

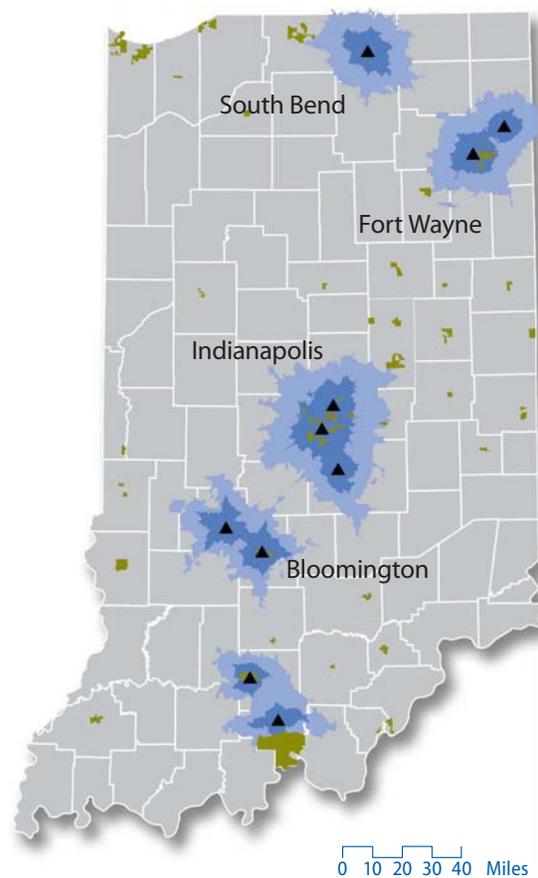
Addressing Food Deserts Through SNAP Reimbursement at Farmers' Markets

Background: Chronic diseases are among the most prevalent, costly, and disabling health issues in Indiana. Following a healthy diet reduces the risk of developing many chronic diseases and is a key component of most disease management plans. However, limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables can make a healthy diet more difficult to achieve. Communities with limited access to fresh, affordable produce often are referred to as "food deserts" and typically have high poverty rates. To improve nutrition and access to fresh produce in these communities and others across the state, the Indiana State Department of Health has worked with other state agencies to expand the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) reimbursement to include farmers' markets.

Action: Indiana used GIS to map areas in need for future SNAP expansion. By showing the locations of food deserts and farmers' markets participating in SNAP together in one map, Indiana can expand SNAP strategically to improve access to fresh produce in areas of high need. The map also has been used to compare access to healthy food options to data from community health centers and mortality data.

This map identifies the locations of food deserts in Indiana as well as farmers' markets participating in SNAP. By showing 15- and 30-minute drive times to each market, the map illustrates the accessibility of Indiana's SNAP reimbursement markets for people living within food deserts.

Indiana



- ▲ SNAP reimbursement market
- < 15 minute drive to market
- < 30 minute drive to market
- Food desert (Census tract)

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Agricultural Marketing Service and Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (2011).

Enhancing GIS Capacity

Staff from the Indiana State Department of Health enhanced geographic information systems (GIS) capacity within their agency by participating in a collaborative GIS Capacity Building Project provided by CDC, the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors, and the Children's Environmental Health Initiative at the University of Michigan.

The Power of GIS

Learn more about how public health personnel use the power of GIS to address chronic diseases and submit your own maps to the Chronic Disease GIS Exchange:

www.cdc.gov/dhdsp/maps/gisx.

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