

FOOD INSECURITY & OBESITY INCIDENCE ACROSS CONNECTICUT



Zwack Center for Food and Resource Policy
 Summary of Outreach Report No. 54, January 2019
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WHAT IS THE ISSUE?

Ensuring that all Connecticut residents and households are food secure is a critical public health goal. Studies of low-income populations in the U.S. find that food insecurity is associated with poorer diet quality, which has implications for health. At the same time, rates of obesity and diet-related chronic diseases in Connecticut have risen steadily since the late 1990s. Consequently, the primary objective of this report was to describe the prevalence of food insecurity and obesity across Connecticut's diverse population and towns.

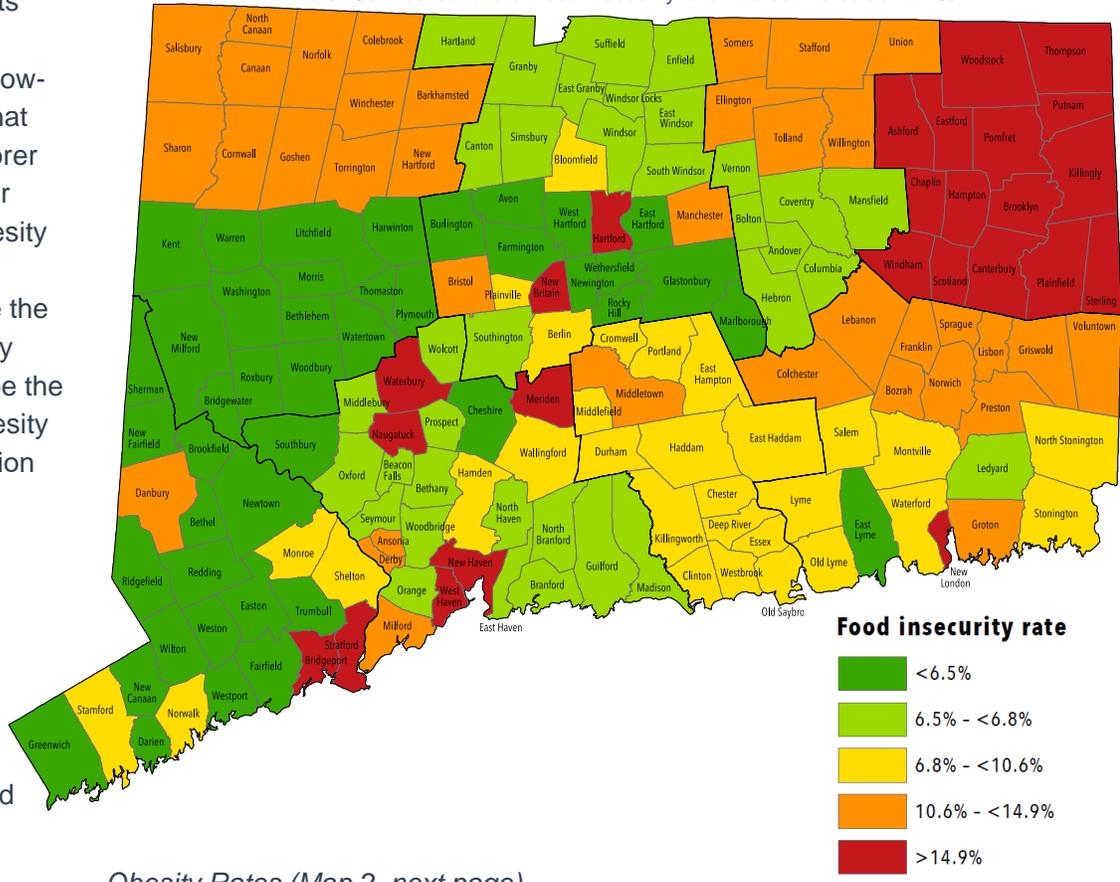
WHAT DID THE STUDY FIND?

Food Insecurity Rates (Map 1)

- 12.4% of Connecticut households reported having insufficient funds to purchase food in the last 12 months (defined as food insecure for this report).
- Black, Hispanic/Latino, and other non-white households were more likely to be food insecure compared to White and Asian households
- Households with children <18 years old were more likely to be food insecure
- Rates of food insecurity were highest in Connecticut's urban centers and in some rural areas

MAP 1: FOOD INSECURITY RATES BY CONNECTICUT TOWNS OR TOWN-CLUSTER

Note: Connecticut overall food insecurity rate was estimated as 12.4%.

