

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

Low-Income Households – This focus group included people who applied for low-income assistance through Waushara County Human Services Department, utilized food pantries in the Waushara County, participated in the Head Start Program, received household budgeting training from UW-Extension Waushara County, or were identified by local church leaders as members of low-income households.

The primary location where Waushara County low-income residents get most of their food:

- Full service local grocery store – A retail store in Waushara County that consistently carries a variety of canned and boxed vegetables, fruits, beverages, pasta, meat, and prepared meals, frozen foods, fresh meat, fresh produce, bakery products, dairy products, paper products, cleaning products, personal hygiene and healthcare products as well as other products
 - Piggly Wiggly – Redgranite
 - 49 Meats – Poy Sippi
 - Copps – Wautoma
 - Stoneridge – Wautoma
- Full service larger grocery store outside of Waushara County – A retail store outside of Waushara County that consistently carries a variety of canned and boxed vegetables, fruits, beverages, pasta, meat, and prepared meals, frozen foods, fresh meat, fresh produce, bakery products, dairy products, paper products, cleaning products, personal hygiene and healthcare products as well as other products
 - Aldi – Waupaca, Stevens Point, Oshkosh, and Appleton
 - Woodman’s – Appleton
 - Super Wal-Mart – Oshkosh, Stevens Point, Plover, and Wisconsin Rapids
- Convenience store – A retail establishment that carries a limited number of everyday items including food items. Usually the number of snack food items outnumber other food products. Often the sale of food items is secondary or equal to the sale of other items either liquor or particularly in the case of Waushara County, gasoline
 - Ultimart (Amoco/BP) – Poy Sippi
 - Kwik Trip – Redgranite
- Dollar store – A store that sells a variety of inexpensive products, including food products, cleaning supplies, household items, lawn and garden supplies, personal hygiene products, toys, trinkets, and decorations. Food product selection is usually limited to canned, boxed, snack, candy, and possibly dairy products; also known as dime stores
 - Dollar General – Redgranite and Wautoma

Reasons why Waushara County low-income residents get most of their food at a particular business:

- Location
 - Close to home
 - Save money on gas
- Convenient
 - Location
 - One-stop shopping
- “One-stop shopping” (“if you need movies and groceries, you can’t do that anywhere else.”)
 - I can get everything there in one trip
- Food choice

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- They sell milk, eggs, bread, cereal, juice and flour
- We can buy everything for the whole week – i.e. frozen pizzas
- Meat
 - Nicely cut meat
 - Stock up on meat – 10 for \$10
 - Meat tastes better
 - Variety
 - Cheap - pork, 5lb bag of chicken quarters – store in freezer
 - Quality Meat
 - Fresh
 - Butcher their own
 - Will slice smaller quantities
- Cheese
 - Big cheese cooler
 - Cut their own
 - Slice a box
- Deli
 - Lots of variety
 - Precooked items are practical for the kids when we are working and don't have time to cook
- Food Quality
- Cost/Savings
 - Flour tortillas less expensive
 - Canned goods
 - Cheap prices – milk, eggs, butter, bananas, potatoes (38 cents), onions
 - “Significant to older people cause you can get one can at a time and pay the same next week for it.”
- Sales
 - Healthy, nutritious items like milk, eggs and fruit go on sale
 - “Every once in awhile” – donuts, cookies, oranges (4 for \$1), pizzas half price
- Friendlier
 - Polite Staff
- Support local business
 - “We need to keep store in [town]. They are as reasonably priced as they can be.”
 - “It's expensive, but it's a grocery store”
- Familiar
 - “I know where things are at.”
- Simple
 - “Simply have food, that's it – not paying for fancy stuff.” (renovations, packaging, high-end food i.e. lobster)
- Hours – late night / after work hours
- Takes food stamps
- “They have nice big shopping carts with seats with buckles to strap in my two small children (so they can't get out). I can get in, get what I need, and get out.”

