



Cara Cuite, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department Human Ecology Steph Brescia, Ph.D., School of Graduate Studies Jennifer Wiseman, M.S., M.S.N., APN-C, Family Nurse Practitioner, Student Health

Cathryn Heath, M.D., Director of Student Health
Kerri Willson, Ed.M., Director of Off-Campus Living and Community
Partnerships

Anne Newman, Ph.D., Associate Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs Marina Vineis, M.S., R.D.N., Nutritional Sciences Graduate Program

What is food insecurity?

What are we doing at RU-NB?

Screen & Intervene program

What is the future of food insecurity at RU-NB?

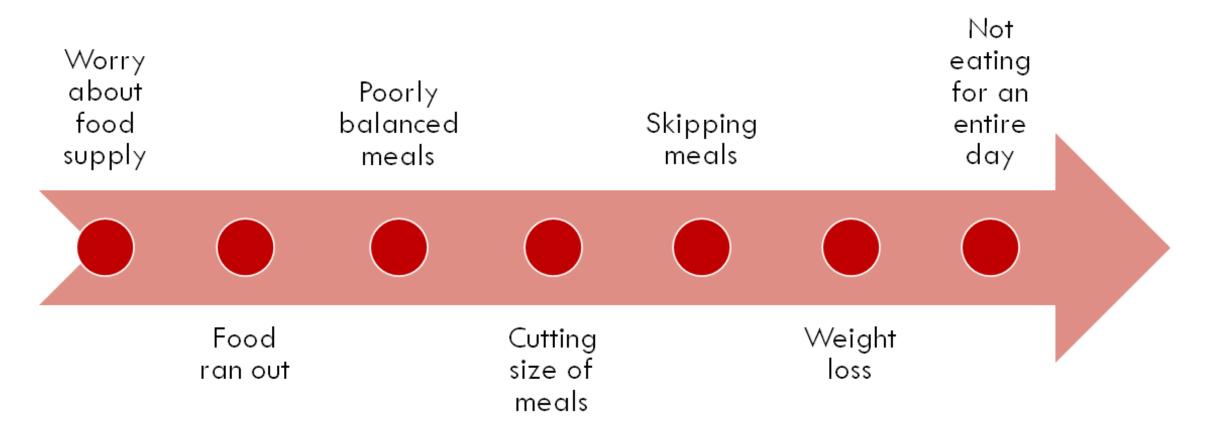
### Overview



## What is food insecurity?

Food insecurity is the limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.

## Food Insecurity Occurs Along a Spectrum



LESS SEVERE — — — — — — — — — — — — MORE SEVERE



National Higher Education Context

#### **2019 Survey Administration**

- Total of 227 institutions, mostly community colleges
- Overall response rate 8%

#### **Four-Year Institutions**

- 56 Colleges & Universities (85% Public)
- 48,618 respondents

#### **Four-Year Institution Findings**

• 33% of students were Food Insecure in the past 30 days

## Survey of Food Insecurity Among Rutgers-NB Students

2016

- Cara Cuite, Ph.D., Department of Human Ecology and Rutgers Cooperative Extension
- Stephanie Brescia, Ed.M., Graduate School of Education
- Victoria Gregorio, Ph.D., Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning
- Dayna Weintraub, Ph.D., Student Affairs Research and Assessment
- Kerri Willson, Ed.M., Off-Campus Living and Community Partnerships

2019

- Cara Cuite, Ph.D., Department of Human Ecology and Rutgers Cooperative Extension
- Stephanie Brescia, Ph.D., School of Graduate Studies
- La Reina Bates, Ph.D., Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning
- Dayna Weintraub, Ph.D., Student Affairs Research and Assessment
- Kerri Willson, Ed.M., Off-Campus Living and Community Partnerships
- Mark Walzer, Ed.M., Higher Education Program





## Survey Methodology-2016

#### Administration

November 22- December 19, 2016

#### Response

- 19% response rate
- 8,393 students completed

#### Representativeness

 The sample is representative of the population with some known minor or small differences



Undergraduate Students	Graduate Students
(n = 6,823)	(n = 1,570)
36.9%	32.1%

## Living arrangements and food insecurity

 Undergraduates who live off campus are more likely to be food insecure than those who live on campus.

