REACHING FOR AUTONOMY

UNEARTHING FOOD APARTHEID IN CHERRY HILL

USING BYI'S FOOD APARTHEID STUDY ORGANIZING TOOL

OCTOBER 2024

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Black Yield


Save the
Block
Party


Black Yield
NEW ERA

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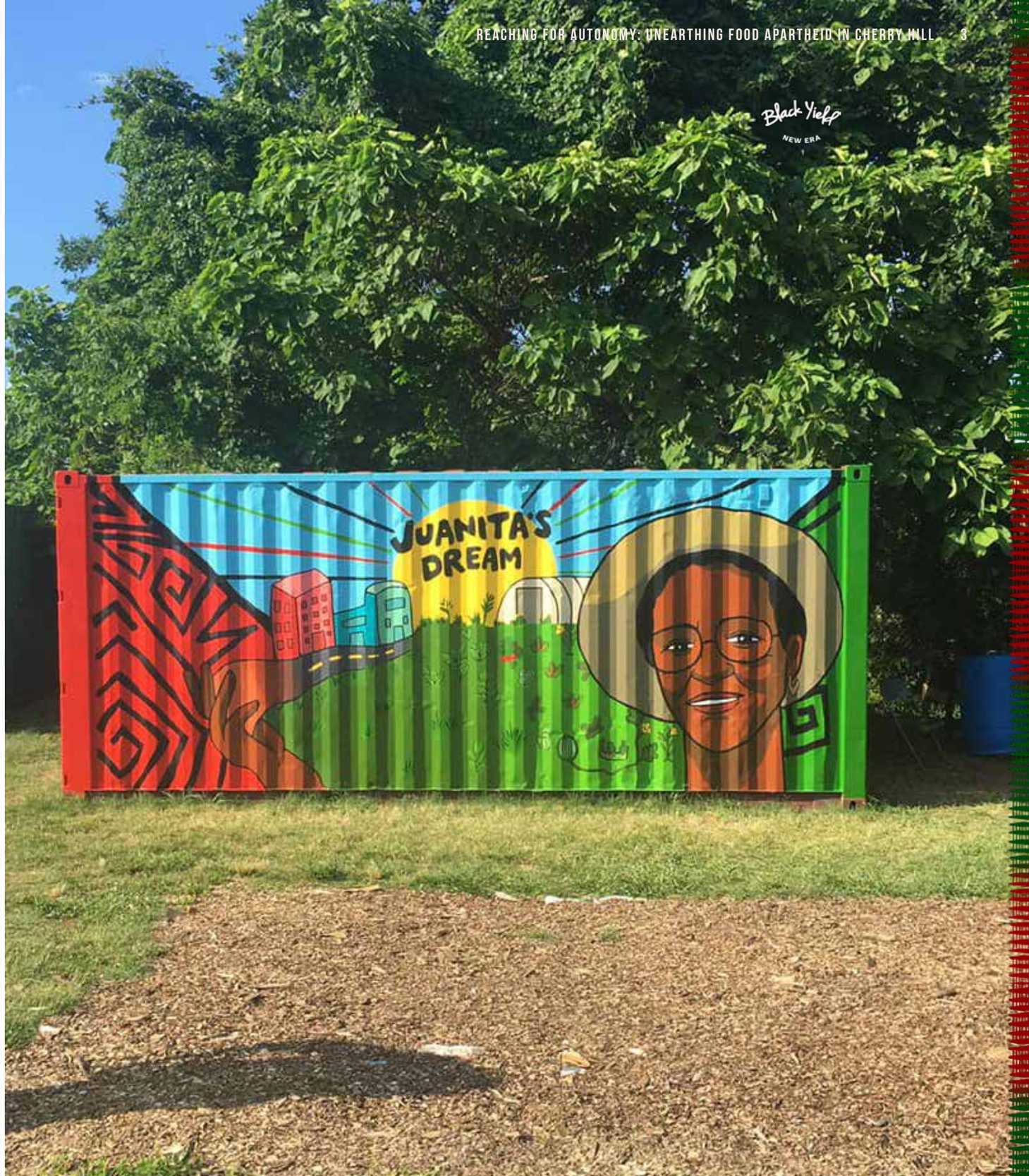


LETTER FROM THE SERVANT-DIRECTOR

Greetings,

Wow! Getting to this moment has been a testament of faith–a faith that is steeped in a commitment to bringing this project to life. The perseverance and determination exhibited by all contributors, supporters, believers, and witnesses has been incredible. It is with great honor that I welcome you to the pages of the **Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study Report**. This report represents more than the content outlined in the study. Black Yield Institute, in continuing with our contributions to knowledge production in the Black Radical Tradition, has modeled what community-based knowledge can be. The **Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study Report** is our offering of hope as we purpose this work to serve in the future development of self-determining food economies in Cherry Hill and Black communities like it elsewhere. Here is to new beginnings for us all!

The idea of the report was born from a larger aim first articulated in January 2018. After the release of Baltimore City's Food Environment Report, Black Yield Institute dared to envision a food apartheid study that sought to create and build upon current data to frame a research project that utilized food apartheid and Black land and food sovereignty conceptual frameworks. We embarked on a journey that I knew would be impactful. While the original idea of conducting a city-wide study was idealistic and lofty, it seeded the determination to create a framework that could identify food apartheid trends and the feasibility of Black land and food sovereignty in community statistical areas across Baltimore City.

In 2019, we decided to move away from the grandiose idea of organizing a knowledge production campaign that moved throughout the city toward a more manageable scale of information gathering in one community. We tested out our idea and committed to the discovery of the qualitative and quantitative factors that tell the stories of the Cherry Hill food economy. Countless hours of fundraising, planning, data collection, data synthesis and analysis, and writing have gone into this study. In spite of the starts and stops of this project that saw interruptions through a pandemic and cast changes, we have completed the study and are ready to share our findings.

It is with profound joy that I applaud the efforts of countless thought partners, volunteers, and the overall Black Yield Institute community. First, I must acknowledge that our knowledge production is made possible by the power and influence of our ancestors and the divine. Our work is part of a tradition laid forth by many scholars who produced knowledge that shines bright and assists in the growth of BYI. Thank you to the Circle of Wise Counsel members, Program Action Leaders (a special tier of volunteers who give countless hours of labor to advance BYI's mission), and contractors who worked on this project (outlined in the Contributors section). The research team has worked tirelessly and faithfully on this iteration of the study for three calendar years. They spent hours planning and connecting with our community. They sat and walked and wrote and met. The publishing of this report is not possible without their work! I am extremely grateful to every participant who shared their narratives and opinions through in-person meetings, virtual engagement, and surveys. Every single person who contributed to the earliest iterations of the study–who assisted BYI with developing the research questions and desired metrics– your work is appreciated: Sarah, Ilana, MacKenzie, Katie, Jordan, TJ, Aria, Jasmine, Taylor, Ashanté, Maddie, Bela, Muriana, Clarissa, Hanah, and Ashia. I must also acknowledge the contributions of our financial contributors, which includes a long list of people, local and national foundations and funding initiatives, and public agencies. Finally, I am deeply appreciative of all past and present BYI staff, Circle of Wise Counsel members, and others who spent time hearing about the progress of the study and remained hopeful even after the many changes over the years!

To many more moments and opportunities to produce knowledge that breaks barriers and creates new paths in the pursuit of Black Land and Food Sovereignty!

Keep the Flame,

Eric Jackson
Servant-Director

GLOSSARY

AUTONOMY: The right of an organization, community, country, or a group of people to be independent and govern itself.

BALTIMORE CITY'S FOOD ENVIRONMENT REPORT: A collaboration between the Baltimore City Department of Planning and the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future to examine the Baltimore food environment through research, analysis and mapping.

BLACK LAND AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: Black Land and Food Sovereignty, as defined by Black Yield Institute, is a movement-building approach to addressing apartheid, which asserts the rights and self-determination of Black and African peoples to healthy, affordable, and culturally approachable food and arable land.

COMMUNITY-BASED RESEARCH PROJECT: Community-based research is a participatory approach to research where projects are driven by community priorities and the community is involved throughout the entire research process.

FOOD APARTHEID: According to the National Black Food & Justice Alliance, food apartheid entails the systematic destruction of Black self-determination to control our food (including land, resource theft, and discrimination), a hyper-saturation of destructive foods and predatory marketing, and a blatantly discriminatory corporate controlled food system that results in our communities suffering from some of the highest rates of heart disease and diabetes of all times.

FOOD DESERT: Summarized by the Food Empowerment Project, a food desert is a USDA term describing a geographic area where residents' access to affordable, healthy food options (especially fresh fruits and vegetables) is restricted or nonexistent due to the absence of grocery stores within convenient traveling distance.

FOOD ENVIRONMENT: The physical, social, economic, cultural, and political factors that impact the accessibility, availability, and adequacy of food within a community.

FOOD SYSTEM: The food system is a complex web of activities involving the production, processing, transport, and consumption of food.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY: As defined by La Via Campesina, food sovereignty is the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods and their right to define their food and agriculture systems.

HEALTHY FOOD PRIORITY AREA: A term used by the City of Baltimore to describe an area where the availability of healthy foods in food stores is low; the median household income is at or below 185% of the Federal Poverty Level; over 30 percent of households have no vehicle available; and the distance to a supermarket is more than a quarter of a mile.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD: As defined by the U.S Department of Health and Human Services, Institutional Review Boards—or IRBs—review research studies to ensure that they comply with applicable regulations, meet commonly accepted ethical standards, follow institutional policies, and adequately protect research participants.

SELF-DETERMINATION: The right of all peoples to determine their own political status and pursue their own economic, social, and cultural development. Black self-determination "encourages the construction and control of Black institutions, prioritizes Black people, creates and legitimizes knowledge, and sets an agenda by and for Black people."

BLACK LAND AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY IS A MOVEMENT-BUILDING FRAMEWORK. IT IS NOT JUST A TERM TO HELP TO UNDERSTAND A SOLUTION TO AN ISSUE—THE TERM DELVES INTO RACIAL DYNAMICS AND THE DIRECT SOCIAL, POLITICAL, AND ECONOMIC CONDITIONS MANIFESTED AS A RESULT OF FOOD APARTHEID.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The ***Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study*** is a community-based research project developed by Black Yield Institute that aims to give voice to the material conditions of the food economy in the neighborhood of Cherry Hill in Baltimore. The overall approach to our research was rooted in two major foci of study. We were interested in:

1. Understanding and unearthing the implications of food apartheid in the community.
2. Assessing the prospect of achieving Black Land and Food Sovereignty. In other words: what community assets can help build communal self-determination as it relates to food and land in the geographical area of Cherry Hill?

TThe study was conducted using a variety of methodologies—including collecting narratives of Cherry Hill residents through listening sessions, surveying community members and food providers, and utilizing pre-existing bodies of work to identify major aspects of the Cherry Hill sociopolitical environment. This report is an overall demonstration of what the research team found, along with the important histories that create food environments like the one that you will learn about in Cherry Hill. We also have developed recommendations, and conclude this report with next steps for the utility of this research project.

There are three major sections in this report. In the Introduction, we will give an introduction to the study itself, and provide greater context for its purpose and aims. The **Introduction** also contains a presentation of conceptual understandings of both food apartheid and Black Land and Food Sovereignty. Additionally, we share historical knowledge about the Cherry Hill community that offers context for the subsequent analyses in connection with current food and land-based oppression and the prospect of community self-determination.

The next section provides an understanding of the methodologies utilized by the research team. We highlight the ways in which we collected data and further explain the mixed methods approach to our information gathering. The **Findings** section then presents what we learned in this study. Through qualitative data collection, we gathered evidence from community members about the nature of food apartheid in Cherry Hill, as well as the potential for achieving Black Land and Food Sovereignty through the expression of unjust occurrences and perceived land and food assets in the community.

In the **Findings** section, we also share direct quotes from community members who participated in the study, as well as paint a picture of the food environment through what is gleaned from our surveys. Using maps, charts, and photographs, we illuminate what the research team learned about the Cherry Hill food economy and build upon this understanding to develop analyses about what this means for current residents and stakeholders. Moreover, we posit the direct and indirect implications of and make responsible analyses based on our findings.

The report ends with a **Conclusion** section where we summarize the general themes of the study and our major takeaways. Importantly, we make a bold proclamation of the limitations of the study and offer a set of recommendations. The study has the potential of being a fundamental document to move forward the work of organizing toward Black land and food sovereignty in Cherry Hill and beyond. Thus, it is important for us to both pull out the salient themes as well as name the ways this study can serve as a blueprint for others to do this work in their own communities. The limitations will be highlighted so that readers understand where there are opportunities to build upon the research. Furthermore, we aim for a greater understanding of where there may be more information gathering necessary. Leaders, members, and organizers might find that this will put them in a better position to be strategic about implementing tactics that put community members and stakeholders at the helm of materializing the Cherry Hill that they envision. The **Conclusion** section boldly asserts recommendations for how to use the research while offering possibilities in other communities across the city of Baltimore, throughout the Mid-Atlantic region, across this country, and throughout the world, wherever Black people and others experience food apartheid.

