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Food Stamps Grow Urban Gardens

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Food Stamps Grow Urban Gardens

Plants and seeds can be purchased with SNAP (formerly Food Stamps, renamed Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP in 2008,) but most current SNAP participants are unaware. Nearly four decades ago, in 1973, Alabama Senator James Allen championed an amendment to allow the purchase of food-producing plants and seeds with Food Stamps. The Senate passed the amendment after less than ten minutes of floor debate. However, in the ensuing decades, there has not been a focused national effort to make SNAP participants raise awareness of this choice that is available to SNAP participants, nor to connect SNAP participants to resources that make gardening a viable with their benefits viable.

As of May 2012, nearly than 46.5 million Americans, or more than 1 in 7, 79% of whom are in metropolitan households, depend on SNAP to put food on the table, with an average monthly benefit of \$133 per person. Most Americans do not consume sufficient fruits and vegetables, and for SNAP participants, the “triple-A” challenges of access, affordability and awareness are particularly pronounced. Diets with insufficient fruit and vegetable intake can lead to increased incidence of preventable illnesses, such as diabetes and obesity. Those illnesses further increase the burdens of citizens living in poverty. Such burdens fall not only on poor individuals and their families but also on society at large, in the form of Medicare and Medicaid costs.

Gardening offers a unique opportunity to simultaneously address access, affordability, and awareness. Gardening can help considerably in providing a healthful diet for SNAP participants in urban areas, while at the same time improving the surrounding neighborhood atmosphere and the natural environment. There are many experiential education lessons to be learned in a garden, including acquiring skills that can be leveraged into new career opportunities.

This article will discuss the history of food stamps and gardening as well as current efforts to raise awareness and develop resources to facilitate gardening with SNAP benefits, particularly in urban areas. Because gardeners tend to be the best advocates for gardening, this article will also highlight the role that urban community gardens and community gardeners can play in cultivating awareness and providing support.

Keywords

food stamps, SNAP, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, community gardens, USDA, policy, agriculture, urban agriculture, urban farming, food

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INTRODUCTION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP (called Food Stamps until the name changed in the 2008 Farm Bill) is our country's largest federally funded food assistance program. The original Food Stamp Plan was initiated in 1939 to address widespread hunger and a struggling farm economy. The program was suspended in 1943 due to improving economic conditions brought on by World War II. In 1961, President Kennedy initiated limited Food Stamp pilots in depressed counties across America. The Food Stamp Act of 1964, signed into law by President Johnson in order to improve levels of nutrition among low-income households, made the program permanent (USDA Food and Nutrition Service 2012a). Food was defined by the Act as "any food or food product for human consumption except alcoholic beverages, tobacco, those foods which are identified on the package as being imported, and meat and meat products which are imported."

As of May 2012, nearly 46.5 million Americans, or more than 1 in 7, depend on SNAP to put food on the table (USDA Food and Nutrition Service 2012b). The average monthly benefit nationwide is currently \$133 per person. Seventy-nine percent of SNAP households are classified as "metropolitan," meaning the program primarily serves urban residents (USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research and Analysis 2011).¹

Gardening in Food Stamp Legislation

Gardening entered the Food Stamp legislative picture in 1972, when Representative Garry E. Brown (R-Michigan) proposed an amendment to the Food Stamp Act to allow eligible households to purchase seeds and canning equipment with food stamps. This amendment did not pass (United States Congress 1985), but the following year, Congress passed a similar amendment, championed by Senator James Allen (D-Alabama), to allow the purchase of food-producing plants and seeds with Food Stamps. He explained his amendment as one that would (1) allow participants to "use their own initiative to produce fruits and vegetables needed to provide variety and nutritional value for their diet," (2) allow participants to make a small investment in seeds and plants that could yield a large amount of produce, (3) be cost neutral to the federal government. The Senate passed the amendment after less than ten minutes of floor debate (United States Senate 1973). However, in the ensuing decades, there has no focused national effort to make SNAP participants aware of this choice or to connect SNAP participants to resources that make gardening with their benefits viable. Our nation has barely tapped the incredible "growing power" of food stamps.

¹ "Metropolitan Households" are defined as households whose SNAP application was processed at an agency in a Census Bureau-defined Metropolitan Statistical Area (MSA). An MSA has at least one urbanized area with population of 50,000 or more and includes adjacent territory with a high degree of social and economic integration with the core, as measured by commuting ties (USDA Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Research and Analysis 2011).

