

Food Access and Health

a 2015 snapshot of conditions in Massachusetts and goals of the MA Local Food Action Plan



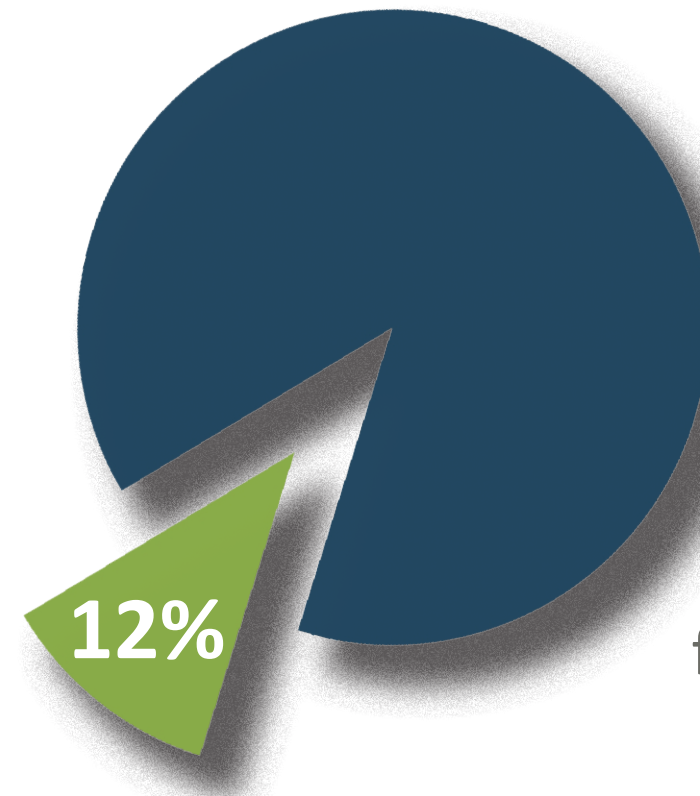
\$\$ The cost of living is **32%** higher than the national average

costs



Groceries are **16%** more expensive than national prices

Nearly 12% of people are living below the poverty level



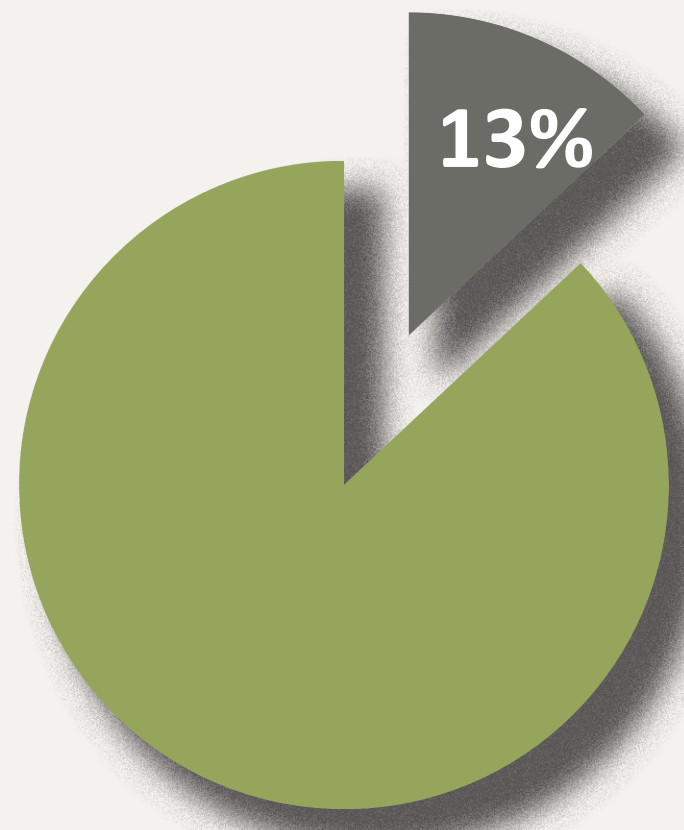
and the poverty rate for children is 15%

The lack of purchasing power among low-income families and individuals is a fundamental barrier to increasing the consumption of healthy foods