The ***Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study*** report is first and foremost an organizing tool and not a traditional academic research paper. As the reader moves through these pages, please understand that the goal is to understand—from the perspective of the people of Cherry Hill—what the food economy is, and what it could be. This is a living document that has much room to change and shift. May the study and report be the impetus for the next iteration of community galvanizing to create a food economy that is self-determined by the people who are most impacted by oppression.

WE NAME THE LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY IN ORDER FOR FOLKS TO BUILD UPON THIS WORK AS WELL AS APPLY OUR GRASSROOTS RESEARCH METHODOLOGIES TO BETTER UNDERSTAND FOOD APARTHEID IN THEIR OWN COMMUNITIES.

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

In this Institutional Review Board-approved research study, the research team of organizers, academics, students, youth, community members, and technical experts came together to design and develop a groundbreaking project which infuses traditional participatory research and asset-based community development while applying a radical organizing framework. The research study, as is common in all research project designs, was guided by our inquiry, or research question. In our case, we decided to identify two research questions to guide our community-based study. Our first question was: how do residents of Cherry Hill conceptualize food apartheid? In other words, the study explored the idea of how food apartheid shows up for people living in Cherry Hill, guided by the people of Cherry Hill themselves. Utilizing a definition of food apartheid definition developed by the National Black Food and Justice Alliance, we established five "sub-definition" categories and listed desired metrics within each that we were interested in exploring. These categories were:

- Availability
- Accessibility (transportation/distance)
- Affordability
- Quality
- Abandonment

Our first research question was: how did residents of Cherry Hill conceptualize food apartheid?

Our second research question was: What assets exist in Cherry Hill that may contribute to the pursuit of Black Land and Food Sovereignty? This question invited people to identify community assets perceived as useful for an organizing strategy that would help create community self-determination as it relates to food and land in the geographical area of Cherry Hill. In a similar way to our first research question, we were able to utilize a definition of Black Land and Food Sovereignty offered by Black Yield Institute. The team created "sub-definitions" and developed the metrics that we were interested in exploring.

Our second research question was: what assets exist in Cherry Hill that may contribute to the pursuit of Black Land and Food Sovereignty?

[1] National Black Food and Justice Alliance. "Black Food Justice Glossary." https://blackfoodjustice.org/media/black-food-justice-glossary. Accessed 18 September 2023.
[2] Black Land and Food Sovereignty is a movement-building approach to addressing apartheid, which asserts the rights and self-determination of Black and African peoples to healthy, affordable, and culturally approachable food and arable land.

DATA COLLECTION TOOLS

Additionally, the team created a list of potential data collection tools for primary data collection. We identified five tools that we would employ to learn more about the food economy from the lived experiences of people in Cherry Hill.

The first set of tools consists of two questionnaires. One questionnaire went to food consumers/community members who purchase food from food establishments. The second questionnaire was developed for food providers with the objective of learning more about where their food comes from, and what kind of food they are using, how much revenue the enterprise accrues, and what their sources of revenue are. We identified food providers as anyone or entity who provided food (for profit or nonprofit) and included institutions like churches, which gift food to people through food pantries and soup kitchens. We included traditional businesses that work both in the economic center of the community and businesses that are sole proprietorships and cottage enterprises that operate from people's homes or other venues. Both questionnaires are included in the Appendix of this report.

The third tool that we developed is a windshield survey. This survey was designed for data collectors to walk through the community to observe social trends related to land and food. The fourth tool is called the asset map. The Mapping Community Capacity framework that we utilize to identify three spheres of community assets related to land, food, and people and institutions in the community.

The fifth tool that we developed and utilized is a Culturally Appropriate Food Availability Tool. We surveyed the community to identify culturally appropriate foods and then employed these responses and ones developed by the team to observe the availability of these foods in food retail establishments.

The research team was organized into three committees: 1.) Writers Committee, 2.) Data Committee; and 3.) Admin Committee. The writers worked on framing the report and conducted historic research and reflection. The data folks specifically focused on developing the data collection tools and doing initial searches for databases and reports related to the Cherry Hill community, its health, and considerations for food and land. The admin group focused on coordinating the group and managing the study timeline. Our project design framework included planning, data collection, community meetings, recruitment of participants and contractors, compiling the data, and synthesizing that data. The research team included a primary group of volunteers, a coordinator, research assistants, and a data analyst.

[3] From McKnight & Kretzmann's *Mapping Community Capacity*

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study is to identify the major understandings of the Cherry Hill food economy. It was paramount for us to understand how the people who live, work, worship, and play in Cherry Hill sustain themselves through food sales and food consumption. Our interest also laid in learning where people get food from, if they are satisfied with the quality of food available to them, how far they have to travel with food, and what kinds of food they eat. We further had the desire to understand people's interests and their understanding of their culturally appropriate foods. In addition, we committed ourselves to understanding how people experience inspiration and motivation from what is possible. To that end, we facilitated asset mapping and asked people to help us understand how they see primary, secondary, and tertiary assets in their community.

It is important to note that our research study is not a traditional one, where one is generally only interested in understanding a social problem to be able to write about it. We were clear that we wanted to: (1) broaden the perspective of how people understand the food economy of Cherry Hill; (2) and seek to add to the body of knowledge of Cherry Hill produced first and foremost by the people of Cherry Hill themselves, facilitated by a Black institution that is committed to Black self-determination and power. Our study is thus an information-gathering project that allows Black Yield Institute to put on paper hard statistics, political analyses, histories, and community member narratives that will be utilized to advance the work of building people-power that brings about change to the social, political, and economic dynamics of the food environment within Cherry Hill Community.

In this way, our research study differs greatly from reports produced by governmental bodies and academic institutions. Speaking broadly, traditional research methodologies and frameworks are designed to maintain power. The act of conducting research itself is housed within existing capitalist institutions—producing knowledge that ultimately serves to uphold the systems of exploitation and oppression under which we live. Baba Walter Rodney, the Guyanese historian, anti-colonial intellectual, and revolutionary, explains this well in a speech he gave titled "Marxism and African Liberation" at Queen's College in New York City in 1975. In his words: "In class societies, all ideologies are class ideologies. All ideologies derive from and support some particular class. So for all practical purposes we have grown up in capitalist society, and bourgeois ideology is dominant in our society. These institutions in which we function were created to serve the creation of ideas as commodities, ideas which will buttress the capitalist system."

Academic research conducted under a "community-based" framework, for instance, tends

[4] Rodney, Walter. 1975. "Marxism and African Liberation". Speech by Walter Rodney At Queen's College, New York, USA.

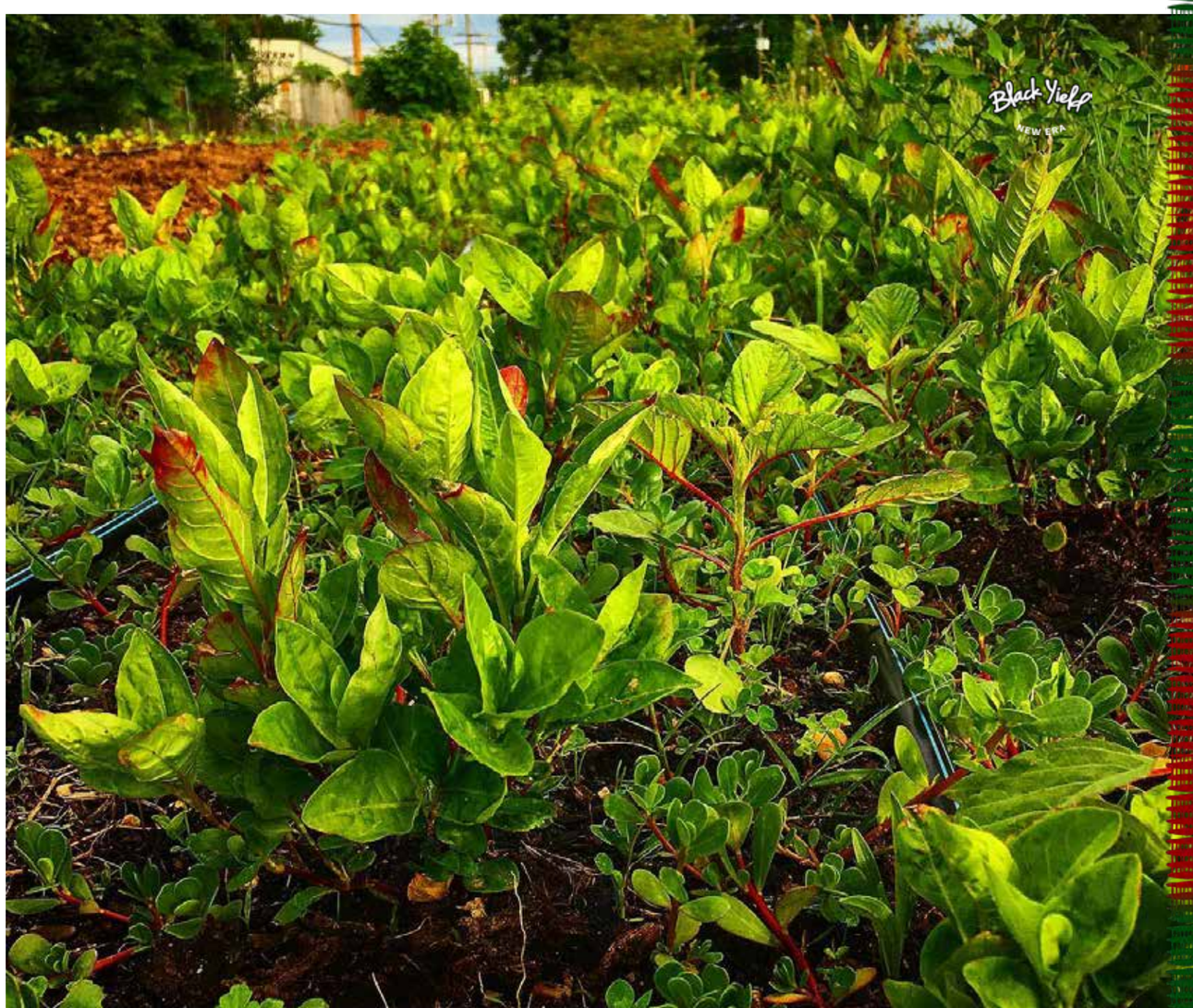
to be extractive. Researchers have little to no connection to the communities in which they wish to conduct research in, nor lived experience of the phenomena they wish to study. Research questions, frameworks, and methodologies are developed independently of community; community members thus largely serve as objects from which to extract knowledge. In this way, the objectives of academic knowledge production are to formalize and institutionalize within the university what communities generally already know. The results of said research are then published in inaccessible academic journals, serving to bolster the researcher's professional credentials and advance their academic standing. While academic fields such as anthropology and ethnography have departed from their original mandate of explicitly bolstering the work of colonial administrations, the ways in which research is conducted today still often bears the mark of its imperialist legacies.

