

THE JACOBS & CUSHMAN

SAN DIEGO FOOD BANK

Economic Impact and Recipient Data Report
2023



■ **SDSU**

L. Robert Payne
School of Hospitality &
Tourism Management

San Diego Food Bank

Economic Impact and Recipient Data Report

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Table of Contents

I. Executive Summary.....	4
II. Introduction.....	6
1. Project Goals.....	6
III. Methodology.....	7
1. The Survey.....	7
2. Results.....	7
IV. Impact.....	8
1. Economic Impact.....	8
2. Food Valuation.....	8
3. Pass-Through Effects.....	9
4. Monetary Distribution.....	9
5. Total Economic Impact.....	11
V. Food Bank Recipients.....	12
1. Survey Results.....	12
VI. Recipients by Region.....	23
1. Survey Locations- Table 5.....	23
2. Regional Differences.....	24
3. Demographics by Region.....	25
VII. Appendices.....	28

I. Executive Summary

The following report is a summary of a survey process of over 1,000 Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank (SDFB) recipients conducted in 2022 by the Center for Hospitality and Tourism Management at San Diego State University. The goal of the study was twofold. First, to identify the economic impact SDFB has on San Diego through its services. Second, to understand the characteristics of food bank recipients and their usage of SDFB services more accurately. While the study was conducted in close proximity to the Covid-19 pandemic, the data illustrate the current reality of SDFB recipients and the tremendous value SDFB provides to San Diego County.

Selected Highlights:

- The SDFB economic impact on San Diego County was calculated at up to \$134.5 million depending on how much of the offset food money or “pass through” recipients used in the economy. Some \$83 million represents direct food value provided to SDFB recipients.
- The primary need for SDFB services results from rising costs (76%) with some 45% adding that they do not receive enough income. Another 25% responded that the need arose because they were seniors on a fixed income. Other reasons for needing the services include unemployment by the primary bread winner (13%), a disability (8%) and an inability to qualify for other assistance (7%).
- Individuals average 73 meals per year, which is comprised of 43.5lbs of food per year at a value of \$166. The wholesale value of the food provided is \$62.7 million per year.
- Respondents reported that an average of 42% of their household food is made up by the SDFB.
- Most respondents (57%) have been using the SDFB for less than one year and almost three quarters (72%) attend food distribution from the SDFB monthly.
- Some 15% of respondents have to travel less than one mile and 23% less than 3 miles to access the SDFB services.
- The median household income is \$21,000 and the average household income is \$24,433 with the modal class of respondents (24%) earning between \$11,000 and \$15,000.
- For households where the job status of the main breadwinner is not retired, the median household income is \$24,000 and the average household income is \$26,113 with the two modal classes of respondents (17%) earning between \$11,000 and \$15,000 and \$26,000 and \$30,000.
- Families who use the SDFB have an average of 3.52 people and a median of 4 people in their household.

- Of those individuals that are not retired, 73% of the main breadwinner in the household is either working full time (43%) or part time (30%).
- Of those individuals that are not retired, 49% have one adult working in the household, 21% have two adults working in the household, and 23% have no adults working in the household.
- The predominant race in the respondent's household is white (53%) and the predominant ethnicity in the respondent's household is Hispanic (63%).

Summary Table: Category	2022
SDFB Economic Impact (EI)	Up to \$134.5M*
Direct Food Value	\$83M
Indirect Economic Impact	\$51.5M
Meals Per Year (Individual)	73**
Pounds of Food Per Year (Individual)	43.5 lbs**
Wholesale Value of food per year	\$62.7M**
Value Per Year Per Individual	\$166.00**
Median Family Yearly Income	\$21,000
Average Family Yearly Income	\$24,433
Median Family Yearly Income (Retirees Excluded)	\$24,000
Average Family Yearly Income (Retirees Excluded)	\$26,113
Average Percentage of Food Received from Food Bank	42.43%
Modal Tenure of Food Bank Services	6 Months to 1 Year (26%)
Modal Frequency of Use	Monthly (72%)

*The total represents 100% pass through of recipient food value. Numbers are rounded

**Data point provided by SDFB

II. Introduction

1. Project Goals

San Diego State University's L. Robert Payne School of Hospitality & Tourism Management partnered with the Jacobs & Cushman San Diego Food Bank (SDFB) to conduct research focused on food bank recipients. The project had two primary goals. The first, was to identify the economic impact of the food provided to hundreds of thousands of recipients in San Diego County each year. The second, was to identify important characteristics of current Food Bank recipients and better understand who they are and how they use SDFB services.

A. Economic Impact

One may not initially see food bank donations as creating significant economic impact on a region. However, when someone receives food bank donations, that food represents a dollar value. As a result, the recipient will spend a corresponding dollar value less on food creating a "pass through" effect with the money. Consequently, over the course of a year, a significant dollar value is passed on to food bank recipients who now have money to spend in other parts of the economy for necessities such as utilities, fuel, medication, rent, and clothing. The first section of this report identifies the mean percentage of food bank donations received and traditional spending patterns of San Diego residents to assess the direct, indirect and total economic impact of SDFB on San Diego.

B. Recipient Characteristics

The second part of this report overviews food bank usage characteristics and demographic characteristics of current food bank recipients. These data identified who is receiving food, how often, from what distance and what percentage of their total food was SDFB providing, in addition to providing current family and demographic characteristics. A variety of data were collected which better profiles those who receive food.

SDFB recipients receive significant benefits with an average of 42% of household food made up by the Food Bank donations.



III. Methodology

1. The Survey

To accomplish both research goals a 13- item survey was created, tested and deployed as part of this study. The questions were created in conjunction with SDFB staff and tested at two locations in north San Diego. The final items used focused on:

- Length of time used
- Travel distance
- Frequency
- Other assistance received
- Reasons for using Food Bank
- Job status
- Family size, make up and age
- Race and Ethnicity

Over three-quarters (76%) of respondents reported that rising costs is a reason for using the Food Bank. 45% reported that it is because they don't have enough income and 25% are a senior on fixed income.

