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EAST CENTRAL OGDEN FOOD ETHNOGRAPHY

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY (ENGLISH)

The goal of this food ethnography is to contribute to a better understanding of East Central Ogden residents' relationship with food. This qualitative research project gathered information through interviews and participant observation during 2020 and 2021. This document compiles East Central neighbors' perspectives, opinions, experiences, and suggestions around food issues, and highlights their voices.

Key findings

- Neighbors like experimenting and trying new foods, but overall find comfort in familiar foods.
- There is a lack of consensus on what healthy foods are and what it means to eat healthily, but this does not mean people do not know what is good for them.
- Experiencing hunger during childhood has shaped peoples' tastes and food choices later in life: the type of food consumed, the way to prepare it, the portion size, and the calculation of costs and benefits (how many calories can I get for the least amount of money).
- East Central neighbors do not eat most meals at the same time as other members of their household.
- Most neighbors go grocery shopping at least once a week, especially those with larger families or those without a car, and the median spent in groceries per month is \$400.
- Time is the biggest limitation, and influences how people eat, shop, cook, share food, and impacts their ability to garden and get involved in community activities.
- Almost 28% of the respondents worried about food in some degree during the last year.
- The social aspect of food has a lot of potential for building relationships and bringing people together around issues that matter to them.
- In East Central, there is a great diversity of food cultures, traditions, and ways of preparing and eating food, more than is visible at first sight.
- Most of the food residents eat comes from grocery stores or other types of food establishments (sometimes purchased using food stamps), and many residents shop outside of the neighborhood.
- Food pantries are relatively utilized by East Central residents in need but present limitations due to location, restrictive requirements that inhibit access (especially for migrant families), quality of food, and lack of fresh food options.

- People rely more on their gardens, wild and urban foraging, and sharing food than on food programs (like SNAP or WIC), aside from food pantries.
- Mutual aid initiatives were already in place before the pandemic. People share rides, food, and knowledge about resources, as well as perform small tasks for each other. There is also a great potential to improve people's lives by supporting mutual aid initiatives.
- Food can be a sensitive matter with the power of triggering different emotions, as it is linked to personal experiences, family ties, cultural backgrounds, and life memories that are not always positive.
- To make a community event memorable, share food.

Recommendations

- 1) Food has both a personal and a cultural component. All interventions related to nutrition should be culturally appropriate and informed, and specifically tailored to the target population.
- 2) People's food choices are constrained by time, schedules, budgets, and knowledge. Interventions related to food should address how these limitations affect food preparation and be applicable to participants' lived realities.
- 3) People are busy and may not have the time or the interest to take part in research or community activities. It is important to compensate participants for their time and knowledge, provide incentives, or create tangible outcomes.
- 4) Residents value feeling welcomed and building relationships with the people where they shop and eat. Interventions have a better chance of succeeding if community partners work with food establishments that are strong in this regard.
- 5) There is a strong culture of food sharing and mutual aid. Interventions should explore innovative ways of uplifting and harnessing this local tradition.
- 6) Neighbors are interested in growing their own food and having more gardens in the neighborhood. Community partners should support grassroots initiatives around gardening.
- 7) Neighbors have different ways of understanding the concept of "community." It would be beneficial to reflect on some of these questions: Is East Central "a community"? How many communities are there? What makes a "community"?

Resident suggestions

Food Access

- Increase the number of grocery stores in the neighborhood and diversify the food offerings.
- Ease the process of using food pantries and remove barriers to accessing food donations.
- Include more produce in food banks.
- Build creative ways of getting food to people, like a mobile food pantry and strengthening school food banks.
- Work on transportation limitations.

Corner stores

- More food options that are fresher, healthier, and that include both local and culturally appropriate foods, and that are affordable for the people that live in East Central.

Food businesses

- Build a local food economy in the neighborhood based on small businesses and initiatives, like small family-own grocery stores and local restaurants that "the community can connect to".
- Support local farmers, and potential urban farmers.
- Create a food coop.
- Food to the street: organize a mobile farmers' market coming through East Central, support informal street vendors that already exist in the neighborhood, and instill more food trucks to bring more people to use public spaces.
- Establish an incubator kitchen.
- Support the growth of the local food scene in a way that is authentic to Ogden and East Central.

Gardens and other food sources

- Support more people growing their own food, and of their own culture.
- Find smart solutions for space limitations, including farming in parking strips and other public spaces.
- Advertise more community gardens that already exists and support the establishment of other grassroots community gardens where anyone could take part.
- Create incentives for homeowners and landlords for having gardens in their yards.
- Grow school gardens with an educational component.
- More fruit trees available in public places to access free fresh fruit (urban foraging).

Education and training

- Raise awareness about food in general: understanding what you eat, where it comes from, and what it takes to grow food, providing people with the knowledge to make more conscious decisions and value food more.
- Create space for the Latinx migrant community (and other migrant communities), to talk about their food cultures and the diet change happening in the US.
- Organize different classes, courses, and workshops around topics like gardening, cooking, wild foods gathering, nutrition, and food businesses, upon demand.

Community

- Food and gardens bring people together. Neighbors believe there is a lot of potential for developing successful initiatives in East Central that can contribute to improving access to food, and to the foods they want.
- When working with the community: listen, don't make assumptions, build relationships, and support community initiatives and leaders.
- Institutions and organizations should be more aware and careful when working in the neighborhood.
- Include people of different backgrounds and needs in decision-making processes.
- Acknowledge that food, housing, and transportation are tightly related, and that improve these requires work towards policy change.

RESUMEN EJECUTIVO (ESPAÑOL)

El objetivo de esta etnografía alimentaria es contribuir a entender mejor la relación con la comida de las personas que viven en el barrio de East Central. Utiliza un enfoque cualitativo. Para levantar la información se llevaron a cabo entrevistas y observación participante durante 2020 y 2021. Este documento compila las perspectivas, opiniones, experiencias y sugerencias en cuestiones alimentarias de personas que residen en East Central, y resalta sus voces.

Resultados claves

- A la gente le gusta experimentar y probar nuevas comidas, pero en general encuentran confort en alimentos familiares.
- No hay un consenso en cuanto a lo que son alimentos saludables o qué significa comer sano, pero eso no significa que las personas no sepan que alimentos son buenos o no para ellas.
- Haber experimentado hambre durante la infancia da forma a los gustos alimentarios y las elecciones de comida de la gente: al tipo de alimentos que consumen, la forma de prepararlos, el tamaño de las porciones y el cálculo de costos y beneficios (cuántas calorías puedo obtener por la menor cantidad de dinero posible).
- Las vecinas y vecinos de East Central no comen la mayoría de las veces al mismo tiempo que otras personas de su mismo hogar.
- La mayoría de las personas compran alimentos al menos una vez por semana, especialmente aquellas familias numerosas o quienes no tienen auto, y la mediana del dinero gastado en comida al mes es de unos 400 dólares.
- El tiempo es el mayor limitante a la hora de alimentarse, ya que influye en cómo la gente come, compra, cocina y comparte los alimentos, e impacta la habilidad de cultivar alimentos e implicarse en actividades comunitarias.
- Seguridad alimentaria: casi un 28% de las personas que respondieron a la entrevista han tenido preocupaciones respecto de poder alimentarse a ellas y sus familias durante el último año.
- La dimensión social de la comida tiene gran potencial para construir relaciones y reunir a la gente alrededor de temas que les importan.
- En East Central, hay una gran diversidad de culturas alimentarias, tradiciones y maneras de prepara y comer los alimentos, más de lo que se puede ver a simple vista.
- La mayoría de los alimentos que comen las personas que viven en el barrio provienen de compras en supermercados u otro tipo de establecimientos

alimentarios (a veces utilizando bonos de alimentos), y muchas de estas compras suceden fuera de East Central.

- Los bancos de alimentos son relativamente utilizados por personas que necesitan asistencia alimentaria, pero presentan limitaciones en cuanto a localización, algunos requisitos restrictivos que suponen una barrera para acceder a los alimentos (especialmente para familias migrantes) y ofrecen alimentos que no son vistos como ideales pues los enlatados tienen mucha presencia.
- La gente se apoya en sus huertos, en la recolección de frutos y otros alimentos en espacios naturales y urbanos, y en compartir comida, más que en programas alimentarios que no sean bancos de alimentos.
- Las iniciativas de apoyo mutuo ya existían antes de la pandemia. La gente comparte conocimientos y recursos, comida, aventones, y realiza pequeñas tareas para otras personas. También hay aquí un gran potencial para mejorar las vidas de las personas apoyando este tipo de iniciativas.
- La comida puede ser un tema sensible con el poder de desencadenar diferentes emociones en la gente, que están ligadas a experiencias personales, lazos familiares, características culturales y memorias de vida, las cuales no siempre son positivas.
- Las vecinas y vecinos de East Central tienen diferentes maneras de entender el concepto de "comunidad". Sería beneficioso reflexionar acerca de las siguientes cuestiones: ¿Es East Central una "comunidad"? ¿Cuántas comunidades hay? ¿Qué es lo que conforma una "comunidad"?
- Si se quiere que un evento comunitario sea memorable: hay que ofrecer y compartir alimentos.

Recomendaciones

- 1) La comida tiene al a vez un componente personal y uno cultural. Cualquier intervención relacionada con la nutrición debe ser culturalmente apropiada y fundada, así como específicamente diseñada para la población objetivo.
- 2) Las decisiones alimentarias de las personas están determinadas por el tiempo, los horarios, los presupuestos y el conocimiento. Las intervenciones que se realicen deben tener en cuenta cómo estas limitaciones y ser aplicables a las realidades de quienes participan.
- 3) La gente tiene ocupaciones y es posible que no disponga del tiempo o el interés para participar en proyectos de investigación o actividades comunitarias. Es importante retribuir a quienes participen con algún tipo de compensación, proveer de incentivos o proporcionar resultados tangibles.
- 4) Las personas que residen en el barrio conceden importancia a sentirse bienvenidas y a poder desarrollar relaciones con quienes trabajan en los lugares donde compran y comen. Las intervenciones tienen más probabilidad de éxito si se trabaja con establecimientos de alimentos que tienen un fuerte componente a este respecto.
- 5) Hay en le barrio una fuerte cultura de compartir alimentos y de ayuda mutua. Las intervenciones deberían explorar maneras innovativas de impulsar y aprovechar esta tradición local.
- 6) La gente tiene interés en cultivar sus propios alimentos y en tener más huertos en el barrio. Los aliados comunitarios deberían apoyar iniciativas comunitarias de base sobre huertos urbanos.

Sugerencias de quienes viven en East Central

Acceso a la comida

- Incrementar el número de tiendas de alimentos en el barrio y diversificar los productos que ofrecen.
- Facilitar el proceso para hacer uso de bancos de alimentos y remover las barreras para acceder a donaciones de alimentos.
- Incluir más productos frescos en los bancos de alimentos y no solo ofrecer comida enlatada.
- Diseñar formas creativas de hacer llegar alimentos a la gente, como un banco de alimentos móvil, y fortalecer los bancos de alimentos de los colegios.
- Trabajar en las limitantes del transporte.

Tiendas de barrio

- Más opciones de alimentos que sean más frescos, más saludables y que incluyan tanto comida local como culturalmente apropiada, y que sea a precios asequibles para las personas que viven en East Central.

Negocios alimentarios

- Construir una economía alimentaria local en el barrio basada en pequeñas empresas e iniciativas, como tiendas y negocios familiares y restaurantes locales a los que "la comunidad pueda sentirse conectada".
- Apoyar a los productores y productoras de alimentos locales y a los potenciales agricultores y agricultoras urbanos.
- Crear una cooperativa de venta de alimentos.
- Comida en la calle: organizar un mercado de productos agrícolas móvil que pase por East Central, apoyar la venta ambulante informal que ya existe en el barrio, e incentivar más carritos de comida para atraer más gente a usar el espacio público.
- Establecer una cocina incubadora (incubator kitchen).
- Apoyar el crecimiento de la escena alimentaria local de manera que sea auténtica a Ogden y a East Central.

Huertos y otras fuentes de alimentos

- Apoyar que más personas puedan cultivar su propia comida, y que sea de sus culturas alimentarias.
- Encontrar soluciones inteligentes a las limitaciones del espacio, como cultivar en las medianas y otros espacios públicos.
- Promocionar más los huertos comunitarios que ya existen y apoyar la creación de huertos comunitarios de base donde cualquiera pueda participar.
- Crear incentivos para propietarios y arrendadores para albergar huertos en sus patios y jardines.
- Establecer huertos escolares con un componente educativo.
- Incluir más árboles frutales en los espacios públicos para que haya acceso gratuito a fruta fresca (recolección urbana).

Educación y formación

- Concientizar sobre alimentación en general: entender qué comemos, de dónde vienen los alimentos y qué conlleva producir la comida para que las personas tengan conocimientos suficientes para tomar decisiones más conscientes y aprecien más la comida.
- Crear espacios para la comunidad migrante Latinx (y otras comunidades migrantes) para hablar sobre sus culturas alimentarias y los cambios de dieta que tienen lugar en Estados Unidos.
- Organizar diferentes clases, cursos y talleres alrededor de temas como cultivar alimentos y establecer huertos, cocina, recolección de frutos silvestres, nutrición y establecimiento de negocios alimentarios, cuando haya demanda.

Comunidad

- La comida y cultivar alimentos une a la gente. Las vecinas y vecinos de East Central creen que hay mucho potencial para desarrollar iniciativas exitosas en el barrio que puedan contribuir a mejorar el acceso a los alimentos que desean.
- Al trabajar con la comunidad, hay que escuchar, no hacer conjeturas, construir relaciones y apoyar iniciativas comunitarias y a sus líderes.
- Las instituciones y organizaciones que trabajen en el barrio deben ser más conscientes y cuidadosas al trabajar con la gente.

- Incluir personas de diferentes contextos en los procesos de toma de decisiones.
- Reconocer que la comida, la vivienda y el transporte están estrechamente relacionados, y que mejorar esto requiere cambios en las políticas públicas.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND QUESTIONS

This food ethnography stems from a need to better understand East Central neighbors' relationship with food. Secondary data from different local sources inform about the existence of food insecurity in the neighborhood (Backman, French-Fuller & Esplin, 2021), resulting in negative health outcomes for residents. A food ethnography contributes to broadening the knowledge about East Central neighbors' food behaviors and needs, through their own perspectives, opinions, and experiences. This research highlights resident voices speaking about food and related issues.

The objectives of this study are:

- 1) Gather first-hand information about East Central neighbors' food habits, preferences, and experiences around food—what they eat, where their food comes from, and which factors may be influencing their eating practices.
- 2) Compile suggestions from participants for improving the neighborhood foodscape.
- 3) Provide some useful recommendations for OgdenCAN to design future interventions that support food security in East Central through successful community work.

The research questions that guide this study are:

- 1) What are the food preferences and eating habits of East Central residents?
- 2) Where do neighbors get their food from, and what do they value from those food sources?
- 3) How do neighbors describe what healthy foods are, and what does it mean to them to eat healthily?
- 4) What barriers do residents face in being able to eat the foods of their choice?
- 5) What are the social and cultural practices around food in the neighborhood?
- 6) How do neighbors envision the foodscape of East Central, and what suggestions do they have to make that vision a reality.
- 7) How can all of this feedback help design better interventions that foster food security?

STUDY SITE

East Central is a neighborhood in the city of Ogden, Utah, located between Washington Boulevard (east boundary) and Harrison Boulevard (west boundary) and between the Ogden River to the north and 30th Street to the south.



East Central borders. Map source: GoogleMaps, 2021

Within the total population of 14,646, 40% identify as Hispanic (United States Census Bureau, 2019, S0101). Other characteristics of East Central demographics are "a lower median income, a high rate of residents [living] below poverty, a higher proportion [of] renters, and ... a lower education attainment" (Backman, French-Fuller & Esplin, 2021).

The neighborhood houses the Weber County Library, Oasis Community Garden, and a community center. There are several restaurants, coffee shops, eleven convenience stores, and three grocery stores that offer a diversity of culturally specific foods: Rancho Market, Kim's, and Anaya's Market.

METHODS AND INTERVIEW PROCESS

This report is based on a food ethnography.

Two methods are frequently used when conducting ethnographies. This food ethnography of East Central Ogden gathered information through interviews and participant observation. This study employed a qualitative approach.

The interview questions were designed based on the research objectives and questions, encompassing nine sections for a total of 32 questions including basic demographic information about the participants (see Appendix A for the interview guide in English and Spanish).

An ethnography is typically used in anthropology and other social sciences to describe and understand a certain ethnic group or community. It is both a methodology and a writing piece. A food ethnography focuses on the cultural aspects and behaviors around food for a designated group of people.

Prospective participants were contacted through referral by community leaders or neighbors and asked if they would like to be part of the study. Snowball sampling – or asking research participants to refer someone they know to participate -- was applied. Recruitment also happened using promotional flyers (see Appendix B) that were designed in both English and Spanish and placed in different establishments across East Central such as stores, restaurants and cafés, the city library, the community center, and schools—as well as posted online by partners such as the Farmers' Market Ogden. Additionally, flyers were handed to neighbors at community events and in public places, where the ethnographer had the opportunity to answer any questions people asked.

The aim was to reach out to people from different backgrounds and interview participants with diverse demographics. Interviews were conducted in either English or Spanish, depending on the participant's preference. With their consent, the conversation was recorded. Their responses were kept anonymous. Participants only responded to the questions they felt comfortable answering.

Some interviews followed the order of the questions very closely, interviewees answered only about what was asked, and the interviews lasted for around 50 minutes. For the most part, interviewees enjoyed the process, and the interview became a more relaxed conversation about food, lasting for around 90 minutes. In all, 20 in-depth interviews were conducted. As compensation for their time, participants each received a grocery store gift card.