THE TRIPLE A-CHALLENGE: GARDENING CAN HELP

Most Americans do not consume sufficient fruits and vegetables (Guenther et al. 2006), and for SNAP participants, the “triple-A” challenges of access, affordability and awareness are even more pronounced. Diets with insufficient fruit and vegetable intake often lead to increased incidence of preventable illnesses, such as diabetes and obesity (He et al. 2004). Those illnesses further increase the burdens on citizens living in poverty. Such burdens fall not only on poor individuals and their families but also on society at large, in the form of Medicare and Medicaid costs.

While there is no simple solution, gardening offers a unique opportunity to address the challenges presented by the “triple As” of access, affordability, and awareness. Here’s how:

Access

Many neighborhoods with minimal access to fresh fruits and vegetables – even neighborhoods in dense urban areas – have land that could be cultivated, whether at schools, in parks, on vacant lots, in windowsills, on rooftops, in church yards, or in backyards. Even small gardens can provide a significant amount of produce. However, it is important to remember that soil quality in many urban areas has been exposed to heavy metals, which may require mitigation to make gardening safe. Additionally, water is not always available for garden use, even when land is.

Affordability

Roger Doiron of Kitchen Gardeners International has calculated an 862% return on investment from his home garden (Doiron 2009). In other words, \$1 invested in food-producing plants and seeds could be leveraged into \$8.62 in fresh produce. However, many SNAP participants do not have the gardening skills possessed by Doiron. On the other hand, Doiron’s calculation doesn’t account for economies of scale that might occur when SNAP participants garden collaboratively in community gardens. Farming Concrete found that nearly 88,000 pounds of food worth well over \$200,000 were harvested on just over 1.7 acres in 67 New York City community gardens in 2010 (Gittleman et al. 2012). However, cost and origins of inputs were not measured.

Storage of a bountiful harvest may also prove challenging, particularly for urban dwellers with limited space. However, canning and other preservation methods, once learned, can help mitigate the challenge and further extend the reward on investment. It is also important to consider that weather, pests, and diseases are unpredictable, and can destroy a particular crop or entire garden.

Awareness

Many Americans are acclimated to diets that exclude fresh fruits and vegetables and are not aware of the importance of consuming more produce. The 2010 update to USDA’s *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, for the first time, advised gardening to “empower individuals and families with improved nutrition literacy, gardening, and cooking skills to heighten enjoyment of preparing and consuming healthy foods.” Gardening can foster demand for more produce in

underserved neighborhoods, because SNAP participants who garden may request increased produce options at supermarkets and corner stores, as well as increased access to farmers' markets. Litt et al. (2011) found that "Community gardeners consumed fruits and vegetables 5.7 times per day, compared with home gardeners (4.6 times per day) and non-gardeners (3.9 times per day). Moreover, 56% of community gardeners met national recommendations to consume fruits and vegetables at least 5 times per day, compared with 37% of home gardeners and 25% of non-gardeners." Gardening can help considerably in providing a healthful diet for SNAP participants and has the potential to provide a host of environmental benefits as well (Ovkat and Zatura 2011).

USE OF SNAP BENEFITS FOR BUYING SEEDS AND PLANTS

A Brief History of SNAP Gardening Media Coverage

Congress has not authorized the USDA to gather data on the types of products purchased with SNAP benefits, either by individuals or on the aggregate level. The SNAP EBT (Electronic Benefit Transfer) redemption card authorizes payments and information about the items purchased is not transmitted through the EBT system (United States GAO 2008). While it is assumed that most SNAP participants do not purchase plants and seeds, it is virtually impossible to know the total value or percentage of SNAP benefits used to make such purchases from 1973 to the present day.



Figure 1. First Page of *Food Stamps Grow Home Gardens* article.

Despite the data deficiency, scattered success stories have appeared in print over the years. In the October 1975 issue of *Food and Nutrition*, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service newsletter, USDA employee Joe Dunphy authored an article entitled *Food Stamps Grow Home Gardens*. That was the first and only full-length article that shared the stories of people choosing

to garden with their benefits. Sylvia Bell, featured in the article, had been receiving benefits before plants and seeds became eligible items, and claimed that this change made food stamps more important to her family. Bell told Dunphy that “when the harvest season comes...our freezer is going to get mighty crowded.” Another beneficiary, Barbara Jordan, said she had been alerted to the fact that she could buy plants and seeds by the staff at her local grocer, and spent about \$20 worth of food stamps on tomato, eggplant, and pepper plants. She was happy that her garden yielded a bounty every day and that gardening had also had a positive affect on the eating habits of the children. Jordan’s kids enjoyed eating “whatever they take care of ...even spinach.” These personal stories were emblematic of the promise of gardening using food stamps.