2. Results

Some 1,018 surveys were completed in the current study. A stratified random sample was implemented across four regions of San Diego including *Northern San Diego, Central San Diego, South Bay* and *East County*. The goal was ensure that the completed surveys roughly mimicked food distribution throughout the county. In addition, the stratification ensured that an accurate picture of recipients was captured rather than focusing in just one or two areas.



IV. Impact

1. Economic Impact

To assess the economic impact of San Diego Food Bank donations, first, the accurate retail value of the food had to be assessed. This identifies what recipients would have had to spent if they purchased the foods themselves. Once this total is identified than the amount of money that is likely to flow into the economy is calculated using traditional spending patterns of San Diego families. Finally, the total dollar value that passes through to the economy is assessed for indirect impacts on the economy. That is, when a dollar is added to the San Diego economy, that money stimulates further spending or indirect impact by other businesses and employees who benefit from the expenditure.

2. Food Valuation

While the dollar value of food collected by SDFB is readily available, this is not necessarily the value of the food to a family. The true value is closer to what the family would have to pay for the food if they had to purchase it at a retail location. In order to do so, we utilized data provided by SDFB including the wholesale value of the food that was distributed, the number of individuals receiving the food, and a basket of typical foods that were distributed.

Most respondents (57%) have been using the Food Bank for less than one year.



In 2021, the wholesale value of the food distributed by the SDFB was **\$62,748,366** and it was distributed to an average of **500,000 individuals**. From this wholesale valuation, it is necessary to determine how much the recipient would have paid to obtain this food at a retail store. To aid in this determination, the Food Bank provided a sample of various food items in various categories they typically give out and

their unit wholesale cost. From those items we determined the retail price of the same items at Walmart, Target and other retailers. The average difference between the wholesale cost to the Food Bank and the retail cost to a consumer is **32.29%**. In other words, food obtained at a store is **32.29%** more expensive than what it costs the San Diego Food Bank to obtain the same food. Appendix 1 has detailed information on this calculation and Table 2 below shows the retail value.

Retail Valuation Table 2	
Wholesale Value of food per year	\$62,748,366
Estimated Retail Value	\$83,009,813
Number of Individuals Served	500,000
Value per year per individual	\$166

3. Pass-Through Effects

The next step in valuing the economic impact of the San Diego Food Bank is to determine how an individual benefits from the food they received from the Food Bank. In other words, because an individual received food from SDFB, this frees up income that they can spend on other goods and services. However, it is unlikely that the entire value of the food that an individual receives will be spent on other things. Simply because an individual receives **\$166** worth of food does not mean that this frees up **\$166** in spending money. One reason for this is that if an individual didn't receive the food from the San Diego Food Bank they may have gone without and consumed less food. Instead of the **\$166** in food freeing up income to be spent elsewhere it resulted in additional food that would not have been purchased and consumed otherwise.

Almost three quarters (72%) attend food distribution from the Food Bank monthly.



Another reason that there is likely a difference between the value of food received the value of additional spending is because of the contents of the basket of food received. The items in the basket may not be the same items the individual would have bought had they been given **\$166** in cash instead. The recipient may have chosen to purchase a different basket of food or spent that money in other ways such as on rent or childcare. For the purposes of this study, we refer to the difference between the value of food received and the amount of income that is freed up to spend on other things as “pass-through.” If the pass-through is **100%** then the entire value of the food received is spent on other goods and services and **\$166** of food received results in an equal amount of additional spending. If the pass through is **50%** then only half the value is passed through and **\$166** of food received results in **\$83** in additional spending. Because the amount of pass through is likely highly variable from individual to individual we present a range of potential pass-through values that range **30% to 100%** in the estimates provided.

4. Monetary Distribution

The last step in determining the economic impact to an individual of the San Diego Food Bank is to see how an individual will distribute the value of the food they receive amongst other goods and services. To do this we need a reliable source that provides an estimate of how a typical San Diego resident spends their income. The California Budget and Policy Center has a report that provides information as to various sized families and how they allocate their income.¹ The survey results indicated that the modal family in our survey is comprised of a two-parent family with one of the adults working and two children. Therefore, this is budget that we utilize in this report. Table 3 shows the average budget along with the pass-through amount previously discussed.

¹ https://www.calbudgetcenter.org/app/uploads/Fact-Sheet_Making-Ends-Meet-2017_San-DiegoCty.pdf

**Monetary Distribution and Pass-Through Percentage
Table 3**

Average Annual Expenditures	Two Parent Family (One Working)	Percentage Pass-Through							
		100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Percent Distribution	Value of Food	\$83,009,305	\$74,708,374	\$66,407,444	\$58,106,513	\$49,805,583	\$41,504,652	\$33,203,722	\$24,902,791
Food	15.3%	\$12,700,424	\$11,430,381	\$10,160,339	\$8,890,297	\$8,890,297	\$6,350,212	\$5,080,169	\$3,810,127
Housing	34.4%	\$28,555,201	\$25,699,681	\$22,844,161	\$19,988,641	\$19,988,641	\$14,277,600	\$11,422,080	\$8,566,560
Transportation	7.8%	\$6,474,726	\$5,827,253	\$5,179,781	\$4,532,308	\$4,532,308	\$3,237,363	\$2,589,890	\$1,942,418
Healthcare	9.7%	\$8,051,903	\$7,246,712	\$6,441,522	\$5,636,332	\$5,636,332	\$4,025,951	\$3,220,761	\$2,415,571
Child Care/Educ.	6.9%	\$5,727,642	\$5,154,878	\$4,582,114	\$4,009,349	\$4,009,349	\$2,863,821	\$2,291,057	\$1,718,293
Miscellaneous	15.6%	\$12,949,452	\$11,654,506	\$10,359,561	\$9,064,616	\$9,064,616	\$6,474,726	\$5,179,781	\$3,884,835
Taxes	10.3%	\$8,549,958	\$7,694,963	\$6,839,967	\$5,984,971	\$5,984,971	\$4,274,979	\$3,419,983	\$2,564,988

