



# Snacks and Facts: Misconceptions about Food Insecurity

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# Land Acknowledgement



# Experiences at the Food Bank: Food Insecurity from a Middle Class Cultural Perspective

Sharra Fullersmith

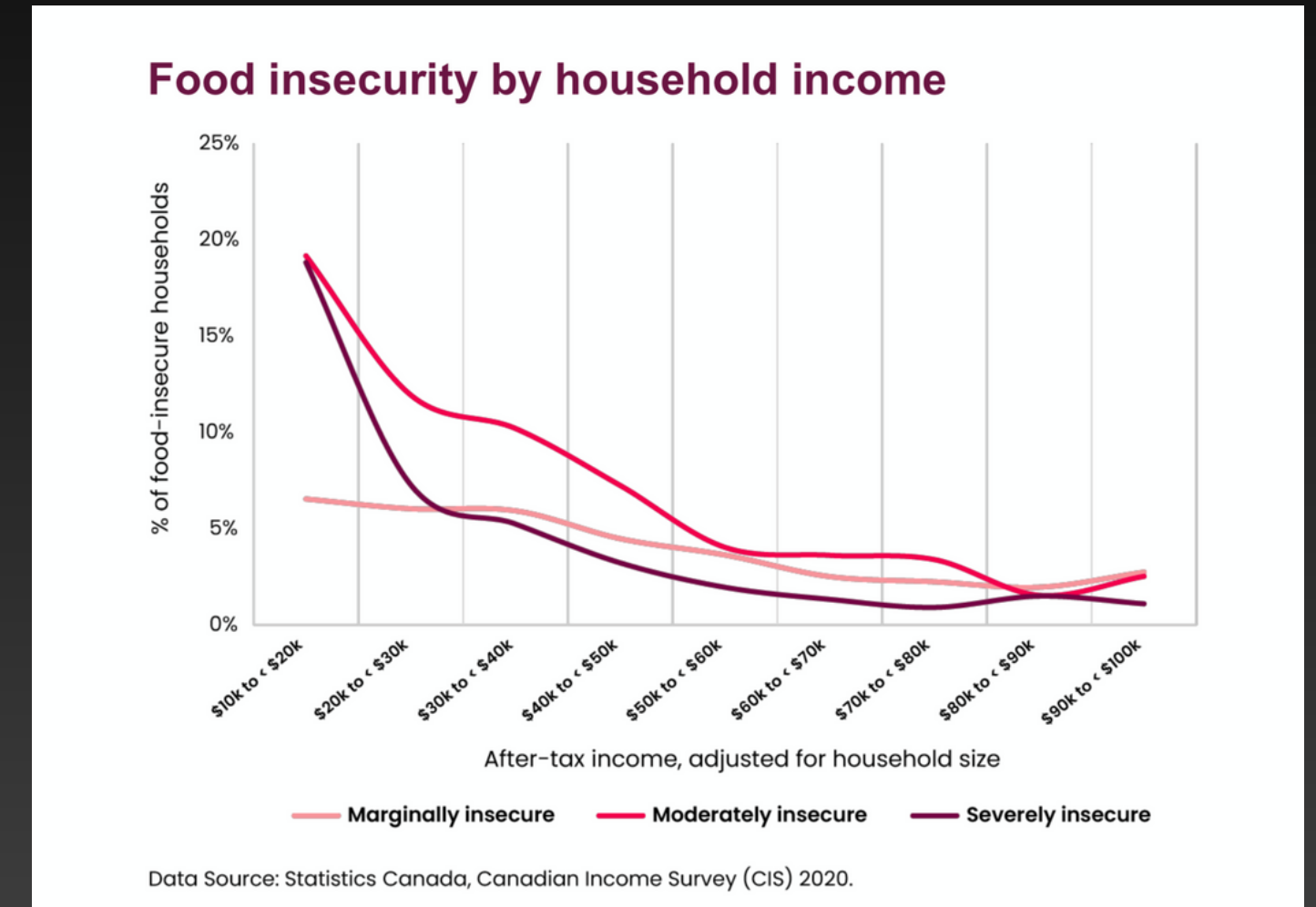
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Master of Arts: Anthropology

Snacks and Facts: Misconceptions about Food Insecurity

# What is food insecurity?

- Food insecurity is the inability to afford quality, nutritious food that is culturally appropriate, available, and physically accessible- “inadequate or uncertain access to a sufficient quantity and/or adequate quality of food due to financial limitations” (Duignan, 2019 & Enns et. al, 2020).
- Food insecurity is not only food- it is an intersectional understanding of cultural perspectives, environmental relationships, economic systems, and global policy initiatives (CBC Ideas, 2023).
- Food insecurity is felt across all income groups; individuals unable to receive the foods they need to stay physically and mentally well (Tarasuk et al., 2023).



**Marginal food insecurity:** Worry about running out of food and/or limited food selection due to a lack of money for food.