Where Waushara County low-income residents obtain food:

- Full service local grocery store – A retail store in Waushara County that consistently carries a variety of canned and boxed vegetables, fruits, beverages, pasta, meat, and prepared meals, frozen foods, fresh meat, fresh produce, bakery products, dairy products, paper products, cleaning products, personal hygiene and healthcare products as well as other products
 - Benny’s Market – Wild Rose
 - Cops Food Center – Wautoma
 - 49 Meats & Groceries – Poy Sippi
 - Piggly Wiggly – Redgranite
 - Royal Supermarket – Plainfield
 - Stoneridge Meat & Country Market – Wautoma
- Full service larger grocery store outside of Waushara County – A retail store outside of Waushara County that consistently carries a variety of canned and boxed vegetables, fruits, beverages, pasta, meat, and prepared meals, frozen foods, fresh meat, fresh produce, bakery products, dairy products, paper products, cleaning products, personal hygiene and healthcare products as well as other products
 - Aldi – Waupaca/Steven’s Point/Oshkosh/Appleton
 - Church Street Market - Berlin
 - Festival Foods – Oshkosh
 - J & T’s – Berlin
 - Pick N Save – Waupaca
 - Super Wal-Mart (Oshkosh, Steven’s Point, Plover, Wisconsin Rapids)
 - Woodman’s – Appleton
- Specialty store – A retail establishment that specializes in a particular type of food product or caters to a particular type of customer or ethnic group
 - El Popo – Wautoma
 - Mi Tendieta – Plainfield
- Discount grocery store – A retail store that sells dented, damaged, expired, discontinued, and overrun or surplus food products at a discounted price than similar regular food products
 - Banana Box Discount Store - Hancock
 - Country Discount Grocery – Wautoma
 - Scratch-N-Dent – Richford
- Convenience store – A retail establishment that carries a limited number of everyday items including food items. Usually the number of snack food items outnumber other food products. Often the sale of food items is secondary or equal to the sale of other items either liquor or particularly in the case of Waushara County, gasoline
 - BP - Wautoma
 - Kwik Trip – Redgranite
 - Shell Station – Wautoma
 - Ultimart (Amoco/BP) – Poy Sippi
- Dollar store – A store that sells a variety of inexpensive products, including food products, cleaning supplies, household items, lawn and garden supplies, personal hygiene products, toys, trinkets, and decorations. Food product selection is usually limited to canned, boxed, snack, candy, and possibly dairy products; also known as dime stores
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- Farmer Stand – Fresh produce stand either at a farm, a roadside stand, or out of the back of a pick-up truck or other vehicle; similar to a farmers market, but only one farmer
 - Mielke Farm – Hwy 22 between Wautoma and Wild Rose
- Employer – Business for whom you work for to receive a paycheck
 - Del Monte Cannery
 - McCain Foods
- Garden – Grow produce for personal use
- Hunting and fishing – Bow or gun hunting wild animals and fish during season with a permit
- Pick along roadside – Gathering produce that is growing in the public road right-of-way
- Food Pantry – One of a number of nonprofit run sources for free or reduced food available to low income households often with a referral
- Share Program– Berlin, Omro, and Waupaca (program is now in Wautoma) – participant purchases a box of food at a reduced price; see www.share.org
- Friends and Neighbors
- Prepared Foods – Establishments where meals are prepared and served for a fee
 - Senior Meal Sites
 - Restaurants
 - Bowling Alley in Plainfield
 - Country Kettle Restaurant
 - Fast Food Restaurants
- Special Events – Events that happen once a year, often around a holiday
 - Labor Day Parade
 - Christmas Programs

Reasons why Waushara County low-income residents get most of their food from a particular source:

- Full service local grocery store
 - Location
 - Close to home
 - Save money on gas
 - Convenient
 - Location
 - Food choice
 - Meat
 - Nicely cut meat
 - Meat tastes better
 - Quality Meat
 - Fresh
 - Will slice smaller quantities
 - Cheese
 - Big cheese cooler
 - Cut their own
 - Slice a box
 - Deli
 - Lots of variety