		100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Percent distribution	Budget Percent	82,827,843	74,545,059	66,262,274	57,979,490	49,696,706	41,413,922	33,131,137	24,848,353
Food	15.3%	12,672,660	11,405,394	10,138,128	8,870,862	8,870,862	6,336,330	5,069,064	3,801,798
Housing	34.4%	28,492,778	25,643,500	22,794,222	19,944,945	19,944,945	14,246,389	11,397,111	8,547,833
Transportation	7.8%	6,460,572	5,814,515	5,168,457	4,522,400	4,522,400	3,230,286	2,584,229	1,938,172
Healthcare	9.7%	8,034,301	7,230,871	6,427,441	5,624,011	5,624,011	4,017,150	3,213,720	2,410,290
Education/Child Care	6.9%	5,715,121	5,143,609	4,572,097	4,000,585	4,000,585	2,857,561	2,286,048	1,714,536
Miscellaneous	15.6%	12,921,144	11,629,029	10,336,915	9,044,800	9,044,800	6,460,572	5,168,457	3,876,343
Taxes	10.3%	8,531,268	7,678,141	6,825,014	5,971,887	5,971,887	4,265,634	3,412,507	2,559,380

5. Total Economic Impact

The results of the first part of the study suggest that the direct value of food provided to SDFB recipients ranges from **\$24.9M-\$83M** depending on the pass-through effect. Put simply, if the recipients use ALL of the value of food they receive in the economy, the pass through is 100%. This dollar value causes a ripple effect or indirect impact on the economy. This total is calculated use the Regional Input-Output Modeling System, or RIMS II multiplier.² Table 4 provides the direct value for each percentage of pass through and the corresponding economic impact. The range of numbers is helpful in looking at EI from a variety of situations as usage of SDFB resources changes.

Total Economic Impact by Pass-Through Table 4								
Pass-Through	100%	90%	80%	70%	60%	50%	40%	30%
Direct Value	\$83,009,305	\$74,708,374	\$66,407,444	\$58,106,513	\$49,805,583	\$41,504,652	\$33,203,722	\$24,902,791
Indirect EI	\$51,465,769	\$46,319,192	\$41,172,615	\$36,026,038	\$30,879,461	\$25,732,884	\$20,586,308	\$15,439,730
Economic Impact	\$134,475,074	\$121,027,566	\$107,580,059	\$94,132,551	\$80,685,044	\$67,237,536	\$53,790,030	\$40,342,521

² <https://www.bea.gov/news/blog/2020-08-03/bea-updates-regional-economic-tool>

V. Food Bank Recipients

The following section highlights the results of the survey conducted with San Diego Food Bank recipients. The goal was to identify more usage and demographic characteristics about those who receive San Diego Food Bank support. The first section is focused on the direct survey results. The second section breaks out these data by geographic location.

1. Survey Results

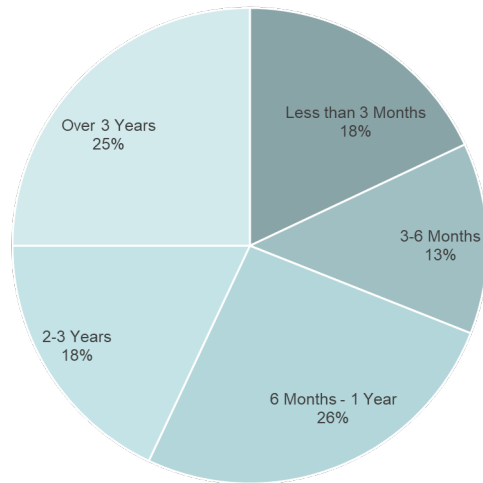
A. Recipient Summary

The traditional San Diego Food Bank recipient is a family with an average of **3.5** people. The family likely has a senior and/or a child as part of the family unit. The family is likely white who classify as Hispanic. The family is likely to have the main bread winner working full time. The primary reason the family used San Diego Food Bank services is due to rising costs and not having enough income to cover expenses. The San Diego Food Bank makes up over **40%** of their household food intake. The family has likely used the San Diego Food Bank services for between 6 months and a year, visits monthly, and travels less than **3 miles** to the site.



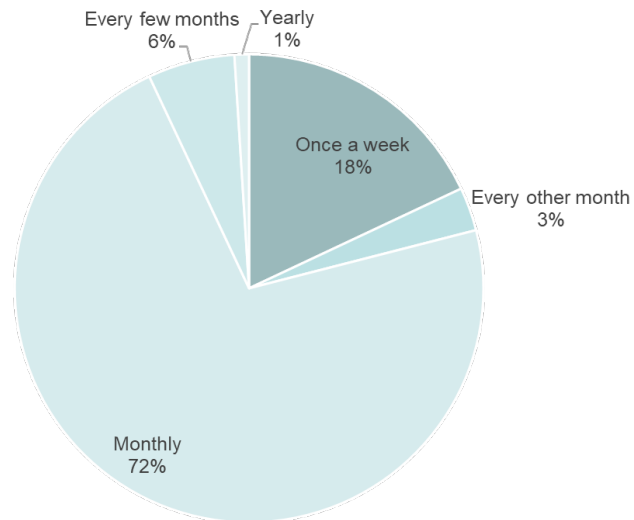
B. San Diego Food Bank Tenure

How long have you received food from the Food Bank?
(Among all respondents, N=1017)



