

PROOF: Research to identify policy interventions to reduce food insecurity in Canada

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Funding:

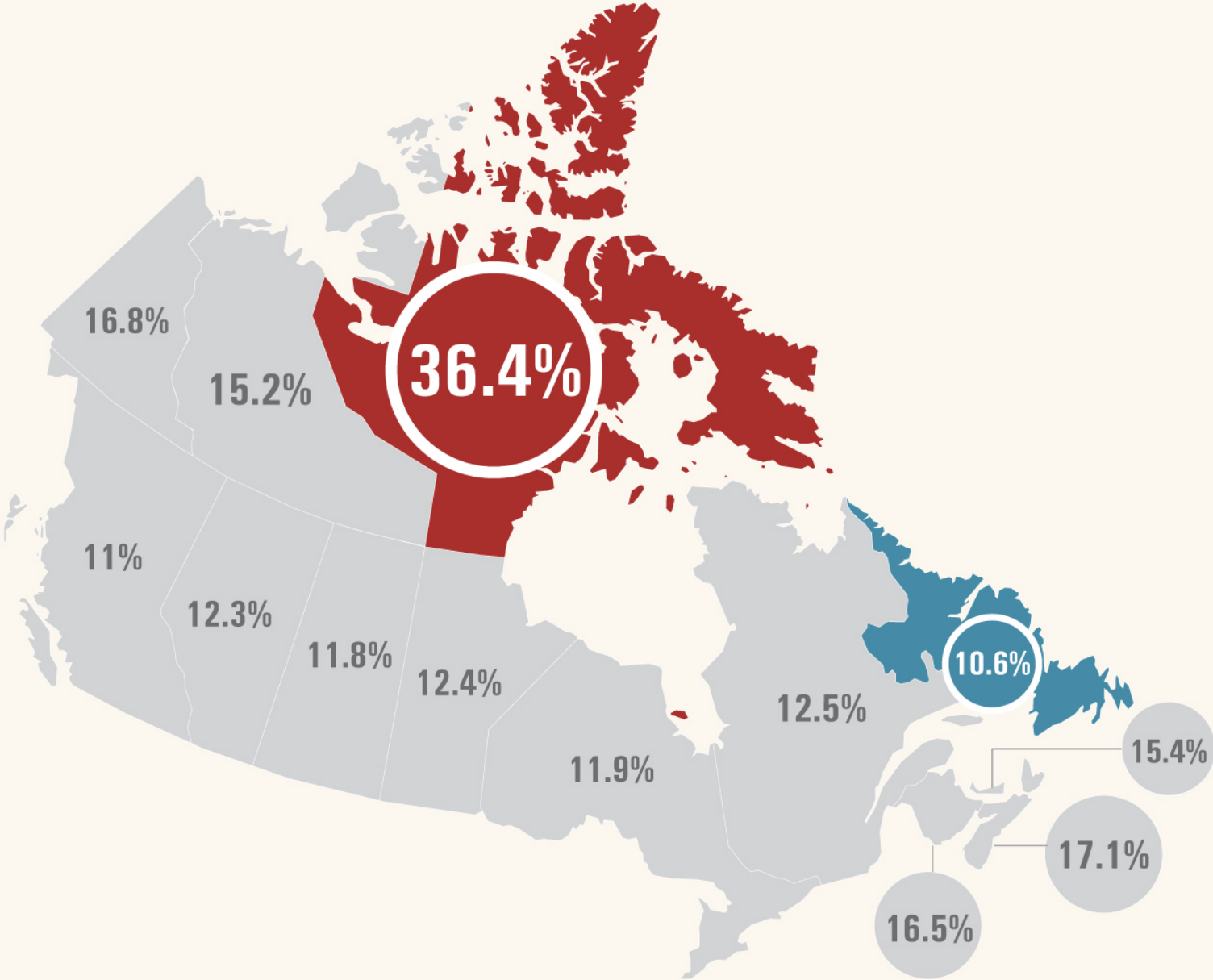
This research is funded by a programmatic grant from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

Sensitivity of food insecurity to policy interventions that improve household finances

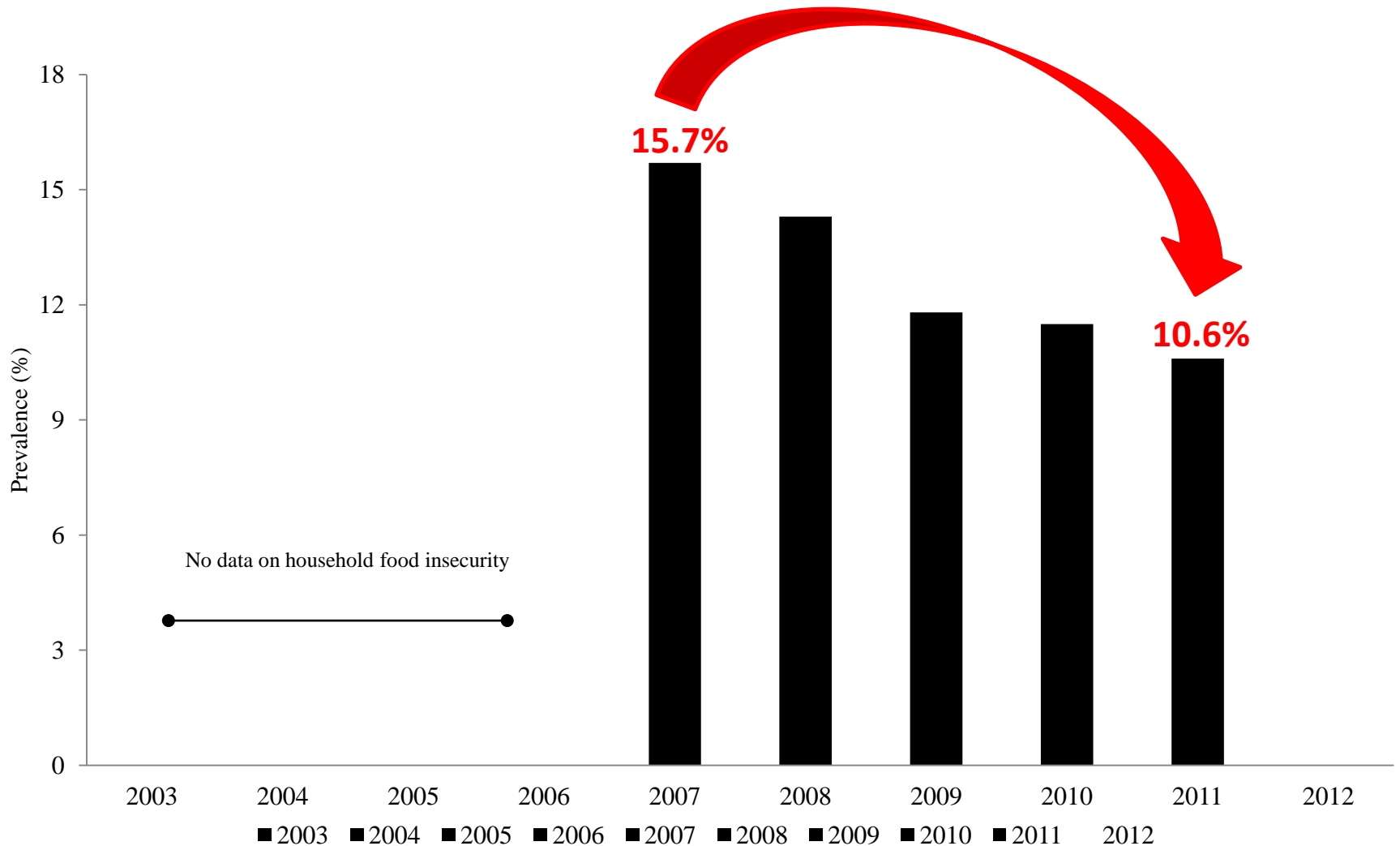
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Andree-Anne Fafard-St.Germain

Acknowledgement: This research is funded by a programmatic grant in '*Tackling Health and Health Inequities*' from the Canadian Institutes of Health Research.

