 datasets listed relating to food security around the world
- You can scroll through or search this resource for specific datasets for various countries
- You can also view the raw data files in the “tables” included with the dataset overviews (see examples in screenshot to the right)



Food Insecurity Mapping - Southern Africa (January ...

Humanitarian Data Exchange · Updated 2 years ago

Food Insecurity Mapping - Southern Africa (January - March 2014)

Dataset with 6 projects 16 files 2 tables

Tagged [agriculture](#), [food security](#), [security](#), [weather and climate](#), [angola](#), +6

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Food Insecurity Mapping - Central America and The ...

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Food Insecurity Mapping - Central America and The Caribbean (January - March 2013)

Dataset with 7 projects 16 files 2 tables

Tagged [agriculture](#), [food security](#), [security](#), [weather and climate](#), [el salvador](#), +4

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WFP and FAO Overview of Countries Affected by th...

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WFP and FAO Overview of Countries Affected by the El Niño

Dataset with 3 projects 2 files 2 tables

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Food Insecurity Mapping - East Africa (April - June 2...

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Food Insecurity Mapping - East Africa (April - June 2014)