

About the Data

This document includes a summary of the data used to develop the Southern Nevada Healthy Food Access Webmap. The webmap relies on data from a variety of sources, including local partners, federal agencies, and nonprofit organizations. Because of differences in when data was made available and the frequency at which it is updated, the information displayed in the webmap varies across several years. For instance, the U.S. Department Agriculture's (USDA) "Food Access Research Atlas," a widely used resources for identifying food deserts, was last updated in 2015 and used some data from the 2010 decennial census¹. However, the list of grocery stores included in the webmap was compiled by RTC of Southern Nevada staff in 2019. As such, the webmap is intended to be used for illustrative purposes and as a general reference to help inform efforts related to healthy food access. Additional research and analysis is advised to fully understand and address current conditions.

Census tract

Description: A small, relatively permanent geographical area established by the U.S. Census Bureau to help analyze populations.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Last updated: 2010

Year of data: 2010

Additional notes: The primary purpose of census tracts is to provide a stable set of geographic units for the presentation of statistical data. Census tracts generally have a population size between 1,200 and 8,000 people, with an optimum size of 4,000 people. A census tract usually covers a contiguous area; however, the spatial size of census tracts varies widely depending on the density of settlement. Census tract boundaries are delineated with the intention of being maintained over a long time so that statistical comparisons can be made from census to census. Census tracts occasionally are split due to population growth or merged as a result of substantial population decline. Additional information on Census geographies, including census tracts, can be found [here](#).

Community gardens

Description: Location of community gardens in Clark County, Nevada.

Source: Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD), Office of Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion; University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE)

Last updated: 2019

Year of data: 2019

Additional notes: This list includes community and school gardens. Not all community gardens are open to the general public; many have limited or restricted access. For example, community gardens located at age restricted housing complexes or communities (e.g., senior housing complexes) may limit access to community residents.

Farmers markets

Description: Location of farmers markets in Clark County, Nevada.

Source: Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD), Office of Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion; University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE)

Last updated: 2019

Year of data: 2019

¹ An update to the "Food Access Research Atlas" is scheduled for 2020.

Additional notes: A list of authorized farmers markets in Clark County can be found [here](#).

Food deserts

Description: Census tracts that are both low income and low access, as determined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA).

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Economic Research Service

Last updated: 2010

Year of data: 2010-2015

Additional notes: The USDA's "Food Access Research Atlas" maps census tracts that are both low income (li) and low access (la), as measured by the different distance demarcations. This tool provides researchers and other users multiple ways to understand the characteristics that can contribute to food deserts, including income level, distance to supermarkets, and vehicle access.

For the purposes of the Southern Nevada Healthy Food Access Webmap, food deserts were determined, using the "Food Access Research Atlas" framework, as census tracts that were *low income* and *low access* at the 1- and 10-mile demarcations. See the entry on **low access tracts** below for more detail.

Additional information on the "Food Access Research Atlas" can be found [here](#).

Food insecurity rates

Description: Estimate of the percentage of the population that experienced food insecurity at some point during the year.

Source: Feeding America

Last updated: 2019

Year of data: 2013-2017

Additional notes: Food insecurity is the household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food.

Feeding America, the largest hunger relief organization in the U.S., has produced food insecurity estimates for the U.S. since 2011 as part of its "Map the Meal Gap" report. To produce its estimates, Feeding America first analyzes the relationship between food insecurity and closely linked indicators of food insecurity (poverty, unemployment, homeownership, etc.) at the state level. Then, the coefficient estimates from this analysis are used in conjunction with the same variables from the county level. Together, these variables can generate estimated food insecurity rates for individuals and children at the county level. Additional information of Feeding America's study methodology can be found [here](#).

Census tract estimates of food insecurity in Clark County, Nevada are provided under special arrangement for Three Square Food Bank.

Food pantries

Description: Location of food pantries that are open to the public in Clark County, Nevada.

Source: Southern Nevada Health District (SNHD), Office of Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion; University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE); Three Square Food Bank

Last updated: 2019

Year of data: 2019

Additional notes: A food pantry is an individual site that distributes food directly to those in need who reside in a specified area. A food pantry is a member agency of a food bank, from which it receives food.

Grocery stores

Description: Location of grocery stores in Clark County, Nevada.

