

NJFSI Survey Insights & Solutions for Strengthening WIC in New Jersey



Who is NJFSI?

The New Jersey Food Security Initiative (NJFSI) is a multi-year collaborative effort to address food insecurity. The Food Research & Action Center (FRAC), a non-profit organization, is leading this work with funding from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (RWJF).

The Center for Nutrition & Health Impact (CNHI) is the evaluation partner for the NJFSI. Part of the evaluation includes the Benefits Enrollee Survey, which asks community members about enrollment barriers for SNAP and WIC and awareness of Summer EBT.

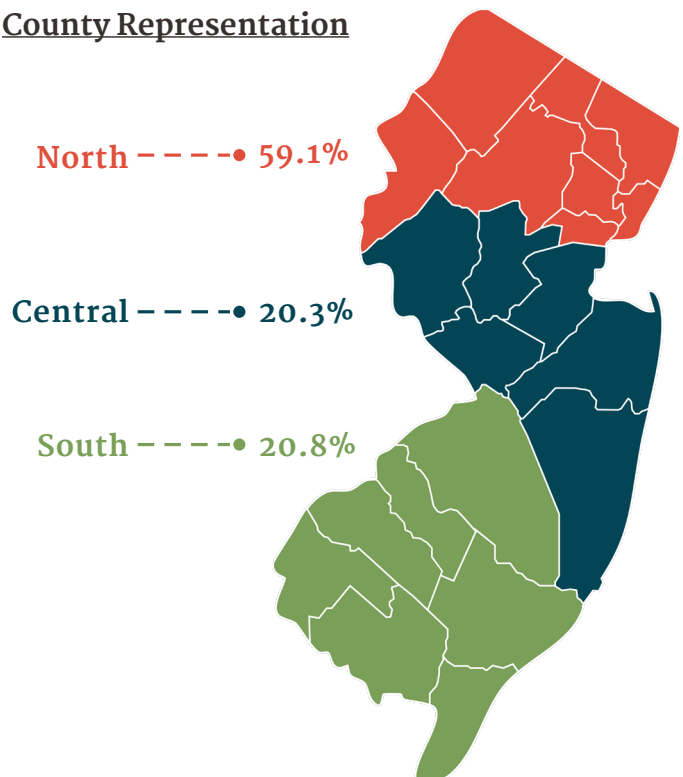


About the Sample

NJFSI grantees and Qualtrics recruited participants for this survey. All participants were experiencing food insecurity or had attempted to enroll in a food assistance program in New Jersey. Recruitment occurred from mid-September to mid-November 2024.

A total of 837 participants were included in the final analysis. Two-thirds of the sample identified as female, almost one-third as men, and a few participants selected 'some other way' of 'don't know or prefer not to answer.' Survey participants' ages ranged from 18 to 83 years old.

County Representation



Racial and Ethnic Identity	Frequency (%)
White or European American	357 (43.8%)
Black or African American	183 (22.4%)
Hispanic or Latino	176 (21.6%)
Multiple Racial Identities or Other Racial Identity	100 (12.3%)

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The two tables below show the results from survey questions asking about experiences with WIC enrollment and challenges with WIC.

WIC Enrollment Experience

Survey Item	% Agree/Strongly Agree
I understood the questions on the New Jersey WIC application.	86%
The New Jersey WIC application was easy to complete.	80%
I was treated fairly when I applied for New Jersey WIC.	80%
The time it took to approve my New Jersey WIC application was okay with me.	77%
When applying for New Jersey WIC, I trusted that they would help me with my need.	77%
Applying for New Jersey WIC addressed my need.	75%
Overall, I was satisfied with my experience applying for New Jersey WIC.	73%
Employees were helpful when I applied for New Jersey WIC (e.g. staff at the WIC clinic).	72%

Most Commonly Reported Challenges

WIC Barrier	Frequency (%)
Want to save WIC benefits for others that need it more	26 (29%)
Currently using all the assistance programs that my household is eligible for	25 (27%)
Would qualify for only a small amount of WIC benefits, not worth it	24 (26%)
Make too much to qualify for WIC	22 (24%)
Too confusing to qualify for WIC	15 (16%)

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Solutions in Action

NJFSI grantees are working across New Jersey at the local, county, and state level to pilot innovative solutions to strengthen WIC. Grantee solutions being piloted include, but are not limited to:

- Providing technical assistance to NJ growers to be able to accept WIC, increasing the number of NJ farms, markets, farmers markets, and mobile markets that can accept WIC as a form of payment.
- Creating and launching community-informed outreach campaigns and strategies to increase the number of residents aware of WIC benefits and connected to their local WIC offices.
- Developing and strengthening referral systems and partnerships with healthcare providers, to link patients to WIC.
- Building and implementing a WIC navigator pilot program.

NJFSI grantees include City Green, C.R.O.P.S., CUMAC, Hunger Free NJ, nourish.NJ, NJ Office of the Food Security Advocate, and RWJBarnabas Health.

