



THE HEALTHY
LIVING COALITION

Healthy Living Coalition Nutrition Advocacy 101

We believe that healthy living is a human right and to create a movement toward sustainable change, we must approach issues of food access with language that puts people, dignity and empathy first.

We recognize the words we use have an impact on how knowledge is shared and learned. As part of our goal to help raise awareness of issues and destigmatize food and nutrition insecurity, the Healthy Living Coalition put together a short list of terms that may be useful as you start to have important conversations about food and nutrition access in your own community.

DEFINITIONS

Nutrition Security: incorporates all aims of food security but places an additional emphasis on the accessibility of wholesome, healthful, nourishing foods. Nutrition Security means having consistent access to, and availability and affordability of, foods that promote well-being, while preventing and/or treating disease. Nutrition Insecurity is experienced when there are limitations and/or barriers placed on that access.

Food Security: a state or condition when all people at all times, have physical, economic and social access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life. Food Insecurity is experienced when there is a lack of regular food access and can be experienced at mild, moderate and severe levels. Levels range from being uncertain in your ability to obtain food, to compromising or reducing food quality or quantity, to going without food for a day or more.

Hunger: the uncomfortable, painful physical sensation caused by insufficient consumption of dietary energy. Today, it is estimated that 690 million people are going hungry. Hunger may also be referred to as 'Undernourishment.'

Malnutrition: deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person's intake of dietary energy (calories) and/or nutrients. The term malnutrition covers two broad groups of conditions. One is 'undernutrition'— stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals). The other is overweight, obesity and diet-related noncommunicable diseases (such as heart disease, stroke, diabetes, and cancer).

Food Access: the ease and availability to sources of healthy food as measured by: distance to a store or number of stores in an area, individual level resources that affect accessibility such as income or vehicle availability, and neighborhood level indicators of resources including average income and availability of public transport.

Food Justice: Food Justice takes a holistic, rights based view of the food system and considers the socio-economic pressures, structural barriers and inequities that prevent food access and contribute to poor health outcomes in underserved communities.

- The Food Justice Movement is a grassroots movement that supports communities in exercising their right to grow, sell and eat nutritious, fresh, affordable, locally produced and culturally appropriate food.
- A related concept is Food Sovereignty, defined as a people's right to culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agricultural systems.

Food Systems: All actors involved in the production, harvesting, processing, distribution, consumption, and disposal (loss or waste) of food products and the outputs generated at each step. Food products originate from agriculture, livestock, forestry, fisheries, and food industries. Production includes farming communities, pre-production actors such as input industries producing fertilizers or seeds. Other actors include: science, technology, data, innovation actors, public and private quality and safety control organizations.

Food Waste or Loss: Any food that is lost, discarded and disposed of that is or was at some point fit for human consumption. Loss can occur at any level of the supply chain: production and transportation, wasting blemished produce at the retail-level, or overbuying and cooking more than is needed at home and tossing the excess.

Emergency Food System: the federal network of food assistance programs that facilitates supplying food to people in need on a temporary and supplemental basis.

Food Bank: a type of non-profit organization that safely stores and delivers millions of pounds of food to local food programs like a food pantry.

Food Pantry: supplied with food from a food bank, this type of non-profit organization distributes food directly to people and families in need.

Federal Nutrition Programs: the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) works to end hunger and obesity through federal nutrition programs including school meals

SNAP, which stands for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, is a US federal program that provides low-income families with additional income to help them purchase food to meet nutritional needs. This program is formerly known as food stamps.

WIC is a Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, and provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals and nutrition education.

Food Sovereignty: The right to food, adequate nutrition, and resources necessary for each person to be able to feed themselves with dignity in culturally appropriate ways.

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