



Working with Food Rescue Groups to Reduce Wasted Food in Colorado

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Run of Show

1. Grounding around language
2. Understand where food loss happens and impacts of food loss/recovery
3. Explore approaches to food recovery in Colorado
4. Interactive conversation: How can we work together to change the ways Coloradans interact with food and food systems to reduce food insecurity and wasted food?



Language matters

Food Surplus: *The unsold food in fields, and at farms, stores, events and other locations that is perfectly good for people to eat.*



Photos from UpRoot and Cafe Food Rescue

Language matters

Animal Edible Food: *Food that is no longer appropriate for human consumption but is still safe for animals. Examples: Spent grains from brewing and food scraps.*



Language matters

Organics or Organic Feedstocks: *Include Food Scraps & Yard Trimmings. May include certified compostables if accepted at local processors. These are the materials collected to be processed into biochar, mulch, digestate or compost.*



Compost or Finished Compost: *is the product manufactured through the controlled aerobic, biological decomposition of biodegradable materials. The product has undergone mesophilic and thermophilic temperatures, which significantly reduces the viability of pathogens and weed seeds, and stabilizes the carbon, such that it is beneficial to plant growth. Compost is typically used as a soil amendment, but may also contribute plant nutrients. ([USCC 2018 official definition](#))*

Language matters

Organic Waste, Food Waste, Yard Waste: *Organics only become waste when their value is ruined and lost by being landfilled or incinerated.*

Organic Waste is to be avoided at all costs!

