

## Hunger in North Carolina | Issue Brief

# Feeding America’s Map the Meal Gap Study Shows Increases in Food Insecurity in North Carolina and the Food Shuttle’s Service Area

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle distributed more than 10 million pounds of food through partner agencies in fiscal year 2022-23. During this time the food bank’s food costs shot up – by more than 420% from 2019.

Feeding America’s annual study, [Map the Meal Gap](#)\* (MMG), provides data and insights on food prices and local food insecurity, which is a measure of the number of people who don’t have enough to eat or don’t know where their next meal will come from. The mapping project is based on the most recent data, from 2022.

This year’s release of MMG indicates that food insecurity rates dipped and then increased between 2019 and 2022 in North Carolina and in all seven counties making up the Food Shuttle’s service area: Wake, Durham, Orange, Chatham, Johnston, Nash and Edgecombe. In each county, food insecurity rates were higher among Black and Hispanic persons.

### North Carolina

In North Carolina, the average dollar amount spent on food per meal by food-secure individuals rose steadily from \$2.99 in 2019 to \$3.91 in 2022. MMG estimates the annual food budget shortfall at over a billion dollars in 2022 for North Carolina: \$1,099,431,000. That’s up from about \$725 million in 2019.

In North Carolina, 14% of individuals, or 1 in 7 people, were estimated to be food insecure in 2022. That rate was 19.6% for children, or 1 in 5.

**Table 1:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in North Carolina, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	14.0%	1 in 7	1,493,870	19.6%	1 in 5	448,460
2021	11.8%	1 in 8	1,248,880	15.4%	1 in 6	353,450
2020	12.0%	1 in 8	1,245,870	17.1%	1 in 6	394,300
2019	13.5%	1 in 7	1,417,440	18.2%	1 in 5	417,240

**Table 2:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in North Carolina, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	26%	1 in 4	22%	1 in 5	10%	1 in 10
2021	21%	1 in 5	17%	1 in 6	8%	1 in 13
2020	23%	1 in 4	20%	1 in 5	8%	1 in 13
2019	23%	1 in 4	20%	1 in 5	10%	1 in 10

\* Dewey, A., Harris, V., Hake, M., & Engelhard, E. (2024). Map the Meal Gap 2024: An Analysis of County and Congressional District Food Insecurity and County Food Cost in the United States in 2022. Feeding America.

## Inter-Faith Food Shuttle's Seven-County Service Area

**Table 3:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Food Shuttle's 7-county service area, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	11.9%	1 in 8	242,810	15.2%	1 in 7	69,960
2021	9.3%	1 in 11	187,420	11.3%	1 in 9	51,960
2020	10.5%	1 in 10	207,940	14.4%	1 in 7	65,310
2019	11.1%	1 in 9	216,140	14.3%	1 in 7	64,550

**Table 4:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups Food Shuttle's 7-county service area, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	24%	1 in 4	21%	1 in 5	8%	1 in 12
2021	20%	1 in 5	16%	1 in 6	6%	1 in 17
2020	21%	1 in 5	19%	1 in 5	6%	1 in 17
2019	20%	1 in 5	19%	1 in 5	8%	1 in 13

## Wake County

**Table 5:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Wake County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	11.1%	1 in 9	126,110	12.7%	1 in 8	33,550
2021	8.5%	1 in 12	94,980	8.9%	1 in 11	23,720
2020	9.5%	1 in 11	104,210	11.8%	1 in 8	30,820
2019	10.1%	1 in 10	107,570	12.1%	1 in 8	31,160

**Table 6:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Wake County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	24%	1 in 4	20%	1 in 5	8%	1 in 12
2021	19%	1 in 5	15%	1 in 7	5%	1 in 20
2020	20%	1 in 5	17%	1 in 6	5%	1 in 20
2019	19%	1 in 5	18%	1 in 6	7%	1 in 14

