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| Tab 1 | SPB 7028 by AG ; Food Policy Advisory Council | | | | | |
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| Tab 2 | SB 922 by Perry (CO-INTRODUCERS) Ausley ; (Identical to H 00597) Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant Program | | | | | |
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| Tab 3 | SB 1002 by Burgess ; (Identical to H 01097) Florida Citrus | | | | | |
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| Tab 4 | SB 1006 by Burgess ; (Identical to H 00567) State Symbols | | | | | |
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The Florida Senate
COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

AGRICULTURE
Senator Rouson, Chair
Senator Bradley, Vice Chair

MEETING DATE: Thursday, January 13, 2022
TIME: 11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.
PLACE: *Toni Jennings Committee Room*, 110 Senate Building

MEMBERS: Senator Rouson, Chair; Senator Bradley, Vice Chair; Senators Ausley, Boyd, Burgess, Perry, Polsky, and Rodriguez

| TAB | BILL NO. and INTRODUCER | BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS | COMMITTEE ACTION |
|---------------------------------|--|--|---|
| | Overview of OPPAGA Research Memorandum, "Geographic Access to Healthy Food in Florida," by Daphne Holden, Senior Legislative Analyst | | Presented |
| Consideration of proposed bill: | | | |
| 1 | SPB 7028 | Food Policy Advisory Council; Creating the council adjunct to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; providing the purpose and membership of the council; requiring the council to meet at least quarterly; providing for per diem and travel expenses for council members; providing the duties of the council; requiring the council to submit an annual report to the Governor and the Legislature by a specified date; providing requirements for the report, etc. | Submitted and Reported Favorably as Committee Bill Yeas 8 Nays 0 |
| 2 | SB 922 Perry (Identical H 597) | Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant Program; Creating the program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; requiring the department to select grant recipients based on specified criteria; providing that a recipient may not receive more than one award per year under the program; specifying that grant funding is contingent upon specific annual appropriation by the Legislature, etc. AG 01/13/2022 Favorable AEG AP | Favorable Yeas 8 Nays 0 |

COMMITTEE MEETING EXPANDED AGENDA

Agriculture

Thursday, January 13, 2022, 11:00 a.m.—1:00 p.m.

| TAB | BILL NO. and INTRODUCER | BILL DESCRIPTION and SENATE COMMITTEE ACTIONS | COMMITTEE ACTION |
|-----|---|---|----------------------------|
| 3 | SB 1002 Burgess (Identical H 1097) | Florida Citrus; Citing this act as the "Citrus Recovery Act"; revising the membership of the Florida Citrus Commission; increasing the number of citrus districts in this state and revising the counties that comprise each district; requiring certain entities to provide reports on citrus production research to the commission at specified intervals and upon request of the commission; requiring that new varieties of citrus fruit produced from research or studies funded by state funds be made exclusively available for licensing and purchase to certain Florida producers for a specified timeframe, etc. AG 01/13/2022 Favorable CA RC | Favorable Yeas 8 Nays 0 |
| 4 | SB 1006 Burgess (Identical H 567) | State Symbols; Designating strawberry shortcake as the official state dessert, etc. AG 01/13/2022 Fav/CS CA RC | Fav/CS Yeas 8 Nays 0 |

Other Related Meeting Documents



OPPAGA

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability

Research Memorandum

December 27, 2021

Geographic Access to Healthy Food in Florida

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Table of Contents..... | i |
| Executive Summary..... | iv |
| Introduction..... | 1 |
| Defining the local food environment..... | 1 |
| Factors that contribute to the development of low income, low access food areas..... | 3 |
| Local context and structure of the food retail industry act as disincentives for stores to locate healthy food outlets in low-income and low-access areas..... | 3 |
| Individual transportation options and public transportation systems are a central part of the food environment that may affect food access..... | 4 |
| Known effects of food environment on communities..... | 5 |
| LILA areas often face broad challenges associated with poverty..... | 5 |
| Limited availability of healthy food sources may adversely affect the local business environment..... | 6 |
| Improving availability and accessibility of healthy food may have a modest positive impact on low-income households, but may not lead to better health outcomes..... | 7 |
| Select federal and state agency efforts to address food access and food insecurity..... | 8 |
| Findings..... | 9 |
| Statewide: The number of Florida LILA tracts has decreased slightly, but barriers to healthy food access remain..... | 9 |
| The number of LILA tracts and SNAP retailers have declined since 2015..... | 10 |
| The COVID-19 pandemic may have negatively impacted food access statewide; some government efforts attempted to mitigate these impacts..... | 11 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Stakeholders noted barriers to accessing or buying healthy food and named negative health outcomes as a critical consequence for residents of LILA areas | 12 |
| County case study: Residents face transportation and income barriers to accessing healthy food but find ways to improve their food environment through local initiatives | 14 |
| Hillsborough County: Unhealthy food is prevalent and limited public transit creates barriers to accessing healthy food..... | 15 |
| Context: Compared to the state as a whole, Hillsborough County has a similar percentage of residents living in a LILA census tract | 15 |
| Food environment: LILA areas in Hillsborough County are concentrated east of I-275; southeastern Tampa LILA residents have poor transportation access | 17 |
| Barriers: Tampa community stakeholders reported that healthy food is unaffordable and unhealthy food is plentiful in an area with limited transportation options..... | 20 |
| Local efforts: Public and private entities have initiated food access efforts in Hillsborough, but funding is limited | 23 |
| Pinellas County: Low access to healthy food is one of many problems in LILA areas..... | 24 |
| Context: Pinellas LILA census tract residents have a higher percentage of Black residents, as compared to the rest of the county..... | 24 |
| Food environment: Most Pinellas LILA tracts are also food swamps..... | 26 |
| Barriers: Pinellas stakeholders noted barriers to accessing or buying healthy food and creating a more healthy food environment..... | 27 |
| Local efforts: Residents adapt to the food environment and city officials have taken steps to address food access issues in Midtown St. Petersburg; stakeholders reported resource limitations for community-driven efforts | 30 |
| Suwannee County: Residents have limited access to food and high rates of disability and disease | 31 |
| Context: Compared to the state as a whole, Suwannee County has a higher percentage of residents who live in LILA census tracts, with seniors disproportionately impacted..... | 31 |
| Food environment: The two LILA census tracts in Suwannee have no supercenters and the two major chain supermarkets are near the tract boundary..... | 33 |
| Barriers: Suwannee County stakeholders reported that the largest barrier to healthy food is transportation..... | 34 |
| Local efforts: Stakeholders reported limited local interventions for residents in LILA areas | 35 |
| Options For Legislative Consideration | 35 |
| Several considerations may influence the effectiveness of food access initiatives..... | 35 |
| The Legislature could consider several types of policy options for addressing food access | 36 |
| Develop or support food access planning..... | 36 |
| Build on existing programs..... | 37 |
| Support targeted initiatives..... | 37 |

| | |
|---|----|
| Appendix A..... | 41 |
| Federal Food Programs..... | 41 |
| Appendix B..... | 43 |
| Food access data sources..... | 43 |
| USDA <i>Food Access Research Atlas</i> | 43 |
| Limitations of the USDA FARA..... | 44 |
| Appendix C..... | 45 |
| Floridians Living in LILA Census Tracts..... | 45 |
| Appendix D..... | 46 |
| Food Retail Data..... | 46 |
| Food Retail Categories..... | 46 |
| Healthy and Unhealthy Food Retailers | 47 |
| Food Swamps | 47 |
| Appendix E..... | 48 |
| Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee County Profiles..... | 48 |
| Food Insecurity..... | 48 |
| Hillsborough County..... | 49 |
| Pinellas County | 51 |
| Suwannee County | 53 |

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Low access to healthy food refers to the absence of a large healthy food source within a geographic area. Access measures, such as the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, focus on areas that are both low-income and low-access (LILA). These areas are sometimes called food deserts.

Residents of LILA areas face broad challenges associated with poverty. In these areas, it is difficult, time-consuming, and expensive to navigate access to healthy food for those without good transportation options. Limited availability of food may also adversely impact the local business environment. However, living in a LILA area is not consistently linked to lower consumption of healthy food or diet-related health outcomes.

In Florida, the number of LILA tracts has decreased, but barriers to healthy food access remain. Approximately 13.5% of Floridians live in census tracts that are both low income and low access, with a larger percentage of urban residents compared to rural residents.

In a case study of Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwanee counties, residents face transportation and income barriers to accessing healthy food but find ways to improve their food environment through local initiatives. In Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, residents of LILA census tracts are disproportionately Black compared to other areas of the county and the LILA census tracts have high poverty rates, and few, if any major chain supermarkets. Public and private

entities have started a range of food access initiatives in these counties, though resource constraints present a challenge. In Suwanee County, the two LILA census tracts have a higher proportion of residents that are 65 and older, have no major chain supermarkets, and stakeholders report that the largest barrier to healthy food access is transportation.

To address issues related to food access, OPPAGA identified options for legislative consideration. These options include developing or supporting food access planning at the state and local levels; building on existing programs; increasing participation in existing programs, like SNAP and WIC; providing assistance for food program matching requirements for federal food programs; addressing root causes by investing in education and workforce development; and providing funding for local food system initiatives.

REPORT SCOPE

The Legislature directed OPPAGA to describe low-income, low-access census tracts in the state, which includes

1. Describing what is known about low income, low access food areas and the effects on residents of those areas;
2. Describing the incidence of low-income, low-access census tracts statewide, specifically, the number of people that are both low income and have limited access to healthy food options by census tract;
3. Providing additional information about LILA areas in Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwanee counties; and
4. Providing high-level policy considerations to expand access to healthy food in LILA areas.

INTRODUCTION

Researchers and stakeholders who examine low-income areas with low access to healthy foods emphasize that such areas are best understood in relationship to the broader food environment, including the local food retail industry, and effects on community residents, including diet-related health.

Defining the local food environment

The community retail food environment is composed of all sources of food that are available and accessible to people in a certain location, such as a neighborhood or specific community. Food environments include the physical, economic, social, and cultural attributes of a location that influence food choices.¹ OPPAGA’s research focuses on the community retail food environment, specifically the impact that the location of food sources may have on individuals and communities. Food environments may be evaluated by the availability, accessibility, affordability, and acceptability of healthy food as well as the extent to which area food sources accommodate the needs of residents.² (See Exhibit 1.)

Exhibit 1

Multiple Factors Determine Whether the Local Food Environment Meets the Needs of Residents

| Factors | Description |
|----------------------|--|
| Availability | Is there is an adequate amount of healthy food? Availability involves the number of outlets that offer healthy food as well as the volume and variety of healthy food in each outlet. |
| Accessibility | How difficult is it for residents to get to healthy food sources? Accessibility involves not only proximity to a healthy food source, but also the resources needed and hazards encountered when accessing healthy food. |
| Affordability | How much does healthy food cost? Does poverty or high food costs limit families’ ability to purchase an adequate supply of healthy food? |
| Acceptability | Is the healthy food available something that residents would eat? Acceptability may involve the quality and cultural appropriateness of food options. |
| Accommodation | Does shopping at sources of healthy food fit residents’ lifestyles? For example, are hours of operation convenient for residents? ³ |

Source: OPPAGA analysis of academic literature.

Research about limited access to healthy food classifies different food sources as primarily healthy or unhealthy.⁴ Large and common sources of healthy food include larger grocery stores, supermarkets, and supercenters, which typically have lower prices and a wider selection of options than smaller stores.⁵ Small sources of healthy food include small grocers, farmers’ markets, produce stands, and community gardens, which may have limited operating hours and offer a lower volume of food than large food sources. Unhealthy food sources, such as convenience stores, fast food

¹ Swinburn B. et al. “INFORMAS: Overview and Key Principles.” *Obesity Reviews* 14, no. S1: 1–12. <https://doi.org/10.1111/obr.12087>.

² Turner, Grace et al. “The Association of Dimensions of Fruit and Vegetable Access in the Retail Food Environment with Consumption; a Systematic Review.” *Global Food Security* 29: 100528, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.gfs.2021.100528>.

³ Caspi, Caitlin E. et al. “The Local Food Environment and Diet: A Systematic Review.” *Health & Place* 18, no. 5: 1172–87. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2012.05.006>.

⁴ Cooksey-Stowers, Kristen et al. “Food Swamps Predict Obesity Rates Better Than Food Deserts in the United States.” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 14, no. 11. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14111366>.

⁵ Caspi, Caitlin E. et al. “Pricing of Staple Foods at Supermarkets versus Small Food Stores.” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 14, no. 8: 915. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph14080915>.

restaurants, and most dollar stores, offer primarily shelf-stable or prepared food products.^{6,7,8} Food environments may also include unclassified sources of food, including schools that provide meals and charitable feeding programs, such as food pantries and soup kitchens. (See Exhibit 2.)

Exhibit 2

Commonly Recognized Types of Retail Food Stores and Store Characteristics⁹

| Type of Retail Food Store | Characteristics |
|------------------------------|---|
| Convenience stores | Convenience stores are small stores that offer a smaller variety of foods that are primarily shelf-stable goods. These stores typically carry little to no fresh produce. These stores may be attached to gas stations. |
| Specialty food stores | Stores such as bakeries, ethnic food stores, and stores that specialize in meat or seafood, may provide access to healthy foods, but may lack the variety of food needed for a complete healthy diet. |
| Small grocery stores | Small grocers may stock food in all major departments, but do less than \$500,000 in annual sales. Although many of these stores may offer healthy and affordable food, store-to-store variability means researchers cannot reliably assume that any individual store provides healthy and affordable food. Some small grocery stores may have offerings more similar to a convenience store. |
| Large grocery stores | These stores have similar offerings as supermarkets, but lower annual sales – between \$500,000 and \$2 million. |
| Supermarkets | These stores have a set of major food departments considered to offer a variety of healthy food, including fresh meat and poultry, produce, dairy, frozen foods, as well as dry and packaged foods. To be considered a supermarket, the retailer must also have at least \$2 million in annual sales. |
| Supercenters | These are very large stores that combine grocery store products with a variety of other products, such as apparel, home furnishings, and electronics. Food prices at supercenters tend to be lower than at other supermarket chains. |

Source: OPPAGA analysis and U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Problems in food environments include low access to healthy food and high relative availability of unhealthy food. The literature generally frames low access to healthy food as the absence of a large healthy food source within a geographic area. Large stores are used to determine access because these stores are more likely to have lower costs and more healthy food options than smaller stores. Access measures, such as the USDA Food Atlas, focus on areas that are both low-income and low-access (LILA).¹⁰ Such areas are sometimes called food deserts.¹¹ The USDA estimates that 5.6% to 17.4% of the U.S. population lives in LILA census tracts.¹²

⁶ Gustafson, Alison A et al. "Validation of Food Store Environment Secondary Data Source and the Role of Neighborhood Deprivation in Appalachia, Kentucky." *BMC Public Health* 12: 688. <https://doi.org/10.1186/1471-2458-12-688>.

⁷ Shier, V. et al. "Is There a Robust Relationship between Neighbourhood Food Environment and Childhood Obesity in the USA?" *Public Health* 126, no. 9: 723–30. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2012.06.009>.

⁸ Studies of the food environment do not consistently classify dollar stores as unhealthy food retailers, setting them apart from fast food and convenience retailers. The recent proliferation of dollar stores has garnered increased attention both in research and among stakeholders and policymakers. Much of this attention recognizes that these retailers most often lack an ample supply of foods necessary for a healthy diet, most notably, fresh produce.

⁹ OPPAGA includes all establishments that sell food as food retailers, regardless of whether food is the primary product the retailer carries or sells. These retailer typologies are consistent with USDA categories and depend on access to retailer sales data. OPPAGA retailer categories used for analysis differ slightly because of data availability.

¹⁰ USDA Economic Research Service. "Documentation." Accessed March 2, 2021. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation/>.

¹¹ The term food desert is now contested by scholars and activists in part because it ignores the complexity of the problems faced by communities designated as such. Criticisms include the following: 1) the metaphor of desert implies barrenness, ignoring the people and institutions that are there; 2) the term focuses on a static situation without an acknowledgement of the political and social contexts of racial segregation; 3) the term presupposes a solution, adding a healthy food source to an area, rather than treating the lack of a supermarket as one outcome of community segregation, disadvantage, and disinvestment. OPPAGA will be consistent with the USDA's terminology of LILA areas.

¹² USDA Economic Research Service. "Documentation." Estimates vary based on the specific criteria used to determine low access.

High relative availability of unhealthy food refers to geographic areas where there is a high ratio of unhealthy food sources to healthy food sources.¹³ Such areas are sometimes referred to as food swamps. Both low-access and unhealthy food environments have been associated with a range of social, economic, and health concerns.¹⁴

KEY TERMS

Low income, low access census tracts meet both criteria below.

- **Low Income:** A census tract where the poverty rate is greater than 20% or the median family income is less than or equal to 80% of the statewide median family income, or in metropolitan areas, 80% of the metropolitan area median family income.
- **Low Access:** A census tract where at least 500 people, or 33% of the population is greater than 1 mile or 10 miles from a supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store.

Food Swamp: A ratio equal to or greater than five unhealthy food retailers to one healthy retailer.

Factors that contribute to the development of low income, low access food areas

Local context and market forces create disincentives for stores to locate healthy food outlets in low-income and low-access areas. Individual transportation options and public transportation systems are a central part of the food environment that may affect food access.

Local context and structure of the food retail industry act as disincentives for stores to locate healthy food outlets in low-income and low-access areas

The literature suggests that supermarkets perceive locating in urban and rural areas to be more risky than locating in suburbs. Retail grocers operate on a slim profit margin and it often takes five to seven years to recover initial investments.¹⁵ Because of this, supermarkets are risk-averse when locating new stores. Perceived risks in high-crime areas include high insurance costs, security concerns, difficulty in finding and retaining employees, and uneven cash flow related to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. Moreover, in communities with high unemployment rates, the perception is that workers need more training than in other areas.¹⁶

It is easier for stores with less-healthy, non-perishable food products with small footprints to be successful in LILA urban areas, and these retailers may displace or preempt existing grocery stores and supermarkets. Dollar stores, convenience stores, and pharmacies can successfully sell food in places where supermarkets and supercenters do not want to build, including underserved rural and low-income urban communities. As the retail food landscape has shifted, dollar stores have proliferated, filling the void in both urban and rural communities.¹⁷ Locating stores in urban areas

¹³ OPPAGA's definition and measurement of a food swamp is consistent with recent literature.

¹⁴ Cooksey-Stowers, Kristen et al., "Food Swamps Predict Obesity Rates Better Than Food Deserts in the United States."

¹⁵ Food Marketing Institute. "Access to Healthier Foods: Opportunities and Challenges for Food Retailers in Underserved Areas." July 2011. https://www.fmi.org/docs/consumer/access-to-healthier-foods.pdf?sfvrsn=db292930_4.

¹⁶ Food Marketing Institute. "Access to Healthier Foods: Opportunities and Challenges for Food Retailers in Underserved Areas."

¹⁷ Center for Science in the Public Interest. "The Rise of Dollar Stores: How the Proliferation of Discount Stores May Limit Healthy Food Access." February 2020. <https://cspinet.org/resource/rise-dollar-stores>.

when grocery stores move to the suburbs and in rural areas when big box stores draw customers away from main street retailers, often leads to store closures.¹⁸ One study found that dollar stores have grown from about 20,000 locations to nearly 30,000 since 2011.¹⁹

For food retailers, fixed costs and the volume of sales vary across rural and urban areas, creating a disadvantage to locating in either. Fixed costs are greater in dense urban areas because of high land costs and costly zoning requirements, disadvantaging potential urban grocers. The volume of sales can offset fixed costs by spreading them among many people.²⁰ In rural, less populated areas, there is not the population density to support large formats such as supermarkets, creating a disincentive to open such stores there.²¹

Food purchases at convenience stores is common and increasing; smaller food retailers may be capturing supermarkets' market share. Food revenues at convenience stores represent the second largest market share, after grocery stores, among all food retailers.²² Like convenience stores, pharmacies are increasingly selling food and competing with grocery stores.²³ Dollar stores, convenience stores, and pharmacies sell food that is generally highly processed for a long shelf life and high in fat and sugar.²⁴

Some literature points to potential impacts for both small town/rural and urban locations as dollar stores, convenience stores, and pharmacies take more of the market share from grocery stores. Existing grocery stores in small towns may close, leaving residents fewer options for healthy food. In urban areas, dollar stores can saturate the market, making it difficult for new grocers to take root.²⁵ However, a growing number of dollar stores are offering fresh produce. For example, while researchers found that dollar-discount stores carrying fresh produce in the Las Vegas, Nevada metropolitan area had lower availability of all products than supermarkets, the stores did provide quality fresh and healthy foods that were usually less expensive. Dollar stores also generally accept SNAP, increasing access for those most in need. In areas where fresh food is otherwise unavailable, dollar stores can offer some food options for community members.²⁶

Individual transportation options and public transportation systems are a central part of the food environment that may affect food access

Both at the individual and community level, transportation options help define the boundaries of local food environments and influence accessibility. Transportation options may include walking, biking,

¹⁸ Mitchell, Stacy et al. "Dollar Stores Are Targeting Struggling Urban Neighborhoods and Small Towns. One Community Is Showing How to Fight Back." *Institute for Local Self-Reliance* (December 6, 2018) <https://ilsr.org/dollar-stores-target-cities-towns-one-fights-back/>.

¹⁹ Mitchell, Stacy et al. "Dollar Stores Are Targeting Struggling Urban Neighborhoods and Small Towns. One Community Is Showing How to Fight Back."

²⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. "Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences." Report to Congress. June 2009.

²¹ Additional rural disadvantages are high levels of poverty and low housing values and residents' low levels of education. These characteristics are associated with low geographic purchasing power and create a disincentive for retailers to locate there. See Liese, Angela D. et al. "Food Store Types, Availability, and Cost of Foods in a Rural Environment." *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 107, no. 11 (November 2007): 1916–23. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jada.2007.08.012>.

²² Caspi, Caitlin E. et al. "Food and Beverage Purchases in Corner Stores, Gas-Marts, Pharmacies and Dollar Stores." *Public Health Nutrition* 20, no. 14 (October 2017): 2587–97. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980016002524>.

²³ Wilking, Cara et al. "The Role of Chain Pharmacies to Promote Healthy Food Retail: Current Trends, Legal Limits, and Policy Opportunities." *Health Marketing Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2019): 291–306. <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/epub/10.1080/07359683.2019.1575058?needAccess=true>.

²⁴ Caspi, Caitlin et al. "Food and Beverage Purchases in Corner Stores, Gas-Marts, Pharmacies and Dollar Stores."

²⁵ Mitchell, Stacy et al. "Dollar Stores Are Targeting Struggling Urban Neighborhoods and Small Towns. One Community Is Showing How to Fight Back."

²⁶ Coughenour, Courtney et al. "Healthy Food Options at Dollar Discount Stores Are Equivalent in Quality and Lower in Price Compared to Grocery Stores: An Examination in Las Vegas, NV." *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 15, no. 12 (December 2018): 2773. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ijerph15122773>.

public transit, and private vehicles. Private vehicle access has a significant impact on food accessibility. For example, a study of Washington low-income residents found that among those who qualified for the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) supplemental nutrition program and lacked reasonable access to a supermarket, 78% lacked access because they lacked a personal vehicle.²⁷ For individuals without access to a private vehicle, concerns related to transportation and food access include the walkability of the route to food sources, having to rely on others for transportation, and navigating public transportation while carrying heavy groceries and caring for children.²⁸

In both urban and rural areas in the United States, low-income, low-access census tracts have significantly lower vehicle access rates than other tracts.²⁹ Lack of access to a vehicle may also create greater difficulty in rural areas, where fewer transportation options may be available.

Food accessibility may be further influenced by the adequacy of public transportation systems. Better public transportation systems have been linked to lower food insecurity. A 2016 study found that an additional bus-equivalent per 10,000 people reduced the probability of food insecurity by 1.6 percentage points.³⁰

Finally, certain groups may face unique transportation challenges. For example, individuals with atypical schedules may have limited public transportation options to access food.³¹ Individuals with mobility issues may require transportation accommodations to access food and may choose food retailers based on additional in-store accommodations.³²

Known effects of food environment on communities

A range of problems associated with poverty and poor health outcomes present challenges for residents of low-income and low-access areas. Access to food may come at great personal expense, and the business community may suffer from a poor food environment, because supermarkets anchor other commercial development and contribute to local tax revenues.

LILA areas often face broad challenges associated with poverty

Low income and low access areas often have a complex set of interrelated problems associated with poverty, all of which can aggravate food access and health outcomes. A USDA study found that LILA tracts have higher rates of abandoned or vacant homes, residents with lower levels of education, lower incomes, and higher unemployment than all other census tracts.³³ Further, another USDA study found that neighborhood characteristics such as income inequality, racial segregation, lack of transportation infrastructure, and household deprivation were all strong predictors of low-access

²⁷ McDermot, Dennis et al. "Assessment of Healthy Food Availability in Washington State—Questioning the Food Desert Paradigm." *Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior* 49, no. 2 (February 1, 2017): 130-136. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jneb.2016.10.012>.

²⁸ Pitt, Erin et al. "Exploring the Influence of Local Food Environments on Food Behaviours: A Systematic Review of Qualitative Literature." *Public Health Nutrition* 20, no. 13 (September 2017): 2393-2405. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1368980017001069>.

²⁹ Dutko, Paula et al. "Characteristics and Influential Factors of Food Deserts." U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service (August 2012). https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/45014/30940_err140.pdf.

³⁰ Baek, Deokrye. "The Effect of Public Transportation Accessibility on Food Insecurity." *Eastern Economic Journal* 42, no. 1 (January 1, 2016): 104-34. <https://doi.org/10.1057/ej.2014.62>.

³¹ Widener, Michael J. et al. "How Do Changes in the Daily Food and Transportation Environments Affect Grocery Store Accessibility?" *Applied Geography* 83 (June 1, 2017): 46-62, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.apgeog.2017.03.018>.

³² Huang, Deborah L. et al. "Food Access Patterns and Barriers among Midlife and Older Adults with Mobility Disabilities." *Journal of Aging Research* 2012 (September 26, 2012): e231489, <https://doi.org/10.1155/2012/231489>.

³³ Dutko, Paula et al. "Characteristics and Influential Factors of Food Deserts."

to supermarkets.³⁴ Problems faced by residents in a LILA area may both contribute to the reluctance of supermarkets to enter the market and be exacerbated by the lack of a supermarket.³⁵

Given the complex problems associated with poverty, the presence of a supermarket in a LILA area may not in itself fundamentally change community socioeconomic disadvantage and improve health outcomes. A 2019 study explored the causes of nutritional inequality by examining new supermarket openings and individual changes in residence and concluded that eliminating all differences in the availability and accessibility of food would reduce dietary differences between low-income and high-income households by less than 10%.³⁶

Navigating access to food may be difficult, time-consuming, and expensive for low-income residents of LILA areas. A 2016 review of qualitative data from several studies regarding the influence of local food environments on food and purchasing behavior of adults in urban settings finds that transportation barriers often meant that residents relied on others' cars or took public transportation, a difficult endeavor with heavy bags of groceries and children in tow.³⁷ Many of the qualitative studies reviewed show that consumers perceive cost as more important than nutritional quality and healthy food as more expensive than unhealthy items.

Limited availability of healthy food sources may adversely affect the local business environment

Supermarkets may act as an anchor for other commercial development and may increase local tax revenues. For example, an evaluation of the Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative, a statewide financing program designed to attract supermarkets and grocery stores to underserved communities, found that bringing a new supermarket to an underserved community increased community real estate appreciation by improving the overall attractiveness of the area. Further, the new supermarkets brought new jobs to the community and raised earnings.³⁸ Losing a supermarket, or not having one, could thus have the opposite effect, lowering tax revenue and reducing traffic at surrounding businesses, potentially jeopardizing the supermarkets' success.³⁹ Further, when residents of LILA areas shop outside of their community for affordable food, they may be depriving their community of the economic benefits of their expenditures.

Moreover, some stores that serve low-income consumers generate fewer jobs and revenues for the communities in which they locate. For example, stores with higher proportion of total revenues from SNAP redemptions have lower labor costs as a percentage of sales.⁴⁰ Research has also found that dollar stores generate fewer jobs and revenues than supermarkets. When dollar stores fill the void left

³⁴ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service. "Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences."

³⁵ Crowe, Jessica et al. "Barriers to Food Security and Community Stress in an Urban Food Desert." *Urban Science* 2, no. 2 (May 31, 2018): 46. <https://doi.org/10.3390/urbansci2020046>.

³⁶ Allcott, Hunt et al. "Food Deserts and the Causes of Nutritional Inequality." National Bureau of Economic Research, December 2017. <https://doi.org/10.3386/w24094>.

³⁷ Pitt, Erin et al., "Exploring the Influence of Local Food Environments on Food Behaviours: A Systematic Review of Qualitative Literature."

³⁸ The Reinvestment Fund. "The Economic Impact of Supermarkets on Their Surrounding Communities." 2007.

<https://www.reinvestment.com/research-publications/7620/#:~:text=The%20Economic%20Impact%20of%20Supermarkets%20on%20Their%20Surrounding,real%20estate%20value%2C%20new%20investment%20and%20lower%20prices>.

³⁹ However, other literature points out that bringing a grocery store, especially an expensive one that caters to the tastes of higher-income residents, to an urban LILA area could have detrimental effects, such as increasing gentrification. One study showed that a new supermarket in a Portland, Oregon neighborhood created social exclusion wherein residents cannot afford the food or find it to be unfamiliar. See Sullivan, Daniel Monroe. "From Food Desert to Food Mirage: Race, Social Class, and Food Shopping in a Gentrifying Neighborhood." *Advances in Applied Sociology* 04, no. 01 (2014): 30–35. <https://doi.org/10.4236/aasoci.2014.41006>.

⁴⁰ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, "Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences."

by supermarkets, the stores are more likely to locate in low income, low access areas, employ fewer people on average than small, independent grocery stores, and rely more heavily on publicly subsidized health care for employees.⁴¹

Improving availability and accessibility of healthy food may have a modest positive impact on low-income households, but may not lead to better health outcomes

The availability of healthy food is often associated with improved diets, but better geographic access to healthy foods is not consistently linked to healthier eating. The availability of healthy food refers to the volume and variety of healthy food offered in the food environment, and availability may be measured through store audits or perception surveys. Many studies show a positive relationship between the availability of healthy food and healthy diets. For example, a 2021 review found a positive relationship between the availability of fruits and vegetables and reported fruit and vegetable consumption in 9 of 15 identified studies.⁴²

However, better geographic accessibility does not necessarily increase the consumption of these foods. Studies do not show a consistent positive relationship between the accessibility of healthy food and healthy diets. For example, a 2012 review found an inconsistent relationship between the accessibility of healthy food based on physical distance to a grocery store and healthier diets. Only 4 of 13 studies showed a uniformly positive relationship between access and healthier diets, while 9 of 13 studies showed no relationship or mixed results.⁴³ A 2021 review found mixed results regarding the relationship between the accessibility of fruits and vegetables and reported fruit and vegetable consumption.⁴⁴

Geographic interventions and changes in the community food environment are also inconsistently associated with changes in diet across studies. A 2019 review identified 14 studies examining the relationship between geographic access interventions and a healthier diet. The review found that 11 of the 14 studies reported a mixed relationship or no relationship.⁴⁵

Higher availability of and access to healthy foods does not necessarily lead to better health. Even when features of the food environment contribute to healthier diets, dietary improvements may not always lead to corresponding improvements in health outcomes. A 2019 review identified 113 studies examining the relationship between the retail food environment and obesity. Of the 1,937 associations identified in these articles, 76% showed no relationship between the food environment and obesity. The review identified 50 overlapping methodological categories in the studies, including whether studies measured availability or accessibility. Regardless of the methodology used, most associations showed no relationship between the food environment and obesity. In each of the 50 identified categories, less than 40% of associations showed a positive relationship between the food environment and lower obesity.⁴⁶

⁴¹ Institute for Local Self Reliance. "Dollar Store Impacts: Dollar General, Dollar Tree, and Family Dollar Have Big Expansion Plans. But Are These Chains Good for Communities?" https://ilsr.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Dollar_Store_Fact_Sheet.pdf.

⁴² Turner, Grace et al. "The Association of Dimensions of Fruit and Vegetable Access in the Retail Food Environment with Consumption; a Systematic Review."

⁴³ Caspi et al., "The Local Food Environment and Diet."

⁴⁴ Turner Grace et al., "The Association of Dimensions of Fruit and Vegetable Access in the Retail Food Environment with Consumption; a Systematic Review."

⁴⁵ Mah, Catherine L. et al. "A Systematic Review of the Effect of Retail Food Environment Interventions on Diet and Health with a Focus on the Enabling Role of Public Policies." *Current Nutrition Reports* 8, no. 4 (December 1, 2019): 411–28. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s13668-019-00295-z>.

⁴⁶ Wilkins, Emma et al. "A Systematic Review Employing the GeoFERN Framework to Examine Methods, Reporting Quality and Associations between the Retail Food Environment and Obesity." *Health & Place* 57 (May 1, 2019):186–99. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.healthplace.2019.02.007>.

