

**NYC HUNGER EXPERIENCE 2011:  
SACRIFICE AND SUPPORT**



## ABOUT THE FOOD BANK FOR NEW YORK CITY

Food Bank For New York City recognizes 28 years as the city's major hunger-relief organization working to end food poverty in the five boroughs. As the city's hub for integrated food poverty assistance, the Food Bank tackles the hunger issue on three fronts — food distribution, income support and nutrition education — all strategically guided by its research.

Through its network of community-based member programs citywide, the Food Bank helps provide 400,000 free meals a day for New York City residents in need. The Food Bank's hands-on nutrition education program in the public schools reaches thousands of children, teens and adults. Income support services including food stamps, free income tax services for the working poor and the Earned Income Tax Credit put millions of dollars back in the pockets of low-income New York City residents, helping them to achieve greater dignity and independence. Learn how you can help at [foodbanknyc.org](http://foodbanknyc.org).

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

CHAIR, Rev. Henry Belin  
EXECUTIVE VICE CHAIR, Mr. Ralph L. Rogers, Jr.  
VICE CHAIR, Mr. Jewel Jones  
TREASURER, Mr. Robert Weinmann  
SECRETARY, Mr. John F. Fritts, Esq.

Mr. Todd Aaron  
Mr. Mario Batali  
Mr. Peter L. Bloom  
Mr. Anthony C. Bowe  
Ms. Carla A. Harris  
Mr. G. Robert James  
Ms. Gloria Pitagorsky  
Mr. Lee Brian Schragger  
Ms. Eileen Scott  
Ms. Nancy Seliger  
Mr. Arthur J. Stainman  
Mr. Stanley Tucci

Margarette Purvis  
*President and CEO*

### PRINCIPAL AUTHORS

**Gail Quets**, Senior Director, Research and Evaluation  
**Astrid Spota**, Research Associate

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

**Overview.....1**

**Highlights.....10**

**Findings.....16**

**Methodology.....49**

**Contact Information.....51**

## OVERVIEW

The recession that began in December 2007 officially ended in June 2009, and the number of New York City residents reporting difficulty affording needed food subsequently declined. However, as reported in *NYC Hunger Experience 2010: Less Food on the Table*, even in the post-recession era many New Yorkers were managing to avoid difficulty affording food only by reducing its quantity and quality and relying on savings to get by. In 2011, the number of New York City residents reporting difficulty affording food declined even further, but a substantial number of New Yorkers continued to have to reduce the quantity and quality of their food and rely on savings in order to feed themselves or their families. In addition, groups among which food affordability issues had not been traditionally prominent (e.g., better educated residents, higher income residents) saw increases in percentages reporting difficulty affording food and increases in percentages expressing concern about needing food assistance (such as food stamps, soup kitchens, and food pantries) in the future.

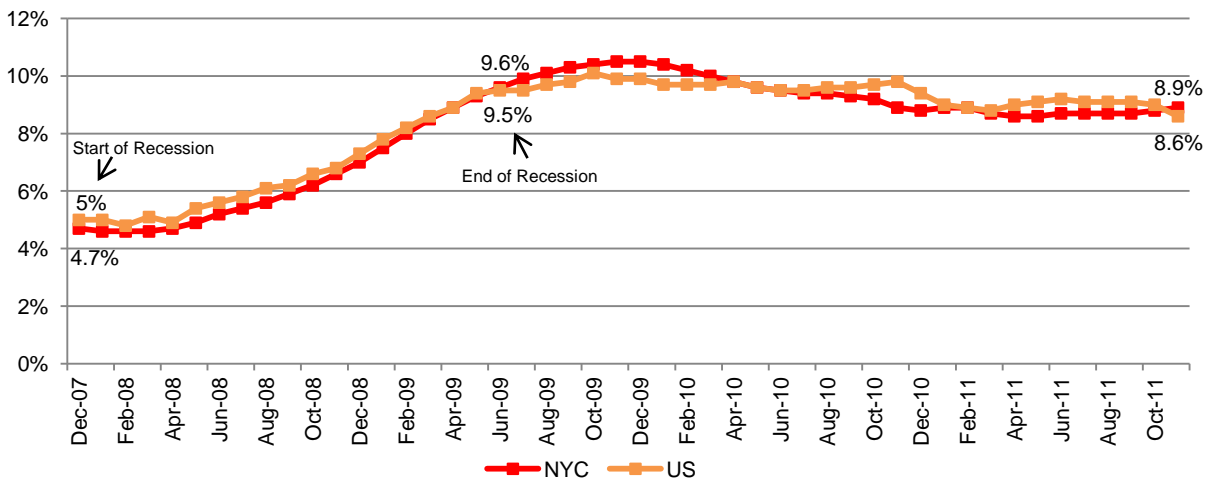
This year's edition of the *Food Bank For New York City's Hunger Experience* report series analyzes data from an annual opinion poll conducted in collaboration with the Marist Institute for Public Opinion. It examines the most recent general decline in the number of New Yorkers having difficulty affording food, identifies those groups experiencing increases in these numbers, and provides updated, comprehensive trend data on what a loss of household income would mean to residents' ability to afford food and how concern is being expressed about needing food assistance in the future. The report also includes never before published data on the specific kinds of quantity and quality sacrifices and financial trade-offs New York City residents are making to ensure that food remains on the table.

## THE POST-RECESSION PICTURE

Although the recession was declared over in June 2009, its end did not put more money in everyone's pockets. Unemployment declined as the recession ended, but as of 2011, the unemployment rate had yet to reach pre-recession levels in New York City or the nation, as illustrated in Figure I.

**Figure I**

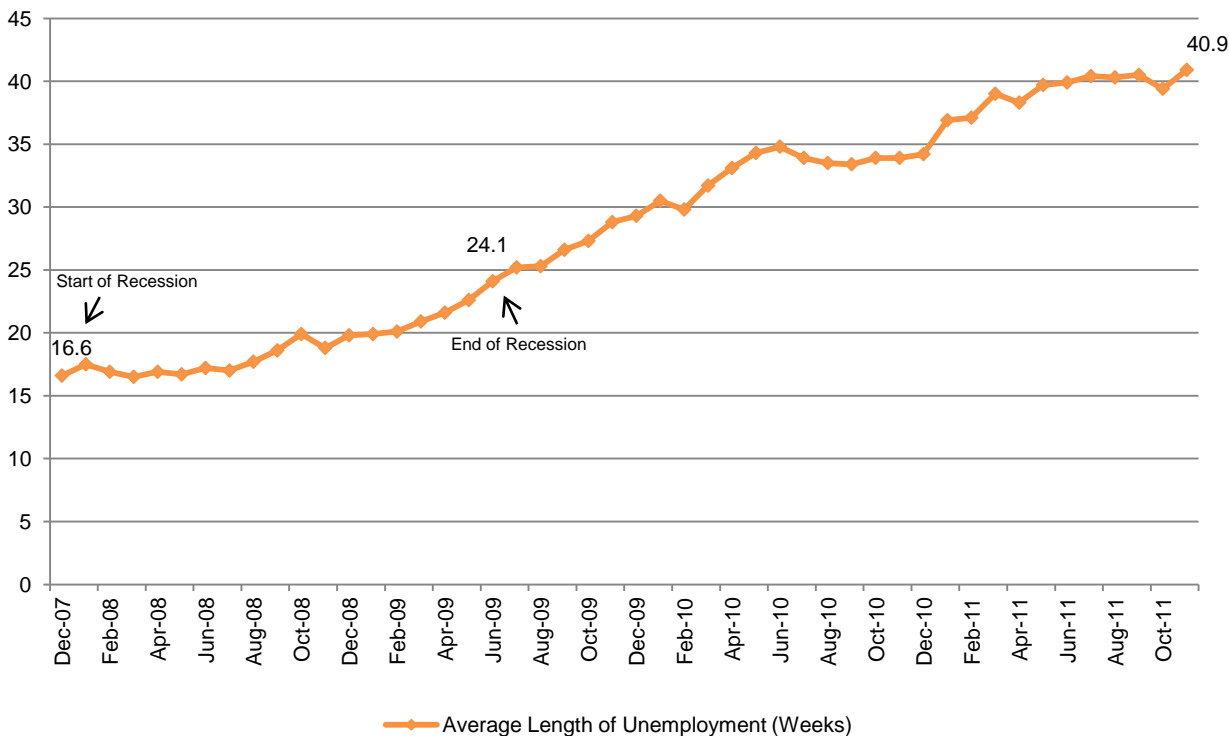
### Unemployment Rate in New York City and United States, December 2007 to Present<sup>1</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Analysis of unemployment data as reported by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Also, the length of time that workers who had lost their jobs stayed unemployed rose. According to the federal Bureau of Labor Statistics, during the recession, the average length of time an American worker remained unemployed increased to 24.1 weeks in June 2009, up from 16.6 weeks in December 2007. Even after the recession ended, length of unemployment continued to rise, hitting 40.9 weeks in October 2011. This is the highest level recorded in more than sixty years of official recordkeeping, as illustrated in Figure II.<sup>2</sup>

**Figure II**  
**Average Length of Unemployment (Weeks) in the United States, December 2007 to Present<sup>3</sup>**



Longer periods of unemployment mean that an ever-increasing portion of the unemployed are no longer receiving unemployment benefits, thereby increasing need. According to the Department of Labor, in early 2010, 75 percent of unemployed residents were receiving benefits; by November, 2011, that figure was down to just 48 percent.<sup>4</sup>

Wages stayed ahead of inflation during the recession, but this pattern did not continue post-recession, as many people who had lost their jobs during the recession returned to work at lower wages.<sup>5</sup> Indeed, household income decreased more in the two years immediately following the end of the recession than it did during the recession itself.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Analysis of unemployment benefits as reported by the United States Department of Labor.

<sup>5</sup> (1) *Consumer Price Index* (2011). United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2) Farber, Henry S. (2011). *Job Loss in the Great Recession: Historical Perspective from the Displaced Workers Survey, 1984-2010*. National Bureau of Economic Research.

<sup>6</sup> *Household Income Trends During the Recession and Economic Recovery*. (October 2011). Sentier Research.

## DIFFICULTY AFFORDING FOOD

At the height of the recession, the percentage of New York City residents having difficulty affording needed food rose to 48 percent, the highest level since the start of the poll in 2003. As the economy began to recover, and relief measures kicked in, the percentage of New York City residents reporting difficulty decreased to 40 percent in 2009, 37 percent in 2010, and 35 percent (approximately 2.9 million people) in 2011.

Data for 2011 therefore show that the overall number of New York City residents having difficulty affording needed food decreased by five percent between 2010 and 2011. Currently, the percentage of residents having difficulty is lower than its pre-recession level of 38 percent in 2007, but higher than it was in 2003 (25 percent). As noted, approximately 2.9 million people are still reporting difficulty. (See Table I.)

**Table I**

**Difficulty Affording Food – NYC Residents, 2007 to 2011**

2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
38%	48%	40%	37%	35%
3.1 million	3.9 million	3.3 million	3.1 million	2.9 million

## WHO ARE THE 2.9 MILLION NEW YORKERS? NEW FACES

2011 data indicate that food affordability is increasingly becoming an issue for some surprising groups:

- The percentage of New York City residents with annual household incomes between \$50,000 to \$74,999, and annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more, who reported difficulty affording food increased from 26 percent to 32 percent, and from 13 percent to 16 percent, respectively, between 2010 and 2011. Moreover, these same groups saw extremely large increases if our “look back” extends to 2003. For instance, New York City residents in the \$75,000 or more income bracket recorded an increase of 300 percent (from 4 percent to 16 percent) between 2003 and 2011.
- The percentage of *employed* New York City residents who reported difficulty affording food increased slightly – from 33 percent to 34 percent between 2010 and 2011.
- The percentage of *male* New York City residents who reported difficulty affording food increased slightly – from 31 percent to 32 percent between 2010 and 2011.
- While the percentage of New York City residents in the youngest and oldest age groups (ages 18 to 35 and ages 65 or older) having difficulty affording food declined, the percentage of New York City residents in the *middle age categories* (ages 36 to 49 and ages 50 to 64) reporting difficulty increased (from 37 percent to 38 percent, and from 39 percent to 40 percent, respectively, between 2010 and 2011).
- While the percentage of New York City residents at lower educational levels (high school or below, or some college or Associate’s degree) reporting difficulty affording food declined, the percentage of New York City residents at *higher educational levels* (college degree or graduate/professional degree) increased. The percentage of residents with a college degree rose from 24 percent to 30 percent; and for those with a graduate/professional degree, from 19 percent to 21 percent.

Not only are better educated and higher income groups reporting more difficulty affording food, they are also expressing increasing concern about their future and a possible need for food assistance (like food stamps, soup kitchens, or food pantries) in the next 12 months:

- The percentage of New York City residents with an *annual household income of \$50,000 to \$74,999*, and an *annual household income of \$75,000 or more*, who expressed concern about needing food assistance in the next 12 months increased from 24 percent to 27 percent, and from 9 percent to 11 percent, respectively, between 2010 and 2011. (The percentage of New York City residents with an annual household income of \$25,000 to \$49,999 who expressed concern also increased – from 34 percent to 45 percent.)
- The percentage of *employed* New York City residents who expressed concern about needing food assistance in the next 12 months increased from 25 percent to 27 percent between 2010 and 2011.
- The percentage of *male* residents who expressed concern about needing food assistance in the next 12 months increased from 27 percent to 32 percent between 2010 and 2011.
- While the percentage of New York City residents in the youngest age group (ages 18 to 35) expressing concern about needing food assistance in the next 12 months declined, the percentage of New York City residents in the *middle age categories* (ages 36 to 49 and ages 50 to 64) expressing concern increased (from 29 percent to 30 percent, and from 32 percent to 38 percent, respectively, between 2010 and 2011. (The percentage of New York City residents ages 65 and older also increased, from 26 percent to 32 percent.)
- While the percentage of New York City residents at lower educational levels (high school or below, or some college or Associate's degree) expressing concern about needing food assistance in the next 12 months remained stable or declined, the percentage of New York City residents *with a college degree* expressing concern increased from 23 percent to 30 percent.

