

## PRESENTATION ON FOOD DESERTS

For questions on the Food Desert Presentations:

(Oct.3, 2023) Presentation 1: What is a food desert?

CNBC Documentary: “Why Grocery Stores Are Avoiding Black Neighborhoods” [25 mins]  
<https://youtu.be/Rd8J-9uUnfc?si=CAMGjjWggYNyhYSN>

- 1) Some criticize big retail stores like Krogers or Walmart for pulling out of poor neighborhoods. Others criticize “outsiders” who do not live in the neighborhood for owning or working in stores in the neighborhood. Do either or both of these criticisms have legitimacy?
- 2) Take a moment to read these four comments from the list following the video posted on YouTube. Do you agree with the authors?

Comment 1) “As a black man in Minneapolis, I don’t blame the grocery stores, I blame the community who lacks accountability.”

Comment 2) “I worked as an assistant store manager for a grocery store chain. ... The store itself didn't do much business compared to other stores elsewhere and I am pretty sure the only reason it was built in that neighborhood was some cost benefit provided by the state. ... Theft was extremely high.”

Comment 3) “Years ago, I was a supermarket manager at a small chain. ... While all store experience theft, the more urban store experienced 2x the theft. And to add to that, the merchandise mix was poor in the urban stores. ... Doing business in the ‘hood’ is a losing endeavor.”

Comment 4) “This situation reminds me when I was in college and I did research on the desertification of commerce in the center of our city, that because of violence and constant thefts, stores began to increase the number of security guards. But upon realizing how expensive it was to maintain compared to profits, many decided to simply close. .... When I presented the statistical data to colleagues, part of the class claimed that statistics were fascist tools and what was happening was purely oppression of the rich over the poor.”

(Oct.10, 2023) Presentation 2: Solutions to the food shortage problem.

Two short videos: “A Black Owned Farm Fights Food Deserts in the Bronx” (6 mins):

<https://youtu.be/-vj2zEQy1eg?si=RFTQeOrl7CMhY3IH>

and “PBS NewsHour: This Teen-Led Co-op is Harvesting a Healthier Future” (3:30 mins):

<https://youtu.be/y9PaIwxYzLI?si=1Bfcj2K2-awMVx1C>

- 1) Do you think it is true that poor people eat unhealthy food (processed and junk foods) because they like them or because they have no other choice?
- 2) Both of the videos presented self-starting projects in poor neighborhoods. Does such a project need outside, perhaps professional, consultants? Or do outsiders take away from the initiatives of the poor?

Third short Video: “A Black Marketplace Bringing Fresh Produce to All”:

<https://youtu.be/911WA1sInF4?si=USrAiuF3FmpMd8zs>

- 1) How might a black person feel walking into a white farmers’ market? How would the experience be for him/her walking into a black farmers’ market? Frankly, does their idea sound like fun?
- 2) How possible would it be to have such a market in your area? What sort of things would need to happen for it to be a possibility? (E.g., How many black farmers would live close enough to your area to supply a market?)