



HOMETOWN FOOD SECURITY PROJECT

MOWER COUNTY, MN

What is the Hometown Food Security Project?

The Hometown Food Security Project is a cross-sector coalition working to address hunger and food insecurity in Mower County, Minnesota. Led by Hormel Foods and United Way of Mower County, the Project Coalition identifies resources, gaps, barriers, and opportunities by engaging experts and community members with lived experiences. We are committed to empowering individuals and families to achieve long-term food security and self-sufficiency through education, advocacy, and community partnerships. Our vision is a hunger-free Mower County, striving for a food secure community with a food insecurity rate of 3% or lower.

What is Food Security?

Food security is when all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life.

Ready to make a difference in your community?

Here are a few areas where you can focus your efforts to create lasting change in your hometown. Our team has been guided by these priorities to scale impact:

Access & Alignment: Increase access to food for all residents by ensuring efficient distribution systems and promoting collaboration among food providers and community organizations.

Inclusivity & Dignity: Promote an inclusive and dignified approach to addressing food insecurity by recognizing and respecting the diverse needs and circumstances of individuals and communities in your County.

Education & Empowerment: Provide education and resources to empower individuals and families with the knowledge and skills necessary to access support with confidence.

Choice & Autonomy: Empower individuals and families experiencing food insecurity to have greater choice and autonomy in accessing and obtaining the food that meets their specific needs and preferences.

Vibrant Community: Foster a vibrant and resilient community by leveraging collective resources and engaging community members in collaborative efforts to address hunger.

Learn about food insecurity in your community:
<https://map.feedingamerica.org>

RATES OF FOOD INSECURITY

NATIONAL - 2020

11.8%



MINNESOTA - 2020

6%



MOWER COUNTY - 2020

8.4%



VISIT US AT → www.HometownFoodSecurity.org



NEW! Get up to speed with the Mower County Hunger and Food Insecurity Community Assessment Report. Through dozens of stakeholder interviews, surveys, community listening sessions, subject matter expert input, and countless conversations, the Coalition has compiled an informative report for starting to understand hunger in our community.



DOWNLOAD THE REPORT NOW

Where We Are Now

To date, the Hometown Food Security Project has gathered critical stakeholders including those from school and governmental programs, nonprofits, businesses and religious organizations. The desire to share knowledge, participate and explore innovative new ways to collaborate has been universal and heartening. This report aims to create a comprehensive community assessment and a map of the assets that are currently in place.

With a problem as complex and intractable as food insecurity, community assessments are a crucial part of organizing for change. They help develop a deeper understanding of a community's strengths, needs, history, assets and social and cultural structure. With this knowledge we can identify where resources can be best used and understand why some populations fell into the gaps. Our hope is that this report will be the foundational document that creates a vibrant discussion between community leaders about how to optimize our efforts and build new collaborations that will increase our collective effectiveness.

The Challenge

Despite the valiant and concerted efforts of many organizations, community leaders and volunteers, food insecurity statistics have stayed roughly the same in the county over the last decade? According to Feeding America, Mower County had a food insecurity rate of 8.4% in 2020¹. While this is below the national average of 11.8%² it is significantly above the Minnesota state average of 6%. We believe that Mower County has the resources, knowledge and community spirit not only to reduce food insecurity below the state average, but also to become a shining example of how to address small issues larger both across the state and the nation.

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"Food insecurity is on a downward trajectory in the U.S. This is due to economic growth, a strong agricultural supply chain, and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). Those who will remain food insecure despite these broader trends are some of the most vulnerable in our midst, including those with mental and physical health disabilities. To address this will require creative solutions at the community level by those who most fully understand the challenges facing the most vulnerable among us. Mower County will be at the forefront of these efforts and will serve as a template for other communities who seek to help all our neighbors escape food insecurity."

¹City Gardeners, See Family, Followed Closely; Baylor Collaborates on Hunger and Poverty; BOPF; Professor, Department of Economics

Coalition Members

