

## Household Food Insecurity in Prince Edward Island

**In PEI, 15.4%, of households were affected by food insecurity in 2011.**

**12.2% of Canadian households were affected in the same year.**

**15,900 adults and 8,500 children under the age of 18 in PEI were living in food insecure households in 2011.**

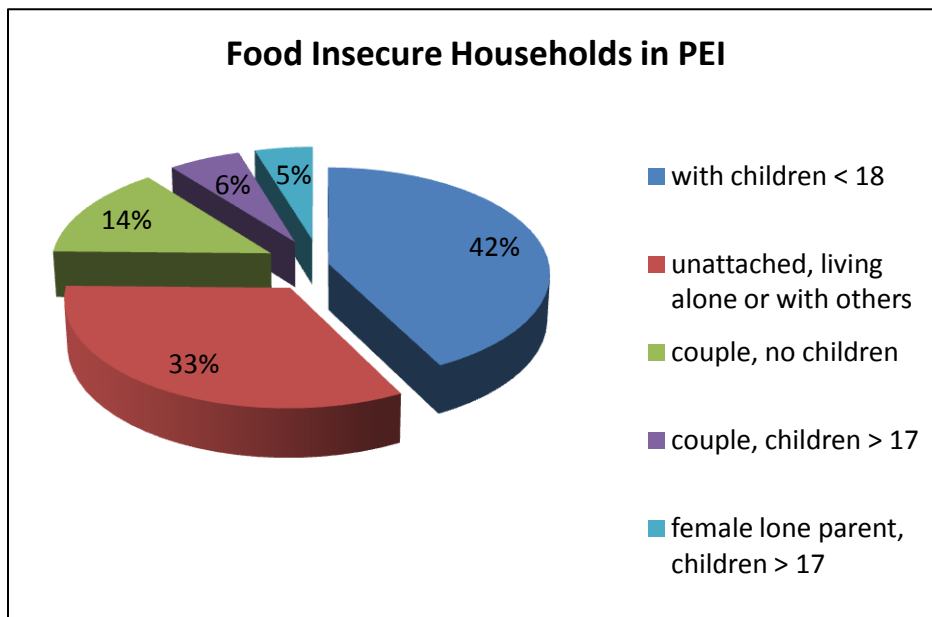
The rate of food insecurity in PEI 2011 was similar to rates seen in 2007 and 2008, but higher than the 12.9% observed in 2005.

### What is Food Insecurity?

Household Food Insecurity is insecure or inadequate access to food due to financial constraints.

The experience of food insecurity can range from concerns about running out of food before there is more money to buy more, to the inability to afford a balanced diet, to going hungry, missing meals, and in extreme cases, not eating for a whole day because of a lack of food and money for food.

### Who is Food Insecure in PEI?



- **26.8% of children under 18 on PEI in 2011 were living in food-insecure households.** PEI has the second worst rate of food insecurity among families with children in the country (only Nunavut's rate is higher).

- **Children of all ages are affected. 42% of food insecure households with children included at least one child under the age of 6, but 58% included children 6 years of age or older.**

- **Over half (53%) of lone parent, female-led families were food insecure in 2011 due to their relative economic disadvantage.**

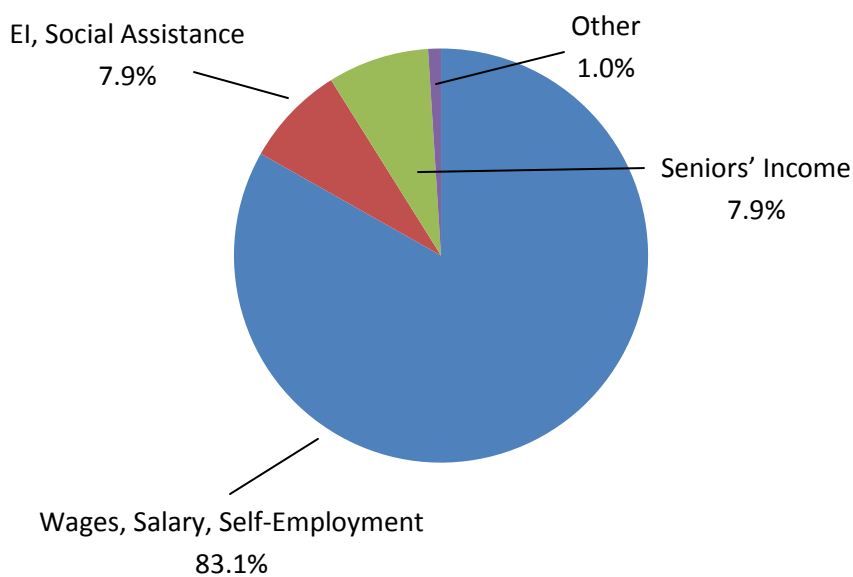
- **Unlike the rest of Canada, food insecurity in PEI is not primarily an urban phenomenon.** The situation is no worse and no better in rural vs more urban areas.

# PROOF

Research to identify policy options  
to reduce food insecurity

- **Home ownership protects households from food insecurity.** Renters are twice as likely as home owners to be food insecure, but 53% of food-insecure households own their dwellings.
- **Households reliant on social assistance are about two and half times as likely to report food insecurity as those reliant on employment for their incomes.**
- **Most food-insecure households (84%) are supported by wages, salaries, or income from self-employment.**

## Main Source of Income among Food Insecure Households



**Being a senior in PEI is highly protective.** Households reliant on old-age pensions and retirement investments have one-third the chance of food insecurity of households reliant on employment incomes. *The guaranteed annual incomes, drug benefits, and other kinds of assistance available to seniors in PEI appear to be protecting most from food insecurity.*

### Food insecurity takes a toll on health.

Food insecurity is a serious public health problem because individuals' health and well-being is tightly linked to their household food security. Recent research in Canada has shown that the experience of hunger leaves an indelible mark on children's physical and mental health, manifesting in greater likelihood of such conditions as depression and asthma in adolescence and early adulthood. Adults in food insecure households have poorer physical and mental health and higher rates of numerous chronic conditions, including depression, diabetes, and heart disease. Once chronic diseases are established, their management is also compromised in the context of food insecurity.

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