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
Jennifer Otten, PhD, RD
University of Washington
jotten@uw.edu
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

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

Age categories

Wave 1
- 18 to 34 years: 24%
- 35 to 54 years: 43%
- 55 years and older: 32%

Wave 2
- 18 to 34 years: 21%
- 35 to 54 years: 44%
- 55 years and older: 34%

Race/ethnicity

Wave 1
- White: 73%
- Other: 9%

Wave 2
- White: 75%
- Other: 8%
Who are WAFOOD Survey Respondents?
Similar in Wave 1 and Wave 2

Education

Wave 1:
- Some college or less: 43%
- College graduate: 31%
- Graduate degree: 23%

Wave 2:
- Some college or less: 49%
- College graduate: 29%
- Graduate degree: 21%

Household Income

Wave 1:
- Less than $15,000: 14%
- $15,000 to less than $35,000: 25%
- $35,000 to less than $75,000: 27%
- $75,000 to less than $150,000: 25%

Wave 2:
- Less than $15,000: 12%
- $15,000 to less than $35,000: 20%
- $35,000 to less than $75,000: 29%
- $75,000 to less than $150,000: 22%
30% in Wave 1 and 27% in Wave 2 were food insecure

Measured using the USDA food security scale

Wave 1
- High or marginal food security: 66%
- Low food security: 13%
- Very low food security: 17%

Wave 2
- High or marginal food security: 63%
- Low food security: 12%
- Very low food security: 15%
Not much change in amount respondents report spending on food-at-home (monthly, per person) before and during COVID-19

Income

Overall <$15,000 $15,000 to <$35,000 $35,000 to <$75,000 $75,000 to <$150,000 $150,000+

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)

Education

Overall Some college or less College graduate Graduate degree

WAFOOD
Washington State Food Security Survey
But drastic change in how much respondents report spending on eating out (monthly, per person) during COVID-19

While spending has begun to increase for some, expenditures remain low or are decreasing for low income households.
At the same time, food prices are mostly increasing (national consumer price index)

https://www.bls.gov/news.release/cpi.nr0.htm
Not surprising: Diets worsen during COVID-19 and this did not improve from summer to winter

Overall diet quality

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)

Diet Change

Worsened
40%
43%

No change
36%
41%

Improved
23%
15%

Poor
Fair
Good
Very good
Excellent
7%
7%
26%
25%
37%
38%
24%
24%
6%
6%
Food self-sufficiency activities during COVID-19 (wave 1)

- **Baking**: 40% More, 33% About the same, 13% Less
- **Cooking meals from shelf stable or frozen foods**: 37% More, 45% About the same, 10% Less
- **Creating less food waste**: 36% More, 50% About the same, 9% Less
- **Fruit/vegetable gardening**: 34% More, 24% About the same, 4% Less
- **Food processing or preservation**: 14% More, 28% About the same, 6% Less
- **Raising poultry or livestock**: 5% More, 11% About the same, 2% Less
- **Fishing (fish and/or shellfish)**: 0% More, 12% About the same, 5% Less
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)

Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Level</th>
<th>More</th>
<th>About the same</th>
<th>Less</th>
<th>N/A or Prefer not to answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>&lt;$15,000</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to &lt;$35,000</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to &lt;$75,000</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to &lt;$150,000</td>
<td>41%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000+</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>23%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Education

- Some college or less: 27% More, 22% About the same, 6% Less, 9% N/A or Prefer not to answer
- College graduate: 37% More, 24% About the same, 4% Less, 5% N/A or Prefer not to answer
- Graduate degree: 42% More, 26% About the same, 2% Less, 1% N/A or Prefer not to answer
### Perceived timeline for resuming regular activities (wave 2: Dec 2020-Jan 2021)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Doing now</th>
<th>3 - 12 months</th>
<th>1 year or more</th>
<th>Never again</th>
<th>N/A or Prefer not to answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Go to a grocery store</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>See a doctor or dentist for a nonurgent</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appointment</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hike or picnic outdoors with friends</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work in a shared office or workplace</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hug or shake hands when greeting a friend</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit an elderly relative or friend in their home</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Send kids to school, camp, day care, or play dates</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teach students in-person</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat at a dine-in restaurant (not takeout)</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a church or other religious service</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travel by airplane</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ride a subway or bus</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop routinely wearing a face covering</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exercise at a gym or fitness studio</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attend a sporting event, concert, or theater</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>46%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Income Range</th>
<th>Doing now</th>
<th>3 - 12 months</th>
<th>1 year or more</th>
<th>Never again</th>
<th>N/A or Prefer not to answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>&lt;$15,000</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$15,000 to &lt;$35,000</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$35,000 to &lt;$75,000</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$75,000 to &lt;$150,000</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$150,000+</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>22%</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</table>

**Education**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Never again</th>
<th>N/A or Prefer not to answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Some college or less</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>College graduate</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate degree</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Positive outcomes experienced by respondents during the COVID-19 pandemic (wave 2)

- Spending more time with family: 52%
- More time to cook and prepare food at home: 46%
- Spending more time on hobbies or skills: 41%
- Restaurants have made it safer to get food: 37%
- Learning more about public health and safety: 34%
- Supermarkets have made it safer for me to get what I need: 34%
- Enjoying time outdoors: 30%
- People in your community helping out more: 29%
- Access to food assistance services in your community: 18%
- Leaders in your community listening to the residents concerns: 9%
- Increased opportunities to volunteer: 8%
- None: 8%
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: 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:
  o https://nutr.uw.edu/cphn/

• You can also email us at:
  o phisurvey@uw.edu
  o 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