

CLIENT FOOD NEEDS AT COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRIES

TRI RIVER REGION

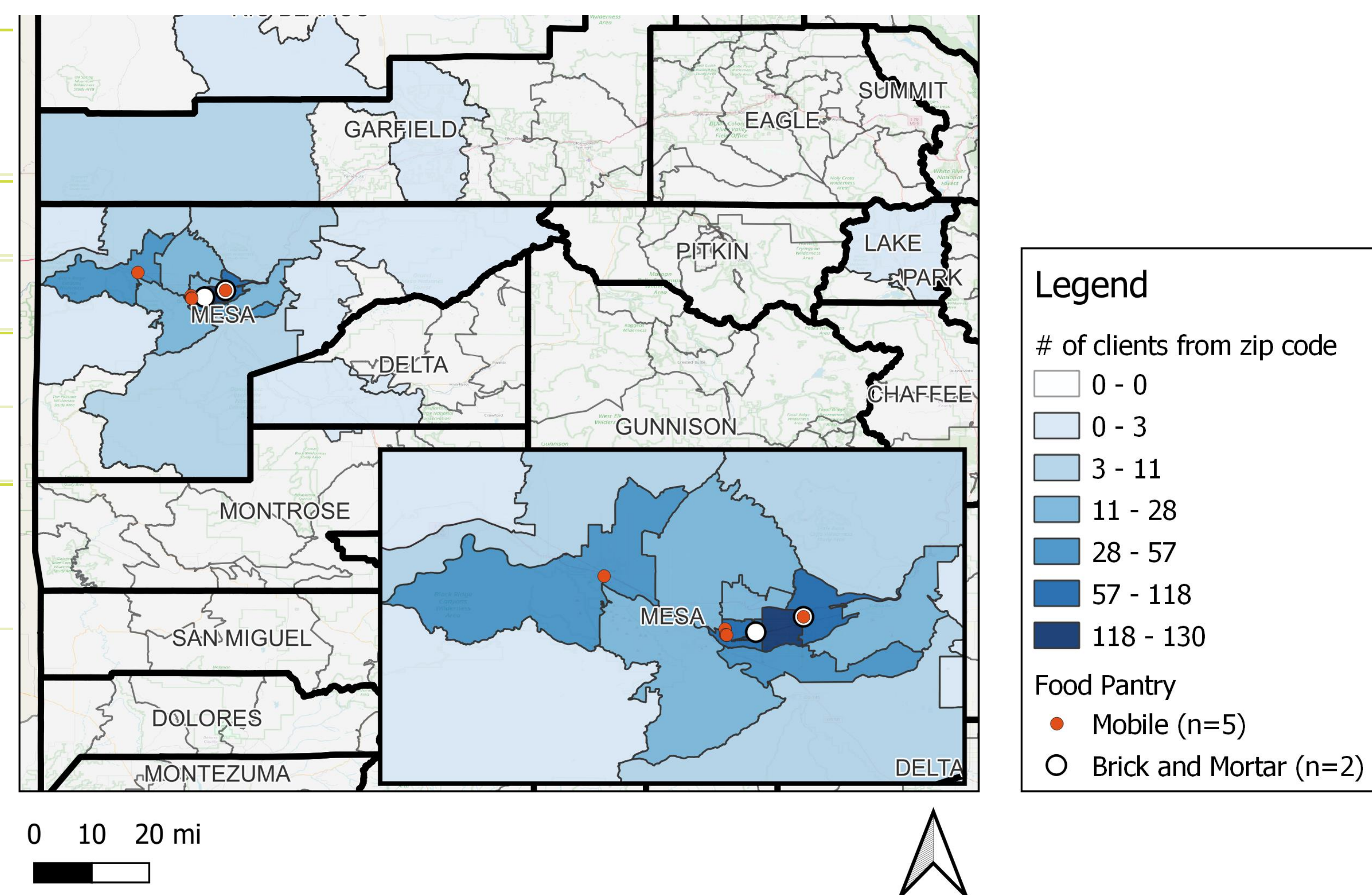
PROJECT OVERVIEW & METHODS



Who?	Mesa County Hunger Alliance Orchard Mesa Research Station CSU Extension Program
What?	Survey of 623 clients at mobile and brick-and-mortar food pantries in Mesa County to assess gaps in the food pantry system
When?	10-week CSU Extension Internship Summer 2021
Where?	Mesa County, CO 6 community food pantries
Why?	Looking for gaps in the food pantry system



FOOD PANTRY LOCATION & CLIENT DISTRIBUTION



COOKING AS A BARRIER TO USING FOOD

31% of clients who said they can't use some of the food said it's because they can't cook it

- **59%** said it's because they need other cooking supplies
- **17%** said it's because they don't have access to a kitchen
- **Only 12%** said it's because they don't know how to cook it

FOOD OPTIONS VS. CLIENT FOOD PREFERENCES

- Overall, clients are getting the foods they said they wanted from food pantries
- Clients **prefer fresh foods** over pantry items **87%** of the time
- Most people want meat, dairy, fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and grains
- 28%** of clients can't use some of the food because of dietary restrictions
- Food preferences are not the main determinant in choosing a food pantry

CSU EXTENSION RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the current consumer gaps that food pantries can meet through targeted purchases?
2. What educational opportunities are there for CSU to support increased consumption of fresh fruits, vegetables, or legumes?

PUBLIC HEALTH LESSONS

Qualitative data analysis	Spanish survey limitations	The danger of a single story	The joy of sharing with others
Considering unintended consequences	Listening for unexpected barriers	Building rapport	Community engagement

FACTORS INFLUENCING FOOD PANTRY CHOICE

Curbside pickup	Mobile (59%) Brick and mortar (34%)
Location	Mobile (57%) Brick and mortar (52%)
Amount of food	Mobile (44%) Brick and mortar (51%)
I feel comfortable	Mobile (40%) Brick and mortar (51%)
I like the food	Mobile (33%) Brick and mortar (35%)
*I get to choose food	Overall (22%) Community food bank (42%)

*Results are presented for mobile vs. brick-and-mortar pantries, except where differences are specific to an individual food pantry
**Other options not listed include liking the hours, speaking the client's language, having foods from the client's culture, and other miscellaneous factors that were selected by only a small percentage of clients but may be important when looking at individual pantry results

KEY FINDINGS & RECOMMENDATIONS

- Clients are going to multiple food pantries and are willing to travel, but location matters**
 - Liaison at food pantries to help clients navigate other resources
- When choosing a food pantry, other factors are more important than liking the food**
 - Evaluations of barriers and facilitators to using food pantries should consider more than just food preferences
- Most clients knew how to cook, even if they said they couldn't cook some food**
 - Consider other barriers to cooking
 - Provide other cooking ingredients at food pantries or educational events
- Dietary restrictions impact people's ability to use food from food pantries**
 - Advertise dietary restriction options
 - Consider dietary restrictions with cooking education