

Healthy Eating and the Built Environment

Improving Access to Healthy Food Options



May 9, 2007

What's the connection between healthy eating and the built environment?

- Obesity and diet-related diseases are major public health challenges
- Built environment policy shapes the “food retail environment” – location, density, quality, access
- Individuals make choices in the context of their communities and neighborhoods

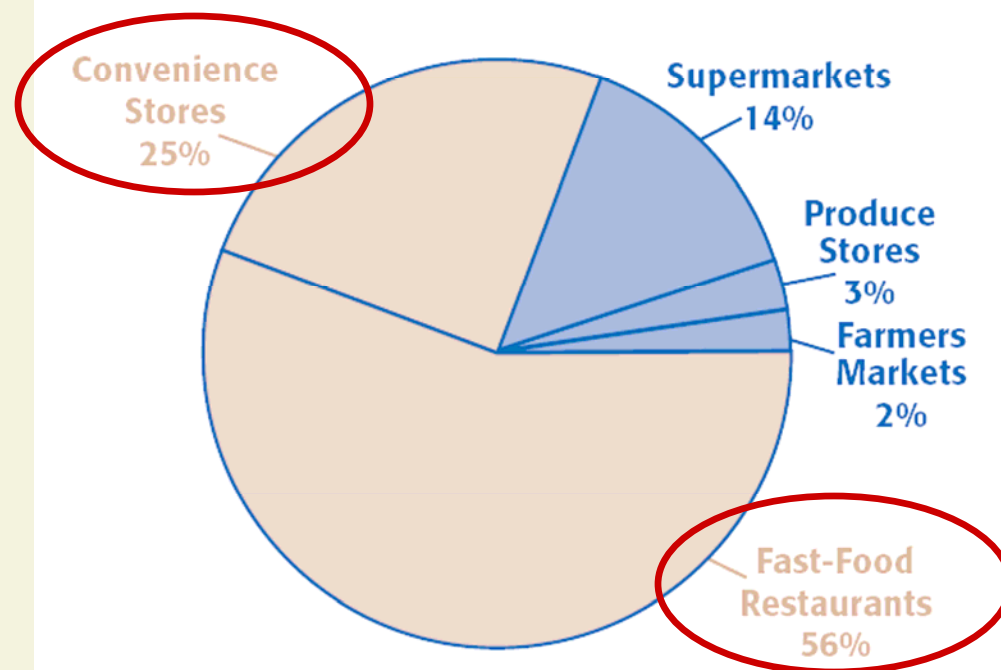


Source: <http://flickr.com/photos/pushshove/11696665/>

Food Retail Environment and access to healthy foods

- Food deserts: not only about location, but also about density
- Not just about “the market” – land use policy affects the food retail environment
- Simple message of “eat healthy” doesn’t address access
- *What foods are you likely to eat??*

