



FOOD FOR TODAY, HOPE FOR TOMORROW

**FOOD SECURITY PROGRAM EVALUATION
REPORT TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

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WITH THANKS TO:

THE ANDERSON CHARITABLE FOUNDATION, FOR PROVIDING SCHOLARSHIPS TO THE UNM EVALUATION LAB, AND MAKING THIS EVALUATION EFFORT POSSIBLE.
TERESA SANCHEZ, VOLUNTEER COORDINATOR AT CDP, AND ALL THE VOLUNTEERS WHO HELPED ENGAGE CLIENTS IN THE SURVEY AND FOCUS GROUPS.



BACKGROUND:

In July 2022, Casa De Peregrinos received scholarships from the Anderson Charitable Foundation to send four staff to the Summer Institute of the Evaluation Lab, a collaborative training program for community organizations, organized by the Masters of Public Policy program at the University of New Mexico. The class extended over the course of a week, and represented 33 credit hours.

The course involved the creation of logic models, theories of change, rubrics, (defined as: "A matrix that identifies criteria for success and describes levels of performance in relation to those criteria along a spectrum from poor to excellent"), the differences between quantitative and qualitative data, data collection tools, determining organization outcomes, evaluation goals, evaluation questions, and how the data will be used. Each class was in lecture format, with organizational teams then working to develop the workplan for their organization. Participants from CdP were: Lorenzo Alba Jr., Executive Director, Nancy Ryan, Deputy Director, Diana Alvarez, Programs Manager, Leticia Garcia, Mobile Pantries Supervisor.

New Mexico State University has also been a collaborator on the evaluation project, and the focus groups and survey have gone through NMSU Internal Review Board review and approval.



PURPOSE OF EVALUATION PROJECT:

1. TO LEARN TO MEASURE "OUTCOMES" RATHER THAN JUST "OUTPUTS"
2. TO UNDERSTAND WHAT IMPACT OUR PROGRAMS HAVE ON CLIENTS' LIVES
3. TO IMPROVE OUR REPORTING TO FUNDERS, PARTNERS, AND THE PUBLIC
4. TO IMPROVE OUR SERVICES TO CLIENTS
5. TO CREATE A MODEL FOR CDP FOR FUTURE EVALUATION EFFORTS



OUR EVALUATION PROCESS:

STEP 1: FOCUS GROUPS

Focus groups ran over the course of a week for 90 minutes each, done at different times of the day to accommodate different participants schedules. Participants received a meal and a gift card as incentives. Each was conducted in both English and Spanish. They were advertised with posters at the sign-in desk, and workers conducting client intake personally invited clients to participate. CdP conducted the four focus groups October 25 to 31, 2022. Their purpose was to ask in-depth questions about the impact CdP has on their families and to help develop the questions to be used on a larger client survey.

Number of clients invited to participate: @600

Number of clients signed up: 66

Number confirming attendance: 56

Number participating: 32

57% of those confirming participation ended up participating



OUR EVALUATION PROCESS:

STEP 2: AN ANONYMOUS, VOLUNTARY, WRITTEN SURVEY

A survey was generated based on our input from the focus groups and with input from our advisory team. It was conducted among clients at the central pantry over the course of one month. (As clients generally come for food once per month, this timeframe was used to get a representative sample). Surveys were provided in both Spanish and English, and clients were offered the opportunity to have a volunteer read the questions and record the answers.

Surveys were distributed to clients as they waited in line to sign-in for food. A verbal disclaimer was used. All surveys were collected in a box at the door as they picked up their carts. The survey was conducted from December 16, 2022 to January 11, 2023. Our impression was that clients were enthusiastic about the survey, and many thanked us for the opportunity to fill it out.

1,799 clients were served during that timeframe and all were offered a survey

714 surveys were returned for a 40% return

Note: Not all clients answered all questions, which will account for the difference in numbers of responses.



SURVEY RESULTS: PART 1, CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS

CLIENTS BY GENDER:

Male: 206 (31%), Female 418 (62%), Other 46 (7%)

CLIENTS BY ETHNICITY:

Hispanic/Latino: 76%, Caucasian 100 (15%), African American, Native American, Asian/Pacific Islands: Less than 1% each

CLIENTS BY INCOME:

Less than \$15,000: 453 (82%), \$15,000 to \$25,000: 105 (19%), Over \$25,000 (4%)

CLIENTS BY ETHNICITY:

Within the City of Las Cruces: 303 (75%), South County 68 (16%) North County 51 (12%)

