



Eliminating Food AND IMPROVING LOW INCOME COMMUNITIES Deserts

ASHLEY CARTER, MS, RD, LDN

JASMINE WESTBROOKS, MS, RD, CDCES

About EatWell



- 501(c)3 nonprofit organization (Florida & North Carolina)
- Nutrition education with a focus on culture
- Creating sustainable change in lower socioeconomic communities
- Primarily local/national grant, donation-funded & community collaborations
- Taught over 28,163 people
- Over 150 events and presentations in 2023



About



Registered Dietitians & Best Friends

- Certified Diabetes Educator
- Both have over 10 years in the nutrition field
- Met working for the Department of Health



The fun stuff...

- Love to travel
- Great dance partners
- Car Karaoke Queens
- Foodies, love to try new foods



Ashley Carter, MS, RD, LDN



Jasmine Westbrook,
MS, RD, LDN, CDCES

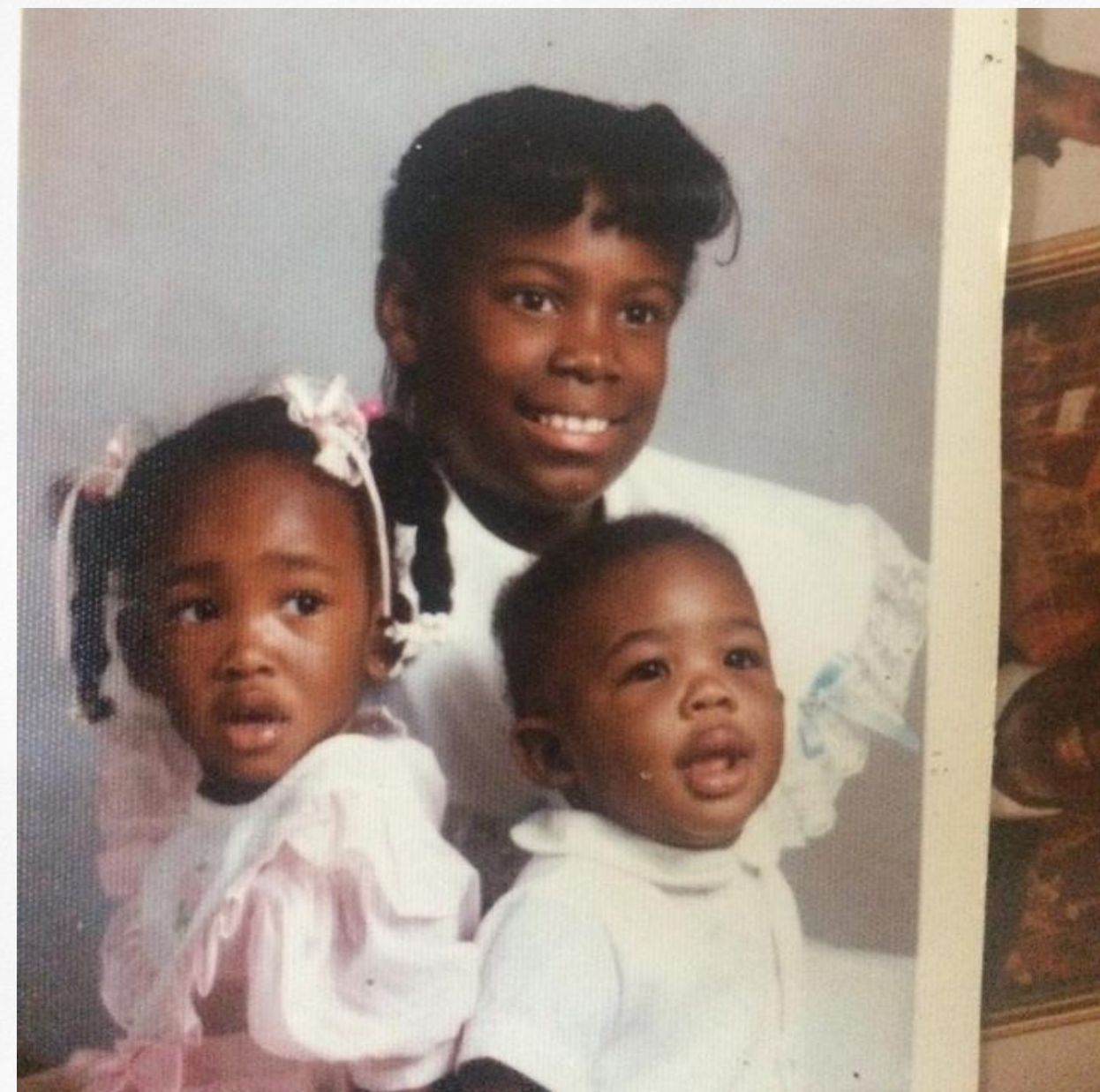
Where it all



st

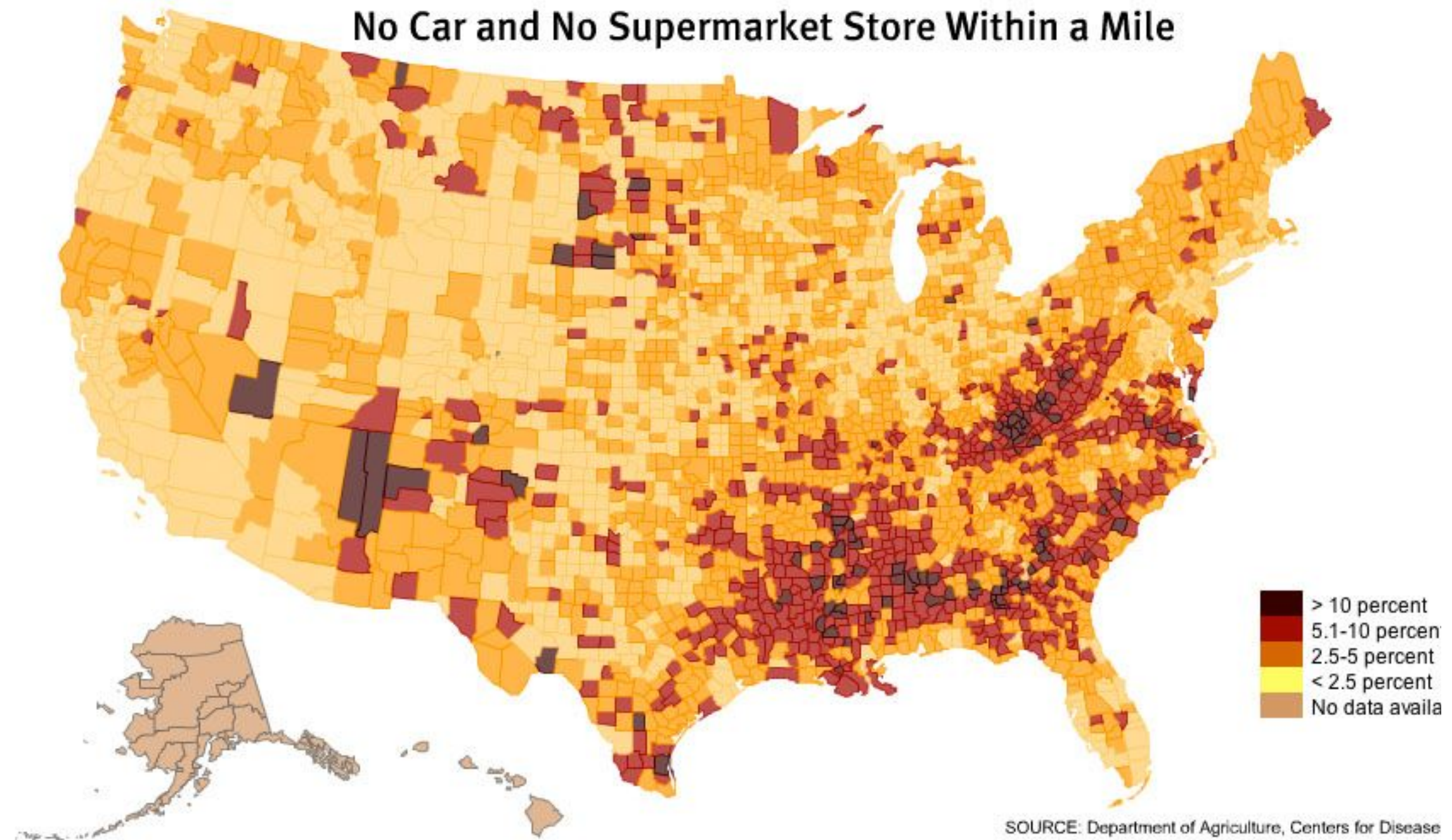


Ashley Miami, FL



Jasmine Memphis, TN

FOOD DESERTS/FOOD APARTHEID AND LOCATION



“Where you live is a better indicator of your health than your genetic code”
– Harvard School of Public Health



