

**Table 206. Households and Persons Having Problems With Access to Food: 2002 to 2006**

[108,601 represents 108,601,000. Food-secure means that a household had access at all times to enough food for an active healthy life for all household members, with no need for recourse to socially unacceptable food sources or extraordinary coping behaviors to meet their basic food needs. Food-insecure households had limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways. Households with very low food security (a subset of food-insecure households) were those in which food intake of one or more household members was reduced and normal eating patterns disrupted due to inadequate resources for food. The severity of food insecurity in households is measured through a series of questions about experiences and behaviors known to characterize households that are having difficulty meeting basic food needs. These experiences and behaviors generally occur in an ordered sequence as the severity of food insecurity increases. As resources become more constrained, adults in typical households first worry about having enough food, then they stretch household resources and juggle other necessities, then decrease the quality and variety of household members' diets, then decrease the frequency and quantity of adults' food intake, and finally decrease the frequency and quantity of children's food intake. All questions refer to the previous 12 months and include a qualifying phrase reminding respondents to report only those occurrences that resulted from inadequate financial resources. Restrictions to food intake due to dieting or busy schedules are excluded. The omission of homeless persons may be a cause of underreporting. Data are from the Food Security Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS); for details about the CPS, see text, Section 1, Population, and Appendix III]

Household food security level	Number (1,000)					Percent distribution				
	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
<b>Households, total</b> . . . . .	<b>108,601</b>	<b>112,214</b>	<b>112,967</b>	<b>114,437</b>	<b>115,609</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Food-secure . . . . .	96,543	99,631	99,473	101,851	102,961	88.9	88.8	88.1	89.0	89.1
Food-insecure . . . . .	12,058	12,583	13,494	12,586	12,648	11.1	11.2	11.9	11.0	10.9
With low food security <sup>1</sup> . . . . .	8,259	8,663	9,045	8,158	8,431	7.6	7.7	8.0	7.1	6.9
With very low food security <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	3,799	3,920	4,449	4,428	4,617	3.5	3.5	3.9	3.9	4.0
With very low food security among children <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	265	207	274	270	221	0.7	0.5	0.7	0.7	0.6
<b>Adult members</b> . . . . .	<b>206,493</b>	<b>213,441</b>	<b>215,564</b>	<b>217,897</b>	<b>220,423</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
In food-secure households . . . . .	184,718	190,451	191,236	195,172	197,536	89.5	89.2	88.7	89.6	89.6
In food-insecure households . . . . .	21,775	22,990	24,328	22,725	22,887	10.5	10.8	11.3	10.4	10.4
With low food security . . . . .	15,486	16,358	16,946	15,146	15,193	7.5	7.7	7.9	7.0	6.9
With very low food security <sup>2</sup> . . . . .	6,289	6,632	7,382	7,579	7,694	3.0	3.1	3.4	3.5	3.5
<b>Child members</b> . . . . .	<b>72,542</b>	<b>72,969</b>	<b>73,039</b>	<b>73,604</b>	<b>73,587</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>
In food-secure households . . . . .	59,415	59,704	59,171	61,201	60,959	81.9	81.8	81.0	83.1	82.8
In food-insecure households . . . . .	13,127	13,265	13,868	12,403	12,628	18.1	18.2	19.0	16.9	17.2
With low food security among adults or children . . . . .	12,560	12,845	13,323	11,797	12,198	17.3	17.6	18.2	16.0	16.6
With very low food security among children <sup>3</sup> . . . . .	567	420	545	606	430	0.8	0.6	0.7	0.8	0.6

<sup>1</sup> Prior to 2006, USDA described these households as food insecure without hunger. <sup>2</sup> Food intake of one or more members in these households was reduced and normal eating patterns disrupted at some time during the year because of the household's food insecurity. Prior to 2006, USDA described these households as food insecure with hunger. <sup>3</sup> The food security survey measures food security status at the household level. Not all children residing in food-insecure households were directly affected by the households' food insecurity. Similarly, not all children in households classified as having very low food security among children were subject to the reductions in food intake and disruptions in eating patterns that characterize this condition. Young children, in particular, are often protected from effects of the households' food insecurity.