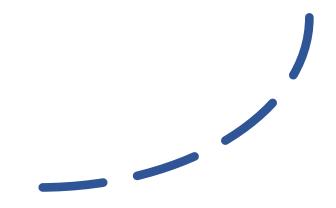


Food Security

Why is this initiative important? Food insecurity is defined as a lack of consistent access to enough food for every person in a household to live an active, healthy life. Ending food insecurity in Weld County is essential for community members to thrive.

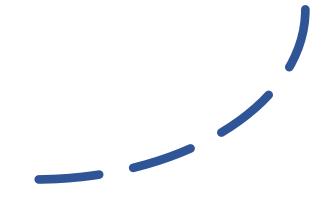




Food Security

What are we doing in this initiative?

The Weld Trust will convene the partners that are providing food security to determine priorities countywide and fund collaborative programs and resources that put nutritious food into the hands of people in need across Weld County.





Nutritious Food Programs

Food

Security

What are the

priorities in

this initiative?

Weld County individuals and families need access to healthy food programs throughout the County.

Food Resource Management Training

Ensure all who qualify for federal food programs are enrolled.

• Food Access and Distribution

Maximize access to nutritionally prepared meals for all Weld County residents in need especially vulnerable populations (older adults, people with disabilities, low-tomiddle income, and communities in food deserts). Food Security

What are our goals for this initiative?

 Increase access to premade meals, healthy food consumption, and ultimately decrease the number of individuals who are food insecure in Weld County.



- Increase the number of nutrition education programs.
- Increase the enrollment in food programs such as Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) for qualifying individuals.
- Increase the access to food assistance and nutritious foods for children and families, seniors, and homebound residents.
- Decrease the number of individuals who are food insecure in Weld County.
- Increase home meal preparation.
- Improve affordability of nutritious foods.

Food Security Logic Model



Mission Statement: To promote excellence in health and education in Weld County.

The Weld Trust will convene the collaborative partners that are providing food security to determine priorities countywide and fund collaborative programs and resources that put nutritious food into the hands of people in need across Weld County.

