

Food Security and Behaviors Among Hawai'i Residents

Responses from the 2023 'Imi Pono Hawai'i Wellbeing Survey

Food plays an important role in Hawai'i – as we nourish ourselves, we also nourish our connections through shared meals. Hawai'i's ever-increasing cost of living has challenged residents with food insecurity, ultimately impacting the wellbeing of Hawaiians and non-Hawaiians alike. Native Hawaiians are more likely to skip or reduce meals because money is tight, experience more food insecurity, and are more likely to rely on convenience stores to obtain food compared to non-Hawaiians.



Food Security and a Thriving Community

1 out of 4 respondents believe that food security (having sufficient and safe access to nutritious food) is one of the top three characteristics that make up a thriving community.

This belief is highest among respondents between **ages 55-62** years old (32%) and those residing on **Kaua'i** (30%).

Food Insecurity

Native Hawaiians (30%) are more likely to skip or reduce meals because money is tight, compared to non-Hawaiians (22%).



Native Hawaiians **ages 18-24** (63%) report significantly higher rates of food insecurity compared to Native Hawaiians **ages 25 and older** (42% and below).

Respondents who skipped at least one meal per month also faced other challenges:

83%

Did not have enough to make ends meet or savings for 2 months of expenses

56%

Worried about not being able to pay for basic needs

48%

Accessed social services monthly or more

Food Behaviors

Top Places to Obtain Food



Native Hawaiians (19%), those with less than a high school degree (49%), and those ages 18-24 years old (39%) are the most likely to obtain food from convenience stores although they often have the highest prices for food.

Top Considerations for Choosing What to Eat

- 1 Cost
- 2 Convenience
- 3 Taste

Older respondents are more likely to consider nutritional value and sustainability, ethical, environmental beliefs when choosing what to eat.

