



Department Highlights –



Using the existing backbone of the [Well Fed Essex County Collaborative](#), of which the Health department chairs, the county as a whole has been able to mount a speedy response to the lack of funding for the federal program called Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The SNAP program has been in place in various ways since 1939, permanently funded as a program since 1964 and re-named SNAP in 2008.

This is the first time in history the SNAP program has been left without federal funding, even through federal shutdowns such as the one leading to the current lack of funding. County data shows that more than 2,900 residents currently use SNAP benefits. Of these recipients, 30% are age 61 or older, and 27% are under age 18. This demographic breakdown is relevant as the County's percentage of residents age 65+ is 24.9%, meaning nearly a quarter of the County's total population is aging adults—the highest rate in the region.

Knowing residents would be turning to food pantries and food assistance programs, the Well Fed Collaborative was identified as a natural place to direct people seeking help themselves and those wanting to help their friends and neighbors. The Health Department worked diligently on updating the information on local food pantries and the map available on the Well Fed website. On the [Well Fed website](#) people can also find food programs such as low and no-cost meals, and food and nutrition support programs for which people may be eligible. Cornell Cooperative Extension of Essex County mobilized a way to accept funds for those wanting to donate through a few clicks. And at the Regular Meeting of the Essex County Board of Supervisors on November 3rd, the Board appropriated \$20,000 for food pantries serving the county.

Having been in existence for over 7 years the Well Fed Collaborative led to an amazing capacity to be quickly responsive to this harsh reality through well established relationships and an existing web platform: <https://wellfedessexcounty.org/>



Essex County Heroin Opioid/Other (ECHO Coalition conducted its first official Overdose Fatality Review (OFR) October 16, 2025.

- All agencies engage with the purpose of identifying:
- * key factors that contributed to the overdose
 - * community-level prevention and intervention strategies
 - * opportunities to improve system-level operations, policies, programs and services that will ultimately prevent future overdoses.

In preparation for this review the Health Department worked diligently to ensure a secured file sharing location for OFR member agencies to share information about the case and a policy for safety of information storage. Agencies also met to ensure they freshly understood their role in contributing information, building the timeline and identifying recommendations for partner agencies to move forward with as a result of the OFR.

Agencies marked this first OFR as successful and will continue this valuable collaborative work.

ECHD Program Data – OCTOBER (unless otherwise noted)

Community Health Assessment and Improvement Planning

CHA/ARHN/Data Meetings – 0

CHA/CHIP Partner Meetings – 4

CHA Training/Webinars – 0

NYSACHO CHA/CHIP Workgroup - 1

CHA/CHIP Progress Updates & Special Reports – ECHD and hospital partners will be hosting its third quarterly meeting of the Community Health Coalition of Essex County in December. The goal of this particular virtual meeting is to have partners conduct a brainstorming session to develop the final parts of the Community Health Improvement Plan.

Communicable Disease

Communicable Disease Surveillance/Epidemiology Investigations

Respiratory Illness investigations (Flu, COVID, RSV, TB) - 22

GI Illness (Water/Foodborne) Illness Investigations - 2

STI/Hepatitis & HIV Investigations – 5

Arthropod-borne (Mosquitos and Ticks) Disease Investigations – 9

Food Safety/Outbreak Investigations – 0

Other investigations – 0

Immunization Program

Clinics in the community - 1

- Flu Clinics Essex County employees + make-up days

Clinic Days at the Health Department - 11

Individuals immunized – 87

Healthcare provider engagement –

- Interactions with school nurses -8
- Interactions with healthcare providers - 4

Highlights, campaigns, activities –

- Flu campaign encouraging understanding of benefits of vaccination
- immunization records from children and adults entered into NYSIIS. This supports accurate vaccine record surveys for schools and immunization documentation for adults.
 - 3 schools accepted offers for immunization “soft audits”; 2 public & 1 private
- 2 state audits attended by Public Health Nurse

Trainings-Public Health Nurses accepted multiple training opportunities to stay current with seasonal information regarding Flu, COVID, RSV, Vaccine for Children program and many other immunization-related topics.