Our approach to addressing the strategic issues will be:	Activities TWT will undertake	Partner Organizations	Outputs	Immediate Outcomes 0-4 years	Intermediate Outcomes 4-8 years	Long-term Outcomes/Impac 8+ years
und and assist in the designing of	Data gathering/reporting	Educational Entities	Healthy Food Programs	Healthy Food Programs	Healthy Food Programs	Weld County residents:
ealthy food programs, as well as	Primary sources	Schools, Districts, and	# of organizations funded to	As measured by grant partners:	As measured by grant partners in	
rganizations that aim to increase	Grant outcomes	BOCES	implement healthy food	(1*) Increased access for children	self-reported surveys:	Access to nutritious food
asy access (physical and affordable)	Focus groups	Higher Education	programs;	and families to	 5% increase in healthy food 	• 8.9%, 28,190 people are fo
o nutritious foods for families in	C	o Aims	o # of promotores de salud	immediate/convenient	consumption	insecure in Weld County,
eed, especially in rural communities.	Secondary sources	o University of	(health promoter)	premade meals and snacks by 5%	• 5% increase fruit and	Feeding America.
Discover and fund organizations	 Community Health Improvement Plans 	Northern Colorado	 # of school food pantries 	• (1*) Increased capacity for rural	vegetable consumption	o Decrease by 2%
to develop new food pantries		Nonnrofit Portnord	supported	areas (e.g., storage place, facilities,		 Measured by food security while oprolled in program
(e.g., RE-6, RE-8, RE-1, rural communities).	Weld County Health Department Assessments	Nonprofit Partners Weld Food Bank	 # of students/families accessing nutritious foods 	freezers, staff, community	preparation	while enrolled in program
Fund programs increasing access	Department Assessments Census 	Nonprofits	and beverages through	gardens).(2*) Initial attitudes evaluated by	Food Resource Management	
	USDA household food	-			_	
to healthy premade meals for grab and go convenience.	 USDA household tood insecurity 	 Local community centers 	school pantries# of nutritious premade	pantry self-reported survey: o 5% increase in belief by	As measured by grant partners in self-reported surveys:	
Fund programs targeting rural	 Feeding America's Map the 	Government Agencies	 # of nutritious premade meals distributed from 	o 5% increase in belief by individuals served that food	 3% increase of at home meal 	
areas to maximize access and	 Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap 	Weld County	grantees/organizations	security and choice are being	 3% increase of at nome mean preparation 	
capacity.	Mear Gap	Human Services	measured by grantees.	enhanced.	 5% increase of fruit and 	
capacity.	Research and surveying	Weld County Health	# of rural community	(1*) Increased convenient	• 5% increase of fruit and vegetable consumption	7
ind and convene food resource	 Identify existing programs 	Department	programs funded	access to nutritious foods for	As measured by Weld County	
anagement training and programs	 Identify barriers to access 	o Cooking Matters	o # of people served	residents in need by 5%.	Health Department Assessments:	
Convene referral networks for	• Identity barriers to access	o Friendly Fork	0 # 01 people served	residents in need by 5%.	 8% increase of SNAP/WIC 	
local agencies to maximize	Convening of stakeholders:	o 5210	Food Resource Management	Food Resource Management	eligible residents enrolled in	
Supplemental Nutrition	 K-12: districts, schools 	0 3210	 # of funded nutrition 	As measured by grant partners:	federal program	
Assistance Program (SNAP)	Higher Education partners		education programs	(3*) Increase food literacy	64% of eligible Weld County	
and Women, Infants, and	Weld Food Bank		 # of participants served in 	programs and double the	residents are enrolled in	
Children (WIC) enrollment for	 Government agencies and 		the funded programs	number of Weld County	SNAP; 50% of eligible Weld	
those who qualify.	stakeholder groups		# of SNAP/WIC eligible	residence exposed to food	County residents are enrolled	
these the quality.	Non-profits; service		residents enrolled in federal	literacy programs.	in the WIC Program	
und programs that maximize access	providers		program	(3*) Initial attitudes	 % Increase in underserved/ 	
o nutritionally prepared meals	Community centers		P0	evaluated by self-reported	marginalized residents self-	
Farm to institutions	Other funders		* Emphasis on cultural	survey.	efficacy in food resource	
Subpopulations of older adults,			responsiveness and	o 3% increase in confidence	management	
people with disabilities, low-to-	Fund opportunities		inclusiveness	interval of food resource		
middle income, and				management	* Emphasis on cultural	
communities in food deserts.	Media/print campaigns		Prepared Meal Access	o 3% increase in self-efficacy	responsiveness and	
			 # of senior (60 years and 	for at-home meal	inclusiveness	
Emphasis on food deserts, rural			older) and homebound	preparation, making		
communities, and South County.			residents served	healthy family food	Prepared Meal Access	
			 # of seniors in rural areas 	decisions, ability	As measured by grant partners in	
			served	to read nutrition labels	self-reported surveys:	
			 # of residents and families 	and unit labels.	 Improved self-reported 	
			provided with nutritious	o 3% increase in confidence	health by 5%	
			meals	for meal planning, ability	 Improved intake of 	
			 # of premade meals 	to manage food resources.	nutritious foods by 10%	
			delivered		 Decreased worry about 	
			(pounds/percentage)	Prepared Meal Access	being able to remain in	
				As measured by grant partners:	home by 10%	
				 (1*) Increased access to food 	 Improved ability to afford 	
				assistance and nutritious	basic needs by 3%	
				food for seniors/homebound		
				residents in need by 2%		
				o Increased capacity for		
				providers		

* Numbered for prioritization

ASSUMPTIONS and ECOSYSTEM

*** Consider needs assessment at food banks/pantries for culturally relevant foods distributed and needs for community members. ** Emphasis on rural areas.

The USDA defines food insecurity as limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods for an active and healthy life.⁶

Food insecurity rates are highest for single mothers and households with incomes below the poverty line (6). A vital component to combat food insecurity in low-income households is increasing their food literacy, encompassing their knowledge, skills, and behaviors essential to achieving a healthy diet.²

Low-income adults are at higher risk for food insecurity, obesity, certain chronic diseases, and poor dietary intake compared to higher-income counterparts. This is due to not meeting the recommended guidelines for healthy eating and exceeding the recommended limits for nutritionally inadequate foods, resulting in the hunger-obesity paradox.³

Inequitable obesity risk among women, racial-ethnic minorities, individuals with low income, and other historically marginalized oopulations is well-documented. People burdened by food insecurity—especially women and older adults—are at an increased risk of overweight and obesity. This phenomenon, in which obesity and food insecurity coexist within the same person or household, is frequently referred to as the hunger-obesity paradox or the food insecurity paradox.⁸

Normally, 1 in 5 people and 1 in 4 children in Weld County struggle with hunger. During the pandemic, 1 in 3 people are struggling with hunger.

12.8% of Weld County children are food insecure.