Living	Food insecurity
Off campus	46.1%
On campus	29.4%



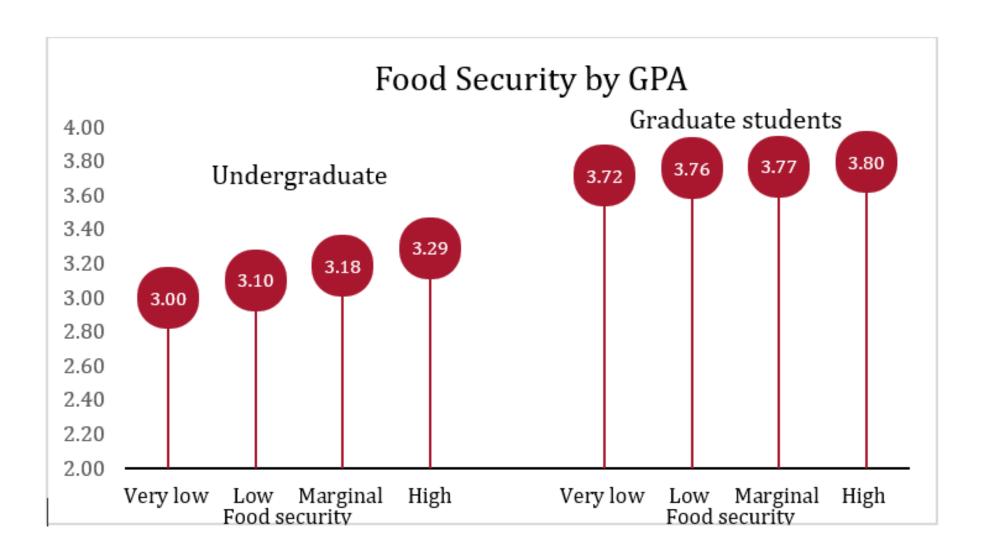
Photo credit: NJTV ne

# Meal plans and food insecurity

- Undergraduates without a meal plan are significantly more likely to be food insecure than those with a meal plan
- 45.8% vs. 29.4%



## Food insecurity is associated with GPA



### Use of Food Resources

#### **SNAP**

• 2.2% of students have SNAP

#### **Pantry Use**

- 1.6% use RSFP\*
- 5.4% use off campus pantries

#### **Campus Dining Halls**

- 25.1% take food for later
- 19.0% stay for multiple meals

#### **Campus Events**

23% attend events for free food



## Lived Experience of Food Insecure Students

- Perceived lack of awareness of food insecurity on campus
- View food insecurity as a private, personal problem
- Importance of peer support networks
- Hesitant to seek assistance due to issues of stigma & shame

I don't think the majority of the population is aware of how much it is and issue because it's not something that's displayed. It's something that people are ashamed of. It's something that people doesn't want anyone to know. That's just a personal situation is like, okay, this is my situation, this is my reality.

# Institutional Response to Student Food Insecurity 2016-Present







#### **RUTGERS STUDENT FOOD PANTRY**

- Opened in 2016
- 3,118 total visits
- 804 unique visitors as of Fall 2019



#### **DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE**

- Referrals to/from Rutgers Student Food Pantry
- Provide emergency funds
  - Meal plans
  - Grocery store gift cards
  - Rides to grocery store
- SNAP enrollment assistance



### MASTER OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE MBS.RUTGERS.EDU

## RUSA to pass resolution for Meal Swipes for Charity September 17, 2019 12:00am | By Brendan Brightman



Photo by The Daily Targum | The Daily Targum



#### MASTER OF BUSINESS AND SCIENCE

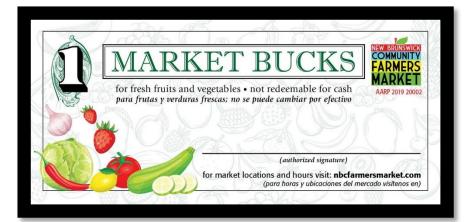
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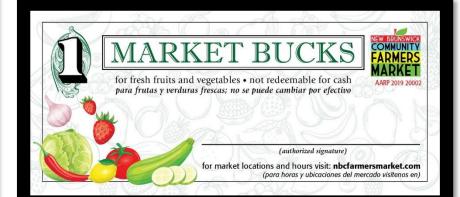
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#### The Student Farm at Rutgers University