In an article titled *Families Garden Cooperatively* in the December 1977 issue of *Food and Nutrition*, USDA employee Herb Strum reported that the Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council had opened a pair of community gardens for those who wished to garden but lacked land and tools. Of the sixty participating low-income families, half were food stamp recipients who had purchased plants and seeds using their benefits. Using a small portion of their benefits and some manual labor, vegetables were in plentiful supply throughout the summer, along with a surplus that were frozen or canned for later consumption. Program staff anticipated even more families would use their food stamp benefits to garden the next summer.²

While some USDA employees were enthusiastic about growing food with food stamps, others were oblivious or unimpressed. The 392-page 1977 USDA *Yearbook of Agriculture*, themed “Gardening For Food and Fun,” failed to make a single mention of gardening with food stamp benefits. Neither did the 1978, 1980, or 1985 revision to the USDA Extension Service’s *Home and Garden Bulletin: Growing Vegetables in the Home Garden*. These are curious omissions, given that the USDA administers the Food Stamp Program.

In the decades after Congress authorized food stamp use for food-producing plants and seeds, there was very little print media coverage of the use of food stamps for gardening. A few regional USDA officials mentioned the benefit, particularly Edward W. Davidson, Southeast Regional Director of the food stamp program, who was quoted in the *Atlanta Daily World* in 1980. He explained that gardening with food stamp benefits could be “an economic manner of improving the nutrition of their diets.” In 1982, the *Atlanta Daily World* again urged food stamp participants to grow some food. Mrs. Charlie Morris, Southeast Regional Director of USDA FNS pointed out that food stamps do not expire, and so if enough food is grown, “families can save some of their coupons during the summer months to help with the food budget next winter.”³

In May 1986, a Southeast Georgia paper, Waycross Journal-Herald ran an article again quoting Davidson. The article cited a USDA survey finding that “low-income families often purchase less vegetables and fruit than are needed for a nutritious diet.” Davidson explained that

² An inquiry to Saratoga County Economic Opportunity Council yielded no information on the continuation of this gardening project. No 1970s-era staff remained in 2011.

³ Even today, many SNAP participants and those who work with SNAP clients are unaware that monthly SNAP benefits “roll over” like cell phone minutes. This lack of awareness is understandable, since the great majority of SNAP participants run out of benefits before the month is over. Gardeners and potential gardeners are poised to take full advantage of this feature of SNAP.

gardening could help a family save money while simultaneously improving nutrition. The same week, the Kentucky New Era ran a blurb about stretching the food dollar. “Families reducing their food purchases by growing their own tomatoes, beans, corn and the like” explained Joe Padgett, manager of Kentucky’s food stamp program, “could save some of the food stamps they receive during and after the harvest.”

The promotion of gardening with food stamps paid dividends for some Kentucky residents, as reported by the Associated Press in 1993. Cathy Wright, mother of two teenage sons told the writer that she had learned from a caseworker that she could buy seeds with her benefits. She planted one seed packet and harvested 50 to 60 quarts of green beans. As for the taste, she boasted “you can’t buy tomatoes in a store like I can grow at home.” The reduced cost of vegetables enabled her to purchase more nutritious food with the remainder of her benefits.

21st Century Momentum: USDA Hits the Blogosphere

Research did not discover any other newspaper coverage of SNAP gardening in the 1990s or the early years of the new century. In 2010, however, a USA Today article on food stamps told the story of Corbyn Hightower, a Sacramento-area mother of three who had lost her job more than a year before. She used some of her food stamps to buy seeds to ensure a steady supply of fresh produce for her family. The story was heartwarming, but the article also acknowledged “food stamp gardening is rare.”

In 2009, the Suffolk County, New York legislature passed a resolution establishing a Grow Green - Save Green initiative by promoting "recession gardens" in client benefit applications. Specifically, the resolution authorized, empowered and directed the Commissioner of the Suffolk County Department of Social Services to work with the Suffolk County Department of Environment and Energy to “develop and distribute a cover letter with all food stamps applications stating that food stamp allocations may be used to purchase seeds and plants that produce food for consumption.” According to legislative staff, the cover letters have begun, but there has been no follow-up tracking to determine gardening activity thus far. Since SNAP purchase data is not tracked by the USDA, other methods of measurement will need to be devised, such as surveying local authorized SNAP retailers and participants.