Food environments with a high ratio of unhealthy to healthy food sources may have a modest detrimental impact on health outcomes. The review of studies on the food environment and obesity found that of the associations related to the relative unhealthiness of the food environment, such as the ratio of unhealthy to healthy food sources, 78.7% were null. However, the remaining 21.3% of associations were positive and there were no negative associations, indicating a positive though weak or inconsistent relationship between unhealthy food environments and obesity.⁴⁷ In line with these findings, a study of food environments in California found a positive relationship between the relative unhealthiness of the food environment and obesity, though the effect was minimal after controlling for other factors.⁴⁸ There is also some evidence that unhealthy food environments may have a larger impact than geographic access on health outcomes. An analysis of food swamps and low-income, low-access areas in the United States found that food swamps are much more strongly correlated with county-level obesity rates than low-income, low-access areas.⁴⁹

Having access to higher-quality stores may be important not only for the overt benefits—such as health—but also for resident perceptions of their neighborhood, which can affect health-related choices. Specifically, studies show that the presence of a supermarket affects residents' sense of community desirability and prosperity. For example, residents interviewed in one study thought that the absence of a quality food store in their community meant that their neighborhood was a less desirable place to live.⁵⁰ In a review of qualitative literature about the influence of food environments on food behaviors, respondents across several studies perceived that there is superior accessibility and quality of food stores in White as compared to minority communities and that chain stores stock different products in different communities.⁵¹ These studies point to the central importance of a grocery store for a community's identity and note that the food residents buy in their food environment is shaped by their perceptions of it, such as new grocery store changing residents' frame of reference for quality of fresh produce. One study that surveyed households in two Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania low-income neighborhoods found net positive changes in dietary quality in only the neighborhood that had a new supermarket, regardless of how frequently residents shopped at the new store. The researchers point out that the dietary improvement was likely because of the measured increase in neighborhood satisfaction, something that also differed significantly between the two neighborhoods.⁵²

Select federal and state agency efforts to address food access and food insecurity

Several federal programs address food access and food insecurity. Some federal food assistance programs provide financial benefits to eligible individuals. State governments administer some of these programs, such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. In Florida, the Department of Children and Families administers the state's SNAP program.

⁴⁷ Wilkins, Emma et al. "A Systematic Review Employing the GeoFERN Framework to Examine Methods, Reporting Quality and Associations between the Retail Food Environment and Obesity."

⁴⁸ Truong, K. et al. "Measuring the Physical Food Environment and Its Relationship with Obesity: Evidence from California." *Public Health* 124, no. 2 (February 2010): 115–18. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.puhe.2009.12.004>.

⁴⁹ Cooksey-Stowers, Kristen et al. "Food Swamps Predict Obesity Rates Better Than Food Deserts in the United States."

⁵⁰ Tach, Laura et al. "Constrained, Convenient, and Symbolic Consumption: Neighborhood Food Environments and Economic Coping Strategies among the Urban Poor." *Journal of Urban Health* 92, no. 5 (October 2015): 815–34. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11524-015-9984-x>.

⁵¹ Pitt, Erin et al. "Exploring the Influence of Local Food Environments on Food Behaviours: A Systematic Review of Qualitative Literature."

⁵² Dubowitz, Tamara et al. "Diet And Perceptions Change With Supermarket Introduction In A Food Desert, But Not Because Of Supermarket Use." *Health Affairs* 34, no. 11 (November 2015): 1858–68. <https://doi.org/10.1377/hlthaff.2015.0667>.

Other federal programs offer competitive grants, such as the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program, which provides grants to increase the purchase of healthy food. In Florida, Feeding Florida administers a nutrition incentive program, Fresh Access Bucks, funded through such a grant. At retail outlets, the Fresh Access Bucks program provides SNAP recipients with one dollar toward fresh fruits and vegetables for each dollar they spend with SNAP, up to \$10 per shopping trip. The program is offered through certain farmer's markets, produce stands, community-supported agriculture, mobile markets, and community grocery outlets. Fresh Access Bucks has begun a retail pilot program, expanding the program to a limited number of small, regional, or independent grocery, co-op, convenience, or corner stores. (See Appendix A for other federal food programs.)

In addition to administering several federally funded programs, Florida also has state-level food access and food security initiatives administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. In 2016, the Legislature established the Healthy Food Financing Initiative, directing the department to coordinate the use of \$500,000 in state financial assistance to construct, rehabilitate, or expand independent grocery stores, independent supermarkets, convenience stores, and community facilities to increase access to fresh produce and other nutritious food in underserved and low-income communities. The Florida Community Loan Fund administers the initiative, which has used the full funding amount to help finance three projects.⁵³

- Evans Center: The project includes a fresh market, health clinic, and classrooms for nutrition education and job training for area residents. The facility is located in a LILA census tract and is in a medically underserved area. The \$700,000 loan included \$150,000 from the initiative.
- Fresh Choice Market: The grocery store is located in a LILA census tract, increasing access for 23,000 local residents in a high poverty area. The project has been operational since October 2018. The \$700,000 loan included \$150,000 from the initiative.
- Community Health Centers of Pinellas Highpoint Clinic: The project includes the renovation of health clinic and initiation of a food prescription program to improve the management of chronic diseases by providing access to diet-appropriate meals for patients with chronic conditions. Construction began in early 2021. The \$400,000 loan included \$200,000 from the initiative.

In 2020, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services established the Food Security Advisory Committee to develop a statewide plan to address food insecurity. The committee recommends to the commissioner policies and statewide strategies that would reduce hunger, eradicate food insecurity and increase participation in federally funded nutrition assistance programs. The committee is also currently drafting a list of policy recommendations.

FINDINGS

Statewide: The number of Florida LILA tracts has decreased slightly, but barriers to healthy food access remain

Approximately 13.5% of Floridians may live in LILA census tracts, with a larger proportion of residents in urban areas rather than rural areas living in these tracts. Despite overall growth in the retail sector

⁵³ OPPAGA will review the Florida Healthy Food Financing Initiative in 2023.

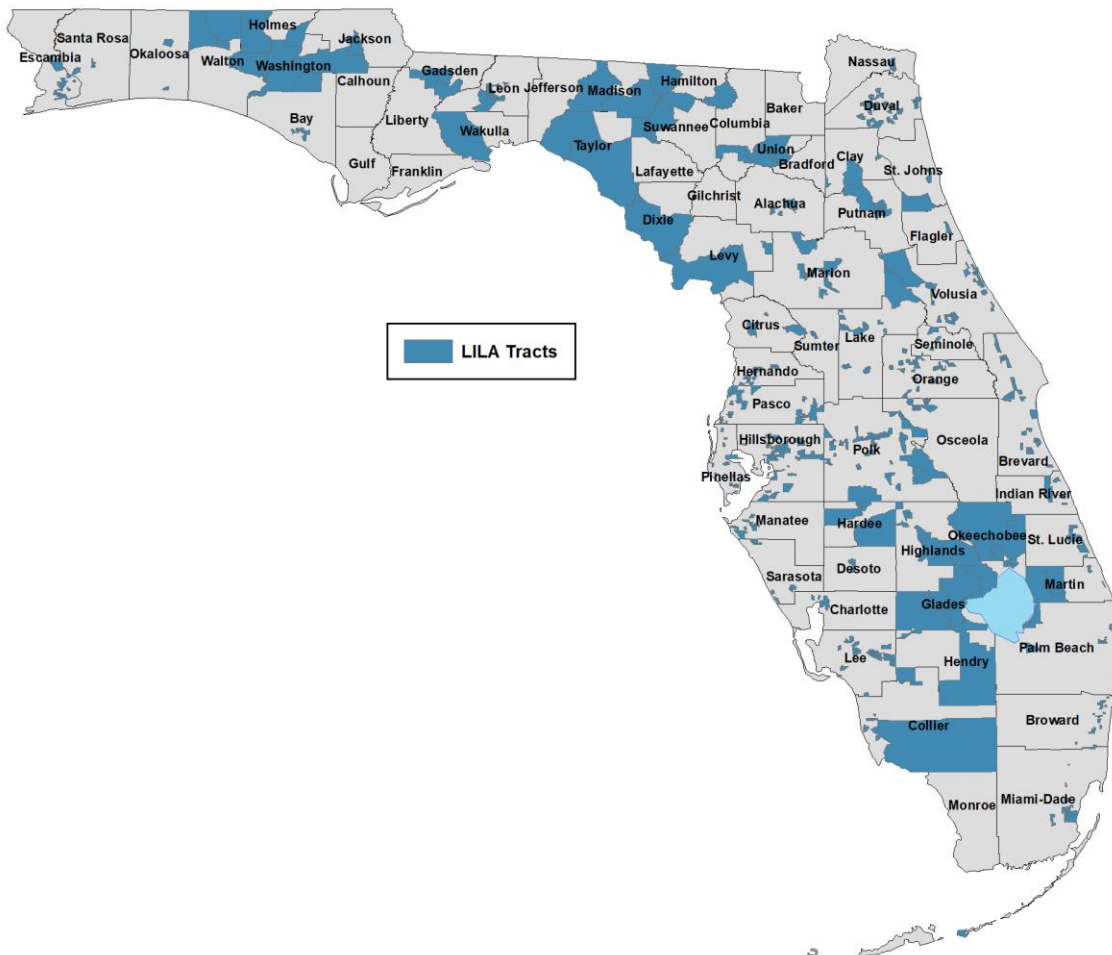
over the past five years, the number of retailers accepting SNAP benefits has declined, which makes it more difficult for low income Floridians to purchase food. Food access stakeholders reported that the COVID-19 epidemic, among other barriers, negatively impacted food access in Florida. Stakeholders also noted the negative health outcomes associated with living in LILA areas.

The number of LILA tracts and SNAP retailers have declined since 2015

According to USDA data, approximately 13.5% of Floridians live in census tracts that are both low income and have low access to a retailer that provides healthy and affordable food.^{54,55} The proportion of residents living in low-income, low-access census tracts varies widely by county. Eight counties have no LILA tracts, thus no residents living in LILA areas and in one county, Glades, all tracts are LILA, therefore all residents live in areas that are low-income and low access. (See Exhibit 3.) (See Appendix C for the proportion of residents in each county that are living in LILA census tracts.)

Exhibit 3

Statewide, 550 of Florida's 4,180 Populated Census Tracts Are LILA



Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* data.

⁵⁴ For this analysis, OPPAGA used data from the current USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* (FARA) combined with 2014-19 American Community Survey (ACS) population estimates. See Appendix B for detailed information about the USDA FARA and the measures used.

⁵⁵ Population estimates based on ACS data. Margin of error = .1%.

A larger percentage of urban residents live in low-income low-access census tracts compared to rural residents.⁵⁶ As noted above, USDA standards classify tracts as “low access” if a large number or share of residents is far from a supermarket, where far is considered more than 1 mile in urban areas and more than 10 miles in rural areas.⁵⁷ However, rural residents typically travel longer distances for daily needs, such as jobs and shopping; thus, the distance at which going to a supermarket could be considered a burden is farther for rural residents than for urban residents.⁵⁸ A mile is considered a walkable distance in an urban area, while 10 miles is considered a drivable distance in a rural area.⁵⁹

The net total of LILA census tracts in Florida declined from 582 in 2015 to 550 in 2019, and the share of the population in LILA tracts declined from 14.7% to 13.5% during the same period.⁶⁰ Changes in the designation of tracts as low income and low access were primarily the result of fewer tracts being designated as low income; changes in access were less common.⁶¹

Florida had fewer SNAP retailers in 2021 than in 2015, despite overall growth in the food retail sector.⁶² The total number of food retail outlets in Florida has increased slightly in recent years. Convenience stores, supercenters, and supermarkets, where most SNAP dollars are spent, grew by 4% between 2017 and 2021.⁶³ Nevertheless, the number of Florida food retailers accepting SNAP has declined since 2015, from approximately 15,987 in June 2015 to 14,763 in March 2021.^{64, 65}

The COVID-19 pandemic may have negatively impacted food access statewide; some government efforts attempted to mitigate these impacts

While the pandemic did not lead to a significant increase in food insecurity overall, households with children experienced significant increases. The U.S. Department of Agriculture reported that in 2019, 6.5% of U.S. households with children were food insecure at times, and in 2020, this percentage increased to 7.6%.⁶⁶ Stakeholders from a food policy council, two local health departments, a state agency, and a regional health system reported that there was more hunger in Florida because of the pandemic. Some noted that children in Florida were not getting school food and more of them were hungry as a result.

In addition, existing research suggests that shopping habits for the general population changed in reaction to the initial COVID-19 outbreak, which may have made food access difficult for some families. In particular, many people shifted to online food purchasing and bought food in brick and mortar stores less frequently. In addition, stores adopted different measures to protect customers and employees. At the beginning of the pandemic, many supermarkets reduced hours to provide time for

⁵⁶ Population estimates based on ACS data. Margin of error = .1%.

⁵⁷ The larger percentage of urban residents living in LILA areas may in part be a reflection of the different definitions for urban and rural areas.

⁵⁸ Rahkovsky, Ilya et al. “Food Choices and Store Proximity.” ERR-195, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, September 2015.

⁵⁹ U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, “Access to Affordable and Nutritious Food: Measuring and Understanding Food Deserts and Their Consequences.”

⁶⁰ This decline is statistically significant at $p < .01$.

⁶¹ As with any categorization based on a threshold, changes in a tract’s designation as low income could result from relatively small changes in poverty rate or median family income when those indicators are near the threshold, and may not reflect sizeable changes in tract residents’ poverty or income.

⁶² OPPAGA analysis of Florida Department of Revenue and USDA SNAP Retailer locator data. Appendix D describes relevant retailer data notes.

⁶³ The number of establishments is from U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data on establishments by industry, first quarter.

⁶⁴ OPPAGA analysis of USDA SNAP retailer locator data including SNAP retailers active in June 2015 and March 2021. These are approximate counts and in some instances, totals counts may include retailers more than once.

⁶⁵ The fact that retailers accept SNAP does not necessarily mean that they sell healthy food. Although there are minimum qualifications about the variety and quantity of healthy food retailers must carry to be SNAP qualified, SNAP retailers include convenience and dollar stores. Appendix D describes store categorization, including healthy food retailers.

⁶⁶ Coleman-Jensen, Alisha. “Household Food Security in the United States in 2020.” U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, September 2021.

cleaning and restocking. Many supermarkets also restricted shopping during certain hours to higher risk groups.⁶⁷

In response to increased food insecurity for households with children and limitations to in-person shopping during the pandemic, the federal government added flexibility to SNAP benefits. For example, USDA expanded SNAP participants' ability to use EBT benefits for online grocery shopping. However, delivery fees and low access to digital technology may limit some SNAP recipients' ability to take advantage of online grocery shopping. Further, one study on pre-pandemic SNAP food delivery found that among the eight states participating in a 2018-19 pilot program in rural LILA areas, almost 70% of census tracts were outside of grocery delivery areas.⁶⁸ The federal government also gave states permission to waive some SNAP enrollment and recertification requirements during the pandemic, such as interviews for new SNAP participants. Additionally, the Pandemic-Electronic Benefit Transfer allows for supplemental benefits for children qualified for free or reduced-price school lunch and children in childcare centers.

Stakeholders noted barriers to accessing or buying healthy food and named negative health outcomes as a critical consequence for residents of LILA areas

OPPAGA interviewed 28 governmental and non-governmental stakeholders who have programs that seek to increase food access or healthy food consumption at the state, regional, county, city, and community levels. Most stakeholder groups have several goals, including

- creating food policy;
- lending money or giving grants to food initiatives;
- offering incentives for buying produce;
- providing or partnering with organizations that provide free or affordable food to communities in need;
- educating community residents about food and nutrition;
- promoting community and home gardening, urban agriculture, or farmers' markets;
- forming grocery co-ops;
- promoting the use of food insecurity screening tools or food-as-medicine initiatives in health care settings;
- administering USDA nutrition services or assisting with eligibility determination for services;
- job training in food production or distribution; and
- providing employment in food production for youth.⁶⁹

These stakeholders reported barriers to accessing food in the current Florida food environment, including barriers to eating healthy food when it is accessible, barriers to creating a better food environment and reasons behind low demand for healthy food.

⁶⁷ Kassraie, Aaron. "Some Markets Continue Senior Hours Due to Coronavirus." AARP. Accessed September 3, 2021. <https://www.aarp.org/home-family/your-home/info-2020/coronavirus-supermarkets.html>.

⁶⁸ Brandt, Eric J. et al. "Availability of Grocery Delivery to Food Deserts in States Participating in the Online Purchase Pilot." *Journal of the American Medical Association* Network Open 2, no. 12 (December 2, 2019): e1916444, <https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2019.16444>.

⁶⁹ Representatives of the food retail industry did not agree to be interviewed by OPPAGA for this research.

Stakeholders reported that even when it is accessible, residents may not seek healthy food for several reasons.⁷⁰ Twelve stakeholders reported that community members may not have the knowledge about or interest in available healthy food, whether it is because the food is not culturally appropriate or familiar or because people do not know how to grow or prepare food or have a place to grow or prepare it. Many of these stakeholders noted the importance of giving community members in LILA areas a voice about the types of stores and offerings within stores, the importance of education about nutrition and cooking, and the need to provide immediately-consumable protein to people who do not have a place to cook it.

Moreover, ten stakeholders reported that cost was an important barrier to accessing healthy food. They said that people cannot afford healthy food, food costs in general have increased, and eligible residents may not be accessing SNAP and WIC to help afford healthy food.

A few stakeholders reported that they thought that retailers' lack of accommodation to community member schedules and need for dependability created barriers to healthy food access, such as when food pantry hours end before a workday is complete and popup markets that are only sporadic and seasonal. Other comments included concerns about cleanliness and safety of local stores and quality of local food offerings.

Stakeholders reported that lack of transportation to grocery retailers is a barrier to food access. Seventeen stakeholders cited transportation as an issue for accessing healthy food. Some said that many residents do not have a vehicle and noted that even when residents have a vehicle, it might have mechanical issues or gas or insurance is unaffordable. For those who do not have a vehicle, it may be easier to walk to fast food stores rather than healthy food retailers. Other residents may take a cab or bus to a grocery store or supermarket, which takes longer and is more difficult or stressful because of adverse weather or children in tow. Other stakeholders said that there are inadequate buses for many areas where low-income people live, including a lack of routes or no direct routes to grocery stores.

Eleven respondents said that physical access to grocery retailers was a barrier to healthy food or food in general. Comments in this category included that while there are grocery retail stores, it was difficult to access *healthy* food, such as in corner stores. Further, there might be no or inadequate access to grocery retailers where customers can access a variety of food to do weekly shopping or to a farmers' market that accepts SNAP.

Stakeholders reported that there are barriers to creating a better food environment, such as retail economics, low demand, and market domination by large grocery retailers. Nine respondents thought that aspects of retail economics made it difficult for smaller stores, local retail markets, and corner stores to profit from selling healthy food. Particular concerns included the following.

- Small profit margins of grocery stores overall give larger stores that can use economies of scale an advantage.

⁷⁰ In an interview study with 121 SNAP participants from 12 states, the USDA found that individual barriers to eating a healthy diet—like lack of knowledge about healthy eating, lack of cooking skills, lack of kitchen equipment, lack of time for cooking, and lack of time to acquire foods—were not found in a large proportion of the sample, with the most common barrier found in only 15% of the sample. In contrast, almost a third of the sample faced a lack of affordable foods that are part of a healthy diet, followed by one quarter facing a lack of transportation. See Gearing, Maeve et al. "Barriers that Constrain the Adequacy of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Allotments: In-depth Interview Findings." Westat, Inc. for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service. June 2021. www.fns.usda.gov/research-and-analysis.

- LILA areas are not economically feasible for a supermarket, because they do not attract higher-income customers, or, for rural areas, are not dense enough to sustain a food outlet.
- Charitable food in LILA areas competes with struggling local food retailers such as farmers' markets.)
- Market dominance by Publix and Walmart.⁷¹
- Corner stores in LILA areas are not willing to take risks on selling many perishable products because such products are not profitable.

The demand side of retail, including that residents may not want healthy food when it is available, further makes it difficult for food retailers to profit from selling healthy food.

Stakeholders most frequently noted that a consequence of living in a LILA area is negative health outcomes, including chronic disease, mental health concerns, and, for infants, failure to thrive. Three stakeholders mentioned negative educational outcomes for children who lived in low-income, low-access areas. Others reported a negative community economic impact, including revenue lost to other areas that have supermarkets.

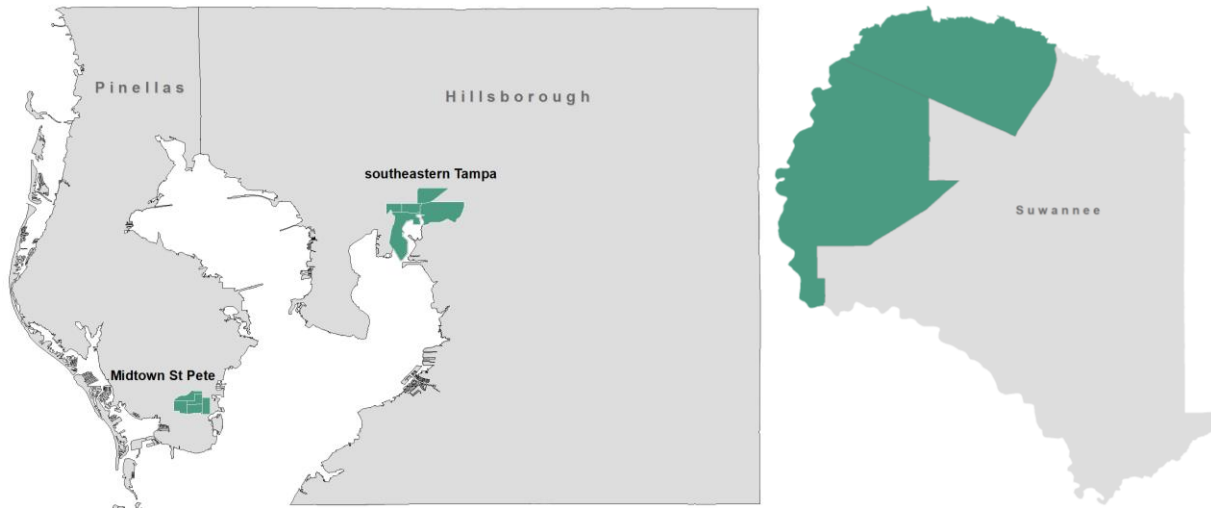
County case study: Residents face transportation and income barriers to accessing healthy food but find ways to improve their food environment through local initiatives

The Legislature directed OPPAGA to select and conduct a case study of several Gulf Coast and Northeast Florida counties, including rural and urban counties. The selected counties were Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee. The case studies also present details about one community in each county that is low-income and low-access: southeastern Tampa in Hillsborough, Midtown St. Petersburg in Pinellas, and the two LILA census tracts in Suwannee. (See Exhibit 4.) (See Appendix E for food insecurity rates, demographic and economic indicators, access to care and health status indicators, and diet-related health outcomes indicators for each county.)

⁷¹ In 2014, the Florida Community Loan Fund commissioned a market structure analysis of Florida. The analysis found that Florida's major and minor metro areas are overwhelmingly and unusually dominated by large existing grocery store industry players that control the majority share of local consumer markets, making it difficult for others to compete, especially smaller grocers and new entrants to the marketplace. A recent trade article reports that the two retailers still dominate the Florida market: for the first quarter of 2020, in South, Central, and North Florida, Publix's share of the market is 60.2%, 52.9%, and 46.6%, respectively, followed by Walmart with a 12.54%, 18.9%, and 20% share, respectively.

Exhibit 4

Focus LILA Areas Are Southeastern Tampa in Hillsborough County, Midtown St. Petersburg in Pinellas County, and Northwestern Suwannee County



Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* data.

Of the 28 stakeholders we interviewed, 20 were community food advocates, some who were area residents, who had initiatives that served these three areas. We visited each site and its surrounding areas to see firsthand the food environment, including examining some convenience stores and other food retailers and touring community gardens and urban farms.

For each county and community, we present the social and demographic context; features of the food environment; barriers to healthy food access; and local efforts to change the food environment. (See Appendix E for profiles that present county context, including food insecurity rates, demographic and economic indicators, access to care and health status indicators, and diet-related health outcomes.)

Hillsborough County: Unhealthy food is prevalent and limited public transit creates barriers to accessing healthy food

Context: Compared to the state as a whole, Hillsborough County has a similar percentage of residents living in a LILA census tract

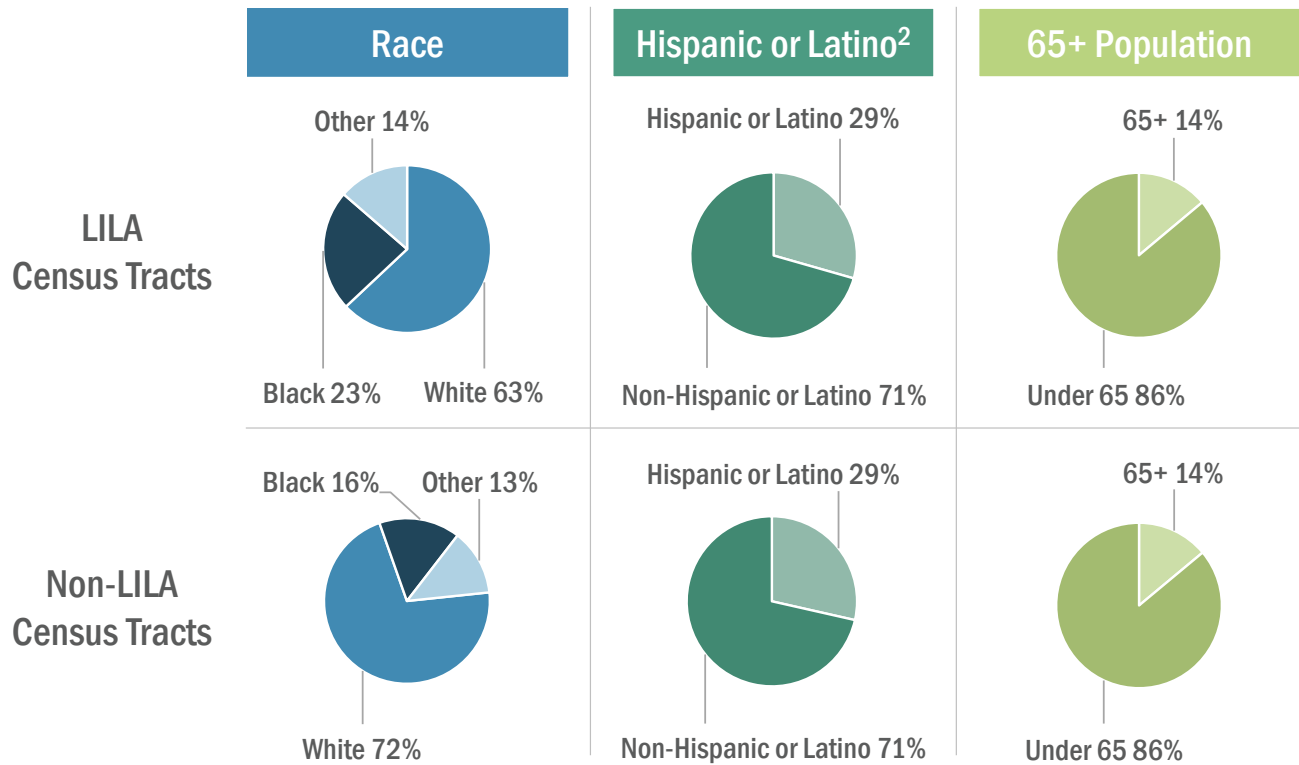
In Hillsborough County, approximately 13.8% of the population lives in LILA tracts, similar to the statewide figure of 13.5%.⁷² LILA census tract residents have a higher percentage of Black residents than non-LILA census tracts: 23% of all LILA tract residents are Black compared to 16% of residents in non-LILA tracts. Other demographic characteristics—percentage Hispanic or Latino and percentage seniors—are similar to non-LILA tracts.⁷³ (See Exhibit 5.)

⁷² The margin of error for Hillsborough is .3%. All descriptions of LILA census tract designation, including low vehicle access tracts, are based on OPPAGA analysis of populated census tracts from the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*.

⁷³ Percentages are estimates based on sample data and the margin of error for the estimates ranges from .2% to 1.6%.

Exhibit 5

Hillsborough County LILA Tracts Have a Higher Percentage of Black Residents Than Non-LILA Tracts; Other Demographic Groups Have Similar Representation¹



¹Percentages are estimates based on sample data with 95% margin of error that ranges from .2% to 1.6%. Percentages may not add to 100 as a result of rounding.

²People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity may fit any race category.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and 2014-19 American Community Survey data.

Southeastern Tampa has census tracts with high minority populations and considerable poverty. The LILA area in southeastern Tampa has both historic and industrial zones; one residential area is separated from other parts of the city by a major highway. The City of Tampa contains 96 census tracts, 13 of which are LILA tracts. Ten of Tampa’s 13 LILA tracts are East of I-275, and 5 of those are in the southeastern section of the city, near downtown. Parts of this LILA area are heavily industrial, yet nearly 11,000 Tampa residents live in the five southeastern census tracts. This area includes Ybor City, a historic district in Tampa zoned to preserve historical Tampa and to encourage economic development. The southernmost tracts in this area are heavily industrial, and a highway separates the tracts from other parts of the city.

This LILA area is disproportionately comprised of minority residents and has high poverty rates. Two of the census tracts in this area have a very high percentage of Black residents: 57% and 65%, respectively. Another tract in this area is 67% Hispanic or Latino. LILA tracts are low income by definition, but the extent of economic disadvantage varies across areas. In these five census tracts, more than 30% of residents are in poverty, and median annual family incomes range from \$28,800 to \$41,000. (See Exhibit 6.)

Exhibit 6

Southeastern Tampa LILA Tracts Have High Minority Populations and High Poverty Rates¹

| | Tract 36 | Tract 37 | Tract 38 | Tract 39 | Tract 53.02 |
|------------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|-----------------|-------------|
| Population, 2019 | 4,924 | 880 | 1,040 | 2,193 | 1,891 |
| Demographic Groups | | | | | |
| Percentage Black | 65% | 25% | 57% | 38% | 7% |
| Percentage Hispanic or Latino | 21% | 32% | 12% | 26% | 67% |
| Percentage 65+ | 15% | 13% | 12% | 12% | 12% |
| Poverty | | | | | |
| Poverty Rate, 2018 | 40% | 30% | 32% | 44% | 31% |
| Median Family Income, 2018 | \$32,300 | \$28,800 | \$41,400 | -- ² | \$35,200 |
| Household SNAP Participation, 2019 | 43% | 51% | 24% | 34% | 26% |

¹All figures are estimates based on American Community Survey (ACS) sample data; the margin of error varies by estimate and differences in tract estimates may not be statistically significant. Population estimates, including minority representation, are based on 2014-19 data. Poverty rates and median family income for 2018 are included in the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*. OPPAGA updated Household SNAP participation using 2014-19 ACS data.

²Median family income for this tract was not reported in the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*.

