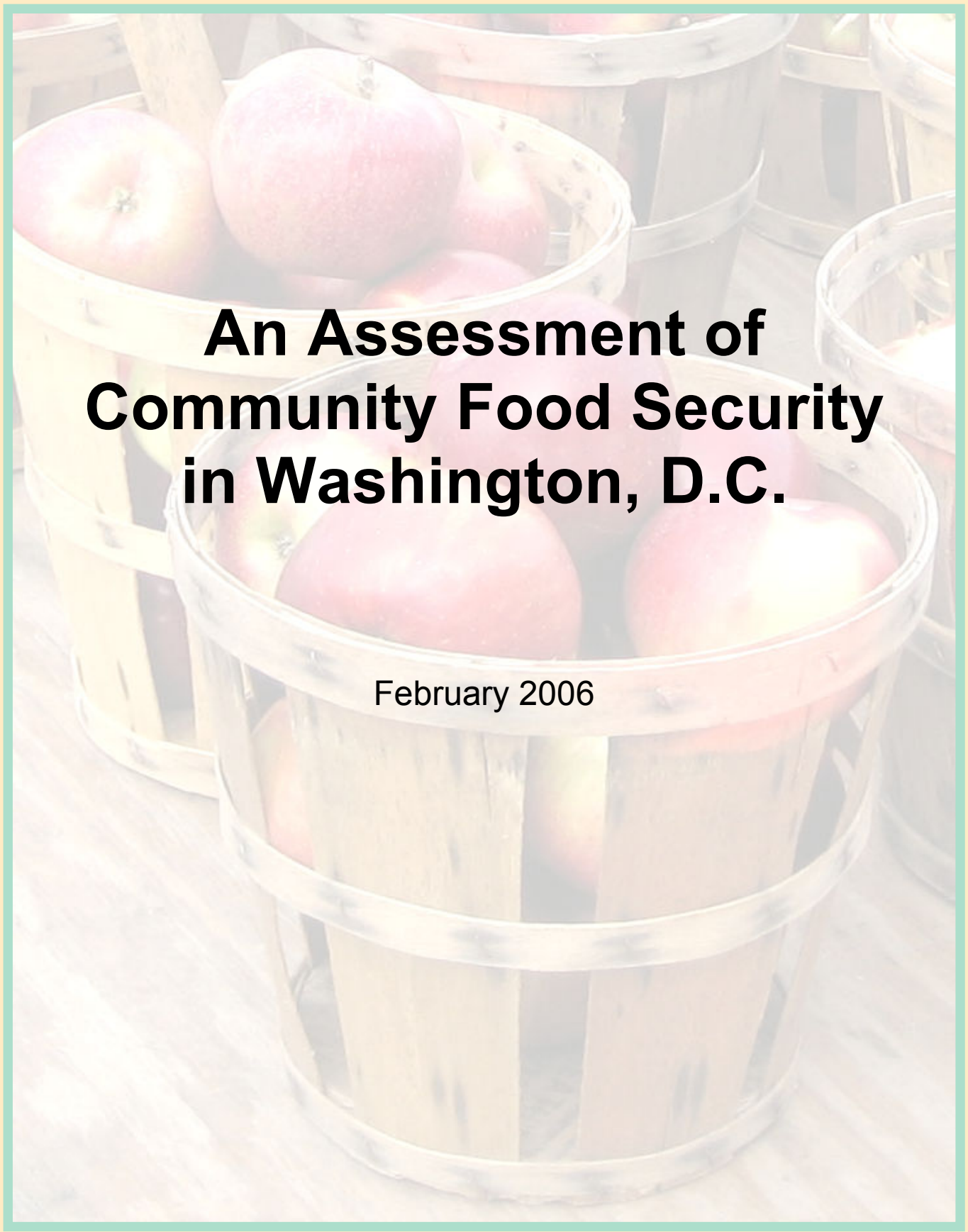

An Assessment of Community Food Security in Washington, D.C.

February 2006

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Plan to End Childhood Hunger in the Nation's Capital

This assessment has been completed for DC Hunger Solutions, a project of the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). DC Hunger Solutions is dedicated to fighting hunger and obesity and improving the nutrition, health, and well-being of children and families in the District of Columbia. This year the organization, in partnership with the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) and Share Our Strength, will begin implementation of a ten-year strategic plan to end childhood hunger in the nation's capital.[1]

The plan acknowledges that the strongest resources we have to fight hunger in the District are the federal nutrition programs. Therefore many of the goals of the plan focus on expanding access and utilization of programs such as the Food Stamp Program, the child nutrition programs, and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC.) The plan also focuses on ensuring that growth occurs in programs where expansion is needed and that all the programs are able to work to their strongest capacity. Also, the plan stresses the importance of increasing economic security and access to nutrition education for District residents. This way, people who access the federal nutrition programs will ultimately not need to depend on them for the long term and will have the knowledge and education necessary to ensure they consume nutritious foods on a regular basis.

Purpose of This Assessment

This assessment alludes to the federal nutrition programs, but the best way to learn more about them is to consult the strategic plan and DC Hunger Solution's "Get the Facts: 2005 Guide to Federal Nutrition Programs in the District of Columbia." The purpose of this assessment is to provide a more in-depth look at programs and systems that promote community food security.

Food Insecurity

The United States Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity is "limited or uncertain availability of nutritionally adequate and safe foods or limited or uncertain ability to acquire acceptable foods in socially acceptable ways." This would mean having to use emergency food supplies, eating less than necessary to get by, or buying extremely inexpensive foods that are not sufficient enough to maintain a normal diet.

Community food security is a "prevention-oriented concept that supports the development and enhancement of sustainable, community-based strategies to improve access of low-income households to healthful nutritious food supplies, to increase the self-reliance of communities in providing for their own food needs, and to promote comprehensive responses to local food, farm, and nutrition issues."[2] This assessment identifies where food insecurity occurs in the District, what community systems are in place that can help prevent this insecurity, and also looks at viable, new options for creating sustainable practices and programs to benefit people who are food insecure.

This assessment also identifies answers to the following questions:

- What barriers prevent food insecure residents of the District from having adequate and dignified access to nutritious foods at all times?
- What resources currently exist to help food insecure residents have adequate and dignified access to healthful foods at all times?
- How can the District build a strong community through better management of local resources?[3]

Although the federal nutrition programs are the largest piece of the puzzle in fighting hunger and food insecurity in the District, there are many other pieces that can contribute. This assessment focuses on how we can ensure access to healthy and affordable food through grocery stores, convenience stores, carry-outs, farmers' markets, schools, community supported agriculture programs (CSAs), food cooperatives, and community gardens. These different approaches are highlighted in the hopes that the information presented here will compliment the plan to end childhood hunger in the nation's capital and ultimately lead to creating a healthy, food secure, and prosperous District of Columbia.

Key Recommendations

While there are many ways to improve and expand the existing programs in the District, the following recommendations deal with the most pressing concerns and are the most important ways that community organizations, DC government, local businesses, and residents can aid in the fight against food insecurity today and in the near future. For more information on these recommendations and for examinations of their underlying issues, consult the page numbers noted.

Two Year Goals

Grocery Stores

- **Create a grocery store financing initiative**. Advocate for the city to provide money for supermarket development in underserved areas and encourage local businesses, developers, and investors to match city funds. This has been done successfully in Philadelphia, and it should be accomplished here. (p. 17)

Farmers' Markets & the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)

- **Ease the process of licensing and permitting for farmers' (both in general processes and for FMNP) and reduce the fees that come along with these processes**. This will encourage more farmers to participate in the farmers' market system, thereby increasing the amount of fresh foods that are available in the District. (p. 27)

School Food

- **Begin Farm-to-School initiatives in DC**. Farm-to-school programs connect local farms with school cafeterias to incorporate fresh fruits and vegetables in

school food. They are a new way to aid in obesity prevention and nutrition education, and the District should be involved in this approach. (p. 34)

Community Supported Agriculture Programs (CSAs) & Buying Clubs

- **Perform outreach to food stamp recipients and people who continually rely on food banks** concerning programs that promote food affordability and accessibility. In particular, promote SHARE, a grocery buying club that significantly lowers costs for participants, and CSA programs, which provide seasonal fresh fruits and vegetables at local drop off points. (p. 44)
- **Provide funding for CSAs to subsidize shares in low-income communities**. Currently only one CSA in the District (Capital Area Food Bank's Clagett Farm) makes a point to provide CSAs at an affordable cost for low-income residents. There should be more, but this requires some supplemental funding. (p. 46)

Community Organizing

- **Organize ANCs around the problems of lack of food accessibility and affordability in their communities**. Community members are an untapped resource in advocating for changes in the food system. Underserved neighborhoods can speak for themselves, but they need support and information to help make their voices heard. (p. 23)

Nutrition Education

- **Further publicize existing nutrition education programs**, such as SHARE's Health Project, BrainFood, Washington Youth Garden, Capital Area Food Bank's Food & Skills and Operation Frontline. These programs teach District residents of all ages the importance of health and nutrition and should be utilized to their greatest ability. (p. 53)

Five Year Goals

Grocery Stores

- **Advocate for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to provide discounted or free metro and bus fares** for people who are traveling to buy their groceries. Until grocery stores are built in underserved areas, these communities need alternative forms of assistance. (p. 17)
- **Require businesses that wish to establish grocery stores in higher-income areas of the District to establish the same number of low-income communities**. This will ensure equal access to food across the District. (p. 16)

Farmers' Markets & the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

- **Create an "Eat Smart, Buy Local" campaign in the District**. Encourage residents to buy local products to support local farmers and distributors while

simultaneously engaging the community in a larger effort to expand nutrition education and improve community health. (p. 28)

- **Run some of the existing higher-income communities' markets in conjunction with new ones to be started in lower-income communities**. This will encourage community unification and provide equal access to nutritious foods. (p. 27)
- **Eliminate the eligibility requirement that seniors must participate in DC's Commodity Supplemental Food Program in order to be eligible for farmers' market coupons**. This is currently excluding a number of seniors from having access to fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets. (p. 31)

Convenience Stores, Carry-Outs, and Fast Food Restaurants

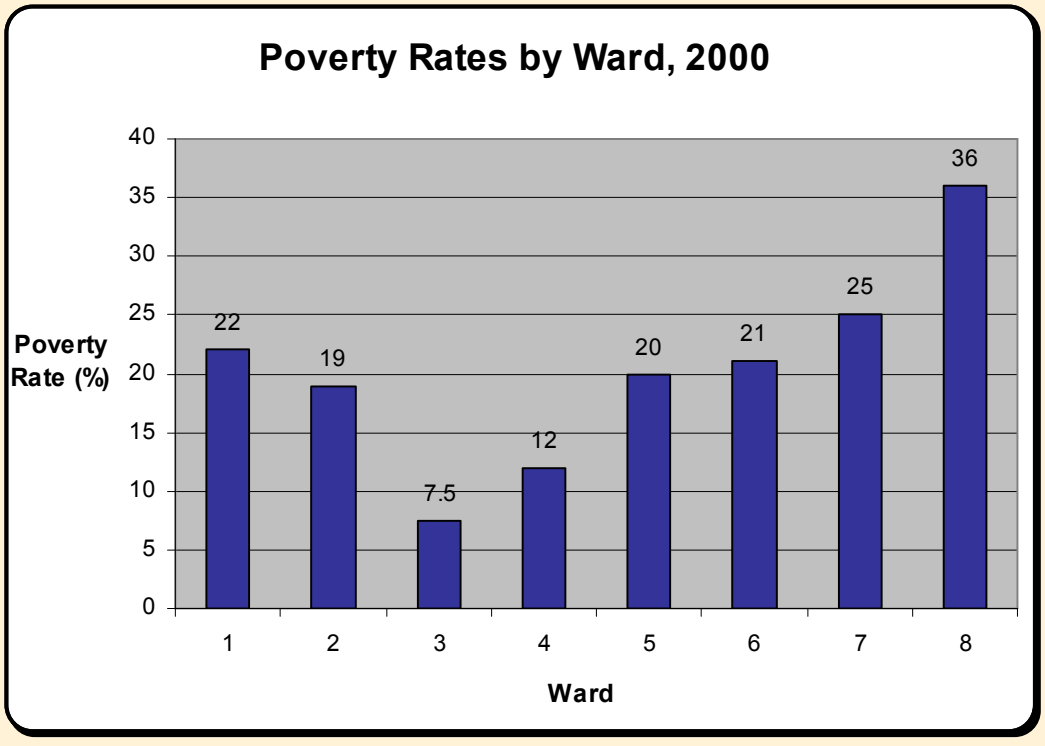
- **Organize convenience stores to use their collective buying power to purchase healthier options**, such as fruits and vegetables, from larger wholesale companies or local farmers' associations. (p. 20)
- **Provide tax-incentives to carry-outs and fast food establishments if 60% of their menu items meet the newest USDA nutrition guidelines**. This will ensure that time efficient and easily accessible sources of food are nutritious. (p. 22)

INTRODUCTION

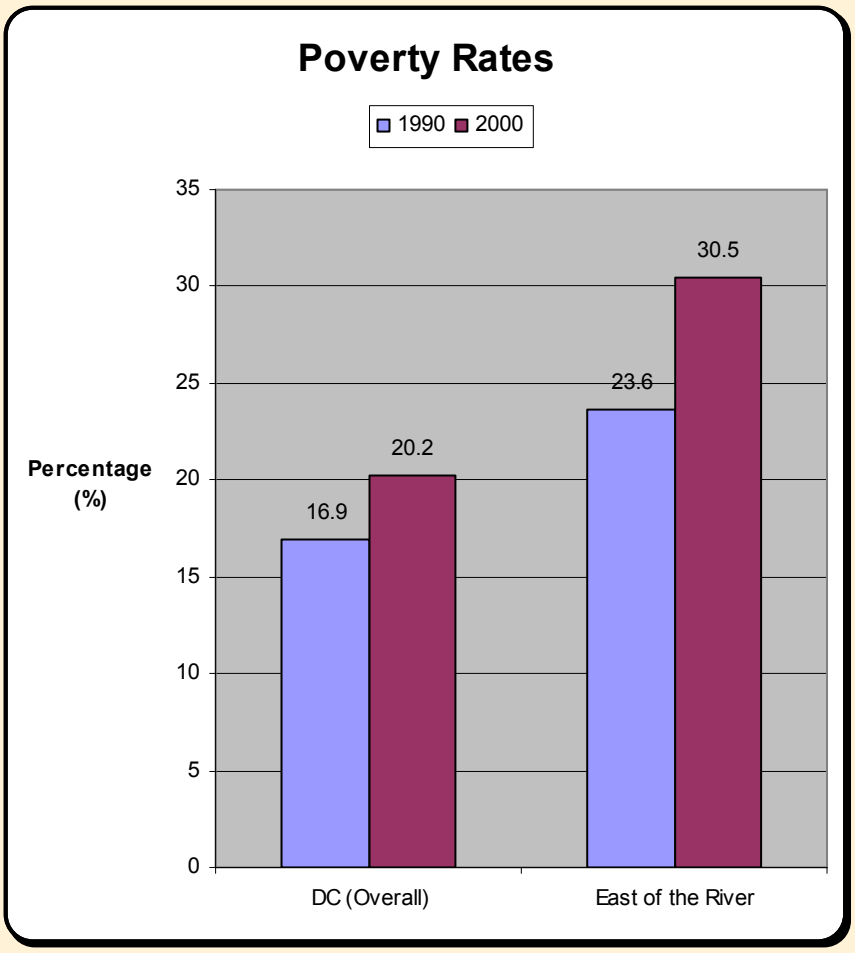
Who is Food Insecure?