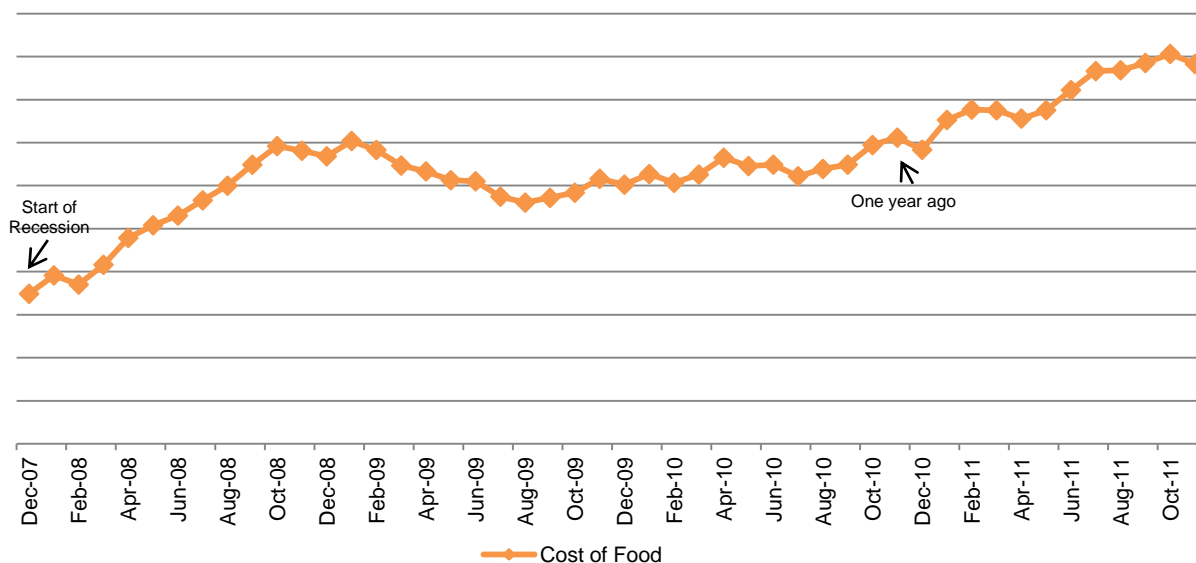
New York City residents with higher household incomes are not eligible for food stamps or the other nutrition assistance programs that help keep lower-income households afloat, and they are probably less likely to avail themselves of emergency food programs (or they may find themselves ineligible for these as well), even though the anecdotal evidence is that some “middle class” families have been knocking on program doors. Meanwhile, as illustrated in Figure IV, the cost of groceries increased by 4 percent between November 2010 and November 2011, and by 13 percent between December 2007 and November 2011.<sup>7</sup>

---

<sup>7</sup> *Consumer Price Index*. (2011). United States Bureau of Labor Statistics. Figures are calculated for the New York City Metropolitan Statistical Area.

Figure IV

**Cost of Food in New York City Metropolitan Statistical Area,  
December 2007 to November 2011<sup>8</sup>**



As noted earlier, unemployment rates have been slow to fall, and the length of time it has been taking workers who lose jobs to find new ones has been lengthening. In the event of a job loss, previously high-income households might have to bear high fixed costs (like mortgages or rents) for a significant period of time while remaining ineligible for (or unaware of) subsidies and supports available to lower-income households.

Middle-aged New Yorkers are also reporting more difficulty affording food, and expressing more concern about needing food assistance in the future, than older or younger New Yorkers. Residents in their middle years who have been unemployed for significant lengths of time may feel that they cannot dip into savings to pay food or other bills, given that their retirement years are right around the corner. Also, although “aging boomers” are less likely to lose their jobs than younger workers, they have a harder time finding comparable new ones. A recent study found that 40 percent of unemployed workers older than 55 had been out of work a year or longer.<sup>9</sup>

### **WHO ARE THE 2.9 MILLION NEW YORKERS? FAMILIAR FACES**

Consistent with previous findings from the poll, the data indicate that low-income residents, households with children, unemployed residents, women, and New Yorkers without a college degree are more likely to experience difficulty affording needed food than other groups:

- Half of New York City residents (50 percent) with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 had difficulty affording needed food.
- More than two in five New York City households with children (43 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Addendum. *A Year or More: The High Cost of Long-Term Unemployment*. (2011). The Pew Charitable Trusts.



- More than two in five unemployed New York City residents (41 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.
- Almost two in five female New York City residents (38 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.
- More than two in five New York City residents with a high school degree or below (43 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.

All of these percentages are unacceptably high, and much higher than they were at the start of the poll in 2003, but all have also decreased since 2010, consistent with the decline in the general New York City population:

- The percentage of New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 who reported difficulty affording needed food decreased from 62 percent to 50 percent between 2010 and 2011, but increased from 49 percent to 50 percent between 2003 and 2011.
- The percentage of New York City households with children who reported difficulty affording needed food decreased from 44 percent to 43 percent between 2010 and 2011, but increased from 32 percent to 43 percent between 2003 and 2011.
- The percentage of unemployed New York City residents who reported difficulty affording needed food decreased from 54 percent to 41 percent between 2010 and 2011. (Earlier data is unavailable.)
- The percentage of female New York City residents who reported difficulty affording needed food decreased from 42 percent to 38 percent between 2010 and 2011, but increased from 28 percent to 38 percent between 2003 and 2011.
- The percentage of New York City residents with a high school degree or below who reported difficulty affording needed food decreased from 52 percent to 43 percent between 2010 and 2011, but increased from 39 percent to 43 percent between 2003 and 2011.

## **MAKING SACRIFICES TO AFFORD FOOD: CUTTING BACK**

As noted, the percentage of New York City residents reporting difficulty affording food declined in 2011 to 35 percent of the city's population (or 2.9 million people). It is likely that this decline can be attributed, in part, to increased participation in the food stamp program (also known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) and other nutrition assistance programs and to the attempts of emergency food programs to meet unmet food needs. Unfortunately, it can also be attributed to sacrifices being made by households experiencing difficulty affording needed food, including cutbacks to the quantity and quality of food being consumed.

In 2011, almost two in five New York City residents (38 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money. More than one in three residents (35 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less dairy; and more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables.

These figures are of immediate concern, because the protein contained in meat, poultry, and fish provides amino acids that assist in building and preserving body muscle and tissues. Dairy is also a source of protein. Current USDA recommendations call for Americans to eat more, not less, fruits and vegetables, because fruits and vegetables contain several nutrients (including folate, magnesium, potassium, dietary fiber, and vitamins A, C, and K) that are under-consumed in the United States. Fruits and vegetables are relatively low in calories and can help both

adults and children maintain a healthy weight. Also, eating fruits and vegetables is associated with reduced risk of many chronic diseases. For instance, eating two cups of fruits and vegetables per day can prevent cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke; some fruits and vegetables may even offer protection against certain types of cancer.<sup>10</sup>

Food affordability problems that require New York City residents to cut back on the amount of protein and fresh fruits and vegetables they consume may result in an inadequate diet that leaves a significant portion of the city's population at risk for disease and poor health.

### **MAKING SACRIFICES TO AFFORD FOOD: IMPACT ON CHILDREN**

Approximately one in five households with children (41 percent) bought less food to save food or money. More than one in three (35 percent) bought less meat, poultry, or fish. Even greater sacrifices were made by New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 – almost half (48 percent) reported that they had purchased less food in order to save food or money. More than two in five of these households (41 percent) reported that they had purchased less meat, poultry, or fish; 38 percent reported that they had purchased less dairy; and 36 percent reported that they had purchased less fresh fruits and vegetables.

These sorts of sacrifices on the part of low-income households with children can have severe long-term consequences. Research has shown that children living in households that are “food insecure” are 90 percent more likely to have fair/poor health than excellent/good health.<sup>11</sup> They are even more vulnerable than adults to the long-term consequences of an inadequate diet and are therefore a special concern when food affordability issues are reported by such a large proportion of low-income households.

### **THE IMPORTANCE OF FOOD STAMPS**

As noted, it is likely that the continued decline in the percentage of New York City residents having difficulty affording food, reported here for 2011, can be attributed, in part, to an expansion of the food stamp program. As of October 2011, there were 1.83 million New York City residents receiving food stamps, up 62 percent from 1.12 million at the start of the recession in December 2007, and up 2 percent from 1.79 million one year ago in October 2010. (See Figure III.)<sup>12</sup> Increases in food stamp participation rates also occurred nationwide. As of September 2011, there were 46.3 million United States residents receiving food stamps, up 69 percent from 27.4 million at the start of the recession in December 2007, and up 8 percent from 42.9 million one year ago in September 2010.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>10</sup> Cook, John and Frank, Deborah. Department of Pediatrics, Boston, University School of Medicine. *Food Security, Poverty, and Human Development in the United States*. (2008). New York Academy of Sciences.

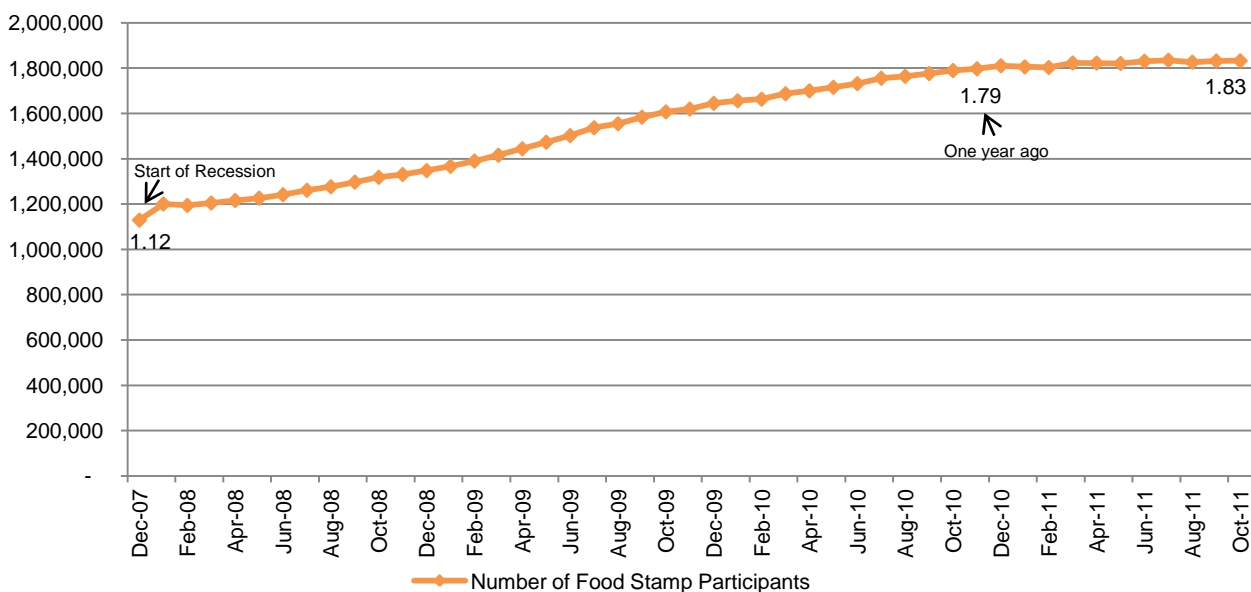
<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Analysis of SNAP data as reported by the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA).

<sup>13</sup> Analysis of SNAP data as reported by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS).

**Figure III**

**Number of Food Stamp Participants in New York City,  
December 2007 to October 2011<sup>14</sup>**



As need has increased, the federal government, the agencies that administer the food stamp program at local levels, and anti-hunger advocates have increased their efforts to reach eligible households with information about food stamps and improve the application process.

