

Vouchers 4 Veggies – EatSF and SF WIC

SDDT Advisory Committee
October 2024



What We'll Cover (briefly)

1. Vouchers 4 Veggies + WIC Program Overview
2. Program Structure and Impact
3. SDDT Alignment
4. Local Community Impact (including jobs)
5. Successes and Accomplishments
6. How program improved/augmented services
7. How much funds are expended
8. Challenges





Food Insecurity & Pregnancy



Health Impact of Food Insecurity During Pregnancy

- Low birth weight
- Birth defects
- Inappropriate weight gain during pregnancy
- Impact on infant health, growth and development
- Gestational diabetes, pre-eclampsia
- Mental health issues such as perceived stress, anxiety, depressive symptoms and loss of control



Equity-Focused Approach

Focus on Latinx/African-American/PI pregnant people to address health disparities



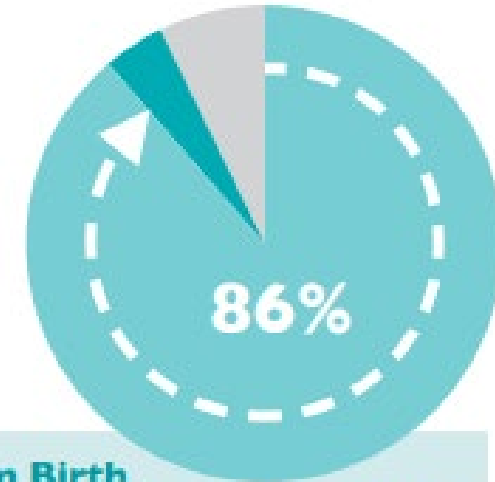
Food insecurity among pregnant women in San Francisco¹

26.5% among Latinx women

19.5% among Black/African American women

6.6% among Asian and Pacific Islander women

Almost no White women in San Francisco report food insecurity during pregnancy.



Full-Term Birth

Full term birth more likely for Whites (**93%**) than Black/African Americans (**86%**).²

San Francisco WIC Partnership

- SFDPH initiated partnership between V4V and SF WIC in 2016
 - Goal of reducing disparities in food insecurity rates
 - Improving birth outcomes for low-income pregnant people in San Francisco
 - Focus on Latinx/African American populations
- Implemented V4V at all WIC sites across SF
- Participants receive \$40/month in F&V vouchers for 9 months
 - Serve over **1500+** pregnant people each year



The partnership is primarily funded by the San Francisco Department of Public Health through SDDT

Vouchers 4 Veggies – EatSF: Program Structure

Program Structure

Community Distribution Sites



Partner with WIC and supporting clinics

Vendor Locations (40+)

- ✓ Corner stores
- ✓ Grocery stores
- ✓ Farmers markets



Dose, Duration, & Mechanism

- ✓ \$40/month for 9 months
- ✓ Paper vouchers

Eligibility

- ✓ Food insecure + very low-income (Medicaid eligible)
- ✓ Pregnant and enrolled through WIC and other clinics

Average Numbers Served

- ✓ Approximately 2400 participants served annually



WELCOME TO EATSF

Participant
INFORMATION



 **EatSF** IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  **wic**
AND THE SAN FRANCISCO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Vouchers 4 Veggies: How does it work?

Participants enroll through WIC and partnering clinics.



Participants receive \$40+ per month for 9 months in F&V benefits redeemable at partnering vendors



Impact

- Program Impact
- SDDT Alignment
- How program improved/augmented services



Demographics Served in FY 23-24

2,458 pregnant WIC participants served in FY 23-24

30+ participating stores in SF (corner stores, farmers markets, large national grocery chains) where vouchers can be used