**Moderate food insecurity:** Compromise in quality and/or quantity of food due to a lack of money for food.

**Severe food insecurity:** Miss meals, reduce food intake, and at the most extreme go day(s) without food.

# Food Insecurity as Human Rights

- The Canada Poverty Reduction Strategy, 2015.
- “Right to food for all persons” (Food Policy for Canada, 2019).
- The 17 UN Sustainable Development Goals, 2023.
  - Goal 1: No Poverty & Goal 2: Zero Hunger

**REDUCE THE INCIDENCE OF POVERTY**  
By 20% by 2020 and by 50% by 2030,  
as measured by Canada's Official Poverty Line

**DIGNITY**

Lift Canadians out of poverty by ensuring basic needs are met

- Food insecurity
- Unmet health needs
- Unmet housing needs and chronic homelessness
- Deep income poverty

**OPPORTUNITY and INCLUSION**

Help Canadians join the middle class by promoting full participation in society and equality of opportunity

- Literacy and numeracy
- Youth engagement
- Relative low income
- Bottom 40% income share

**RESILIENCE and SECURITY**

Support the middle class by protecting Canadians from falling into poverty and by supporting income security and resilience

- Median hourly wage
- Poverty entry and exit rates
- Average poverty gap
- Asset resilience

14 Opportunity for All – Canada's First Poverty Reduction Strategy

**THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

1 NO POVERTY

2 ZERO HUNGER

3 GOOD HEALTH AND WELL-BEING

4 QUALITY EDUCATION

5 GENDER EQUALITY

6 CLEAN WATER AND SANITATION

7 AFFORDABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY

8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES

11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES

12 RESPONSIBLE CONSUMPTION AND PRODUCTION

13 CLIMATE ACTION

14 LIFE BELOW WATER

15 LIFE ON LAND

16 PEACE, JUSTICE AND STRONG INSTITUTIONS

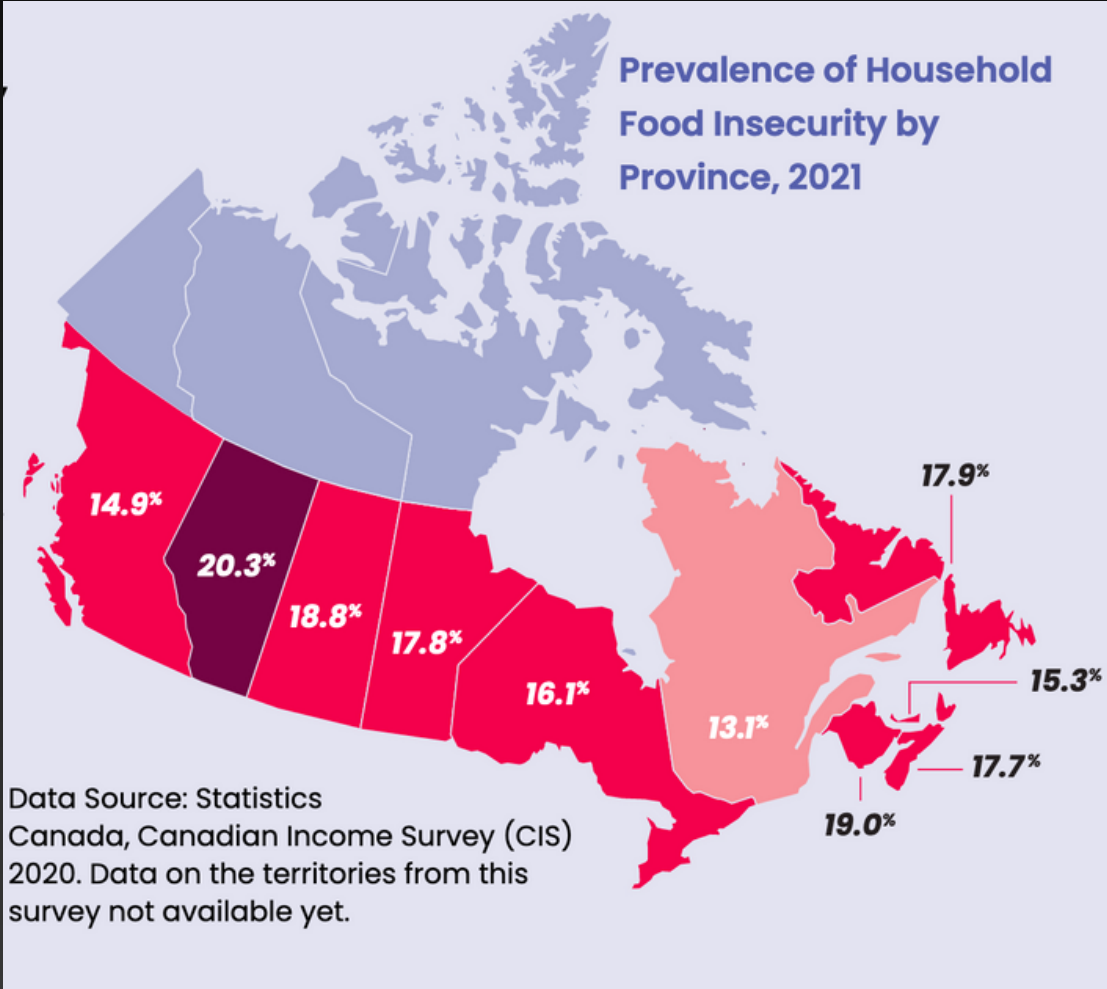
17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

# Food Insecurity in Lethbridge; Alberta; and Canada

- Increase in food bank use in Alberta of 94% since 2019 (Hunger Count, 2023).
- From 1/5 to almost 1/4 in four years were considered food insecure in Alberta; some of whom self-identify as middle class.
- Over 6.9 million people in Canada, 18.4%, are categorized as food insecure in 2023 (Tarasuk et al., 2023).

- 4.4 million before the pandemic, 12.7% in 2017-2018 (Tarasuk et al., 2020).