## Durham County

**Table 7:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Durham County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	12.2%	1 in 8	39,620	19.8%	1 in 5	12,880
2021	9.6%	1 in 10	30,870	15.3%	1 in 7	10,080
2020	11.3%	1 in 9	35,870	18.8%	1 in 5	12,420
2019	12.1%	1 in 8	37,850	17.6%	1 in 6	11,570

**Table 8:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Durham County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	24%	1 in 4	22%	1 in 5	9%	1 in 11
2021	20%	1 in 5	17%	1 in 6	7%	1 in 14
2020	21%	1 in 5	19%	1 in 5	7%	1 in 14
2019	21%	1 in 5	20%	1 in 5	9%	1 in 11

### Orange County

**Table 9:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Orange County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	12.3%	1 in 8	17,980	11%	1 in 9	3,080
2021	9.5%	1 in 11	13,940	6.6%	1 in 15	1,900
2020	10.2%	1 in 10	14,970	9.1%	1 in 11	2,600
2019	11.6%	1 in 9	16,760	11.4%	1 in 9	3,260

**Table 10:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Orange County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	24%	1 in 4	19%	1 in 5	10%	1 in 10
2021	21%	1 in 5	15%	1 in 7	8%	1 in 13
2020	21%	1 in 5	18%	1 in 6	8%	1 in 13
2019	21%	1 in 5	19%	1 in 5	10%	1 in 10

### Chatham County

**Table 11:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Chatham County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	12.6%	1 in 8	9,680	13.7%	1 in 7	2,050
2021	9.7%	1 in 10	7,310	10.0%	1 in 10	1,510
2020	10.7%	1 in 9	7,820	13.6%	1 in 7	2,000
2019	11.7%	1 in 9	8,350	15.2%	1 in 7	2,220

**Table 12:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Chatham County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	20%	1 in 5	21%	1 in 5	8%	1 in 12
2021	18%	1 in 6	17%	1 in 6	6%	1 in 17
2020	20%	1 in 5	20%	1 in 5	6%	1 in 17
2019	19%	1 in 5	20%	1 in 5	9%	1 in 11

## Johnston County

**Table 13:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Johnston County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	12.7%	1 in 8	27,920	16.2%	1 in 6	8,850
2021	10.5%	1 in 10	22,210	12.9%	1 in 8	6,930
2020	11.5%	1 in 9	23,460	16.1%	1 in 6	8,350
2019	12.1%	1 in 8	23,890	16.5%	1 in 6	8,360

**Table 14:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Johnston County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	22%	1 in 5	23%	1 in 4	8%	1 in 12
2021	18%	1 in 6	20%	1 in 5	7%	1 in 14
2020	20%	1 in 5	22%	1 in 5	7%	1 in 14
2019	19%	1 in 5	21%	1 in 5	9%	1 in 11

## Nash County

**Table 15:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Nash County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	14.2%	1 in 7	13,450	26.4%	1 in 4	5,490
2021	11.6%	1 in 9	11,010	20.9%	1 in 5	4,370
2020	13.8%	1 in 7	13,040	24.8%	1 in 4	5,130
2019	13.7%	1 in 7	12,920	21.3%	1 in 5	4,440

**Table 16:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Nash County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	27%	1 in 4	22%	1 in 5	10%	1 in 10
2021	22%	1 in 5	17%	1 in 6	8%	1 in 13
2020	22%	1 in 5	22%	1 in 5	9%	1 in 11
2019	22%	1 in 5	21%	1 in 5	11%	1 in 9

## Edgecombe County

**Table 17:** Estimated food insecurity status for the overall and child population in Edgecombe County, 2019-2022

	Overall Food Insecurity Rate	Overall Ratio	# of Food Insecure Persons	Child Food Insecurity Rate	Child Ratio	# of Food Insecure Children
2022	16.4%	1 in 6	8,050	36.5%	1 in 3	4,060
2021	14.3%	1 in 7	7,100	30.5%	1 in 3	3,450
2020	16.5%	1 in 6	8,570	34.0%	1 in 3	3,990
2019	16.7%	1 in 6	8,800	29.5%	1 in 3	3,540