**THE IMPORTANCE OF OTHER NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS**

A range of other nutrition assistance programs, such as the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), school breakfast programs, the National School Lunch program (NSLP), and the Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), have also played a role in keeping needy New York City households afloat food-wise. Since 2007, participation in the National School Lunch Program has risen in all fifty states.<sup>15</sup> Across the state, the number of students receiving free or low-cost lunches rose from 1,063,344 during the 2008-2009 school year to 1,099,893 during the 2009-2010 school year.<sup>16</sup> In 2010, New York State managed to enroll almost 30 percent of low-income children receiving free or reduced-price lunches during the school year in its summer food service program, out-performing almost all other states in this effort.<sup>17</sup>

**THE IMPORTANCE OF EMERGENCY FOOD**

Food stamps benefit levels have not increased since 2008, when they rose by 13.6%.<sup>18</sup> In 2010, the average monthly food stamp benefit was \$287.<sup>19</sup> When food stamps are not

<sup>14</sup> Analysis of SNAP data as reported by the New York City Human Resources Administration (HRA).  
<sup>15</sup> Analysis of National School Lunch Program participation rates as reported by the United States Department of Agriculture.  
<sup>16</sup> *Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation: Summer Nutrition Status Report 2011*. (2011). Food Research and Action Center (FRAC).  
<sup>17</sup> Ibid.  
<sup>18</sup> *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) - Fiscal Year (FY) 2010 Cost-of-Living Adjustments (COLAS)*. (2011). United States Department of Agriculture.  
<sup>19</sup> Analysis of SNAP data as reported by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Services (FNS).

available, or run out, households with low incomes need an opportunity to turn somewhere for immediately available food. Sometimes emergency food becomes a frequently utilized resource, as households have trouble making ends meet on a regular basis. Emergency food has therefore played an important role in some households' efforts to address food affordability issues, as directors of several well-known food pantries and soup kitchens in the City of New York can attest, having observed increased demand in 2011.<sup>20</sup> Unfortunately, increased demand has stretched some food pantries and soup kitchens to their limits and led them to turn away potential participants or temporarily close their doors.<sup>21</sup>

## THE ROAD AHEAD

In 2011, the number of New York City residents reporting difficulty affording food declined, as it had in 2009 and 2010. This decline was likely due, in part, to an increase in the number of New Yorkers participating in the food stamp program, and the percentage of New Yorkers having difficulty affording food would probably have been higher were it not for the existence of other nutrition assistance programs (like school breakfast and lunch programs) and the continued efforts made by emergency food programs to provide for New Yorkers in need. Still, a substantial number of New Yorkers continued to reduce the quantity and quality of their food and rely on savings in order to feed themselves or their families. Groups that had the most difficulty affording needed food in the past (e.g., less educated, lower-income residents, unemployed residents, and households with children) continued to have the most difficulty. In addition, groups among which food affordability issues had not been traditionally prominent (e.g., educated, higher-income residents) saw increases in percentages reporting difficulty affording food and increases in percentages expressing concern about needing food assistance (such as food stamps, soup kitchens, and food pantries) in the future.

As Congress continues to wrestle with the challenge of reducing the nation's deficit, and embarks on setting funding and policy frontiers for the hunger safety net in the 2012 Farm Bill reauthorization, any suggestions that food stamps or other anti-hunger programs be cut are insupportable, both in the face of the rising need that increased use of food stamps among New Yorkers indicates and the evidence presented here that New Yorkers are continuing to make sacrifices to afford food. Cuts to food stamps or other anti-hunger programs could result in a substantial increase in the percentage of New York City residents reporting difficulty affording food. They could also increase pressure on the emergency food programs that are doing their own part to help households struggling with food affordability problems.

While recovery from the recent recession proceeds slowly, protecting and strengthening the nation's hunger safety net is of the utmost importance. Hungry New Yorkers will continue to rely on food stamps, other nutrition assistance programs, and emergency food programs to help address food affordability problems. Making these programs as responsive to demonstrated need as possible, and as accessible as possible, should continue to be key priorities for the federal government, the agencies that administer the food stamp program at local levels, and anti-hunger advocates.

---

<sup>20</sup> Souccar, Miriam Kreinin. (2011). *Number of needy New Yorkers growing at alarming rate*. Crain's New York Business.

<sup>21</sup> (1) Food Bank For New York City's meals database. (2) *Not Too Big to Fail: As New York City Hunger Soars, Feeding Programs Close Due to Government Cuts: New York City Coalition Against Hunger's Annual Hunger Survey (2011)*. New York City Coalition Against Hunger.

## HIGHLIGHTS

### NEW YORK CITY RESIDENTS

- In 2011, more than one in three New York City residents (35 percent) experienced difficulty affording needed food. This percentage represents approximately 2.9 million people.
- Although the percentage of New York City residents having difficulty affording food has dropped since the height of the recession in 2008, when it stood at 48 percent, it has yet to decrease to the level at the start of the poll in 2003 (25 percent).
- Almost two in five New York City residents (38 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, more than one in three residents (35 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less dairy; and more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables.
- One in five New York City residents (20 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. In other words, they would not have savings or other resources on which they could fall back to purchase food. More than one in five New York City residents (42 percent) would be in this same precarious position within three months.
- Although one in three New York City residents (33 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months, the percentage of New York City residents reporting this concern decreased by 21 percent since 2008 (42 percent).

### HOUSEHOLD INCOME

- In 2011, New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 had difficulty affording needed food more often than New York City residents in other income groups. Half of New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 (50 percent) reported difficulty.
- However, higher-income groups also had difficulty affording needed food. For instance, almost one in three New York City residents with annual household incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 (32 percent) reported difficulty. Moreover, all higher-income groups showed dramatic increases in the percentage reporting difficulty since 2003. For instance, the percentage of New York City residents in the \$50,000 to \$74,999 bracket reporting difficulty increased 129 percent between 2003 (14 percent) and 2011 (32 percent).
- Almost half of New York City residents with an annual household income of less than \$25,000 (48 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, almost half of New York City residents with an annual household income of less than \$25,000 (47 percent) reported buying less meat,

poultry, or fish; more than two in five (42 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; and two in five (40 percent) reported buying less dairy.

- More than one in three New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 (35 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their income. Almost two in three New York City residents in this income bracket (63 percent) would be in this same precarious position within three months.
- All higher-income groups saw increases in the percentage of residents who would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. Percent increases were as follows: 29 percent for New York City residents with annual household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 (from 21 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2011); 40 percent for residents with annual household incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 (from 10 percent in 2010 to 14 percent in 2011); and 17 percent for residents with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more (from 6 percent in 2010 to 7 percent in 2011).
- Almost half of New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 (49 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months,.
- All higher-income groups saw increases in the percentage of residents concerned about needing food assistance in the next 12 months. Percent increases were as follows: 32 percent for residents with annual household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 (from 34 percent in 2010 to 45 percent in 2011); 13 percent for residents with annual household incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 (from 24 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2011); and 22 percent for residents with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more (from 9 percent in 2010 to 11 percent in 2011).

## **HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN**

- In 2011, more than two in five New York City households with children (43 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.
- Although the percentage of New York City households with children having difficulty affording needed food has dropped since the height of the recession in 2008, when it stood at 56 percent, it has yet to decline to the level at the start of the poll in 2003 (32 percent).
- More than two in five New York City households with children (41 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, more than one in three New York City households with children (35 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less dairy; and more than one in four (26 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables.
- One in four New York City households with children (25 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. Approximately half

of households with children (46 percent) would be in this same precarious position within three months.

- Almost one in three New York City households with children (32 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months.

## **LOW-INCOME HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN**

- In 2011, low-income households with children were more likely than households with children to have difficulty affording needed food, to not be able to afford food after losing their household income, and to be concerned about needing food assistance in the next twelve months.
- In 2011, more than half of New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (54 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.
- Although the percentage of New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 having difficulty affording food has dropped since the height of the recession in 2008, when it stood at 77 percent, it has yet to decline to the level at the start of the poll in 2003 (58 percent).
- Almost half of New York households with children with an annual income of less than \$25,000 (48 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, more than two in five New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (41 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; almost two in five (38 percent) reported buying less dairy; and more than one in three (36 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Almost two in five New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (39 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their household income. More than three in five households (65 percent) would be in this same precarious position within three months.
- More than half of New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (51 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months.

## **EMPLOYMENT**

- In 2011, two in five unemployed New York City residents (41 percent) had difficulty affording needed food.
- Almost half of unemployed New York City residents (46 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, two in five unemployed New York City residents (40 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; more than one in three (35

percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; and more than one in three (34 percent) reported buying less dairy.

- More than one in four unemployed New York City residents (28 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income, and more than half of unemployed New York City residents (51 percent) would be in this same precarious position within three months.
- Almost half of unemployed New York City residents (46 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months.

## **GENDER**

- Female New York City residents are consistently more vulnerable to food affordability issues than male residents. In 2011, there was a six percentage point difference in the proportions of male residents (32 percent) and female residents (38 percent) having difficulty affording food. In 2008, at the height of the recession, there was a ten percentage point difference (men, 43 percent; women, 53 percent).
- Two in five female New York City residents (40 percent) purchased less food in order to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, more than one in three female New York City residents (36 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; and one in four (25 percent) reported buying less dairy.
- In 2011, more female residents than male residents reported that they would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income, and within three months of losing their annual household income (women, 25 percent and 48 percent respectively; men, 15 percent and 36 percent respectively).
- Approximately one in three female residents (33 percent) and male residents (32 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months.

## **AGE**

- New York City residents ages 50 to 64 reported the most difficulty affording needed food in 2011. Among New York City residents ages 50 to 64, two in five (40 percent) experienced difficulty affording food. This represents a 60 percent increase from 2003 (25 percent).
- New York City residents ages 36 to 49 and New York City residents ages 50 to 64 were more likely to purchase less food to save food or money than New York City residents in other age groups. Almost half of residents ages 36 to 49 (46 percent), and two in five residents ages 50 to 64 (40 percent) reported buying less food to save food or money.



- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, 41 percent of residents ages 36 to 49 and 39 percent of residents ages 50 to 64 reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; 31 percent of residents ages 36 to 49 and 34 percent of residents ages 50 to 64 reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; and 27 percent of residents ages 36 to 49 and 31 percent of residents ages 50 to 64 reported buying less dairy.
- New York City residents age 65 or older (21 percent) were almost as likely as New York City residents ages 50 to 64 (20 percent) to not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income, and to be in this same precarious position within three months (40 percent and 39 percent, respectively).
- New York City residents ages 50 to 64 were more likely than residents in other age groups to be concerned about needing food assistance. Almost two in five residents ages 50 to 64 (38 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months.

## EDUCATION

- In 2011, New York City residents with a high school degree or below were more likely to have difficulty affording needed food than residents with higher levels of educational attainment. More than two in five New York City residents with a high school degree or below (43 percent) reported difficulty.
- In 2011, the percentage of New York City residents with a high school degree or below who had difficulty affording needed food (43 percent) was lower than it was at the height of the recession (60 percent), but has yet to decline to the level at the start of the poll in 2003 (39 percent).
- New York City residents with higher levels of educational attainment also had difficulty affording food. The percentage of residents with a college degree reporting difficulty affording food increased 25 percent from 24 percent in 2010 to 30 percent in 2011. In all higher level education categories, the percentage of residents reporting difficulty increased considerably. For example, there was a 68 percent increase in difficulty for residents with some college or an Associate's degree between 2003 (22 percent) and 2011 (37 percent); a 173 percent increase for residents with a college degree between 2003 (11 percent) and 2011 (30 percent); and a 110 percent increase for residents with a graduate/professional degree from 2003 (10 percent) to 2011 (21 percent).
- New York City residents with a high school degree or below (45 percent) and some college or an associate's degree (43 percent) were more likely than residents with a college degree (33 percent) or a graduate/professional degree (25 percent) to report buying less food to save food or money.
- In order to stretch their grocery dollar, more than two in five New York City residents with a high school degree or below (43 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; two in five (40 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; and almost two in five (37 percent) reported buying less dairy.

- More than one in four New York City residents with a high school degree or below (28 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. More than half of residents with a high school degree or below (55 percent) would not be able to afford food within three months.

## **RACE/ETHNICITY**

- In 2011, Black/African-American and Latino/Hispanic residents in New York City had the most difficulty affording needed food. More than two in five Black/African-American residents (44 percent) had difficulty, compared to two in five Latino/Hispanic residents (40 percent).
- Between 2010 and 2011, the percentage of Black/African American residents having difficulty affording food decreased from 49 percent to 44 percent; the percentage of Latino/Hispanic residents having difficulty affording food decreased from 43 percent to 40 percent; and the percentage of White/Caucasian residents having difficulty increased, from 23 percent to 27 percent.
- Almost half of Latino/Hispanic residents (45 percent) reported purchasing less food to save food or money, compared to 39 percent of Black/African-American residents and 31 percent of White/Caucasian residents.
- Almost one in three Black/African-American residents (32 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income, compared to one in five Latino/Hispanic residents (20 percent).
- Half of Black/African-American residents (50 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), in the next 12 months, compared to two in five (42 percent) Latino/Hispanic residents.

## **BOROUGH**

- With the exception of Queens, paying for utilities instead of food was the financial trade-off most frequently made by residents of all boroughs, followed by paying for rent instead of food.
- Across all boroughs, buying less food to save food or money was the most frequently utilized method of dealing with food affordability issues.
- In 2011, Bronx residents were more likely than other groups to report that they would not be able to afford food immediately after losing household income (29 percent). They were also more likely to be concerned about needing food assistance including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries) in the next 12 months (38 percent).

