

Unpacking complexities and closing equity gaps: Student food security, basic needs, and food sovereignty at private nonprofit universities

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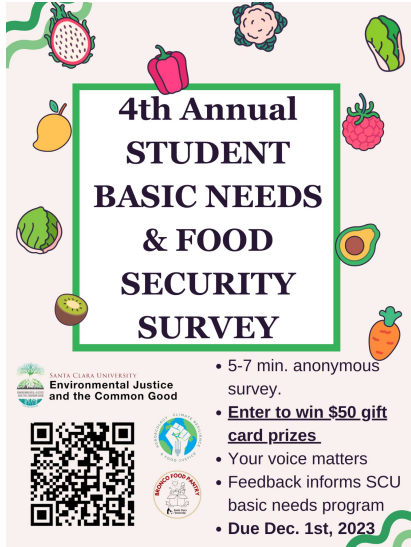
SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY
**Environmental Justice
and the Common Good**

Santa Clara University in Transition



Methodology

- Community-Based Participatory Action Research (CB-PAR)
- Mixed Methods



Study Design:
Implemented the use of a campus-wide student surveys assessing food security, interviewed with students, interviewed with key stakeholders, and conducted a case study on UC Basic needs funding

Shared Results:

- Shared findings with community partners at the SCU Food Security Program
- Provided recommendations to university administrators to improve students' food sovereignty
- Created new labeling system for Bronco Pantry

Data Collection:

- Student survey with 777 respondents, conducted Fall 2022
- Interviews conducted February 2023
 - 9 Student Interviews
- 3 Key Stakeholder Interviews

CBPAR Research Process

Subsequent Data Analysis:

- Shared findings and received feedback from community partner
- Further developed creative solutions to promote food security

Initial Data Analysis:

- Coded and analyzed survey responses
- Calfresh Funding Research
- Transcribed interview responses
- Coded and analyzed interview responses