In July 2011, the USDA published a blog post entitled “Using SNAP Benefits to Grow Your Own Food.” The blog discussed some of the benefits of gardening, foremost that “Supplementing SNAP with homegrown food makes it possible for families to buy food products that they wouldn’t normally be able to afford.” And the benefits were not just economic. The blog post pointed out that producing food would empower SNAP participants and increase their self-reliance. The blog post offered some advice for people who might want to help SNAP participants get started in the garden, including offering gardening classes, donating land, and compiling recipe books “that incorporate the foods commonly grown in your community with the help of program participants.” Perhaps online forums will at last provide a sustained media presence and source of information for SNAP participants seeking to grow their own food.

THE GREEN FUTURE OF SNAP IN URBAN AREAS

As of 2008 (the most current year of county level data made available by USDA), many of the counties with the highest number of SNAP participants were urban counties (See Appendix A). There are millions of SNAP participants living in cities who could leverage their benefits to grow some of their own food if they were made aware of the choice and were connected with resources to make gardening viable. With so many millions relying on SNAP in urban areas, there are many ways to encourage and facilitate increased gardening among SNAP participants.

SNAP Gardens

SNAP Gardens was founded in 2011 to cultivate awareness that SNAP benefits can be used to purchase food-producing plants and seeds and to facilitate successful gardening experiences among SNAP participants across America. The primary outreach thus far has been to farmers markets that are equipped to accept SNAP benefits. SNAP Gardens has two goals regarding SNAP-authorized farmers markets: (1) to make sure the vendors know that they can (and in fact must) accept SNAP for any food-producing plants and seeds sold at market; and (2) to help the markets promote these options to their customers. SNAP Gardens also supplies colorful posters in many languages, to anyone interested in promoting gardening with SNAP benefits. Requests have come from local SNAP administrators, food co-ops, supermarkets, community gardeners, economic development organizations and others. The website www.SNAPgardens.org is becoming a clearinghouse for information and best practices, and will become a more useful resource as more and more SNAP participants engage in gardening.



Figure 2. Posters distributed by SNAP Gardens.

SNAP Gardens in New York City

While the work of SNAP Gardens is occurring nationwide, the program currently maintains its main physical presence in New York City where more than 1.8 million citizens, 22% of the city's population, currently rely on SNAP benefits (NYC Human Resources Administration 2012b). New York City is also home to at least 138 farmers markets, most of which accept SNAP

benefits. (NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene 2012). SNAP Gardens posters have been distributed to farmers markets in the boroughs of Brooklyn, Manhattan, Queens, and the Bronx.

In some instances, SNAP Gardens has been more directly involved in supporting gardening efforts. In October 2011, SNAP Gardens facilitated the construction of a hoop house at the High School for Public Service Youth Farm in East Flatbush, Brooklyn, a neighborhood where 27% of residents receive food stamps (NYC Human Resources Administration 2012a). A portion of the hoop house is used to grow seedlings for sale at the weekly farmers market onsite, generating revenue for the farm while making seedlings available for sale in a neighborhood where SNAP authorized retailers generally do not sell seeds and plants. High school students who are part of the summer youth employment program spend some time engaged in customer recruitment, and incorporate information about SNAP and plants into their sales pitch.



Figure 3. SNAP Gardens poster on display at Bushwick Farmers Market. (Photo Courtesy EcoStation: NY)

One of SNAP Gardens partners is EcoStation:NY is a non-profit organization that serves Bushwick, Brooklyn, a neighborhood where 38% of residents receive food stamps (NYC Human Resources Administration 2012a). In May 2012, EcoStation:NY's Bushwick Farmers' Market kicked off the season with a plant sale. They promoted the use of SNAP benefits for seedling purchases and reported a number of SNAP participants buying seedlings with their benefits. They also reported frequent purchases by SNAP participants at their subsequent farmers markets.

SNAP Gardens staff also regularly attend the 125th Street Farmers Market in Central Harlem, a neighborhood where 37% of the residents receive food stamps (NYC Human Resources Administration 2012a). SNAP Gardens informs market customers that they can

purchase plants with their food stamps. Many SNAP customers say they were previously unaware of this choice, and some leave the market with plants in hand. However, due to heat wave conditions, plant vendors do not attend every week, leaving some SNAP participants frustrated or confused.