**Table 1: 2021 Food Price Results: 2022 Forecast vs Observed\***

CATEGORIES	2022 CANADA'S FOOD PRICE REPORT FORECAST	2022 ACTUAL CHANGE (CPI, SEPT. '21 TO SEPT. '22)
Bakery	5% to 7%	14.8%
Dairy	6% to 8%	9.7%
Fruits	3% to 5%	11.4%
Meat	0% to 2%	7.6%
Other	2% to 4%	12.8%
Restaurants	6% to 8%	7.5%
Seafood	0% to 2%	7.6%
Vegetables	5% to 7%	12.7%
<b>Total Food Categories Forecast</b>	<b>5% to 7%</b>	<b>10.3%</b>

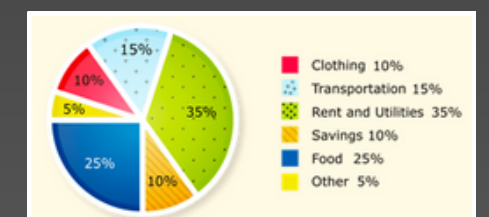
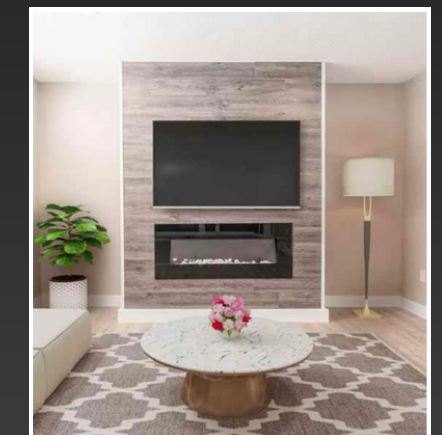
# Food Insecurity for the Middle Class

- Food insecurity as a result of economic changes
  - Income vs. Cost of Living
- Middle-class cultural identity as constructed by patterns in consumption & race (Ortner, 1998)
  - House & car ownership;
  - Education & work opportunities;
  - Clothing & technology access
- “A cost for everything and everything at a cost”
  - Social stigma around middle-class food insecurity



# The Middle Class and Food Insecurity in Lethbridge, Alberta

- My thesis studies the impact of food insecurity on self-identified middle-class families in Lethbridge, (emphasis on unmarked White middle-class consumption).
- Research objectives:
  - 1) Examining middle-class identity in economic crisis;
  - 2) the relationship between food insecurity and middle-class status; &
  - 3) how social capital and social networks meet economic pressures
- Research plan:
  - 1) Participant Observation at the Food Bank & Initial Interviews (Weeks 1-6)
    - Research Objectives 1, 2 & 3
  - 2) Option 1: Photovoice Project (Weeks 7-9)
    - Research Objectives 1 & 2
  - 3) Option 2: Walking Conversational Interview & Pizza-Pie Exercise (Weeks 10-12)
    - Research Objectives 1 & 2





# Experiences at the Food Bank: Participant Observation

“I wish we didn’t have to be here, doing this”  
– Interfaith Food Bank volunteer



“Pick Room” photo (Volunteer Handbook, Interfaith Food Bank, 2023).

LAST NAME FIRST: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ ADULTS      \_\_\_\_\_ CHILDREN

D/B \_\_\_\_\_      B-Day \_\_\_\_\_      B/B \_\_\_\_\_

SIGNATURE: \_\_\_\_\_

Photo by primary researcher, 28 February 2024.

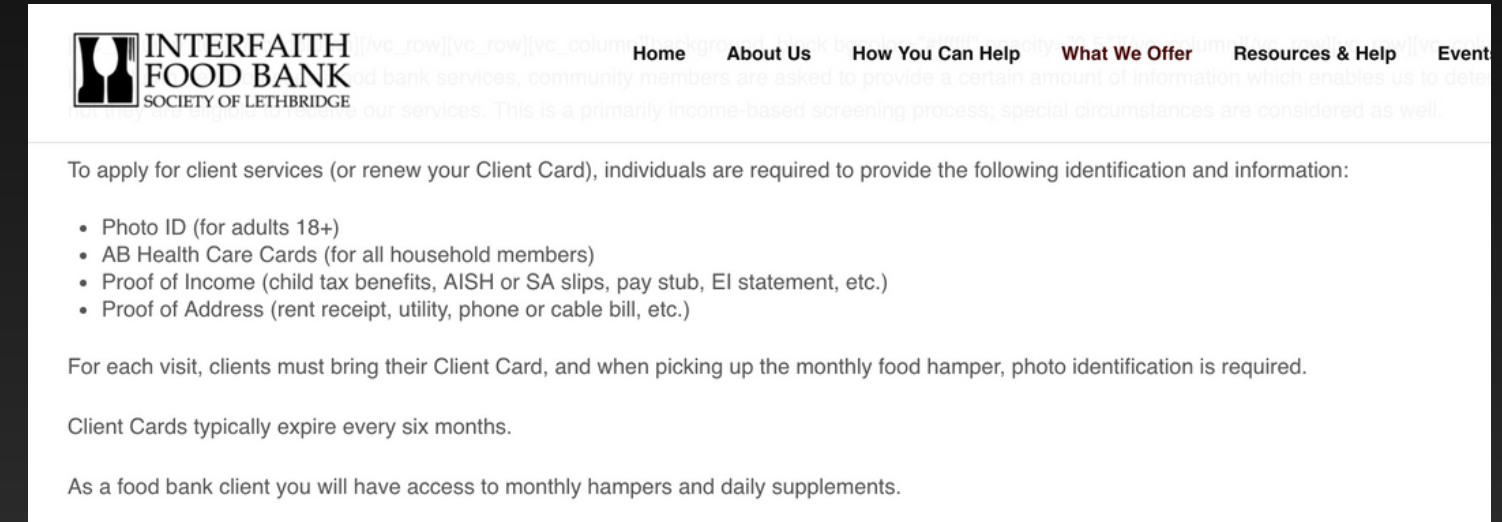
Hamper Size	Color
1 person	Pink
2-3 person	Blue
4-5 person	Yellow
6-7 person	Yellow/Yellow