Participant observation was conducted in restaurants, at the farmers' market, food stores, food pantries, and community gardens.

The interview recordings were transcribed with the help of local undergraduate research assistants. The written texts of the interviews were coded using the program Nexus.

To analyze the interview transcriptions and participant observation notes, the information was qualitatively coded for themes and trends (thematic coding approach; Robson, 2011). Following Beveridge et al. (2019), interview transcripts were coded inductively, and then a simple categorization was applied. The ethnographer integrated and interpreted the data.

This project experienced some changes and delays due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Three of the 20 interviews were conducted online over Zoom. Participant observation, first intended to be developed together with the families of the individuals who were interviewed, had to shift to public places and establishments instead of neighbors' homes. For the interviews, safety protocols were followed: keeping a 6-foot distance and wearing facemasks, meeting outside of peoples' homes or other places they work or frequent (restaurants, community gardens, etc.).

During Spring 2021, the ethnographer collaborated in a photojournalism project with MJ Munger, resident advisory council organizer of OgdenCAN; Katharine French-Fuller, director community research at Weber State University; and Amir Jackson, director of Nurture the Creative Mind in Ogden, Utah.

Six out of the eight participants of the photojournalism project were interviewed for the ethnography. The photojournalism project has been an excellent complement for the ethnography because, through the pictures, researchers had a glance at peoples' kitchens and eating habits.

Photojournalism is a qualitative technique that uses the theoretical approach of community-based participatory research (CBPR). Participants will take photos and reflect on their experiences (Mitchell, Stevees, & Perez, 2015). Frequently used in cross-culture studies, it will provide a cultural context surrounding food through the eyes and words of the East Central residents.

Excerpt from Backman,
French-Fuller & Esplin, 2021.

Most of the interviewees chose to participate in the ethnography because they have an interest in food: they enjoy cooking and eating, they make a livelihood around food, or they have ethical positions regarding food and food systems. Primarily interviewing people who have existing interests in food created some sampling limitations, but it made the interviews very enjoyable experiences. Some people shared that participating in the interviews made them think about their relationship with food in a new light. They were prompted to reflect on their diet and came to realize some aspects of their food lives that they had not thought about before. Most of the interviewees believed it was a positive experience and enjoyed sharing about their perspectives on food. Though no one thought it was a negative experience, a couple of interviewees were neutral about the process.



RESULTS

Results from the ethnography are presented here, addressing eight thematic sections that coincide with the questions asked during the interviews: demographic background of the interviewees; food preferences, eating and cooking; food access; gardening and other food obtaining and transformation practices; food programs and other services; food security and health; food sharing and celebrations; food landscape and future interventions.

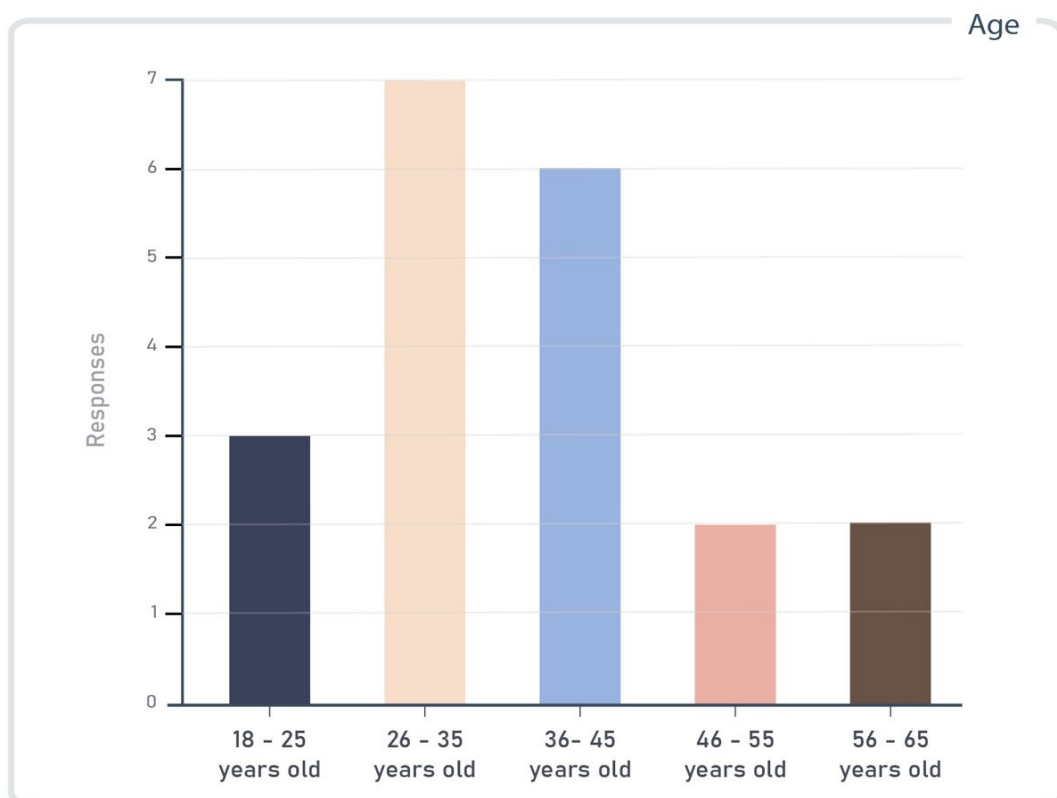
When pertinent, additional comments and information from the participant observation part of the ethnography have been included.

Demographics

This section compiles the demographic characteristics of the participants of this study. It reflects the diversity of the neighborhood in different aspects: age, gender, race and ethnicity, languages spoken and preferred, household income, and size—among others.

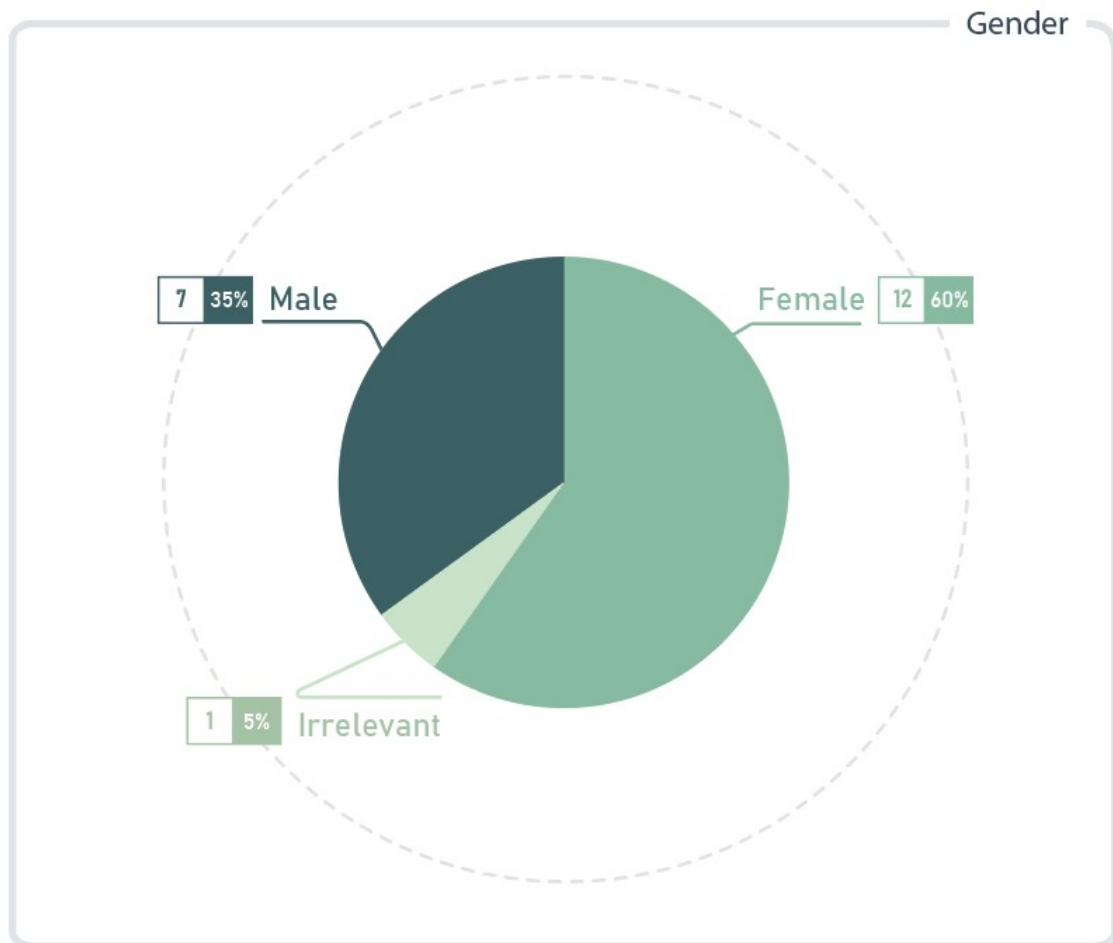
Age

To participate in this study, neighbors had to be 18 years old or older. The age of the respondents (n=20) ranged from 18 to 65 years, and the average age of interviewees was 36.8 years.



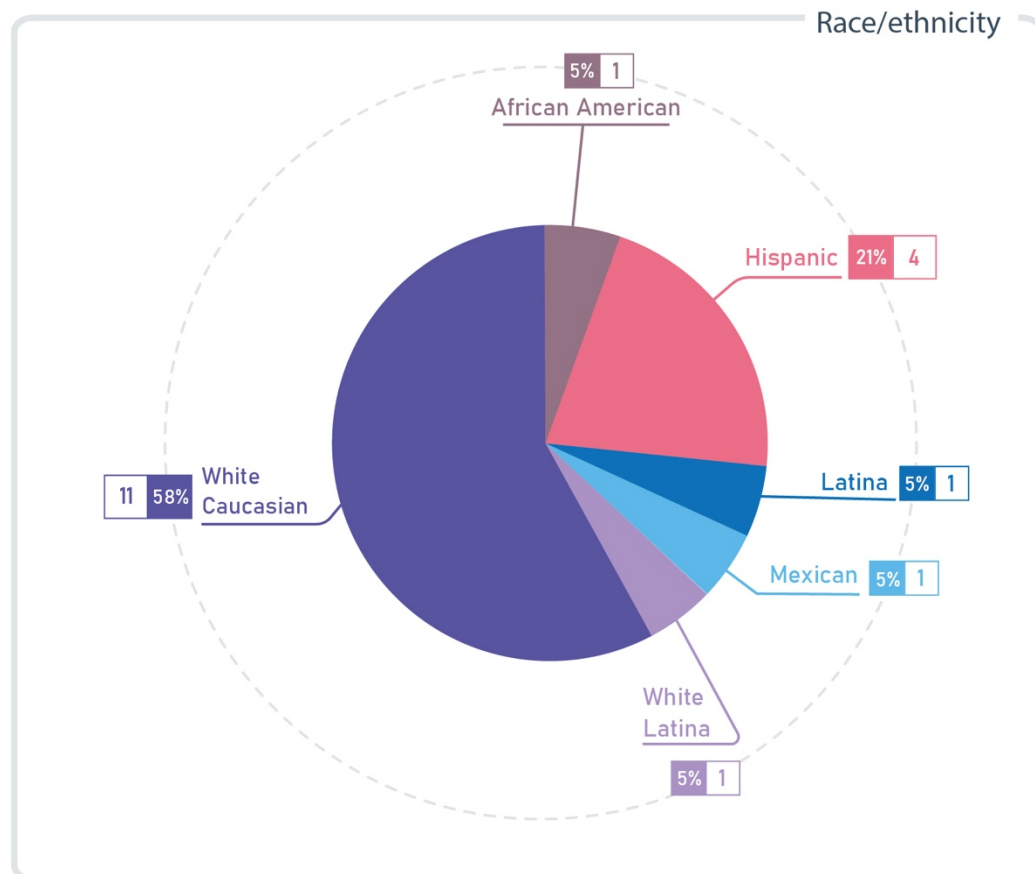
Gender

Participants were asked to self-identify in terms of gender. Of a total of 20 responses, 12 of the interviewees identified as female, 7 as male, and for one participant gender was irrelevant.



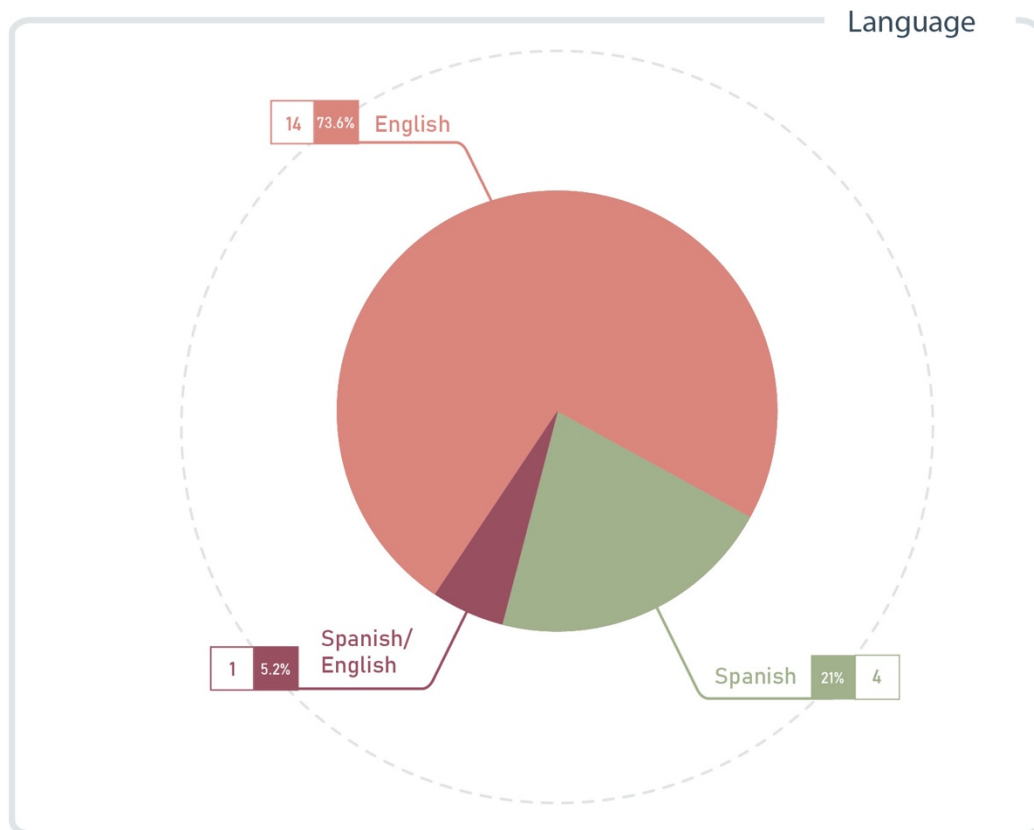
Ethnicity/race

Participants were asked to self-identify in terms of race or ethnicity (n=19). The majority of the respondents, 58%, reported being white or Caucasian. Seven participants (36%) identify with some kind of Latinx or Hispanic origin—one specifying being Mexican, another being White Latina. One of the respondents is African American (5%).



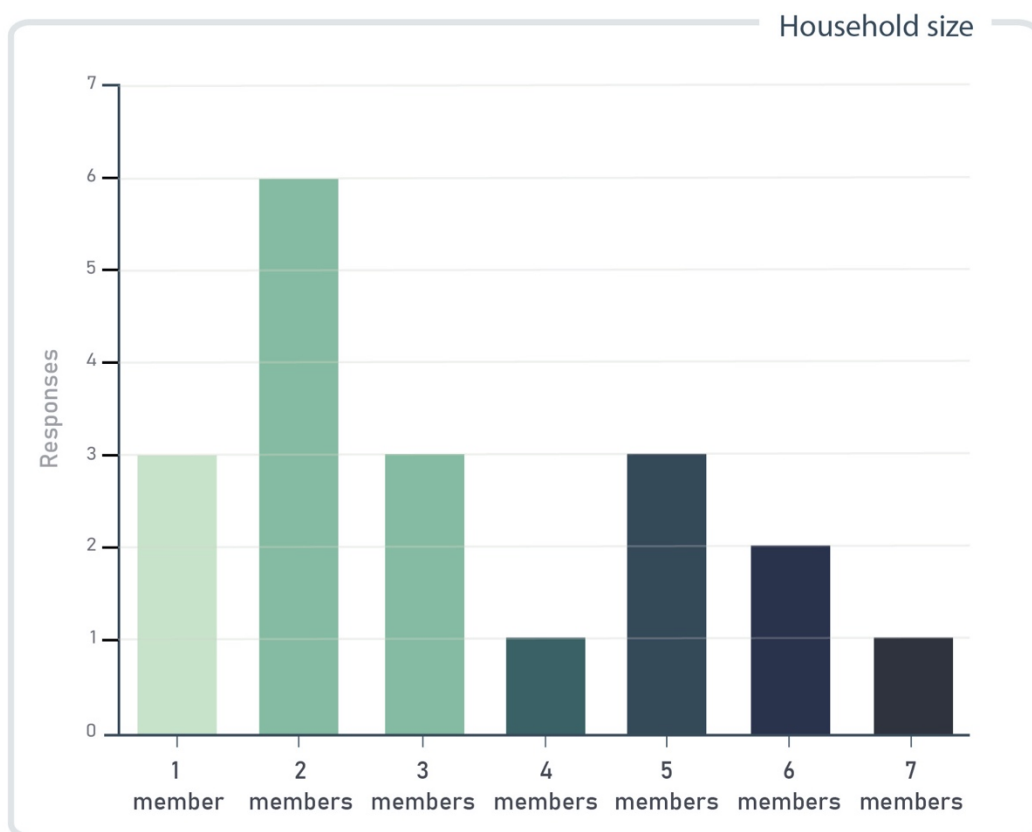
Language

Although all the respondents (n=19) had a certain proficiency in English, some being bilingual English-Spanish, not all were English native speakers, and 5 chose to be interviewed in Spanish. No other language besides English or Spanish were spoken, and one participant reported using both with the same proficiency.



