

Insights from the Washington State Food Security During COVID19 Survey

Farm-to-Table Trade Meeting
Market Trends in Response to COVID-19
February 23, 2021
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WAFOOD

*Washington State Food Security Survey:
A UW/WSU Joint Effort in Collaboration with Tacoma Community College*

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON



UW & WSU

Washington State Food Security Survey



WAFOOD Survey Objectives (Multiple waves)

- Understand the impacts of COVID-19 on WA State residents:
 - Economic security, employment
 - Food access and food security
 - Food shopping patterns
 - Income/food assistance: barriers/supports
- Longitudinal (wave 2) and cross-sectional aspects

WAFOD: Washington State Economic Security and Food Access During COVID19 Survey

Wave 1 completed, 2,616 respondents from 38 of 39 counties: June to July 2020

Wave 2 completed, 3,511 respondents (also 38/39): December 2020 to January 2021

Wave 3 (planned): Summer 2021

Future waves: With funding

WAFOD
Washington State Food Security Survey

Economic Security and Food Access in Washington State During the COVID-19 Pandemic
June to July 2020, Research Brief 1

WAFOD Survey
The Washington (WA) State Food Security Survey (WAFOD) funded through the University of Washington (UW) Population Health Institute (UWHI) was deployed from June 18th to July 31st, 2020. The goal was to understand the impacts of the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic on economic security and food access of WA State residents. A total of 2,621 WA residents in 38 of 39 counties responded. This brief provides a snapshot of survey participant responses on the status and conditions of employment, income and food assistance, food security, and food shopping patterns. We also examine barriers to accessing both federal and state programs before and since the pandemic.

Critical Disparities in Food Insecurity

- Using the United States Department of Agriculture 6-item validated scale, 30% of households were food insecure (Figure 1).
- Of food insecure households, 30% had children.
- The prevalence of food insecurity ranged from 3% to as high as 50% by income.

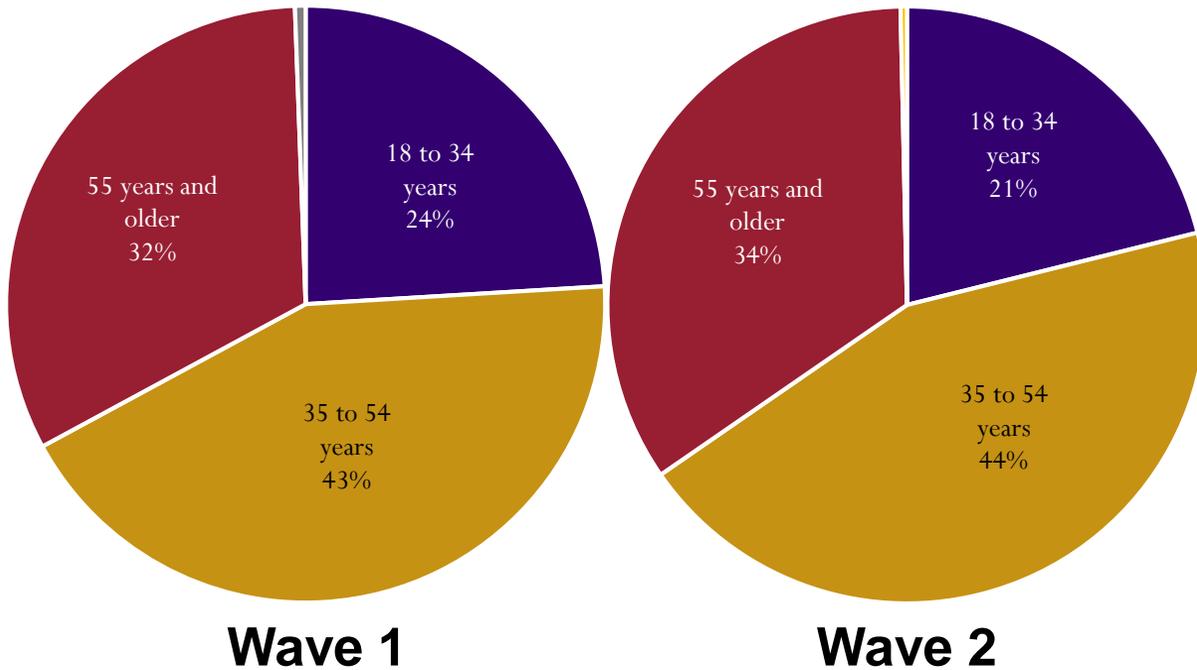
Income	Prevalence
<\$15,000	50%
\$15,000 to \$19,999	35%
\$20,000 to \$24,999	31%
\$25,000 to \$34,999	2%
\$35,000 to \$44,999	1%
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Key Findings

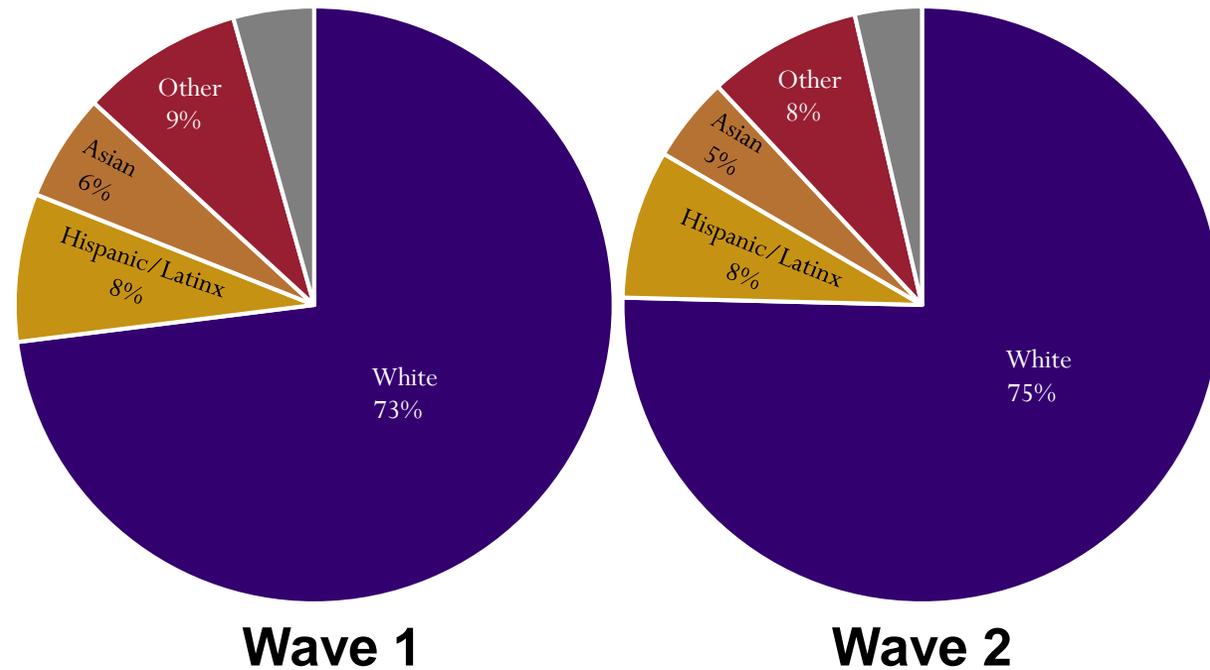
- Food insecurity was experienced in 30% of households and of those, 30% had children.
- Food assistance was sought by

