

# Where's the Kale? Continued victories of a community-based participatory research partnership

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Healthy Eating in Context: Local Solutions, Global Challenges

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# Background

- A healthy and nutritional diet is important in addressing the health problems of minorities.
- Studies have found that both supermarkets and smaller stores serve as major food shopping outlets for households.
- Limited numbers of stores that offer healthy food options have created barriers to good eating habits among poor and nonwhite communities.

# Where's the Kale? Findings

- Thesis study of whether a predominantly African American neighborhood had disproportionately less availability of fruits and vegetables than a predominantly non-Hispanic White neighborhood.
- Availability was judged on the bases of the types of stores available in each community and the specific types of fruits and vegetables made available in each store.
- The availability of fruits and vegetables in the food stores of each community was assessed by physically canvassing neighborhood food stores and taking a census of available fruit and vegetable items based on a list of fruits and vegetables derived from the DASH diet.
- The predominantly African American community under study had fewer varieties of fresh fruits and vegetables and fewer stores offering larger varieties of fruits and vegetables.

**Williams, E.M.**, Tayo, B.O., McLean, B., Smit, E., Sempos, C.T., & Crespo, C.J. Where's the Kale? Environmental availability of fruits and vegetables in two racially dissimilar communities. *Environmental Justice* 1(1): 35-43, 2008.

# Background

- The Environmental Justice Action Group (EJAG) of Western New York was awarded a grant to address the issues of food justice on Buffalo's eastside through community gardening.
- The project involves phytoremediation and bioremediation of the soil on a double lot purchased by EJAG in the shadow of a local Superfund site.
- The community found that some of the toxins had migrated from the site to the soil of the purchased property.
- Research was expanded to engage the community in food production and the lack of access to fresh foods.

# Study Population

- The Eastside of Buffalo, New York, specifically census tracts 34-35.
- This region has a population of approximately 11,000 per the 2,000 census.
- There is only one small supermarket in this area that carries fresh fruits and vegetables.

# Goals/Objectives

- Determine how many growing seasons it takes to get the soil to a safe level for gardening.
- The goal is to create a self-contained garden of raised beds in mini hoop houses on part of the land.
- There will be a rain barrel watering system and a compost box to grow enriched soil for the gardens.
- Produce from the garden will be available to residents and any excess will be donated to a local food pantry.



# Assessment and Offerings

- Dietary knowledge, behavior, and perceptions of residents will be assessed before planting and end of project.
- A six month assessment will determine whether healthy eating habits have been sustained.
- This project will offer free classes on nutrition, eating healthy on a budget, and healthy cooking.



# Expectations

- The garden is expected to build community capacity.
- The garden is also expected to provide free fresh fruits and vegetables to residents.
- The garden is expected to help meet the requirements for Urban Farming to sell the produce at local farmer's markets or become a co-op.



# Who Will Be Involved?

- The residents of Model Block and members from True Bethel Baptist Church
- Project Coordinator (Americorps Volunteer)
- A horticulturist will oversee the project



# Questions

