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Food Insufficiency and Halal Observance Among American Muslims:

MET COUNCIL'S ANALYSIS OF THE INSTITUTE
FOR SOCIAL POLICY & UNDERSTANDING'S
2022 AMERICAN MUSLIM POLL

MARCH 2023

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A Letter from our CEO

Met Council was founded on Jewish values over 50 years ago and continues to be deeply rooted in the Jewish communities of New York. In our fight against poverty, our insight into the communities we serve allows us to help all of New York's neediest move from crisis to stability. Thanks in large part to the generosity of our major supporters, including **UJA-Federation of New York** and countless other foundations, our ten departments serve more than 320,000 New Yorkers in need each year, creating the largest Jewish-sponsored social safety net in America. One of our biggest departments, Met Council Food Programs, operates the country's largest kosher food bank and pantry network. In fiscal year 2022, we distributed a record 21 million pounds of food.

When COVID-19 disrupted our global supply chains in March 2020, the City of New York called on the largest emergency food providers throughout the City to support smaller pantries that were working at the ground level with those directly affected by the pandemic. The City came to us because of our best-in-class expertise in culturally responsive food provision and asked for help. We volunteered to expand our kosher emergency food services to other groups in need.

During this expansion, Met Council quickly noticed that pantries serving halal-observant Muslim New Yorkers lacked needed support. Utilizing our understanding of kosher food provision, we leapt into action and took on the challenge of meeting the distinct needs of halal-observant communities. Our experience in the provision of emergency food for religiously informed diets allowed Met Council to quickly pivot and work with local providers, community leaders, and city and state officials to ensure that halal observant pantries and the New Yorkers who depend on them would not be left behind during the pandemic.

As the pandemic has waned, we have continued to grow our work in New York's Muslim communities. To date, we have worked with over thirty Muslim pantries on a regular or semi-regular basis and hired a full-time Halal food coordinator to serve this important constituency. Nevertheless, as with Jewish communities, the need within Muslim communities is often challenging to enumerate. As a food bank and pantry network, we can base reporting only on the inventory of food we have to distribute, which is inherently restricted by our access to resources and does not account for those who need food but are not being served due to a lack of supply. This report, *Food Insufficiency and Halal Observance Among American Muslims*, aims to measure need based on demand by measuring food insufficiency and halal observance through the direct polling of Muslim Americans.

With generous funding from **The New York Community Trust**, Met Council worked with the **Institute for Social Policy and Understanding** a nationally renowned Muslim American research institute, to collect nationally representative data on two indicators: halal observance and food insufficiency. The data generated by this survey quantifies, for the very first time, the needs of the communities we serve based on the input of those with lived experiences of hunger in America. In this report, you will find data showing disproportionate food insufficiency within communities with high halal observance rates, clearly illuminating a need for halal-certified emergency food resources similar to the needs within kosher communities reliant on emergency food. Met Council's goal is to ensure that food-insecure New Yorkers of all backgrounds, cultures, and religions can access emergency food that meets their dietary and cultural requirements. This data and the following recommendations highlight the issues we must address to ensure that every American, regardless of their background, has their hunger needs met.

David G. Greenfield

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Institute for Social Policy and Understanding Survey Design	6
2022 American Muslim Poll Methodology	7
Findings	8
Recommendations	11
Conclusion	14
Acknowledgements	15
Appendix	16
Endnotes	18

Introduction

For over 50 years Met Council has been America's largest Jewish charity dedicated to fighting poverty. We operate ten departments ranging from 100% affordable housing to our award-winning family violence program to comprehensive Holocaust Survivor assistance, senior programming, crisis intervention, and the largest kosher emergency food network in the country. In total, we provide a wide array of support to over 320,000 clients a year.

When COVID-19 swept through New York in the spring of 2020, Met Council rapidly mobilized each of our departments. So when the City of New York sought support from its largest emergency food providers to supply food and technical assistance to smaller or newer pantries in need, we leapt into action. Met Council, which has immense expertise about the specific needs of communities that require kosher food, decided to use this in support of pantries serving Muslim communities with requirements for halal emergency food support. Even though halal food requirements are not identical to kosher food requirements, Met Council also knew the barriers and gaps in America's emergency food system for those with religious dietary requirements, and we recognized that our interests and needs were actually similar.

Since April 2020 Met Council has worked with 31 halal pantries, serving 159,420 clients and distributing over 2 million pounds of food. While our history and expertise is rooted in serving the Jewish community, over the last two and a half years we have been increasing our capacity to serve New York's Muslim community and dedicating resources to expand our understanding of halal food service and the needs of halal partners.

