

Introduction

- Food insecurity among college students associated with adverse effects on academic performance
- UCSD students may face difficulties because of local food availability and costs
- Survey conducted in early 2023 to evaluate prevalence and risk factors for food insecurity and access to food resources

Methods

- Food insecurity module developed in as part of a multi-component online Qualtrics survey, sent out to all Bachelor of Science in Public Health (BSPH) senior capstone students
- Six-item USDA questionnaire and score system used to define food security status
 - Low security: reduced quality, variety, or desirability of diet
 - Very low security: multiple indications of disrupted eating patterns and reduced food intake
 - Insecure = low + very low food security
- EpiInfo 7.1 used to calculate prevalence rate ratios (PRR) + 95% CI for associations between demographic risk factors and food insecurity and levels of food insecurity and academic outcomes

Results

- Response rate 82% (178/217)
- 38% of students met USDA definition of food insecure (16% low, 22% very low)
- Significant risk factors for food insecurity :
 - First generation status (PRR = 2.1, 95% CI 1.3-3.4, p<0.001)
 - Living off-campus (PRR = 1.7, 95% CI 1.0-2.9, p = 0.03)
 - Working students (PRR = 1.6, 95% CI 1.0-2.6, p = 0.04)
 - Pell Grant recipient (PRR = 2.1, 95% CI 1.4-3.1, p<0.001)
- Dose-response relationship between level of insecurity and GPA < 3.0 , with food insecure students 5.7 times more likely to have lower GPAs (95% CI 1.7 - 19.1, p<0.001)
- Even among students with very low security, food resource awareness exceeds use
 - 71% aware of UCSD Food Pantry, 29% have used
 - 58% aware of CalFresh assistance resources, 34% have used

Conclusion

- Nearly 40% of BSPH seniors are food-insecure, four times the rate of 10% for the state and national average
- Levels of very low food security were ten times the rate of 4% for the state and national average
- University leadership must recognize food insecurity as a priority and mobilize efforts to decrease the prevalence of food insecurity on campus



UCSD Triton Food Pantry, April 2023

Nearly 40% of UCSD BSPH seniors are food insecure, four times the state and national rate of 10%

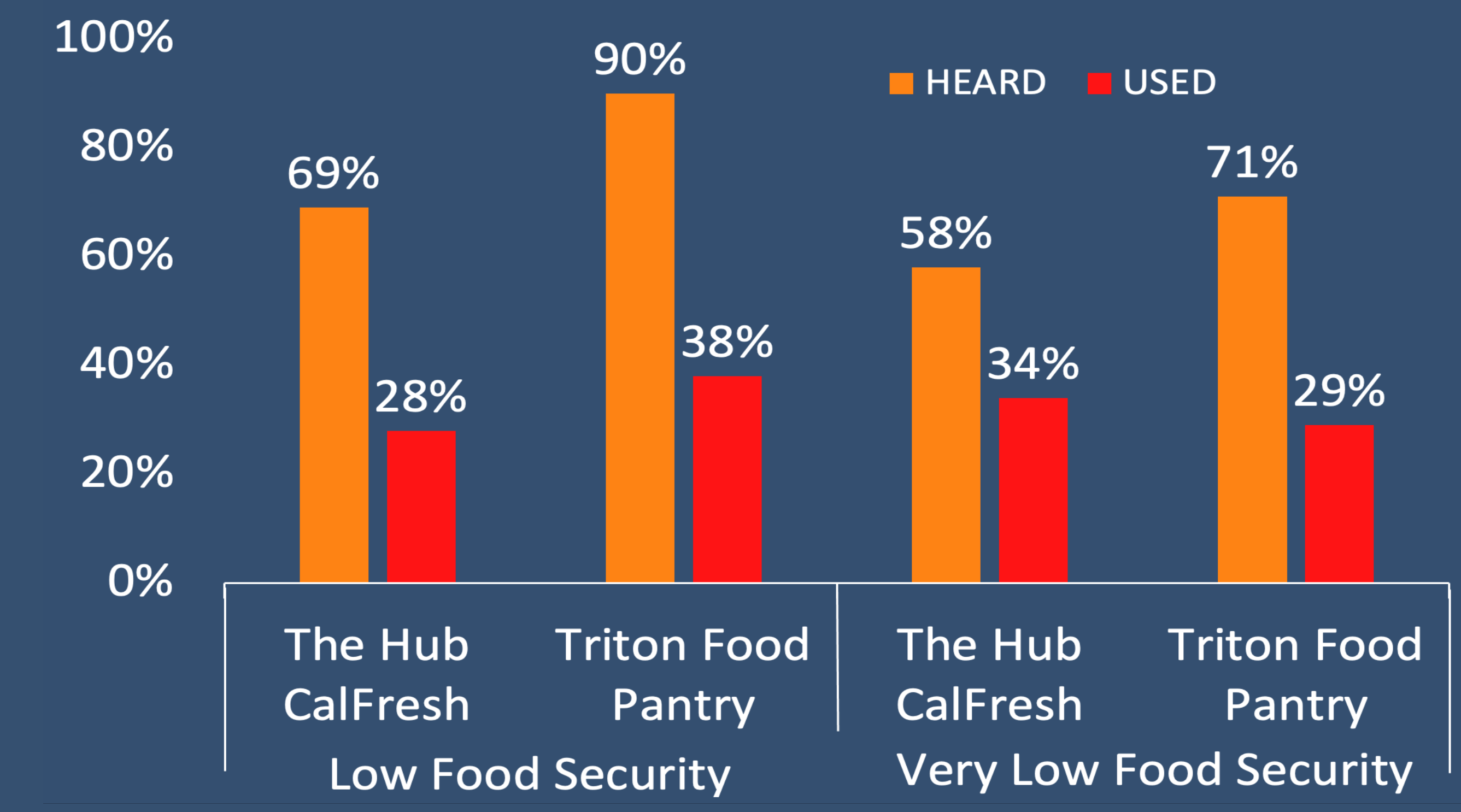


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Food Insecurity by Demographic Characteristics

Characteristic	N	Food Security Status, %		
		Very Low	Low	Food Insecure
First generation				
Yes	115	28%	18%	46%
No	63	10%	13%	22%
Living off-campus				
Yes	130	25%	18%	42%
No	48	13%	13%	25%
Working				
Yes	125	26%	17%	42%
No	53	11%	15%	26%
Pell Grant				
Yes	82	28%	25%	52%
No	96	16%	8%	25%

Knowledge vs Use of Food Resources among Students with Low and Very Low Food Security, BSPH Capstone Survey, 2023 (N=67)



Impact of Food Insecurity on GPA < 3.0, BSPH Capstone Survey, 2023 (N=102)