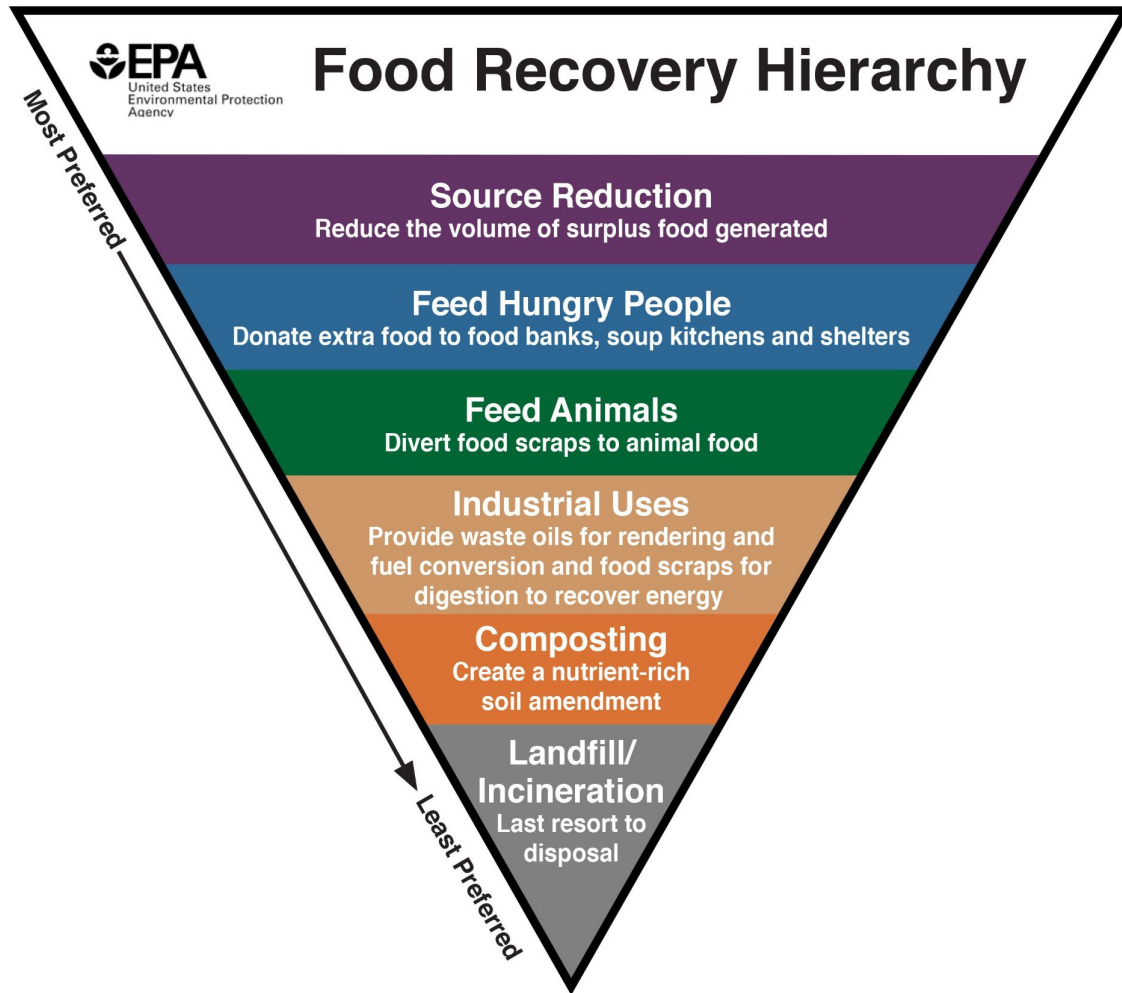


Language matters

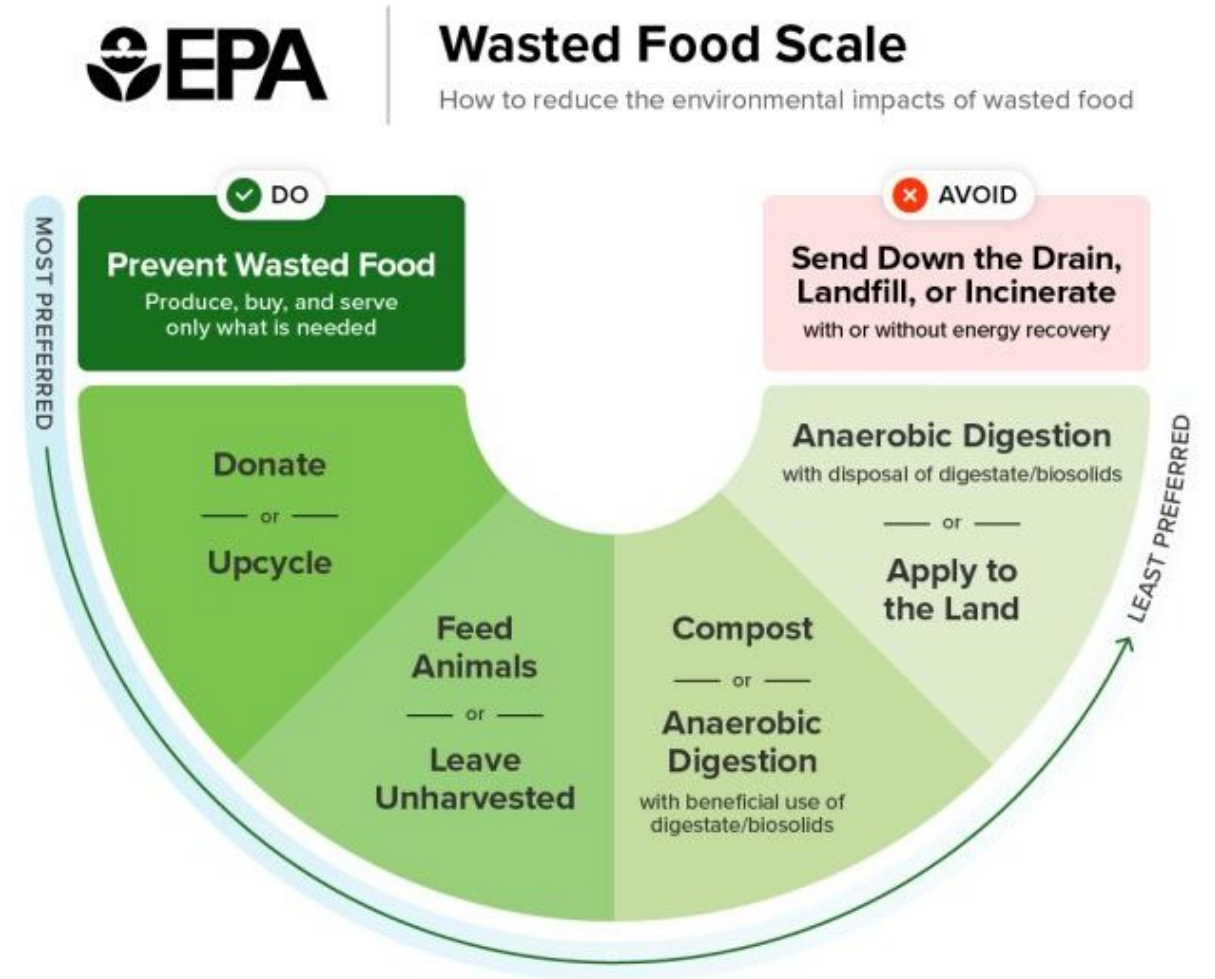
Food recovery or food rescue: *The act of collecting food that would otherwise be wasted, and redirecting it for human consumption. Recovering or rescuing this food represents a critical opportunity to improve food security and reduce waste.*