Emergency food providers often speak about needs based on how many people they serve, which is inherently restricted by the product they can access. To ensure success serving New York's Muslim residents, we have sought to better measure both halal observance and food need within observant communities. We hope to understand hunger and

Muslims in New York City

Rather than being a monolith, New York's Muslim population is extremely diverse: **locally born and from Arab, Middle Eastern, North African, South Asian, and other ethnic backgrounds.** Some refer to this collective as AMENAMSA, but for this report, we use the term Muslim to represent all these ethnic groups, as that is the language used by the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU).¹

halal observance using a data-informed approach that measures need based on demand, not supply. However, there is a dearth of data on Muslim Americans, making it difficult to understand these communities and strategically plan to meet the needs of Muslim Americans experiencing hunger.

The 2022 American Muslim Poll (AMP2022) was conducted by the Institute for Social Policy and Understanding (ISPU), a nonprofit research organization dedicated to understanding the Muslim community through data, in collaboration with an academic advisory team and multiple question sponsors, including Met Council. This is the 6th annual poll conducted by ISPU that measures demographic metrics of

*A Primer on Halal & Haram*³

Halal, translating to “permissible” in English, refers to food that does not consist of or contain anything which is considered to be unlawful according to Islamic law. This means that it has been prepared, processed, transported, or stored using an appliance or facility that was compliant with Islamic law and has not been in direct contact with any food that fails to satisfy Islamic law during preparation, processing, transportation or storage. The rules of halal food practices are derived from the Qur’an, the central religious text for Muslims. Food that is not halal is considered *haram* (“forbidden”) and must not be consumed.

According to the customs and practices of those following a halal diet, foods become haram if they are made of specific proteins, such as pork or other animals that are not slaughtered by the methods prescribed under Islamic law, any products containing alcohol or intoxicating substances, or any additives derived from either of the previous items. Halal customs have precise instructions about animal slaughter (referred to as *zabiha*) and the processing, transportation, and handling of all foods meant for consumption. A product with a halal certification will likely be considered halal by most observant communities. In the United States, there are multiple halal certification bodies.

As noted, the Muslim communities of New York City are from vastly diverse ethnic backgrounds, and as a result, interpretations of halal and dietary preferences vary. As emergency food service providers with a specific focus on communities with religious dietary restrictions, we aim to know the specific needs of each community we serve down to the neighborhood level, providing only acceptable products at all times.

American Muslims while also collecting responses to various questions on the daily life and opinions of a burgeoning population of Americans.⁴

To begin to address this data gap, Met Council submitted two questions to ISPU for the 2022 American Muslim Poll. The first measured food insufficiency, a United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) metric meant to measure a household's access to food within a given week, and the second addressed halal observance among the diverse respondents to the poll.⁵ The following is a summary of our findings along with some relevant demographic data provided by ISPU available through their AMP2022

ISPU Survey Design

The AMP2022 asked a range of questions to a nationally representative sample made up of 2,159 Americans affiliated with 13 different religious ideologies.⁶ They grouped these ideologies into seven categories labeled: Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, Protestant, White Evangelical, Non-Affiliated, and General Public. For this report, we are reporting results as they relate to Muslim respondents.

Met Council submitted two multiple choice questions to be part of AMP2022 (Fig. 1 & Fig. 2). These questions addressed two topics of specific interest for our work: a standard measure of food insufficiency to understand the degree of hunger among Muslim Americans (Q31), a multiple-choice question to determine the approximate level of

In total, the AMP 2022 surveyed 814 Muslim Americans.

Q31. In the last 7 days, which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household?

- 1 Had enough of the kinds of food you wanted to eat
- 2 Had enough, but not always the kinds of food you wanted to eat
- 3 Sometimes did not have enough to eat
- 4 Often did not have enough to eat
- 9 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know/Refused
- X Blank

Fig. 1

observance to halal diets by Muslim Americans (Q32).

The AMP2022 also asked questions covering general demographics and other areas of interest within the American Muslim community that we will not report on. ISPU's full report can be found here: [AMP2022](#). In this report, we briefly examine race, educational attainment, and household income as they relate to the questions we provided to the survey.

In the future, both ISPU and Met Council may consider other demographic variables measured in AMP2022.

AMP2022 Methodology

ISPU analyzed each question in multiple ways. In one version of reporting, Analysis 1, ISPU looked at responses across the seven religious categories and by gender within each category. In the second version, Analysis 2, ISPU compared the results between Muslim respondents and the general public, with additional subcategories that covered age and race. In the latter analysis, the General Public category encapsulates all non-Muslim respondents.

Within these comparisons, ISPU looked for statistical significance across each category. Using a significance level of .05 (5%), each category was compared to understand if any particular group had statistically significantly different responses from other religious groups, genders, races, or ages for each question (App. 1). A 5% significance level means that, between two groups, there is 95% certainty that the difference in response is not due to chance or a data collecting error, but rather a very probable difference in how the two groups of respondents experience the question being posed. While this is not absolute certainty, we can use these survey results to assess the difference in how Muslim Americans experience several factors of American life.