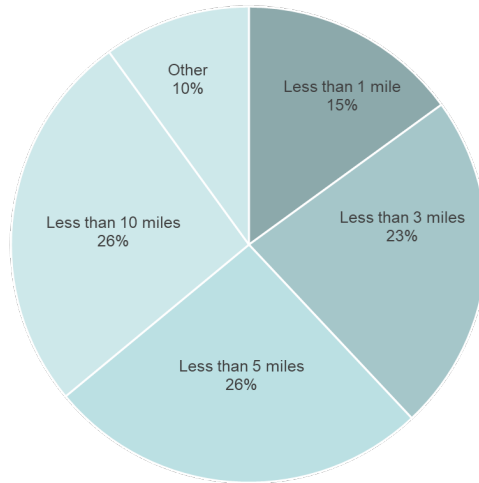
C. Sand Diego Food Bank Usage Frequency

How often do you attend food distributions?
(Among all respondents, N=1017)



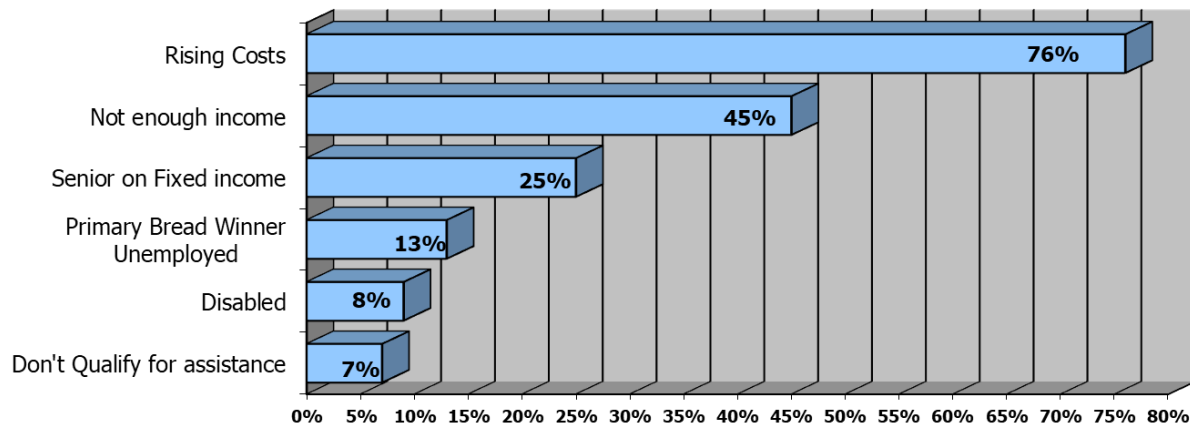
D. Distance Traveled

How far do you travel to access the Food Bank?
(Among all respondents, N=1015)



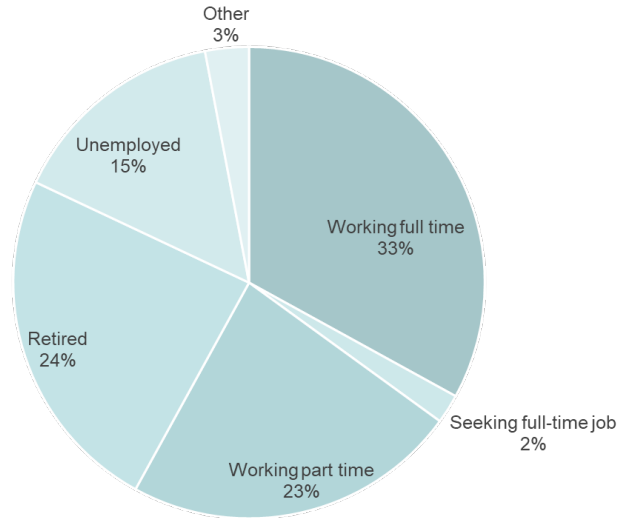
E. Reason for Using the Food Bank

Why is your household seeking food at the Food Bank?
Choose all that apply
(Among all respondents, N=1014)



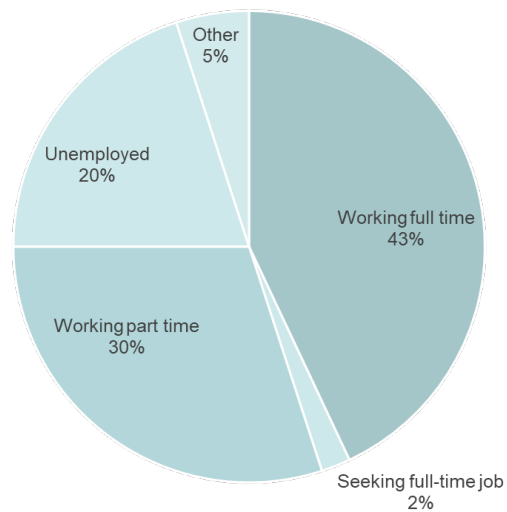
F. Job Status

What is the job status of the main breadwinner in your family? May or may not be you
(Among all respondents, N=1010)



G. Job Status if Not Retired

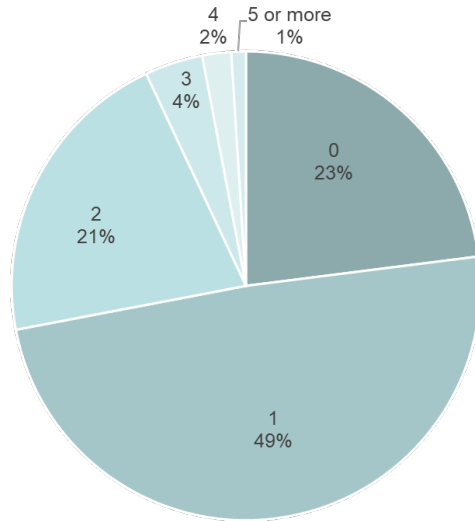
What is the job status of the main breadwinner in your family? May or may not be you
(Among respondents that aren't retired, N=769)



- It is likely that respondents are working more than one part-time job that could be a fulltime equivalent.