October 29 at 12:10 PM · §

Making our weekly delivery to @rufoodpantry! If you are a Rutgers student i need of nutrient-dense food, we drop off fresh veg from the farm every Tuesday.



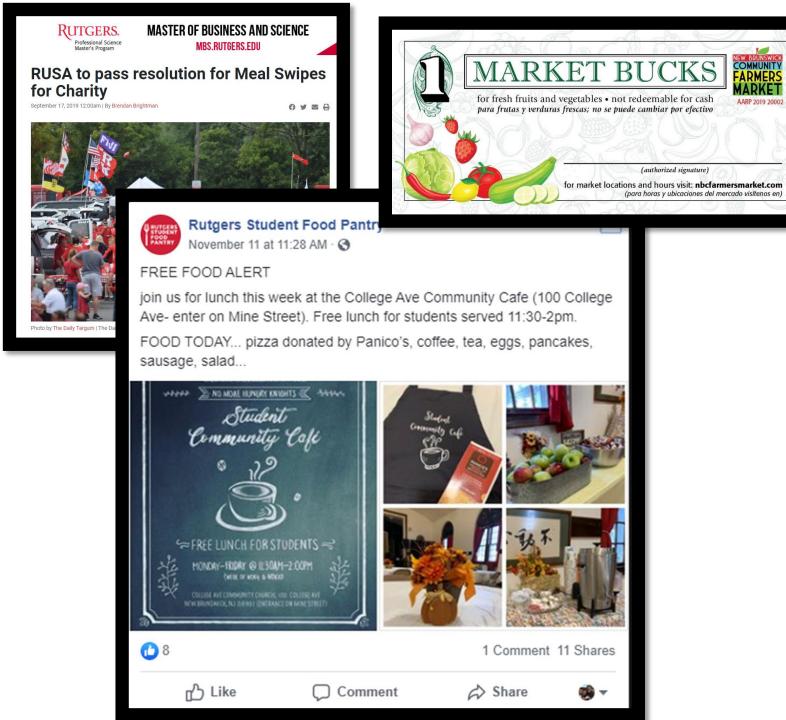














Like

COMMUNITY FARMERS

MARKET

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Comment

⇔ Share



Rutgers University Task Force on Student Aid Board of Trustees provided \$2 million in aid in 2018

## Leadership Response



RU-NB Chancellor's Task Force on Student Essential Needs NB-wide interdisciplinary committee created in 2019



Food Insecurity
Screen & Intervene at
Rutgers Student
Health

## FI Screen & Intervene: Rutgers Student Health Referral Project Team

- Melodee Lasky, M.D.
- Cathryn Heath, M.D.
- Diane Heimlich, APN-C
- Jennifer Wiseman, MS, MSN, APN-C
- Glenn Davis
- Dayna Weintraub, Ph.D.
- Kerri Willson, Ed.M.
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- Steph Brescia, Ph.D.
- Marina Vineis, M.S., R.D.N.

Rutgers Student Health

Rutgers Student Affairs

Research Team

## **Rutgers Student Health Process**

Student completes
Personal Health History
questionnaire online,
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Go to appointment at Student Health (health centers and CAPS), practitioner will read screener







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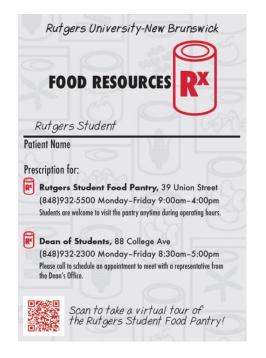
If FI, given referral postcard to Rutgers Student Food Pantry and DOS Office











#### Rutgers University-New Brunswick



#### Rutgers Student

#### Patient Name

#### Prescription for:



R Rutgers Student Food Pantry, 39 Union Street (848)932-5500 Monday-Friday 9:00am-4:00pm Students are welcome to visit the pantry anytime during operating hours.