Who are WAFOOD Survey Respondents? Similar in Wave 1 and Wave 2

Age categories



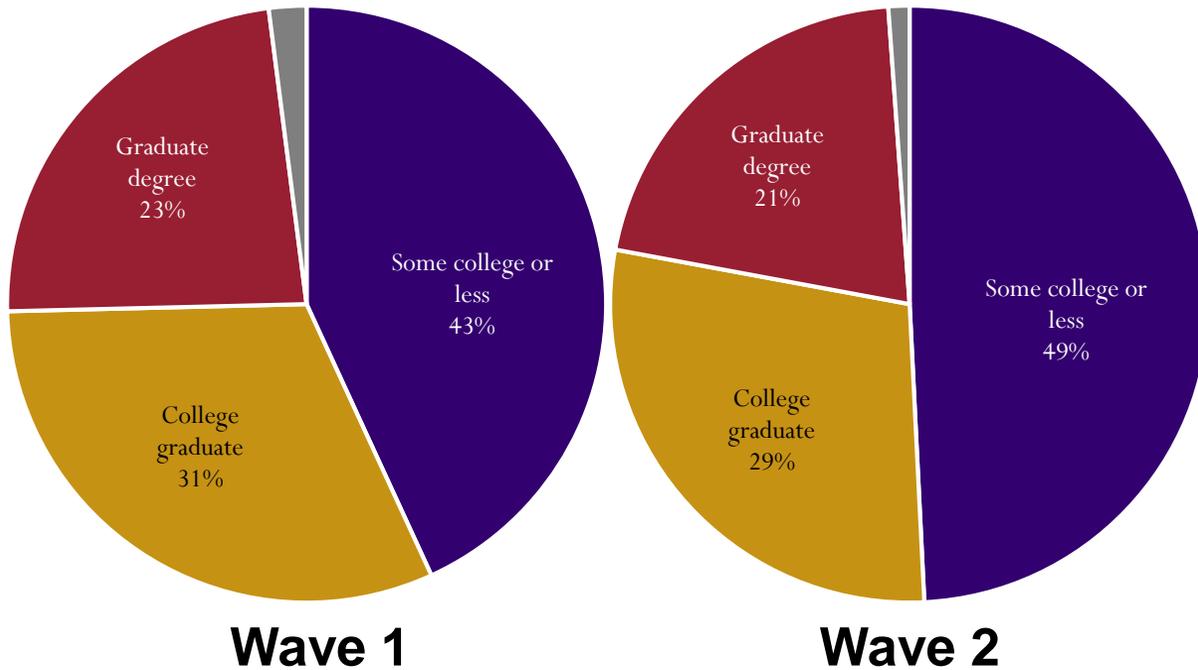
Race/ethnicity



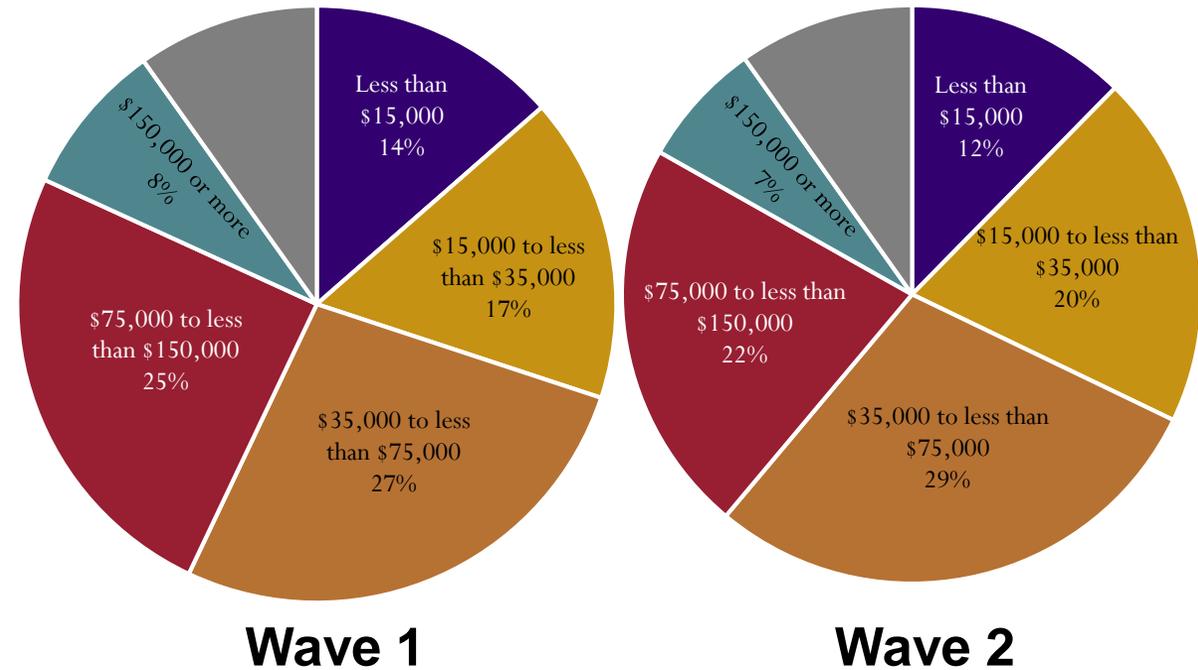
Who are WAFOOD Survey Respondents?

