



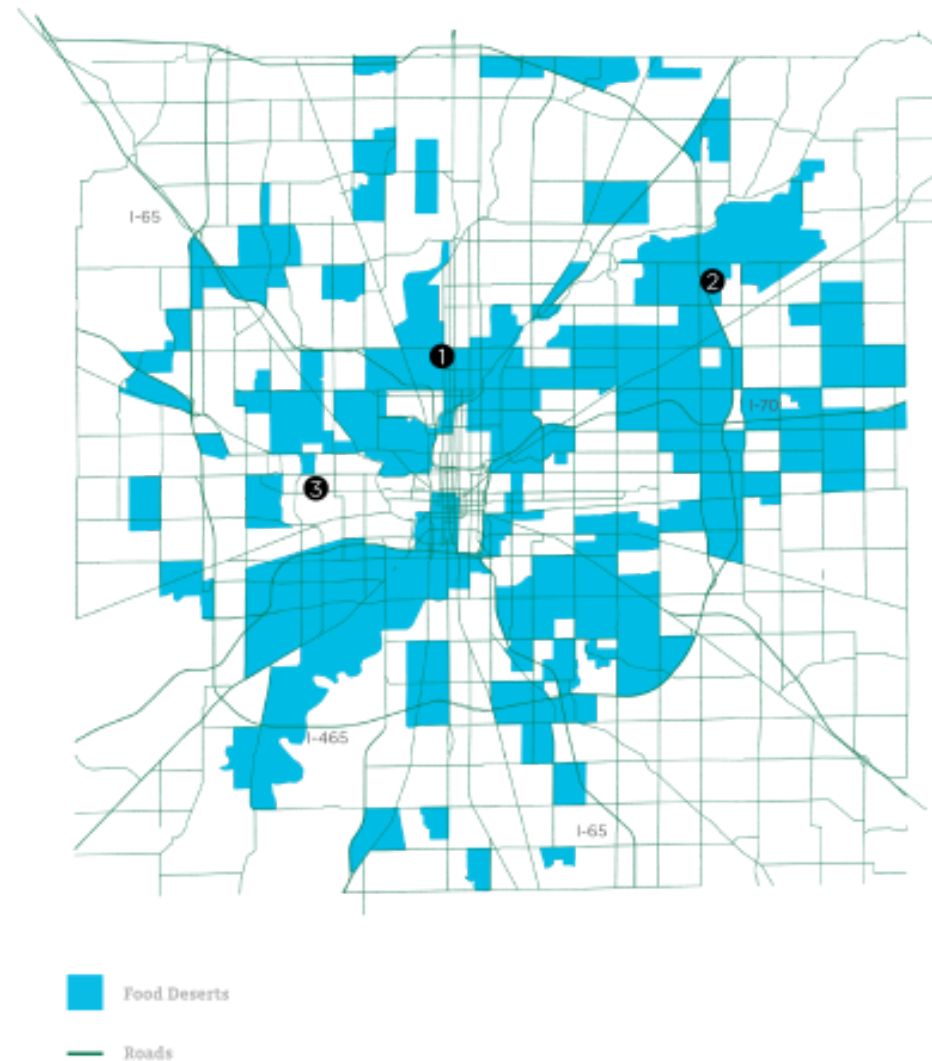
Food Desert vs. Food Apartheid: what's the difference?

Food deserts are low-income neighborhoods with low-access to healthy food.

This definition frames the place as a desolate area, and has the connotation of a naturally occurring area. Food deserts are not desolate, they have life, and they are not naturally occurring, they are intentional.

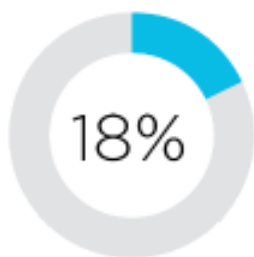
Food apartheid "looks at the whole food system, along with race, geography, faith, and economics" - Karen Washington

Is there a problem in Indianapolis?

