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NY Food 20/20: Visions, Research and Recommendations for Food Systems During COVID-19 and Beyond

Evaluation Rationale and Framework

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Covid-19 in New York City

- Probable high levels of unknown cases in February and early March
- Hospitals overwhelmed and high deaths late March through early May

The New York Times

By Jesse McKinley March 22, 2020

New York City Region Is Now an Epicenter of the Coronavirus Pandemic

The city and its suburbs account for roughly 5 percent of global cases, forcing officials to take urgent steps to stem the outbreak.

The streets of Manhattan were eerily quiet on Sunday, as cases of the coronavirus in the city soared.
Jeenah Moon for The New York Times

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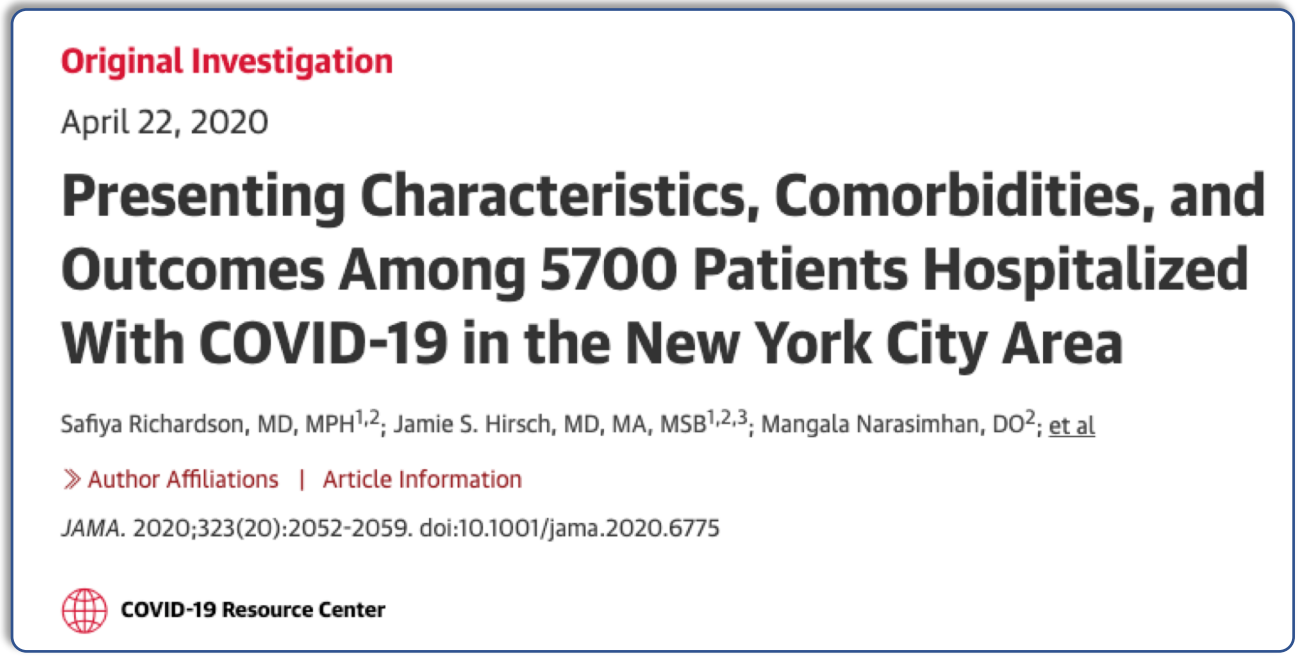
Covid-19 in New York City

- Many patients hospitalized with Covid-19 had chronic diseases *suggesting NYC's previous failure to reduce diet-related chronic diseases is contributing to the Covid-19 burden.*



Original Investigation

April 22, 2020

Presenting Characteristics, Comorbidities, and Outcomes Among 5700 Patients Hospitalized With COVID-19 in the New York City Area

Safiya Richardson, MD, MPH[1,2]; Jamie S. Hirsch, MD, MA, MSB[1,2,3]; Mangala Narasimhan, DO[2]; et al

» Author Affiliations | Article Information

JAMA. 2020;323(20):2052-2059. doi:10.1001/jama.2020.6775

COVID-19 Resource Center

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Covid-19 upended NYC food system

- Doubling to tripling of food insecurity
- Two in five parents skipping meals to feed their children
- Widening inequities in health and wealth

npr wNYC

BRIAN MANN

May 21, 2020 · 1:54 PM ET

THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

In New York City, 2 Million Residents Face Food Insecurity, Officials Say

National Guard members help load up boxes at a food distribution center at Kingsbridge Armory in New York City last month.
Lev Radin/Pacific Press/LightRocket via Getty Images

Officials in New York City say they plan to deliver more than a million free meals a day beginning next week. The number of people going hungry in the five boroughs has risen sharply during the COVID-19 pandemic.

