MSDA 607 Final Project Proposal

Question to Answer

Does access to local and/or organic food correlate to better performance in school for children in the US

Parameters

Location = States

I want to include all the states in the US, but would consider the 48 contiguous states a reasonable subset, if data for Hawaii and Alaska are more difficult to get. It would be interesting to compare results with and without Hawaii and Alaska to see if they skew the data.

Population = Age

I want to target children before they enter college or the work force, so I am thinking public-school aged children (5 to 18 years or age). I do not care what type of school they attend (public or private) or their actual age, just that they are attending school and there is some measure of performance. This would leave out home-schooled children.

This brings up the possible comparison of public versus private schools and/or trying to find ways to include home-schooled children. I do not plan to examine these differences due to time constraints.

Data Sources

In general, I need two big buckets of data for my Mash-Up, Food Data and Education Data. I can also foresee the possible need for geographic and demographic information as a third major category. I plan to examine US Census data for this third category. Although I am aiming at two to three major data categories, the data may comes from several sources.

Food Data

I plan to examine these potential data sources for information on local and organic food.

- USDA
- State Agriculture Departments
- Specialized Grocery Stores
- Local and Organic Food Associations

Education Data

I plan to examine these potential data sources for information on education performance.

- US Department of Education
- State Education Departments
- Education Associations

Data Analysis

Once the data is collected and organized in a useful way the main analysis will be testing for correlation between food and education. This gives me plenty of possible tests to run to find out what works best. The successful test(s) should lend itself to a good graphic.

If time permits, it would be great to graph the information geographically, because this type of information seems to provide more insight when resources are seen on a map .