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Agriculture



Hello Ministers and Secretaries of the United States Department of Agriculture,

The following link is to the Youtube presentation I have prepared.

<https://youtu.be/vS8hbLxST5c>

Please watch through the recording carefully and respond back with your suggestions in how to move forward with this issue. I would like to thank you for taking your valuable time to watching this presentation

This handout is the presentation slides that you have requested to look at. I have also included a small summary of the issue below for your convenience.

America has enough food to feed everyone, however, not everyone has access to food. Despite being one of the most developed countries, almost 14 million households face food insecurity who do not have enough food to meet their nutritional needs (Pathak, 2022).

Yet, when the Covid-19 pandemic hit, food insecurity heightened as economic stability decreased and budgets tightened. As a result, consumer access towards food shifted with more than 49 million people turning to food assistance and 1 in 5 children facing hunger (Feeding America, 2023). Driven by the cost-of-living crisis, socio-economic inequalities, and food market volatility, food security concerns became one of the key global challenges by the UN through SDG target 2.1.

Hence, it is imperative the US government develop a national food security strategy targeting low socio-economic areas by improving economic wellbeing through investments to increase access to food.

Kind Regards,

from **Justin Khoa Nguyen Vo z5421217**



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Presentation by Justin Khoa Nguyen Vo z5421217



Food Security In America

How we are prevailing after the Covid-19 Pandemic

[Presentation Recording](#)



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- 01 Importance of Food Security in the Economy
- 02 Food Insecurity during the Covid-19 Pandemic
- 03 Macroeconomic Impacts on Food Insecurity
- 04 Social-economic Inequalities on Food Insecurity
- 05 Call to Action: Future Plan & Strategies



“Ensuring every nation has the ability to feed its population...”

Access to quality, nutritious food is fundamental to human existence.

Improving food security produces a range of positive impacts in the economy, with opportunities to:

- Reduce Poverty as integral to reduce hunger
- Create accessible and stable food systems
- Ensure equality in poor socio-economic areas
- Improved health and healthcare
- Expand productivity and economic efficiency

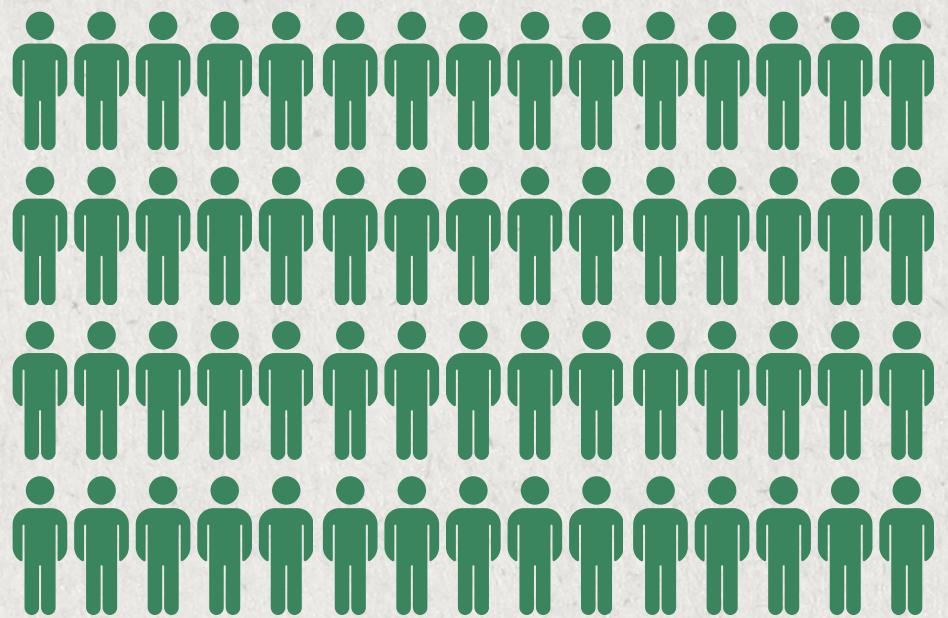




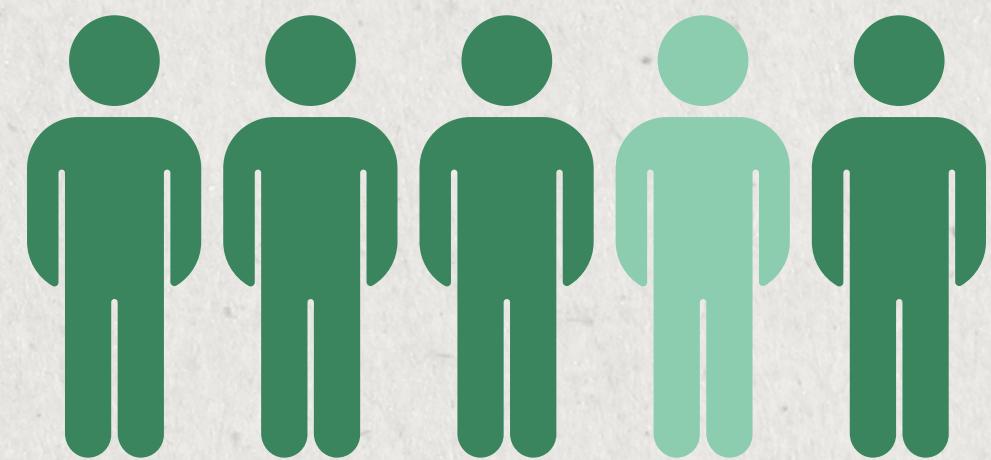
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Feeding America: “a wealthy country doesn’t mean a healthy country”



44 Million Americans
experience being food
insecure every day



1 in 5 Children
facing hunger in 2022

Food Security

Covid-19 Pandemic

Macroeconomics

Socio-economics

Call to Action

Food Insecurity is on the rise...