Q32. Do you prefer to keep a kosher [KO_SHUR]/halal [HUL_LAAL] diet, or not?

- 1 Yes, for all products that require (kosher-certification/halal certification), [I/you] only purchase and consume (kosher-certified/halal-certified) products
- 2 Yes, mostly, [I/you] prefer (kosher-certified/halal-certified) food, but [I/you] do purchase or consume some foods without certification if they are not blatantly (treif [TRAY-FF]/haram [HR-AAM])
- 0 (DO NOT READ) No, [I/you] do not keep (kosher/halal)
- 9 (DO NOT READ) Don't Know/Refused
- X Blank

Fig. 2

Findings

ISPU's Analysis 1 found statistically significant results for both of the questions Met Council submitted to AMP2022.

Regarding religious dietary adherence, Muslim Americans overwhelmingly keep halal diets. Of the groups surveyed, a significantly higher proportion of Muslim respondents adhere to a religiously-informed diet than any other group (Fig. 3).⁷

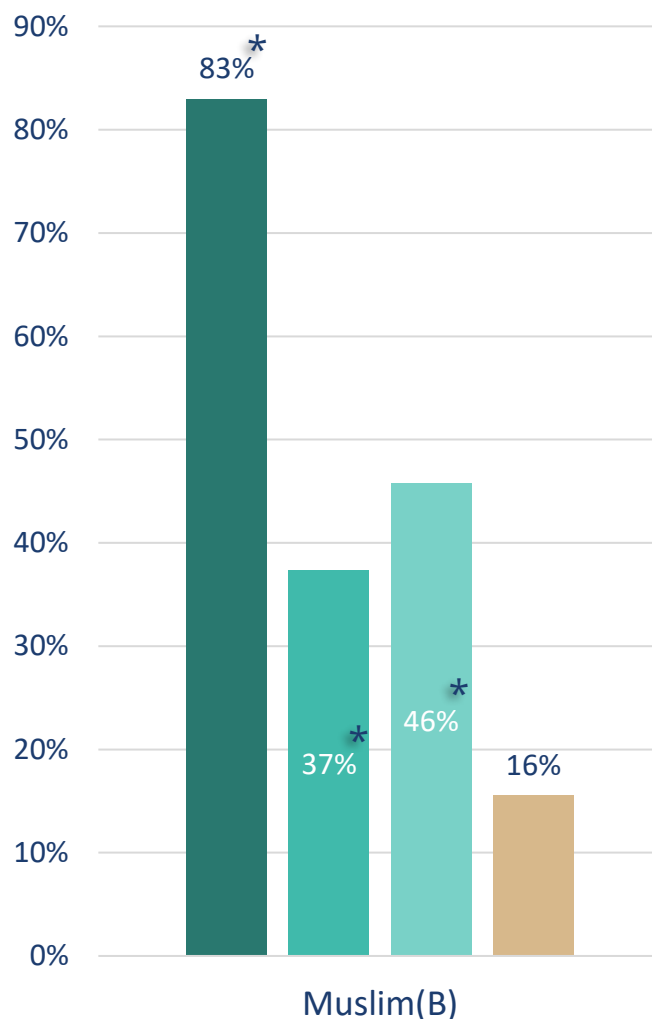
While 35% of Jewish respondents do keep (18%) or at a minimum prefer (17%) purchasing and consuming kosher food (App. 2), **83% of Muslim respondents keep (37%) or prefer (46%) purchasing and consuming halal food products.**⁸

Reliable data on the current size of the U.S. Muslim population is not available. However, recent estimates place the total population around 3.45 million.⁹ This survey's findings indicate that it is highly probable that the vast majority of this population, close to 3 million Americans, prefer halal food to meet their dietary needs.

Our second question found that food insufficiency (defined on the following page) within Muslim populations is 10% (Fig. 4).¹⁰ This percentage of Muslim American respondents who experience either low or very low food sufficiency is statistically significant. In fact, it is significantly higher than five of the six other groups.¹¹ When these groups are combined, **food insufficiency among Muslim Americans is more than twice that of all other survey participants.**¹² This data points to the possibility of disproportionate food insecurity within American Muslim communities.

Fig. 3

Religious Dietary Observance: Do you prefer to keep a kosher/halal diet or not?



- Yes (Net %)
- Yes, for all products that require kosher/halal-certification, [I/you] only purchase and consume kosher/halal certified products
- Yes, mostly, [I/you] prefer kosher/halal-certified food, but I/you do purchase or consume some foods without certification if they are not blatantly treif/haram
- No, [I/you] do not keep kosher/ halal

*Statistically significant results

What is Food Insufficiency?

