Food Security and Environmental Sustainability in Lehigh Community

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Results and Discussion

The Road to Access: How far must people travel to get food [3]

69% Short Drive (Within 45 minutes)
20% Walking Distance
10% Long Diver (>45 mins)
1% Not Sure


Price Comparison between Conventional Grocery Store and CSA

Carbon Footprint Calculation [4]

Results and Discussion

From my research, I gathered information and understood the food insecurity in South Bethlehem. When evaluating the food availability and food equality, easy parking and good location become important factors. For example, C-Town, which locates on the East 3rd Street, offers shuttle service to the elders, the disabilities, or anyone who spends over $30. This service greatly contributes people’s willingness to shop closer to home. Furthermore, my interview with the produce manager - Franklin, he indicated that C-town was originally interested buying Ahar’s Market due to its location and space. Larger space for parking means more customers. “Location, location, location” he said. Nonetheless, C-Town has provide more access in nutritious and cheap food options on the southside. With less individual’s distance driving, it contributes less carbon dioxide emission to the environment.

Still, through twice a week delivery from Bronx, NY, C-Town produces 5.69 tons of carbon dioxide each year. This is not even adding the produce that needs to be delivered first to the control center. Majority of the local residents, especially the Hispanics and Latinos prefer to shop in C-Town rather than from the farmer’s market or support CSA food share due to conventional stores run until late in the evening, offer unseasonal produce all year long, and most importantly usually provide coupons for discount food.

However, through calculation and personal participation in the CSA Food Share, it provides a cheaper, fresher, closer relationship alternative to conventional grocery stores. Each week, the CSA participants receive a food share of local produce that alternates according to what is seasonably available from the local farm. The chart on the left indicates how much customers will need to pay in the conventional grocery stores for the same amount of produce. Participants will need to commit total of four months starting from July until end of October and each week pay a fixed cost of $35. Even though the CSA doesn’t allow participants to select what they get each week, but it provides tasty and less pesticide produce that directly contribute to local economic and develop a reciprocal relationship between community members and local farmers.

Because I believe our culture and society convenience have divorced us from our national connection with the earth, thus leading adult education cooking and canning classes at the public library help local residents reconnect and appreciate the nature of food. Through three total workshops, we shared and experienced ways in freezing, pickling, and canning; the feedbacks were all positive. Learning how preserve food makes it more possible for family to turn unused into future food security.

Future Work

Many communities lack the capacity or resources to meet the needs of a growing population of hungry Americans. Increases in obesity and diet-related diseases are major public health problems. These problems may be worse in lower income communities because access to affordable and nutritious foods is difficult. Limited access to nutritious food suggests tendency to purchase from fast food restaurant and canned food. Therefore, working to improve food equality in local community not only improves general health, but also encourages local economy. This research has fully extend my passion in food and the environment, thus I will continue to contribute this positive vibe in the South Bethlehem by my weekly involvement with the Boys and Girls club. Through garden work and experiencing new healthy foods, the children will further increase their interests in the nature and most of all, change the way they eat at home. Furthermore, since the workshops were such great success, Me and Kate Armbruster will continue to provide two more on September 28th and October 24th. Please join us on the preserving mission in order to better understand our land and our food.

Acknowledge

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Citations