# Charity Culture & Food Banks

- Charity is not the solution to long-term food insecurity
  - Started in cultures of “moral responsibility,” blame on the individual (Smandych, 1995).
  - Food insecurity is a structural problem, not solved by food (Tarasuk et al., 2023).
- The first food banks in Canada
  - Opened in Edmonton, Alberta in 1981 (Riches, 1986).
  - Interfaith Food Bank in 1989 (Interfaith Food Bank, 2023).

# Food Insecurity: Ideas to Consider

- Every physical, legislated restriction to access
  - Having a bank account, phone or Internet access, photo identification, or driver's license
  - There will always be someone who starts with nothing
- Be aware of cultural barriers to access that require training
  - Language or translation services, writing skills, knowledge of resources
- Every stage of the process takes time
  - Planning, organizing, and moving perishable food, or scheduling volunteers



**INTERFAITH FOOD BANK SOCIETY OF LETHBRIDGE**

Home About Us How You Can Help What We Offer Resources & Help Events

To apply for client services (or renew your Client Card), individuals are required to provide the following identification and information:

- Photo ID (for adults 18+)
- AB Health Care Cards (for all household members)
- Proof of Income (child tax benefits, AISH or SA slips, pay stub, EI statement, etc.)
- Proof of Address (rent receipt, utility, phone or cable bill, etc.)

For each visit, clients must bring their Client Card, and when picking up the monthly food hamper, photo identification is required.

Client Cards typically expire every six months.

As a food bank client you will have access to monthly hampers and daily supplements.



**DECEMBER 2023**

**INTERFAITH FOOD BANK SOCIETY OF LETHBRIDGE**

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					1	2
					Open 9am-1pm	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Bread & Produce only in Pick Room						Open 9am-1pm
					Christmas Market 10am-4pm	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
CHRISTMAS HAMPER DISTRIBUTION					Client Intake open afternoon!	Open 9am-1pm
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
CHRISTMAS HAMPER DISTRIBUTION						
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
IFB CLOSED UNTIL JAN 3RD						
Merry Christmas!						
						31



## Interfaith Christmas Hours

**Hours of Operation**

**Donations and Administration:**  
8am - 4pm Monday - Friday, 9am - 1pm Saturdays

**The Second Door Thrift Store:**  
8am - 4pm Monday - Friday, 9am - 1pm Saturdays

**Client Intake:**  
9:30am - 12pm & 1pm - 3:30pm Monday - Thursday,  
9:30am - 12pm Fridays

**Client Intake Extended Hours**

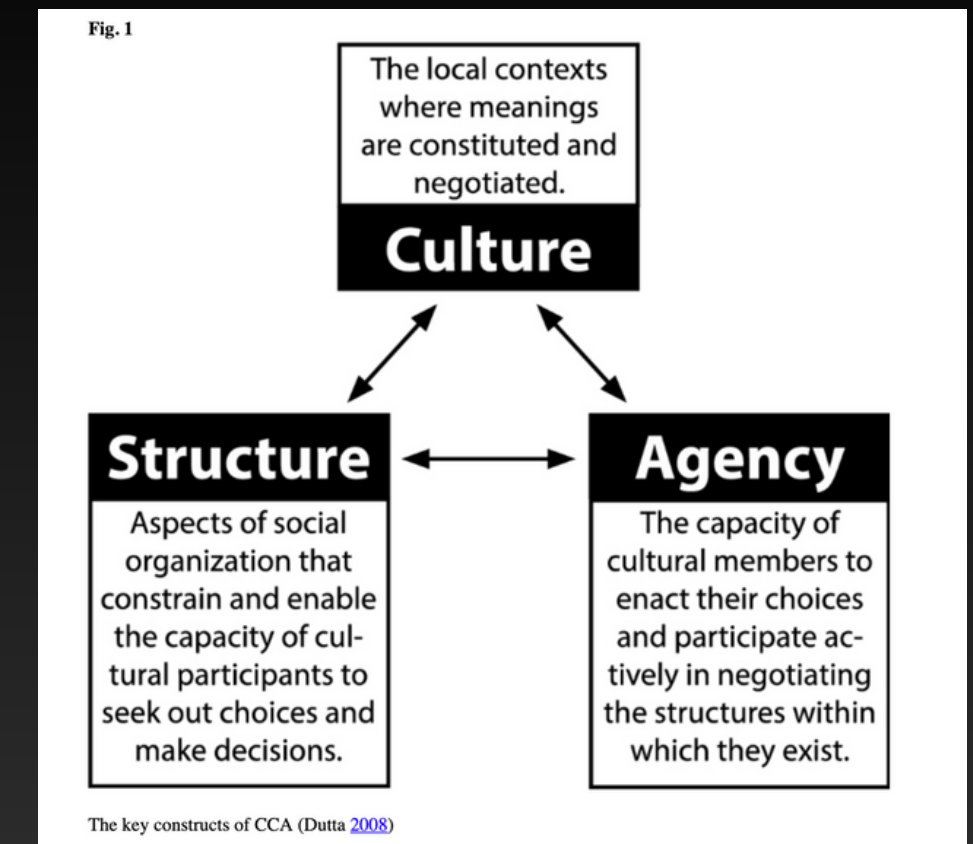
December 15: 1pm - 3:30pm  
December 22: 1pm - 2pm

**Christmas Closure**

December 23 - January 2: Interfaith Food Bank will close on December 22nd at 2:00 and will not re open until 8:00am on January 3rd.