Similar in Wave 1 and Wave 2

Education

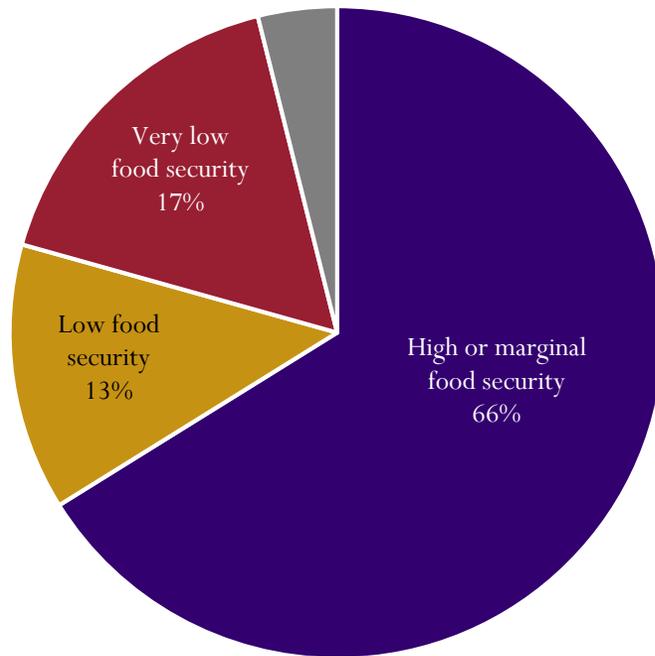


Household Income

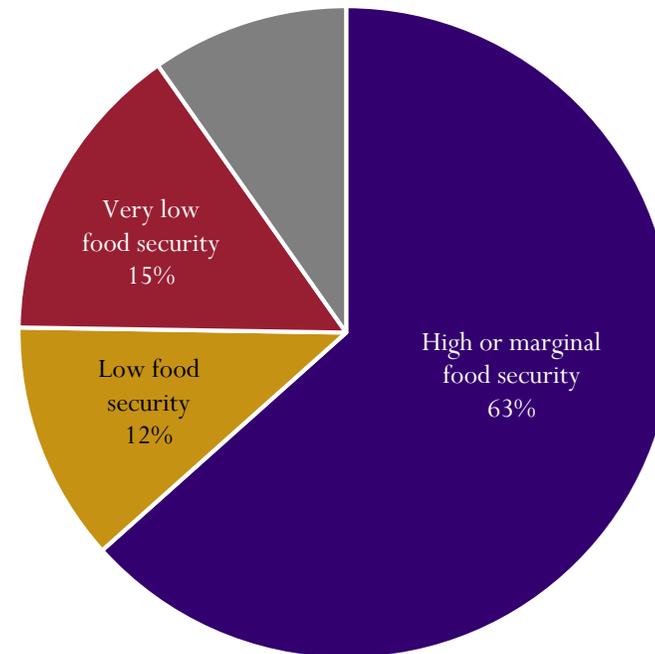


30% in Wave 1 and 27% in Wave 2 were food insecure

Measured using the USDA food security scale

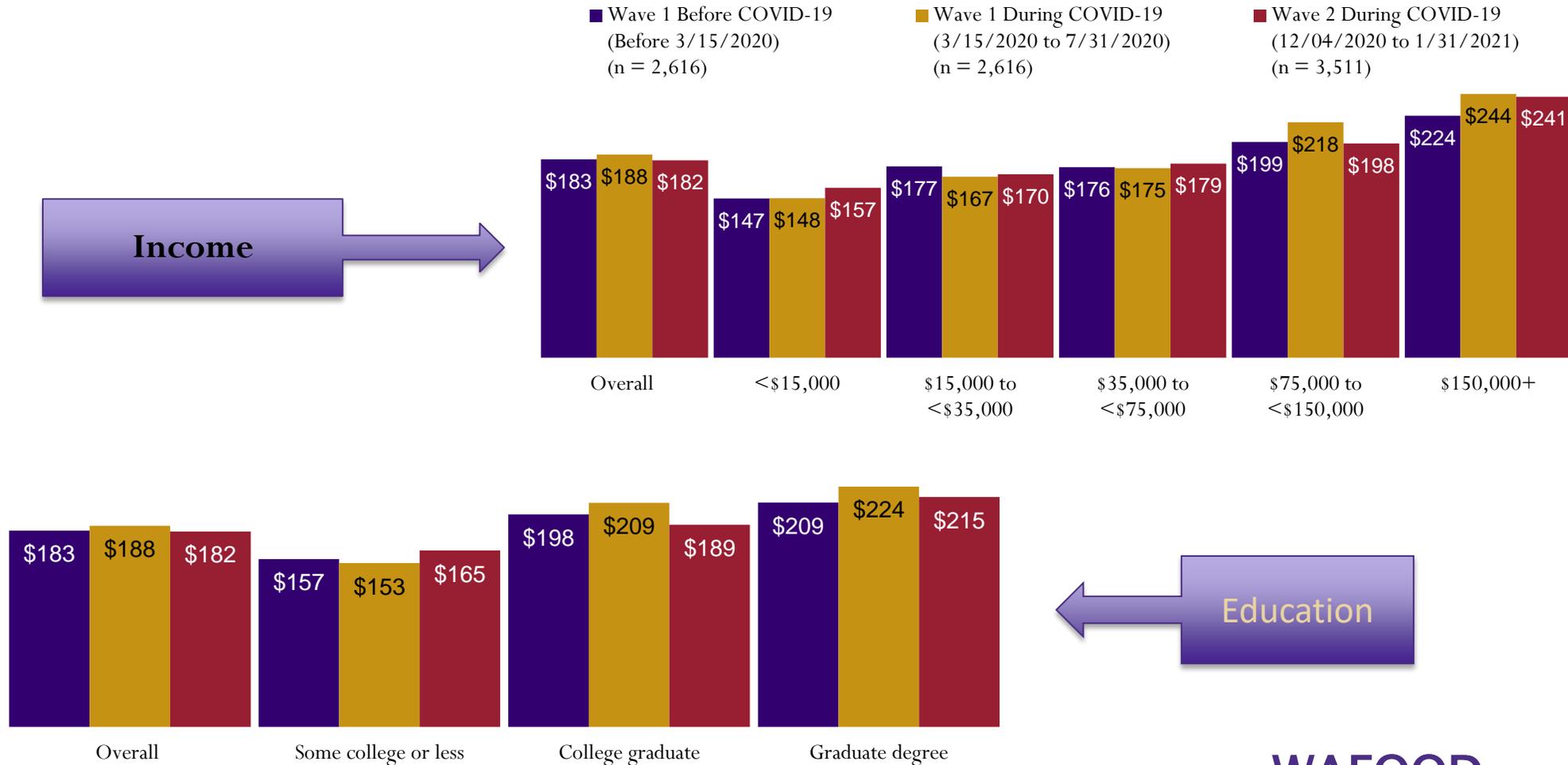


Wave 1



Wave 2

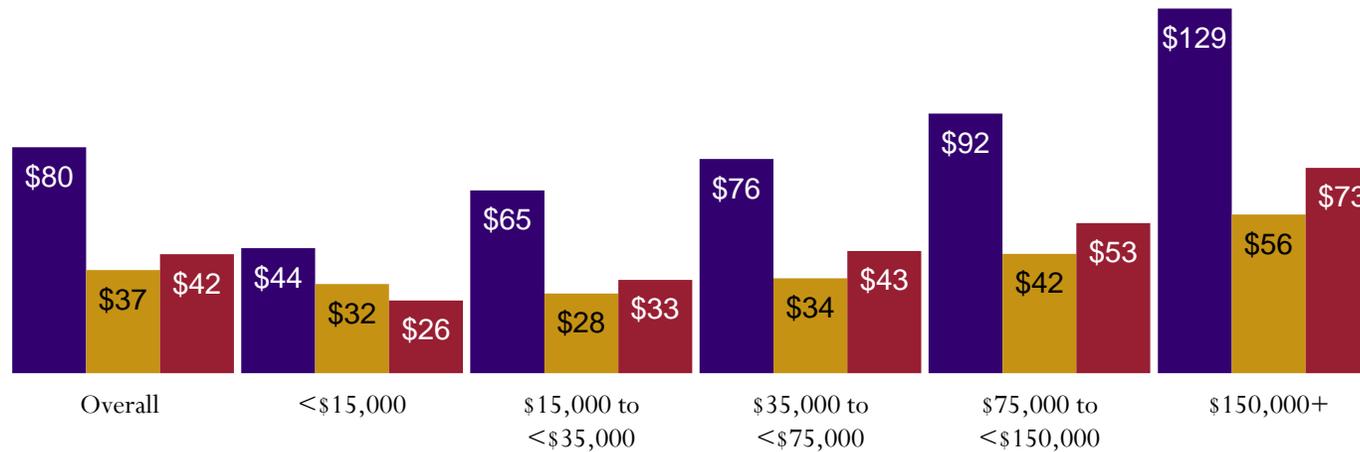
Not much change in amount respondents report spending on food-at-home (monthly, per person) before and during COVID-19



But drastic change in how much respondents report spending on eating out (monthly, per person) during COVID-19

