



## Food Justice: Food Access and Equality

*In 2014, Food Day has a special focus on issues related to food justice. Food Day envisions food that is healthy, affordable, and produced with care for the environment, farm animals, and the people who grow, harvest, and serve it.*

### The Facts:

- 23.5 million Americans do not have access to a supermarket within one mile of their home. **Areas with a majority of low-income residents have roughly half the number of supermarkets as areas with wealthy residents.**<sup>1</sup>
- As of 2007, compared to predominantly white ZIP codes, majority African American ZIP codes had about **half the number of supermarkets**, and mostly Latino ZIP codes had about **one-third as many**.<sup>2</sup>
- In Mississippi—which has the highest obesity rate of any state—over **70 percent of food stamp eligible households travel more than 30 miles** to reach a supermarket.<sup>3</sup>
- Nationally, **low-income ZIP codes have 30 percent more convenience stores**, which tend to lack healthy items, than middle-income ZIP codes.<sup>2</sup>
- Using statistical modeling techniques that control for a variety of factors, researchers estimate that **adding a new grocery store to a high-poverty neighborhood in Indianapolis would lead to a three-pound weight decrease** among residents, while eliminating a fast-food restaurant in a neighborhood with a high density of fast food outlets would lead to a one-pound weight decrease.<sup>2</sup>
- According to a 2007 California Institute for Rural Studies (CIRS) study that administered a food insecurity assessment to 454 farm workers in Fresno County, California—one of the country's most agriculturally productive areas—around **half (45 percent) of the farm workers reported experiencing food insecurity**.<sup>4</sup>
- Increased access to local food can improve the local economy and help lift low-income residents out of poverty.** A 2010 study in 16 counties in Northeastern Ohio found that 27,664 new jobs could be created (providing work for one-eighth of unemployed residents of the area) and \$4.2 billion in annual regional sales raised if just 25 percent of consumer demand for locally-produced food was met locally.<sup>5</sup>



1 "Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences." United States Department of Agriculture. June 2009. [http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/242675/ap036\\_1\\_.pdf](http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/242675/ap036_1_.pdf)

2 Powell, L., Slater, S., Mirtcheva, D., Bao, Y., and Chaloupka, F. "Food Store Availability and Neighborhood Characteristics in the United States." *American Journal of Preventive Medicine* 44 (2007): 189–195.

3 Treuhait, Sarah and Allison Karpyn. "The Grocery Gap: Who Has Access to Food and Why it Matters." 2010. <http://www.policylink.org/att/cf/percent7B97C6D565-BB43-406D-A6D5-ECA3BB-F35AF0/percent7D/FINALGroceryGap.pdf>

4 Wirth, Strolch, et al. "Hunger in the Fields: Food Insecurity Among Farmworkers in Fresno County." November 2007. <http://www.ncfh.org/pdfs/7338.pdf>

5 Masi, Schaller, et al. *The 25 percent Shift: The Benefits of Food Localization for Northeast Ohio & How to Realize Them*. December 2010. <http://www.neofoodweb.org/sites/default/files/resources/the25shift-foodlocalizationintheNEOregion.pdf>