GARDENER ADVOCACY

Gardeners are often the best advocates to encourage others to garden. The following section offers some suggestions for gardeners to increase awareness, affordability, and access to gardening using seeds and plants purchased with SNAP benefits.

Increasing Awareness

A key method for raising awareness is for gardeners to reach out to government officials who administer SNAP locally. Community gardeners can ensure that local SNAP offices and employment offices are aware that seeds and plants are eligible purchase items. Advocates can provide government officials and caseworkers with gardening resources that can be shared with SNAP participants. Public housing sites and schools in low-income neighborhoods could be ideal venues to spread awareness. Local public health and parks and recreation agencies may also take an interest in promoting and facilitating gardening.

Gardeners can raise awareness in their own gardens through posters (Figure 2), newsletters, and online presence.⁴ Community gardeners can also tell local Agricultural Extension Agents and Master Gardeners that SNAP benefits can be used to purchase food-producing plants and seeds. In turn, the Extension Agents and Master Gardeners will spread information and provide hands-on gardening support. Some existing gardeners may be SNAP participants who would benefit from using their benefits to fund the upfront investment in seeds and plants, or to expand growing options to include personal favorites and culturally relevant crops.

Here are a few more ideas about increasing awareness that SNAP can be used to buy seeds and edible plants:

- *Unite with like-minded organizations* – Community gardening organizations can ensure that food justice, environmental justice, anti-hunger, anti-poverty and other community development organizations are aware that SNAP offers the potential for gardening, and work together to raise awareness and increase resources. Organizations that run cooking demonstrations may be interested in incorporating gardening information into their programming.
- *Engage with retailers and help to advertise* – Gardeners can work with SNAP-authorized retailers, including farmers markets, bodegas, co-ops, and supermarkets to ensure that the retailers are aware that they can accept SNAP for food-producing plant and seed

⁴ SNAP Gardens provides such posters at <http://www.SNAPgardens.org/posters>.

purchases.⁵ They can also work with retailers to stock these items. Since demand is unlikely to match up with supply initially, gardeners may be able to coordinate special orders from a retailer. Many community gardens also operate farmers markets where plants and seeds can be marketed to SNAP participants as well as to other customers. Starting seeds and offering plant starts for sale may even generate revenue for the garden or other community-based organization.

- *Share success to inspire others* – When SNAP participants have successful experiences in the garden, media-savvy community gardeners can help connect those gardeners to media outlets. The media can amplify these stories, which may inspire other SNAP participants to take up gardening as well. (They should be careful to discuss with individuals prior to media outreach, as some will be uncomfortable with being identified as SNAP participants.) Introductions can also be made to policy makers and food policy council members who can leverage support and resources to encourage and facilitate more gardening. Social media such as Facebook and Twitter can be used to share stories and other useful information. Pocket-sized video-cameras and smartphones can also be used to document successes over time.

Expanding Access to Land

There are many ways to help gardeners access and secure land. If gardens have space available, the garden members can attempt to recruit gardeners by promoting the gardening potential of SNAP benefits around the neighborhood. If there is no additional space in a garden, gardeners can work with interested SNAP participants to identify viable sites and advocate for access to those sites, whether public or private. Gardeners can help get soil tested to ensure that the land is in a safe place to grow, and help remediate soil in cases where it is contaminated.

Once SNAP participants gain access to land, it may be necessary to offer gardening education. For example:

- Community gardeners can teach classes on topics such as window box gardening, composting, insect control, water conservation, etc.
- Experienced gardeners can also educate on seed saving, season extension, and canning, to help stretch food dollars and SNAP benefits even further.
- Experienced gardeners can also teach about some of the environmental benefits of gardening, such as carbon sequestration, attraction of pollinators, and reduction of vehicle miles travelled. These benefits to society at large may help SNAP participants to recognize that by gardening, not only are their own lives improved, but they also giving back and acting as stewards.

⁵ Authorized SNAP retailers are not required to sell food-producing plants and seeds, but if they do, they must accept SNAP as payment. Emails sent to SNAP Gardens from SNAP participants suggest that customers who attempt to purchase plants and seeds with SNAP benefits have been wrongly told, in multiple states, that SNAP benefits cannot be used for such purchases.