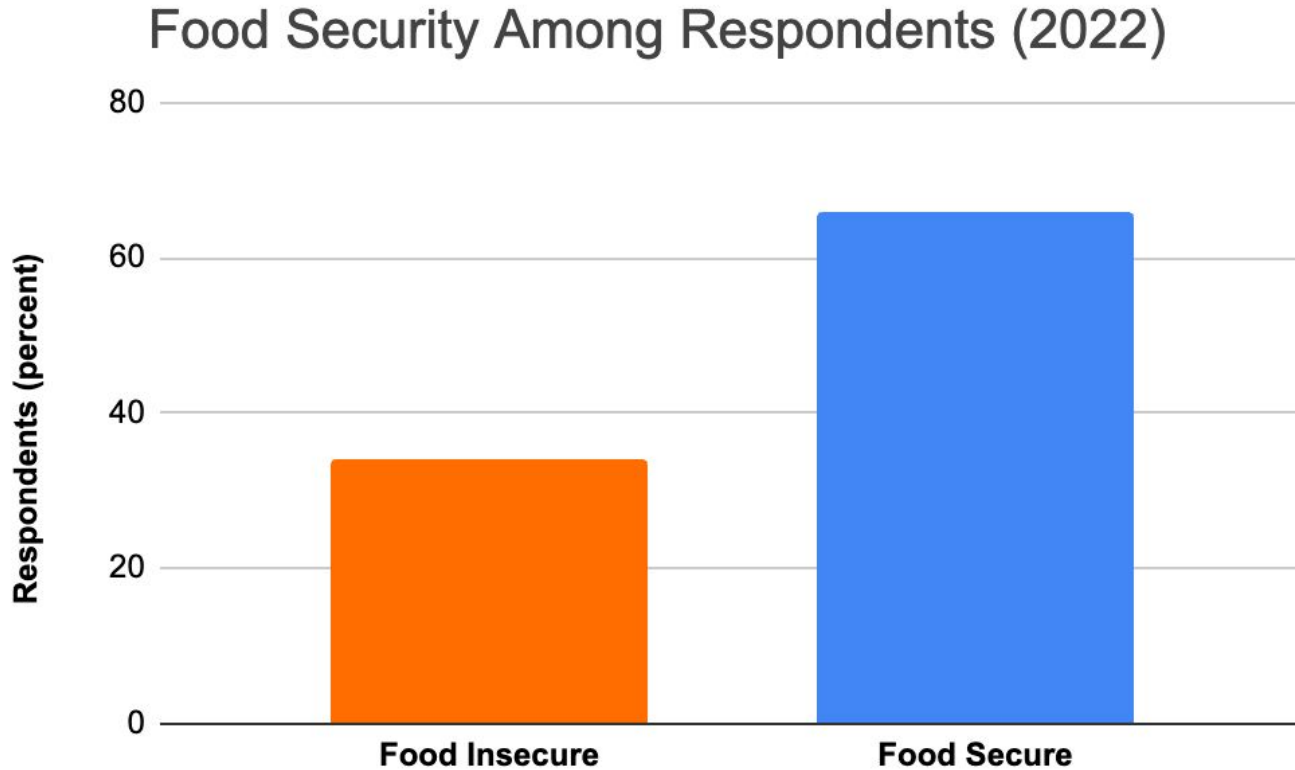


Figure 1: Food Security Among SCU Students in 2022.

Source: 2022 SCU Basic Needs Survey. Food security was calculated using the USDA Food Security Scoring Model. 34% of student respondents showed food insecurity (n=775).

Food security level by race, ethnicity, & international student status (n=747), 2022.