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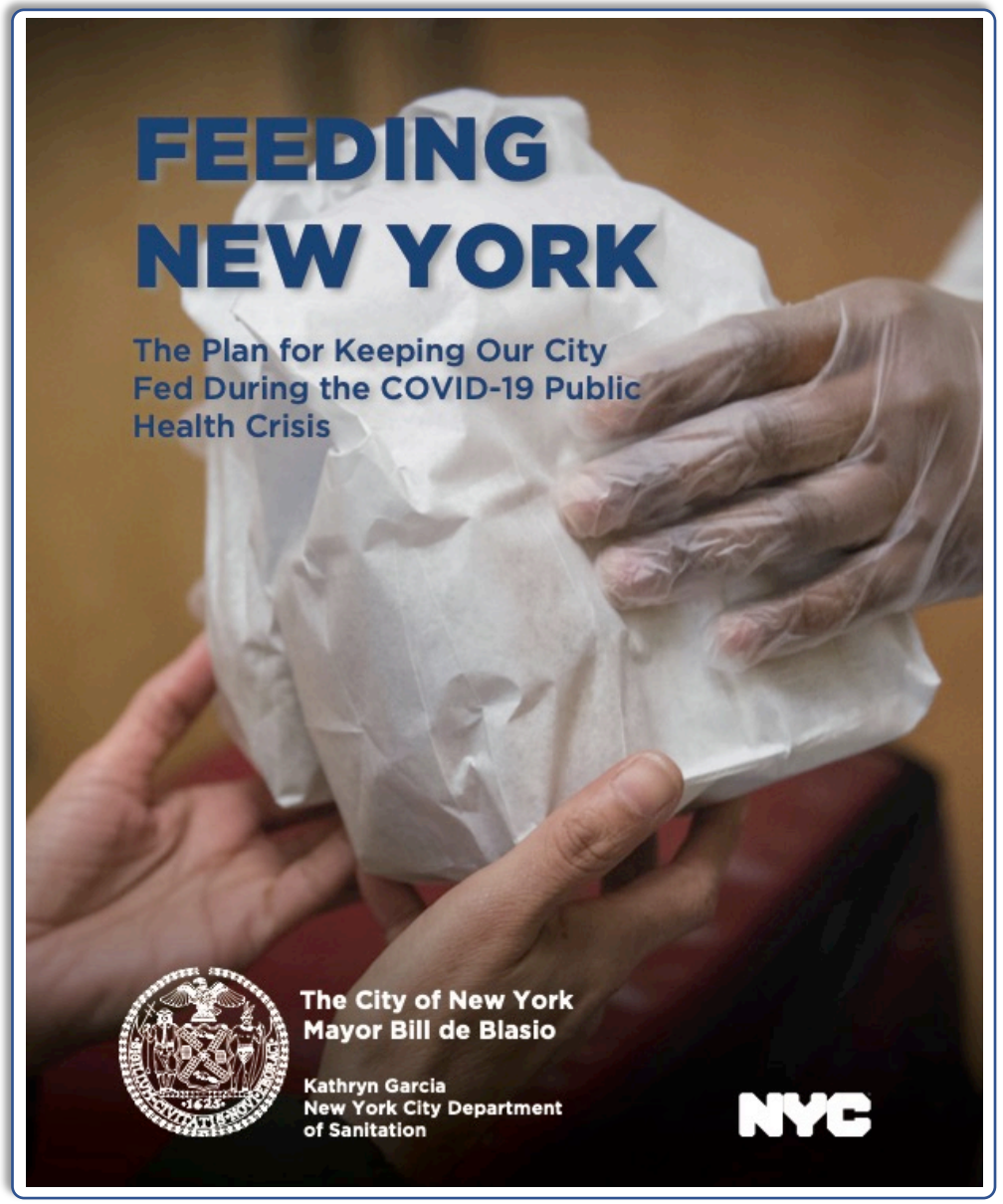
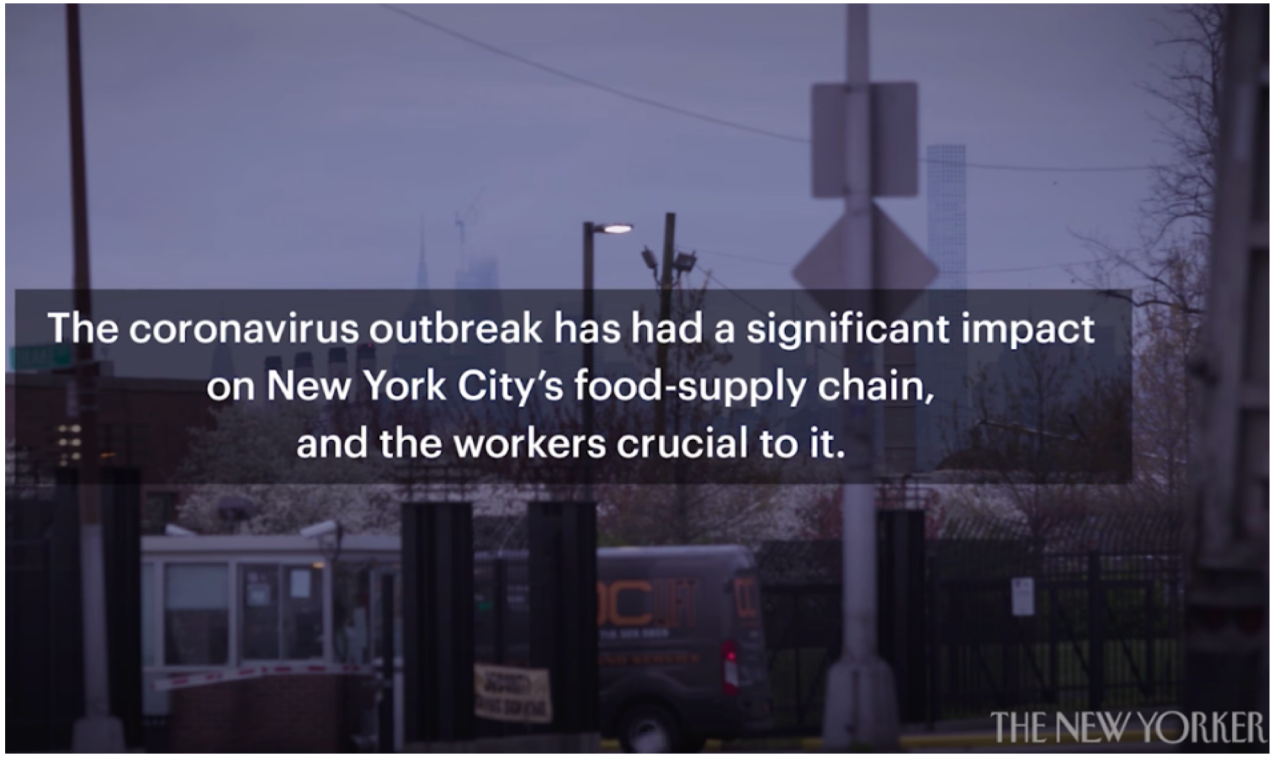
The response was swift and massive