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Insights

1

- Food insecurity increased drastically to almost 15% during the Global Financial Crisis (GFC)

2

- Maintained at a high level for almost 5 years before slowly decreasing

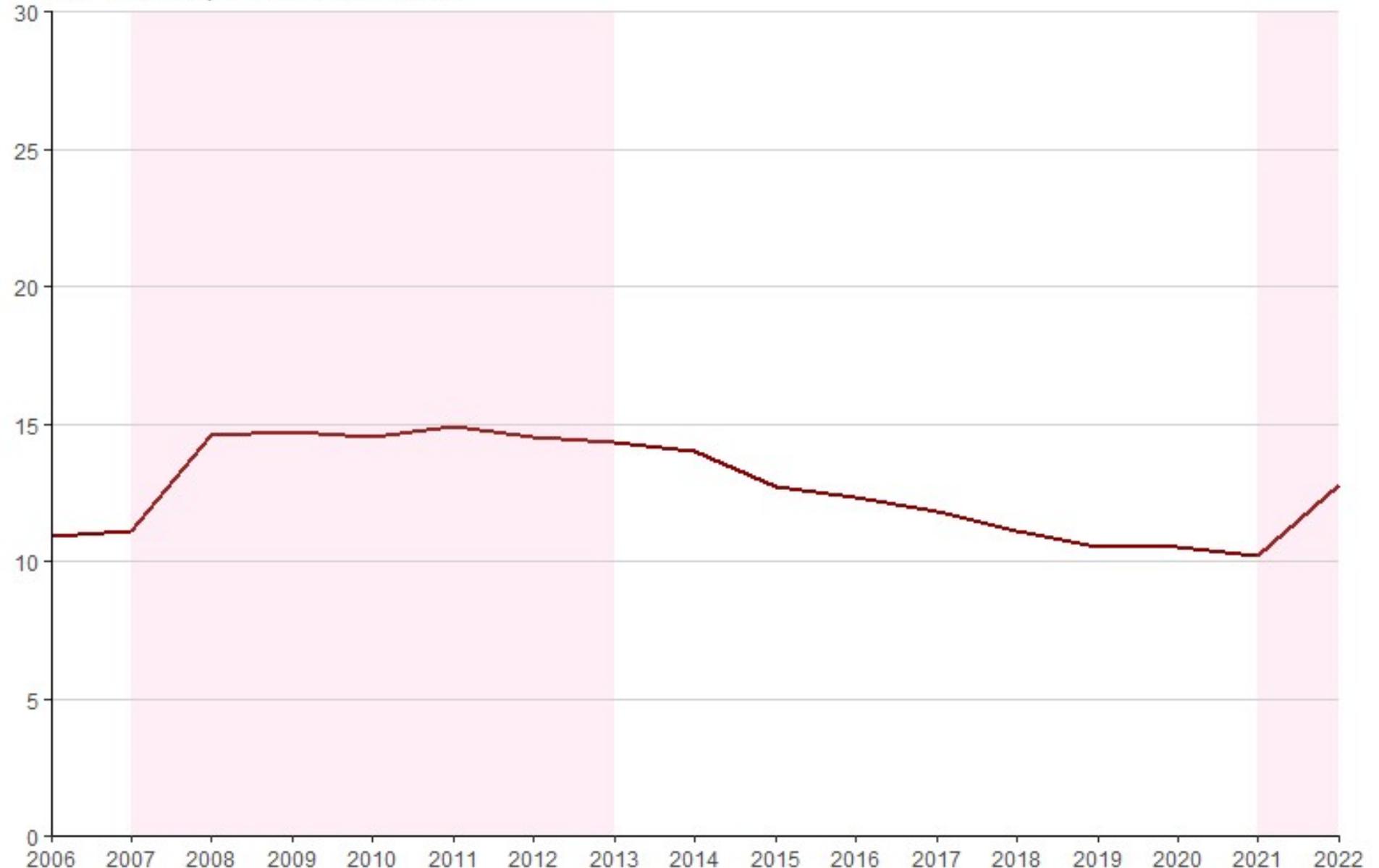
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- Post pandemic shift has caused food insecurity to jump again

How can we ensure that food insecurity does not sustain for too long over the next 5 years, just like the GFC?