17% of children are food insecure



Nearly 12% of all people are food insecure, a rate that is 71% higher than 10 years ago



13% of people use a food bank or food pantry

And hunger impacts all types of people, including working people, students and elderly

Living in a **food desert**, or a place without convenient access to grocery stores, is linked with having higher rates of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases.

hunger

diet

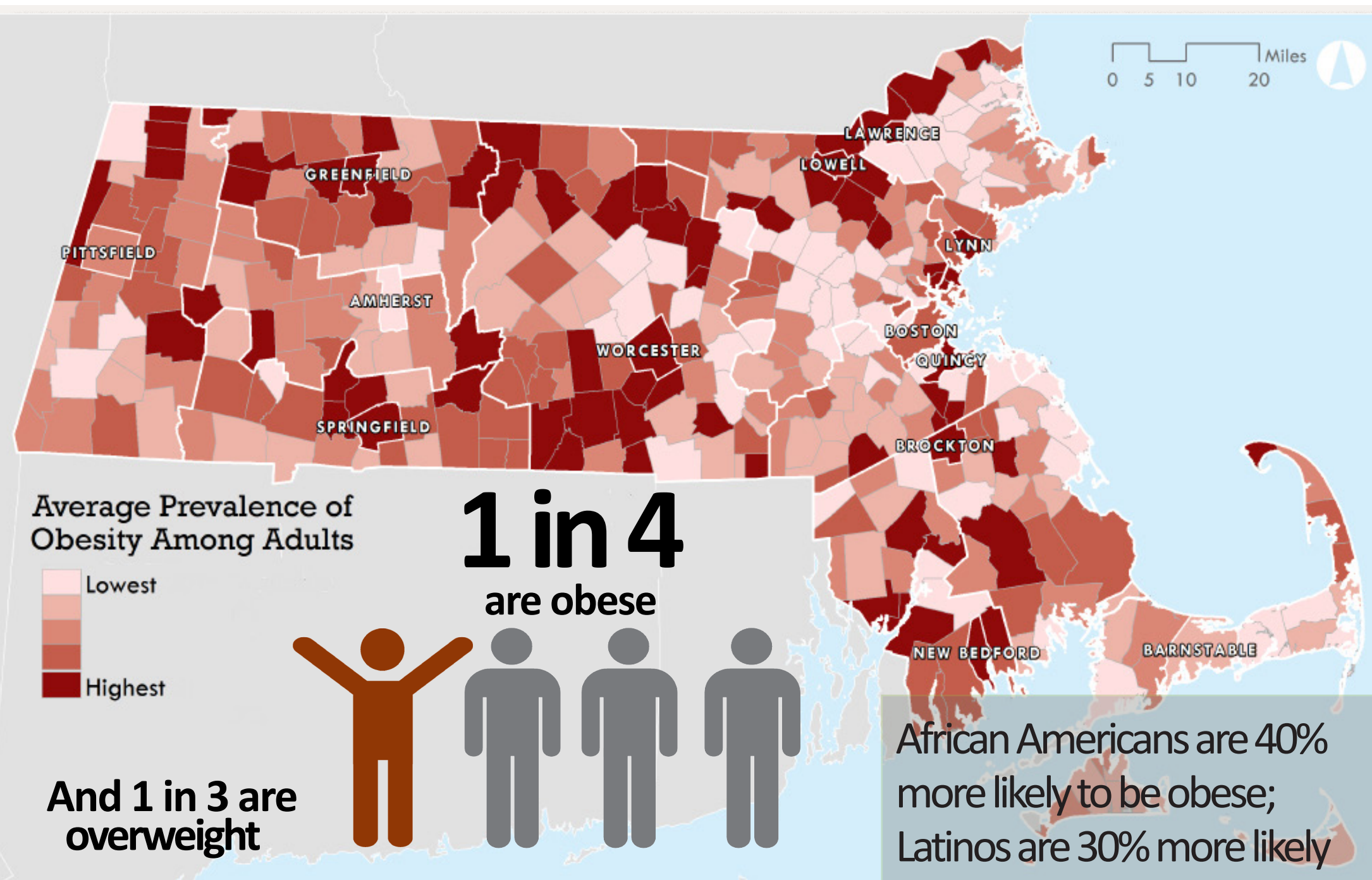
Only 1/4 of people eat 5 servings of fruits or veggies a day