# Food Insecurity: Solutions?

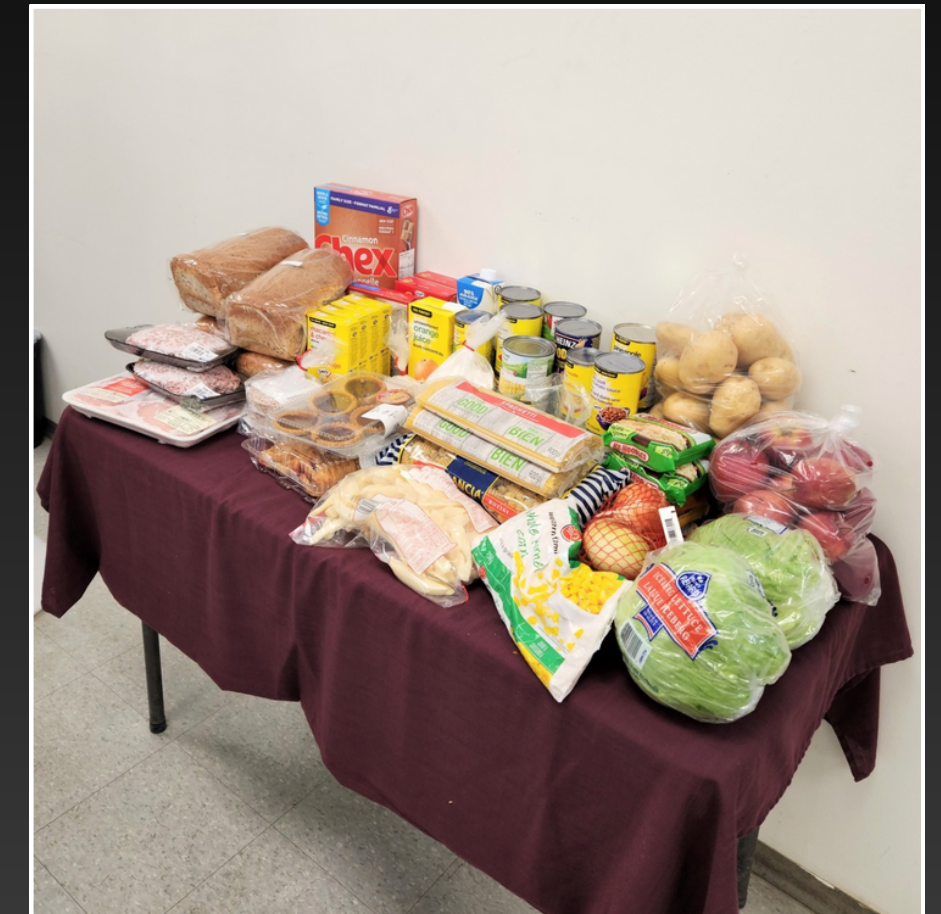
- Food should be more accessible (short-term)
  - Expand who has access to free food opportunities
  - Automatic access & increase in financial benefits
  - Beyond citizenship or permanent residency: who is living here and requires provisioning
- Preventing food waste in the community
  - Food literacy and education initiatives



“Canstruction” (Interfaith Food Bank, 2023)

# Food Insecurity: Solutions?

- Better income to cost ratios (long term)
  - Income & resource inequality has increased
  - Some CEOs make more than 246x the salary of their average worker (Wilson, 2024).
- “Income ceiling” for aid: when policy is not enough
  - Community-based provisioning and social action



Example: one week of food for a four person household, cost of \$235 CAD

(Interfaith Food Bank, 2023).

\*Researcher note: This example may not be culturally acceptable, appropriate, or accessible for all households

# Conclusion

Food security can be achieved with community support and changes in hegemonic middle-class culture.

Food literacy and education initiatives create opportunities for innovation and systemic solutions to complex issues.

Thank you

# The Starving Students' Path to Food Security

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**Bryanne Wandler**



**Food for Thought  
Coordinator**

**&**

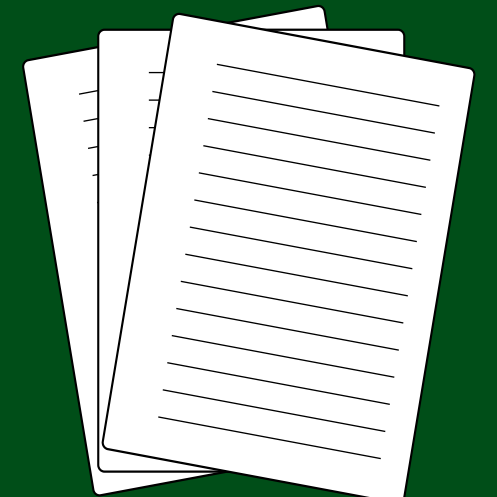
**Community Bridge  
Lab Fellow**



# Food for Thought Involvement



# Undergrad Thesis Development





# It is More Than a Affordability Crisis

Other factors contributing to food  
insecurity:

- Food Literacy
- Ease of Access
- Stigma and Perception



# Increase in Popularity of Food Delivery Services



Recently, studies have stated more students prefer purchasing takeout because of its quantity size as well as the convenience it provides.