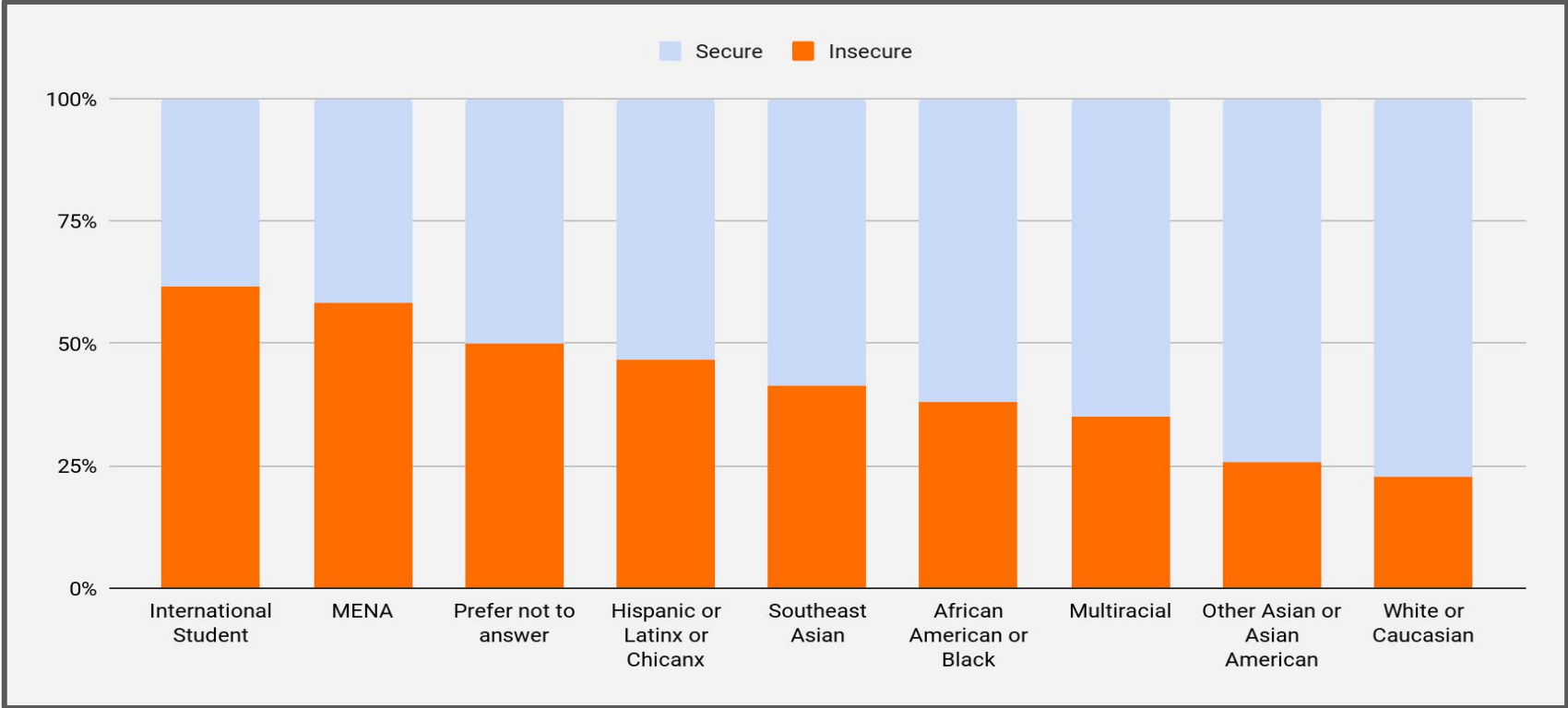
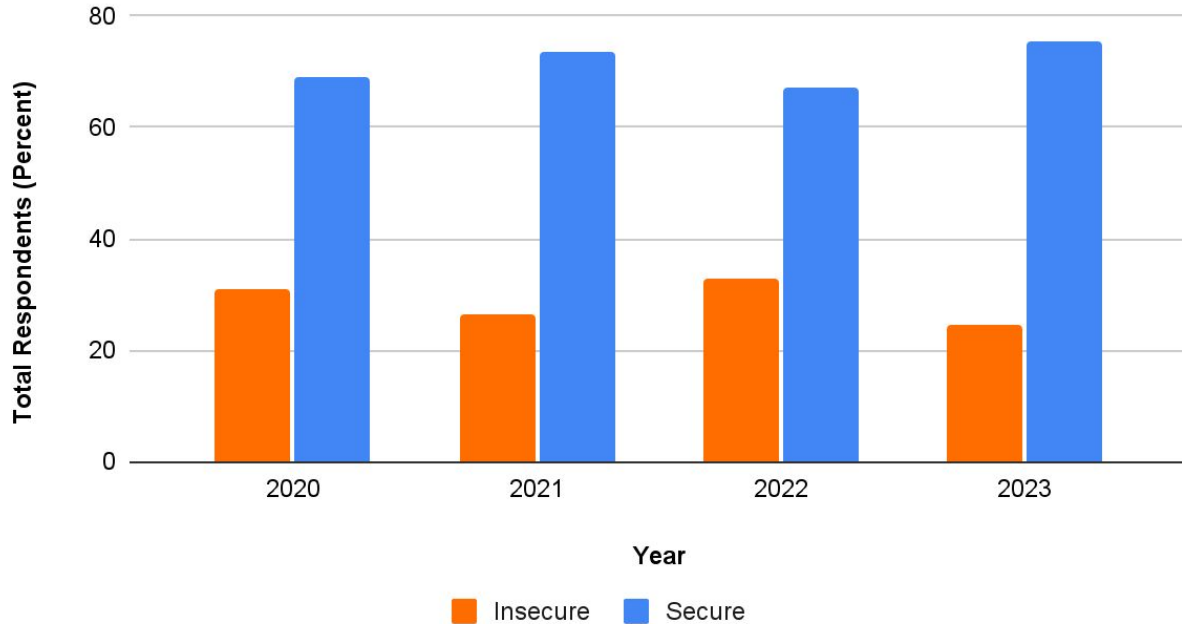


Figure 2: Food Security by Race, Ethnicity and International Student Status, n=747

Notes: Food insecurity was scored using the USDA questions. It was disaggregated by race and ethnicity, and international students.