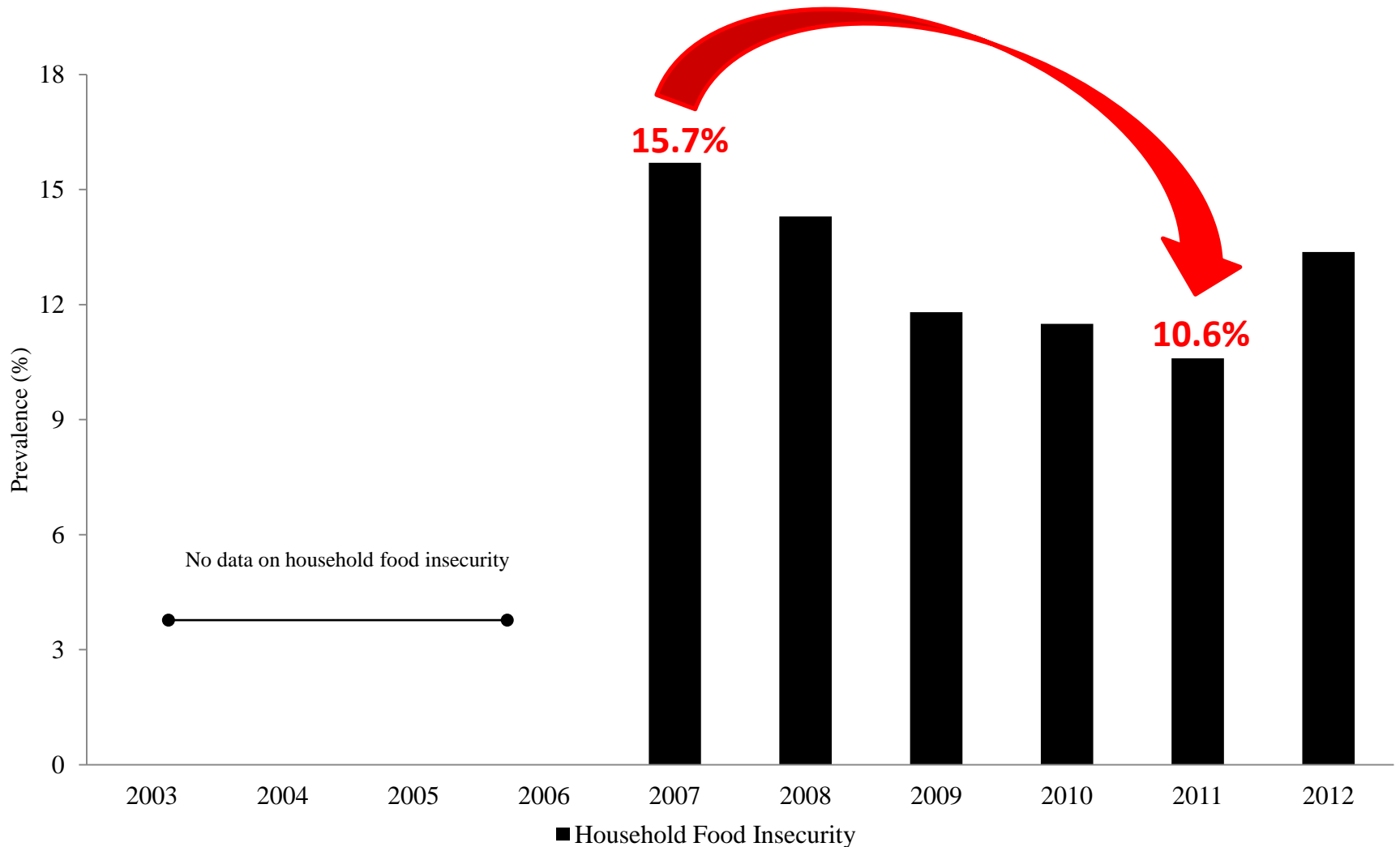
Prevalence of household food insecurity, Canadian Community Health Survey 2011:



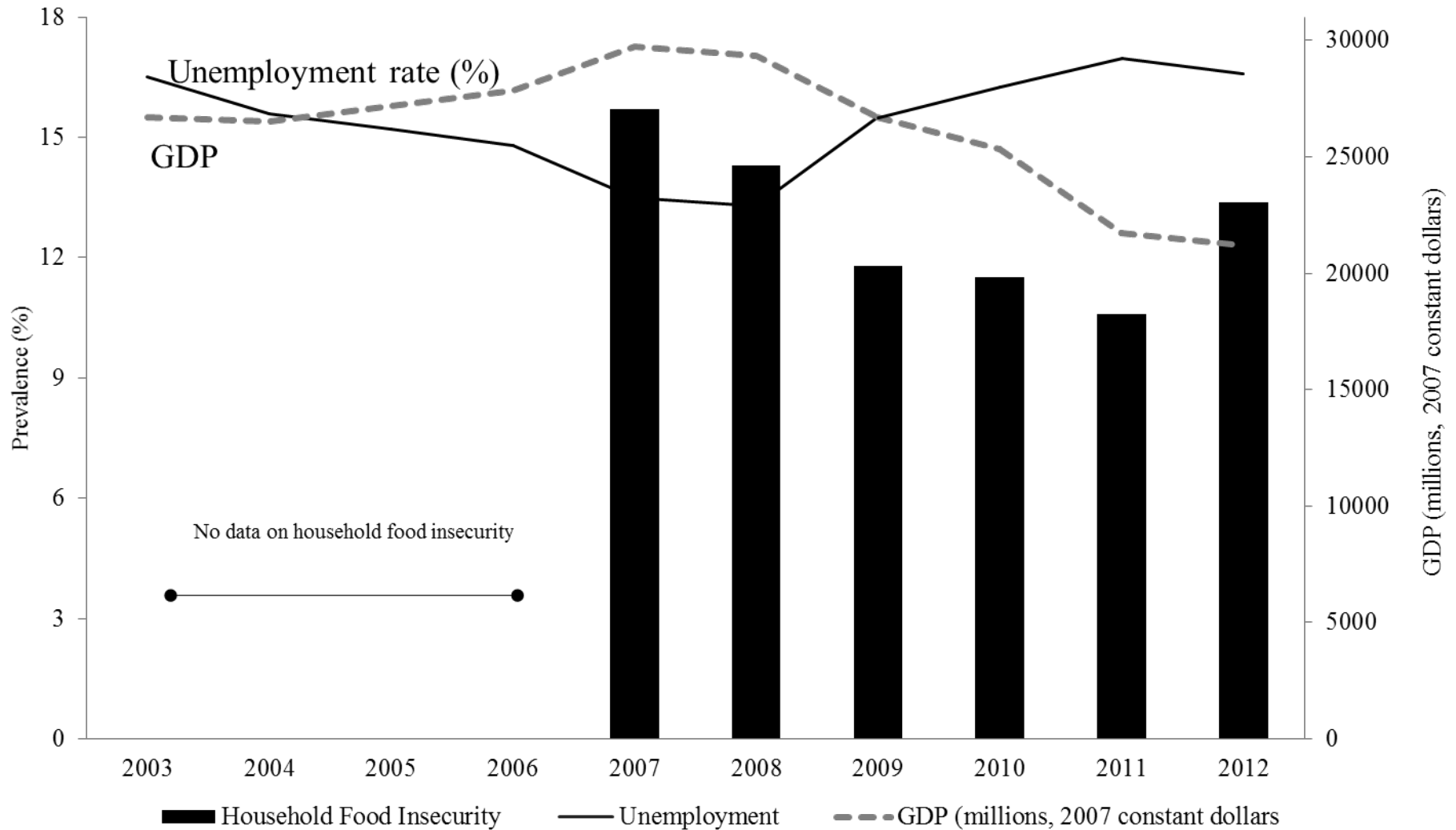
Household food insecurity in Newfoundland and Labrador