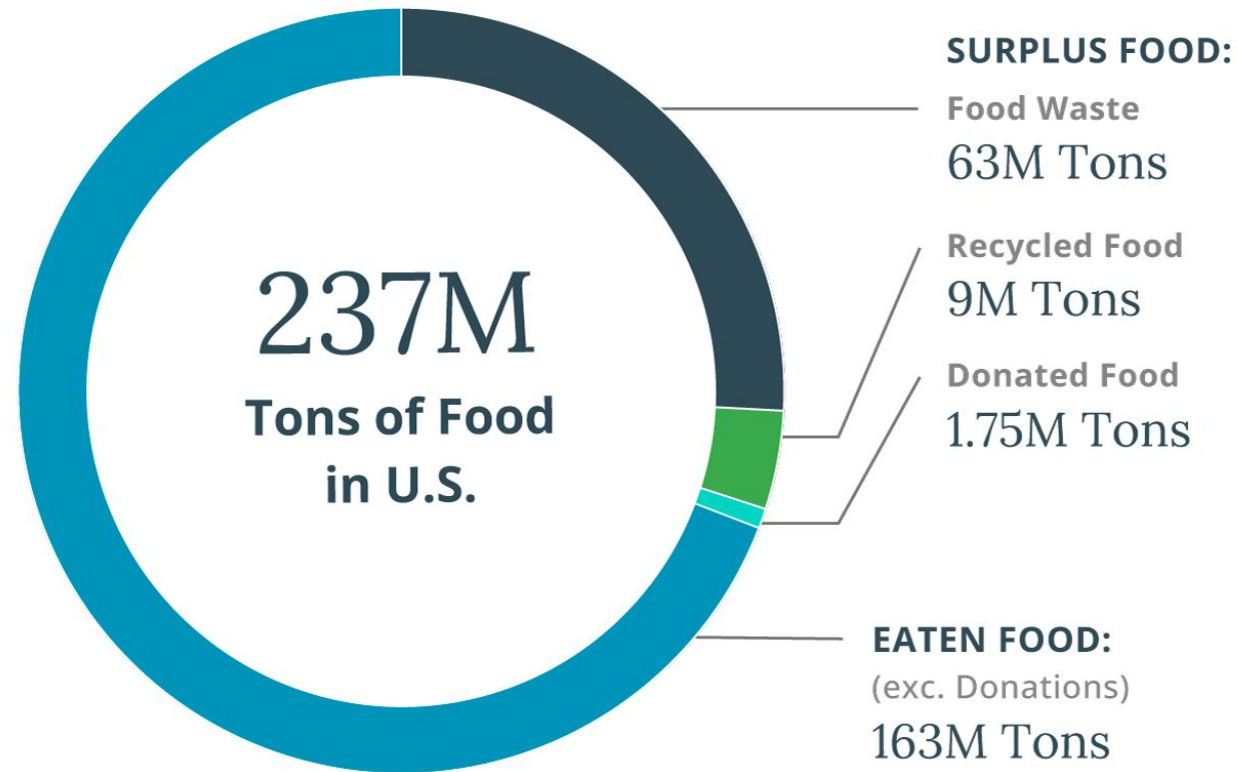
Photo from Cafe Food Rescue



Old model



New Model
2023



Source: ReFED/2023 Data (Published Feb 2025)





CONSUMER-FACING BUSINESSES INCLUDE:



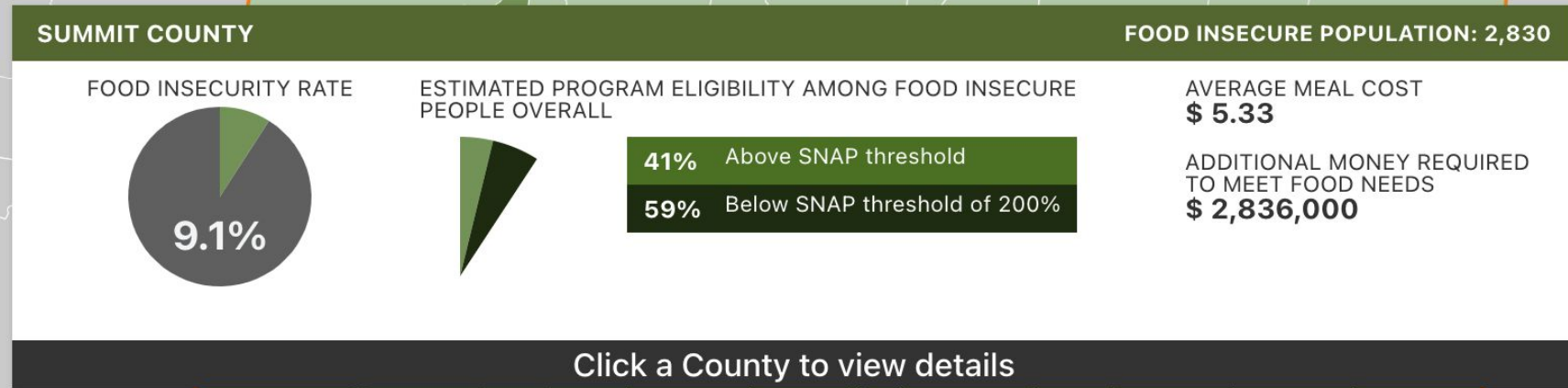
Source: ReFED/2023 Data (Published Feb 2025)



2022

CO: 11.5%, \$4.13

US: 13.5%, \$3.99



<https://map.feedingamerica.org/>



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The Standard Calculates the Real Costs of Meeting Each of the Major Budget Items

Official Poverty Measure

Food is 1/3 of the budget and all other costs are 2/3 of the budget.