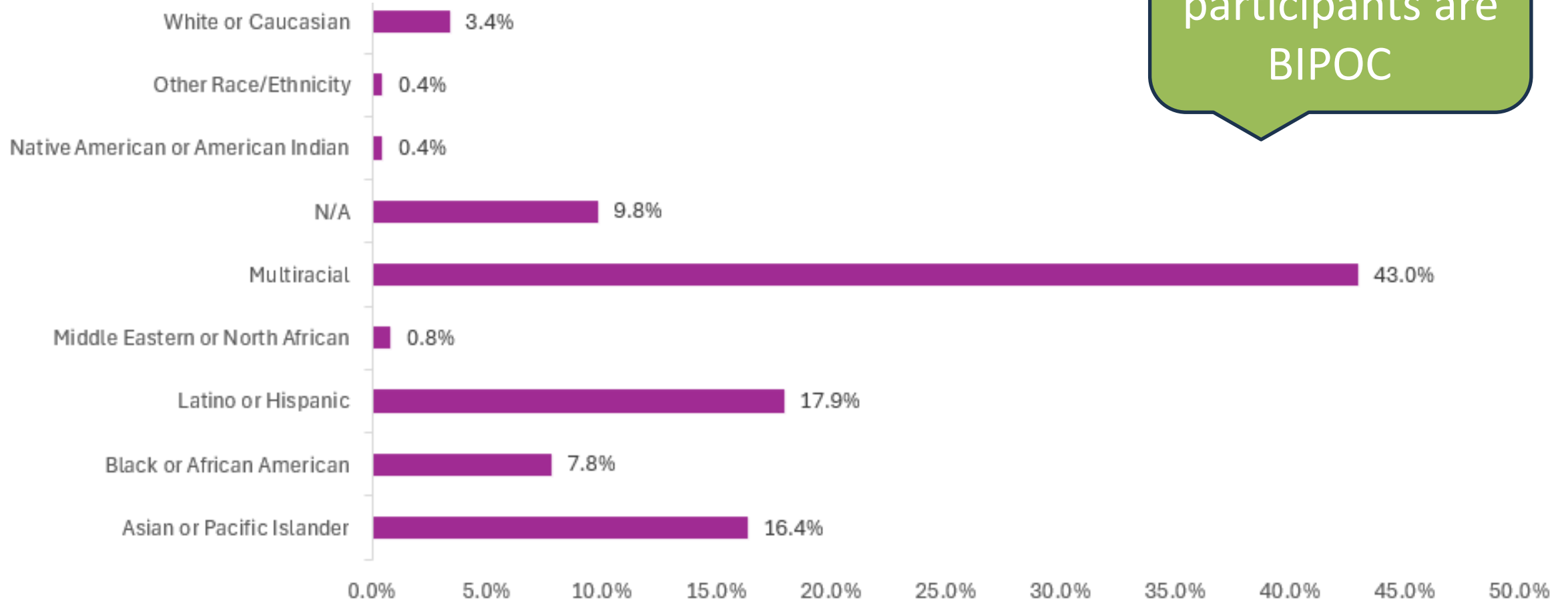
Good redemption rate (approximately 75%)