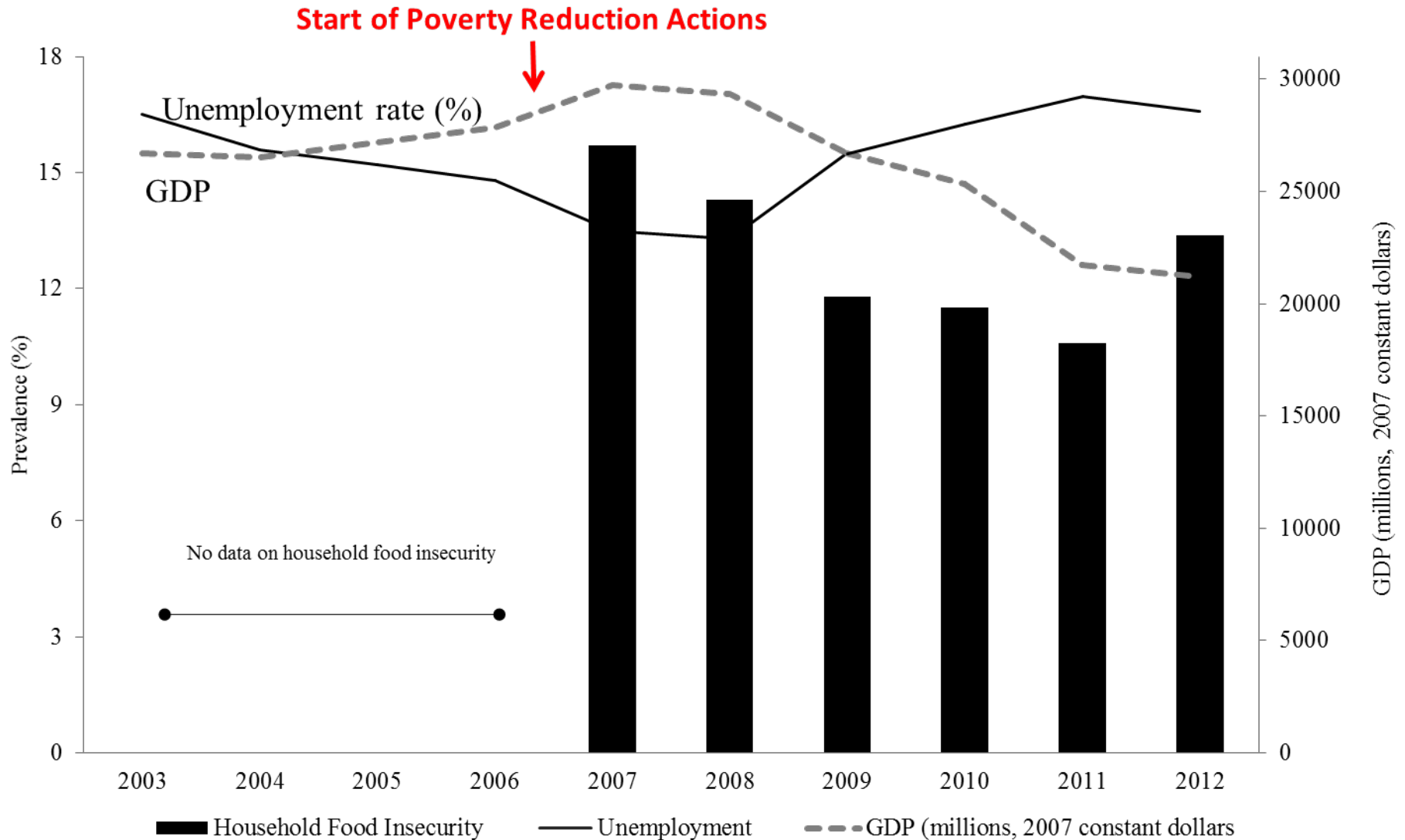
Household food insecurity in Newfoundland and Labrador



