

City Harvest's Healthy Neighborhoods Initiative

What is Healthy Neighborhoods?

More than one million New Yorkers are facing hunger and for many people that City Harvest serves, healthy food is unavailable and unaffordable. In turn, diseases related to poor nutrition – including diabetes and heart disease – tend to be concentrated where demand for emergency food is greatest.

As a natural extension of the anti-hunger work we began more than 30 years ago, City Harvest developed Healthy Neighborhoods programs to respond to the need for emergency food, improve access to fruits and vegetables for residents in low-income communities and provide nutrition education that will inspire affordable, healthy meal choices. Through our Healthy Neighborhoods programs, City Harvest partners with residents, community organizations, afterschool programs, and local businesses. Together we work to achieve a long-term impact in the fight against hunger by engaging residents in healthy choices and improving the local food landscape. Building off our nutrition education classes which began in 2000, and our Mobile Markets which began in 2004, City Harvest has since expanded Healthy Neighborhoods programs to high-need communities across the five boroughs.

City Harvest remains dedicated to feeding hungry New Yorkers and Healthy Neighborhoods programs enhance our organization's core food rescue work. This year, City Harvest will rescue and deliver 46 million pounds of food to some 400 soup kitchens and food pantries across the city.

Where are Healthy Neighborhoods programs?

Healthy Neighborhoods programs target five low-income neighborhoods of New York City, one in each borough:

- Bedford Stuyvesant in Brooklyn
- South Bronx
- Washington Heights/Inwood in Manhattan
- Northwest Queens
- North Shore of Staten Island



What is the focus of Healthy Neighborhoods?

Healthy Neighborhoods programs are working to put good nutritious food on the table for New Yorkers in need, and help inspire long-term change in the fight against hunger by:

1. Relieving Food Insecurity

City Harvest works to provide hungry New Yorkers with nutritious, free food to feed themselves and their families.

Emergency Food: City Harvest delivers 46 million pounds of food citywide and over 10 million pounds of food to emergency food programs located in Healthy Neighborhoods. Sixty percent of this food is produce, giving soup kitchens and food pantries the opportunity to offer participants a variety of healthy food.

Mobile Markets: Through free, farmers market-style distributions in low-income communities across the five boroughs, City Harvest distributes around 150,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables each month. On-site cooking demonstrations provide information on how to cook with produce, and on-site wellness programming offers additional healthy tips. This year, we will deliver over 2.5 million pounds of fruits and vegetables through our Mobile Markets.

ACE: With the Agency Capacity Expansion (ACE) program, City Harvest offers grants to selected emergency food providers for one-time projects to upgrade services and strengthen their ability to serve the community. In addition, City Harvest University courses on subjects such as fundraising and planning help improve agencies' core skill sets so they can serve as a stable resource for their clients.

2. Providing Nutrition Education and Inspiring Healthy Choices

City Harvest offers free nutrition courses and activities focused on buying, preparing and eating healthy foods.

Nutrition Education Courses: City Harvest provides free nutrition education classes for adults, families, teenagers, and senior citizens at participating community organizations. These classes help instill the skills and confidence to prepare healthy meals.

Quick Look: NYC Landscape*

- 20% of New Yorkers live in poverty, including one in three children under age 18.
- Approximately 3 million New Yorkers live in "food deserts" where junk food is plentiful but affordable, nutritious food is hard to find.
- People living in poverty are more than 3 times as likely as those in the upper-middle class to suffer from chronic dietary illnesses.



*Sources: U.S. Census Bureau; American Community Survey, 2011 American Community Survey, One-year Estimates: Table C17001

New York City Food Policy Coordinator, the NYC Economic Development Corporation (NYCEDC), and the Department of Health (DOH). "Going to Market: NYC's Neighborhood Grocery Store and Supermarket Shortage." (Study presented to the Department of City Planning, New York, New York, April 21, 2008.)

McClellan, Mark B., et. al. "Beyond Health Care: New Directions to a Healthier America." (The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation's Commission to Build a Healthier America: April 2009), 10.

Cooking Demonstrations: The staff and volunteers of City Harvest demonstrate healthy cooking recipes and techniques for residents at senior centers, supermarkets, corner stores, health clinics, and other community gathering places.

Shopping Workshops: Through Cooking Matters® at the Store workshops, City Harvest teaches customers practical tools on how to stretch food dollars and find affordable, healthy foods right in their neighborhood supermarket.

City Harvest's Fruit Bowl: City Harvest introduces preschool and afterschool students to a regular supply of fresh produce and low-fat dairy, and combines a unique nutrition education program designed to teach life-long healthy eating habits to children and caregivers.

3. Increasing Access to Affordable, Healthy Food

City Harvest works with residents, community organizations, afterschool programs, and local businesses to raise awareness of healthy food, ensure that residents can find affordable, nutritious food in their neighborhoods and improve the overall food landscape.

Healthy Supermarkets and Corner Stores: City Harvest works with retailers to reach neighborhood residents where they shop for food. In addition to offering assistance to these food retailers to increase the quantity, quality and variety of available produce, City Harvest hosts healthy cooking demonstrations and budget shopping workshops to encourage nutritious and affordable choices right on site.