# Food Desert vs. Food Swamp

A food desert is an area where a third of its residents are located more than 1 mile (1.6 kilometers) away from a supermarket selling nutritious food.

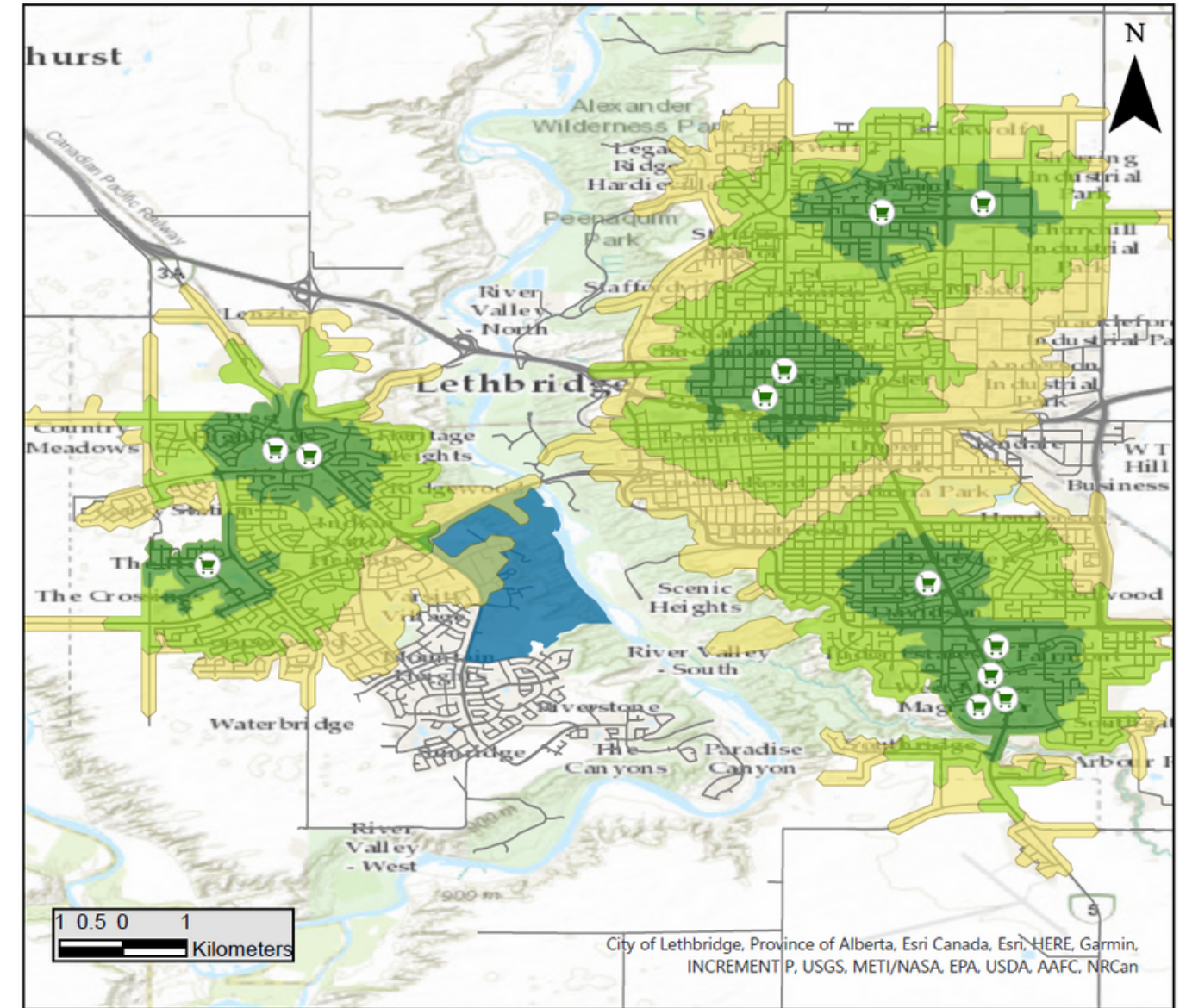
A food swamp is an area where residents have inadequate access to healthy alternatives and are left with an overabundance of fast food chains and convenience stores.



# How close do you live to a grocery store?




## Lethbridge Food Desertification





### Legend

Grocery Store Walking Distances

- 1 km
- 2 km
- 3 km

 Grocery Store Locations

 University of Lethbridge Grounds

 Street Network

This map depicts the walking distances to grocery stores within Lethbridge using the existing street networks. There are three scales 1, 2, and 3 kilometers away all fading in color intensity to signify increased walking distances and time required to reach one.

Created By: Bryanne Wandler  
Date: November 26, 2023

Data Sources: Open Data Lethbridge and Google Maps for street addresses.

# How does stigma and perception contribute to the severity of food insecurity?

- Students may avoid accessing food security resources because they believe other students may think they are poor and do not deserve to be there.
- Students may also believe others are in more need than them, causing a few meals to be skipped.