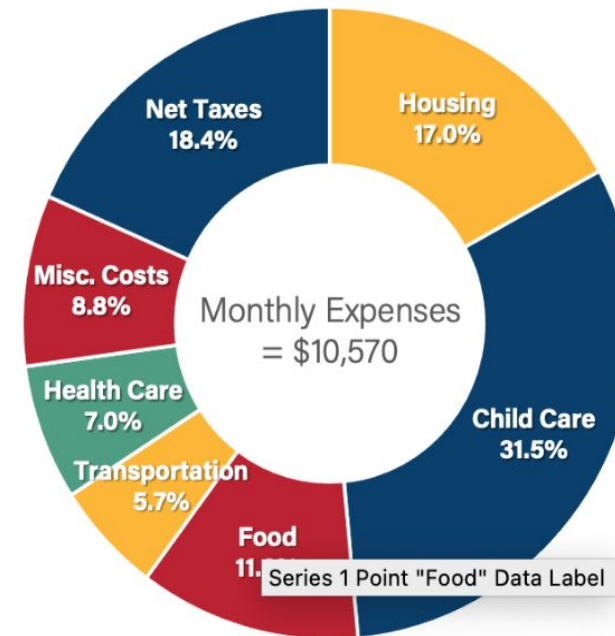


22%

The official poverty measure only covers 22% of the costs of all basic needs as defined by the Self-Sufficiency Standard

Self-Sufficiency Standard

Housing and child care account for almost half of the family budget in the Standard.



Summit County
2 adults + 1 infant + 1 preschooler



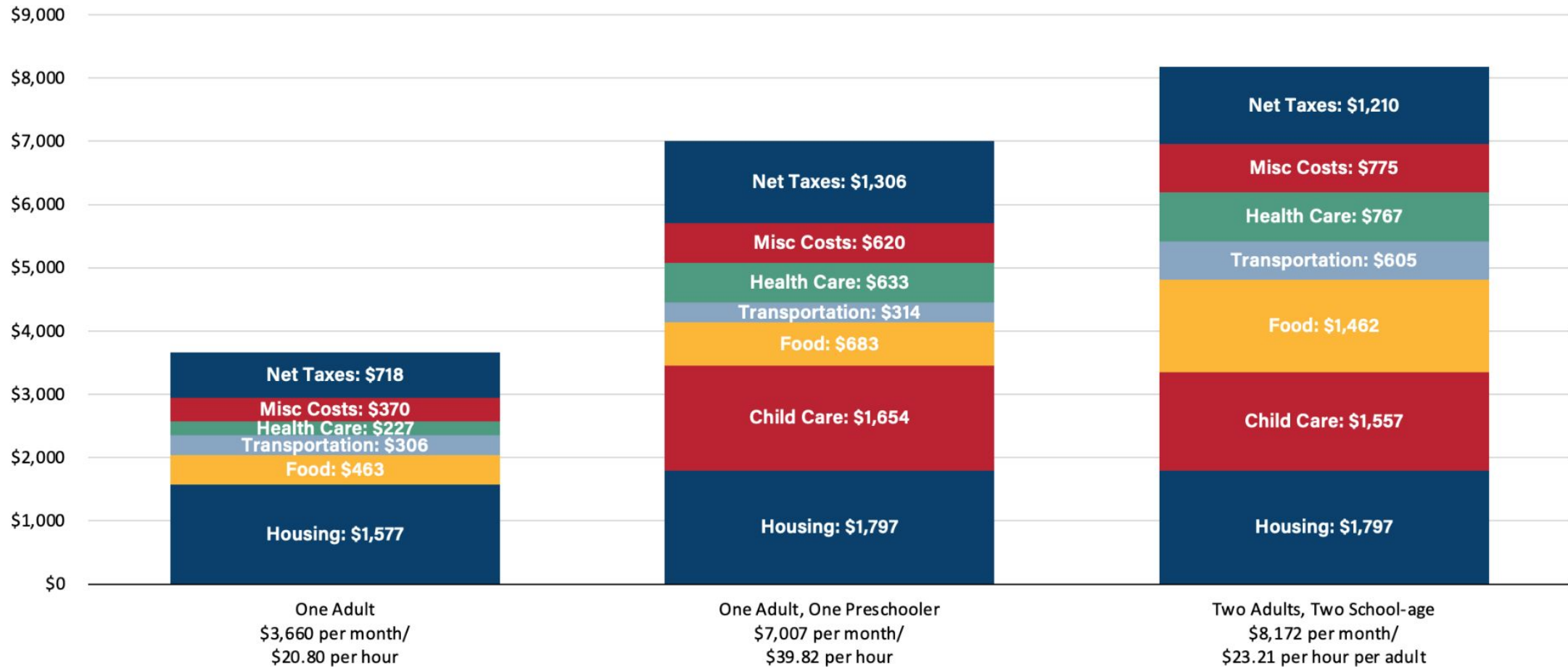
**RECYCLE
COLORADO**

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W CENTER FOR WOMEN'S WELFARE
UNIVERSITY of WASHINGTON
School of Social Work