Distribution of Retail Food Outlets in California

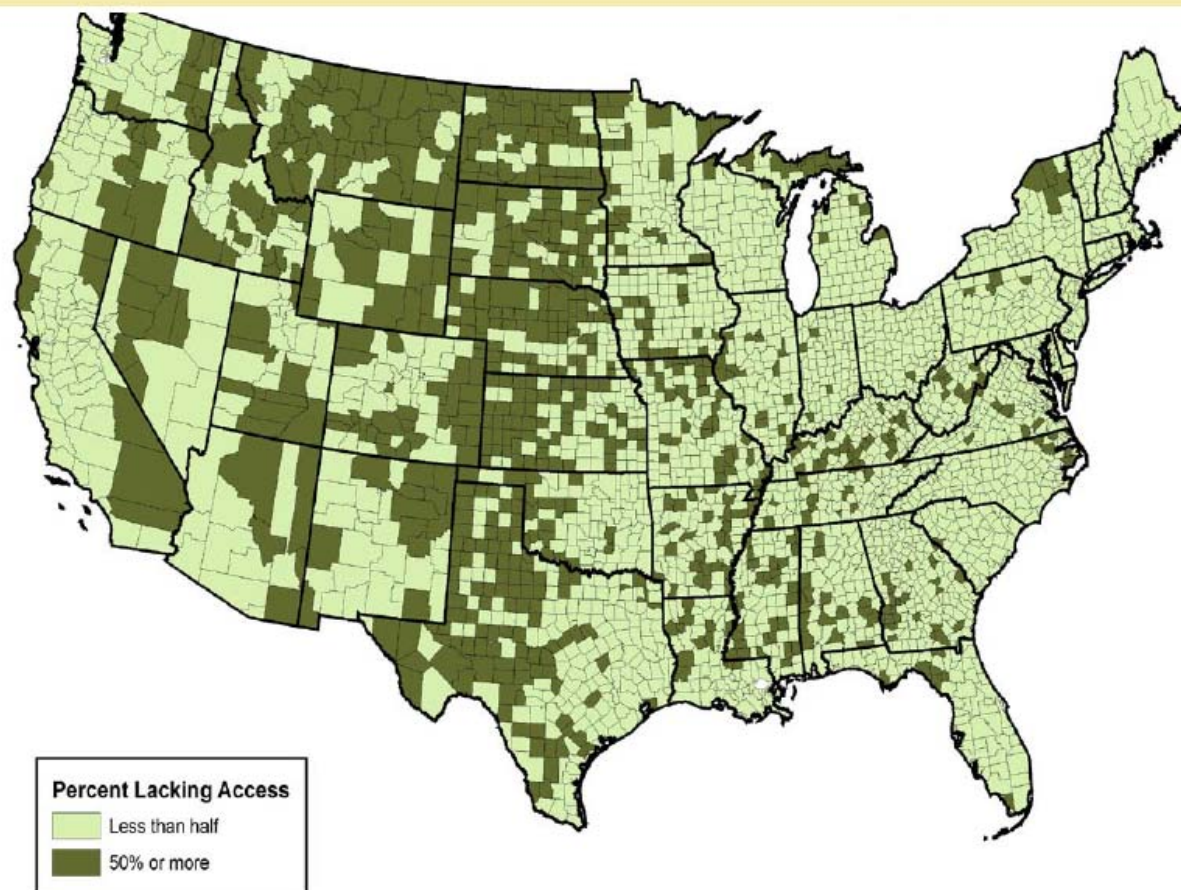


In California as a whole, there are more than four times as many fast-food restaurants and convenience stores as supermarkets and produce vendors, for a Retail Food Environment Index (RFEI) of 4.18.

Rural food deserts

- Counties in which at least half of residents live more than 10 miles from any supermarket or supercenter
- Defined as “low food access”

Map 1: Percent Lacking Convenient Access to a Supermarket or Supercenter in U.S. Counties, 2000



Source: “Starved for Access: Life in Rural America’s Food Deserts”