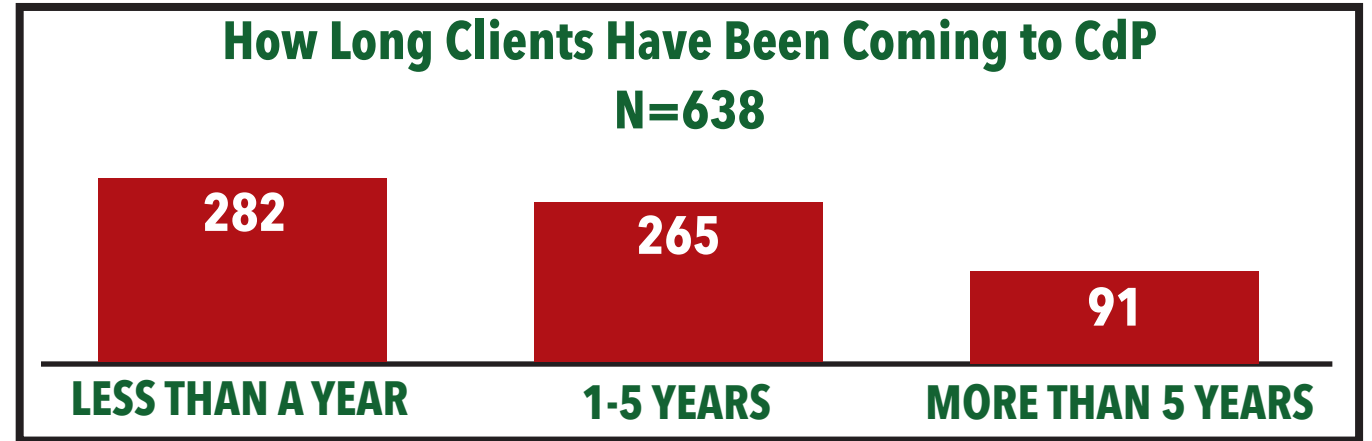
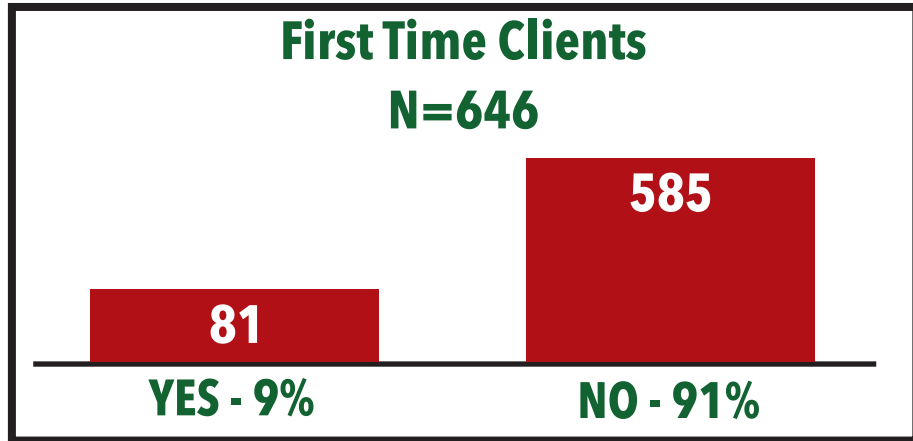
CLIENTS BY HOUSEHOLD SIZE:

1 Person: 101 (15%), 2 People 106 (15%), 3-5 People 222 (32%), 6-9 People 219 (32%), More than 9 People 37 (5%)



SURVEY RESULTS: PART 2 CLIENT HISTORY WITH CASA DE PEREGRINOS

FOR ALL CHARTS, N= THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTION



SURVEY RESULTS: PART 3 CLIENT REACTIONS TO CDP PRODUCTS & SERVICES

FOR ALL CHARTS, N= THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTION

Products Clients Most Look Forward to Receiving N=671 Multiple Answers Solicited

Milk & Eggs 555 - 82%

Meat 489 - 73%

Fruits & Vegetables 505 - 75%

Staple Products 389 - 58%

Bakery Products 288 - 44%

Other 197 - 29%

Would Any of the Following Nutrition Services Be Helpful to You? N=370 Multiple Answers Solicited