From 2002 to 2004, the average percentage of food insecure households in the District of Columbia was 10.2%.[4] This means that approximately 1 in 10 District households had to count on emergency food supplies for food, ate less than necessary to get by, or bought inexpensive foods that are not sufficient enough to maintain a normal diet.

Residents who are most likely to be food insecure are those that are living near or below the poverty line and are eligible for some form of federal nutrition program assistance. To be eligible for food assistance, residents' income must be at or below 185% of the poverty level. For a family of three in 2006, the gross monthly income limit is $1,744.[5] People who live in poverty are more at risk for food insecurity because food can easily be treated as a flexible expense. Bills, car payments, and rent are priority expenses, so purchasing food can often be the first cost to go when money gets tight. The following tables signify where poverty levels are high in the District.



Source: NeighborhoodInfo DC, Neighborhood Profiles, Council Wards[1]



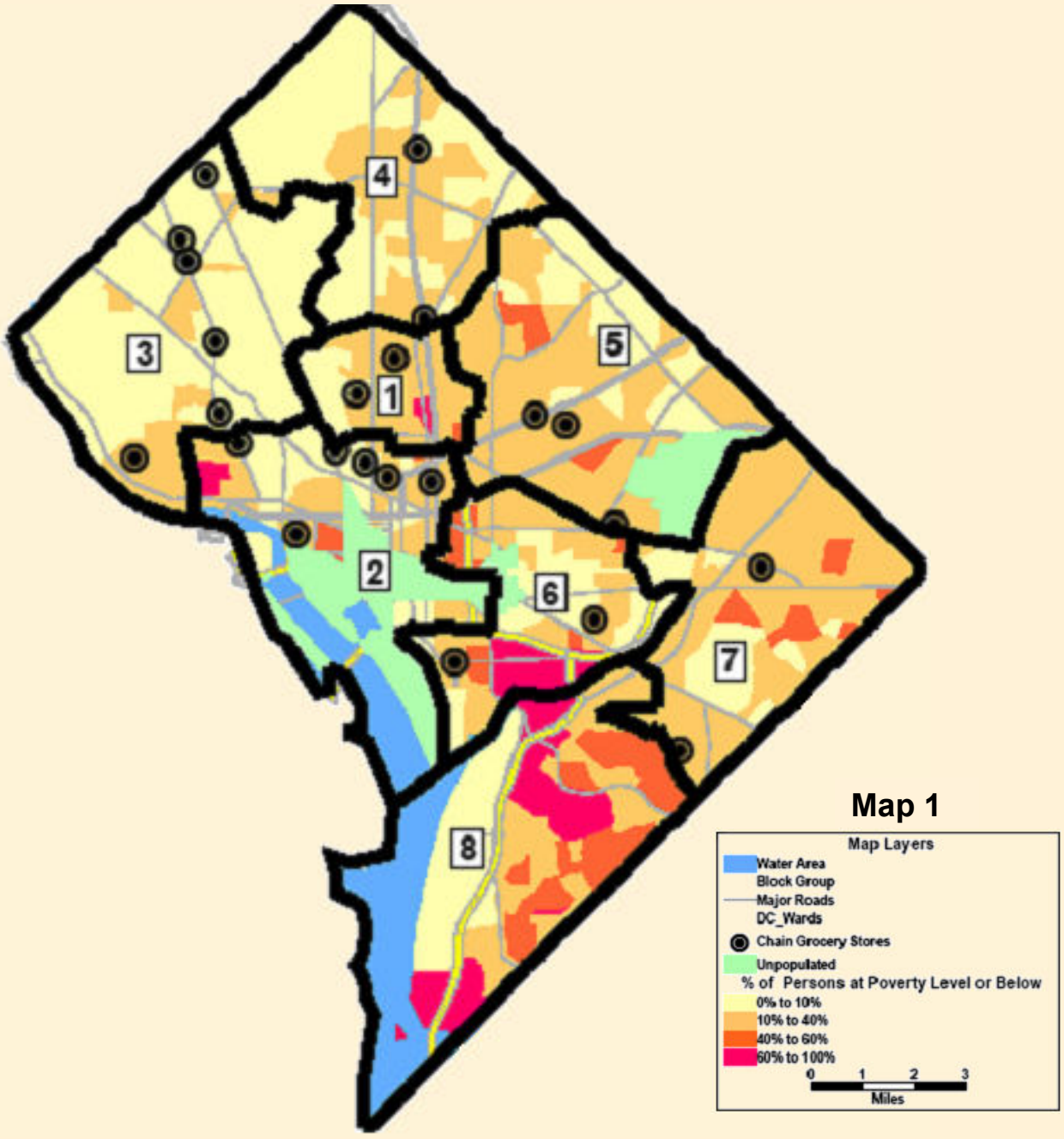
Source: DC Agenda, 2004 Issue Scan[1]

These tables clearly show that the areas with the highest poverty in DC are east of the river in Wards 7 & 8. Wards 1, 5, & 6 also all have high rates of poverty. A map that denotes poverty and clearly defines the ward lines is available in Appendix A.

GROCERY STORES

Grocery Stores in the District

Access to grocery stores (which here are defined as regional or national chain stores) is one of the main necessities for people to be food secure in the District. Even if residents have the economic means to purchase food, they might not be food secure because they cannot easily access stores for shopping. There are large disparities in access to grocery stores in the District. Map 1 signifies the locations of all twenty-three major chain grocery stores in the District—four Giants, three Whole Foods, and sixteen Safeways.



Map 1

The map signifies that Wards 1, 2, & 3 have a good number of stores, while Wards 5, 7, & 8 do not have adequate numbers of stores considering their land size. Note that only two chains exist east of the river in Wards 7 & 8, an area with over 140,000 people. As the map reveals, Ward 8 does not currently have a chain grocery store. There was a Safeway on Milwaukee Place SE, but it closed its doors in 1998.[6] There are, however, official plans to build a $37 million, 63,000 square foot Giant in Ward 8 on the old Camp Simms National Guard site on Alabama Ave SE.[7] For the time being, however, the chair of the Advisory Neighborhood Commission 8E (in Ward 8), Sandra Seegars, reports that many residents often go outside of District lines to Maryland to do their shopping.[8] This means that money is flowing outside the District that would most likely stay within District lines if grocery stores existed in the ward. It should be acknowledged that there are other smaller grocers, convenience stores, and carry-outs that sell food in Wards 7 & 8, but many of these stores have high prices and little selection for traditional groceries (for example, they may just sell milk and bananas.)

Empty shelves such as these are often seen in District grocery stores.

The Urban Institute's "Retail Challenges in Washington, DC: An Analysis of Six Retail Categories" stated that many of the city's grocery stores are not located in predominately African-American parts of town. It also found that Wards 2 & 3—which have majority white populations—have the highest number of food store employees, while Wards 6 & 7—which have majority African-American populations—have the lowest numbers of food service employees.[9] This information is consistent with the ratio of stores shown on the map.

Access to Food in DC

In August 2000, the USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) completed a study that assessed the availability and affordability of food in DC. The study assessed what foods were available and determined what the cost of a week's worth of food that measured up to the requirements of the USDA's Thrifty Food Plan would be. (The Thrifty Food Plan is a list of foods that is deemed to comprise a nutritious diet for the lowest cost possible and serves as the benchmark for food stamp allotments in the United States.) The ERS surveyed 34 food stores that accepted food stamps—21 chain supermarkets, 7 independent supermarkets, and 6 discount food stores—in order to determine availability and affordability of food in the District.[10]

(To clarify, where the rest of this assessment refers to "grocery stores" as regional or national chain stores, this particularly section on the ERS study will refer to them as "chain supermarkets" because this is how the study labeled them. Additionally, the study defines "independent supermarkets" as stores that are not chain stores, but may be part of a business with more than one location. "Discount stores" is the category the study chose to represent a group of stores in DC that are not supermarkets but also not specialty stores. A large number of food stamp redemptions occurred in these discount food stores, and because they carried staple goods and fresh produce and meat, they were included in the study under there own separate category.[11])

In terms of availability, the study found that 8 of the 34 stores surveyed had all 68 items on their list, 11 had all but 1 or 2 items, and 7 did not sell 10 items or more.[12] In terms of the number of average missing items in relation to the type of store, chain supermarkets were only missing 1 of out the 68 items, independent supermarkets were missing 8, and the discount stores were missing 18.[13] (18 missing items equates to 27% of the TFP shopping list.)[14]

In terms of the TFP costs by type of store, the TFP shopping list cost $100.54 at chain supermarkets, $103.30 at independent supermarkets, and $85.86 at discount stores (which equates to 16% less than the average costs at the supermarkets.)[15] The discount stores were less expensive, but these stores averaged the highest number of missing items, and when the study determined total costs, it listed the missing items' costs as the average dollar amount of what they cost at the other stores where they were available. So these costs were totaled in a way that assumed items were available when in fact they were not. Therefore it may have been less expensive to shop at the discount stores, but many of the items on the TFP shopping lists were not available.

The study also compared the costs of the TFP according to the food stores' locations and their relation to levels of poverty. The study found that the average cost of the TFP in the 21 stores that were in areas with more than 15% of the people living in poverty was $98.26, while the cost in the 13 stores that were in less poor areas was $98.92.[16] This denotes that it was slightly less expensive to shop in areas of higher poverty, but this is due to the fact that 5 of the 6 discount stores where

located in the areas of higher poverty.[17] It was also noted that within the two supermarket categories, the cost of the TFP was higher in areas of higher poverty. So while this could potentially support the theory that the poor pay more for food, this study's sample size was too small to prove these findings are statistically significant.[18] Table A denotes the differences in cost and availability of the TFP.

Table A: Missing Items and Total Thrifty Food Plan Cost at All Types of Food Stores[19]

Food Stores in ERS Survey	# of Stores	# of Missing Items	Weekly cost ($) of TFP
Chain Supermarkets (total)	21	1.0	100.54
Located in zip code areas with:			
Less than 15% of residents in poverty	10	.8	99.57
15% or more of residents in poverty	11	1.2	101.41
Independent Supermarkets (total)	7	7.7	103.30
Located in zip code areas with:			
Less than 15% of residents in poverty	2	-	-
15% or more of residents in poverty	5	6.58	104.48
Discount Food Stores (total)	6	18.3	85.86
Located in zip code areas with:			
Less than 15% of residents in poverty	1	-	-
15% or more of residents in poverty	5	15.2	85.10
Total sample	34	5.4	85.10
Located in zip code areas with:			
Less than 15% of residents in poverty	13	4.3	98.92
15% or more of residents in poverty	21	5.9	98.26

- = Estimates suppressed due to small sample size

In terms of overall TFP cost, the study found that the average total cost of the TFP for a family of four in the District in August 2000 was $98.51 a week, while the national cost for a week was $101.70.[20] While it may be surprising that the District cost was lower than the national, this may very well be due to the way each TFP cost was measured. Nationally, the cost for each item is based on a weighted average of brand name, store brand, and generic products of all different sizes. The DC TFP cost was determined by looking strictly at the lowest cost of one size, so the measurements are a bit different.[21]

While this study does allow for some comparisons to be made and for some commonalities to be drawn, is not completely representative of all food stores in the District. Another important caveat about this study is that it did not take in to

consideration availability of time or accessibility and costs of transportation—all factors that would greatly determine a family's shopping abilities.[22]

Access to Fruits and Vegetables

Fresh produce is often not available in many stores, and when it is, can be of poor quality.

In 2001, the Capital Area Food Bank released a study on the food system in the mid-Atlantic region. Part of this study entailed calling retails stores which sold food in the District to determine what sort of access to fresh produce existed in the city. Of the 305 retail stores they contacted, 161 had produce while 144 did not.[23] Yet any store that noted it only had one or two items of produce was included in the count of 161. This means that potentially a large number of the 161 stores with produce could have had limited variety of fresh food. The USDA ERS's study on food affordability and availability in the District noted earlier found that fresh fruits and vegetables accounted for a total of $15.84—approximately 16%—of the cost of the TFP.[24] They are a crucial part of a nutritious diet, so the fact that fresh produce is limited is problematic. Neither of these studies, however, took into consideration the quality of produce that is available, and this is an important factor because even if produce is available, people will not buy it if it is spoiled.

Correlations Between Poverty, Health, and Access to Food

There are important correlations to be noted between District residents' access to food, their overall health, and the level of poverty at which they live. A study by George Washington University graduate students entitled "Assessing the Need for Nutritious and Affordable Food in the District of Columbia" found a correlation between poverty, access to grocery stores, and diet-related diseases. They discovered that residents in Wards 7 & 8—where poverty is high and grocery stores are scarce—are more likely to suffer from diet-related diseases than residents of the District's other wards.[25] They also discovered that, of all the wards, Wards 5, 7, & 8 had the highest rates of obesity from 1996 to 2000 (when taken as a five-year average.)[26] Table B denotes the most recent obesity rates by ward from 1999 to 2003.

Table B: Prevalence (%) of Obesity in DC, by Ward, 1999-2003[27]

Year	Ward 1	Ward 2	Ward 3	Ward 4	Ward 5	Ward 6	Ward 7	Ward 8
1999	14.4	13.1	7.7	20.5	25.5	17	27.3	25.8
2000	22.7	20.8	9.3	27	29.8	22.9	33.3	31.6
2001	21.8	16.5	7.1	28.6	25.5	22.4	27.9	37.2
2002	22.7	22.9	6.8	20.8	33.1	22.3	39.3	30.6
2003	21.2	10.5	6.6	27.9	23.3	28.6	42	35.8
5 Year Average	20.6	16.8	7.5	25.0	27.4	22.7	34.0	32.2

Table B signifies that Wards 7 & 8—which have only two grocery stores combined—had the highest prevalence of obesity over the five year period from 1999 to 2003.

Bringing Grocery Stores in to Low-Income Communities

The study done by the USDA's Economic Research Service on food affordability and availability in the District found that of the 374 stores in DC are authorized to accept food stamps, convenience stores and small grocery stores made up 65% of stores authorized, but only accounted for 14% of food stamp redemptions. Conversely, supermarkets made up only 15% of the total number of stores authorized to accept food stamps, but accounted for 60% of redemptions.[28] This denotes that in the District, most food stamp recipients are using their benefits at supermarkets.

With this in mind, it should be noted that Ward 3 currently has six chain supermarkets, while Wards 7 & 8 combined only have two. According to NeighborhoodInfo DC's Ward profiles, Ward 3 had a poverty rate of 7.5% in 2000 while the poverty rates in Wards 7 & 8 were 25% and 36% respectively.[29] This disparity in number of stores, particularly in light of where poverty exists and where food stamps are redeemed, is unjust.

The Barriers to Adding More Stores in Areas of Poverty

In 2000, the DC Council passed the Supermarket Tax Exemption Amendment Act, which allows grocery store businesses that would like to build in the District ten-year property tax exemptions in addition to licensing fee waivers and exemptions on sales tax in the purchase of building materials.[30] But it seems that there are many other barriers that prevent businesses from taking advantage of these benefits offered. One of the largest barriers is land—supermarkets need at least four to six acres of land in order to even consider an area as a potential site.[31] Also, many grocery businesses are reluctant to establish in low-income communities because they think that crime, insufficient employment markets, and higher operational costs will present financial problems. But studies have shown that such worries are unfounded and not sufficient reasons for not establishing business.

