



THEME

Food Quality, Availability, & Accessibility

For CalFresh populations, not only do they face challenges enrolling into and maintaining benefits, they also may not have access to a grocery store. Food quality and availability are neither guaranteed nor consistent in low-income communities.⁶⁰ The availability of quality food plays an important role in CalFresh participation. In a nationwide study, SNAP participants who lived far from a grocery store consumed significantly less fruit than those who lived within a mile of one.⁶¹

Community members voiced frustration with the lack of nutritious food at CalFresh vendors and challenges in understanding how to use benefits. They also expressed interest in nutrition education.

DID YOU KNOW...

THERE ARE MORE LIQUOR STORES THAN GROCERY STORES IN SOUTH LA?

“South LA is the only neighborhood that has seen an increase in the number of liquor stores over the past several years, at a rate of over 10%. South LA is also the only neighborhood that has more liquor stores than grocery stores, meaning it is easier for community members to access a convenience store than a supermarket. The saturation of liquor stores poses a health risk for residents, as these stores rarely offer fresh or healthy food at affordable prices; instead, liquor stores and convenience stores sell alcohol, cigarettes, and heavily processed foods.” (Los Angeles Food Policy Council, 2020 Food Systems Dashboard)

In communities like South L.A., food apartheid speaks to the racial injustice of our food system (See page 11). Disproportionate rates of obesity, diabetes, hypertension, and chronic illnesses in communities of color are just a few of the outcomes of food apartheid.

WHAT IS A FOOD SUPPLY CHAIN?

The journey of food, from how it is grown to how we eat it, is known as the supply chain. A lack of availability of quality food directly impacts the motivation that local businesses have to purchase

fresh produce. Communities that experience food injustices need better food supply chains by increasing the availability of fresh produce (supply) to meet the existing needs of communities (demand). This can improve local food options, create jobs, and promote healthier eating!

