

Food insecurity among Canadian youth and young adults

INSIGHTS FROM THE CANADA FOOD STUDY

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BACKGROUND

Food insecurity in Canada

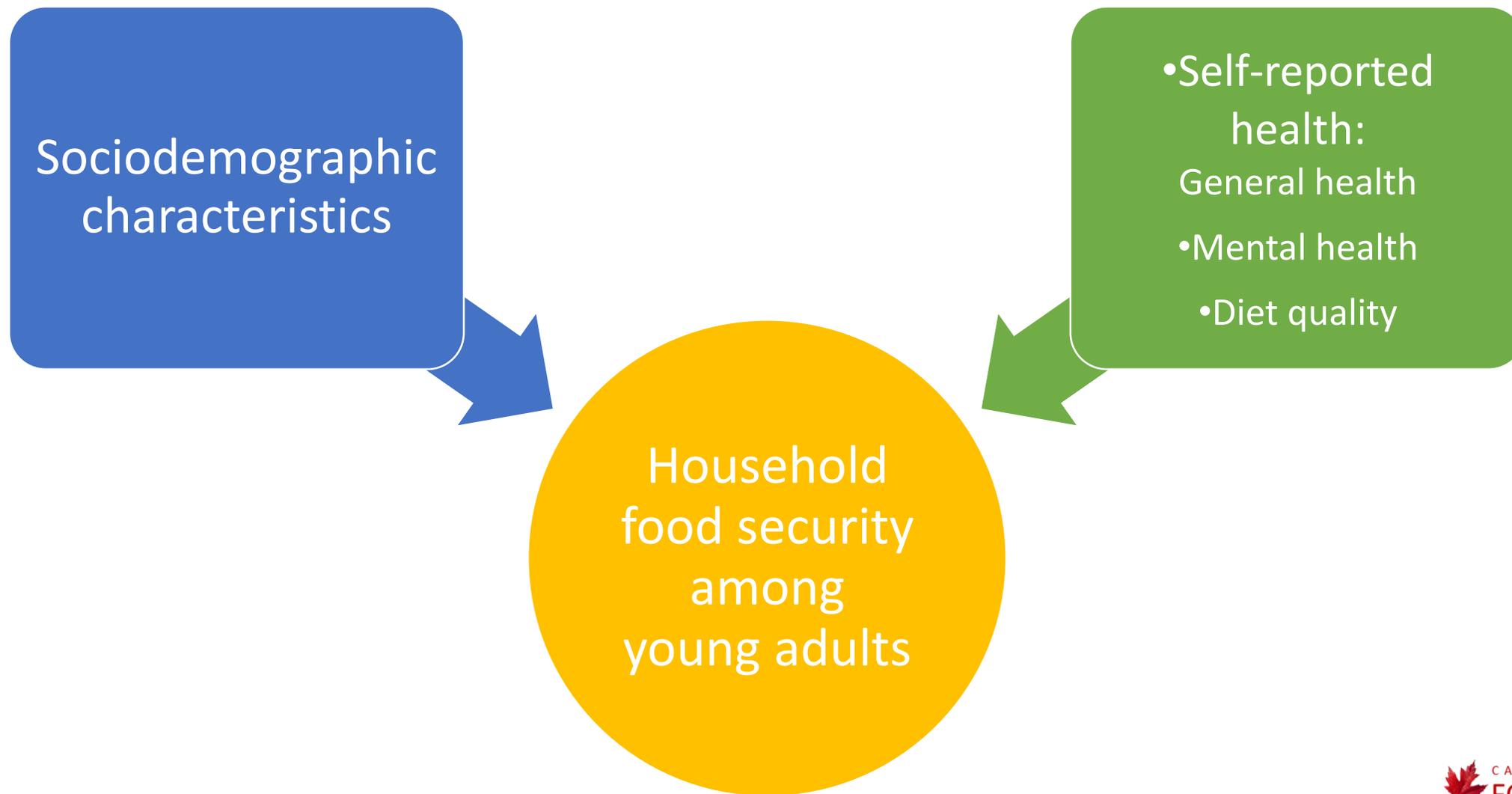


Image Credit: SUNY New Paltz, 2018

- Over 1 in 10 households in Canada are food insecure
- Underlying causes of food insecurity are multifactorial and complex
 - Income and income sources
 - Housing circumstances
 - Household composition
- In Canada, youth and young adults are amongst the most vulnerable

BACKGROUND

Objective



METHODS

Study Design

Français



CANADA

FOODSTUDY

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A new study about how eating patterns are changing among young people.

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METHODS

Measures

- Household Food Security Survey Module
 - 18 questions (10 adult, 8 child)
- Sociodemographic characteristics
 - Age, sex, race/ethnicity, education/employment status, income adequacy, parental status, body mass index
- Perceived health
 - General health, mental health, diet quality

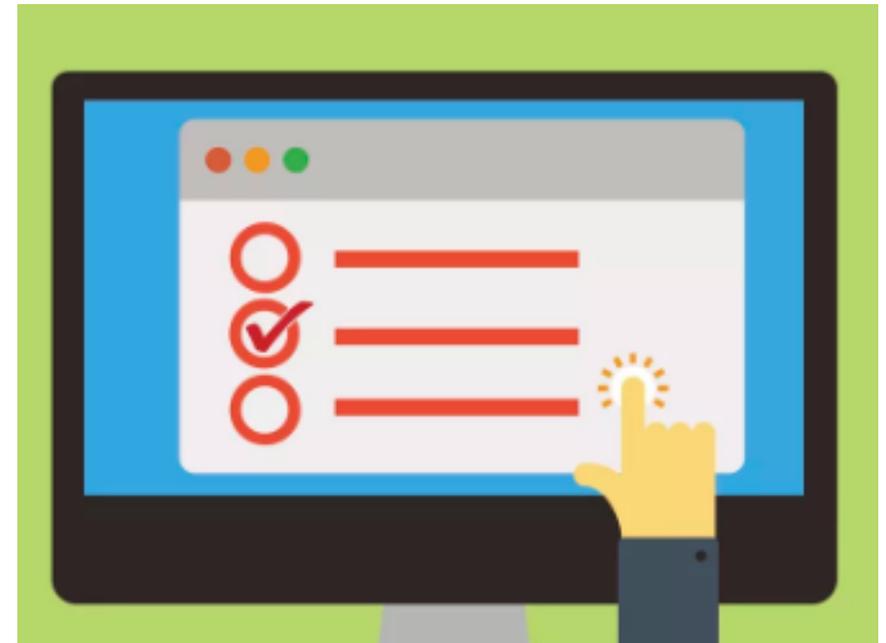


Image Credit: chokkicx/Getty Images

METHODS

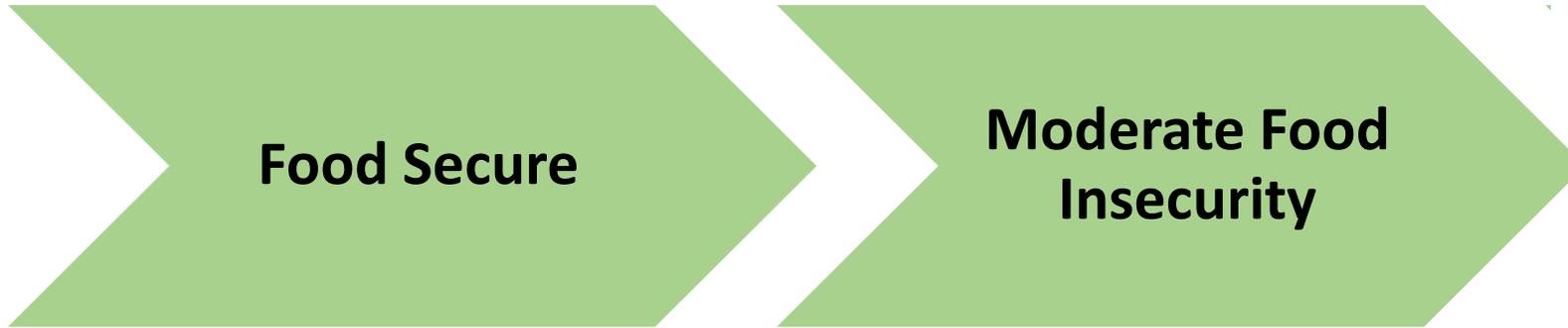
Level of Food Insecurity



- “had access, at all times throughout the previous year, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members”