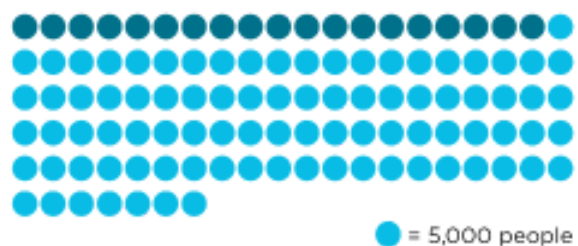


1/5 of Indianapolis lives in a food desert.

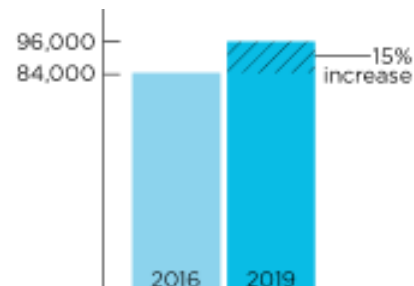
Food deserts by demographics



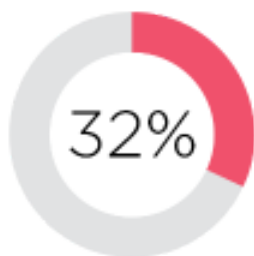
of white residents
live in food deserts.



That's one fifth of Indianapolis' white
residents, or 96,000 people...



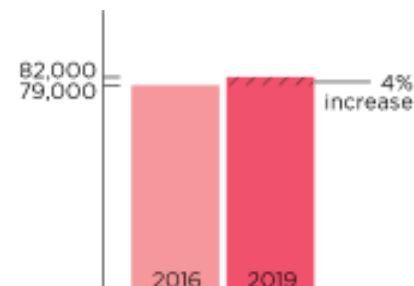
...which is a 15% increase
since 2016



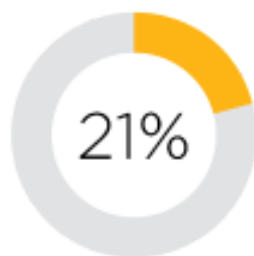
of black residents
live in food deserts.



That's one third of Indianapolis' black
residents, or 82,000 people...



...which is a 4% increase
since 2016



of Hispanic or Latino residents live in food deserts.

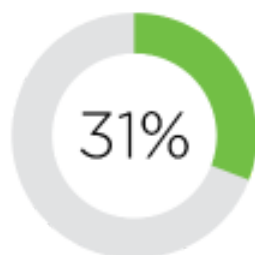


● = 5,000 people

That's one fifth of Indianapolis' Hispanic or Latino residents, or 20,000 people...



...which is a 15% increase since 2016

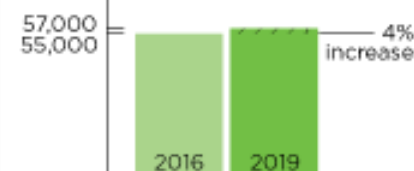


of people in poverty live in food deserts.



● = 5,000 people

That's almost one third of people in poverty, or 57,000 people...



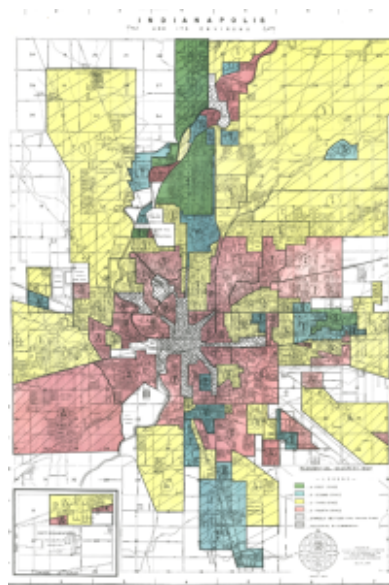
...which is a 4% increase since 2016

(all above photos from Andres et al. 2019).

Auto/Transit Food Deserts

236,000 residents in a transit food desert (public transit takes over 10 minutes to get to a grocery store, or there is no public transit), with 10,500 households having no vehicle (Andres et al. 2019).

Why is this?



Indianapolis as a redlined city

The history of redlining in the city has left certain areas and neighborhoods with less access to transportation, as well as created a trend of supermarkets relocating from urban environments to the suburbs (Healy 2020, Elliot et al. 2011).