Housing Insecurity from 2020 to 2023

Student Housing Security (2020-2023)

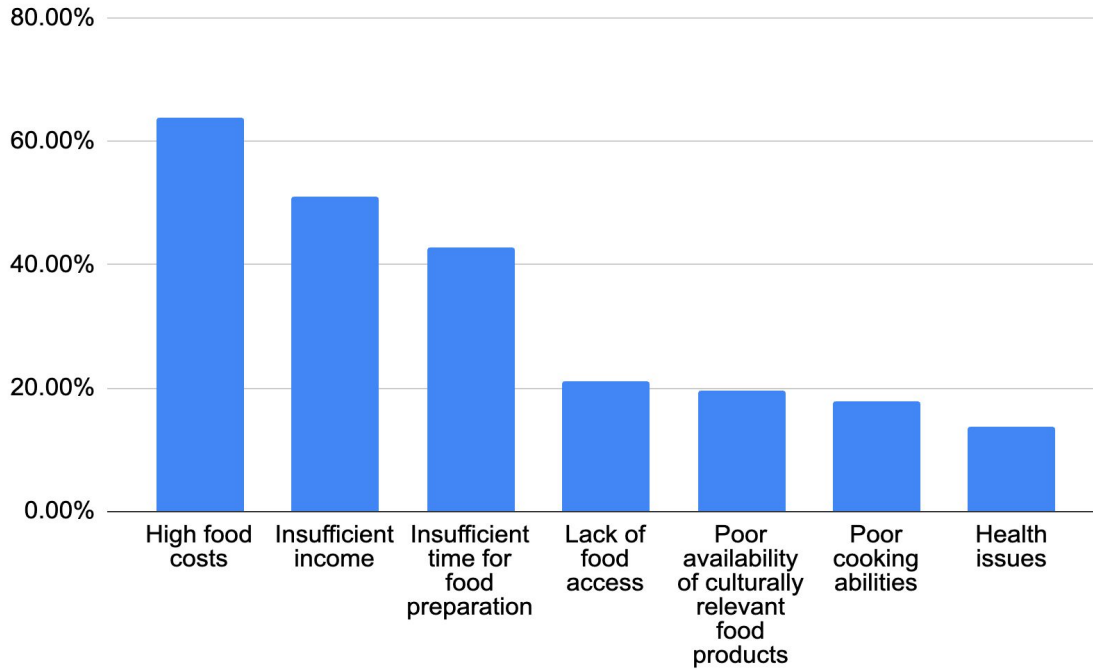


2023 Preliminary Results:

- 827 total respondents
- Approximately 1 in 5 students are housing insecure

Student identified barriers to their food security

Top 7 list of student identified barriers to achieving food security (n=775)*



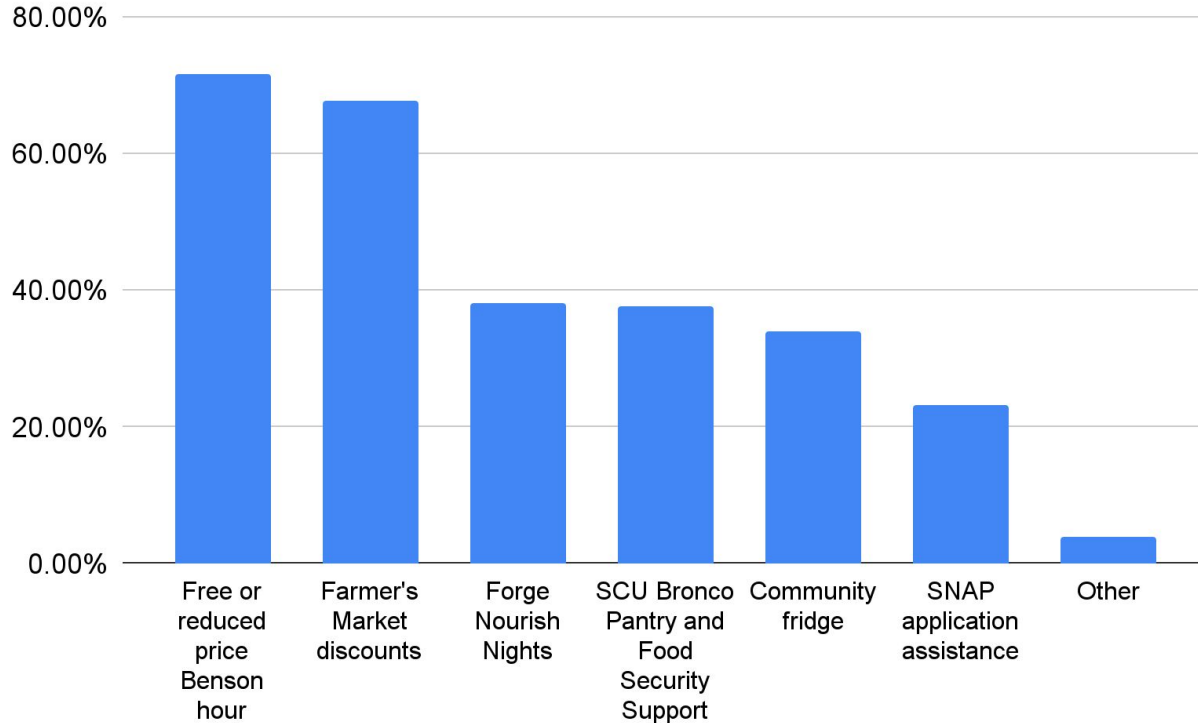
“...I’m kind of in a tough spot because I do believe the price of food ultimately has to pay the people who work in [Dining Commons], but I think they can certainly lower prices because it will accumulate, you’re probably spending \$50 a day for breakfast, lunch, and dinner...”