## FINDINGS

### HUNGER EXPERIENCE POLL

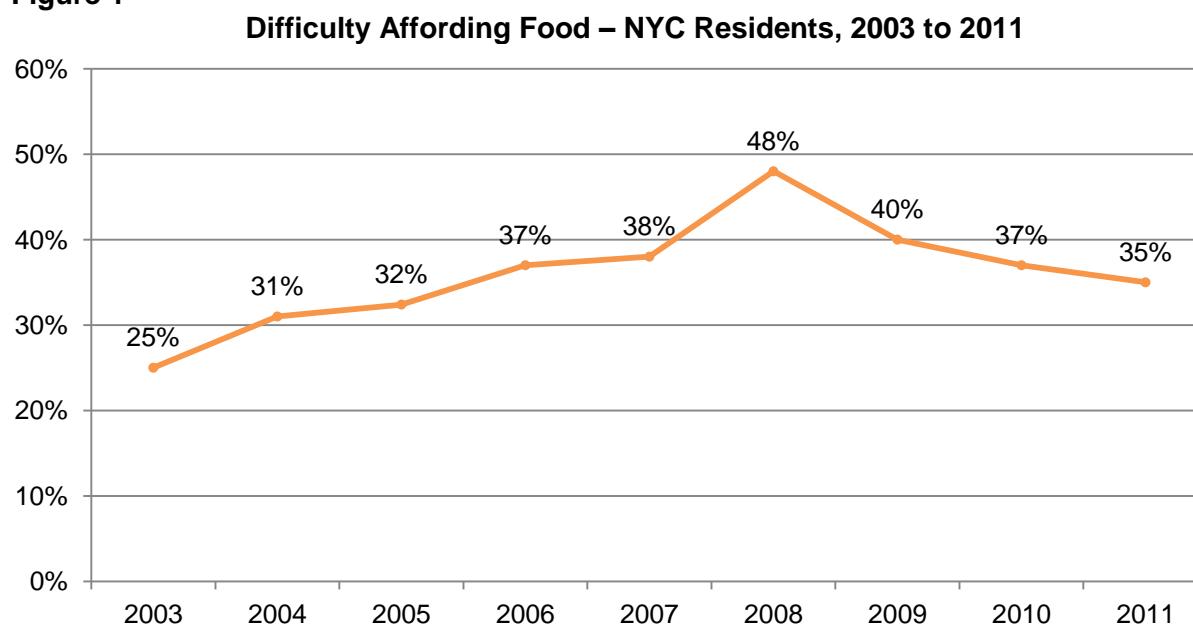
---

Food Bank For New York City contracts with the Marist Institute for Public Opinion to conduct telephone interviews on food affordability and other hunger-related issues with a random and representative sample of city residents. To identify those populations that report the greatest difficulty affording food during the year, socio-demographic data is also collected. The research results contained in this report are based on an analysis of trend data from 2003 (the earliest year the poll was conducted) through 2011, trend data from 2008 through 2011, and information gleaned from questions asked in 2011 for the first time.

#### NEW YORK CITY RESIDENTS

In New York City, 35 percent of residents (approximately 2.9 million people) experienced difficulty affording needed food during 2011. This percentage represents a 5 percent decrease from 37 percent in 2010. Although the percentage of New York City residents having difficulty affording food has dropped since the height of the recession, when it stood at 48 percent, it has yet to decline to the level at the start of the poll in 2003 (25 percent). Overall, there has been a 40 percent increase since 2003 (25 percent), as illustrated by Figure 1.

**Figure 1**



One of the methods families use to deal with difficulty affording food is to cut back on the quantity of food they purchase. In 2011, almost two in five New York City residents (38 percent) reported that they had bought less food in order to save food or money. Almost one in three (32 percent) reported that they had eaten smaller meals; and more than one in five (21 percent) reported that they had skipped meals.

Another frequently used method of dealing with food affordability issues is to reduce the quality of food purchased. In 2011, one in five New York City residents (20 percent) reported that they had purchased less healthy food in order to save food or money. More than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; the same percentage (27 percent)

reported buying less dairy (e.g. milk, yogurt, cheese); and more than one in three (35 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish.

To save food or money, New York City residents facing food affordability issues also changed their meal patterns. More than one in four residents (26 percent) ate meals at friends' or relatives' homes; almost one in five (18 percent) served fewer family members at mealtime; and more than one in ten (11 percent) eliminated holiday meals or Sunday dinners.

The strategy used most often by residents facing food affordability issues was buying less food to save food or money (38 percent), followed by buying less meat, poultry, or fish (35 percent), and eating smaller meals (32 percent).

The results discussed above are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
**Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – NYC Residents, 2011**

<b>NYC Residents</b>	<b>2011</b>
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	38%
Ate Smaller Meals	32%
Skipped Meals	21%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	20%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	27%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	27%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	35%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	26%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	18%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%

As shown in Table 2, one in five New York City residents (20 percent) reported that they had been unable, during the last twelve months, to pay for food because they had to pay for utilities; almost one in five New York City residents (18 percent) reported that they could not pay for food because they had to pay for rent; 17 percent, because they had to pay for transportation; and 13 percent, because they had to pay for medicine or medical care.

**Table 2**  
**Competing Living Expenses – NYC Residents, 2011**

<b>NYC Residents</b>	<b>2011</b>
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	18%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	20%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	17%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	13%

As shown in Table 3, one out of five New York City residents (20 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income in 2011, a 5 percent increase from 2010 (19 percent) and an 18 percent increase from 2003 (17 percent). Additionally, 42 percent of residents would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their annual household income. This percentage represents a 7 percent decrease from 2010 (45 percent), and a 5 percent increase from 2003 (40 percent).

**Table 3****Impact of Loss of Income – NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food, 2003 to 2011**

<b>NYC Residents</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Immediately	17%	17%	21%	21%	20%	23%	18%	19%	20%
0-3 months	40%	39%	44%	45%	45%	45%	39%	45%	42%

Approximately one in three New York City residents (33 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown in Table 4. This percentage of concerned residents represents a 3 percent increase from 2010 (32 percent), and a 21 percent decrease from 2008 (42 percent), the earliest data available.

**Table 4****Concern about Needing Food Assistance – NYC Residents, 2008 to 2011<sup>22</sup>**

<b>NYC Residents</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
Concerned about Needing Food Assistance in Next 12 Months	42%	31%	32%	33%

**ANALYSIS BY ANNUAL HOUSEHOLD INCOME**

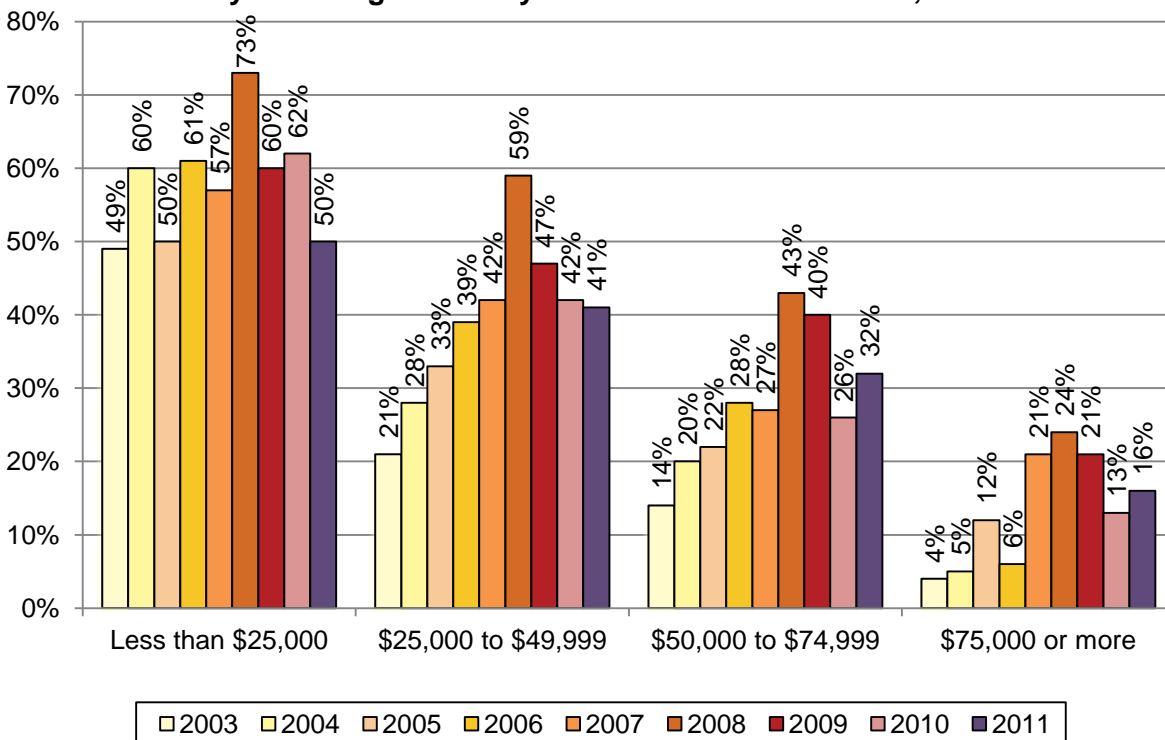
In 2011, more low-income New York City residents had difficulty affording food than any other income group. As illustrated by Figure 2, half of New York City residents (50 percent) with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 experienced difficulty affording food during 2011, down 19 percent from 2010 (62 percent) and up 2 percent from 2003 (49 percent).

In 2011, even higher-income groups saw increases in the percentage of residents having difficulty affording food. In the \$50,000 to \$74,999 bracket, for instance, this percentage increased by 23 percent – from 26 percent in 2010 to 32 percent in 2011. In the \$75,000 or more bracket, this percentage increased by 23 percent – from 13 percent in 2010 to 16 percent in 2011. In both of these groups, as well as the \$25,000 to \$49,999 income bracket, the percentage of residents having difficulty affording food also increased from 2003. Among residents with annual household incomes of between \$25,000 and \$49,999, difficulty increased by 95 percent from 2003 (21 percent) and 2011 (41 percent); among residents with annual household incomes of between \$50,000 and \$74,999, difficulty increased by 129 percent from 2003 (14 percent) to 2011 (32 percent); and among residents with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more, difficulty increased by 300 percent from 2003 (4 percent) and 2011 (16 percent). Residents with household incomes of less than \$25,000 were the only income group with increased difficulty affording food from 2009 to 2010.

<sup>22</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

**Figure 2**

**Difficulty Affording Food – By Annual Household Income, 2003 to 2011**



In 2011, almost half of New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 (48 percent) reported that they had purchased less food in order to save food or money. Almost half (47 percent) reported that they had purchased less meat, poultry, or fish; and more than two of five (43 percent) reported that they had eaten smaller meals. More than two in five (42 percent) reported buying less fresh fruits and vegetables; two in five (40 percent) reported buying less dairy (e.g. milk, yogurt, cheese); one in three (33 percent) reported buying less healthy food; and almost one in three (31 percent) reported that they had skipped meals. See Table 5.

To save food or money, New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 also changed the way they organized their meals with others. More than one in three (34 percent) ate meals at friends' or relatives' homes. More than one in four (26 percent) served fewer family members at mealtime, and almost one in five (18 percent) eliminated holiday meals or Sunday dinners, as shown in Table 5.

New York City residents at higher income levels engaged in these behaviors less frequently, but still noticeably. For instance, almost two in five residents with annual household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,000 (39 percent) bought less food to save food or money; almost two in five (37 percent) ate smaller meals; more than one in three (35 percent) bought less fresh fruits and vegetables; and almost one in three (30 percent) bought less dairy. In the \$50,000 to \$74,999 bracket, two in five residents (40 percent) bought less food to save food or money; almost one in three (31 percent) ate meals at friends' or relatives' homes; almost one in three (30 percent) ate smaller meals; and almost one in three (30 percent) bought less dairy. One in four New York City residents with annual household incomes of \$75,000 or more (25 percent) bought less food to save food or money and almost one in five (18 percent) ate smaller meals.

**Table 5**

**Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Annual Household Income, 2011**

<b>Annual Household Income</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	48%
Ate Smaller Meals	43%
Skipped Meals	31%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	33%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	42%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	40%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	47%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	34%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	26%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	18%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,000</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	39%
Ate Smaller Meals	37%
Skipped Meals	25%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	24%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	35%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	30%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	40%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	25%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	26%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	12%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	40%
Ate Smaller Meals	30%
Skipped Meals	16%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	18%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	27%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	30%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	38%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	31%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	12%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	9%

<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	25%
Ate Smaller Meals	18%
Skipped Meals	9%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	7%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	11%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	10%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	23%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	14%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	9%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	5%

As shown in Table 6, more than one in three (34 percent) of New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 reported that they had been unable, at some point during the last twelve months, to pay for food because they had to pay for utilities. Almost one in three residents (30 percent) reported that they could not pay for food because they had to pay for rent; 27 percent, because they had to pay for transportation; and 19 percent, because they had to pay for medicine or medical care.

New York City residents at higher income levels reported making these trade-offs less frequently. More than one in four residents with annual household incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,000 (26 percent) paid for utilities instead of food; 22 percent paid for rent instead of food; and 20 percent paid for transportation instead of food.

**Table 6**  
**Competing Living Expenses – By Annual Household Income, 2011**

<b>Annual Household Income</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	30%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	34%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	27%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	19%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,000</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	22%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	26%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	20%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	18%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	14%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	13%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	10%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	10%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	7%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	9%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	6%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	6%



As shown in Table 7, more than one in three New York City residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 (35 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income, representing a 3 percent decrease from 2010 (36 percent), and a 17 percent increase from 2003 (30 percent). In addition, 63 percent of residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their annual household income, down by 7 percent from 2010 (68 percent), but up 19 percent from 2003 (53 percent).

All higher-income groups saw increases in the percentage of residents who would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. In the \$25,000 to \$49,999 bracket, this percentage increased by 29 percent – from 21 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2011. In the \$50,000 to \$74,999 bracket, this percentage increased by 40 percent – from 10 percent in 2010 to 14 percent in 2011. In the \$75,000 or more bracket, this percentage increased by 17 percent – from 6 percent in 2010 to 7 percent in 2011.

**Table 7**  
**Impact of Loss of Income –**  
**NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Annual Household Income, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Annual Household Income</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	30%	29%	29%	34%	29%	43%	29%	36%	35%
<i>0-3 months</i>	53%	57%	60%	61%	60%	61%	55%	68%	63%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,999</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	16%	17%	26%	26%	26%	26%	28%	21%	27%
<i>0-3 months</i>	50%	46%	54%	53%	53%	54%	52%	54%	52%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	10%	10%	16%	16%	18%	10%	11%	10%	14%
<i>0-3 months</i>	33%	33%	36%	46%	47%	42%	40%	34%	33%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	7%	4%	9%	5%	9%	11%	8%	6%	7%
<i>0-3 months</i>	19%	15%	20%	20%	28%	28%	20%	24%	22%

Almost half (49 percent) of residents with annual household incomes of less than \$25,000 were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown in Table 8. This percentage represents a 9 percent decrease from 2010 (54 percent) and a 32 percent decrease from 2008 (72 percent), the earliest data available.