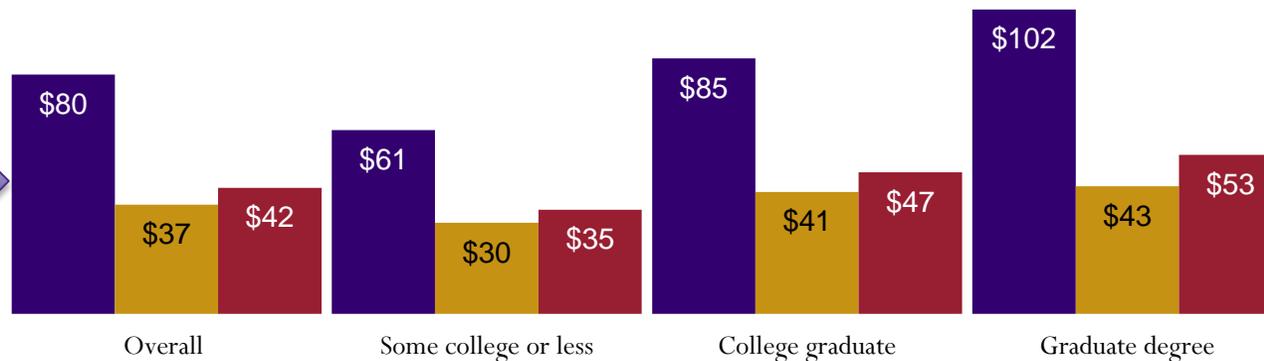
■ Wave 1 Before COVID-19 (Before 3/15/2020) (n = 2,616)
■ Wave 1 During COVID-19 (3/15/2020 to 7/31/2020) (n = 2,616)
■ Wave 2 During COVID-19 (12/04/2020 to 1/31/2021) (n = 3,511)

Income

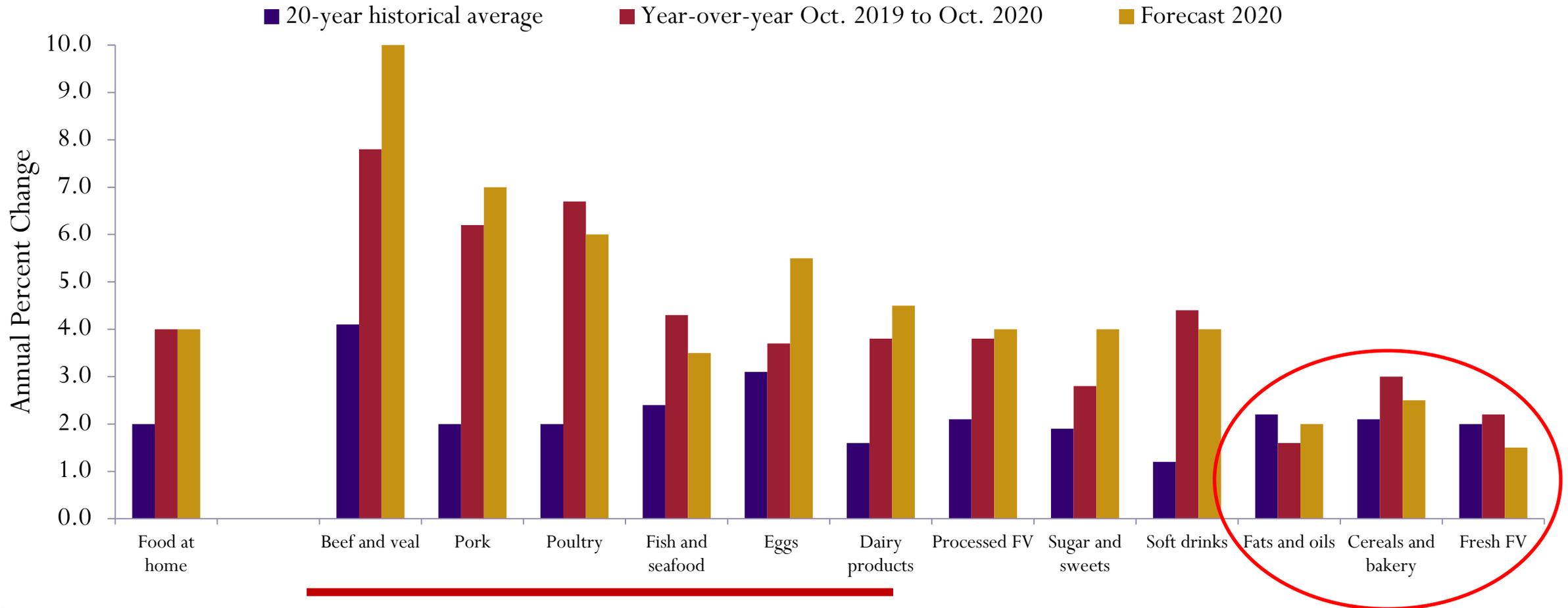


While spending has begun to increase for some, expenditures remain low or are decreasing for low income households.

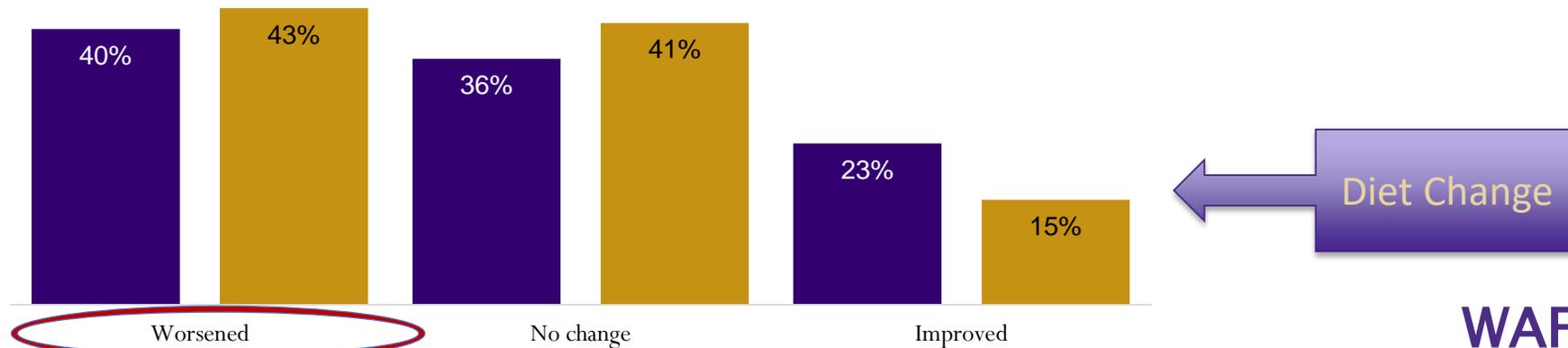
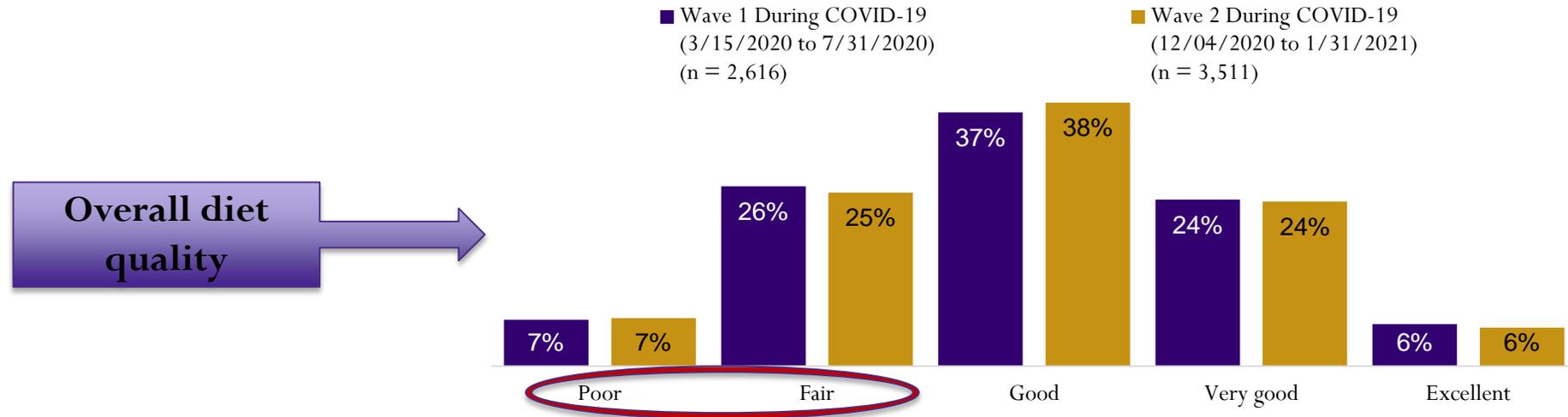
Education