(Henry, 2017;  
Watkins, 2023)

**Security**

**u**

**Access**

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**Awareness**

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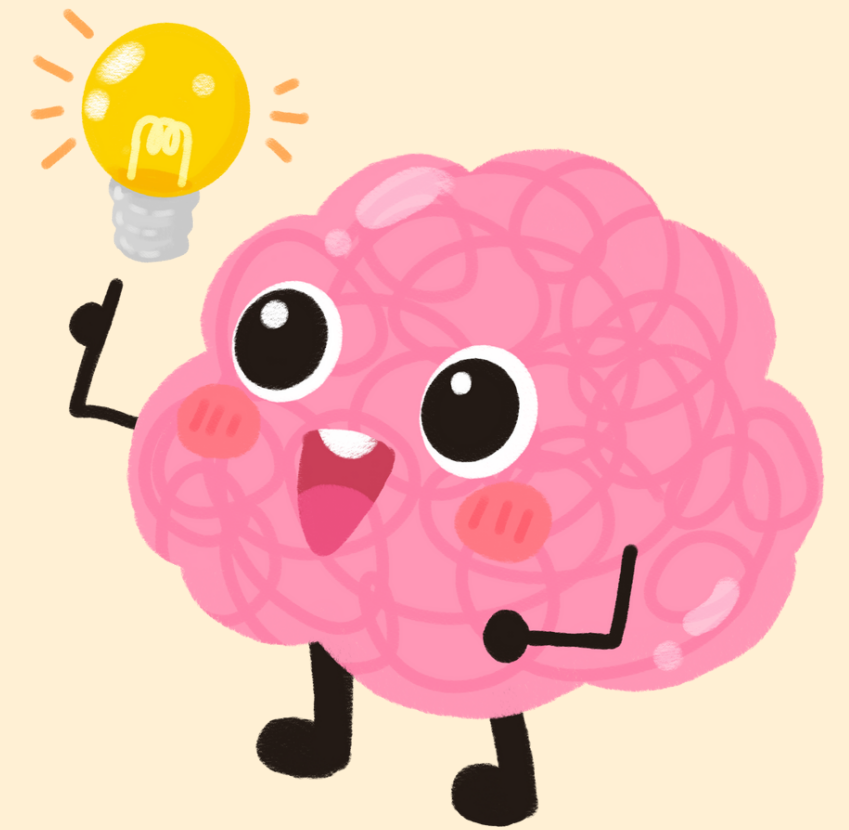
**n**

# Thank You!



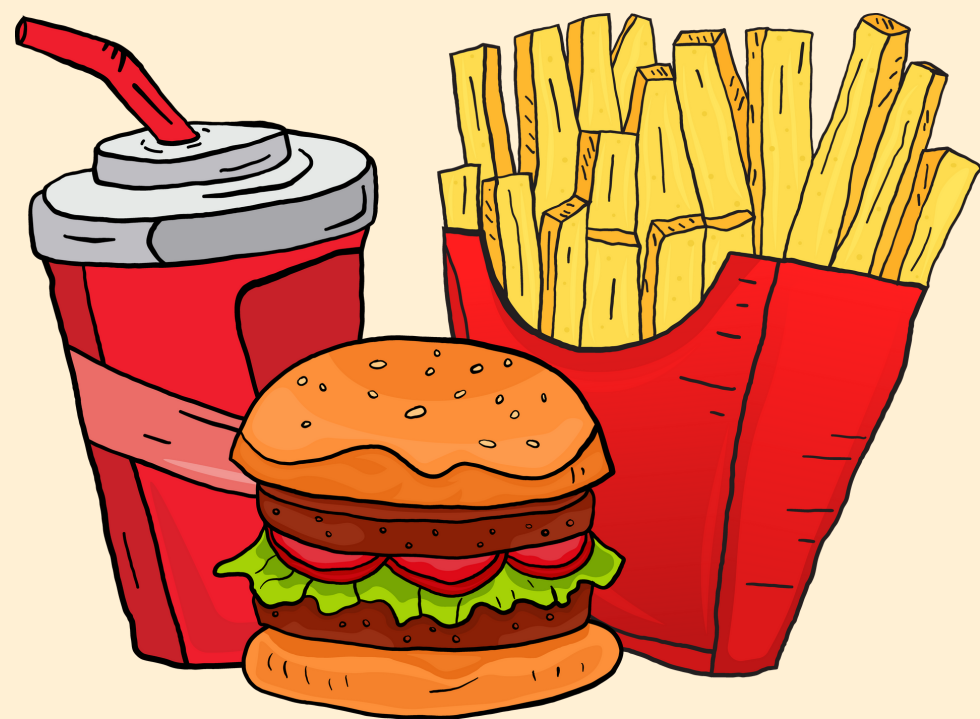
# **Negative Effects Food Insecurity has on the Brain and Body**

**Maryam Wattoo**



# The Biggest Misconception with Food Insecurity

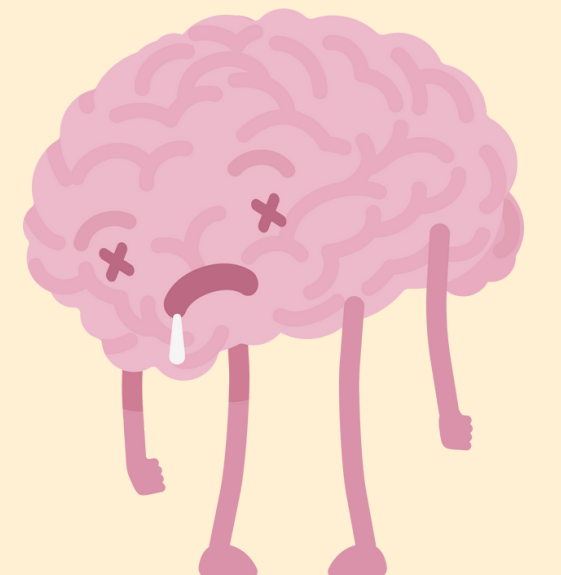
It is NOT necessarily about having a lack of  
food but lack of quality of food