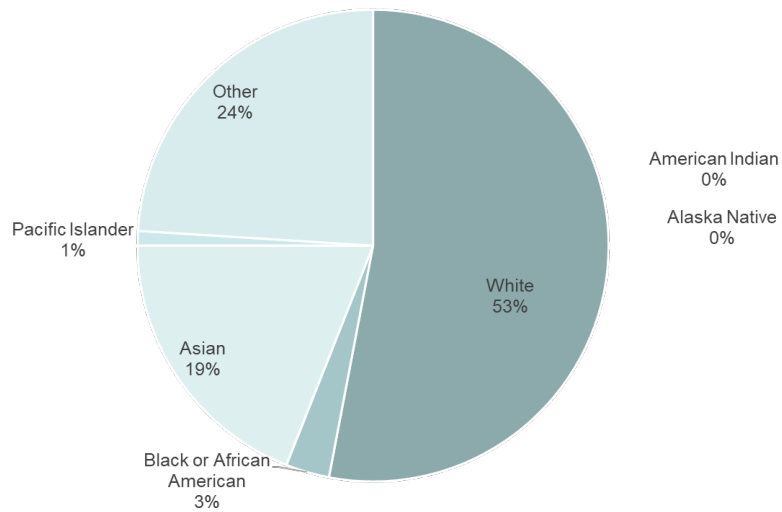
H. Number of adults working in household if main breadwinner isn't retired

How many adults (18 or over) in your household earn income through work, including yourself?
 (Among all respondents, N=772)



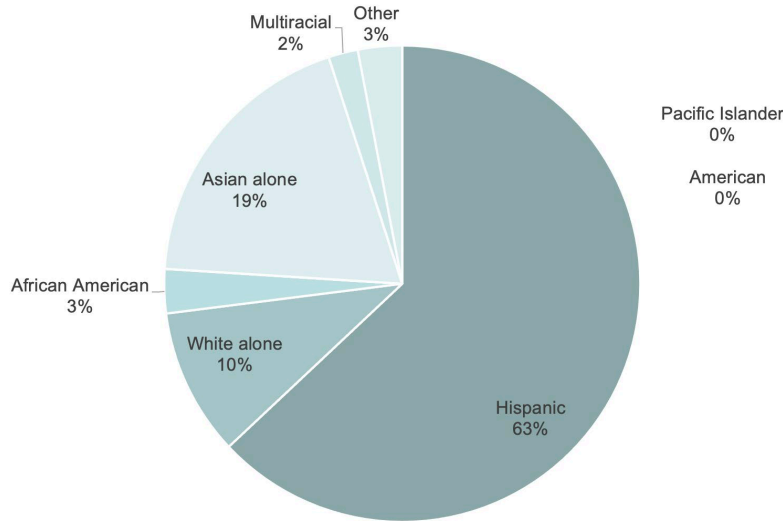
I. Predominant Race in Household

What best describes the predominant race in your household?
 (Among all respondents, N=1007)



J. Predominant Ethnicity in Household

What best describes the predominant ethnicity in your household?
(Among all respondents, N=1006)



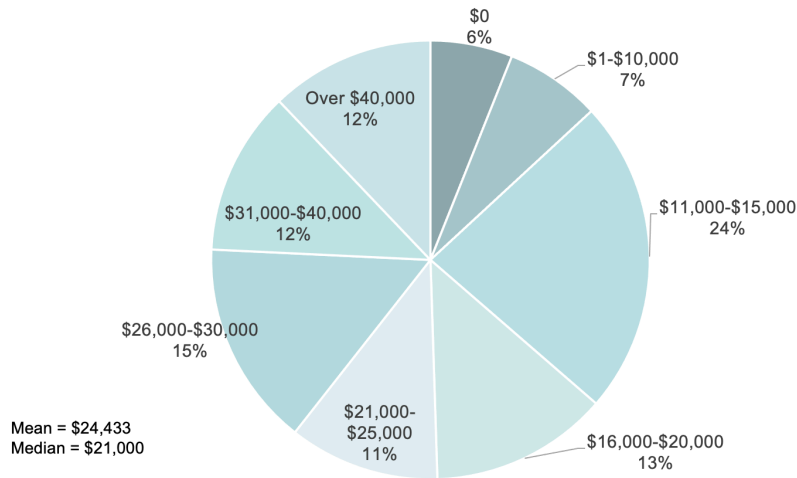
K. Race by Ethnicity in Household

Analysis of race by ethnicity in household
(Among all respondents, N=1006)

Ethnicity	Race						
	Hispanic	White	African American	Asian	Pacific Islander	Multi-racial	Other
White	43.1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	19.7%
African American	9.3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
American Indian	0%	2.9%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Alaska Native	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Asian	0%	0%	0%	19.34%	0%	0%	0%
Pacific Islander	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1.6%
Other	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2.7%