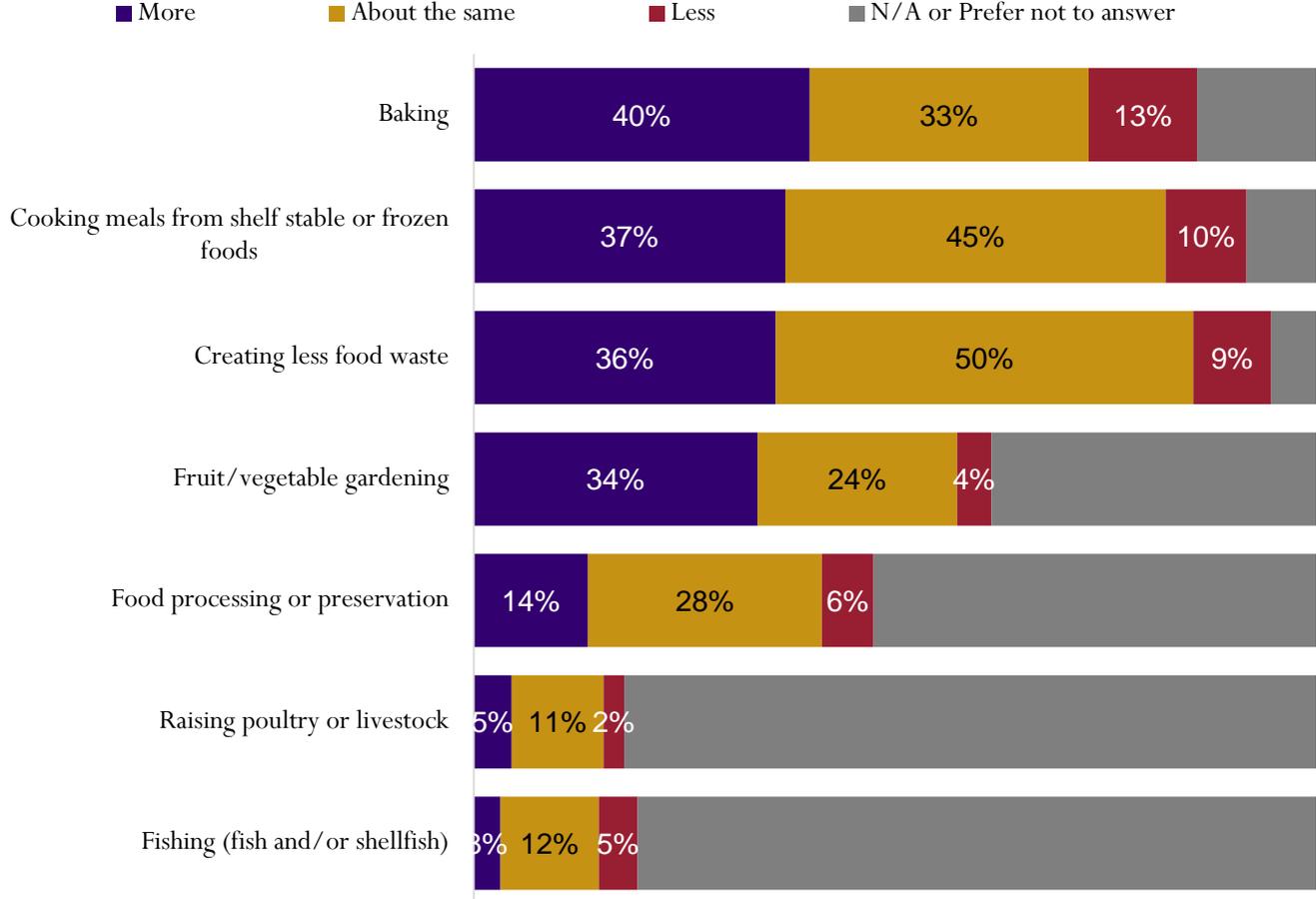
At the same time, food prices are mostly increasing (national consumer price index)



Not surprising: Diets worsen during COVID-19 and this did not improve from summer to winter



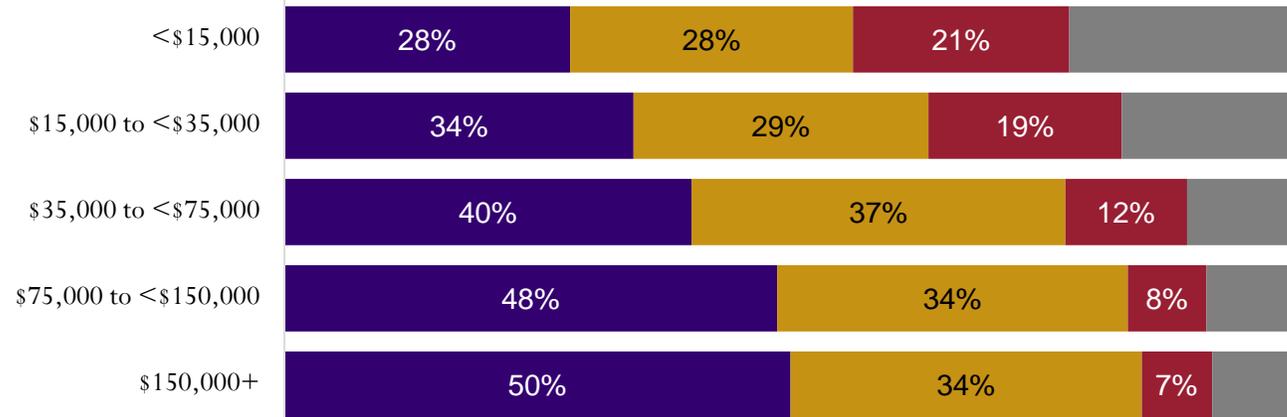
Food self-sufficiency activities during COVID-19 (wave 1)