Participant Characteristics FY 23-24

Total: 2458

Race/Ethnicity

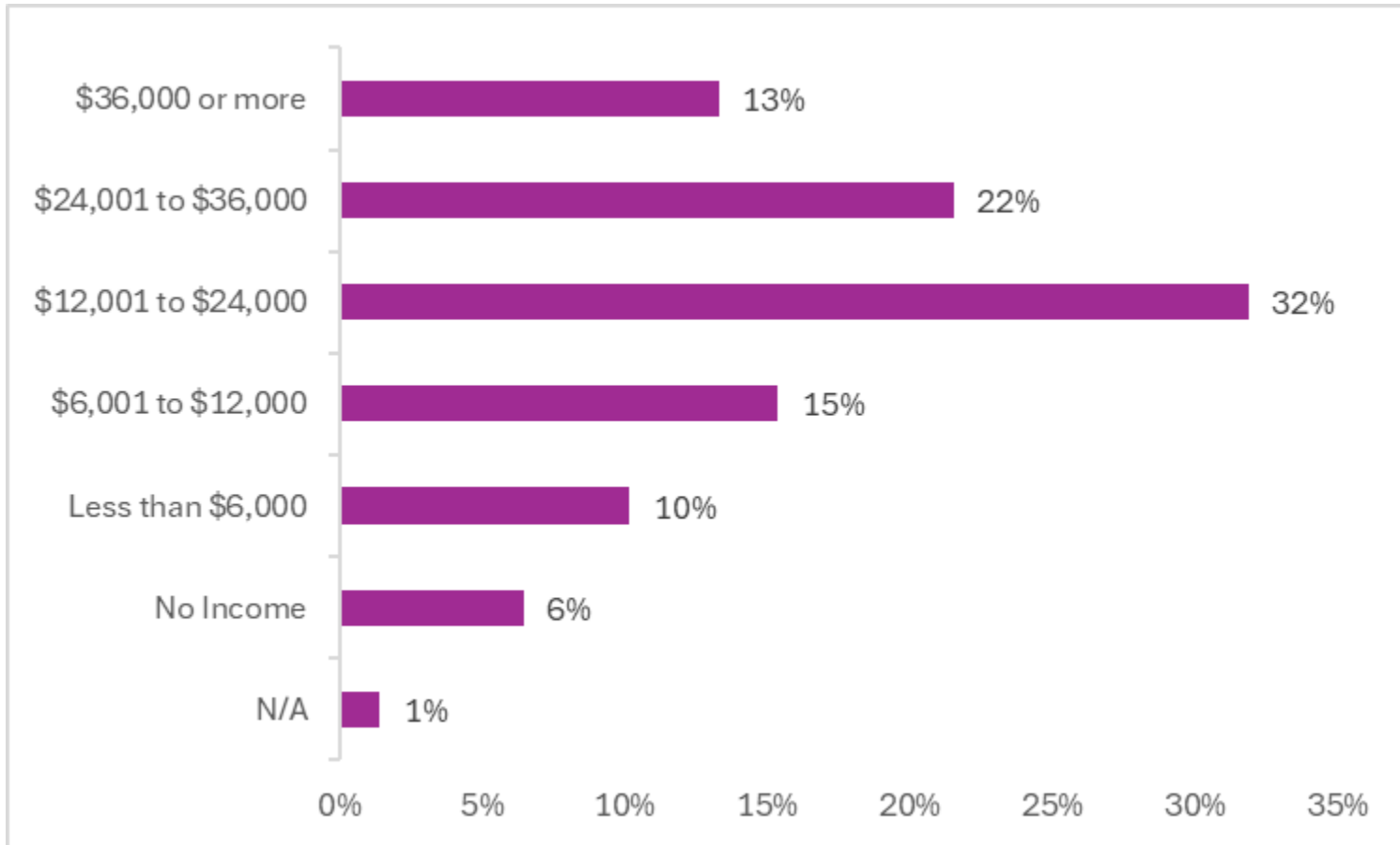


96.6% of participants are BIPOC

Participant Characteristics FY 23-24

Total: 2458

Yearly Household Income



WIC Income Requirements:

Family of 2 = \$37,814

Family of 3 = \$47,765

Family of 4 = \$57,720



Participant Feedback

“I eat a lot more fruits now. And I feel that my pregnancy has been healthier because of it.”

“I appreciate the help they give me and my children so I’m very happy with EatSF, and I like everything about it.”

“I am a single parent with 3 kids, so it’s a serious pleasure for me. And it keeps me from eating candy”

WIC Research Study: Promising Results

Study Design

- Statistically significant results (n=592)
- Pre-post Survey Design
- Non-randomized (historical) control group
- Published in Journal of Health Education & Nutrition (June 2020)