Trends in Food Insecurity in U.S. households from 2006-2022

Measured as percent of households



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Macroeconomics

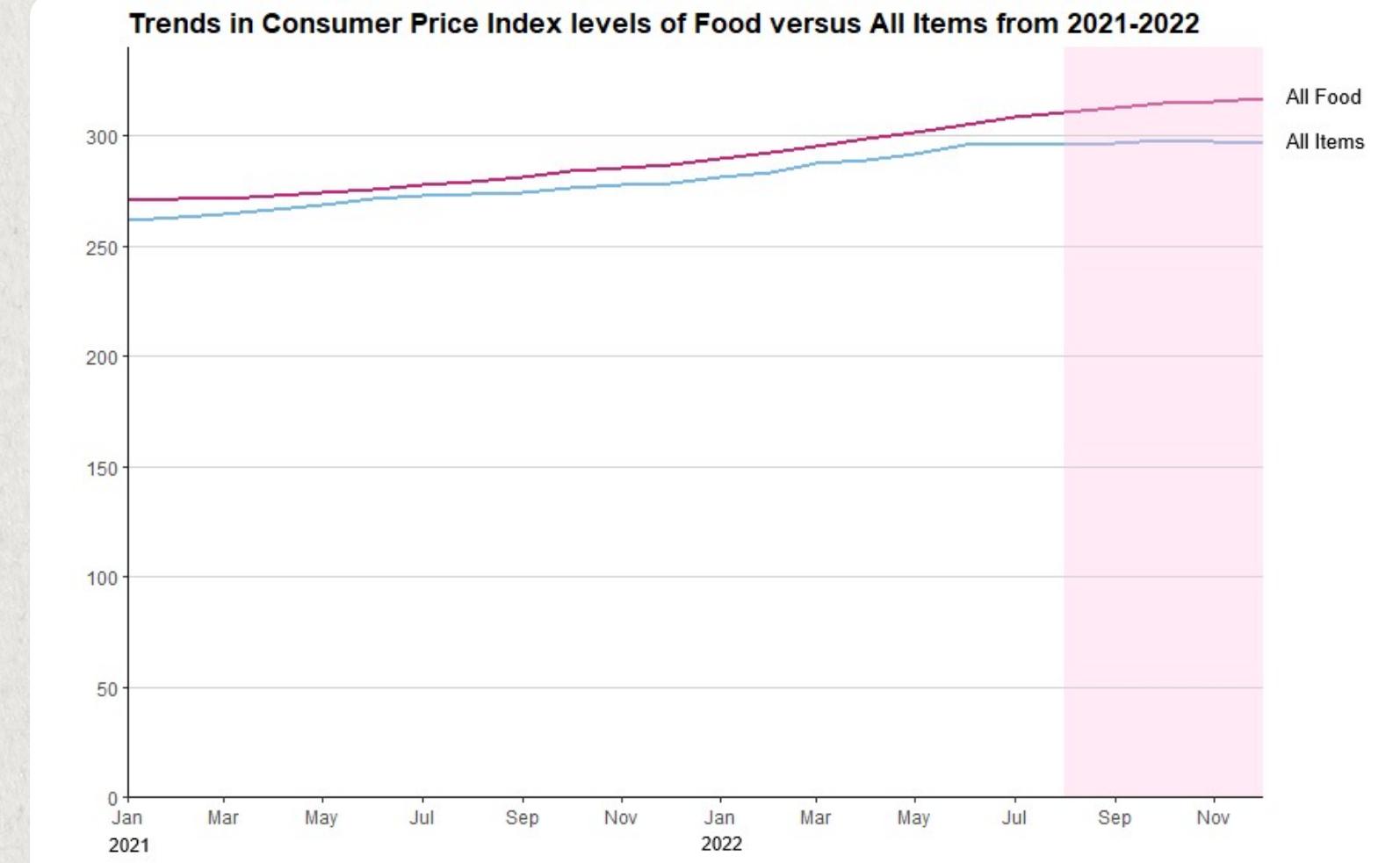
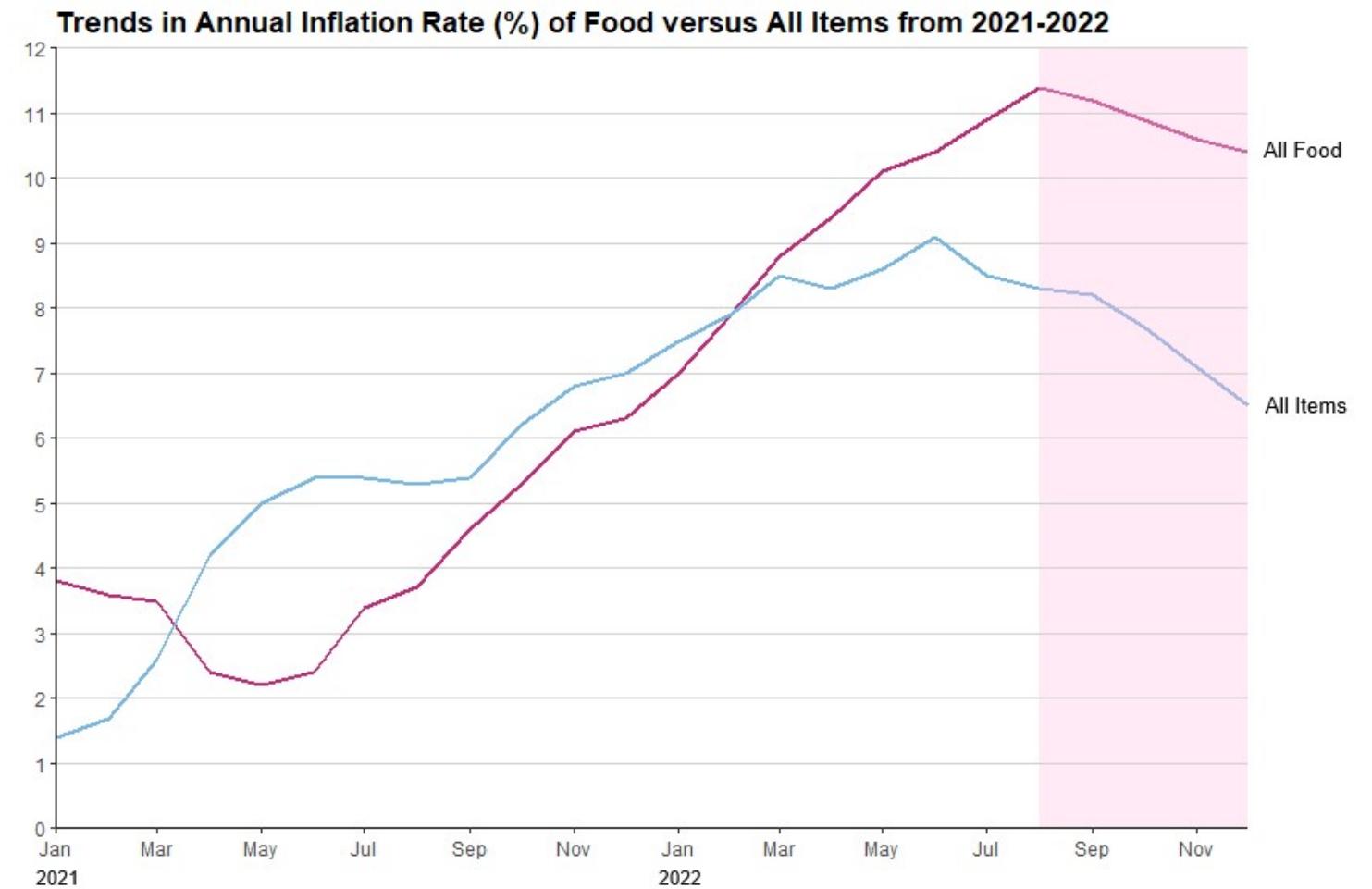
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The Inflationary Environment - Misconceptions



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Misconception

- The word ‘inflation’ has been used as a **political weapon** by many politicians, which can create misinformation
- For example, the US President said “inflation is coming down. Food prices are coming down”.
- Falling inflation does **not necessarily** mean that prices are decreasing.

Argument

- Inflation measures the growth rate of commodity prices compared to a **12-month change** rather than monthly
- Both food and item inflation reached its **highest point** in July 2022 but has been **falling** since
- Despite this, the price level of food is still **increasing** with the price level of items starting to **decrease**.