82 - 22% Recipes

64 - 18% Nutrition & Cooking Classes

44 - 12% More Information About Sell-By Dates

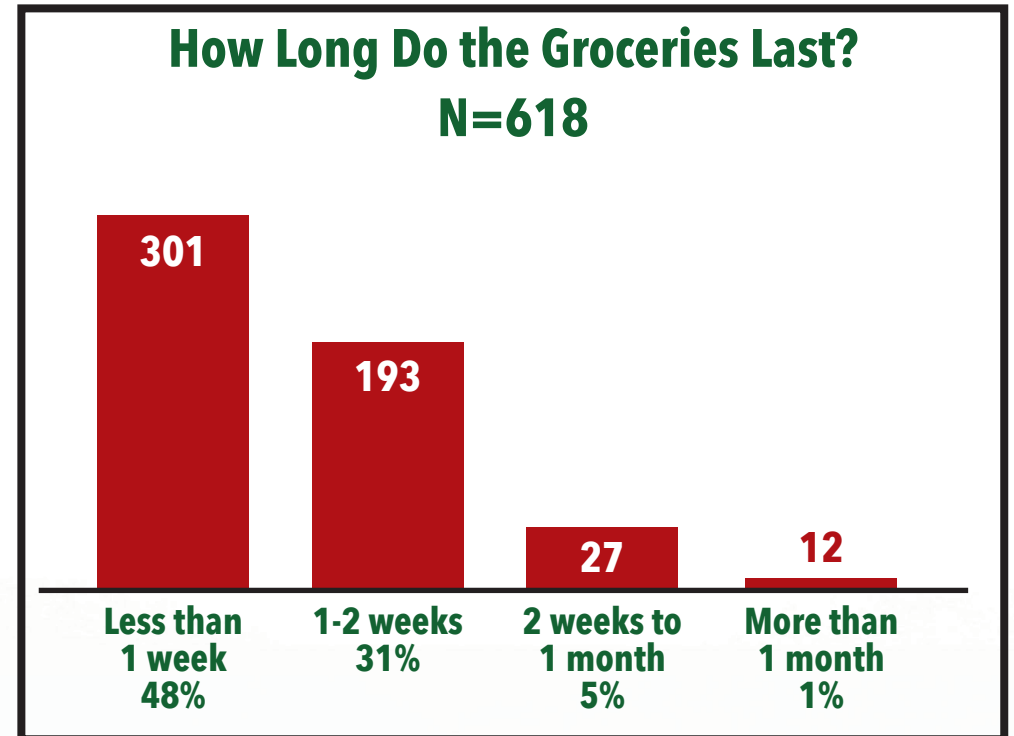
24 - 6% Nutritional Contents of Food

150 - 40% No, I don't need any cooking assistance



SURVEY RESULTS: PART 3 CLIENT REACTIONS TO CDP PRODUCTS & SERVICES

FOR ALL CHARTS, N= THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTION

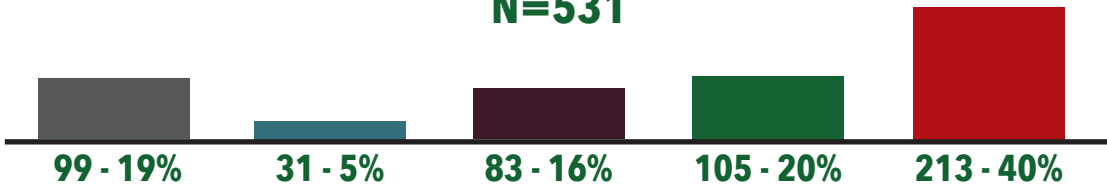


SURVEY RESULTS: PART 4 OUTCOMES: HOW CDP IMPACTS CLIENT FAMILIES

CLIENTS WERE ASKED TO RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ON A SCALE OF 1-5, WITH 1 MEANING "DOES NOT APPLY" AND 5 MEANING "COMPLETELY APPLIES"

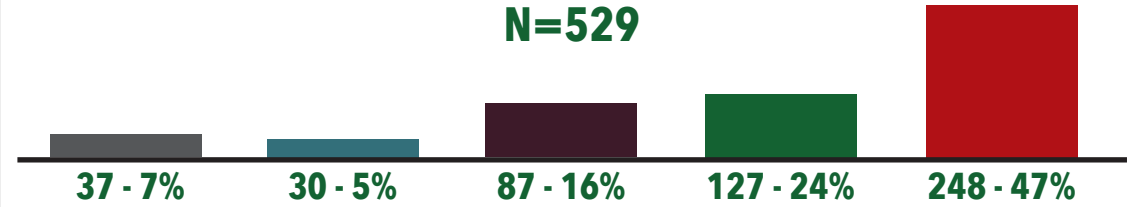
"Because of CdP services our family misses fewer meals"

N=531



"Because of CdP services we eat more fruits & vegetables"