**Table 18:** Estimated food insecurity status for select racial and ethnic groups in Edgecombe County, 2019-2022

	Food Insecurity Rate Among Black Persons	Ratio Among Black Persons	Food Insecurity Rate Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Ratio Among Hispanic Persons (any race)	Food Insecurity Rate Among White, non-Hispanic persons	Ratio Among White, non-Hispanic persons
2022	30%	1 in 3	24%	1 in 4	12%	1 in 8
2021	25%	1 in 4	18%	1 in 6	10%	1 in 10
2020	25%	1 in 4	21%	1 in 5	10%	1 in 10
2019	26%	1 in 4	19%	1 in 5	13%	1 in 8

## Our Vision is a Hunger Free Community

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle is a nonpartisan, 501c3 non-profit organization and a member of the Feeding America National Network of Food Banks.

We recover and distribute food to our low-income neighbors. We also provide programs designed to empower people with skills to meet their own food needs through culinary job training, beginner gardening, and cooking healthy on a budget. We feed, teach, and grow to create a hunger-free and healthy community.

And we cultivate relationships with neighbors, agency partners, advocacy organizations, policy makers and funders. Through our public education and policy advocacy initiatives, we lift the voices of our food insecure neighbors in the design of innovative and equitable solutions to ending hunger.

**Food Recovery & Distribution** – 10,128,655 pounds of food distributed in FY 2022-23. Our food recovery prevented 9.3 million pounds from reaching landfills.

**Community Partnerships** - Support nearly 80 organizations providing food – pantries, mobile markets, soup kitchens and shelters.

**Child Hunger** – Backpack Buddies, School Pantries, Community Health Education.

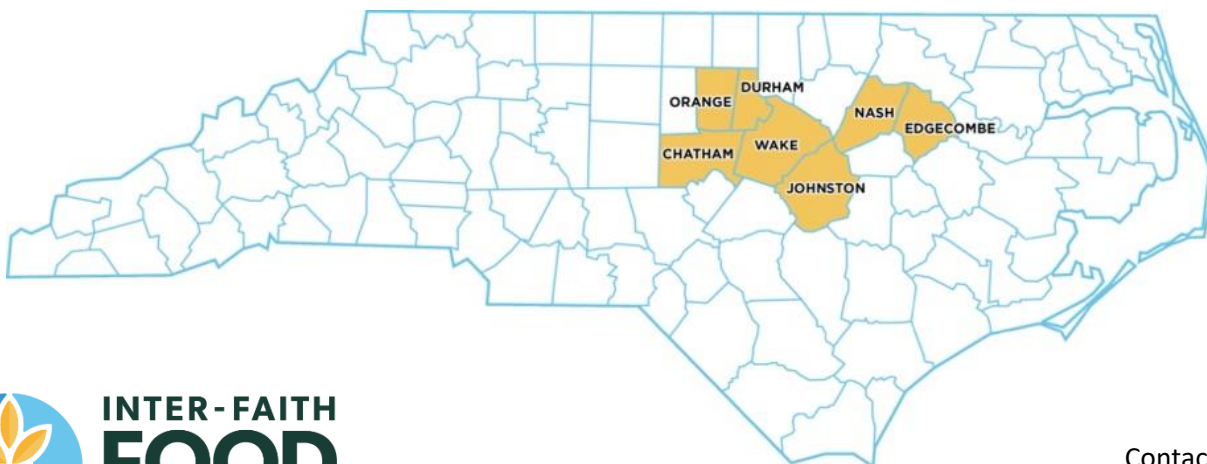
**Senior Nutrition** – Grocery Bags for Seniors, Community Health Education.

**Farms & Gardens** – 14-acre farm providing fresh produce, Community Gardens for produce and agricultural education.

**Culinary Apprenticeship Program** – Fall 2023 saw first cohort graduate since the pandemic.

**Volunteers** – 27,230 volunteer hours engaged across all our programs for FY 2022-23.

Inter-Faith Food Shuttle's 7-county service area



**Questions?**  
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