For instance, the December 2004 USDA study "Supermarket Characteristics and Operating Costs in Low-Income Areas" found that it does not cost more to serve low-

income shoppers than those that are not.[32] In fact, the opposite has been discovered—low-income areas have strong buying power and grocery stores could make profits because of their lack of competition. In 2002, a study done by the Initiative for a Competitive Inner City stated that "America's inner cities possess over $85 billion in annual retail spending power… [and] $21 billion of this demand went unmet within the inner city, representing a tremendous urban retailing gap." It also found that "some supermarkets that have located in inner cities are actually more profitable than their suburban counterparts."[33] People in the underserved areas in the District must buy food, so there is spending power in those areas. As noted, many people travel to Maryland to shop—so currently this buying power is going outside of the District.

What Can Be Done?

The following recommendations, if acted upon, could bring in more stores to the underserved areas of DC.

- **Require businesses that wish to establish grocery stores in higher-income areas of the District establish the same number of low-income communities**. This will ensure equal access to food across the District.
- **Create a market analysis of Wards 7 & 8 to determine the community members' buying power** to show grocery store businesses that the markets are sound and that the potential for profit exists.
- **Post the Department of Health's grocery store inspection ratings online**. The Food Protection Division posts information on restaurants, but nothing is available to the public on grocery stores.[34] If residents, advocacy groups, and city government workers are able to see how stores rank in comparison of one another, each group will be better informed of stores' conditions and more able to urge for the improvement of certain stores.

The following options could ease the process of grocery shopping and aid in grocery store accessibility to people in underserved areas until more stores arrive.

- **Urge community based organizations in the underserved areas to provide residents' with shuttle service to the closet grocery stores**. Organizations could set times and locations for pick up so that residents could have easier access to stores than they currently have. Many residents without cars would benefit from this service.
- **Advocate for Giant's Peapod Grocery Delivery Service to lower the minimum delivery order amount and waive the delivery fee for people who live in areas without grocery stores**. Currently, District residents can order groceries from Giant to be delivered to their homes, but the minimum order amount is $50 for delivery and shoppers must pay a $9.95 delivery fee for orders less than $100 and a $6.95 fee for orders that exceed $100.[35] By lowering the minimum order total and the delivery fees, the Peapod service would be a viable option for many low-income people.

- **Publicize Peapod and Safeway's delivery service in low-income communities**. Many low-income residents pay high amounts for people to drive them to and from stores. The delivery fees for Giant and Safeway's online stores—although still high—are often less expensive than the fees that people pay for drivers. Therefore these services are viable options for low-income residents and should be advertised in low-income communities.
- **Create more delivery services similar to Peapod & Safeway's delivery systems in underserved areas**. In Hartford, CT, for example, the Hartford Food System, a local non-profit organization, runs a grocery delivery service. In 2004, the program operated in six towns and made 1,200 deliveries to 78 seniors in the area. The Hartford Food System handles all the legwork and organizational aspects of the program and Geissler's Supermarkets takes the orders and then deliveries the groceries.[36]
- **Establish a mobile market to sell fresh foods and staple goods** directly from the truck. The People's Grocery in Oakland, California responded to the area's lack of grocery stores and now sells items directly from a truck at regularly scheduled locations so residents can depend on it.[37] Such a model would work very well in underserved areas in the District.
- **Advocate for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to provide people who travel to buy groceries discounted or free metro and bus fares and/or neighborhood shuttles to grocery stores**. For some people transportation costs are limiting, so providing decreased or no fares until new stores are built in underserved areas would make traveling for groceries more affordable.

Financing Grocery Options

Finding money sources to aid in increasing the number of grocery stores in underserved areas is difficult, simply because grocery store development is an expensive endeavor. One model the District could mimic is the Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative. The Food Trust, a Philadelphia-based organization that focuses on expanding access to nutritious food to residents of Pennsylvania, determined that the Greater Philadelphia region had seventy too few grocery stores in its low-income communities.[38] Upon this finding and other studies that detected correlations between low grocery store access and high rates of diet-related diseases, The Food Trust, the Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition, and The Reinvestment Fund jointly started a campaign to raise money to develop more grocery stores across the state.[39] These organizations motivated the state to provide $20 million for this initiative, to which The Reinvestment Fund matched $60 million through private funds and their New Markets Tax Credits Allocation (bringing the total to $80 million.) These funds go to pre-development work, land acquisition, equipment costs, construction, and even permanent finance to ensure the stores are strong and sustainable.[40] If such a model were adapted to the District, funding would not have to be as large simply because a local initiative here would not be as expansive as the work being done in Pennsylvania. Through the work that the city has done to update the DC Comprehensive Plan, it is clear that the city has goals to expand economic and community development in Wards 7 & 8. Grocery stores are

often the basis of such development. As grocery stores come in, dry cleaners, video rentals, restaurants, banks, and other services establish nearby—so a grocery store expansion initiative should be a top priority for District government.

CONVENIENCE STORES AND CARRY-OUTS

Why Are These Places Important?

Convenience stores and carry-outs are commonly used as a source of food by District residents. These stores can be seen on many blocks all across the District, although they are often hidden amidst other larger stores and restaurants. But many corner stores and carry-outs are strong establishments in their communities—as neighbors and retailers come and go, these places stay and thrive for years. Because these food outlets are so numerous and varied, little research has been done in order to determine what kinds of food these places provide, how much food costs, or how often these places are open. Yet both types of location are important to include in the understanding of DC's food system.

Convenience stores (also referred to as corner stores and "mom and pops") and carry-outs are frequented in DC because they are easy to access and open during convenient hours. Another reason is grocery store scarcity. If a resident can't easily access a grocery store, convenience stores and carry-outs stand in as a reliable place to obtain food, be it a snack or a full meal. Also, many small convenience stores located in immigrant communities in DC offer foods and products that are desired by the residents of these communities. Therefore these stores are frequented because they often times offer these items that the larger, more institutionalized grocery stores do not.

Convenience Stores in DC

In a 2005 study assessing the need for affordable and accessible food in the District, students at the George Washington University School of Public Policy and Public Administration estimated that there were 314 convenience stores in DC.[41] In April 2005, the students gathered data from nine stores in the District—including Safeways and convenience stores—on 25 foods in order to determine what foods were available and how much they cost. In the five convenience stores, they found that 3 out of 5 did not sell chicken and 2 out of 5 did not sell oatmeal, American cheese, kidney beans, green peas, and bananas. 4 out of 5 did not sell or have in stock oranges and lettuce.[42] They also determined that convenience stores are the primary food providers in areas of high poverty, especially in Wards 1, 7, and 8, and that in these stores, food were more expensive on the whole.[43]

These stores, however, should not be blamed for not providing foods of high nutritional value on a regular basis. Because they are small operations—much smaller than the city's grocery stores—it is often times too costly to provide foods of higher nutritional value. For example, fruit is more expensive to buy and maintain in a store than nonperishable bags of potato chips.

Mobile Markets: Stores on Wheels

Throughout DC there are also mobile markets, where vendors informally sell limited foods and products. Many vendors sell out of trucks on street corners and they are

very popular in certain areas. For example, in areas of DC where there are large populations of immigrants, these mobile markets sell foods and products that are specific to their home countries—fruits such as mangos or foods such as tamales. Yet these vendors offer little variety to their customers. Read a bit about "The People's Grocery," an exemplary model of a mobile market that offers healthy variety and value in Oakland, CA, in the Grocery Store section on page 17 of this assessment.

On A Road to Improvement

How, then, can it be profitable for smaller convenience stores to carry healthy (and more often than not, perishable) foods? The following recommendations would help these stores move towards offering healthier foods and would also help residents in communities where convenience stores substitute as grocery stores gain access to sources of food that offer more variety.

- **Organize convenience stores to use their collective buying power to purchase healthier options**, such as fruits and vegetables, from larger wholesale companies so that the costs are lower for each convenience store owner. This would erase the barrier of healthier options being too expensive and would bring healthier options in to these establishments.
- **Organize the stores to use their collective buying power to establish Farm-To-Corner Store initiatives**. Much like farm-to-school, convenience stores could buy collectively from local farmers, thereby lowering their stores' costs and supporting local business as well.
- **Promote programs like Peapod that offer grocery home delivery to people who live in areas of DC with no grocery stores**. By using these services, residents can access nutritious foods that they would not otherwise have access to.
- **Help convenience stores get WIC and food stamp certified**. If these stores can accept these forms of payment, they would be more inclined to include more nutritious foods that people would buy with these payments. (Especially WIC, since the program has guidelines as to what is WIC certified, including foods such as milk, cheese, vegetables, and fruit juices.)
- **Make the processing process for mobile markets in DC less arduous and expensive**. Many of these small markets only sell select items because they are not licensed vendors. Therefore they don't have interest or the financial ability to make markets into more extensive operations. If the processes for getting a license were easier, many of these markets would be able to grow and offer better selections and quality products to their customers.

The Food Trust in Philadelphia has done some work to improve the availability of nutritious foods in some of the city's convenience stores. In their work, which they call their "corner store campaign," they partnered with ten convenience stores to promote healthier food in the stores. They purposefully chose convenience stores that were located near schools so that they could link the availability of healthier snack options in the stores with nutrition education in the neighboring schools. This way youth in the area would not receive competing messaging and instead would be able to link their education with practical application. The campaign also includes the "Snack Smart Street Soldiers," a group of adolescents who work as ambassadors of the program to share the ideas and culture of healthy eating with their classmates and friends at school. The "soldiers" also created a comic book about making healthy choices that will be distributed in the spring of 2006. The convenience stores were willing to participate in The Food Trust's campaign because they offered the stores social marketing materials and publicity to promote the new healthier options. Additionally, since The Food Trust was conducting research, they offered the stores a small sum of money so that they would sign an Institutional Review Board (IRB) contract to participate in the research. But the store owners also responded favorably because they were very familiar with the importance of eating well and saw the effects of diabetes in the communities they served.[1] This initiative is an excellent model of how to begin the process of improving nutrition in urban convenience stores.

A Network of Similar Initiatives

There are many initiatives across the country that do work similar to the corner store campaign of The Food Trust. The Healthy Community Stores National Network, led by the Johns Hopkins Center for Human Nutrition, links programs in places such as Apache reservations in Arizona, Hawaii's islands, and East Baltimore to share best practices and information in each areas' work on improving local food sources.[44] The work done in Baltimore, in particular, would be a good model for how such an initiative could begin in the District.[45]

Carry Outs in DC

For anyone who works full time—or longer—time is a precious commodity, and carry-outs are quick and readily available options for meals. Local carry-outs provide "fast" food that requires less thought and preparation than making meals at home. Also, carry-outs are relatively inexpensive, so people with low-income can use carry-outs as sources of food without having to spend large amounts of money.

The Numbers

Currently, the yellow pages show 215 listings for carry-outs in DC.[46] While they are speckled throughout the District, many of these carry-outs can be found more frequently in areas that don't have many grocery stores or other accessible food

sources, such as Wards 1, 7, and 8. For instance, in a 1998 profile of Ward 7 for *The Washington Post,* Sari Horwitz noted that the "5.7 square-mile area is a culinary wasteland of carry-outs and at least 15 fast-food joints."[47] Also, the Comprehensive Plan for DC (it is currently undergoing an update), noted that Ward 8 only has one sit-down restaurant and otherwise depended on "mom-and-pop carry-outs and fast food chain outlets." [48] Additionally, in November 2003, the Center for Science in the Public Interest discovered that there were fifteen chain restaurants in Ward 1 alone—and this number does not account for the many non-chain carry-outs that dot the area.[49]

Some carry-outs offer many different (and not always nutritious) options...

Clearly some areas of the District are filled with these sources of food, but many of them do not offer healthy options for their customers. Many, in fact, offer several kinds of potentially unhealthy foods (such as fried chicken, pizza, and Chinese food) under one roof. The picture to the left depicts one such carry-out option in the city. Carry-outs with choices such as this one present people who have limited time, money, and/or access to other places to buy food with insufficient options for healthy eating. DC needs more carry-outs that provide affordable, nutritious food. One such carry-out is the Soul Vegetarian Café near Howard University. This carry-out—while remaining affordable—offers many types of cooked vegetables and meatless entrees such as vegetarian meatloaf, pitas, and soy burgers. The picture below depicts Soul Vegetarian Café food.

Recommendations

A 2005 study by the Trust for America's Health found that 53.3% of the District's adults are overweight or obese.[50] As time, access, and money continue to be tight for many District residents, the following recommendations would help ensure that they have options that are both convenient and beneficial to their health.

- **Provide tax-incentives to carry-outs and fast food establishments if 60% of their**

…while other offer vegetables and other healthy choices.

menu items meet the newest USDA nutrition guidelines. This way, healthier options would be required while owners would benefit financially from providing this service. Also, any concern that healthier options might not sell well could be alleviated because the tax incentive would ensure that owners have some extra economic security during their transition in to offering healthier items.

- **The city should provide incentives for new healthier fast food options**. Since fast, inexpensive options are desired by District residents, it is important to guarantee that healthy options are available that meet these desires. For example, the District should promote the addition of more carry-outs that serve fruits, vegetables, and grilled and baked foods instead of places that offer highly processed and fried foods.
- **Change zoning laws to limit the number of carry-outs and fast food establishments in residential areas**. Many DC neighborhoods are filled with carry-outs offering fried chicken and pizza. Limiting where these places can establish business would subsequently curb the growing number of places where such foods can be acquired.
- **Carry-outs, like corner stores, have great potential to buy more fruits and vegetables collectively**, thereby lowering each carry-outs' cost to provide these healthy options. Collectively purchasing healthy foods would make it very economically feasible to meet the requirements if the city created tax incentives for establishments that meet the USDA's nutrition guidelines.
- **Carry-outs in immigrant communities should offer culturally appropriate—and healthy—options** for their surrounding residents. For many male immigrants who come alone from countries where women traditionally cook for their families, carry-outs provide a main source of food because they are not accustomed to cooking for themselves. Therefore it is especially important that carry-outs provide nutritionally rich meals that residents can depend on as main sources of food.
- In certain areas of DC, a multitude of carry-outs might in fact signify the lack of other sufficient food sources—particularly grocery stores. **Community organizations (such as ANCs, Advisory Neighborhood Commissions) could use this knowledge as an impetus to organize their community to recruit a grocery store for the area.**

Investing in Carry-Outs

The District has many neighborhood development associations and business improvement districts—these groups could be potential funders for improving carry-outs and financing fresh food initiatives. They would be interested in creating strong, vibrant communities that offer good food options and also want to support small, local businesses.

FARMERS' MARKETS

Food travels an average of 1,500 miles to get to Americans' plates.[51] The District relies on outside food sources, since very little—if anything—is grown in the city. But there is a great deal of prosperous land around us that local farmers harvest to produce fresh fruits and vegetables. These resources should not be underestimated in the fight against food insecurity in the District.