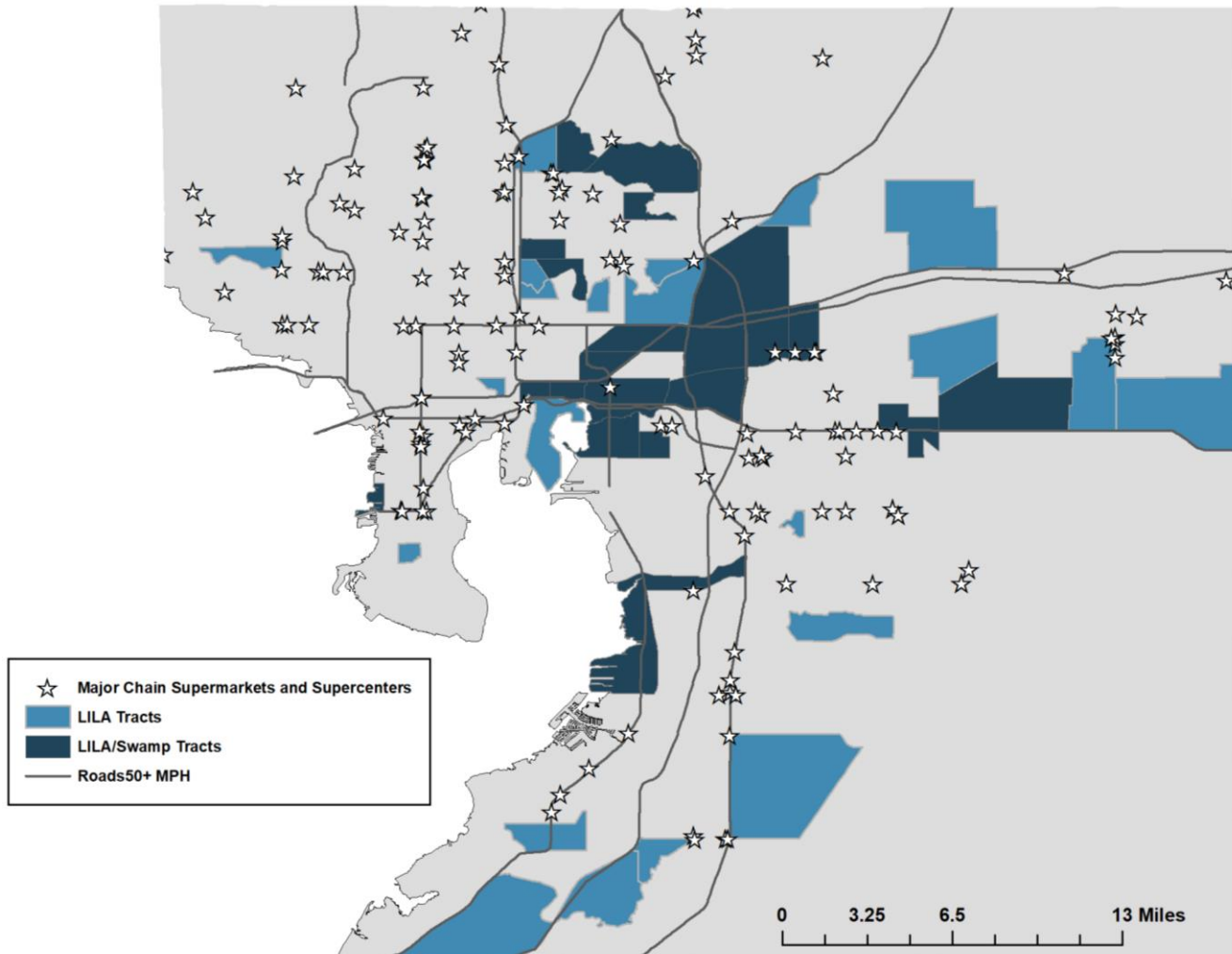
Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and 2014-19 American Community Survey data.

Food environment: LILA areas in Hillsborough County are concentrated east of I-275; southeastern Tampa LILA residents have poor transportation access

Forty-five of the county's 314 populated census tracts are LILA, a net gain of two LILA tracts since 2015. LILA census tracts in Hillsborough County generally have few or no major chain supermarkets or supercenters, but do contain a larger share of all convenience and dollar stores in the county. About half of the county's LILA tracts are also food swamps, meaning the ratio of unhealthy to healthy food retailers is 5:1 or greater. (See Exhibit 7.)

Exhibit 7

In Hillsborough, Few Large Stores Are In LILA and LILA/Swamp Tracts, Though Several Are Adjacent to the Tracts



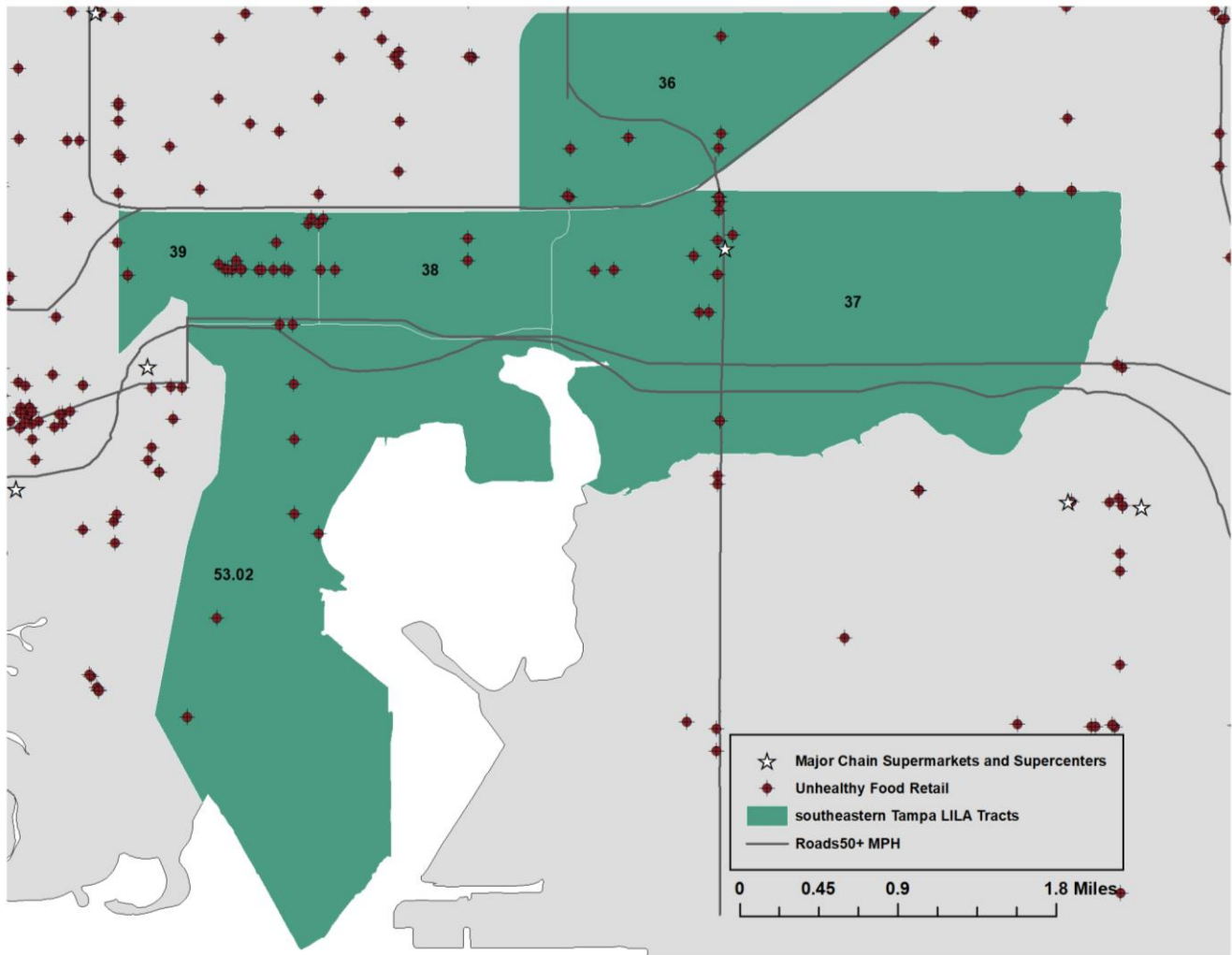
Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, Department of Revenue, and USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data.

Southeastern Tampa LILA residents have low vehicle access and a high number of unhealthy food retailers.⁷⁴ The five southeastern Tampa LILA tracts have 75 food retailers, 71% of which are fast food restaurants or convenience stores. Only one major chain supermarket exists within these seven tracts: a Save-A-Lot. Four of the five LILA census tracts in this area are also food swamps. (See Exhibit 8.)

⁷⁴ According to the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, a census tract has low vehicle access when more than 100 households in the tract report having no vehicle available and are more than a half mile from the nearest supermarket.

Exhibit 8

Only One Southeastern Tampa Major Supermarket Is In a LILA Tract, Though Several Major Stores Are Adjacent to the Tract



Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, Department of Revenue, and USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data.

The southernmost tract in this area is primarily industrial, but includes a residential area known as Palmetto Beach, isolated by McKay Bay to the south, a major toll road to the north, and a major street to the southwest, separating it from the industrial zone to the south. It is isolated by geography, has no major chain grocery stores, and the residents have high poverty and low vehicle access. The easternmost tract is also primarily industrial. It is dominated by the CSX rail yard and includes large recycling and used auto parts operations, a warehouse district, as well as the Hillsborough County Sheriff's Office and county jail.

Stakeholders reported that the Tampa area food environment improved in recent years, though problems persist. As a subset of the 28 state stakeholders, OPPAGA interviewed 7 Hillsborough County stakeholders with initiatives located in the county: one county health organization, one university extension office, one health care system, one regional charitable food organization, one community gardening organization, and two urban farms.

Stakeholders reported that new supermarkets and supercenters improved access to healthy foods, and many LILA residents are able to access healthy food sources in adjacent neighborhoods. While there

are seven farmers' markets in Hillsborough, LILA areas in southeastern Tampa still have no farmers' markets that sell fresh produce, but one farmers' market that accepts SNAP-EBT is less than .25 miles from the westernmost southeastern Tampa LILA tract. However, stakeholders raised concerns that some accessible sources of healthy food may not adequately accommodate resident needs. For example, some food pantries in the Tampa area have limited hours and long wait times.

Barriers: Tampa community stakeholders reported that healthy food is unaffordable and unhealthy food is plentiful in an area with limited transportation options

For some Tampa residents, healthy food is difficult to afford, and unhealthy food options provide an inexpensive substitute. A 2016 study found that food prices were substantially higher in Hillsborough County LILA tracts as compared to prices in Hillsborough non-LILA tracts.^{75,76,77} According to Hillsborough County stakeholders, these high prices discourage healthy eating because inexpensive, high-fat food is prevalent in Tampa, particularly in low-income areas.

Local stakeholders identified additional demand-side barriers to healthy eating. According to one stakeholder, some residents may not have experience preparing healthy meals. Another barrier to healthy eating is that some residents lack the necessary resources, such as a place to cook. Further, the Tampa area is culturally diverse, and some residents may have difficulty accessing foods that they consider culturally acceptable.

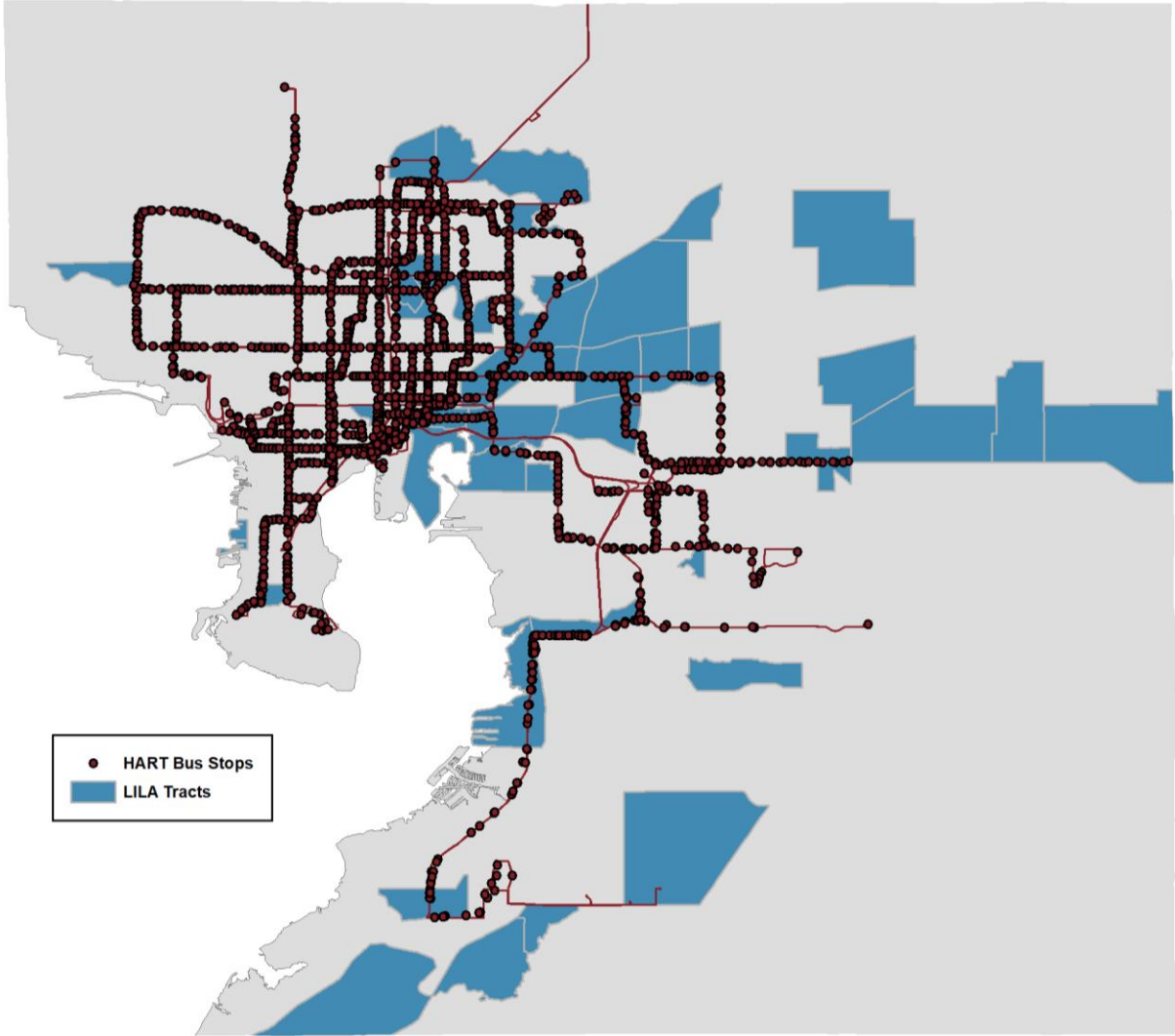
Transportation options are limited, particularly in LILA areas. Low vehicle access and limited public transportation creates difficulties for many residents in Hillsborough's LILA tracts. Eighteen of Hillsborough's 45 LILA tracts have low vehicle access, including 4 of the 5 tracts in the southeastern Tampa LILA area. The Tampa area has limited public transportation infrastructure, and bus coverage in the southeastern Tampa LILA area varies by tract from limited to poor. Sixteen of Hillsborough's 45 LILA tracts do not have a bus stop within tract boundaries. These tracts are primarily in the eastern and southern parts of the county, and many are adjacent to Hillsborough's undeveloped tracts. (See Exhibit 9.)

⁷⁵ Wright, Lauri et al. "Accessibility and Affordability of Healthy Foods in Food Deserts in Florida: Policy and Practice Implications." 15 (2018): 7.

⁷⁶ Borja, Karla et al., "Availability of Affordable Healthy Food in Hillsborough County, Florida." *Journal of Public Affairs* 19, no. 3 (August 2019): N.PAG-N.PAG, <https://doi.org/10.1002/pa.1866>.)

⁷⁷ In 2016, researchers surveyed one large grocery store and two small convenience stores per census tract in several Hillsborough and Duval County LILA census tracts and compared these with nine large grocery stores from non-LILA tracts in the same counties. They found that food prices were 35.7% higher in LILA census tract stores than in non-LILA tract stores, and the food groups which were most expensive in the LILA census tracts were frozen vegetables, breads, meats, and fresh fruit. See Wright, Lauri et al. 2018. Another 2016 food price survey in Hillsborough County found that healthy food prices differed based on type of store but not based on neighborhood income levels. See Borja and Dieringer, 2018. Taken together, these studies may indicate that price differences in Hillsborough LILA areas are primarily due to the lack of large grocery stores, which often sell healthy food at lower prices.

Exhibit 9
Many Hillsborough LILA Tracts Have Limited to No Public Bus Service

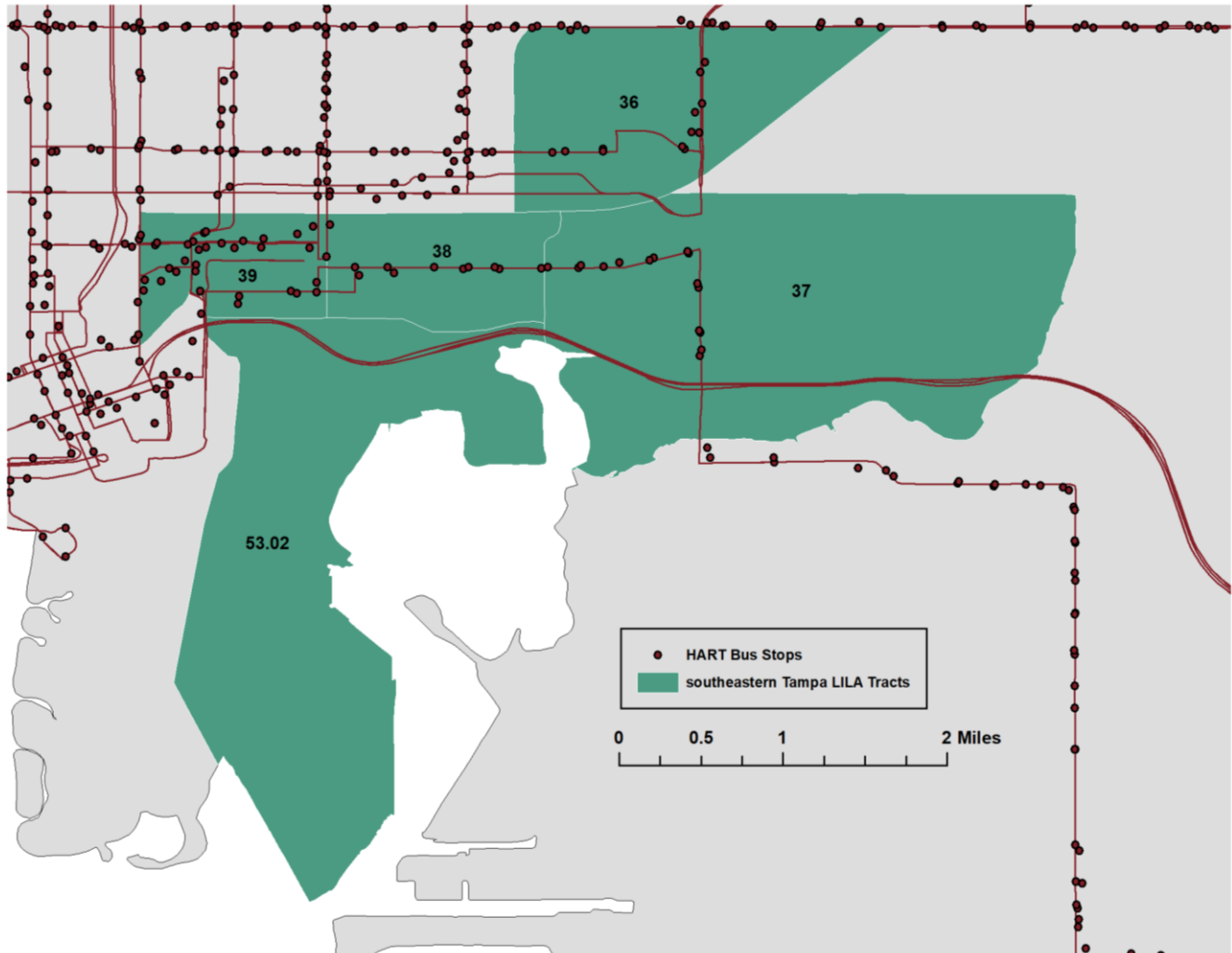


Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and Hillsborough Area Transit Authority data.

Major chain supermarkets and supercenters are moderately accessible to public bus service in Hillsborough County. Ninety-nine of the 143 chain supermarkets and supercenters in Hillsborough have a bus stop within a quarter mile distance of the store. The Palmetto Beach area in southeastern Tampa is particularly isolated from healthy food options; residents in the tract have low vehicle access, no public bus stops, and no major chain grocery stores within neighborhood boundaries. (See Exhibit 10.)

Exhibit 10

Southeastern Tampa LILA Tracts Have Limited to No Public Bus Service



Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and Hillsborough Area Transit Authority data.

Consistent with these findings, several stakeholders reported that transportation issues presented a barrier to accessing healthy food. For example, some residents may have to take multiple buses to reach a grocery store. Transportation difficulties may be more acute for some residents outside the urban core. Residents in the more rural areas of southeastern Hillsborough County have no public transportation options, and would have to pay for personal transportation to a grocery store. In addition to reducing access to healthy food, stakeholders noted that the lack of public transportation causes stress and creates financial burdens for low-income residents.

HILLSBOROUGH LILA AREA RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

Alice,* a retiree, lives in a LILA tract in Northeast Tampa. While there are no large grocery stores in her neighborhood, there are grocery stores around the periphery of the neighborhood that she can drive to without much difficulty. However, residents in her neighborhood without vehicle access have more limited options, and she often sees people walking to nearby dollar stores and gas stations.

Alice is an active gardener. She first obtained a front yard barrel garden through the Coalition of Community Gardens, and she attended several of the coalition's educational events, including classes on gardening and healthy food preparation. She later planted a raised bed in her backyard, where she grows a variety of vegetables, including zucchini, okra, tomatoes, and onions.

As Alice talked about her garden with her neighbors, other members of the community also became interested in gardening. Alice says that gardens spread "like wildfire" through the community. Her neighbors across the street put in a garden, as did the local school. During the pandemic, Alice says that gardening has provided a safe way to stay active and help people in the community feel more connected to each other.

*OPPAGA modified interview respondents' personal information to protect their confidentiality.

Local efforts: Public and private entities have initiated food access efforts in Hillsborough, but funding is limited

Public and private organizations have taken steps to improve food access in Hillsborough County. In 2019, Hillsborough established a Food Systems Program Coordinator position in county government. The coordinator acts as a liaison between grassroots food programs and funders or partners, including by mapping and convening stakeholders and identifying and applying for funding opportunities. While some counties in other states have created similar positions, the coordinator noted that the position may be the first of its kind in Florida.

Health care providers have also incorporated food access initiatives into efforts to address chronic health problems. Hospitals in the BayCare regional health system and the county health department screen patients for food insecurity and refer patients to community resources. The county health department employs two or three staff who help food-insecure individuals apply for food programs, access charitable food, and manage other social determinants of health, such as housing. BayCare recently completed its first food-as-medicine accelerator project, which provides medically tailored meals for high-risk patients, and plans to expand the effort into a pilot program designed for food-insecure, medically fragile populations.

Charitable food organizations operate a wide range of services in Hillsborough County. Feeding Tampa Bay partners with several food pantries, including a food pantry in southeastern Tampa, and operates Trinity Cafe, a free, full-service restaurant. Feeding Tampa Bay also has grocery distribution programs, nutrition education programs, and programs that combine food access and economic development, such as FRESHforce and On the Go programs. FRESHforce provides workforce development and on-the-job training to individuals with barriers to employment, who, as part of that training, assist Feeding Tampa Bay's programs. On the Go is Feeding Tampa Bay's mobile grocery store, and sales are used to help purchase groceries for families in need. The Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger also has several

programs, including Meals on Wheels for Kids, which includes southeastern Tampa and areas outside the urban core. The Tampa Metropolitan Area YMCA operates a Veggie Van that distributes fruits and vegetables in LILA areas, using a donation-based payment system.

Hillsborough County also has 21 community gardens and seven farmer's markets, though they are mostly located outside LILA areas. Hillsborough also has several urban farms.⁷⁸ These initiatives vary in approach and communities served. For example, one for-profit initiative offers higher priced organic foods, while some non-profit initiatives aim to meet cultural food standards in specific neighborhoods. In response to feedback from community members, the Coalition of Community Gardens developed a program offering front-yard barrel gardens to residents. Many urban farms and community gardens in the area also include an educational component, and some of these organizations view community education as a central objective.

Hillsborough stakeholders identified several challenges to improving access to healthy food. The challenge most commonly mentioned was difficulty securing adequate program funding and resources. Stakeholders also noted that urban agriculture and community gardens often face high start-up costs, some of which are due to local government fees and regulatory requirements.⁷⁹

Pinellas County: Low access to healthy food is one of many problems in LILA areas

Context: Pinellas LILA census tract residents have a higher percentage of Black residents, as compared to the rest of the county

In Pinellas County, 9.4% of the population lives in one of the 20 LILA census tracts. LILA census tract residents have a higher percentage of Black residents than non-LILA census tracts: 32% of all LILA tract residents are Black compared to 8% of residents in non-LILA tracts. The percentage Hispanic or Latino is similar between LILA and non-LILA tracts. LILA tracts have a slightly lower share of seniors than non-LILA tracts in the county.⁸⁰ (See Exhibit 11.)

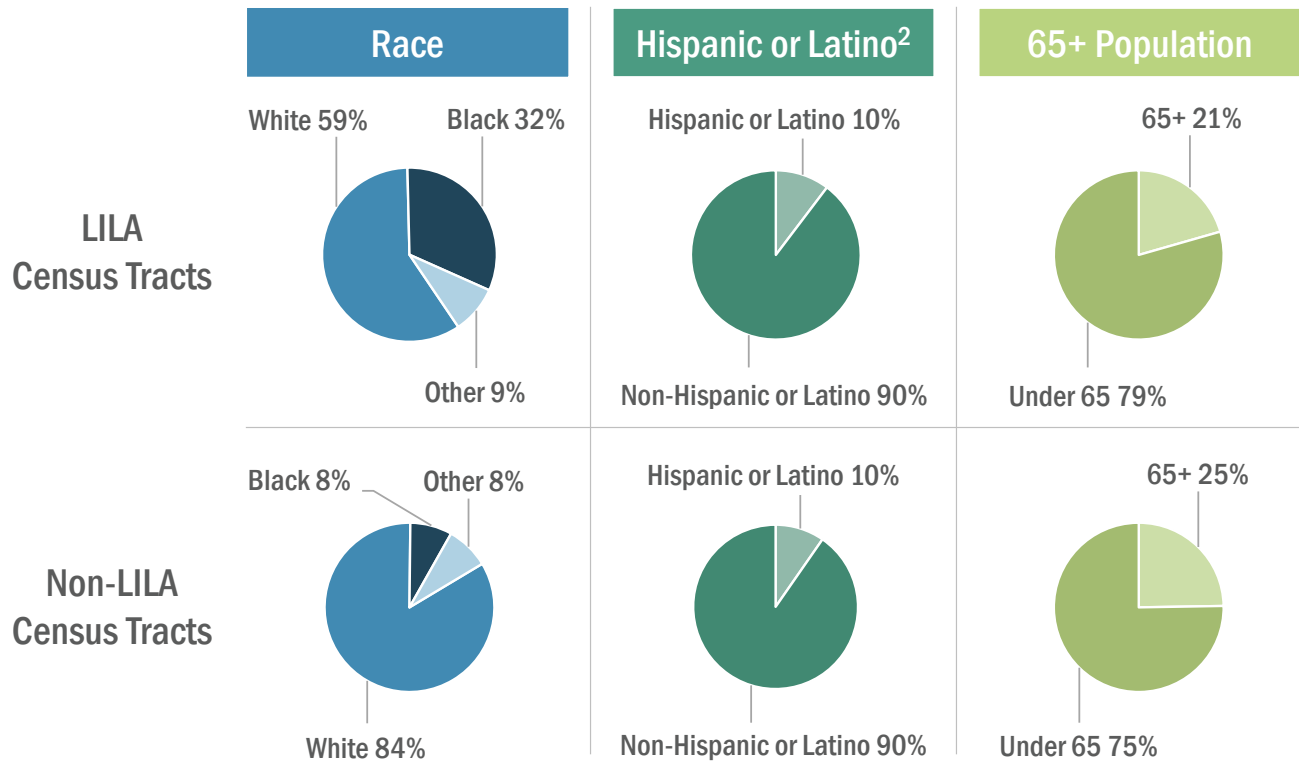
⁷⁸ At least two of Hillsborough's urban farms are also farmer's markets.

⁷⁹ Chapter 2021-115, *Laws of Florida*, authorized five urban agricultural pilot programs to regulate urban agriculture under certain conditions in order to determine the effectiveness and impact of the pilot projects on farming operations in the selected dense urbanized areas of the state.

⁸⁰ Percentages are estimates based on sample data and the margin of error for the estimates ranges from .3% to 2.5%.

Exhibit 11

Pinellas LILA Tracts Have a Higher Percentage of Black Residents Than Non-LILA tracts; LILA Tracts Have a Slightly Lower Senior Population¹



¹Percentages are estimates based on sample data with 95% margin of error that ranges from .3% to 2.5%.

²People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity may fit any race category.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and 2014-19 American Community Survey data.

The Midtown area of St. Petersburg has a very high percentage of Black residents, and poverty rates in the area are high. OPPAGA focused on Midtown for a more in-depth analysis of the Pinellas LILA census tracts. Nearly 17,000 Pinellas residents live in the five census tracts that make up the Midtown area.

Midtown’s census tracts range from 73% to 95% Black and 1% to 7% Hispanic or Latino. The over-65 population ranges from 8% to 16%. Midtown’s five census tracts range from an 18% to 57% poverty rate and a \$21,000 to \$46,400 median family income. (See Exhibit 12.)

Exhibit 12

Midtown St. Petersburg Is a Predominantly Black Area and Residents Have High Poverty¹

| | Tract 205 | Tract 206 | Tract 207 | Tract 212 | Tract 287 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Population, 2019 | 4,309 | 4,267 | 3,237 | 2,846 | 2,243 |
| Demographic Groups | | | | | |
| Percentage Black | 77% | 73% | 95% | 80% | 95% |
| Percentage Hispanic or Latino | 7% | 5% | 1% | 2% | 1% |
| Percentage 65+ | 14% | 12% | 16% | 14% | 8% |
| Poverty | | | | | |
| Poverty Rate, 2018 | 46% | 26% | 18% | 57% | 50% |
| Median Family Income, 2018 | \$26,800 | \$46,400 | \$45,100 | \$21,000 | \$28,100 |
| Household SNAP Participation, 2019 | 37% | 33% | 29% | 35% | 40% |

¹All figures are estimates based on American Community Survey sample data; the margin of error varies by estimate and differences in tract estimates may not be statistically significant. Population estimates, including minority representation, are based on 2014-19 ACS data. Poverty rates and median family income for 2018 are included in the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*. Household SNAP participation was updated using 2014-19 ACS data.

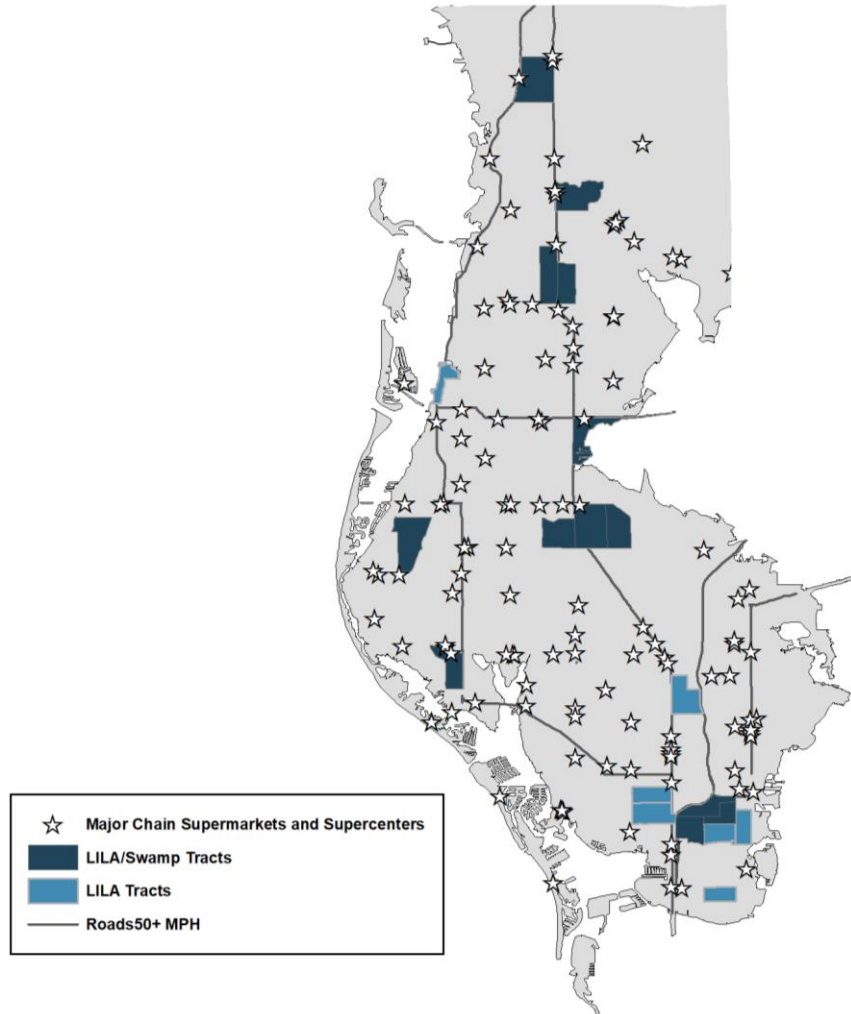
Source: OPPAGA analysis USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and 2014-19 American Community Survey data.

Food environment: Most Pinellas LILA tracts are also food swamps

Although the percentage of residents living in a LILA tract in Pinellas is lower than the statewide percentage, the county has seen a net gain of seven LILA tracts since 2015. Unhealthy food retailers are prevalent in Pinellas LILA tracts; the majority of the LILA census tracts are also food swamps. Only four major chain supermarkets and no supercenters are located in the LILA tracts in the county, while these areas boast over 120 convenience stores and fast food restaurants. Furthermore, 17% of all major dollar stores in Pinellas are located in LILA census tracts. (See Exhibit 13.)