Household food insecurity in Newfoundland and Labrador

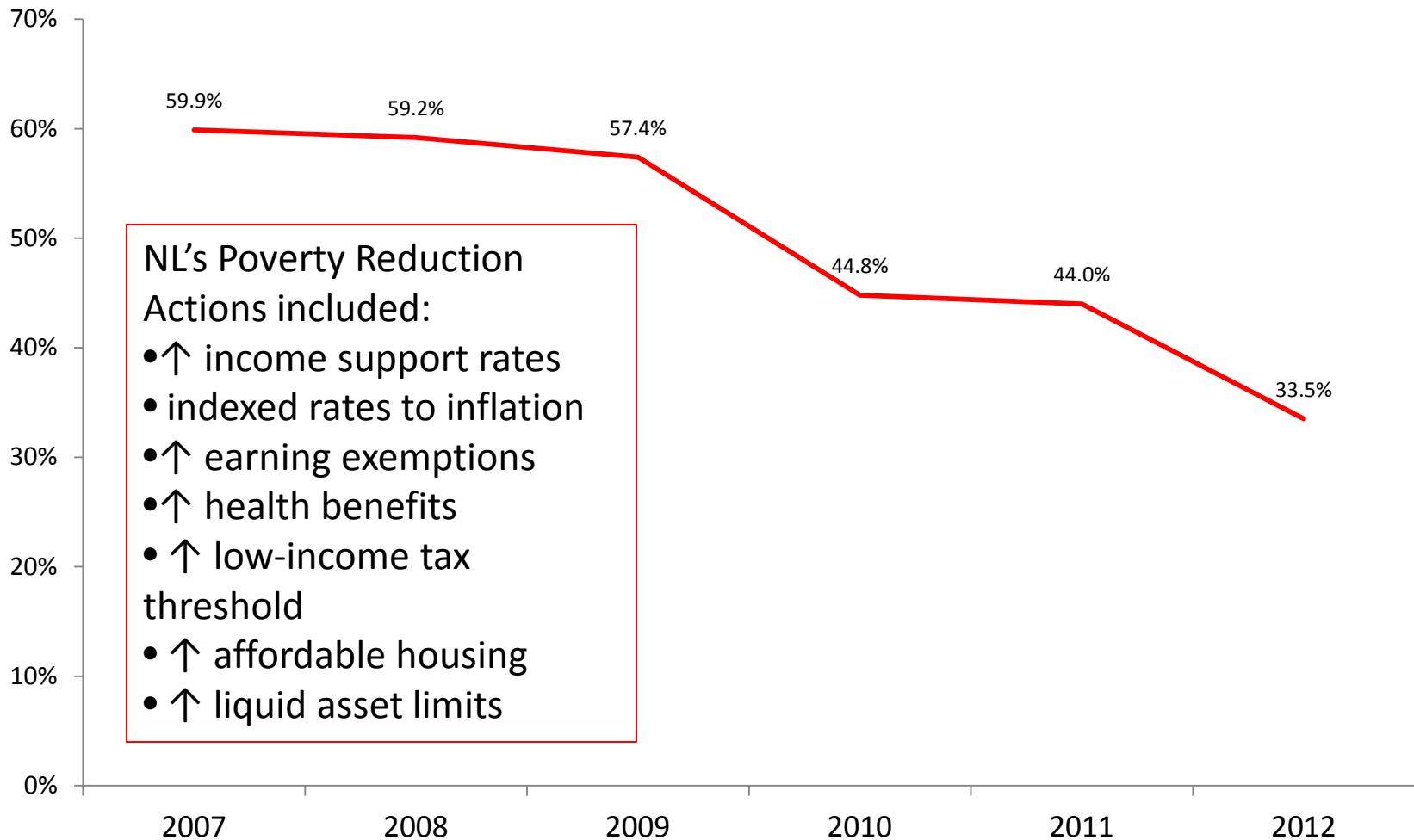


Household food insecurity in Newfoundland and Labrador

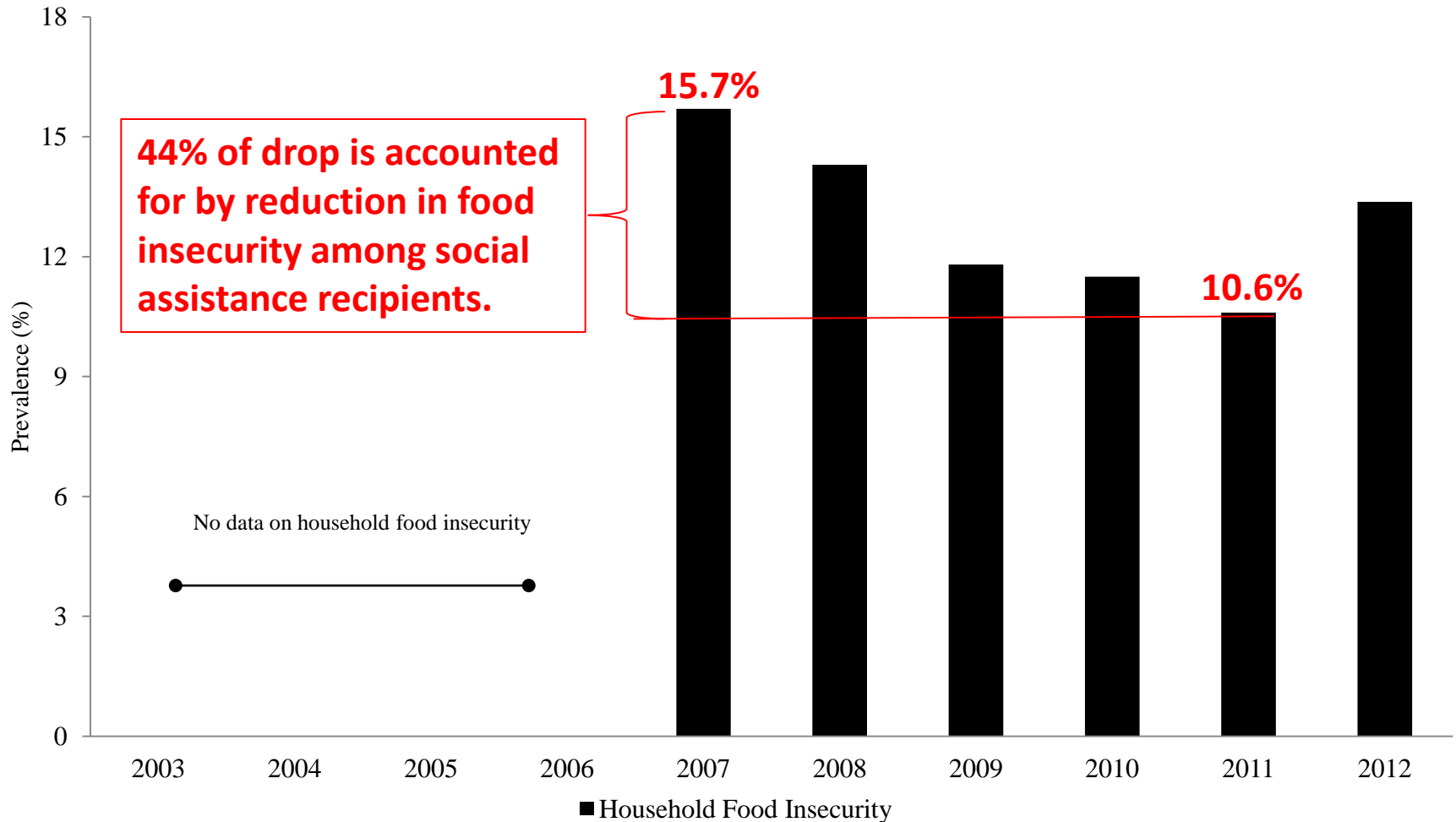


(Loopstra, Dachner & Tarasuk, *Canadian Public Policy*, September, 2015)

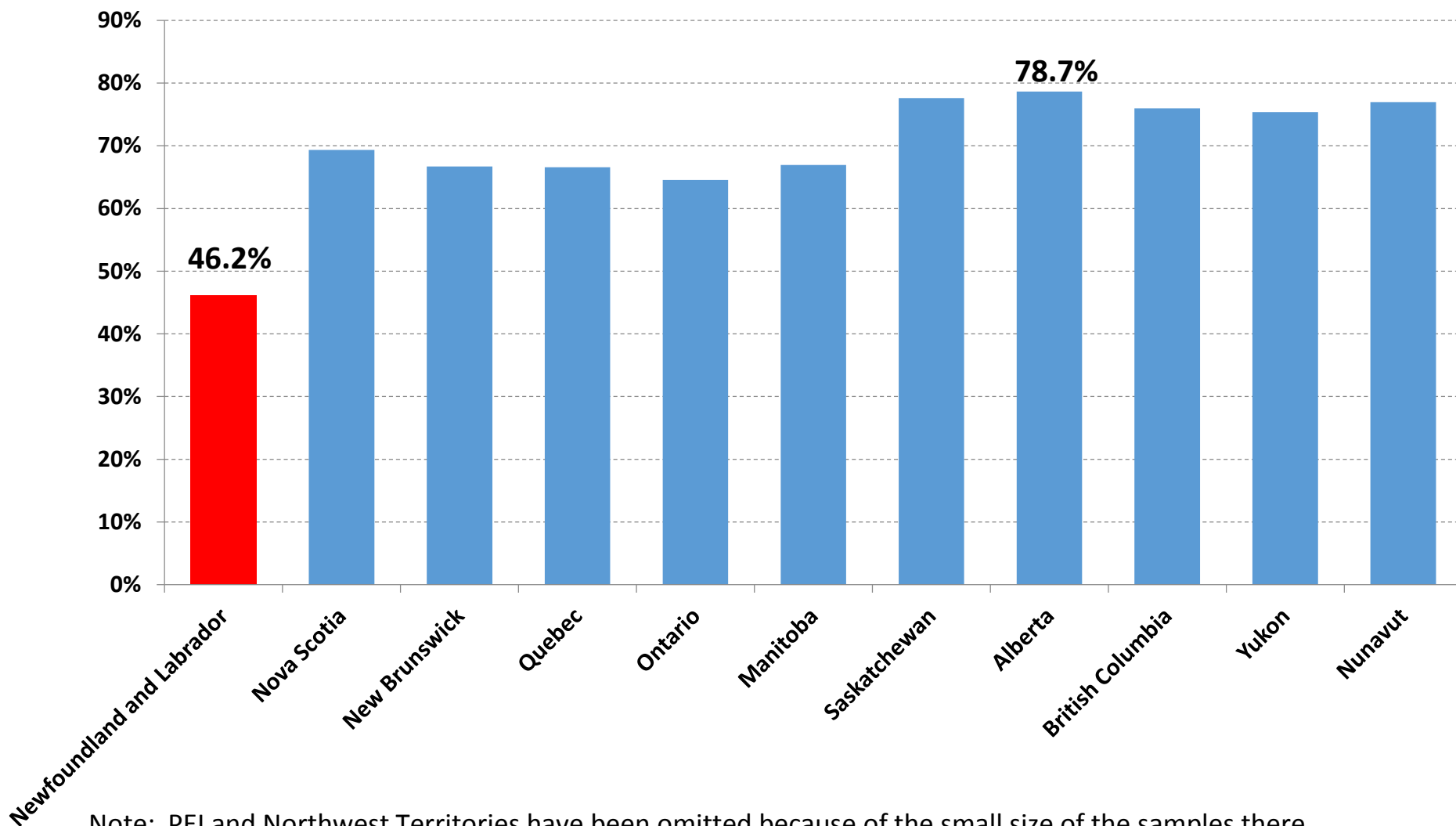
Prevalence of food insecurity among households in Newfoundland and Labrador reporting any income from social assistance.