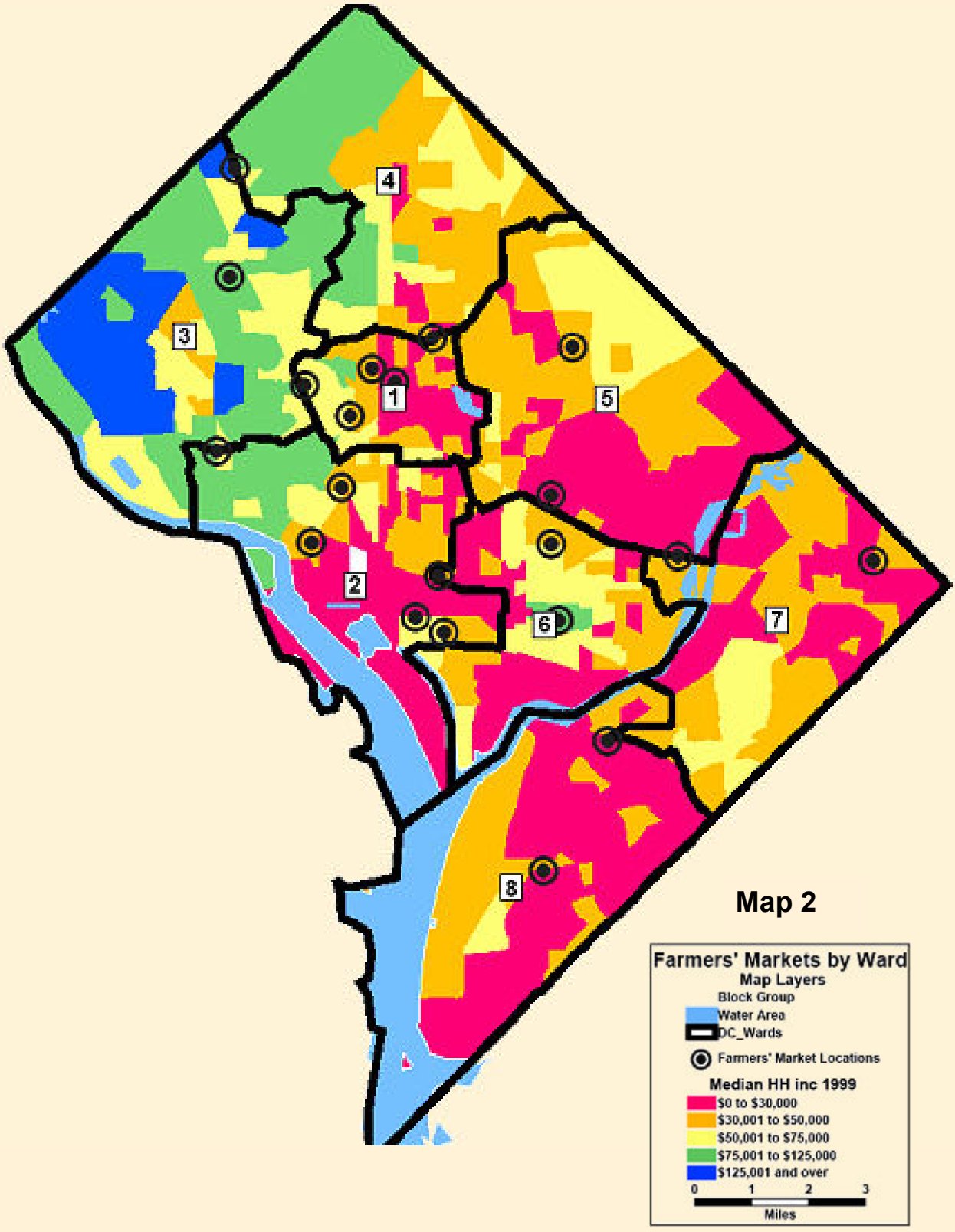
The Markets

There are over twenty farmers' markets in the District of Columbia, all of which serve as sources of food for people across the city. Farmers come from Virginia, Maryland, Pennsylvania, and West Virginia to sell their fruits and vegetables (and often times breads and meats) to the District's citizens. There are two main organizations that run farmers' markets in DC—FreshFarm Markets and the Local Food Alliance, a branch of the local organization Community Harvest.[52] These organizations run successful markets throughout the city and work to ensure that fresh fruits and vegetables are made available to citizens who desire them. Additionally, other single markets exist that are either run by an organization or a neighborhood who wanted to provide easy access to healthy, fresh food. The markets signified in Map 2 are the markets that were open in 2005. For a list of their locations and the days and times they are open, consult Appendix C.

How They Work In DC

Farmers' markets offer a number of benefits to District residents. They provide seasonally fresh, healthy food and nutrition education, but they also help citizens support local farmers and the business that they bring into the city. A market also has the power to bring together communities and make them stronger. For example, the Columbia Heights market in Northwest DC was created because residents in the area wanted a market and worked with the Ward 1 government to establish one. The market pulled together residents and ward employees—people of different backgrounds, interests, and expertise—to strengthen the community and establish a sense of neighborhood unity. Another benefit of markets is that they can often offer culturally appropriate foods that might not be available through traditional stores and specialty shops. Some farmers can offer specific fruits and vegetables that he knows are desired by people in the market's community.

First and foremost, these markets are a supplier of food. Currently, many of the District's markets exist in the higher-income areas of Northwest DC, where people are typically more food secure. It is wonderful to have these markets as an alternative source of food in these areas, but there are many parts of the District that could benefit equally from having farmers' markets. Many neighborhoods in Northeast and Southeast DC (where residents are often times food insecure *and*


4
3
1
5
2
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7
8
Farmers' Markets by Ward
Map Layers
Block Group
Water Area
DC_Wards
Farmers' Market Locations
Median HH inc 1999
$0 to $30,000
$30,001 to $50,000
$50,001 to $75,000
$75,001 to $125,000
$125,001 and over
0 1 2 3
Miles

Map 2

Underserved by grocery stores and outlets of healthy food) do not have farmers' markets. Markets in these areas could serve as prime sources of food. There are, however, challenges to establishing markets in low-income areas in the District. The following list details such challenges:

- Unlike many cities, there is not a lead organization that can organize efforts to establish markets in low-income parts of the District. Each market is left to its own devices—and limited resources—to sustain growth and profit.
- Markets in other cities have shown that low-income markets often need to start out by connecting to higher-income markets in order to initially subsidize costs and borrow expertise and experience. Such an approach does not exist in DC.
- Beginning a market is a financial endeavor, and many farmers are unable to invest a great deal in a market when they are already fully invested in a farm. Grants are available for assistance, but lack of time for fundraising is a challenge.
- Acquiring permission for the land where the market will be is a large task. It requires work with the city or private landowners and takes a great deal of time.

Considering all of these barriers, it is not easy to establish markets in low-income communities. But because markets are so beneficial, these challenges are worth overcoming. Fortunately, there are examples in DC to look to for hope. (See box)

Two examples of markets in areas of high food insecurity in District are the Capital Area Food Bank's Anacostia market and the market in the RFK stadium parking lot. They have overcome many of the barriers that were up against them, and are still working to grow and improve. Often markets have a difficult time accepting food stamps because they do not have the electrical capability to set up the card-swiping machines that make this possible. But these markets have also overcome this challenge and are able to accept EBT card (food stamp benefits), making their markets accessible sources of food for many who may otherwise not be able to shop there. At the Anacostia market, for example, shoppers can swipe their EBT cards through an electronic point-of-sale terminal and get the equivalent amount in vouchers. They then give the paper money to the farmer when they purchase an item(s) and later the farmers redeem the vouchers for money.

Both the Anacostia and RFK markets serve many District residents that are most vulnerable to food insecurity. The markets accept the federally funded WIC and Senior's Farmer Market Nutrition Program coupons, which are provided through the food assistance programs run by the Department of Health. While the Capital Area Food Bank's market is still in its early stages, farmers been coming to the RFK parking lot for over 20 years—a sign that an economic market exists for farmers to prosper in lower-income communities. These two markets provide wonderful services to the areas they are in, and should be used as models to create similar markets in other areas of the District.

How Markets Can Make District More Food Secure

By increasing the number of farmers' markets in the District, more residents will have access to healthy, affordable food. (For more information on what can make them affordable, see "Farmers' Markets & the Federally Funded Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.") The following recommendations, if put in to reality, will aid in this goal.

A farmers' stand at the RFK market

- **Ease the process of licensing and permitting and reduce the fees that come along with these processes**. Currently, markets must be approved by 90% of businesses and residences within 500 feet of the outer barrier of the market and apply for a public space permit with the DC Dept of Consumer of Regulatory Affairs. (If a street must be closed, it has to submit an alternate traffic plan.) The permit costs $19 per day the market is open, often costing upwards of $400 for the season. Additionally, if a market wants to open on publicly owned metro land—an excellent location for markets—its manager must clear the plan with WMATA and pay a $2,000 fee for the entire market season simply to occupy space. These costs are burdens on many of the markets because either those running the markets must pay or the burden is put on the markets' farmers, many who do not have the economic capacity to afford such fees.
- **Run some of the existing higher-income communities' markets in conjunction with new ones that could be started in lower-income**

communities. The profits from the higher-income area's markets would help support the new markets as they establish a base in the community and work to become sustainable.

- **Require that farmers, in order to participate in a market in an area of high income, also participate in a market in a low-income community**. Some farmers are waiting to get in to certain "desirable" markets, but not establishing elsewhere. By creating this requirement, farmers' market participation would be more evenly distributed. The ultimate goal is that, over time, all markets become equally successful.
- **Set the market days and times according to the schedules of community members**. This means having markets open when people leave work in the evening or during convenient weekend hours.
- **Provide public and private grants to pay for lighting for evening markets**. This would help make staying open in evening hours easier.
- **Supply wireless EBT devices for markets in low-income communities**. When food stamps switched to the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system, many farmers' markets suffered because they lacked the technological sophistication to accept EBT cards and thereby lost profit. The New York State Farmers Market offers an example of a successful inclusion of electronic EBT devices.[53]
- **Encourage farmers at high-end markets to donate their leftover produce (or sell it at a lower cost) to markets in low-income communities**. This would also create a connection between the city's markets and would ensure all people have access to the same quality of foods.
- **Have a larger, continuing conversation about markets in the city**. Currently, over ten different people or organizations run markets in the city.[54] There needs to be collaboration between these groups to determine what areas in the city are not being served and how they can work together to fill these gaps. The Mayor's Commission on Food and Nutrition could possibly oversee a coalition of these stakeholders.
- **Create farmers' markets outside of WIC and food stamp offices**. Establishing on city-owned land erases some challenges of securing a site, and people who access the federal nutrition programs at these offices will have access to convenient source of healthy food.
- **Create an "Eat Smart, Buy Local" campaign in the District**. Encouraging residents to buy local products will support local farmers and distributors while simultaneously engaging the community in a larger effort to collectively identify the importance of healthy, locally grown foods. An organization called Food Routes Network partnered with ten local organizations across the country to create "Buy Local" campaigns in those areas.[55] One such organization is the Pennsylvania Association for Sustainable Agriculture, which started "Buy Local PA" across their state.[56]

How to Fund These Improvements

The city could supply a small amount of funds to streamline the process of permitting and establishing markets. Lowering the current costs would also improve the

process. Establishing a coalition of the different individuals and groups involved in the city's markets would only cost a portion of the salary of an employee at the mayor's office to organize and convene meetings, but the resulting coherence in the market system in the District would be worth it.

For farmers' markets establishment and buy local campaigns, the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program could be a good source of money. These grants fund $10,000 to $300,000 for one to three years but do, however, require equivalent funding matches.[57] Matching funds could come from the city or preexisting markets in the District. Another source of funding is the Farmers' Market Promotion Program, which provides competitive grants to develop and sustain successful farmers' markets in the United States.[58] Two other potential funding sources are the Community Food Security Coalition and the Rural Management Agency.

FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM

The Program

In 1992, Congress established the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) in order to provide fresh fruits and vegetables to WIC participants (low-income pregnant women, mothers, and their children) and low-income seniors.[59] Currently, the WIC "food package" makeup does not allow for participants to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables (with the exception that fully breastfeeding women could buy carrots), so FMNP has proved vital to District residents who have access to the city's farmers' markets. The FMNP has made it so that mothers are able to purchase these healthy foods for themselves and their children. Additionally, the program has been a great resource for over 7,000 seniors in the District.[60]

String beans at a farmer's markets that can be purchased with FMNP coupons

How FMNP Operates in DC

Through the Department of Health, there are two branches of the FMNP that administer the coupons for fruits and vegetables in the District—the WIC office (to their participants) and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (to seniors ages 60 and older.) Anyone who is eligible for WIC or CSFP is able to participate in FMNP in the District. In 2004, WIC administered 422,000 coupons to approximately 17,000 WIC clients, while CSFP gave out over 20,000 coupons to more than 7,000 seniors.[61] DC has 32 farmers and 21 markets that are certified to accept FMNP coupons. In 2005, both WIC participants and seniors received $30 (up from $25 in past years) to be used from May to November at area farmers' markets.[62] Participants simply pick these coupons up at their WIC or CSFP office and then use them like checks at the farmers' markets. The farmers can then redeem the coupons for payment.

Both the WIC and Seniors FMNP programs are excellent resources, but not enough people know about these programs, recognize their importance, and use them as a source of fresh fruits and vegetables. The 2004 American Community Survey revealed that of an estimated 62,870 seniors in the District, 14.4%—roughly 9,050 seniors—lived below the poverty level.[63] This equates to approximately 2,000 seniors in DC who are eligible for SFMNP but are not receiving any benefits. Not only is more outreach necessary, but improved access to markets must occur so that once residents know about the programs, they can actually use them. This equates to the need for an easier process for farmers to become (and remain)

FMNP certified so that many will choose to administer the programs. For example, under current DC regulations farmers that wish to administer FMNP must be a part of an existing market, meaning that they cannot have their own farm stand in a neighborhood of their choice.[64] (All farm stands must be linked to a non-profit and verify non-profit status.) Considering that one of the biggest problems with the current situation is that people with FMNP coupons cannot easily access the markets, this requirement is a large barrier. If farmers were allowed to establish individually throughout the District, access would become less of an issue. Participation would most likely improve, benefiting the residents and farmers simultaneously.

How the Program Can Be Helped

The problems mentioned above create many barriers that prevent FMNP from reaching its fullest potential in the District. The following actions would aid in expanding FMNP in the District and would ease the process for those who already participate.

Peppers at a local farmers' market

- **Raise the amount that participants receive**. $30 is a small amount to offer for an entire year. WIC participants have noted that they wish their coupons were worth more, and it would not be a large expense to slightly increase the WIC FMNP funding at the city level.
- **Distribute the coupons in lower increments**. Since change is not given for the coupons, participants have to buy all their produce at once, as opposed to spreading it out over the entire growing season. If the coupons were for $1 or $2, rather than $5, participants would have more choice and could purchase the fruits and vegetables according to their own timetables.
- **Do more outreach to WIC participants and CSFP seniors so that they know about the program and use it**. In 2004, there was only a 49% redemption rate for the coupons that were given to WIC clients, meaning that a little more than half are *not* using their coupons. This could be in part because they do not live in an area where a farmer's market is accessible. Therefore it is also important that more accessible markets are established in the District so that these federal resources given to DC are used in their highest capacity.
- **Eliminate the eligibility requirement that residents must participate in the District's CSFP in order to be eligible for SFMNP.** Currently, in order to receive SFMNP in DC, you must be eligible for CSFP, which means you must live below 130% of the poverty level. But the federal eligibility requirement for SFMNP is 185%, meaning that many people who live between 130% and

185% of the poverty level in DC are not getting benefits that federal law allows them.

