

# Why are Manitobans Food Insecure?

Food Insecurity can affect people of any race, gender, or income level. However, because of systemic inequalities, some people are at higher risk of Food Insecurity than others.

## WHO IS AT GREATER RISK TO BE FOOD INSECURE?

- Women<sup>1</sup>
- Households with children and single mothers in particular<sup>2</sup>
- People who identify as Indigenous or Black<sup>3</sup>
- People who have a chronic illness or disability<sup>4</sup>
- Recent Newcomers<sup>2</sup>
- Those receiving social assistance<sup>3</sup>
- Low paid workers with unstable work conditions<sup>5</sup>
- People who rent, rather than own their home<sup>6</sup>



## HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY IS TIGHTLY LINKED TO INCOME

Canada measures poverty using the **Market Basket Measure (MBM)**, that calculates the cost of goods and services needed to meet basic needs. Using MBM, a family of four in Winnipeg is at the poverty line if their annual income is \$36,544 and for individuals living alone it is \$18,272.<sup>7</sup>

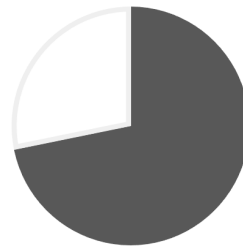


## EIA has continued to be below the poverty line for many decades



66.4% of those who are food insecure are in the workforce<sup>8</sup>

**Minimum wage** in Manitoba currently is 11.65/hr. This is full-time earnings of only \$24,230/year before taxes. This may not be enough to meet a person's basic needs, especially in households with children. A living wage for Manitobans is calculated now to be \$16.63/hr.<sup>9</sup>



71.8% of people that rely on EIA are food insecure<sup>9</sup>

Basic **social assistance/EIA** provides \$820/month for a single adult.<sup>10</sup> The average rent of a bachelor apartment in Winnipeg is \$733/month, leaving \$87 for all other expenses.<sup>11</sup> A healthy diet for a single person costs \$315/month and for a family of 4, it costs \$880/month.<sup>9</sup>

If minimum wage and social assistance/EIA were indexed to inflation they would keep up with the cost of living

## HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY IN THE NORTH

Northern and remote communities in Manitoba have limited access to nutritious food. There may be only one store in the area. Even if there is an all-season road, the nearest store can be hours away by car.

### Comparison of Food Prices<sup>13</sup>

	Winnipeg	North (without all-weather road)
Milk (1L)	\$1.66	\$3.06
Tomato (per kg)	\$3.94	\$10.86
Ground beef (per kg)	\$11.54	\$16.89
Apples (per kg)	\$3.36	\$7.41

Traditional food knowledge – how to grow, harvest, preserve and share food from the land - is on the rise again, in spite of an ongoing legacy of colonization. Yet, the cost of equipment may be a deterrent to accessing country foods, as are concerns that industrial development have contaminated traditional food resources.<sup>14</sup>

**More than 60% of Indigenous people living on reserve in Northern Manitoba are food insecure<sup>12</sup>**

Food in the North is very expensive. Prices are escalated by the high cost of transportation, especially for food flown into isolated communities.<sup>14</sup>

1. Matheson and McIntyre, "Women Respondents Report Higher Household Food Insecurity than Do Men in Similar Canadian Households."  
 2. Tarasuk, Mitchell, and Dachner, "Household Food Insecurity in Canada 2012."  
 3. Tarasuk, Valerie, Andr e-Anne Fafard St-Germain, and Andrew Mitchell, "Geographic and socio-demographic predictors of household food insecurity in Canada, 2011-12."  
 4. Tarasuk, Mitchell, McLaren, and McIntyre, "Chronic Physical and Mental Health Conditions among Adults May Increase Vulnerability to Household Food Insecurity"; Schwartz, Tarasuk, Buliung, Wilson, "Mobility impairments and geographic variation in vulnerability to household food insecurity"  
 5. McIntyre, Lynn, Aaron C. Bartoo, and JC Herbert Emery, "When working is not enough: food insecurity in the Canadian labour force."  
 6. McIntyre, Lynn, Xiuyun Wu, Valerie C. Fleisch, and JC Herbert Emery, "Homeowner versus non-homeowner differences in household food insecurity in Canada."  
 7. Statistics Canada, "Market Basket Measure (MBM)" Retrieved from https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/ref/dict/pop165-eng.cfm  
 8. Tarasuk V, Mitchell A. (2020) Household food insecurity in Canada, 2017-18. Toronto: Research to identify policy options to reduce food insecurity (PROOF). Retrieved from https://proof.toronto.ca/  
 9. Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives. "Change Starts Here: Manitoba Alternative Provincial Budget 2020"  
 10. Government of Manitoba. EIA for General Assistance. https://www.gov.mb.ca/fs/eia/eia\_general.html  
 11. Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Rental Market Report Data Tables. https://www.cmhc-schl.gc.ca/en/data-and-research/data-tables/rental-market-report-data-tables  
 12. Food Secure Canada. Affordable Food in the North. https://foodsecurecanada.org/resources-news/news-media/we-want-affordable-food-north  
 13. Wendimu, Mengistu Assefa, Annette Aur lie Desmarais, and Tabitha Robin Martens. "Access and affordability of 'healthy' foods in northern Manitoba? The need for Indigenous food sovereignty."  
 14. Skinner, Hanning, Desjardins and Tsuji. "Giving voice to food insecurity in a remote indigenous community in subarctic Ontario"



**FOOD MATTERS**  
MANITOBA

Production possible through financial contribution from the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). Views expressed herein do not necessarily represent the views of PHAC.