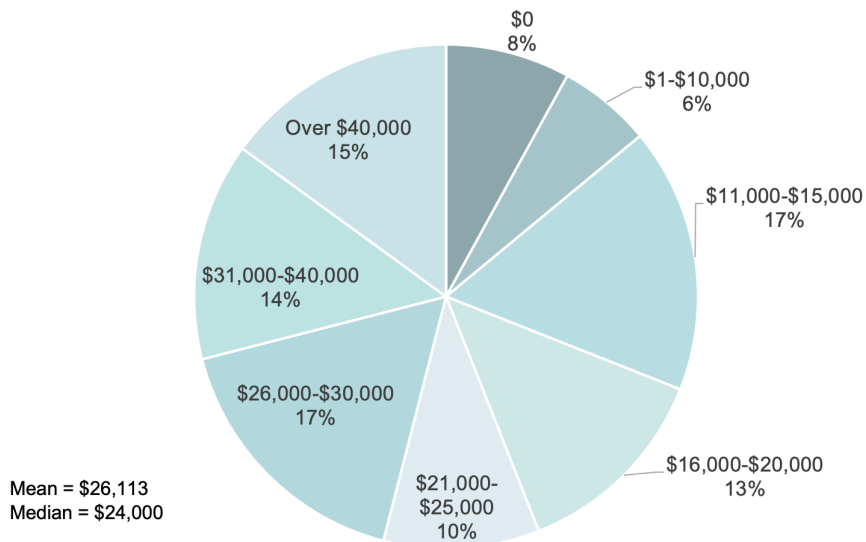
L. Household Income

What is your total household income in thousands?
 All family members combined?
 (Among all respondents, N=989)



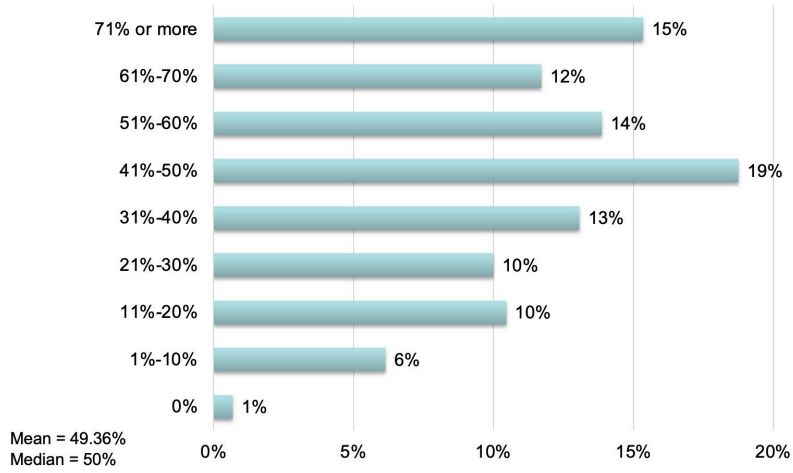
M. Household Income if the main breadwinner is not Retired

What is your total household income in thousands?
 All family members combined?
 (Among all respondents, N=989)



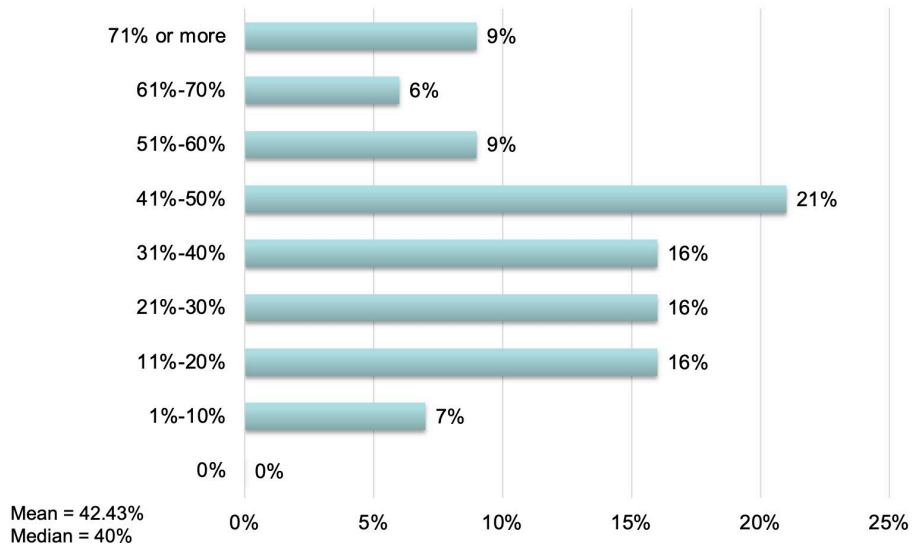
N. Grocery Store Household Food Percentage

What percentage of your household food is made up by the grocery store?
(Among all respondents, N=880)



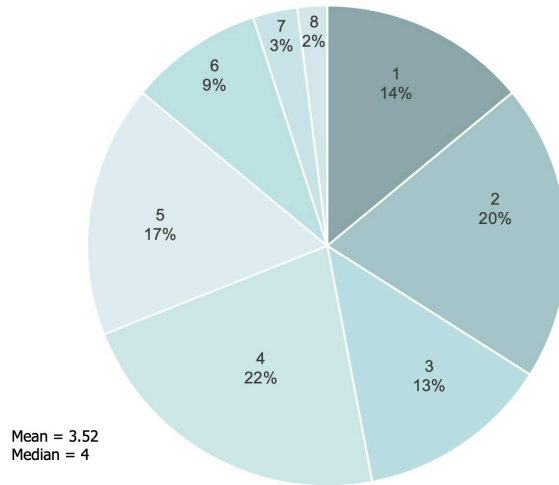
O. Food Bank Household Food Percentage

What percentage of your household food is made up by the Food Bank?
(Among all respondents, N=996)