Factors Influencing Food Access



Food Cost



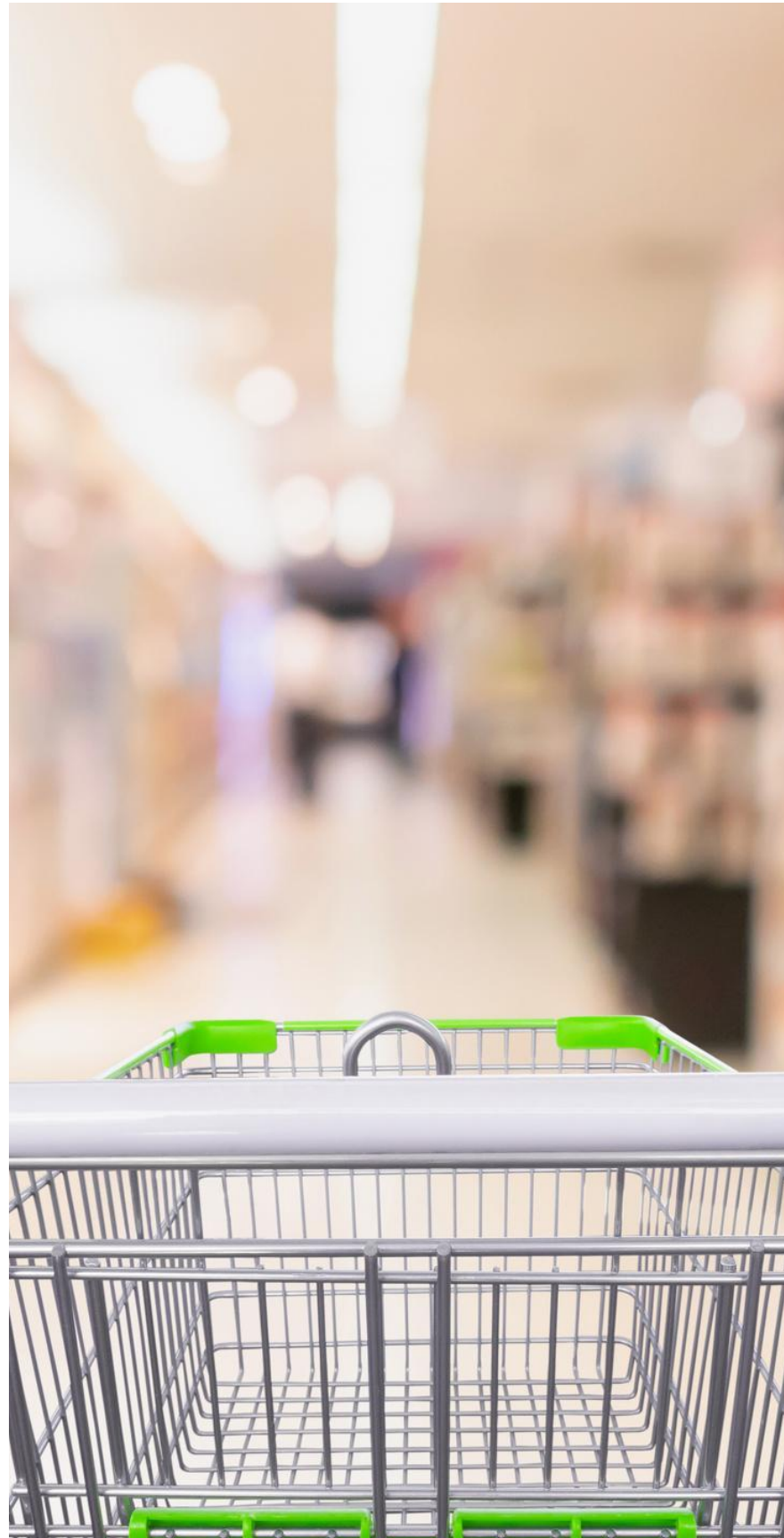
Lack of Knowledge



Negative Perception
of Cultural Foods



Healthy Foods
Not Available



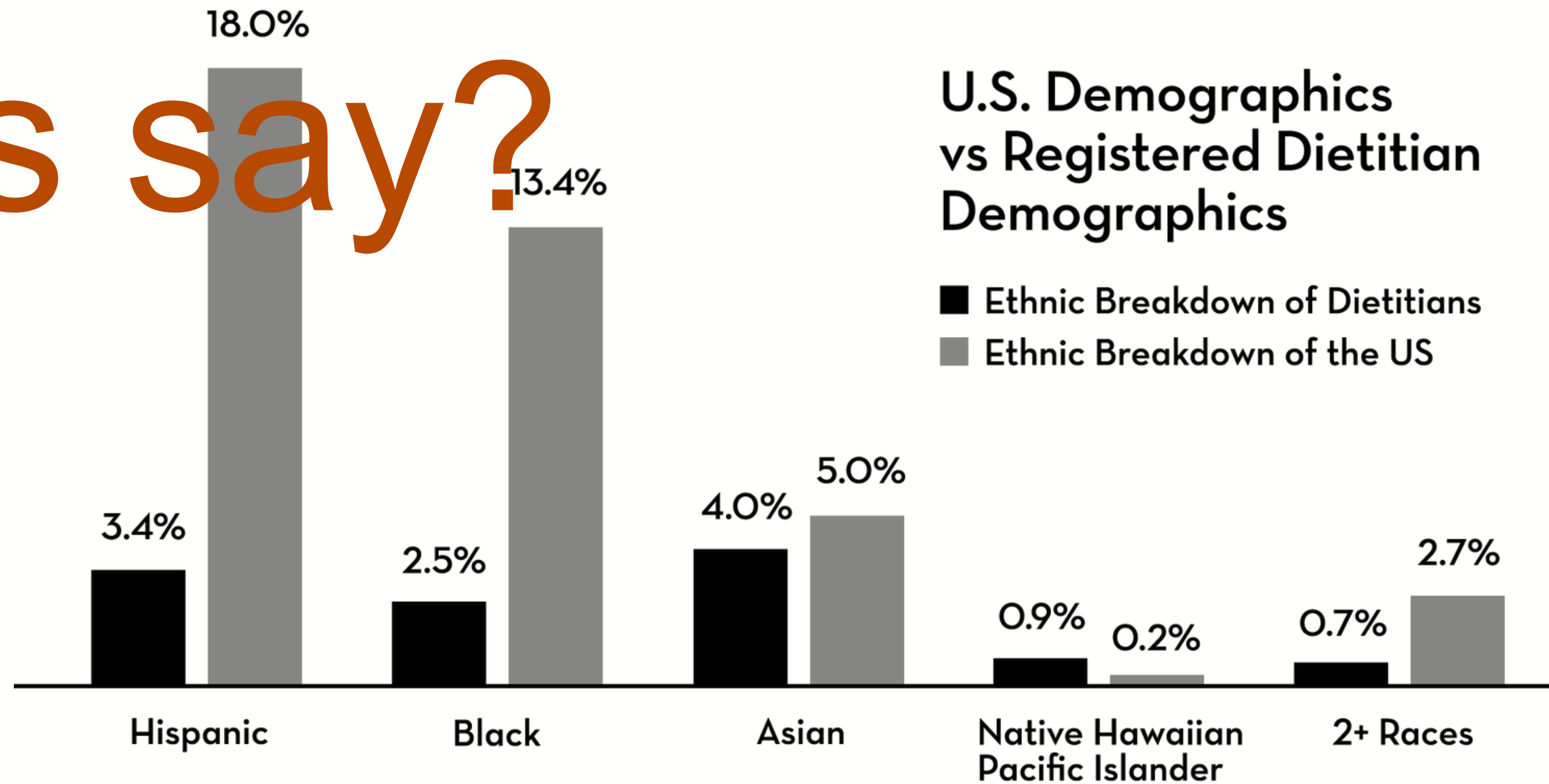


Negative Perception
of Cultural Foods

We are not about cultural foods learning

- Literature and nutrition professionals are not well-versed in African-American cultures
- Lack of cultural resources & professionals
- False narratives and assumptions around cultural food
- Systemic racism and stress relating to chronic diseases unmentioned
- Shame surrounding our cultural foods and our food story

What do the stats say?



African Americans and Hispanics are not well REPRESENTED but have higher rates of diabetes, cancer, heart disease, and obesity.