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) works with agencies to help people choose healthy foods and active lifestyles. Current USDA SNAP-Ed guidance allows for garden-based nutrition education (USDA Food and Nutrition Service 2012c). Gardeners can get in touch with the state agency and/or implementing agency via <http://snap.nal.usda.gov> to ensure that they know gardening is a qualified activity, and to offer gardens as sites for such education.
- The People's Garden Initiative run by USDA offers many gardening resources at <http://www.usda.gov/peoplesgarden>.
- The national 4-H Junior Master Gardener Program offers curriculum specifically for youth.

Increasing Affordability

Raising awareness and increasing access to land and education are critical steps in expanding the use of food stamps to cultivate gardens, but they are not enough. To succeed, gardening with food stamps must also be affordable. Here are some ideas to make gardening affordable:

- *Tool sharing.* Gardeners can advocate for public libraries to start tool-lending libraries, so that in addition to checking out books, people can check out tools, removing the cost barrier of investing in those tools. Alternatively, gardeners can start tool-lending libraries outside the library system.
- *Collaboration.* Gardeners can create volunteer systems for weeding and watering shifts to enable gardening for those who have limited time or inflexible schedules. Joining with others also creates economies of scale, which makes gardening more affordable (and more fun).

CONCLUSION: A NATION OF GARDENERS (WITH SNAP AT THE HEART)

Given the many benefits of gardening, all Americans would be smart to return to our agricultural roots, tilling the soil to provide healthy, fresh food on the table while saving money. And indeed, there is an explosion of gardening across America that is fostering a healthier diet, creating greater awareness of the joy of growing food, giving people a deeper appreciation of the importance of land, improving the environment, and slowing down the tempo of life in the 21st century (Tavernise 2012). But we must make greater effort to ensure that SNAP participants, concentrated in our cities, often in neighborhoods where fresh produce is hard to find, have ample opportunity to be at the forefront of a nation of gardeners.

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Appendix A: Urban counties with highest SNAP participant numbers in 2008, as well as percentage of the county population depending on SNAP (USDA Economic Research Service 2011).

County	Major City or Borough	Number of Participants	Percentage of County Population
Cook County, IL	Chicago	739,701	12.8%
Los Angeles County, CA	Los Angeles	724,937	6.6%
Kings County, NY	Brooklyn	510,743	17.5%
Wayne County, MI	Detroit	405,046	18.9%
Harris County, TX	Houston	386,836	8.3%
Maricopa County, AZ	Phoenix	386,309	7.7%
Miami-Dade County, FL	Miami	375,857	13.2%
Bronx County, NY	Bronx	364,581	22.5%
Philadelphia County, PA	Philadelphia	357,580	22.8%
Dallas County, TX	Dallas	262,424	8.9%
Queens County, NY	Queens	238,010	7.6%
Bexar County, TX	San Antonio	215,214	12.0%
New York County, NY	Manhattan	212,841	11.5%
Shelby County, TN	Memphis	210,604	20.7%
Cuyahoga County, OH	Cleveland	203,641	14.4%
Milwaukee County, WI	Milwaukee	173,219	15.8%
Franklin County, OH	Columbus	151,806	11.7%
Sacramento County, CA	Sacramento	146,130	9.0%
Baltimore city, MD	Baltimore	141,901	18.7%
Marion County, IN	Indianapolis	137,642	13.6%
Clark County, NV	Las Vegas	136,279	5.7%
King County, WA	Seattle	135,877	6.0%
Broward County, FL	Ft. Lauderdale	133,185	6.0%
Hillsborough County, FL	Tampa	132,951	8.6%
Fulton County, GA	Atlanta	127,424	11.1%
Pima County, AZ	Tucson	125,079	10.1%
Allegheny County, PA	Pittsburgh	124,194	9.5%
San Diego County, CA	San Diego	118,062	3.3%
Erie County, NY	Buffalo	114,604	11.3%
Suffolk County, MA	Boston	111,001	12.9%
Multnomah County, OR	Portland	108,701	13.6%
St. Louis City, MO	St. Louis	101,452	31.3%
Orange County, CA	Anaheim	100,671	2.8%
Jefferson County, KY	Louisville	100,334	12.8%
Jackson County, MO	Kansas City	100,022	17.1%
Kern County, CA	Bakersfield	99,724	10.7%
District of Columbia, DC	Washington, DC	98,911	15.1%