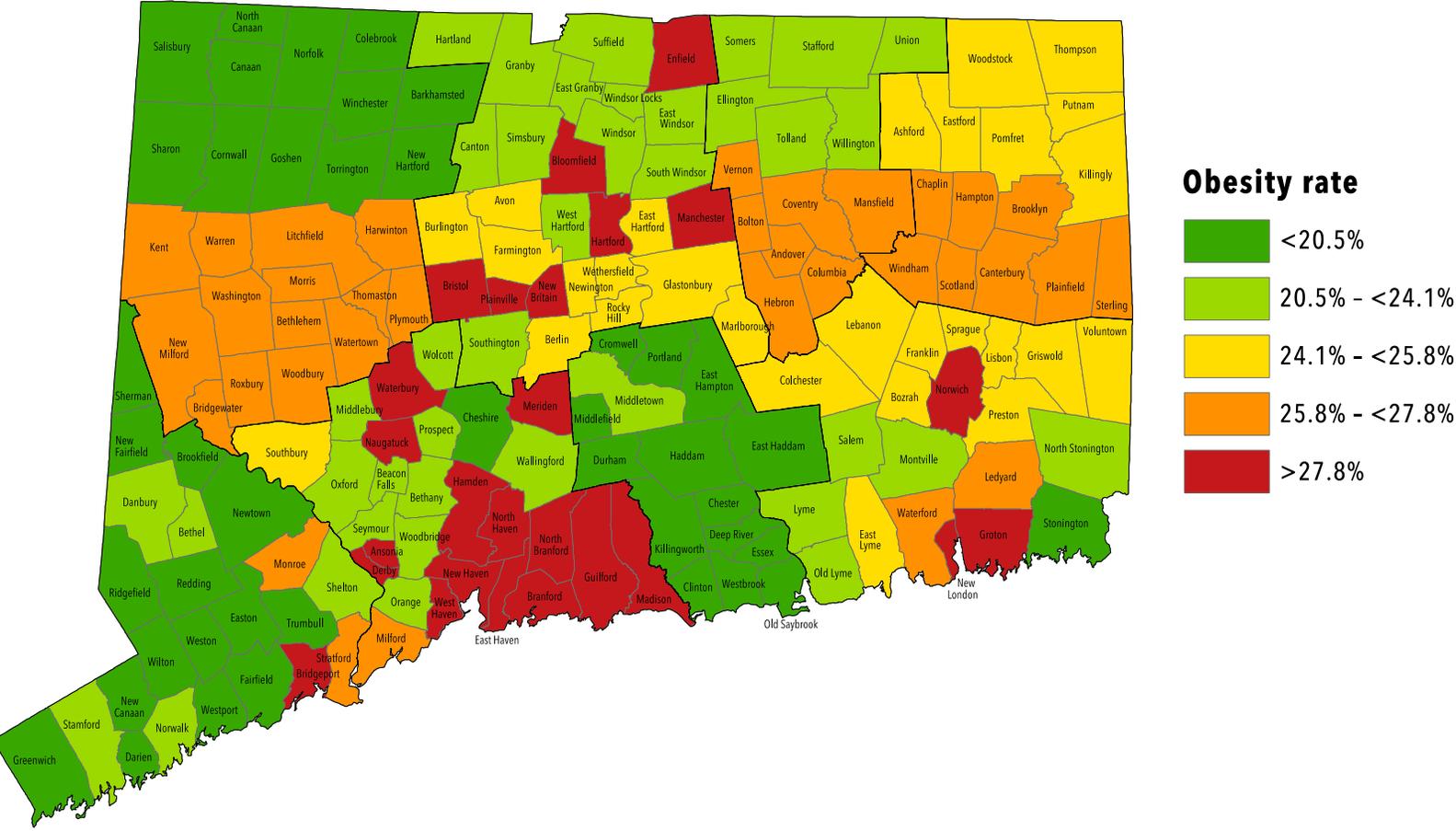


Obesity Rates (Map 2, next page)

- 61.6% of Connecticut residents surveyed reported being overweight (36.0%) or obese (25.6%)
- Black, Hispanic/Latino, and other non-white survey respondents were more likely to be overweight or obese compared to White and Asian survey respondents.
- Incidence of overweight and obesity was substantially more widespread across Connecticut's towns than food insecurity.
- Incidence of overweight was consistent across income classes, but the incidence of obesity was substantially lower for higher-income respondents.

MAP 2: OBESITY RATES BY CONNECTICUT TOWNS OR TOWN-CLUSTER

Note: Connecticut overall obesity rate was estimated as 25.6%.



HOW THIS STUDY WAS CONDUCTED

Self-reported data on household food insecurity and the household respondent’s body mass index (BMI) collected in the DataHaven 2015 Community Wellbeing Survey were used to conduct the analyses presented in this report. All statistical errors are those of the authors and not attributable to DataHaven. To report errors or for questions, please contact rigoberto.lopez@uconn.edu.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS OF THE STUDY

Rebecca Boehm, PhD is an economist with the Food and Environment Program at Union of Concerned Scientists in Washington D.C., and previously a Postdoctoral Fellow with the Zwick and Rudd Centers at the University of Connecticut (UConn). Jaime Foster, PhD is Senior Director of Community Partnership and Programs at the Connecticut Food Bank and formerly a Postdoctoral Fellow with the Rudd Center. Jiff Martin is Associate Extension Educator for UConn Extension. Rigoberto Lopez, PhD is the Director of Zwick Center and professor and head of the Department of Agricultural and Resource Economics at UConn. For the full report, see the Zwick Center Outreach Report No. 54 available at: www.zwickcenter.uconn.edu

ABOUT THE ZWICK CENTER

The Charles J. Zwick Center for Food and Resource Policy provides quantitative and policy oriented economic research on problems confronting food and natural resources to improve the functioning of markets and related government policies, and to advance and disseminate knowledge that impacts public policies to improve society’s welfare.