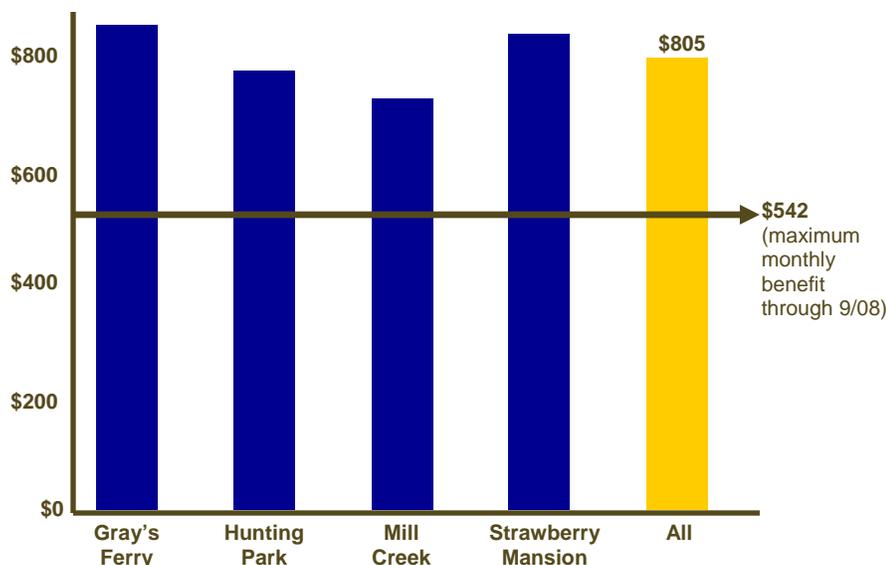


The Real Cost of a Healthy Diet

Philadelphia results

Cost of TFP in four neighborhoods exceeds maximum food stamp benefit

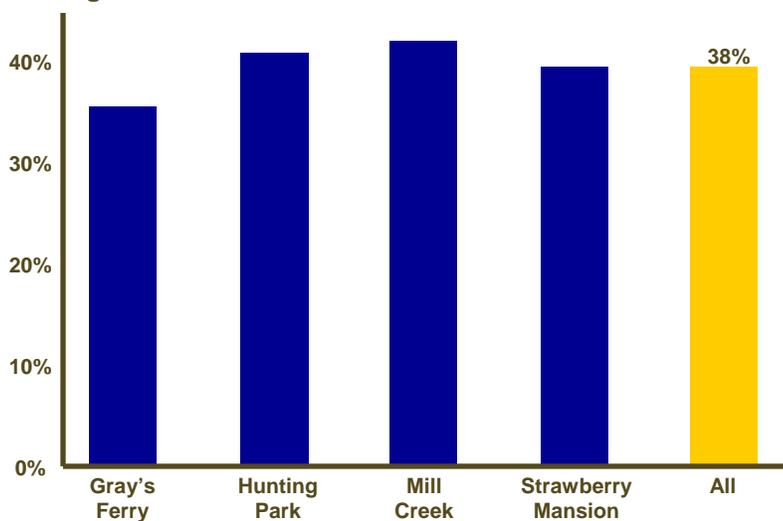


Results are based on data collected in four stores in each of four Philadelphia neighborhoods (16 stores total). The average monthly cost of the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) was \$805, 49% higher than the maximum monthly food stamp benefit for a family of four. On average, the TFP could not be purchased with the maximum food stamp benefit in any of the participating neighborhoods; **the maximum benefit was sufficient to purchase the TFP in only one of sixteen surveyed stores.** Families in Philadelphia relying on small stores for their grocery needs pay the highest prices—nearly \$850 according to our results.

Healthy items missing from grocery shelves

The TFP food list contains 104 items. On average, **38% of items were not available** in participating Philadelphia stores. The most commonly missing items were whole wheat products, such as bread, cereal, rice, and pasta. Low-fat dairy products, lean meats, and fresh fruits and vegetables were also seldom available. Thirty two percent of items were not available in medium size stores and over one half of items in the Thrifty Food Plan were missing from small stores in Philadelphia.

Percent of items missing



September 2008

Resources and demographics

Partner and advocacy organizations

The Food Trust

Mission: To ensure that everyone has access to affordable, nutritious food by addressing the systemic issues that prevent our food and farming system from adequately serving hundreds of thousands of individuals throughout the region every year.

Website: www.thefoodtrust.org

Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger

Mission: To serve as an information clearinghouse and a catalyst for collective action around the issue of hunger in Southeastern Pennsylvania; to empower emergency food providers; to inform and mobilize concerned citizens; to help shape public policy; and to work directly with low-income people to help them access their food stamp benefits.

Website: www.hungercoalition.org

Urban Nutrition Initiative

Mission: A university-community partnership that engages K-16+ learners in an active, real-world problem-solving curriculum that strives to improve community nutrition and wellness.

Website: www.urbannutrition.org

Greater Philadelphia Urban Affairs Coalition

Mission: To unite government, business, neighborhoods, and individual initiative to improve the quality of life in the region, build wealth in urban communities, and solve emerging issues through (1) policy development, (2) program implementation, and (3) professional services.

Website: www.gpuac.org

The Children's Advocacy Project of Philadelphia

Mission: To help bridge the gap between the many quality social service agencies in the Philadelphia area and the families that need their help the most.

Website: <http://www.cap4kids.org/philadelphia>

Philadelphia Urban Food and Fitness Alliance

Mission: To create vibrant Philadelphia communities that support access to locally grown, healthy and affordable food, and safe places for physical activity and play — for everyone—with a focus on environmental change.

Website: <http://www.phillyfoodandfitness.org>

Local policy actions

Promote policies to implement or reward local food system improvements. Models for expanding access to healthy food in low-income communities exist and could be replicated elsewhere with government support. Philadelphia-based examples include:

- Philadelphia Urban Food and Fitness Alliance, which aims to create vibrant communities that support access to locally grown, healthy, and affordable food— for everyone;
- The PA Fresh Food Financing Initiative, a public/private program that uses grant and loan funding to stimulate supermarket and grocery store development in underserved communities; and
- Equipping farmers' markets with wireless EBT (electronic benefit transfer) card readers, which can improve access to local fruits and vegetables in communities with limited fresh food options.

Neighborhood Profiles

	Gray's Ferry	Hunting Park	Mill Creek	Strawberry Mansion
Population (2000)	35,783	57,125	43,866	41,709
<i>Black/African American</i>	25,988	34,703	41,110	40,453
<i>Non-Hispanic White</i>	7,673	7,428	1,215	382
Poverty Rate	31%	39%	32%	37%
Median Household Income	\$24,803	\$20,077	\$21,329	\$18,777

Source: <http://www.city-data.com/city/Philadelphia-Pennsylvania.html>