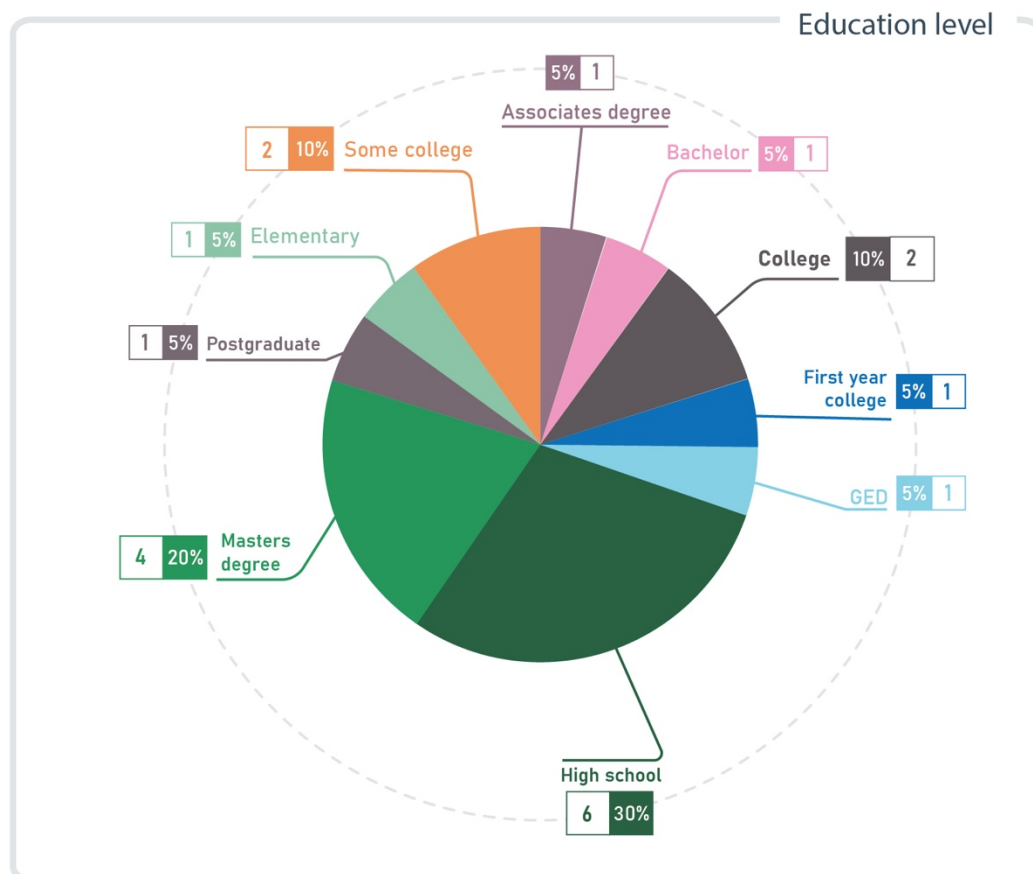
Household size

Through the 20 individuals that participated in the interview, this study gathered information about the foodways of a total of 62 neighbors, combining all the members of the household. Although many questions target personal preferences and suggestions from the person interviewed, others addressed household habits and routines around food. A total of 19 people answered the question of household size. Most of the respondents (6) live with one other person, 3 live by themselves, and 6 live in a household with 5 or more members. The largest household has 7 members.



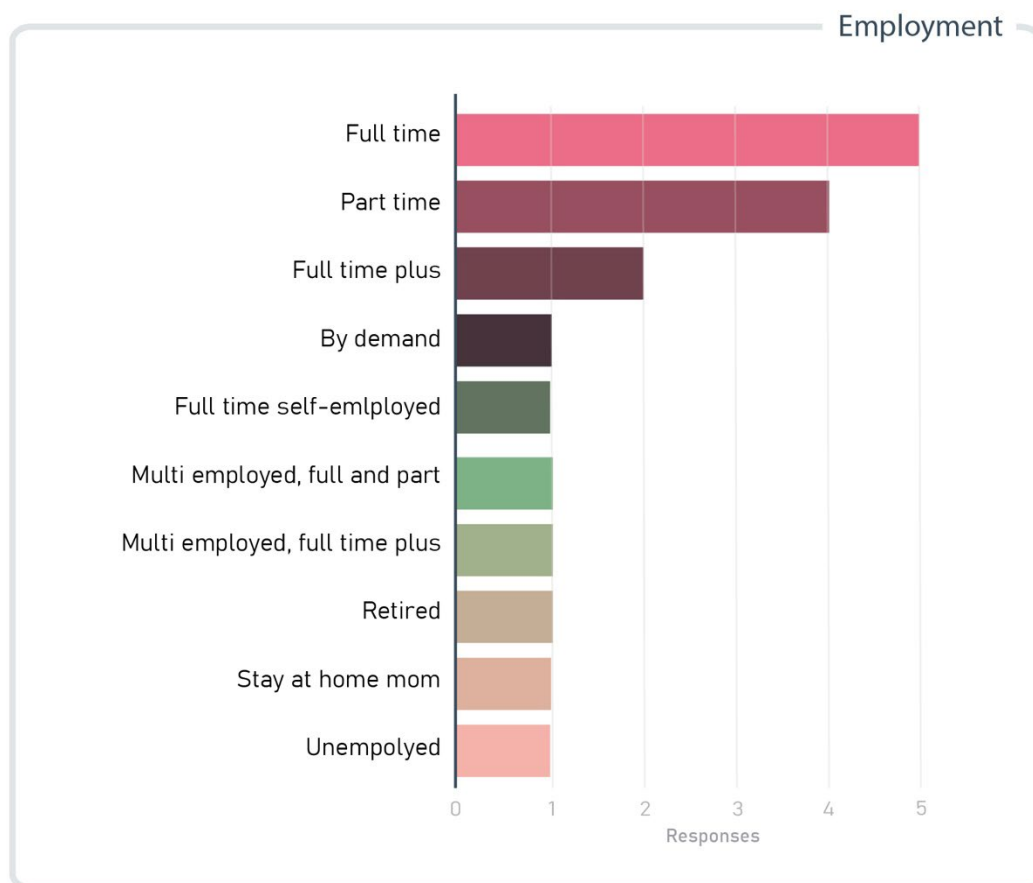
Education completed

Participants were asked about the highest level of education that they had completed at the time of the interview. All respondents except one had completed high school or obtained a GED. Of those, one is in the first year of college, one has an associate degree and one a bachelor, two reported studying some college and two reported having completed college. Five participants have postgraduate degrees, four of which are masters.



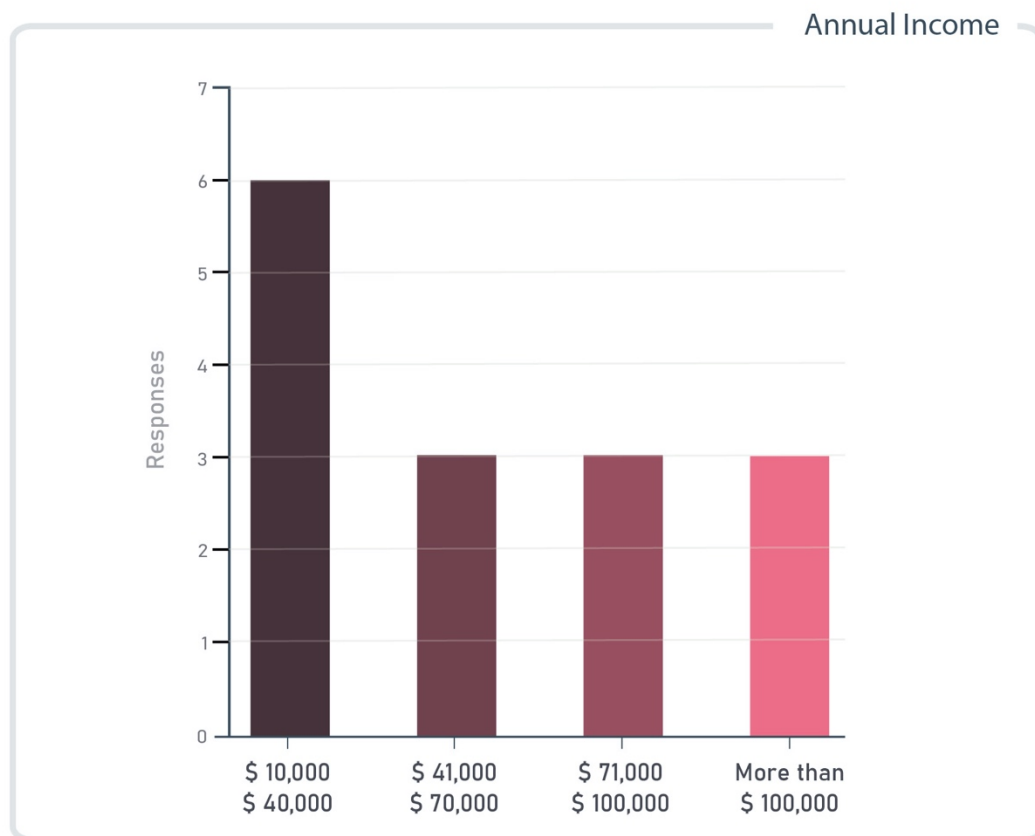
Employment

Participants were asked to describe their employment situation at the time of the interview. A total of 18 responses were registered. Most of the interviewees were employed at the time of the interview (14), working multiple jobs (2), full time or full time plus (8), or part-time jobs (4). One person reported to work only by demand, one was retired, another was a stay-at-home parent, and one reported to be unemployed at the time.



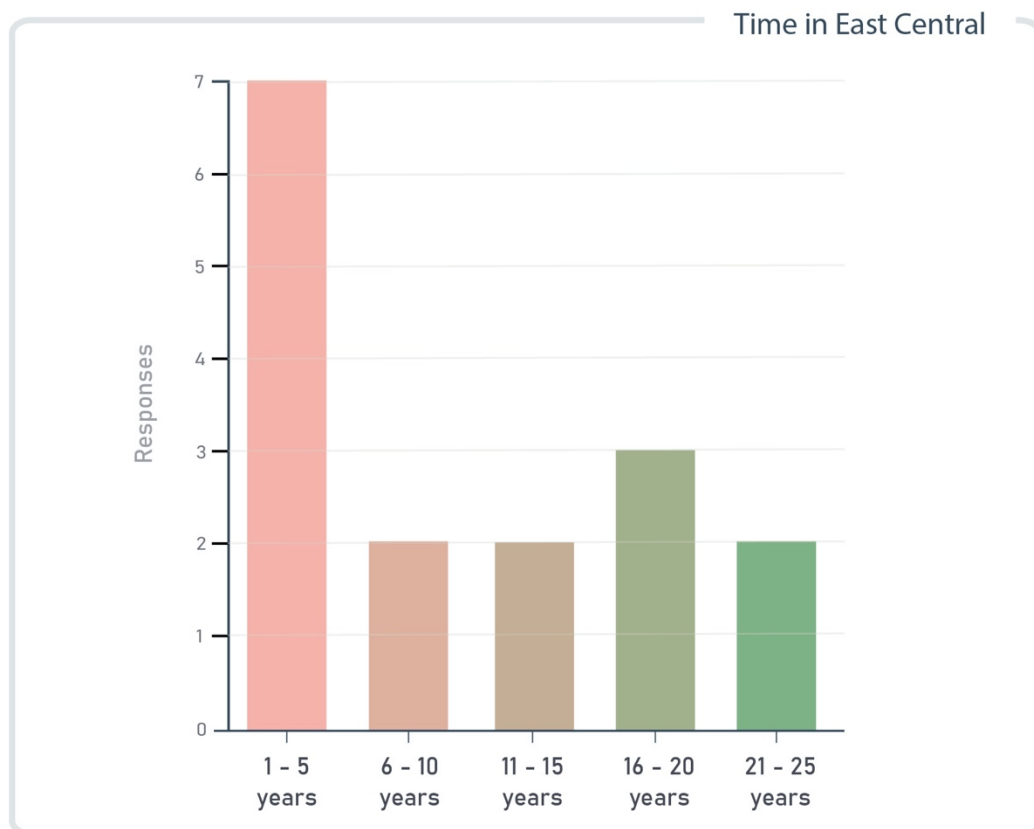
Household annual income

This question asked for an estimate of total household income during the year before the interview was conducted, excluding any remittances that may have been sent out of the US. There were 15 responses registered. Most of the participants (6) reported estimated annual incomes between \$10,000 and \$40,000. Three participants have annual incomes of \$100,000 or more. The estimated average of participants' household income is \$73,000.



Years in East Central

Participants that answered this question (n=15) have been living in East Central for an average of 9.5 years, ranging from 1.5 to 22 years. Most of the respondents (7) have been living in the neighborhood for 5 years or less, and 5 respondents have been East Central residents for more than 16 years. This means for at least three of the participants that they have been living in the neighborhood for most of their lives.



Place of origin

Most of the people who participated in this study come from somewhere in Utah, mainly the Wasatch Front and specifically Ogden. A couple of neighbors grew up in California and others in the Midwest or on the East Coast. Four participants come from Mexico and one from Ecuador. People chose to identify a place of birth, a place where they grew up, or both. The following map indicates the main place they talked about "coming from."



Depending on where neighbors grew up, their life experiences vary. Regarding food, at least five participants grew up on a farm, growing their own food, or eating from relatives' gardens. Despite living in a rural area where stores were far away, those that lived on farms reported having better access to food, and to better foods. Those coming from bigger cities, like Los Angeles or New York, describe interacting with many food cultures and missing the same diversity and access to those foods in Ogden, as well as having well-supplied corner stores at a walkable distance. However, for those growing up in smaller towns in Utah, Ogden represents access to a higher diversity of foods and people, and also more and better life opportunities.

Food preferences, eating, and cooking

A question as simple as "what are your favorite foods?" was not that easy to answer for most people. They had to take a minute and think. Some neighbors responded very generally with certain groups of food, like "vegetables" or "fruit." Others were very particular and named specific dishes like "pozole" or "chilaquiles." A couple of people responded with food cultures like "Mexican food" or "Asian food."

As reflected in the word cloud below, chicken and rice were the two items named more times by the respondents among their preferred food. Also very popular were pizza, pasta, vegetables, pozole, fruit, eggs, beans, cheese, chilaquiles, tortillas, and fish.



People try to eat the foods they like the most, but there are certain constraints like money, time, and knowledge to prepare them, and access to specific ingredients. Also, some respondents recognized that some of their favorite foods are not among the healthiest, and they try to control the consumption of those despite liking them so much. For all these reasons, respondents did not always eat their preferred foods at home.

The following word cloud shows the foods that the interviewees reported to eat more frequently. Rice and pasta are clearly the staples, and chicken is the most popular animal protein. Beans, tomatoes, and other vegetables are also at the top of the list, followed by eggs and fish. This cloud represents a more detailed list, as different types of vegetables, fruits, meats, and cheeses are specified.



Acquiring food tastes

The appreciation for traditional foods is carried on from childhood into adult life for people with a strong food culture. This was salient in participants with Mexican and African American heritage, as they referenced aspects of their culture to play a relevant role in the process of acquiring food tastes and ways of eating.

There are several reasons people listed for changing food preferences throughout life. Among those are travel and living in different places, which entail being in contact with other foods and food cultures. This exposure results in incorporating new ingredients and dishes into the diet, as the scope of knowledge around food expands.

Growing up comes with a better comprehension of the different types of foods and "which are good to eat, and which are not." For some people, too, it comes with a deeper understanding of the history behind different diets and one's own food culture. This leads to developing a stronger connection to those foods and valuing them more.

There are also health or medical reasons behind diet change, which many times requires modifying meal patterns and removing certain ingredients. Under these conditions, changes occur "not by choice," and people develop a preference for foods that will not cause harm.

Food insecurity influenced food habits and preferences. Experiencing hunger during childhood has shaped peoples' tastes and food choices later in life: the type of food consumed, the way to prepare it, the portion size, and the calculation of costs and benefits (what foods provide the most calories for the least amount of money).

Finally, family values learned while growing up also guide people's relationship with food. An example of this is found in the following quote, where this neighbor describes the origin of their food ethics in their father's native roots and his instilling of Indigenous values like taking care of the land and giving back.



A reason that I eat the way that I eat is because I was raised by my parents [...] My dad's mom grew up on a Nez Perce reservation. Even though our family has never really deeply connected with our Native American roots, we like the ethics, the care that is given in catching and eating food has always been very, very important, and my dad [...] make[s] sure that we're taking care of the land that you're getting energy our energy from. Giving it back at some ways.

Cooking and preparing meals

Although participants communicated that all the adults in the household have at least basic cooking skills, usually an individual is in charge of cooking for everyone—whoever has the most knowledge and experience or is “the best cook in the house.” Only in Latinx families did females take a leading role in meal preparation more often.



“I actually enjoy the process of learning, making mistakes even. I’m not afraid of trying something and failing and so, yeah, I am the best cook in the house, because I really care about the process of being a good cook.”

There are two main ways interviewees describe meal preparation at home: either it is a meal that has been carefully planned and crafted, with specific ingredients that have been gathered, or they improvise a meal putting together whatever is available in the pantry.