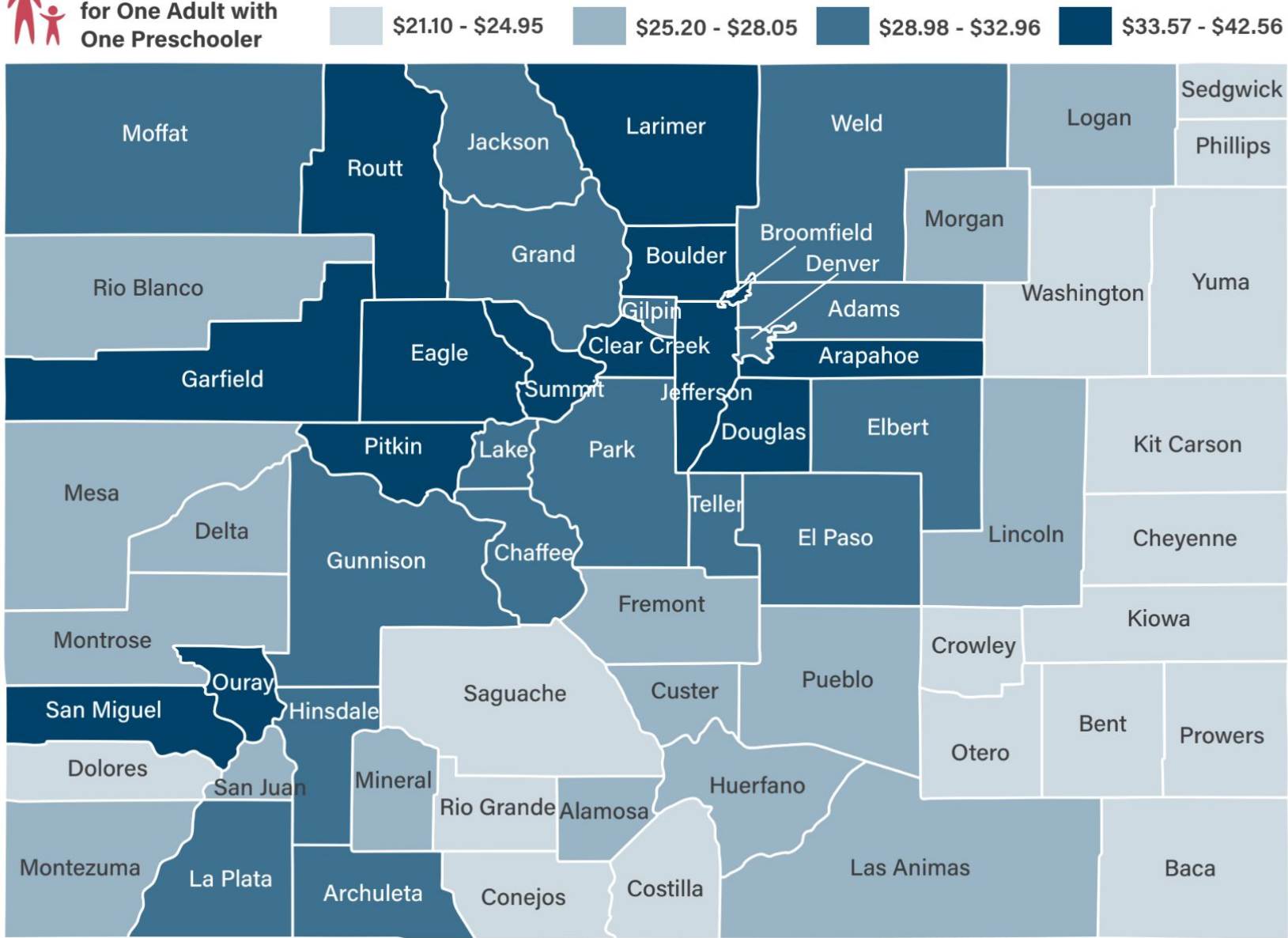
CCLP
Colorado Center
on Law and Policy

Self-Sufficiency Standard for Two Family Types in Summit County, 2022





**Hourly Self-Sufficiency Wage
for One Adult with
One Preschooler**



<https://selfsufficiencystandard.org/colorado/>



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What is Gleaning?

The act of gathering excess crops from farm fields, orchards, and/or fruit trees and redistributing them for human consumption.