N=529

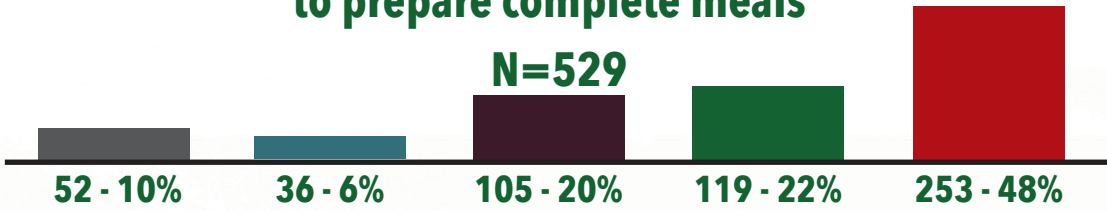


KEY

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5

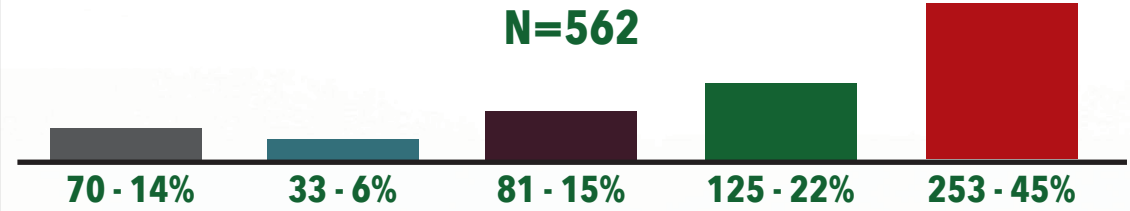
"Because of CdP services our family has the food we need to prepare complete meals"

N=529



"Because of CdP services we are buying less junk food"

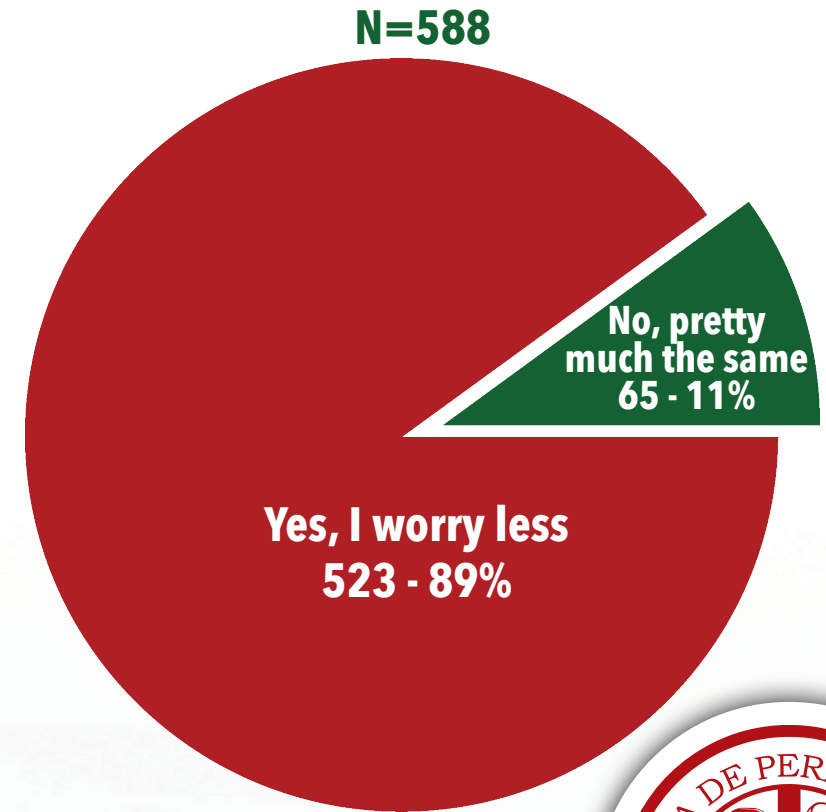
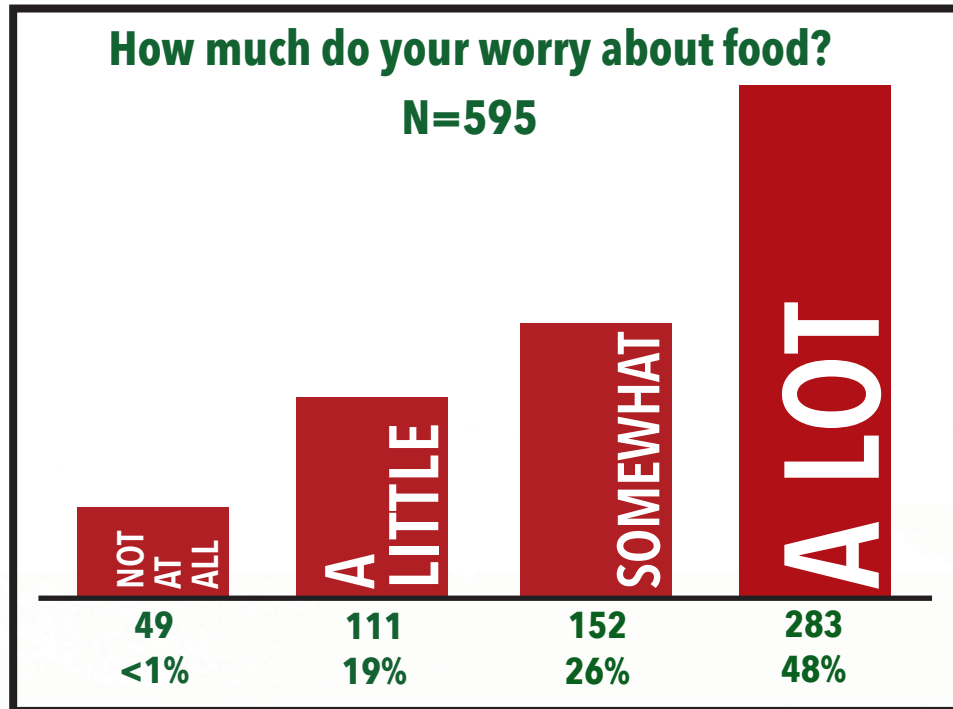
N=562



