

Food Access & Food Security



- There are several **food deserts** in Springfield (areas with limited access to affordable and nutritious food)
- **1 in 7 Hampden County** residents are food insecure
- Residents of Hampden County experience high rates of cardiovascular disease, diabetes and obesity with higher rates among Black residents
- 31% of adults in Hampden County are obese, compared to 25% statewide.

Racial Equity

- People with lower incomes and people of color are more likely to live in food deserts
- Almost twice as many respondents of color reported worrying about getting food compared to White respondents (46% vs. 25%) (CCIS 2020)

Assets/Momentum

- There are many food pantries and emergency food providers.
- Improved access to local produce: Gardening the Community, Go Fresh Mobile Market, Forest Park Farmers Market.
- There are coalitions and collaborations working on the issue: Springfield Food Policy Council, Mass UP Springfield.
- Healthy Incentives Program, SNAP
- Federal changes have increase opportunities for growth in local food footprint.
- There is a strong partnership with state leaders in advocating for local farming and sourcing.
- There were efforts made in Springfield public schools to increase access to fruits and vegetables in the first round of TCI, that we could build off.

Opportunities/Gaps

- Support to grow your own food- access to seed banking, preserving food
- Bring information/resources to the people rather than expecting them to visit a website to find it
- Expand SNAP qualifications (and other programs) to include more people. There are working people who don't qualify for programs like SNAP, but still need the support.
- Increase understanding about what "healthy food" is