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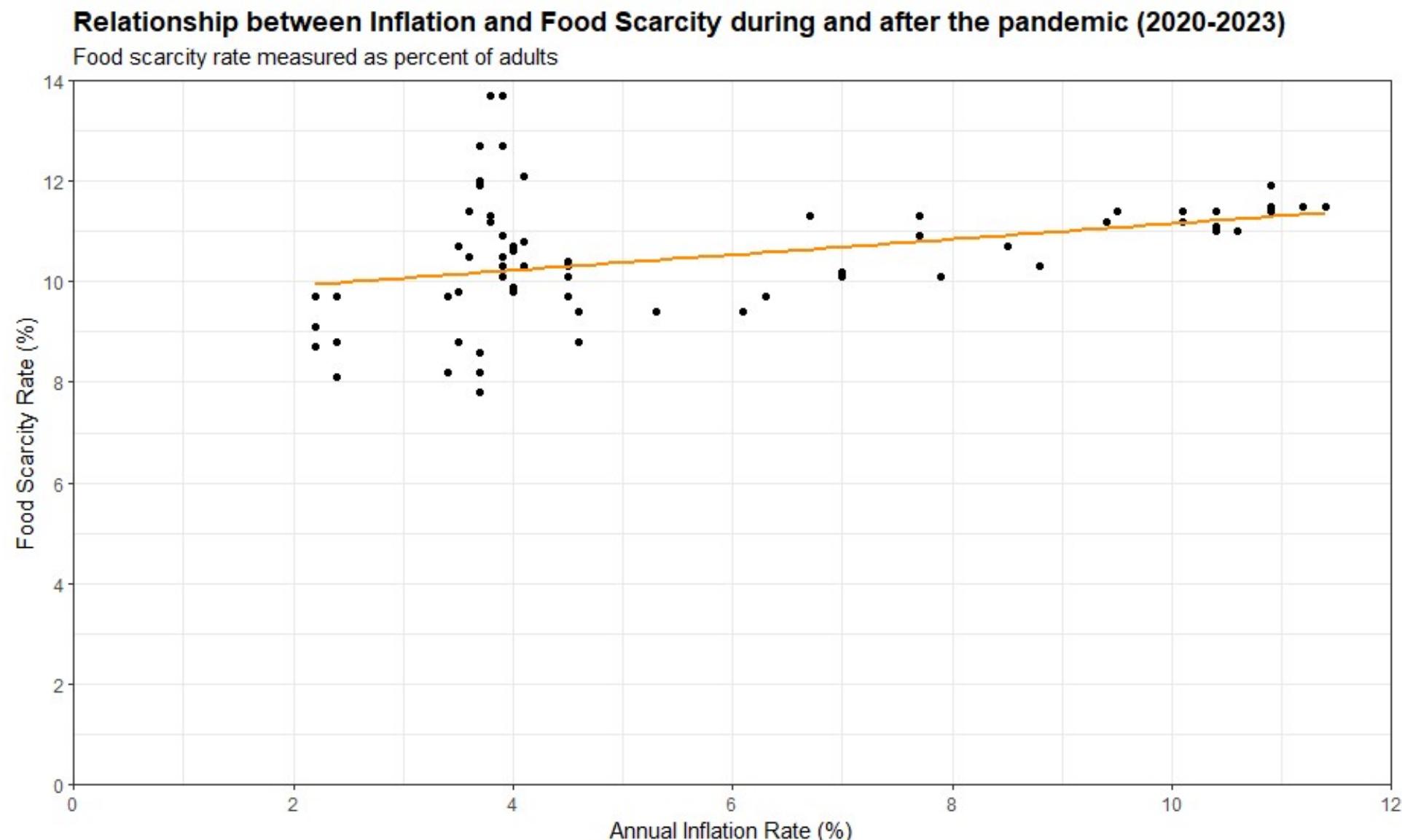
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Inflation impact on Food Security



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Insights

- 1 • The food scarcity rate is measured as the percentage of adults where there was not enough to eat in the last 7 days
- 2 • For this analysis, we only look at data during and after the pandemic
- 3 • We can clearly see there is a positive linear relationship between food inflation and food scarcity. Higher food inflation likely leads to higher food scarcity due to lower access to food

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Social Demographics - Household Composition

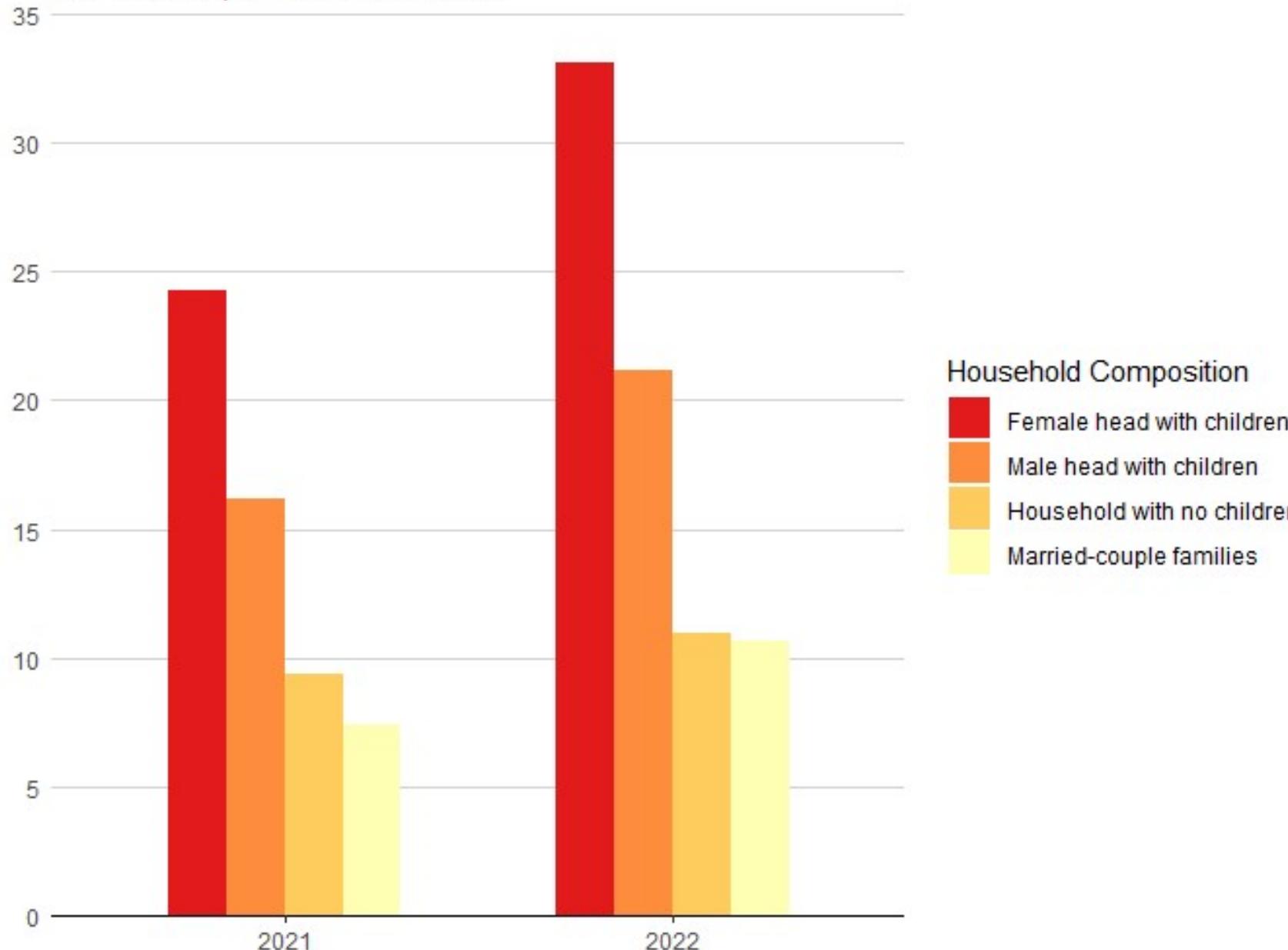


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Food Insecurity by Household Composition in U.S. households 2021-2022