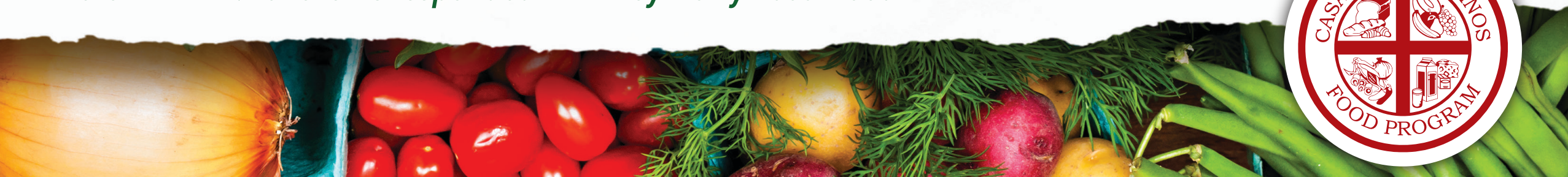
SURVEY RESULTS: PART 4 OUTCOMES: CONCERN ABOUT FOOD

CLIENTS WERE ASKED TO RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ON A SCALE OF 1-5, WITH 1 MEANING "DOES NOT APPLY" AND 5 MEANING "COMPLETELY APPLIES"

Has coming to CdP helped you worry less about food?