Dean of Students, 88 College Ave (848)932-2300 Monday-Friday 8:30am-5:00pm Please call to schedule an appointment to meet with a representative from the Dean's Office.



Scan to take a virtual tour of the Rutgers Student Food Pantry!

We used a multi-method approach and studied multiple outcomes during the 2018-19 academic year.

Only some are discussed here.

# How many students that visit RSH are food insecure?

Student completes
Personal Health History
questionnaire online,
with FI screener

#### **METHOD:**

- RSH shared PHH findings with us.
  - Thanks Glenn Davis from RSH!



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#### **FINDINGS:**

Lower food insecurity rate than in the school-wide sample—9.7%

Different population

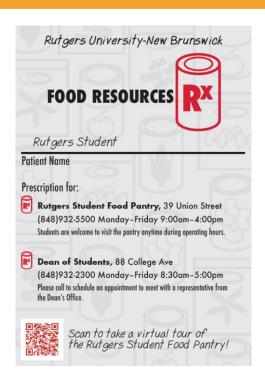
Different measurement tool/# of questions

Different time of year

Different setting/lowered sense of anonymity

# How many students that were referred used food resources?

If FI, given referral postcard to Rutgers
Student Food Pantry and DOS Office

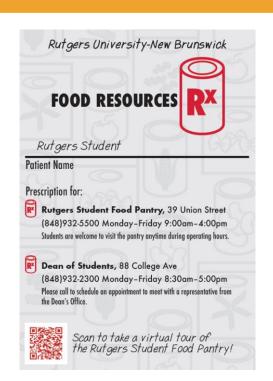


#### **METHOD:**

- Used existing data from RSH, DOS and RSFP.
  - Issues:
    - FI status changed if students completed PHH multiple times.
    - Data entry issues made it hard to track some students.

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#### **FINDINGS:**

- Food pantry:
  - ~10% of FI students used pantry during study year
- Dean of students:
  - ~20% of FI students used DOS during study year

Numbers may change slightly, but regardless, we know we helped to get some students into the pantry/DOS, and that there are more students we can reach.

# Why don't food insecure students use resources?

#### **METHOD**

- Dr. Cathryn Heath invited all students that screened positively for food insecurity to participate in an interview with Steph Brescia
- 8 Students that <u>were not</u> connected to campus food resources were interviewed





### Student Interviews: Findings









## SCREENING PROCESS

- Half of students reported they were not screened
- Overall reaction to the process was positive
- Clinician conversations about food insecurity are valuable

#### **REFERRAL CARD**

- Recommendation to add that you do not need to prove income to use the pantry
- Recommendation for electronic distribution
- Highlighting the food pantry was common

## BARRIERS TO PANTRY USE

- Logistical difficulties
- Social stigma
- Not feeling "poor enough" to use resources
- Reserving resources for other students
- Not wanting to ask for help

## BARRIERS TO DEAN OF STUDENTS USE

- Not understanding the role of the DOS office
- Not wanting to ask for help
- Thinking their situation is not severe enough or not wanting to explain the details

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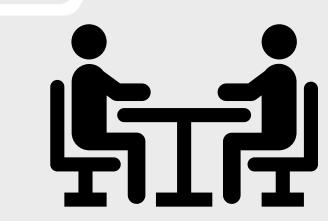
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## What did the RSH medical staff think of the program?

