

Food is Medicine

Cooking and Nutrition Series

**Free bag of grocery items
with each class, featuring
sampled ingredients.**



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BRODY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

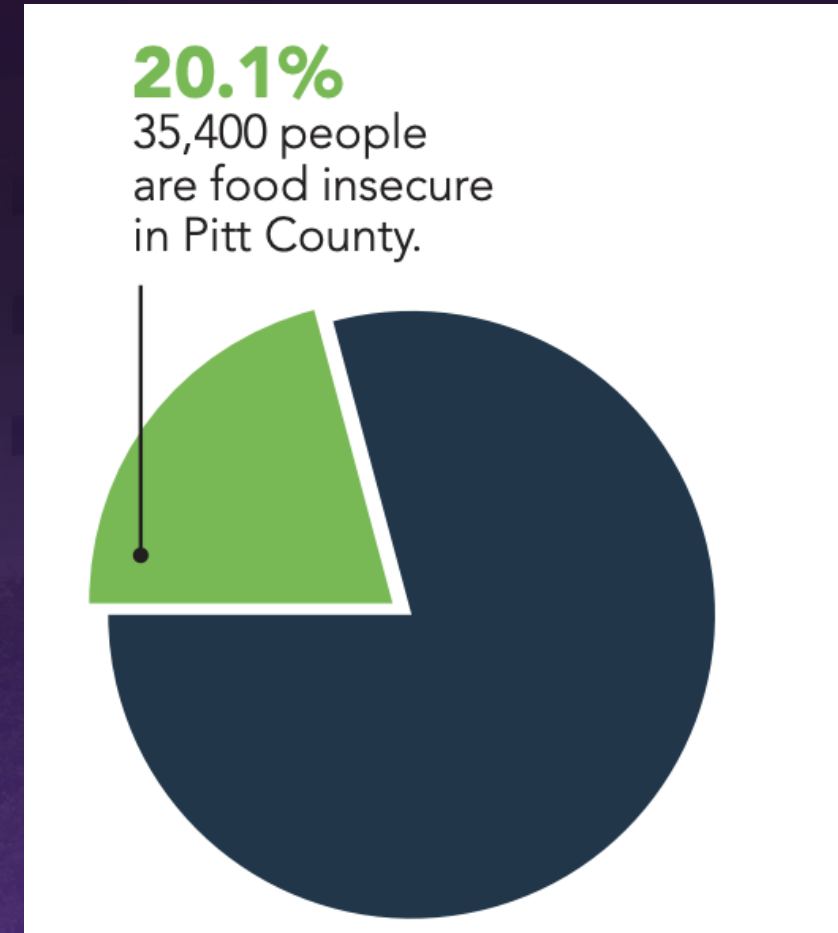
9th Annual Medical Education Day

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Pitt County Population: 172,169 (2021)

- Food insecurity affects roughly 20% of the population in Pitt County.
- Within the county, 9.7% of the adults 65 and older are living below the poverty line.
- Low-income older adults have compounding vulnerabilities that put them at high risk for negative health outcomes as a result of food insecurity.
- The goal of Food is Medicine is to *reduce food insecurity for older adults* living in Pitt County through improved access to healthy foods, nutrition education, cooking instruction, and budgeting workshops.