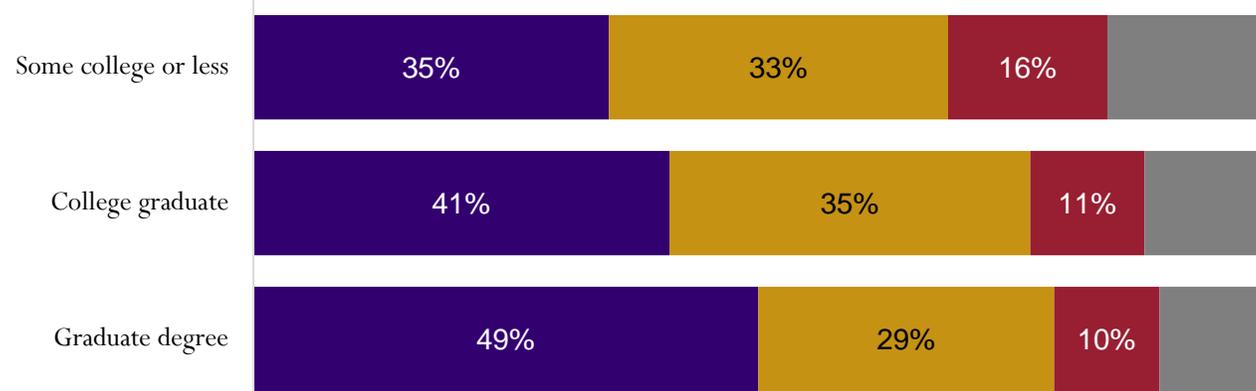
Socioeconomic gradients in baking during COVID-19 (wave 1)

■ More
 ■ About the same
 ■ Less
 ■ N/A or Prefer not to answer

Income →

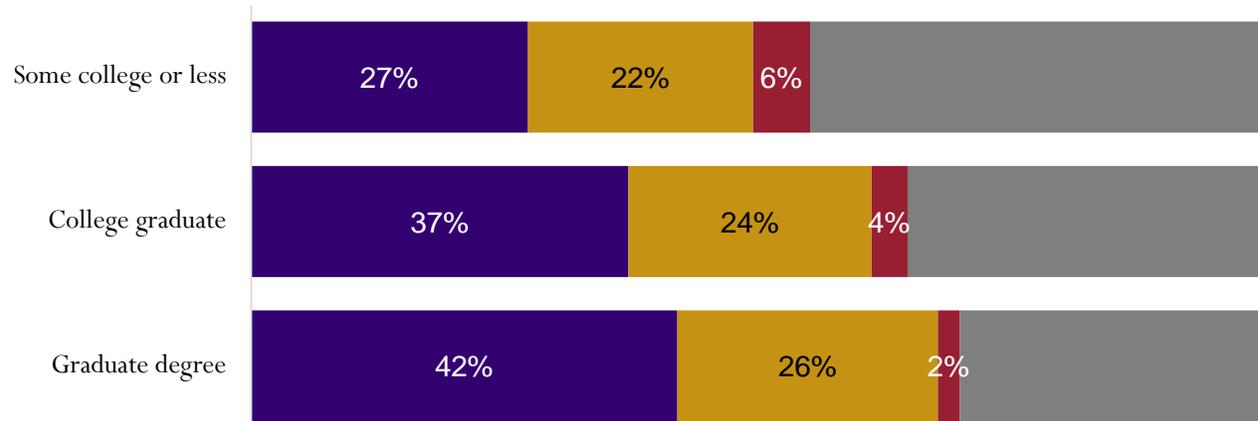


Education →

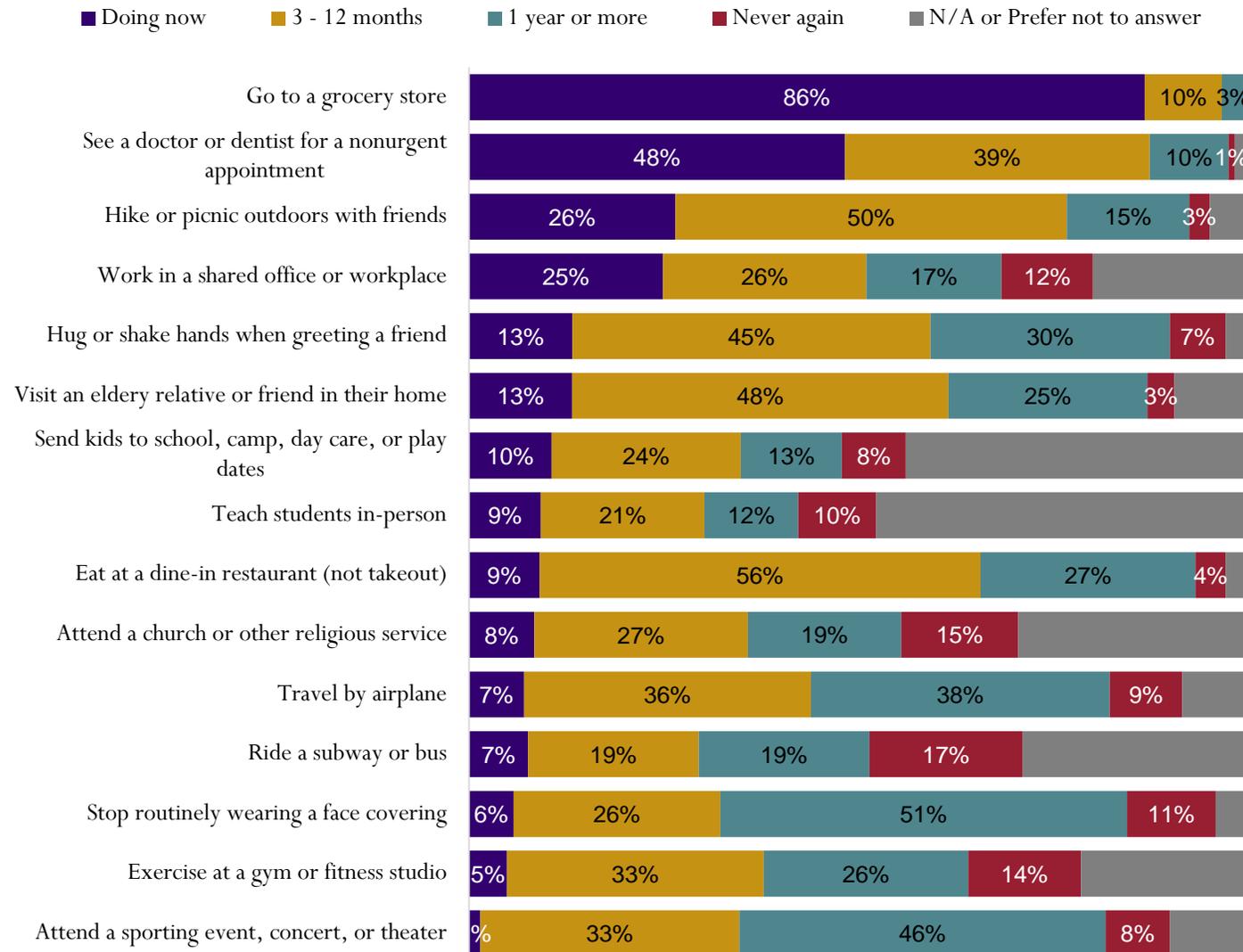


For some, food self-sufficiency strategies there may be a cost of entry or time may be a barrier for those with low income or education.

