

Hunger in Oregon During COVID-19

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Annie Kirschner
Executive Director
Partners for a Hunger-Free Oregon
Oregon Hunger Task Force

Susannah Morgan
CEO
Oregon Food Bank



Briefing Topics

- Food Insecurity in Oregon has doubled
- Solutions today to emerge stronger tomorrow
- Q & A



Hunger in Oregon Pre-Pandemic

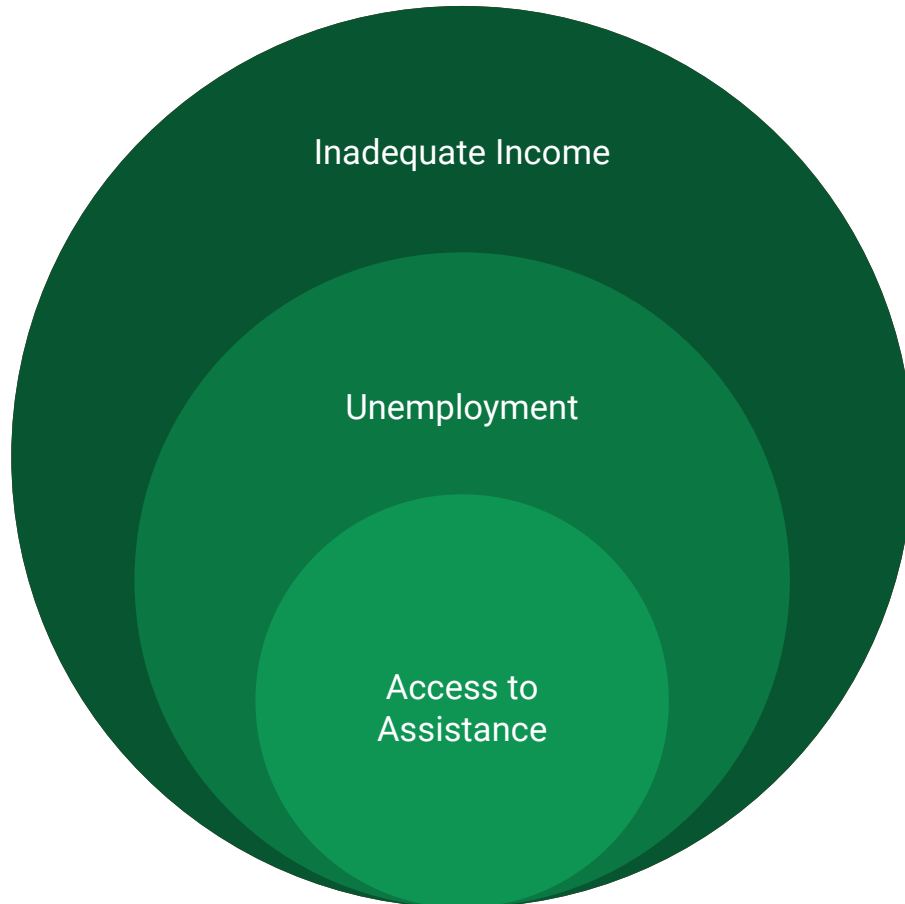


- Pre-pandemic: 11.1% (1 in 9 people) face challenges putting food on the table
- Spread fairly evenly across rural, small town and urban communities
- Higher rates for single parent families and communities of color
- Driven by income inequality, despite low unemployment (3.5%)