Neighbors identify time to be the biggest constraint for meal preparation, and weekends are when there is more availability for cooking more developed recipes or dishes that require more time and care.

Most participants learned how to cook from others, especially growing up. Interestingly, they do not report being specifically taught how to cook. Instead, they have learned by being around older family members when the food preparation happened and watching them doing it. A couple of interviewees report having family recipes that have been passed down to them but claim that they still have to master the dishes as they do not taste as good as their grandma’s.

Because most of the people that reached out or were referred to be part of this study have a strong relationship with food; many also enjoy cooking. Apart from what has been learned in their household growing up, participants described an interest in expanding their cooking knowledge by looking up recipes on the internet or in cook books, experimenting with different combinations, and substituting ingredients for those available.

At least seven participants have had some kind of professional relationship with food: either they have received some formal education around cooking or being educated as chefs, or they have been working in restaurants and meal services. Three members of two different households are currently owners of restaurants located in the neighborhood or have regular clients from East Central. One household sells tamales informally, and one participant is a nutritionist. Two more have taken cooking classes for fun, around specific food cultures that they wanted to learn about. In general, food is a driver for making a living for some East Central neighbors, or for making life more enjoyable.

Cooking is also connected to mental health. Several respondents identified the process of meal preparation with a state of joy—positively impacting their mood and contributing to better mental wellbeing.



"When I'm cooking, it puts a smile on my face. It actually helps me with my depression and anxiety, a lot."

Eating habits

East Central neighbors do not eat most of their meals at the same time as the other members of their households. Only one family reported to eat, regularly, all meals together. Different schedules and busy days with school, work, and other activities leave people with little time to share a meal during weekdays. Breakfast and lunch are less likely to happen together; it is easier for people in the household to be together at night. Weekends are usually when people sit at the table as a family, and Sunday dinners are when time is intentionally carved out for that.

However, despite having different schedules, people might still eat the same meals. A member of the household normally cooks a meal for everyone, and others eat whenever they get home or take the food with them. This means that even if people have the time to cook, there is not always time to eat together.

Some eating habits are developed consciously. Several interviewees pointed to eating seasonally as a chosen practice, which entails selecting those foods that are available according to the local seasons. For people who grow their own food, this represents creating a menu around the ingredients that come from the garden. Others choose to eat whatever is available at the farmers' market. And seasonality can also mean identifying optimal times for certain dishes. Some foods are more comforting depending on the weather: in winter soups are preferred, and summer is for salads and fresh fruits and vegetables.

Managing food preferences and dietary restrictions

Food preferences and dietary restrictions can be hard to manage when they stem from cultural differences and medical conditions. Finding a middle ground between distinct food cultures sometimes entails leaving some traditions aside to be able to share a meal as a household. Also, educating oneself and others on how to eat differently to remain healthy and lower the risk of disease or harm can require a steep learning curve. As described by one of the photovoice participants, understanding ingredient lists on packaged food is not easy, as many times language is ambiguous and different brands use confusing language. Eating out can also be challenging. Therefore, for people with specific conditions like diabetes, lactose intolerance, or allergies, eating at home from raw ingredients is always the best option, as they are better able to control what they are putting into their own and their family's bodies.

Other discrepancies in diets are easier to manage, like when someone is vegetarian or vegan. In general, the most restrictive diet is taken as the starting point for preparing meals, and there may be add-ons or the possibility of cooking a different food if other people are willing to. Especially if household members eat separately, it is easier to manage those details, even when they only result from a matter of taste. Several families reported as a possibility having discrepant members cook their own meal if they do not want to eat what has already been made for the household.

There are generational differences regarding food preferences. Overall, individuals with children report the children liking different types of foods than adults, which means they are given other "kid food." For the most part, interviewees believe their children are "picky" but "when they grow up, they normally get over it."

Three immigrant families with children who grew up both in their country of origin and in the US communicated that the children who were born or grew up almost entirely in the US have different preferences than the ones that arrived to the country later in life. The first group tends to eat more of the foods that adults prepare and that are part of traditional diets in the country of origin.

When eating with and cooking for people outside of the household, dietary restrictions are also contemplated. Some participants reported enjoying the challenge of having to be creative and cook recipes outside of their comfort zone and offer guests a meal that is aligned with their dietary standards.



"There's been a lot of times where I've learned stuff cooking for other people because I've had friends with dietary restrictions. I have a friend who is celiac, and she can't have any gluten at all. So, what I'll do is, I find recipes that I can make that are friendly and they're gluten-free for her."

Diet changes since COVID-19

Most people have not experienced significant dietary changes since the COVID-19 pandemic started. The most outstanding change for some people has been cooking and eating more at home, preparing more meals from scratch, and eating more frequently together with others in the household, especially during the time where working and schooling happened from home. For one family whose business was active during the pandemic and the number of hours worked scaled up, the change was the opposite: more fast food was added to their diet because of the inability to cook due to time constraints.

Two of the interviewees had recovered from COVID-19, and they struggled with the loss of taste, or, more specifically, they experienced a change in how certain foods taste, making eating an unpleasant experience.

The stress from COVID-19 has affected peoples' eating habits. This quote reflects how dealing with the pandemic while locked down at home represented a decline in appetite and the willingness to cook. There is an expectation this will change as things get back to normal, but some people may experience long-lasting impacts if mental health wellness is not addressed.



"Covid has a definite impact on my mental health [...] Even though I know how to cook decently well, when I'm not mentally available for it, I just I don't want to and then I'll just eat because it's a means to an end; I know that I have to at the end of the day. But there's also times where I'll go a couple days without eating and I won't even be hungry just because of the stress, from Covid, being at home, working in my house, living in my office."

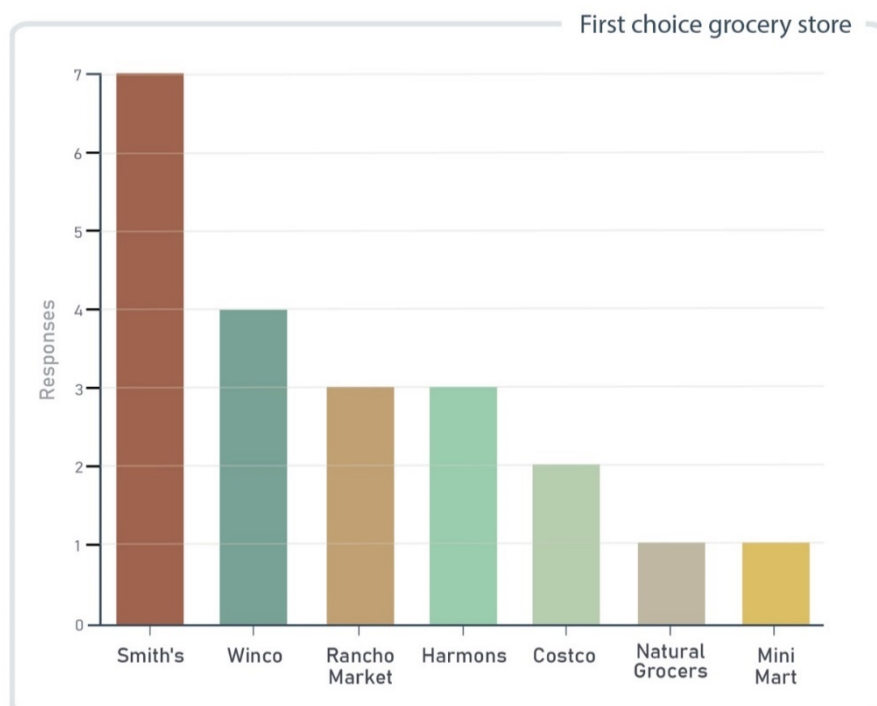
Food Access

Where food comes from

Participant neighbors were asked to list all of the places their food comes from. Most people get their food from stores and supermarkets, but also Ogden's downtown farmers' market (when in season), private or community gardens, food banks, or food programs like school lunch. Less frequently, food is gathered from the wilderness or the urban environment. Additionally, East Central neighbors obtain food from family or friends that share with them. Only one interviewee was part of a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) that operates from Hooper. These other ways of procuring food will be addressed in subsequent sections, following a focus here on stores and restaurants.

Grocery store choice

Although people may have a preferred place to buy food, every interviewee reported using more than one store. When asked about the first choice for grocery shopping, some respondents have two stores that they go to indiscriminately. Smith's was named by seven neighbors as the main store where their food comes from, followed by WinCo (4), Rancho Markets (3), and Harmon's in Roy (3). This shows that, for most of the interviewees, their first choice for buying food is outside East Central. Therefore, some means of transportation would be needed.

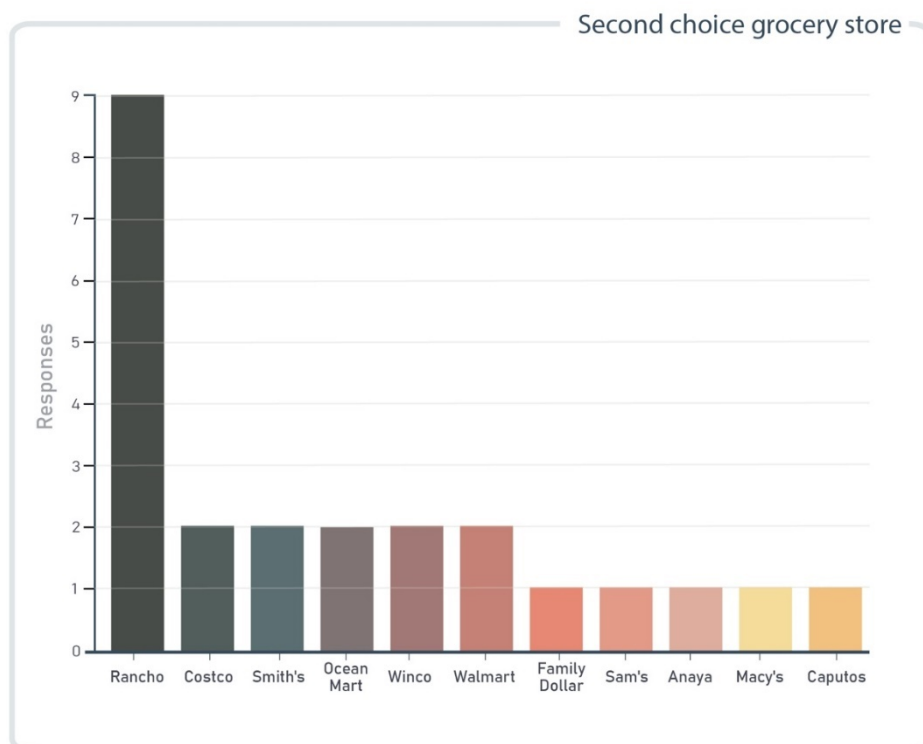


Rancho Market (located in the neighborhood) was the most popular second option, named by nine neighbors. Other second options were Costco, Smith's, Ocean Mart, WinCo, and Walmart. As Rancho Market is the largest supermarket in East Central, it was the one grocery store that people walked to. Residents also walked to convenience stores like 7-Eleven. Also, for Latinx or Hispanic neighbors, Rancho or Anaya Market are favorites because they offer culturally relevant foods.



"Rancho Market. We don't get most of our stuff there, but I only like it because it has more of that LA feel. And I find more things there than I do, like, at WinCo, or Smith's, or stuff like that. So, even though it's not the main store where we buy our groceries, I would say it's my favorite."

Additionally, a couple of respondents commented on a specific bakery in town where they buy bread (Great Harvest) and a local dairy business (Rose Hill Dairy in Morgan) that delivers milk to them.



During the interviews, participants showed remarkable knowledge about what each store has to offer: where they could find different things, which stores have better quality in general and for very specific ingredients, and the variability in price. For example, they could name a store that they consider has good prices but point out that the produce will not last long before going bad. Neighbors also identified which days of the week produce is stocked and therefore when to shop, or they know which stores carry certain items from their food culture that are only available there.

East Central participants chose these places to buy food for several reasons. The most salient one is quality. Even for people on a budget, good quality produce and meat outweighs the price difference of cheaper and lower quality items. However, quality and cost are the biggest tradeoffs, because although looking for the best quality, most of the participants think about the price and the money they are spending. Shopping at Harmon's or going all the way to Salt Lake City for a delicacy at Caputo's is considered a special treat that only happens occasionally. For many of the respondents, quality is synonymous with "fresh," and some go out of their way to look for fresher products, even if that means going to the farmers' market in Murray.

Another big reason for choosing one store over another is convenience: having lots of options and being able to do most of the shopping all at once. This saves time and trips. For people who rely on public transportation or on neighbors giving them rides, convenience is particularly important, and they choose stores along a bus route or those that are within walking distance, for example.

Although it is more salient for restaurants, human connection is also meaningful for the experience at a grocery store. East Central neighbors appreciate the familiarity that comes with knowing a place and knowing where things are, but also value having developed relationships with the store owners or workers. Being greeted nicely, getting help when needed, and being treated politely are important reasons for returning to a store. A couple of people also mentioned good working conditions were important to them. All of these factors create a sense of community and caring for customers, in particular, and people in general.



"We have a deeper relationship than just like recognizing each other at the checkout line, so community really comes down to relationships, personal connection to the people involved in the process of food."

Less mentioned reasons important to neighbors were organic and local options or avoiding food waste (for example, by being able to buy food items by weight).

Finding and buying preferred foods

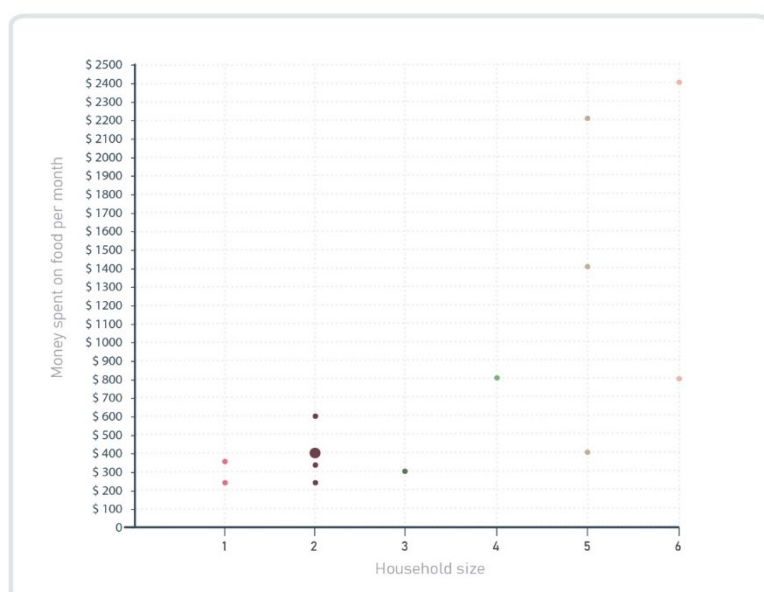
Except for very specific ingredients needed in special dishes or from a particular food culture that is not common in Ogden (or the Wasatch Front), participants do not usually have trouble finding the foods they would like to eat. Those coming from bigger and more diverse cities get used to the types of food that can be found in town.

When it comes to affording the foods they would like to eat, most of the respondents reported not having trouble buying them. For a smaller number, this was an issue, especially if they relied on SNAP, as money coming from the program is limited and they must spend only what is available on food. A couple of families describe choosing to buy only what fits a tight budget, even though are not currently using SNAP.

Shopping frequency and money spent on food

Most people chose to go grocery shopping at least once a week. This is especially the case for larger families or neighbors without a car. Those who rely on SNAP buy food immediately after receiving the benefit, and one other neighbor mentioned waiting to get paid every other week to go grocery shopping. Exceptionally, when people are planning a meal for guests or decide to prepare a special dish, they shop to get the ingredients needed for that. Going to stores that sell in bulk, like Costco, is less frequent or about once a month.

The next graphic shows the average amount of money, including food stamps and eating out, that households spend on food every month. With some exceptions, there is a general trend for larger families to spend more on food than those individuals living alone or households with fewer members. Money spent on food ranges from \$240 to \$2240 a month and represents an average of around \$926 and a median of \$400.



Shopping routine

People who own a car use this as the main form of transportation to access food, mainly to go grocery shopping and/or to a food pantry. Neighbors who do not own a car and must take the bus to access the supermarket of their preference, report how difficult it is to ride public transit with grocery bags. Walking long distances with bags is also challenging, and people who chose to walk to the store normally do not buy large quantities at a time. Several neighbors reported carpooling to go grocery shopping or to a food pantry. They coordinate with their neighbors a day and time to do so, or join their neighbors when offered an opportunity at a feasible time.

Time was also named as a big constraint to going grocery shopping. People have to fit the task between jobs, school, and other responsibilities, and making it coincide with others' schedules can be challenging. Time availability is something that frequently determines the day of the week and the time of the day to go grocery shopping, which many times means going during the weekend or after work on a weekday. Apart from the respondents that live by themselves, a couple of households have a person in charge of grocery shopping who goes alone. For those respondents, grocery shopping is a point of contention and frustration with their partners because of the divergent approach each has to this activity. Just one interviewee tries to avoid taking children to the store because "they will [throw] anything in the cart, even what they don't like." For the most part, buying food is an activity that is done with other members of the household, including children.



"Even before we had a kid, my wife and I always grocery shopped together. It's just something that we've felt is important for us rather than because nobody really loves grocery shopping. So we kind of feel like if both of us do it together, then it's a little bit more fun. Or it's at least something we're in together."