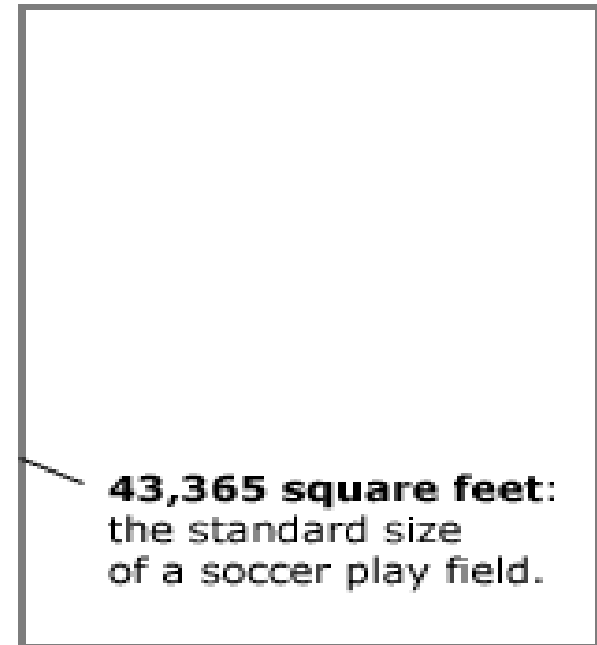
Some Common Strategies

- **Supermarket Development**
 - Build a new full service supermarket
- **Small Store Development**
 - Build new produce markets or small format groceries
- **Corner Store Improvement**
 - Identify corner store operators willing to offer fresh food for sale in existing stores
- **Mobile Markets**
 - Organize the sale of fresh produce from trucks with a weekly schedule
- **Farmers Markets**
 - Organize weekly market

Expanding Store Footprint



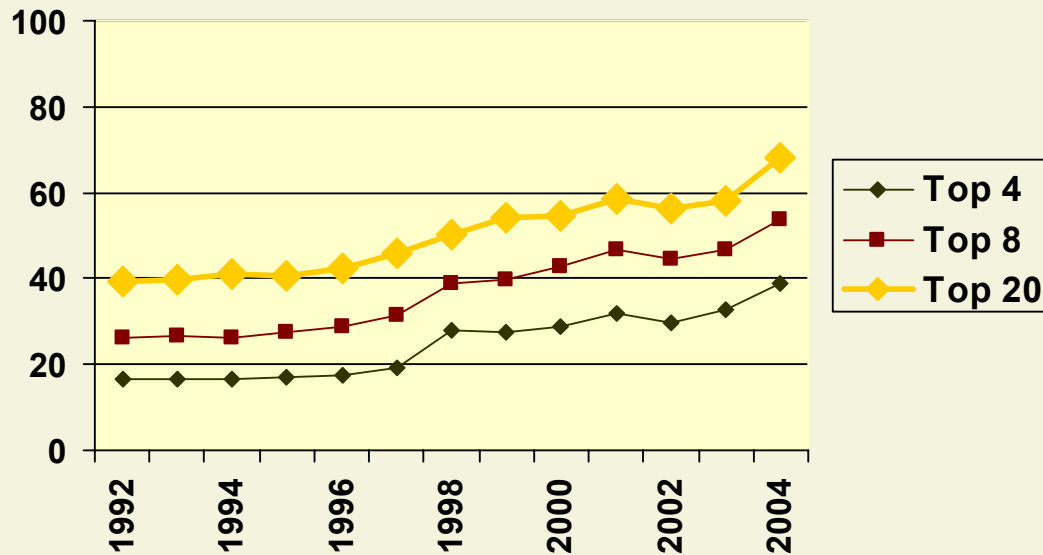
8,000 square feet:
the average size of
a supermarket in
the Netherlands.



43,365 square feet:
the standard size
of a soccer play field.

215,000 square feet:
the average size of a
Wal-Mart super center
in the United States
(excluding parking lot)

Consolidated Market Share of Top U.S. Food Retailers



- Top 20 food retailers in U.S. responsible for 68% of retail grocery sales
- Top 4 food retailers in U.S. responsible for nearly 39% of grocery sales

Bad zoning impedes food access



SECTION 12-232. "C-L" LIMITED NEIGHBORHOOD SHOPPING CENTER DISTRICT.

SECTION 12-232.1. USES PERMITTED.

- 6. Confectionery;
- 20. Tobacco products.

SECTION 12-232.2. USES PERMITTED SUBJECT TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT.

- *2. Bakery goods, retail sales only;
- *6. Delicatessen;
- 8. Ice cream;
- 9. Liquor products (off-sale);
- 10. Restaurants (with or without alcoholic beverages)
- *12. Soft drink fountain.

SECTION 12-232.3. **USES EXPRESSLY PROHIBITED.**

4. Fruit and vegetable store;

6. Grocery store;

9. Meat market;

Zoning can limit gardening opportunities...