Source: Food security survey 2022. *Omits none of above responses



Student preferred solutions to improve food security

Preferred Student Food Security Resources, 2022 (n=775)



for students?

Student food sovereignty and ethics

student mutual aid



How important is it that your food is _____?

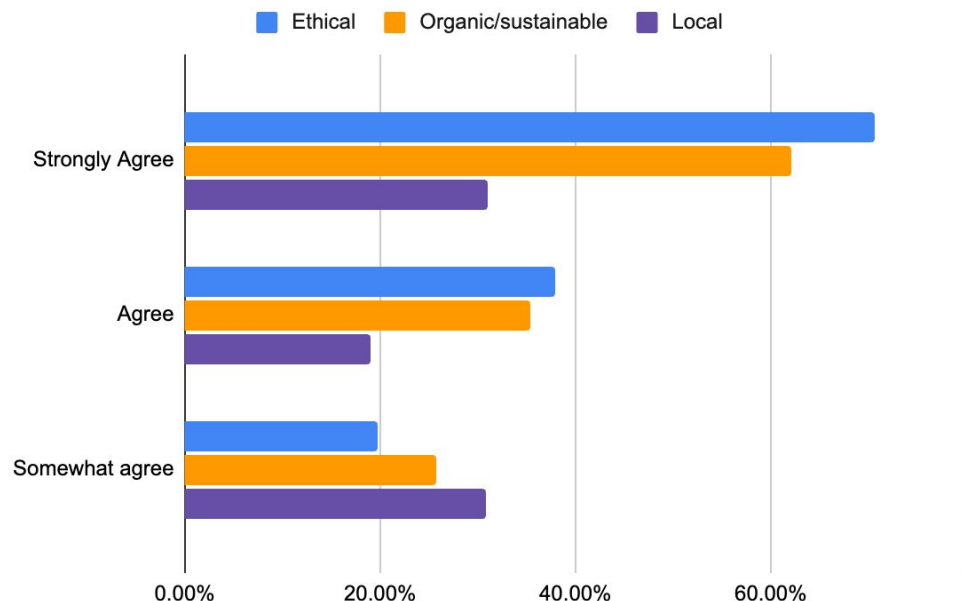


Figure 6: Student Level of Agreement with Different Sustainable Food Attributes

Notes: 7 point scale, top three most positive results shown Source: 2022-2023 Survey question on perception of food preference n=667 for Organic/sustainable, n=676 for Ethical, n=675 for Local

Santa Clara University's Response Thus Far...