The second question we asked sought to measure food insufficiency. This metric, as defined by the USDA Economic Research Service (ERS), measures whether households sometimes or often did not have enough to eat in the seven days prior to the survey. This measurement is different than the USDA ERS measurement of food security, which measures food security on a 12-month basis through a 10-to-18 question survey. Food insufficiency measures food availability in seven-day increments allowing for frequent survey administration to closely monitor change in near-real time. Past data comparisons show a significant overlap between food insufficiency and food insecurity. Households with marginal, low, or very low food sufficiency are often the same households with low or very low food security. We chose to use the one-question food insufficiency metric, which allowed us to assess issues with food access, while not having to ask too much of our ISPU survey respondents.

ISPU's full data set, shows an overall combined food insufficiency rate of about 6% for all survey respondents. This number is low compared to recent metrics regarding food insecurity (2020: 11.8% [Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap](#); 2021: 10.2% [USDA ERS](#)). We cannot be certain why insufficiency in this study tracked so differently than insecurity in other analyses, but this encourages further data collection and measurement to ensure the validity of metrics across studies.

[For more information, see USDA ERS - Measurement.](#)

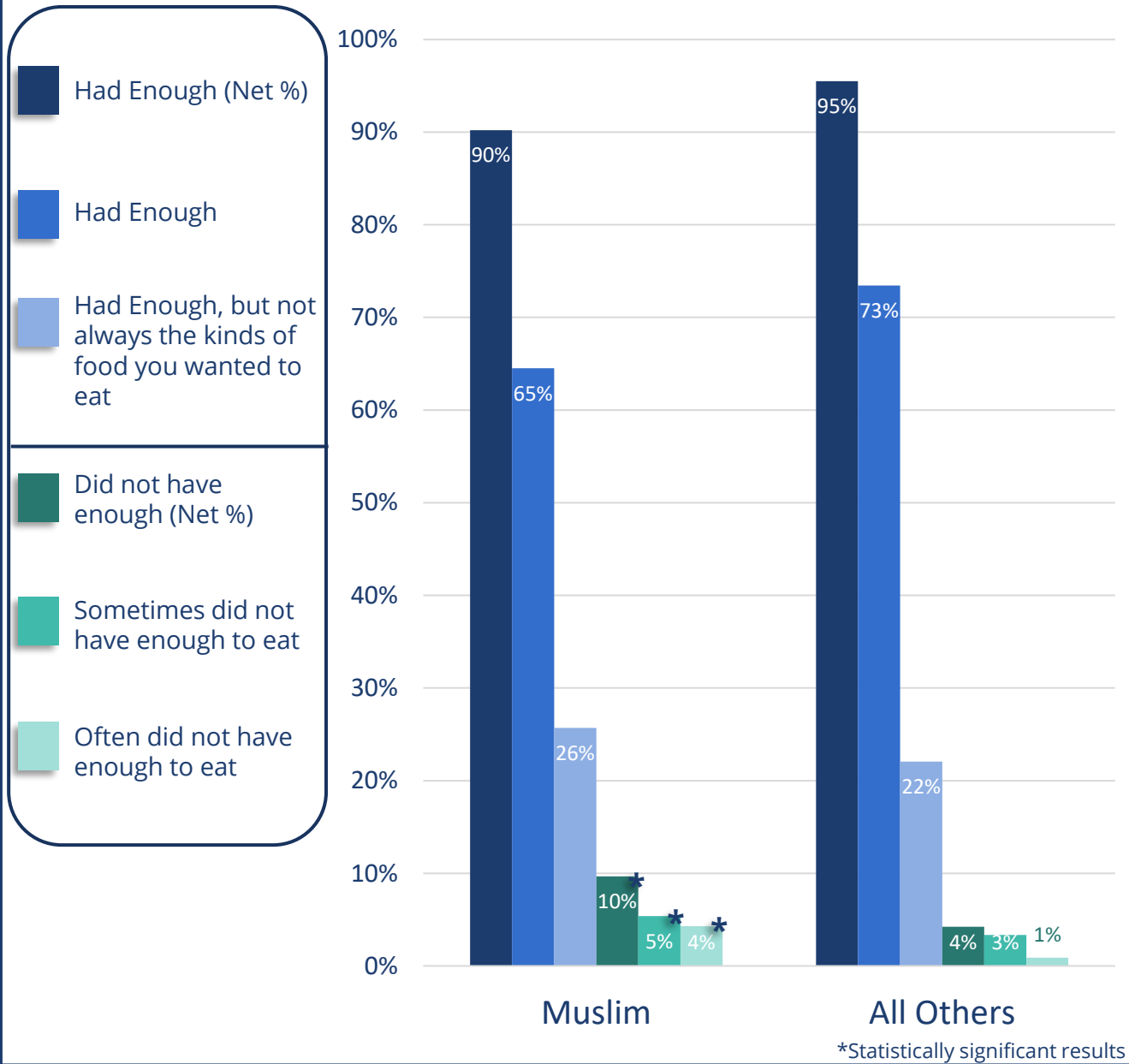
ISPU's Analysis 2 shows that Muslim respondents who identify as White and Asian are somewhat more likely to keep halal than those who identify as Black and Arab.¹³ In response to Q32 about halal diets, 87% of White and Asian Muslim Americans answered that they keep halal ("all" and "mostly" combined).¹⁴ For Arab Muslims, this percentage was 81%, and for Black Muslims, 80%. Notably, for White and Asian Muslim Americans, at least 50% of respondents purchase and consume only products with halal certification.¹⁵