Exhibit 13

LILA Census Tracts Are Dispersed Throughout the County and Most Are Food Swamps



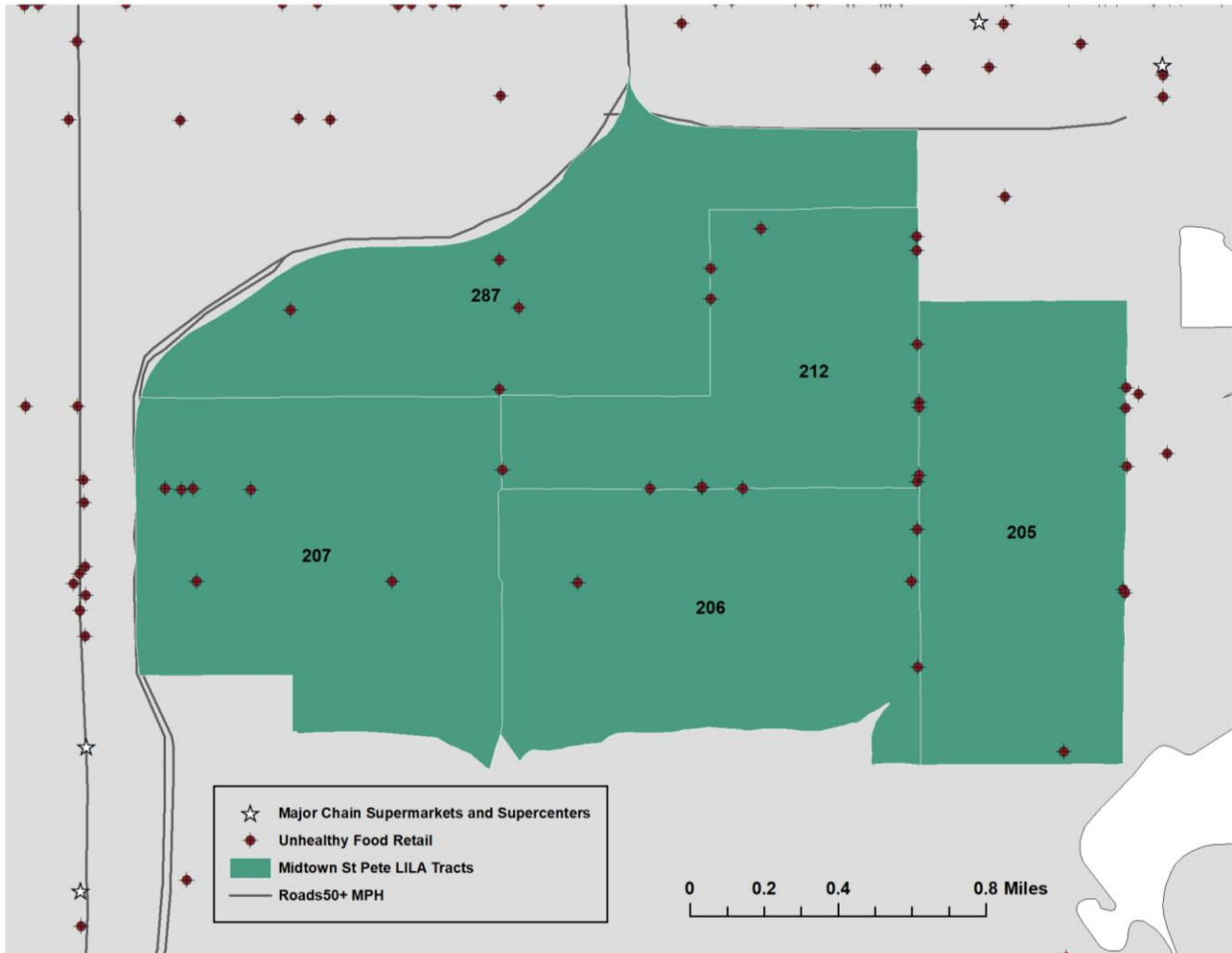
Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, Florida Department of Revenue, and USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data.

No major chain supermarkets or supercenters exist in the five Midtown St. Petersburg LILA census tracts. These tracts have 51 food retailers, 61% of which are fast-food restaurants and convenience stores. Six other stores appear to be small grocers.⁸¹ The area is home to five major dollar stores, including two Dollar Generals and two Family Dollar stores. The remaining stores include meat and seafood markets, specialty food retailers, and a general merchandise retailer. Three of the five LILA census tracts in Midtown are also food swamps. (See Exhibit 14.)

⁸¹ Although these have supermarket industry codes, they are not one of the major chain supermarkets or supercenters in Florida.

Exhibit 14

Midtown St. Petersburg Has Unhealthy Food Retail and No Major Supermarket Chain Retailers or Supercenters



Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, Florida Department of Revenue, and USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data.

Local Pinellas food systems initiatives like farmers' markets, community gardens, and urban agriculture can increase the accessibility of healthy food. Pinellas has five farmers' markets and nine community gardens. Two of the farmers' markets and two of the community gardens are in or adjacent to Midtown St. Petersburg.

Barriers: Pinellas stakeholders noted barriers to accessing or buying healthy food and creating a more healthy food environment

As a subset of the 28 state stakeholders, OPPAGA interviewed 9 Pinellas stakeholders with initiatives that are located in Pinellas County: one youth development farm; two community economic development initiatives, one of which includes a community garden; one county economic development organization; one city economic development organization; one city food policy council; one farmers' market; one regional charitable food organization; and one grocery cooperative.

In Midtown St. Petersburg, government officials and residents offered different perspectives on the difficulty in sustaining a supermarket in the area. In the mid-1990s, community organizing led to city officials trying to address the lack of services in the area, including supermarkets, a Post Office,

medical clinics, and other retail. In 2005, Tangerine Plaza in Midtown opened with Sweetbay supermarket as the anchor tenant, but the supermarket closed when the city tax credit expired and there was more competition from Walmart and Publix, which located one to two miles away. After the Sweetbay supermarket closed, the city recruited a Walmart Neighborhood Market into the plaza, but in 2017, it closed. One city official thought that the market was too saturated. According to a county official, Walmart reported that unless it could continue to get city incentives, it would rather pay rent on an abandoned store than try to sustain the Tangerine Plaza location through profits any longer. On the face of it, community demand was not enough to sustain a supermarket.⁸²

However, residents and community stakeholders reported that while the community wants a supermarket, they found Walmart deficient. Three Pinellas stakeholders said citizens reported that this Walmart offered expired or nearly-expired food or that it was not well managed or maintained. A city official reported that the retailer was estranged from the community, and according to another stakeholder, at a community meeting after Walmart closed, residents said that despite being upset about the loss of the retailer, they did not want Walmart to return. One stakeholder reported that while convenient for some items, the Midtown Walmart primarily sold food without nutritional value. It has now been four years since Midtown has had a supermarket.

Low vehicle access is a barrier to healthy food access in Pinellas, although bus service is an option. Fifty-six of Pinellas' 244 census tracts have low vehicle access, meaning more than 100 households in the tract report having no vehicle available and are more than a half mile from the nearest supermarket. In contrast, 80% of the LILA census tracts have residents with low vehicle access. All five of Midtown's census tracts are low-vehicle access.

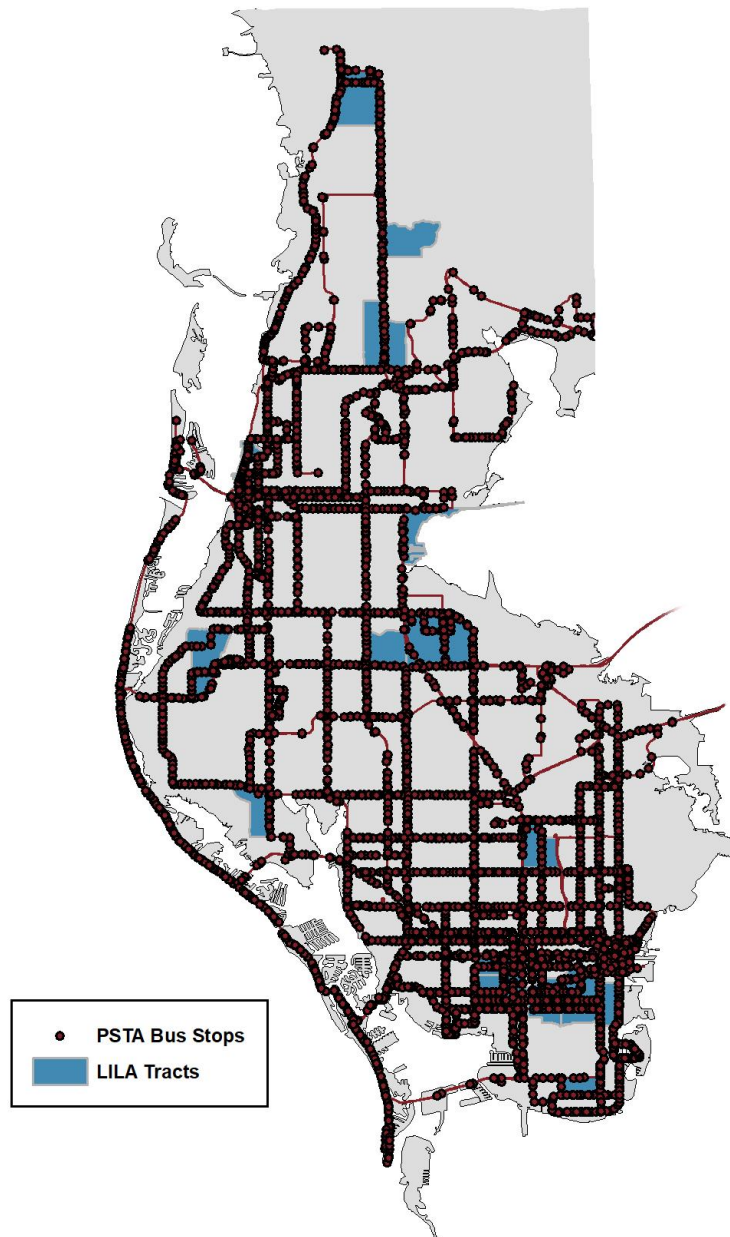
All LILA tracts in Pinellas, including Midtown, have bus stops within tract boundaries. GIS analysis shows the majority of LILA tract residents have bus stops for two or more bus routes within .5 miles of their residence.⁸³ (See Exhibit 15.)

⁸² According to a city official, Walmart has a lease to pay rent for the store through 2027, unless the city can negotiate breaking the lease for another vendor to take over the site.

⁸³ Pinellas only has one isolated LILA tract where residents could live more than .5 miles from a bus stop.

Exhibit 15

Most Pinellas LILA Tracts, Including Midtown St. Petersburg, Are Well-Served by Public Bus Service



Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority data.

Major chain supermarkets and supercenters are highly accessible to public bus service in Pinellas County. One-hundred twenty-one of the 124 chain supermarkets and supercenters in Pinellas have a bus stop within a quarter mile distance of the store.

Midtown stakeholders reported specific barriers involving access to food. For example, a stakeholder pointed out that the food pantry in downtown St. Petersburg is open only from 11:00 am to 2:00 pm, making it inconvenient for working people. It is also far for Midtown residents to access on foot. Stakeholders noted that meat markets are affordable and ubiquitous, but store quality and safety were concerns.

MIDTOWN LILA AREA RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

Residents described the meat markets as being places that many residents depend on, especially those with low incomes who do not have cars. They said that the meat markets carry a few fresh fruits and vegetables and are generally affordable. These meat markets have package deals on meat so that when people get their SNAP-EBT cards at the first of the month, they can purchase enough meat to last for two weeks. Some residents expressed concerns about the safety and cleanliness of the stores and the quality of the products, and described the meat markets as “really just convenience stores.”

Residents described the difficulty of getting food for people who do not have vehicles. At the first of the month when SNAP-EBT benefits are distributed, they can see people taking cabs to get food or taking the bus with a pushcart. Residents said that if you need to walk or bike to a supermarket, it would take 30 to 60 minutes to get there. Others described the bus system as slow and one resident pointed out that taking the bus entails waiting with groceries in the sun or rain. As one resident pointed out, fresh food has a short shelf life. As a result, the time and effort it takes to get to a grocery store could deter people from buying fresh food because buying it requires more frequent trips to the store.

Local efforts: Residents adapt to the food environment and city officials have taken steps to address food access issues in Midtown St. Petersburg; stakeholders reported resource limitations for community-driven efforts

Residents adapt by shopping at a few local stores that offer some fresh food options, such as Joe Brady’s Bait & Tackle Shop, with collards growing at the front of the building and eggs in the refrigerator, and at those that have few fresh options, like corner stores. Those with transportation travel outside the community to shop at Walmart, Publix, or Aldi. Those without transportation might take cabs or ride with a friend or on the bus.

After seeking proposals for redeveloping the abandoned Tangerine Plaza site, the South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Agency chose a local developer and began negotiations for a smaller footprint retail grocer called Taste of the Islands. An agency official said that the appraisal found that the community could sustain the smaller store.

The South St. Petersburg Community Redevelopment Agency is also funding the St. Pete Youth Farm, a youth development program and urban farm. In addition to the existing traditional urban farm, the St. Pete Youth Farm is collaborating with the University of South Florida to bring a hydroponic farm to the area with the goal of harvesting 150 pounds of produce monthly, with 70% sold to the community and 30% donated to a local nonprofit.

The city, along with the Florida Community Loan Fund, is also supporting The Isaiah Project, started by long-time community residents, which has renovated two properties, including an urban garden to provide fresh food to the community. The project plans to partner with a nearby hydroponic farm to bring produce to the community in shipping containers.

The City of St. Petersburg has recently taken several steps to increase access. In 2021, the city created several regulations including

- allowing residents to grow fruits and vegetable on their property and sell them to the public;

- eliminating the not-for-profit requirement for community gardens, extending the date of initial permit expirations, and lowering fees;
- eliminating the special exemption for commercial gardens and greenhouses that required a time-consuming public hearing; and
- expanding options for selling produce from vehicles and on vacant property and lowering fees for doing so.

The St. Petersburg Council also created a resolution declaring that food is a human right and establishing “a goal of eradicating food deserts in the city of St. Petersburg” and formed a Food Policy Council to address food insecurity in the city.

Just as LILA area challenges are complex and interrelated, OPPAGA found that many of Midtown’s initiatives to increase access to healthy food are multifaceted. For example, in addition to increasing access to healthy food, urban agriculture and grocery food cooperative initiatives also aim to improve the local economy, build the community, and educate community members on healthy eating.

One farmer’s market in Midtown accepts SNAP-EBT, and one new volunteer-driven food grocery co-op is educating people on cooperatives and trying to collect membership fees to secure community support.

Stakeholders who are trying to increase access to healthy food by establishing farmers’ markets describe obstacles that include having enough money, large start-up fees, needing vacant property on which to set up a farmers’ market, and the difficulty of marketing to consumers.

Suwannee County: Residents have limited access to food and high rates of disability and disease

Context: Compared to the state as a whole, Suwannee County has a higher percentage of residents who live in LILA census tracts, with seniors disproportionately impacted

Suwannee is a rural county with rates of disability, and diet-related health problems that are high relative to the state.⁸⁴ Two of Suwannee’s seven census tracts are LILA, and 25% of Suwannee’s population lives in those two census tracts.⁸⁵ Because Suwannee is a rural county, its census tracts cover larger geographic areas than the urban census tracts of southeastern Tampa and Midtown St. Petersburg, reflecting the county’s lower population density.

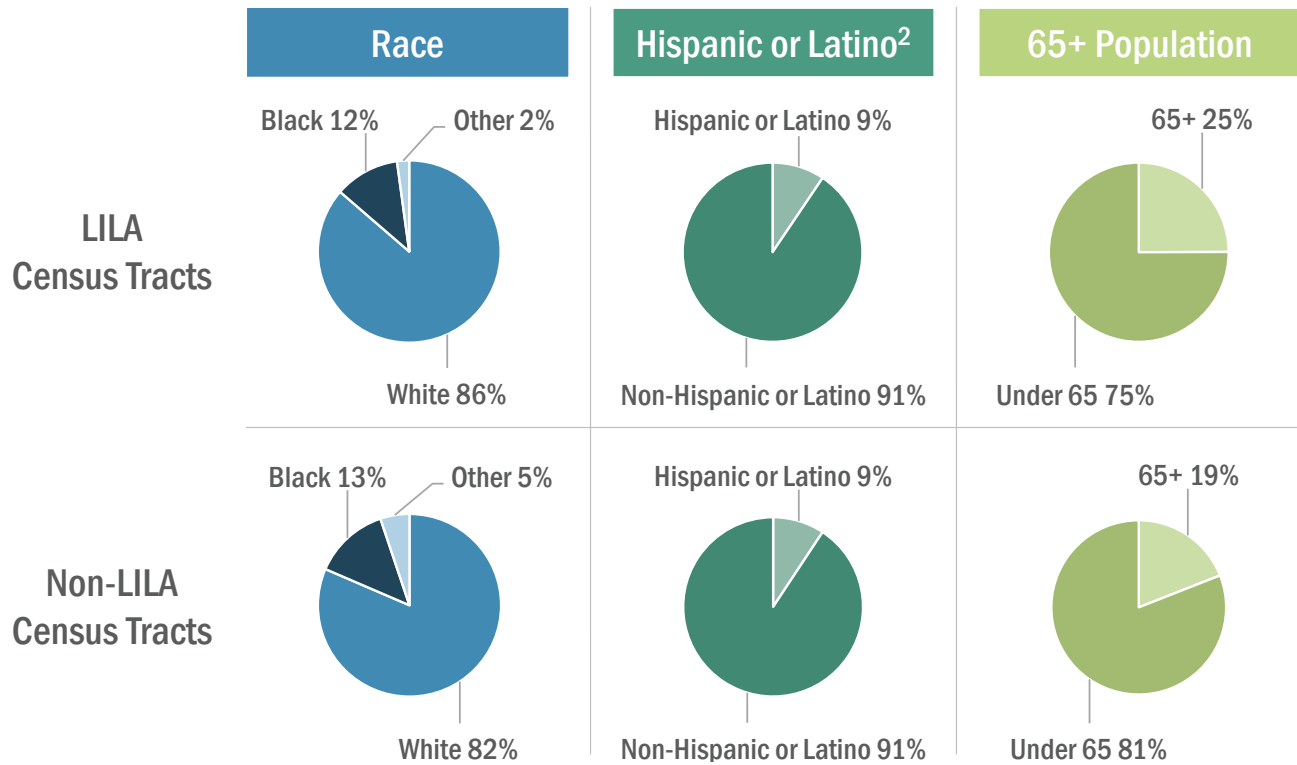
Demographically, the residents of the LILA area in Suwannee are somewhat similar to those in other areas of the county. The racial and ethnic composition of the LILA areas is very similar. However, the population of those 65 and older is larger in LILA areas: 25% of Suwannee residents in LILA census tracts are seniors compared with 19% in non-LILA tracts. (See Exhibit 16.)

⁸⁴ Numerous studies have found higher rates of morbidity and mortality among residents of rural areas compared to urban area residents. Further, studies have found that there is poorer diet quality among those in rural areas. See Harnack, Lisa et al. “Importance of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Rural America.” *American Journal of Public Health* 109, no. 12 (December 2019): 1641–45. <https://doi.org/10.2105/AJPH.2019.305359>.

⁸⁵ The 95% margin of error is 2.2%.

Exhibit 16

Suwannee LILA Tracts Have a Similar Percentage of Black Residents as Non-LILA Tracts; Other Demographic Groups Have Similar Representation



¹Percentages are estimates based on sample data with 95% margin of error that ranges from 1.6% to 3.9%.

²People of Hispanic or Latino ethnicity may fit any race category.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and 2014-19 American Community Survey data.

Looking at each census tract shows greater variation in demographic characteristics across the county. The LILA tract in the far north of Suwannee has the highest percentage of Black and Hispanic or Latino residents in the county. The LILA tract on the west side of the county is heavily White and nearly one-third of the residents are 65 or older. This tract includes Dowling Park, a retirement community in western Suwannee County. (See Exhibit 17.)

Exhibit 17

The Two Suwannee LILA Census Tracts Have Distinct Demographic Characteristics; One of Suwannee’s LILA Tracts Has Much Higher Poverty Rates Than the Other¹

| | Tract 702 | Tract 703.02 |
|------------------------------------|-----------|--------------|
| Population, 2019 | 4,524 | 6,559 |
| Demographic Groups | | |
| Percentage Black | 26% | 1% |
| Percentage Hispanic or Latino | 12% | 8% |
| Percentage 65+ | 18% | 30% |
| Poverty | | |
| Poverty Rate, 2018 | 18% | 26% |
| Median Family Income, 2018 | \$49,900 | \$55,400 |
| Household SNAP Participation, 2019 | 14% | 16% |

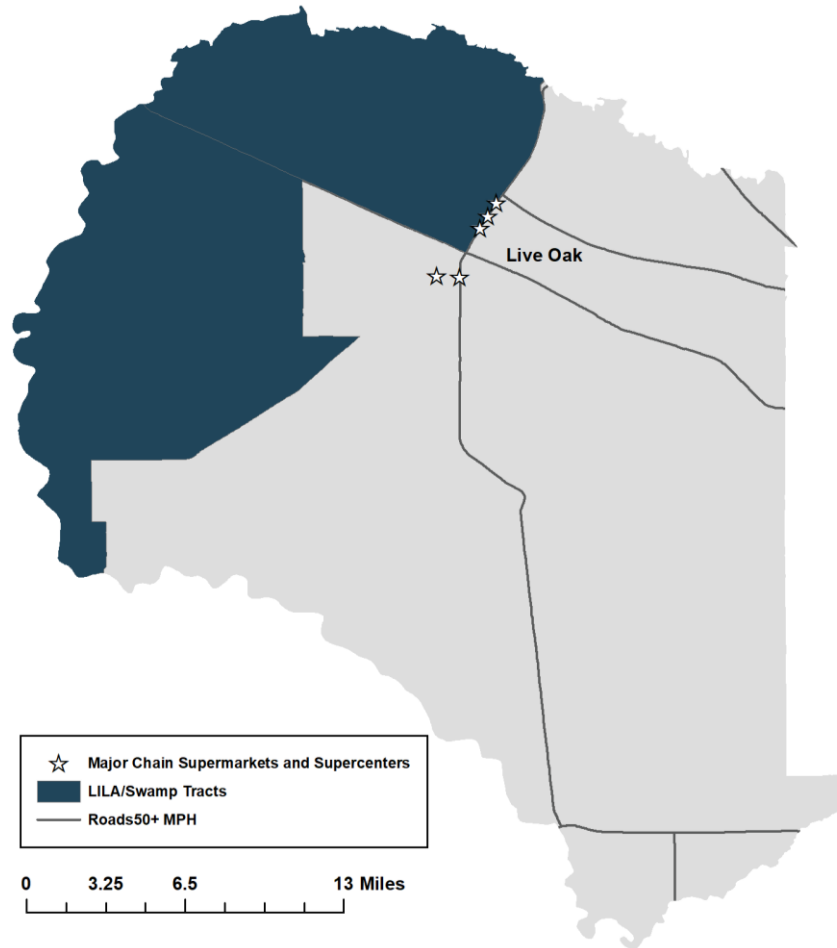
¹All figures are estimates based on American Community Survey sample data; the margin of error varies by estimate and differences in tract estimates may not be statistically significant. Population estimates, including minority representation, are based on 2014-19 ACS data. Poverty rates and median family income for 2018 are included in the USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*. Household SNAP participation was updated using 2014-19 ACS data.

Source: OPPAGA analysis of USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* and 2014-19 American Community Survey data.

Food environment: The two LILA census tracts in Suwannee have no supercenters and the two major chain supermarkets are near the tract boundary

The two LILA census tracts in Suwannee have no supercenters, and the two major chain supermarkets are near the tract boundary. Both LILA census tracts are also food swamps: 12 of the 21 food retail outlets are unhealthy.⁸⁶ The area also includes three supermarkets, two dollar stores, and one general merchandise store.⁸⁷ (See Exhibit 18.)

Exhibit 18 Suwannee County Supermarkets Are All Located in or Near Live Oak



Source: OPPAGA analysis based on USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, Florida Department of Revenue, and USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data.

Suwannee has one farmer's market but it does not have consistent hours or produce options and does not accept SNAP-EBT. OPPAGA interviewed six stakeholders with initiatives that are located in or touch Suwannee County, including one city economic development organization; one university extension office; two people from a charitable food organization; and several stakeholders from a public health organization. The university extension office reported that none of the eight rural counties in the area, including Suwannee County, has a farmers' market, with the exception of one that is a third-party food reseller. The area does not have the population density to support a market. OPPAGA learned that there is a new farmer's market in Live Oak, but it does not accept SNAP-EBT, and

⁸⁶ Six of the seven census tracts in Suwannee are food swamps according to OPPAGA's definition.

⁸⁷ OPPAGA analysis based on USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*, Florida Department of Revenue, and USDA Snap Retailer Locator data.

Suwannee stakeholders reported that the market has inconsistent vendors and irregular hours. Farmers sell in-season food from trucks, but residents cannot count on vendors participating on a regular basis.

Barriers: Suwannee County stakeholders reported that the largest barrier to healthy food is transportation

Suwannee stakeholders reported that limited food is available to Suwannee residents who do not have a car. In this rural county, there is no bus system.

SUWANEE LILA AREA RESIDENT EXPERIENCE

Geraldine,* a 68-year-old retiree, has lived in the northwest Suwannee LILA census tract on 10 acres of land in the country for over 30 years. When she moved to Suwannee, she worked in local government and then took care of her husband who had Alzheimer's. She survives with social security, a small pension from her husband, and a small amount of retirement savings.

Like many Suwannee residents, Geraldine has a health issue that makes getting nutritious food even more important, but finds that doing so on a limited income requires some ingenuity. As a diabetic, Geraldine would like to eat fewer carbohydrates and more meat because the protein stabilizes her blood sugar and contributes to good sleep and overall wellbeing. However, after losing her husband, she decided that she did not want to spend money on fueling her stove, so now can cook only minimally with an electric skillet. About three times a week, she eats fast food in Live Oak, the closest town that is a 15-minute drive away, because she can get a meal for less than \$5. She buys her groceries in Live Oak as well, at Walmart or Save-a-Lot, because these retailers are less expensive than others. However, she cannot afford meat and produce at these retailers, so, for these items, depends on the food pantry in the LILA tract where she lives, which is open twice a month. Available options at the pantry are limited to what was donated, so she finds it difficult to find enough fruit and "decent meat" and says that there is often an overabundance of the kinds of food she should avoid, such as packaged cake and cookies. She takes these offerings nonetheless, but tries to trade later for something that is more healthy.

Geraldine described the importance of having a car to get groceries in Suwannee County. Prior to purchasing a new car five years ago, she relied on a neighbor for rides to Walmart. Now she does her shopping when she volunteers in Live Oak four times a week. She said that people in her area are used to going to town frequently to get what they need and prioritize having a car. When volunteering at the food pantry, she sees three households sharing one dilapidated car, making it difficult to fit the pantry food in the car.

*OPPAGA modified interview respondents' personal information to protect their confidentiality.

Suwannee stakeholders also reported that barriers to eating healthy food in their area included that many people do not know how to cook and that healthy food sources, such as the small grocery retailer in a retirement community in the northwest LILA census tract, are expensive.

Local efforts: Stakeholders reported limited local interventions for residents in LILA areas

These stakeholders reported that residents go to a food pantry in the northeast LILA tract that is open twice a month and reported that it is so busy the police have to direct traffic. The retirement community in the northwest side of the county regularly buses its residents to shop in Live Oak. Additionally, Suwannee Valley Transit for Medicare and Medicaid populations provides transportation. There are several churches that, along with the local health department and community partners, provide charitable food on a regular basis in Suwannee. Stakeholders also noted that because of the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing, residents were not leaving home as often. Local faith-based organizations arranged two pop-up drive-through pantries in Live Oak. About 1,000 people showed up for the first one, and the pantry ran out of food.

OPTIONS FOR LEGISLATIVE CONSIDERATION

The food access policy landscape is complex. Federal programs address areas of need on a large scale through programs such as SNAP and WIC and provide funding for a variety of state and local initiatives. Local governments may influence food access through land use policies, public transportation services, and food access initiatives tailored to the local context. Private organizations such as health care providers and food banks may also implement programs to improve healthy food access.

Despite the breadth of efforts to improve access to healthy food, gaps remain. Stakeholders that OPPAGA interviewed identified a lack of resources as a significant challenge for efforts to improve food access, and several also suggested additional state investment to address food access issues.

States have a variety of options to improve access to healthy food. OPPAGA identified several considerations that may influence the effectiveness of food access initiatives and provides policy options.

Several considerations may influence the effectiveness of food access initiatives

Much like the food access policy landscape, food access initiatives are also complex. Food access initiatives often involve multiple connections among a variety of objectives, policy approaches, and community stakeholders. Understanding these connections may facilitate the design and implementation of state food access policies.

Food access policies may advance multiple policy objectives. Food access research focuses on diet and diet-related health, areas where policy interventions frequently have little to no measurable impact. However, food access policies may have objectives beyond improving diets, including saving low-income residents the time and money it takes to commute, giving residents more community pride, and attracting more businesses to the area. For instance, urban farms and community gardens often have objectives related to community development and education. State initiatives that address multiple policy objectives may maximize benefits for communities.

Food access problems may require multifaceted solutions. Some communities may face several barriers to food access, and in some cases, improving food access may require addressing each of these barriers. For example, encouraging a store to offer healthy options may do little to improve access if

residents lack adequate transportation options and the area surrounding the store is not walkable. Even in cases where a single initiative would improve access, a multifaceted approach may be more effective. For example, a new farmers' market may have a greater impact if accompanied by food education programs and financial incentives to purchase healthy food.

Communities have a variety of needs related to food access. Because accessibility needs differ for residents with and without vehicle access and for those with varying levels of mobility, different approaches may be required to address the needs of such groups. Community needs also go beyond physical access to healthy food. Effective food access policies must provide options that are affordable to the community. Providing low-cost, healthy food options may require tradeoffs in some food access programs; for example, it may be difficult to offer locally grown, organic produce at a price that is affordable for low-income residents. Ideally, available food would also be acceptable to residents in terms of quality and cultural appropriateness, and outlets would accommodate residents in terms of operating hours and other factors. For example, food pantries that are open weekends and offer after work hours on weekdays may better meet residents' needs. Requirements that proposals meet these criteria may help ensure that local initiatives meet resident needs.

The Legislature could consider several types of policy options for addressing food access

Develop or support food access planning

Develop state-level planning. State-level planning may help manage the complexity of food access policies by identifying clear objectives and policy priorities. Several states have implemented planning structures related to food systems and food access. For example, the Connecticut Legislature established a food policy council to develop, coordinate, and implement a food system policy in the state. Several states have also developed food systems planning documents. For example, the Minnesota Department of Health developed the Minnesota Food Charter in collaboration with other state agencies and organizations to guide food systems decisions in the state. Florida has taken an initial step in state-level planning through the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Food Security Advisory Committee. The committee includes several Florida stakeholders, and it is currently drafting a list of policy recommendations. Subsequent planning steps could include developing a comprehensive state food systems plan, establishing a framework for interagency and legislative coordination on food policy issues, and incorporating food access considerations into state agency strategic planning.

Support local planning. Florida could also consider improving food access planning at the local level by developing model policies and providing local governments with one-time technical or financial assistance to develop planning documents or continued assistance to support food planning coordination. A Florida Food Policy Council analysis of several Florida counties noted that county land use plans lack specific, actionable policies to directly address hunger and food security, and in an interview with OPPAGA, the council highlighted the possible benefits of a model land use policy for food systems. Some localities in Florida have taken initial steps toward food access planning. For example, Hillsborough County established a Food Systems Program Coordinator role to serve as a liaison for organizations working on food access and food security issues.

Build on existing programs

Expand highly effective programs. Florida could provide state funding to expand highly effective programs. Based on consistent findings across multiple studies, school-based food programs and nutrition incentive programs are two of the most effective types of programs at promoting healthy diets. The primary school-based food programs are federally funded. While gaps may exist, it is unclear to what extent state investment to address these gaps would be effective at improving access to healthy food and better diets.

Many states have established nutrition incentive programs, often with federal grant assistance. For example, over 25 states, including Alabama, North Carolina, and Texas, have Double Up Food Bucks programs that match SNAP dollars spent on fruits and vegetables. In Florida, the federal government funds a nutrition incentive program, Fresh Access Bucks, which is administered by Feeding Florida. The Fresh Access Bucks program increases the purchasing power of SNAP recipients to buy fresh fruits and vegetables at certain farmers' markets, produce stands, community-supported agriculture organizations, mobile markets, and community grocery outlets. As part of a pilot initiative, the program has expanded to include a small number of supermarkets, but further expansion would require additional funding. State investment to expand the retail pilot initiative may be an effective approach to promoting healthy diets, particularly if accompanied by increased federal funding.

Increase participation in existing programs. Policies that increase participation in existing food access programs may help increase the effectiveness of these programs. For example, Florida could encourage or require health care providers to screen patients to identify food insecurity and refer them to local resources, an approach already adopted by certain health care providers in the state. Increasing the number of retailers that accept SNAP and WIC may also increase the affordability of healthy foods and expand access to food in low-income areas.