- **Advocate to ensure that if fruits and vegetables are added to the WIC food package (which is scheduled to happen in the near future), WIC FMNP funding is not cut**. Farmers' markets often offer culturally appropriate fruits and vegetables that grocery stores do no carry and, for some District residents, are easier to get to than a grocery store. Thus it is of high importance to keep such markets as an option for WIC participants.
- **Make the certification process for farmers to join FMNP easier**. If the certification process is easier, farmers would be more likely to participant in this program and would be more willing to establish markets in lower-income communities, often times where WIC and CSFP participants reside. Currently, farmers have to get certified by the DC County Extension Agency and the DC Department of Health before they can sell their crop at markets. They must also agree to grow at least 60% of the product they sell and set up for business for four hours once a week throughout the season.[65] These requirements, while they seem minor, may limit some farmers from joining the program. Farmers must reapply for the program each year, which is also burdensome.
- **Allow for regional (VA-DC-MD) certification for farmers**. If a farmer participates in FMNP, he/she must get a separate certification for each area. This often discourages a farmer from participating in some areas because they don't have the time or resources to go through the process up to three times.

How to Fund Changes

Federal funds pay for 100% of the allocation for food, but only 70% of the administrative costs, thereby leaving 30% for the state level administrator to pay. If the District government would be willing to offer additional funds (more than 30%), the amount given to participants could go up, thereby providing them with the opportunity to purchase more healthy food that they might not have the opportunity to do otherwise. The investment would be small and the outcomes of such a change would be worth the money. Additionally, private foundations that are interested in funding obesity prevention work might be interested in giving money to these programs.

SCHOOL FOOD

The Importance of the School Breakfast & Lunch Programs

On a typical day during the 2003-04 school year, an average of 18,041 children in 168 schools in the District participated in the School Breakfast Program, while approximately 44,392 children in over 193 schools participated in the School Lunch Program.[66] These programs are of great importance for the District's children because, for many students, they are the primary source of food. In fact, school meals provide a major source of students' daily nutritional needs. Breakfasts in the National School Breakfast Program provide ¼ or more of the daily recommended levels for nutrients children need, while lunches in the National School Lunch Program account for 1/3 or more of the recommended levels.[67]

The Center for Disease Control estimated in their 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Study that 14% of DC high school students were overweight and that 17% were at risk for becoming overweight. Additionally, they discovered that 79% of the high school students they surveyed said that they ate fewer than five servings of fruits and vegetables per day during the last seven days.[68] Therefore it is extremely important to take steps toward including more fresh fruits and vegetables into our youth's diets and thereby aiding in improving their overall health. Two major avenues through which such change could be created are the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs. Teachers, school principals, school board members, and parents should look toward these programs as a major solution to the city's growing childhood obesity problem.

In addition to the issue of obesity, research shows poor nutrition can lead to hindered cognitive development. Conversely, it has been proven that if a child's nutritional needs *are* met, the child is more attentive in class, has better attendance, and fewer disciplinary problems.[69] Therefore an investment in school meals is an investment in education. Ensuring that a student receives the types of healthy food they need to perform well academically should be a priority for all District schools.

Below are example menus from a DCPS school with a national vendor:[70]

Pizza Dippers **Pizza Dipping Sauce** **Peach Cup** **Apple Cranberry Juice** **Mini Pretzels** **1% Chocolate Milk** **2% White Milk**	**Hamburger** **Potato Rounds** **Fresh Nectarine** **Whole Wheat Bun** **Brownie** **1% Chocolate Milk** **2% White Milk**	**Cheese Pizza** **Fresh Carrots** **Ranch Dressing** **Pineapple Tidbits** **Sugar Cookie** **1% Chocolate Milk** **2% White Milk**	**Fish Fillet** **Diced Carrots** **Fresh Plum** **Whole Wheat Bun** **Tartar Sauce** **Jungle Crackers** **1% Chocolate Milk** **2% White Milk**

While these meals meet the National School Lunch Program nutritional guidelines, they rely on heavily processed foods rather than locally-grown fruits and vegetables. They could be improved by adding fresh fruits and vegetables, and it would be best if these foods are grown locally. Locally grown food, because it can be served closer to the day it left the farm, retains more nutritional value. It would be wonderful to see apples from Pennsylvania, greens from Virginia, and Maryland-grown winter squash incorporated into the District's school meal programs. With farm-to-school programs, this could be a reality.

What is a Farm-To-School Program?

www.farmtoschool.org

A farm-to-school program is a program that connects local farms to school cafeterias with the goal of incorporating fresh fruits and vegetables in to the food that schools serve to improve students' nutrition. Farms and schools across the country have been linking arms to create partnerships that benefit both the students and the farmers. Children eat healthily and consequently do better in school, while farmers create local markets and earn money to support their operations. Farm-to-school programs are an excellent way to ensure that children develop healthy eating habits at a young age and begin to create lifelong commitments to eating fruits and vegetables—a habit that will aid in sustaining good health in all stages of life.

How Would Farm-To-School Work in DC?

Currently, the District participates in the Department of Defense's Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program. For 2005-2006, the District received approximately $100,000 to go towards buying fruits and vegetables from the Department of Defense.[71] All DC Public Schools (DCPS) and four charter schools participate, but this program does not have the same benefits that local farm-to-school programs would have. First and foremost, individual farm-to-school programs could be much more flexible and work to meet the needs of each specific school. Additionally, the relationship between schools and farmers creates an excellent educational opportunity for the students. The farmers that grow the apples the students eat at lunch can come in to their classrooms and speak to them about the science of their trade and the importance of maintaining personal good health and a clean environment. Local farm-to-school programs also show that the city's school systems recognize the importance of and financially support the regional economy.

The District is fortunate because it is a city surrounded by the beautiful farmland of the Chesapeake Bay, so there are many opportunities for schools to connect to farmers from Virginia, Maryland, and other areas to establish mutually beneficial relationships. Initially farm-to-school projects in the District should start small, so that incremental change can begin without any one stakeholder (a farmer, a school, a food service worker) getting in over their heads. By linking a few schools with one or

two local farmers, the roots of larger farm-to-school programs can be established for later years.

The best way to begin in the District is to focus on a few items in a few schools. Sweet potatoes and carrots could be bought from local farmers—the sweet potatoes for sweet potato sticks (like French fries, but better and healthier!) and the carrots for use in soups and as side dishes. Processing would be necessary, but it would not as burdensome as processing produce such as fresh corn. (To provide fresh fruits and vegetables for older students, processing could be easier. For example, it could simply entail washing apples for them to consume.) The best option for the District would most likely be to buy from the Tuscarora Organic Growers Cooperative.[72] This growers' association already gathers produce from multiple farms around the metropolitan area and sells it together to clients such as restaurants. The cooperative would benefit from having schools as clients because they would bring in steady business, while the schools would benefit from the ease of tapping in to the pre-existing business system of the cooperative. The Food Trust in Pennsylvania actually used Tuscarora for their farm-to-school initiatives in Philadelphia, but the central location of the cooperative where they shipped the food from was too far for it to be a profitable venture.[73] Tuscarora is much closer to the District, though, so this option has more potential for our city.

By having a few schools at the beginning embark on a farm-to-school endeavor, the schools can collectively use their buying power to buy large quantities at reasonable prices. By starting modestly—perhaps with some small charter schools—it would soon be clear what would work for the District and what wouldn't. Mike Tabor, an area farmer who has been involved in farm-to-school in Baltimore, suggests schools such as Cesar Chavez and Capital City Public Charter as potential sites for beginning farm-to-school programs. He has presented in their schools on topics such as food, agriculture, and nutrition and believes these schools would be very receptive and excited about the possibility of starting farm-to-school initiatives. If farm-to-school starts at smaller charter schools such as these, DCPS could model a larger project for their own schools on these operations and therefore ease in to incorporating farm-to-school on the larger scale.

Another option other than Tuscarora would be to use another broker that could sell produce to schools. These options might have not the same emphasis on buying local food, but because one of the main goals of farm-to-school is to improve the quality of school food, these options are a good starting point. Keany's Produce in Landover, Maryland sells to some schools in Virginia, while L&M Produce in Jessup, Maryland and Kegel's in Lancaster, Pennsylvania are other options.[74] These businesses are larger and would potentially be able to handle a school system the size of DCPS. Another alternative would be to use an organization such as the Capital Area Food Bank as an outside broker. They already obtain produce and distribute it, so they might be interested in expanding to help some smaller schools test a farm-to-school initiative.

In addition to these logistical matters, there are other things that would aid in adopting farm-to-school programs in the District. Hiring community-minded chefs with experience preparing fresh foods is a key aspect of making farm-to-school successful. Having support from parents and PTAs is extremely important, as is having these groups engaged in understanding the policies that surround school food. The USDA is requiring that all schools that participate in the National School Lunch and/or Breakfast Programs establish local wellness policies by fall 2006. As a part of this requirement the USDA insists that the adoption of the policies engage students, teachers, principals, food service administrators, and parents. Therefore this is a wonderful opportunity to have these different stakeholders stress the importance of adding more fresh fruits and vegetables into the lunch and breakfast programs.

It should be also noted that there are some limitations to how farm-to-school could operate in the District. The following are challenges that face DC:

- Each school in the District is different—some have on-site kitchens where meals can be prepared, while others only have warmers to heat food that is prepared by off-site vendors. This makes it difficult to create a farm-to-school model that would work at every school.
- New equipment would be needed for the food service facilities, since many schools are not equipped to prepare food in the needed way.
- DCPS would need to establish contracts with food service providers that would be willing to incorporate more local food into the products they deliver.
- Time is an issue. Students only get a certain amount of time for lunch, so any farm-to-school program that begins must be time-sensitive.
- Food service workers may need to work longer hours in order to have time to prepare fresh fruits and vegetables for students. This, in turn, equates to more money needed for salaries a farm-to-school program to work.
- Workers might also need more extensive training in food safety, which can be difficult to work out financially and in terms of time.
- It is often more expensive to buy fresh fruits and vegetables from local farmers than it is to use other options such as a national vendor. There are ways, however, to defer some costs.

Seasonality: Is It An Issue?
One thing some people might worry would be a problem is that the DC area (unlike locations such as California and Florida) has limited growing seasons. This is not problematic, though, because there is produce that grows in the winter (such as many different types of greens) that could be used in school food. Since the height of the growing season is during the summer, when school is out, another option for testing farm-to-school would be to begin by trying summer meal sites instead of schools. These programs are often smaller, so logistically they might be a good approach to beginning farm-to-school in the District.

A simple format will work for some, while others may need a more complex model to follow. The box below gives an example of a program that started out small but grew to a larger capacity—much like the situation that would work here in the District.

Harlem, NY: The Promise Academy is a charter school that is run by the Harlem Children's Zone, a non-profit organization that runs many programs in Harlem such as job training and parenting classes. The school's meal program has received nationwide recognition as a model of healthy, quality food service because they have adopted a farm-to-school initiative. Students are able to enjoy fresh New York products and expand their knowledge of what foods are available in their state and develop palates for them. An example of a meal includes turkey chili, brown rice, braised red cabbage, an apple, and milk or juice. While almost all the children receive free lunch, the Promise Academy spends $5.87 per student for breakfast, lunch, and snacks. This is more than twice as much as most schools spend, but grants allow the school to cover their costs. Ann Cooper, the food service director of Berkley California public schools, helped Promise Academy establish their program. She stressed the importance of the program, saying, "I think it's what we have to do at every school in America right now […] The level of quality of the produce, the level of quality of the cooking, the minimal use of processed food, the use of locally grown food as much as possible is where every school in American should be."

The food service program has a staff of six and is run by a chef with an extensive background in restaurant, soup kitchen, and public school food service. Even the eating environment is fresh and inviting—the children eat at round tables with tablecloths, which the school hopes will teach them manners and respect at the table. While the school acknowledged that it was initially difficult for children and parents to adapt to the new approach to food, they knew it was only a matter of time before the situation became familiar and enjoyable. Tiffany Vargas, a seventh grader at Promise, has already moved down this path. She has learned to like zucchini, vegetable lasagna, and cabbage! (*"Harlem School Gets High Health Marks," by Karen Matthews (AP), January 15, 2006.*)

The Benefits of Farm-To-School for DC and Its Children

In order for DC schools to be reimbursed for the meals they serve, the meals must meet USDA guidelines on fat and caloric content. Creating farm-to-school programs within District schools would be an excellent measure to ensure that the nutritional guidelines are easily met. Another benefit is that students would be eating more fresh fruits and vegetables, thereby maintaining healthy lifestyles and forming lifelong habits.

Where Could Funding Come From?

The State Education Office, which is the agency that administers the federal child nutrition programs in the District, and the DC Public Schools Food Service, the main school food operation in the city, work incredibly hard to provide healthy food to children in school. But there is little money set aside for unique approaches to

improving school food such as farm-to-school. For this reason, the city government should supplement the federal funding the District already receives in order to initially fund farm-to-school. More funding for farm-to-school programs would equate to better tasting, healthier lunch and breakfast food, which in turn would mean the city's children are eating better and forming healthy eating habits. If the city truly wants to make a commitment to anti-obesity work and improving our children's health, this type of funding should be a priority.

Farm-to-college is another version of farm-to-school—it's a program with the same purposes, but instead of occurring at primary and secondary schools, it is run on college campuses. Both American University and Gallaudet University in the District have farm-to-college programs that are run in their dining halls by Bon Appetit Management, a food service provider. Bon Appetit places a strong emphasis on creating "food services for a sustainable future" and runs Farm-To-Fork initiatives in many of their food service programs. Farm-To-Fork is a program in which Bon Appetit buys as much food as they can within a 150 mile radius of their locations, thereby stressing the importance of buying from small farmers and of delivering the freshest food possible to their clients. American University has bought from local farms such as Even' Star Farm in Lexington Park, Maryland, the Tuscarora Growers' Cooperative, and even the Dupont Circle farmers' market. The university also participated this year in Bon Appetit's "Eat Local Challenge" in which the food service had to prepare an entire lunch menu from strictly local ingredients. *For more information, contact Yvonne Matteson at 202-885-3195.*

Another source of money could be the Cooperative State Research, Education, and Extension Service's Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program (CFPCGP.) This organization gives out grants to programs that serve communities in a way that meets the needs of low-income communities and supports local food initiatives. The National Farm-To-School Program, Center for Food & Justice, and Urban & Environmental Policy Institute at Occidental College are all available for assistance in writing farm-to-school grant applications.[75] Additionally, the National Institutes of Health offers grant money for "school-based interventions to prevent obesity."[76]

COMMUNITY GARDENS

Community gardens are pieces of land that community members share to communally grow fruits, vegetables, and flowers of their own personal choice. The gardens are usually divided up evenly in to plots so that each participant has an equal amount of space, and tools and resources are shared among the many members. Many community gardens put limits on the amount of non-food items (such as flowers) can be grown so that the gardens remain predominately food-based. For many participants, these gardens provide a good source of fresh fruits and vegetables, physical activity, and enjoyable recreation.