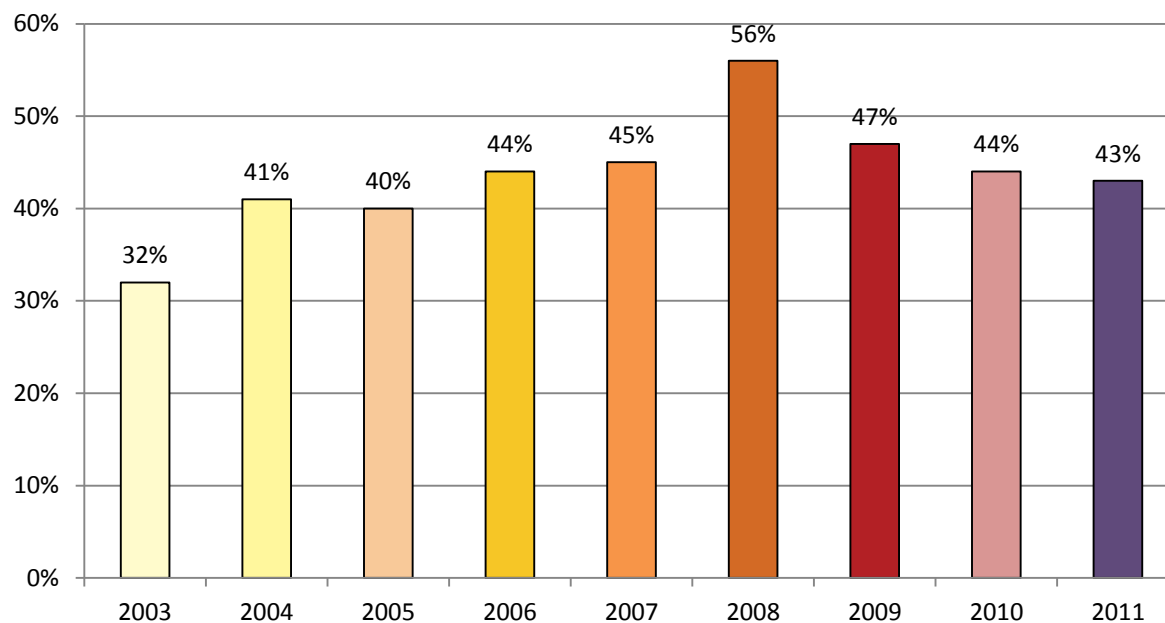
All higher-income groups saw increases in the percentage of residents concerned about needing food assistance within the next 12 months. For instance, in the \$25,000 to \$49,999 bracket, this percentage increased by 32 percent – from 34 percent in 2010 to 45 percent in 2011. In the \$50,000 to \$74,999 bracket, this percentage increased by 13 percent – from 24 percent in 2010 to 27 percent in 2011. In the \$75,000 or more bracket this percentage increased by 22 percent – from 9 percent in 2010 to 11 percent in 2011.

**Table 8****Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Annual Household Income, 2008 to 2011<sup>23</sup>**

Annual Household Income	2008	2009	2010	2011
Less than \$25,000	72%	52%	54%	49%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	53%	39%	34%	45%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	36%	25%	24%	27%
\$75,000 or more	18%	11%	9%	11%

**ANALYSIS OF HOUSEHOLDS WITH CHILDREN**

More than two in five New York City households with children (43 percent) experienced difficulty affording needed food in 2011, as illustrated by Figure 3. This represents a 2 percent decrease from 2010 (44 percent) and a 34 percent increase from 2003 (32 percent).

**Figure 3****Difficulty Affording Food – By Households with Children, 2003 to 2011**

More than half of New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (54 percent) experienced difficulty affording food for themselves and their families in 2011, as shown in Table 9. This represents a 29 percent decrease from 2010 (76 percent) and a 7 percent decrease from 2003 (58 percent). Almost three out of five households with children with annual incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,999 (59 percent) experienced difficulty affording food, representing an 11 percent increase from 2010 (53 percent) and a 79 percent increase from 2003 (33 percent).

<sup>23</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

**Table 9****Difficulty Affording Food – By Households with Children By Annual Income, 2003 to 2011**

Household with Children By Annual Income	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Less than \$25,000	58%	71%	56%	69%	68%	77%	72%	76%	54%
25,000 to \$49,999	33%	49%	43%	50%	47%	76%	62%	53%	59%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	24%	31%	29%	39%	29%	55%	56%	34%	48%
\$75,000 or more	6%	6%	18%	11%	29%	29%	27%	14%	18%

As shown in Table 10, more than two in five households with children (41 percent) bought less food to save food or money; more than one in three (35 percent) bought less meat, poultry, or fish; and one in three (33 percent) ate smaller meals.

**Table 10****Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Households with Children, 2011**

Households with Children	2011
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	41%
Ate Smaller Meals	33%
Skipped Meals	19%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	22%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	26%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	27%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	35%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	28%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	17%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	12%

In 2011, as shown in Table 11, almost half of New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (48 percent) reported that they had purchased less food in order to save food or money. This was the most frequently used method of dealing with food affordability issues. More than two in five (41 percent) reported that they had purchased less meat, poultry, or fish; 39 percent, that they had eaten smaller meals; 38 percent, that they had purchased less dairy; 36 percent, that they had purchased less fresh fruits and vegetables.

To save food or money, New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 also changed the way they organized their meals with others. Two in five (40 percent) reported eating meals at friends' or relatives' homes, as shown in Table 11.

New York City households with children at higher income levels engaged in these behaviors less frequently, but still noticeably. For instance, more than two in five households with children with annual incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,000 (43 percent) bought less food to save food or money. Approximately one in three (32 percent) reported eating meals at friends' or relatives' homes. More than half of households with children with annual incomes between \$50,000 and \$74,999 (53 percent) reported buying less food to save food or money; the same percentage (53 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish. Almost half (46 percent) reported eating smaller meals. Even among households with children with annual incomes of \$75,000 or more, one in four (25 percent) reported buying less food to save food or money.

**Table 11**

**Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Households with Children By Annual Income, 2011**

<b>Households with Children By Annual Income</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	48%
Ate Smaller Meals	39%
Skipped Meals	29%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	30%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	36%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	38%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	41%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	40%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	19%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	20%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,000</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	43%
Ate Smaller Meals	38%
Skipped Meals	26%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	26%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	32%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	34%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	38%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	32%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	28%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	9%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	53%
Ate Smaller Meals	46%
Skipped Meals	18%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	33%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	35%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	40%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	53%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	35%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	10%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	10%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	25%
Ate Smaller Meals	20%
Skipped Meals	6%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	8%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	8%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	6%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	22%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	10%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	8%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	5%

As shown in Table 12, more than one in four households with children (26 percent) paid for utilities instead of food, and 24 percent paid for rent instead of food. Almost one in five (19 percent) paid for transportation instead of food, and 13 percent paid for medicine or medical care instead of food.

**Table 12**  
**Competing Living Expenses – By Households with Children, 2011**

<b>Households with Children</b>	<b>2011</b>
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	24%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	26%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	13%

More than one in three households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (35 percent) paid for utilities instead of food. One in three households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (33 percent) paid for rent instead of food. Among households with annual incomes between \$25,000 and \$49,000, these trade-offs were made with similar frequency. Households with higher incomes made these, and similar trade-offs, less frequently. See Table 13.

**Table 13**  
**Competing Living Expenses – By Households with Children By Annual Income, 2011**

<b>Households with Children By Annual Income</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	33%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	35%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	28%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	12%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,000</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	30%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	35%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	26%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	25%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	15%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	10%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	9%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	11%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	7%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	3%

As shown in Table 14, one in four households with children (25 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual income. This represents no change from 2010, yet a 25 percent increase from 2003. Almost half of households with children (46 percent) would not be able to afford food within three months. This represents a 12 percent decrease from 2010 (52 percent), and no change from 2003.

**Table 14**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
Households with Children Not Able to Afford Food, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Households with Children</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
Immediately	20%	20%	25%	27%	22%	25%	18%	25%	25%
0-3 months	46%	48%	52%	53%	50%	50%	43%	52%	46%

As shown in Table 15, in 2011, almost two in five New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 (39 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their household income. This represents a 3 percent decrease from 2010 (40 percent) and is consistent with 2003 (40 percent). Additionally, in 2011, 65 percent of households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their household income. This represents a 22 percent decrease from 2010 (83 percent) and a 3 percent decrease from 2003 (67 percent).

**Table 15**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
Households with Children Not Able to Afford Food By Annual Income, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Households with Children By Annual Income</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Less than \$25,000</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	40%	32%	35%	41%	32%	46%	31%	40%	39%
<i>0-3 months</i>	67%	66%	63%	70%	69%	68%	60%	83%	65%
<b>\$25,000 to \$49,999</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	23%	23%	35%	37%	25%	29%	29%	31%	34%
<i>0-3 months</i>	65%	66%	63%	67%	56%	55%	58%	58%	52%
<b>\$50,000 to \$74,999</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	10%	12%	18%	19%	27%	11%	6%	19%	13%
<i>0-3 months</i>	28%	36%	49%	49%	45%	47%	36%	45%	36%
<b>\$75,000 or more</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	9%	9%	10%	7%	9%	15%	11%	9%	10%
<i>0-3 months</i>	26%	30%	27%	23%	30%	35%	28%	21%	29%

Almost one in three New York City households with children (32 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown in Table 16. This percentage of concerned households represents an 11 percent decrease from 2010 (36 percent) and a 32 percent decrease from 2008 (47 percent), the earliest data available. See Table 16.

**Table 16**

**Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Households with Children, 2008 to 2011<sup>24</sup>**

<b>Households with Children</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
	47%	35%	36%	32%

<sup>24</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

As shown in Table 17, more than half (51 percent) of New York City households with children with annual incomes of less than \$25,000 were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months. This percentage represents an 18 percent decrease from 2010 (62 percent) and a 35 percent decrease from 2008 (78 percent), the earliest data available.

**Table 17**

**Concern about Needing Food Assistance –  
Households with Children By Annual Income, 2008 to 2011<sup>25</sup>**

<b>Households with Children By Annual Income</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
Less than \$25,000	78%	64%	62%	51%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	61%	48%	38%	42%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	45%	19%	33%	33%
\$75,000 or more	16%	16%	11%	7%

**ANALYSIS BY EMPLOYMENT<sup>26</sup>**

As shown in Table 18, 41 percent of unemployed New York City residents experienced difficulty affording needed food during 2011, compared to 34 percent of employed residents. The percentage of unemployed New York City residents experiencing difficulty in 2011 represents a 17 percent decrease from 58 percent in 2009, the earliest data available.

**Table 18**

**Difficulty Affording Food – By Employment Status, 2009 to 2011**

<b>Employment Status</b>	2009	2010	2011
Unemployed	58%	54%	41%
Employed	37%	33%	34%

In 2011, 46 percent of unemployed residents in New York City bought less food to save food or money; 40 percent reported buying less fruits or vegetables. Thirty-nine percent ate smaller meals; 37 percent ate meals at friends' or relatives' homes. Thirty-five percent bought less meat, poultry, or fish; 34 percent bought less dairy. See Table 19

**Table 19**

**Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Employment Status, 2011**

<b>Employment Status</b>	2011
<b>Unemployed</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	46%
Ate Smaller Meals	39%
Skipped Meals	24%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	24%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	40%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	34%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	35%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	37%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	21%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%

<sup>25</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

<sup>26</sup> Employment status was introduced into the 2009 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

<b>Employed</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	35%
Ate Smaller Meals	29%
Skipped Meals	18%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	17%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	22%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	23%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	34%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	24%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	14%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%

As shown in Table 20, more than one in four (28 percent) unemployed New York City residents paid for rent instead of food. Almost one in four (23 percent) paid for utilities instead of food, and almost one in four (23 percent) paid for transportation instead of food.

**Table 20**  
**Competing Living Expenses – By Employment Status, 2011**

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	28%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	17%
<b>Employed</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	17%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	16%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	10%

More than one in four unemployed New York City residents (28 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. More than one-half (51 percent) would not be able to afford food within three months, as shown in Table 21.

**Table 21**  
**Impact of Loss of Income –**  
**NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Employment Status, 2009 to 2011**

<b>Employment Status</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Unemployed</b>			
<i>Immediately</i>	17%	18%	28%
<i>0-3 months</i>	52%	55%	51%
<b>Employed</b>			
<i>Immediately</i>	19%	17%	18%
<i>0-3 months</i>	39%	44%	39%



Almost half of unemployed New York City residents (46 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as illustrated by Table 22. This percentage of concerned residents represents an 8 percent decrease from 2010 (50 percent). More than one in four employed residents (27 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance within the next 12 months. This percentage represents an 8 percent increase from 2010 (25 percent). See Table 22.