Measured as percent of households



Insights

- 1 • Food insecurity for all household compositions increased significantly between 2021 and 2022
- 2 • Female heads with children yielded the highest food insecurity with the largest increase from 24% to 33% between 2021 and 2022
- 3 • Married-couples and households with no children yielded the lowest food insecurity also having the lowest increase in food insecurity between 2021 and 2022.
- 4 • Female heads with children are 1.6 times more food insecure than their male counterparts and are 3 times more food insecure than households with no children

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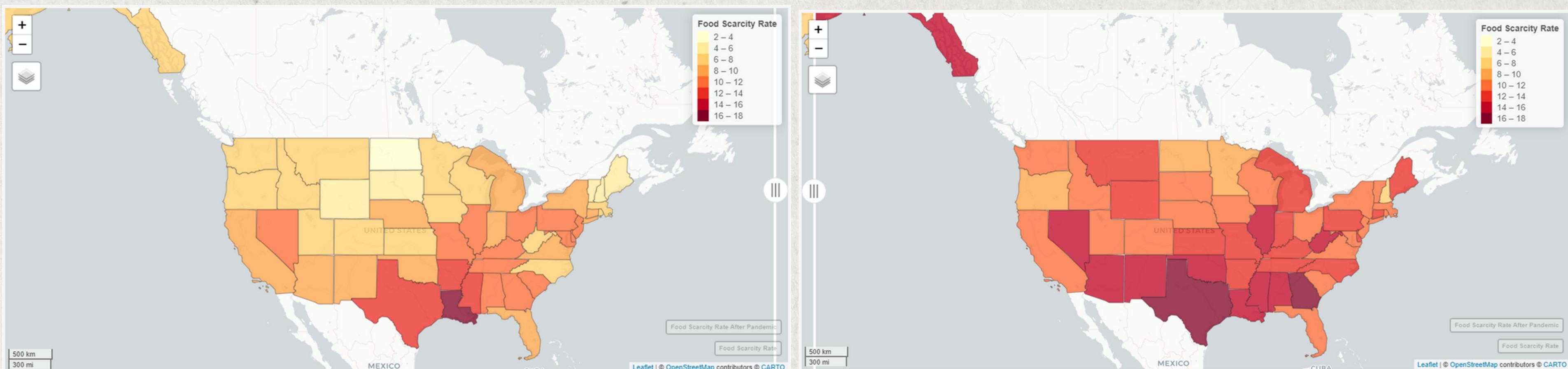
Social Demographics - US States



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Food Scarcity by States in U.S. households before and after the pandemic (2020 versus 2023)



Interactive Data Visualisation Heatmap <https://lustrous-creponne-a7f2c6.netlify.app/>
Please have a look. Do reach out if website does not work!

- 1
 - States in Southern US like Texas, Louisiana, and Mississippi have one of the highest food scarcity rates compared to states in Northern US like Dakota, Wyoming, and Maine.
 - Food scarcity increased across the country from 2020 to 2023 with states like Alaska, Montana, and Wyoming being hit the hardest.
- 2

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Stress on Food and Nutrition Programs



Insights

1

- Expenditure on the USDA's food and nutrition programs have been growing exponentially

2

- As the American population grows, increased funding into food banks and programs is inevitable.