METHODS

Level of Food Insecurity

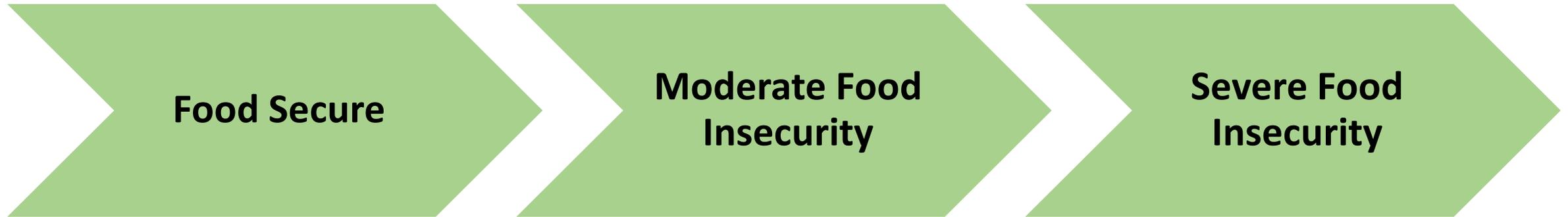


- “had access, at all times throughout the previous year, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members”

- “compromise in quality and/or quantity of food consumed”

METHODS

Level of Food Insecurity



- “had access, at all times throughout the previous year, to enough food for an active, healthy life for all household members”

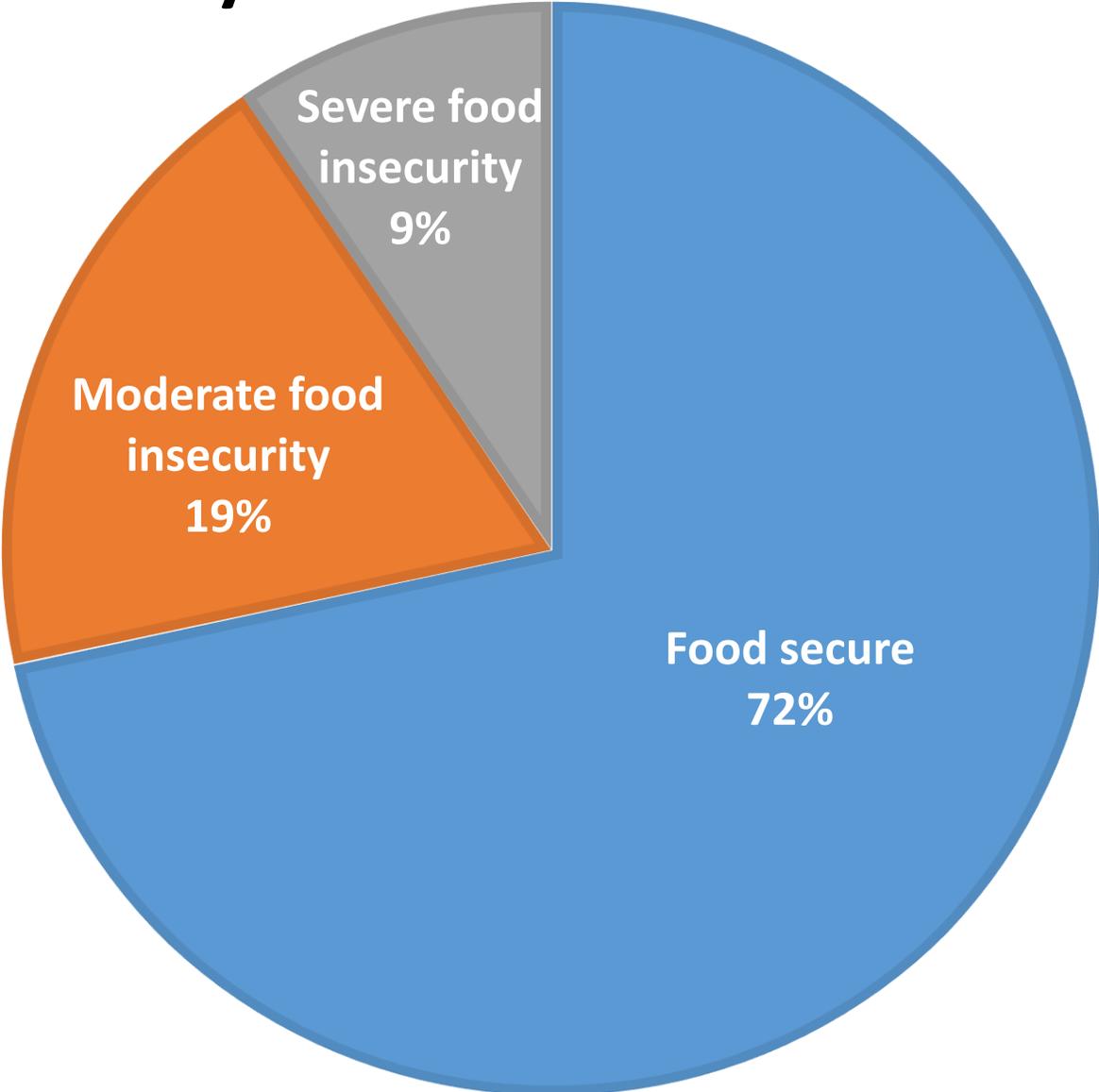
- “compromise in quality and/or quantity of food consumed”

- “reduced food intake and disrupted eating patterns”

