



The FARMacia Project

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Presenters



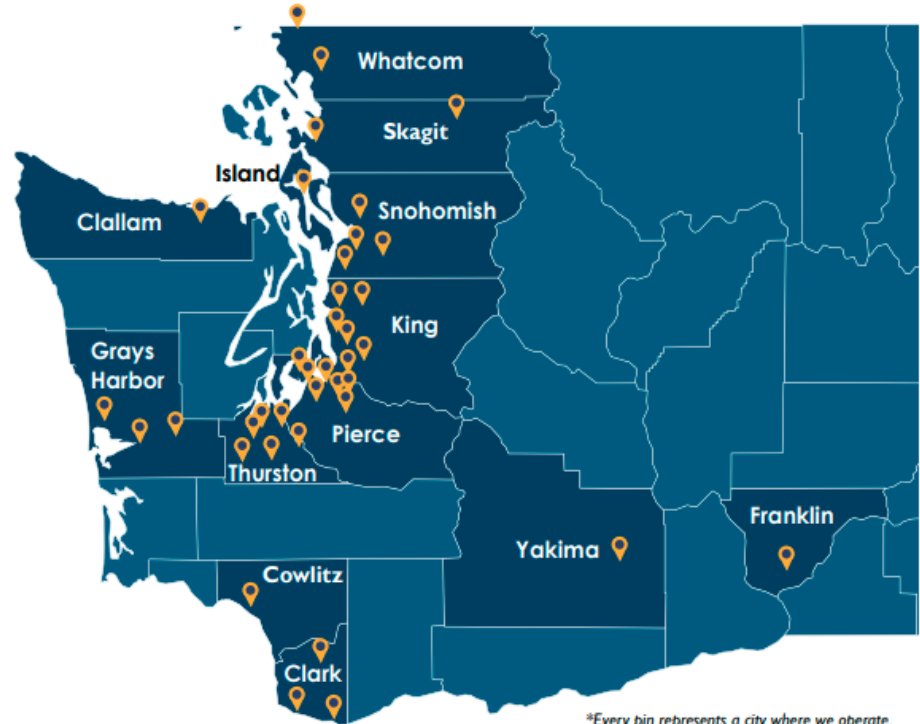
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Sea Mar Community Health Centers

Sea Mar Community Health Centers is a community-based organization committed to providing quality, comprehensive health, human, housing, educational and cultural services to diverse communities, specializing in service to Latinos.



*Every pin represents a city where we operate.

Taken from <https://www.seamar.org/annual-reports.html>

Health Education Program

Sea Mar Health Educators are an essential part of the care and support system of our patients. Our services focus on chronic disease prevention and management

- Pre-Diabetes & Diabetes
- Hypertension
- Obesity/Hyperlipidemia
- Metabolic Syndrome → *(These conditions include increased blood pressure, high blood sugar, excess body fat around the waist, and abnormal cholesterol or triglyceride levels.¹)*



Whatcom County

“Unfair differences in health and well-being persist, especially for youth who second language is English and for youth and adults with low-incomes, experiencing homelessness and people of color²”



Food Insecurity

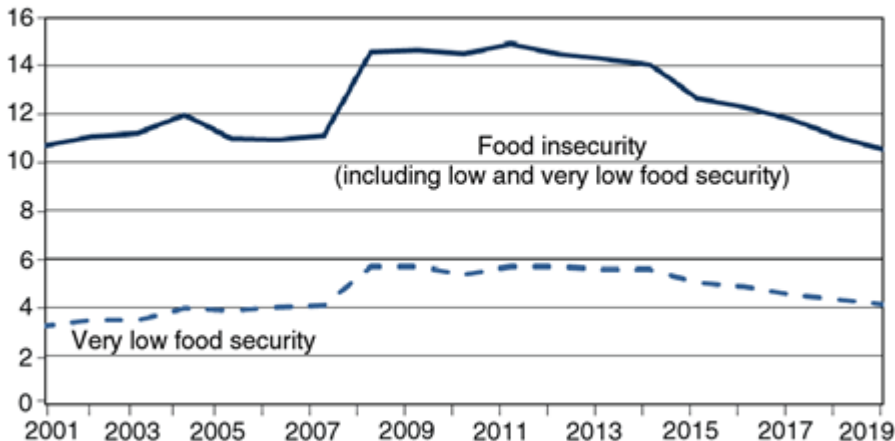
Food Insecurity:

“The limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate, safe foods or the inability to acquire personally acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways.”³

Before
COVID-19

Prevalence of food insecurity and very low food security, 2001–2019

Percent of U.S. households



Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using data from Current Population Survey Food Security Supplements, U.S. Census Bureau.