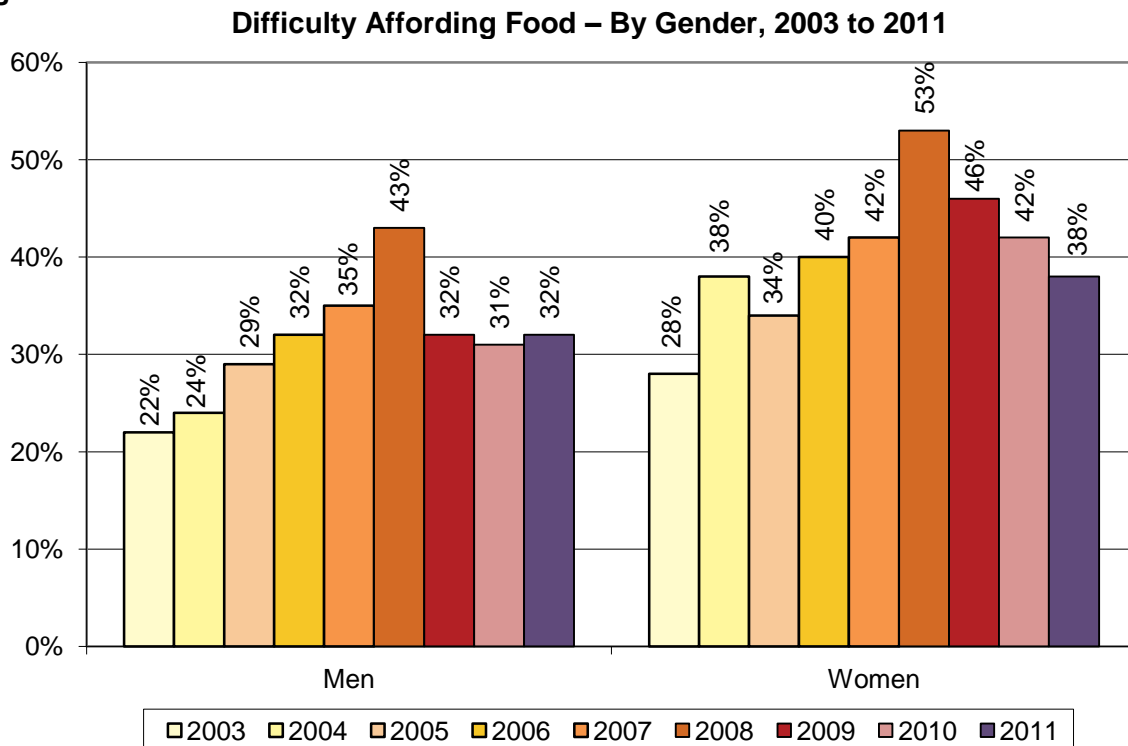
**Table 22**  
**Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Employment Status, 2009 to 2011**

Employment Status	2009	2010	2011
Unemployed	52%	50%	46%
Employed	27%	25%	27%

**ANALYSIS BY GENDER**

As the data show, female New York City residents have been consistently more vulnerable to food affordability issues than male residents, as illustrated by Figure 4. For instance, in 2011, there was a six percentage point difference in the proportions of male and female residents having difficulty affording food. Both genders had more difficulty affording food in 2011 than 2003. The percentage of female residents experiencing difficulty affording food rose by 36 percent from 2003 (28 percent) to 2011 (38 percent), and the percentage of male residents experiencing difficulty rose by 45 percent from 2003 (22 percent) to 2011 (32 percent). Interestingly, the percentage of male residents experiencing difficulty rose slightly between 2010 (31 percent) and 2011 (32 percent), but decreased for female residents (from 42 percent in 2010 to 38 percent in 2011).

**Figure 4**



In 2011, as shown in Table 23, two in five female New York City residents (40 percent) bought less food to save food or money. More than one in three (36 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; and one in three (33 percent) reported eating smaller meals. Male residents used some strategies more often than female residents – for instance, they bought less healthy food more frequently (22 percent versus 18 percent); they bought less dairy more frequently (29 percent versus 25 percent); and they ate meals at friends’ or relatives’ homes more frequently (28 percent versus 24 percent).

**Table 23**  
**Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Gender, 2011**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Female Residents</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	40%
Ate Smaller Meals	33%
Skipped Meals	20%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	18%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	27%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	25%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	36%
Ate Meals at Friends’ or Relatives’ Homes	24%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	18%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	12%
<b>Male Residents</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	36%
Ate Smaller Meals	30%
Skipped Meals	21%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	22%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	27%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	29%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	35%
Ate Meals at Friends’ or Relatives’ Homes	28%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	17%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	10%

As shown in Table 24, female New York City residents were more likely than male residents to make financial trade-offs in order to afford food in 2011.

**Table 24**  
**Competing Living Expenses – By Gender, 2011**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Female Residents</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	21%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	17%

Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	15%
<b>Male Residents</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	17%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	20%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	16%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	12%

One in four female New York City residents (25 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income, compared to 15 percent of male residents, as shown in Table 25. The percentage of female residents unable to buy food immediately after losing their annual household income increased by 14 percent from 22 percent in 2010 to 25 percent in 2011, while the percentage of male residents unable to buy food immediately after losing their annual household income remained stable at 15 percent. Additionally, 48 percent of female residents would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their annual household income in 2011, compared to 36 percent of male residents. The percentage of female residents unable to buy food within three months of losing their annual household income increased by 4 percent from 46 percent in 2010 to 48 percent in 2011, while the percentage of male residents unable to buy food within three months of losing their household income decreased by 16 percent from 43 percent in 2010 to 36 percent in 2011.

**Table 25**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Gender, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Gender</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Female Residents</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	20%	20%	23%	26%	24%	24%	18%	22%	25%
<i>0-3 months</i>	42%	46%	47%	51%	49%	45%	42%	46%	48%
<b>Male Residents</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	15%	13%	17%	16%	16%	21%	18%	15%	15%
<i>0-3 months</i>	39%	31%	38%	39%	42%	44%	37%	43%	36%

One in three female New York City residents (33 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown in Table 26. This percentage represents an 8 percent decrease from 2010 (36 percent) and a 27 percent decrease from 2008 (45 percent), the earliest data available. Almost one in three male residents (32 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance within the next 12 months. This percentage represents a 19 percent increase from 2010 (27 percent) and an 18 percent decrease from 2008 (39 percent), as shown in Table 26.

**Table 26**

**Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Gender, 2008 to 2011<sup>27</sup>**

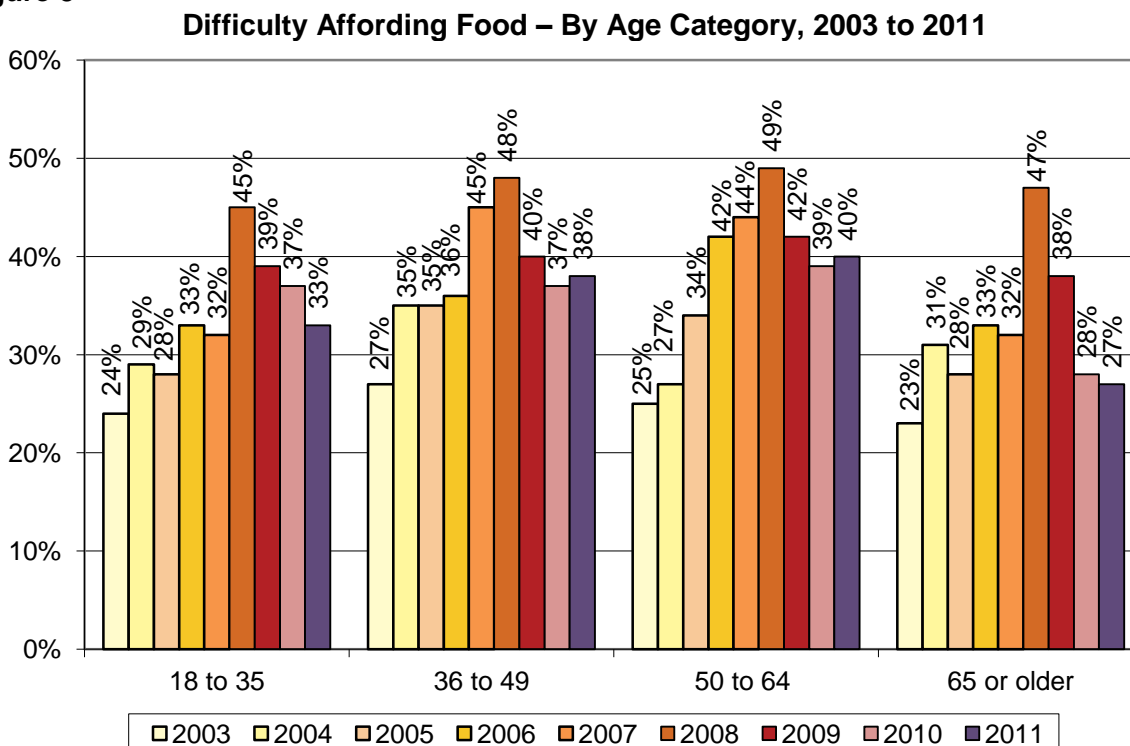
<b>Gender</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
Female Residents	45%	36%	36%	33%
Male Residents	39%	26%	27%	32%

<sup>27</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

## ANALYSIS BY AGE

As illustrated by Figure 5, New York City residents ages 50 to 64 experienced the most difficulty affording needed food. Among residents ages 50 to 64, 40 percent experienced difficulty affording food, representing a 3 percent increase from 2010 (39 percent) and a 60 percent increase from 2003 (25 percent). Similarly, among residents ages 36 to 49, 38 percent experienced difficulty affording food, a 3 percent increase from 2010 (37 percent), and a 41 percent increase from 2003 (27 percent). Residents ages 65 and older had less difficulty affording needed food. More than one in four (27 percent) experienced difficulty, a four percent decrease from 2010 (28 percent), but a 17 percent increase since 2003 (23 percent).

**Figure 5**



In 2011, as shown in Table 27, New York City residents ages 36 to 49, and residents ages 50 to 64, were more likely than residents in other age groups to address food affordability issues by buying less food (46 percent and 40 percent, respectively). New York City residents ages 36 to 49 were also more likely than other groups to utilize each of the strategies listed to save food or money, with the exception of buying less dairy, buying less fresh fruits and vegetables, and changing their meal patterns. For instance, 41 percent of residents ages 34 to 49 bought less meat, poultry, or fish. Patterns for utilizing individual strategies were similar for New York City residents ages 18 to 35 and New York City residents age 65 and older. On the contrary, residents age 65 and older (18 percent) were least likely to eat meals at friends' or relatives' homes, while residents ages 18 to 35 (34 percent) were most likely to do so.

Table 27

## Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Age Category, 2011

Age Category	2011
<b>18 to 35</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	32%
Ate Smaller Meals	26%
Skipped Meals	16%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	17%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	22%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	28%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	31%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	34%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	13%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	9%
<b>36 to 49</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	46%
Ate Smaller Meals	38%
Skipped Meals	27%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	27%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	31%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	27%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	41%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	23%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	19%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%
<b>50 to 64</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	40%
Ate Smaller Meals	36%
Skipped Meals	24%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	20%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	34%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	31%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	39%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	23%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	22%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	14%
<b>65 and older</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	33%
Ate Smaller Meals	28%
Skipped Meals	16%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	16%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	22%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	20%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	28%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	18%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	18%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%

As shown in Table 28, New York City residents ages 36 to 49, and residents ages 50 to 64, were more likely than residents in other age groups to make financial trade-offs in order to afford food. Approximately one in four residents in these age groups paid for utilities (25 percent and 24 percent, respectively) instead of food and paid for rent (23 percent) instead of food and New York City residents ages 65 and older were less likely than residents ages 18 to 35 to make financial trade-offs, with the exception of paying for medicine or medical care instead of food (6 percent for residents ages 18 to 35, and 11 percent for residents ages 65 and older).

**Table 28**

**Competing Living Expenses – By Age Category, 2011**

<b>Age Category</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>18 to 35</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	15%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	17%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	15%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	6%
<b>36 to 49</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	25%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	22%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	16%
<b>50 to 64</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	24%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	21%
<b>65 and older</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	11%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	14%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	8%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	11%

As shown in Table 29, 21 percent of residents ages 65 or older would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income in 2011. This represents a 62 percent increase from 2010 (13 percent) and an 11 percent increase from 2003 (19 percent). Similarly, the percent of residents ages 65 or older who would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their annual household income increased by 43 percent – from 28 percent in 2010 to 40 percent in 2011. The percentage of residents ages 36 to 49, and ages 50 to 64, who would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income also increased in 2011. The percentage of residents ages 36 to 49 increased 29 percent (from 17 percent in 2010 to 22 percent in 2011); the percentage of residents ages 50 to 64 increased 33 percent (from 15 percent to 20 percent).

**Table 29**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Age Category, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Age Category</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
18 to 35									
<i>Immediately</i>	18%	17%	25%	22%	19%	23%	24%	25%	20%
<i>0-3 months</i>	46%	40%	56%	58%	52%	50%	50%	56%	42%
36 to 49									
<i>Immediately</i>	16%	17%	19%	26%	24%	23%	15%	17%	22%
<i>0-3 months</i>	39%	45%	41%	47%	46%	48%	36%	47%	46%
50 to 64									
<i>Immediately</i>	14%	15%	21%	22%	21%	21%	15%	15%	20%
<i>0-3 months</i>	40%	38%	42%	44%	45%	42%	37%	37%	39%
65 or older									
<i>Immediately</i>	19%	18%	11%	12%	17%	23%	15%	13%	21%
<i>0-3 months</i>	31%	29%	27%	27%	31%	36%	29%	28%	40%

Almost two in five residents ages 50 to 64 (38 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown by Table 30. This percentage of concerned residents represents a 19 percent increase from 2010 (32 percent) and a 21 percent decrease from 2008 (48 percent), the earliest data available. Residents in other age categories were less likely to report concern about needing food assistance.