Socioeconomic gradients in fruit and vegetable gardening during COVID-19 (wave 1)



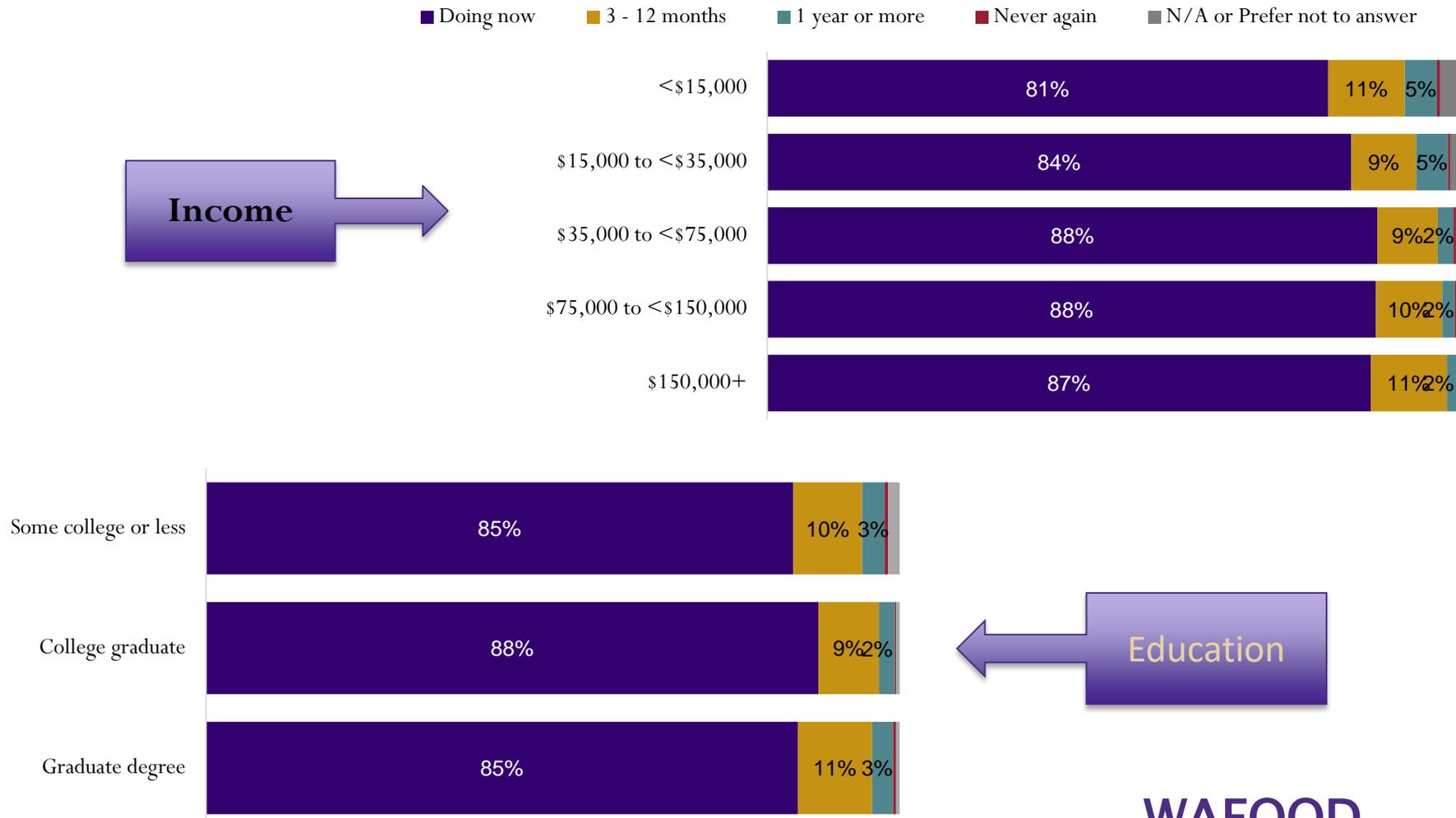
Perceived timeline for resuming regular activities (wave 2: Dec 2020-Jan 2021)



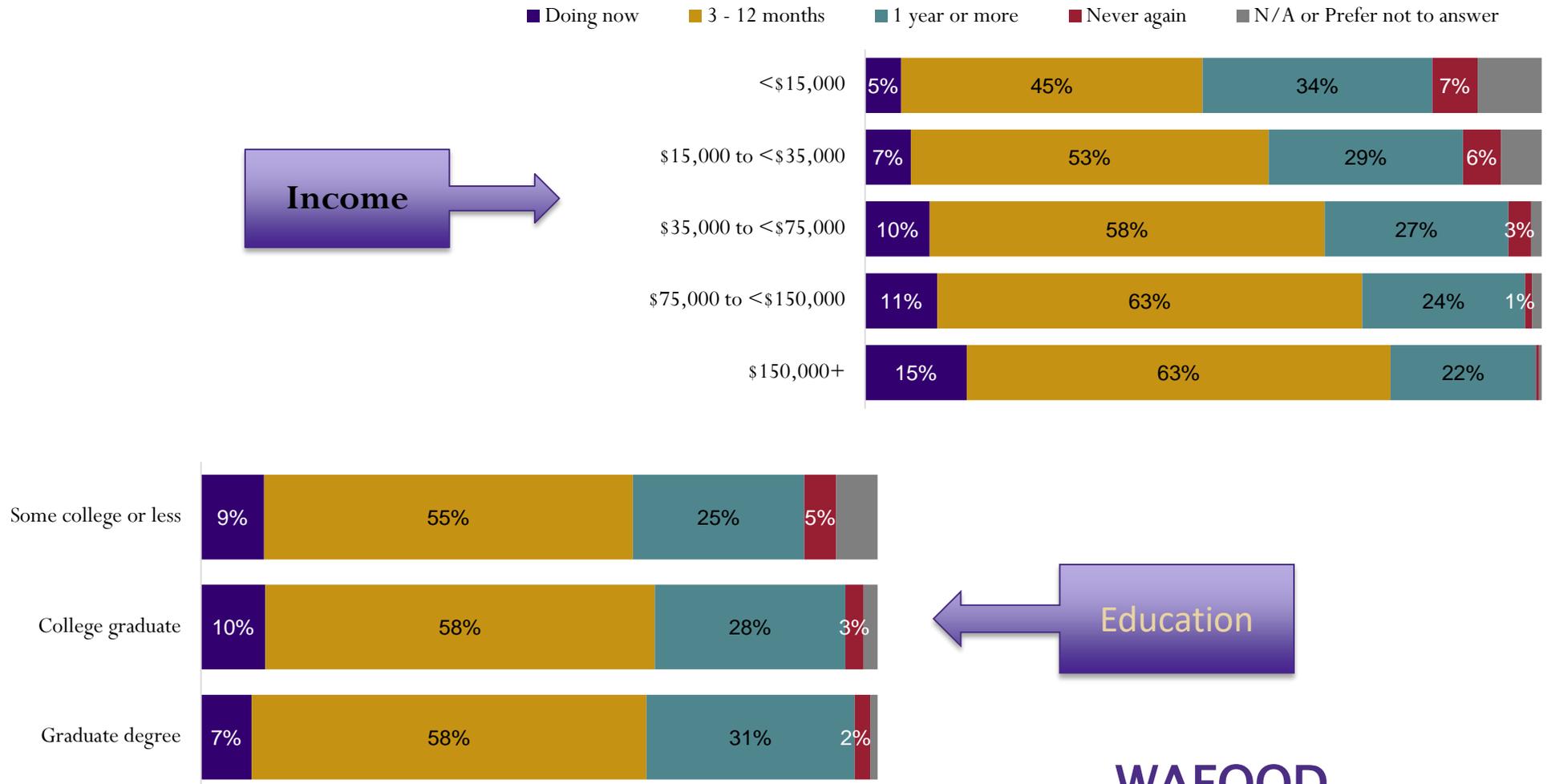
Most (83%) respondents said they are currently shopping at grocery stores in-person

By contrast, few (9%) said they are currently dining-in at restaurants but over half said they plan to do so in 3-12 months (56%).

