



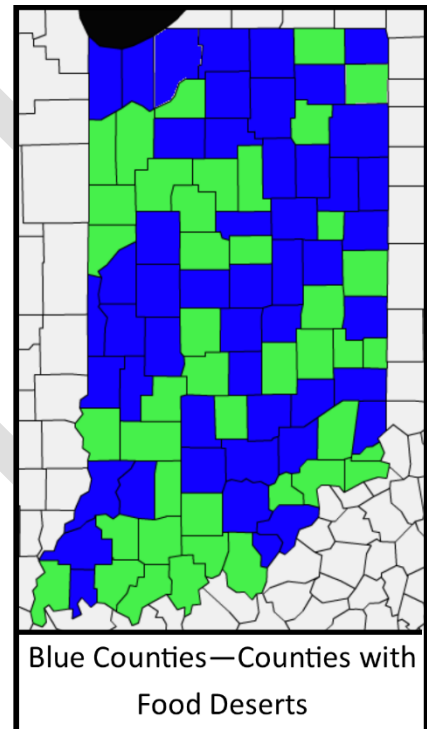
Healthy Food Financing Initiatives

Increasing Access to Healthy Foods and Increasing Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables

The promotion of good nutrition through policy, environment and systems changes is a core tenant of the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative (IHWI). One of IHWI's key goals is to "increase access to and consumption of healthy foods and vegetables."ⁱ Unfortunately access is a key barrier to hundreds of thousands of Hoosiers. Food deserts appear in great frequency in both rural and urban communities across Indiana. One policy and systems change that can be used to address food access are known as Healthy Food Financing Initiatives (HFFIs). HFFIs are programs that use financial incentives like tax credits, loans, grants, and development initiatives to attract supermarkets and other healthy food retailers to underserved areas.

According to the USDA's Food Atlas, more than 900,000 Hoosiers live in census tracts considered low-income and low-access.ⁱⁱ This includes Hoosiers in more than 50 of 92 counties, in all parts of the state. According to the 2013 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey (BRFSS), Hoosiers are not likely to eat many fruits or vegetables. Nearly 2 out of every 5 Hoosier adults report having eaten less than 1 piece of fruit daily and more than 1 in 4 Hoosiers report eating less than 1 vegetable per day.ⁱⁱⁱ Such low consumption of fruits and vegetables contributes to our state's high rate of obesity. According to the Trust for America's Health and The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, Indiana has the 7th highest obesity rate in the nation.^{iv}

In response to their state's obesity epidemic Pennsylvania adopted a Healthy Food Financing Initiative. Between 2004 and 2006, the Pennsylvania state legislature set aside \$30 million to start a HFFI fund, which was leveraged for an additional \$90 million in private dollars and tax credits. By 2012, the Pennsylvania HFFI had generated more than 5,000 jobs and helped develop 88 supermarkets and fresh food outlets.^v The Pennsylvania HFFI more than halved the approximately 300,000 Pennsylvanians who lived in areas with low food access.^{vi}



The CDC recognizes that a key strategy to preventing obesity and other chronic diseases is to provide "incentives for supermarkets or farmers' markets to establish their businesses in underserved areas"^{vii} and that "neighborhood residents with better access to supermarkets and other retail stores that provide healthful foods tend to have healthier diets."^{viii}

Because of the clear connection between Healthy Food Financing Initiatives and improving access to healthy foods, the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative supports the creation of Healthy Food Financing Initiatives in Indiana.

For more information about potential Healthy Food Financing Initiatives in Indiana please contact the Indiana Healthy Weight Initiative or the Indiana Chapter of the American Heart Association.

ⁱ Indiana Comprehensive Nutrition and Physical Activity Plan 2010-2020

ⁱⁱ <http://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-environment-atlas.aspx>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.in.gov/isdh/reports/brfss/2013/toc.htm>

^{iv} <http://stateofobesity.org/states/in/>

^v http://thefoodtrust.org/uploads/media_items/hffi-one-pager.original.pdf

^{vi} <http://www.healthyfoodaccess.org/policy-efforts-and-impacts/state-and-local/pennsylvania>

^{vii} <http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/strategies/healthy-food-env.html>

^{viii} http://www.cdc.gov/obesity/downloads/fandv_2011_web_tag508.pdf