RESULTS

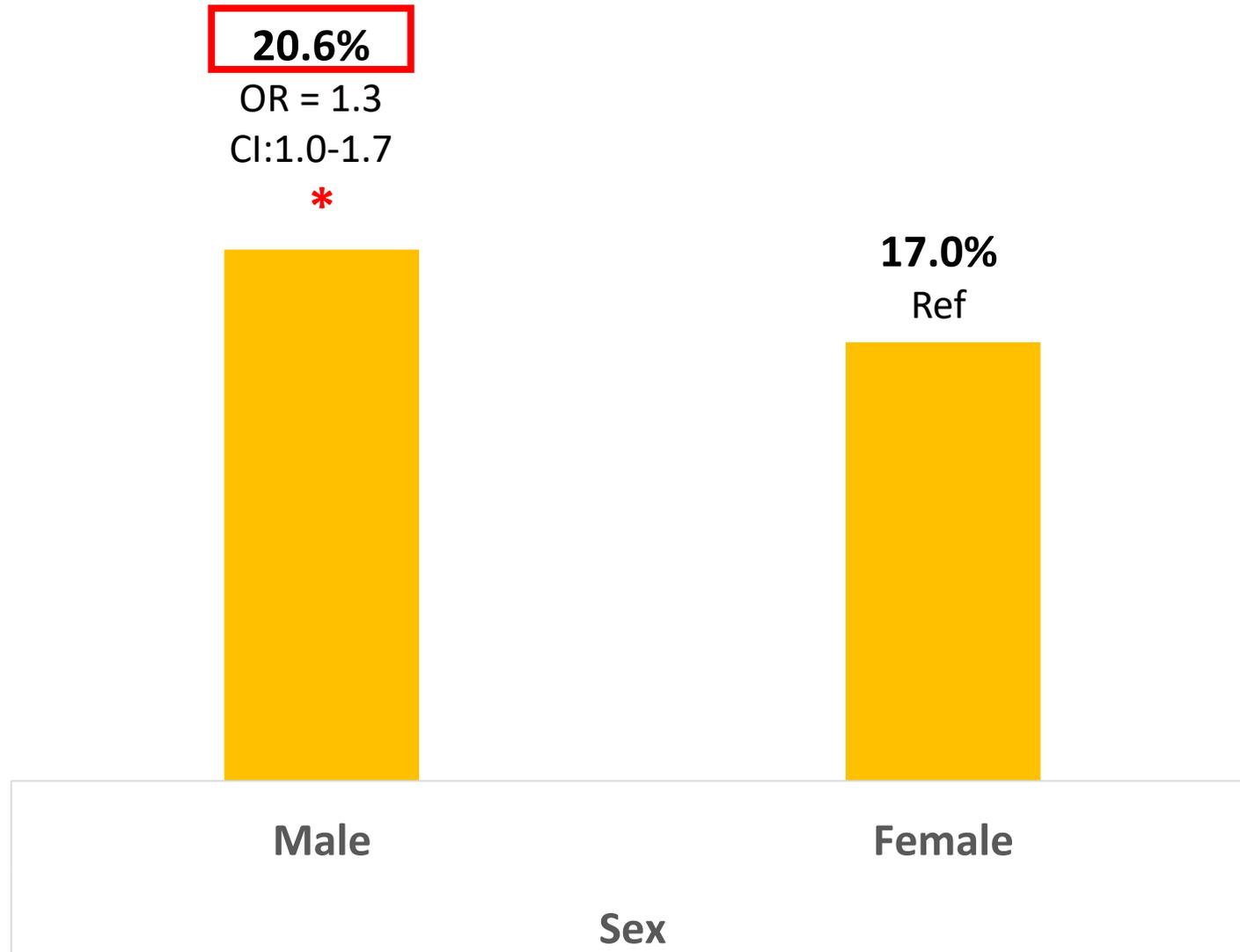
Household Food Insecurity

Over **1 in 4** households
(28%) lived in food
insecure households



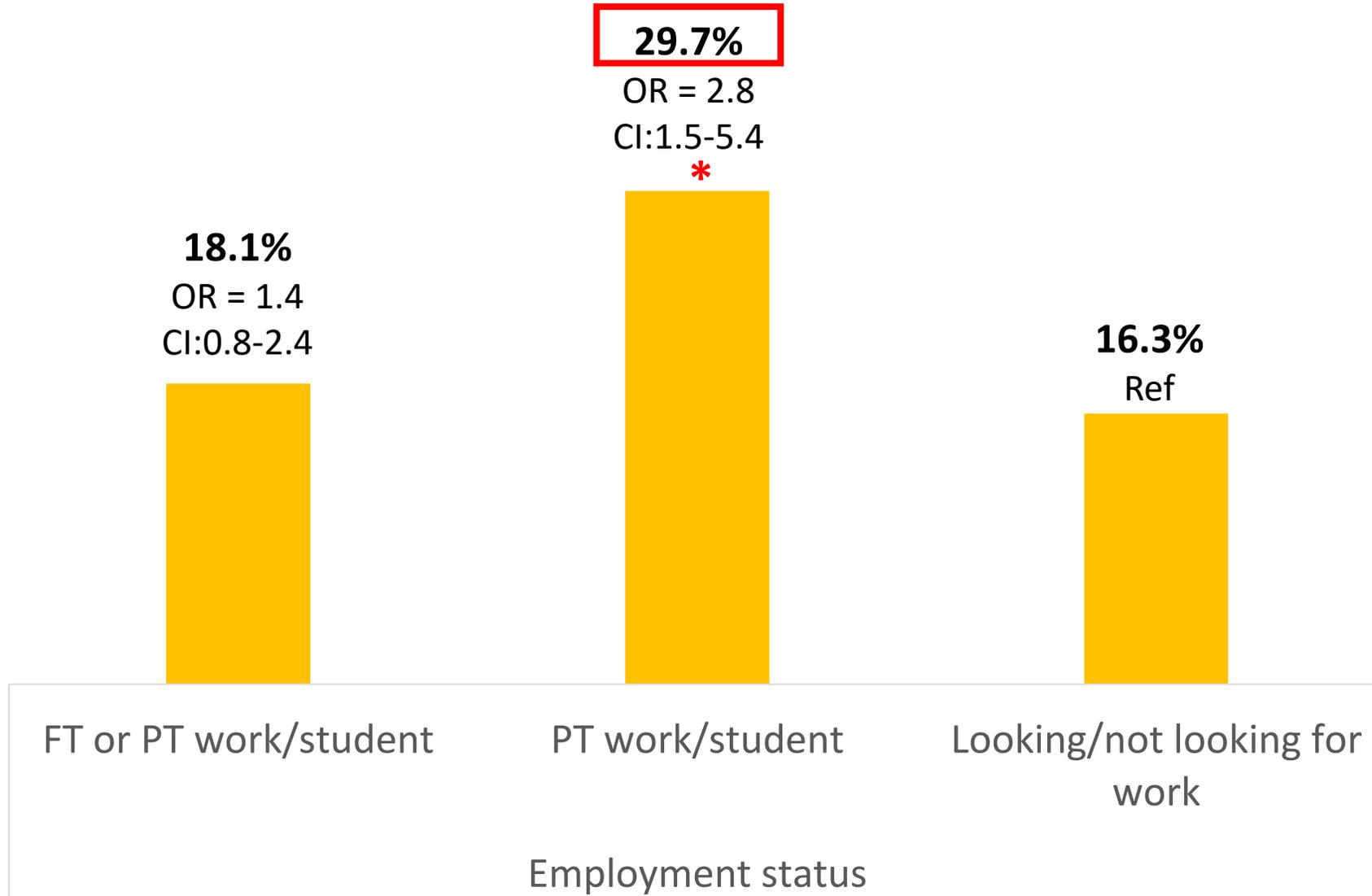
RESULTS

Moderate Food Insecurity - Sex