**Table 30**

**Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Age Category, 2008 to 2011<sup>28</sup>**

<b>Age Category</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
18 to 35	40%	36%	36%	31%
36 to 49	39%	33%	29%	30%
50 to 64	48%	31%	32%	38%
65 and older	46%	28%	26%	32%

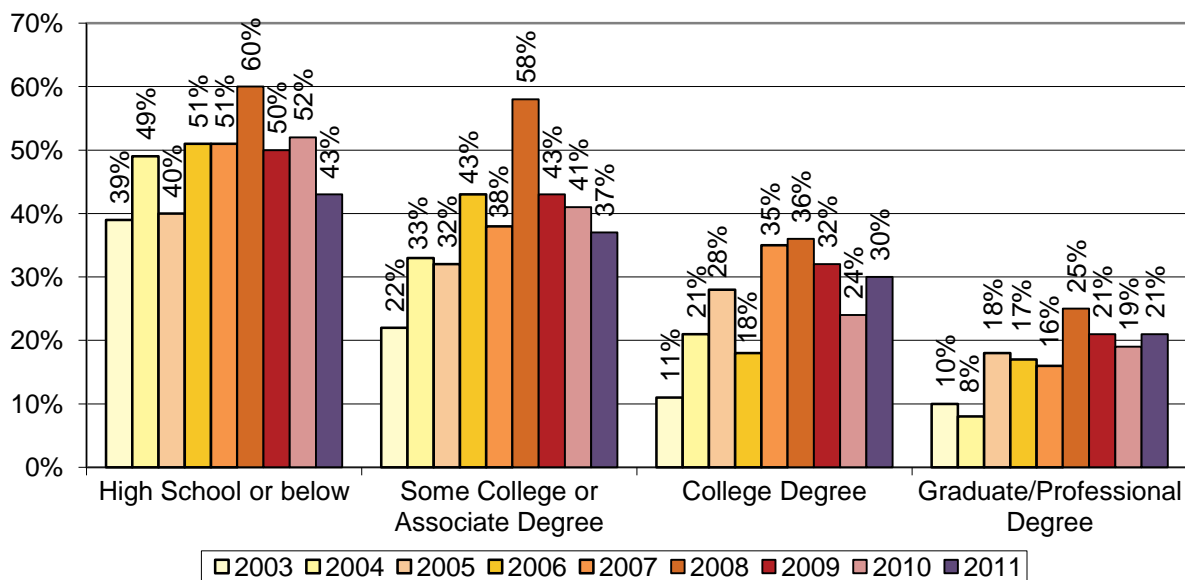
**ANALYSIS BY EDUCATION LEVEL**

New York City residents with a high school degree or below had the highest percentage of difficulty affording food, yet many residents at higher education levels reported difficulty as well. As illustrated by Figure 6, 43 percent of city residents with a high school education or below experienced difficulty affording food during 2011, a decrease of 17 percent from 2010 (52 percent) but an increase of 10 percent from 2003 (39 percent). The percentage of residents with some college who had difficulty affording food increased by 68 percent from 2003 (22 percent) to 2011 (37 percent). Almost one in three residents with a college degree (30 percent) had difficulty affording food in 2011 – this percentage represents a 173 percent increase from 2003, when only 11 percent reported difficulty. Even among residents with a graduate/professional degree, more than one in five (21 percent) had difficulty affording food during 2011, more than double the percentage in 2003 (10 percent), representing a 110 percent increase.

<sup>28</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

**Figure 6**

**Difficulty Affording Food – By Education Level, 2003 to 2011**



New York City residents who had a high school degree or below (45 percent), and those with some college or an Associate’s degree (43 percent), were more likely than residents with a college degree (33 percent) or a graduate/professional degree (25 percent), to have purchased less food to save food or money. Still, one in three residents with a college degree (33 percent) and one in four residents with a graduate/professional degree (25 percent) reported buying less food to save food or money.

Residents with a high school degree or below, and those with some college or an Associate’s degree, reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish (43 percent and 38 percent, respectively); less dairy (37 percent and 32 percent, respectively); and less fresh fruits and vegetables (40 percent and 29 percent, respectively). The most frequently utilized food affordability strategy among residents with a college degree (32 percent) and among those with a graduate/professional degree (22 percent) was buying less meat, poultry or fish. See Table 31.

More than two in five residents with a high school degree or below (42 percent) reported eating smaller meals, as did more than one in three residents with some college or an Associate’s degree (35 percent). One in four residents with a high school degree or below (26 percent) reported skipping meals, as did approximately one in five residents with some college or an Associate’s degree (21 percent).

New York City residents with a high school degree or below were more likely than residents at all other levels of educational attainment to report eating meals at friends’ or relatives’ homes (37 percent).



Table 31

## Food and Nutrition Sacrifices, By Education Level, 2011

Education Level	2011
<b>High School or below</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	45%
Ate Smaller Meals	42%
Skipped Meals	26%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	28%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	40%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	37%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	43%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	37%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	25%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	14%
<b>Some College or Associate's Degree</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	43%
Ate Smaller Meals	35%
Skipped Meals	21%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	26%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	29%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	32%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	38%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	22%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	29%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	10%
<b>College Degree</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	33%
Ate Smaller Meals	24%
Skipped Meals	17%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	11%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	19%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	21%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	32%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	22%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	13%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	9%
<b>Graduate/Professional Degree</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	25%
Ate Smaller Meals	19%
Skipped Meals	11%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	11%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	11%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	10%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	22%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	19%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	6%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	8%

New York City residents with a high school degree or below reported paying for rent instead of food more often than residents at other educational levels; more than one in four (28 percent) did so. An even higher percentage of residents with a high school degree or below (31 percent) reported paying for utilities instead of food.

**Table 32**  
**Competing Living Expenses – By Education Level, 2011**

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>High School or below</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	28%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	31%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	25%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	15%
<b>Some College or Associate's Degree</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	16%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	14%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	19%
<b>College Degree</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	11%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	20%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	14%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	10%
<b>Graduate/Professional Degree</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	8%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	17%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	6%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	7%

As shown in Table 33, more than one in four New York City residents (28 percent) with a high school degree or below would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income in 2011. Additionally, 55 percent of residents with a high school degree or below would not be able to afford food within three months. One in four residents with some college or an Associate's degree (25 percent) also reported that they would not be to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income; and more than half (51 percent) reported that they would not have been able to afford food within three months.

**Table 33**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Education Level, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Education Level</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
High School Degree or Below									
<i>Immediately</i>	21%	27%	26%	25%	26%	33%	24%	24%	28%
<i>0-3 months</i>	48%	52%	54%	51%	54%	54%	46%	59%	55%
Some College or Associate									
<i>Immediately</i>	19%	17%	19%	25%	26%	25%	26%	22%	25%
<i>0-3 months</i>	42%	42%	46%	54%	52%	52%	55%	48%	51%
College Degree									
<i>Immediately</i>	11%	10%	19%	18%	12%	15%	8%	17%	13%
<i>0-3 months</i>	33%	30%	38%	38%	34%	40%	33%	37%	31%
Graduate/Professional Degree									
<i>Immediately</i>	12%	8%	9%	10%	10%	11%	7%	7%	12%
<i>0-3 months</i>	30%	22%	27%	28%	32%	29%	17%	25%	26%

More than two in five New York City residents with a high school degree or below (44 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown in Table 34. This percentage of concerned residents is consistent with 2010 (44 percent), but down from 59 percent in 2008, the earliest data available. The percentage of residents with some college or an Associate's degree concerned about needing food assistance (35 percent) was down from both 2010 (39 percent) and 2008 (45 percent); the percentage of residents with a college degree (30 percent) was up from 2010 (23 percent), but down from 2008 (33 percent). Only one in ten residents with a graduate/professional degree (10 percent) was concerned about needing food assistance within the next 12 months. This percentage represents a 17 percent decrease from 2010 (12 percent) and a 41 percent decrease from 2008 (17 percent).

**Table 34**

**Concerned about Needing Food Assistance – By Education Level, 2008 to 2011<sup>29</sup>**

<b>Educational Level</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
High School Degree or Below	59%	42%	44%	44%
Some College or Associate's Degree	45%	42%	39%	35%
College Degree	33%	18%	23%	30%
Graduate/Professional Degree	17%	15%	12%	10%

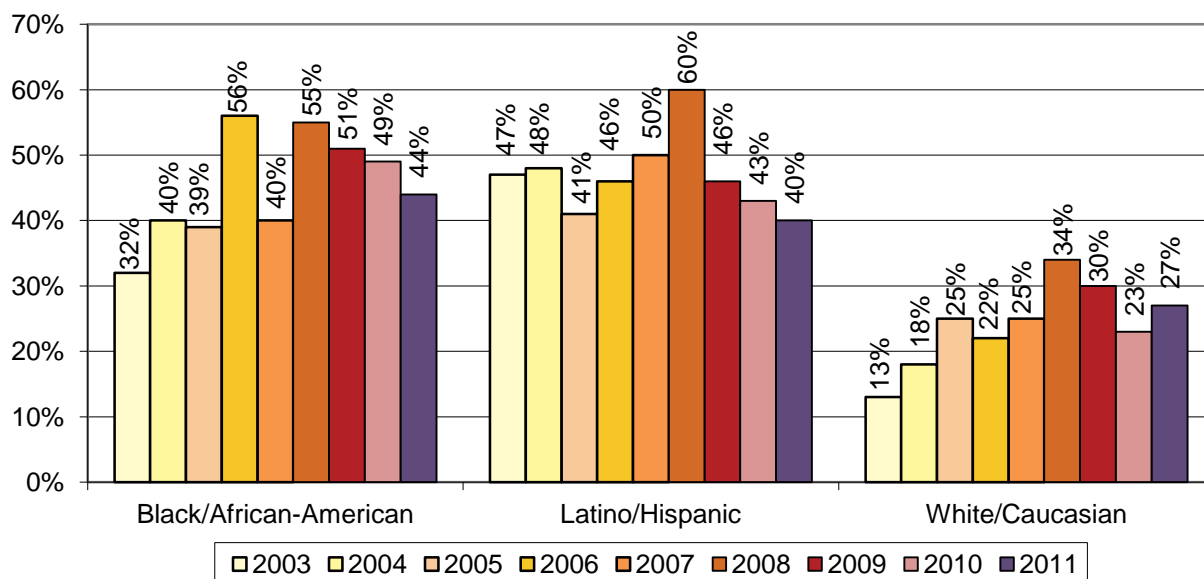
<sup>29</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

## ANALYSIS BY RACIAL/ETHNIC IDENTITY

During 2011, Black/African-American and Latino/Hispanic residents in New York City had the most difficulty affording food. As illustrated by Figure 7, more than two in five Black/African-American residents (44 percent) experienced difficulty affording needed food in 2011, down 10 percent from 2010 (49 percent), and up 38 percent from 2003 (32 percent). Among Latino/Hispanic residents, 40 percent experienced difficulty affording needed food in 2011. This percentage represents a 7 percent decrease from 2010 (43 percent) and a 15 percent decrease from 2003 (47 percent). White/Caucasian residents had the least difficulty affording food at 27 percent, but the percentage of these residents reporting difficulty increased 17 percent from 2010 (23 percent), and 108 percent from 2003 (13 percent).

**Figure 7**

**Difficulty Affording Food – By Racial/Ethnic Identity, 2003 to 2011**



Latino/Hispanic residents in New York City (45 percent) were more likely than Black/African-American residents (39 percent) and White/Caucasian residents (31 percent) to report buying less food to save food or money. Black/African-American and Latino/Hispanic residents were more likely than White/Caucasian residents to report eating smaller meals (38 percent and 39 percent, respectively). Black/African-American and Latino/Hispanic residents were also more likely than White/Caucasian residents to report buying less healthy food to save food or money (25 percent and 27 percent, respectively), buying less fresh fruits and vegetables (36 percent and 31 percent, respectively), buying less dairy (32 percent and 36 percent, respectively), and buying less meat, poultry, or fish (41 percent and 40 percent, respectively).

Table 35

## Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Racial/Ethnic Identity, 2011

Racial/Ethnic Identity	2011
<b>Black/African-American</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	39%
Ate Smaller Meals	38%
Skipped Meals	28%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	25%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	36%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	32%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	41%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	28%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	28%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	17%
<b>Latino/Hispanic</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	45%
Ate Smaller Meals	39%
Skipped Meals	28%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	27%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	31%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	36%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	40%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	33%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	24%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	7%
<b>White/Caucasian</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	31%
Ate Smaller Meals	23%
Skipped Meals	12%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	10%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	17%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	13%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	27%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	20%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	8%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	8%

Black/African-American (25 percent) and Latino/Hispanic residents (27 percent) were more likely than White/Caucasian residents (9 percent) to pay for rent instead of food and to make all other financial trade-offs as well.

**Table 36**

**Competing Living Expenses – By Racial/Ethnic Identity, 2011**

<b>Racial/Ethnic Identity</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Black/African-American</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	25%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	29%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	18%
<b>Latino/Hispanic</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	27%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	27%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	23%
	15%
<b>White/Caucasian</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	9%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	10%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	6%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	8%

As shown in Table 37, almost one in three Black/African-American residents (32 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. This percentage represents an increase of 19 percent from 2010 (27 percent), and 68 percent from 2003 (19 percent). Additionally, 59 percent of Black/African-American residents would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their annual household income, up 4 percent from 2010 (57 percent) and up 23 percent from 2003 (47 percent). One in five Latino/Hispanic residents (20 percent) would not be able to afford food immediately after losing their annual household income. Additionally, 49 percent of Latino/Hispanic residents would not be able to afford food within three months of losing their annual household income, a decrease of 4 percent since 2010 (51 percent) and of 8 percent since 2003 (53 percent).