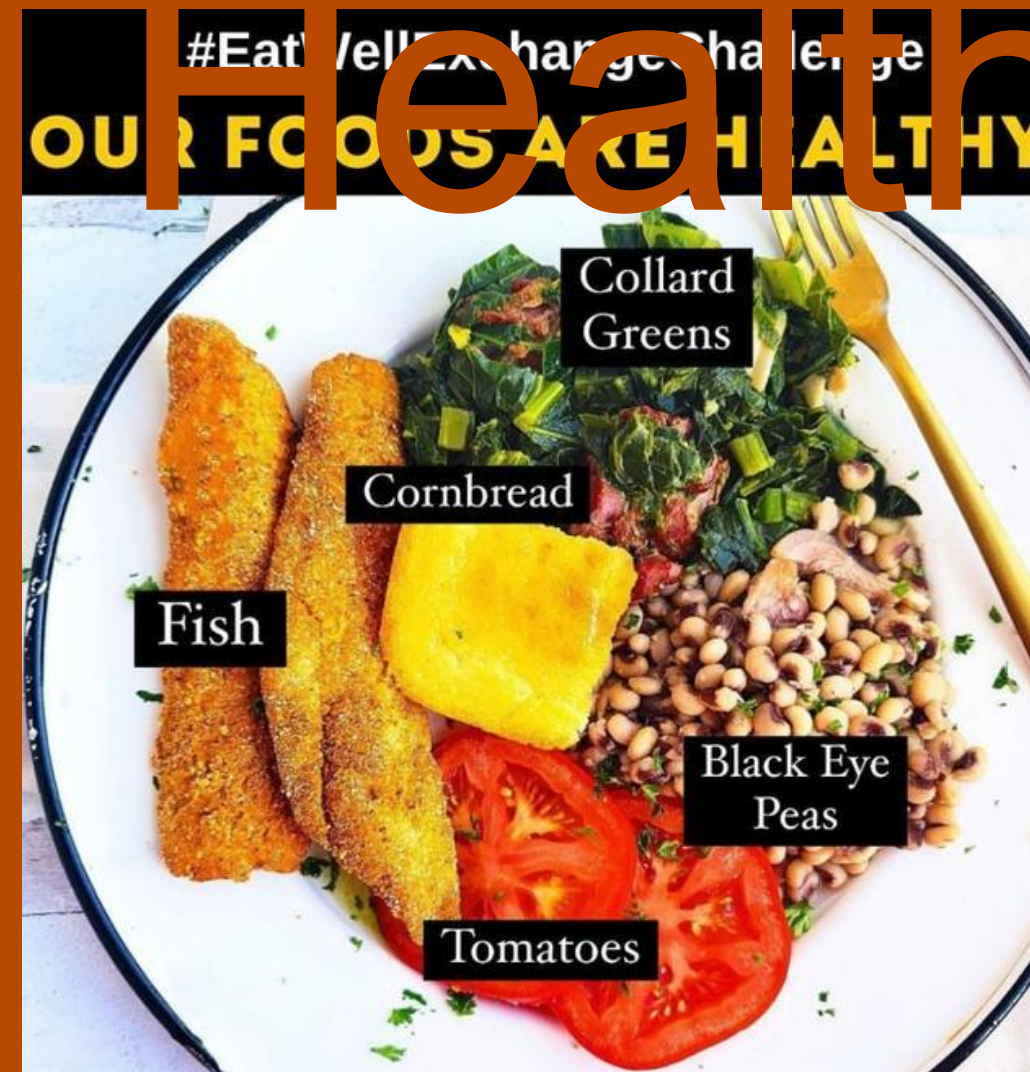
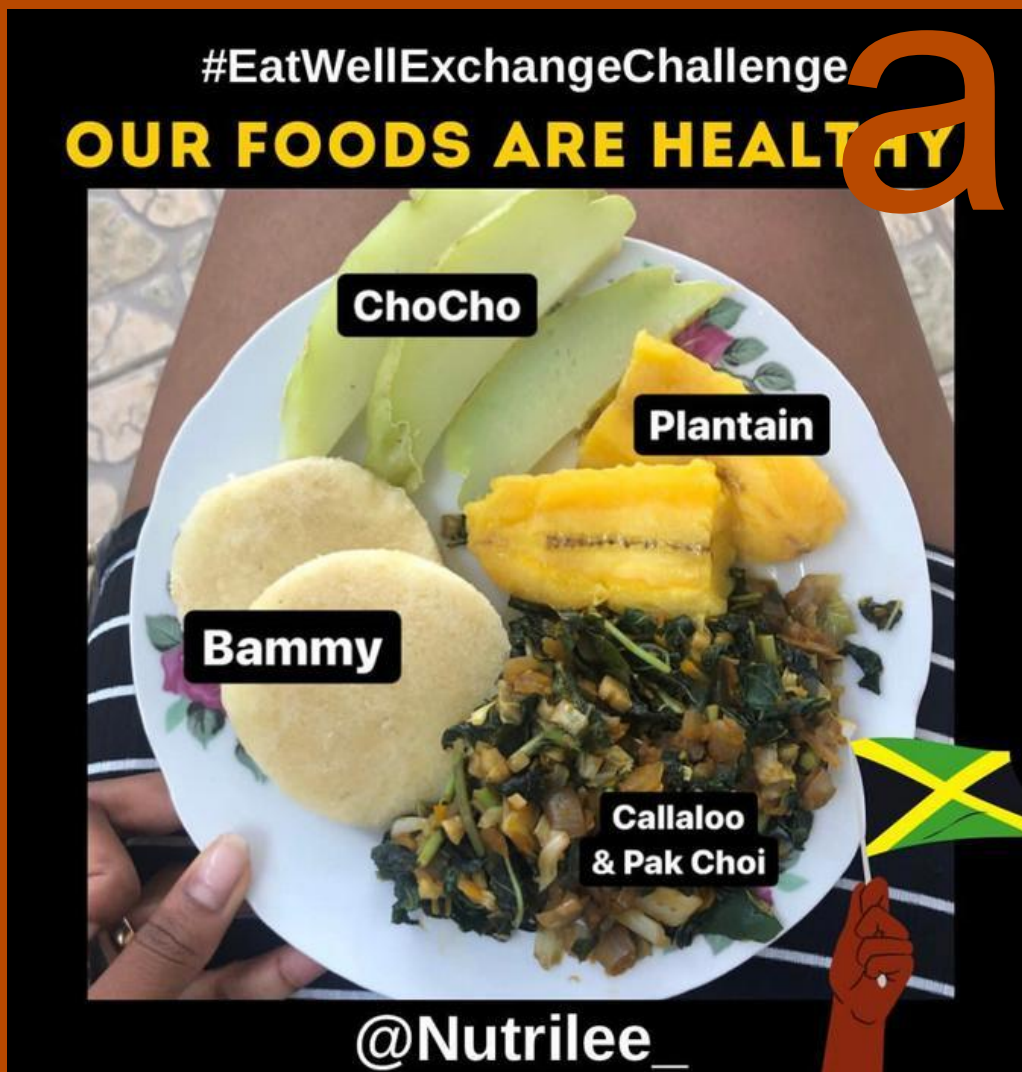
Our

