



## FOOD SECURITY FACT SHEET

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Economic Research Service, food security means access at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life. Furthermore, Michigan State University (MSU) recognizes that limited food availability with a reduction in the quality or variety of food intake, can often result in disrupted eating patterns and be a considerable obstacle to academic success.

### MSU Nourishing Success\*

#### Research Findings:

2018 survey data showed that an estimated 2,200 MSU students (4.4 percent of the population of 50,000 students) may be experiencing food insecurity.

Researchers concluded that the degree of food security likely has an impact on academics since those participants with higher food security were more likely to have a higher GPA compared to those who reported disrupted eating patterns and reduced intake related to food insecurity.

Research found that perceived stigma can influence intent to use the campus food bank especially among undergraduate students, yet 90% of students approve or strongly approve of other students using the MSU Student Food Bank.



\*2018 MSU Nourishing Success Survey of 363 MSU students.

#### MSU Student Food Bank

463 East Circle Dr., Room 151  
 East Lansing, MI 48824  
[www.foodbank.msu.edu](http://www.foodbank.msu.edu)

### WHAT IS FOOD SECURITY?

The USDA uses the following labels to describe the ranges of food security that exist within differing degrees of food access problems or limitations: **high food security** refers to having no problems or limitations with food access; **marginal food security** indicates some anxiety over food sufficiency or shortage of food in the house, but little or no change to food intake; **low food security** refers to the reduced quality, variety, or desirability of food intake, and **very low food security** refers to disrupted eating patterns resulting in reduced food intake (USDA, 2016). **The low to very low food security range is often referred to as “food insecurity.”**

Food security not only addresses quantity of food intake, but also considers quality, variety, and desirability of food intake needed to support good nutrition. This broader context for achieving food security supports the need for reliable, on-going access to enough enjoyable and nutritious food.

The rising costs associated with higher education has made it increasingly difficult for college students to have the financial stability to afford adequate food to meet dietary needs. **Research suggests food insecurity can pose a significant barrier to academic success.**

### HOW IS MSU MAKING A DIFFERENCE?

- In 1993, the Michigan State University Student Food Bank became the first student-run, campus-based food assistance program in the United States.
- With over 6,000 visits each year, the MSU Student Food Bank serves a diverse group of new and returning student clients, many with families, most of whom do not have a campus dining plan.
- Having to decide between spending money on food or textbooks is not a decision any student should be forced to make. The MSU Student Food Bank is a valuable resource that can provide the supplemental food assistance needed to support MSU students as they pursue and achieve their academic goals.
- We are proud to have helped students for over 25 years and will continue to support students in getting their food and nutrition needs met so they can focus on supporting their appetite for learning.



Source: Adapted from the USDA Economic Research Service.