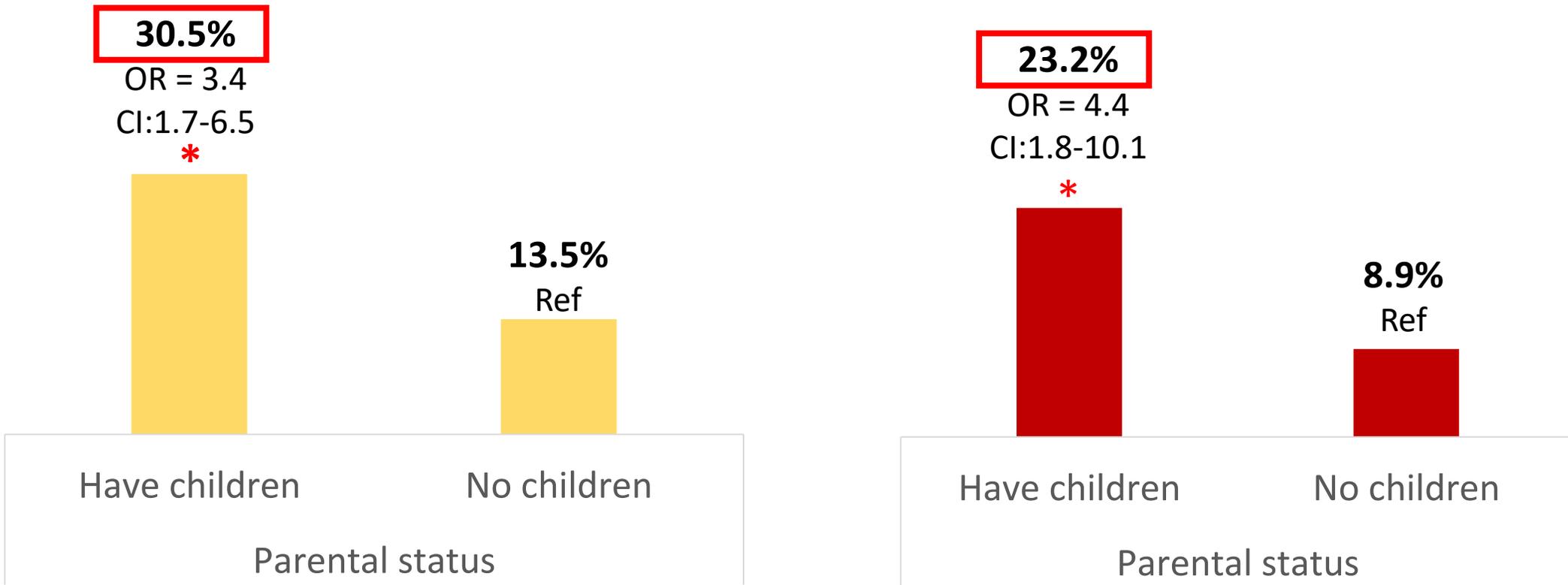
RESULTS

Moderate Food Insecurity – Employment Status



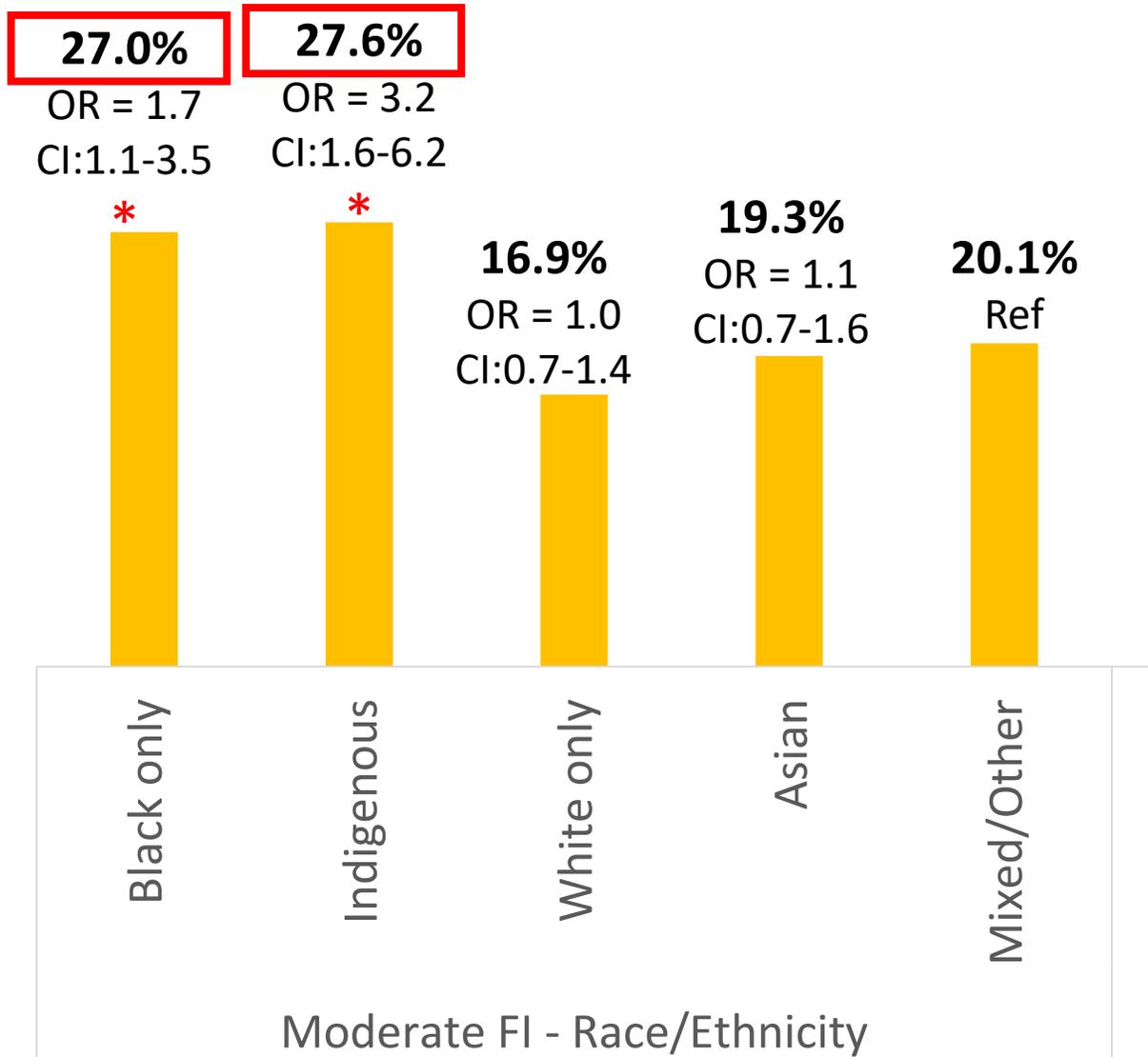
RESULTS

Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Parental Status



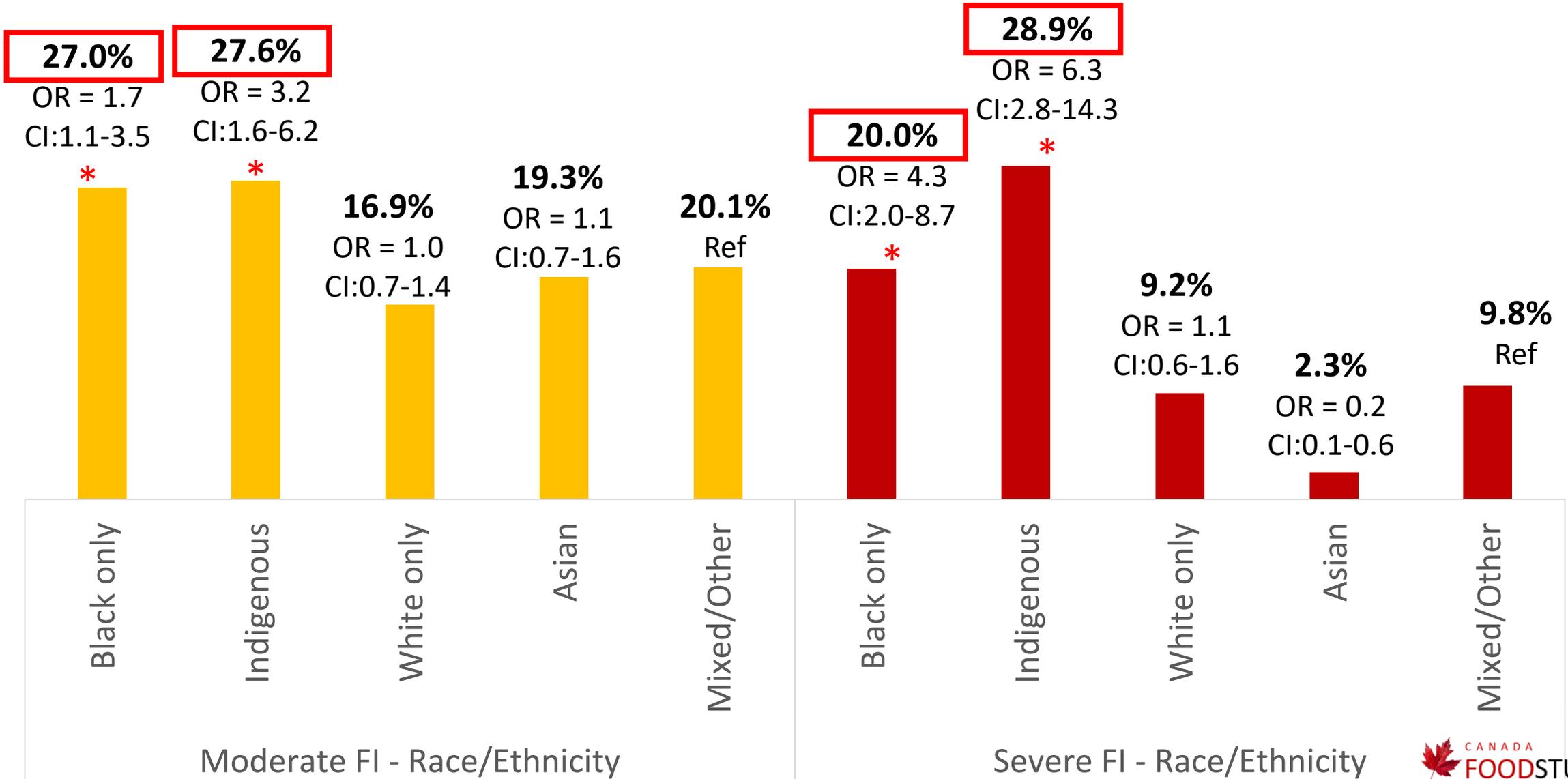
