



New Yorkers Are Going Into Debt Over the Rising Cost of Food

New Yorkers' Incomes Are Not Keeping Pace with Rising Food Prices; People of Color—Especially Women—and Families Hit Hardest with Increased Debt

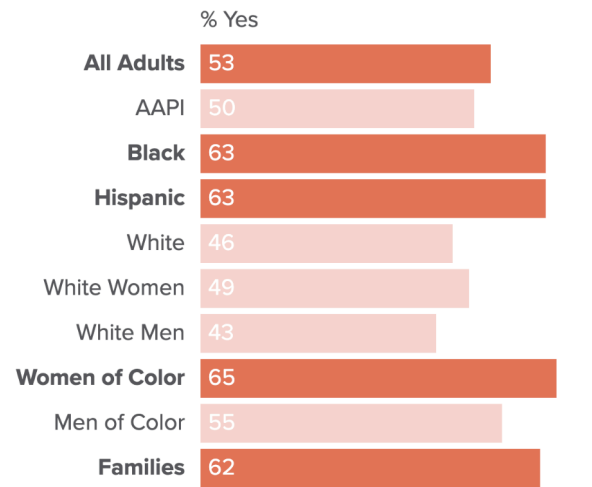
Food Costs Rising Faster Than Incomes, Damaging Financial Wellbeing and Health

A recent poll¹ conducted by Change Research on behalf of No Kid Hungry New York shows incomes failing to keep pace with rising food prices. The vast majority (86%) of New Yorkers say the cost of food is rising faster than their income, showing [no improvement since this time last year](#).

Rising food costs are causing major damage to New Yorker's financial wellbeing. Half (53%) say their debt has increased in the past 12 months due to the cost of food. Black and Hispanic New Yorkers, and especially women of color, are hardest hit. Two-thirds (65%) of women of color experienced increased debt over the past year. Families (respondents with children 18 and under in their household) are struggling, too: 62% of all families and 73% of Hispanic families accrued debt due to food costs over the past year. Many parents say they are now accruing credit card debt to buy enough nutritious food for their household.

Many are facing significant health consequences as a result of rising food costs. Half (52%) say their physical health has suffered due to the cost of food, and 63% say their mental health has suffered.

In the past 12 months, has your debt (including credit card debt) increased due to the cost of food?



What are the specific ways that the rising cost of food has impacted your household's financial situation?

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Being on a budget, the rise in food cost strains my pockets. There are times where I have to use my credit card just to make sure there's enough food in the house for me and my son until my next paycheck.

(Black Mom, 18-34, Bronx County)

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I was using a credit card to pay for groceries at least once or twice a month. I maxed out that card and decided to do debt consolidation and now we are eating mostly pasta, and some vegetables.

(White Mom, 35-49, Broome County)

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It has made me put more [debt] on my credit cards. Also I had to get money out of my 401k [so I wouldn't] get behind on my bills like mortgage and credit card payments.

(Hispanic Dad, 34-49, Suffolk County)

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We are unable to afford quality foods, so I am forced to budget the necessities and we have to cut back on the healthy foods that cost more money. I am paying for groceries with my credit cards because it has gotten so expensive.

(White Mom, 35-49, Dutchess County)

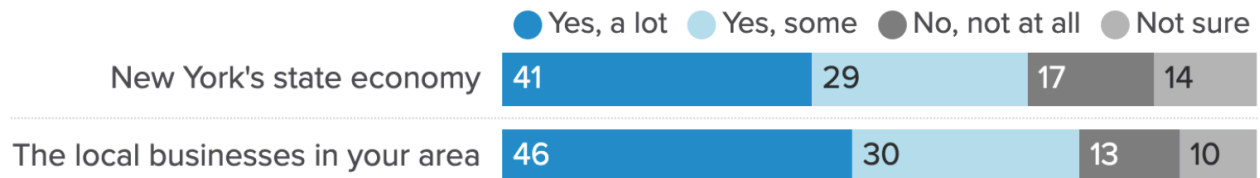
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¹ Using its Dynamic Online Sampling Engine to obtain a sample reflective of the adult population in New York, Change Research polled 1,596 people statewide from February 8-14, 2025. The modeled margin of error is 2.6%. Post-stratification weighting was performed on age, race/ethnicity, sex, education, region, and 2024 Presidential vote choice. Weighting parameters were based on U.S. Census and voter file data. See full methodology details [here](#).

Wide Belief that Food Assistance Programs Have Positive, Local Economic Impacts

A majority (60%) of New Yorkers say food assistance programs like SNAP, WIC, and Summer EBT have a positive impact on local economies and businesses where recipients spend their benefits. An even larger majority (70%) believe these programs boost the state economy, and three-quarters (76%) believe that local businesses benefit from these programs.

In your opinion, do(es) _____ benefit from food assistance programs, directly or indirectly?



New Yorkers Would Spend Grocery Benefits Locally and on Nutritious Food

Income-eligible families would buy more healthy food if they had more money in their grocery budget.

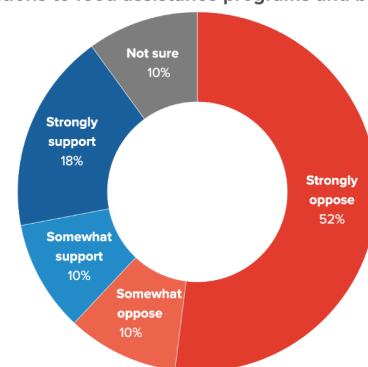
When asked how they would use an extra \$80 in their monthly grocery budget, half (52%) of respondents with children and incomes within 185% of the federal poverty level say they would buy more meat, fish, eggs, and other proteins, and 42% would buy more fresh fruits and vegetables. Many (41%) would use the money freed up in their grocery budget to pay for another basic necessity, like rent and utilities.

Income-eligible families are also likely to spend their benefits locally. More than three-in-four (77%) say they would be more likely to shop at a locally-owned store or business, buy food directly from local producers, or shop at a corner store, bodega, or somewhere else close to home if they had \$80 more in their monthly grocery budget.

Strong Opposition to Food Assistance Cuts, Demand for Bipartisan Action on Hunger

New Yorkers are strongly opposed to funding cuts and other reductions to federal food assistance programs like SNAP, WIC and Summer EBT. A majority (62%) oppose, and half (52%) strongly oppose cuts to these programs.

Do you support or oppose funding cuts and other reductions to food assistance programs and benefits?



Across the partisan spectrum, New Yorkers want their elected officials to take action on hunger. Nearly all (96%) respondents agree that child hunger should not exist in New York, and 91% believe that ending childhood hunger should be a bipartisan goal. Almost nine in ten (87%) would like to see elected officials in New York do more to end childhood hunger.

Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (% Agree)