Household food insecurity in Newfoundland and Labrador



Prevalence of food insecurity among households whose main source of income was social assistance, by province/territory, 2011-12



Note: PEI and Northwest Territories have been omitted because of the small size of the samples there.

Conclusion:

- Both the prevalence and severity of food insecurity are reduced by policy interventions that improve the financial circumstances of vulnerable households.

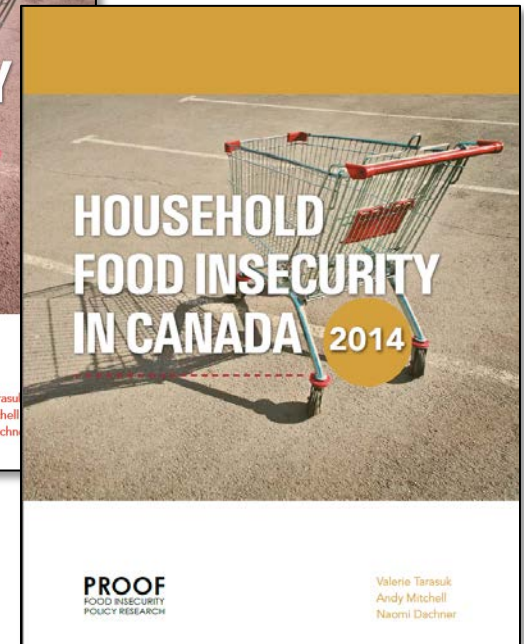
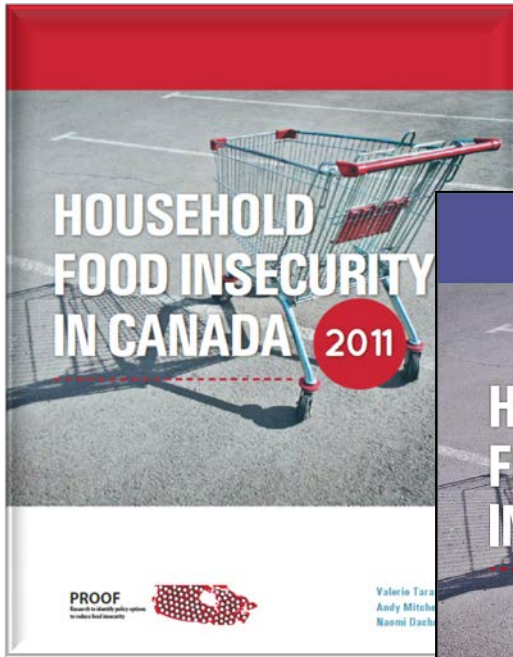
Further support:

- modest reduction in food insecurity among social assistance recipients in BC following one-time increase in rates (Li, Dachner & Tarasuk, Prev Med 2016).

Knowledge Translation

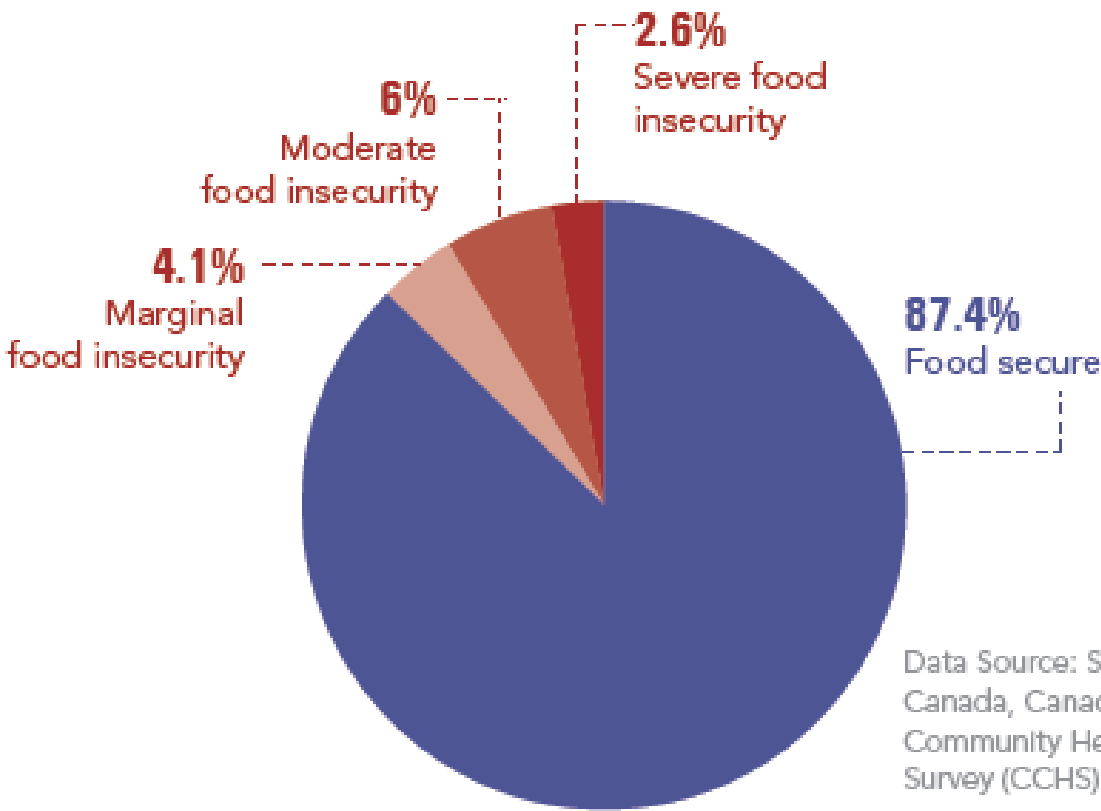
... laying the foundation for policy intervention

<http://proof.utoronto.ca/>



Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2012.

Household food insecurity, Canada 2012



What is food insecurity?

According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, food security exists when "all people, at all times, have physical and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life."³ This definition was adopted by Canada at the World Food Summit, but the measurement and monitoring of food insecurity in the country focuses on a household's experience of food insecurity, or the inadequate or insecure access to adequate 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.