For our first question, Q31, regarding food insufficiency, Analysis 2 also points to additional differences by race. Muslims who identify as either Black or White were more likely to not have enough (12%, net of "sometimes" and "often") than those who identified as Arab (9%) or Asian (2%).¹⁶

By analyzing these differences by race, we gain additional insight into the diverse array of experiences across Muslim communities. Further, there are a few demographic factors within ISPU's Analysis 2 that we can look to for possible explanations.

Fig. 4

Food Insufficiency: In the last 7 days, which of these statements best describes the food eaten in your household?



Analysis 2 shows Black Muslim respondents were significantly more likely to have lower annual household income than many other respondents and less educational attainment than all other Muslims by race; their educational attainment was also lower than Black respondents who did not identify as Muslim.¹⁷ Though, as noted above, we see some decline in the specific requirement for halal food commodities within this group, this difference is not significant. These additional personal economic factors may contribute to higher rates of food insufficiency, and possibly affect dietary choices, but without additional research, we cannot make definitive conclusions at this time.

Recommendations

ISPU's AMP2022 is the first survey we know of that measures food insufficiency and religious dietary observance for American Muslims on a nationally representative level. The data generated through this survey is vital to Met Council's goal of better understanding the need for emergency food within halal-observant communities. Without improved measurements of need and demand, we are left to assume need based solely on our ability to procure and distribute halal food rather than planning our programs based on documented need.

While this survey does not answer all our questions, nor does it explicitly speak to the need here in New York City, it remains an important set of data that bolsters and informs some of the many policy recommendations Met Council has been advocating for in recent years.

New York City is home to an estimated 22% of the American Muslim population, far and away the largest population of Muslim Americans in the United States.¹⁸ While New York City is fortunate to benefit from emergency food programs administered at the city, state, and federal level, each operates with different models and policies, none of which adequately meet the needs of New York City's Muslim community.

While this survey does not directly link food insufficiency to Jewish populations, past studies have shown that poverty within New York's Jewish communities closely mirrors the general population, and recent research, including our analysis of GetFoodNYC, points to specific issues with poverty and food insecurity for many Jewish Americans (App. 2).¹⁹

Met Council's GetFoodNYC report, published in late 2021, provided insight into a New York City-based pandemic emergency food delivery program that, from March 2020 through September 2021, delivered over 27 million kosher and halal meals. These meals represented 21% of the total program output.²⁰ From our experience, we know that the needs of these of Muslims and Jewish communities, while different, often overlap. In fact, in many cases, halal observant communities will accept some kosher-certified food products if halal food is not readily available. Combined with this new data generated by the AMP2022, we have a clearer picture of the religious dietary practices and food security concerns related to both American Muslims and American Jews.

Considering this research about the experiences of Muslim Americans, and additional

analysis of kosher observant communities, the City and State of New York along with the USDA must consult organizations that work directly with these Americans to craft policy solutions that proactively improve all halal and kosher emergency food programs for the people who rely on them as an important part of their regular diet. **The AMP2022, in conjunction with our GetFoodNYC analysis and other recent research, highlights a need within kosher- and halal-observant communities that must be adequately accounted for by all levels of public food support.**²¹ Here in New York City, Met Council and our halal partner organizations are already doing this work. With this immense experience and first-hand knowledge of the needs of our communities, we offer the following policy recommendations for New York City, New York State, and the Federal Government:

New York City Policy

- Community Food Connection (CFC), formerly Emergency Food Assistance Program (EFAP), is New York City's emergency food resource. Recently through a competitive bidding process, CFC contracted with a new vendor to provide emergency food to pantries across the city. CFC must work with their new vendor to ensure that a minimum of 21% of each product category required to pack a balanced pantry bag (produce, protein, grains, and dairy), be either certified kosher or halal, or culturally appropriate food products. In addition, these products must make their way to pantries that have the cultural fluency and knowledge to properly handle and distribute these products to communities with religious dietary requirements.
- According to Local Law 52/2011, the City of New York must produce an annual food system metrics report that covers "the production, processing, distribution, and consumption of food in and for the City of New York during the previous fiscal year."²² This report, currently produced by the Mayor's Office of Food Policy, lacks adequate reporting on kosher and halal food. New York City is home to more than 787,000 Muslims and more than 943,000 Jewish residents.²³ With this population and our findings of both notable food insufficiency and halal observance within Muslim communities, this annual report must include adequate data collection on halal and kosher food production, processing, distribution, and consumption.