**Table 37**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Racial/Ethnic Identity, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Racial/Ethnic Identity</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Black/African-American</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	19%	21%	28%	28%	22%	31%	23%	27%	32%
<i>0-3 months</i>	47%	47%	54%	59%	51%	54%	49%	57%	59%
<b>Latino/Hispanic</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	20%	25%	27%	29%	26%	25%	23%	20%	20%
<i>0-3 months</i>	53%	52%	57%	56%	54%	50%	54%	51%	49%
<b>White/Caucasian</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	14%	11%	14%	14%	13%	14%	13%	13%	13%
<i>0-3 months</i>	30%	27%	32%	31%	36%	34%	27%	30%	28%

More than half of Black/African-American residents (50 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as shown by Table 38. This percentage of concerned residents represents an 11 percent increase from 2010 (45 percent) and an 11 percent decrease from 2008 (56 percent), the earliest data available. More than two in five (42 percent) Latino/Hispanic residents were concerned about needing food assistance within the next 12 months. This percentage represents an 11 percent increase from 2010 (38 percent) and a 25 percent decrease from 2008 (56 percent).

**Table 38**  
**Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Racial/Ethnic Identity, 2008 to 2011<sup>30</sup>**

<b>Race/Ethnic Identity</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>
Black/African-American	56%	41%	45%	50%
Latino/Hispanic	56%	44%	38%	42%
White/Caucasian	23%	18%	18%	17%

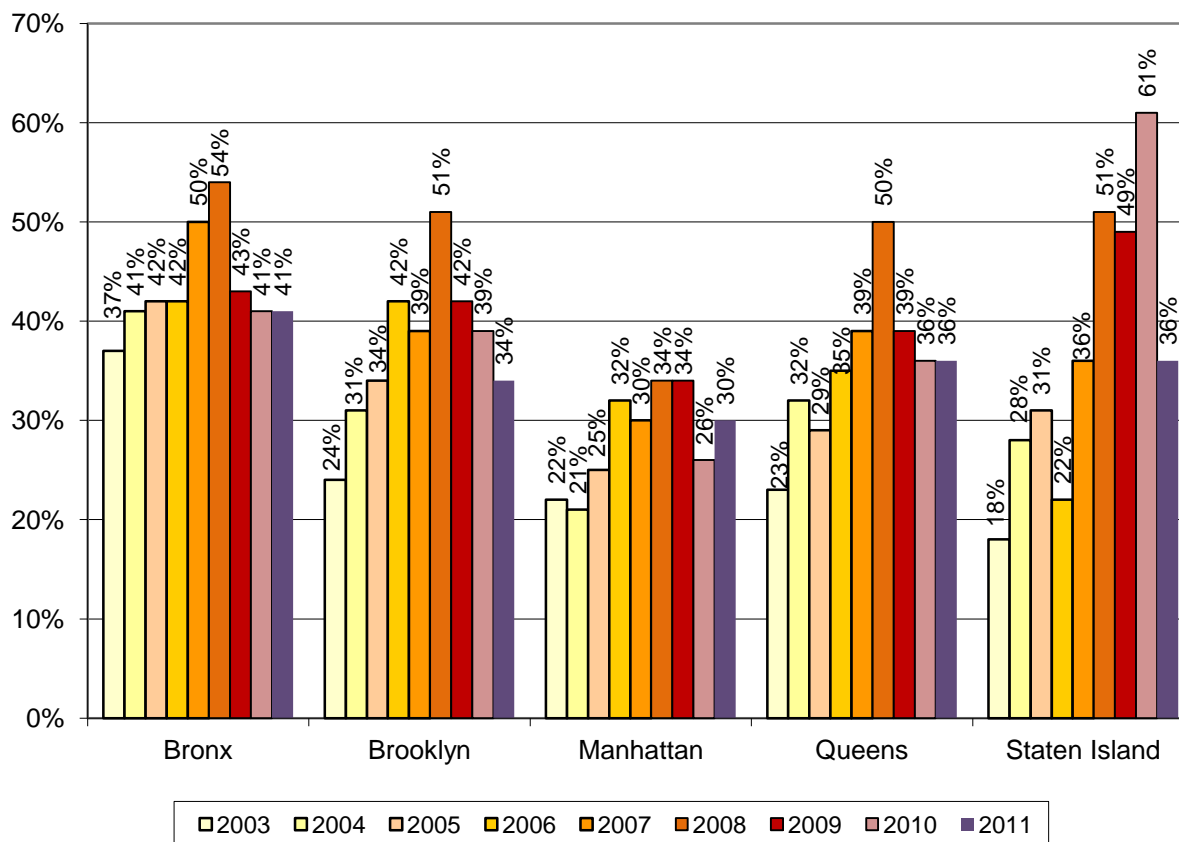
<sup>30</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

## ANALYSIS BY BOROUGH

As illustrated by Figure 8, 41 percent of Bronx residents experienced difficulty affording needed food during 2011 followed by Queens residents (36 percent), Staten Island residents (36 percent), Brooklyn residents (34 percent) and Manhattan residents (30 percent).

**Figure 8**

**Difficulty Affording Food – By Borough, 2003 to 2011**



Across all boroughs, buying less food to save food or money was the most frequently utilized method of dealing with food affordability issues. As shown in Table 39, 46 percent of Staten Island residents reported buying less food to save food or money; 43 percent of Bronx residents reported buying less food to save food or money; 39 percent of Brooklyn residents reported buying less food to save food or money; 37 percent of Queens residents reported buying less food to save food or money; and 32 percent of Manhattan residents reported buying less food to save food or money.



Table 39

## Food and Nutrition Sacrifices – By Borough, 2011

Borough	2011
<b>Bronx</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	43%
Ate Smaller Meals	32%
Skipped Meals	19%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	30%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	32%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	30%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	36%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	33%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	22%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	10%
<b>Brooklyn</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	39%
Ate Smaller Meals	33%
Skipped Meals	21%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	21%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	27%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	25%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	36%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	22%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	19%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%
<b>Manhattan</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	32%
Ate Smaller Meals	26%
Skipped Meals	17%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	11%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	22%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	20%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	25%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	23%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	15%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	11%
<b>Queens</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	37%
Ate Smaller Meals	35%
Skipped Meals	23%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	19%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	28%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	34%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	40%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	27%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	13%

Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	14%
<b>Staten Island</b>	
Bought Less Food to Save Food or Money	46%
Ate Smaller Meals	32%
Skipped Meals	26%
Bought Less Healthy Food to Save Food or Money	22%
Bought Less Fresh Fruits and Vegetables	27%
Bought Less Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)	20%
Bought Less Meat, Poultry, or Fish	44%
Ate Meals at Friends' or Relatives' Homes	33%
Served Fewer Family Members at Mealtime	29%
Eliminated Holiday Meals or Sunday Dinners	6%

With the exception of Queens, paying for utilities instead of food was the financial trade-off most frequently made by residents of all boroughs, followed by paying for rent instead of food. As shown in Table 40, 31 percent of Bronx residents paid for utilities instead of food; 24 percent of Staten Island residents paid for utilities instead of food; 18 percent of Brooklyn residents paid for utilities instead of food; and 16 percent of Manhattan residents paid for utilities instead of food.

**Table 40**

**Competing Living Expenses – By Borough, 2011**

<b>Borough</b>	<b>2011</b>
<b>Bronx</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	29%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	31%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	23%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	12%
<b>Brooklyn</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	17%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	18%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	13%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	13%
<b>Manhattan</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	13%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	16%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	15%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	8%
<b>Queens</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	20%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	19%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	18%
<b>Staten Island</b>	
Paid For Rent Instead of Food	8%
Paid For Utilities Instead of Food	24%
Paid For Transportation Instead of Food	8%
Paid For Medicine or Medical Care Instead of Food	18%

The Bronx has the highest percentage of residents who would not be able to afford food immediately after losing household income. As shown in Table 41, almost one in three Bronx

residents (29 percent), would not have been able to afford food immediately after losing their household income, followed by Brooklyn (21 percent), Staten Island (21 percent), Manhattan (20 percent) and Queens (16 percent). In addition, more than half Staten Island residents (54 percent) would not be able to afford food within three months, followed by the Bronx (48 percent), Brooklyn (47 percent), Queens (40 percent) and Manhattan (33 percent).

**Table 41**

**Impact of Loss of Income –  
NYC Residents Not Able to Afford Food By Borough, 2003 to 2011**

<b>Borough</b>	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bronx</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	20%	27%	28%	28%	29%	30%	23%	23%	29%
<i>0-3 months</i>	48%	52%	52%	55%	56%	50%	44%	43%	48%
<b>Brooklyn</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	17%	17%	21%	24%	20%	21%	19%	20%	21%
<i>0-3 months</i>	39%	36%	47%	50%	48%	46%	41%	48%	47%
<b>Manhattan</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	17%	16%	16%	14%	11%	18%	13%	18%	20%
<i>0-3 months</i>	38%	36%	31%	32%	33%	37%	34%	35%	33%
<b>Queens</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	15%	13%	21%	23%	19%	25%	19%	13%	16%
<i>0-3 months</i>	38%	39%	46%	46%	41%	45%	39%	45%	40%
<b>Staten Island</b>									
<i>Immediately</i>	21%	6%	13%	10%	37%	12%	13%	30%	21%
<i>0-3 months</i>	38%	30%	33%	44%	71%	46%	40%	61%	54%

Residents of the Bronx have the greatest concern about needing food assistance, including food stamps (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP) or emergency food (soup kitchens and food pantries), within the next 12 months, as illustrated by Table 42. Almost two in five Bronx residents (38 percent) were concerned about needing food assistance within the next 12 months, followed by Staten Island residents (36 percent), Brooklyn residents (35 percent), Manhattan residents (30 percent) and Queens’s residents (28 percent).

**Table 42**

**Concern about Needing Food Assistance – By Borough, 2008 to 2011<sup>31</sup>**

<b>Borough</b>	2008	2009	2010	2011
<b>Bronx</b>	53%	32%	39%	38%
<b>Brooklyn</b>	46%	33%	36%	35%
<b>Manhattan</b>	31%	29%	25%	30%
<b>Queens</b>	44%	32%	28%	28%
<b>Staten Island</b>	35%	21%	31%	36%

<sup>31</sup> This data was introduced into the 2008 poll; trend analysis from 2003 is not available.

## METHODOLOGY

### HUNGER EXPERIENCE POLL

---

#### **SURVEY INSTRUMENT**

The Food Bank For New York City commissioned the Marist Institute for Public Opinion to conduct a survey to determine residents' ability to afford food. Data were collected via a phone interview which consisted of several questions developed by the Food Bank in collaboration with the Marist Institute.

#### **SAMPLE POPULATION**

This year, telephone interviews were conducted using random digit dialing to land lines and cell phone numbers on September 20 through September 22, 2011. A total of 827 New York City residents ages 18 and older were interviewed. Interviews were administered in English and Spanish from a centralized location by trained interviewers. Up to three attempts to establish contact were made per telephone number.

#### **DATA ANALYSIS**

A final weighted data set that reflects interview responses was provided by the Food Bank by Marist College. To ensure proportionality, statistics were weighted by borough, income, age, race/ethnicity and gender population data from the U.S. Census Bureau. Results are significant at the  $\pm 3.5$  percent levels.

#### **STUDY LIMITATIONS**

While efforts were made to ensure sample randomness, proportionality and consistency, there are several limitations to this study.

First, as residents selected themselves to participate in the telephone survey, there is the potential for there to be a self-selection bias in the data.

Second, although the overall findings are statistically significant at the +3.5 percent, the margin of error increases for statistics obtained through cross-tabulation.

Finally, the interviews were conducted by Marist College Institute for Public Opinion only in English and Spanish. Because there are considerable populations of New York City residents who speak languages other than those used for the interview, a bias may have been introduced.

## SURVEY QUESTIONS

**During the past twelve months, how difficult was it for you to afford to buy food that was needed for you and your family?<sup>32</sup>**

Very difficult  
Somewhat difficult  
Not very difficult  
Not difficult at all

**If you lost your job or household income, how soon do you think it would be until you could not afford to buy food for you and your family after paying your monthly bills and expenses?**

Immediately  
After 1-3 months  
After 4-6 months  
After 6 months – 1 year  
Longer than 1 year

**How concerned are you that you and your family may need to turn to food assistance (including Food Stamps, food pantries, soup kitchens) in the next twelve months?<sup>33</sup>**

Very concerned  
Somewhat concerned  
Not very concerned  
Not at all concerned

**During the past twelve months, did you or members of your household change your eating habits or meals routine in order to save food or money? For instance, did you . . .**

Buy less food?  
Buy less healthy food?  
Skip meals?  
Eat smaller meals?  
Eat meals at friends' or relatives' homes?  
Serve fewer family members at mealtime?  
Eliminate holiday meals or Sunday dinners?

**During the past twelve months, did you or members of your household buy less of any of the following types of foods to stretch your grocery dollar?**

Fresh fruits and vegetables  
Dairy (e.g., milk, yogurt, cheese)  
Meat, poultry, fish

**During the past twelve months, have you or members of your household ever been unable to pay for food because you had to pay for . . .**

Rent?  
Utilities?  
Transportation?  
Medicine or medical care?

---

<sup>32</sup> The responses "very difficult" and "somewhat difficult" were combined to indicate difficulty.

<sup>33</sup> The responses "very concerned" and "somewhat concerned" were combined to indicate concern.

**For more information, please contact:**

Department of Research and Evaluation  
Food Bank For New York City  
39 Broadway, 10<sup>th</sup> Floor  
New York, NY 10006  
t. 212.566.7855 ext. 2249  
f. 212.566.1463