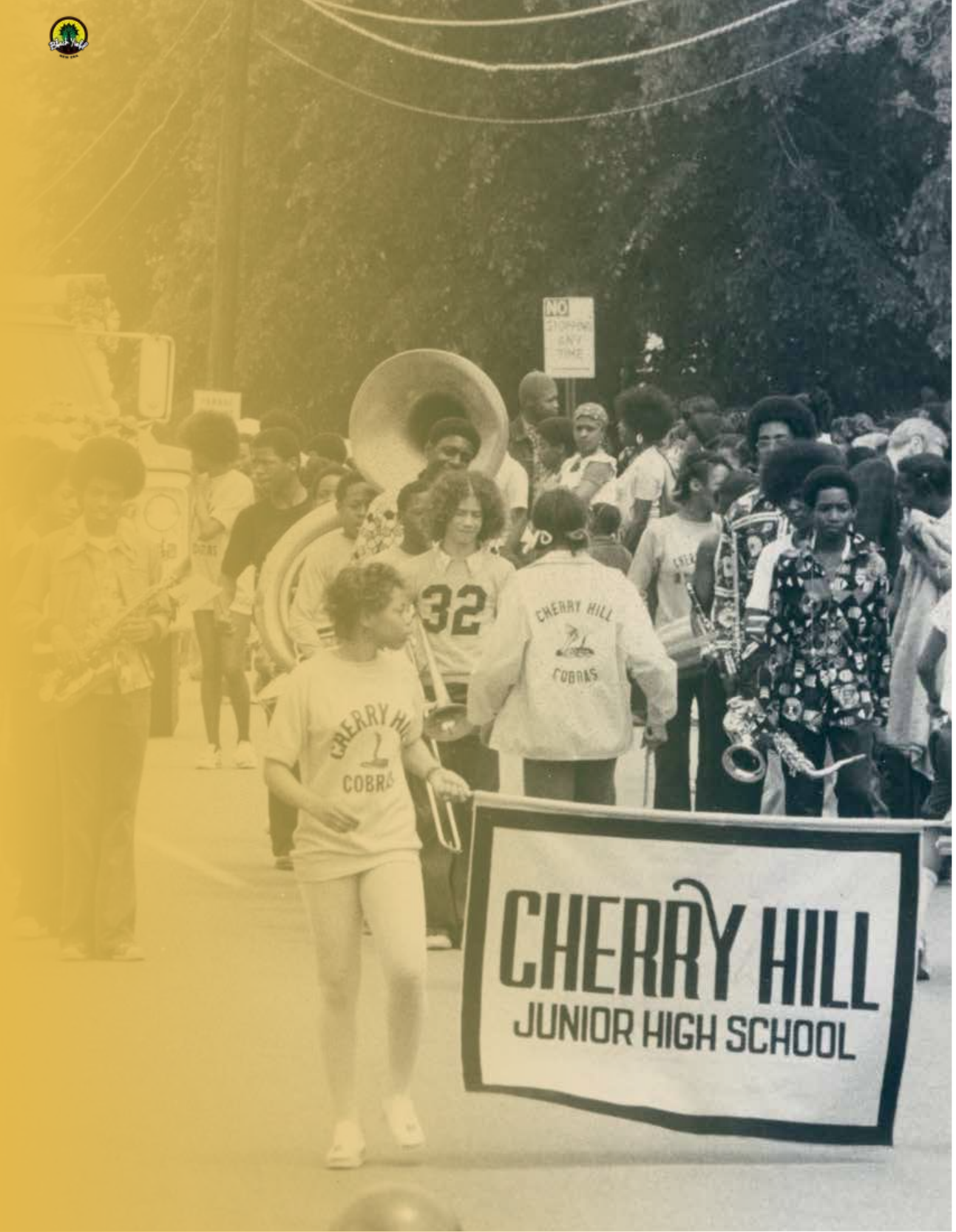
Similarly, reports produced by government institutions regarding food economies lack analyses of power. As we talk about in more detail below, the term "food desert" itself—first appearing in U.S. federal legislation in the 2008 Farm Bill—is inherently depoliticized. Measuring a household's distance from sources of affordable and high-quality fresh food says little about race, class, and gender, much less the larger systems of oppression that produced and continue to perpetuate a deeply unequal food environment. In Baltimore, every few years the Baltimore City Department of Planning and the Johns Hopkins Center for a Livable Future release the Baltimore City Food Environment Report—a collaborative study intended to examine and map the Baltimore food environment to provide meaningful interventions to reduce rates of food insecurity.

While useful in many respects, the study's designation of certain neighborhoods in the city as "Healthy Food Priority Areas" performs the same function as labeling such areas as food deserts. The data produced through the study is primarily intended to serve city agencies and institutions such as Johns Hopkins—creating interventions that do not address the root causes of food apartheid nor build toward communal self-determination. Such interventions, such as produce box distributions, SNAP nutrition incentives, and "Food is Medicine" programs, are predominantly stopgap measures. Similar to the pitfalls of academic studies, residents in "Healthy Food Priority Areas" are positioned as objects of city intervention as opposed to decision-makers in their own food economies. The scope of study in the Baltimore City Food Environment Reports, thus, also remains limited, with information collected and methodologies used that do not meaningfully challenge power.

Our intention was for the Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study to break free from the confines of traditional governmental and academic research. We aimed to do this through: (1) utilizing a grassroots, participatory research framework where all aspects of the study were guided by the people of Cherry Hill themselves; (2) expanding the focus of our study

to move beyond metrics of access to understanding the cultural, emotional, and historical food experiences of Cherry Hill residents; (3) and assessing the prospect of achieving Black Land and Food Sovereignty in the neighborhood and beyond. In these ways, this study serves both as an organizing tool to help build communal self-determination as well as a blueprint for others to understand the implications of food apartheid in their own communities. In this iteration of the study, we are thus interested in sharing how we conducted this work—our process—in addition to presenting its results. And as we named earlier, the Conclusion section of this report delves into the lessons we learned from this process, what we were not able to accomplish, and the multiple directions we envision the next stages of this study to take in the future.





CHERRY HILL HISTORY OVERVIEW

The Cherry Hill community is not unique; it is not the only community that has experienced food apartheid. Nor is it the only community that has the potential for Black Land and Food Sovereignty. There are histories of experienced food-based oppression and a glorious trajectory of organizing for community control within the Black Radical Tradition. We must first conceptualize what we mean by food apartheid and Black Land and Food Sovereignty. We have to do that by offering the historical context of the Cherry Hill community.

The community of Cherry Hill has historically stood as a staple community in Baltimore City. There are decades of rich grassroots movements and examples of Black sovereignty rooted in the grounds of this community. However, through political and geographical processes that broke down Cherry Hill's rich economic culture and community assets, this community became food insecure. As Eric Jackson and Nicole Fabricant write in "Black Freedom & Land Insecurity in Baltimore," Cherry Hill's "very existence is characterized by external control and discriminatory city policies. From the founding of the community, the destiny of the residents was largely determined by elected officials, public servants,

[5] Fabricant, N. & Jackson, E. "Black Freedom & Land Insecurity in Baltimore," New Politics. 24 December 2021

and private corporations. Anecdotes from descendants of previous occupants reveal that Black people, along with white folks, were displaced in order to create the community we know as Cherry Hill."

"Food security," a term defined by the USDA, means that all people at all times have access to enough food to live an active, healthy life.

Let's take a deeper dive into the history of Cherry Hill. As the GI Bill was passed in the 1940s, this community would be one of the first suburban-planned communities for African Americans following World War II. Persevering through the social and political inequities at the hands of a racist America, community members mobilized, helping to develop a thriving community. The fruits of banding together and organizing produced a neighborhood of schools, religious institutions, and businesses, owned and/or operated by the residents. The 1950s were a staple period for community and economic progression. During this time, Cherry Hill developed a booming, mobilized Black economy and community. History suggests that this success occurred at the hands of the people through the practice of bartering goods, Black family and independent entrepreneurship, land ownership, and farming. Moving into the 1970s and 1980s, the community constructed several restaurants and carryout food enterprises, popularizing the neighborhood's carryout and dining culture. Black entrepreneurship also helped to spearhead food access through commodifying resources by selling goods from their homes, vehicles, and public spaces. Food not only served as a means of economic sustainability, but was a pillar for relationship building. As the community was composed of both middle and lower-income citizens, food brought together residents of various socio-economic backgrounds, thus strengthening the sense of community, resilience, and mobility in this era.

Food in Cherry Hill not only served as a means of economic sustainability, but was a pillar for relationship building.

Delving into Cherry Hill's rich history—one rooted in food sovereignty and mobility—causes us to question how our beloved Cherry Hill has become food insecure. Looking at the political developments of the 1960s and 1970s, the 1964 Civil Rights Bill passage served to diminish the progression of Cherry Hill's socio-political advancement. Middle class Black people took advantage of the entitlements newly afforded by the 1964 legislation. This meant that middle class families moved from Cherry Hill elsewhere in order to enjoy the fruit harvested from the tree of integration—while working class and poor families were relegated to feast on the droppings leftover by the remnants of segregation. Such families remained in the Cherry Hill community, joined by others who migrated from other parts

of the city and beyond to this Black neighborhood. Many Cherry Hill associates who lived the community during this era have expressed disdain for the impacts of desegregation efforts, as they broke up powerful alliances amongst families across class lines.

Although the community mobilized to keep afloat, the effects of poverty were still deeply influential. The impacts of poverty alongside the Civil Rights Bill eventually influenced the migration of the middle-class population out of the city, leaving the low-income residents to fend for themselves in impoverished conditions. Thus, Cherry Hill's economic, social, and political reality shifted, creating gaps in economic and human capital and resources. The farming culture that provided food diminished and other food sources would soon decline following the reduction of food outlets. These were ideal circumstances for corporate and foreign entities to advance themselves and their businesses. As resources steadily diminished in the 1980s, an influx of immigrant-owned carry outs and large corporate-owned stores transitioned shops and spaces that were previously community-owned. Understanding what it took to keep the retail and grocery chain afloat deterred many from trying to maintain the business economy that was missing essential investment. Cherry Hill has yet to come back from the decline of local sustenance or grocery store access since 2003.

Cherry Hill's food environment has also been heavily impacted and influenced by the government sanctions that have driven out food access. Contemporary Cherry Hill is currently characterized by carry-outs, general stores, and unhealthy and culturally inadequate food stores. Taking it a step further, the community is continuously socialized and driven into a culture normalizing detrimental living conditions. This influence can be seen in predatory marketing, corporate control of resources and assets, and laws that redirect adequate funding to develop the community—so much so that the Cherry Hill is categorized as a "Health Food Priority Area" in Baltimore City reports. Black Yield Institute has termed this socio-economic detriment as Food Apartheid due to the dividing nature on the basis of race, class, and gender. Not only does food insecurity cause destruction to the food and land control, but it also affects the livelihood of the residents. Ultimately, the outcome of diminishing Cherry Hill's food access is an influx of chronic diseases associated with unhealthy diets. In recognizing the need for food security, we note that not only do residents of Cherry Hill need access to fresh produce, but there is a need for culturally appropriate food access as well.

Black Yield Institute understands that the contemporary food economy of Cherry Hill is a product of Food Apartheid due to its divisive nature on the basis of race, class, and gender.

One question that we must work to address is how to create access to fresh, culturally appropriate foods in our neighborhood. This concern is what kickstarted the ***Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study.*** The study was conducted to gain a better understanding of how food apartheid affects Cherry Hill, as well as to map out the assets that exist in and around the area to work towards Black food sovereignty. Black Yield Institute as a collective is committed to questioning how this once-booming Black economy has been demobilized and become food scarce. This study is our way of remobilizing and redirecting resources to our beloved Cherry Hill once again.

The Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study was conducted to gain a better understanding of how food apartheid affects Cherry Hill, as well as to map out the assets that exist in and around the area to work towards Black food sovereignty.

DEFINING FOOD APARTHEID AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

What do we mean by food apartheid? While it has become common to describe areas that face food insecurity as "food deserts," activist, farmer, and community organizer Karen Washington coined the term food apartheid to more accurately speak to the injustices deeply rooted in our food system. Washington argues that the term "food desert" is problematic because the word "desert" typically conjures images of a barren, lifeless place—one that is devoid of life and resources. The language of food deserts also makes food disparities sound geographical and naturally occurring. The reality is that communities facing food insecurity are full of vibrancy and potential. As Washington explains: "Who in my actual neighborhood has deemed that we live in a food desert? Number one, people will tell you that they do have food. Number two, people in the hood have never used that term. It's an outsider term."

Food insecurity is instead a structural issue. Major chain supermarkets, for example, have been found to not locate themselves in poor, Black neighborhoods—a pattern conceptualized as 'supermarket redlining.' Baltimore City's 2018 Food Environment Brief provides a local example of the implications of supermarket redlining, as the report found that in 2018, 31% of Black residents in Baltimore lived in a healthy food priority area, which is 3.5x the rate of Baltimore's white residents. Food apartheid, then, is ultimately about understanding power in our food system through race, class, and gender.

The National Black Food and Justice Alliance defines food apartheid as, "the systematic destruction of Black self determination to control our food (including land, resource theft and discrimination), a hyper-saturation of destructive foods and predatory marketing, and a blatantly discriminatory corporate controlled food system that results in our communities suffering from some of the highest rates of heart disease and diabetes of all times." As the definition implies, studying food apartheid goes beyond looking at where food retail outlets are located and instead considers how racism, white supremacy, settler colonialism, and other oppressive systems and institutions are all responsible for creating a food system that fails to meet the needs of all people. Exploring how different institutions play a role in our food system brings us closer to understanding the root cause of the disparities that are present, therefore helping us make more intentional decisions about how to build a food system that honors all people's wants and needs.

Exploring how different institutions play a role in our food system brings us closer to understanding the root cause of the disparities that are present, therefore helping us make more intentional decisions about how to build a food system that honors all peoples' wants and needs.