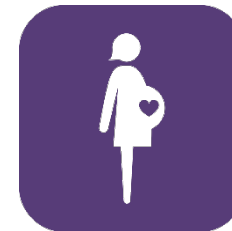
Outcomes



+30%
Food Security



+.73 Serving
FV Intake

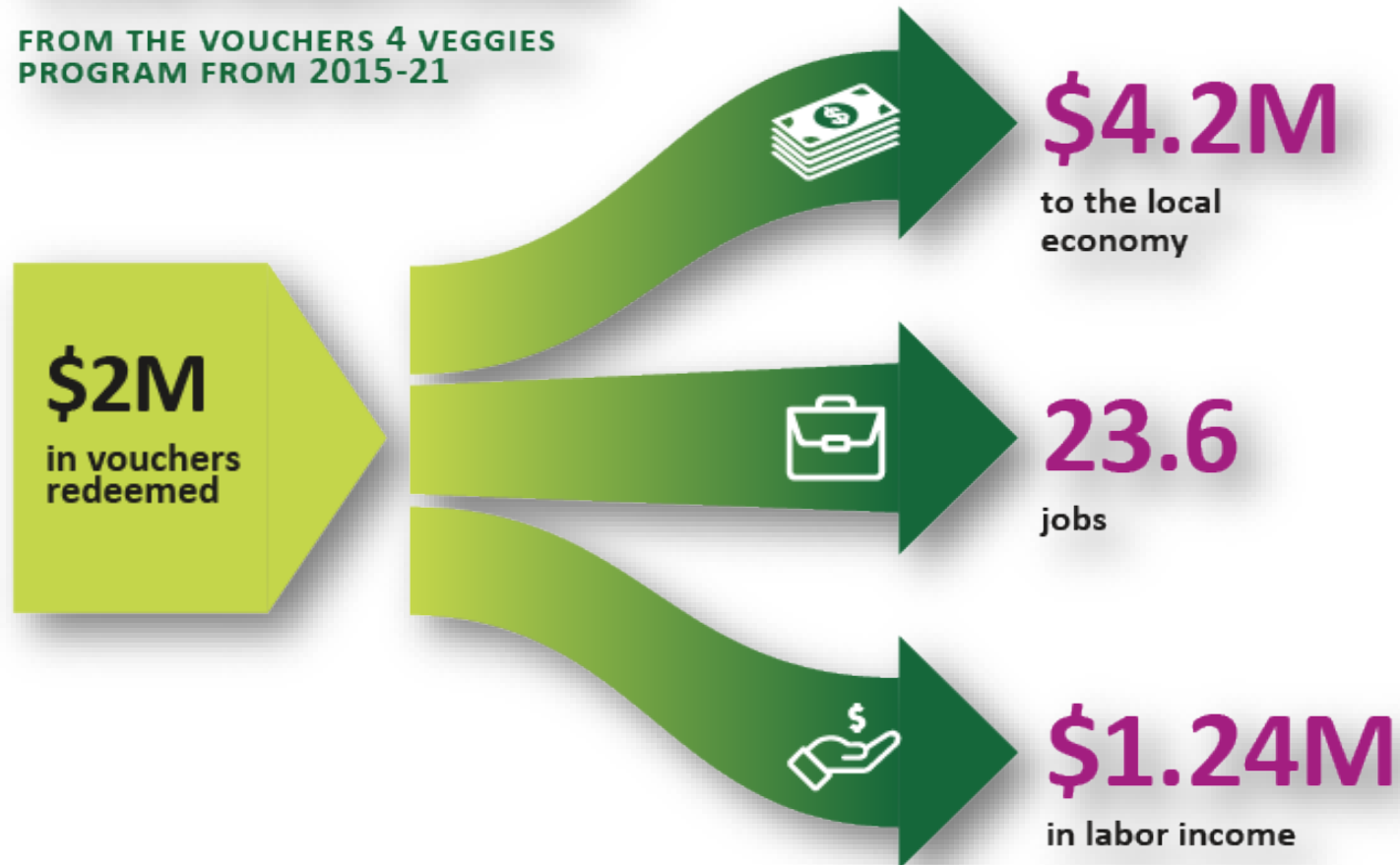


-37%
Odds of preterm birth
delivery

Vouchers 4 Veggies: Economic Impact

ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTIONS

FROM THE VOUCHERS 4 VEGGIES PROGRAM FROM 2015-21



A recent economic analysis found every \$1 invested in Vouchers 4 Veggies programs leads to an additional \$3 in economic activity to the local economy**

**Adapted from research upon analysis conducted by a team of economists at Colorado State University, in partnership with SPUR, Fair Food Network, and a coalition of ten additional implementing partners across nine states in the U.S. For the full details of methodology and findings see: fairfoodnetwork.org/incentivesimpact*

***Thilmany, D., Bauman, A., Love, E., & Jablonski, B. (2021). "The Economic Contributions of Healthy Food Incentives". Retrieved from: https://marketmatch.org/wpcontent/uploads/2021/02/Economic_Contributions_Incentives.pdf.*

Vouchers 4 Veggies: What Vendors Say

- ✓ New customers
- ✓ Increased revenue
- ✓ More produce displayed, some stores display a greater variety
- ✓ Higher produce turnover, less food waste

Approximately 50.83% of vouchers distributed have been spent at small vendors and farmer's markets



Successes & Challenges

- How much funds are expended
- Successes, Challenges and Barriers



WIC + V4V – How it augments

- ❑ **Complimentary:** Reaches WIC clients, leverages WIC education & increases access to F&V
- ❑ **Acts as an Incentive:** Adds to financial benefit of WIC package and encourages program enrollment and retention
- ❑ **Wellness focus:** conveys health and wellness (with colorful, upbeat branding); reduces stigma
- ❑ **Culturally sensitive:** materials translated into multiple languages (3)



Accomplishments

- ❑ Local supplements help fill gaps in federal benefits
- ❑ Length of enrollment has increased from 9 to 12 months
- ❑ Added stores in Treasure Island and Bayview
- ❑ National model (presented at multiple conferences)
- ❑ Multiyear funding required for rolling enrollment and enables 12 month coverage
- ❑ Transitioning from paper voucher to card in 2025



Funds Expended

- Most of funds are anticipated to be expended in FY 24-25
- WIC must cover all eligible participants
- Can not deny participant services as program at/over capacity
- Enrollment can vary depending on how many people are eligible and qualify for WIC
- Expected that funds are not fully expended due to requirement not to have waitlists or deny services

Challenges

- Extremely high cost of living (food and rent costs)
- Even with supplement nutritional foods are still out of reach



Challenge: Healthy Food Still out of Reach

- Estimated cost is **\$150** per month per person to meet dietary recommendations for F&V* (USDA Econ Research Service ,2024)
- F&V even more important for pregnant people
- For a family of 2
 - \$43 (WIC) + \$40 (V4V) = **\$83/mo** for F&V
 - 42% short for one person (\$63 less per month)
- Solution: Increase the V4V supplement



*USDA Economic Research Service, Fruit and vegetable Prices, May 2024,
<https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/fruit-and-vegetable-prices>



THANK YOU!



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