- In April 2020 NYC distributed 10M meals.
- This is led by the free school meals which is distributing 450,000 a day, half for children and half for adults



More change into the future

- As the pandemic changes new threats and opportunities will arise
- The region's food system will continue to be disrupted and perhaps damaged.



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Why evaluate?

Monitoring the implementation of these new Covid-19 related programs can assess their impact on communities, institutions, and the food system as a whole.

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Three of NYC's leading food policy research centers are collaborating on this evaluation

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The CUNY Urban Food Policy Institute is a research and action center based at the CUNY Graduate School of Public Health & Health Policy.

Provides evidence and advocacy that helps to create healthier, more sustainable, and equitable urban food systems.

The Tisch Food Center is a research and advocacy center housed in the Program in Nutrition at Teachers College Columbia University.

Conducts research on food and nutrition education practice and policy to give people power to demand healthy, just, sustainable food.

The Hunter Food policy Center is an academic research center on Hunter College's East Harlem Campus in the School of Urban Public Health.

Through interdisciplinary research, policy analysis, evaluation, and education the center leverages the expertise and passion of the NYC food policy community.

Ecological approach to Covid-19 Food system Impact in NYC

Research frame question:

What is the impact of Covid-19 on food access and food resources in New York City communities with a focus on underserved and/or disproportionately affected communities?

Sub-questions

- What food resources closed? Comparisons between underserved and other communities?
- For open food resources what were the barriers and facilitators to access?
- What food resources and information did individual and communities access?
- How has food retail changed?

Research frame question:

How are NYC agencies providing meals in response to Covid-19?

Sub-questions

- What federal, state, and city policies influence institutional food service?
- What is working and needs to change for institutional meals to best provide food to vulnerable New Yorkers?
- What does a case study about school meals reveal about challenges and opportunities during Covid-19?
- How can the institutional food response to Covid-19 guide response to future crises?