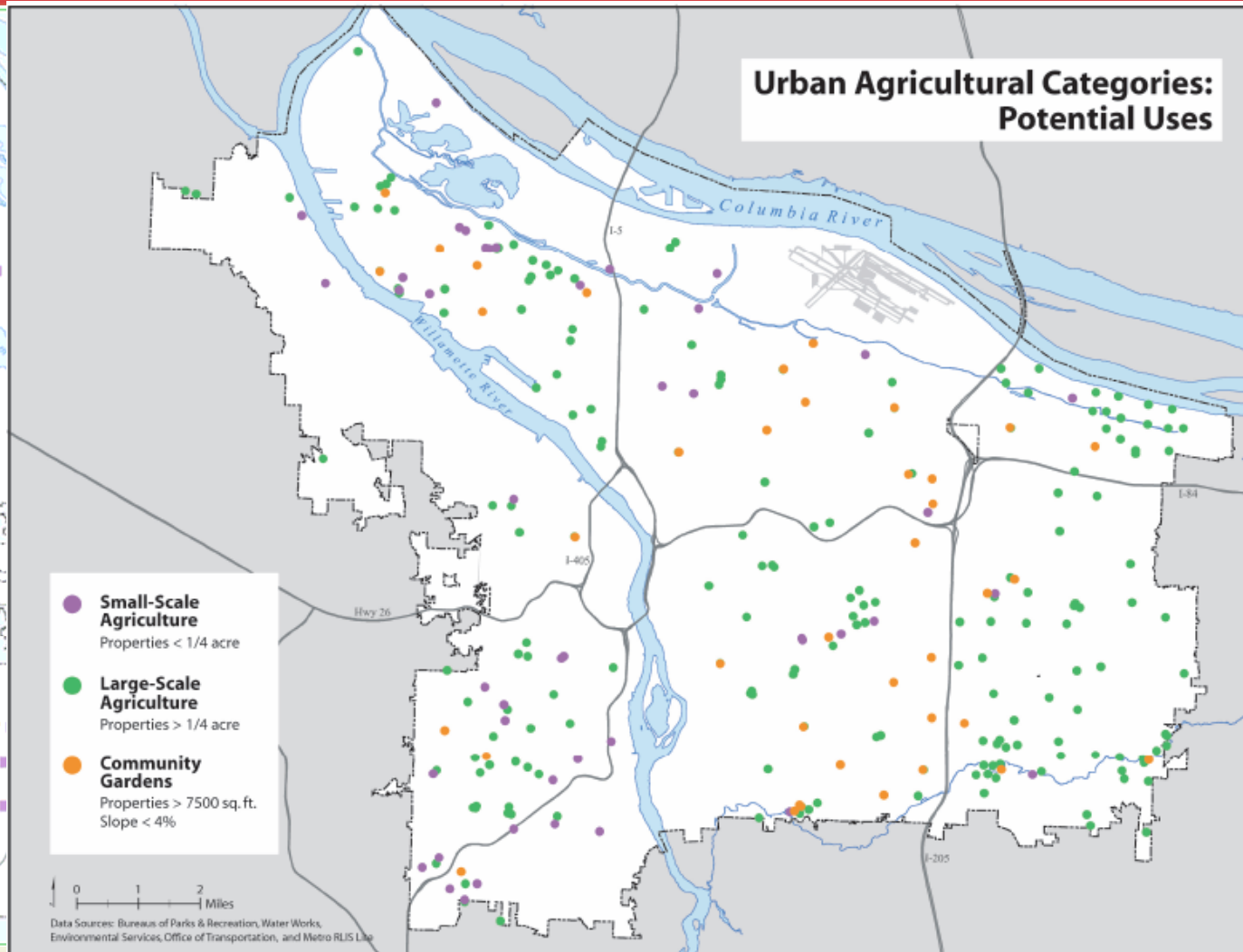
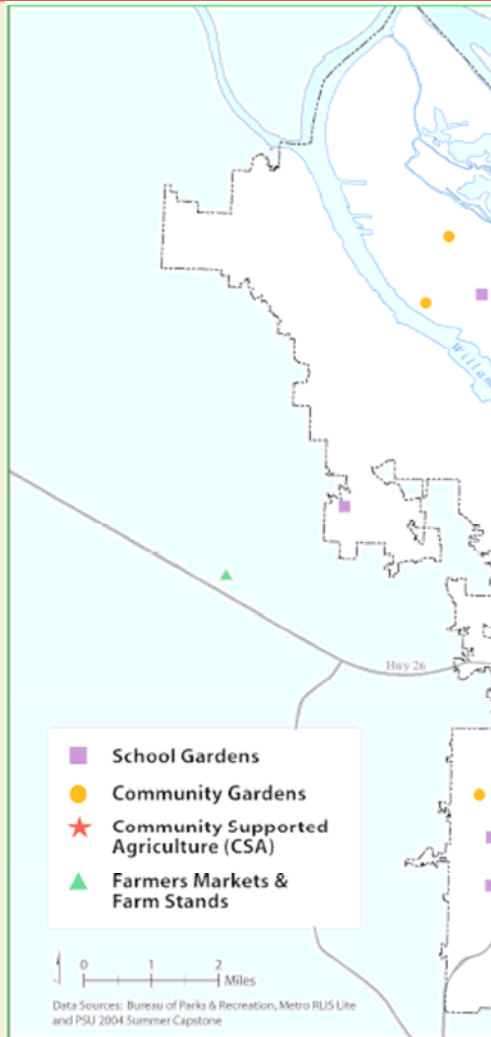