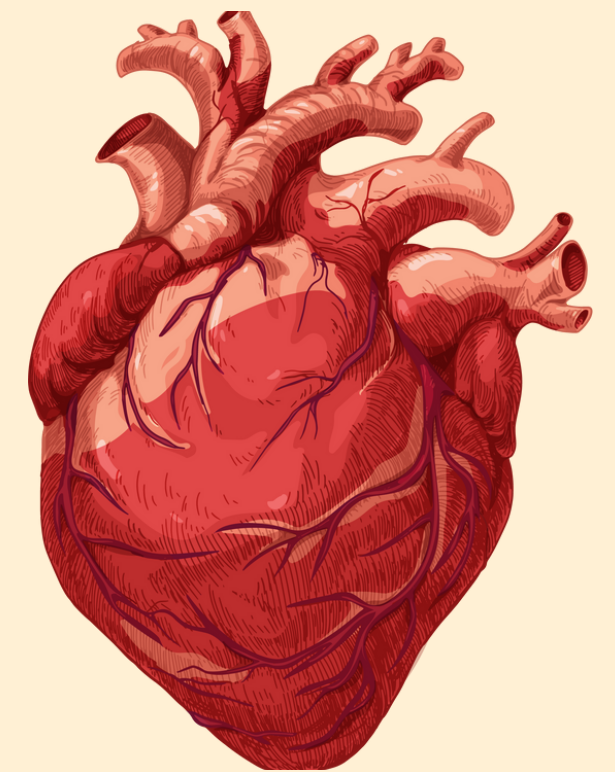
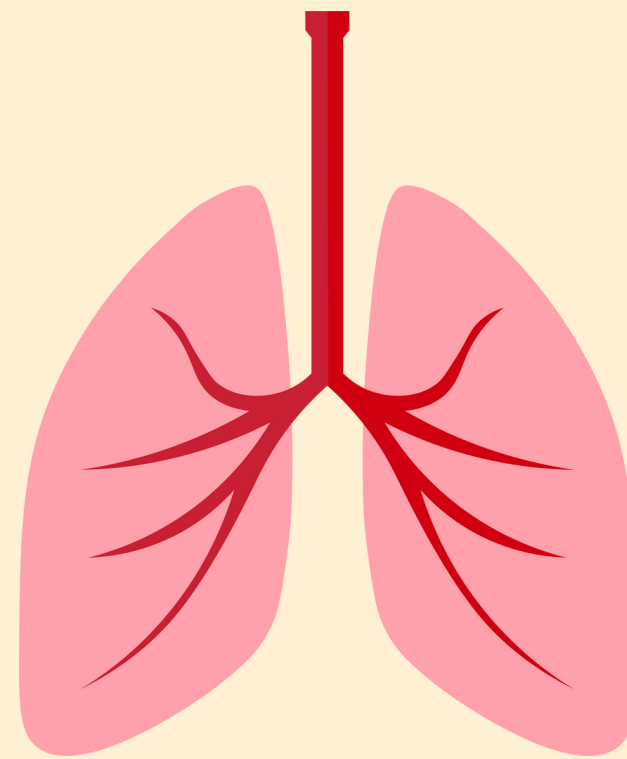
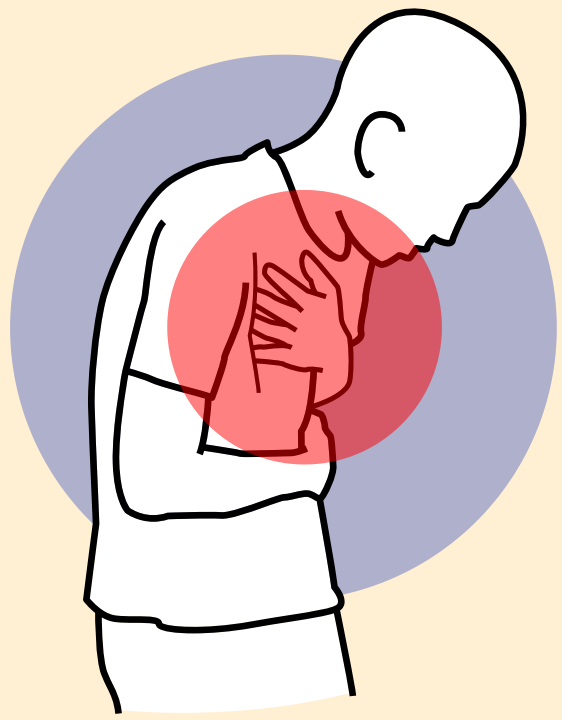
# Negative Effects of Food insecurity on the Brain

- Deficiencies of proper nutrients in the diet cause physical alterations in the brain's reward network system, specifically in the dopamine receptors.
- Greater risk of depression, anxiety, and chronic stress



# Negative Effects of Food insecurity on the Body

- Food insecure populations die about 9 years earlier than their food secure counterparts.
- More prone to infectious diseases (because of a weaker immune system due to inadequate diet), poor oral health (because of excessive sugars and sodiums in the diet), heart and cardiovascular diseases, (because of diet and stress), and other chronic diseases.





# LUNCH & LEARN: HEALTHY EATING

## MADE SIMPLE

**MONDAY, MARCH 18**  
**AT 11:30 AM IN THE**  
**U-HALL ATRIUM**



**SIGN UP ON MYEXPERIENCE**  
**SCAN**



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## Presentation 3:

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