Provide assistance for food program matching requirements. Some federal food programs require matching funds. For example, the Community Food Projects Competitive Grants Program, administered by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture, requires a dollar-for-dollar match. In Florida, some local governments and nongovernmental organizations may have difficulty meeting matching requirements for federal food programs. Providing state funds to help meet federal matching requirements may be a cost-efficient way for Florida to increase the number of food access and food security programs in the state.

Support targeted initiatives

Address root causes. Policy approaches that focus on broader systemic issues, such as poverty, address the underlying causes of low access to healthy food. Financial assistance programs and economic development programs in low-income areas may increase access to healthy food and food security. Florida has taken steps to address these underlying causes through, for example, the state's recent minimum wage increase. Additional investment in education, workforce development, and childcare assistance may also help expand access to food and reduce food insecurity.

Provide funding for local initiatives. Food access issues vary by location, and food access policies that address the community-specific causes of food access problems may be most effective. These causes may vary by community, possibly including demand-side factors such as consumer preferences and the price of healthy food relative to substitute goods, and supply side factors such as high wholesale produce prices for small retailers and lack of access to large supermarkets. Determining the local causes of food access problems may require in-depth analysis of local factors and substantial

community input. Some existing food access efforts incorporate community input. For example, some urban farms and community gardens have surveyed community residents to determine the types of foods residents are interested in acquiring and the types of educational programs that would be beneficial.

Local food access policy options include food systems initiatives, land use policies, government declarations, incentives for healthy food retailers, and charitable food programs. The options that are likely to be most effective may vary based on policy objective and local context. (See Exhibit 19.)

Exhibit 19

Each Type of Local Initiative Often Has Multiple Goals and Policy Considerations

| Type | Description | Typical Goals | Policy Considerations |
|---|--|---|---|
| Local Food Systems Initiatives | <p>Local food systems create an alternative to the existing food system through routing production and distribution of food in particular communities. They can include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Urban agriculture: city and suburban agriculture that takes the form of backyard, roof-top and balcony gardening, community gardening in vacant lots and parks, roadside urban fringe agriculture, and livestock grazing in open space • Farmers' markets: a common area where several farmers gather on a recurring basis to sell a variety of fresh fruits, vegetables and other farm products directly to consumers⁸⁸ • Farm to schools: bring local, healthy food to students by connecting local farmers with schools and by incorporating information about how food is grown into school curricula | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to healthy food • Support the local economy • Educate people about food and agriculture • Build community | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low- income populations may have limited money and transportation, which makes it more difficult to frequent farmers' markets for produce, or participate in a community garden • Big box stores can be less expensive and more convenient as a one-stop shop for all household needs • Local initiatives that are not started by local residents may not be supported by the community the initiatives are targeting, because the initiatives do not accommodate local food preferences or do not reflect the racial makeup of the community • May be difficult to sustain • Food produced from these local farming initiatives does not have a significant impact on community food security or dietary quality • Urban agricultural projects may not be supplying food to communities in which they are located • Urban agricultural projects require financial and political support and usually cannot survive on profits, particularly if they incorporate other social goals • Lack of long-term land tenure makes them vulnerable to redevelopment |
| Local Land Use Policy⁸⁹ | <p>Comprehensive plans</p> <p>Community redevelopment agency plans</p> | <p>Communicates a community's long-term goals and provides justification for land use codes, regulations, and ordinances</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addresses the unique needs of a community that experiences high rates of poverty and disinvestment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult and expensive • Requires public input and staff expertise, often requires consultants for technical analysis <p>Should be linked to a justification in the comprehensive plan</p> |

⁸⁸ USDA: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=77600>

⁸⁹ Most of the analysis in this section was taken from the Florida Food Policy Council Scan, a 2019 analysis of land use policies from six Florida counties for food access, security, and food recovery.

| Type | Description | Typical Goals | Policy Considerations |
|--|---|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Can use local food projects as low-investment, high impact strategies to spur economic development. | |
| | Land development regulations, land use codes, and ordinances, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> zoning to increase access to healthy food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase production of healthy food by reducing development costs of new fresh food markets, or expansion of existing ones Waive the requirement for a use permit to eliminate the otherwise mandatory public hearing process Allow a larger store than the zoning permits, since grocery stores are large-footprint businesses | Should be linked to a justification in the comprehensive plan |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> zoning to limit access to unhealthy food | Restrict the density and location of fast food restaurants, including around schools, subject them to higher levels of scrutiny, or limit drive-throughs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should be linked to a justification in the comprehensive plan May face opposition from local officials and community members |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> residential zoning | Ensure that developers build housing, and low-income housing in particular, in proximity to healthy food sources | Should be linked to a justification in the comprehensive plan |
| Government Declarations of Purpose | Food as a human right resolution | A rights-based approach holds government accountable for creating enabling environments that support access to food | |
| | Creating a local food policy council. Florida has a statewide council, and nine local councils | Evaluate how the food system is operating and develop recommendations on how to improve it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Requires time to get to know food system; one of the most common first steps is conducting a food systems assessment Councils need well-defined mission, goals, and organizational structure A diverse membership requires start-up time to build trust and effective leadership Needs government support to be effective, which could entail a city council resolution supporting it or providing funding, meeting places, or other support Staffing and funding may be a challenge |
| Expanding Healthy Grocery Retailers | Increasing supermarkets and smaller markets, including mobile markets, that carry healthy food through funding or incentives for grocers in underserved communities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increase access to healthy food Increase local economic development | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The community may not support the new food retailer, because it does not offer food they want or is too expensive Although a supermarket may have positive local economic impact, if the food retailer is national, profits do not go to local residents New food retailer may contribute to gentrification, making it unaffordable for local residents to stay in the area Market forces may create disincentives for new retailers and/or make new retailers unprofitable without continued incentives |

| Type | Description | Typical Goals | Policy Considerations |
|------------------------|---|--|--|
| | Increasing healthy food offered in existing stores by providing incentives | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to healthy food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Market forces may create disincentives for retailers and/or may make carrying healthy food unprofitable without continued incentives |
| | May include grocery food cooperatives, defined as a consumer-owned business that is managed and controlled by the people who use it | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to healthy food • Increase community identity and empowerment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grocery cooperatives require strong community support, especially financial support in the start-up phase. |
| Charitable food | Includes mobile and stationary food pantries, disaster food assistance, summer meal programs, backpack programs, and school pantry programs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to food • Food education • Economic and workforce development • Community empowerment | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community members sometimes do not have choice in food • Community members may feel uncomfortable accepting charitable food |
| Transportation | Improving public transportation services by adding bus lines, adding stops near grocery stores, increasing frequency and hours of service | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to healthy food, particularly for residents without access to private transportation • Increase safety and convenience of accessing healthy food • Reduce reliance on private vehicles and provide better transportation in general, beyond access to food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Food access is one of many goals of transportation networks, and public transportation routes may require tradeoffs among different destinations • High trip frequency may be required to make public transportation an attractive option for accessing food, particularly during non-peak usage times, such as weekends • May not be practical in low-density areas |
| | Targeted transportation to grocery stores, including shuttle services and ride-sharing partnerships and incentives | Increase access to healthy food, particularly for residents without access to private transportation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One ridesharing company has a food access program that offers rides to grocery stores at a reduced rate |
| | Improving the coverage, quality, and safety of sidewalks, adding pedestrian crossings, requiring grocery stores to provide walkable access | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to healthy food, particularly for residents without access to private transportation • Increase safety and convenience of accessing healthy food | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improving walkability may involve tradeoffs with other aspects of the built environment, such as road width |
| Delivery | Providing grocery and meal delivery services, partnerships with and incentives for existing delivery services | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase access to healthy food, particularly for residents without access to private transportation • Increase convenience of accessing food, particularly for residents with additional responsibilities such as childcare | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some delivery platforms, such as Food Rescue Hero, require substantial volunteer involvement • May be particularly beneficial in low-density areas where public transportation and grocery stores are not viable |
| Education | Nutrition programs in schools; in-store promotion of healthy food benefits; classes on nutrition, cooking, and gardening | Increase knowledge about and demand for healthy food | Food education interests and needs may vary based on available food preparation resources and community food preferences |

Source: OPPAGA analysis of information provided by interviews and academic, government, and non-profit advocacy publications.

APPENDIX A

Federal Food Programs

| Program | Program Description |
|--|---|
| Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) | Provides nutrition benefits to supplement the food budget of needy families so they can purchase healthy food and move towards self-sufficiency. |
| Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) | Provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk. |
| Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) | Awards grants to eligible WIC participants that are issued FMNP coupons in addition to regular WIC benefits. These coupons can be used to buy eligible foods from farmers, farmers' markets or roadside stands that have been approved by the state agency to accept FMNP coupons. |
| Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program | Awards grants to provide low-income seniors with coupons that can be exchanged for eligible foods at farmers' markets, roadside stands, and community-supported agriculture programs. |
| National School Lunch Program | Operates a federally assisted meal program in public and nonprofit private schools and residential childcare institutions. It provides nutritionally balanced, low-cost or free lunches to children each school day. |
| School Breakfast Program | Provides reimbursement to states to operate nonprofit breakfast programs in schools and residential childcare institutions. |
| Summer Food Service Program | Reimburses program operators who serve free healthy meals and snacks to children and teens in low-income areas. |
| Special Milk Program | Provides milk to children in schools and childcare institutions who do not participate in other federal meal service programs. The program reimburses schools for the milk they serve. Schools in the National School Lunch or School Breakfast Programs may also participate in the Special Milk Program to provide milk to children in half-day pre-kindergarten and kindergarten programs where children do not have access to the school meal programs. |
| Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program | Provides free fresh fruits and vegetables to children at eligible elementary schools during the school day. The goal of the program is to introduce children to fresh fruits and vegetables, to include new and different varieties, and to increase overall acceptance and consumption of fresh, unprocessed produce among children. The program also encourages healthier school environments by promoting nutrition education. |
| Child and Adult Care Food Program | Provides reimbursements for nutritious meals and snacks to eligible children and adults who are enrolled for care at participating childcare centers, day care homes, and adult day care centers. The program also provides reimbursements for meals served to children and youth participating in afterschool care programs, children residing in emergency shelters, and adults over the age of 60 or living with a disability and enrolled in day care facilities. |
| Commodity Supplemental Food Program | Works to improve the health of low-income persons at least 60 years of age by supplementing their diets with nutritious USDA Foods. |
| Emergency Food Assistance Program | Helps supplement the diets of low-income Americans by providing them with emergency food assistance at no cost. |
| Disaster Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program | Gives food assistance to low-income households with food loss or damage caused by a natural disaster. |
| Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – Education | Supports evidence-based nutrition education and obesity prevention interventions and projects for persons eligible for SNAP through complementary direct education, multi-level interventions, and community and public health approaches to improve nutrition. |
| Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations | Provides USDA Foods to income-eligible households living on Indian reservations and to Native American households residing in designated areas near reservations or in Oklahoma. |

| Program | Program Description |
|--|---|
| Farm-to-School Grant Program | Awards grants to support planning, developing, and implementing farm-to-school programs. |
| Community Food Projects Competitive Grant Program | Awards grants to fight food insecurity through developing community food projects that help promote the self-sufficiency of low-income communities. Community Food Projects are designed to increase food security in communities by bringing the whole food system together to assess strengths, establish linkages, and create systems that improve the self-reliance of community members over their food needs. |
| Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program | Provides funding opportunities to conduct and evaluate projects providing incentives to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by low-income consumers. |
| Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program | Provides nutrition education to limited resource families and children. |

Source: United States Department of Agriculture and University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences.

APPENDIX B

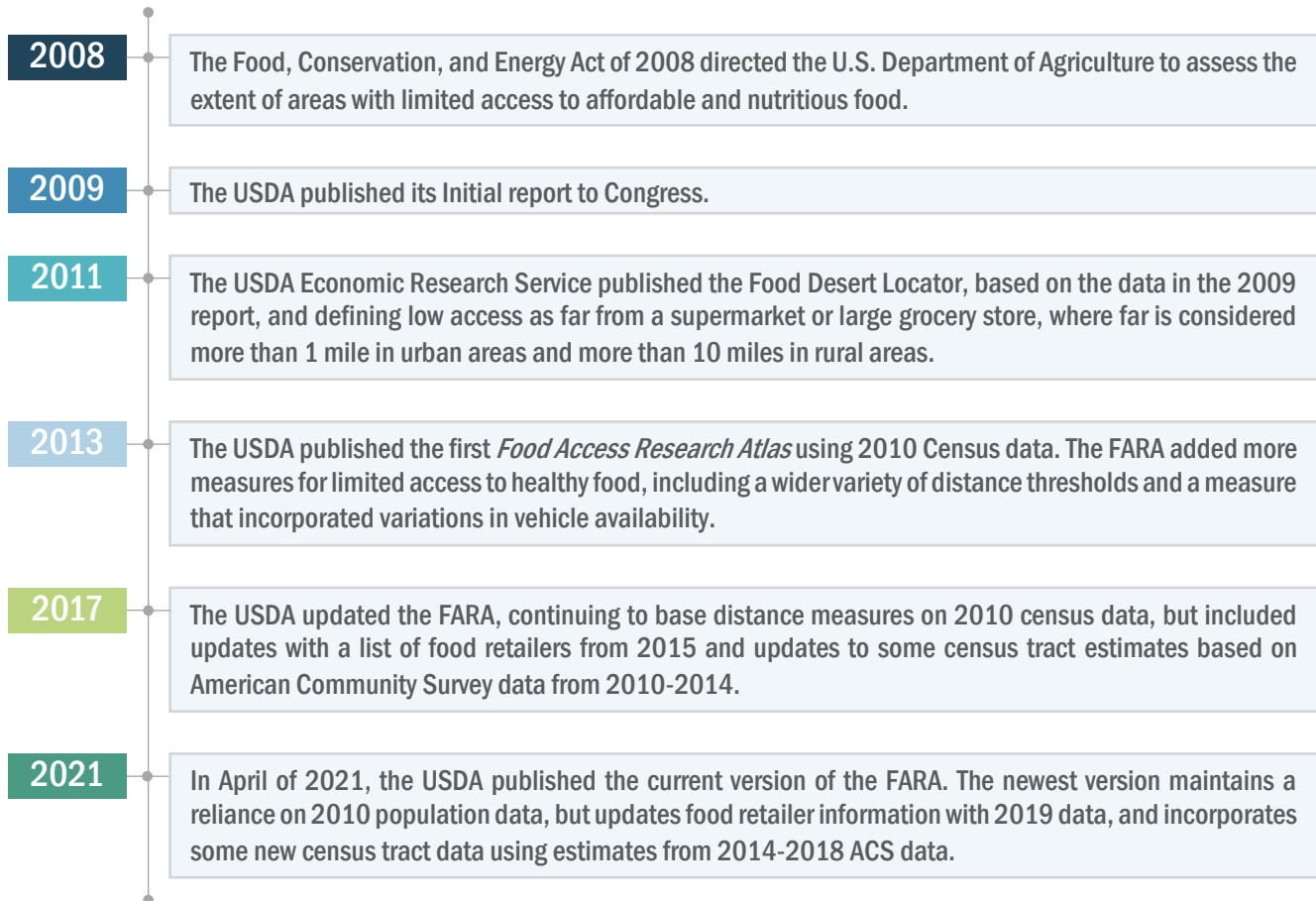
Food access data sources

USDA *Food Access Research Atlas*

OPPAGA used data from the 2021 USDA *Food Access Research Atlas* (FARA) to identify low income, low access census tracts. The USDA measures included in FARA were initially developed in 2009 and were updated most recently in 2021. Federal and state government rely on the census tracts identified in the FARA to inform policy about limited access to food stores that carry a wide variety of healthy and affordable food. Although some stakeholders and researchers point to limitations of the FARA, it remains a central source of publicly available information for researchers and policymakers. (See Exhibit B-1.)

Exhibit B-1

Timeline: Milestones in the USDA classification of LILA census tracts



Source: OPPAGA analysis.

The most recent version of the *Food Access Research Atlas* was published in April 2021 and is based on a 2019 list of supermarkets, population data from the 2010 Census, and some tract-level data from the 2014-2018 American Community Survey. The FARA allows users to look at maps and data using several different measures for the distance to a retailer that sells a variety of healthy foods, so that users are able to determine the measure of access to a healthy food source that is most appropriate for their purposes. OPPAGA relied on the LILA measure that specifies low access at 1 mile and 10 miles,

which is consistent with the measure first introduced by the USDA ERS in the 2011 Food Desert Locator. OPPAGA also use the FARA designation of tracts with “low vehicle access,” when more than 100 households in the tract report having no vehicle available and are more than a half mile from the nearest supermarket.

Because some population counts in the FARA are based on 2010 Census information, OPPAGA updated population estimates using 2015-2019 American Community Survey data. These updates included total tract population, as well as the estimates for the population of major race groups, Hispanic or Latino ethnicity, Seniors, and household SNAP participation. Other estimates used in the report come directly from the FARA Atlas.

Limitations of the USDA FARA

Despite its utility, stakeholders and researchers point to some limitations of the FARA. These critiques primarily center on three issues: timeliness; geographic and distance complications; and store classifications.

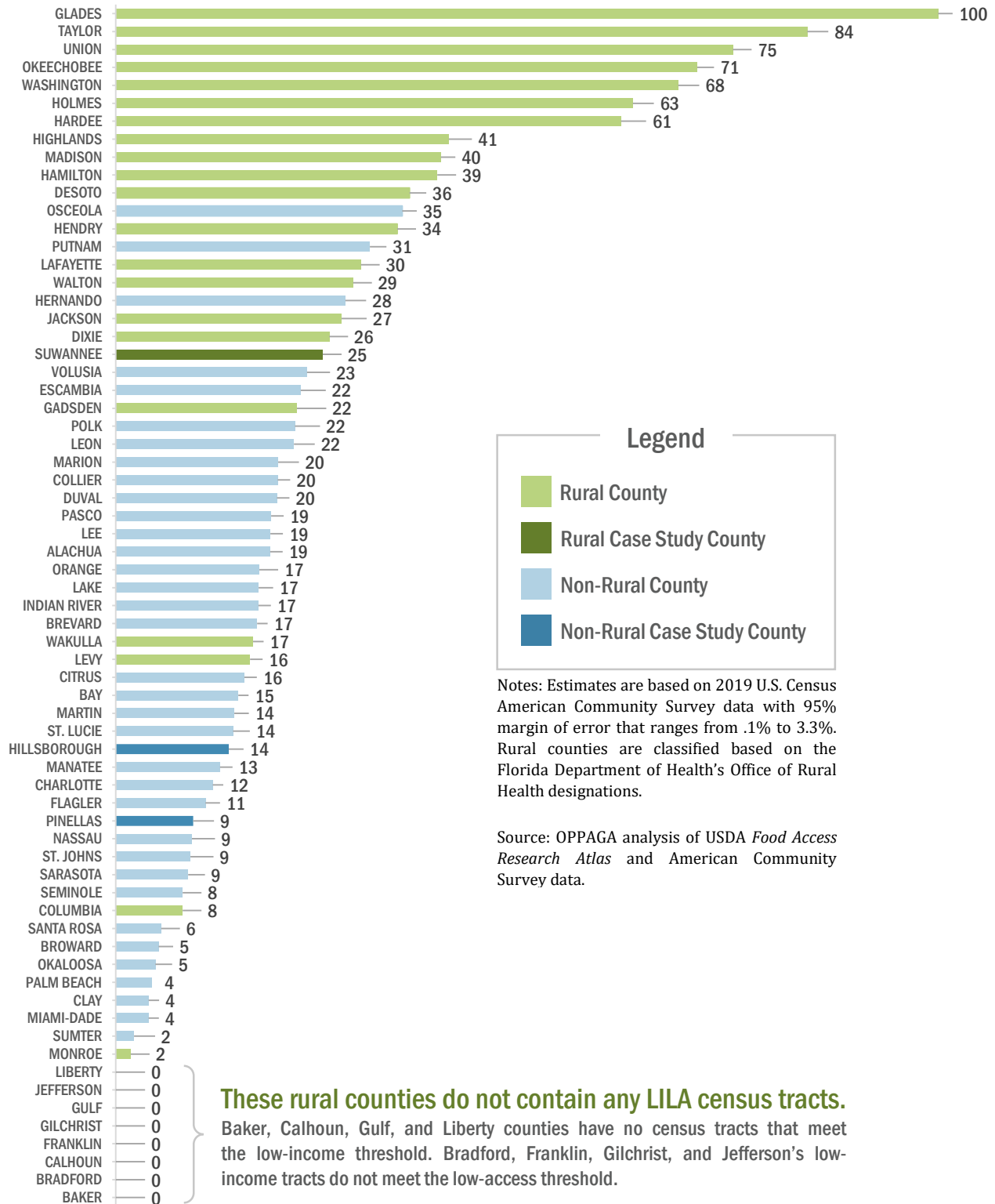
The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Florida Community Loan Fund both indicated that the FARA information is generally out of date and as a result may inaccurately represent food deserts, and retailer locations in particular. Notably, although the FARA was recently updated, the newest version still relies on retailer information from 2019. Geographic complexities, including the artificiality of census tracts as a geographic unit, differences in distance thresholds for urban and rural areas, and assumptions that shopping near home is most convenient for consumers, point to weaknesses in the FARA. By focusing only on low-income census tracts with low access, the FARA overlooks large numbers of low-income people living in middle- and high-income areas that may also lack nearby access to a large grocery or supermarket. The greater distance threshold for rural areas in the FARA discounts the implications for rural residents who do not have cars and for whom 10 miles may be an insurmountable barrier. Finally, many shoppers, including low-income shoppers, find ways to shop where their dollar stretches farther. For example, consumers often may grocery shop closer to other locations they frequent, such as school or work. Lastly, several researchers point to the limitation of restricting the indicator of access to “healthy food sources” to supermarkets and superstores. Other types of retailers, such as small corner stores, ethnic food markets, and farmers’ markets, may have adequate selections of healthy and affordable food. On the other hand, not all larger grocers have ample supplies or a variety of healthy and affordable foods.

APPENDIX C

Floridians Living in LILA Census Tracts

Exhibit C-1

Percentage of County Residents Living in LILA Census Tracts, Ranked From Highest to Lowest



APPENDIX D

Food Retail Data

Food retailer data are combined from two sources: publicly available USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data and Florida Department of Revenue (DOR) business records. Both sources of data were necessary in order to distinguish between retailers that accept SNAP and to best identify the food retail store type. SNAP retailer locator data include retailers currently operating as of March 25, 2021, and comparable data authorized prior to July 1, 2015. The DOR records included all retailers in a subset of food retail NAICS (North American Industry Classification System) codes active on June 30, 2020. OPPAGA matched the retailer data in order to ensure a comprehensive and non-overlapping list of food retailers for our geographic areas of interest.

To reconcile the list of SNAP retailers with DOR records, OPPAGA matched stores based on names, street address, zip code, and city using statistical software to identify exact and close matches, used GIS software to visually inspect close matches, and manually reviewed to evaluate all possible matches. The final list of food retailers in focal counties and all surrounding counties included 9,153 food retailers in the categories of interest.

Food Retail Categories

OPPAGA categorized food retailers into 11 categories using several methods.⁹⁰ The analysis initially relied on industry codes included in the DOR retailer data and then used other information available based on business names and logical inference to refine the categories. When relevant, OPPAGA used observations from fieldwork to most accurately categorize food retailers directly observed. (See Exhibit D-1.)

Exhibit D-1 Food Retail Categorization

| Type of Retail Food Store | Criteria for Categorization |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| Convenience Stores | NAICS 445120 and 447110. Additionally, using retailer name, OPPAGA categorized any chain store with NAICS 445110 as convenience if the majority of locations had NAICS 445120 or 447110. For example, if data showed a Circle-K to be a supermarket, OPPAGA classified it as a convenience store because the majority of Circle-K retailers had NAICS 445120. |
| Dollar Stores – Major Chains | This category includes the three major chain dollar stores: Dollar General, Dollar Tree, and Family Dollar. Most of these retailers had NAICS 452319. OPPAGA coded one Dollar General “Dollar General Market” store in Suwannee County as a supermarket because of observing it. Nothing in the SNAP or DOR data allowed distinguishing between standard Dollar General stores and “Dollar General Market” stores, which offer typical grocery selections. |
| Fast Food | NAICS 722513. OPPAGA also included major recognizable chain fast food even if the retailer has been assigned a different NAICS code. |
| Fruit or Vegetable Markets | NAICS 424480 or 445230. For SNAP retailers with no NAICS data, OPPAGA included any retailer with the words “Produce,” or “Garden” in the retailer’s name. |
| General Merchandise | NAICS 452319. Any general merchandise store that was not included in in other categories. OPPAGA retained this category because some SNAP retailers fall into it. |

⁹⁰ OPPAGA also had data on membership stores but did not use this category in the analysis.

| Type of Retail Food Store | Criteria for Categorization |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Meat or Seafood Markets | NAICS 445210 and 445220. For SNAP retailers with no NAICS data, OPPAGA included any retailer with the words “Meat,” “Sausage,” “Seafood,” “Shrimp,” or “Crab” in the retailer’s name, unless the retailer was a fast food restaurant. |
| Pharmacies | NAICS 446110. These also include a small number of recognizable chain pharmacies that may have been associated with a different NAICS code. |
| Specialty Food Stores | NAICS 445299. For SNAP retailers with no NAICS data, OPPAGA included Bakeries and Ethnic Food stores in this category. |
| Supercenters | This category includes Walmart and Target, most of which have NAICS 452210. Walmart neighborhood markets, discount stores, and distribution centers were excluded from this category. Neighborhood markets were included instead as a major chain supermarket, discount stores primarily offer non-food items, and distribution centers ship merchandise to stores. |
| Supermarkets | NAICS 445110, not otherwise identified as a convenience store or major chain supermarket. Data used by OPPAGA did not allow differentiating supermarkets based on size, therefore retail outlets in this category may or may not contain a variety of healthy foods. Reliable information about the range and affordability of food sold in these stores would require direct observation or more detailed data for each store. |
| Supermarkets – Major Chains | Any supermarket with more than 10 locations throughout Florida, not otherwise identified as a convenience store. Walmart “neighborhood markets” are included in this category. |

Source: OPPAGA analysis of Department of Revenue and USDA SNAP Retailer Locator data.

Healthy and Unhealthy Food Retailers

OPPAGA categorized food retailers as healthy or unhealthy following a literature review. Supermarkets, major chain supermarkets, fruit and vegetable markets, and supercenters were included as healthy food sources. Convenience stores and fast food were categorized as unhealthy food retailers.

Food Swamps

OPPAGA calculated the ratio of unhealthy to healthy food retailers for each census tracts, classifying tracts with ratios greater than 5:1 as “food swamps.” Tracts with fewer than four total retailers were excluded from these calculations.

APPENDIX E

Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee County Profiles

OPPAGA compiled the following information for Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee Counties to provide context for understanding these local food environments and their impacts.

- **Food insecurity rates** indicate whether people have trouble balancing food costs with other living expenses.
- **Demographic and economic indicators**, such as age, race, ethnicity, homelessness, disability, SNAP usage, median income, population below poverty level, unemployment, and population without a high school diploma can illustrate some of the broad systemic challenges faced by communities in these counties. Many of these indicators have been shown to affect a wide range of health risks and outcomes.
- **Access to care and health status indicators** provide information on how well people in each county can access health care and their self-reported health status.
- **Diet-related health outcome indicators** provide information on health outcomes related to inadequate nutrition. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, poor nutrition can cause overweight and obesity, heart disease and stroke, type 2 diabetes, and cancer.⁹¹

For the food insecurity rates, and demographic, economic, access to care, health status, and diet-related health outcomes indicators, OPPAGA compared the county to the state as a whole by presenting quartiles. A county's quartile indicates where it falls relative to the state as a whole. The first quartile, the most favorable, means that the indicator is more favorable than about three-quarters of the state. The fourth quartile, the least favorable, means that the indicator is less favorable than about three-quarters of the state.

Food Insecurity

The U.S. Department of Agriculture defines food insecurity as a household-level economic and social condition of limited or uncertain access to adequate food. Food insecurity may be occasional or episodic, but it is usually not constant. The USDA's food insecure classification includes a household having only a single episode of food insecurity during the year.⁹² People who live in low income, low access areas may or may not be food insecure. Food insecurity is usually related to poverty or high food costs, which could include not just distance from a food source, but an inability to prepare food at home or trouble balancing food costs with other living expenses.⁹³ A food insecure household might live next door to a grocery store, but not be able to afford healthy food.

In 2018, Florida had a statewide food insecurity rate of 13.0%. Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties had slightly lower food insecurity rates at 12.3% and 12.9%, respectively, with about half of Florida

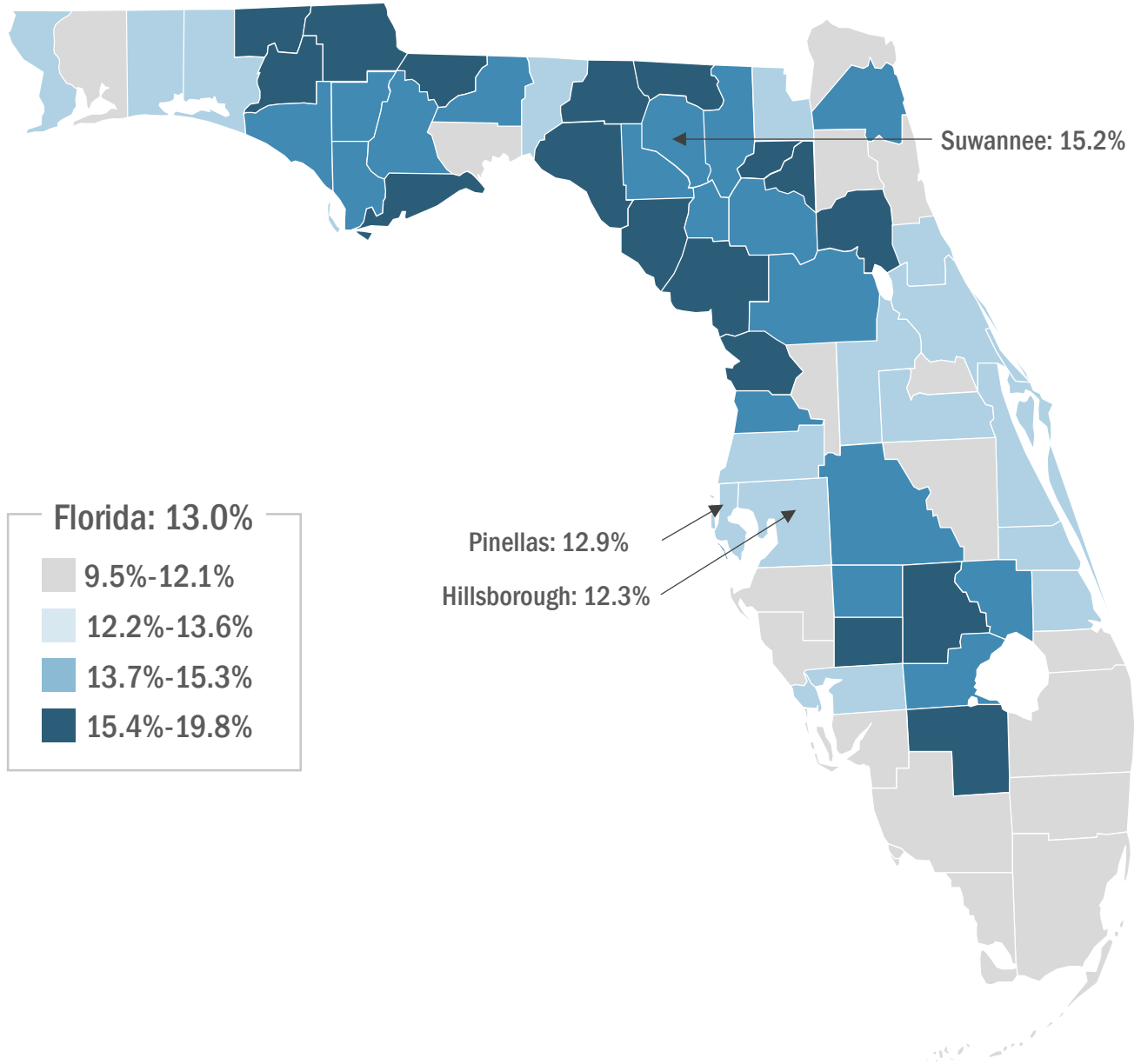
⁹¹ CDC. "Poor Nutrition." Accessed January 12, 2021, <https://www.cdc.gov/chronicdisease/resources/publications/factsheets/nutrition.htm>.

⁹² Coleman-Jensen, Alisha, et al. "Household Food Security in the United States in 2019."

⁹³ Karpyn, Allison E. et al., "The Changing Landscape of Food Deserts," *UNSCN Nutrition* 44 (2019): 46–53. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC7299236/>.

counties having higher rates of food insecurity. Suwannee had a higher rate of food insecurity at 15.2%, with about one-quarter of Florida counties having higher rates. ⁹⁴ (See Exhibit E-1.)