Our Culture, History and Identity

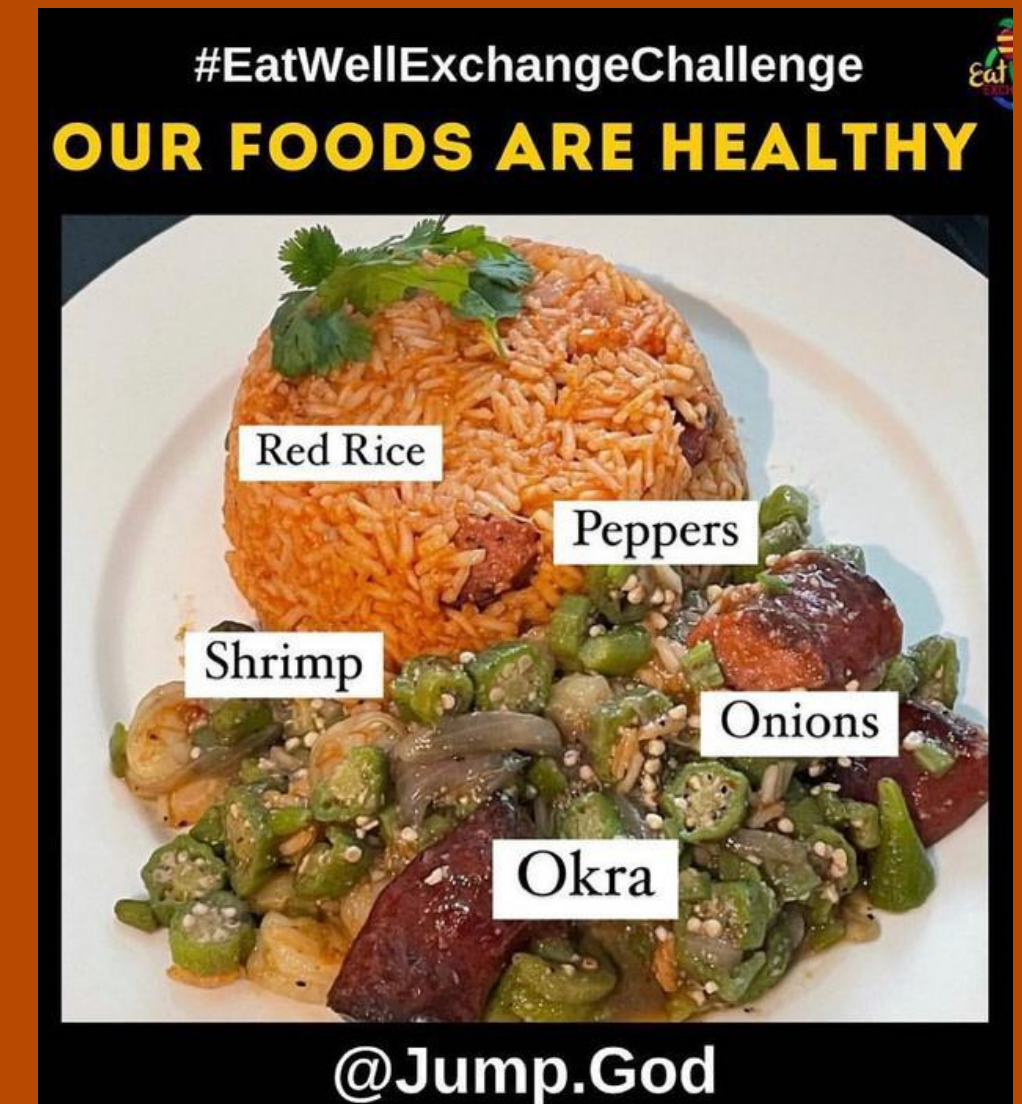
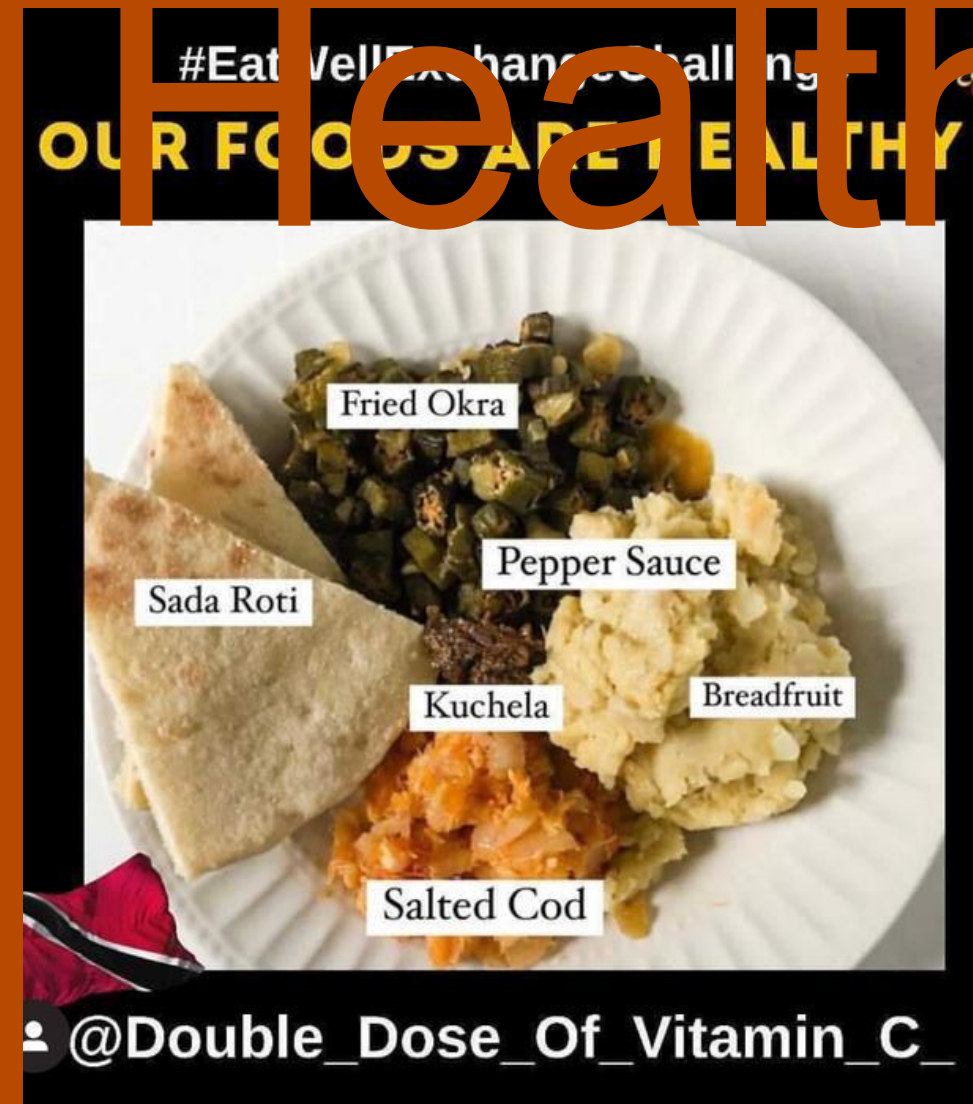
Foods. A general perception is that eating healthy means giving up part of their cultural heritage and trying to conform to the dominant culture.