New York State Policy

- The Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP) provides food pantries with flexible funding to procure emergency food. In doing so,

New York State continued.

HPNAP allows halal and kosher pantries to purchase the food their communities desire rather than relying on a limited product list, like other emergency food resources. However, to ensure that the needs of halal and kosher New Yorkers are met, HPNAP must ensure that a minimum of 21% of all funding going to New York City be dedicated to organizations that will use HPNAP funds to purchase and distribute halal and kosher food to communities in need of halal and kosher emergency food service.

- Nourish New York has provided an important benefit to the Muslim and Jewish communities of New York by offering food commodities produced in New York State — including unprocessed produce, which is acceptable to halal and kosher communities. Nourish must work to ensure that this program equitably serves kosher and halal communities in New York City and that a minimum of 21% of Nourish products go to New York City halal and kosher emergency food organizations.

Federal Policy

- The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) is the backbone of America's emergency food network. However, out of the hundreds of products they offer to most pantries, only one product — tomato sauce — is required to have halal certification, and only eight are required to be kosher. A recent internal analysis Met Council conducted of the 126 products offered through TEFAP showed that while some products do not require certification to be acceptable to halal- or kosher-observant communities, 66% of TEFAP commodities do not meet kosher and/or halal requirements. The results of the AMP 2022 illustrate that among Americans, Muslim-Americans experience food insufficiency at a much higher rate than nearly all other groups. The survey also shows the levels of halal and kosher observance reported represent millions of Americans. USDA must recognize that the products it currently offers through TEFAP with halal or kosher certifications are insufficient to meet the needs of Muslim and Jewish Americans, and they must work to incorporate a sufficient amount of halal- and kosher-certified or acceptable products into the TEFAP food commodities list.
- USDA ERS conducts research and data analysis for USDA, which allows USDA to better understand the landscape of needs in America. Based on the results of AMP2022, and additional studies conducted by Met Council, USDA ERS should consider the importance of conducting additional research into the scope of need for halal and kosher emergency food throughout the country, with a keen focus on the areas of the country with large Muslim and Jewish populations.

Conclusion: Where do we go from here?

Before Met Council submitted questions to ISPU's AMP2022, we lacked a verifiable data resource for the prevalence of halal observance and food insufficiency among Muslim Americans. This data not only provides a first-of-its-kind unique insight into the dietary habits and needs of this community. It is also profoundly impactful for our continued policy and advocacy efforts. These metrics will help us put food directly into the hands of Muslim New Yorkers by giving Met Council the data to make compelling arguments to stakeholders, legislators, and agencies that can directly impact our emergency food program. We will put this new data to use in support of halal-observant Americans facing food insecurity as we look to expand our halal emergency food service in New York City, and advocate for the needs of Muslim Americans at all levels of government.

Though we look forward to continuing our policy and programming work, this is still only a nationally representative sample. What we need more than anything is localized data for Americans with religiously informed dietary restrictions, both in New York and throughout the United States. Cities and states, particularly those with significant populations of Jewish or Muslim residents, must work to measure these communities, and include them in annual reporting and planning for emergency food distribution. These regional bodies must also work to understand the cultural practices of Americans with religiously informed dietary restrictions and engage with appropriate training and best practices in service of these communities.

Met Council is committed to supporting better data collection at the local and regional level, investing in the staff and expertise that can help us grow our data analysis work, and the education and training that it takes to understand the specific dietary needs of Muslim and Jewish Americans. Without improved metrics, appropriate measurement of the need that exists, and an acute understanding of how to best meet this need, it is extremely difficult ensure that we can adequately address hunger. Reliable data allows us to work towards all of these goals. We must continue to build an emergency food system that fosters dignity and respect for those facing food insecurity throughout our country.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of Met Council CEO David Greenfield, Co-Presidents Joseph Allerhand and Ben Tisch, and Chair Richard Mack, a special thanks are extended to the following individuals for their work in researching, authoring, or supporting this report:

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- Rachel Briant, Associate Legal Council, Met Council

Met Council is deeply grateful to the **Institute for Social Policy and Understanding** for their work in conducting this polling, and we encourage our readers to engage with all their research aimed at better understanding American Muslims at www.ispu.org.

Met Council is grateful to **The New York Community Trust**, a partner in our work, whose generous funding allowed us to participate in this survey and produce this report.

Met Council is also a proud partner of **UJA-Federation of New York** and appreciates its ongoing support.



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**For any further questions or comments
please contact policy@metcouncil.org.**

Appendix 1:

Sample table from ISPU's analysis of AMP2022 results.