Residential racial segregation in the U.S. is a form of institutionalized racism that played a key role in producing an unjust food system where resources are unequally distributed. The beginning of legally sanctioned segregation in Baltimore exemplifies how white supremacy shaped our landscapes in ways that still impact the present. On December 19, 1910, former Baltimore Mayor John Barry Mahool responded to white Baltimoreans' growing fear of what was continuously reported by the Baltimore Sun as the "Negro Invasion," or the increasing number of Black homebuyers moving into white neighborhoods, by signing the nation's first comprehensive residential racial zoning law. In passing the ordinance, Mayor Mahool declared "Blacks should be quarantined in isolated slums in order to reduce the incidence of civil disturbance, to prevent the spread of communicable disease into the nearby white neighborhoods, and to protect property values among the White majority." This ordinance and the sentiments that accompanied it were just the beginning of decades of racist housing policies throughout the U.S. and helps to explain why cities like Baltimore came to be hypersegregated. By forcing Black people into "isolated slums," those in power were more easily able to focus their time and resources on communities that were, and in many cases still are, majority white.

[6] Brones, Anna. 2018. "Karen Washington: It's not a food desert, it's food apartheid." https://www.guernicamag.com/karen-washington-its-not-a-food-desert-its-food-apartheid/

[7] Eisenhauer, Elizabeth. 2001. "In poor health: Supermarket redlining and urban nutrition." GeoJournal:125–133. https://doi.org/10.1023/A:1015772503007
[8] Baltimore City 2018 Food Environment Brief. 2018. Department of Planning. https://planning.baltimorecity.gov/sites/default/files/City%20Map%20Brief%20011218.pdf
[9] National Black Food and Justice Alliance. "NBFJA's glossary of black food movement terms." https://drive.google.com/file/d/1Y2rqv83uk9H-EHbYXtfI9aIIAjVAn5s3/view

As scholar, researcher, and urban Afrofuturist Lawrence T. Brown explains, the hypersegregation of Baltimore by race and class shapes the current contours of the city through what he calls the "Black Butterfly" and the "white L". Decades of redlining and disinvestment have created a built environment where Baltimore's "majority-Black population spreads out like a butterfly's wings on both sides of the coveted strip of real estate running down the center of the city." The consequences of hypersegregation are dire—life expectancies between the city's majority-white and majority-Black neighborhoods, located just miles apart from each other, can differentiate by up to 20 years.

FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

While it is necessary to interrogate the ways that food apartheid shows up in our food system, scholars like Hanna Garth and Ashanté M. Reese argue that it is also necessary to challenge "popular notions that the only way to understand Black people's relationships with food and food institutions is through lack." In other words, conversations around the food system should also include the ways in which Black people and communities have navigated anti-Blackness in the food system and are working to build food sovereignty. First coined by the organization Via Campesina, food sovereignty can be defined as "... the right of peoples to healthy and culturally appropriate food produced through ecologically sound and sustainable methods, and their right to define their own food and agriculture systems... It puts the aspirations and needs of those who produce, distribute and consume food at the heart of food systems and policies rather than the demands of markets and corporations." (Declaration of Nyéléni, 2007).

Food sovereignty, in other words, is about community control of food and land. The movement for food sovereignty works against our current food regime—one where a handful of multinational corporations control most aspects of our food system, from seed markets, to the meat industry, to uneven supply chains and food retail. The end result is that a majority of the world's food laborers toil to provide healthy, affordable, and nourishing food for a small minority. Global rates of food production are on the rise, while those closest to food production are simultaneously experiencing unprecedented levels of hunger—the inevitable product of a food system that values profit over human life. As Frederick Buttel, Fred Magdoff, and John Bellamy Foster explain in *Hungry for Profit: The Agribusiness Threat to Farmers, Food, and the Environment*, "capitalism presents us with a

[10] Brown, Lawrence. 2021. The Black Butterfly: The Harmful Politics of Race and Space in America, 66.
[11] Power, Garrett. 1983. "Apartheid Baltimore Style: The Residential Segregation Ordinances of 1910-1913." Faculty Scholarship. 184.
[12] Garth, Hanna, and Ashanté M. Reese, eds. 2020. Black food matters: Racial justice in the wake of food justice. 5.
[13] "Declaration of Nyéléni." 2007. Declaration of the Forum for Food Sovereignty. http://usfoodsovereigntyalliance.org/what-is-food-sovereignty/

paradoxical reality of a rapid growth of food production and perpetuation of overproduction on the one hand, accompanied by social exclusion and the growth of hunger on the other. The latter is not a result of population growth, but instead a consequence of the fact that the immediate object of food production is not human sustenance and well-being but the growth of profit."

Food sovereignty, thus, is necessarily an anti-capitalist, anti-racist, and anti-imperialist project. Those working towards food sovereignty imagine a world where food and land are treated not as commodities but essential to our survival, meeting our collective physical, emotional, spiritual, and cultural needs.

[14] Magdoff, F., Foster, J.B. and Buttel, F.H. eds., 2000. Hungry for profit: The agribusiness threat to farmers, food, and the environment. NYU Press.

METHODOLOGIES

As we have named, while we are excited to share the results and findings of the ***Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study***, equally important for us is to outline how we conducted this work. This section breaks down our methodology in a number of sections—including how we formed a team; the creation of study tools such as the *Culturally Appropriate Food Availability Tool*; and how we administered surveys and conducted listening sessions with food service providers and community members. In this way, we hope for this section to also serve as a blueprint for others to follow and build on to uncover the impacts of food apartheid in their own communities.

TEAM ASSEMBLY

In order to design and conduct this study, one of our first steps was to form a team—to bring in a paid Research Coordinator, paid Research Assistants, and volunteer researchers with experience and skill-sets in qualitative work. Crucially, the people we added to this team had also engaged with our political education work regarding Black liberatory approaches to addressing food apartheid. This included gaining exposure to and learning the terminology, skills, and theories underpinning movements throughout the world pushing against imperialism's grasp on our global food system. The team thus operated from a common baseline—allowing us to approach the work from an aligned mindset.

We next reconfigured this larger team into three groups. The first group was responsible for data collection, including developing tools for primary data collection as well as conducting research on existing data sets. The second group held the administrative pieces of this project—including convening all members of the study; setting agendas; applying for funding; finding opportunities to collaborate; and contributing to the overall design of the study. The third group was responsible for the actual writing of the report. This involved compiling existing studies, writing a literature review, shaping the framework of the study, and once data was collected, analyzing findings.

Each team had a mix of community members, academics, and organizers. Research assistants were trained through BYI to conduct listening sessions with Cherry Hill residents and to administer surveys.

STUDY TOOL DEVELOPMENT

CULTURALLY AVAILABLE FOODS

To properly understand the impacts of food apartheid in Cherry Hill, we realized early in the design process that we would need to develop our own study tools. We first looked at existing tools measuring food environments in Baltimore—such as the Healthy Food Availability Index (HFAI). As defined in the Baltimore City Food Environment Report, the HFAI "awards points to stores based on the presence of a market basket of basic staple food items, as well as whether there are healthy options available."

We adapted the HFAI not to create another index but, from a value standpoint, for there to be a symbiotic relationship between study "participants"—Cherry Hill community members—and the research team to determine what we actually mean by culturally appropriate foods. We did this in two ways. First, during our listening sessions we had people self-identify what culturally appropriate foods mean to them. We recognized that a limitation of this approach alone is that because of the conditions of food apartheid, Black people—particularly poor, Black people in Cherry Hill and throughout this country—may largely focus on adaptive foods. By this, we mean foods that may be considered "cultural" because they have been given to us. However, this doesn't take into consideration generational foods rooted in African and African American culinary traditions. Thus, we included this framework into our tool development process as well. The outcome of this process and the tool we developed can be found in the **Appendix**.

Methodology: The Culturally Appropriate Food Availability Tool is an instrument that will be utilized by surveyors to identify the presence of identied food items or subcategories in the enterprises operated by food providers in the Cherry Hill community. Data Collectors will contact, via in-person visit, phone, email, and/or other available communication mediums, food prodivers to determine if a given food is available. If the food is available, the collector will denote with a "Y"; if the food is not available, a "N" will be denoted. Please note that 'availability' in this tool solely refers to the presence of the foods being assessed. The items, in each category or food group, will be identified during a preliminary process where community members and research team members determine these foods.

Note: There is a challenge with determing cultural appropriateness with people divorced from our many cultutral expressions will cast limitation. Other work may be need to add to what we learn from community/consumers. I thinlk we should determine how we delineate between foods from our derivative cultures, mother cultures, and pop culture norms. The team should determine a point at which team members experiences and knowledge (through histories and scholarship) contribute to this. Note that some members are also Black. Merely leaning on community members will run the risk of limiting interventions in the future and may stifle efforts to break cycles rather than continue them.

CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE FOOD AVAILABILITY TOOL

Leafy Greens
- Beet Greens
- Collard Greens
- Kale
- Spinach
- Cabbage
- Swiss Chard
- Mustard Greens
- Turnip Greens
- Pumpkin Leaves
- Squash Leaves
- Cassava Leaves
- Callaloo/Garden Vegetable
- Nightshade
- Poke Sallet/Pokeweed
- Head Lettuces

Fruit
- Apples
- Cherries
- Watermelon
- Honeydew Melon
- Cantaloupe
- Papaya
- Mango
- Banana
- Ackee
- Mulberries
- Blueberries
- Strawberries
- Blackberries
- Plantain
- Coconut
- Lemon
- Lime
- Orange
- Ground Cherries
- Peaches
- Pears
- Soursop
- Guaa
- Passionfruit
- Tamarind
- Cranberries
- Grapes
- Plums

Beans/Nuts/Seeds/Legumes
- Cowpeas
- Black-eyed peas
- Barbecue baked beans
- Navy Beans
- Pinto Beans
- Kidney Beans
- Lima Beans
- Lentils
- Split Peas
- Peanuts
- Cashews
- Walnuts
- Almonds
- Brazil Nuts
- Pumpkin
- Seeds
- Egusi Melon Seeds
- Red Beans
- Green Beans
- Green Peas
- Snap Peas
- Hemp Seeds
- Groundnut
- Pistachio
- Kola Nut
- Palm Nut
- Chana/Chickpea

Baked Goods
- Sweet Potato Pie
- White Bread/Buscuits
- Cornbread
- Bean Pie
- Puff Puff
- Meat Pie/Patty
- Rum Cake
- Vanilla Bundt cake
- Coco Bread
- Doubles
- Samusa

Root Vegetables
- Yam
- White Potatoes
- Carrots
- Sweet Potatoes
- Onions
- Beets
- Garlic
- Turnips
- Rutabaga
- Cassava/Yuca
- Jicama
- Taro

Natural Sweetners
- Sugar
- Honey
- Coconut Sugar
- Molasses

Oils, Butters, Fats
- Coconut Oil
- Palm Oil
- Butter
- Vegetable Oil
- Canola Oil
- Nara Oil
- Egusi Oil
- Mongongo Oil
- Marula Oil
- Akabanga Oil

Herbs/Spices/Seasonings/Sauce
- Hot sauce
- Old Bay
- Barbeque Sauce
- Steak Sauce
- Bay Leaves
- Cinnamon
- Nutmeg
- All Spice
- Ginger
- Salt
- Pepper
- Curries
- Jams/Preserves
- Onion Powder
- Garlic Powder
- Seasoned Salt/Season-All
- Parsley
- Bay Leaves
- Honeysuckle
- Jerk
- Thyme
- Lemon Pepper
- Cumin
- Coriander/Cilantro
- Fish Pepper
- Scotch Bonnet Peppers
- Chili Peppers
- Cardamom
- Basil
- Sage

Meat, Poultry, Fish
- Goat
- Crab
- Beef
- Turkey
- Shrimp
- Pork
- Guniea Fowl
- Chicken
- Lamb
- Bass (Fish)
- Perch (Fish)
- Mackarel (Fish)
- Tuna (Fish)
- Croaker (Fish)
- King Fish (Fish)
- Mussels/Clams/Oysyers
- Catfish
- Whiting (Fish)
- Snails

Grains
- Pasta Noodles
- Corn/Maize
- Millet
- Barley
- Teff
- Wheat
- Couscous
- Oats
- Rice
- Maize
- Sorghum

Diary & Animal By-Products
- Cheese
- Milk
- Eggs
- Yogurt

Teas, Coffees, Beverages
- Mint Tea
- Coffee
- Black Leaf Tea
- Ginger Tea
- Hibiscus Flower/Sorrel
- Bouye/Boabab Powder
- Pineapple Ginger Juice
- Watermelon Juice
- Pear Juice
- Mango Juice/Nectar
- Guava Juice/Nectar
- Soursop Juice
- Passionfruit Juice
- Rooibos Tea
- Honey Wine/Tej
- Palm Wine
- Iced Tea/Lemonade
- Mix
- Tamarind Juice
- Irish Moss
- Peanut Punch

WINDSHIELD SURVEYS

Additional tools we developed included a windshield survey to ascertain specific information about food establishments in Cherry Hill. Examples of information we were looking to collect from these surveys included establishment cleanliness; security measures; food availability; and accessibility for folks with disabilities. We also wanted to determine the nature of the surrounding area where an establishment is located, asking questions such as: What do you see when you walk when you drive or walk through the community to get to a store? Do you see vacant land? Is public transportation available to access the store?