**Pounds
gleaned
since 2017:
458,000+**

Regions: 7

**Hunger-relief
partners:
70+**

**Farm
partners: 50+**

**Volunteers:
275**



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Food Rescue



**RECYCLE
COLORADO**



Grocery Store Rescue



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Restaurant Cleanout



CAFE Food Rescue
CLIMATE ACTION FOOD EQUITY



**RECYCLE
COLORADO**

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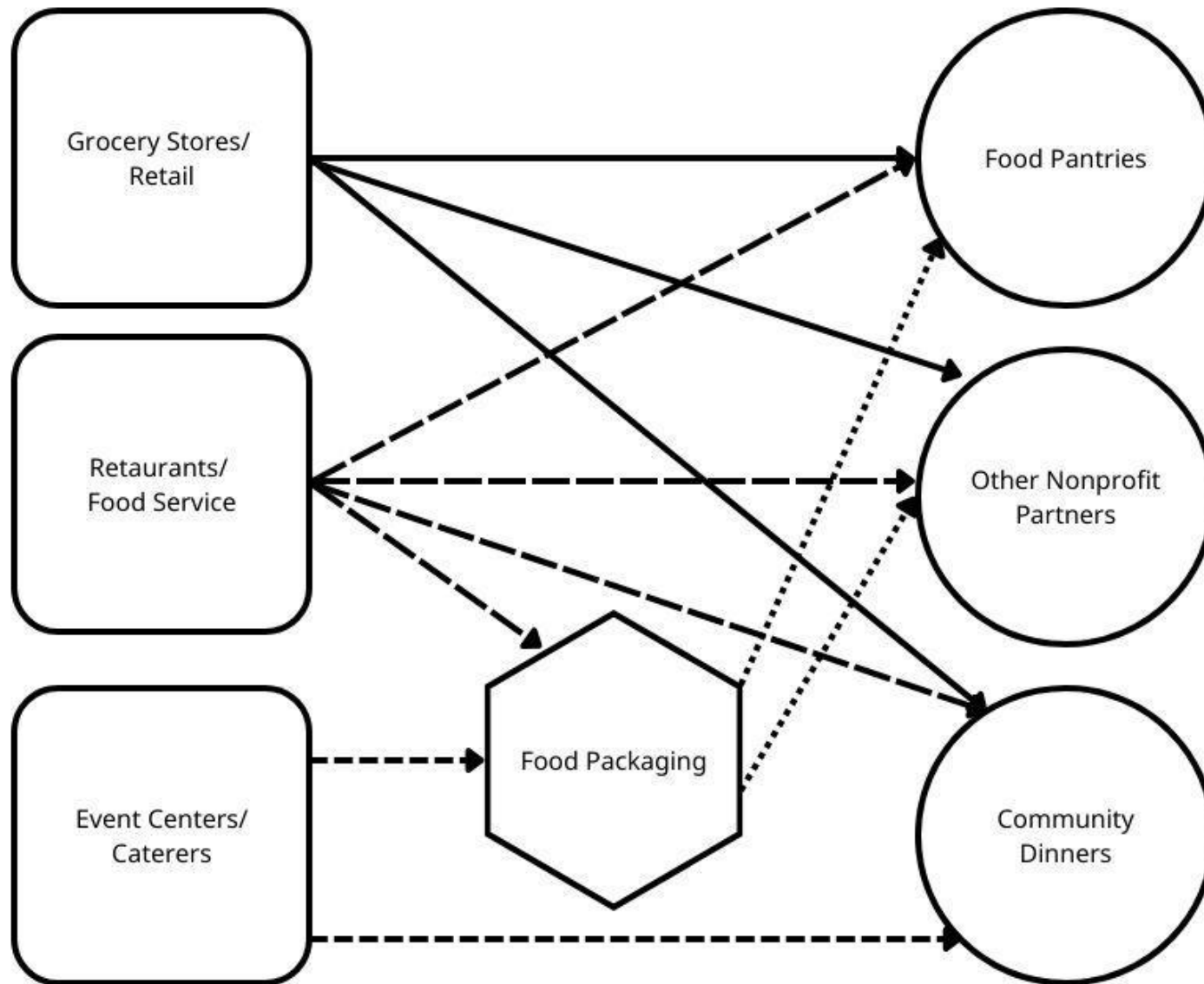


RECYCLE
COLORADO

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Food Donors

Food Recipients



CAFE Food Rescue

125,000 pounds of food in 2024
100,000 meals

4 food pantry partners
4 community dinners
Other non-profit organizations
4 own food pantries
Pop-up fresh markets