Z-II. Do you consider yourself white, black or African American, Asian, Arab, Native American, Pacific Islander, mixed race or some other race?								
Base: Total Respondents								
	Total	Muslim (B)	Jewish (C)	Catholic(D)	Protestant(E)	White Evangelical(F)	Non-Affiliated(G)	General Public(H)
Total Weighted	2,159	817	364	207	250	129	292	1,001
	100	38	17	10	12	6	14	46
	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
White	1,282	268	312	167	193	129	195	712
	100	21	24	13	15	10	15	56
	59%	33%	86%	81%	77%	100%	67%	71%
			BEGH	BGH	BGH	BCDEGH	B	B
Black or African American	369	230	13	4	39	-	36	128
	100	62	4	1	10		10	35
	17%	28%	4%	2%	15%		12%	13%
		CDEFGH			CDF		CDF	CDF
Total Asked	Total Responses		Pct. of Asked that are <i>White/Black</i>			Statistical Significance of Pct. (5% chance of error)		
<p>In this example we can see that every group responded that they were <i>White</i> at significantly higher rates than the Muslim group (B). Additionally, we can see that Muslim respondents are significantly more likely to be <i>Black</i> than all other groups. With this result, we can say we are 95% sure that non-Muslim American respondents are more likely to be White than Muslim Americans. We are also 95% sure that Muslim Americans respondents are more likely to be Black than all other surveyed groups.</p>								

Appendix 2: The Jewish Respondents to AMP2022

Though the percentage of Jewish respondents that keep kosher (~35%), as noted in AMP 2022, is significantly lower than the percentage of Muslim respondents that keep halal, the Jewish population in the United States is estimated to be more than twice the size of the Muslim population, or about 7.6 million residents.²⁴ Accounting for the difference in population size, the 35% of American Jews who keep kosher are nearly the same in number as the Muslim halal-observant population. Combined, these two populations represent millions of Americans who require specific kosher- and halal-certified food products to meet their dietary needs daily.

As noted in the report, this survey does not directly link food insufficiency to Jewish populations. However, past studies have shown that poverty within New York's Jewish communities closely mirrors the general population, and recent research points to specific issues with poverty and food insecurity for many Jewish Americans.²⁵ While New York is certainly unique, other areas of the country with large Jewish populations, particularly those with Orthodox communities, such as Los Angeles, Chicago, Miami, Cleveland, and many other major metropolitan areas are home to many Jewish Americans facing poverty and food insecurity. UJA-Federation of New York conducted a COVID-19 impact study in 2021 and found that 9% of Jewish households in New York reported experiencing food insecurity over the course of the pandemic.²⁶ The Pew Research Center's "Jewish Americans in 2020" study reported that pre-pandemic one-in-four Jewish Americans had trouble paying bills or debts (medical care, rent/mortgage, food, and other bills or debts) in the prior year. Additionally, utilizing a short-term poll conducted in January 2021, Pew reported that 38% of Jews by religion said that they or someone in their household had lost a job or suffered a pay cut since the onset of COVID-19.²⁷

Defining Kosher and Treif

Kosher dietary guidelines are based on kashrut law derived from the Torah, Talmud, Shulchan Aruch, and other Jewish texts. For the kosher-observant consumer, processed and/or packaged goods must bear a reliable kosher certification from a reputable and well-established kosher certifying agency. Without these certifications, the kosher-observant consumer cannot be ensured that the intricate and detailed laws of kashrut are followed, especially given the complexities of modern food processing. Kosher law dictates that meat products be from kosher animals, and slaughtered, processed, and packaged under kosher guidelines. Kosher animals include mammals with split hooves that chew their cud, birds that are non-predatory, and fish with fins and scales. Bugs, Amphibians, and reptiles are prohibited. Once slaughtered, kosher law dictates that all blood is drained and that proper care is taken to ensure the kashrut through the entire process. Additionally, certain parts of the animal may not be consumed. Meat and dairy products may not be commingled. All utensils, machinery, and equipment must be used exclusively for kosher products and exclusively for either meat, dairy, or pareve (a product which is neither meat nor dairy). Fresh, unprocessed produce and eggs do not, generally, require certification, but any version of these products that is prepared, processed, or preserved will likely require certification.

Within these rules, there are different interpretations, stringencies, and customs that various communities uphold.

Treif refers to a product that does not meet kosher law and cannot be eaten by a kosher consumer.