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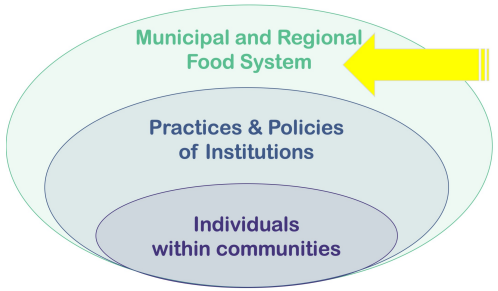

Research frame question:

What is the impact of Covid-19 on interactions among the components of the food systems across NYC, Hudson Valley and Eastern Long Island(e.g., growers, processors, distributors, retailers)?

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Sub-questions

- What are the common and differing needs during Covid-19 for consumers, food retailers, and food growers?
- How is the Covid-19 response changing the food workforce, their salaries and conditions?
- How is Covid-19 changing the regional food system?
- How can Covid-19 related innovations and problems advance regional and municipal food planning?

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Cross-cutting themes

- Interactions among the three levels of social organization
- Compare and contrast Covid-19 and non-Covid-19 food policies
- Compare and contrast Covid-19 food policies to other Covid-19 policies

Cross-cutting themes

- Synergistic (or contradictory) impact of various Covid-19 food policies
- Facilitators and obstacles to equitable implementation of programs and policies
- Cumulative impact of Covid-19 on food security in NYC

Cross-cutting themes

- Cumulative impact of Covid-19 food programs on access to healthy, affordable food
- Identifying Covid-19 innovations that should be sustained
- Impact of Covid-19 and response on vulnerable populations

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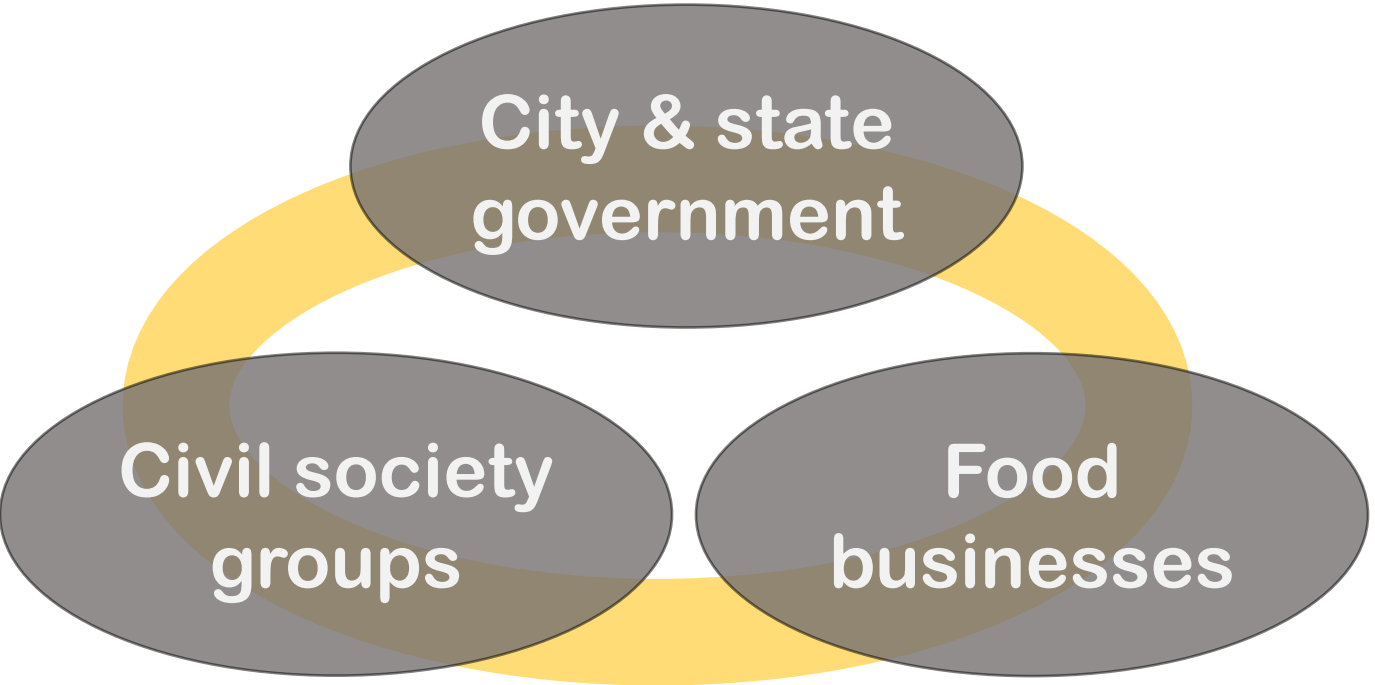
Cross-cutting themes



Interrelated role for Covid-19 food initiatives

Timeline and Deliverables

- Phase 1: Planning & Field-testing
  June to December 2020
- Phase 2: Implementation and Dissemination
  January to December 2021

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Questions, comments and to share your Covid-19 Food System research contact:

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