Most of the respondents have some kind of system that involved a list and a budget, even if they do not always stick to any of it. Often lists were built together with adult members of the household, considering what people want to eat for the week or the next days, or just enumerating the items that are needed in the pantry because they are gone or low in stock. In general, people report having a good sense of what is needed in the house and being able to buy only those foods even if they do not carry a list with them. They sometimes add cravings to the cart but are conscious that these are extras and, thus, pay for them separately when sharing a budget with others.

East Central neighbors also employ other strategies to save money. For those with tight or limited monthly budgets, such as those relying almost exclusively on food stamps, buying foods on sale can help resources stretch. Sale items may, therefore, determine what people cook and eat, but in general, they feel satisfied with the amount and type of foods purchased. Another strategy, for those with a car, is to visit more than one grocery store in order to buy items at the lowest price.

Estimating costs of meals when planning for them is an alternative approach people find useful if they want to stick to a budget, but this requires some initial work:



"I always meal plan. I'll plan what I'm going to make for like the next week. So that'll look like just sitting down with my girlfriend, and we'll figure out, [...] What we want to do? From there we'll make our shopping list, and we will stick very close to the shopping list, [...] because, at that point, we know that, once we start going away from the shopping list that's when we start going way outside of budget. [...] I also used to cost estimate meals, so what I would do is after two or three weeks of shopping, I would write down how much all the food costs, and then I would round up to the next nearest dollar. [...] And then I would write down the ingredients that I needed to buy and then also the associated costs. [...] That only takes a couple hours a week, because once you get the system developed, it's a lot easier to go through."

There are two ways people react when they do not find a specific ingredient they are looking for: rather than forgetting about it, either they purchase a substitute, or they make an extra trip to another grocery store to get it.

Eating out

Eating out is an activity to do with others. People go to restaurants or food trucks with family or friends. Most respondents eat out about once a week; two did only once a month or during road trips, and two of the largest households eat at restaurants or purchase restaurant food to eat together at home at least twice a week.

Depending on where people come from or have previously lived, the perspective about dining options varies: when coming from larger cities, people more often consider Ogden to be limited and homogeneous. Those coming from smaller towns are more satisfied with the diversity of choices. In general, East Central respondents consider there is a lack of restaurants in the neighborhood, and although they will eat at those nearby, they tend to go places in other areas of the city. If they live close to downtown, they walk to 25th Street. Otherwise, they drive, take a bus, or share a ride.

As with grocery stores, East Central participants consider quality to be one of the main characteristics they look for when eating out. Even when going to fast food restaurants, freshness and overall quality of the produce is considered. This means people going to a different location of the same chain restaurant just because one serves "fresher food." Quality also includes the service provided and the care put into the menu or the selection of food sources. Many respondents declare they eat at places where food is served that they do not regularly cook at home or places that do a better job cooking than respondents can do themselves.



"Let me give you a way to describe Tona [...] One day, it was a Sunday. Tona isn't open on Sundays, and I was walking down the street, and I saw the owner of Tona outside with a bucket of water and a towel and a ladder, cleaning off the outside of his building. And I thought to myself 'If he cares that much about the outside of this building, imagine how much he cares about his food that he is serving,' and it is consistently great food. Quality. Fresh. Very clean. It makes sense when you know that the owner was outside on a Sunday, on his day off, cleaning the building with a towel in a bucket."

Asian restaurants were favored by residents. Residents mentioned the high-end sushi restaurants Tona for luxury dining, Thai Curry Kitchen as an everyday choice, Chinese buffets for family dining, especially among the Latinx population.

Another reason to choose a place to eat is convenience. That is what people value most about fast food: it is cheap, filling, and easy to access. Drive-throughs are appreciated when there is no time to sit down and eat.

Supporting local restaurants was mentioned as important by several interviewees, because either they have a relationship with the owners or want to contribute to the local economy (or both).



"I do prefer to buy local. That's one thing about me, that I kind of developed going to college. Because of a professor. She [...] explained to us how beneficial it is to buy local. And so, I try to stick with that when we go out with my friends, we try to go local."

Neighbors with specific diets, like vegan, or with food allergies or restrictions, can have a hard time finding places to dine. They report having two or three places that can accommodate their needs, so they stick with those that work for them.

Feeling welcomed

Human connections and a positive dining or shopping experience that includes good service and good treatment are highly valued by East Central neighbors. Feeling welcomed in a place plays a key role when choosing where to eat, as well as where to purchase food. Customers appreciate being greeted nicely and asked if everything is all right or if they need anything. Feeling welcomed also means going to familiar places, seeing familiar faces and environments, and experiencing a sense of belonging:



"I would say any Mexican restaurant that we go to—and I keep going back to that just because, you know, I lived in LA my whole life, and it's a community, and it's a feeling of being around people that look like you, or people that speak the same language as you, stuff like that. So, even walking into, like, a Mexican restaurant and hearing, like, Mexican music play, it's like—feels like home. It feels—you know, it feels comfortable."

The opposite also happens. Several respondents have witnessed poor treatment or direct discrimination, or have had bad experiences themselves:



“Cuando es un saludo bien y sin mirar el aspecto cómo va la persona, porque hubo una ocasión que fuimos a un restaurante y le dijeron a mi hijo, ‘dile a tus papás que aquí es muy caro’, y ya habíamos pagado en la entrada, y al llegar la mesera le dijo eso”¹

Racism was also a concern for the participants of OgdenCAN's focus groups (French-Fuller 2019), and this can take different forms in relationship to food. A neighbor shared how other people he knows feel “intimidated” shopping at Rancho Markets, just because it feels different. The ethnographer also heard some comments regarding East Central not being a “good neighborhood” or how certain areas were perceived as “sketchy” or “scary” by white residents of all income levels. A couple of interviewees indicated that they avoid particular restaurants because of the business owner's political views, and especially if those establishments are vocally unwelcoming to certain people.

At grocery stores, one essential aspect of feeling welcomed is the physical atmosphere. In general, shopping at a place that is clean and organized is preferred. Respondents feel more comfortable in stores where shelves are frequently stocked, as this communicates that the owners care about their produce and their customers' experience.

Farmers' market are often criticized for not being welcoming to diverse populations. However, most of the respondents know about the existence of their local farmers' market, and none reported feeling uncomfortable or unwelcomed. Additionally, as one participant pointed out during an interview, since the farmers' market started accepting EBT, it has allowed access to the food for a demographic that did not have access before.

Interviewees that participate in the market come from diverse cultural, language, and racial backgrounds. A relatively diverse population has been observed to frequent the market and enjoy the experience, which does not necessarily involve grocery shopping as it is a public space available just for visiting with family and friends or to have some takeout food or

¹. “When is a good greeting and without looking at the person appearance, because there was an instance where we went to a restaurant and they told my son, ‘tell your parents that here is very expensive,’ and we had already paid at the entrance, and when the waitress came, she said that.”

drinks. Additional study might be useful to learn more about how people use the market space and what products they consume.

The ethnographer observed that the population of vendors of prepared food, many of whom serve products that target specific food cultures, is more diverse than the group of people that sells agricultural products. This raises questions about who has access to land in the area and about the potential of cultural knowledge around farming for generating income.

Food access changes since COVID-19

Regarding food access, the main change for East Central neighbors since the COVID-19 pandemic started relates to eating out. For many, eating from restaurants totally stopped as they did not even want to order a takeout meal. However, for those with a higher household income, ordering takeout food intentionally increased so they could support local businesses that were struggling. Some started to use DoorDash, and they consider it to be a very convenient service.

In addition to other safety measures like using facemasks and social distancing, during the peak of the pandemic shopping routines changed as neighbors made fewer trips to the grocery store, shopped faster, purchased food for longer periods of time, and carried on this task individually instead of going with other household members. Most of these temporary changes have now gone back to normal.

Another change, for a couple of households, was the introduction of online grocery shopping. It started as a safe and convenient way to buy food during the pandemic and turned out to be preferred to going physically into the store. At least one family has fully adopted online grocery shopping into their routine and declared an interest in continuing to shop this way in the future, as they consider it more conveniently structured, and it helps them avoid adding foods that are not needed or that divert from a predetermined budget. There is no "impulse shopping" when they only type what they need.

Gardening and other food production and transformation practices

This section further explores other places where East Central neighbors' food may be coming from, in addition to stores or food programs. A remarkable number of participants engage in a variety of practices relating to food production, gathering, or processing.

Gardening

Growing food at home or in a community garden is a popular activity among the participants of this study. Half of them (10) grow at least some fruits, herbs, or vegetables; two garden at Oasis Community Garden. Two more neighbors reported getting produce from friends or family gardens, and two others would like to start growing food. Those that already have some kind of garden or orchard started the project before the pandemic (most have been growing food for several years), although some people have intentionally expanded the number or size of beds in the face of pandemic-related uncertainty, or just because they had more time to tend the plants.

Everyone who grows food shares it with neighbors, family, and friends or even acquaintances: while conducting interviews during the growing season, several participants offered and shared food from their garden with the interviewer. Sharing takes the form of giving fresh produce or something that has been made with it, like juices or salsas. Also, neighbors tend to share seeds and knowledge about gardening.



"Someone will bring us treats, and so we'll bring it back with tomatoes. Like, something from the garden on their empty plate."

Residents had many different reasons they gardened. Some of the reasons participants explain wanting to garden are having access to the freshest food possible with better flavor, experiencing joy growing and sharing food, being used to it as they grew up eating from what their family grew, and feeling concern about where food comes from. A mother from Mexico explicitly described how her children participate in the garden, how she teaches them (and anyone who wants to know) how food is produced. She purposely and proudly instills the value of working the land to provide for yourself and others.



*"Tengo la experiencia de una señora, estábamos sembrando frijoles, me dice ¿qué es eso? Yo le digo que es frijol, y me dice ¿para qué? Se siembra le digo. Ah, yo pensé que solo venían en la bolsa y ya."*²

Also, some participants thought growing food is a better use of space and resources like water than having only flowers or a lawn.

Two main barriers were identified to prevent people from growing food when they would like to. The first is access to land, as those renting feel limited with what they can do with their yards. One interviewee grew microgreens inside the house. Another barrier is awareness about resources, as several neighbors did not know of the existence of Oasis Community Garden (or how it works), or lack knowledge on how to properly grow food generally and in Ogden's climate specifically.



Photo 2. Oasis Gardens

² "I had this experience where a woman, when we were sowing beans, ask me, 'What is that?' and I said 'beans.' She asked again 'what for?' and I said, 'You sow them'. 'Ah, I thought those only came inside bags.'"

Fishing and hunting

At least one member of three different households brings fish home to eat, and one other enjoys smoked fish that their family catches and shares with them. Those who fish report doing so in Ogden River, catching rainbow trout. One of the participants is retired and described how he enjoys spending time in the river, feeling refreshed under the trees in the water, and does not worry much about catching anything or not. Another of the participants got his fishing license recently, with the aim of sourcing wild-caught fish for the household because he feels it is more ethical to acquire fish locally than to purchase fish shipped from far away.

Hunting is a practice that is also valued for the overall experience, not exclusively for being a meat source. One participant described his feelings around hunting after catching and processing an elk:



"I love hunting. [...] Tracking something, that process, the experience is something that I really do enjoy. [...] It is very, very primal, gutting it, skinning it, and all of these things make me feel connected to my primal self. I do enjoy that. I mean it's not even enjoyable and I enjoy it. Gutting something, it stinks, it's not the most fun, but even in that experience of not enjoying it. I love it."

Another interviewee shared her excitement to participate in the hunting season for the first time: her grandfather was going to take her deer hunting and teach her how to prepare the animal to make burger patties to grill. Family bonding and passing down knowledge are involved in this hunting experience.

Wild and urban foraging

A few participants reported being involved in some kind of wild or urban foraging. Regarding wild herbs, a neighbor explained they enjoyed gathering dandelion, purslane, and lambs' quarters, and making dandelion fritters to share with friends. During that interview, interestingly, the interviewer observed a Spanish-speaking neighbor gathering dandelion in the grass space nearby, and had the opportunity to exchange some words and learn about what he was going to do with the dandelion: he uses it as medicine for his wife's swollen feet.



"As a culture and society are afraid of eating things that aren't out of the grocery store; we just are conditioned to be that way, and I would like to see that change."

Several participants know where to find berries and gather them when the berries are in season. Among those available in the wilderness, neighbors named elderberry and blackberries, and in urban spaces—apart from some blackberry bushes—the most popular are mulberries, as there are several trees in East Central.



"Hay árboles con frutas, a mí me encanta esas moritas, esos árboles de mora, yo siempre como eso en la calle. Cerca de la casa, había un árbol de cereza. Estaban dulces. Estaban bien ricas. Y ahí íbamos los cuatro, mi mamá, mi hermana, mi hermano y yo, íbamos a tomar las cerezas al vecino, y había un árbol de nueces, e íbamos con nuestra bolsa a echar nueces. Otra señora que conocemos tenía manzanas y naranjas y pues ahí íbamos."³

Gleaning or picking fruit around town is also popular among some East Central participants. Apricots, peaches, grapes, and cherries were gathered from neighbors' yards or from spaces like Oasis Community Garden. One household described going to Brigham City orchards and paying to pick peaches themselves.

³ *"Here there are trees with fruit. I love those berries, those berry trees; I always eat that in the street. Close to home, there was a cherry tree. They were sweet. They were delicious. And we used to go the four of us, my mom, my sister, my brother and me, we would go to pick the cherries from the neighbor, and there was a walnut tree, and we would go with our bag and fill it with nuts. Other women that we know had apples and oranges, so we would go there."*

Other food processing activities

People take on different food-processing projects in their homes. Despite recognizing time is also a major limitation for these activities, most East Central participants are involved in one or more of the projects listed here.

Food preservation happens especially for neighbors who have gardens. They can food or make jam with their own produce at the end of the season, keeping people busy between August and October (one household made 43 pints of jam one year!). Some people dehydrate fruit, and fish and wild meat are smoked with the same goal of preserving them. Also, neighbors make pesto, salsa, and sauces that they freeze and use later in the year.

A couple of participants are interested in fermentation, and they sometimes experiment with fermenting different types of foods. Some make bread, but not as regularly as some families make tortillas. A couple of households make homemade pasta fairly often, and sometimes pizza dough.



“Las tortillas son muy sensibles, tienes que comerlas cuando las haces, porque si no se endurecen, y para volverlas a calentar, no sabe igual, entonces a nosotros nos gusta hacer exacto, si nos falta nomás la calentamos en el comal para no andar tire-tire-tire tortillas, entonces no más para una comida hacemos.”⁴

Residents stated they know how to make, and will sometimes prepare, beer, wine, and kombucha.

⁴ “The tortillas are very delicate; you need to eat them when you make them because otherwise they will harden, and reheating them do not taste the same, so we like making the exact amount, if we need more, we just heat them in the comal so we don’t have to be all the time throwing tortillas away, so we make only for each meal.”

Food programs and other services

This section addresses any food program that participants are currently participate in, such as food pantries, SNAP, and school lunch programs, Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB), Produce RX, or others. Some participants reported having used one or more of these resources in the past. Results presented here only address responses about current involvement with those programs.

SNAP

Four of the interviewees are current users of the SNAP program. Almost all of their grocery shopping is paid with food stamps, which are spent as soon as the resource comes through.



"All my groceries. Like, milk, bread, uh, cereal, our meats... pretty much everything we buy is on our food stamps, besides when we get hot food — then we have to use cash."

There is general satisfaction with the program, which "helps to put food in the house," to "make sure I am not going hungry," and permits money to be used towards paying for other essentials, like housing, clothing, gas, etc. One participant described the difficulty of being by herself and relying on food stamps, as it would be easier to pool resources among more people. For a new user, it has been a little bit challenging to understand how the program works.

When asked if they would want to change anything about the program, unanimously respondents declared a desire for being able to use food stamps to buy hot food.



"I would love to go to a restaurant, using my food stamps."

Food Pantries

In addition to the four participants who are users of SNAP, three others regularly access food through food banks. Other respondents have used this resource in the past, too. Mainly, people have a preferred location to access food, but most of them use more than one food bank. Among the most popular are Catholic Community Services and the Baptist Church food bank located in East Central Ogden.

Participant observation was conducted at both pantries. The pantries were well-stocked. Volunteers organized the goods on shelves and then into packages to give away. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, people could walk in and choose what they wanted to take from the shelves. Now they receive the food already sorted out according to different criteria such as the number of people in the household that is going to receive it. Also, the Baptist Church gives away food to people experiencing homelessness, so they ask those who come if they have the ability to cook, and this determines the content of the bag. Catholic Community Services implemented a drive-through system at the time of the visit, where users had to register, state how many people were in the household, and food would be delivered to their cars. It is clear that both pantries have developed relationships with their most frequent users; they know patrons by name, asked how they are doing, and had quick conversations with them. The pastor of the Baptist Church, which has no requirements to use the pantry, greeted people while delivering the food.

Food pantry users choose to drive even if the place is nearby, to be able to carry more food more comfortably. Those who do not own a car try to carpool with other neighbors who are also food bank users. When this option is not possible, they walk.

Several users and volunteers indicated they would like to see better food donated, as they do not think it is of good enough quality. They criticized the large amount of canned food available compared to the scarce produce. Some residents knew about efforts to donate local produce from gardens and farms during the harvest season.



"I had volunteered at the food pantry many years ago, and growing up I do remember my stepdad [using it] [...], I think it's important for our community, and maybe it's just me saying this without understanding the challenges that come with it, but I do think our community deserves to have fresh produce given out to them, and not just canned stuff. And not just bread. [...] if there's other options for them to have, I think it's the right thing to do."

Interviewees suggested that food pantries could make accessing the food easier. Requirements like presenting a social security card represent a barrier, especially for undocumented migrants, who have fewer options available despite their need to access food. This can be the reason behind the observation of a neighbor (a Latina woman who does not use this service), who described seeing fewer Latinx families using food pantries than their White counterparts.