FOOD CONSUMER AND FOOD PROVIDER SURVEYS

The food consumer survey we developed was one of the primary tools we used to understand Cherry Hill residents' experiences with the food environment in the neighborhood. Questions were formed from the five subsections of the definition of food apartheid—availability, accessibility, affordability, quality, and abandonment. For example, we wanted to know from people how far they had to travel to purchase food; what places they tend to purchase food from; what food quality was like in those places; and if those stores had the food items folks were looking to buy. In addition to the survey, we asked similar questions during our listening sessions with community members.

We also produced a survey for food providers in Cherry Hill to complete regarding the food offered in their stores. Questions on the survey included: where are you getting your food from? How much money do you make from selling food? How much money goes into running your business? What types of food that you sell are most popular? Types of food providers we identified were broad—from people who ran grocery stores in the community, to corner stores, to food pantries. Both the Food Consumer Survey and the Food Provider Survey are included in the **Appendix** of this report.

It is important to note that this study, and thus study tools, received approval from the Morgan State University Institutional Review Board (IRB).

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Black Yield Institute implemented various qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection for this study—including holding training sessions for research assistants, forming focus groups and listening sessions, collecting observations, interviewing community members, and administering the survey tools mentioned in the previous section.

Survey administration took the form of outreach for food providers and community members. Food providers received a $100 gift card for completing the survey. A list of

food providers was generated through online research as well as from the knowledge of research team members with an intimate knowledge of Cherry Hill. This allowed us to identify food providers not listed online—for example, through locating and surveying informal food pantries at local churches. However, despite these relationships, a majority of food providers did not respond to our surveys. This was due to factors such as store owners or workers not understanding the purpose of the study or willing to share information with us; language barriers; and time constraints. In future iterations of this study, we wish to address these issues and build on data collection from food providers in particular. One way we aim to do this, for example, is through working with folks who speak the same language(s) as shopkeepers.

Surveys for food consumers were distributed at BYI events and offerings, shopping centers, neighborhood centers, schools, churches, and the BYI Marketplace—a space for folks to purchase fresh, frozen, and shelf stable food items and other products from local Black and other farmers and producers. Community members received a $20 gift card for survey completion. We learned through this process that meeting people where they were at—through Back to School gatherings and other social activities, for example, was more effective than tabling at events alone. Survey information was collected through a dual approach—through paper copies at outreach events as well as a Google Form sent via BYI listservs and Cherry Hill stakeholders. We note that having paper copies did add an administrative and capacity barrier, where research assistants were required to manually enter information after data collection.

LISTENING SESSIONS

The listening sessions we held for this study were coordinated and organized by the administrative team. Three listening sessions were planned in total. Community members were incentivized through gift cards and a space for people to connect around shared food experiences. Our goals were to have 20 folks in each session. Questions were asked in an open dialogue to determine people's access to food and how they navigate the food environment in Cherry Hill and beyond. For example, to determine the meaning of culturally appropriate foods, we asked questions such as: what are some foods that are important to you; to Cherry Hill, Baltimore, and Maryland; and to you as a Black person and to your family? After compiling a list of such foods, research assistants visited different food providers in the neighborhood and identified whether or not those specific foods were available.

We also conducted an asset mapping process during these listening sessions, where we

asked community members to identify primary, secondary and tertiary assets regarding food and land in Cherry Hill. For primary assets, we asked questions such as: what are some assets in the community—that are *in* the community and of the community—that you believe are helpful for food access? For secondary assets, we asked: what resources or assets exist in the community that come from agencies or entities that operate outside of the community? For tertiary assets: as it relates to food and land, what resources or assets are outside of the community and operate from *outside* of the community that can still be seen as assets *in* the community? To represent responses, we used an actual physical map of the Cherry Hill community and asked people to use sticky notes to map out their answers. Further, our methods included future envisioning: for instance, we asked people to draw out their ideal food environment and share what they would like their food experiences in the neighborhood to be.

QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS

After collecting data, BYI hired a qualitative research analyst to help pull out key themes from listening sessions, windshield surveys, and food consumer surveys. This allowed us to identify and summarize what we learned throughout this process. Lessons we learned through qualitative analysis included conducting a more thorough training and onboarding of research analysts, to help folks understand the context of the study itself and our approach. An additional learning was to ensure our research equipment was up to par—for instance, we were unable to capture all of the insights folks offered in our listening sessions due to issues with recording. Thus, entail the methodologies we used to conduct the C***herry Hill Food Apartheid Study*** and lessons learned along the way.

FINDINGS

FOOD SOURCES (CORNER STORES, COMMUNITY FOOD SOURCES, RESTAURANTS, ETC.)

1: FAMILY DOLLAR
2: PIXIES PIZZA AND SUBS
3: WING HING CHINESE FOOD CARRYOUT
4: Y & J CARRYOUT
5: Y & J CARRY OUT
6: CHERRY HILL CARRYOUT
7: KRISPY KRUNCHY CHICKEN
8: CHERRY HILL MART
9: HEMINGWAY TEMPLE AME
10: THE CHOICE PROGRAM AT UMBC
11: REEDBIRD FOOD MART
12: 7ELEVEN

RESEARCH QUESTION 1:

Conceptualizing Food Apartheid

We next present our findings gathered from our first research question: how do the residents of Cherry Hill conceptualize food apartheid? The sixty-seven residents of Cherry Hill we surveyed in this study measured food apartheid using five categories: (1) the availability of fresh and culturally relevant foods in the community; (2) accessibility to food sources, including transportation options and distance; (3) food quality; (4) and abandonment. On all five metrics, Cherry Hill residents provided clear evidence of the existence of food apartheid in the neighborhood.

AVAILABILITY

The first way Cherry Hill residents conceptualized food apartheid is through the availability of healthy food in their community. Here, "healthy foods" were defined as fresh fruits, vegetables, and meats, as well as food that gives people energy, nourishes their bodies, and makes them feel good. In addition to healthy foods, availability also included the presence of cultural foods. Many of the residents in Cherry Hill we spoke with identified as African American, while some also identified with other cultures within the Black Diaspora.

Overall, survey participants overwhelmingly do not believe that healthy and/or culturally relevant foods are available in Cherry Hill. Much of the food that is readily available in the neighborhood is heavily processed or canned. As one resident put it: "The stores in Cherry Hill are only mini-marts or convenience stores or fast food with mostly canned or frozen food options." As shown in Figure 1, 80% of people experience challenges obtaining fresh food in the community:

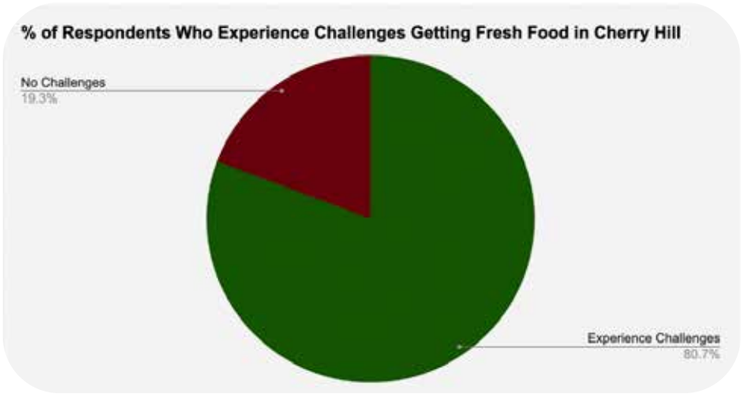


Figure 1

For folks who experience challenges with fresh food, 73% struggle with availability—they do not have access to fresh food sources nearby. And when fresh foods are available, their quality tends to be sub-par. Additional challenges that residents face include poor food availability (10.5%), having to travel long distances to stores (13.2%), and a lack of affordable food options (2.6%).

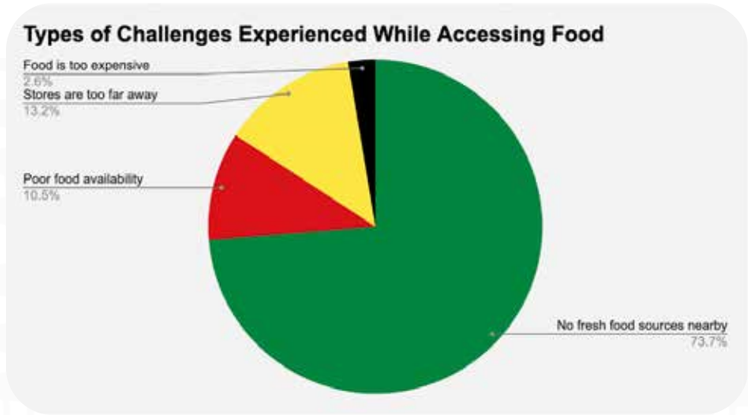


Figure 2

Corner stores and dollar stores, which do not prioritize fresh foods as product offerings, are more accessible than grocery stores in Cherry Hill. Of the 67 residents we spoke with, 32% rely on corner stores in the area for the majority of their food, while only 30% rely on grocery stores.

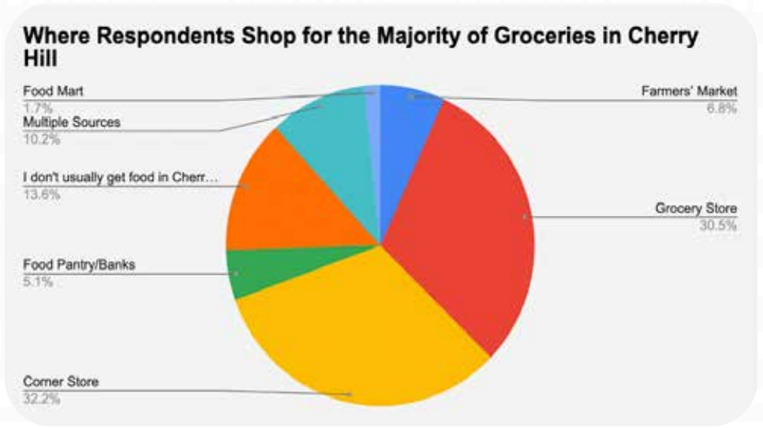


Figure 3

Not having healthy food available also restricts residents in their ability to make healthy meals. During one community listening session, a resident shared an anecdote regarding their experience attempting to purchase fresh produce:

"I was looking for a grocery store and found Save-A-Lot. The only item that I found on my grocery list was spinach and I put it back because I could not find anything else on my list."

Other residents left these comments in the survey to describe their experience trying to find healthy food in Cherry Hill:

"There are no fresh food markets… there is a lack of resources in Cherry Hill."

"[Fresh food] is out of stock at a lot of places." *—N.F*

"No fresh food section [in Cherry Hill stores]." *—R.L., a resident of Cherry Hill for 40 years.*

"There are no markets in the community." *—S.B.*

"There was no store nearby to get fresh produce before [the BYI pop-up farmers' market]."

"There is never any fresh fruit or vegetables." *—K. H.*

"There are no supermarkets, only corner stores with no fresh food options." *—J. R.*

"They do not sell a variety of foods, no fresh foods, everything is frozen food." *—K.B,. a resident of Cherry Hill for over 50 years.*

Other residents noted that while they could find what they needed in Cherry Hill, they had to go to multiple places to get what they needed to prepare a meal. This challenge further speaks to the accessibility barriers the Cherry Hill residents encounter. As one person shared, "I definitely don't find what I'm looking for in my community. I have to leave my community and hunt down a sale. I still have to go to more than one place."

ACCESSIBILITY

The hassle of traveling to shop for healthy foods is a second challenge faced by the Cherry Hill community. In this study, "accessibility" is defined as both the method of transportation Cherry Hill residents have to use to travel to healthy food sources as well as the time it takes to do so. As we show below, nearly half of Cherry Hill residents we surveyed (46.2%) have to use a car to reach their grocery shopping destinations—meeting the criteria of a "food desert" as set by the USDA, where residents live farther than one mile from a food source. Public transportation is residents' next frequent mode of transportation (30.8%). While public transportation is affordable, it is frequently unreliable and adds to the inconvenient nature of accessing food in Cherry Hill. Walking to a store is one of the least used modes of transportation, with only 10.8% of the respondents traveling in this way.

Lastly, while ridesharing is an option for some Cherry Hill residents, it constitutes an added cost for folks in a community where 37.3% of residents find the food itself already to be overpriced. During our community listening sessions, residents shared that when they do decide to utilize resources like Uber or Lyft, they either have to pay for a $15 ride one-way or carpool with others. As a result, grocery shopping has the added cost of having to pay a premium to even get to the store and the challenges of timing trips with others' schedules in order to reduce financial costs.