Valuing Food More Highly as a Food Waste Reduction Strategy



Map of Food Rescue and Food Recovery Nonprofits in Colorado

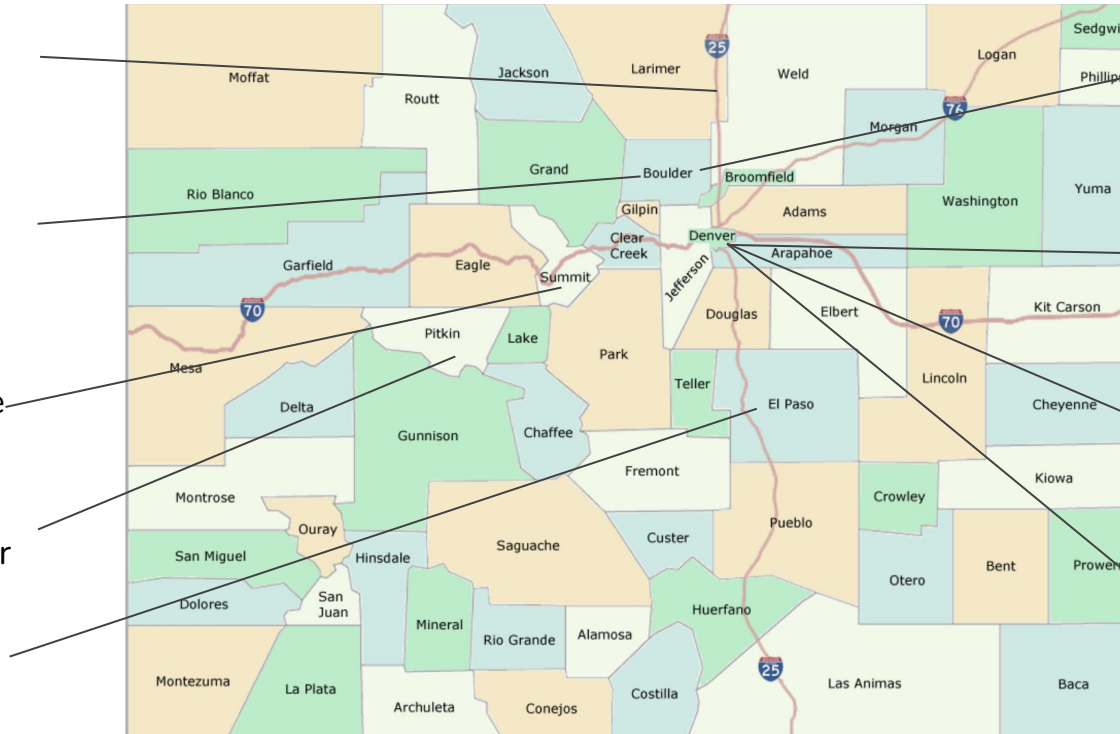
- Vindeket Foods

- Longmont Food Rescue

- CAFE Food Rescue

- Harvest for Hunger

- Food to Power



• Boulder Food Rescue

• Denver Food Rescue

• Kaizen Food Rescue

• We Don't Waste

- UpRoot Colorado (7 regions across the state)



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Discussion:

How can we work together to change the ways Coloradans interact with food and food systems to reduce food insecurity and wasted food?

How can we incorporate the understanding of food surplus and food recovery into the work our work?

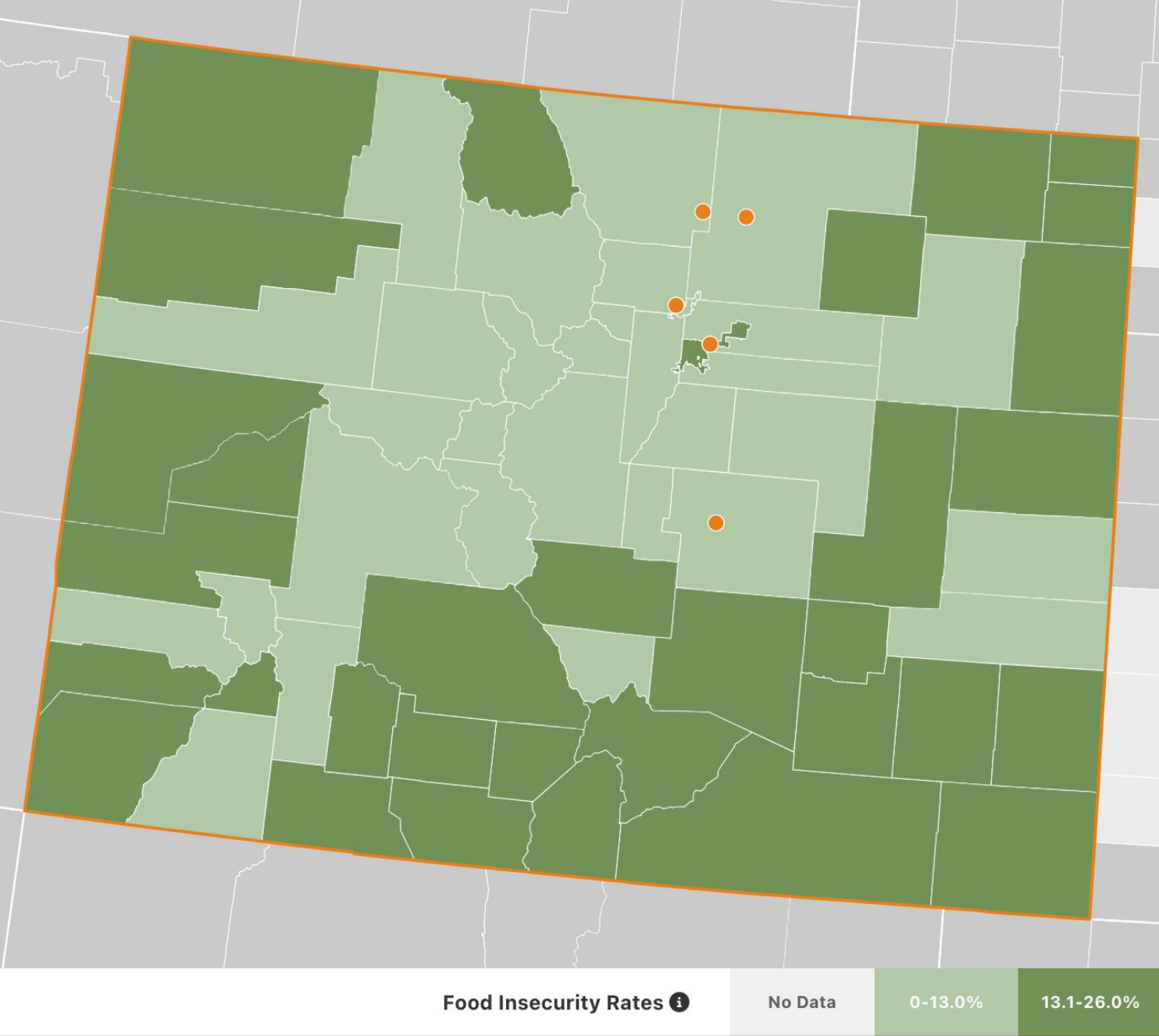
How can we (communities, composters and organizations) partner with food rescue groups?