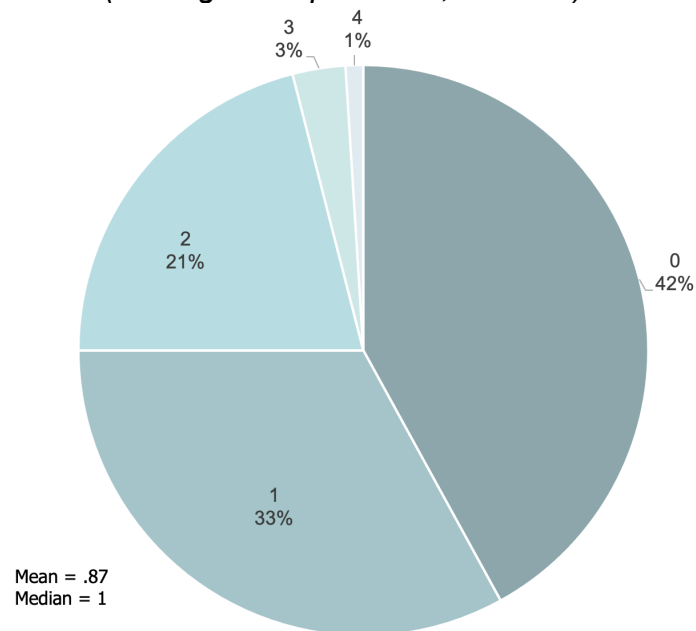
P. Household Size

The number of individuals in your household
(Among all respondents, N=1018)



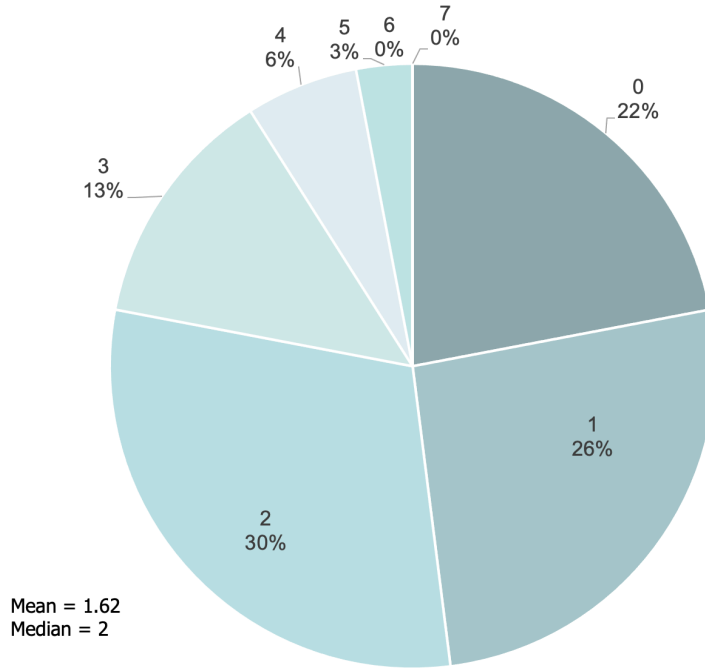
Q. Number of Seniors (Ages 62+) in Household

The number of individuals 62 years old or older
(Among all respondents, N=1018)



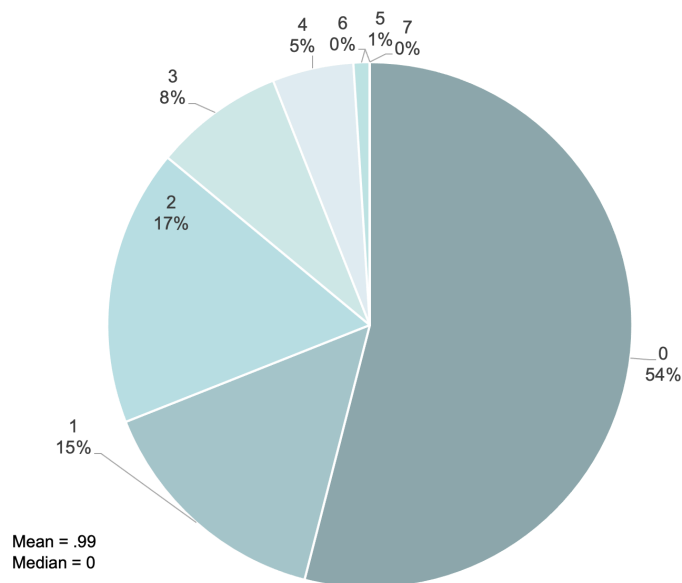
R. Number of Adults (Ages 18-61) in Household

The number of individuals between 18 and 61 years old
(Among all respondents, N=1018)



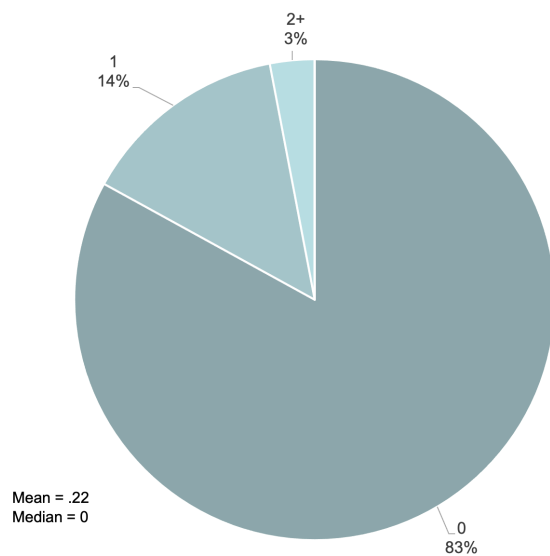
S. Number of Kids Under Age 18 in Household

The number of individuals under 18 years old
(Among all respondents, N=1018)



T. Number of Kids 5 and Under in Household

The number of individuals 5 years old and under
(Among all respondents, N=1018)



VI. Recipients by Region

The survey data were collected in 4 regions of San Diego to ensure all stakeholder groups were represented. These regions include North County, Central San Diego, East County and South Bay. Table 5 below shows the breakdown of targeted survey locations. The following section looks at differences between these regions on important characteristics such as demographics and San Diego Food Bank usage.