Zoning can also support community gardening!



- **Portland's** zoning code allows community gardens in all residential areas
- **Berkeley's** general plan establishes open space (including community gardens) as the highest priority for some city-owned vacant land
- **Boston** has special open space zoning districts that include community gardens

Diggable City Project: Portland



Local Government Leadership



- Improved coordination between economic development and housing agencies - New York, NY
- Bundling of multiple locations - Rochester, NY
- Banning restrictive covenants – Chicago, IL
- Formula Retail Exemption? – San Francisco, CA
- Improving transportation access to food retail – Austin, TX and Hartford, CT

Engaging Community Residents in the Land Use Process

Photovoice

(Conceived and implemented by the Central Valley Health & Nutrition Collaborative)



- Ask participants about the food and physical activity environment in their community
- Give the participants cameras. Pair the photographs with quotes from participants
- Introduce the participants to the zoning maps for their neighborhoods
- Introduce the participants to the General Plan
- Participants present Photovoice results to decision-makers - such as the Planning Commission and City Council



18-year Park Hill resident 2006

Where are the fruits, vegetables, and fresh baked bread on these shelves? Neighbors in this part of the community need some affordable and healthy choices in their local convenience store.



Park Hill Community Worker 2006

Read this billboard carefully: "I had to unbutton my pants. Dinner can be your alibi. Come to Las Vegas." Would you like this billboard in your neighborhood? Let's be thoughtful and strategic about the kinds of messages we give our children about healthy eating!



Nina Kuhl, Park Hill parent 5 years (2004)

The lack of a sidewalk ramp makes it difficult for the little girl to cross the street. Sidewalks like this are the norm in Park Hill, so it is a challenge to push a stroller, ride a bike, or use a wheelchair.

Mapping Exercise



www.pedbikeimages.org/DanBurden

- Ask participants to draw maps of their neighborhoods and how they get around
- Compare to zoning maps for the neighborhoods the participants have drawn
- Make a list of needed changes in the built environment
- Participants present maps and lists to decision-makers such as the Planning Commission and the City Council!



