



Reducing summertime, child food insecurity in Montezuma & Dolores Counties

Why School Meals Matter to Youth

Participation in school lunch programs is linked to a 14 percent lower risk of food insufficiency in households where at least one child receives free or reduced-price meals.

Helps kids stay healthy

Free or reduced-price school lunches reduce rates of poor health by at least 29 percent or higher and rates of obesity by 17% or greater.



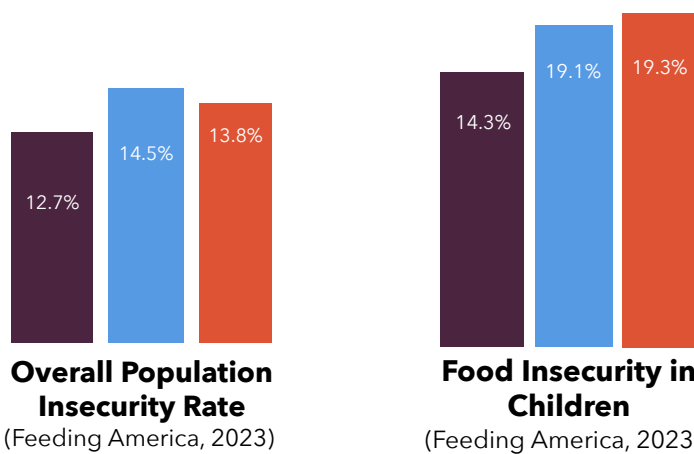
Reduces Food Insecurity for Youth

Nationally, school lunch lifted 1.2 million people – including 722,000 children – above the poverty line in 2017, based on Census Bureau data on poverty and income in the U.S.

Helps kids succeed in school

Students who participate in school breakfast programs have improved attendance, behavior, academic performance, and academic achievement as well as decreased tardiness, based on decades of research on the topic.

What does Childhood Nutrition and Food Security look like in Our Community?



"School Meals are Essential for Student Health & Learning", Food Research & Action Center, May 2021"

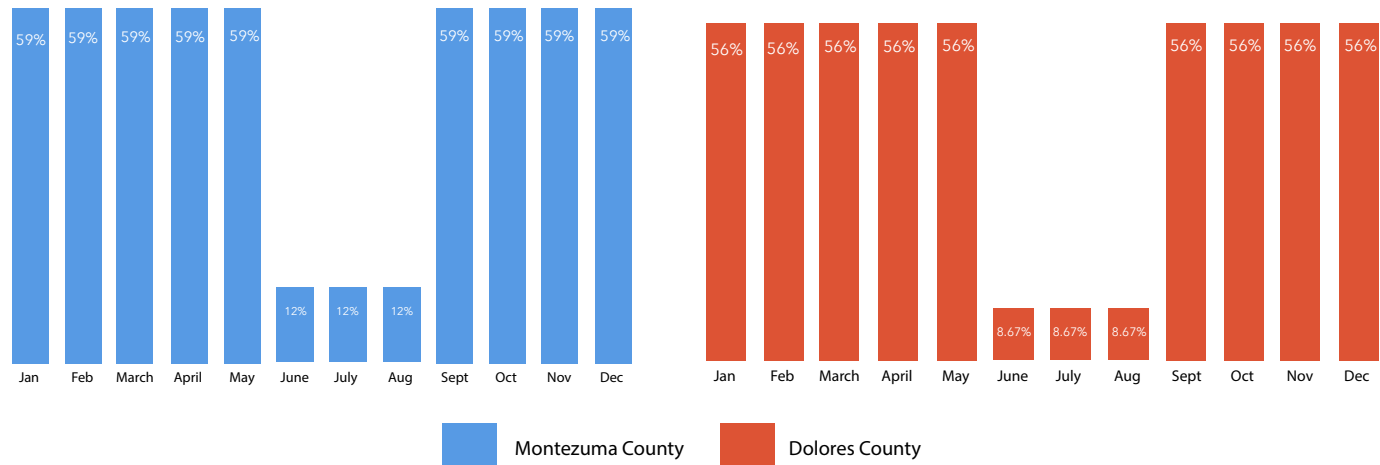
Montezuma County Colorado Dolores County

Access to nutritious meals during the summer months remains a critical need for families in Montezuma and Dolores Counties. With schools out of session, many children lose regular access to free and reduced-price meals, heightening the risk of food insecurity. In response, GFC is taking steps to improve the reach and impact of summertime meal programs in the region.

Our biggest gap is summertime food insecurity for kids

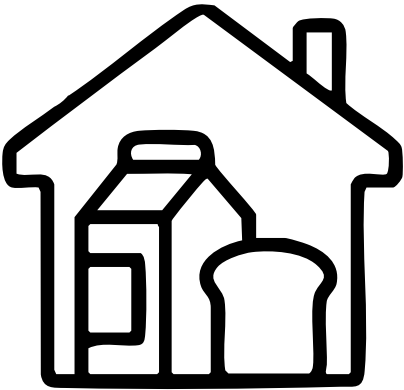
Summertime Meal Site Coverage (2024)

(Qualified students are defined as those from households who meet the financial criteria for Free or Reduced Lunch)



To get there, our plan is to:

- **Empower** community leadership through the formation of the Montezuma County SFSP Workgroup.
- **Discover** solutions and better understand the problem by conducting surveying and Community Listening sessions across the region.
- **Identify** potential host sites and partners interested in feeding students in Summer 2026 and beyond.



Feeding families now!

In 2024, the Colorado Food Cluster began providing free, at-home delivery of prepared breakfasts and lunches for qualifying households with children aged 3-18 in Montezuma and Dolores counties.

Go to **ColoradoFoodCluster.com/MealDeliveries** to check eligibility and to register.

If you have questions or want to get involved, contact Alix Midgley, GFC Rural Food Access Coordinator at alix@goodfoodcollective.org or 970-403-5040.



Funding for this project is generously provided by the Colorado Trust and the Colorado Office of Health Equity