Screening Services

HCV Screenings - 0

HIV Screenings - 0

TB Screening - 0

STI Screening Services –referrals and/or services rendered – 0

Rabies Prevention Program

Rabies Vaccine Clinics – 1

Pets Vaccinated – 53

Rabies investigations - 14

Specimens submitted for testing – 2; 1 positive: Raccoon (Ticonderoga)

YTD Positive Specimens – 8

People approved for rabies post exposure prophylaxis – 7



Emergency Preparedness & Response

Real World Events, Drills & Exercises – 2

- Training: Countermeasure Data Management System (CDMS)

Training/Continuing Education – 6

- Building Bridges: Connecting Public health and County Leadership
- Framing Public Health in Rural Settings
- Voices of Experience: Communication Strategies from Seasoned Public Health Leaders
- Public Health and the Law: Recent Changes and the Impact on State and Local Public Health Agencies
- Building and Sustaining the Public Health Workforce
- Scenario-Based Framing: Strengthening Leadership and Communication Through Everyday Challenges

Meetings/Coalitions/Community Engagement– 3

- Environmental Health & Emergency Preparedness Summit – October 15, 2025
- Public Health Leaders Summit October 22-24, 2025

Chronic Disease

Public Health Detailing – 1

- Well Fed Essex County Collaborative Public Health Detailing Report (attached)
The Essex County Health Department’s Chronic Disease Outreach Coordinator, an Article 6 required position, acts as the permanent facilitator and organizer for Well Fed. This ensures continuity and stability for the collaborative. During the SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) federal funding freeze, the ECHD was an instrumental partner in the local response to keep our residents fed. The Well Fed website is being revised to serve as a central hub for locating all food assistance programs in Essex County.

Coalition/Collaboration Interactions/Meetings & Highlights

Nutrition (Well Fed); - 3

Tobacco – TURN – 1

Chronic Disease & Older New Yorkers - 2

Campaigns/Events - 3

- #Getfitessexcounty – Progressive pushup challenge
- Breast Cancer Awareness Month – Approximately 700 pairs of gloves were distributed with the message “Get a grip. Get a mammogram”, to local health centers, high school sporting events, and senior centers. Double sided shower card were distributed with the gloves. One side illustrated how to do a breast self-exam and the other side illustrated a testicular self-exam.
- Through a partnership with Essex County STOP-DWI, billboard messaging was purchased to encourage people to make a sober plan when driving this holiday season with the “see our trails, not our jails” campaign.



Training – 0

Community Opioid Overdose Prevention Program (COOP)

Narcan Kits Distributed – **18**

Groups Trained - **0**

SUDOR Submissions/ODs – **1 Non-Fatal; 0 Fatal**

YTD ODs Non-Fatal/Fatal – **22 Non-Fatal/2 Fatal**

10/4/25: Celebrated 2nd Annual Recovery Day at Hunter Way Farms. About 65 community members in attendance

10/16/25: Completed first Essex County Overdose Fatality Review

Environmental Health

Air, Water and Food Health & Safety

Air Safety/Quality/Excessive Heat Alerts - **0**

Public Water Notices

Boil Water Orders – **0**

Blue-Green Algae Notices – **0**

Climate and Health

Initiatives –

- DEET wipes were handed out at the Essex County Health Department Rabies Clinic in Schroon Lake to raise awareness and prevent tick borne illnesses.

Family Health

Baby Steps to Bright Futures

Babies born & families offered the Program – **21 (10 pending)**

Families enrolled in the program – **4 (3 born previous month but accepted services this month)**

Families that sent a packet as unable to reach or declined the program - **7**

Referrals out to programs and services – **2**



Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program

Lead Cases open (elevated lead levels in pregnant women or children) & ensure appropriate follow-up care:

Active Children - **17**

Pending confirmatory testing - **9**

Released with confirmatory testing stating capillary testing was falsely elevated - **1**

Car Seat Program

Car seat check clinics – **4 (3 Tech Check Tuesdays and 1 Lactation Support Group)**

Car seats checked - **5**

Car seats issued as new & installed – **5**

School Nurse Stetho-Scoop Monthly Meeting - 1

- School immunization survey and immunization requirements
- Current respiratory disease and vaccine update
- Upcoming epilepsy first aid training Part 2 at the November StethoScoop