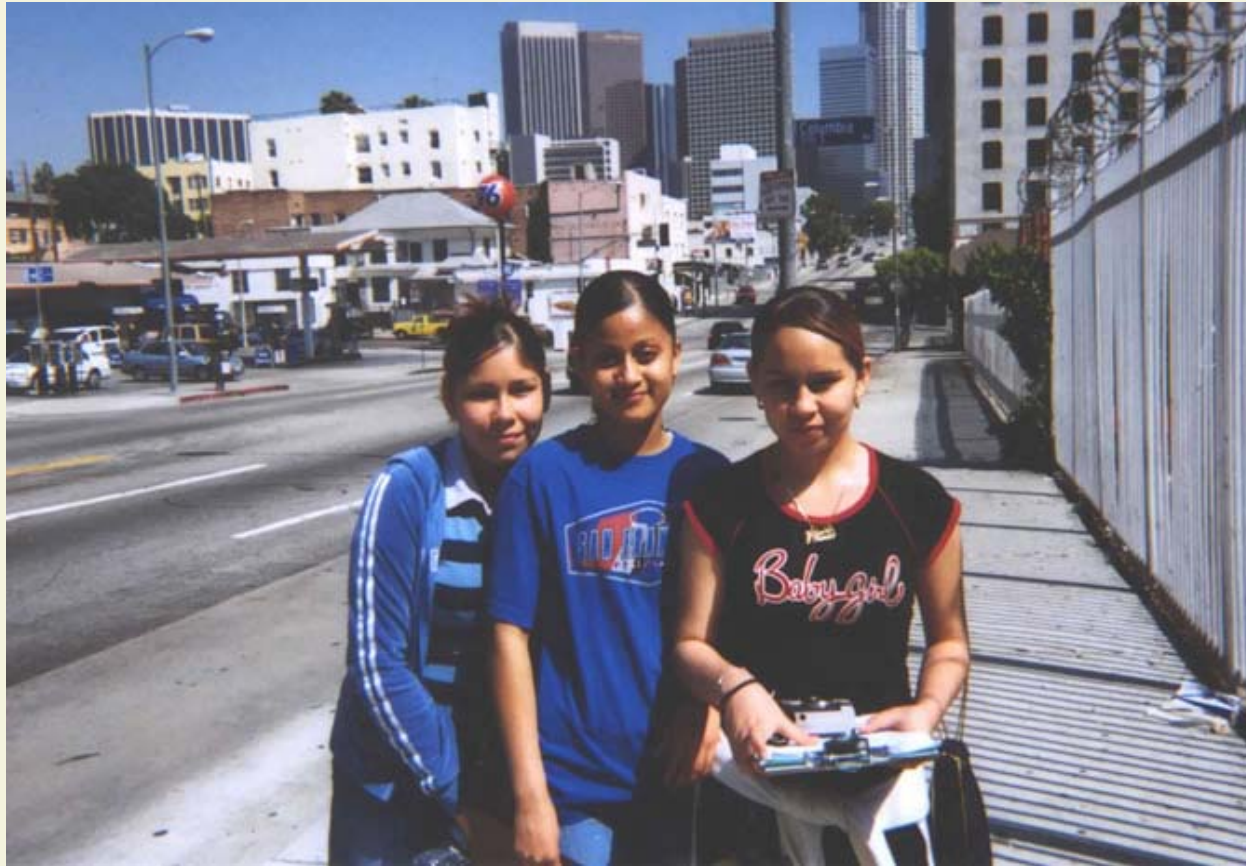
PUBLIC HEALTH
LAW PROGRAM

Community Food Environment Audits



- See Chapter 21 of the General Plans & Zoning Toolkit for some auditing tools - teach participants to use these tools
- Using a map, help each participant decide on a route and store to audit - Everyone audits! Then compare results
- Introduce the participants to neighborhood zoning maps. *Do you have access to healthy food in your neighborhood?*
- Participants present audit results to decision-makers - Planning Commission and City Council
- You can also do a walkability audit!

