

“Irrigating” Food Deserts

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Problem

- Massachusetts contains 70 food deserts.
- Massachusetts lacks legislation to eliminate food deserts.
- Worcester, the second largest city in Massachusetts has two food deserts.(9)

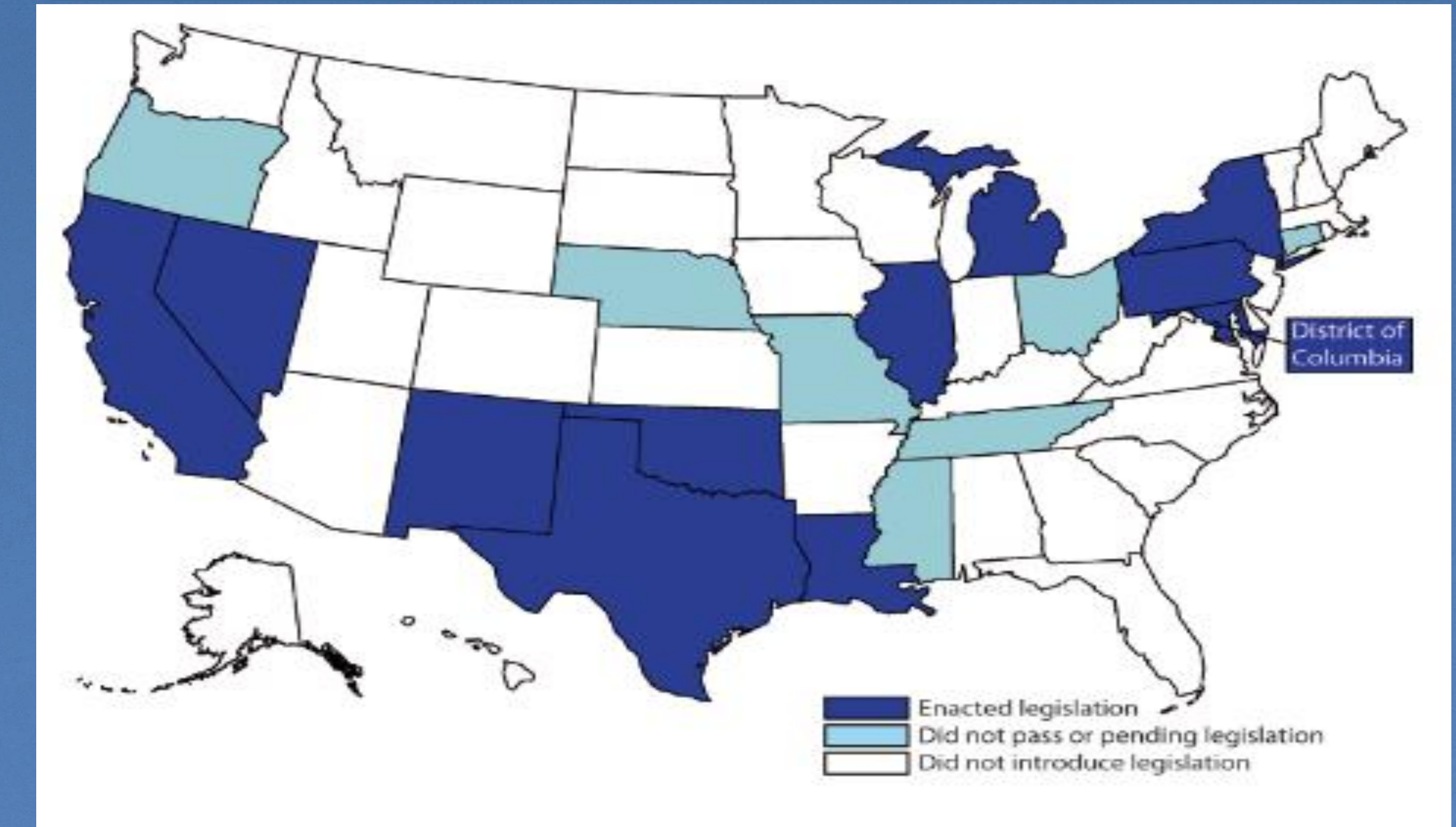
Solution

Support the passing of state-wide policy that incentivizes and subsidizes affordable full-service grocery stores to move into the food deserts.

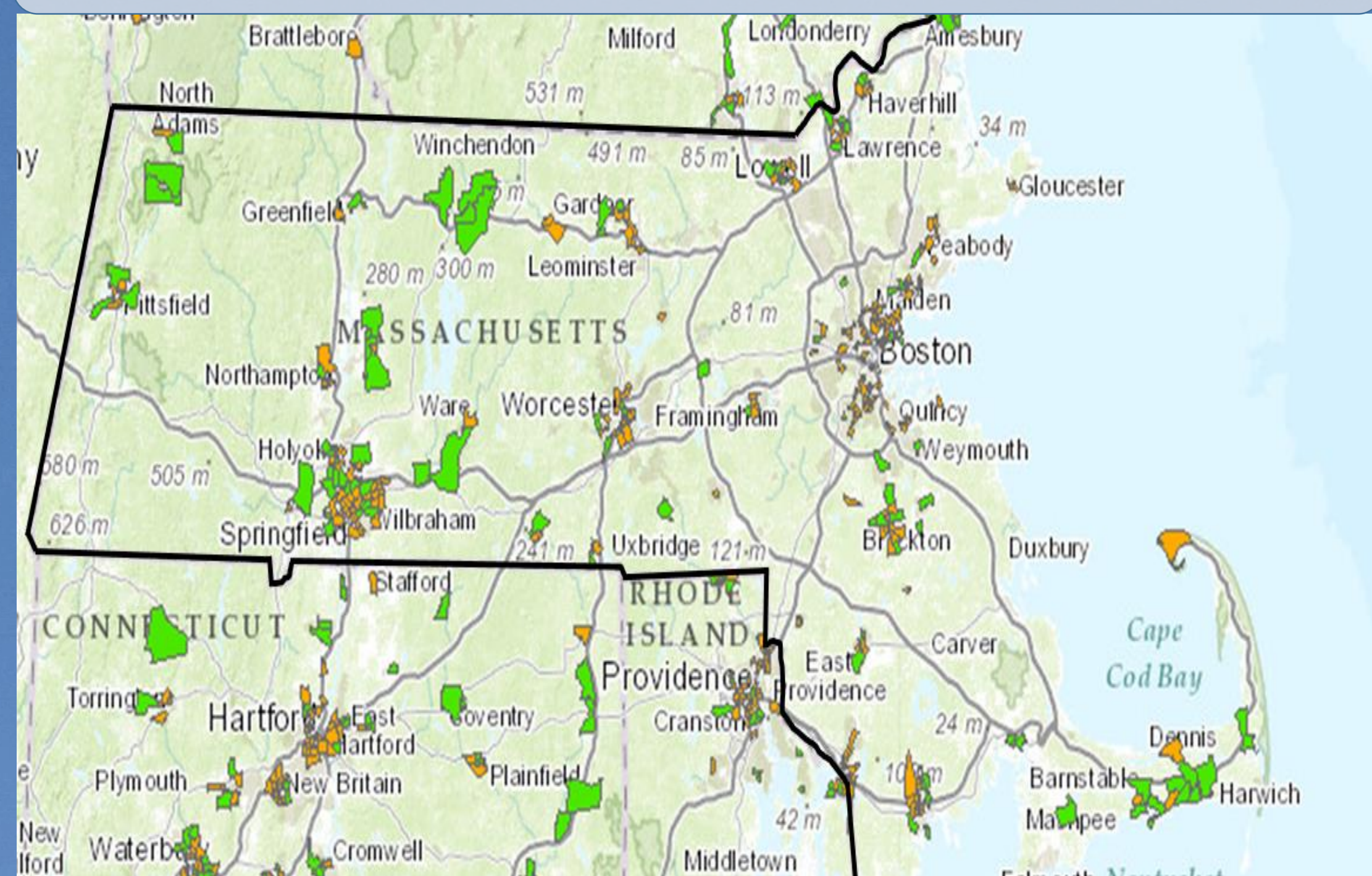
Assessment

- 12 states have passed similar legislation.(7)
- The graphic to the right shows the states who are involved in this type of legislation.
- A grocery access report (2012) recommends to state legislators, the same incentives other states have used(8).
- The proposed bill benefits citizens and companies by eliminating food deserts and creating business.

Map of States that enacted Similar Legislation to Proposed Solution
State Initiatives Supporting Healthier Food Retail. (n.d.). Retrieved December 8, 2014, from



Map of Primary and Secondary Food Deserts in MA
"USDA ERS - Go to the Atlas." USDA ERS - Go to the Atlas. Web. 10 Nov. 2014.



Promotion Plan

- Report that shows the pros of this legislation, and plan to distribute it to all representatives and senators.
- Plan on having politicians use this policy for their campaigns and to help move the bill through the legislative process.

Definitions

- An urban area more than one mile away from a full-service grocery store is described as a primary food desert (1).
- People near or under the poverty line living in a food desert are more likely to be food insecure and suffering from malnutrition (2).

Proof of Concept

- Pennsylvania enacted a healthy food retail policy in 2004.
- Program offers special low rate financing, grants for renovation, loans for start-up costs, construction, and equipment.
- The policy built 88 stores, created 5,023 jobs, and 1.6 million square feet of commercial space.
- Pennsylvania currently has a 11.9% food insecurity rate which is 2.4% lower than the national average of 14.3%.(10)

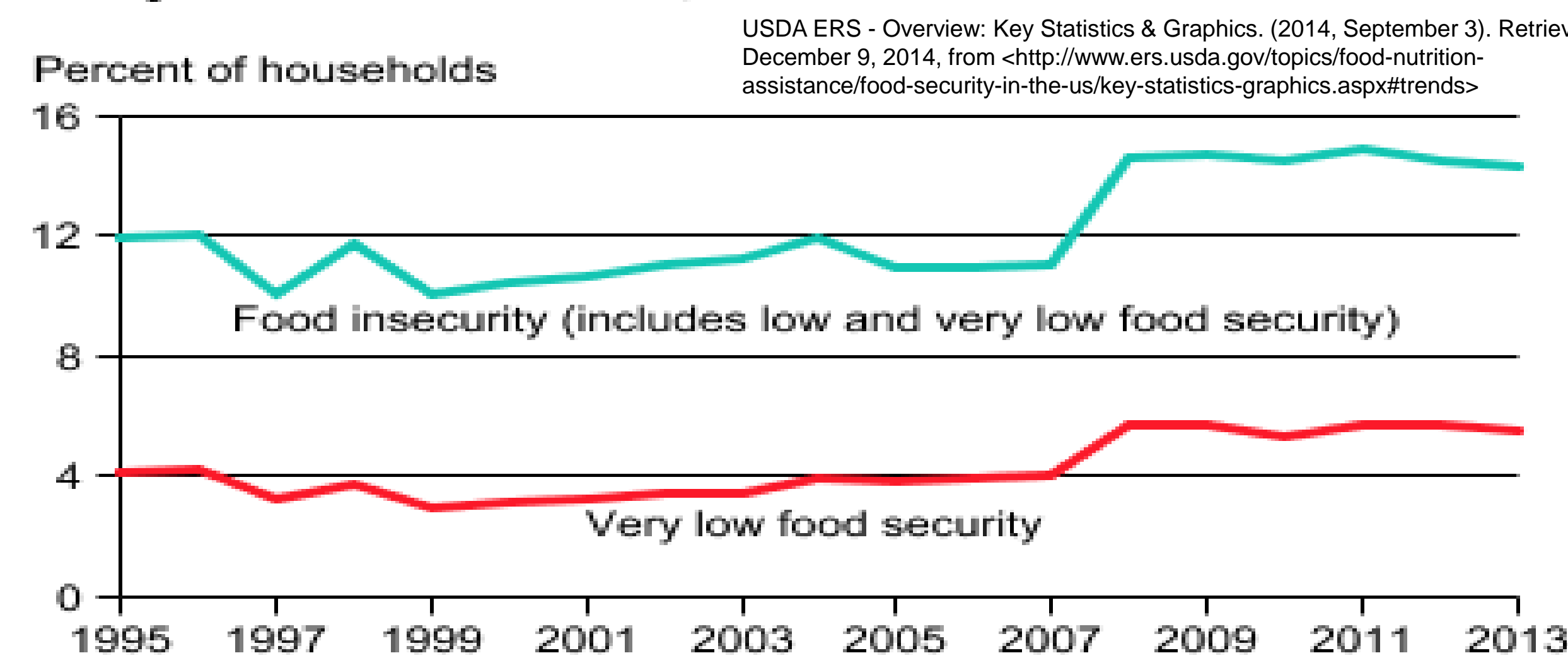
Acknowledgments

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Evidence

- In 2012, the Center for Disease Control reported the link between living in a food desert to food insecurity and malnutrition (1).
- Obesity (3), diabetes (3), heart disease (4), and mental health disorders (5), as well as poverty (6) are more prevalent in food deserts.

Trends in prevalence rates of food insecurity and very low food security in U.S. households, 1995-2013



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