Taken from: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=58378>

Food Insecurity –After COVID-19

Feeding America estimates that 45 million people (1 in 7), including 15 million children (1 in 5), may have experienced food insecurity in 2020.⁵

- 1 in 12 white, non-Hispanic individuals (8.1%) lived in food insecurity
vs.
- 1 in 6 Latino individuals (15.8%)

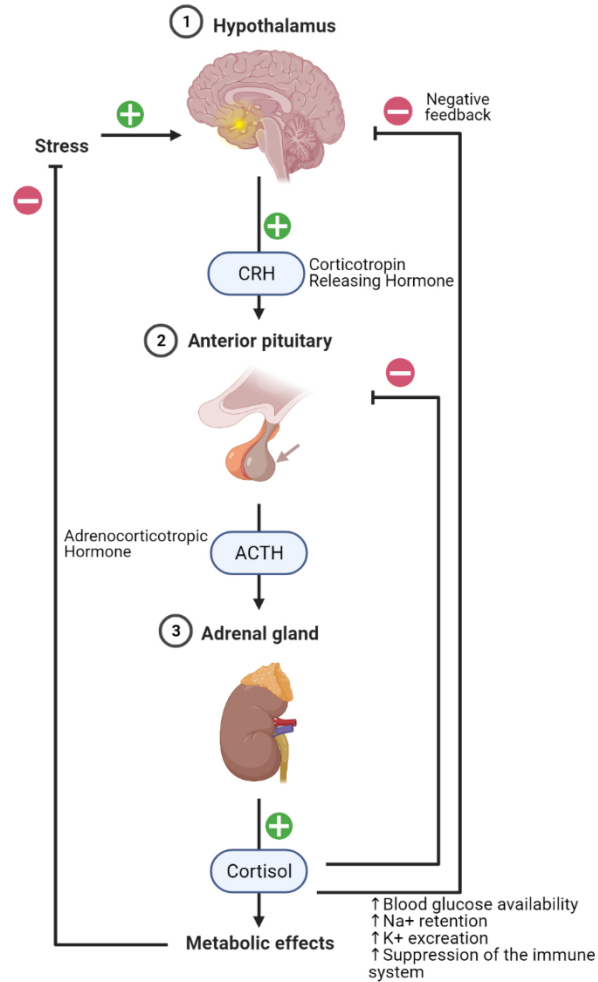
Food Insecurity Projections

	Actual	2020	2021
Annual Food Insecurity Rate	10.9%	13.9%	12.9%
Number of Food-insecure People	35.2 million	45 million	42 million
Ratio	1 in 9	1 in 7	1 in 8