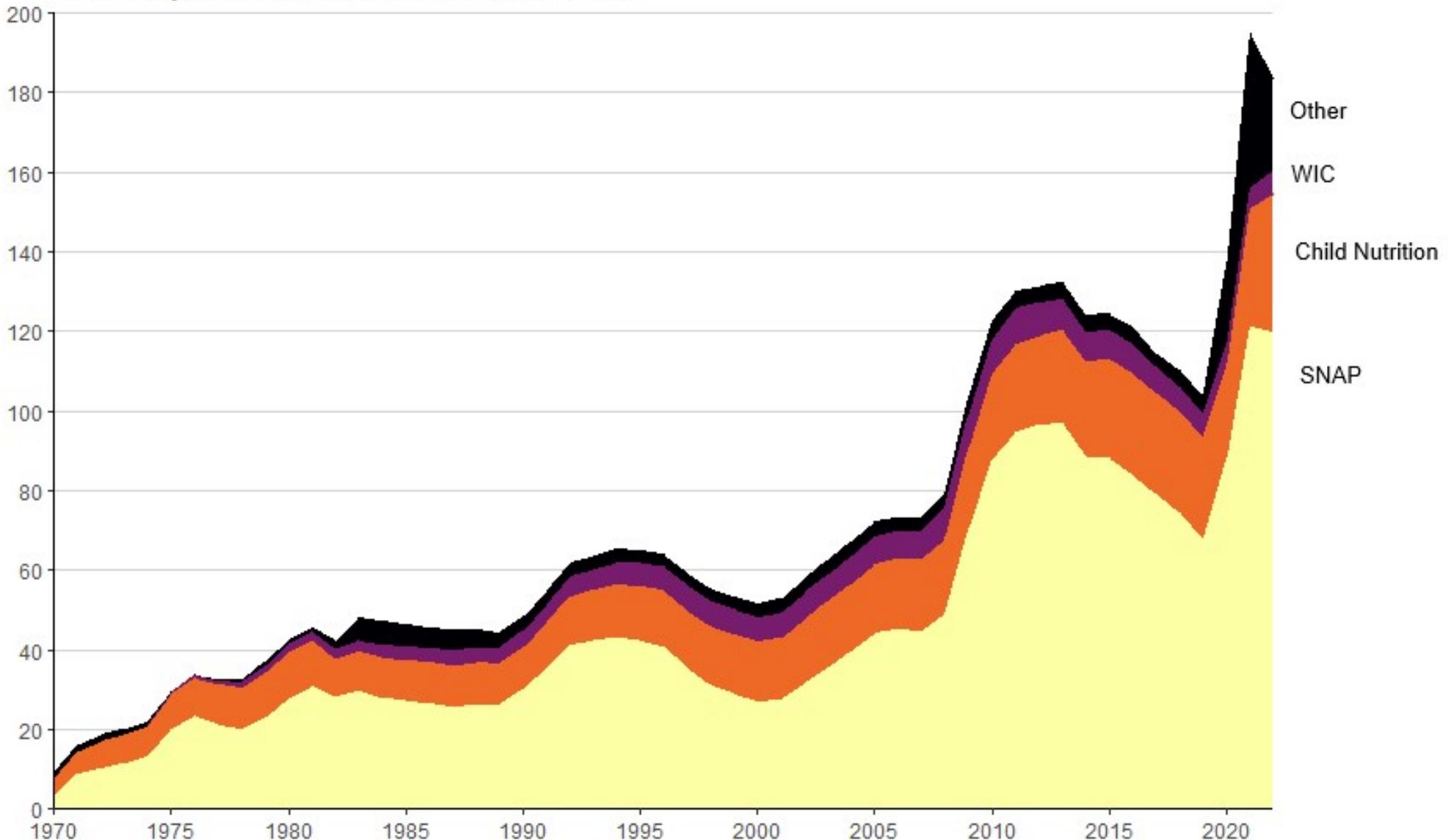
3

- Unviable to continue to increase investments into its food programs due to government's tight budget

What must the government tackle to reduce food insecurity without stress funding its food and nutrition programs?

Trends in USDA Expenditure on Food and Nutrition Assistance Programs from 1970-2022

Inflation-adjusted measured in billions of 2022 dollars



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Future Roadmap



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Recommendations



- The US government should develop a national **food security strategy**