Our foods remind us of our history, family, traditions, regions and values.

Our Foods



Our Foods





Food Cost

- “Supermarket redlining,”
 - Roughly 17.7% of predominately black neighborhoods had limited access to supermarkets, compared to 7.6% of largely white neighborhoods
 - Major chain supermarkets are disinterested in building store locations in inner cities
 - Charge higher prices in lower-income communities
- An abundance of fast food, corner stores, and liquor stores
 - 2.5x more in lower socioeconomic black communities



Healthy Foods Not Available

- Loss of 90% of black farmland
 - In 1920, Black farmers in the U.S. owned 41.4 million acres of land.
 - Over the past century, Black people in the U.S. have collectively experienced a loss of 90% of the farmland they once owned.
- Farmer's Markets not common in Black communities
- Local stores more likely to market less nutrient-dense options

Our Programs Impacting Food Insecurity



Food Access

- Partnerships with food pantry and fridges
- Gardening classes
- Free Farmers Market



Nutrition Education

- Interactive classes in the community
- Teach healthcare professionals and chefs



Culinary Programs

- Kids Culinary academies
- Cooking Demonstrations
- Prevent diabetes culinary program
- Tri-lingual Family

Culinary

Our Programs Impacting Food Insecurity



Food Access

- Partnerships with food pantry and fridges
- Gardening classes
- Free Farmers Market



Nutrition Education

- Interactive classes in the community
- Teach healthcare professionals and chefs



Culinary Programs

- Kids Culinary academies
- Cooking Demonstrations
- Prevent diabetes culinary program
- Tri-lingual Family Culinary



Free Food Access Program

For Farmers

In black communities:

- Decreased access to healthier options, and farmers' markets are not available there.

Market

- Increasing access to healthy, cultural foods with dignity
- Community assessment prior to, during, and post
- Food primarily purchased from black farmers
- Provided nutrition education by color