Endnotes

1. AAFSCNY Org- <https://www.aafscny.org> and Adriana Curto, "Accessibility of Halal Food Aid in NYC," *Arab-American Family Support Center* (blog), August 5, 2022, <https://www.aafscny.org/2022/08/05/accessibility-of-halal-food-aid-in-nyc/>.; Dalia Mogahed and Erum Ikramullah, "American Muslim Poll 2022" (Institute for Social Policy and Understanding, August 2022).
2. Mogahed and Ikramullah, "American Muslim Poll 2022."
3. "GENERAL GUIDELINES FOR USE OF THE TERM 'HALAL,'" accessed September 29, 2022, <https://www.fao.org/3/y2770e/y2770e08.htm>.
4. Previous polls were conducted in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. 2021 was skipped and going forward these polls will be conducted every two years.
5. "USDA ERS - Measurement," accessed December 20, 2021, <https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/measurement.aspx#insufficiency>.
6. Protestant (Baptist, Methodist, Non-denominational, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Pentecostal, Episcopalian, Reformed, Church of Christ, Jehovah's Witness, etc.), Catholic/Roman Catholic, Mormon (Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints/LDS), Orthodox (Eastern, Greek, Russian, Armenian, etc.), Jewish/Judaism, Muslim/Islamic, Buddhist, Hindu, Christian, Atheist (do not believe in God), Agnostic (not sure if there is a God), Something else, No Religion/none (Nothing in particular).
7. Mogahed and Ikramullah, "American Muslim Poll 2022."
8. Ibid.
9. "2017 Survey of U.S. Muslims," *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project* (blog), accessed May 26, 2021, <https://www.pewforum.org/dataset/2017-survey-of-u-s-muslims/>.
10. Mogahed and Ikramullah, "American Muslim Poll 2022."
11. The Non-Affiliated respondent group *Did not have enough (net)* was ~9%. This is lower than the 10% of Muslim respondents, but not significantly lower.
12. "All Others" percent hand calculated from data provided by ISPU utilizing weighted totals for the numerator and denominator.
13. "Who Are White Muslims?, ISPU," April 27, 2021, <https://www.ispu.org/who-are-white-muslims/>. In the 2017 Pew Research Center's (Pew) survey of American Muslims, 40% of respondents are categorized as white, although half of those in this group are of Middle Eastern or North African (MENA) descent (an ancestry that the census presently codes as racially white). Unlike Pew, ISPU offers respondents "Arab" as a racial/ethnic category. The percentage of respondents who chose "white" from this expanded menu of options averaged 22% across the five waves of ISPU's American Muslim Poll from 2016-2020 (a tally that parallels the Pew data). White Americans thus comprise a sizable segment of the Muslim community.
14. This is a statistically significant difference from other groups based on age, religious affiliation, or racial groups in AMP2022 survey.
15. Mogahed and Ikramullah, "American Muslim Poll 2022."
16. Ibid.
17. "MAP-NYC-Report-Web-3.Pdf," accessed September 8, 2022, <https://www.ispu.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/MAP-NYC-Report-Web-3.pdf>.
18. Jonathan Hornstein, "Jewish Poverty in the United States: A Summary of Recent Research," accessed September 22, 2022, <https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/jfn/pages/3513/attachments/original/1572892789/jewish-poverty-in-the-United-States.pdf?1572892789>.
19. "MetCouncil-GettingFood.Pdf," accessed January 5, 2022.
20. Ibid.
21. "68-NYC-FoodMetrics-LocalLaw52-2011.Pdf," accessed September 8, 2022, <http://growingfoodconnections.org/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/1970/01/68-NYC-FoodMetrics-LocalLaw52-2011.pdf>.

23. Estimated populations based on the following sources: "MAP-NYC-Report-Web-3.Pdf.", accessed May 5, 2021; "American Jewish Population Project," accessed May 5, 2021. <https://ajpp.brandeis.edu/>.
24. "American Jewish Population Project," accessed October 8, 2021, <https://www.brandeis.edu/cmjs/constructs/2016/population-estimates.html>.
25. Jonathan Hornstein, "Jewish Poverty in the United States: A Summary of Recent Research," accessed September 22, 2022, <https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/jfn/pages/3513/attachments/original/1572892789/Jewish-poverty-in-the-United-States.pdf?1572892789>.
26. "UJA: Food Insecurity During COVID-19," 2021, https://jewishdatany-admin.ujafedny.org/sites/default/files/reports/UJA-Covid19-Reports-FoodInsecurity_0.pdf.
27. "Because the January survey did not contain a detailed battery of questions about various kinds of Jewish identity, it can be used to analyze the experiences only of U.S. adults who say their religion is Jewish ('Jews by religion'), not 'Jews of no religion.' The term 'Jews of no religion' (or, sometimes, 'Jews not by religion') has been in use by demographers and sociologists for decades. More colloquial terms include cultural Jews, ethnic Jews and secular Jews." 11. Economics and Well-Being among U.S. Jews," *Pew Research Center's Religion & Public Life Project* (blog), May 11, 2021, <https://www.pewforum.org/2021/05/11/economics-and-well-being-among-u-s-jews/>.



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