RESULTS

Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Race/Ethnicity

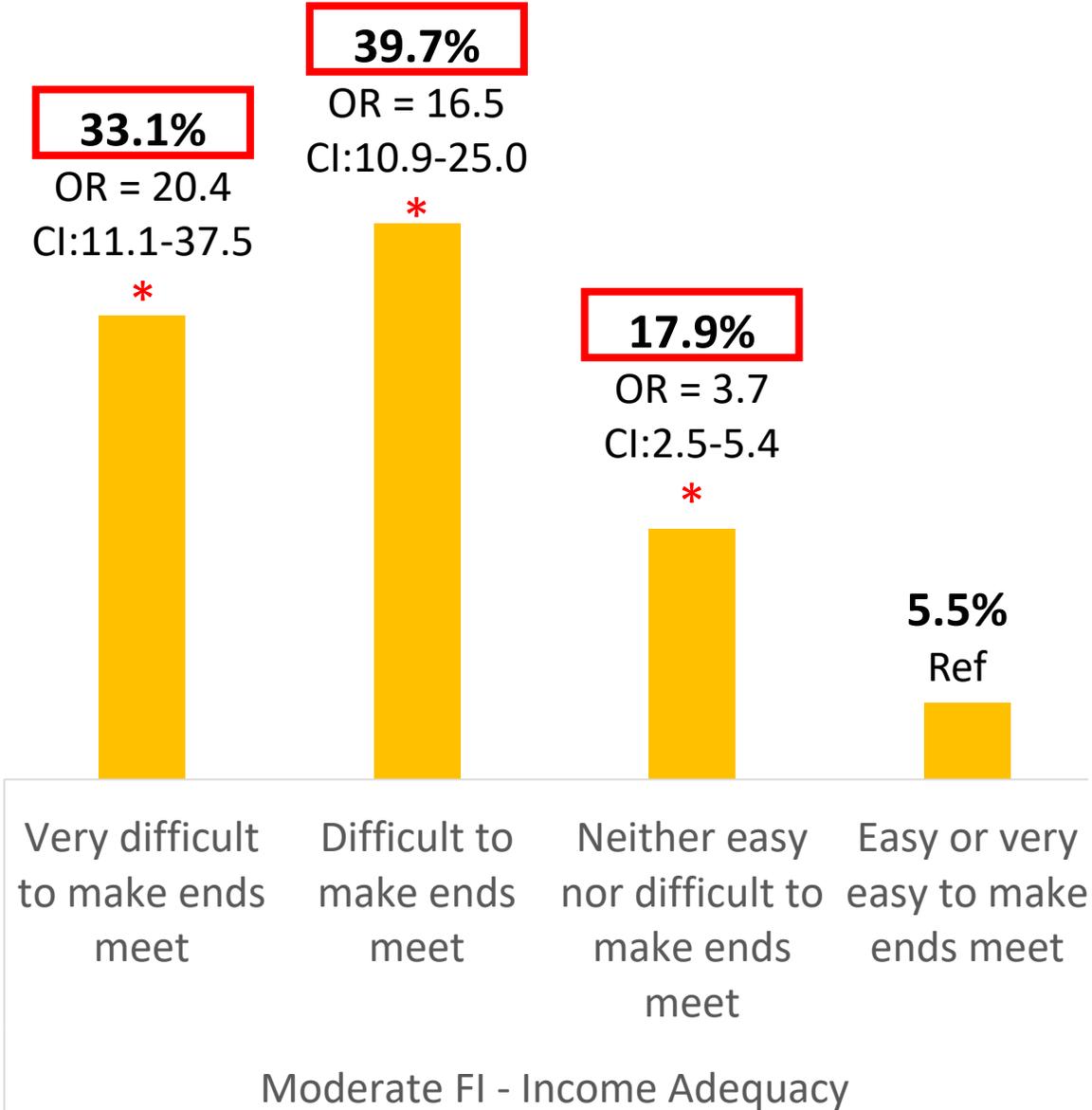


RESULTS

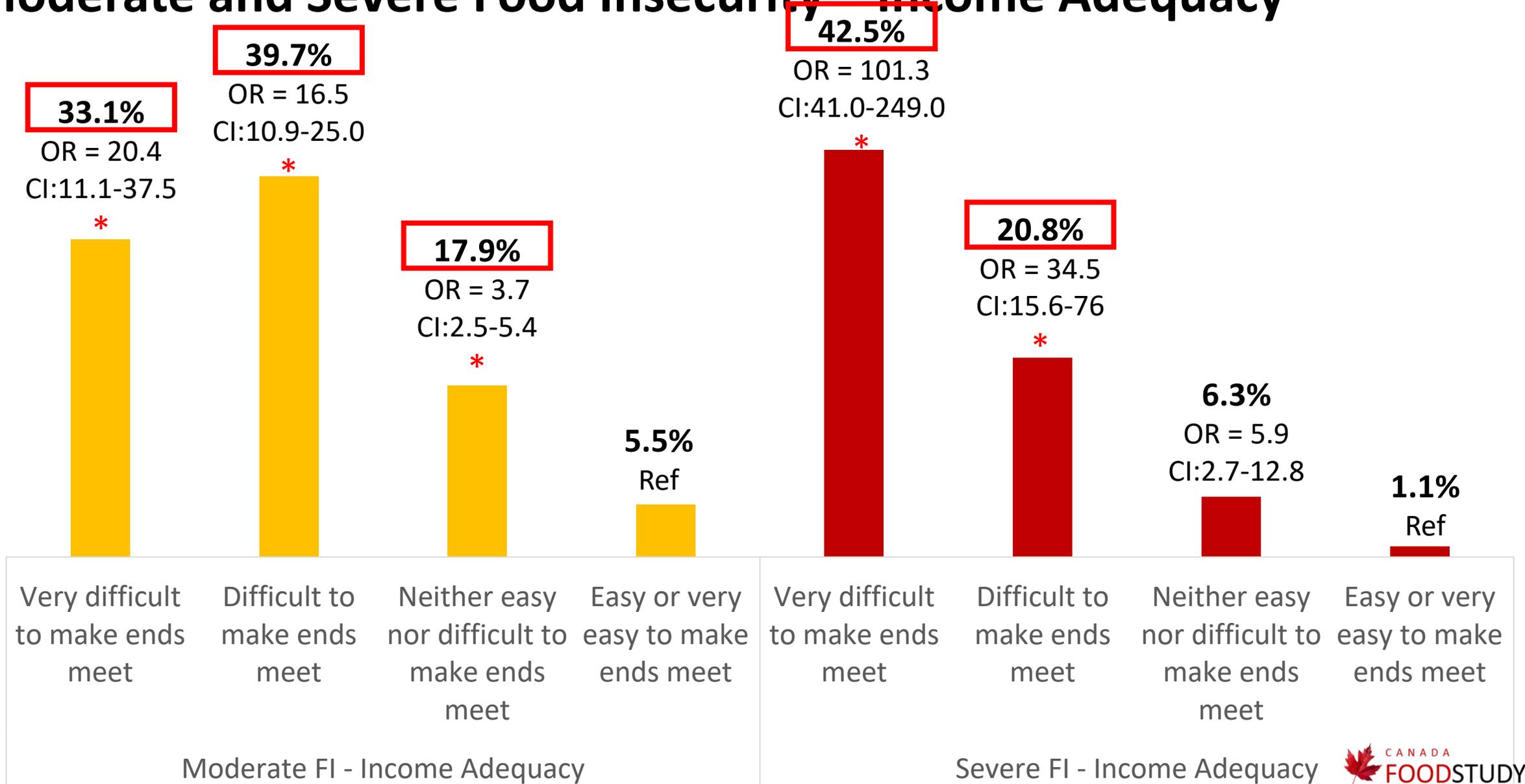
Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Race/Ethnicity



Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Income Adequacy

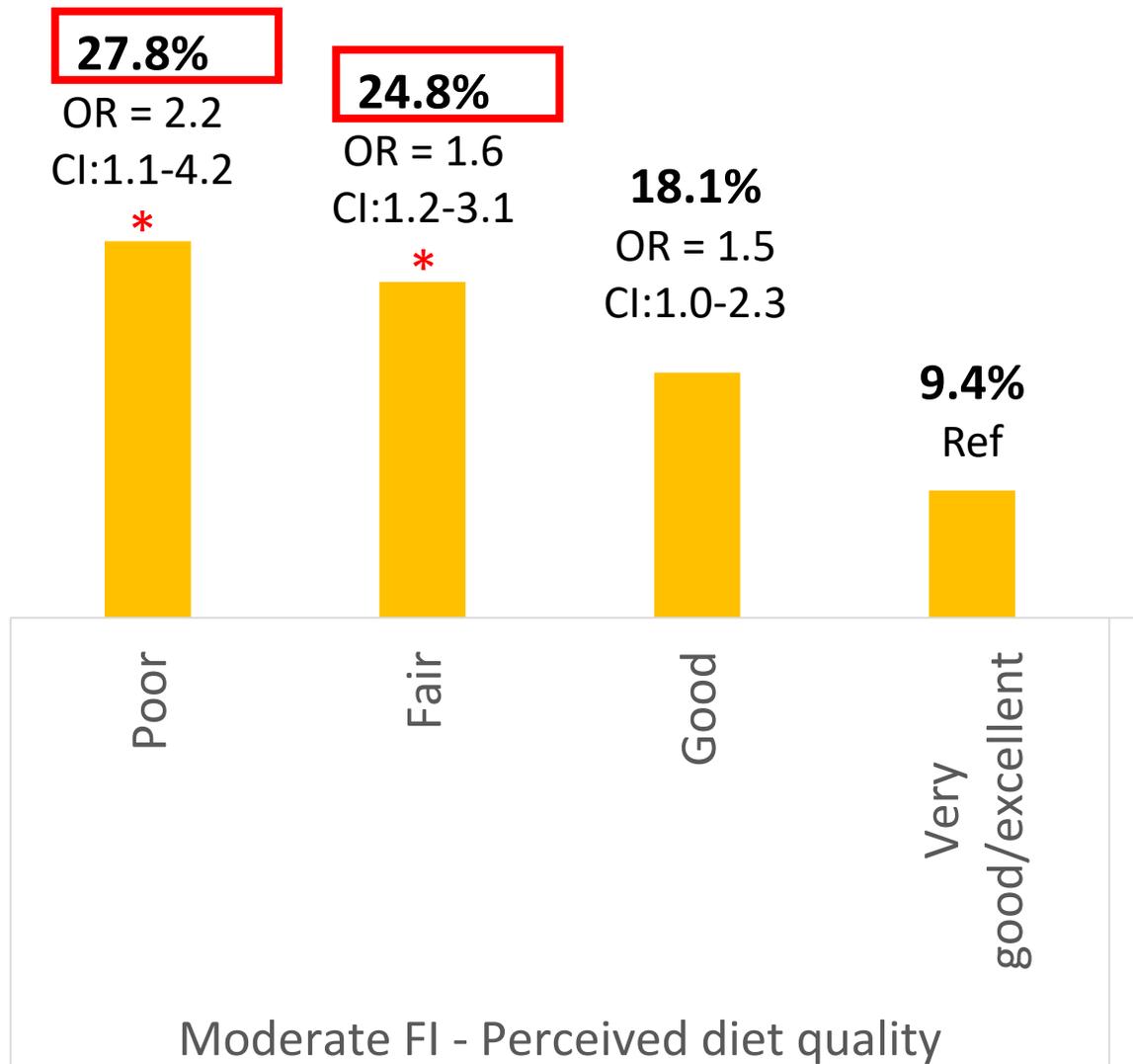


Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Income Adequacy



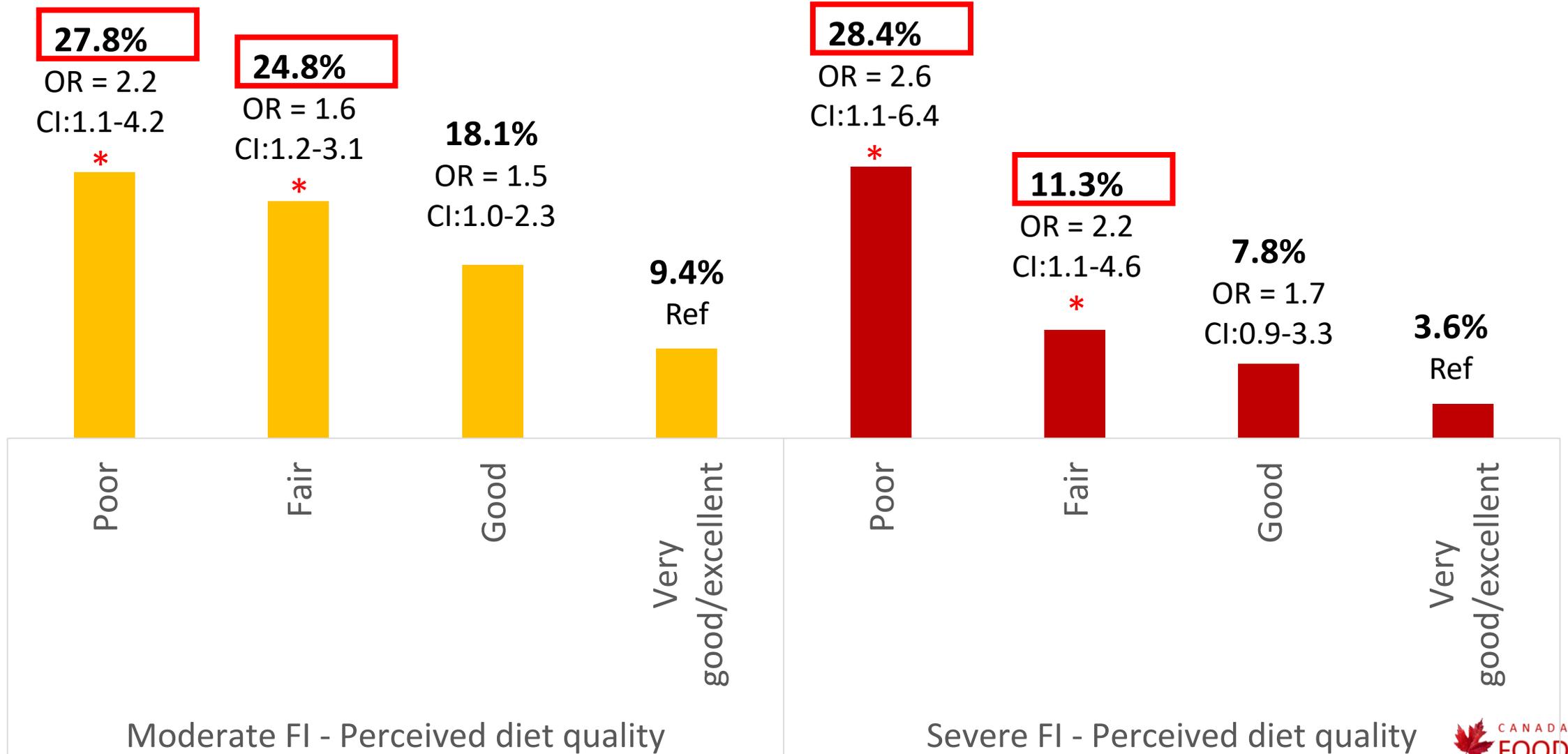
RESULTS

Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Diet Quality



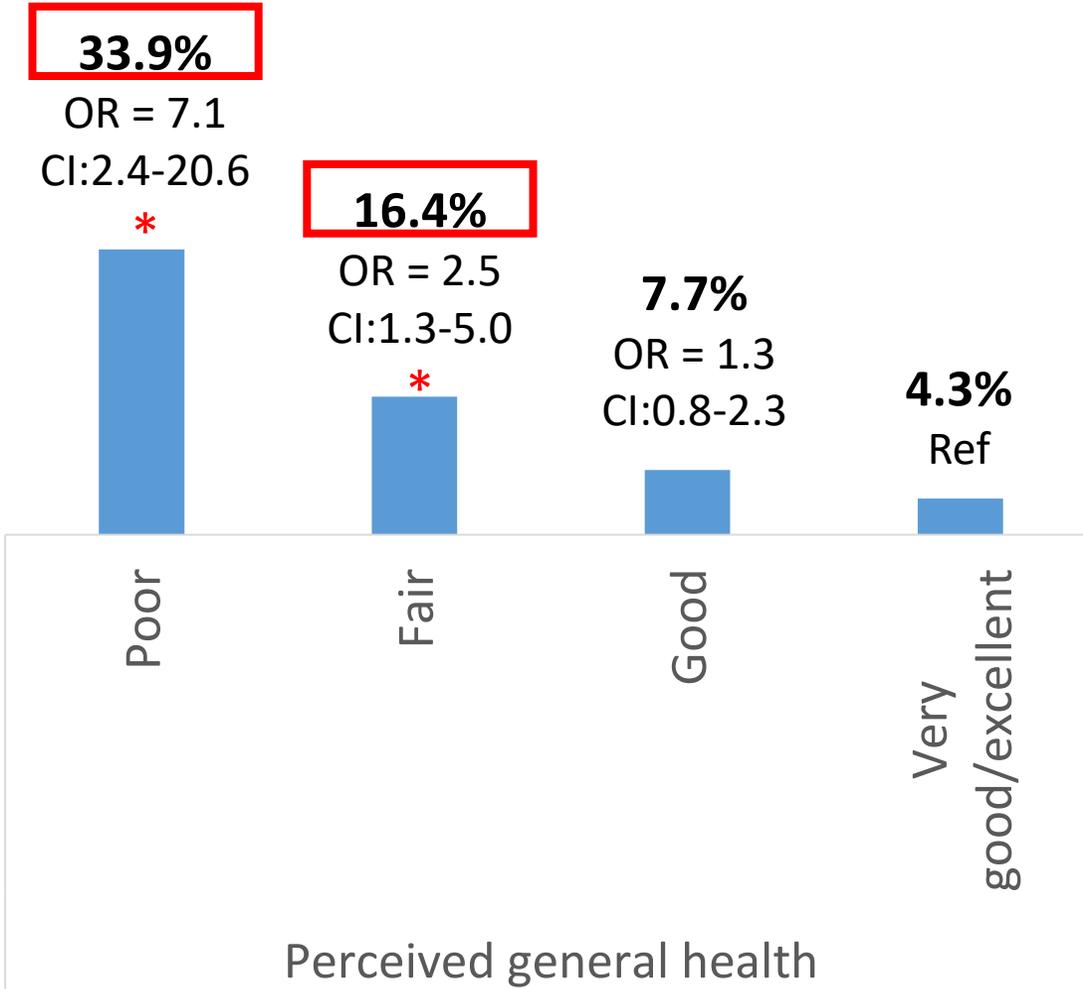
RESULTS

Moderate and Severe Food Insecurity – Diet Quality



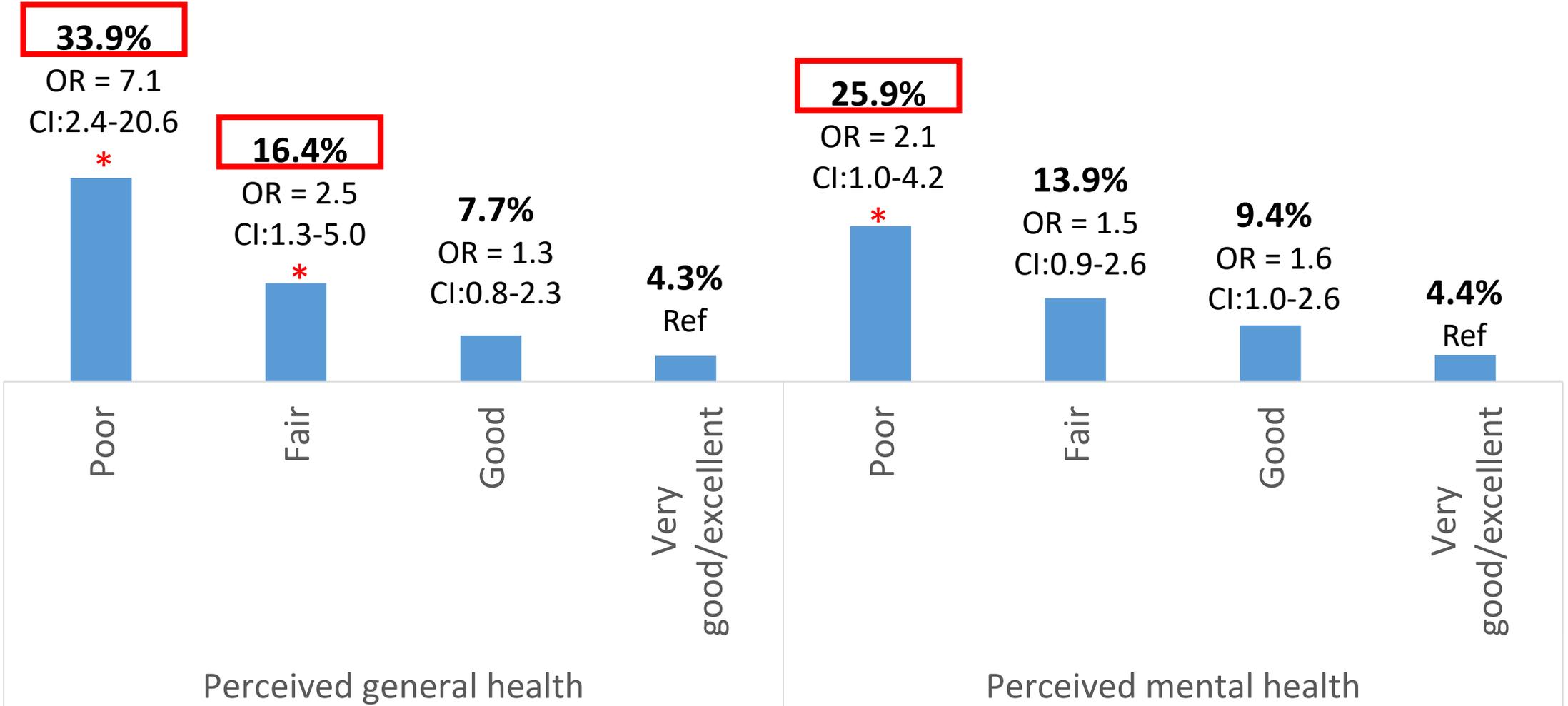
RESULTS

Severe Food Insecurity – General Health



RESULTS

Severe Food Insecurity – General Health



DISCUSSION

Concluding Remarks



- Higher estimates of food insecurity among young adult sample compared to the general Canadian population
- Need to target income and employment opportunities
- This could include:
 - Income protection
 - Improved benefits for low income households
 - Increased social assistance