Free Food Access Program

Farmers

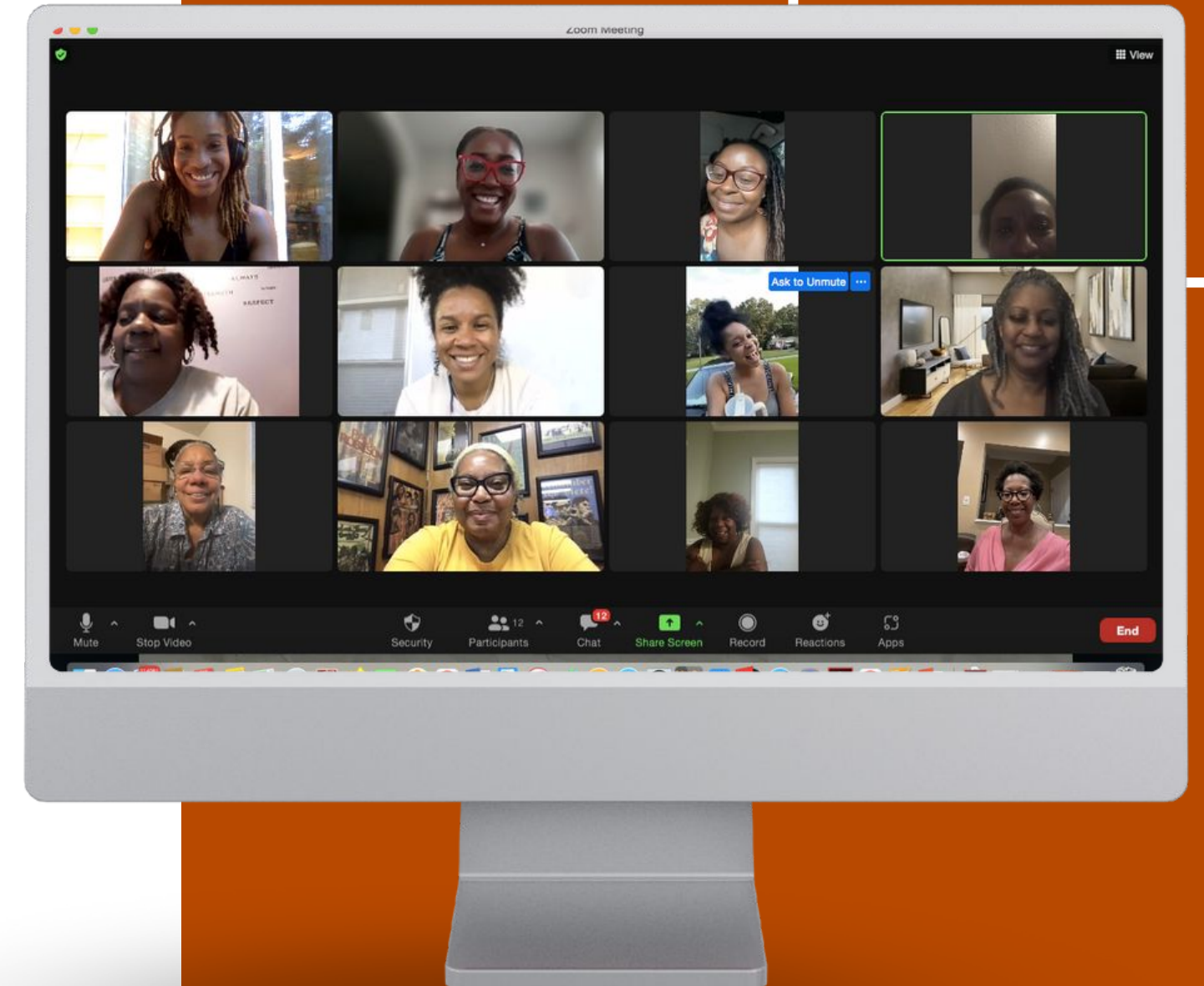
- We have had 6 free farmers' markets within the past 2 years, serving from 40-120 people with signage and staff in 3 languages
- Participants reported food access barriers:
 - Cost and availability of produce in local stores
 - Not knowing how to prepare healthy foods
- Changes reported:
 - Increased their daily fruit and vegetable intake(76%) and willingness to try new foods(85%).

Market

Prevent Culinary Program

Diabetes

- Classes taught by Registered dietitians, Certified diabetes educators, and certified diabetes prevention instructor
- 4 classes a month (gradually decrease to biweekly, then monthly) for 5-6 months
 - 60-minute nutrition education and culturally relevant culinary classes
 - Affordable, quick, and easy cultural recipes cooked during the session
- Pre- and Post- program evaluation, lab work, wt, waist circumference
- Population served: 15-25 participants of African



Prevent Culinary Program

- # Diabetes
- 100% culinary skills improved in the kitchen
 - 69% lost weight or inches an average of 5-32 lbs. and 3-29 inches
 - 64% had improvements in lab work (decreased cholesterol, blood pressure, A1c & glucose)
 - 97% reported improved fruit & vegetable intake
 - 83% reported increased physical activity levels weekly
 - 94% feel positive about their overall health & outcomes





In your

field...
What is the impact of
food access?





In your

What can you practically do

at this moment to improve
field...

access of healthy cultural

foods?



In your

What Nutrition & Food access

Programs partnerships would
eld...

be beneficial to the

communities you work with?

In your field...

What can you do today to
improve access of healthy
cultural foods?



Thank you!

Any Questions?



Contact Us & Follow
Eatwell Exchange



@EatwellExchange
www.EatwellExchange.org
info@eatwellexchange.org