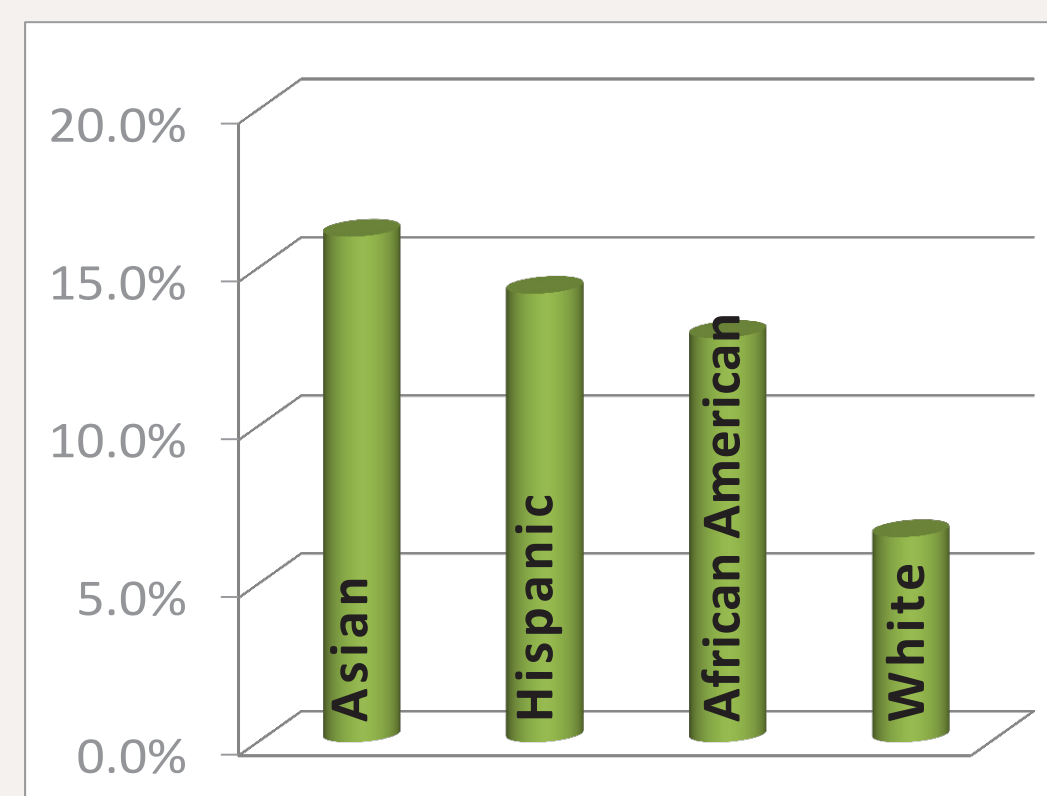
learn more at www.choosemyplate.gov



People eat about 142 pounds of sugar a year or **30 teaspoons daily**



Diabetes rates vary by race



and rates have increased 28% in the last 10 years

Note: There are clear disparities in poverty rates/overweight and obesity in the State by race and ethnicity, which are linked to the social determinants of health. Social determinants of health are conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work, and age. These conditions are shaped by the distribution of money, power, and resources at global, national, and local levels. Examples of resources include employment, housing, education, health care, public safety, and food access. Source: www.who.int/social_determinants/sdh_definition/en/

health

goals

- 1: Everyone will be able to afford more healthy and local foods.
- 2: Everyone who qualifies for SNAP will receive the benefits that are available to them.
- 3: More people will be able to purchase healthy foods using public food assistance incentive programs.
- 4: Healthy food education and choices for all children and adolescents will be expanded.

- 5: The roles of health care providers, institutions, and insurers in fostering access to healthy food will be expanded.
- 6: Food pantries and meals programs will increase their distribution of locally produced foods.
- 7: Healthy and locally produced food will be more accessible through better public transportation and food infrastructure.
- 8: More people will be aware of the direct effects that nutrition has on their health and will take part in effective nutrition education programs.