Sexual/Reproductive/Relationship Health Program

Schools/Camps/Groups – **2 (Northwood School & Moriah)**

Classes/Students – **58 students**

CAP Pack Distribution – **11**

STI and HIV Training by Public Health Nurse - **1**

Children's Services

Early Intervention

Referral received in to the program - 7
Children found eligible & enrolled (have a plan) - 19
Children awaiting evaluation - 2
Speech Therapy - 8 receiving; 8 waiting
Occupational Therapy - 2 receiving; 0 waiting
Physical Therapy - 1 receiving; 2 waiting
Special Instructional Services - 10 receiving; 0 waiting

Preschool Program

Children in process of evaluation, referrals - 21
Children enrolled - 64
Children waiting for services
Counseling - 1
Occupational Therapy - 2
Physical Therapy - 1
Speech Therapy - 4
Special Education/Itinerant Teacher - 8
Children Attending Center Based Classrooms
In County - 18
Out of County - 4

Children and Youth with Special Healthcare Needs (CYSHN)

Children enrolled – 40

WIC

Target Enrollment – 600
Enrolled - 515
Women enrolled - 109
Infants (0-1) enrolled - 112
Children (1-5) enrolled - 294
High Risk Families - 35
Nutrition Education sessions – 190
 In person - 51
 Remote - 139
Referrals made to other programs/services - 110
Breastfeeding Initiation Rate – 81%

WIC, in collaboration with ADK Action, was able to offer 30 WIC families a \$600 CSA winter farm share. These were distributed to families across the county.

Home Health Care

New Patients Admitted into ECHD Home Care – 57
Patients Safely Discharged from Program – 58
Home Visits Made – 726
Miles Driven by Staff – 5,132

Patient Admissions

Patients were admitted to our services for a variety of complex medical conditions including, **neurological, cardiovascular, integumentary, respiratory, digestive, renal and metabolic, musculoskeletal, and mental health conditions.**