Food Insecurity in Oregon Has Doubled

Driving factors



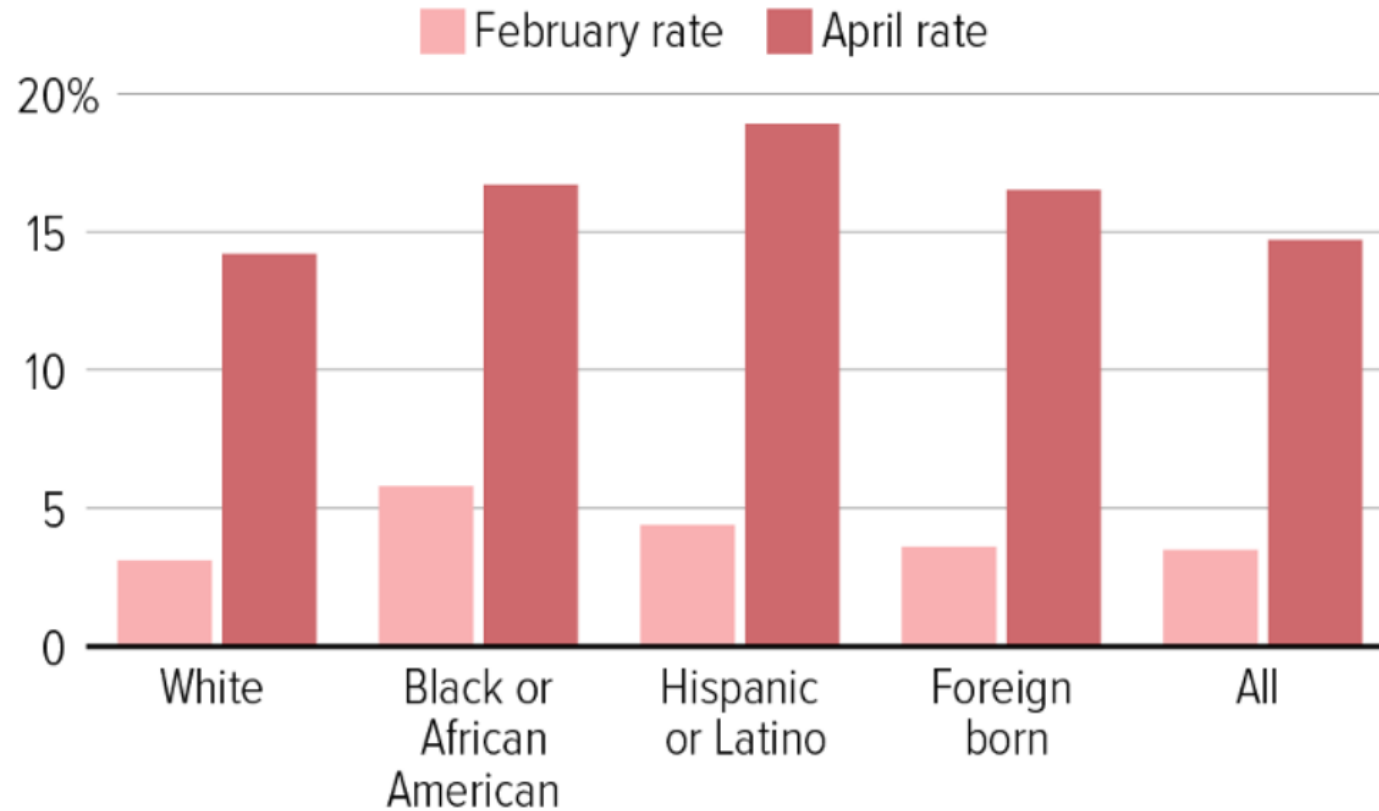
Food Insecure Households in Oregon:

- **Pre-Pandemic: One in Nine (438,000)**
- **Now: One in Five (900,000+)**

Sources: USDA, Oregon State University



April: National Unemployment Rate by Race

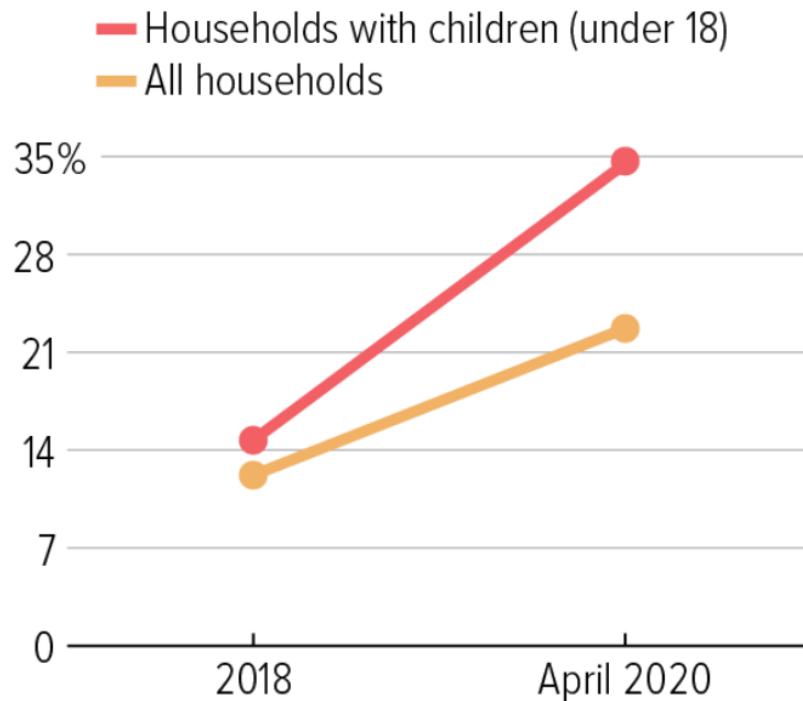


Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics data
Chart courtesy of Center on Budget and Policy Priorities



1 in 3 Households with Kids in U.S. Now Face Hunger

Share of households saying “the food we bought just didn’t last and we didn’t have money to get more”



Source: Hamilton Project, “The COVID-19 Crisis Has Already Left Too Many Children Hungry in America”

Chart courtesy of Center on Budget and Policy Priorities

Child hunger can be expected to spike even higher this summer

- Summer Meal service is optional for schools
- No additional state funds to support meal supplies and transportation costs
- Pandemic EBT and extra SNAP ends in June



SNAP is the Strongest Tool We Have to Reduce Hunger

- DHS exercising new federal options, flexibilities
- + 50,000 SNAP households (Apr./Feb '20). Will grow higher.
- SNAP maximum benefits now available (\$646 for family of 4)
- Yet there are gaps, including many college students and immigrants

\$1 SNAP



\$1.79 in economic activity



Opportunities to Strengthen SNAP

- **Conduct robust outreach.** For example, people who are waiting for UI benefits, those without access to internet.
- **Make it easy to apply.** Reduce barriers to "sign" over the phone, since the online application is only available in English.
- **Allow SNAP to be used at restaurants** by seniors, people with disabilities and those experiencing houselessness.

