

Food Insecurity Leon County

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The connections between climate, agriculture and food must be made to promote sustainability in local and regional food systems. The science is clear: Climate change causes erratic weather patterns, extreme temperatures and changes in natural resources, threatening farmers' ability to sustainably produce and maintain quality crops.

Food insecurity is a lack of consistent access to enough safe, nutritious and socially acceptable food for an active, healthy and productive life. It can be cyclical, or episodic - associated with a crisis like COVID-19. Research has shown that the rate of food insecurity is significantly higher for individuals living near the poverty line, single women with children, and Black and Hispanic households.

In 2019, 56,310 People are food insecure in Leon County and with an average meal cost of \$3.36, we saw a roughly 19.7% food insecurity rate. Today, in no small part because of the Coronavirus pandemic, almost 100,000 residents of the Big Bend area, including families, children and seniors, experienced hunger on a regular basis. Today, 150,000 people - almost 30% of the Big Bend population - are seeking food assistance.

An equitable food system is one that creates a new paradigm in which all - including those most vulnerable and those living in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color - can fully participate, prosper, and benefit. It is a system that, from farm to table, from processing to disposal, ensures economic opportunity; high-quality jobs with living wages; safe working conditions; access to healthy, affordable, and culturally appropriate food; and environmental sustainability.

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Sources:

- PolicyLink.org/food-systems/equiatble-food-systems-resource-guide
- **Second Harvest of the Big Bend: fightinghunger.org/food-insecurity**
- **America's Health Rankings Food insecurity report: https://www.americashealthrankings.org/explore/health-of-women-and-children/measure/food_insecurity_household**
- **Intersecting Race, Space, and Place through community Gardens: <https://anthrosource.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/am-pdf/10.1111/napa.12113>**

The CLEO Institute works in partnership with local, state, regional and national organizations to support and advocate for bipartisan, intersectional solutions to climate change and its impacts.