Source: Compiled using data from: U.S. Department Agriculture's (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS); City of Boulder City, Business License Office; Clark County, Business License Department; City of Henderson, Business Licensing; City of Las Vegas, Business License Division; City of Mesquite, Business Licenses; City of North Las Vegas, Business License Division

Last updated: 2019

Year of data: 2019

Additional notes: An attempt was made to approximate the methodology² used by USDA's "Food Access Atlas" to derive a list of grocery stores and supermarkets in the region. First, a directory of stores authorized to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits in Clark County, Nevada was obtained through USDA's Food and Nutrition Services and compared with business licensing data from each of the region's jurisdictions. Stores met the definition of a supermarket or large grocery store if (i) it contained all the major food departments found in a traditional supermarket (including fresh produce, fresh meat and poultry, dairy, dry and packaged foods, and frozen foods), and (ii) its building footprint was at least 17,000 square feet. This list was reviewed and vetted by regional partners.

Households without a vehicle

Description: Estimate of the percentage of households without a vehicle.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates

Last updated: 2018

Year of data: 2013-2017

Additional notes: The data on vehicles available were obtained from Housing Question 11 in the 2017 American Community Survey (ACS). The question was asked at occupied housing units. These data show the number of passenger cars, vans, and pickup or panel trucks of one-ton (2,000 pounds) capacity or less kept at home and available for the use of household members. Vehicles rented or leased for one month or more, company vehicles, and police and government vehicles are included if kept at home and used for non-business purposes. Motorcycles or other recreational vehicles are excluded. Dismantled or immobile vehicles are excluded. Vehicles kept at home but used only for business purposes also are excluded.

The American Community Survey (ACS), administered by the U.S. Census Bureau, is an ongoing survey of the nation's population that provides detailed demographic, housing, social, and economic data. ACS estimates are released annually for geographic areas that meet specific population thresholds. One-year estimates are available for geographic areas with a minimum population of 65,000. Five-year estimates are available for all geographic areas regardless of population size.

Low access tracts

Description: Census tracts in which a significant number or share of the population had limited access to a supermarket or large grocery store – i.e., they lived more than 1 mile from a food store in urban areas or more than 10 miles in rural areas.

² In the USDA's "Food Access Research Atlas," a directory of supermarkets, supercenters, and large grocery stores within U.S. was derived from merging the 2010 STARS directory of stores authorized to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and the 2010 Trade Dimensions TDLinx directory of stores, a proprietary source of individual supermarket store listings. Stores met the definition of a supermarket or large grocery store if they reported at least \$2 million in annual sales and contained all the major food departments found in a traditional supermarket, including fresh produce, fresh meat and poultry, dairy, dry and packaged foods, and frozen foods.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Economic Research Service

Last updated: 2015

Year of data: 2010-2014

Additional notes: In the USDA's "Food Access Research Atlas," a census tract is considered to have low access to healthy food is defined as being far from a supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store ("supermarket" for short).

The USDA presents three measures of low access based on distance to a supermarket:

- A census tract in which at least 500 people or 33 percent of the population living more than ½ mile (urban areas) or more than 10 miles (rural areas) from the nearest supermarket
- A census tract in which at least 500 people or 33 percent of the population living more than 1 mile (urban areas) or more than 10 miles (rural areas) from the nearest supermarket
- A census tract in which at least 500 people or 33 percent of the population living more than 1 mile (urban areas) or more than 20 miles (rural areas) from the nearest supermarket

A fourth and slightly more complex measure incorporates vehicle access directly into the measure, delineating low-income tracts in which a significant number of households are located far from a supermarket and do not have access to a vehicle. This measure also includes census tracts with populations that are so remote, that, even with a vehicle, driving to a supermarket may be considered a burden due to the great distance.

Under this measure, a tract is considered low access if at least 100 households are more than ½ mile from the nearest supermarket and have no access to a vehicle; or at least 500 people or 33 percent of the population live more than 20 miles from the nearest supermarket, regardless of vehicle access.

For the purposes of the Southern Nevada Healthy Food Access Webmap, low access tracts were those at the 1- and 10-mile demarcations, the most widely used measure.

In the USDA's "Food Access Research Atlas," a directory of supermarkets, supercenters, and large grocery stores within U.S. was derived from merging the 2010 STARS directory of stores authorized to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and the 2010 Trade Dimensions TDLinx directory of stores, a proprietary source of individual supermarket store listings. Stores met the definition of a supermarket or large grocery store if they reported at least \$2 million in annual sales and contained all the major food departments found in a traditional supermarket, including fresh produce, fresh meat and poultry, dairy, dry and packaged foods, and frozen foods.