- 66% of Greeley District 6 students are qualify for free-and-reduced lunch, which is an indicator of poverty and food insecurity in the district. This is 65% in Fort Lupton District 8, 53% in Weld District 1.
- Compared to pre-pandemic almost all Weld Food Bank programs saw an increase in people served ranging from 24% to 167%
- Residents at or below the 100% FPL reported they were worried about having enough money to buy nutritious meals nearly 4 times as often as residents who were not below the 100% FPL (43% compared to 12%).
- Residents who were Hispanic/Latino more frequently reported that they needed and used food or meal assistance compared to residents who are not Hispanic/Latino (WCDPHE, 2019).
- Colorado currently ranks 44th lowest in the United States for enrolling eligible citizens in SNAP (2015 data) and 48th lowest for enrollment in WIC (2013 data). 64% of eligible Weld County residents are enrolled in SNAP; 50% of eligible Weld County residents are enrolled in the WIC Program below the goal of 60%
- Countywide, 15% of residents needed food or meal assistance, and 10% of residents used it. Among residents aged 18 to 34 years, and 55 years and older, approximately 1 in 5 needed food or meal assistance and 1 in 8 used it. Residents aged 35-54 years reported needing and using food or meal assistance less: 1 in 10 needed food or meal assistance and 1 in 15 used it (WCDPHE, 2019).
- Weld County families need income more than two and a half times the federal poverty level to make ends meet (Colorado Center on Law and Policy and the University of Washington, 2018).

School food pantries

Food insecurity is one of the most prevalent nutrition-related problems that children and adolescents (i.e., youth) experience in the United States. The severity of household food insecurity is positively associated with mental disorders among both children and adolescents in the US.7

- Food insecurity significantly increases a child's risk for being overweight or obese, and it may also cause the child to experience more health problems such as stomach aches, frequent headaches, and colds. As a result, these children are more likely to be absent from school, miss school frequently, and fall behind in grade levels. School food pantries increase access to wholesome foods, which can improve school attendance.
- Food insecurity is of particular concern for school-aged children. Studies have found that food insecure children are more likely to have poor health, iron deficiency, anxiety, depression, behavioral issues, psychosocial issues, and impaired academic performance. Reducing or eliminating food insecurity is considered to be a key predecessor of allowing children to reach their full academic and social potential.
- Research has established that food insecurity contributes to persistent deficits in the physical and psychosocial development of children. A consistent lack of access to food not only influences physical size but also cognitive growth and fine and gross motor skills.⁹
- Food pantries present one potential access point for families struggling with consistent access to food.⁹

Food resource management

- Without health and nutrition literacy skills, even when healthy options are available, food pantry clients may have difficulty accessing and understanding public health information, such as MyPlate dietary guidelines and recommendations, to help them better understand which options are better choices.⁹
- Targeting food insecure low-income households with tools to increase healthy food consumption, nutrition education, and food resource management (FRM) skills to increase food literacy is an effective method to extend food dollars and increase consumption of a healthy diet.
- Food resource management refers to the ability to stretch food dollars and make healthy choices despite limited budgets, and encompasses meal planning, smart shopping, and awareness of impulse buys (1). Nutrition education and FRM skills are essential for this population to make healthy food choices and extend resources for healthier foods. FRM involves techniques to promote selection of healthy foods and cost-effective shopping to improve the quality of food purchases while
- simultaneously stretching food dollars.⁴
- Low-income households are most at risk for food insecurity, regardless of their SNAP participation.

Aging population

- Food insecure seniors were more likely to have depression (262%), asthma (78%), diabetes (74%), and congestive heart failure (71%).
- Reducing perceived threat of low food security may be crucial in changing energy intake behaviors.
- One-quarter of older adults experienced problems with having safe and affordable transportation available or having housing to suit their needs, 11% reported issues with having enough food to eat.
- By 2030, nearly one out of every five Coloradoans will be 65 years or older. In Weld County, 7.3% of those 65+ live below the poverty level—that's 2,228 seniors. In Fort Lupton, that number more than doubles to 20% of those 65+ living in poverty.

Rural Community

In rural areas, access to food may be limited by financial constraints or other factors, such as transportation challenges. Rural shoppers may rely on more expensive and less nutritious food, such as the types available at gas station convenience stores or face a long drive to a town with a supermarket or grocery store that stocks fresh produce, milk, eggs, and other staples.

- The USDA-ERS reports that households in rural areas accounted for 17.7% of all food-insecure households in 2016. In Colorado, a quarter of young adults in rural areas (25.4%) experienced food insecurity in 2019.
- People in rural Colorado were more likely to struggle with food access: 12.0% of Coloradans in rural areas reported experiencing food insecurity, compared with 9.3% of Coloradans in urban areas.
- The risk of food insecurity increases as counties become more rural.

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