Exhibit E-1
Household Food Insecurity, 2018



Source: Florida Department of Health FLHealthCHARTS data viewer.

Hillsborough County

Hillsborough residents. Hillsborough County is an urban county with a younger population than the state. Specifically, in 2019, the county had a higher percentage of population under 18-years-old than the state and a lower percentage of population over 65-years-old than the state. The county's racial and ethnic makeup were similar to the state. The percentage of the population who have any disability

⁹⁴ Feeding America modeled these estimates from the Census's Food Security Supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS), and as such, the estimates are not direct county-level measures of food insecurity. This model uses state-level estimates of the relationships between CPS-measured food insecurity and county-level associate factors such as unemployment, income, home ownership, race, and ethnicity to impute county-level food insecurity rates. Thus, the estimates may not reflect other local factors affecting food insecurity.

in the county is similar to the state. In December 2020, Hillsborough was in the third quartile among counties for SNAP usage, meaning that about half of counties in Florida have lower SNAP usage as a percentage of households. Hillsborough County is in the second quartile in the state for population below 100% of the poverty level, unemployment, and population without a high-school diploma. This means that poverty, unemployment, and earning a high school diploma, as measured by these indicators, are less favorable in about two-quarters of the counties and more favorable in about one-quarter of other counties. Hillsborough County is in the top quartile in the state for median income.

Hillsborough Residents’ Health Indicators. For most health access, health status, and diet-related health indicators, Hillsborough County residents are in the first or second quartile in the state, meaning that they are more favorable than about half of the counties in the state. (See Exhibit E-2.)

Exhibit E-2

Hillsborough County Demographics, Access to Care, Health Status, and Diet-Related Health Outcomes

| | Year | Measure | County Quartile 1=most favorable 4=least favorable | County | State |
|--|------------------------|---------|--|-----------|------------|
| Socio-Demographics | | | | | |
| Total population | 2019 | Count | | 1,445,243 | 21,268,553 |
| Population under 18 Years Old | 2019 | Percent | | 22.8 | 19.9 |
| Population 18-64 Years Old | 2019 | Percent | | 62.9 | 59.7 |
| Population 65+ Years Old | 2019 | Percent | | 14.3 | 20.4 |
| Population - White | 2019 | Percent | | 74.3 | 77.3 |
| Population- Black | 2019 | Percent | | 17.8 | 16.9 |
| Population - Other | 2019 | Percent | | 7.9 | 5.8 |
| Population - Hispanic | 2019 | Percent | | 29.2 | 26.3 |
| Homeless Population ¹ | 2021, Point-In-Time | Count | | 870 | 21,141 |
| Adults who have any disability ² | 2019 | Percent | 2 | 27.1 | 31.0 |
| Households that receive SNAP | December, 2020 | Percent | 3 | 27.2 | 25.8 |
| Median income | 2015-19 | Dollars | 1 | 58,884 | 55,660 |
| Population below 100% poverty | 2015-19 | Percent | 2 | 14.6 | 14 |
| Percentage of civilian labor force which is unemployed | 2015-19 | Percent | 2 | 5.5 | 5.6 |
| Population over 25 without high school diploma or equivalency | 2015-19 | Percent | 2 | 11.3 | 11.8 |
| Access to Care and Health Status | | | | | |
| Adults with health insurance coverage | 2015-19 | Percent | 3 | 87.4 | 87.2 |
| Adults who have a personal doctor | 2016 | Percent | 4 | 66.5 | 72 |
| Adults who could not see a doctor at least once in the past year due to cost | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 17 | 16.6 |
| Adults who said their overall health was "fair" or "poor" | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 19.5 | 19.5 |
| Adults who said their overall health was "good" to "excellent" | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 80.5 | 80.5 |

| | Year | Measure | County Quartile 1=most favorable 4=least favorable | County | State |
|--|---------|------------------------|--|--------|--------|
| Diet-Related Health Outcomes | | | | | |
| Overweight and Obesity | | | | | |
| Adults who are overweight | 2016 | Percent | 3 | 37.3 | 35.8 |
| Adults who are obese | 2016 | Percent | 1 | 26.7 | 27.4 |
| Adults who have a healthy weight | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 34.1 | 34.5 |
| Coronary Heart Disease | | | | | |
| Coronary heart disease age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 96.2 | 91.1 |
| Coronary heart disease age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 292.9 | 278.1 |
| Stroke | | | | | |
| Stroke age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 1 | 29.5 | 40.7 |
| Stroke age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 244.3 | 233.3 |
| Cancer | | | | | |
| Cancer age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 152.0 | 146.1 |
| Cancer age-adjusted incidence rate | 2016-18 | Per 100,000 population | 4 | 484.7 | 444.4 |
| Diabetes | | | | | |
| Diabetes age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 19.8 | 20.3 |
| Diabetes age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 3 | 2716.9 | 2320.9 |
| Amputation due to diabetes age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 37.5 | 36.8 |

¹According to Florida's Council on Homelessness, these are likely undercounts because of the difficulty in locating every person who is homeless, and the count is at best a single point-in-time snapshot. The point-in-time number of homeless in Hillsborough for 2020 was 1,650 people, compared to 870 in 2021. In 2021, because of COVID-19-related safety concerns, the Continuum of Care organization that serves Hillsborough County conducted a sheltered, but not unsheltered count, thus resulting in an undercount. Given job and income loss and evictions across the country, advocates think that COVID-19 has likely increased homelessness.

²Data are based on six disability types: serious difficulty hearing; seeing; concentrating, remembering or making decisions; walking or climbing stairs; dressing or bathing; or doing errands alone.

Source: Florida Health CHARTS, which compiled this data from a variety of sources, including the Florida Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research; the U.S. Census Bureau; Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, Certificate of Need Office; and the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics.

Pinellas County

Pinellas County is an urban county with a slightly higher percentage of Whites than the state and a lower percentage of Blacks and Hispanics or Latinos. In 2019, Pinellas had a greater percentage of population over 65-years-old than the state. The county is similar to the state for percentage population who have any disability. In December 2020, Pinellas was in the second quartile for SNAP usage, meaning that about half of counties have a higher percentage of households who use SNAP. For median income, the population below 100% of the poverty level and unemployment rate of Pinellas County is in the second quartile in the state. This means that these indicators are less favorable in about half of the counties, and more favorable in about one-quarter of other counties. For percentage of the population with a high school diploma, Pinellas County is in the top quartile in the state. For most

health access, health status, and diet-related health indicators, Pinellas County residents are in the second quartile in the state, meaning that they are more favorable than those of about half the counties in Florida. (See Exhibit E-3.)

Exhibit E-3

Pinellas County Demographics, Access to Care, Health Status, and Diet-Related Health Outcomes

| | Year | Measure | County Quartile 1=most favorable 4=least favorable | County | State |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|---------|------------|
| Socio-Demographics | | | | | |
| Total population | 2019 | Count | | 979,558 | 21,268,553 |
| Population under 18-Years-Old | 2019 | Percent | | 16.2 | 19.9 |
| Population 18-64-Years-Old | 2019 | Percent | | 59.1 | 59.7 |
| Population 65+ Years-Old | 2019 | Percent | | 24.8 | 20.4 |
| Population-White | 2019 | Percent | | 82.6 | 77.3 |
| Population-Black | 2019 | Percent | | 11.1 | 16.9 |
| Population-Other | 2019 | Percent | | 6.3 | 5.8 |
| Population-Hispanic or Latino | 2019 | Percent | | 10.0 | 26.3 |
| Homeless Population ¹ | 2021, Point-in-time | Count | | 2,307 | 21,141 |
| Adults who have any disability ² | 2019 | Percent | 2 | 29.7 | 31.0 |
| Households that receive SNAP | December 2020 | Percent | 2 | 19.0 | 25.8 |
| Median income | 2015-19 | Dollars | 2 | 54,090 | 55,660 |
| Population below 100% poverty | 2015-19 | Percent | 2 | 12.2 | 14 |
| Percentage of civilian labor force that is unemployed | 2015-19 | Percent | 2 | 5.4 | 5.6 |
| Population over 25 without high school diploma or equivalency | 2015-19 | Percent | 1 | 8.7 | 11.8 |
| Access to Care and Health Status | | | | | |
| Adults with health insurance coverage | 2015-19 | Percent | 2 | 89.1 | 87.2 |
| Adults who have a personal doctor | 2016 | Percent | 3 | 73.7 | 72 |
| Adults who could not see a doctor at least once in the past year due to cost | 2016 | Percent | 3 | 17.2 | 16.6 |
| Adults who said their overall health was "fair" or "poor" | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 21 | 19.5 |
| Adults who said their overall health was "good" to "excellent" | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 79 | 80.5 |
| Diet-Related Health Outcomes | | | | | |
| Overweight and Obesity | | | | | |
| Adults who are overweight | 2016 | Percent | 3 | 35.8 | 35.8 |
| Adults who are obese | 2016 | Percent | 2 | 28.1 | 27.4 |
| Adults who have a healthy weight | 2016 | Percent | 1 | 34.7 | 34.5 |
| Coronary Heart Disease | | | | | |
| Coronary heart disease age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 93.5 | 91.1 |
| Coronary heart disease age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 255.7 | 278.1 |

| | Year | Measure | County Quartile 1=most favorable 4=least favorable | County | State |
|--|---------|------------------------|--|--------|---------|
| Stroke | | | | | |
| Stroke age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 1 | 29.4 | 40.7 |
| Stroke age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 217 | 233.3 |
| Cancer | | | | | |
| Cancer age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 148.8 | 146.1 |
| Cancer age-adjusted incidence rate | 2016-18 | Per 100,000 population | 3 | 464.3 | 444.4 |
| Diabetes | | | | | |
| Diabetes age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 21 | 20.3 |
| Diabetes age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 2253.2 | 2,320.9 |
| Amputation due to diabetes age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 1 | 31.5 | 36.8 |

¹According to Florida's Council on Homelessness, these are likely undercounts due to the difficulty in locating every person who is homeless; the count is at best a single point-in-time snapshot. The point-in-time number of people counted was 2,209 in 2020, compared to 2,307 in 2021.

²Data are based on six disability types: serious difficulty hearing, seeing; concentrating, remembering or making decisions; walking or climbing stairs; dressing or bathing; or doing errands alone.

Source: Florida Health CHARTS, which compiled this data from a variety of sources, including the Florida Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research; the U.S. Census Bureau; Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, Certificate of Need Office; and the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics.

Suwannee County

Suwannee County is rural, and in 2019, the county had a higher population of Whites than the state as a whole. It is similar to the state for the percentage population under 18-years-old and the percentage population over 65-years-old. The county has a high percentage of the population who have any disability as compared to the state. In December 2020, Suwannee was in the fourth quartile among all counties for SNAP usage. This means that about three-quarters of counties have lower SNAP usage than Suwannee.

For multiple economic indicators, including median income, population below 100% of the poverty level, unemployment, and population without a high-school diploma, Suwannee County is in the third quartile in the state. This means that for these economic indicators, about one-half of the counties in Florida are more favorable, and about one-quarter of the counties are less favorable.

For most health access, health status, and diet-related health indicators, Suwannee County residents are in the fourth quartile in the state. This means that Suwannee's health status, health access, and health outcomes, as measured by these indicators, are less favorable than the indicators of about three-quarters of the counties in Florida. (See Exhibit E-4.)

Exhibit E-4

Suwanee County Demographics, Access to Care, Health Status, and Diet-Related Health Outcomes

| | Year | Measure | County Quartile 1=most favorable 4=least favorable | County | State |
|--|------------------------|------------------------|--|--------|------------|
| Socio-Demographics | | | | | |
| Total population | 2019 | Count | | 45,482 | 21,268,553 |
| Population under 18-Years-Old | 2019 | Percent | | 21.1 | 19.9 |
| Population 18-64-Years-Old | 2019 | Percent | | 57.6 | 59.7 |
| Population 65+ Years-Old | 2019 | Percent | | 21.4 | 20.4 |
| Population-White | 2019 | Percent | | 84.2 | 77.3 |
| Population-Black | 2019 | Percent | | 12.8 | 16.9 |
| Population-Other | 2019 | Percent | | 3.0 | 5.8 |
| Population-Hispanic or Latino | 2019 | Percent | | 9.6 | 26.3 |
| Homeless Population ¹ | 2021, Point-in-time | Count | | 9 | 21,141 |
| Adults who have any disability ² | 2019 | Percent | 4 | 40.9 | 31.0 |
| Households that receive SNAP | December 2020 | Percent | 4 | 31.7 | 25.8 |
| Median income | 2015-19 | Dollars | 3 | 47,839 | 55,660 |
| Population below 100% poverty | 2015-19 | Percent | 3 | 14.9 | 14.0 |
| Percentage of civilian labor force that is unemployed | 2015-19 | Percent | 3 | 6.0 | 5.6 |
| Population over 25 without high school diploma or equivalency | 2015-19 | Percent | 3 | 17.7 | 11.8 |
| Health Status and Access to Care | | | | | |
| Adults with health insurance coverage | 2015-19 | Percent | 3 | 86.1 | 87.2 |
| Adults who have a personal doctor | 2016 | Percent | 3 | 73.7 | 72.0 |
| Adults who could not see a doctor at least once in the past year due to cost | 2016 | Percent | 4 | 23.8 | 16.6 |
| Adults who said their overall health was "fair" or "poor" | 2016 | Percent | 4 | 29.7 | 19.5 |
| Adults who said their overall health was "good" to "excellent" | 2016 | Percent | 4 | 70.3 | 80.5 |
| Diet-Related Health Outcomes | | | | | |
| Overweight and Obesity | | | | | |
| Adults who are overweight | 2016 | Percent | 1 | 32.1 | 35.8 |
| Adults who are obese | 2016 | Percent | 4 | 40.0 | 27.4 |
| Adults who have a healthy weight | 2016 | Percent | 4 | 26.3 | 34.5 |
| Coronary Heart Disease | | | | | |
| Coronary heart disease age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 4 | 121.7 | 91.1 |
| Coronary heart disease age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 4 | 421.7 | 278.1 |
| Stroke | | | | | |
| Stroke age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 3 | 43.4 | 40.7 |
| Stroke age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 4 | 295.8 | 233.3 |

| | Year | Measure | County Quartile 1=most favorable 4=least favorable | County | State |
|--|---------|------------------------|--|---------|---------|
| Cancer | | | | | |
| Cancer age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 4 | 186.4 | 146.1 |
| Cancer age-adjusted incidence rate | 2016-18 | Per 100,000 population | 3 | 474.2 | 444.4 |
| Diabetes | | | | | |
| Diabetes age-adjusted death rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 2 | 22.3 | 20.3 |
| Diabetes age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 4 | 3,134.6 | 2,320.9 |
| Amputation due to diabetes age-adjusted hospitalization rate | 2017-19 | Per 100,000 population | 3 | 42.4 | 36.8 |

¹According to Florida's Council on Homelessness, these are likely undercounts because of the difficulty in locating every person who is homeless; the count is at best a single point-in-time snapshot. The point-in-time number of homeless in Suwannee for 2020 was 182 people, compared to 9 in 2021. In 2021, because of COVID-19-related safety concerns, the Continuum of Care organization that serves Suwannee County conducted a sheltered, but not unsheltered count, thus resulting in an undercount. Given job and income loss and evictions across the country, advocates think that COVID-19 has increased homelessness.

²Data are based on six disability types: serious difficulty hearing; seeing; concentrating, remembering or making decisions; walking or climbing stairs; dressing or bathing; or doing errands alone.

Source: Florida Health CHARTS, which compiled this data from a variety of sources, including the Florida Legislature's Office of Economic and Demographic Research; the U.S. Census Bureau; Florida Agency for Health Care Administration, Certificate of Need Office; and the Florida Department of Health, Bureau of Vital Statistics.

Access to Healthy Food in Florida

Presentation to the Senate Committee on Agriculture

Daphne Holden, Senior Legislative Analyst



OPPAGA

Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability

JANUARY 13, 2022

Project Objectives

1

Describe what is known about food deserts (low-income, low-access areas) and their effects on residents

2

Describe the incidence of low-income, low-access areas (LILA)

3

Provide detailed information about LILA areas in Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee counties

4

Provide high level policy considerations to expand access to healthy food in LILA areas

Methodology



Literature Review



Quantitative data analysis: statewide and for Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee counties



Fieldwork in LILA areas: Southeastern Tampa, Midtown St. Petersburg, and Suwannee



Interviews with 28 stakeholders

Background

Background

Low-Income, Low-Access Food Area

Low Income

A census tract where the poverty rate is greater than **20%** or the median family income is less than or equal to **80%** of the statewide median family income

Low Access

A census tract where at least 500 people, or **33%** of the population, is greater than **1 mile** (urban) or **10 miles** (rural) from a supermarket or supercenter

Food Swamp: a ratio equal to or greater than five unhealthy food retailers to one healthy retailer

Background



Market factors affect access to healthy food

Supermarkets perceive locating in LILA areas as more risky

- ✓ Supermarkets have slim profit margins and are risk averse
- ✓ Perceived risks in high-crime areas
- ✓ Perception that workers need more training

It is difficult to be profitable in LILA areas

- ✓ Fixed costs greater in dense urban areas
- ✓ High land costs and zoning restrictions

Increased consumption of food from non-grocery stores

- ✓ Dollar stores, convenience stores and pharmacies sell less nutritious food with longer shelf lives
- ✓ These stores may claim more market share

Background



Known Effects of the Food Environment

- Navigating access to food may be difficult, time-consuming, and expensive
- Limited availability of healthy food sources may adversely affect the local business environment
- Improving accessibility of healthy food may not lead to better health outcomes

Statewide Findings

Statewide Findings



The number of LILA tracts has decreased slightly, but barriers to healthy food access remain

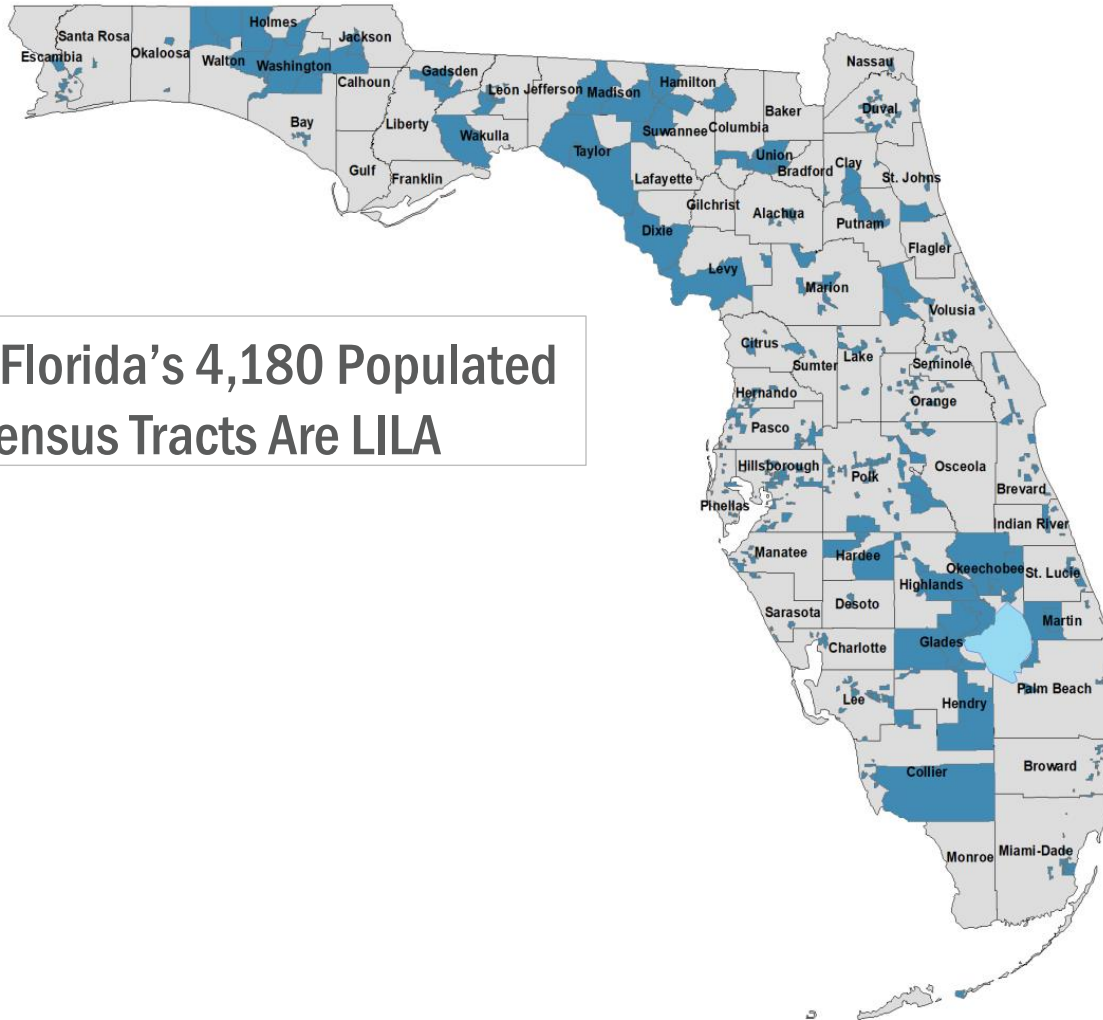
Trends since 2015

- ✓ Decline in number of LILA tracts
- ✓ Overall growth in retail sector
- ✓ Decline in share of population that resides in LILA tracts
- ✓ Decline in SNAP retailers

Population in LILA areas

- ✓ Approximately **13.5%** of Floridians live in LILA census tracts
- ✓ A larger percentage of urban residents live in LILA tracts compared to rural

Statewide Findings



550 of Florida's 4,180 Populated
Census Tracts Are LILA

Statewide Findings



Florida stakeholders report three main barriers to accessing healthy food

Residents may not seek healthy food, even when accessible

- ✓ Little interest or knowledge
- ✓ Unfamiliar foods
- ✓ Do not know how to cook or have a place to do so
- ✓ Cannot afford



Barriers to creating a better food environment

- ✓ Small profit margins
- ✓ Do not attract higher-income customers in some urban areas
- ✓ Do not have density to sustain food outlets in some rural areas
- ✓ Perishable food is not profitable

Lack of transportation

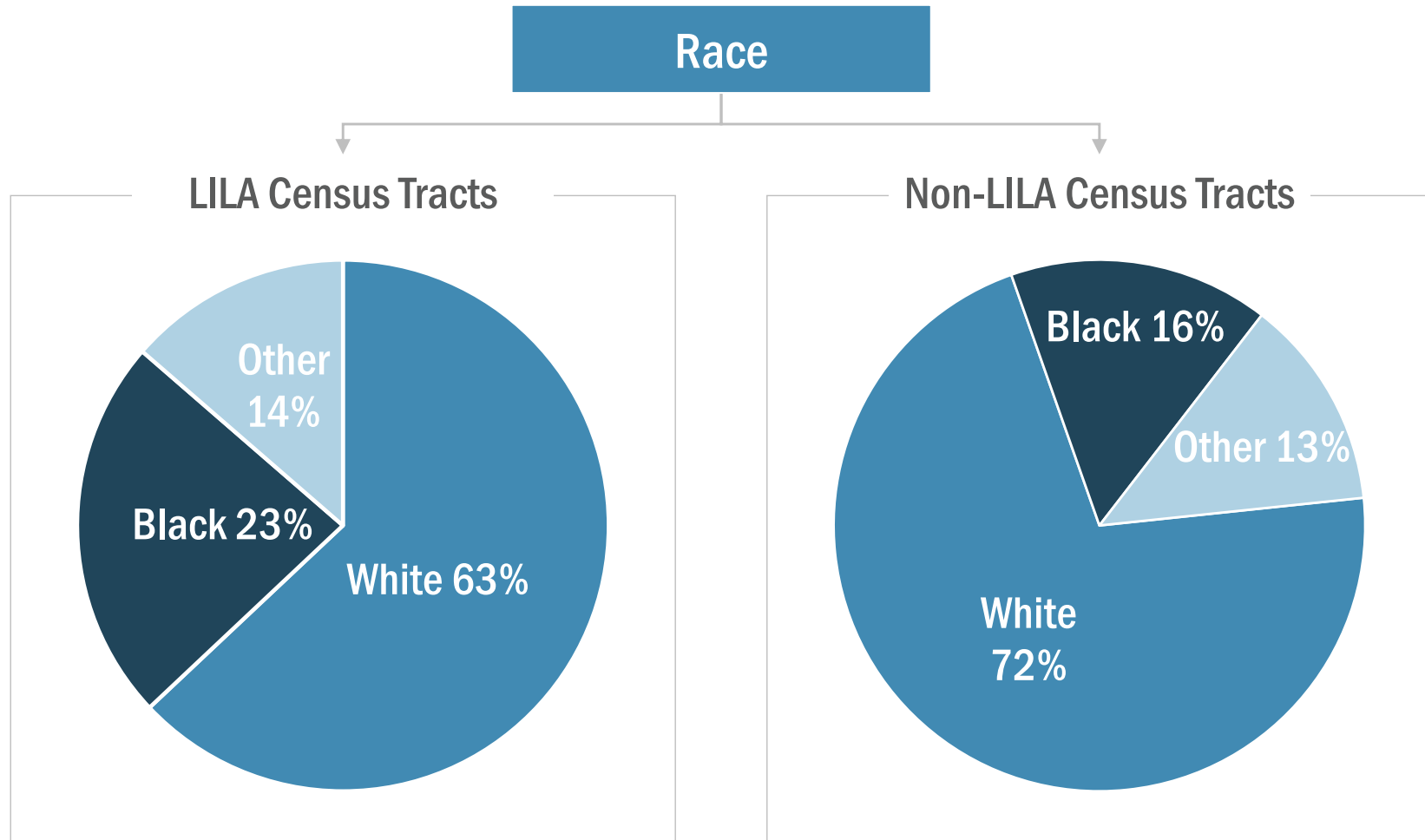
- ✓ Many residents do not have a vehicle
- ✓ Insufficient bus routes
- ✓ Accessible stores do not have healthy food



Hillsborough County Findings

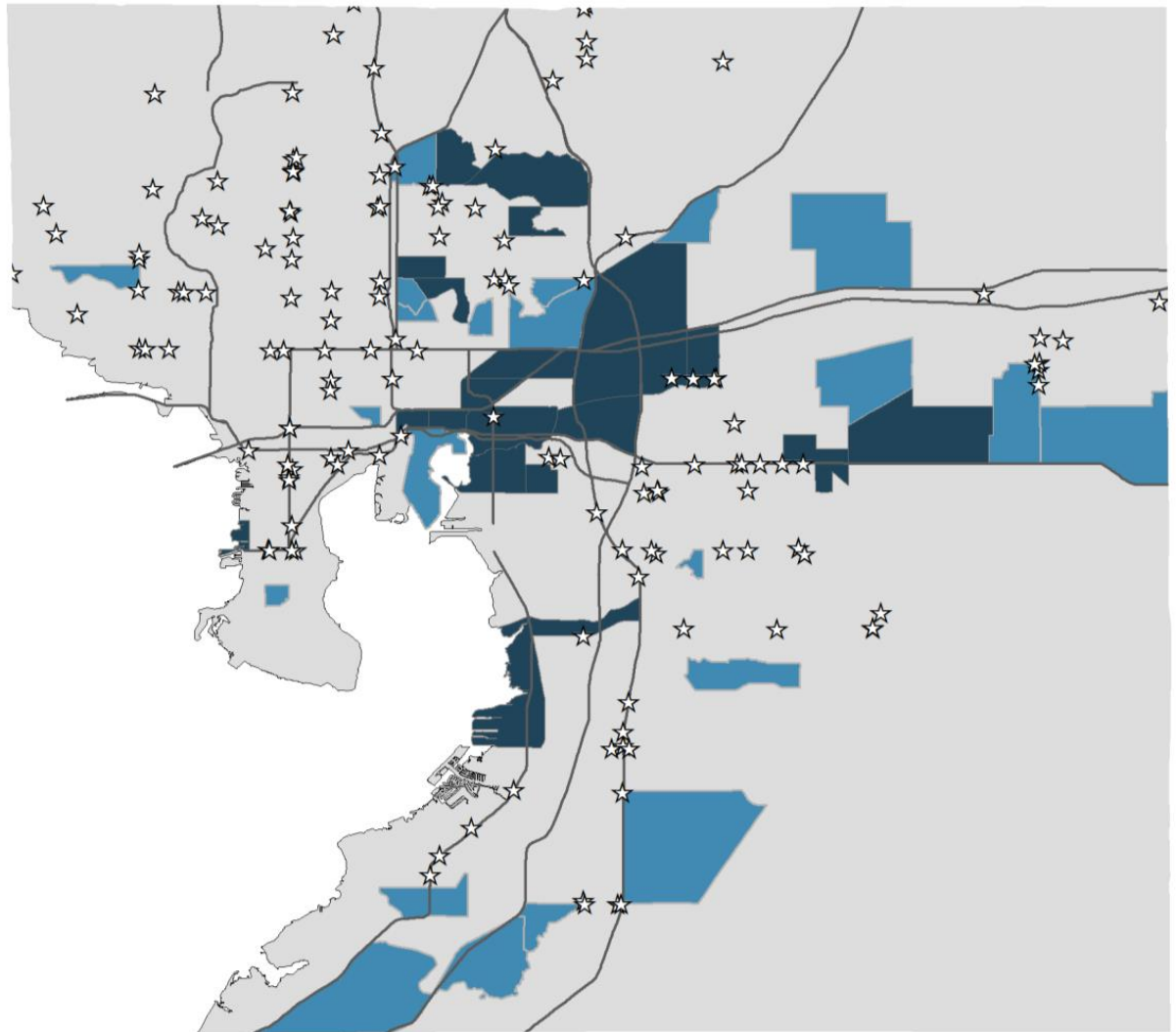
Hillsborough County Findings

Hillsborough County LILA tracts have a higher percentage of Black residents than non LILA tracts



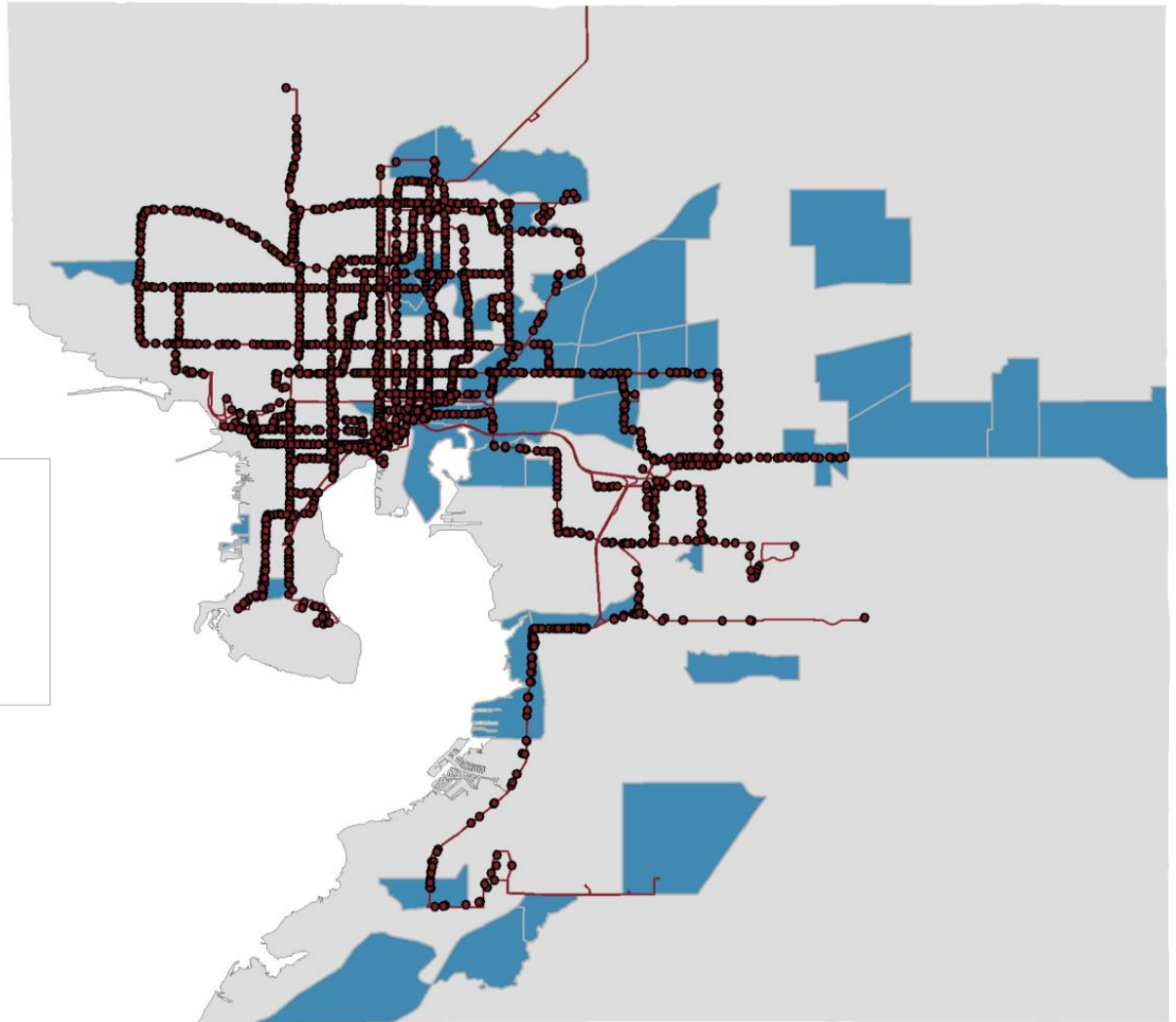
Hillsborough County Findings

- Approximately **13.8%** of the population lives in one of the 45 LILA census tracts
- Few large stores are in LILA/swamp census tracts
- About half of the county's LILA census tracts are also food swamps
- There has been a net gain of two LILA census tracts since 2015