Where They Are in DC

There are multiple community gardens within the community—Rock Creek Park has nine gardens, Fort Dupont Park has one garden with over 150 plots, and there are other individual gardens throughout the city.[77] Wards 3 and 4 have gardens, as does Ward 7 (the Fort Dupont garden), but Wards 1, 5, & 8 are underserved in terms of community gardening. Urban Oasis, which unfortunately no longer operates, used to offer Ward 8 residents the opportunity to garden. Land is of course an issue—some parts of DC simply do not have the space to create gardens. But in many parts of the District public and private land could be converted in to a useful garden.

There are some school gardens in the District that grow food, but not enough so that they would be a substantial source of food for anyone. Unfortunately, community gardening is often viewed as an activity reserved for people with extra time and money to devote to their plots. Therefore gardening often goes overlooked as a source of food to anyone who doesn't have these resources available to them. Even if they did, often the gardens aren't easily accessible by public transportation (such as the Fort Dupont Park garden), so participating is not a viable option.

If there is a model for how a garden can thrive in the District, it is the Newark Street Community Garden in Northwest DC. The garden is a great example of how a garden can be important in a community. It was established in 1973, and currently has 220 plots that serve about 440 people. Participants can grow their own food in plots as big as 20 feet by 10 feet and can devote as much time to the garden as they want. The garden prides itself on its international makeup—there are African, Chinese, South American and European gardeners side by side. In past years, surplus growth has been delivered to organizations that give the fresh food to those who may not otherwise have access to it.[78] For its participants, the garden serves as a source of food, a friendly gathering of neighbors, and occasionally even a community service.

Why Are They Important?

Community gardens can provide an excellent source of food for District residents. A garden plot that is 20 by 20 square feet can produce an average of $500 worth of food throughout the year.[79] Therefore gardens can have a great impact their communities and guard against food insecurity and hunger for the city's citizens. Additionally, many immigrants that come to the District have backgrounds in farming and knowledge of farming skills that they could use to participate in community gardening and provide food for themselves. Youth gardens such as the Washington Youth Garden at the National Arboretum and the Lederer Youth Garden also teach children the importance of knowing how food grows and create an opportunity to apply nutrition education to real life.[80] Community gardening also promotes physical activity for people of all ages, helps connect neighborhood residents with one another, provides the surrounding area with refreshing green space, and creates the potential for community development. It also promotes independent sustainability.

There are some problems that gardens present if they are to be a considerable source of food in the District. Obtaining and financing land are issues, and sustaining a productive garden is a difficult task. Many District residents lack the time and expertise that gardens demand, so they are sometimes not time and cost efficient endeavors. If gardens are to play a role in helping make District residents more food secure, there will have to be a shift in focus from the upscale, recreational garden to the accessible, food-providing garden. There will also have to be a commitment to providing community members with the knowledge and tools that are necessary for successful food growth.

Gardens' Role in the District

Other systems and programs outside of community gardening reach more people and better aid the overall population in becoming more food secure. But it should be noted that although community gardens alone will not make District citizens more food secure, they may be an additional source of food for some individuals. Gardens also provide health and community benefits outside of food. These contributions should not be overlooked. The following things should be done in order to ensure that those who count on their community garden plot as a reliable source of food can continue to do so, and that those who would find this resource beneficial could have access to a garden.

- **Create gardens in areas (such as Wards 1, 5, & 8) where other food sources are minimal**. In the growing season, these gardens could serve as accessible sources of healthy food.
- **Support Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) DC financially so that the organization can provide training, information, and resources** on how to create productive, sustainable, and aesthetically pleasing gardens.
- **Have one organization, such as GROW DC, oversee coordination of all the city's gardens**. The individual gardens can maintain their autonomy, but a lead organization is needed to coordinate larger efforts. For example, as

city development pressure strengthens in the future, this organization could advocate for community gardening space in the District.

- **Have a lead organization sponsor, oversee, and coordinate all *school* gardens in the District**. One possibility could be the Children and Youth Investment Trust Corporation, an organization whose vision is that DC children are "given every opportunity to develop and grow into a healthy, caring and productive adult[s]."[81]
- **Allow more public land to be used for community gardens**. This way residents would not have to pay to procure land for gardens.
- **Recruit AmeriCorps volunteers to create and run community gardens**. Other areas of the country have been successful in getting AmeriCorps volunteers ever year so that the gardens they create can have sustainable leadership and organization.
- **Promote the growth of gardens in communities made up of immigrant populations who come from strong agricultural backgrounds**. Many District residents have the knowledge and skills to grow a large portion of their own food, but do not have places to apply these talents. This would allow such communities better access to sources of food, but would also aid in the expression of their ethnic pride and thereby add to the diversity and inclusiveness that defines the District.

Finding "Green" for Greening

Community gardens are usually funded through their own dues. Participants in the District usually pay anywhere from $15 to $75 to work a plot, and this money goes to upkeep and other general costs.[82] Outside funding can come from community groups or neighborhood associations that support the gardens, while school gardens can raise money from their school and parent associations or through private donations. Also, GROW DC, a local nonprofit, gives yearly grants to gardens throughout the city in need of support. Nationally support could come from the American Community Gardening Association or other gardening organizations.

GROCERY CO-OPS, SHARE, & COMMUNITY SUPPORTED AGRICULTURE

For many people, buying food entails going to the grocery store, local market, corner store, or convenience store. While these are the most commonly used locations for food shopping, there are some important alternative methods of acquiring food that should not be overlooked. These methods—which can often be less expensive than the more traditional forms of buying food—include shopping at a local food cooperative, participating in a buying club, and being a shareholder of a community supported agriculture program. Residents could participate in every option, but below are separate explanations of how each program works, why they are important here in the District, and what should be done to improve access to them.

Grocery Co-ops

A grocery cooperative, or "co-op", is a grocery store that is typically owned and operated by the people who shop there. There are currently only a few co-ops that serve the DC area, most notably the City Garden Co-op and the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Co-op, the latter with two stores—one in Takoma Park, MD and one in Silver Spring, MD. There is also the Senbeb Coop, but their selection is limited to vegan items. The City Garden Co-op, a small but successful co-op, is located in Mt. Pleasant and has approximately eighty members.[83] City Garden allows people who are interested to try shopping there, but then requires membership for people to use it continually. When possible, the co-op tries to buy from local growers and distributors and requires that all members work at the co-op for three hours once every seven weeks in order to keep it functioning. The Takoma Park/Silver Spring Co-op, a much larger organization, has well over 5,000 members between their two locations. Membership in the co-op, however, is not a requirement to shop there; instead, members get discounts and offers that non-members do not. Members can volunteer at the co-op to receive a discount, but there are employees that are paid by the co-op who work there on a regular basis.[84]

These grocery co-ops operate as buying clubs in which the members determine what is purchased for sale. The co-ops are able to buy items at a low cost and are able to set their own markup prices, so the products are as affordable as the members make them (within purchasing costs limits.) This thereby offers "deals" to members because they are able to purchase food without high price markups.

What Co-ops Mean For the District

These co-ops not only offer good quality fresh foods (including fruits and vegetables) at reasonable prices, they also support local farmers and cut down on distribution costs and subsequent environmental pollution. While sometimes co-ops thrive in moderate to expensive neighborhoods, the District would benefit from the creation of more co-ops geared toward low-income communities and their needs. Currently, the coops that exist in the District don't work according to the needs of low-income

people. For example, it costs $100 up front to join the Takoma Park/Silver Spring Co-op.[85] Although the money is returned upon termination of membership, it is still a barrier at joining for many people. They do not accept WIC, but they do accept food stamps. Yet for many food stamps recipients, the Takoma Park Co-op is not easily accessible. The City Garden Co-op, which does not accept food stamps or WIC, only costs $30 per year for an individual membership. Membership for two people costs $50 per year and for three people it's $65 per year. For four or more people, member costs an additional $10 for each person.[86] So while it may be economical for some, the costs get higher for larger families and are a yearly expense, as opposed to a one time cost.

In low-income communities in Wards 7 and 8, where grocery stores are scarce, it would be beneficial to open a co-op (or multiple) which residents could use as their primary source of food. In these cases co-ops would be financially beneficial to residents, fill the "food deserts" that currently exist, and expand community development. Funding for such projects could come from many places, such as local organizations, but there are also larger organizations that offer money to aid in co-op startup. The Food Co-op 500, for example, offers small grants for the beginning stages of establishing a co-op, but also gives out funds for building capital during the middle stages of creation.[87]

There are many examples of successful examples of co-ops that have thrived in low-income communities across the country. Such co-ops could be used as models for establishing successful co-ops here in the District. One good example is the Cass Corridor Food Cooperative in Detroit, Michigan. The coop opened in 1972 and currently has over 2,000 members and thrives in its community. (*The Cooperative Grocer*, #98, January-February 2002.)

There is currently one co-op being planned for the District, potentially on H Street. This would be a wonderful addition to the city because there are many people who do not have access to a co-op that could use this one. Putting the two following recommendations into action would ensure that the highest number of people could benefit from this co-op, while the third recommendation could improve the existing co-op in the District.

- **Establish socioeconomic diversity on the board**. This would guarantee that movements be taken to include people from all parts of the city as customers.
- **Establish a community discount program that would give people who are on any type of public assistance a 10% (or comparable) discount**. This would be an excellent way to ensure that the co-op initially receives low-income customers that otherwise might not patron it, thereby ultimately bringing in more business and creating publicity and a truly inclusive community.

- **The City Garden Co-op should accept food stamps**. This would open the door to more customers and provide another affordable food source for food stamp recipients.

SHARE

While a grocery co-op has a physical location, there are also buying clubs that do not have a "storefronts" that their members can visit. One such buying club available to the District residents is SHARE, which stands for **S**elf **H**elp **A**nd **R**esource **E**xchange. Begun in 1990 in the metropolitan area and based in Hyattsville, MD, SHARE is a food network that distributes affordable and nutritious food throughout the District.[88] It eases the stress of getting to the grocery store and the costs of high grocery bills and it is a fabulous example of the financial power that buying collectively can produce.

How Does It Work?

The only requirement for being a member of SHARE is that members perform two hours of volunteer service a month in their community, which could be anything from helping a neighbor to working at the SHARE warehouse. SHARE is able to provide approximately $35-$40 worth of groceries to its participants at a low cost, currently $16. Participants can order and pick up their food at any of the approximately 340 churches, Head Start programs, senior citizen centers, tenant associations, and other community organizations that serve as extension arms of the SHARE network.[89] For many people who do not live near a grocery store or who have difficulty getting there, there are most likely a few SHARE host organizations near their homes. Participants can pay for the food by cash, money order, or food stamps, so this is a wonderful—and less expensive—alternative to grocery shopping.

The food is made available at the low price of $16 because SHARE, through the members' collective buying power, is able to purchase food at lower, wholesale prices, thereby making the cost for individuals much lower. In past years, SHARE has been able to offer up to a 60% reduction in grocery prices, which they estimate saves metropolitan area residents approximately $3.9 million.[90] In 2003, SHARE distributed over 3.8 million foods of food to their participants.[91]

How Can It Be Improved?

Overall SHARE is a great program and provides an excellent way for people with economic hardships to buy affordable food and therefore have more money to spend on other expenses. The following recommendations would increase access to SHARE and improve the program overall.

- **SHARE should be promoted to people and specific communities who don't have easy access to grocery stores**, such as Wards 7 and 8. (Only two chain grocery stores serve over roughly 140,000.)
- **Perform outreach to food stamp recipients in particular** because participation in SHARE could help lessen the costs of food, either by helping

their food stamps last longer or by being an option when their food stamps run out at the end of the month.

- **Perform outreach to people who rely on food banks as continual sources of food**. By buying groceries from SHARE, people would be able to save more money for other expenses and thereby rely on emergency services less.
- **SHARE should offer more vegetarian and meat options in their packages** so that people who prefer or require such food could participate. This way, SHARE would be an option for many people that don't eat meat or have specific dietary needs.
- **Create neighborhood-based grocery buying clubs like SHARE for District residents**. SHARE is an excellent model—it should be replicated to aid the food insecure in the city.

Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs)

What is a CSA and Why is it Important?

The phrase *community supported agriculture* simply refers to the process in which local farmers sell seasonal "shares" to people interested in having fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the growing season. Shareholders usually pay up front for a season's worth of produce, then throughout the season farmers distribute grocery bags containing a week or two week's worth of crops to their shareholders at designated locations. Some farmers only provide summer season shares, but others have both summer and winter CSAs. CSAs are important because they are a source of fresh, seasonal fruits and vegetables to people in the city. If District residents don't have access to a grocery store (or do, but the produce is not up to acceptable standards), a CSA is a wonderful alternative to ameliorate these problems.

Clagett Farm, where the Capital Area Food Bank runs their CSA.

Where Are There CSAs in the District?

Currently, there is only one CSA that specifically makes itself available and affordable to low-income communities in DC. The Capital Area Food Bank works in conjunction with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation to run Clagett Farm in nearby Maryland; it is from this farm that the food bank runs a CSA. The CSA offers full shares for half the price to people who qualify for WIC or food stamps (EBT.) Participants can pick up their half shares at the farm in Upper Marlboro, MD, the Anacostia Farmers Market at Peace Park on 14th St SE, or near Dupont Circle.[92] Additionally, Clagett Farm gives out shares to the low-

income children who visit the farm in their Farm Youth Initiative, which the children in turn take home to their families. (It should also be noted that the farm also donates produce to low-income communities in DC through the food bank.)[93]

The Washington Post article "A Weekly Taste of the Harvest" from March 2nd, 2005 listed eight CSAs run by farms in the metropolitan area that are available to DC residents.[94] A list of these farms is listed in Appendix D. A share for these CSAs can typically cost anywhere from $300 to $500. For this reason, the District needs more CSAs that are affordable to low-income communities. In order for CSAs to sell low-income residents and be sustainable, subsidies are usually needed (especially at the beginning of the season.) Farmers need money early on to fund their labor and farm costs for the season, so most CSAs require payment for the whole season up front. For many low-income residents, paying up front for a season's worth of produce is difficult, if not impossible, to do.

What Needs To Be Done To Expand the CSA System?

Although there are many CSAs serving the District, this does not indicate that the system is fully reaching its capacity or working effectively. The following things should be done in order to improve the current system.

- **More CSAs that are affordable and accessible to the city's low-income communities are needed**. The existing CSAs are good resources for many people in the District, but they do not serve enough communities where grocery stores and healthy food are scarce. Residents in areas without access to fresh fruits and vegetables could greatly benefit from being able to pick up produce on a weekly basis right in their neighborhoods. If farmers choose drop-off locations where fresh food is not readily available, their CSA could be highly profitable and extremely popular in the community.
- **Help the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB) expand their subsidy program**. The subsidies CAFB uses to offset costs for people of low-income make it possible for many people to buy a share that may not be able to do so otherwise. Raising more funds for the subsidies would equate to more people participating in CSAs and thus receiving more fresh fruits and vegetables. Additionally, the CAFB could use funding to begin expanding their CSA program's delivery to some of their member agencies. This way, more people across the city could have access to this great program.
- **Provide funding for other CSAs to subsidize shares in low-income communities**. There should be more than just one CSA in the District that is affordable to low-income residents.
- **Use schools as CSA drop-off points**. Having schools as pick-up locations would be good because it makes it easy on parents—they pick up their children and grab part of dinner at the same time. Also, schools guarantee the farmer(s) customer flow because parents will regularly arrive to pick up their children.

