FOOD FOR THOUGHT

THE CHALLENGE OF FOOD ACCESS IN IMPOVERISHED COMMUNITIES
WHAT WE WILL DISCUSS

• Terminology
• The Food System – an overview
• National Research & Trends
• Niagara Falls – the numbers
• Innovation & Successful Solutions
• Questions
TERMINOLOGY

Healthy Food
Food Access
Food (In)Security
Food Desert
Food Justice
Built Environment
THE FOOD SYSTEM

Community-based Food System

SUPPORT SYSTEM
- Community Viability
- Farmland Protection
- Community Advocates
- Jobs
- Economic Development
- Environmental Stewardship

Policy-Makers
- Retailing
- Distribute
- Waste Disposal
- Food Security
- Government Agencies
- Technical Service Providers

Community Viability
- Growing Food
- Farm Viability
- Process
- Educators & Researchers
- Funder & Lenders

Adopted from CS Mott Group at MSU
NATIONAL RESEARCH & TRENDS

• Accessing healthy food is a challenge for many Americans – particularly those living in low-income neighborhoods, communities of color, and rural areas.

• Better access corresponds with healthier eating.

• Access to healthy food is associated with lower risk for obesity and other diet-related chronic diseases.

• New and improved healthy food retail in underserved communities creates jobs and helps revitalize low-income neighborhoods.
NIAGARA FALLS – THE NUMBERS

• 22% of the population live on incomes under the federal poverty level.

• 1 in 7 has urgent needs for food.

• 15% of the city’s most vulnerable population have urgent concerns for food.

• 70% of the city’s population are dependent on food stamps.

• 1 the number of grocery stores within the city limits of Niagara Falls

• 2 the number of farmers markets in Niagara Falls
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• Quality and Price of produce and other healthy food options.

• Transportation – can people get there?

• Cultural appropriateness of neighborhood food choices.

• Education
INNOVATION & SUCCESSFUL SOLUTIONS

• Needs driven & consumer based
• Focus on non-conventional forms of social enterprise
• Location specific
• Build on existing assets
• Emphasis on selling to underserved communities
• Informed by innovations and experiences from across the country
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Food access solutions need to reach beyond physical access to healthy food to include social, environmental, and cultural factors.
THANK YOU!

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