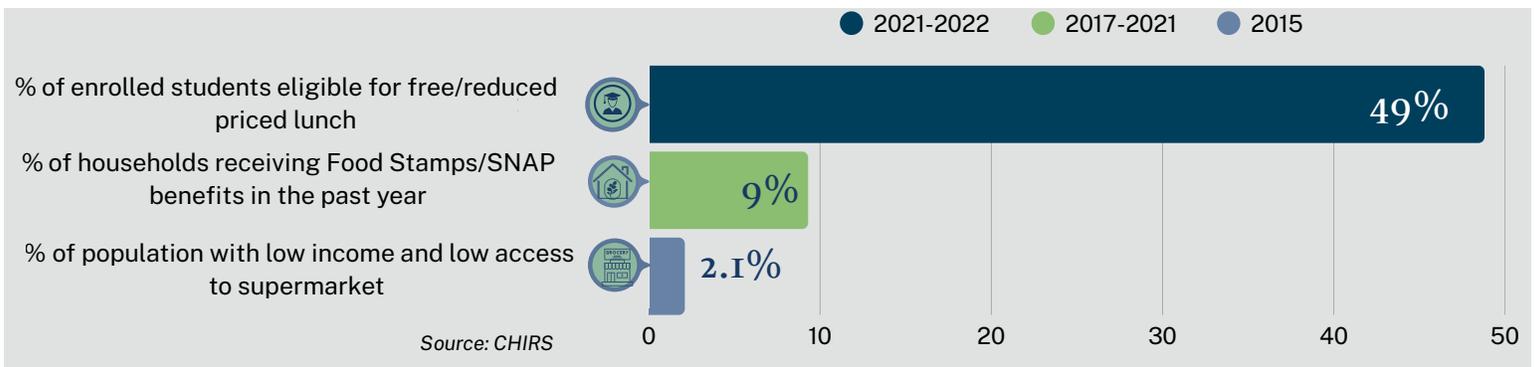
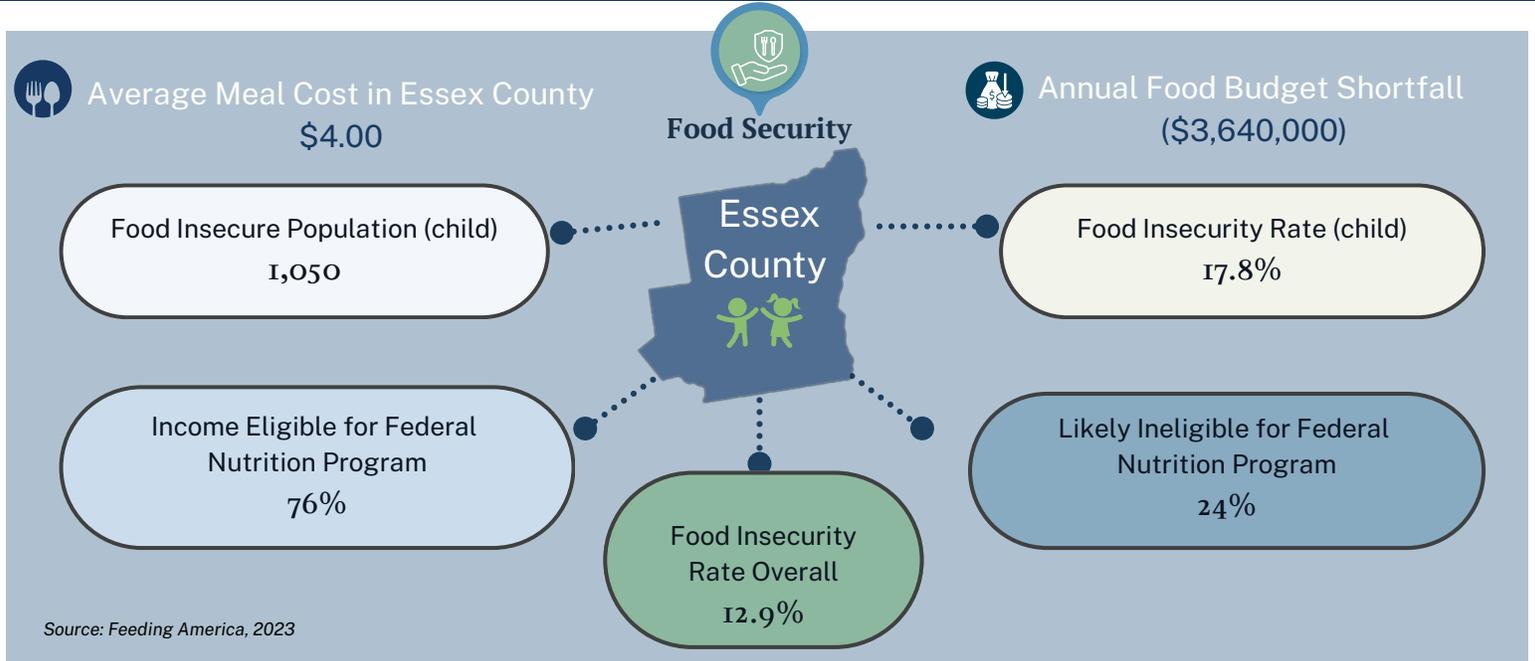
WELL FED ESSEX COUNTY COLLABORATIVE

Food Insecurity = The condition of not having access to sufficient food



The Well Fed Essex County Collaborative is a broad-based community group dedicated to combating food insecurity by ensuring all Essex County residents, have access to healthy and nutritious food.

Keys to its success are a framework of mutually reinforcing projects and a committed multi-organization partnership (including government and healthcare) that focuses on both the distribution and consumption of healthy food, such as fresh produce and whole grains. Efforts are strategically focused to address barriers like transportation and cost in the county's large, rural, aging population.



The key disparities and systemic challenges in Essex County, that contribute to food insecurity primarily center on geographic isolation, economic factors, and demographic vulnerability.



Poverty 13%

In 2023, the percentage of individuals living below the Federal Poverty Level was **higher in Essex County at 13%** than U.S. at 11.1%.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2019 - 2023 ACS 5 yr estimate



Transportation 9.4%

in 2020, approximately **9.4% of households in Essex County**, had No Vehicles Available.