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- Precooked items are practical for the kids when we are working and don't have time to cook
 - Food Quality
 - Cost/Savings
 - Sales
 - Friendlier
 - Support local business
 - “We need to keep store in [town]. They are as reasonably priced as they can be.”
 - “It's expensive, but it's a grocery store”
 - Familiar
 - “I know where things are at.”
 - Simple
 - “Simply have food, that's it – not paying for fancy stuff.” (renovations, packaging, high-end food i.e. lobster)
- Full service larger grocery store outside of Waushara County
 - Convenient
 - One-stop shopping
 - “One-stop shopping” (“if you need movies and groceries, you can't do that anywhere else.”)
 - I can get everything there in one trip
 - Food choice
 - They sell milk, eggs, bread, cereal, juice and flour
 - We can buy everything for the whole week – i.e. frozen pizzas
 - Meat
 - Variety
 - Cheap - pork, 5lb bag of chicken quarters – store in freezer
 - Quality meat and Seafood
 - Good bakery
 - Birthday cakes
 - Cost/Savings
 - Flour tortillas less expensive
 - Canned goods
 - Stock up once a month
 - Sales
 - Healthy, nutritious items like milk, eggs and fruit go on sale
 - Friendlier
 - Polite Staff
 - “They have nice big shopping carts with seats with buckles to strap in my two small children (so they can't get out). I can get in, get what I need, and get out.”
- Specialty store
 - Mexican food
- Discount grocery store
 - Cheaper/save money on peanut butter, toothpaste, toothbrush
- Convenience store
 - Cheap prices – milk, eggs, butter, bananas, potatoes (38 cents), onions

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- Sales – “every once in awhile” – donuts, cookies, oranges (4 for \$1), pizzas half price
- Takes food stamps
- Emergencies items – Milk, eggs, butter, etc.
 - “I go for last minute needs, like milk when I am in the middle of making dinner”
- Convenience
 - “Gas station down the street” from my house.
- Hours – late night / after work hours
- Buy chips, candy bars, soda
- Dollar store
 - Lower prices consistently
 - A lot of Mexican items are cheaper than at the Mexican Store
 - “Significant to older people cause you can get one can at a time and pay the same next week for it.”
 - Can find most items
 - Nice, fresh beans
- Farmer Stand
 - Fresh fruits and vegetables
 - Apples - make applesauce
 - Corn and cucumbers
 - Summer and fall
 - They grow their own vegetables and fruits (berries)
- Employer
 - They give away fresh produce - potatoes, carrots and corn to employees
 - Employees who work there all year long get very low prices on French fries and a variety of potatoes 1 time per month.
- Garden
 - Always plant a big gardener
 - Can veggies and sauces
- Hunting and Gathering
 - Pick along roadside
 - Berries
 - Mushroom
 - Nuts
 - Asparagus
 - Hunting
 - Fishing
- Food Pantry
 - One woman was new to using food pantries as she was newly unemployed. Though she was grateful for the food she received, she also felt it was lacking in nutritious food.
 - “That’s the only one I’ve been to. But you go there and you get pasta, you get great stuff. You can do a lot with tuna fish, you can do a lot with the product they give, but you also need fresh produce, fresh vegetables... Right now I don’t have a job so this is the first time I ever had to think about Food Stamps. I go to the pantry and it’s not food normally I would eat. I’m not talking

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

about t-bone steak, I'm just talking a healthy salad... I mean celery, that's a good snack for kids with peanut butter on it, that's a good snack. Instead they are giving you nothing for snacks and now your kids are still eating the candy bars and non-nutritious stuff... Cheese, especially in Wisconsin – how come there's no cheese at the food pantry. They never have had cheese or butter, you get those little pats of butter, and I'm not complaining because it's better than nothing, but you know, you can make a lot of grilled cheese sandwiches with a loaf of American cheese."