1. Survey Locations- Table 5

Agency Name	City	Area
Community Food Connection 14047 Twin Peaks Rd, Poway, CA 92064	Poway	North
Fallbrook Spanish Seventh Day Adventist Church 439 Iowa Street, Fallbrook, CA 92028	Fallbrook	North
Community Resource Center 650 Second Street, Encinitas, CA 92024	Encinitas	North
California Independent Provider Training Center 4855 Seminole Drive, San Diego, CA 92115	Rolando	Central
First Christian Church of National City 1800 East 17th Street, National City, CA 91950	National City	Central
Sherman Heights Community Center 2258 Island Avenue, San Diego, CA 92102	Sherman Heights	Central
Old Town Community Church 2444 Congress Street, San Diego, CA 92110	Old Town	Central
Jewish Family Service of San Diego 8804 Balboa Ave, San Diego, CA 92123	Kerney Mesa	Central
First Christian Church of National City 1800 East 17th Street, National City, CA 91950	National City	Central
Ramona Food & Clothes Closet Incorporated 773 Main, Street Ramona, CA 92065	Ramona	East County
Samoa Independent 2055 Skyline Drive, Lemon Grove, CA 91945	Lemon Grove	East County
Salvation Army - El Cajon 1025 East Main Street, El Cajon, CA 92021	El Cajon	East County
MACC Project 1385 Third Avenue, Chula Vista, CA 91911	Chula Vista	South Bay
Oxford Terrace Apartments 555 Oxford Street, Chula Vista, CA 91911	Chula Vista	South Bay
Lutheran Social Services of SoCal Project Hand 580 Hilltop Drive, Chula Vista, CA 91910	Chula Vista	South Bay
Iglesia Cristiana Getsemani 3055 Beyer Boulevard Ste #C101, San Diego, CA 92123	San Diego	South Bay

Note: Some locations were surveyed twice.



2. Regional Differences

Highlights

- North County locations has many instances and South Bay a few instances where the responses are different than Central and East locations.
- North County respondents are fairly new users of the Food Bank as 70% have been using the Food Bank less than or equal to one year.
- Over half (53%) of residents in North County household food is made up by the Food Bank, which is larger than the overall average of 42%. South Bay has the least of their food made up by the Food Bank at 35%.
- North county locations visit the Food Bank more often than other locations as 42% of respondents come weekly while only 18% come weekly overall. South County has 91% of their respondents visiting the Food Bank monthly.
- North County cites the main reason (52%) their household seeks food from the Food Bank is due to not enough income while other locations report rising costs (around 75%) as the primary reason their household uses the Food Bank.
- North County respondents have average incomes of \$16,336 which is approximately \$8,000 less than the average income of \$24,433 and a median income of \$7,000 less than the overall median of \$21,000. South Bay incomes are almost \$3,000 more than the average income and a median income of \$2,000 more than the overall median.
- North County households have an average household size of 3.01 which is smaller than the average house size of 3.52. South Bay households have larger than average household size of 4.26.

3. Demographics by Region

A. Income by Region

	Mean	Median
Overall	\$24,433	\$21,000
Central	\$25,006	\$21,000
East	\$25,139	\$24,000
North	\$16,336	\$14,000
South Bay	\$27,112	\$23,000

B. Percentage of Household Food made up by the Food Bank

	Mean	Median
Overall	42.43%	40.00%
Central	42.31%	40.00%
East	42.77%	40.00%
North	53.27%	50.00%
South Bay	35.41%	30.00%

C. Number of People in the Household

	Mean	Median
Overall	3.52	4
Central	3.26	3
East	3.53	4
North	3.01	3
South Bay	4.26	4

D. Job Status of Food Bank Recipients

	Central	East	North	South
Working full time	26%	35%	37%	36%
Seeking full-time job	1%	1%	6%	1%
Working part time	27%	23%	18%	21%
Retired	27%	26%	6%	27%
Unemployed	15%	11%	32%	12%
Other	4%	4%	1%	3%

E. Food Bank Usage by Region

	Central	East	North	South
Less than 3 months	21%	17%	23%	14%
3 -6 months	9%	15%	18%	12%
6 months-1 year	24%	24%	28%	36%
2-3 years	20%	17%	11%	22%
Over 3 years	26%	27%	20%	16%

F. Frequency of Use of the Food Bank

	Central	East	North	South
Once a week	20%	16%	42%	1%
Every other week	1%	5%	6%	2%
Monthly	75%	71%	43%	91%
Every few months	3%	8%	9%	6%
Yearly	1%	0%	0%	0%

G. Distance Traveled to the Food Bank

	Central	East	North	South
Less than 1 mile	15%	14%	25%	10%
Less than 3 miles	22%	27%	24%	19%
Less than 5 miles	22%	29%	24%	27%
Less than 10 miles	32%	21%	17%	29%
Other	9%	9%	10%	15%

H. Reason for using the Food Bank

	Central	East	North	South
Rising costs	75%	88%	47%	73%
Not enough income	45%	42%	52%	44%
Senior on Fixed income	28%	24%	15%	28%
Primary breadwinner unemployed	11%	10%	29%	11%
Disabled	12%	8%	8%	9%
Don't qualify for assistance	9%	6%	10%	3%

VII. Appendices

Appendix 1 Product Valuation Calculations

Unit Cost (pound/case)	Retail Cost	Percent Difference
\$1.89	\$1.28	-0.32
\$1.89	\$1.42	-0.24
\$1.96	\$1.42	-0.27
\$1.74		na
\$1.91	\$1.84	-0.04
\$0.85	\$1.72	1.04
\$4.88	\$5.97	0.22
\$1.92	\$2.16	0.13
\$4.65	\$9.79	1.2
\$0.47		na
\$3.44	\$3.44	0
\$1.21	\$3.17	1.6
\$1.49	\$1.84	0.23
\$2.29	\$3.23	0.41
\$1.34	\$ 1.78	0.32
	Avg Percent Difference	32.2%