Food insecurity is a serious public health problem because individuals' health and well-being are tightly linked to their household food security. Recent research in Canada has shown that the experience

Responses to items in the Household Food Security Module,
Canadian Community Health Survey, Canada 2014*

Adult food security scale:	All Households		Households with children < 18		Households without children < 18	
	Number (000s)	%	Number (000s)	%	Number (000s)	%
Worried food would run out	975.7	8.9%	370.6	11.5%	605.1	7.8%
No food, and no money for more	753	6.9%	264.4	8.2%	488.6	6.3%
Could not afford balanced meals	834	7.6%	259.5	8.1%	574.5	7.4%
Adults cut or skipped meals (Y/N)	417.8	3.8%	138.3	4.3%	279.5	3.6%
Adults cut or skipped meals (frequency)	312.6	2.9%	97.3	3.0%	215.3	2.8%
Ate less than felt should	468.1	4.3%	153.6	4.8%	314.5	4.1%
Was hungry but could not afford to eat	254	2.3%	70.9	2.2%	183.1	2.4%
Lost weight, no money to buy food	165.2	1.5%	45.8	1.4%	119.4	1.5%
Adults did not eat for a whole day (Y/N)	97.5	0.9%	27.8	0.9%	69.7	0.9%
Adults did not eat whole day (frequency)	73.9	0.7%	21.6	0.7%	52.3	0.7%
Child food security scale:						
Relied on a few kinds of low cost foods to feed children	258.9	2.4%	258.9	8.1%	n/a	n/a
Couldn't afford to feed children a balanced meal	178.1	1.6%	178.1	5.6%	n/a	n/a
Children were not						

Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2012.

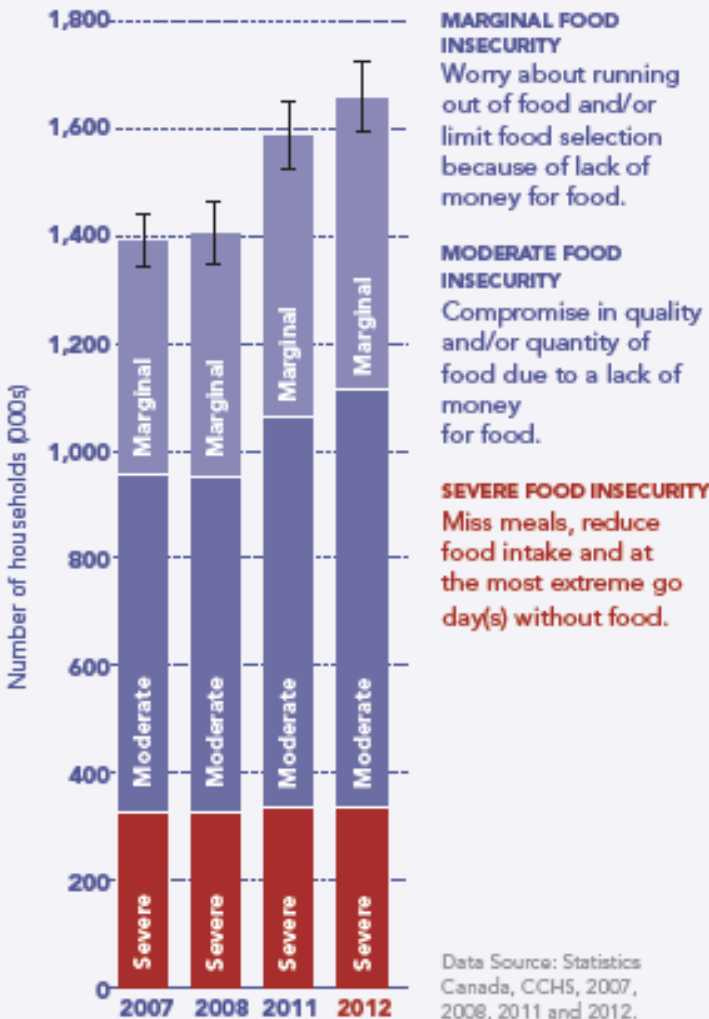
1.7 million
Canadian households
experienced food insecurity