Community Networks: To build public support for healthy food outlets, and sustain change over time, City Harvest convenes Community Action Networks (CANS) in each of the Healthy Neighborhoods. These networks engage passionate and dedicated residents and retailers who are committed to improving access to healthy food choices.

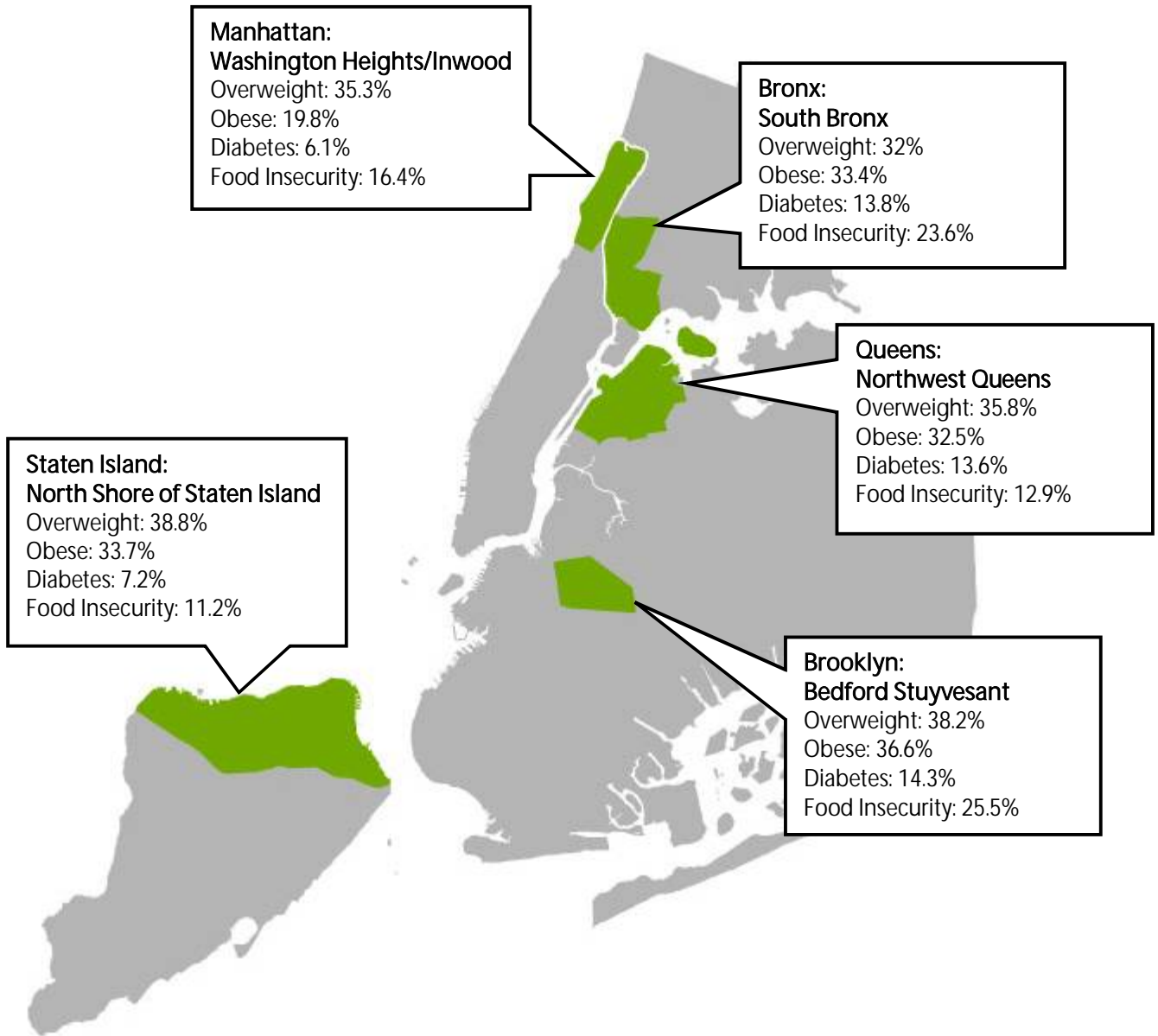
By the Numbers: City Harvest's Work

- Over 5,000 children receive fresh fruit every week through City Harvest's Fruit Bowl.
- Some 12.5 million pounds of free, fresh produce are distributed in Healthy Neighborhoods through emergency food programs and City Harvest Mobile Markets.
- Nearly 25,000 people are reached every year through Healthy Neighborhoods nutrition education programs, including over 250 healthy shopping workshops and cooking demonstrations.
- We are working with 60 supermarkets and 60 corner stores in Healthy Neighborhoods programs over the next four years to improve their produce offerings, which in turn will provide access to fresh, affordable food for nearly half a million people.



Hunger and Diet-Related Conditions in New York City

City Harvest rescues and delivers nutritious food throughout the five boroughs of New York City. The map below highlights City Harvest's Healthy Neighborhoods, shown in green, where we focus resources and programs to address high rates of diet-related conditions that surround hunger.



Data source: 2011 Community Health Survey, NYC DOHMH. Neighborhoods are defined by United Hospital Fund.