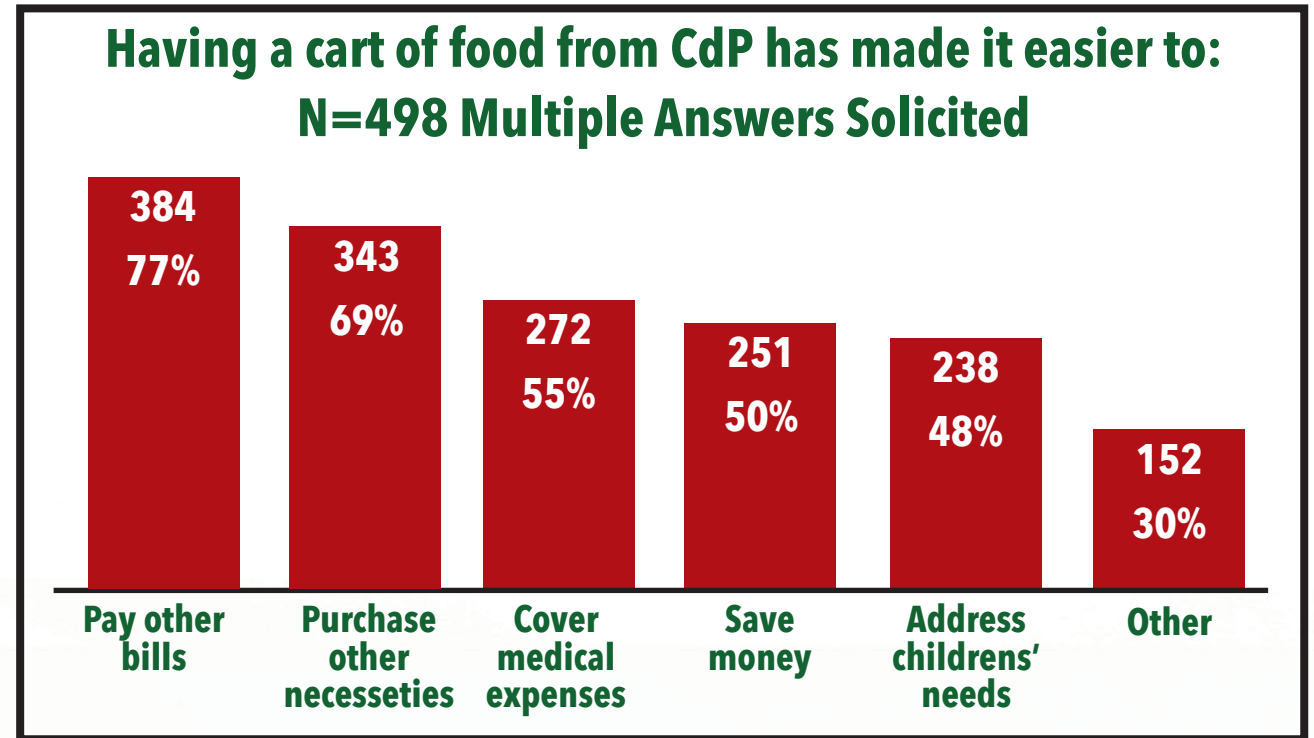
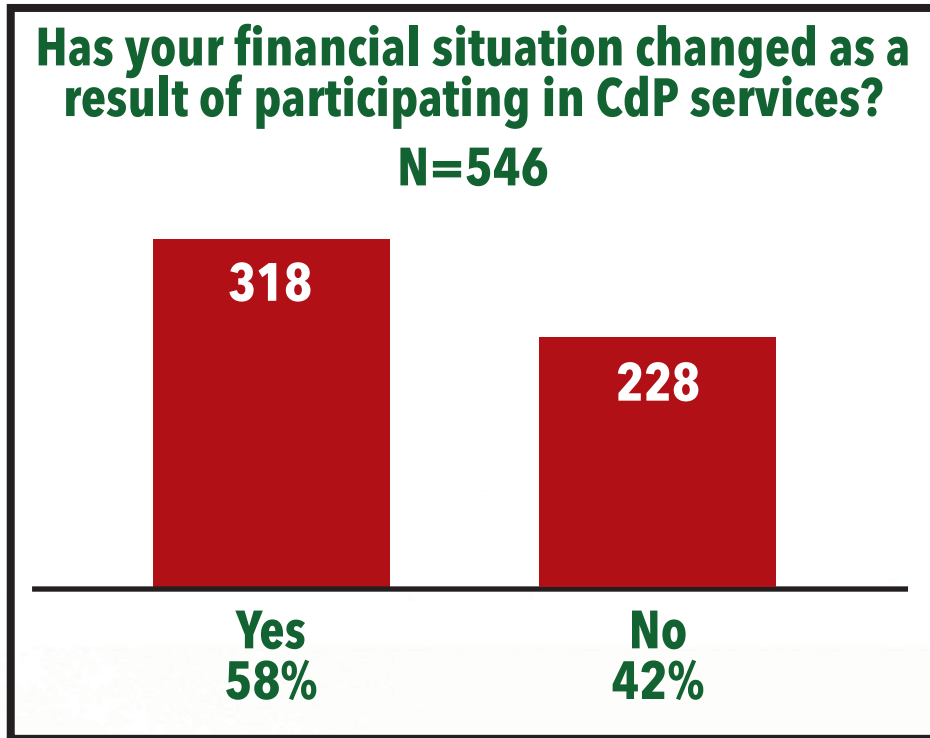


More than 99% of clients responded that they worry about food.



SURVEY RESULTS: PART 4 OUTCOMES: HOW CDP CHANGES FINANCIAL SITUATIONS

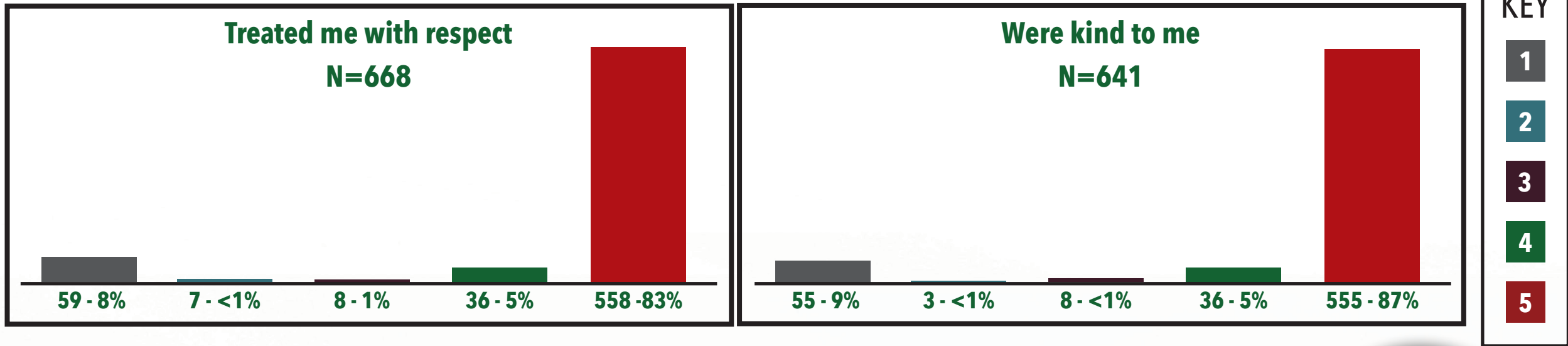
FOR ALL CHARTS, N= THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTION



SURVEY RESULTS: PART 5 CLIENT REACTIONS TO CDP

CLIENTS WERE ASKED TO RESPOND TO THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ON A SCALE OF 1-5, WITH 1 MEANING "DOES NOT APPLY" AND 5 MEANING "COMPLETELY APPLIES"

"The staff that served me when I came to CdP for food":



Note: Clients may have misunderstood the rating scale, as many of the "1" ratings were accompanied by positive comments

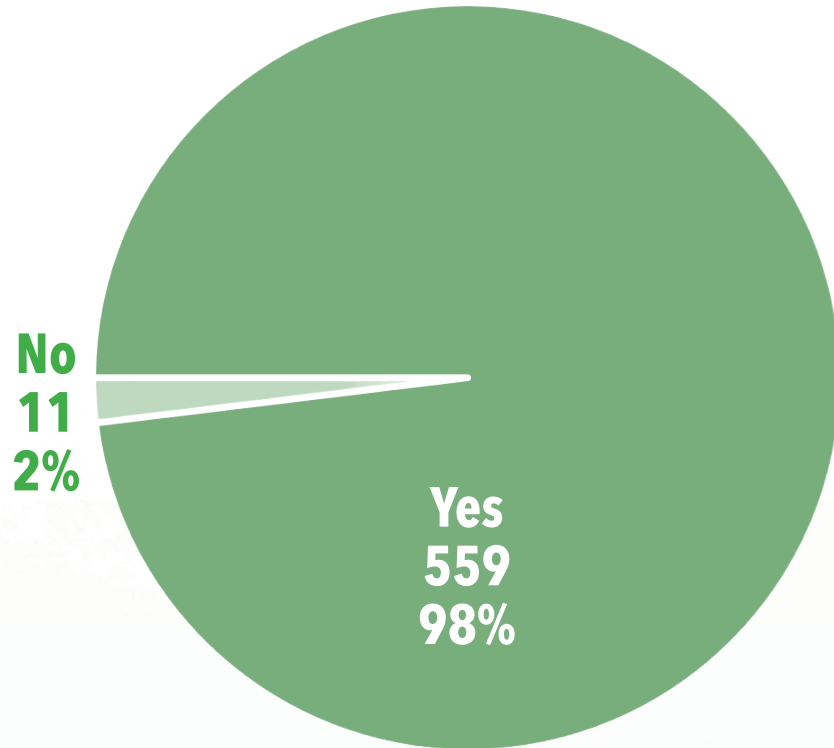


SURVEY RESULTS: PART 4 OUTCOMES: HOW CDP CHANGES FINANCIAL SITUATIONS

FOR ALL CHARTS, N= THE NUMBER OF CLIENTS RESPONDING TO THIS QUESTION

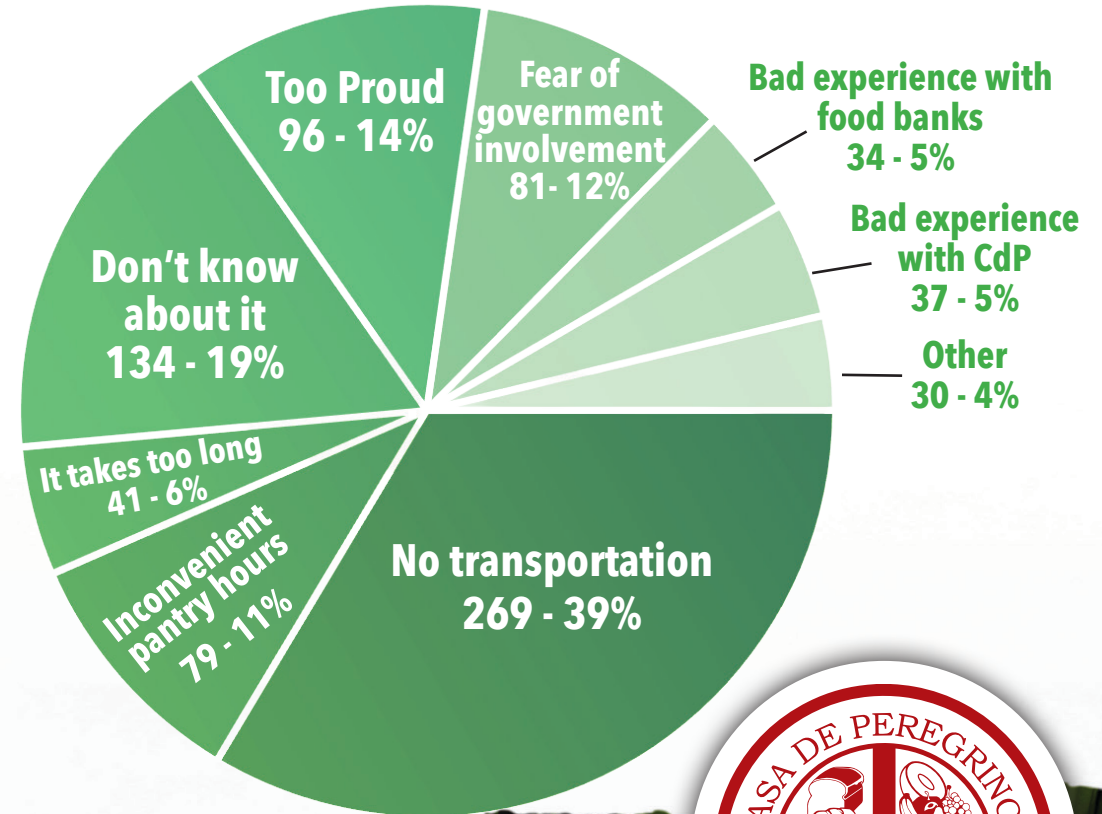
Would you recommend CdP to family, neighbors, and friends?