This amounts to nearly
one in eight households

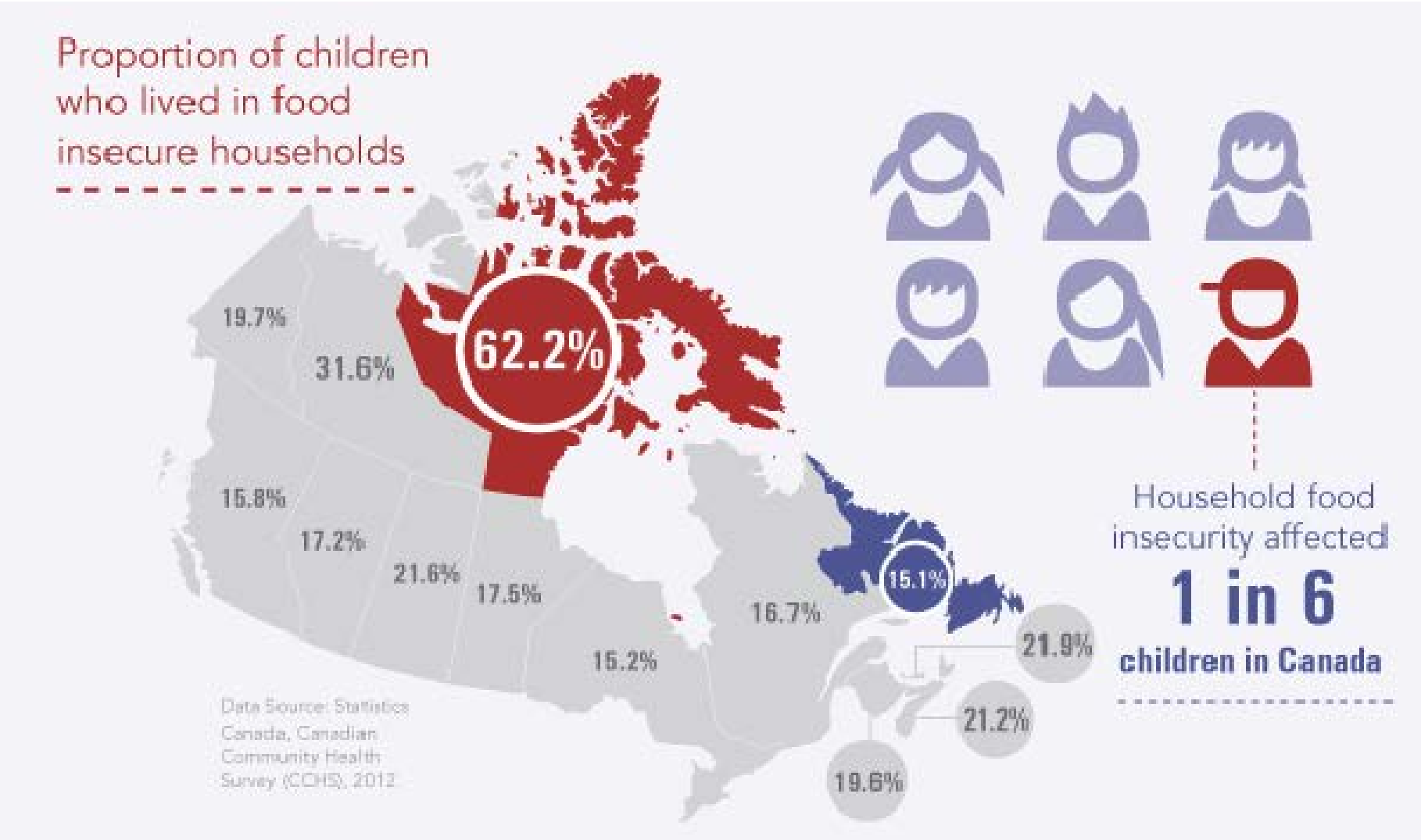


4 million
individuals, including
1.15 million children

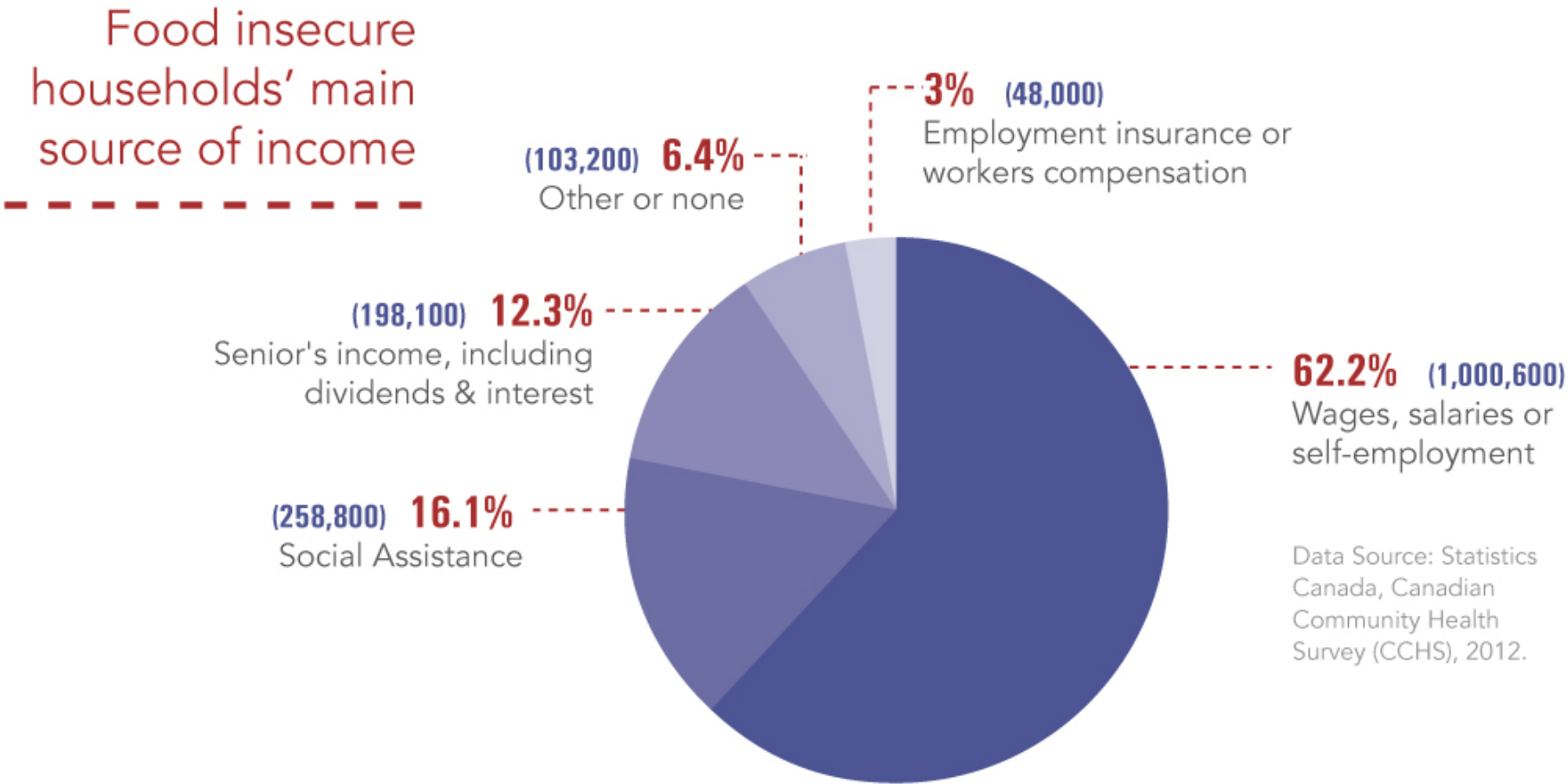
Household food insecurity



Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2012.



Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2012.

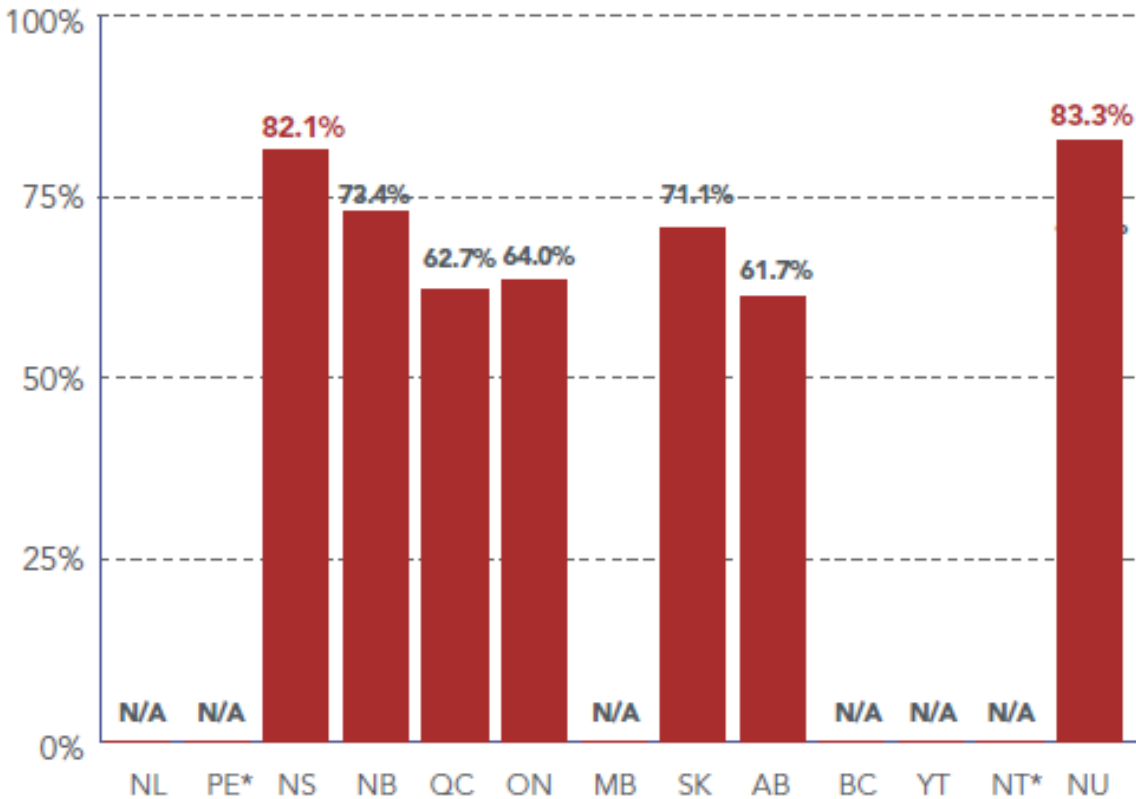


Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014.