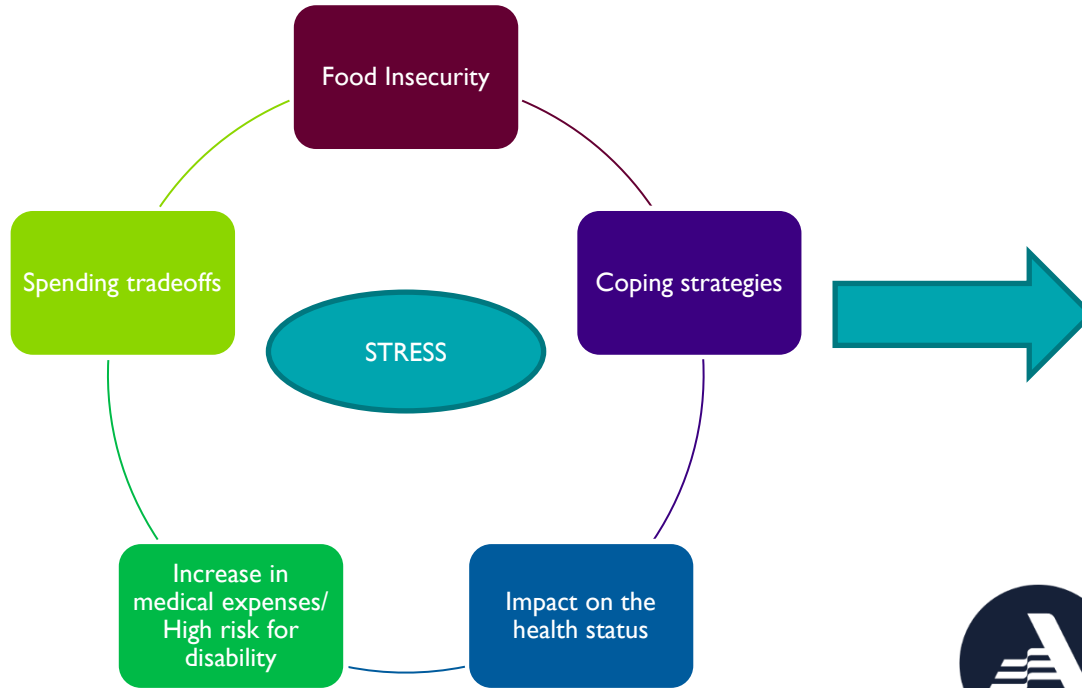
Source: Feeding America, March 2021

Food Insecurity and its role in chronic conditions

- In a cross sectional study, a number of findings suggest that household food insecurity is linked to chronic diseases.⁶
- Food Insecurity is significantly associated with type 2 diabetes—particularly among Latinos^{6,7}
- People with food insecurity are often overweight, a food insecure individuals are overweight, a phenomenon known as the “hunger-obesity paradox.”⁴



Creating solutions: a partnership with the AmeriCorps VISTA organization



Community Interventions that...

- Involves the medical providers
- Minimizes stigma
- With a culturally appropriate approach
- Focus on fresh fruits and vegetables and health education



AmeriCorps

Creating Solutions: A partnership with AmeriCorps Vista

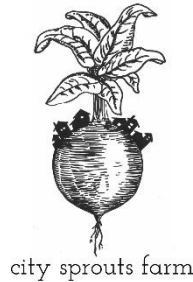
- AmeriCorps is the federal agency focused on connecting individuals and organizations to tackle the nations pressing challenges surrounding issues of poverty.
- The VISTA sector of AmeriCorps focuses on building capacity in each organization by aiding in program development, generation of commitment from private sector resources, and creating volunteer services at the local level.



AmeriCorps

The FARMacia project

- A grassroots initiative
- A patient focused program
- A step towards increasing food access in Whatcom County



city sprouts farm



AmeriCorps Year I - Create

- Research communities in need of increasing food access.
- Build relationships with partners.
- Create a program that addresses food insecurity.



AmeriCorps VISTA Year 2- Develop

- Secure partnerships and donations.
- Survey the community to receive feedback from pilot year of program.
- Create plan for efficiency.



The Impact of the Food FARMacia Program

- During the pilot year of the FARMacia project:
 - 1,455 patients served
 - 11,706 lbs. of produce distributed
- The program continues to increase accessibility of produce for patients who are living with chronic conditions and face economic barriers aside from those surfaced by the COVID-19 pandemic.



AmeriCorps VISTA Year 3- Sustain

Goals for 2021-2022:

- Build pool of volunteers.
- Secure ongoing funding for all FARMacia programs.
- Aid Health Educators outside of Whatcom County in program implementation.

Conclusion

- Food Insecurity has increased since the outbreak of COVID-19.
- Food Insecurity is a Public Health Issue.
- Food insecurity is associated with higher health care expenditures.
- Food insecurity interventions might improve health and reduce health care costs.
- Medical providers and healthcare stakeholders should be part of the creation of tangible solutions to reduce food insecurity and improve patient self-advocacy.

Questions?

Thank you for your interest in our program, feel free to reach out with any questions you may have!

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