Hillsborough County Findings

Many Hillsborough LILA tracts
have limited to no public bus
service



Hillsborough County Findings

Reported efforts to improve food environment

- ✓ Hiring Hillsborough county food systems program coordinator
- ✓ Screening for food insecurity in hospitals
- ✓ Providing charitable food options
- ✓ Helping people apply for food programs
- ✓ Creating community gardens and urban agriculture

Reported barriers to creating a better food environment

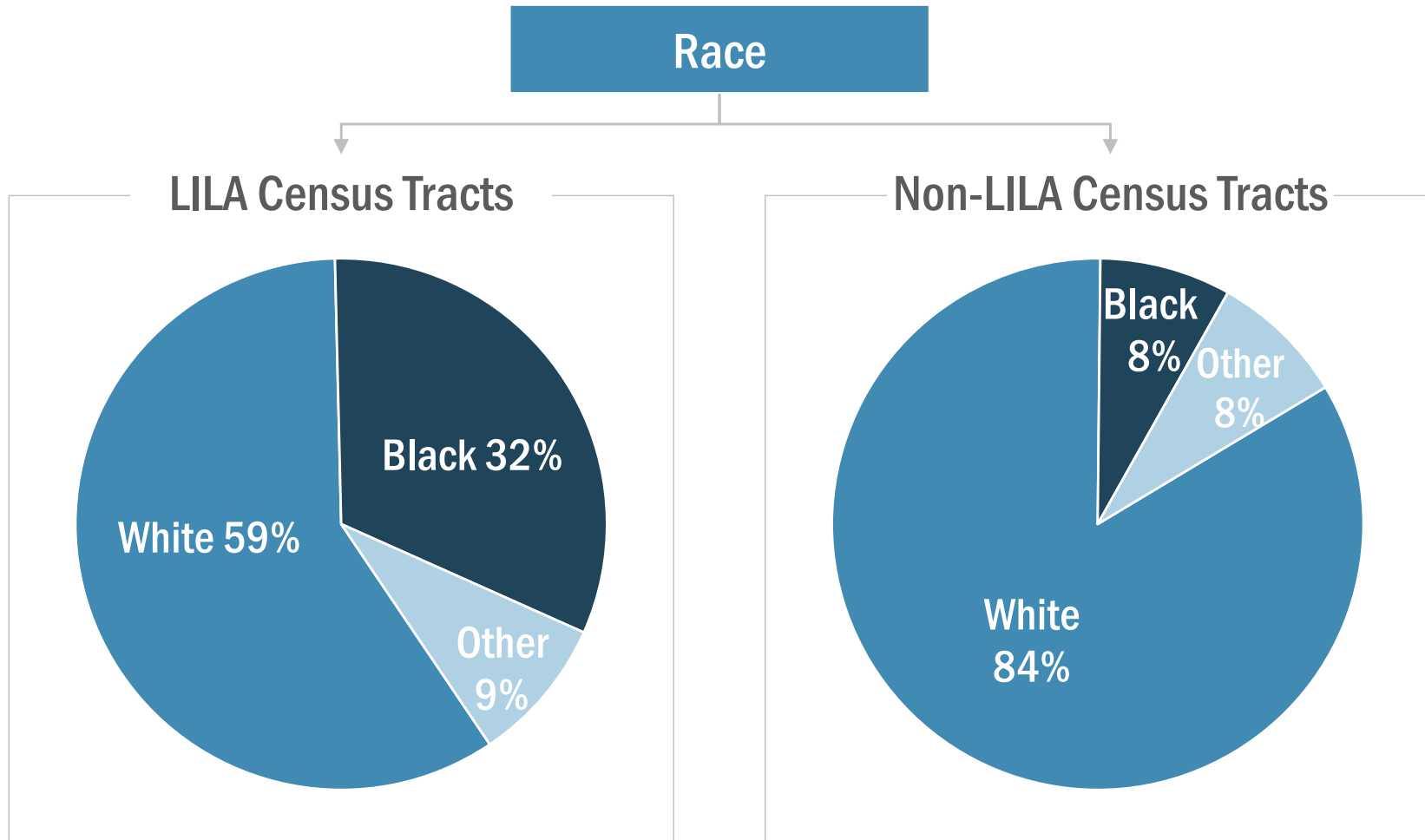
- ✓ Community gardens and urban agriculture often face high start-up costs



Pinellas County Findings

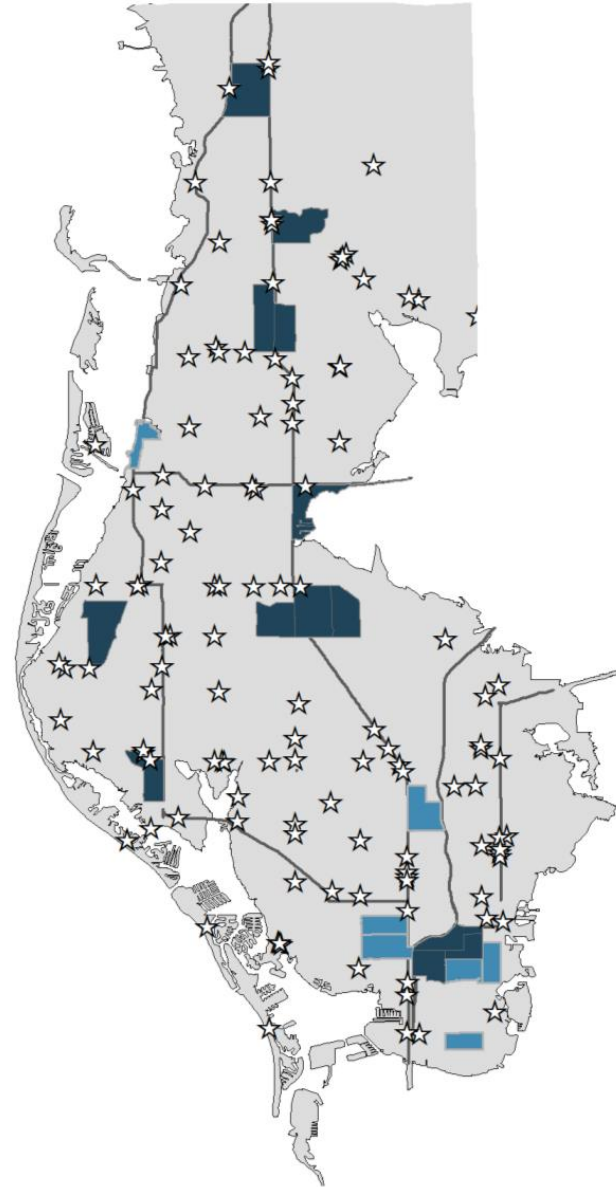
Pinellas County Findings

Pinellas County LILA tracts have a higher percentage of Black residents than non-LILA tracts



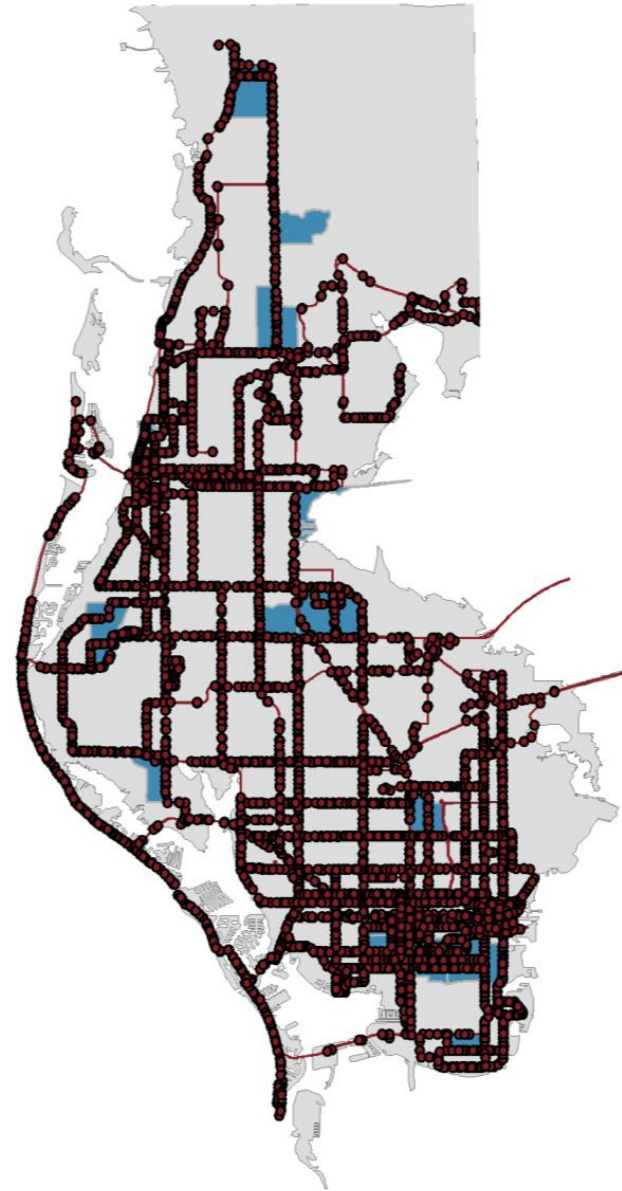
Pinellas County Findings

- 9.4% of the population lives in one of the 20 LILA census tracts
- The majority of LILA census tracts are also food swamps
- There has been a net gain of seven LILA tracts since 2015



Pinellas County Findings

Most Pinellas LILA tracts are well served by public bus service



Pinellas County Findings

Reported efforts to improve food environment

- ✓ Choosing retail grocer for a vacant property in Tangerine Plaza
- ✓ Establishing new city regulations to encourage urban agriculture
- ✓ Creating a food policy council
- ✓ Passing a food as a human right ordinance
- ✓ Creating urban agriculture programs

Reported barriers to creating a better food environment

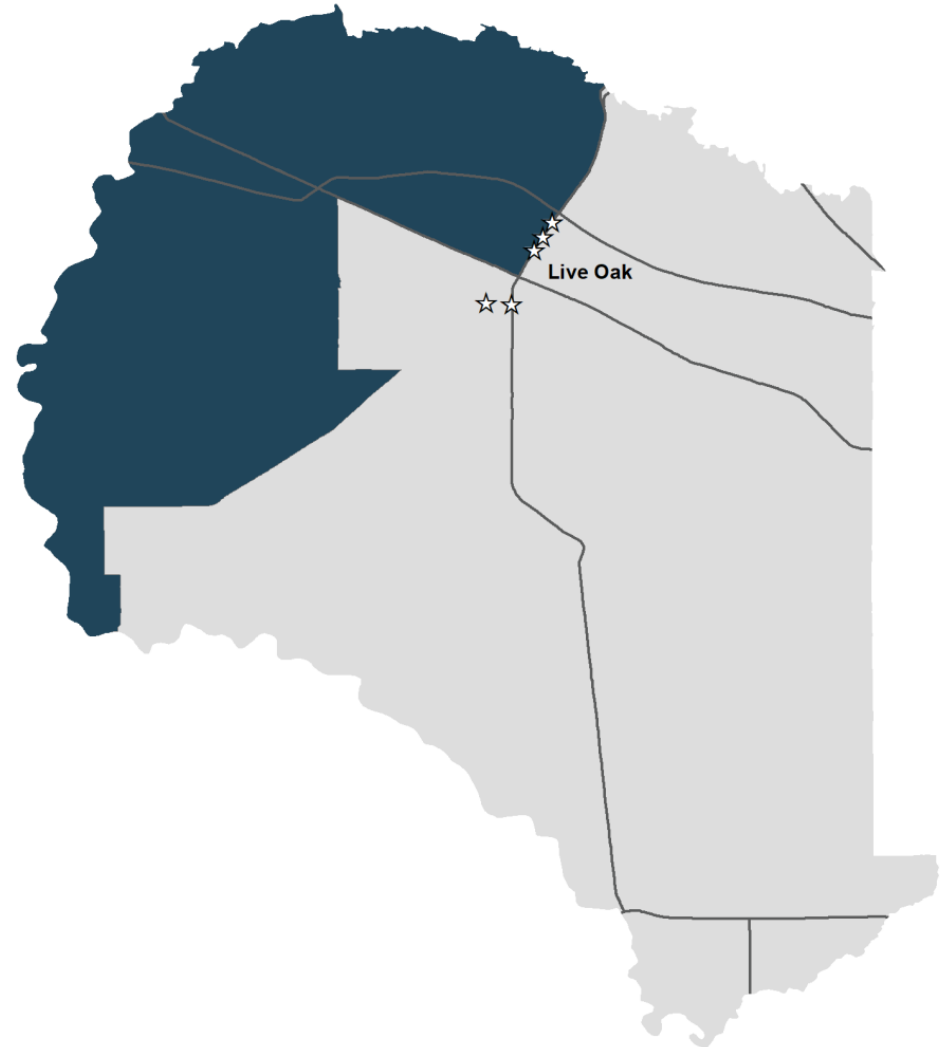
- ✓ High start-up costs
- ✓ Needs vacant property
- ✓ Marketing to consumers is difficult



Suwannee County Findings

Suwannee County Findings

- Suwannee County supermarkets are all located in or near Live Oak
- Two of Suwannee's seven census tracts are LILA, and 25% of Suwannee's population lives in those two census tracts



Suwannee County Findings

Reported efforts to improve access to food

- ✓ Using the food pantry in the northeast LILA tract
- ✓ Distributing food via churches



Reported barriers to accessing food

- ✓ Transportation barriers are primary
- ✓ Many residents do not have access to vehicles
- ✓ Stakeholders reported that many people do not know how to cook and healthy food is expensive

Legislative Options

Legislative Options

Enhance State-Level Planning

- Develop a comprehensive state food system plan
- Incorporate food access considerations into state agency strategic planning

Support Local Planning

- Develop model policies
- Provide local governments one-time assistance
- Guide and educate local officials on how to create land use plans that address hunger

Build on Existing Programs

- Expand highly effective programs

Support Targeted Initiatives

- Address root causes such as poverty with financial assistance and economic development programs
- Provide funding for local initiatives

Questions?

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**FLORIDA LEGISLATURE OFFICE OF PROGRAM POLICY ANALYSIS AND
GOVERNMENT ACCOUNTABILITY**

OPPAGA supports the Florida Legislature by providing data, evaluative research, and objective analyses that assist legislative budget and policy deliberations.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SPB 7028

INTRODUCER: Agriculture Committee

SUBJECT: Food Policy Advisory Council

DATE: January 13, 2022

REVISED: _____

| ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. <u>Fink</u> | <u>Becker</u> | _____ | AG submitted as Comm. Bill/Fav |

I. Summary:

SPB 7028 creates the Food Policy Advisory Council (council). The purpose of the council is to serve as a forum for presenting, investigating, and evaluating barriers to food access for Floridians and for identifying solutions to such barriers. The bill specifies requirements for the membership, meetings, compensation, and duties of the council. It also directs the council to submit a report to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives containing its findings and recommendations on how to best increase access to food in Florida.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

II. Present Situation:

The Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) prepared a research memorandum to describe low income, low access (LILA) census tracts in the state, which includes describing what is known about LILA food areas and the effects on residents of those areas.¹ The memorandum outlines the incidence of LILA census tracts statewide, specifically, the number of people that are both low income and have limited access to healthy food options by census tract; provides additional information about LILA areas in Hillsborough, Pinellas, and Suwannee counties; and provides high level policy considerations to expand access to healthy food in LILA areas.

In Florida, the number of LILA tracts has decreased since 2015, but barriers to healthy food access remain.² Approximately 13.5% of Floridians live in census tracts that are both low income and low access, with a larger percentage of urban residents compared to rural residents. In Hillsborough and Pinellas counties, residents of LILA census tracts are disproportionately Black compared to other areas of the county and the LILA census tracts have high poverty rates, and few, if any major chain supermarkets. Public and private entities have started a range of food

¹ Office of Program Policy and Government Accountability, "Geographic Access to Healthy Food in Florida," (December 27, 2021).

² *Id.* at 10

access initiatives in these counties, though resource constraints present a challenge. In Suwannee County, the two LILA census tracts have a higher proportion of residents that are 65 and older, have no major chain supermarkets, and stakeholders report that the largest barrier to healthy food access is transportation.

High relative availability of unhealthy food refers to geographic areas where there is a high ratio of unhealthy food sources to healthy food sources. Such areas are sometimes referred to as food swamps. Both low-access and unhealthy food environments have been associated with a range of social, economic, and health concerns. A “low income” census tract is characterized by a poverty rate greater than 20%, or median family income of less than or equal to 80% of the statewide median family income, or in metropolitan areas, 80% of the metropolitan area median family income. A “low access” census tract is characterized by an area where at least 500 people, or 33% of the population is greater than 1 mile or 10 miles from a supermarket, supercenter, or large grocery store.

To address issues related to food access, OPPAGA identified options for legislative consideration. These options include developing or supporting food access planning at the state and local levels, building on existing programs, increasing participation in existing programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Program (SNAP) and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), providing assistance for food program matching requirements for federal food programs, addressing root causes by investing in education and workforce development, and providing funding for local food system initiatives.

The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services' Food Security Advisory Committee (FSAC) was established in 2020 by Commissioner of Agriculture Nikki Fried and charged with the responsibility of creating a statewide plan for addressing food security.³

FSAC recommends to the Commissioner policies and statewide strategies that would reduce hunger, eradicate food insecurity and increase participation in federally funded nutrition assistance programs. FSAC also provides, advises and consults with the Commissioner and the division directors of the department, at their request or upon its own initiative, regarding the promulgation, administration and enforcement of all laws and rules relating to reducing hunger and enhancing the food security of Florida residents in addition to any other issues within the Advisory Committee's expertise.⁴

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SPB 7028 creates the Food Policy Advisory Council (council), an advisory council as defined in s. 20.03(7), F.S., adjunct to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department).

The bill establishes that the purpose of the council is to serve as a forum for presenting investigating, and evaluating barriers to food access for the residents of Florida and for identifying solutions to such barriers.

³ Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, “Food Security Advisory Committee,” *See* <https://www.fdacs.gov/About-Us/Advisory-Councils-and-Committees/Food-Security-Advisory-Committee> (Last visited January 11, 2022).

⁴ *Id.*

The council shall be made up of the following members:

- The Commissioner of Agriculture (or his or her designee);
- The State Surgeon General (or his or her designee);
- The Commissioner of Education (or his or her designee);
- A person actively participating in the growing of food in this state, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- A food retailer, appointed by the President of the Senate;
- A representative of an anti-hunger organization appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives;
- Each of the following food bank representatives, (or his or her designee):
 - The executive director of Feeding Florida.
 - The chief executive officer of Second Harvest of the Big Bend.
 - The chief executive officer of Feeding the Gulf Coast.
 - The food bank director of Florida Gateway Food Bank.
 - The president of Feeding Northeast Florida.
 - The chief executive officer of Bread of the Mighty Food Bank.
 - The president of First Step Food Bank.
 - The president of Second Harvest of Central Florida.
 - The president of Feeding Tampa Bay.
 - The chief executive officer of All Faiths Food Bank.
 - The president of the Treasure Coast Food Bank.
 - The president of the Harry Chapin Food Bank.
 - The president of Feeding South Florida.

The bill requires that the council shall elect by a two-thirds vote of the members one member to serve as chair of the council. A majority of the members of the council constitutes a quorum.

The bill requires the council to meet at least once a quarter at the call of the chair. Council members shall serve without compensation but may be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses incurred while attending meetings of the council.

The duties of the council are to:

- Identify barriers to food security in Florida;
- Develop a food system policy that takes into consideration economic and transportation challenges faced by Floridians who are food insecure; and
- Submit recommendations to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives for increasing access to food.

Additionally, the bill requires that by September 1 of each year, beginning in 2023, the council shall submit a report to the Governor, President of the Senate, and Speaker of the House of Representatives containing its findings and recommendations on how to best increase access to food.

The bill takes effect upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

Undetermined. The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services may incur costs associated with the council.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 500.82 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

- A. **Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

- B. **Amendments:**

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.



969612

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| Senate | . | House |
|------------|---|-------|
| Comm: FAV | . | |
| 01/13/2022 | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |

The Committee on Agriculture (Rouson) recommended the following:

Senate Amendment

Between lines 41 and 42

insert:

a. The president of Farm Share.

FOR CONSIDERATION By the Committee on Agriculture

575-01878-22

20227028pb

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Food Policy Advisory Council;
3 creating s. 500.82, F.S.; creating the council adjunct
4 to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
5 Services; providing the purpose and membership of the
6 council; requiring the council to meet at least
7 quarterly; providing for per diem and travel expenses
8 for council members; providing the duties of the
9 council; requiring the council to submit an annual
10 report to the Governor and the Legislature by a
11 specified date; providing requirements for the report;
12 providing an effective date.

13
14 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

15
16 Section 1. Section 500.82, Florida Statutes, is created to
17 read:

18 500.82 Food Policy Advisory Council.—

19 (1) CREATION.—The Food Policy Advisory Council, an advisory
20 council as defined in s. 20.03(7), is created adjunct to the
21 Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services. Except as
22 provided in this section, the council shall operate in a manner
23 consistent with s. 20.052.

24 (2) PURPOSE.—The purposes of the council are to serve as a
25 forum for presenting, investigating, and evaluating barriers to
26 food access for the residents of this state and for identifying
27 solutions to such barriers.

28 (3) MEMBERSHIP; MEETINGS; COMPENSATION.—

29 (a) The Food Policy Advisory Council shall be composed of

575-01878-22

20227028pb

30 the following members:

31 1. The Commissioner of Agriculture or his or her designee.

32 2. The State Surgeon General or his or her designee.

33 3. The Commissioner of Education or his or her designee.

34 4. A person actively participating in the growing of food
35 in this state, appointed by the President of the Senate.

36 5. A food retailer, appointed by the President of the
37 Senate.

38 6. A representative of an anti-hunger organization,
39 appointed by the Speaker of the House of Representatives.

40 7. Each of the following food bank representatives, or his
41 or her designee:

42 a. The executive director of Feeding Florida.

43 b. The chief executive officer of Second Harvest of the Big
44 Bend.

45 c. The chief executive officer of Feeding the Gulf Coast.

46 d. The food bank director of Florida Gateway Food Bank.

47 e. The president of Feeding Northeast Florida.

48 f. The chief executive officer of Bread of the Mighty Food
49 Bank.

50 g. The president of First Step Food Bank.

51 h. The president of Second Harvest of Central Florida.

52 i. The president of Feeding Tampa Bay.

53 j. The chief executive officer of All Faiths Food Bank.

54 k. The president of the Treasure Coast Food Bank.

55 l. The president of the Harry Chapin Food Bank.

56 m. The president of Feeding South Florida.

57 (b) The council shall elect by a two-thirds vote of the
58 members one member to serve as chair of the council.

575-01878-22

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59 (c) A majority of the members of the council constitutes a
60 quorum.

61 (d) The council shall meet at least once a quarter at the
62 call of the chair.

63 (e) Council members shall serve without compensation but
64 may be reimbursed for per diem and travel expenses pursuant to
65 s. 112.061 incurred while attending meetings of the council.

66 (4) DUTIES.—The duties of the council include all of the
67 following:

68 (a) Identifying barriers to food security in this state.

69 (b) Developing a food system policy in this state which
70 takes into consideration economic and transportation challenges
71 faced by Floridians who are food insecure.

72 (c) Submitting recommendations to the Governor, the
73 President of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of
74 Representatives for increasing access to food in this state.

75 (5) REPORT.—By September 1 of each year, beginning in 2023,
76 the council shall submit a report to the Governor, the President
77 of the Senate, and the Speaker of the House of Representatives
78 containing its findings pursuant to subsection (4) and
79 recommendations on how to best increase access to food in this
80 state.

81 Section 2. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SB 922

INTRODUCER: Senator Perry

SUBJECT: Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant Program

DATE: January 12, 2022

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1. | Becker | Becker | AG | Favorable |
| 2. | | | AEG | |
| 3. | | | AP | |

I. Summary:

SB 922 establishes the Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant Program within the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to support startup functions for new farming and ranching operations. To receive a grant, an individual must:

- Be an agricultural producer, be an employee of a farm or ranch, or be an agricultural producer who is a veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14), F.S.;
- Be between the ages of 18 and 35;
- Have operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years;
- Demonstrate, at minimum, a dollar-for dollar matching investment for the grant amount requested; and
- Submit a grant application.

If funded by the Legislature, each grant award would be between \$5,000 and \$20,000, and a recipient may receive only one award grant period.

For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the sum of \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the department for the purpose of implementing the program.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

II. Present Situation:

Opportunities exist within farming and ranching, but beginning farmers and ranchers have unique educational, training, technical assistance, and outreach needs. Capital access, land

access, and access to knowledge and information to assist in ensuring profitability and sustainability are vital to those just entering agriculture and in their first ten years of operation.¹

Currently, there are no grant programs within the department specifically to assist young farmers and ranchers. The department does provide resources through its Grant Opportunity² public webpage.

To address the lack of resources and assistance, the 2018 Legislature created a 12 member Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Advisory Council³ to provide an opportunity for young people to offer advice and to give recommendations to the Commissioner of Agriculture about the challenges facing aspiring farmers and ranchers in the early stages of their careers. The council is authorized to examine issues such as access to land, availability of credit and capital, and access to business skills training. The Legislature also directed the department to create the Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Resource Clearinghouse on its website⁴ in order to provide career information and resources to young farmers who will be entering a wide range of jobs involving food production, natural resources, plant systems, animal management, and much more.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 creates s. 288.06572, F.S., to establish the Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant Program. The bill requires the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (department) to administer grants to foster the creation and expansion of agricultural businesses by young farmers and ranchers in Florida. The department is directed to adopt rules regarding the program. To be eligible, grant recipients must at a minimum:

- Be an agricultural producer, employee of a farm or ranch, or an agricultural producer who is a veteran as defined in s. 1.01(14);
- Be at least 18 years of age, but not older than 35 years of age;
- Have operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10 years;
- Demonstrate, at a minimum, a dollar-for-dollar matching investment for grant money requested; and
- Submit a grant application during the time period designated by the department.

Each grant award must be between \$5,000 and \$20,000, and a recipient may receive only one award per grant period. Annual grant funding is contingent upon appropriation from the legislature. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the sum of \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the department for the purpose of implementing the program.

Section 2 provides that this act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

¹ See <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/beginning-farmer-and-rancher-development-program-bfrdp> (Last visited January 12, 2022).

² See <https://www.fdacs.gov/Business-Services/Grant-Opportunities> (Last visited January 12, 2022).

³ Section 570.843, F.S.

⁴ See <https://www.fdacs.gov/Education/Preparing-for-Careers-in-Agriculture> (Last visited January 12, 2022).

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the sum of \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General Revenue Fund to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services to implement the program.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 288.06572 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Perry

8-00892A-22

2022922__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Young Farmer and
3 Rancher Matching Grant Program; creating s. 288.06572,
4 F.S.; creating the program within the Department of
5 Agriculture and Consumer Services; specifying the
6 purpose of grants administered through the program;
7 requiring the department to select grant recipients
8 based on specified criteria; requiring the department
9 to adopt rules; requiring that applicants meet
10 specified eligibility requirements; specifying a range
11 for grant amounts; providing that a recipient may not
12 receive more than one award per year under the
13 program; specifying that grant funding is contingent
14 upon specific annual appropriation by the Legislature;
15 providing an appropriation; providing an effective
16 date.

17
18 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

19
20 Section 1. Section 288.06572, Florida Statutes, is created
21 to read:

22 288.06572 Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant
23 Program.—

24 (1) The Florida Young Farmer and Rancher Matching Grant
25 Program is created within the Department of Agriculture and
26 Consumer Services to support the start-up functions associated
27 with new farming and ranching operations.

28 (a) Grants administered by the Department of Agriculture
29 and Consumer Services through the program must be for the

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2022922__

30 purpose of fostering the creation and expansion of agricultural
31 businesses by young farmers and ranchers in this state.

32 (b) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
33 shall select grant recipients based on selection criteria
34 adopted pursuant to subsection (2).

35 (2) (a) The Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services
36 shall adopt rules governing the operation of the program,
37 including an application process and selection criteria for
38 grant recipients.

39 (b) At a minimum, in order to be eligible to receive a
40 grant, an individual must meet all of the following
41 requirements:

42 1. Be an agricultural producer, be an employee of a farm or
43 ranch, or be an agricultural producer who is a veteran as
44 defined in s. 1.01(14).

45 2. Be at least 18 years of age but not older than 35 years
46 of age.

47 3. Have operated a farm or ranch for not more than 10
48 years.

49 4. Demonstrate, at minimum, a dollar-for-dollar matching
50 investment for the grant amount requested.

51 5. Submit, on a form prescribed by the Department of
52 Agriculture and Consumer Services, a grant application during
53 the application period established by the Department of
54 Agriculture and Consumer Services. The Department of Agriculture
55 and Consumer Services may designate only one period each year
56 for accepting applications.

57 (3) Each grant award under the program must be at least
58 \$5,000 but not more than \$20,000, and a grant recipient may not

8-00892A-22

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59 receive more than one award per grant period.

60 (4) Annual grant funding for this program is contingent
61 upon specific annual appropriation by the Legislature.

62 Section 2. For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the sum of
63 \$500,000 in nonrecurring funds is appropriated from the General
64 Revenue Fund to the Department of Agriculture and Consumer
65 Services for the purpose of implementing this act.

66 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: SB 1002

INTRODUCER: Senator Burgess

SUBJECT: Florida Citrus

DATE: January 12, 2022

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|------------------|
| 1. | Fink | Becker | AG | Favorable |
| 2. | | | CA | |
| 3. | | | RC | |

I. Summary:

SB 1002 creates the "Citrus Recovery Act." Specifically, the bill:

- Increases the membership of the Florida Citrus Commission (commission) from nine members to eleven;
- Increases the number of citrus districts from three to six and revises the counties that comprise each district;
- Requires certain entities to provide reports on citrus production research to the commission at specified intervals and upon request of the commission;
- Requires that new varieties of citrus fruit produced from research or studies funded by state funds be made exclusively available for licensing and purchase to certain Florida producers for a specified timeframe;
- Requires producers who receive such exclusivity to retain the exclusivity for a specified timeframe and providing pricing requirements for such arrangements; and
- Requires moneys in the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust Fund to be expended for the activities authorized by s. 601.13, F.S.

II. Present Situation:

The Florida Citrus Commission acts as the head of the Department of Citrus. The commission is composed of nine representatives of the citrus industry who are citizens of the state and have at least five years of experience as citrus growers, packers or processors.¹ Additionally, during the five years immediately prior to appointment, each member must have derived a major portion of his/her income from activities listed above or been the owner of, member of, officer of, or paid employee of a corporation, firm, or partnership which has derived the major portion of its income from the growing, growing and shipping, or growing and processing of citrus fruit.

¹ Fla. Stat. Ann. § 601.04(1)(a)

Members of the commission are appointed by the governor for three year terms.² Appointments are made by February 1 preceding the commencement of the term and must be confirmed by the Senate in the following legislative session. Four members are appointed each year. Members serve until their respective successors are appointed and qualified. The regular terms begin on June 1 and end on May 31 of the third year after appointment. Effective July 1, 2011, the terms of all members of the commission appointed on or before May 1, 2011, were terminated and the Governor appointed members in accordance with the provisions of chapter 601, F.S. When appointments are made, the Governor publicly announces the actual classification and district that each appointee represents. A majority of the members of the commission constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business and for carrying out the duties of the commission. Prior to beginning their duties as members of the commission, each member must take and subscribe to the oath of office as prescribed in s. 5, Art. 11 of the State Constitution.

The commission must elect a chair and vice chair and such other officers as it deems necessary.³ The chair, with the concurrence of the commission, may appoint such advisory committees or councils composed of industry representatives as he/she deems appropriate. In appointing such committees or councils, the chair must set forth areas of committee or council concern that are consistent with the statutory powers and duties of the commission and the department.