- Share Program www.share.org – Berlin & Omro (program is now in Wautoma)
 - Good Quality food
 - Price – save money
 - Once a month shopping - 6:30am on Sat. – only in Berlin & Omro
 - A lot of frozen food
 - Have to buy at least \$15 worth of food
 - Semi truck delivers produce & meat, canned goods, spaghetti, sauces, potatoes, onions, fruit, broccoli, carrots, etc.
 - Can order over internet
 - Volunteers distribute and sometimes take to your car for you
- Friends and Neighbors
 - Barter
 - Venison
 - Fish
- Prepared Foods
 - Pizza
 - Fish Friday
 - Fast Food
- Special Events
 - On Labor Day Miller's Farm has a big wagon that goes through the parade and gives away bags of free potatoes
 - Basket of food from Methodist Church, New Life Assembly, Kiwanis
 - Neighborhood gets together and donates cans of food and buys gifts – boy and girl scouts, businesses

Ways to make the local grocery store a more attractive option:

- Become a one-stop shop
 - One large trip for everything. "I don't want to do 10 trips when I could do 2."
- More variety
- At larger stores, they have 5 different kinds, from high end to low end and you Diabetic products – all in one aisle
 - can pick what you are looking for. The local store offers just 1 name brand and 1 generic brand.
 - "You go one place and they've got something that the other store doesn't have. You have to go to 2 different stores just to get your groceries."
 - People with WIC don't have a lot of options to choose from.
 - "You have to get the same things all the time."
- New meat case

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- Though realizes it's not efficient and the town can't afford it
- Did buy a new smoker and curious how that will work
- They are trying new ideas and that's great
- “Fresher meats and vegetables.”
- Diabetic products – all in one isle
- Lower prices
 - Local stores should give the same price to everyone- no membership cards, no coupons (I don't get the newspaper so I don't get the store's coupons. I could go to the desk and ask for them, but this is a lot of putzing around.)
 - Like Wal-Mart or Dollar General
 - Generic food or bag your own like Aldis – ¼ or 1/3 normal prices
 - Smaller portions
 - Local stores should offer Larger package sizes of foods and make bulk quantities available... this makes for better deals and more convenience. “Why run to the store every 5 minutes to buy more?”
 - Buy in bulk and transfer saving onto customers
- Sales/Specials
 - Weekly sales
 - Sales that compete with other stores
 - Weekend specials
 - Buy in bulk and transfer saving onto customers
 - Palette sales – non perishables – potatoes for example
 - Stop deceptive/false advertising
 - “new and improved” – “the only thing they do that is new and improved is the lettering on the bag, with the products not new and improved.”
 - Advertise coupon in one city that can only be used in another city
 - “I once got a coupon in Wautoma for chicken breasts in Oshkosh. I showed them the coupon and the manager comes out and says they don't honor coupons from other cities -same store but different city even though I got the coupon from Wautoma.”
 - Clear advertising on Sales within the store
 - “They will say 10 for \$5 but they have certain ones they don't have included in that category. You get some flavor that's not included in that and you'll be paying 65 cents instead of 50 cents.”
 - Coupons
 - Our local store won't accept coupons of any kind. I get a lot of coupons online, and wal-mart will take them, but our local store won't.
 - Wal-Mart will take coupons, and will offer me the lowest price of any competitor.

Reasons why Waushara County low-income residents shop at farm stands:

- Tastes good
- Fresh
- Safe
 - “not afraid you're getting salmonella poisoned or something like that.”

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- Support local farmers
 - “to keep \$ in community”
- Help out church – Lord’s Acres proceeds go to church
- Can’t grow certain foods in own garden
 - Once in awhile for a tomato or cucumber when I can’t wait for mine to ripen.
 - “Only buy peppers cause can’t group my own.”
 - Only for corn – 2-3x’s year.
- Variety is good
- “farm friendly”
- Cheaper
 - “you can get more for your money”
 - “The price is right, and you know you’re getting something fresh”
 - “You can get corn at such a better price”

Ways to make farm stands a more attractive option:

- Better variety (Seasonal)
- Have farm stands or a farmers’ market within the Flea Market like in Stevens Point where they sell flowers, spices and clothes.
- Lower the prices
 - Why are potatoes so expensive (\$4 for 10#) when there are so many in Wisconsin?
 - “Farmer’s Markets are for resort people – locals can’t afford that.”
- “Allow us to pick or harvest ourselves and give us better prices (no intermediaries – farmers don’t have to spend extra money on employees)”
 - “Sometimes farmers don’t want to sell – even when they have harvest in their fields, they didn’t let us pick or buy it.”
- Offer other payment options beyond cash only, including Food Share and credit cards
- “If it’s fast and I can get in and out, that’s fine.” leave the kids in the car, “grab it and go it can be very fast”
- Better parking – “so you don’t get run over”
- Have self service stands in Plainfield like in Hancock.
- Welcome and cater to local residents

Obstacles that Waushara County low-income residents faced to getting the food they needed or wanted:

- Financial
 - Work seasonally (ag) and do not always have enough money off season to buy needed food.
 - “Summer we have more work and more money and can buy what we want, but other seasons we must look carefully at price.”
 - Don’t have enough money
 - Job – don’t have one
 - Food Stamp application process – difficult to navigate – lots of papers, etc.

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- Transportation
 - Either do not know how to drive or do not have drivers' license (can't afford and/or do not have social security number)
 - "I don't know how to drive. When it's very cold, walking is difficult. My husband is not here in the winter."
 - Gas – don't have enough money to buy
 - Vehicle – don't have one
 - County transportation not at convenient times
- Time
 - Winter
 - Quality of food not as good
 - You need to use or freeze food immediately or it spoils. Told story about chicken that went bad quickly when stored in her refrigerator door.
- Weather
 - "I'm not going to get out shopping if it's snowing and raining."
 - "We go & buy everything we can and go to the other stores before storm."
 - Winter
 - "In snowstorms we can't get out anywhere."
 - Can't pick wild edibles
 - Eat more – inside more, more sedentary, need more to stay warm
- Type of food
 - Can't get fresh produce in winter – no farm / produce stands
 - Knowledge (cooking and food preparation)
 - "Don't know how to bake. I have to purchase everything."
 - Products not available in store
 - Sometimes the store is out of it
 - Health needs for diabetics
 - Seasonal shortages, sometimes because of tourist influx in the area.
 - Stores don't carry all items regularly, not just produce, but things like corned beef – it's hard to get off-season (not St. Patty's Day).
- Food Pantries
 - Food Pantry's don't always offer nutritious food i.e. produce, cheese, butter
 - Food Pantry's don't always offer toothpaste and other essentials
 - Felt degraded by the application process at Human Services to get a voucher for the food pantry. Weren't eligible, yet can't afford the food they need.
 - "The attitude on the phone was I didn't need it. It was a week before check comes and only had a little bit of rice in the cupboard."
 - Don't get enough food or complete meals
 - Don't know how to prepare some of the food provided
 - Quality food isn't always good either – moldy bread in the past
 - Aren't treated equally at the food pantry. Believe that some residents are receiving preferential treatment.
 - One participant said that this was her experience both as a volunteer worker for the pantry and as a recipient.
 - Don't know how to get to the food pantry.

Ways that the community- government, business, individuals, churches, and organizations may address obstacles Waushara County residents have to getting the food they want or need:

- Financial
 - Government-sponsored credit card available
 - “Government give a credit card in winter when out of work and in summer when we have money we do a payment plan to pay it off.”
 - Low-interest or no-interest credit card just for food that can be used when running low on money.
 - Aldi Store in town
 - “Get me a job. When they’re not hiring at McDonalds, you know it’s bad.”
 - Allow yard/rummage sales without a permit.
 - Two participants talked about gathering materials out of trash cans and making nice things (crafts, etc.) for the tourists. They said they’d average \$15-\$20 and that the extra cash made a huge difference for them getting by in a month. They are now being required to purchase a permit for these sales, which costs \$15-\$20, and are being limited to 2 per year.
 - Free training for jobs.
 - “Give us classes!”
 - Local, low-cost courses
 - Make it easier to go back to school.
 - “I thought about going back to school, but I have to drive to Appleton. I’m a single Mom. With babysitting, transportation, not just gas, but maintenance on vehicle and I don’t have anybody to borrow money from. It’s impossible.”
 - Childcare
- Transportation
 - Driving classes
 - Affordable class for adults and kids
 - “Someone who knows how to drive should teach.”
 - In school they give driving classes
 - Driving classes “should be free or have a payment plan.”
 - Affordable driver’s license
 - Offer to pick up food for people without transportation or who can’t get out
 - Communicate with one another – ride share – car pool to grocery stores
- Weather
 - Winter weather driving lessons
- Type of food
 - Inform grocery store owners/buys what’s going on with diabetics
 - ”Have dieticians in the hospitals manage the stores and tell them products to put up on the shelves for special diets, sugar or substitute sugar...”
 - Survey residents to see what people want to have in the stores and get more options

