

Venango County Food Insecurity



A REPORT BY BRIDGE BUILDERS COMMUNITY FOUNDATIONS

49,938

County Population (2021)

\$59,278

Median Household Income (2022)

1,609

Households with No Vehicle (2019)

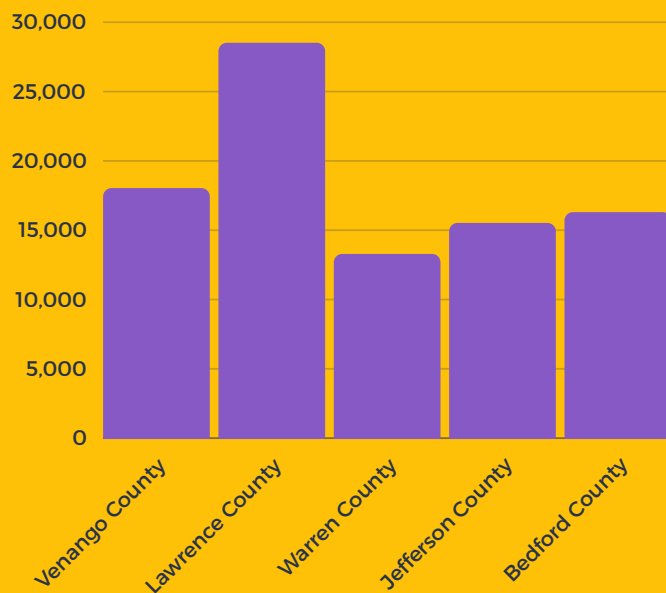
1,244

Families Below Poverty Line (2022)

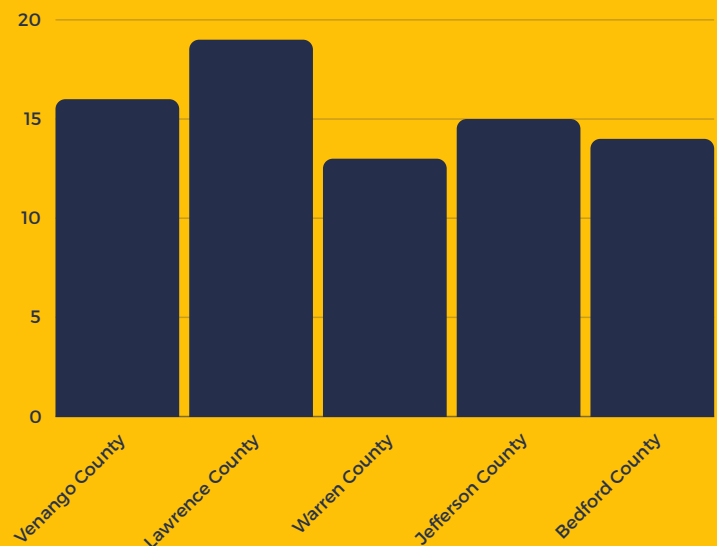
INTRODUCTION

In Venango County, food insecurity underscores a critical challenge affecting our residents. A significant portion of the population faces uncertainties about accessing nutritious and sufficient food. The combination of several economic factors including employment opportunities, and community resources, contributes to this issue. This report provides a glimpse into the multifaceted issue of food insecurity in Venango County, emphasizing the need for collective efforts and interventions to ensure that all community members have consistent access to nourishing food options.

Population of Low Income People (2022)



Percentage of Households Receiving SNAP (2022)



WHAT IS SNAP?

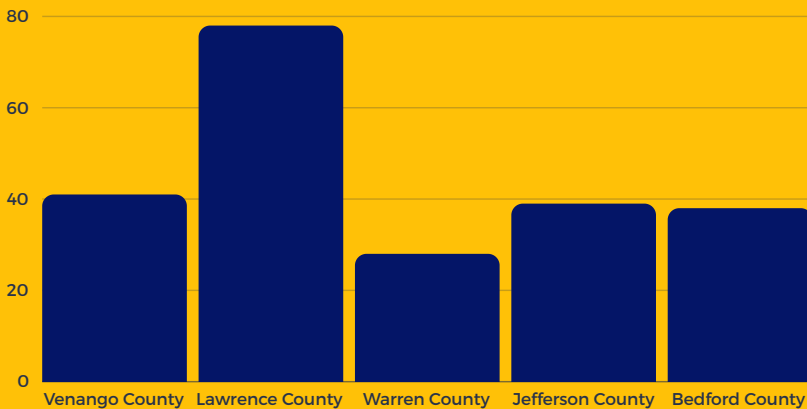
SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits, formerly known as food stamps, are a form of federal assistance provided to eligible low-income individuals and families to help them purchase food. SNAP benefits are distributed through electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards, which function like debit cards and can be used at authorized retailers to buy eligible food items such as fruits, vegetables, dairy products, meats, and grains.

The amount of SNAP benefits a household receives is based on factors including household size, income level, and expenses. Eligibility criteria for SNAP benefits vary by state but generally require applicants to have incomes below certain thresholds and meet other program requirements.

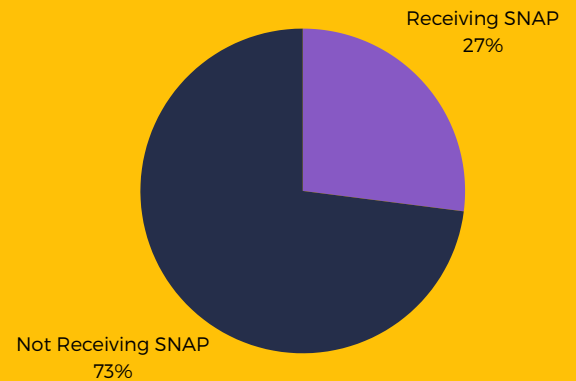
FAMILIES AND HEALTHY FOOD

Access to healthy food is crucial for children's growth, development, and overall well-being. Nutritious foods provide essential nutrients that support physical and cognitive development, immune function, and energy levels, enabling children to thrive academically, socially, and emotionally. Ensuring that families have access to healthy foods can improve the likelihood for children to succeed.

Number of SNAP Authorized Stores (2017)



Venango County Households with Children (2022)



FOOD ACCESSIBILITY

Food accessibility in Venango County presents varying levels of access to healthy food options. While the county has grocery stores and supermarkets in populated areas like Franklin and Cranberry, some more rural communities and smaller towns may have limited access to fresh produce and nutritious food items. This disparity can pose challenges for residents, particularly those without reliable transportation. Additionally, food insecurity rates in Venango County indicate that a significant portion of the population may struggle to afford or access adequate food consistently. Efforts by local organizations and initiatives aim to improve food accessibility through community gardens, farmers' markets, and outreach programs.

TRANSPORTATION AND FOOD ACCESS

The lack of transportation can be a significant roadblock for residents trying to access nutritious food. While Venango County does have options for healthy food, these stores can be upwards of 25-30 minutes away by car. For many residents, the most accessible food options are convenience stores and gas stations, which do not have many healthy food options and are not often SNAP authorized stores. In these situations, alternatives need to be considered to ensure healthy food access for everyone.



1,609 Households in Venango County Have No Vehicle Access

CONCLUSION

Venango County needs to ensure healthy food access for everyone to promote overall well-being, prevent chronic diseases, and support academic and economic success. Equitable access to nutritious food fosters a healthier population, reduces healthcare costs, and promotes social equity and community resilience. Ongoing efforts are needed to ensure that this becomes a reality.