While redlining is now illegal, supermarket redlining is not. "Supermarket redlining refers to the disinclination of large supermarkets to locate their stores in inner cities or low-income neighborhoods" (Mukherjee 2020).

Indianapolis is not exempt. While 37 stores closed in 2016, 40 new ones opened. However, all but 3 of these new locations were near an already existing grocery store (Andres et al. 2019).

<https://foodways.casel.indiana.edu>

More information on Indianapolis as a redlined city and food insecurity.

Why is this a problem?

Lack of access to healthy food (food deserts) has been linked to higher levels of diabetes and obesity.

Food insecurity affects one's physical and mental health. It has been linked to higher levels of depression and anxiety, as well as disciplinary/behavioral issues within school (Krehbiel-Burton 2016).

Creation of a cyclical cycle: food insecurity can lead to educational issues, which can lead to lower levels of wealth, both increasing the poverty of an area and the likelihood of one to live in a food desert.

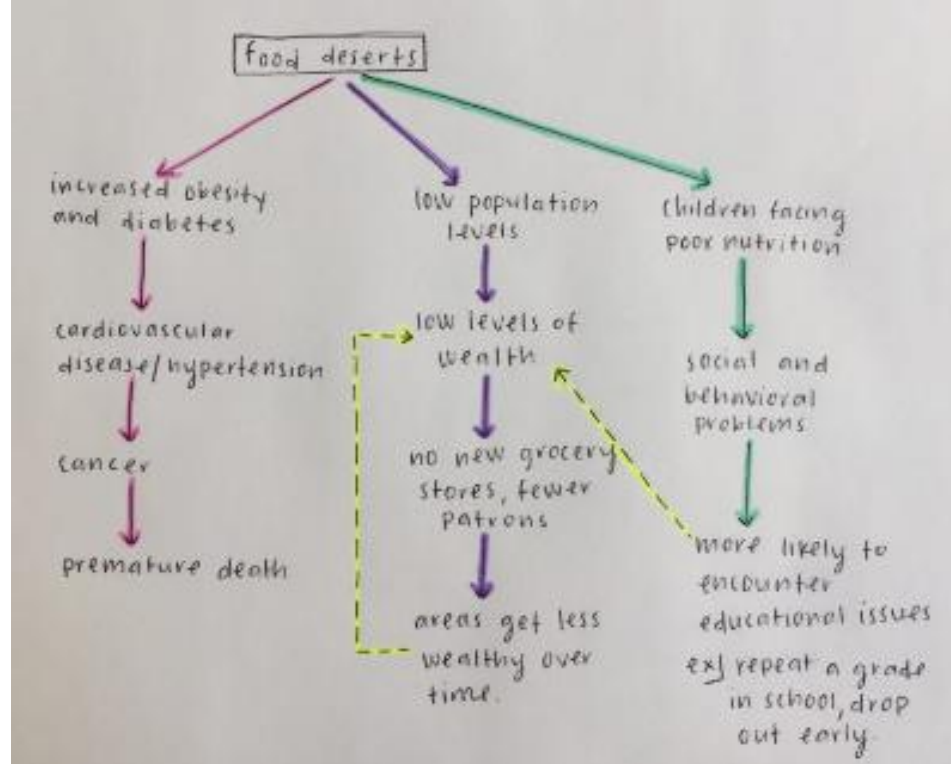


Diagram of the Impacts of Food Deserts by Barbara Lynn Weaver

Imagine

You have to walk over a mile across a large hill and busy roads, all while carrying heavy grocery bags.

" the measurable distance does not tell the whole story; multiple factors can mediate one's physical distance from a grocer, if one must walk" (Roderick 2020).

Safety and physical capability additionally affect one's ability to reach a grocery store on foot. Transportation is another key

barrier to food access.

So what?

The current food distribution system creates a clear disparity that is harmful to minorities and those living in lower-income areas well being and overall health. The system is intertwined with historic racism and policies such as redlining. Food apartheid takes into account all the different injustices that contribute to this discrepancy, instead of merely stating that certain areas lack access to food. This issue is much deeper than a lack of access to food.

Access to fresh food should be a right.

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