Additional information on the "Food Access Research Atlas," including methodology used to assess distance to the nearest supermarket for each measure, can be found [here](#).

Low income tracts

Description: Low income census tracts, as determined by the Department of Treasury's New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Economic Research Service

Last updated: 2015

Year of data: 2010-2014

Additional notes: The criteria for identifying a census tract as low-income are from the Department of Treasury's New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) program. This program defines a low-income census tract as any tract where:

- the tract's poverty rate is greater than 20 percent; or
- the tract's median family income is less than or equal to 80 percent of the state-wide median family income; or
- the tract is in a metropolitan area and has a median family income less than or equal to 80 percent of the metropolitan area's median family income.

While current data is available that would allow for updated analysis and designation of low income tracts, the determinations from the last USDA “Food Access Research Atlas” analysis were chosen for the Southern Nevada Healthy Food Access Webmap because they were used, in part, to determine the food deserts visualized on the webmap.

Additional information on the “Food Access Research Atlas” can be found [here](#).

Median household income

Description: Estimate of median household incomes.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates

Last updated: 2018

Year of data: 2013-2017

Additional notes: Household income includes the income of the householder and all other individuals 15 years old and over in the household, whether they are related to the householder or not. Although the household income statistics cover the past 12 months, the characteristics of individuals and the composition of households refer to the time of interview. Income includes wages and salaries, transfer payments, child support, rental receipts, dividends, and interest, as well as other kinds of income routinely received.

The median divides the income distribution into two equal parts: one-half of the cases falling below the median income and one-half above the median. For households and families, the median income is based on the distribution of the total number of households and families including those with no income. The median income for individuals is based on individuals 15 years old and over with income. Additional information on median household income can be found [here](#).

The American Community Survey (ACS), administered by the U.S. Census Bureau, is an ongoing survey of the nation's population that provides detailed demographic, housing, social, and economic data. ACS estimates are released annually for geographic areas that meet specific population thresholds. One-year estimates are available for geographic areas with a minimum population of 65,000. Five-year estimates are available for all geographic areas regardless of population size.

Population, tract total

Description: Estimate of the total number of individuals residing in a census tract.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates

Last updated: 2018

Year of data: 2013-2017

Additional notes: The American Community Survey (ACS), administered by the U.S. Census Bureau, is an ongoing survey of the nation's population that provides detailed demographic, housing, social, and economic data. ACS estimates are released annually for geographic areas that meet specific population thresholds. One-year estimates are available for geographic areas with a minimum population of 65,000. Five-year estimates are available for all geographic areas regardless of population size.

Poverty rates

Description: Estimate of the percentage of people living at or below the federal poverty thresholds.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey (ACS) 5-year estimates

Last updated: 2018

Year of data: 2013-2017

Additional notes: The U.S. Census Bureau uses a set of income thresholds that vary by family size and composition to determine who is in poverty. If a family's total income is less than the family's threshold, then that family and every

individual in it is considered in poverty. The official poverty thresholds do not vary geographically, but they are updated for inflation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI-U).

To determine a person's poverty status, one compares the person's total family income in the last 12 months with the poverty threshold appropriate for that person's family size and composition. If the total income of that person's family is less than the threshold appropriate for that family, then the person is considered "below the poverty level," together with every member of his or her family. If a person is not living with anyone related by birth, marriage, or adoption, then the person's own income is compared with his or her poverty threshold. The total number of people below the poverty level is the sum of people in families and the number of unrelated individuals with incomes in the last 12 months below the poverty threshold. Additional information on how the Census Bureau measures poverty can be found [here](#).

The American Community Survey (ACS), administered by the U.S. Census Bureau, is an ongoing survey of the nation's population that provides detailed demographic, housing, social, and economic data. ACS estimates are released annually for geographic areas that meet specific population thresholds. One-year estimates are available for geographic areas with a minimum population of 65,000. Five-year estimates are available for all geographic areas regardless of population size.

SNAP retailers

Description: Location of retailers that accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) in Clark County, Nevada.

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Services (FNS)

Last updated: 2019

Year of data: 2019

Additional notes: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) – formerly known as “food stamps” – is a federal nutrition program administered by the USDA. SNAP provides food-purchasing assistance for eligible low-income individuals and families.

FNS publishes and regularly updates its database of SNAP retailers, which is available to view and download, [here](#).