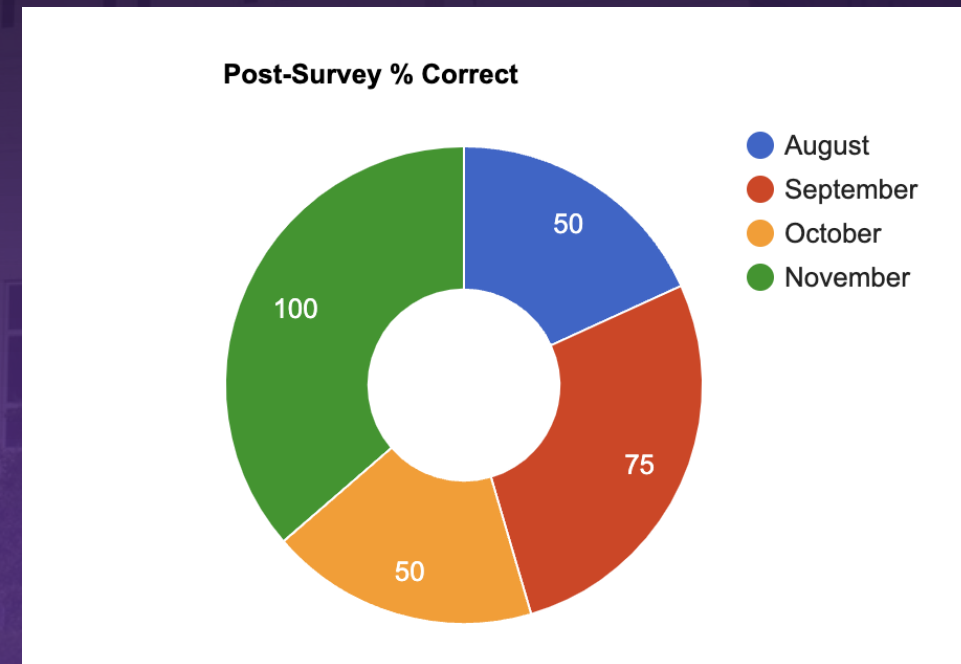
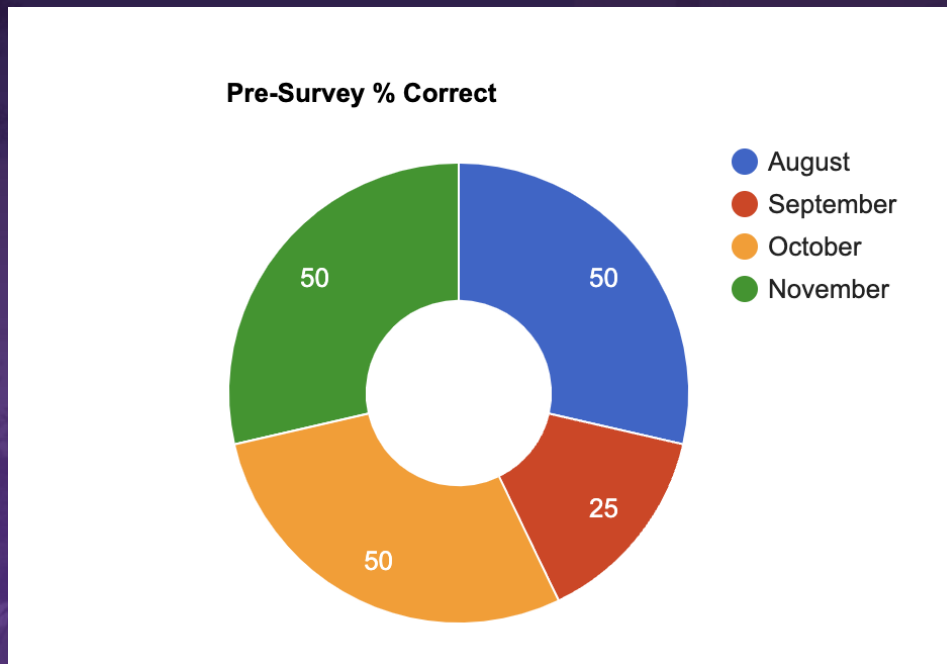
- As North Carolina Schweitzer Fellows, we conducted an **observational study** to determine behavior change amongst 4 cohorts of adults 65 and older living in Pitt County, North Carolina.
- We partnered with the **Food Bank of Central and Eastern North Carolina** and the **Pitt County Council on Aging** to administer a study involving 57 older adults at risk for food insecurity.
- We conducted a cooking series at the **Pitt County Council on Aging** that featured a variety of common affordable foods provided by the Food Bank that can be transformed into healthy and culturally appropriate meals.
 - Through our classes, we provided **nutrition education, cooking demonstrations, and budgeting workshops** in partnership with the Pitt County Health Department.
 - We provided each participant with a taste test of the daily recipe, a journal to track their health goals, a hard copy of the featured recipe and additional low-cost healthy options, and a grocery bag of non-perishable food items and fresh produce to recreate each recipe at home.
- The cooking series involved four classes per month. We administered the classes in August, September, October, and November. We had a new cohort every month. Each monthly cohort completed all four classes.

- We provided a pre-survey during the first class of each month and a post-survey during the last class of each month. We measured behavior change by assessing the percent of correct and incorrect responses to four questions on the survey. During the cooking series, we provided education about the topics in the questions, including the correct answers.
 - The recommended amount of water to drink every day is ____ cups.
 - The recommended total servings of fruits and vegetables a day for my age group is ____.(cups)
 - True or False: Fresh vegetables are always healthier than canned vegetables?
 - Which of the following beverages is the healthiest option? (sweet tea, regular coke, crystal light flavored water).
- We compared the average percent of correct and incorrect answers to these four questions between the pre-survey and the post-survey to assess a growth in knowledge. Additional questions on the pre-survey and post-survey showed behavior change over the course of the cooking series.

Results

- The recommended amount of water to drink every day is ____ cups.
- The recommended total servings of fruits and vegetables a day for my age group is ____.(cups)
- **True or False:** Fresh vegetables are always healthier than canned vegetables?
- Which of the following beverages is the healthiest option? (sweet tea, regular coke, crystal light flavored water).

We assessed the average response to these four questions and reported the percentage of those questions that were answered correctly between the Pre-Survey and Post-Survey



- Our data showed that **2 out of 4 cohorts improved their average number of correct responses to the four questions** provided on the Pre-Survey and Post-Survey.
- This suggests that our class helped improve nutrition knowledge for at least half of the cohorts that participated in our cooking series.
- Our observational findings showed that **all participants demonstrated the ability to apply new skills at home and an enhanced desire to eat healthy foods that are financially available.**
- The Food is Medicine cooking series suggests that community cooking interventions are potentially an effective way to reduce insecurity for older adults by supplying nutritious, low-cost foods and providing education on the health benefits and utility of these affordable food items.