N=680



If they are not coming to CdP why do think this is?

N=695



PART 5: SUMMARY OF WRITTEN COMMENTS

Comments were solicited on the survey 11 times. Out of 714 surveys, 408 people made a written comment. The vast majority, 337, were responding to the question, "Are there other comments you would like to make about the staff and volunteers?" 325 were generic positive, using language such as: Blessing, Amazing, Good Job, Excellent, Kindness, Friendly. 6 negative comments were registered, 4 related to intake, the process was tedious or clients felt that staff treated them rudely, and 2 related to expired food and inconveniences such as weather and long lines.

PROCESS SUGGESTIONS:

- Use a swipe card for intake
- More carts to make the line go faster
- Let elderly, disabled clients come to the front of the line
- Keep the website up to date
- There is a lot of people in need and just because they do not have documents they cannot receive the help
- Like the line better than waiting for a number

OTHER:

"Not having a job & consistent income makes buying food very difficult."

"Food distribution is a life saver!"



PART 6: CONCLUSIONS

First. Client-staff interactions are outstanding. Overwhelmingly, clients felt that the staff and volunteers that served them treated them with respect and with kindness. Our staff and volunteers are to be commended for their compassion.

Second. CdP now has statistical evidence that *we are impacting our clients lives in specific and positive ways*. We are impacting them *financially*, 498 people indicated that the availability of a cart of food each month allowed them to have more options and more freedom: to purchase other necessities, to save money, and to pay other bills. And nearly 40% of the clients responding indicated that, as a result of CdP, *they are missing fewer meals*. But, what might have been less obvious is that *we are also positively impacting their emotional well being*. Over 99% of our clients indicated that they worry about food, but 523 respondents or 89% indicated that having a cart of food from CdP each month *allowed them to worry less*. This study gives us the statistical evidence that through our services CdP is positively affecting client families' peace of mind.

Third. *Nutrition education services would be welcomed by CdP clients*. Almost 1/3 of the survey takers indicated that they would appreciate classes, recipes, and/or information about the nutritional content of different kinds of food.

Fourth. The food that CdP provides is but a fraction of what is needed. CdP strives to provide a week's worth of food to families, and the data shows *48% of clients use their food in under a week*. For clients receiving SNAP benefits, 80% are used within the first two weeks of when they are received, and 21% are used on the day that they are received. This is a problem that is bigger than CdP, as we are incapable of providing all the food families need, but one we need to remain aware of, and to advocate for policies that help relieve food insecurity.

Finally. There remain numerous obstacles for CdP to overcome as it strives to provide food to needy families in our county. Transportation is indicated as the biggest obstacle to receiving services, which is reflective of both generational poverty, and the dearth of public transportation in Doña Ana County. It is an expensive and challenging obstacle to overcome, and not one that CdP is able to do on its own. However, clients' perception of why their friends, neighbors, and family members don't come to CdP also indicate that *many might not be aware of our services*, or might not understand who our programs serve. Increased outreach can begin to address this lack of understanding and let potential clients know about our services and our policies.



NEXT STEPS:

1. Complete a final report with complete documentation of the process and data
2. Create a poster to advertise results to clients and thank them for their participation
3. Circulate final report to funders, partners, and the public
4. Generate plan and schedule for evaluation of other CdP programs: Rural Pantries, Senior Pantries, Student Pantries, and Childrens' Programs