- Community Engagement
- Programmatic partnerships to meet community goals
- Policies
- Other ways?

Thank you & Contact info

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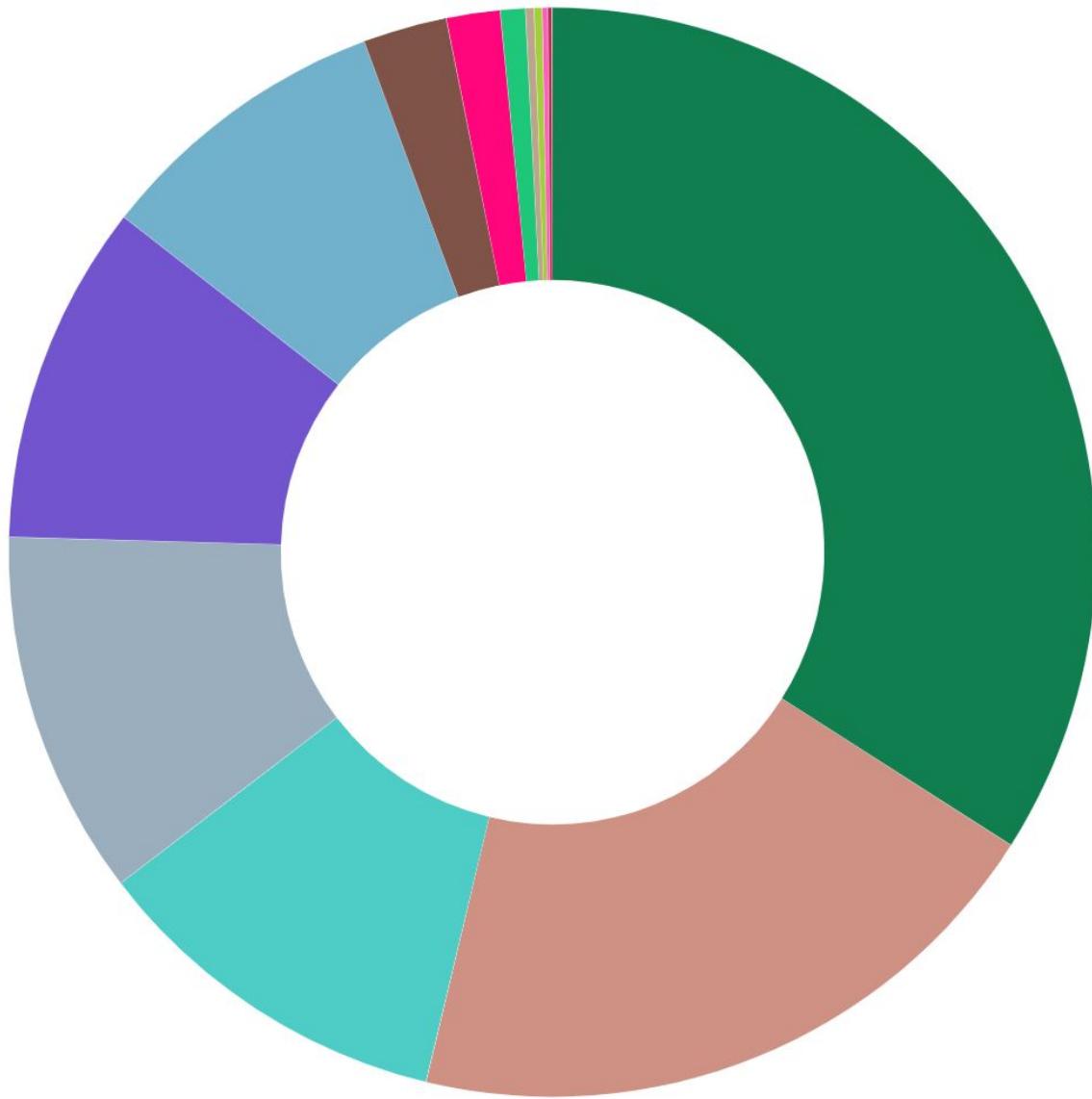
2023 Data Feeding America

	Food Insecurity	Cost of Meal	Above SNAP
Summit County	10.0%	\$4.74	47%
Colorado	12.7%	\$3.73	48%
United States	14.3%	\$3.58	37%

<https://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2023/overall/colorado>



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- Produce: 34.0%
- Bread/Rolls: 19.7%
- Fresh Prepared: 10.9%
- Dairy: 10.8%
- Desserts: 10.1%
- Shelf Stable: 8.8%
- Non-food: 2.5%
- Raw Protein: 1.6%
- Lunch Meat: 0.7%
- Pasta/Rice Entree: 0.3%
- Prep Fruit/Veg: 0.2%
- Starch: 0.2%
- Protein Entree: 0.1%

