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**MAYOR EMANUEL ANNOUNCES RELEASE OF FOOD DESERT DATA AND NEW
INTERACTIVE EFFORTS TO COMBAT FOOD DESERTS IN CHICAGO**

Efforts to Reduce Food Deserts Have Reduced Food Deserts in Low-Income Areas by More than 20 Percent; New Release of Data Will Help Communities Join the Fight to Alleviate Food Deserts

Today, Mayor Rahm Emanuel publicly released vital information and data on food deserts, including lists of grocery stores, interactive maps of these stores locations, and raw data that outlines the existing food deserts in Chicago. The data also includes a comprehensive list of nearby Cook County independent grocery stores and chains, and a map of urban farms. The information will help the public understand the ongoing efforts to combat food deserts in the City of Chicago, provide a reference for convenient grocery store locations, and bring awareness of the food desert initiative to all Chicago communities. This data will also help determine areas to extend an even greater focus and opportunities for new potential partnerships with grocery stores.

“Ensuring healthy food access for all Chicagoans is a top priority for my administration. Having access to these food desert datasets will be beneficial to this initiative, our partners who are engaged in reducing food deserts in the City of Chicago, and our community members.” said Mayor Rahm Emanuel. “This data is critical to continue making progress, and will serve as a source for all those involved in eliminating food deserts to reference, explore and use in the very important work they are doing for our city.”

Bringing grocery stores to neighborhoods with the highest level of need remains a priority for the City of Chicago. Since the launch of the City's efforts to reduce the number of food deserts in June 2011, the number of low-income Chicagoans living in these areas has declined by 21 percent, falling from 100,159 Chicagoans to 79,434. The City of Chicago

broadly defines “food desert” residents as all Chicagoans living in a census block located more than a mile from a retail food establishment licensee with a business location larger than 10,000 square feet, and also has developed other useful measures of food access. For example, a total of 122,998 Chicagoans earning below and above the average median income live more than a mile from a large grocery store; that’s down from 157,605 in 2011.

Another approach counts the number of Chicagoans both below median income and across all incomes living at least a half mile from smaller scale grocers, or a retail food establishment licensee with a business location larger than 2,500 square feet. Today that count citywide is 425,284, down from 446,040 in 2011. However, just measuring Chicagoans earning beneath the average median income yields 219,254, down from 227,008 in 2011. In all measures, locations such as gas stations and fast food restaurants were removed from the data set. The top ten highest-earning community areas are not counted in the analysis.

The City of Chicago has continuously worked with its partners to expand efforts to eliminate Chicago’s food deserts. These successes include the opening and expansion of 15 full-scale grocery stores and conversion of 2 CTA buses into mobile produce markets in 7 neighborhoods in or on the periphery of a food desert. They have also licensed 14 fresh produce carts, with half in low food access areas, while launching 5 new successful farmers markets in West Side food deserts. This partnership produced 253,000 pounds of fruits and vegetables grown in the first year on more than 15 acres of urban farms and distributed to 85 restaurants, pantries, grocery stores, farmers markets, and private residents.

Innovative approaches to reducing food deserts have sprung from other city programs such as “Seed Chicago”, an initiative of Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs. Through Seed Chicago, five Chicago businesses and community organizations have raised \$55,000 for projects aimed at alleviating food insecurity and creating market opportunities related to food. These projects include the Rogers Park Business Alliance’s GROW-Food business incubator, Growing Home’s Englewood Urban Farm, the Garfield Park Community Council’s Fresh Food Market, Albany Park’s Global Gardens refugee training project and YoLo’s Food & Snacks Mobile Kitchen in the Austin neighborhood. Funding for these projects, raised through Kickstarter’s online platform, represents over one-third of the total funds generated by the Seed Chicago effort.

Seven new datasets on food deserts are being released on the city’s data portal, which will complement the citywide initiative to end food deserts as well as allow for greater transparency. The data will provide those actively working to eliminate Chicago’s food

deserts with a comprehensive overview of grocery store locations, easily accessible means to measure progress, and a method to identify areas that deserve an even greater focus. Interested community members will also be able to suggest edits to food desert data as the food desert landscape changes. The release of this data will also allow interested community members to further grasp the improvements that have occurred since Mayor Rahm Emanuel took on the challenge in June 2011 to reduce the number of food deserts.

In January 2013, the Chicago Plan Commission implemented the citywide plan “A Recipe for Healthy Places” that will support: building healthier neighborhoods, growing healthy food, expanding healthy food enterprises, ensuring residents can eat well regardless of income, providing healthy food and beverage choices, and improving eating habits. This plan will enable the City of Chicago to further advance as a healthier and stronger city.

Mayor Emanuel has announced a goal of completely eliminating food deserts for Chicagoans by 2020.

The data that is posted today is as follows:

- Map of Grocery Stores – 2013: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Community-Economic-Development/Map-of-Grocery-Stores-2013/ce29-twzt>
- Map of Grocery Stores – 2011: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Community-Economic-Development/Map-of-Grocery-Stores-2011/is62-fcyv>
- Cook County Independent Grocery Stores (Map): <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Community-Economic-Development/Map-of-Nearby-Independent-Cook-County-Grocery-Stor/ewv9-944i>
- Cook County Grocery Store Chains (Map): <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Community-Economic-Development/Map-of-Nearby-Cook-County-Grocery-Store-Chains/v486-wsbn>
- Population estimates by Census Block: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Facilities-Geographic-Boundaries/Population-by-2010-Census-Block/5yjb-v3mj>
- Food Desert GitHub repository (crowdsourcing link): <https://github.com/Chicago/food-deserts>
- Map of Urban Farms: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Environment-Sustainable-Development/Map-of-Urban-Farms/uti6-fp3f>
- List of Urban Farms: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Environment-Sustainable-Development/Urban-Farms/2a55-dhk8>
- Map of Food Carts: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Community-Economic-Development/Map-of-Food-Carts/avh4-5pwj>
- List of Food Carts: <https://data.cityofchicago.org/Community-Economic-Development/Food-Carts/divg-mhqk>

Below is a chart that outlines the progress being made in combating food deserts in Chicago:

Grocery Location Analysis - 1/2 mile 2,500 sf	June 2011	August 2013
Population of unserved areas in a community with a median income below Chicago median income	227,008	219,254
Total unserved population	446,040	425,284

Grocery Location Analysis - 1 mile 10,000 sf	June 2011	August 2013
Population of unserved areas in a community with a median income below Chicago median income	100,159	79,434
Total unserved population	157,605	122,998

Note: Excludes unserved residents in top 10 highest earning neighborhoods: Loop, Lincoln Park, Forest Glen, Edison Park, Lakeview, Near South Side, North Center, Mt. Greenwood, Beverly, and Norwood Park.

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