*"Siento que para agarrar comida, [...] hacen muchas preguntas, pero literalmente no sabes si esa familia lo necesita. Hay veces que hay familias que en serio necesitan comida, pero se lo niegan, por cosas. Por ejemplo, la señora que le digo tiene 8 hijos y para los del gobierno, todos esos, piensan que todo el dinero es como no más para ellos. O sea, también hay que pagar la casa, pagar otras cosas y pagar una casa no es barato. Entonces yo digo pues porqué será, si ellos están pidiendo ayuda, porqué se lo niegan. [...] Sí, el Social Security es una barrera muy grande, porque no todos tienen el social, y pues ni para decir no lo tengo, si no lo tienes, pues es muy difícil zafarte."*⁵

⁵ "I feel that to grab food they ask a lot of questions, but literally you don't know if that family needs it. There are instances where a family seriously needs food, but it is denied to them, for different reasons. For example, this woman I am telling you about that has 8 children, and for the government, those, they think all the money is just for them. I mean, you also have to pay for the house, pay for other things, and pay for a house is no cheap. So I say, why would it be? If they are asking for help, why is it denied to them? [...] Yes, the Social Security number is a barrier, because not everyone has it. And if you cannot say you don't have it, if you don't, it is very difficult to get away with it."



Photo 3. Baptist Church Food Pantry Day

School lunch programs

Families with children use school lunch programs, and there is overall satisfaction with them, although some would like to see healthier food served.



"I think the fact that kids get lunch is an amazing thing. It's very difficult for me to criticize them getting food, any type of food. Of course, I would love for it to be healthy food, maybe make better choices. That being said, I think it is a blessing that we live in a country where the kids get potentially two meals a day if they get there early enough to get breakfast and they get lunch. And if they stay in after-school programs, they may even get some food at that point in time too, so it's very difficult to judge a system that's feeding the kids."

Some participants that qualify for one or more of the programs are not part of all of them, and in some instances, were not aware of their existence. Only one resident knew of and used Double-Up Food Bucks. Another participant described how he believes he should qualify for more benefits but requires help learning about and applying for those programs. Specifically, he would like to work with a case manager who can assist with enrollment in food-related programs and other types, too. No one reported a significant change in the use of any of these programs during the pandemic, besides acknowledging that there was more food to access through food pantries, which were also perceived to be busier.

Food security and health

This section addresses East Central participants' food security during the last year and their perception of healthy foods and healthy diets. For some neighbors, their food security situation has changed over their lifetime, and they shared past experiences when food was scarcer in their lives.

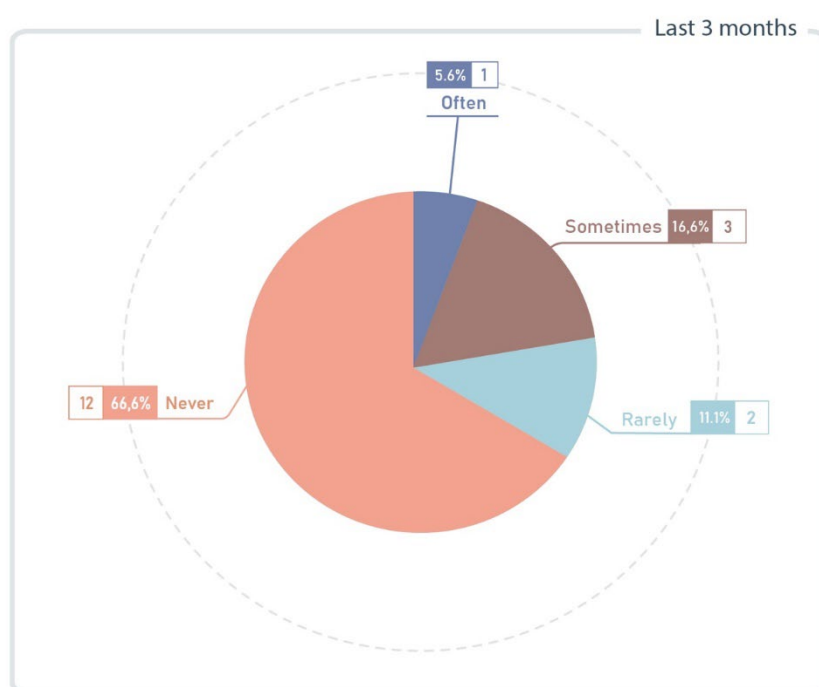
Food security

The following question was used to estimate participants' sense of their own food security:

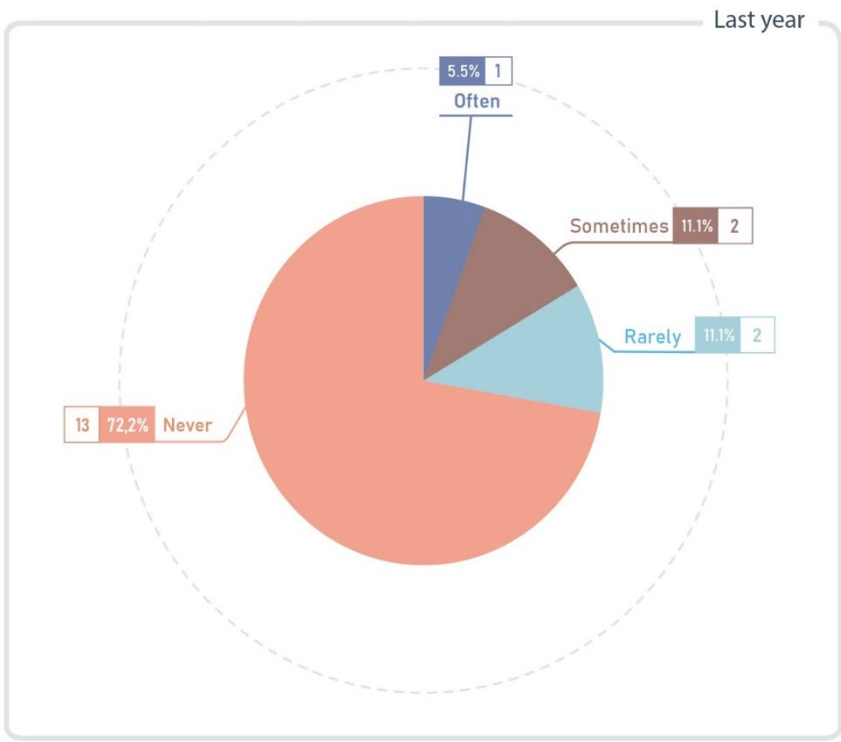
Over the past (year/3 months), how often did you worry about not having enough food to eat? Would you say (never, rarely, sometimes, often, always)?

This question was modified from the ones included in Nunnery and Dharod (2017). Different versions of the question are frequently used to assess food insecurity perception in the household over a specific period of time.

Most individuals reported to have never worried about not having enough food in the past three months (12 out of 18 responses) or the past year (13 out of 18 responses). However, for several of them, this was not the case throughout their lives: either they experienced hunger while growing up and/or had to deal with limited budgets and less access to food while young—for example, during college.



Two people said they rarely worried about food during the last year or last three months. Three people responded "sometimes" in the last 3 months, and two in the last year. One person has often experienced worrying about not having enough to eat both in the past three months and the past year.



Those who experienced food insecurity sometimes or often used food banks and food stamps to access food. These respondents also received food from neighbors and family or friends—or participated in mutual aid practices like carpooling to the food pantry—which also helped them cope in times of need. One household has a garden but did not rely on its production to feed their family.

Despite having a certain degree of access to food, some circumstances aggravated the feeling of concern, and that affected the overall wellbeing of the family by having limited options beyond the essential:



"My husband lost his job. And then we're waiting on unemployment to come.... so we can actually have the money to be able to pay our bills and to have the extra food that we need. Or to take the boys out for a treat. To take them out to eat."

Five people who indicated they have never had to worry about food in the last year or last three months and one who rarely did in the last three months, described a sense of scarcity and insecurity because of the inconsistency of the food supply in stores during the pandemic. For many people that have the means to get food, it was their first time to think about it in terms of scarcity because they were used to seeing food all the time, and, all of a sudden, shelves were empty at the stores.

For some neighbors, this has meant a change in mentality over the long term:



"I would say the only time that I actually felt worried had less to do with our financial access and more to do with [the fact that] there was a time where I wasn't sure of the world's position. The pandemic shook up things. I mean I've never lived in an America, where you saw the shelves empty [in the grocery stores]. Like, food just showed up, that's the America that I'm familiar with, there's always food on the shelves. And then to go to a place where you saw the whole meat section gone, was really weird and definitely could put you in somewhat of a panic. [...] It's to the degree that we ended up getting a deep freeze [...]. We have probably, no exaggeration, 600 cans of food now. Just in case. That experience reframed how we view the access to food, that it may not always be there.

That [is what the] Great Depression did, right? And that's why my grandparents canned. I believe [...] that I will be this way for the rest of my life, and I'll be telling my grandkids like 'Hey, you better get a deep freeze. You never know, you never know.' So it has definitely reframed my reality, 100%."

Apart from storing food, a practice that is common in Utah, other neighbors have been thinking more about where their food comes from, valuing more the gardens they already had, and deciding to make some changes on the sources of their diets, trying to be more self-sufficient:



"It's just uncertainty about the world as a whole, that's actually part of why I started fishing, [...] I've contemplated this year, a little more heavily, [the] long-term stability and the possibility of infrastructure collapse, supply chain collapse, and what do I do if the grocery stores are out of food for more than just a few weeks, how do I feed myself, and my girlfriend, and our dogs? That's not because there is a limited access to food, it's just because it seems like you never know what's gonna happen anymore."

Neighbors understand the link between food security and culturally appropriate foods, as they believe that food access and security are important, but also providing foods that people "want to eat or traditionally eat."

"Healthy foods"

When asked about what they consider to be "healthy foods," East Central neighbors responded employing different criteria: they listed types of foods; focused on characteristics related to growing, processing, and cooking; pointed out their own relationship with food; or answered from the perspective of what foods are more "unhealthy." Most people agreed that "fruits and vegetables" are healthy, especially if they are fresh and consumed raw. "Greens," "microgreens," and eating a variety of fruits and vegetables of different "colors" were also regarded as healthy foods and/or practices. Other foods that were named as also being on the "healthy" spectrum were legumes, whole grains, chicken, fish, eggs, nuts, and water. Corn tortillas and milk were mentioned once.

In terms of the characteristics of the food, those unprocessed (or less processed), grown locally, organic, home-cooked, and with "labels that you can understand" or with recognizable ingredients are also considered to be "healthy" or "healthier." Many of these characteristics attributed to "healthier" foods were also linked to flavor, and they are preferred for both reasons. For some people, the way food has been grown or produced matters more than the type of food itself, and they highlight the relationship they have with it as eaters:



"I'm thinking like a holistic sense of the word healthy, so I think the biggest thing for me is like having a connection to your food, and I think that's something that a lot of other cultures do really well that America doesn't do very well."

At the other end of the spectrum, there is the group of foods considered to be "less healthy" or directly "unhealthy." Those considered unhealthiest were foods with added sugar: for example, candy was named as the "ultimate processed [food], so far from the earth." Residents said they should avoid sodas, fried or overcooked foods, and those foods with preservatives or "chemicals." For some Latinx families, canned food was considered less healthy, and they reiterated that they prefer cooking beans from scratch, from a pot—"de olla"—as opposed to "from a can."

For some people portion size mattered, recognizing that a healthy portion would not be the same for everyone. Also, some noted that consuming "less healthy" foods here and there is not necessarily that harmful. It is important to pay attention to "what is advertised versus what works for your body."



"I think anything can really be healthy if you kind of pay attention to what it is and how much you eat. [...] You can have these things that are so-called 'unhealthy;' they're labeled as unhealthy because they're processed, but if you're not constantly consuming those things, you're not going to have a heart attack."

Interviewees also raised a concern about defining what is healthy and what is not without understanding the social and cultural context of those foods, the reasons behind diets in different times and places.



"If you think healthy foods is more—what's the word I'd use—it's more of a... I can't think of the word I want to use. It's more of a... like, perception of what you want to see as healthy. And, like, just paying attention to what it is, you know. Because I think part of that is, like, a cultural thing, too. Because I can't label something as unhealthy—I

mean, you can, I guess, yeah, you can—but I can't criticize something I'm eating as unhealthy if I'm not understanding why that culture is constantly consuming that, you know? Or why that group of people is constantly having that. And not understanding their limitations, and... stuff like that."

As much as food cultures are important for the majority of participants, and there is an interest in keeping traditions around food alive, eating healthy is also a concern. Because cultures change over time and adapt to new contexts and situations, food cultures that are not healthy (or no longer healthy) can be modified. People are willing to consciously reshape their food traditions and make them healthier:



"Now, soul food is not healthy. Like that's another thing that has to be understood, like as we become more aware, I become more aware and I think as a culture right like as a Black culture we become aware that this was discarded foods right like and you know we're frying up a lot of things and see how unhealthy, that is. There's a modern type of transition happening like the younger generation trying to figure out how do we have a culture of soul food that is also healthy. Because African Americans have high rate of diabetes, and you know there's a lot of things like high cholesterol levels, high blood pressure, a lot of things that can be connected directly to diet. Great food, delicious food, and super unhealthy. So, trying to figure out how to have that balance is another thing: how to like to be connected to our culture, be connected to our history, be connected to our food, but to do so in a way that's healthy."

“Eating healthy”

The question “What does it mean to eat healthily?” was often interpreted as “What does it mean to ‘be healthy?’” Most respondents mentioned eating home-cooked meals as an important part of eating healthily because then they know exactly what is on their plates. In addition, people mentioned how important exercising or being active is to being healthy. Residents advised “minimal snacking” and eating meals on a schedule. Additionally, knowing how to combine protein with other types of food makes for a healthy meal.

Residents emphasized how balance and moderation are critical in a healthy lifestyle: each person should eat portions that are not too big and meet their needs. Respondents emphasized the importance of monitoring portions and types of ingredients and eating different foods. On the other hand, food is also about pleasure, and they want the food to make them feel happy. Many highlighted the necessity to sometimes “indulge yourself” or eat comfort foods here and there. The key is balancing those foods.

Several neighbors explicitly mentioned that this balance can be achieved by “listening to your body,” eating when they feel hungry, noticing what their bodies crave and how it feels after eating certain foods: “If you don’t feel good after eating something, eat less of that.” Instead of losing weight or looking good, the emphasis was on *feeling* good. Additionally, interviewees feel that counting carbs and having a restrictive diet with the aim of slimming down is not sustainable. One neighbor stated that “skinny equals healthy is not true all the time.”

A healthy diet was linked to access and having options: “You can’t have balance without having options.” Some believe that, given the choice, people will most likely “pick the [healthier option].” Therefore, access to healthy foods and knowing which are healthy is a precondition to being able to eat healthily.



“That’s one of the reasons why I believe like to be healthy, is a privilege, it really is. To have health, to be a part of your life is an absolute privilege. Because when you don’t have money it’s very, very difficult to be healthy. So, eating healthy to me means having options and access. [...] Eating healthy didn’t become a thing until I had options, even as a young person thinking like, ‘I’m being healthy’ was based off of ignorance and not understanding.”

Healthy diet

Most of the interviewees believe that, based on what they consider to be healthy foods and their interpretation of eating healthily, they have a healthy diet. For some, this comes with restrictions imposed by their health conditions.

However, almost everyone recognized that despite "eating healthy enough," they do not eat healthily all the time. People shared their understanding of what *healthy* means; they know what is good for them but are not always able to follow these principles. Interviewees found it particularly difficult to moderate portions of foods considered less healthy even though they try to. Even though people have a general understanding of what makes a diet healthy, they recognize eating that way requires thought and work, and a healthy diet is difficult to implement because of constraints on time and access to certain foods. Additionally, depression makes eating well more difficult, and people do not just want food to be about proper nutrition.

A couple of neighbors mentioned that one person drives healthy eating for their households. This person plans meals and takes the time to prepare healthy meals. This person also makes decisions concerning what food to buy and what snacks are going to be available at home.

Some make choices thinking about what is good for their "future selves," especially when it means preventing diseases that run in the family, like diabetes.

Lack of time is a major reason that residents found it difficult to eat healthy meals. For example, a neighbor mentioned that often food that can be eaten "on the go," while driving, is not necessarily healthy. Work and children's schedules result in less time available to cook and eat, meal options are reduced to what can be eaten in between activities, and limited options condition people to eat less healthily.

Mental health and well-being affect residents' ability to eat well. East Central participants acknowledge that if they feel good emotionally then it is easier to feel motivated to eat well and exercise. Being tired, bored, or sad can reduce the energy people are able to put into meal preparation, or into choosing the types of foods they want to eat. Also, financial stress can make people lean toward less healthy but cheaper options. Because these conditions change over time, it is hard to always eat healthily.



"Diría que como bien, creo que saludable de alguna manera sí, un poco saludable pero no siempre soy saludable, para mí saludable es una palabra como super healthy donde no comes nada, todo verde, a veces yo creo que la palabra saludable para mí es como abusada, como extremista, trato de comer bien, esa es mi perspectiva"⁶.

Some participants expressed concern about determining healthy foods and healthy diets *for others* and explicitly mentioned that they were talking from their own personal experience and perspective. "Healthy" can be a loaded word that can sometimes be overused and potentially can imply some power dynamics: *"Telling other people what healthy foods are [...] it's basically just policing people's behavior and bodies."* It reflects an understanding that these issues are sensitive and can be triggering. Interviewees positioned themselves within their context and stressed the need of understanding where people—and diets—are coming from.