Current law provides legislative intent that the commission be redistricted every five years. Redistricting is based on the total boxes produced from each of the three districts during that five-year period. Under current law, Citrus District One is composed of Levy, Alachua, Brevard, Putnam, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Flagler, Indian River, Marion, Seminole, Orange, Okeechobee, Polk, Volusia, and Osceola Counties.⁴ Citrus District Two is composed of Hardee, DeSoto, Highlands, and Glades Counties.⁵ Finally, Citrus District Three is composed of Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, Hernando, Hendry, Hillsborough, Lake, Lee, Manatee, Monroe, Martin, Pasco, Palm Beach, Pinellas, Sarasota, Sumter, Broward, and Miami-Dade Counties.⁶

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

Section 1 titles this Act the "Citrus Recovery Act".

Section 2 amends s. 601.04, F.S., to revise the qualifications and terms of members of the Florida Citrus Commission (commission). It provides that the commission shall be composed of eleven members, an increase from nine, who are appointed by the Governor. These members must be a resident of this state, rather than a citizen, as previously required.

The bill increases from six to seven the number of members that shall be classified as grower members. These grower members may not be disqualified as a member if, individually, or as the owner of, a member of, an officer of, or a stockholder of a corporation, firm, or partnership

² Fla. Stat. Ann. § 601.04(2)(b)

³ Fla. Stat. Ann. § 601.04(3)(a)

⁴ Fla. Stat. Ann. § 601.09(1)(a)

⁵ Fla. Stat. Ann. § 601.09(1)(b)

⁶ Fla. Stat. Ann. § 601.09(1)(c)

primarily engaged in citrus growing which processes, packs, and markets its own fruit and whose business is primarily not purchasing and handling fruit grown by others.

One grower member shall be appointed from each of the citrus districts designated in s. 601.09, F.S. Each such member must be a grower with a citrus producing area between 250 and 5,000 acres. Current law provides that a member must reside in the district from which they were appointed but the bill specifies that a member must reside or grow citrus in the district. One additional grower member shall be a grower with a citrus producing area of more than 5,001 acres who resides and grows citrus in the state.

The bill requires that three members of the commission shall be classified as processor members instead of grower-handler members. These three members shall be engaged as owners, or as paid officers or employees, of a corporation, firm, partnership, or other business unit engaged in canning, concentrating, or otherwise processing citrus fruit for market other than for shipment in fresh fruit form.

The bill requires that one member shall be classified as a packer member and shall be engaged as an owner, or as a paid officer or employee, of a corporation, firm, partnership, or other business unit that operates as a packinghouse as defined in s. 601.03, F.S. The member shall reside in the Indian River production area as defined in s. 601.091, F.S.

Members shall be appointed to terms of 3 years each, except that, to establish staggered terms of members from each citrus district, the terms of members appointed before July 1, 2022, shall be shortened as follows:

- The terms of two grower members and one processor member shall expire June 30, 2022 2012, and their successors shall be appointed to terms beginning July 1, 2022, and expiring May 31, 2025.
- The terms of two grower members and two processor members shall expire June 30, 2023, and their successors her or his successor shall be appointed to terms beginning July 1, 2023, and expiring May 31, 2026.
- The terms of three grower members and one packer member shall expire June 30, 2024, and their successors shall be appointed to terms beginning July 1, 2024, and ending May 31, 2027.

Section 3 increases the number of Citrus districts from three to six as follows:

- Citrus District One: Collier, Hendry, and Lee Counties.
- Citrus District Two: Charlotte and Desoto Counties.
- Citrus District Three: Glades, Highlands, and Okeechobee Counties.
- Citrus District Four: Hardee, Hillsborough, Manatee, Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties.
- Citrus District Five: Citrus, Hernando, Levy, Osceola, Pasco, Polk, and Sumter Counties.
- Citrus District Six: Alachua, Brevard, Broward, Flagler, Indian River, Lake, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe, Orange, Palm Beach, Putnam, St. Johns, Seminole, St. Lucie, and Volusia Counties.

Section 4 adds requirements relating to citrus research administered by the Department of Citrus (department).

It requires that an entity that expends funds received from the State Treasury on citrus production research conducted pursuant to chapter 573, F.S., as recommended by the Citrus Research and Development Foundation, Inc., or conducted through contract with the department shall deliver a report that includes all of the following information to the commission biannually and at the request of the commission:

- Project plans selected for funding;
- The financial status of the projects;
- Current findings of the funded research;
- Availability of citrus products or application of growers' practices found through funded research; and
- The status of the commercialization process of such products or practices.

It also requires that before being released for sale to the general public, any new variety of citrus fruit which is developed as a result of any research or study accomplished using funds from the State Treasury must be made available:

- For licensing and purchase for a period of 90 days exclusively to any Florida not-for-profit corporation that is a producer engaged, excluding engagement in agricultural commodities other than citrus, in citrus rootstock or scion breeding, research, or licensing, by agreement with a state land grant university, the department, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, or the United States Department of Agriculture. If a producer exercises such exclusive availability, the producer must retain the exclusivity for 8 years after the date of execution.
- At the 5-year rolling average cost of citrus bud or grafting material available to Florida producers, including a development incentive that does not exceed 10 percent of the 5-year average.

Section 5 reenacts section 600.051(1), F.S., which grants the department the power to enter into, administer, and enforce marketing agreements with handlers and distributors engaged in any one or more of the citrus districts established in and by s. 601.09, F.S.

Section 6 reenacts s. 601.10, F.S., to state that the department shall have and shall exercise the power to have any nonpublished reports or data related to studies or research conducted, caused to be conducted, or funded by the department under s. 601.13, F.S. confidential and exempt from s. 119.07(1), F.S. and s. 24(a), Art. 1 of the State Constitution.

Section 7 reenacts s. 601.15(7)(b), F.S., to require moneys in the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust Fund to be expended for the activities authorized by s. 601.13, F.S. and for the cost of those general overhead, research and development, maintenance, salaries, professional fees, enforcement costs, and other such expenses that are not related to advertising, merchandising, public relations, trade luncheons, publicity, and other associated activities. The cost of general overhead, maintenance, salaries, professional fees, enforcement costs, and other such expenses that are related to advertising, merchandising, public relations, trade luncheons, publicity, and associated activities shall be paid from the balance of the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust Fund.

Section 8 provides an effective date of July 1, 2022.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill substantially amends the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 601.04, 601.09, 601.10, 601.13

This bill creates the following sections of the Florida Statutes: 600.051(1), 601.15(7)(b)

IX. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.

By Senator Burgess

20-00784-22

20221002__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Florida citrus; providing a short
3 title; amending s. 601.04, F.S.; revising the
4 membership of the Florida Citrus Commission; requiring
5 members to meet certain requirements; revising
6 commission appointments to achieve staggered terms for
7 the newly appointed members; revising the requirements
8 for a quorum; amending s. 601.09, F.S.; increasing the
9 number of citrus districts in this state and revising
10 the counties that comprise each district; amending s.
11 601.13, F.S.; requiring certain entities to provide
12 reports on citrus production research to the
13 commission at specified intervals and upon request of
14 the commission; specifying requirements for the
15 reports; requiring that new varieties of citrus fruit
16 produced from research or studies funded by state
17 funds be made exclusively available for licensing and
18 purchase to certain Florida producers for a specified
19 timeframe; requiring producers who receive such
20 exclusivity to retain the exclusivity for a specified
21 timeframe; providing pricing requirements for such
22 arrangements; reenacting s. 600.051(1), F.S., relating
23 to marketing agreements and the powers of the
24 Department of Citrus, to incorporate the amendment
25 made to s. 601.09, F.S., in a reference thereto;
26 reenacting ss. 601.10(8)(c) and 601.15(7)(b), F.S.,
27 relating to powers of the department and the use of
28 moneys in the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust Fund,
29 respectively, to incorporate the amendment made to s.

20-00784-22

20221002__

30 601.13, F.S., in references thereto; providing an
31 effective date.

32
33 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

34
35 Section 1. This act may be cited as the "Citrus Recovery
36 Act."

37 Section 2. Section 601.04, Florida Statutes, is amended to
38 read:

39 601.04 Florida Citrus Commission; creation and membership.—

40 (1) (a) There is created within the department the Florida
41 Citrus Commission, which shall be composed of 11 ~~nine~~ members
42 appointed by the Governor. Each member must be a resident
43 ~~citizen~~ of this ~~the~~ state who is and has been actively engaged
44 in the growing, growing and shipping, or growing and processing
45 of citrus fruit in the state for at least 5 years immediately
46 before appointment to the commission and has, during that 5-year
47 period:

48 1. Derived a major portion of her or his income from such
49 growing, growing and shipping, or growing and processing of
50 citrus fruit; or

51 2. Been the owner of, member of, officer of, or paid
52 employee of a corporation, firm, or partnership that has, during
53 that 5-year period, derived the major portion of its income from
54 such growing, growing and shipping, or growing and processing of
55 citrus fruit.

56 (b)1. Seven ~~Six~~ members of the commission shall be
57 classified as grower members and shall be primarily engaged in
58 the growing of citrus fruit as an individual owner; as the owner

20-00784-22

20221002__

59 of, or as stockholder of, a corporation; or as a member of a
60 firm or partnership primarily engaged in citrus growing. Such
61 members may not receive any compensation from any licensed
62 citrus fruit dealer or handler, as defined in s. 601.03, other
63 than gift fruit shippers, but any of the grower members may
64 ~~shall~~ not be disqualified as a member if, individually, or as
65 the owner of, a member of, an officer of, or a stockholder of a
66 corporation, firm, or partnership primarily engaged in citrus
67 growing which processes, packs, and markets its own fruit and
68 whose business is primarily not purchasing and handling fruit
69 grown by others.

70 2. Three members of the commission shall be classified as
71 processor ~~grower-handler~~ members and shall be engaged as owners,
72 or as paid officers or employees, of a corporation, firm,
73 partnership, or other business unit engaged in canning,
74 concentrating, or otherwise processing citrus fruit for market
75 other than for shipment in fresh fruit form ~~handling citrus~~
76 ~~fruit. One such member shall be primarily engaged in the fresh~~
77 ~~fruit business, and two such members shall be primarily engaged~~
78 ~~in the processing of citrus fruits.~~

79 3. One member shall be classified as a packer member and
80 shall be engaged as an owner, or as a paid officer or employee,
81 of a corporation, firm, partnership, or other business unit that
82 operates as a packinghouse as defined in s. 601.03. The member
83 shall reside in the Indian River production area of this state
84 as defined in s. 601.091.

85 4. For purposes of this section, a member's residence is
86 his or her actual physical and permanent residence.

87 (2) (a) One grower member ~~Three commission members~~ shall be

20-00784-22

20221002__

88 appointed from each of the ~~three~~ citrus districts designated in
89 s. 601.09. Each such member must be a grower with a citrus
90 producing area between 250 and 5,000 acres ~~Members appointed~~
91 ~~from the same citrus district shall serve staggered terms, such~~
92 ~~that the term of one of the district's three members expires~~
93 ~~each year.~~ Each member must reside or grow citrus in the
94 district from which she or he was appointed. ~~For the purposes of~~
95 ~~this section, a member's residence is her or his actual physical~~
96 ~~and permanent residence.~~

97 (b) One grower member shall be a grower with a citrus
98 producing area of more than 5,001 acres. The grower must reside
99 and grow citrus in this state.

100 (c) Members shall be appointed to terms of 3 years each,
101 except that, to establish staggered terms of members from each
102 citrus district, the terms of members appointed before July 1,
103 2022 ~~2012~~, shall be shortened as follows:

104 1. The terms ~~term~~ of two grower members and one processor
105 member ~~one member from each citrus district~~ shall expire June
106 30, 2022 ~~2012~~, and their successors ~~her or his successor~~ shall
107 be appointed to terms ~~a term~~ beginning July 1, 2022 ~~2012~~, and
108 expiring May 31, 2025 ~~2015~~.

109 2. The terms ~~term~~ of two grower members and two processor
110 members ~~one member from each citrus district~~ shall expire June
111 30, 2023 ~~2013~~, and their successors ~~her or his successor~~ shall
112 be appointed to terms ~~a term~~ beginning July 1, 2023 ~~2013~~, and
113 expiring May 31, 2026 ~~2016~~.

114 3. The terms ~~term~~ of three grower members and one packer
115 member ~~one member from each citrus district~~ shall expire June
116 30, 2024 ~~2014~~, and their successors ~~her or his successor~~ shall

20-00784-22

20221002__

117 be appointed to terms ~~a term~~ beginning July 1, 2024 ~~2014~~, and
118 ending May 31, 2027 ~~2017~~.

119 4. Subsequent appointments shall be made in accordance with
120 this section.

121

122 Appointments shall be made by February 1 preceding the
123 commencement of the term and are subject to confirmation by the
124 Senate in the following legislative session. Each member is
125 eligible for reappointment and shall serve until her or his
126 successor is appointed and qualified. The regular terms begin on
127 June 1 and expire on May 31 of the third year after such
128 appointment.

129 (d) ~~(e)~~ When appointments are made, the Governor shall
130 publicly announce the actual classification and district that
131 each appointee represents. A majority of the members of the
132 commission currently appointed constitutes ~~shall constitute~~ a
133 quorum for the transaction of all business and the carrying out
134 of the duties of the commission. Before entering upon the
135 discharge of their duties as members of the commission, each
136 member shall take and subscribe to the oath of office prescribed
137 in s. 5, Art. II of the State Constitution. The qualifications
138 and classification required of each member by this section
139 continue to be required throughout the respective term of
140 office, and if a member, after appointment, fails to meet the
141 qualifications or classification that she or he possessed at the
142 time of appointment, the member must resign or be removed and be
143 replaced with a member possessing the proper qualifications and
144 classification.

145 (e) ~~(d)~~ When making an appointment to the commission, the

20-00784-22

20221002__

146 Governor shall announce the district, classification, and term
147 of the person appointed.

148 (3) (a) The commission shall elect a chair and secretary and
149 may elect a vice chair and such other officers as the commission
150 deems advisable.

151 (b) The chair, subject to commission concurrence, may
152 appoint such advisory committees or councils composed of
153 industry representatives as the chair deems appropriate, setting
154 forth the committee or council concerns that are consistent with
155 the statutory powers and duties of the commission and the
156 department.

157 Section 3. Section 601.09, Florida Statutes, is amended to
158 read:

159 601.09 Citrus districts.—

160 (1) For purposes of this chapter, the state is divided into
161 six ~~three~~ districts composed of:

162 (a) Citrus District One: Collier, Hendry, and Lee ~~Levy,~~
163 ~~Alachua, Brevard, Putnam, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Flagler, Indian~~
164 ~~River, Marion, Seminole, Orange, Okeechobee, Polk, Volusia, and~~
165 ~~Osceola~~ Counties.

166 (b) Citrus District Two: Charlotte and Hardee, ~~DeSoto,~~
167 ~~Highlands, and Glades~~ Counties.

168 (c) Citrus District Three: Glades, Highlands, and
169 Okeechobee ~~Charlotte, Citrus, Collier, Hernando, Hendry,~~
170 ~~Hillsborough, Lake, Lee, Manatee, Monroe, Martin, Pasco, Palm~~
171 ~~Beach, Pinellas, Sarasota, Sumter, Broward, and Miami-Dade~~
172 Counties.

173 (d) Citrus District Four: Hardee, Hillsborough, Manatee,
174 Pinellas, and Sarasota Counties.

20-00784-22

20221002__

175 (e) Citrus District Five: Citrus, Hernando, Levy, Osceola,
176 Pasco, Polk, and Sumter Counties.

177 (f) Citrus District Six: Alachua, Brevard, Broward,
178 Flagler, Indian River, Lake, Marion, Martin, Miami-Dade, Monroe,
179 Orange, Palm Beach, Putnam, St. Johns, Seminole, St. Lucie, and
180 Volusia Counties.

181 (2) The Legislature intends that the citrus districts be
182 reviewed and, if necessary to maintain substantially equal
183 volumes of citrus production within each district, redistricted
184 every 5 years. The commission may, once every 5 years, review
185 the citrus districts based on the total boxes produced within
186 each district during the preceding 5 years and, based on the
187 commission's findings, submit recommendations to the Legislature
188 for redistricting in accordance with this subsection.

189 Section 4. Present subsection (3) of section 601.13,
190 Florida Statutes, is redesignated as subsection (5), and a new
191 subsection (3) and subsection (4) are added to that section, to
192 read:

193 601.13 Citrus research; administration by Department of
194 Citrus; appropriation.—

195 (3) An entity that expends funds received from the State
196 Treasury on citrus production research conducted pursuant to
197 chapter 573, as recommended by the Citrus Research and
198 Development Foundation, Inc., or conducted through contract with
199 the department shall deliver a report that includes all of the
200 following information to the commission biannually and at the
201 request of the commission:

202 (a) Project plans selected for funding.

203 (b) The financial status of the projects.

20-00784-22

20221002__

- 204 (c) Current findings of the funded research.
- 205 (d) Availability of citrus products or application of
206 growers' practices found through funded research.
- 207 (e) The status of the commercialization process of such
208 products or practices.
- 209 (4) Before being released for sale to the general public,
210 any new variety of citrus fruit which is developed as a result
211 of any research or study accomplished using funds from the State
212 Treasury must be made available:
- 213 (a) For licensing and purchase for a period of 90 days
214 exclusively to any Florida not-for-profit corporation that is a
215 producer engaged, excluding engagement in agricultural
216 commodities other than citrus, in citrus rootstock or scion
217 breeding, research, or licensing, by agreement with a state land
218 grant university, the department, the Department of Agriculture
219 and Consumer Services, or the United States Department of
220 Agriculture. If a producer exercises such exclusive
221 availability, the producer must retain the exclusivity for 8
222 years after the date of execution.
- 223 (b) At the 5-year rolling average cost of citrus bud or
224 grafting material available to Florida producers, including a
225 development incentive that does not exceed 10 percent of the 5-
226 year average.

227 Section 5. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
228 made by this act to section 601.09, Florida Statutes, in a
229 reference thereto, subsection (1) of section 600.051, Florida
230 Statutes, is reenacted to read:

231 600.051 Marketing agreements; powers of department.—

232 (1) In order to effectuate the declared policy and purposes

20-00784-22

20221002__

233 of this act, the department shall have the power to enter into,
234 administer, and enforce marketing agreements with handlers and
235 distributors engaged in any one or more of the citrus districts
236 established in and by s. 601.09, in the handling and
237 distributing of citrus fruit in fresh fruit form or any variety
238 or varieties, grade, size, or quality thereof, regulating the
239 handling of such citrus fruit in the way and manner and to the
240 extent therein prescribed and agreed upon, which said marketing
241 agreements shall be binding only upon the signatories thereto
242 exclusively. The execution of any such marketing agreement shall
243 in no manner affect the issuance, administration, or enforcement
244 of any marketing order otherwise provided for by chapter 601,
245 and any marketing agreement executed hereunder shall be
246 ineffective to the extent that it is in conflict with any rule,
247 regulation, marketing order, or marketing agreement under any
248 federal law relating to the handling of citrus fruit grown in
249 Florida.

250 Section 6. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
251 made by this act to section 601.13, Florida Statutes, in a
252 reference thereto, paragraph (c) of subsection (8) of section
253 601.10, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

254 601.10 Powers of the Department of Citrus.—The department
255 shall have and shall exercise such general and specific powers
256 as are delegated to it by this chapter and other statutes of the
257 state, which powers shall include, but are not limited to, the
258 following:

259 (8)

260 (c) Any nonpublished reports or data related to studies or
261 research conducted, caused to be conducted, or funded by the

20-00784-22

20221002__

262 department under s. 601.13 is confidential and exempt from s.
263 119.07(1) and s. 24(a), Art. I of the State Constitution.

264 Section 7. For the purpose of incorporating the amendment
265 made by this act to section 601.13, Florida Statutes, in a
266 reference thereto, paragraph (b) of subsection (7) of section
267 601.15, Florida Statutes, is reenacted to read:

268 601.15 Advertising campaign; methods of conducting;
269 assessments; emergency reserve fund; citrus research.-

270 (7) All assessments levied and collected under this chapter
271 shall be paid into the State Treasury on or before the 15th day
272 of each month. Such moneys shall be accounted for in a special
273 fund to be designated as the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust
274 Fund, and all moneys in such fund are appropriated to the
275 department for the following purposes:

276 (b) Moneys in the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust Fund
277 shall be expended for the activities authorized by s. 601.13 and
278 for the cost of those general overhead, research and
279 development, maintenance, salaries, professional fees,
280 enforcement costs, and other such expenses that are not related
281 to advertising, merchandising, public relations, trade
282 luncheons, publicity, and other associated activities. The cost
283 of general overhead, maintenance, salaries, professional fees,
284 enforcement costs, and other such expenses that are related to
285 advertising, merchandising, public relations, trade luncheons,
286 publicity, and associated activities shall be paid from the
287 balance of the Florida Citrus Advertising Trust Fund.

288 Section 8. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Agriculture

BILL: CS/SB 1006

INTRODUCER: Agriculture Committee and Senator Burgess

SUBJECT: State Symbols

DATE: January 13, 2022

REVISED: _____

| | ANALYST | STAFF DIRECTOR | REFERENCE | ACTION |
|----|---------|----------------|-----------|--------|
| 1. | Becker | Becker | AG | Fav/CS |
| 2. | | | CA | |
| 3. | | | RC | |

Please see Section IX. for Additional Information:

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE - Substantial Changes

I. Summary:

CS/SB 1006 designates strawberry shortcake as the official state dessert.

This bill is not expected to have an impact on state and local revenues and expenditures.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

II. Present Situation:

State Symbols

Chapter 15, F.S., designates state emblems. To date, there are designations for a state motto, tree, fruit,¹ beverage,² citrus archive, anthem, song, shell, stone, gem, wildflower, play, animal, freshwater fish, saltwater fish, marine mammal, saltwater mammal, butterfly, reptile, saltwater reptile, tortoise, air fair, rodeo, festival, moving image center and archive, litter control symbol, pageant, opera program, renaissance festival, railroad museums, history museum, transportation museum, flagship, soil, fiddle contest, band, sports hall of fame, pie, honey, horse, and heritage cattle breed.

Currently, there is no state dessert. The state pie is key lime pie.³

¹ Section 15.0315, F.S., designates the orange as the official fruit of Florida.

² Section 15.032, F.S., designates orange juice as the official beverage of Florida.

³ Section 150025, F.S.

Strawberries

The strawberry is a small plant of the *Rosacea* (Rose) family and all varieties of the strawberry plant belong to the *Fragaria* genus.⁴ Strawberries are not berries or fruit, they are enlarged ends of the plant's stamen. The small black spots on the outside are actually the fruit.⁵

Florida produces 12% of the U.S. value of strawberries annually, valued at \$307 million.⁶ Strawberries are the second highest valued of the berry, potato, vegetable, and watermelon crops in Florida.⁷ "Camarosa," "Sweet Sensation," and "Festival" varieties are recommended for Florida home gardens.⁸

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 1006 provides the following information in whereas clauses:

- More than 10,000 acres of strawberries are planted annually in the greater Plant City area, accounting for 75 percent of the United States' winter strawberry crop;
- Beginning in the spring of 1930, and again in 1948 after a six year hiatus during and following World War II, the Florida Strawberry Festival, held in Plant City and organized by the Plant City Lions Club, was revived by American Legion Post #26, and other area civic organizations;
- Each year the Florida Strawberry Festival welcomes visitors from around the world to celebrate this slice of Americana and the area's bountiful harvests;
- Approximately 200,000 strawberry shortcakes, the festival's signature dessert, are served each year at the Florida Strawberry Festival, making it a staple among festival attendees;
- Strawberry shortcake is a dessert consisting of a base of shortcake, which resembles a biscuit with a touch of cake, a layer of sweet, sliced strawberries, and a healthy dollop of whipped cream; and
- In 2000, *Guinness World Records* recognized Plant City as the home of the biggest shortcake in the world.

The bill designates strawberry shortcake as the official state dessert.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2022.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

⁴ UF/IFAS Gulf Coast Research and Education Center, *Strawberry Facts*, <https://gcrec.ifas.ufl.edu/fruit-crops/strawberries/strawberry-facts/> (last visited January 12, 2022).

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, *Florida Agriculture Overview and Statistics*, <https://www.fdacs.gov/Agriculture-Industry/Florida-Agriculture-Overview-and-Statistics> (last visited January 12, 2022).

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ UF/IFAS Extension, *Growing Strawberries*, <https://sfyl.ifas.ufl.edu/lawn-and-garden/growing-strawberries/> (last visited January 12, 2022).

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

D. State Tax or Fee Increases:

None.

E. Other Constitutional Issues:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:**A. Tax/Fee Issues:**

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

None.

C. Government Sector Impact:

None.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Statutes Affected:

This bill creates section 15.0522 of the Florida Statutes.

IX. Additional Information:

- A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:**
(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

CS by Agriculture on January 13, 2022:

Clarifies that the Florida Strawberry Festival occurs each year versus each spring.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.



787412

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

| Senate | . | House |
|------------|---|-------|
| Comm: RCS | . | |
| 01/13/2022 | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |
| | . | |

The Committee on Agriculture (Burgess) recommended the following:

1 **Senate Amendment**

2

3 Delete line 14

4 and insert:

5 WHEREAS, each year, the Florida Strawberry Festival

By Senator Burgess

20-00544-22

20221006__

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to state symbols; creating s. 15.0522,
3 F.S.; designating strawberry shortcake as the official
4 state dessert; providing an effective date.

5
6 WHEREAS, more than 10,000 acres of strawberries are planted
7 annually in the greater Plant City area, accounting for 75
8 percent of the United States' winter strawberry crop, and

9 WHEREAS, beginning in the spring of 1930, and again in 1948
10 after a 6-year hiatus during and following World War II, the
11 Florida Strawberry Festival, held in Plant City and organized by
12 the Plant City Lions Club, was revived by American Legion Post
13 #26, and other area civic organizations, and

14 WHEREAS, each spring, the Florida Strawberry Festival
15 welcomes visitors from around the world to celebrate this slice
16 of Americana and the area's bountiful harvests, and

17 WHEREAS, approximately 200,000 strawberry shortcakes, the
18 festival's signature dessert, are served each year at the
19 Florida Strawberry Festival, making it a staple among festival
20 attendees, and

21 WHEREAS, strawberry shortcake is a dessert consisting of a
22 base of shortcake, which resembles a biscuit with a touch of
23 cake, a layer of sweet, sliced strawberries, and a healthy
24 dollop of whipped cream, and

25 WHEREAS, in 2000, *Guinness World Records* recognized Plant
26 City as home of the biggest shortcake in the world, NOW,
27 THEREFORE,

28
29 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

20-00544-22

20221006__

30

31 Section 1. Section 15.0522, Florida Statutes, is created to
32 read:

33 15.0522 Official state dessert.—Strawberry shortcake is
34 designated as the official Florida state dessert.

35 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2022.

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

OPPAGA research memo

Bill Number or Topic

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

1/12/22

Meeting Date

Agriculture

Committee

Name Daphne Holden

Phone 850-717-0546

Address 111 W Madison St

Email Holden.Daphne@OPPAGA.fl.gov

Tallahassee FL 32399

Street

City

State

Zip

Speaking: [] For [] Against [x] Information OR Waive Speaking: [] In Support [] Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

[x] I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

[] I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

[] I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. 2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf (flsenate.gov)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

1007

Meeting Date

Bill Number or Topic

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Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Matt Joyner - Florida Citrus Mutual

Phone 863-687-1111

Address 600 N. Broadway Ave

Email mattj@flcitrusmutual.com

Street

Darlow

FL

33830

City

State

Zip

Speaking: [] For [] Against [] Information OR Waive Speaking: [x] In Support [] Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

[] I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

[x] I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

FL Citrus Mutual

[] I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. 2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf (flsenate.gov)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

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1/13/22

Meeting Date

SB1006

Bill Number or Topic

Agriculture

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Tracy Streckler

Phone 407-493-6511

Address 2726 Wekiva Meadows Ct.

Email t1streck@gmail.com

Street

Apopka

City

FL

State

32712

Zip

Speaking: For Against Information

OR

Waive Speaking: In Support Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11,045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

The Florida Senate

APPEARANCE RECORD

Deliver both copies of this form to Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

1.13.22

Meeting Date

SB1006

Bill Number or Topic

Agriculture

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name Damaris Allen

Phone 813.843.6210

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Tampa FL 33629

City

State

Zip

Speaking: For Against Information OR Waive Speaking: In Support Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

While it is a tradition to encourage public testimony, time may not permit all persons wishing to speak to be heard at this hearing. Those who do speak may be asked to limit their remarks so that as many persons as possible can be heard. If you have questions about registering to lobby please see Fla. Stat. §11.045 and Joint Rule 1. [2020-2022 Joint Rules.pdf \(flsenate.gov\)](#)

This form is part of the public record for this meeting.

S-001 (08/10/2021)

Meeting Date

Deliver both copies of this form to
Senate professional staff conducting the meeting

Bill Number or Topic

Agriculture

Committee

Amendment Barcode (if applicable)

Name **Libby Guzzo**

Phone **850-245-0155**

Address **400 s. monroe st**

Email **libby.Guzzo@myfloridalegal.com**

Street

tallahassee

fl

32399

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State

Zip

Speaking: For Against Information **OR** Waive Speaking: In Support Against

PLEASE CHECK ONE OF THE FOLLOWING:

I am appearing without compensation or sponsorship.

I am a registered lobbyist, representing:

Office Of Attorney General

I am not a lobbyist, but received something of value for my appearance (travel, meals, lodging, etc.), sponsored by:

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S-001 (08/10/2021)

CourtSmart Tag Report

Room: SB 110 **Case No.:**
Caption: Senate Agriculture Committee

Type:
Judge:

Started: **1/13/2022 11:00:36 AM**
Ends: **1/13/2022 11:41:29 AM** **Length:** **00:40:54**

11:00:43 AM Chair Rouson
11:00:50 AM Opening Remarks
11:01:17 AM Roll Call
11:01:20 AM Pledge of Allegiance
11:01:26 AM Chair Rouson
11:01:57 AM OPPAGA Research Memo "Geographic Access to Health Food in Florida" by Daphne Holden
11:18:20 AM Chair Rouson
11:18:52 AM Vice Chair Bradley with question
11:19:03 AM Daphne Holden to answer
11:19:51 AM Chair Rouson
11:19:59 AM Senator Perry with question
11:20:42 AM Daphne Holden to answer
11:20:53 AM Perry with followup question
11:21:00 AM Daphne Holden to answer
11:21:17 AM Chair Rouson with question
11:21:59 AM Daphne Holden to answer
11:22:16 AM Chair Rouson with comments
11:23:04 AM Presentation concluded
11:23:13 AM Chair Rouson hands gavel to Vice Chair Bradley
11:23:20 AM Vice Chair Bradley
11:23:25 AM Tab 1 - SPB 7028 Food Policy Advisory Council
11:24:15 AM Chair Rouson explains SPB
11:25:14 AM Vice Chair Bradley
11:25:20 AM Chair Rouson explains Amendment 969611
11:25:56 AM Amendment adopted by voice vote
11:26:03 AM On bill as amended
11:26:07 AM Senator Boyd with question
11:26:22 AM Senator Boyd with comment
11:26:32 AM Vice Chair Bradley
11:26:36 AM Roll Call
11:26:45 AM Bill reported favorably
11:27:04 AM Vice Chair Returns gavel
11:27:07 AM Chair Rouson
11:27:10 AM Tab 2 - SB 922 by Senator Perry
11:27:27 AM Senator Perry explains the bill
11:27:53 AM Chair Rouson
11:28:09 AM Senator Perry closes on bill
11:28:25 AM Senator Rouson
11:28:30 AM Roll call
11:28:38 AM Bill reported favorably
11:28:53 AM Tab 3 - SB 1002 by Senator Burgess

11:29:45 AM Chair Rouson
11:29:48 AM Chair Rouson with question
11:30:23 AM Senator Burgess to answer
11:30:43 AM Senator Rouson
11:30:49 AM Matt Joyner - Florida Citrus Mutual waives in support
11:31:16 AM Senator Burgess closes on the bill
11:31:26 AM Chair Rouson
11:31:29 AM Roll Call
11:31:56 AM Chair Rouson
11:32:01 AM Tab 4 - SB 1006 by Senator Burgess
11:32:55 AM Senator Burgess explains the bill
11:33:00 AM Chair Rouson
11:34:04 AM Strawberry Industries history by Burgess
11:36:06 AM Amendment 787412
11:36:25 AM Chair Rouson
11:36:43 AM Senator Burgess closes
11:36:54 AM On bill as amended
11:37:02 AM Senator Ausley with question
11:37:28 AM Senator Burgess to answer
11:37:49 AM Chair Rouson
11:37:59 AM Tracy Strecker waives in support
11:38:21 AM Damaris Allen waives in support
11:38:35 AM Libby Guzzo, AG office, waives in support
11:38:48 AM Chair Rouson
11:38:59 AM Senator Rodriguez with comment
11:39:32 AM Senator Burgess closes on bill
11:40:34 AM Roll call
11:40:56 AM Chair Rouson
11:41:00 AM Bill reported favorably
11:41:09 AM Chair Rouson closing remarks
11:41:16 AM Meeting Adjourned