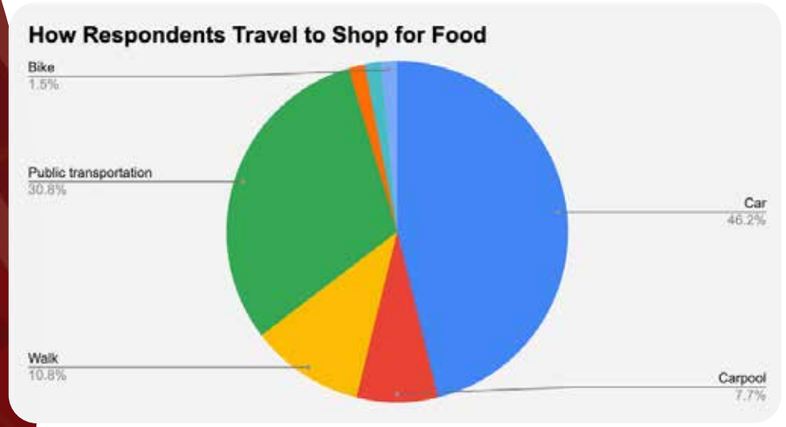


Figure 4

Given the lack of fresh food sources in Cherry Hill, inadequate options, and poor quality, an overwhelming majority of survey participants have to leave their neighborhood for groceries. For example, 83.9% of folks believe the food options are limited in Cherry Hill, and 83.1% have to shop for food outside their community—further adding to transportation and accessibility challenges.

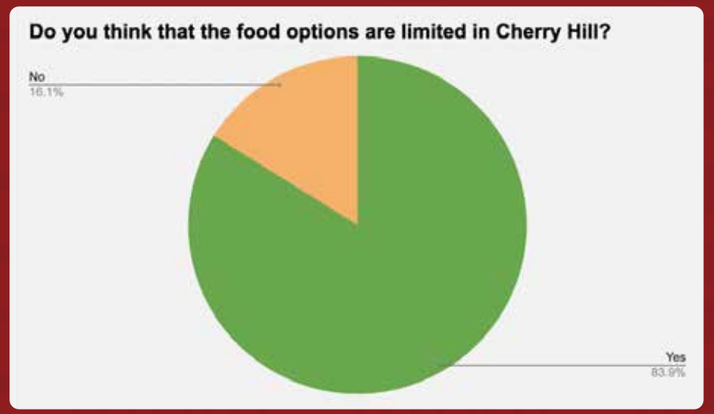


Figure 5

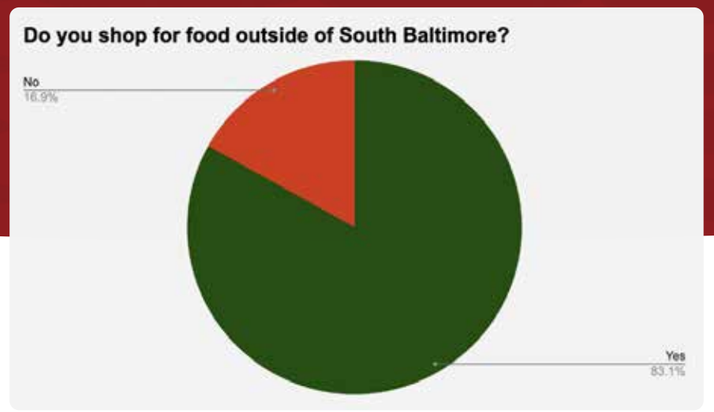


Figure 6

As we name in the Conclusion of this report, the implications of the fact that (1) the majority of residents leave South Baltimore to shop for food, and (2) more residents within Cherry Hill shop at corner stores as opposed to grocery stores are deeply significant. Thus lies a potential for further research—understanding the magnitude of economic extraction regarding the Cherry Hill food environment. This could mean, for example, ascertaining the amount of wealth transferred from Cherry Hill residents to the owners of corner stores; how corporations are profiting off of food apartheid through the specific products folks in the community purchase; and quantifying the dollars leaving Cherry Hill that could be used to reinvest in the neighborhood instead.

Residents who are caregivers find the current state of food access in Cherry Hill distressing. E.J., a 16-year resident of Cherry Hill, shared with us that ***grocery stores available to him are too far for him to travel to for fresh food,*** *especially because he has an elderly mom that he cares for regularly.* ***Being his mother's primary caregiver*** *means that Eric does not have time to* ***travel long distances to multiple stores just to prepare a meal.*** *He longs to be able to travel to one grocery and have all his food needs met there.*

AFFORDABILITY

Even when healthy food items are available in a store, Cherry Hill residents face yet another challenge regarding access—the food is not affordable. When asked to describe their experiences at the stores where they mainly purchase groceries, 38.6% described the food as overpriced. Figure 7 displays how much money per month residents spend when food shopping:

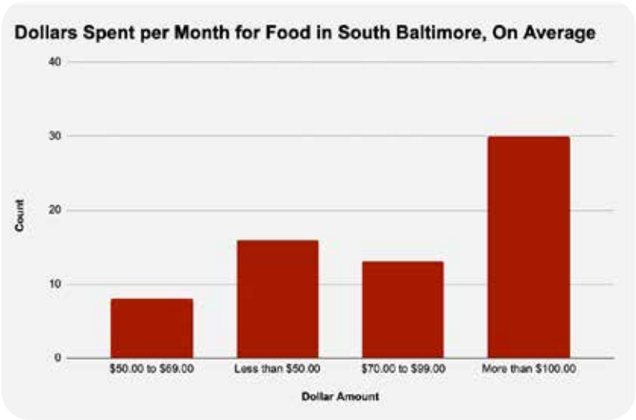


Figure 7

The majority of respondents (44.8%) spend more than $100.00 for food on average at stores in South Baltimore, while 54.7% of respondents spend more than $100.00 for food at stores outside of South Baltimore. Furthermore, almost 70% of respondents shop at locations within South Baltimore that accept SNAP or WIC, and 88.1% of respondents shop at stores outside of South Baltimore that accept SNAP or WIC. It is important to note that in addition to food costs, Cherry Hill residents pay more than what they spend on groceries in terms of time and transportation.

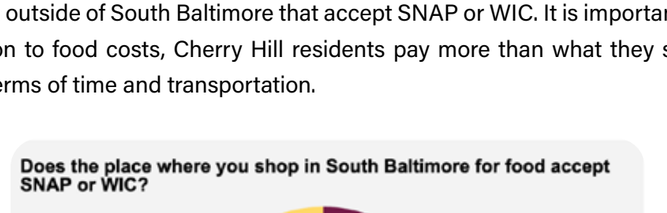


Figure 8

Almost 70% of respondents shop at locations within South Baltimore that accept SNAP or WIC. 88.1% of respondents shop at stores outside of South Baltimore that accept SNAP or WIC

Two Cherry Hill residents voiced their concerns about food affordability during a community listening session. As one person put it, "[There is] no access to fresh fruit and vegetables [in Cherry Hill] without traveling far distances and paying large amounts. And the other: "Harris Teeter has what I want, but double the prices."

FOOD QUALITY

In addition to a lack of availability, accessibility, and affordable foods in Cherry Hill, a fourth defining feature of food apartheid is poor food quality. While grocery stores in or near disinvested neighborhoods may sometimes carry fresh produce, the quality of that produce is subpar. For example, residents in the community listening sessions described journeying all the way to a distant grocery store for fresh produce, only to get there and notice it looks like it has "10 bullet holes" in it. Some people also described the quality of food as "overpriced and stale," "unhealthy," and "not always fresh." As another resident described, "[we] have to make do with the food options we have [in Cherry Hill]."

Figure 9 displays residents' opinions of food quality at the locations they buy groceries:

Figure 9

The majority of residents described food quality as "unacceptable," with only 17.9% of folks believing quality to be "great."

The lack of high-quality and affordable food options for folks in Cherry Hill has significant consequences in terms of one's health. As we named earlier, a food environment suffering from the effects of food apartheid has resulted in Black, brown, and low-income communities throughout the United States having some of the highest rates of heart disease and diabetes of all times.

As residents shared, the same is true for Cherry Hill. 70.1% of survey respondents believe that their diet has impacted the health of them and their family. Specific illnesses that folks suffer from include high blood pressure (71.1%), high cholesterol (55.8%), diabetes (61.5%), and heart disease (28.8%).

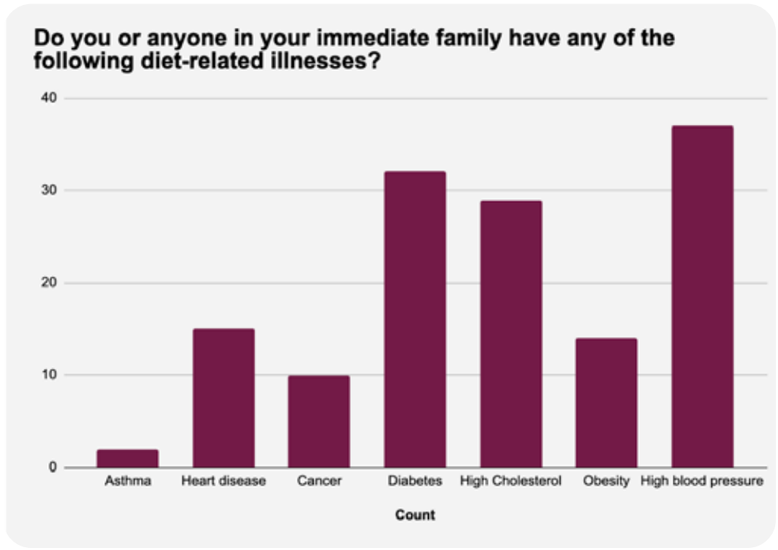


Figure 10

The evidence could not be more clear—food apartheid in the United States is a significant driver of chronic illness. Our built environment is killing our bodies, our minds, and our spirits. Working towards Black land and food sovereignty in Cherry Hill, then, is a matter of life and death.

70.1% of survey respondents believe that their diet has impacted the health of them and their family. Specific illnesses that folks suffer from include high blood pressure (71.1%), high cholesterol (55.8%), diabetes (61.5%), and heart disease (28.8%).

ABANDONMENT

After analyzing all that was shared in this study through our written surveys, conversations, and listening sessions, Cherry Hill residents' opinions on what truly defines the Cherry Hill food environment can be summed up in one word: abandonment. Residents believe that since their food options are controlled by individuals outside of their neighborhood, there is no real investment in building an accessible, affordable, healthy food environment in the community. In fact, residents have named the opposite—there has been an intentional *disinvestment* from Cherry Hill.

In other words, residents we spoke with feel there is a general lack of concern about the state of food apartheid in the neighborhood by those with the means to alter it—investors, city and state elected officials, and corporations that control the food economy. As some folks described, many in Cherry Hill further feel that the sources of their power have been systematically dissolved, and the resources that could be made available in this area have been taken and directed to other communities undergoing gentrification. In speaking to the 2021 eviction of the Cherry Hill Urban Community Garden (once operated by BYI), for example, one person stated: "They took the garden we had. We needed fresh produce at a reasonable price… the pop-up market [was] always a blessing."

When asked what defines the Cherry Hill food environment, residents' responses can be summed up in one word: abandonment.

Some study participants (nearly 9%) also noted that there is a "reputation" the Cherry Hill community holds that prevents investments and access to quality food. Others stated that local government "de-prioritizes the needs of the people" in the neighborhood, that corporations have a "monopoly" on the food environment, and that overall, the needs of community members are "overlooked."

Residents' language of "abandonment" to describe their food environment touches on a larger phenomenon that scholar, organizer, and abolitionist Ruth Wilson Gilmore names as structural and intentional. As she explains in her 2007 book Golden Gulag: Prisons, Surplus, Crisis, and Opposition in Globalizing California, and as Riley, et al. summarize, "organized abandonment by capital and the state refers to the intentional disinvestment in communities leading to the gradual disappearance of safe housing, reliable jobs, clean water, healthy food, and a social safety net which, in turn, create opportunities for privatized social services, redevelopment, and increased police presence and criminalization."

Cherry Hill's food environment is defined by a scarcity of fresh, nutritious, and culturally relevant foods; poor food quality; a lack of accessible grocery stores; and unaffordable food

options. As we've stated in the **Introduction** to this report, the creation of this environment was not inevitable nor the product of an organic food economy governed by the residents of Cherry Hill themselves. Instead, the neighborhood's food environment is deeply rooted in decades of racialized and class-based discriminatory policies and practices oriented towards cultural severance, an eradication of autonomy, and heightened rates of chronic illness. In this way, food apartheid is one aspect of organized abandonment that impacts all areas of a Cherry Hill resident's life.

RESEARCH QUESTION 2:

Pursuing Black Land and Food Sovereignty

Next, we present our findings gathered from our second research question: what assets exist, or can exist, in Cherry Hill that may contribute to the pursuit of Black food and land sovereignty? We discuss four key assets to this end: (1) natural resources; (2) knowledge and skills of elders; (3) desire for governance; (4) and committed organizations.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Our first key asset in building Black land and food sovereignty is, naturally, the potential of the land in and around Cherry Hill itself. During our third community listening session, residents shared about the history of Cherry Hill, the richness of soil in the neighborhood, and how land in Cherry Hill lends itself well to cultivation.

Black Yield Institute demonstrated the potential of land stewardship in the neighborhood by cultivating 1.25 acres of arable land at the Cherry Hill Urban Community Garden (CHUCG) for food production. Over the five years that CHUCG was stewarded by BYI, fresh and nutritious food were distributed using sustainable agriculture and cooperative economic practices directly to community members at affordable prices.. The provision of fresh, healthy, and accessible produce grown within the community had a myriad of benefits to residents—including improved diets and health outcomes, community building through work on the land, and confidence in the capacity of Cherry Hill to provide food for its people through collective labor and action. In this way, examining additional available lands for cultivation in Cherry Hill and soil testing would uncover the viability of following the CHUGG model and growing fresh produce for Cherry Hill residents.

In addition to land, the waterfront and Middle Branch of the Patapsco River also stand as potential assets that could contribute to food and land sovereignty in Cherry Hill. As the

[15] Taylor Riley, Julia P. Schleimer, Jaquelyn L. Jahn. Organized abandonment under racial capitalism: Measuring accountable actors of structural racism for public health research and action, Social Science & Medicine, Volume 343, 2024, 116576, ISSN 0277-9536, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2024.116576.

waterfront is publicly owned, it could be designated for agricultural food cultivation or for fish production through an on-land aquaculture operation. Additionally, the water itself could serve as a site of food production in the forms of bivalves (such as oysters) and/or sea vegetables for consumption, or sea vegetable cultivation for the production of nitrogen-rich soil enhancer for on-land agricultural purposes. However, the water is currently polluted to a level that renders potential foodstuffs grown in it inedible. Bioremediation of the water could lead to Middle Branch becoming a site of food production for a communally-owned and operated aquaculture operation.

KNOWLEDGE & SKILLS OF ELDERS

The second asset present in Cherry Hill is the knowledge of the elders regarding cultivation of their land. During one community listening session, residents shared that it is critical to acknowledge the skills of the elders who know how to take swamp land and cultivate it. This knowledge can be invaluable to residents who want to leverage the land they have to grow their own fresh fruits and vegetables. Residents can draw from the knowledge of those who are already in their community and have a shared investment and interest in seeing Cherry Hill thrive again—as opposed to outsiders who may not hold that shared experience and intention.

Moreover, this presents a great opportunity for knowledge to pass down generationally that may otherwise be lost as elders transition. As identified by study participants, knowledge transfer could be achieved through youth-led oral history projects and documentation of current agricultural practices within the community. Given that one aspect of food apartheid is the severing of ties between people, land, and spirit, the skills and knowledge of land stewardship already present in Cherry Hill is invaluable.

DESIRE FOR COMMUNAL GOVERNANCE

A third asset that can contribute to the pursuit of Black Land and Food Sovereignty in Cherry Hill is aspirational—for residents to have direct governance of the food they consume and the land in their neighborhood. Throughout the listening sessions and surveys, many residents expressed that the reason stores in their community do not have high quality food is because they know most folks have no choice but to shop there. In other words, stores know that many Cherry Hill residents are limited by time, access, and finances. Other stores in the community—such as Family Dollar—do not carry higher quality food items simply because they are not grocery stores.

As a result, people have a strong desire not just to question their food environment and

the practices of predatory food business in their community, but to also explore what community control of food stores could look like. People expressed their wishes to have both sovereignty over and a financial stake in controlling food availability in Cherry Hill. They derived inspiration from community-owned food vending businesses around the country, citing the idea of a food co-op as a possible means to food sovereignty for both community members and the border community. For example, one resident during a community listening session voiced their sentiments as follows:

"...But the bottom line is, why don't we talk about having control, not just in terms of going to someone else, but having our own? In other words, you know, a co-op of some type that can provide food to our community at a reasonable price.

These things are happening all over the country, has been happening in other Black communities as well. So it's time for communities like Cherry Hill or other communities and northwest and northeast Baltimore to do that. And you know, we can do that."

COMMITTED ORGANIZATIONS

In addition to natural resources, the knowledge and skills of their elders, and the possibility of community-owned food stores, residents also named organizations that have had positive impacts in the community as an asset present in Cherry Hill. These organizations included Black Yield Institute, Cherry Hill Strong, and Youth Resiliency Institute. All three of these organizations, people shared, have pioneered community participation and neighborhood building through their commitments to Black-led organizing, education, activism, and material change. They each stand as a model for how food and land sovereignty can be built in Cherry Hill, leveraging existing networks of allyship and activism. Additional organizations named by folks include Cherry Community Coalition, Cherry Hill Eagles, Safe Streets Cherry Hill, Cherry Hill Tenant Council, Restoring Inner City Hope, RICH Juice Bar and a host faith institutions, social programs, and healthcare organizations. Cherry Hill has a robust history of civic engagement through schools, libraries, community-based organizations, social clubs, and faith institutions that have contributed to and uphold the fabric of social life in the community. The named entities and those unnamed are a part

of this tradition and provide a strong basis from which to accomplish the aim of food sovereignty. Every institution has a role in our pursuit of liberation, as long as we take caution to utilize the strengths of each organization and do as Baba Kwame Ture beckons–*organize, organize, organize*!

CONCLUSION

The ***Cherry Hill Food Apartheid Study*** is the first of a multi-part project attempting to understand, from the perspective of the people of Cherry Hill, the way in which food apartheid impacts their lives. Through surveys, conversations, and community listening sessions, we were able to learn first-hand from Cherry Hill residents and stakeholders about their challenges with obtaining fresh, nutritious, and culturally-relevant foods. Crucially, we were also able to uncover what assets exist in Cherry Hill that may contribute to the pursuit of Black land and food sovereignty.

Cherry Hill serves as a textbook case of food apartheid. Availability of healthy food in the community is scarce. With no grocery stores within walking distance, residents are forced to drive, carpool, or rely on public transportation to access a supermarket. Once they arrive, folks then have to pay a premium for healthier food items, which are oftentimes of subpar quality and not culturally relevant. If residents are restricted to purchasing foods within Cherry Hill—if they don't have the time or resources to leave the neighborhood, are disabled, or are without transport, for example—their choices are significantly limited. Corner stores and/or dollar stores are people's only food options, where most of what is available is heavily processed—canned goods, bags of chips, or other foods filled with excessive sodium or sugar. The influx of processed goods and a lack of accessible and affordable fresh food items have taken a toll on the health of Cherry Hill residents and their families. Folks in the community are suffering from a number of chronic illnesses as a result of food apartheid, including diabetes, high cholesterol, and high blood pressure.

The people of Cherry Hill are acutely aware that their neighborhood's food environment is one defined by abandonment. Decades of intersecting forms of oppression, from redlining, to disinvestment, to the active removal of community sources of power, has left residents feeling that their community is at the mercy of those who do not have Cherry Hill's best interests at heart. Yet alongside this awareness exists a strong desire for the people of the community to take control over their own land and food. As shared by elders with deep knowledge and memories of Cherry Hill's past, these experiments with self-determination have precedent. With proper support, organizing, and investment, it is possible that such communal forms of governance can return. With all that has been experienced and lessons learned, it is safe to say that the Cherry Hill food economy–unearthed–stands the chance

of being transformed into a desired environment where all who interact experience dignity. The study has produced significant gaps and opportunities to create a food economy that has the potential of modeing community control. Building upon the strengths and limitations of the study, the community, now well-informed of some nuances of the economy, future contributors have roots from which to grow change.

LIMITATIONS, ASPIRATIONS, AND NEXT STEPS

While this study represents an important first step in understanding the Cherry Hill food economy, as we named in the Introduction of this report, there is much more we need to research, investigate, and document as we work towards achieving autonomy within the food economy in Cherry Hill and beyond. In this way, we present this report not only for our findings but for its critical methodology and limitations.

We thus conclude this report with limitations of what we were able to achieve in this iteration of the study and what we hope to research next. Our original version of this project included both a qualitative section, intended to learn about the experiences of Cherry Hill residents, as well as a quantitative section intended to understand the economic toll food apartheid takes in a community. To do so, we developed a questionnaire to distribute to food businesses in Cherry Hill which we have included in the **Appendix** of this report. In addition to food provider data, in terms of future quantitative research we desire to understand:

- **What do flows of wealth in and out of Cherry Hill look like regarding the Cherry Hill food economy? Who is profiting from food apartheid?**
- **Where do resident dollars go when shopping at corner stores and dollar stores? Which food products are most often bought and sold? How does this shape the socialization of Cherry Hill residents?**
- **Who owns the food businesses in Cherry Hill? How are these food businesses linked to our global food system? In other words, what can we understand about our global food system through examining specific food purchases, and the multinational corporations that own them, in a single neighborhood in Baltimore?**
- **How do store owners in Cherry Hill view the services they provide in relation to the neighborhood's food economy? What do they see as their relationship to Cherry Hill?**

In terms of land in Cherry Hill:

- **What does land use look like in Cherry Hill? What percentage of land is cultivable? What percentage of land is publicly vs. privately owned?**

How did elders in Cherry Hill previously cultivate swamp land for food production?

In terms of demographics:

- **What are the demographics of folks who responded to our survey? What are their annual incomes, and how does that impact their food choices?**

In terms of additional qualitative research:

- **We would like to understand changes to the Cherry Hill food environment over time and cultural changes to food habits through the oral histories of Cherry Hill elders. How did elders connect to food in the past? How do they connect to food now? Have they experienced changes to what they consider culturally-relevant food? Hiring a youth workforce tasked with interviewing and listening to elders as they share their deep knowledge of land cultivation and food-related practices would not only strengthen current community ties and provide a skill set for the current generation to cultivate land in Cherry Hill; it would enable future generations to build on this invaluable knowledge and amass the tools to further enhance land cultivation and food sovereignty in the community.**
- **Similarly: what are the differences between how elders connect to food in Cherry Hill vs. youth? How have changes to the Cherry Hill food environment shaped the eating habits and health of young people today? What do elders eat as opposed to youth? How do youth understand their food environment?**
- **What do families cook at home? How has this changed over time?**

Lastly, we would like to delve deeper into understanding the impacts of food apartheid on people's health. Further: how does food apartheid impact caregiving and healthcare systems in Cherry Hill and Baltimore? What is the monetary and emotional cost of this?

We hope to convey through this report and these further questions the magnitude of undertaking it can be to understand even one neighborhood's food environment. We thus intend for this report to be a starting point and blueprint for others to build from—whether in Cherry Hill or any community experiencing the impacts of food apartheid. It is only through learning from each other and those who have come before us can we organize towards a future where everyone's physical, cultural, and spiritual food and land needs are met. This report is an offering for those working towards such a future.

APPENDIX

EXAMPLES OF RESISTANCE:
STRIVING TOWARD BLACK LAND AND FOOD SOVEREIGNTY

It is critical to identify forms of resistance to the historic systems of oppression, exclusion, and violence that have characterized food apartheid and the thwarting of Black food and land sovereignty. This section of the Appendix highlights examples from Baltimore, the broader U.S. national context, and international movements to show how Black, brown, and Indigenous communities have created food sovereignty outside of the conventional networks of white supremacist capitalist food production, consumption, and land control regimes.

BALTIMORE:

BLACK YIELD INSTITUTE: Black Yield Institute is a Pan-African power institution based in Baltimore, Maryland, serving as a think tank and collective action network that addresses food apartheid. Since our beginning in November 2015, we have worked collaboratively with Black people and entities, along with other institutions, in pursuit of Black land and food sovereignty. We aim to build independent power by establishing an action network and serving as an incubator for ideas and projects. We are unapologetically a Black-led institution, utilizing Afrocentric, Pan-African, and human rights frameworks to anchor our thought and works toward liberation through food.

BLACK CHURCH FOOD SECURITY NETWORK: BCFSN helps Black churches use their assets to establish gardens on their land, host farmers' markets, and buy wholesale from Black farmers. After years of seeing the benefits of integrating a vegetable garden into the

ministry of the church and growing frustrated with food access and charity models, Rev. Heber Brown, III, of Maxine's Garden at Pleasant Hope Baptist Church in Baltimore, MD, began dreaming of what could happen if more Black churches started growing food on their land and worked in coordination with other congregations and farmers to co-create, local Black-owned food systems. Today, the BCFSN spans much of the country with member congregations from as far west as Omaha, Nebraska, throughout the east coast and throughout the southeastern United States as well. Using an asset-based community development approach, the BCFSN supports churches in establishing gardens on their land, hosting miniature farmers' markets, and buying wholesale from Black farmers all while using their existing assets and the skills of their members.

