Lincoln County Food Retailer Assessment
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Outline

• Food Insecurity in Lincoln County
• Food Retailer Assessment
• Recommendations and Next Steps
Food Insecurity in Lincoln County
Definition

• Food insecurity is a state of uncertain or limited access to food.

• A food insecure person may or may not experience hunger.
Lincoln County

• 14.9% of total population is food insecure

• 24.5% of children are food insecure

• Total: 4,970 adults and 1,970 children
What Contributes to Food Insecurity in Lincoln County?

- High food costs
- Low average wages
  - $11.59/hr (2018)
- High housing costs
  - 25% of all renters pay more than half their monthly income on rent (includes 62.5% of low-income renters)
- Lack of transportation and affordable childcare
- Food deserts
  - In rural areas: being 10 miles+ from nearest grocery store or supermarket
Food Retailer Assessment
Overview

• Purpose: to collect data on the local food environment and gain a broader understanding of food insecurity in our county.

• Conducted by Lincoln County Public Health and the CHIP Healthy Lifestyles Work Group
Methods
Methods

• 59 food retailers visited:
  – Mass merchandisers: 6
  – Grocery stores: 16
  – Convenience store/gas station: 25
  – Pharmacy: 6
  – Specialty grocery store: 6

• Data collected on product availability, prices, and built environment.

• Data collection: August 2017 to March 2018
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PRODUCTS</th>
<th>PRICE</th>
<th>PLACEMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fruit: Y N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fresh/raw products</td>
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<tr>
<td>100% fruit juice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Frozen or canned fruit</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of Types: 1-2 3-5 6+</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb bananas</td>
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<td>1 lb apples</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb oranges</td>
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<td>Vegetables: Y N</td>
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<td>Fresh/raw products</td>
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<td>Frozen or canned vegetables</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of Types: 1-2 3-5 6+</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb carrots</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb broccoli</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb tomatoes</td>
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<td>Dairy products: Y N</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low-fat options</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of Types: 1-2 3-5 6+</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 gal milk</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 gal milk</td>
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<tr>
<td>8 oz cheese</td>
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<td>Grains: Y N</td>
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<td>Whole grain options</td>
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<td>No. of Types: 1-2 3-5 6+</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb rice</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 loaf of bread</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 lb bag of tortillas</td>
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<td>1 lb box pasta</td>
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<td>Proteins: Y N</td>
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<td>Lean options</td>
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<td>No. of Types: 1-2 3-5 6+</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 gal eggs</td>
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**Field Notes**
Results
Fruits and Vegetables

• Less than 1/3 of stores carried fresh fruit or vegetables.
  – No convenience stores carried fresh fruit or vegetables.

• Price differences:
  – Bananas, carrots, tomatoes were 2.5x more expensive at specialty stores than mass merchandisers.
  – Oranges were 2x more expensive at grocery stores than mass merchandisers.
Dairy

• 87% of stores carried dairy products.
  – 73% of stores carried low-fat dairy products.
  – 71% of convenience stores carried low-fat dairy.

• Price differences:
  – A half-gallon of milk was 1.75x more expensive at a convenience store than a mass merchandiser.
  – Milk was 1.5x the price of soda at convenience stores.
Whole Grains

• 59% of stores carried whole grains.
  – Less than 1/3 of convenience stores carried whole grain products.

• Price differences (non whole-grains):
  – Rice was 2.5x more expensive at a convenience store than a mass merchandiser.
  – A loaf of bread was almost 5x the price at a specialty store compared to a mass merchandiser.
Protein

• 92% of stores carried protein.
  – 61% carried low-sodium protein; 41% carried lean protein.

• Price differences:
  – Beans were 3.25x more expensive in convenience stores than mass merchandisers.
  – In specialty stores, eggs, chicken, and beans were all around 3x as expensive as in mass merchandisers.
Built Environment

• 5% of retailers had bike racks.

• 19% of retailers had a pedestrian crossing.

• 68% had sidewalks, but only 55% had sidewalk ramps.
Food Assistance Programs

• 75% of retailers accepted SNAP.

• 32% of retailers accepted WIC.
Key Takeaways

• Healthy food can be hard to access, particularly for people without reliable transportation.

• People who rely on convenience stores for their grocery shopping end up paying significantly more for food.

• Families who rely on WIC may struggle to find a store that accepts their benefits.

• People may be unable to access stores due to built-environment factors.
Recommendations

- Increase healthy offerings at convenience stores.
- Increase number of stores that accept WIC.
- Improve built environment factors to increase access for people with disabilities and those using active transportation.
- Reduce prevalence of tobacco and alcohol.
Next Steps

• Reach out directly to retailers to learn more about barriers they face.

• Gather more detailed information about price, availability, and placement.

• Learn more about what populations are most impacted by food insecurity in Lincoln County.
References

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