- Dr. Cathryn Heath invited all RSH staff to participate in an interview with Marina Vineis.
  - 18 participated











### OVERALL PROGRAM IMPACT AND EFFICACY

#### TRAINING ADEQUACY

### THE FOOD INSECURITY SCREENER

### THE FOOD INSECURITY REFERRAL CARD

- Time and ease
- Perceived value
- Reception of the program
- Sufficient with room for improvements
- Newly hired employee training

- Perceived accuracy
- Potential bias
- Perceived language & cultural barriers
- Inability to review the PHH
- Recommended screener placement

- Availability
- Visibility
- Verbal referral preference
- Perceived student reactions
- Documentation









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# Jennifer Wiseman MS, MSN, APN-C





Reflections on the RSH Food Insecurity Screen & Intervene Program

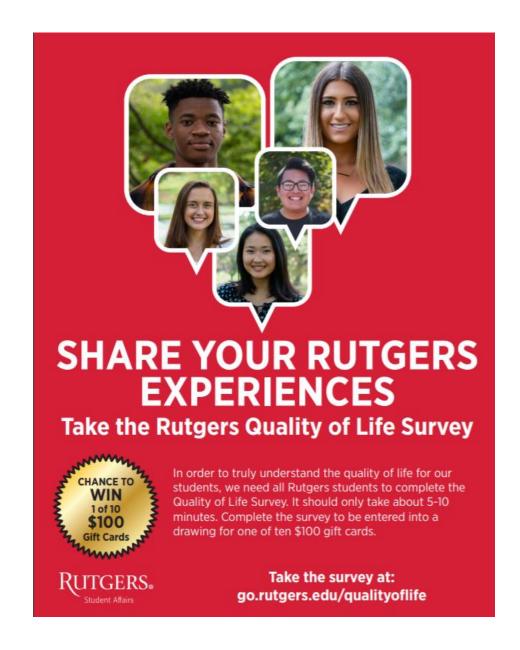
## Conclusions & Recommendations

The program has succeeded in connecting some FI students to services. But there is room to improve.

We have discussed recommendations and potential improvements/changes to the program with RSH.

## What's new in 2019 survey?

- Includes measures of housing insecurity and homelessness.
- Stay tuned for our report!



## Basic Needs Insecurity During COVID-19

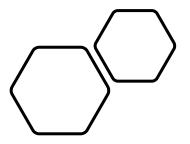
- How have our students been affected by COVID-19?
- How has their level of basic needs insecurity changed as a result of COVID-19?
- How can Rutgers better support them now?

#### Acknowledgements

- Melodee Lasky, M.D.
- Cathryn Heath, M.D.
- Diane Heimlich, A.P.N.-C.
- Jennifer Wiseman, M.S., M.S.N., APN-C
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- La Reina Bates, Ph.D.
- Robert Heffernan, Ph.D.
- Kelly Sokolowski
- Celine LaBelle
- Booker George, B.S.
- Lucas Marxen, M.S.
- Mike Abdallah
- Joe Rudawski
- Lenard Sarabia
- Pamela Harris
- Dayna Weintraub, Ph.D.
- Student Affairs Marketing & Communication

- RSH staff for implementing the program, especially those that participated in interviews
- Staff at DOS and RSFP for their cooperation with project
- All the students who participated, especially those who completed surveys or interviews

# Thank you! Questions?



All of the authors are here on WebEx.

Cara Cuite, Ph.D., Assistant Professor, Department Human Ecology

Steph Brescia, Ph.D., School of Graduate Studies
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## Student Affairs Assessment

- How will you apply the information we've presented into your work?
- How can we help?
- What additional questions do you have about student food insecurity?



#### Resources

- Food Insecurity Among Students at RUNB (Full Report)
  - http://humeco.rutgers.edu/documents pdf/RU Student Food Insecurity 20 18.pdf
- Understanding Coping Mechanisms
  - https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/2194587X.2019.1669463
- Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice
  - https://hope4college.com/
- College and University Food Bank Alliance
  - cufba.org

How did students react to the screening process?

**Surprise: 37.0%** 

**Concern: 18.5%** 

Relief: 11.1%

**Disbelief: 48.1%** 

**Embarrassment: 11.1%** 

Confusion: 14.8%

Prevalence of Food Insecurity at Rutgers-New Brunswick-2016

	Food Security Level	Undergraduate Students % (n = 6,823)	Graduate Students % (n = 1,570)
Food Secure	High food security	45.7	49.9
	Marginal food security	17.4	17.9
Food Insecure	Low food security Very low food security	16.7 36.9 20.2	14.8 32.1 17.3