Source: US Census Bureau, 2020 American Community Survey 5-year Estimates



Grocery Stores* 7

Lack of grocery stores/access, "food deserts", long distance

* Defined as: A store that carries a wide selection of all four staple food categories - fruits/vegetables/dairy/meats/poultry/bread

Source: NYS Dept of Agriculture and Markets, 2025

WELL FED ESSEX COUNTY COLLABORATIVE



Programs

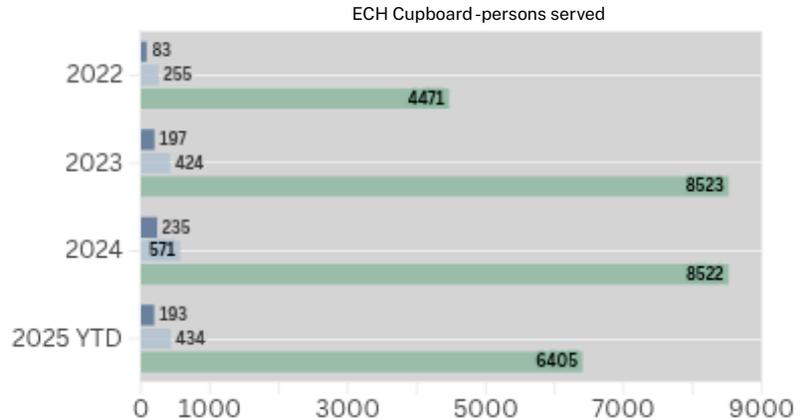
Community Cupboard:

Operated by UVM Health - Elizabethtown Community Hospital

Most food banks estimate that:
1 pound of food = about 1 meal.

- **Integrated Service:** Pantries are located at community health centers for convenient food pickup alongside health visits.
- **Accessibility:** Free to all county residents and stocked with healthy food options (e.g., frozen meats, produce, pantry staples).
- **Delivery** is available to a resident's nearest UVM Health hospital location.

■ FAMILIES ■ INDIVIDUALS ■ POUNDS



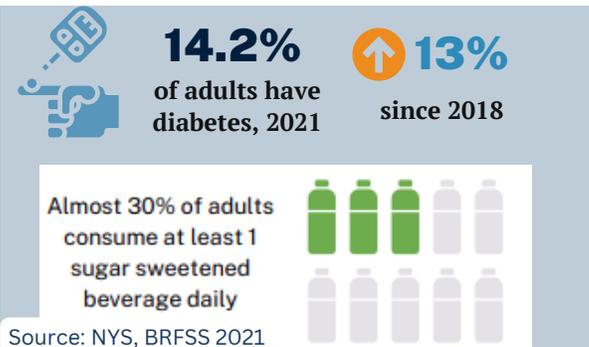
Wellness Rx:

Operated by UVM Health - Elizabethtown Community Hospital

- **Voucher Program:** Provides vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables at local stores.
- **Monthly Coaching:** Participants receive one-on-one sessions covering lifestyle improvement, healthy recipes, and well-being topics.
- **Tracking:** Monitors weight, BMI, and A1C (as needed).

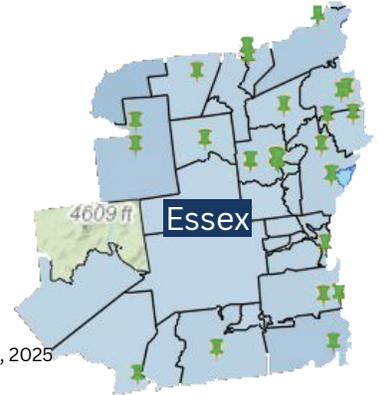
2024 Program Results (67 Participants)

- Average Weight Reduction: 12 pounds
- Average A1C Reduction: 0.72%



The green markers on this map represent:

- Food pantries
- Backpack programs
- Farming and food-related organizations



Source: Adirondack Food System Story Map, 2025



Adirondack Community Action Program (ACAP) Food Drive Summary

- **First-Ever Event:** This was the inaugural food drive held at the Adirondack Harvest Fest.
- **Donations Received:**
 - The drive collected: 328 food items
 - \$310.00 in monetary donations
- **Impact:** The total donations to provide meals for approximately 50-60 people.

Partners:

