



Food Security and Obesity: Public Policy Issues

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Food Security:

Access by all people, at all times to sufficient food for an active healthy life.



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There has been a recognized
phenomena that food insecurity
seems linked with obesity



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Highest rates of Obesity in groups with
highest rate of poverty and lowest
education



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High energy density and high palatability of sweets and fats are associated with higher energy intakes



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Poverty and food insecurity are associated with lower food expenditures, low fruit and vegetable consumption and lower quality of diets



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Low cost diets are high-fat, and energy dense much like the diets of low-income groups



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Prudent diets of lean meat, fish, fresh vegetables and fruit are less affordable



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The association between poverty and obesity may be mediated in part by the low-cost of energy dense food and reinforced by the high palatability of sugar and fat



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More and more Americans are becoming obese while consuming more fats and sugars and spending a lower percentage of income on food



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Obese, defined as having a body mass index (BMI) of 30 or higher.



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An estimated 30 percent of U.S. adults aged 20 years and older - over 60 million people - are obese



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An estimated 65 percent of U.S. adults aged 20 years and older are either overweight or obese, defined as having a BMI of 25 or higher.



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<http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/bmi/calc-bmi.htm>

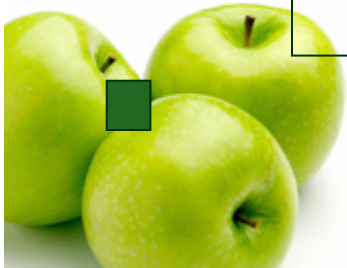
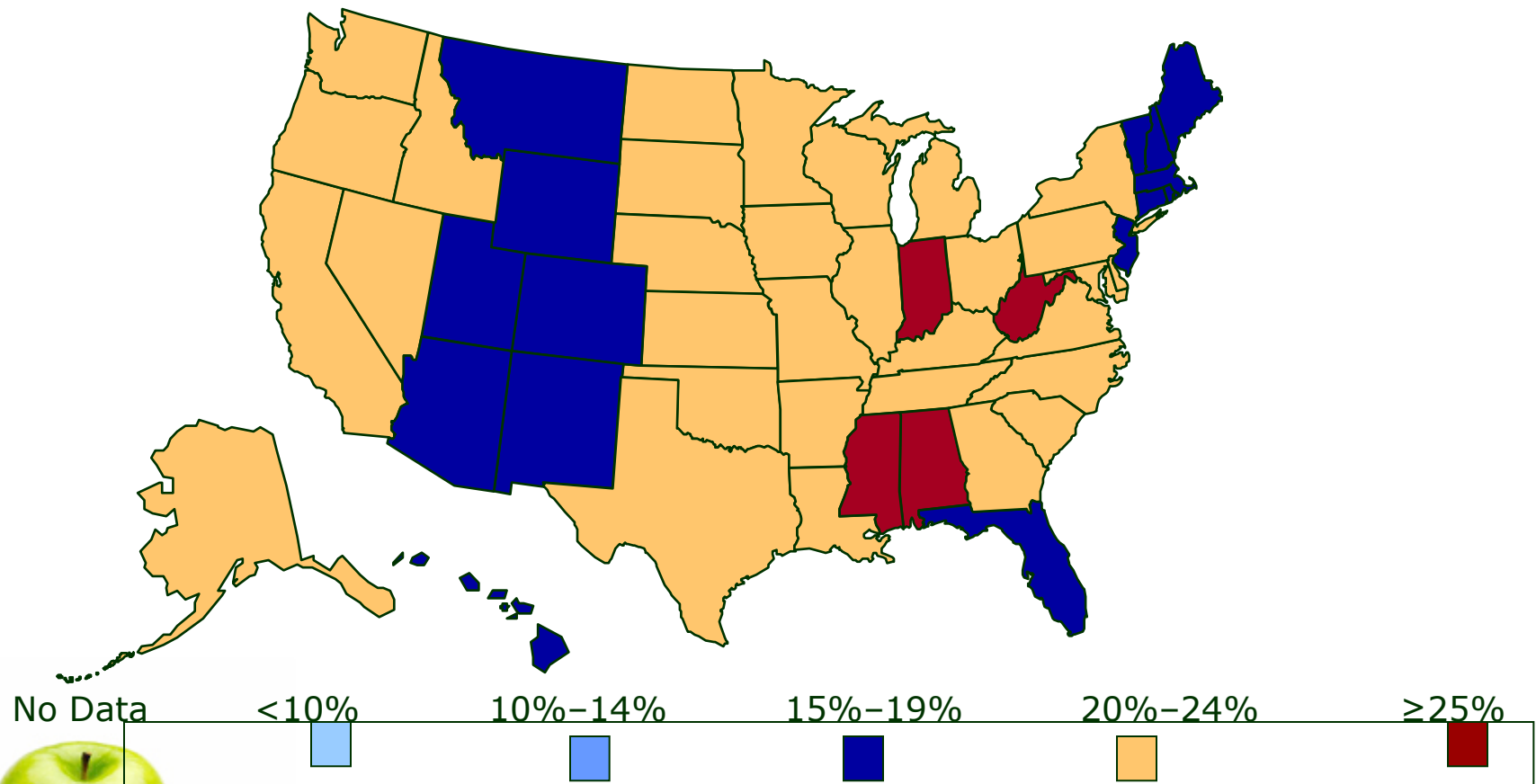
That's the website to calculate YOUR
BMI



Obesity* Trends Among U.S. Adults

BRFSS, 2003

(*BMI ≥ 30 , or ~ 30 lbs overweight for 5' 4" person)



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Obesity = Health Problems

30-60 million people in overweight-
obese categories =

MAJOR PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM



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Food Insecurity may lead to obesity



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The prevalence of food insecurity was 11.2 percent in 2003

The prevalence of food insecurity with hunger was 3.5 percent



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What policies do we have in place to
remedy food insecurity



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Federal food assistance, substantial

- USDA FNS
- Food Action Research Center (FRAC)
 - www.frac.org



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- What policies do we have to promote food security?



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Community Food Security Movement

Community Food Security is defined as a condition in which all community residents obtain a safe, culturally acceptable, nutritionally adequate diet through a sustainable food system that maximizes community self-reliance and builds social capital.



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A CFS approach seeks to build up a community's food resources to meet its own needs.



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Broad range of issues affecting the food system

- Community development
- Food environment/ Food access
- Farmland destruction/Suburban sprawl
- Loss of food producing farmers
- Rural community disintegration
- Air, land and water pollution by non-sustainable practices



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Community Food Security Projects:

- Farm to school
- Community gardens
- School gardens/farms
- Youth farm stands
- Food policy councils
- Immigrant farmers



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Policy Issues:

Public space for farmer's markets

School Food service regulations

Assessment of community food assets

Transportation to food outlets

Food dollar voting

Processing of food on-farm



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Ways Extension involved

Food Stamp nutrition education

EFNEP

Health Dep't partnerships

Catalyzing community food production

Organizing food security assessments



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- Food stamp participation dipped in January 2005 to 25,458,113, two million people since 2004.

proposal in 2005 is to cut the program by 3 million

- Extension can educate on the role Food Stamps plays in relieving food insecurity



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The National School Lunch Program
children to receive a nutritious lunch
local farmers receive a market?



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Economic resources

- Voting with food dollars
- Promoting self sufficiency



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- Together we can build a local, self-sustaining, just, nutritious food supply
- Eating is a moral act



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