



3 Visions Farm

Cocoagranola LLC

Food Deserts

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Food accessibility was a widespread issue long before Covid-19 struck. Unfortunately with the introduction of this virus, the issue has only been exacerbated despite the fact that several sources indicate how important a healthy diet is to overall immune and psychological health. Even if you did live in a city, there's a chance that you might not have transportation to get to the grocery store or that it's too far out to make it possible except for maybe once out of the month. Maybe the food around you is overpriced for all the healthy labels they give it. These places are called "food deserts" and they're spread all throughout the US.



In the Washington state area, a survey was conducted between August 19th and December 21st of last year for a breakdown of the Seattle/Tacoma/Bellevue area regarding food accessibility. From August to December, the population that reported they often didn't get enough to eat hovered around 7% to

8%. When examined why, the study found that about 40%-50% of them couldn't afford to buy more food. Another portion of the survey stated that only up to 10% of the struggling adults in their households got free groceries or meals between those months. Even if they tried to get food, at least 31% said that the stores didn't have what they needed. There's something that correlates

between these numbers and it's accessibility.

How do we make food more accessible and affordable? With 3 Visions Farm having the future goal of spreading it's produce to the people that need it affordably, the SNAP program seems to be a likely course to go. SNAP or "Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program" teams up with farmers markets in the Washington area for those who have an EBT card by raising their benefit amount when they buy fresh produce. The market themselves will receive reimbursement from the sold produce at the end of each month so long as they keep up with their totals from such sales.



Taking this a step further with accessibility, there was a study conducted in Minnesota of 2014 to create a mobile grocery. The company conducting it, EcoDistricts, aims to make food access sustainable and equitable across North America starting with its neighborhoods. For example; the mobile market they

created in Twin Cities Minneapolis and St. Paul retrofitted a bus to carry groceries like fresh fruit, veggies and dairy products 5 days a week at 19 different locations. They stated that their food was cheaper due to their partnerships and bulk wholesalers and the Mobile Market was able to raise more than \$20,000 to retrofit another bus for the task. Their study was quick to point out the possible pitfalls of the business like the costs of setting up a bus like this and bringing up the issue of certain ordinances that might not allow the use of mobile stores. Even facing the pressure from retail chains to keep competition down is something to consider.

3 Visions Farm wants to become a part of the movement of accessibility. In order to understand how we can properly help, we have to be aware of who needs help where and then the how. While it's not often

easy to make up the costs needed to begin them, hence the need for funding, the lasting effects become sustainable with enough of a network keeping each other afloat. Since their beginning in 2010, EcoDistricts has spent years building



up their funding and partnerships enough to spread their neighborhood initiative across the states in a way that can be measured and seen. The website(s) to these organisations will be provided below so that you too can become informed and inspired. 3 Visions Farm certainly is.

Stay tuned for more information. Thanks for reading!

3 Visions Farm
- Celena Meland

Links:

SNAP: [Click Here](#)

EcoDistricts: [Click Here](#)

Public Health- Seattle and King County: [Click Here](#)



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