Arkansas Food and Nutrition Security State Profile

Overview
According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Economic Research Service (USDA ERS), 12.6% of households in Arkansas (AR) experienced food insecurity between 2018-2020. The prevalence of obesity among adults living in AR was 36.4% in 2020 as reported by the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS).

Demographic Overview
2019 U.S. Census data reports AR has an estimated population of 3.01 million. They identify as While (79%), Black (15.7%), American Indian and Alaska Native (1%), Asian (1.7%) and, Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander (0.4%) only. According to the 2019 Census report, 7.8% identify as Hispanic or Latino. 16.2% of AR residents experienced poverty in 2019.

Building Resilient Inclusive Communities (BRIC) - Alaska BRIC Communities
The following counties will be prioritized by the AR BRIC project:, Crittenden (West Memphis), Chicot (Lake Village), Lee (Marianna), Phillips (West Helena) and St. Francis (Forrest City).

Food Banks, Pantries and Feeding Programs
There are six food banks that serve Arkansas.

Northwest Arkansas Food Bank
- Operates mobile pantries, school pantries, SNAP outreach.
- Has 135 partner agencies, to see where they are located, click here.

River Valley Regional Food Bank
- Provides backpack assistance, SNAP outreach, and a Nutrition and Wellness Fair.
- To see a list of the 180 partner agencies, click here.

Food Bank of Northeast Arkansas
- Serves the community of Forrest City.
- Provides a senior food pantry program, CSFP, and a backpack program.
- Partners with growers and gardeners in their Fresh Produce Program.
- Works with 100 partner agencies.

Arkansas Food Bank
- Serves the communities of West Helena, Marianna, and Lake Village.
- To find a list of partner agencies, click here.
- Hosts mobile food distributions, conducts SNAP outreach, operates backpack programs, provides nutrition education.

Harvest Regional Food Bank
- Partner agencies and mobile distribution sites can be found here.
Mid-South Food Bank
- Serves the community of West Memphis
- Operate school pantries, backpack programs, Kids Cafes, a diaper bank, SNAP application assistance, and mobile distribution at healthcare clinics.
- For a list of partner agencies, click here.

Select Food and Nutrition Security Programs
Healthy Food Incentive Programs
- Double Up Food Bucks led by Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention.

Community Nutrition Education Programs
- Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP)
  - The University of Arkansas Extension
- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-ED)
  - The Arkansas Department of Human Services is the state agency responsible for AR SNAP-Ed. SNAP-Ed implementing agencies include:
    - Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention
    - University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension
    - University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
  - For more information, click here.

COVID Response
- Pandemic EBT (P-EBT) Program resources are available at the AR Department of Human Service

Food (Policy) Coalitions and Councils
- Arkansas Coalition for Obesity Prevention
- Arkansas Hunger Relief Alliance
- Arkansas Farm to School Collaborative

Other Collaborators to Consider
- Arkansas Children’s - Access to Healthy Foods Group aims to build evidence, capacity, and support for an equitable food system that fosters the health and wellness of children, families, and communities in Arkansas.
- The Arkansas Department of Health develops and implements policies and programs for Arkansas agriculture and forestry.
- The Arkansas Farmers Market Association provides a forum where market managers can network and advocate on behalf of Arkansas farmers.
- The University of Arkansas: Resiliency Center - Resilient Food Initiative develops strategies for increasing the resiliency of critical life-support systems.
Data Sources and Resources

- AR Profile of Hunger, Poverty and Federal Nutrition Programs - Food Research and Action Center
- Farm to School and Early Childhood Education in the USDA Report Southeast Region Report

The National Association of Chronic Disease Directors (NACDD) and its more than 7,000 Members seek to strengthen state-based leadership and expertise for chronic disease prevention and control in states and nationally. For more information, visit chronicdisease.org.