Funding

Funding for CSAs that provide shares to low-income residents could come from a number of sources. The USDA's Risk Management Agency helps farmers manage business risks and create economic sustainability for their farms, so they might have funds available for local farmers for projects such as direct marketing. The Farmers' Market Promotion Program, which was mentioned in the section on farmers' markets, also funds CSA programs. Additionally, the Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Maryland Cooperative Extension Agencies could help fund their farmers' programs and provide them with technical assistance. Also, local non-profits interested in issues such as obesity prevention and sustainable agriculture could make contributions to CSA programs. If schools were drop-off sites, PTA associations might be interested in making a contribution to ensure that CSAs are affordable to the parents of their school's children.

SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD

1 in 10 DC households are food insecure, and it is very likely that at some point these residents will find it necessary to obtain food from a supplemental food supplier.[95] The Capital Area Food Bank has noticed such a rising demand; in fact, requests for supplemental food from District families with children increased 33% from 2002 to 2003.[96] While the food bank does an excellent job filling this need, the mere fact that there are over 330 sites where supplemental food is available in the District points to other larger, complex issues in our city—both within the food system and beyond it. Although the supplemental food providers offer a wonderful, much needed service in the District, the city's reliance on supplemental food must be lessened.

The System

There are many organizations in the District that provide residents in crisis with supplemental food with individual meals and/or groceries. Supplemental food can be defined as food that is distributed through atypical—usually "emergency"—means which are usually not socially acceptable. Such means would include going to a food pantry to get groceries, having meals at a soup kitchen, or accepting donations of food in place of grocery shopping. Supplemental food is usually the first option residents turn to when they are in crisis because it is readily available and well known as an option for when situations become difficult.

While some supplemental food providers might offer food through their own means, a large portion of these organizations in the District are member agencies of the Capital Area Food Bank (CAFB). CAFB has over 740 member agencies throughout the metropolitan area—333 of which are in the District.[97] Many of these are food pantries (churches or community organizations, for example) but many other providers of emergency food are places such as day care centers, rehab centers, and transitional housing units. CAFB currently distributes approximately twenty million pounds of food—including six million pounds of produce—each year to their member agencies.[98] While this does include organizations outside of District lines, the number of people served is staggering as it is indicative of the great need that exists in the DC area.

In addition to distributing food to agencies, CAFB also has its own programs that distribute supplemental food bags to seniors (in the form of the Seniors' Brown Bag program) and to children (through Food for Kids.)[99] The organization also has a direct distribution program in which they deliver government commodities to communities. Produce for People, an initiative that delivers fresh produce to twenty sites where people who might not have access to fresh fruits and vegetables otherwise can receive nutritious food.[100]

While the process varies from site to site, member agencies receive food from the warehouse and then distribute it to those in need in their communities. For this

reason, supplemental food providers have an immense amount of respect and credibility in their communities. Neighborhood residents trust the providers to help them in times of need and be sympathetic to their challenges. For these reasons, supplemental food providers are an important piece of connecting with food insecure community members.

Recommendations for the Supplemental Food System

Because supplemental food providers are often the first place residents go to when they experience food insecurity, they are excellent places to perform outreach and provide education on what other programs and systems are available to help with food insecurity in the future. The following recommendations would help these providers work to their strongest potential and point the city in a direction away from depending so heavily on supplemental food sources.

- **The CAFB Hunger Lifeline should supply information beyond what food pantries are available in the caller's area.** Information about the federal nutrition programs such as food stamps, the WIC program, school lunch and breakfast programs, and summer food should be available to those who call and visit a supplemental food site.
- **Similarly, supplemental food providers should offer information in addition to the food they distribute.** Because they are often the first place people go to when they are in need, they should provide information about other programs that could provide help.
- **DC government, community organizations, local businesses, and residents should specifically support the programs the CAFB runs that promote systematic change—not just those that provide aid in emergency situations**. For instance, the CAFB uses some of its money to support a farmers' market in a low-income community in Southeast DC, where people do not have sufficient access to healthy, affordable food. This use of funding makes food affordable for the market's patrons, thereby lessening their need to use supplemental means to get food.
- **Supplemental food providers should also offer low-income residents referrals to agencies that can help them with financial assistance and inform them about important options such as the Earned Income Tax Credit**. This will help with clients' overall financial security and thus their food insecurity.
- As noted, supplemental food providers are trusted establishments in their communities. Because of this, **anti-hunger advocacy organizations should offer training to supplemental food providers' workers** so that they are able to supply their clients with appropriate, accurate, and current information on what resources—besides emergency food—are available to them.

NUTRITION EDUCATION

Nutrition education is of utmost importance in the fight against food insecurity. It is not enough to ensure that everyone has food—it is crucial that all of the District's residents understand what foods are necessary for good health. It is estimated that in 2004, approximately 21,000 District residents received nutrition education.[101] This number is less than 4% of the District's population, so they are many more people that are food insecure—adults and youth—that need to be reached.

Nutrition Education for Adults

Adults often do not receive the nutrition education that they need. Many work long hours, have multiple responsibilities outside of work, and are not in places or situations that are conducive to understanding the importance of what they eat and how their food intake affects their health. Furthermore, adults' knowledge of nutrition directly determines what their children are eating, too, so engaging this demographic is vital to the overall health of District families.

Government Programs

The Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) and the WIC program are the two main sources of nutrition education in the District. Together, these two programs were responsible for 45% of the instruction received by District residents in 2004.[102] Both programs are operated by the DC Department of Health. The Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP) runs the "Eat Smart/ Move More" campaign in partnership with the Department of Human Services' Income Maintenance Administration. This program offers nutrition education programs on topics such as food preparation, feeding children and infants, and food budgeting.[103] The WIC program similarly provides nutrition education, but its information and counseling relates specifically to the needs of mothers, their infants, and young children.[104]

Local Community Programs

Besides the two government-run nutrition education programs in the District, there are also many programs that focus on educating community members on the importance of healthy eating and food preparation. One such program, Operation Frontline, is run through the Capital Area Food Bank in conjunction with Share Our Strength. It began in the District in October 1993 and since then, over 3,000 people have participated in the classes.[105] Operation Frontline classes are held all over the city and are available for people of all ages. In these classes, volunteer chefs and nutritionists teach participants about meal planning and preparation, how to spend their money wisely when buying food, and what foods are nutritionally rich and important to their health. In these classes, participants travel to a local grocery store together to learn how to maximize buying healthy foods and minimize costs. They are also given grocery bags at the end of the class with the foods they learned how to prepare so that they can practice their newly acquired skills at home.[106]

The Capital Area Food Bank also runs the Food & Skills Program which—very similar to Operation Frontline—teaches nutrition education and how it relates to individuals' health. The difference between the two is that Food & Skills programming depends a bit more on the needs of specific groups that participate. While Operation Frontline offers excellent, structurally sound nutrition classes, Food & Skills is more flexible in its approach and instruction. Food & Skills classes are taught by many different community members with knowledge of nutrition, while Operation Frontline has specific instructors that align with Share Our Strength's requirements. Food & Skills tries to make a special effort to focus on diet-related health concerns, such as diabetes and heart disease, and notes the importance of physical fitness and how best to use what limited resources participants may have at hand.[107]

A third program that is a good source of nutrition education in the District is SHARE's Health Project. The Health Project sponsors "supermarket tours" for their participants at local Giant grocery stores. The tours, led by dieticians, teach those involved how to read food labels, make healthy choices, and make connections between what they eat and diet-related diseases such as diabetes. The Health Project also runs cooking workshops in which participants learn how to prepare healthy foods, modify the ingredients in common meals to make them more nutritious, and understand nutrition labels. Lastly, SHARE's Health Project promotes a twelve week "walking challenge" in which community members can become more physically active by joining walking groups.[108]

Nutrition Education for Youth

First and foremost, it is important that youth have access nutrition education in their homes and in the classroom. But there are many outside influences that currently exist in the District that can greatly compliment what children are taught by their caregivers and teachers—in kitchens, on farms, and in gardens.

In the Kitchen

One option for teens in the District is to participate in BrainFood, a program that teaches its participants about food, nutrition, and food preparation. The program has two separate parts—an after-school program which youth participate in twice a week and their Summer Institute that runs when school is out of session.[109] In addition to developing self reliance, creativity, a strong work ethic, and teamwork, the participants also learn specific knowledge and skills in different program "modules" such as "Food Science and Nutrition," "Introduction to Cooking," and "Food Issues, Culture, and Politics."[110] BrainFood states it has had up to 450 applicants a year apply for the programs, but only 72 teens—representing four different District schools—can ultimately participate in their programs.[111] So there is obviously a desire for programs of this nature to exist here in the District.

In a Garden

Schools gardens are also a prime location for nutrition education. Many schools have open land where gardens can be created or already have manicured spaces that could easily be transformed in to gardens. Establishing gardens at schools consequently creates an outdoor classroom, giving teachers the opportunity to incorporate the gardens into their Math, Science, and English curriculum. There are some schools in the District that already have gardens, such as Horace Mann Elementary School, Cardozo Senior High School, and Bertie Backus Middle School.[112] But these gardens have not yet incorporated fruits and vegetables into their projects. If schools grew food, such as tomatoes and squash, students would be able to gain hands-on understanding of how food grows and what foods are best for them to eat. Nutrition could be taught inside the classroom and applied outside in the garden.

Besides school gardens, there are other gardens in the District that teach youth about nutrition. The Washington Youth Garden is one such garden. It is located in the National Arboretum and runs seasonal programs on nutrition and learning how to grow food. They have a "Seed to Supper" program in the summer that stresses nutrition education and donates the food that the youth grow to the DC Central Kitchen. The garden also runs "Growing Food…Growing Together" from May to October. This is a program in which approximately twenty-five families learn to grow and cook nutritious foods together.[113] Two other gardens in the District also offer great potential for nutrition education—the Lederer Youth Garden and the Twin Oaks Youth Garden.[114]

On a Farm

Like gardens, farms offer children a space in which learning about nutrition, foods, agriculture can be enjoyable and exciting. Many children in the District are surrounded by concrete and do not understand the link between the food they eat and the way it was produced. Farm visits allow for children to make this connection and thus facilitates their understanding of nutrition and why some foods are better for them than others. The Capital Area Food Bank makes this scenario a reality by giving children the opportunity to participate in their Farm Youth Initiative. The Farm Youth Initiative brings children to the food bank's Clagett Farm and educates them about farming, fresh food, and the importance of good nutrition.[115] The Farm Youth Initiative is an excellent resource for the District, but not enough people know of its existence and its potential to teach children about nutrition. There is great potential to expand this program and connect nutrition education in DC's schools with practical application on the farm.

Another example of the link between farming and nutrition education is Urban Oasis. Due to multiple circumstances, Urban Oasis is not currently in operation, but in past years the program provided wonderful nutrition education to youth in the District. Urban Oasis was a mini-farm that operated on one acre in Southeast DC near Anacostia and Congress Heights. Many school groups and youth were involved in the farm and helped with its operations. Two thirds of the farm's produce was sold at

local farmers' markets while the remaining third was donated to soup kitchens and pantries.[116] Although Urban Oasis is not currently running, it is an exceptional model of an urban farm that was not only productive in terms of growth but also taught people in the community about healthy food and its benefits.

The Need for Growth

Nutrition education is the foundation for good health throughout life, so District residents must be educated to make good choices. But currently, the District's nutrition education programs do not reach the highest number possible. This means that many people are missing out on quality, helpful, and engaging instruction that would ultimately aid them in living healthier lives. Particularly, it is important that children be reached early in life so that they can develop good habits at a young age.

Expanding Nutrition Education in the District

The following actions would improve and expand city residents' awareness and knowledge of nutrition and ensure that more people have access to instruction and up-to-date resources on diet and health.

- **Publicize the existing nutrition education programs in the District**. While the District needs more nutrition education programs to reach all those who could benefit from it, residents must first know of their current options and opportunities.
- **Advocate for District schools to incorporate more nutrition education throughout the curriculum**—including math, science, health, and physical education classes. The more practical application nutrition education has in students' lives, the more beneficial it will be to them.
- **Farmers' markets in the city should sponsor cooking demonstrations at their sites**. Some markets do have occasional demonstrations, but not nearly as many that could. The benefit of such demonstrations is that they provide immediate practical application—the products used in the demonstrations are available at the market, so customers can buy the goods and prepare the very same meals that day.
- **Food stamp offices should provide cooking demonstrations, run nutrition-related videos in the waiting rooms, and have materials available on nutrition**. By giving food stamp recipients examples of what foods to buy and how to prepare them, they will be able to use their food stamp benefits wisely and healthily.
- **Support BrainFood so that it can expand to include more teenagers in their programs**. There are few nutrition education programs in the District geared directly to this age group, so this program is vital to the city.
- **Expand the Capital Area Food Bank's Farm Youth Initiative to run in conjunction with DC school's nutrition education**. Clagett Farm is close enough to DC (only ten miles beyond District lines) that schools could easily take field trips to the farm and use the resources the program offers to enhance the science and health lessons children have in school.

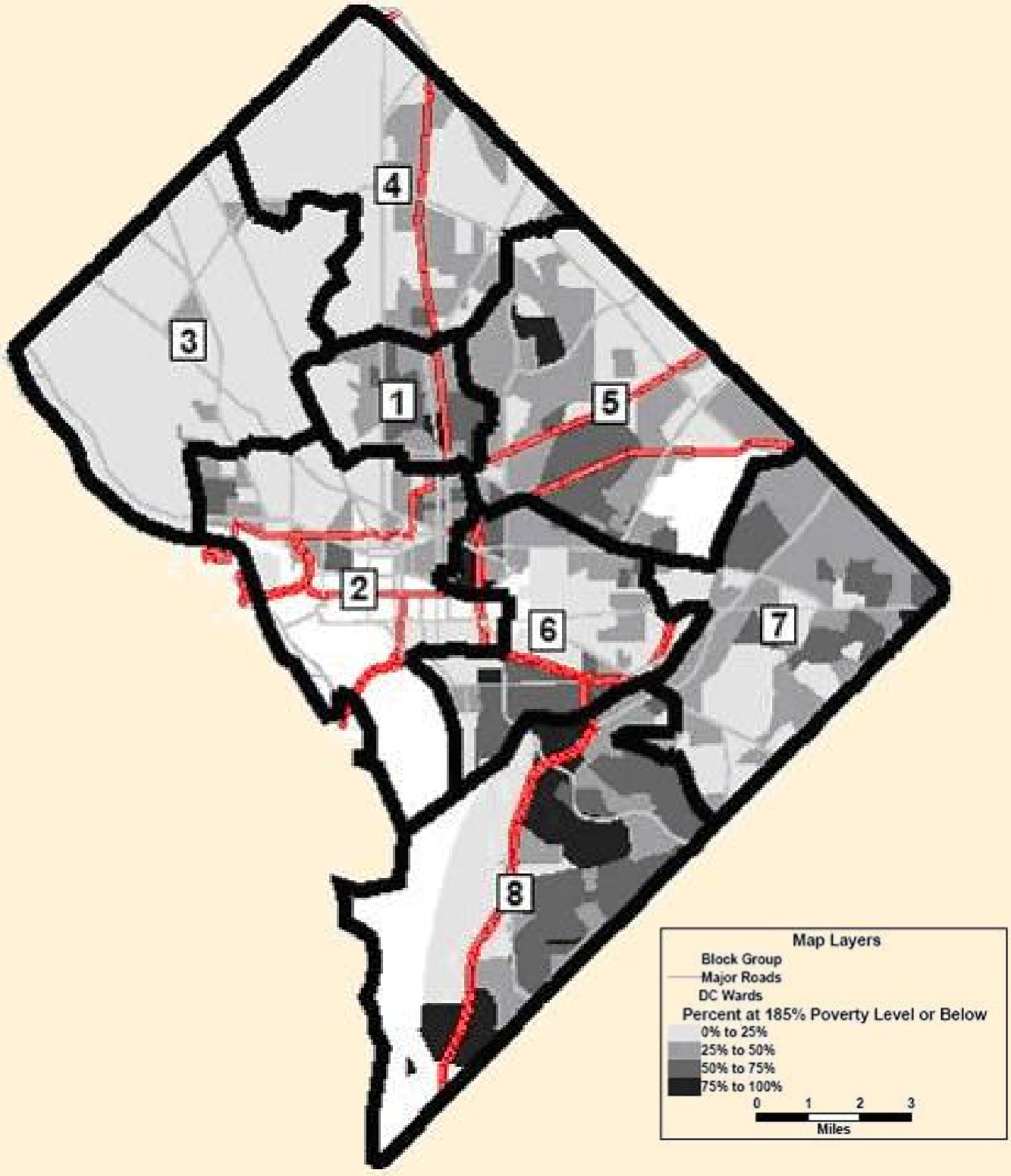
- **Revive Urban Oasis or create a new urban farm modeled after it**. Urban Oasis was an excellent vehicle not just for nutrition education, but self-sufficiency, individual responsibility, and concern for community. The District lacks an important outlet for education without such a program.