 - Investment in subsidized housing

Acknowledgements

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- Canada Food Study team



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EXTRA SLIDES

BACKGROUND

What is food insecurity?

- Food insecurity is a serious public health concern worldwide¹
- Manifestations range from worry and anxiety about accessing sufficient food, to compromises in diet quality and quantity¹⁻³
- Associated with numerous health problems in short- and long-term⁴⁻⁷
 - Poor mental health and depression
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Asthma
 - Compromised immune function

DISCUSSION

Consistent with existing literature

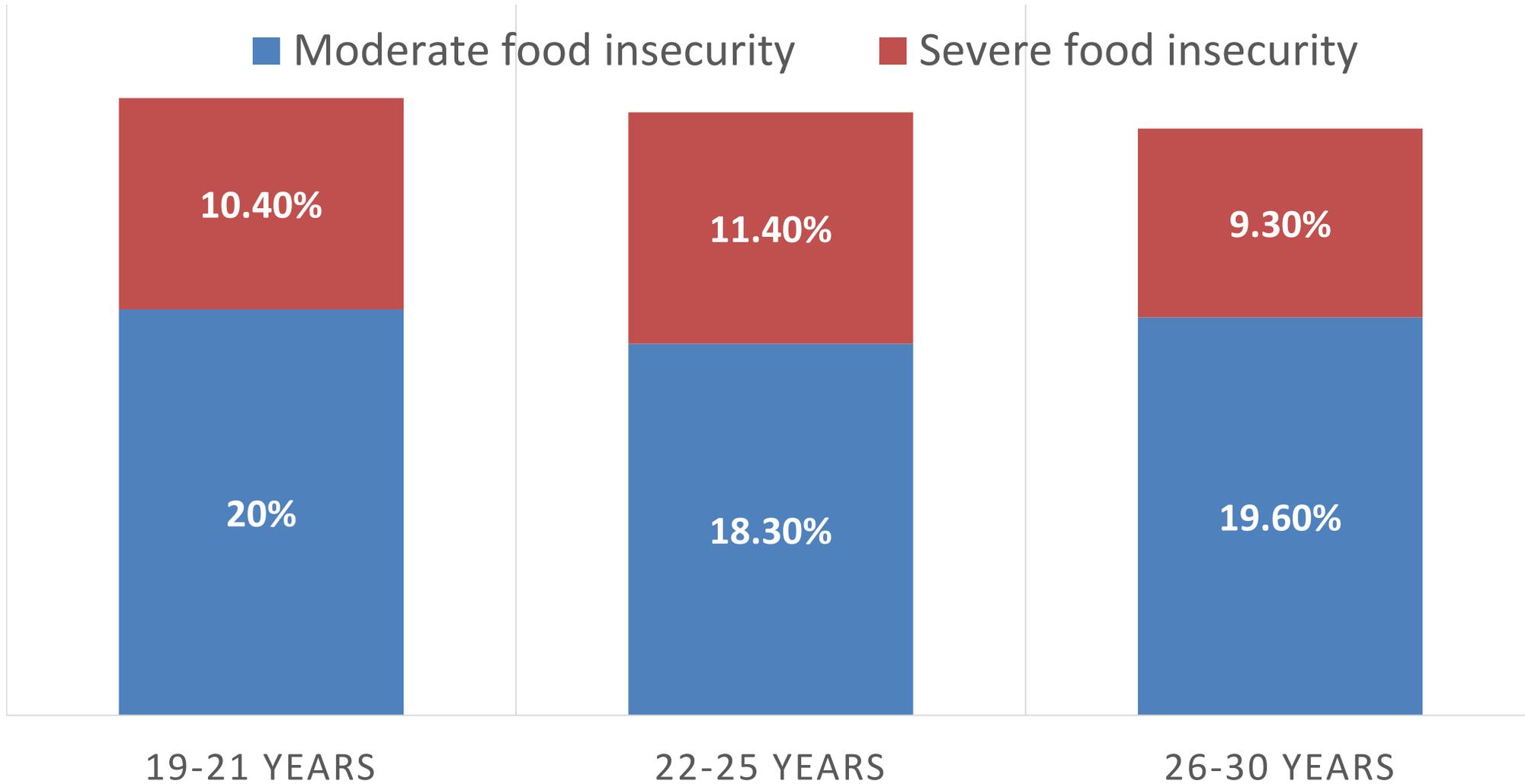
- Sociodemographic correlates of food insecurity^{3,8-10,12,14,19}
- Income adequacy as a strong correlate of food security status.
- Households with children were more likely to be classified as food insecure.
- High levels of vulnerability among Indigenous and Black Canadians, who were more likely to live in moderately and severely food-insecure households.

What's new?

- Study estimates are somewhat higher than estimates for the overall Canadian population.^{2,3}
 - Estimates among young adults may be higher because of their stage in the life course, which is often characterized as a period of transition, i.e., moving outside of caregivers' homes and care and potentially experiencing precarious employment status and income.¹⁰⁻¹³
- Mixed evidence on the relationship between weight status and food insecurity among young adults.^{38,39}
- **Comment on trends with self-reported health.**

RESULTS

Food insecurity by age group



RESULTS

Moderate Food Insecurity - BMI