- Target low socio-economic areas by improving economic wellbeing through investments to increase access to food.



This economic support entails:

- Providing financial guidance and support to those in vulnerable communities, reducing poverty and increasing access to food

Target states in the **South, rural** areas, and **female head** families

- Improve food production systems and infrastructure to make food more accessible and affordable in volatile communities

Target states hit the hardest by the pandemic like **Wyoming** and **Alaska**

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Appendix

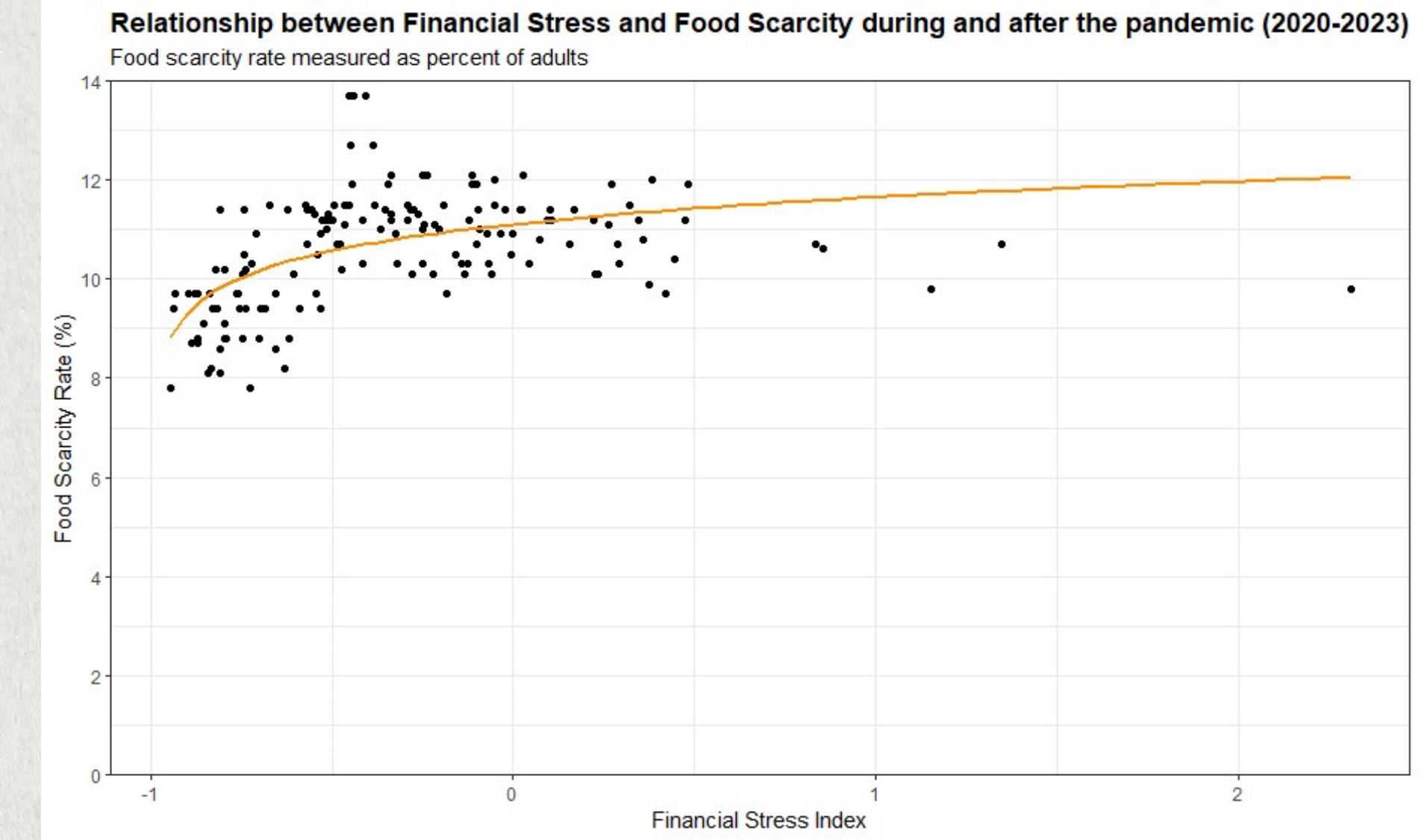
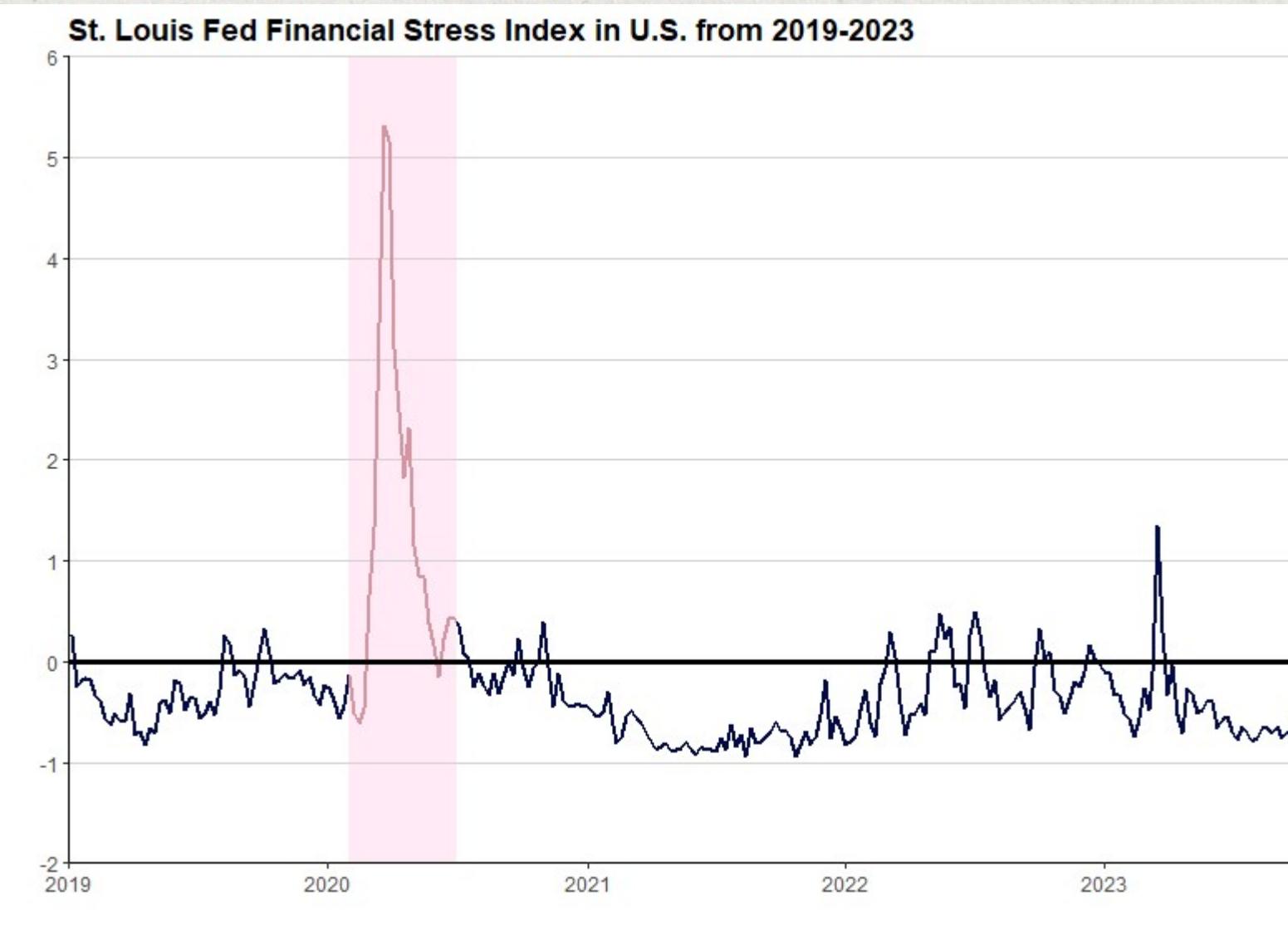
Further Analysis on Food Security