Funding

For the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP), the city could increase its match to federal funding so that they have greater capacity for outreach. Currently, FSNEP must work according to federal regulations, which state that they can only provide nutrition education to people eligible for food stamps. Therefore the program misses great opportunities to reach people who are outside of this population, but would still benefit from FSNEP education. The program could look for private funding to reach other residents that don't receive food stamps and use their pre-existing infrastructure to seamlessly include these groups into their programs.

Additionally, the Department of Health should give out grants to community-based organizations, such as BrainFood and Food & Skills, that provide nutrition education to District residents. Specifically for school gardening programs, Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) DC offers grants for up to $1,000 for schools, after school programs, youth groups, neighborhood associations, shelters, and many other groups in the District to create new gardens and improve existing ones.[117]

APPENDIX A: MAP OF POVERTY IN DC



APPENDIX B: GROCERY STORES AND FARMERS MARKET MAP INFORMATION

Grocery Stores Denoted in Map 1

Giant	1050 Brentwood Rd NE DC 20018
Giant	1414 8th St NW DC 20001
Giant	3336 Wisconsin Ave NW DC 20016
Giant	1345 Park Rd NW DC 20010
Safeway	1601 Maryland Ave NE DC 20002
Safeway	1701 Corcoran St NW DC 20009
Safeway	1747 Columbia Rd NW DC 20009
Safeway	1855 Wisconsin Ave NW DC 20007
Safeway	2550 Virginia Ave NW DC 20037
Safeway	2845 Alabama Ave SE DC 20020
Safeway	332 40th St NE DC 20019
Safeway	3830 Georgia Ave NW DC 20011
Safeway	401 M St SW DC 20024
Safeway	415 14th St SE DC 20003
Safeway	4203 Davenport St NW DC 20016
Safeway	4865 Macarthur Blvd NW DC 20007
Safeway	514 Rhode Island Ave NE DC 20002
Safeway	5545 Connecticut Ave NW DC 20015
Safeway	6500 Piney Branch Rd NW DC 20012
Safeway	1800 20th St NW DC 20009
Whole Foods	1440 P ST NW DC 20005
Whole Foods	2323 Wisconsin Ave NW DC 20007
Whole Foods	4530 40th ST NW DC 20016

Farmers' Markets Denoted in Map 2

Dupont Circle	1500 20th Street NW DC 20036
Foggy Bottom	2400 I Street NW DC 20037
H Street	625 H Street NE DC 20002
Penn Quarter	800 D Street NW DC 20004
Georgia/ Petworth	3680 Georgia Avenue NW DC 20010
Ward 8	500 Alabama Avenue SE DC 20032
RFK Stadium Open Air	2700 Benning Road NE DC 20002
Adams Morgan	1800 Columbia Road NW DC 20009
Twin Springs Farm Stand	2300 Cathedral Avenue NW DC 20008
US Department of Agriculture	1200 Independence Avenue SW DC 20024
US Department of Transportation	400 7th Street SW DC 20024
New Morning Farmers' Market	3600 Alton Place NW DC 20008
Burleith/Glover Park	3700 Whitehaven Parkway NW DC 20007
Brookland	950 Bunker Hill Road NE DC 20017
Riverside/Heritage Park	601 Division Avenue NE DC 20019
Mt. Pleasant	1650 Lamont Street NW DC 20010
Anacostia	1400 U Street SE DC 20020
Columbia Heights	1400 Irving Street NW DC 20010
Eastern Market	225 7th Street SE DC 20003
DC Farmers Market	1309 5th Street NE DC 20002
Chevy Chase	5700 Broad Branch Rd NW DC 20015

APPENDIX C: FARMERS' MARKETS- LOCATIONS & SCHEDULES

Markets Open Year Round	**Location**	**Day/Time**
Dupont Circle	1500 20th Street NW Washington DC 20036	Sundays (Mar-Dec) 9:00-1:00, (Jan-Mar) 10:00-1:00
Eastern Market	225 7th Street SE Washington DC 20003	Saturdays & Sundays 7:00-4:00
New Morning Farmers' Market	3600 Alton Place NW Washington DC 20008	All months except April and May: Saturdays 8:00-1:30
RFK Stadium Open Air	2700 Benning Road NE Washington DC 20002	Summer: Thursdays & Saturdays 7:00-4:00 Some farmers come in the winter, not all
DC Farmers' Market	1309 5th St NE Washington DC 20002	Tuesday-Thursday: 7:00-5:30, Friday & Saturday: 7:00-6:30, Sunday: 7:00-2:00
Summer Season Markets	**Location**	**Day/Time**
Foggy Bottom	2400 "I" Street NW Washington DC 20037	Wednesdays 3:00- 7:00
H Street	625 H Street NE Washington DC 20002	Saturdays 8:30-12:30
Penn Quarter	800 D Street NW Washington DC 20004	Thursdays 3:00-7:00
Ward 8	500 Alabama Avenue SE Washington DC 20032	Saturdays 9:00-2:00
Adams Morgan	1800 Columbia Road NW Washington DC 20009	Saturdays 8:00-2:00
Twin Springs Farm Stand	2300 Cathedral Ave NW Washington DC 20008	Summer-December: Saturdays 8:30-12:30
US Department of Agriculture	1200 Independence Ave SW Washington DC 20024	Fridays 10:00-2:00
US Department of Transportation	400 7th Street SW Washington DC 20024	Tuesdays 10:00-2:00

Brookland	950 Bunker Hill Road NE Washington DC 20017	Tuesdays 4:00-7:00
Brookland (2nd location)	1200 Newton St NE Washington, DC 20017	Sundays 10:00-2:00
Burleith/Glover Park	3700 Whitehaven Parkway NW Washington DC 20007	Tuesdays 7:00-8:00
Riverside/Heritage Park	601 Division Avenue NE Washington DC 20019	Saturdays 10:00-2:00
Mt. Pleasant	1650 Lamont Street NW Washington DC 20010	Saturdays 9:00-1:00
Anacostia	1400 U Street SE Washington DC 20020	Wednesdays 3:00-7:00
Chevy Chase	5700 Broad Branch Rd NW Washington DC 20015	Saturdays 9:00-1:00

**The Georgia/Petworth and Columbia Heights markets' hours are not listed because they are not slated to reopen for 2006. They are included in Map 2 because they were open in 2005.

APPENDIX D: FOR FURTHER INFORMATION

Emergency Food		
Capital Area Food Bank	645 Taylor Street, NE Washington, DC 20017 Tel: 202-526-5344 Fax: 202-529-1767 Hunger Hotline: 202-639-9770	www.capitalareafoodbank.org
Federal Nutrition Programs		
DC Hunger Solutions	1875 Connecticut Ave NW Washington, DC 20009 202-986-2200 x 3023	http://www.dchunger.org
State Education Office-Special Nutrition and Commodities (SNAC)	441 4th Street, NW Suite 350 North Washington, DC 20001 Tel: 202-727-6436	http://www.seo.dc.gov
Department of Human Services-Income Maintenance Administration (IMA) (Food Stamps)	645 H Street NE Washington, DC 20002 Tel: 202-698-3900	http://www.dhs.dc.gov/dhs/cwp/view,a,3,q,568277,dhsNav,|30980|.asp
Department of Health- WIC State Agency	2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE Suite 409 Washington, DC 20020 Tel: 202-645-5663 Fax: 202-645-0516	http://dchealth.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,581976,dohNav_GID,1787,dohNav,|33120|33139|.asp
Farm-To-School, Websites/Resources:		
National Farm-to-School Network		www.farmtoschool.org
Community Food Security Coalition: Farm-to-School		http://www.foodsecurity.org/farm_to_school.html
Community Food Security Coalition: Farm-to-College		www.farmtocollege.org
USDA's "How Local Farmers and School Food Service Buyers Are Building Alliances"		http://www.ams.usda.gov/tmd/MSB/PDFpubList/localfarmsandschool.pdf
USDA's "Eat Smart- Farm Fresh! A Guide to Buying and Serving Locally-Grown Produce in School Meals"		http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Guidance/Farm-to-School-Guidance_12-19-2005.pdf
USDA's "Small Farms/School Meals Initiative Town Hall Meetings: A Step-by-Step Guide on		http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Lunch/Downloadable/small.pdf

How to Bring Small Farms and Local Schools Together"		
Center for Ecoliteracy's "Rethinking School Lunch"		http://www.ecoliteracy.org/programs/rsl.html
"Linking Farms with Schools: A Guide to Understanding Farm-to-School Programs for Schools, Farmers and Organizers"		http://foodsecurity.org/pubs.html#linking
"Feeding Young Minds: Hands-on Farm to School Education Programs"		http://foodsecurity.org/pubs.html#feeding
Farm-to-School, Examples of Programs:		
Vermont FEED (Food Education Every Day)		http://www.nofavt.org/programs/vtfeed.php
Cornell Farm-to-School Program		http://media.cce.cornell.edu/hosts/farmtoschool/
The Crunch Lunch Manual: A Case Study of the Davis Joint Unified School District Farmers Market Salad Bar Pilot Program and a Fiscal Analysis Model		http://www.sarep.ucdavis.edu/cdpp/farmtoschool/crunchlunch32003.pdf
Farmers' Markets		
FreshFarm Markets	P.O. Box 15691 Washington, DC 20003 Tel: 202-362-8889 Fax: 202-244-2131	www.freshfarmmarkets.org
Community Harvest		www.communityharvest.org
Farmers' Market Nutrition Program		
WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) FMNP	2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue SE Suite 409 Washington, DC 20020 Tel: 202-645-5662 or 1-800-345-1942	http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,582102,dohNav_GID,1787,dohNav,|33120|33139|.asp
CSFP (Commodity Supplemental Food Program) FMNP	2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE Room 400 Washington, DC 20020 Tel: 202-645-5518	http://app.doh.dc.gov/services/special_programs/csfp/sfmnp.shtm
Grocery Co-ops		
City Garden Co-op	3327 18th St. NW Washington, D.C. 20010	www.geocities.com/citygardendc
Takoma Park/Silver Spring Co-op (Takoma Park location)	201 Ethan Allen Avenue Takoma Park, MD 20912 Tel: 301-891-2667	http://tpss.coop
Takoma Park/Silver	8309 Grubb Road	http://tpss.coop

Spring Co-op (Silver Spring location)	Silver Spring, MD 20910 Tel: 240-247-2667	
SHARE	5170 Lawrence Place Hyattsville, MD 20781 Tel: 301-864-3115 or 1-800-21-SHARE	www.sharedc.org
Community Supported Agriculture (CSAs) www.nal.usda.gov/afsic/csa; www.localharvest.org. The following CSAs were listed in *The Washington Post* on March 2, 2005. This list is not exhaustive—there are other CSAs that deliver in the District.		
Fresh & Local CSA	Tel: 304-876-3382 Email: info@freshandlocalcsa.com	www.freshandlocalcsa.com
From the Ground Up (Capital Area Food Bank CSA)	Tel: 301-627-4662 Email: clagettfarm@cbf.org	www.clagettfarm.org
Green Farm	Tel: 301-290-0141	
Stoney Lonesome Farm CSA	Tel: 703-754-9145 Email: SLfarm2004@yahoo.com	www.slfarm.us
Jug Bay Market Garden	Tel: 301-627-6211 Email: jugbaymg@earthlink.net	www.jugbaymg.qn.com
Last Straw Farm	Tel: 703-443-9619 Email: laststrawfarm@direcway.com	
Bull Run Mountain Vegetable Farm	Tel: 703-745-4005 Email: bullrun@arczip.com	www.bullrunfarm.com
Farmstead of Charlotte Hall	Tel: 301-884-3384 Email: farmstead88@msn.com	
Community Gardens		
Garden Resources of Washington (GROW) DC	Tel: 202-234-0591	www.growdc.org
National Park Service, Rock Creek Park	3545 Williamsburg Lane NW Washington, D.C. 20008 Tel: 202-282-1063	http://www.nps.gov/rocr/index.htm
National Park Service, Fort Dupont Park	1900 Anacostia Drive, SE Washington, DC 20020 Tel: 202 426-5961	http://www.nps.gov/fodu/index.htm
Washington Youth Garden	Tel: 202-426-0176	www.fona.org/youthgarden.htm
Convenience Stores		
The Food Trust's	1201 Chestnut Street	http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php

Corner Store Campaign (Philadelphia, PA)	4th Floor Philadelphia, PA 19107 Tel: 215-568-0830 Fax: 215-568-0882	/program/corner.store.campaign.php
Grocery Store Financing		
The Food Trust's Supermarket Campaign	Address same as above	http://www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/super.market.campaign.php
Nutrition Education		
Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program (FSNEP)	2100 Martin Luther King Jr. Avenue, SE Suite 409 Washington, DC 20020 Tel: 202-645-5663 Fax: 202-645-0516	http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,595815,dohNav_GID,1787,dohNav,%7C33120%7C33139%7C.asp
WIC State Agency	Same address and phone numbers as FSNEP	http://doh.dc.gov/doh/cwp/view,a,1371,q,581969,dohNav_GID,1801,dohNav,|33183|.asp
BrainFood	1525 Newton Street, NW Washington, DC 20010 Tel: 202.667.5515 Fax: 202.667.9202	www.brain-food.org
Operation Frontline, Food & Skills, Youth Farm Initiative (Capital Area Food Bank)	645 Taylor Street, NE Washington, DC 20017 Tel: 202-526-5344 Fax: 202-529-1767	http://www.capitalareafoodbank.org/programsresources/cnp.cfm
Washington Youth Garden	Tel: 202.426.0176 Fax: 202.544.5398	http://www.fona.org/youthgarden-programs.htm
SHARE Health Project	PO Box 768 Bladensburg, MD 20710 Tel: 301-864-3115 Fax: 1-800-21-SHARE	http://www.sharedc.org/health_project.htm

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