Proportion of households reliant on social assistance who were food insecure

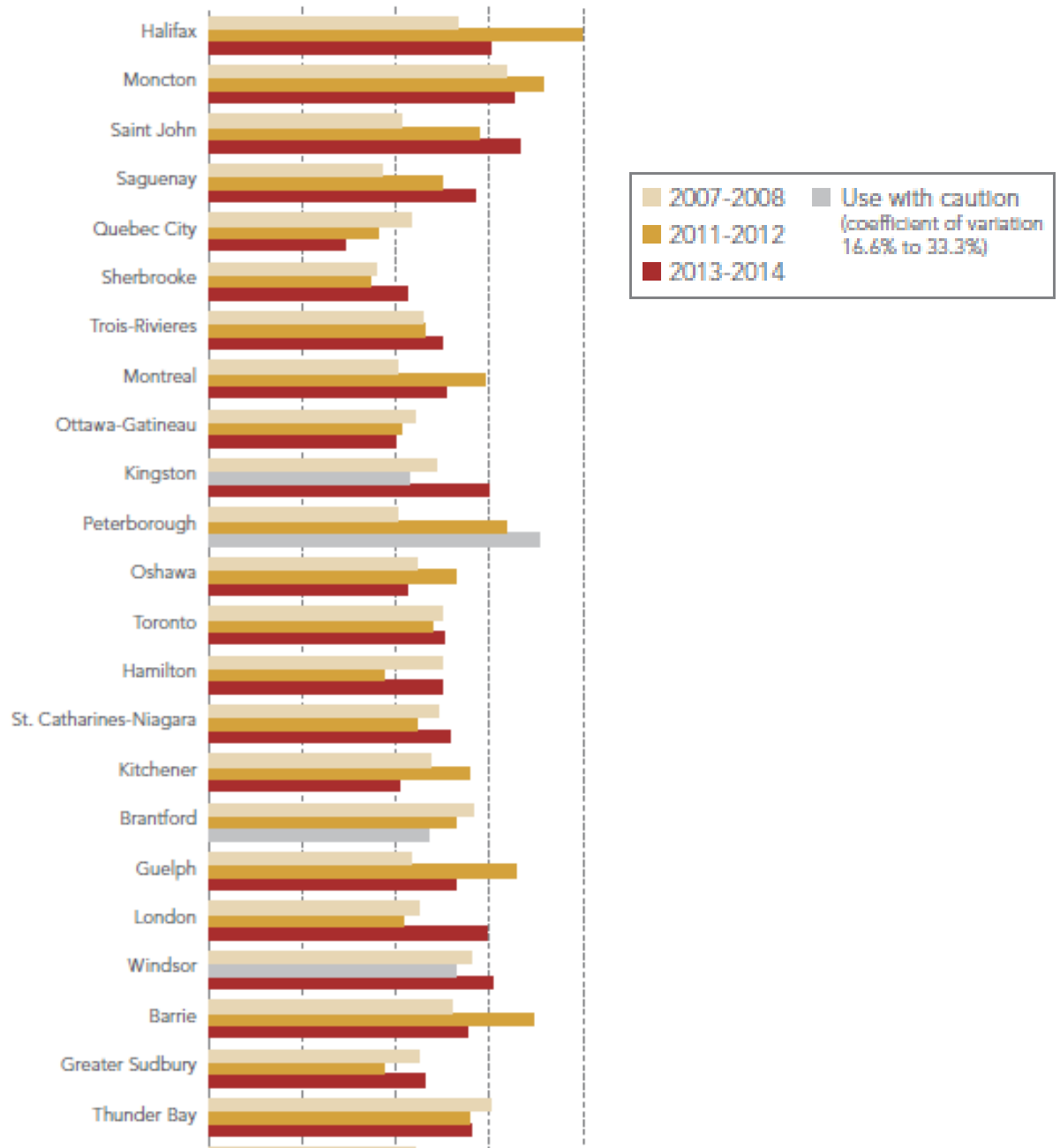
Data Source: Canadian Community Health Survey, 2013 and 2014. Newfoundland and Labrador, Manitoba, British Columbia and Yukon Territory did not participate in the food security module of the 2013 and 2014 CCHS.

* Prince Edward Island and the Northwest Territories excluded due to small sample size.



Household Food Insecurity in Canada, 2014.

Prevalence of household food insecurity by census metropolitan areas, 2007-2008, 2011-2012 and 2013-2014



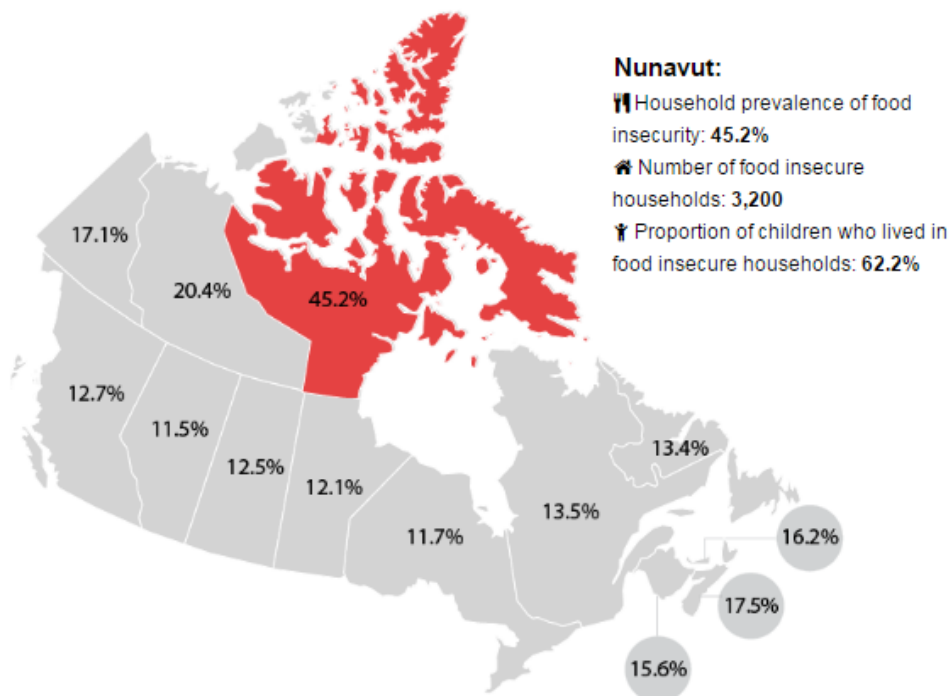
FOOD INSECURITY IS A SERIOUS PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM THAT AFFECTS OVER 4 MILLION CANADIANS.

Food insecurity – the inadequate or insecure access to food due to financial constraints – is a serious public health problem in Canada. It negatively impacts physical, mental, and social health, and costs our healthcare system considerably.

Statistics Canada began monitoring food insecurity in 2005 through the Canadian Community Health Survey (CCHS). The most recent national measure was taken in 2012, with over 4 million Canadians affected by food insecurity.

HOUSEHOLD FOOD INSECURITY IN CANADA, 2012

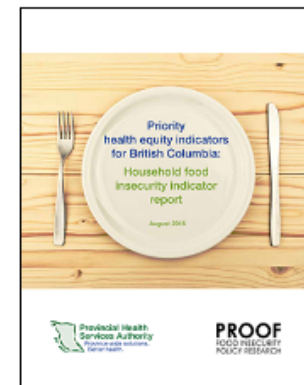
Hover over a province or territory to learn more.



Nunavut:

- Household prevalence of food insecurity: **45.2%**
- Number of food insecure households: **3,200**
- Proportion of children who lived in food insecure households: **62.2%**

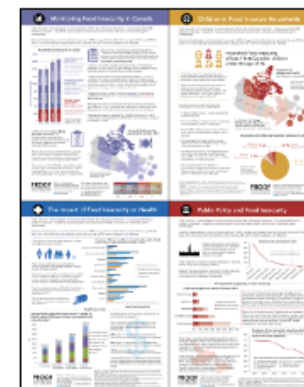
DOWNLOAD NEW REPORT ON FOOD INSECURITY IN BC (PDF)



Released August 31, 2016

[About the report](#)

NEW FACT SHEETS



→ raising awareness, redefining the problem?

July 2013 – Oct 2016: 353 media references to PROOF's work



Impacts?

Linking the problem to policy

e.g, Senate Standing Committee on Social Affairs, Science and Technology report on Childhood Obesity; Senate Open Caucus on the new Health Accord Nov 30th meeting; Community Foundations of Canada (Vital Signs), Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, etc...

Advocacy for basic income to address food insecurity

e.g., Food Secure Canada, Ontario Society of Nutrition Professionals in Public Health, Dietitians of Canada

Policy change?

- PEI's 2014 decision to raise social assistance rate
- A stated goal for Ontario's basic income pilot project (Segal, 2016).