Financial Stress impact on Food Security



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- The financial stress index measures the degree of financial stress in the markets constructed from economic variables including safe assets, credit risk, interest rates and volatility
- The Covid-19 pandemic caused immense financial pressure on US citizens as unemployment rose and economic activity slowed. This lead to the financial stress index jumping to 5.3
- There is a clear positive logarithmic relationship between financial stress and food scarcity, higher financial stress likely leads to higher food scarcity due to lower access for food

Social Demographics - Income to Poverty

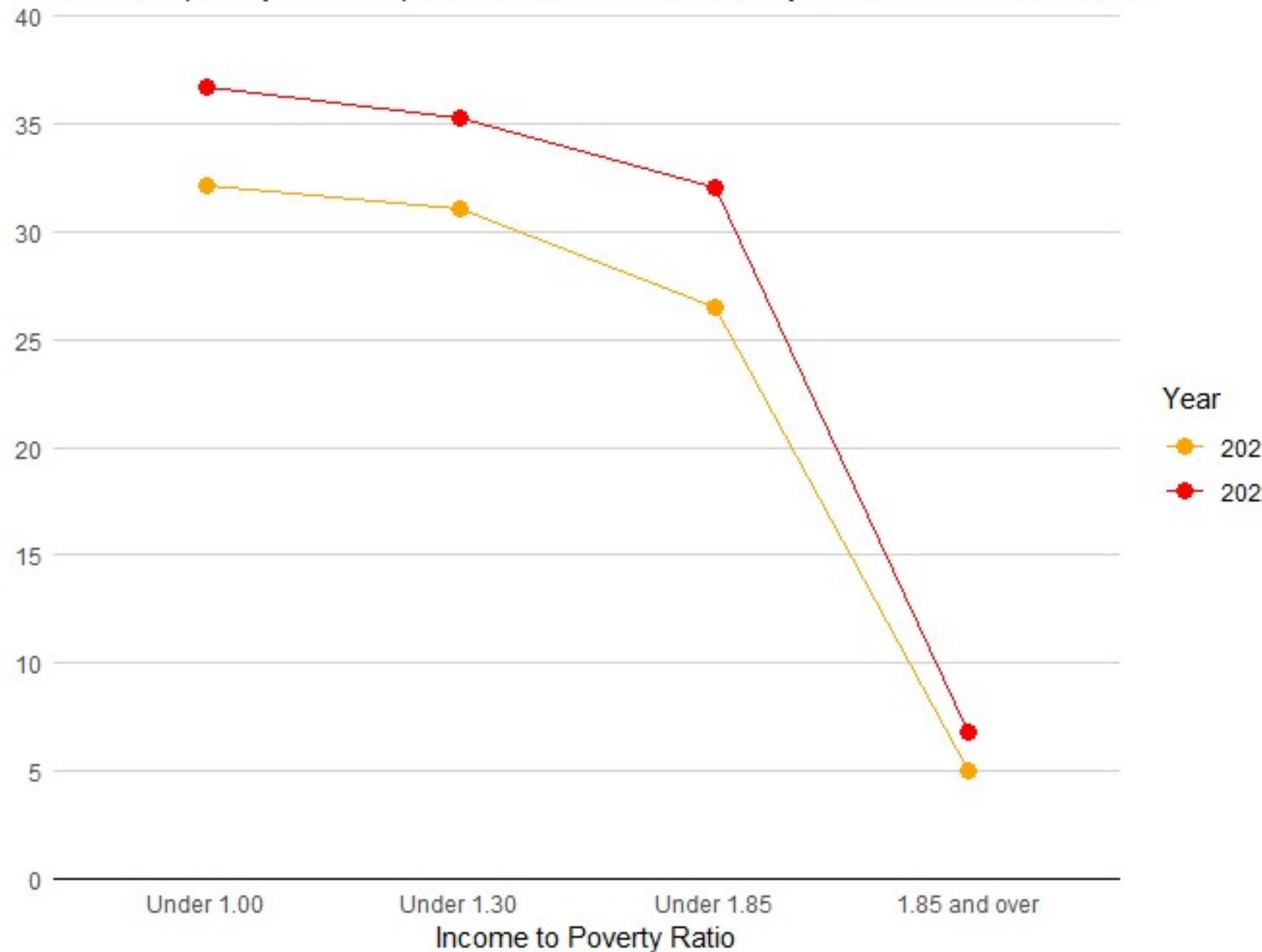


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Income to Poverty versus Food Insecurity in U.S. households 2021-2022

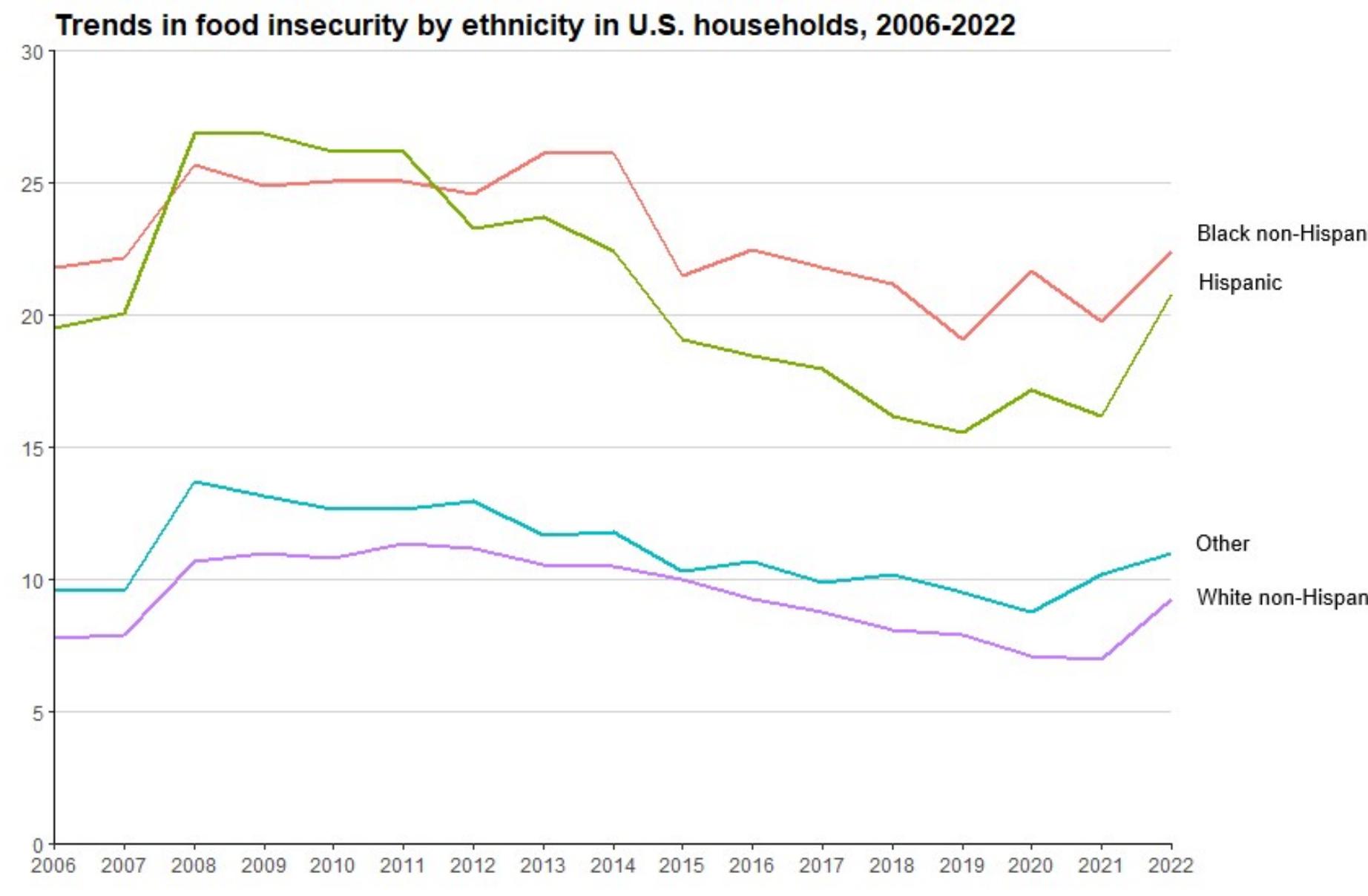
Food insecurity measured as percent of households.
Income to poverty ratio computed as total income divided by median household income.



Insights

- 1 • Households that are over 1.85, significantly above the poverty line, have the lowest food insecurity
- 2 • Households under 1.85, marginally closer to the poverty line, are higher in food insecurity
- 3 • Between 2021 and 2022, households under 1.85 were impacted more, having the largest increase in food insecurity, than households that were over 1.85
- 4 • As individuals reach closer towards falling under the poverty line, food insecurity jumps significantly with securing food becoming scarce and risky

Social Demographics - Ethnicity



Insights

1

- All people of ethnicity experienced higher food insecurity from 2021 to 2022

2

- People of white ethnicity have the lowest food security while black ethnicity have the highest food security

3

- Hispanic people experienced the highest increase in food security from 16% to 21% from 2021 to 2022

4

- There is a big socio-economic disparity between people of colour and white ethnic groups