Food security of an individual or a community can be assessed by how often people worry about not having enough to eat during a certain period of time. In the past year, almost 28% of the participants worried to some degree about food. Although this can be related to the sense of scarcity created by pandemic, most people declared not having experienced significant changes in their food habits due to COVID-19. This means there are underlying and systemic issues that are impacting neighbors' food security, some of which are described in this report.

Regarding healthy foods and healthy diets, neighbors have an overall understanding of what it means to eat healthily. There is a general consensus on what foods are "healthier," like fruits and vegetables, and on what makes a diet healthy, like finding a balance and paying attention to ingredients. Additionally, there is diversity in ways to approach other characteristics that make food "healthier," like how it has been produced, where it comes from, and other aspects like the relationships and wellbeing of the people involved. Neighbors have a holistic perspective regarding the connections between health and food, and consider the sociocultural dimension that influences what can be understood to be "healthy" depending on the context.

⁶ *"I would say I eat well, I believe healthy in some way, yes, a bit healthy but I am not always healthy. For me healthy is a word like 'super healthy' where you don't eat anything, all green, sometimes I feel the word healthy is abused, kind of extremist, I try to eat well, that is my perspective."*

Food sharing and celebrations

This section discusses social aspects of food: those instances where food is shared and the celebrations and special occasions where food plays an important role.

Sharing food and eating with others

Most East Central participants enjoy sharing foods with others. Only one family reported not eating regularly with friends or family members outside of the household, but they share with their neighbors through other means related to mutual aid initiatives.

Food is shared in different ways. It is given away during harvest times, delivered in food pantry boxes, and/or purchased for family members. Respondents take soup to sick neighbors, make pies to show appreciation, cook for guests, and eat together.



"Eating food with people, there's something truly magical that, actively [...] preparing the meal with and for people. It's just something like to me at least that it's just kind of intimate."

Several neighbors—especially among the ones who expressed an explicit interest in food during the interview—described loving to cook for others, which normally happens in their households when they have guests over. They intentionally organize social engagements where special meals are prepared to eat together. Most of them have these bigger gatherings no less than once a month, during weekends. For at least three households, their "cooking brings people" to the household. One home organizes monthly potlucks for about 20-30 people. Another declared to have "saved money and food" during COVID-19 because social gatherings were interrupted.

Those neighbors who organize or participate in these food gatherings described them as occasions for interacting, talking, learning, and exchanging. A participant reported it feels "communal," as families with children come together, and children play while adults talk and cook and talk. The food served has been pointed out to be inclusive of all diet choices and restrictions, and people put a lot of time and care into learning and making dishes that everyone can eat and enjoy.



Photo 4. Eating together homemade brunch by the interviewee

In general, participants eat with people who are not part of their household around once a week. This can be eating out with friends or family, having someone over, or eating at other people's houses. It most frequently takes place during weekends or holidays, but also sometimes on weekdays. Some neighbors meet friends at the farmers' market, others at coffee shops or restaurants.

The frequency of gatherings and the number of people invited have changed dramatically during the pandemic. Families also stopped eating out and sharing with people outside of their "bubble," which frequently was restricted to the household. For some neighbors, this has led to a temporary breaking off from their relationships and feeling a bit isolated.

Public spaces like the park and Ogden Riverbank are places where people get together to eat. Families in the lower income bracket make more use of these spots. Some have expressed an interest in seeing food out more in the streets, and this can take different forms: a monthly cookout or potluck where the neighborhood is involved, or community initiatives based on care practices around sharing food with the unsheltered.

The other most common way of sharing food was neighbors giving away what they grew in their gardens, in the form of a gift, an exchange for other types of food (which included homemade food with those very same ingredients), or an exchange for doing things for each other like mowing a lawn or shoveling snow from sidewalks.



"One neighbor grows corn and tomatoes and then the other neighbor, on the other side grows grapes and zucchini and tomatoes. The other day, they brought me over some zucchini and tomatoes, so I'll mow their lawn for him, I'll do stuff like that for them, and they'll just bring me over produce, which you know? We've never talked about it, it just kind of happened, one day."

Food represents a connection to people and to places lived or traveled in the past. Some neighbors described this connection around family members or close friends who taught them to cook special dishes. Relationships are also built around cooking and eating together.

For some participants, sharing food is part of the culture they grew up in, and they practice it in their lives. However, one of these neighbors perceived sharing as less common in Utah than where they come from, and in some ways they have adapted to the current location, changing some of the sharing behaviors they were used to practicing.

Constraints on time limits food sharing. Members of the same households that have little time to spend with each other have to sacrifice going out and eating with people who are not part of the household.

There are other ways of sharing food-related resources that take the form of mutual aid initiatives. As previously detailed, these include carpooling to a grocery store or food pantry, bringing food to households in need, and intentionally increasing ordering food at local restaurants to support business during the pandemic. Other practices include helping others to access food in different ways, like non-native English speakers assisting with language barriers, and established immigrant families guiding recently arrived ones through the US system and its cultural rules. For others, sharing means contributing to starting a garden:



"During the pandemic what I did was make garden boxes for other families of color, [...] put them in their yards and then fill it with soil, give them seeds or plant starts and just share the love of gardening."

Celebrations



"Anytime that you get to eat food with people [it] is kind of a celebration."

For most participants, social gatherings revolve around food and eating. Two main types of occasions were reported to involve food and people: holidays and the celebration of life events. For many East Central respondents, food is actually the center of every major holiday or event in their lives.

Thanksgiving and Christmas were mentioned as favorite holidays, when extended family and friends get together and food is made and shared in large quantities. Several neighbors described fond memories of these holidays during their childhood where there were lots of delicious foods, people they cared about, and "a lot of love and affection and smiles and laughter."



"A few friends of mine actually host a Friendsgiving [...] everyone has a very complicated relationship with our families, sometimes we like to do our chosen family Thanksgiving as well. So we do an all vegan no matter who's coming, it's just all vegan because enough of our friends are vegan and vegetarian, it is just easier to do it that way, and it also keeps [...] the vibe of like care and love and things like that, so when doing a specifically nonviolent meal in that instance [...] last year was the first year we've missed in like seven years."

Residents also used food to celebrate the Fourth of July, Memorial Day, Pioneer Day, and Juneteenth. For the most part, each holiday has its own special foods. Some families create their own traditions around the festivity, sometimes merging both family sides' cultural traditions, sometimes coming up with new ones to carry on. Others take the opportunity to learn more about the holiday, the culture it belongs to, and the food component that comes with it, something a neighbor described for celebrating Juneteenth.

The celebration of life events includes birthdays, quinceañeras, family reunions, baptisms, weddings, graduations, and retirement parties. Residents of all backgrounds mentioned birthdays, in particular, and getting to eat their favorite foods. Family members or friends cook and prepare favorite meals and make special cakes for them, get together, and eat.



"Family reunions for one part of my family, one part of my family is very heavily Mexican. [...] the family reunions were always my favorite thing to go to, and it was very food centric. Because you know, we had one guy, one of my uncles who would always bring the carne asada and that was his thing, like nobody else was allowed to bring carne asada. We had our grandmas, and they would always bring the salsas and the rice, and that was their thing. You couldn't—nope, don't—if you bring salsa like you'll get in trouble from both of them and then the rest of the family will be mad at you all day. Another family member, you know, we had another family member that would

only bring like the beans and you know everyone kind of just found their good, the thing that they were the best at and that's kind of what they did."

For the Latinx respondents, the quinceañera was among the bigger and more memorable events. Three of the participants described their own quinceañera celebrations as very special occasions with a lot of thought and investment in the preparation, which included traditional Mexican dishes like birria, fajitas, chorizo, and others.



"For my quince, two of my uncles, my stepdad, and my grandpa, they [...] killed a pig from a farmer, and they brought it back, and as a family, they skinned it and cleaned it. And then, my grandma—because in Mexico, she used to sell food, she also knew how to make chorizo, and so she helped us clean the pig and stuff so she could do that. So that's definitely memorable."

Other events people mentioned that involve food and sharing were family gatherings for a pool day, community events, and galas. Only two neighbors did not necessarily see food as celebratory.⁷

⁷ Participants tended to name celebrations and life events that were closer in time to when the interview was conducted.

Food Landscape and Future Interventions

This section covers East Central participants' perceptions of the food landscape of their neighborhood. It describes what they like and do not like and what they would like to see changed, gathers their suggestions about how the food landscape can improve, and presents any specific ideas or proposals OgdenCAN or other local entities can support or contribute with. Interviewees also shared their knowledge about the existence of programs, community processes, and informal initiatives in East Central, some of which they are currently involved with.

East Central food landscape

Neighbors reported being proud of how diverse their neighborhood is, the culture of gardening, having Rancho Market in the neighborhood, and—for those nearby—having the taco trucks on Washington Boulevard. People also mentioned appreciating the community connections and their relationship with neighbors.

The aspects that participants would like to see change revolve around six main, interrelated topics:

- *Food access*
Not enough food is available either through supermarkets or restaurants. Many neighbors reported being disappointed with the limited access to food there is in the neighborhood, both because it is not there (availability) and because neighbors cannot access it (accessibility): "Just because something is there, it does not mean it is accessible." Additionally, they stressed the fact that these foods must be "good foods" and "foods that people want to eat," especially regarding food donations and food banks. In particular, participants would like to have more healthy foods options in East Central and a larger offering of foods, including local and ethnic foods. Participants emphasized that few options are available within walking distance; several of the interviewees do not own a car, have neighbors in that same situation, or simply prefer not to drive. Transportation is a barrier to accessing food.
- *Corner stores*
Participants widely agree that corner stores do not sell healthy foods or foods that are "good for you." Some neighbors link corner stores to the dysfunctional health of a community. The problem is not the corner stores themselves but the type of foods they sell.

- *Food businesses*

Related to the two previous topics, there were comments about the few food-related businesses that exist in East Central and the large potential there is for creating more. Especially, concerns centered around stores that can sell local foods, tailored businesses like bakeries, and restaurant options where there is a balance in price, healthy options, and local and culturally appropriate foods. They also acknowledged the barriers that exist for people to start a business.

- *Gardens and other food sources*

As much as people appreciate gardens in the neighborhood, they also consider there are not enough. There is a significant interest in supporting and creating more gardening space, both in peoples' yards and in public spaces for community use. Oasis Community Garden was seen as both an interesting and needed option but with a lot of limitations, especially in the ability to engage with neighbors from different backgrounds.



"I think a good way is to make community gardens more known. I know we have one, but growing up, I had no idea that was a thing. I haven't participated in it just because of time. But, I definitely think it's important for that to be advertised more, and invest more into it, so that everybody in the community feels welcome [...]. I think—and this is a little off subject, but—with a lot of the gentrification that's going on, it worries me that people in the community will continue to feel distanced from things like that. And it doesn't help with the lack of resources, as it is."

- *Education and training*

Many interviewees described the importance of having knowledge, or access to knowledge, about different aspects related to food: learning how to grow food, learning how to cook, understanding basic nutrition information, and knowing where food comes from and what options and resources are available for people with different needs.



“Food education is also extremely helpful because the more somebody knows how to cook different types of cuisines or they know more about the types of food and where it comes from, they’re going to be able to skip or replace ingredients and find a good way to still tasting good and still being good for them.”

- *Community*

Some neighbors see a disconnection between the neighborhood demographic make-up and the access to some resources and spaces—including decision-making spaces—that can be very “white American.” Places like Oasis Community Garden were perceived to be “very white” and not accurately representing the diversity of the neighborhood around them. Some participants declared they were not the type to “try and turn a place around,” but still want to support and participate in community initiatives they feel are working.



“I think it’s very uncomfortable when people are talking about helping a certain demographic and they don’t think to even have that demographic represented on committees that are making decisions for that demographic.”

There is a strong relationship between mental health and food. Poor mental health can impact one’s motivation to cook and to eat well, but food can also improve mental wellbeing because of the potential it has to build relationships, make people feel good, and generally contribute to a healthier self.

Envisioning a different landscape

Neighbors reflected on, and shared their ideas about, how to make the food landscape of East Central more appealing to them and others. They described several ways they envision the neighborhood in relation to food. Because of the diverse demographics that participated in the study and the diversity of East Central, there is no "one size fits all" approach.

Neighbors emphasize the greater possibility of success of small-scale interventions, especially if they are community-based. Here follows a comprehensive list of suggestions and advice participants had for redesigning East Central's foodscape, some of which are broad, others more specific.

- *Food access*

One of the main points was to increase the number of grocery stores in the neighborhood and diversify the food products they could offer. Another was to ease the process of using food pantries and remove barriers to accessing food donations. Additionally, people want to see more produce and not just canned food in food banks. Thinking on the transportation limitations that currently exist, there were suggestions of having some sort of mobile food pantry that could go around the neighborhood. Schools were named as potential allies in different aspects related to food, including housing food pantries. Some schools already offer this service, so implementing this suggestion would mean supporting and amplifying what is already being done. People thought transportation could improve in two ways: one is by working with the city and having a better transportation plan that is affordable, and another was based on mutual aid initiatives where some kind of program would assist neighbors to organize and "get someone to the grocery store if they need a ride."

- *Corner stores*

Neighbors would like to see more food options that are fresher and healthier, that include both local and culturally appropriate foods, and that are affordable for the people who live in East Central. This would entail working with the corner stores' owners and potentially with the local government to incentivize and support that change.

- *Food businesses*

Apart from suggesting that corner stores improve food selection, East Central participants had a wide range of ideas to build a local food economy in the neighborhood. Some would like to see a big grocery store in place, but, mainly, the focus was on small businesses and initiatives—like small family-owned grocery stores and local restaurants (as opposed to chain restaurants) that “the community can connect to.” The aim is to have enough food businesses located at a walkable distance for all neighbors or well connected to transit. To have more local produce and products in stores, some interviewees mentioned the need to support local farmers and potential urban farmers. One thought was creating a farm-to-table restaurant (that Ogden lacks) or a food co-op, which has been shown to be successful elsewhere. Someone also mentioned having a specialty grocery store in the neighborhood. Other suggestions include having a mobile farmers’ market come through East Central, and supporting established informal street vendors (whom participants report are already highly appreciated). Some people would like to see more food trucks, and they believe street food brings more people to the street, to use public spaces. Another another proposal suggested in several interviews is to establish an incubator kitchen. This would help small food businesses start. Salt Lake City is home to a couple of successful examples: the Square Kitchen and IRC initiatives, both of which cater specifically to ethnically diverse and migrant populations. Given East Central’s relatively central location, initiatives such as these may also drive people from other areas of Ogden into the neighborhood. In general, people would like to see the local food scene grow in a way that is authentic to Ogden and East Central.



“I think a lot of people resonate with and connect with because food is at the center of a lot of peoples’ cultures [...] food to me seems like a really interesting opportunity for breaking cycles of intergenerational poverty, the ability to build food-based businesses seems like one of the most accessible tools to be able to do that, whether that's a restaurant or a product.”



Photo 5. Food brings people to the street: Farmers market food truck

- *Gardens and other food sources*

East Central participants would like to see more people growing their own food, of their own culture (recognizing that not everybody wants to or has the time). Given the space limitations that some neighbors encounter, interviewees suggest finding smart solutions for the available room, including farming in parking strips and other public spaces: "there are spaces that can be reimaged for food production." Regarding community gardens, there is a need for better advertising of what already exists (several neighbors did not know of Oasis's existence or functioning), and more support is needed for establishing other grassroots community gardens where anyone could take part. Some participants also suggested creating incentives for homeowners and landlords for having gardens in their yards. Schools were also named as places where gardening could happen. There are limitations due to the summer season without classes (and a lot of garden work), but there is potential to create an outdoor learning space for children and provide produce for the school food court. Several participants report practicing urban foraging, and even those who do not also suggested having more fruit trees available in public places as a way to give people access to free fresh fruit. They mentioned the city government as an entity that could support this.



"When I was like 15 there was a tree, a mulberry tree, behind an insurance building totally like if it's just in a parking lot, and it didn't matter right, I mean my dad would go there pick tons of berries and eat tons of berries in the process and the insurance company cut the tree down because they didn't want us on their property anymore and it's just devastating. We are doing no harm."

- *Education and training*

Food education can take different forms. One that was pointed out as a baseline is to raise awareness about food in general: understanding what learners eat, where that food comes from, and what it takes to grow food. This provides people with the knowledge to make more conscious decisions and value food more. Among the Latinx migrant community, one neighbor had concerns about the diet change of their peers, especially the children. This neighbor wanted to create the space to talk about what they used to eat while growing up in their home countries and what they are feeding their children nowadays in the US, emphasizing the importance of homemade foods and foods from their distinct cultures. Different classes, courses, and workshops could be organized around topics like gardening, cooking, wild foods gathering, nutrition, and food businesses—based on demand.

- *Community*

Food and gardens bring people together. Neighbors believe there is a lot of potential for developing successful initiatives in East Central that can contribute to improving access to food, and to the foods they want. East Central participants' advice about how to work with the community to make this happen can be summarized this way: listen, do not make assumptions, build relationships, and support community initiatives and leaders. Different participants, saliently those that are not white Americans, had concerns about how outsiders impact their community and would like to see institutions and organizations be more aware and careful when working in the neighborhood. For some, this means being honest about the goals and vision of the entity and acting accordingly: if the objective is to empower people, organizations have to be comfortable giving their power away, even if the result of the process is not what they had originally envisioned. In some way, "give your seat at the table." If entities do not want to compromise their vision, they should be honest about that and find other ways to meet their goals. For many participants, key aspects of working with the community are including people of different backgrounds and needs in decision-making processes, and acknowledging that food, housing, and transportation are tightly related.