Project CAFÉ (Community Action on Food Environments), Los Angeles



Mapping Team Members

Project CAFÉ: Ice Cream and Fruit Vendors



Project CAFÉ: Candy Vendors Outside Elementary School



Food Policy Councils



- 19 local food policy councils
- 12 state food policy councils

- San Francisco
- Toronto
- Hartford
- Portland
- New York
- Woodbury County, Iowa
- London

- The New Mainstream
- American Planning Association

The Healthy Purchase Pilot Program



- **SB 107 (Alquist) Healthy Food Retail Innovations Fund**

Offers incentives to food retailers to locate in underserved communities. It provides residents of underserved communities with retail food markets that would offer high quality fruit, vegetables, and other healthy foods and encourages retail innovation in these areas.

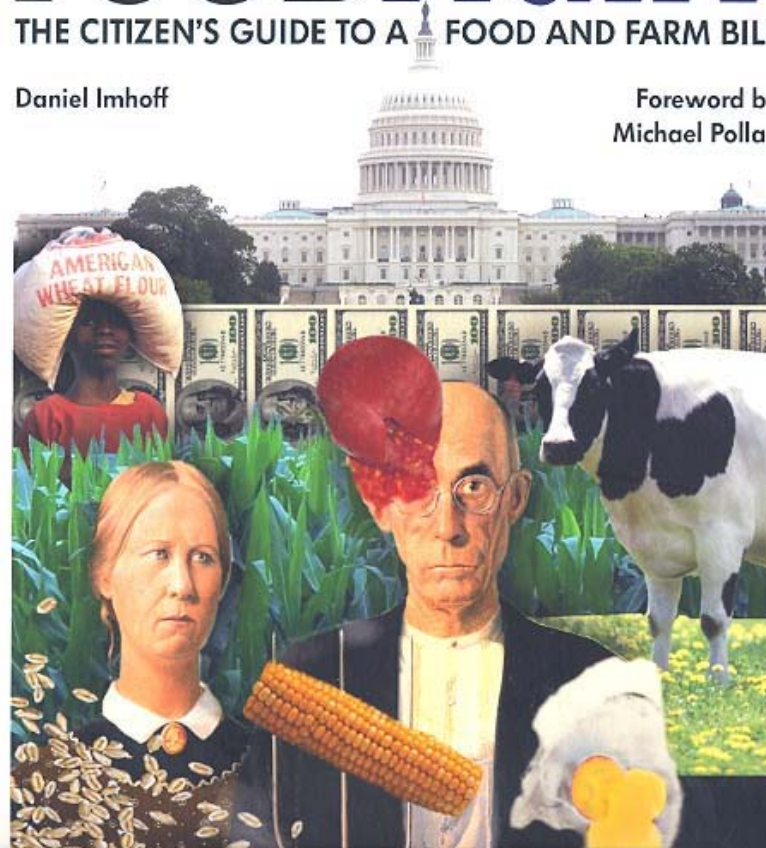
National Policy: The Food and Farm Bill

FOODFIGHT

THE CITIZEN'S GUIDE TO A FOOD AND FARM BILL

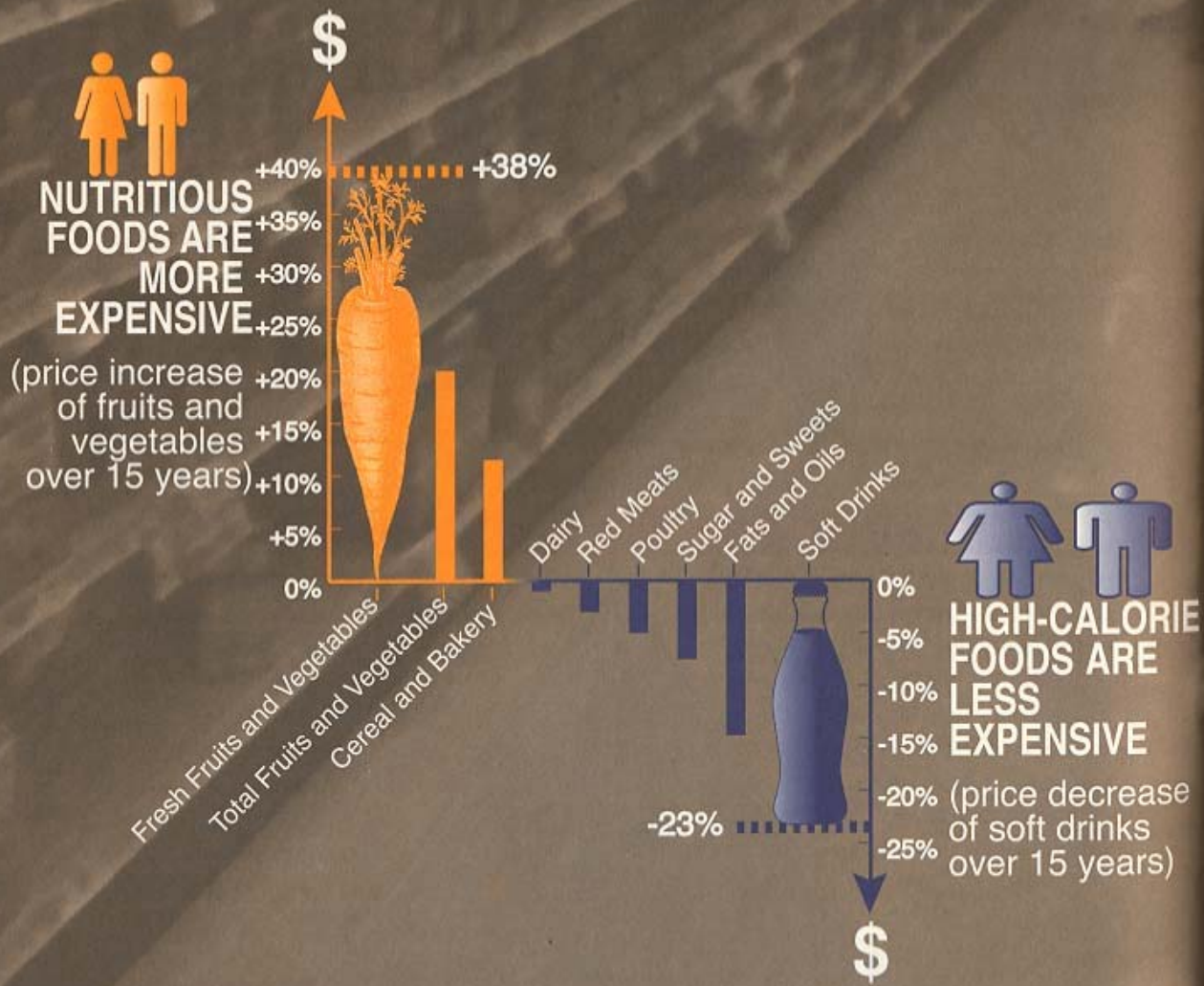
Daniel Imhoff

Foreword by
Michael Pollan



The Higher Cost of Healthy Foods

Change in Food Prices Over a 15-year Period, 1985–2000 (Real Dollars)



Farm bill subsidies of “commodity crops” -including corn and soy – affect food price

Exercise: Food Access and Healthy Planning in Fort Bragg



Fort Bragg, located on the Pacific Coast of Mendocino County along Highway 1, has its roots in the timber and fishing industries. The community has always prided itself on its identity as a "real working town." However, like other coastal communities in California, Fort Bragg has become increasingly dependent on the tourist industry for its livelihood

Using the maps and facts provided here, think about the following:

- In terms of **physical activity opportunities**, what are the opportunities and constraints offered by the City of Fort Bragg and the Mill Site in particular?
- How might the Mill Site development improve **access to healthy foods**, particularly for low-income residents? What are the opportunities and constraints to improving food security in Fort Bragg?
- How can this development opportunity be used to **improve the overall health** of Fort Bragg and Mendocino County residents, particularly for low-income residents?
- What kind of **public health data** do you have to support the ideas and

Contact us:



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