

Food Security in the Inner City

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Abstract

Food security in the American inner city is one of the great food problems of the 21st century. The residents of these characteristically destitute areas have difficulty obtaining healthy, affordable food to feed themselves and their families. Dependency on imports and overcrowding limit the city's food availability while low income leaves the poor urban residents without access to food. In many cases, the desperation of this complex situation leads to the abandonment of both nutrition and morals in favor of a full stomach.

In response to these devastating effects, a variety of solutions have been proposed to combat the food insecurity problem. Where food aid continues to pour resources into temporary relief, this comprehensive set of solutions and mechanisms aims to create food security through correcting the sources of the problem – essentially seeking to change inner city dynamics. Moving food retail outlets into the city while expanding the use of urban agriculture promotes food self-sufficiency and availability. Meanwhile, heightening urban income and civic order would provide greater consumer purchasing power for both transportation and food.

The success of this initiative depends on its regular monitoring and promotion. Both professional and self-evaluations would provide a reliable assessment of the problem's changing nature due to the solutions, as well as a determination of best practices. Simultaneously, the junction of old and new promotional methods would provide the necessary awareness and financial support to ensure that the initiative realizes its maximum potential: satisfying the appetite of American inner cities.

Problem

Food Security: "Access by all people at all times to sufficient food and nutrition for a healthy and productive life."
Agricultural Trade Development and Assistance Act, 1990

Inner City: "Concentrations of U.S. Census tracts having a 20 percent poverty rate or higher, or either:

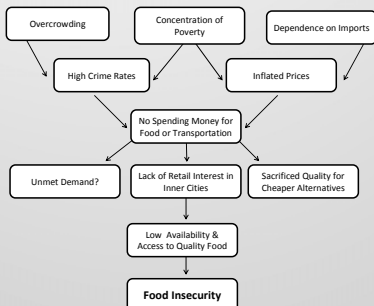
- Poverty rate or unemployment rate 1 ½ times or higher than surrounding metropolitan area
- Medium household income of ½ or less than the surrounding metropolitan area."

Initiative for a Competitive Inner City (ICIC)

- The median density of inner cities in 2000 was 6,113 residents per square mile, compared to 327 persons per square mile in the surrounding metropolitan areas.

- 40% of inner city residents are low income, earning less than \$20,000 annually.

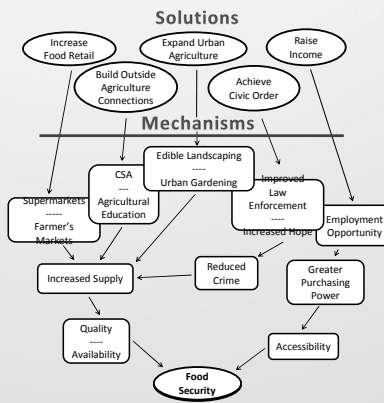
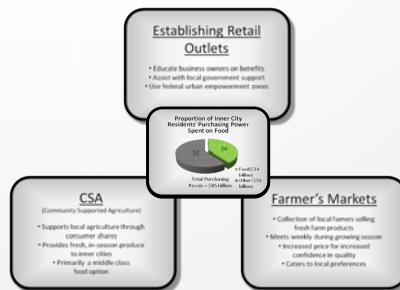
- Companies assume that inner cities are not attractive markets because the average income per household is only \$24,900 versus \$42,000 nationwide. These averages neglect the power of the density of inner city dollars and the considerable number of urban middle income consumers.



Solutions & Mechanisms

System of Solutions addresses:

Accessibility :: Quality :: Availability



Monitoring & Evaluation



Project Success is measured by changes in:

- Food availability, access, diversity, and quality
- Income and crime rate
- Necessity of food aid

Evaluation committee monitors project through:



Promotion



Target audience: Consumer Supplier Donor } groups in inner city food systems