Most WAFOOD respondents are going are shopping at grocery stores regardless of income or education



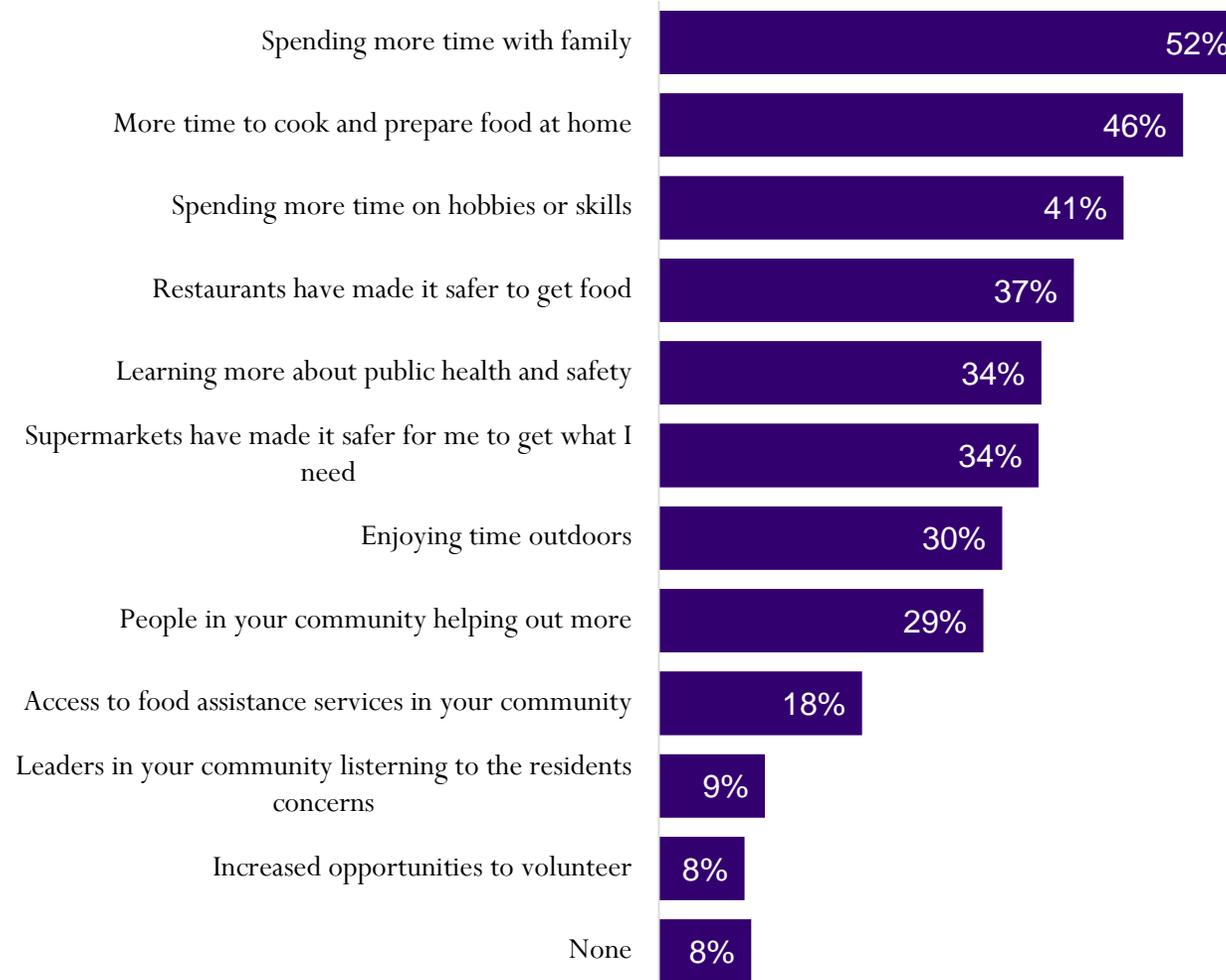
Socioeconomic gradient in eating at dine-in restaurants (not takeout) by income but not education



Income →

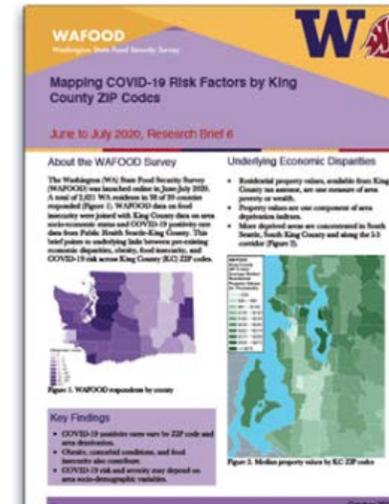
← Education

Positive outcomes experienced by respondents during the COVID-19 pandemic (wave 2)



Seven Report Briefs

- WAFOOD Survey Brief #1: Economic Security and Food Access in Washington State During the COVID-19 Pandemic, **Overall**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #2: Economic Security and Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic: **King County**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #3: Economic Security and Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic: **Pierce County**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #4: Economic Security and Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic: **Clark County**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #5: Economic Security and Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic: **Clark County**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #5: Economic Security and Food Access During the COVID-19 Pandemic: **Snohomish County**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #6: **Mapping COVID-19 Risk Factors by King County ZIP Codes**
- WAFOOD Survey Brief #7: **Comparing Food Insecure and Food Secure Washington State Households During the COVID-19 Pandemic**



For More Information or to Contact the Study Team

- Please visit:
 - <https://nutr.uw.edu/cphn/>
- You can also email us at:
 - phisurvey@uw.edu
 - Jennifer Otten: jotten@uw.edu

We would love to hear what questions you would like asked in Wave 3!!

Additional work: Targeting hard to reach populations

“COVID-19 Food Access among **American Indian/Alaska Native Tribes** in WA State: The value of food sovereignty”

Funder: UW Population Health Initiative (PI: Otten)
UW/WSU/TCC in partnership with the Northwest Tribal Epidemiology Center

“Community-driven approaches to identify barriers to food security due to COVID-19 and solutions to improve food security and resilience in **agricultural communities**”

Funder: UW Population Health Initiative (PI: Spector/Krenz)
UW in partnership with WA DOH and El Proyecto Bienestar.

“Assessing the Impact and Feasibility of **WIC Remote Services and Expanded Food Options**”

Funder: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Healthy Eating Research Program (PI: Otten)
UW in partnership with the Washington State WIC/DOH