WHAT PEOPLE EAT

FOOT DESERTS

Food deserts are geographic areas where access to affordable, nutritious food options is limited or nonexistent because grocery stores are too far away.





FOOD DESERT STATISTICS AND ACCESS TO GROCERY STORES

A food desert is a census tract in the U.S. that's low-income, and its residents typically have limited access to supermarkets and grocery stores. Instead, these individuals usually have access to foods at convenience or corner stores, which may offer limited healthier, nutritionally valuable foods in lieu of cheaper, calorie-heavy foods.



OF THE 65,000 **CENSUS TRACTS** IN THE U.S.

meet the federal definition of a food desert

THESE TRACTS

82% LIVE IN URBAN AREAS

grocery store exists within 1 mile

18% LIVE IN RURAL AREAS

where no grocery store exists within 10 miles





COUNTIES WITH THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE OF AMERICANS LIVING IN FOOD DESERTS SHOW A 9% HIGHER RATE OF ADULT OBESITY THAN THOSE LIVING IN NON-FOOD DESERT REGIONS

WHY RESIDENTS IN FOOD DESERTS HAVE LITTLE ACCESS TO HEALTHY AND NUTRITIOUS FOODS

Top food retailers often avoid building supermarkets or grocery stores in these rural or low-income neighborhoods. Instead, these regions usually feature convenience or corner stores.

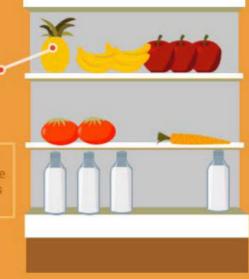
opened 10,300 stores from 2011 to 2015

WERE GROCERY STORES

only 250 of these grocery stores were located in food desert region



small markets have on fresh food





2.5 TIMES MORE

HEALTHY FOOD COSTS MORE

HOW SOCIAL WORKERS CAN HELP REDUCE THE EFFECTS OF FOOD DESERTS

CHANGES TO THE SNAP PROGRAM INCLUDING: · Increase access to health foods at local retailers

- · Restricting the purchase of junk foods and beverages
- · Providing incentives to SNAP users to buy fruits and vegetables
- · Providing incentives to stores to stock produce, milk and other healthy foods

SPONSORING LOCAL FOOD EDUCATION PROGRAMS Teaching kids how to urban farm fresh produce,

cook it and allow them to use it for free lunches More diverse food pantries working

in conjuction with local farmers who grow fruits and vegetables





socialwork.une.edu

SOURCES