Institutionalizing Basic Needs Support

Waived housing deposit for Pell Grant Recipients

01

Research, learning and dialogue

Learning from our colleagues at CA's Public Universities

03

02

New position created: Basic Needs Coordinator

Increasing Awareness



BASIC NEEDS ACTION PLAN

JUNE 2023

Scaling 1st-Gen Scholars Support to Close Equity Gaps

First Generation Scholars Program:

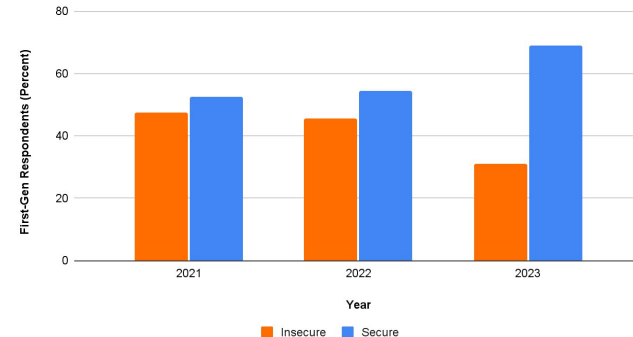
- Academic, financial, career-development, social & wellness programming
- **~500 members & growing, ~65% of scholars are Latine**
- **Challenge: 80% of program is funded by gifts & grants**

Emergency Funding Grants (2022-23):

- 24 for living **expenses/rent**
- 20 for **laptops**
- 11 **medical expenses or student health insurance**



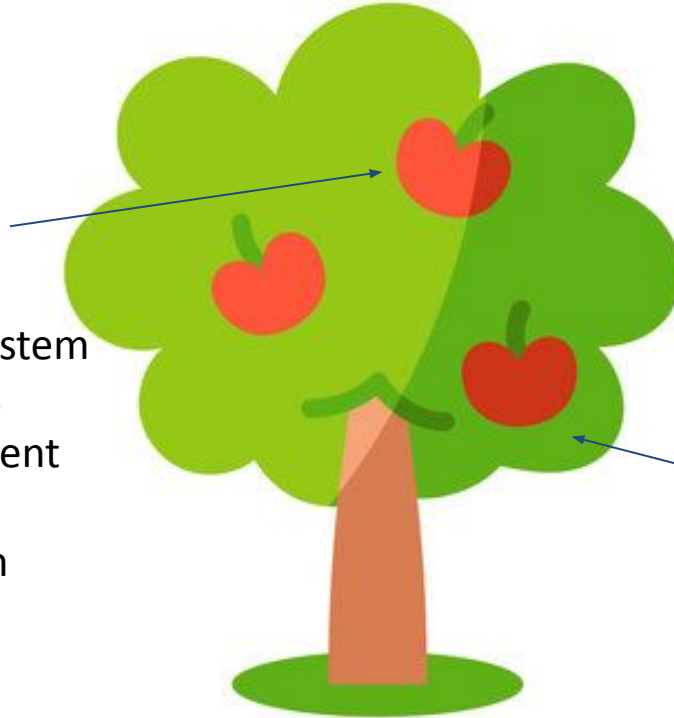
First-Generation Housing Security (2021-2023)



What could be done?

High-Hanging Fruit - Towards Transformation

- Re-design campus food system
- Rewrite housing contracts
- Significantly increase student financial aid
- Build basic needs program



Low-Hanging Fruit: Incremental Changes

- Increase funding
- Statement on syllabi
- + meal point donations
- Conduct annual assessment
- Adjust contract/services to improve housing security

Thank you for listening!

Any Questions?



Image source: <https://www.scu.edu/living/residential-living-options/rtc-undergraduate-housing/cura---finn-hall/>



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