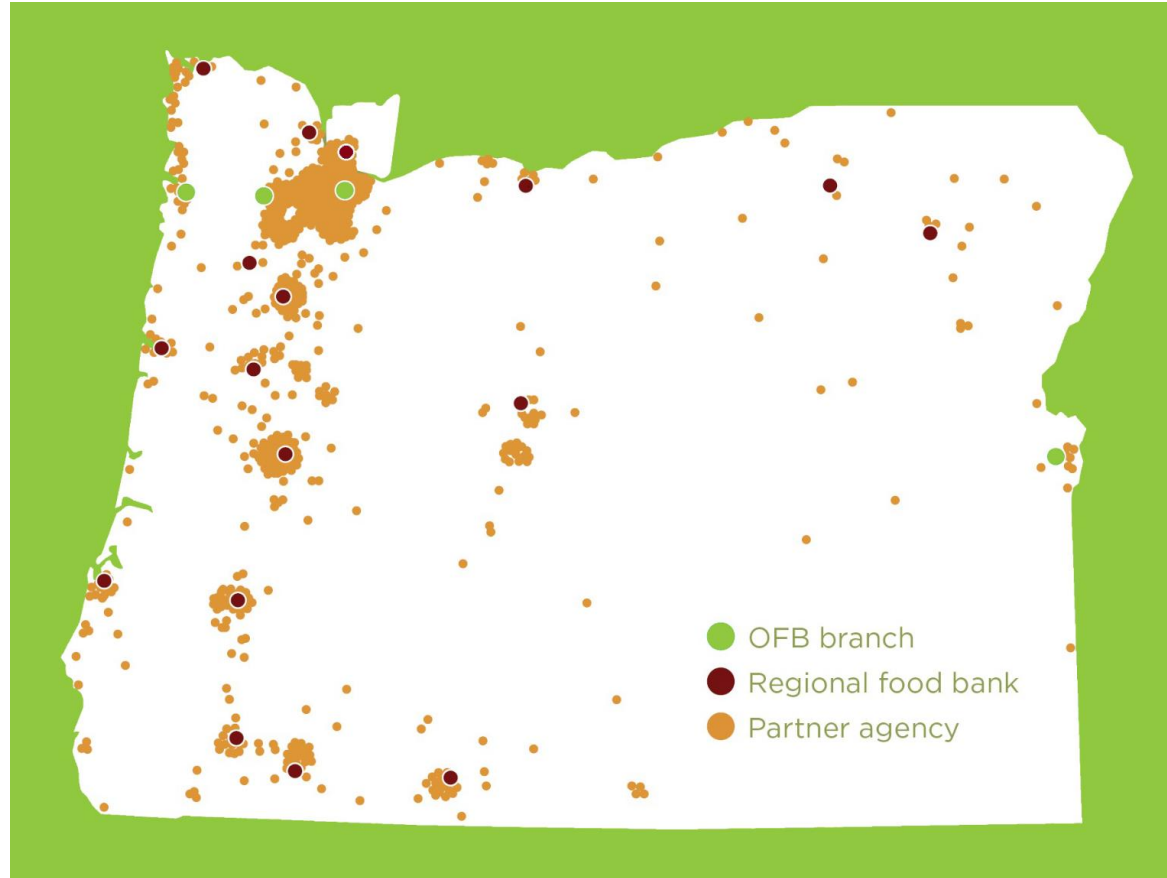
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Oregon Food Bank Statewide Network



- Serving all of Oregon, plus Southwest Washington
- 21 Regional Food Banks
- 1,400 + pantries and meal sites
- 265,000 people per month pre-pandemic



Demand for Emergency Food has Skyrocketed

- **Serving twice as many households** as before COVID-19 (OFB branches)
- Service models have adapted quickly to ensure safety and access
- Our improved “Food Finder” app now available in 11 languages



State and Federal Aid Helps Emergency Food System

- \$8m from Oregon for emergency food (75% FEMA match) started in April.
 - For food purchasing statewide and in local communities
- Federal food commodities (TEFAP) from stimulus to start arriving by June



Gaps Remain: Opportunities at the Federal Level

- **Prevent increased summer hunger:**
 - Expand P-EBT through the summer and school closures.
 - Increase access for summer “grab and go” meals
- **Increase SNAP benefits**
- **End harmful exclusions** of stimulus benefits
- **Provide assistance to states** to avoid need to raise revenue or cut budgets.



Recommendations for Oregon to Emerge Stronger

We must not balance our budget on the backs of Oregonians who are already hurting

- Fully leverage federal nutrition assistance programs, including SNAP and Summer Meals
- Address UI Backlog
- Prioritize gaps for immigrant families, such as the Oregon Worker Relief Fund
- Extend eviction protections and rent assistance
- Preserve critical human services in state budget



Resources

Food Access During COVID-19: <https://oregonhunger.org/covid-19/>

Oregon Food Bank's Food Finder: <https://www.oregonfoodbank.org/find-help/find-food/>



Q & A

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