"I think it's very important to not assume things about the community. Especially people who are coming into our community, kind of coming in and just assuming things are a certain way. I think it's important to make those one-on-one connections with members of the community, and, build those bridges in order to understand what's really going on. So that these problems, and lack of resources, and barriers, can be broken down, and get to the root of why people aren't getting access to what they need."

Future interventions

For OgdenCAN or similar entities working on food security in the neighborhood, residents had advice regarding community work and policy impact. Most of the participants did not know about the network, and it was difficult for them to understand how OgdenCAN works and what it could do to support the neighborhood. One participant who does community work with the Latinx population (to which she belongs) recommended building strong relationships with the neighbors, having staff that speak Spanish, and organizing regular meetings or events to spread the word out about OgdenCAN and different programs or resources available at given time. Being consistent is key.

Residents also advised supporting already existing local initiatives, listening to residents, and working with neighbors to create solutions based on experience. In general, participants expressed a desire for the neighborhood to be uplifted, with the participation of the people that live in it. Residents named four ways for this to happen: helping to raise awareness of existing efforts, implementing tangible programs, helping to create structural change, and working on policy issues. Many of the improvements neighbors listed, like better transportation and the use of public land for gardening, require policy changes or new policy, and because many changes are interrelated, working at the policy level can have a greater impact. For that reason, the Food Policy Council that OgdenCAN has been working establish is a good start.



"Doing this interview has helped me kind of reflect on—not just my own self, but on how much the community needs support, I guess. From each other, and from people who are in a position to help. And how important it is—like, as I'm speaking, I'm listening to my own self, 'cuz I don't think about these things frequently. But, how important it is to me, as an individual, to allow others to be heard and be seen, and not have people just come in and make assumptions. Actually, have people come in and ask, and communicate."

CONCLUSION

This food ethnography collects East Central residents' lived experiences around food. It represents a qualitative approach to food issues and incorporates a personal dimension imbibed in the sociocultural reality of East Central Ogden. Because the neighborhood is diverse whose residents have diverse relationships with food, there will not be a single, unique solution to challenges neighbors face around food.

Food is a multifaceted subject that triggers emotions and appeals to both individual and collective habits and beliefs. Despite its complexity and because of all the social determinants of health that food security is connected to, the work around food has the potential to strengthen and build resilient communities and impact people's health and lives. This study is a through glance at people's food lives, and contributes with suggestions from neighbors and formal recommendations to conduct successful food work in East Central. It has the aim to inform and to inspire community leaders and organizations to continue to be involved and propose new mechanisms and structures to advance food security in the neighborhood.

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APPENDIX A - INTERVIEW GUIDE

Food Security in East Central Neighborhood, Ogden, UT – Interview Questions (English)

Demographics

Full name

Age

Gender

Ethnicity/race

Language

What language are you most comfortable speaking?

How many people, including yourself, do you currently live (and eat) with?

Education completed

What is the highest level of school that you have finished?

Employment

What is your current work situation?

Household annual income

During the past year, what was the approximate total combined income for you and your family members you live with? (excluding remittances)

Years in East Central

Where did you grow up? What was it like for you growing up there?

Food preferences, eating and cooking

1. What do you like to eat? What are your favorite foods? When did you start to like these foods?
2. Are these the foods you cook/eat at home? If not, why?
Do you always eat the kinds of foods you would like to?

What type of foods do you like to serve your family?

Do you eat all together or by yourself?
3. Where did you learn to cook those foods? / Who taught you to cook them?
4. Do some family members want to eat different foods from the rest of the family?
How do you manage those different preferences and requests?
5. What food dishes do you cook more frequently? (every day or most days of the week)
What food items are the main parts of the meal: meat, rice, vegetables?
What sauces and spices do you use in cooking?

6. Can you tell me the recipe for one of your main dishes (like a meat or vegetable dish)?

Prompt: What is the name of the dish? What are all the ingredients and the steps to make it?

*Meal changes since COVID-19?

What, if anything, has changed in your diet (or your family's diet) since COVID-19? Please explain...

Food access

7. Where does your food come from? Please list

stores/supermarkets/farmers' market/garden/food banks or pantries/family members and friends

8. Of all the places where you buy food from, which is your first choice?
9. Why do you buy food there?
10. Do you ever have trouble finding the foods you would like to eat?
11. Do you ever have trouble buying the foods you would like to eat?
12. How often do you/your household go grocery shopping in a month?
13. Can you please describe a typical trip to the grocery store? (who goes, time of day, transportation method, which store(s), what you buy—do you make a list before going to the store? do you buy only the items that you know? what do you do when you don't find the item that you are looking for? etc.)
14. If/when you eat out, where do you go? Why do you choose these particular restaurants/food trucks?
15. What do you like the most about the places where your food comes from?
16. What are the things that make you feel welcomed to a store/restaurant? Are there stores or restaurants in your area that you avoid or feel uncomfortable going to? Please explain...
17. On average/approximately, how much money do you spend on food every month? (excluding food stamps)

*Food access changes since COVID-19?

Gardening and others

18. In addition to grocery shopping, do you do any of the following? Gardening, hunting, fishing, berry picking, canning, jam making, bread making, wine/beer/other making, other (specify). If you do, how often? How much of your weekly diet comes from these activities? Have you experienced any challenges?
19. Gardening: do you grow food at home? In a garden/balcony? Do you participate in any community garden or other type of gardening space? If you do, how did you access the space? If not, would you like to grow your own food?

*Changes since COVID-19?

Food programs and other services

20. What food-related programs are you or your family currently part of? Have you been part of any others in the past—including the use of food pantries, SNAP, school lunch programs, Double Up Food Bucks (DUFb), and Produce RX? Please list.
* If users of school lunch programs: how much do you rely on them?
21. Can you please describe your experience with each of those programs? What aspects of the programs would you improve?

* If food stamps user:

22. Every month, approximately how much money do you get through food stamps?
23. What food items do you usually buy with food stamps? Is there food you would like to use food stamps for but are not able to? What challenges have you experienced with the program? How do you respond to those challenges?

*Program participation changed since COVID-19?

Food security and health

24. Over the past (year/3 months), how often did you worry about not having enough food to eat? Would you say (never, rarely, sometimes, often, always)?

What makes it difficult to get food during those times? How do you manage food for yourself and your family during those times?

Prompts: Gardening, sign up for food stamps/WIC, go to friends/neighbors for lunch or dinner, borrow money from friends/relatives, buy food on credit from small store owners, other things

25. What would you say are "healthy foods"?
26. What would you say it means to "eat healthily"?
27. Based on your answers, would you say you eat healthily? Why yes or why not?

Food sharing and celebrations

28. How often do you eat with people that you care about and feel close to (that are NOT part of your household)?
29. What events or celebrations can you think about in your life in which food is important? Please describe one of them.

Food landscape and future interventions

30. How would you like the food landscape/food scene of the neighborhood to look like? How would you redesign your neighborhood or local community to make the foods you like and prefer more accessible?
31. Interventions: OgdenCAN would like to support food access and food security in the neighborhood. What could we do in your neighborhood or local community to make food more accessible in a way that works for you?
32. What would you expect from a successful intervention? What would you like to see happening?

Seguridad Alimentaria en el barrio de East Central, Ogden, UT – Entrevista (Español)

Características demográficas

Nombre completo

Edad

Género

Etnicidad/raza

Lengua o idioma

¿En qué idioma se siente más cómodo/a hablando?

¿Cuántas personas, incluyéndole, viven (y comen) actualmente con usted?

Educación cursada

¿Cuál es el nivel más alto de educación que ha terminado?

Empleo

¿Cuál es su situación actual respecto al empleo?

Ingresos anuales del hogar

Durante el último año, ¿cuál fue, aproximadamente, el ingreso total combinando de usted y los miembros de su familia con los que vive?
(Sin contar lo que envía como remesas)

Años East Central

¿Dónde creció? ¿Cómo fue para usted crecer en ese lugar?

Preferencias alimentarias, comer y cocinar

1. ¿Qué es lo que le gusta comer? ¿Cuáles son sus comidas favoritas? ¿Cuándo empezaron a gustarle estas comidas?
2. ¿Son estas comidas las que prepara o come en la casa? Si no, ¿a qué se debe?
¿Siempre come los alimentos que quisiera comer?
¿Qué tipo de comida le gusta dar a su familia?
¿Comen juntos o por separado?
3. ¿Dónde aprendió a cocinar esos alimentos/platos? ¿Quién le enseñó?
4. ¿Hay algún miembro de su familia que quiere comer diferente al resto de la familia? ¿Cómo hace para conciliar estas diferencias?
5. ¿Qué platos son los que cocina con mayor frecuencia? (todos o casi todos los días)
¿Qué alimentos son la parte principal de la comida? (carne, arroz, verduras)
¿Qué salsas o especias usa cuando cocina?
6. ¿Podría contarme la receta de uno de sus platos principales? Carne o vegetales
Nombre del plato, cuáles son los ingredientes, pasos para prepararlo

*Cambios en la alimentación desde Covid-19

¿Ha cambiado algo en su dieta o la de su familia desde el Covid-19?

Acceso a los alimentos

7. ¿Dónde consigue sus alimentos? Por favor enumere
Tiendas/supermercados/mercado de productores/ huerto/bancos de alimentos/de familiares y/o amigos
8. De todos esos lugares, ¿cuál es su primera opción para comprar comida?
9. ¿Por qué motivos compra en ese lugar?
10. ¿Tiene alguna vez dificultades para encontrar los alimentos que quisiera comer?
11. ¿Tiene alguna vez dificultades para comprar los alimentos que quisiera comer?
12. ¿Con qué frecuencia usted o su familia van a comprar alimentos cada mes?
13. ¿Podría por favor describir cómo sería un viaje típico a comprar alimentos?
(quién va, en qué momento del día, medio de transporte, a qué tienda/s, qué es lo que compra, si hace una lista antes de ir a comprar, si solo compra alimentos que reconoce, qué hace cuando no encuentra el alimento que estaba buscando)
14. Si come fuera de casa, ¿a qué lugares va? ¿Por qué elige esos restaurantes/carros de comida en particular?
15. ¿Qué es lo que más le gusta de esos lugares en donde consigue su comida?
16. ¿Qué cosas son las que le hacen sentirse bienvenido/a en una tienda o restaurante?
¿Hay restaurantes o tiendas cerca de su casa que usted evita o donde se siente incómodo/a? Por favor explicar.
17. Aproximadamente, ¿cuánto dinero gasta en comida cada mes? (sin contar *food stamps*)

*¿Ha habido cambios en la forma en que consigue su comida desde el Covid-19?

Huertos y otros

18. Además de comprar alimentos, ¿realiza alguna de las siguientes actividades? Cultivar en algún tipo de huerto, cazar, pescar, recolectar frutos, conservas, mermeladas, pan, vino o cerveza u otros (especificar).
Si lo hace, ¿con qué frecuencia? ¿Qué tanto de su dieta semanal proviene de estas actividades? ¿Ha experimentado alguna dificultad para realizarlas?
19. Huertos: ¿cultiva alimentos en su casa? ¿en un huerto, balcón, etc.? ¿Participa de algún huerto comunitario u otro tipo de huerto colectivo? Si lo hace, ¿cómo obtuvo acceso al espacio? Si no, ¿le gustaría poder cultivar sus propios alimentos?

*¿Ha habido cambios en algo de esto desde el Covid-19?

Programas de alimentos y otros servicios

20. ¿En qué programas relacionados con la alimentación y la comida participa usted?
¿Ha participado de algún otro en el pasado? Incluido: bancos de alimentos, SNAP, programas de alimentación escolar, Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB), Produce RX. Por favor enumere.

* Si usa alimentación escolar: ¿qué tanto depende del programa?

21. ¿Podría por favor describir su experiencia con cada uno de esos programas o actividades? ¿Qué aspectos de esos programas quisiera mejorar?

* Si usa SNAP:

22. Cada mes, aproximadamente ¿cuánto dinero gasta a través de SNAP?

23. ¿Qué alimentos compra normalmente con SNAP? ¿Hay algunos alimentos que le gustaría comprar con *food stamps* pero no puede? ¿Qué dificultades ha experimentado con SNAP? ¿Cómo responde ante esas dificultades?

*¿Ha habido cambios en su participación en este tipo de programas desde Covid-19?

Seguridad alimentaria y salud

24. En los últimos (12/3 meses), ¿con qué frecuencia se ha preocupado por no tener suficiente para comer? (nunca, raramente, a veces, con frecuencia, siempre)

¿Qué hace que sea difícil conseguir alimentos en esas épocas? ¿Cómo hace para conseguir comida para usted y su familia en esas épocas?

Por ejemplo: cultiva, se registra en SNAP/WIC, se apoya en amigos o vecinos para comer, presta dinero de familiares o amigos, compra a créditos en pequeños comercios, otros.

25. En su opinión, ¿qué diría que son "alimentos saludables"?

26. En su opinión, ¿qué diría que es "comer sano"?

27. En base a sus respuestas, ¿diría usted que come sano? ¿Por qué?

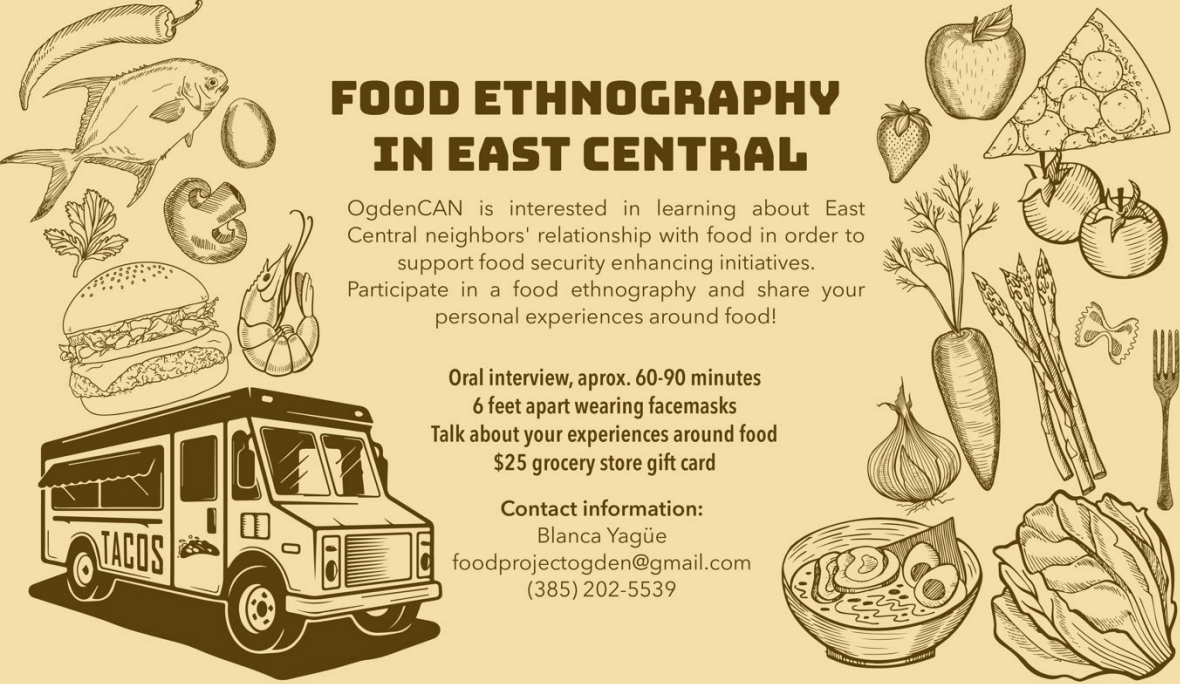
Compartir alimentos y celebraciones

28. ¿Con qué frecuencia come con personas que le importan y con las que siente cercanía (y que no hacen parte de su hogar)?
29. ¿Qué eventos o celebraciones en su vida puede mencionar en los cuales la comida es importante? Por favor describa uno de ellos.

Paisaje alimentario e intervenciones futuras

30. ¿Cómo le gustaría que fuera el paisaje alimentario/la escena alimentaria en su barrio? ¿Cómo rediseñaría algunos aspectos de su barrio o comunidad local para lograr que las comidas que le gustan y prefiere sean más accesibles?
31. Intervenciones: OgdenCAN quiere apoyar el acceso a los alimentos y la seguridad alimentaria en el barrio. ¿Qué podríamos hacer para lograr que la comida sea más accesible en formas que funcionen para usted?
32. ¿Qué esperaría de una intervención exitosa? ¿Qué le gustaría que sucediera al respecto?

APPENDIX B - RECRUITMENT FLYERS




FOOD ETHNOGRAPHY IN EAST CENTRAL

OgdenCAN is interested in learning about East Central neighbors' relationship with food in order to support food security enhancing initiatives. Participate in a food ethnography and share your personal experiences around food!

Oral interview, aprox. 60-90 minutes
6 feet apart wearing facemasks
Talk about your experiences around food
\$25 grocery store gift card

Contact information:
Blanca Yagüe
foodprojectogden@gmail.com
(385) 202-5539



ETNOGRAFÍA ALIMENTARIA EN EAST CENTRAL

OgdenCAN tiene interés en aprender sobre la relación que tienen los vecinos y vecinas de East Central con la comida, para así poder apoyar iniciativas que contribuyan a mejorar la seguridad alimentaria.

¡Participe en una etnografía sobre alimentación y comparta sus experiencias sobre temas relacionados con la comida!

Conversaremos sobre sus experiencias con la comida, tomará de 60 a 90 minutos y lo haremos a 2 metros de distancia y con mascarilla.

Como agradecimiento se le entregará una tarjeta de regalo de \$25 para compras en el supermercado.

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