FRESH AT THE AVENUE: The No Boundaries Coalition runs the Fresh at the Avenue program, connecting residents of Sandtown to affordable produce at the Avenue Market. During COVID-19, they distributed food via home deliveries to their neighbors.

THE BLACK VEG SOCIETY: The Black Veg Society's (BVS) (formerly Black Vegetarian Society of Maryland) mission is to educate the public, particularly BIPOC communities, on the benefits of veganism and the plant-based diet while building a community centered on healthy, accessible, and sustainable food with a focus on lifestyle choices.

THRIVE BALTIMORE: Thrive Baltimore is a Black-led, dynamic community resource center located in the Station North community of Baltimore City. Run by a collective of food, environmental and social justice activists, its mission is to provide education, resources and support to anyone interested in adopting a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle. Part of Thrive Baltimore's mission is to provide free plant-based cooking demos, nutrition lectures, food tastings, film screenings and other fun, informational programming in an open, socially conscious environment that makes it a space where all are welcome. Thrive Baltimore is dedicated to encouraging people to make healthier, kinder choices that will enable them to live more conscious lifestyles.

BACKYARD BASECAMP AND BLISS MEADOWS FARM: Backyard Basecamp was founded by Atiya Wells, a pediatric nurse with a passion to introduce, educate, and connect families in Baltimore, especially People of Color, to local outdoor spaces. Backyard Basecamp provides culturally relevant environmental education. They intentionally center the voices and stories of Black and Brown people outdoors because they know there is a difference in saying "This place was made for you!" as opposed to "This place was made for all." They are engaged in urban environmental education and health and wellness outreach, and run Bliss Meadows, a 10 acre land-reclamation project at the intersection of environmental and food justice.

BLACK BUTTERFLY URBAN FARMER ACADEMY: The Black Butterfly Urban Farmer Academy is a project of the Farm Alliance of Baltimore. Launched in 2021, this nine-month training program focuses on sustainable agriculture methods and farm business planning through classroom sessions, on-farm work and field days. It is designed to provide micro-scaled urban farm training to people who live and/or work in Baltimore City, preferably those who are socially disadvantaged.

NATIONAL: HISTORIC EXAMPLES

COLORED FARMERS' ALLIANCE (CFACU): In the 1880s, The Colored Farmers' Alliance (CFACU) formed to establish African American leadership and control over racial agrarian reform in the South. The union operated under fear and harassment by the white plantation block, but managed to operate several cooperatives in the late 19th century before having to disband. Members of the CFACU shared agricultural techniques and innovations, and coordinated cooperative efforts for planting and harvesting. CFACU promoted alliances between farmers and laborers, and was active in local and regional politics – to maintain rights for African Americans after Reconstruction. Best estimates are that the CFACU had over 1 million members and was the largest Black organization of its time.

FREEDOM FARM COOPERATIVE (FFC): Founded by Fannie Lou Hamer in 1967, the Freedom Farm Cooperative (FFC) was a community-based, rural and economic development project. Between 1967 and 1976, the FFC provided housing, health care, employment, education, and access to healthy food. Members of the FFC were displaced land/farmworkers, dispossessed of access to land and brushed aside by mechanization. The program included the "Sunflower Pigs," which provided families with a piglet to raise for two years, bring back to mate at the bank, and then replenish the bank with two pigs from every litter. The offspring could be sold or slaughtered or mated. By 1969, just two years later, the pig bank had provided over a hundred families with pigs, each of which produced over 150 pounds of meat. Hamer was known to say that so long as she had a pig and a garden, she could survive. In 1973, FFC had six hundred acres in crop production, three hundred families were recipients of animals from the pig bank, and seventy families were living in the organization's low-income, affordable housing. They distributed scholarships to local high school students to attend college and were able to support the start of several Black businesses. It was one of the first Head Start preschool sites in Mississippi. Though recession, natural disaster, loss of funding, and the illness of Hamer, its most successful fundraiser led to the collapse of the FFC, its extraordinary success for a time suggests the power of strategies built on working the land, local sourcing, and self-reliant communities.

[16] https://openharvest.coop/the-legacy-of-african-american-co-ops/

BLACK PANTHER PARTY FREE BREAKFAST PROGRAM: In 1966, Huey Newton and Bobby Seale created the Black Panther Party for Self Defense to address police oppression of blacks in Oakland, California. Because community members also turned to the Panthers for help with economic and social problems like job discrimination and evictions, the Panthers started community services in 1969 to build community self-determination. The Panthers' first and most successful community program was the Free Breakfast for Children Program. at St. Augustine's Church in Oakland in January 1969. Bobby Seale planned the program with Father Earl Neil and Parishioner Ruth Beckford-Smith, who coordinated the program and recruited neighborhood mothers. The Breakfast Program quickly spread to chapters in 23 cities by the end of the year. Local businesses, churches and community-based organizations donated (sometimes with community pressure) space for the program and nutritious food like eggs, grits, toast, and milk. The Panthers fed more than 20,000 children nationally in 1969. By 1971, at least 36 cities had a breakfast program. FBI and local police raids, arrests, and murders of Panther leaders as well as party infighting led to the closure of most Panther chapters and the end of the Free Breakfast Program in the early 1970s.

NATIONAL: CONTEMPORARY EXAMPLES

NATIONAL BLACK FOOD AND JUSTICE ALLIANCE (NBFJA): The National Black Food and Justice Alliance (NBFJA) is a coalition of Black-led organizations aimed at developing Black leadership, supporting Black communities, organizing for Black self-determination, and building institutions for Black food sovereignty & liberation. The Alliance seeks to achieve this by engaging in broad based coalition organizing for Black food and land, increasing visibility of Black-led narratives and work, advancing Black-led visions for just and sustainable communities, and building capacity for self-determination within our local, national, and international food systems and land rights work. They focus their work on Black food sovereignty, self-determining food economies, and land. They approach food sovereignty, land and self-determining food economies through the lens of healing, organizing & resistance against anti-Blackness.

DETROIT BLACK COMMUNITY FOOD SOVEREIGNTY NETWORK (DBCFSN): The Detroit Black Community Food Sovereignty Network (DBCFSN) was formed in February 2006 to address food insecurity in Detroit's Black community and to organize members of that community to play a more active leadership role in the local food security movement. We observed that many of the key players in the local urban agriculture movement were young whites, who while well-intentioned, never-the-less, exerted a degree of control inordinate to their numbers in Detroit's population. Many of those individuals moved to Detroit from other places specifically to engage in agricultural or other food security work. It was and is our

[17] https://lifeandthyme.com/commentary/fannie-lou-hamer-and-farming-as-activism/
[18] https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/black-panther-partys-free-breakfast-program-1969-19 80/

view that the most effective movements grow organically from the people whom they are designed to serve. Representatives of Detroit's majority African-American population must be in the leadership of efforts to foster food justice and food security in Detroit. While our specific focus is on Detroit's African-American community, we realize that improved policy and an improved localized food system is a benefit to all Detroit residents. The organization works in the areas of agriculture and policy development.

SOUTHEASTERN AFRICAN AMERICAN FARMERS' ORGANIC NETWORK (SAAFON): SAAFON is a regional network for Black farmers committed to using ecologically sustainable practices to manage their land and the natural systems on it in order to grow food and raise livestock that are healthy for people and the planet. Many of our farms have been in the same Black family for over 100 years and, as such, are historical treasures. SAAFON' s higher calling is to seek the liberation and empowerment of Black people through agricultural, food, and land-based strategies. We promote agricultural production and land management practices that are rooted in indigenous ways of knowing that span geographies, space and time. We recognize, honor and uplift the ways of our ancestors and ask for their guidance as we show how Black agrarianism offers solutions to some of the most pressing challenges of our communities.

BLACK URBAN GROWERS (BUGS): Black Urban Growers (BUGs), founded in 2010, is committed to building networks and community support for growers in both urban and rural settings. Through education and advocacy around food and farm issues, we nurture collective Black leadership to support Black agrarianism and reimagine Black futures. Based in New York City, BUGs reach is national through its annual conference. BUGS was co-founded by New York City-based farmer Karen Washington.

SOUL FIRE FARM: Soul Fire Farm, based in Petersburg, NY, is an Afro-Indigenous centered community farm committed to uprooting racism and seeding sovereignty in the food system. We raise and distribute life-giving food as a means to end food apartheid. With deep reverence for the land and wisdom of our ancestors, we work to reclaim our collective right to belong to the earth and to have agency in the food system. We bring diverse communities together on this healing land to share skills on sustainable agriculture, natural building, spiritual activism, health, and environmental justice. We are training the next generation of activist-farmers and strengthening the movements for food sovereignty and community self-determination. Soul Fire Farm's food sovereignty programs reach over 160,000 people each year, including farmer training for Black and Brown growers, reparations and land return initiatives for northeast farmers, food justice workshops for urban youth, home gardens for city-dwellers living under food apartheid, doorstep harvest delivery for food insecure households, and systems and policy education for public decision-makers.

[19] https://www.riseandrootfarm.com/karen-washington

JUSTICE FOR BLACK FARMERS' ACT: The Justice for Black Farmers Act will enact policies to end discrimination within the USDA, protect remaining Black farmers from losing their land, provide land grants to create a new generation of Black farmers and restore the land base that has been lost, and implement systemic reforms to help family farmers across the United States. On November 19th, 2020, U.S. Senators Cory Booker (D-NJ), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY) announced landmark legislation aimed at addressing and correcting historic discrimination within the U.S. Department of Agriculture in federal farm assistance and lending that has caused Black farmers to lose millions of acres of farmland and robbed Black farmers and their families of hundreds of billions of dollars of inter-generational wealth.

SOUTHERN RURAL BLACK WOMEN'S INITIATIVE (SRBWI): The Southern Rural Black Women's Initiative (SRBWI) organizes, trains and nurtures women in 77 impoverished rural counties in Mississippi, Alabama and Georgia to incubate businesses, build networks of leaders and advocate for public policies that help families and communities.

INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

LANDLESS WORKERS MOVEMENT [MOVIMENTO DOS TRABALHADORES RURAIS SEM TERRA (MST)]: Brazil's Landless Workers Movement (Movimento dos Trabalhadores Rurais Sem Terra (MST) in Portuguese) is a mass social movement, formed by rural workers and by all those who want to fight for land reform and against injustice and social inequality in rural areas. The MST was born through a process of occupying latifundios (large landed estates) and became a national movement in 1984. Over more than two decades, the movement has led to more than 2,500 land occupations, with about 370,000 families - families that today settled on 7.5 million hectares of land that they won as a result of the occupations. Through their organizing, these families continue to push for schools, credit for agricultural production and cooperatives, and access to health care. Currently, there are approximately 900 encampments holding 150,000 landless families in Brazil. Those camped, as well as those already settled, remain mobilized, ready to exercise their full citizenship, by fighting for the realization of their political, social, economic, environmental and cultural rights.

LA VIA CAMPESINA: La Via Campesina, founded in 1993, is an international movement bringing together millions of peasants, landless workers, indigenous people, pastoralists, fishers, migrant farmworkers, small and medium-size farmers, rural women and peasant youth from around the world. Built on a solid sense of unity and solidarity, it defends peasant agriculture for food sovereignty. La Via Campesina insists that diverse, peasant-driven

agroecological modes of production, based on centuries of experience and accumulated evidence, is central to guaranteeing healthy food to everyone while remaining in harmony with nature. To achieve food sovereignty, La Via Campesina mobilizes and advocates for agrarian reform in peasant territories and provides training on agroecological production methods. This global coalition is also a platform for its members worldwide to communicate and carry out joint solidarity actions, mobilizations, and campaigns in defense of land, water, seeds, and forests.

INDIGENOUS FOOD SYSTEMS NETWORK (CANADA): The Working Group on Indigenous Food Sovereignty (WGIFS) was born in March of 2006 out of a recognized need to carry the Indigenous voice in the various meetings, conferences and discussions that have taken place within the food security movement. Through participation in the B.C. Food Systems Network Annual Gathering and strategic planning meetings, the WGIFS was created for the purpose of increasing awareness of the underlying issues, concerns and strategies impacting food security in Indigenous communities. The WGIFS seeks to apply culturally appropriate protocols and ancient ways of knowing through a consensus-based approach to critically analyzing issues, concerns and strategies as they relate to Indigenous food, land, culture, health, economics, and sustainability. The Indigenous Food Systems Network Website was developed by the WGIFS to allow individuals and groups involved with Indigenous food related action, research, and policy reform to network and share relevant resources and information.

REACHING FOR AUTONOMY: UNEARTHING FOOD APARTHEID **IN CHERRY HILL**

WWW.BLACKYIELDINSTITUTE.ORG