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- Food pantries and related programs
 - Gleaning
 - “Allow us to pick harvest that doesn’t get eaten. Potato farmers who have big harvest and throw away good food – they should call community and give for a better price instead of going to garbage.”
 - Get a local Share distribution site – Redgranite site closed
 - Cheese Factories make a big block of cheese and donate to the food pantry
 - Food Pantries
 - Give Choice of Items or 2 Pantries
 - Provide Personal Care Products
 - Treat applicant for pantry vouchers with respect
 - Offer Bread and Milk at all Pantries
 - Allow Seconds at Pantries
 - Offer complete meals and make simple cards with recipes.
 - “I’m not ungrateful, but I can’t make a meal out of the stuff from pantry and I don’t have enough \$ to finish meal.”
 - “Give them a loaf of bread with a jar of peanut butter. At least you could have peanut butter and jelly sandwiches one night.
 - “If they’d give out like simple recipes, they’re giving you these different kinds of foods, but if they’d give out little cards with recipes, maybe some of it we’d really know what to do with.”
 - Include instructions with packages that are given without the original box.
 - Make it easier to get voucher for food pantries, especially good pantries like Poy Sippi where they give out milk and Redgranite.
 - Equal distribution of food and other products at pantries.
 - Treat applicant for pantry vouchers with respect.

Ways that Waushara County Food Connections can achieve its two part mission. First to make nutritious food available for all Waushara County Residents, and then the second is to strengthen the local food system. We want affordable food for residents and we want to keep our local grocery stores:

- Stores go together and get larger quantities (semi-load vs. ½ semi-load) at cheaper prices
- Stores work together so prices can all drop
 - “It cost \$300 to ship half-semi loads. If there was another store around here where they could fill up the trailer and cost them a hundred and a half and he drops half the load at one store and the other half at the other.”
- Local stores need to lower their prices
 - Price products to local resident incomes
 - “If store owners were smart, they’d lower prices and cater to locals.”
 - “Tourists are here this time of year, they should rely on locals and they don’t. They keep that price right up there.”
 - Increase competition

Appendix B4: Detailed Results – Low-Income Population

- When competition increased prices went down. “Bring in another little grocery store. Maybe they’ll go down again.”
- Offer more sales
 - “That’s all we eat is what’s on sale.”
 - Year round sales
 - “They can have the sales in the summer time to bring the tourists in, but how about doing it at other times for the locals too.”
- How to lower costs
 - “Buy in bulk.”
 - “could have kept the prices down if they didn’t spend so much money on beautiful decorations, fancy packaging and a new parking lot. “When I’m in a store, I’m there to buy food. I don’t want to see somebody’s decorations. It’s irritating.”

Some thing new learned by focus group participant or highlight noted by focus group participant:

- “Sometime we depend on our husbands for everything. Sometimes we should be more independent.” “New to get together and talk about driving lessons. WE can probably find a way in the community to make it cheaper and learn how to drive.”
- “Winter is difficult to walk to the store.”
- “I thought about teenagers not driving, but never thought about adults not being able to afford to learn how to drive.”
- “People can’t get help because they don’t have a social security number. They don’t want to get involved in the system.”
- Share Program
- 55 and over program
 - “I don’t know if you are qualifies, I’m going to be qualified. They have a 55 and over program in Wautoma, I think it’s at the CAP Building that they can help you find some kind of work part time... It’s called the over 55.”
- “At least you were here to listen.”
- “All people were not being treated equally.”
- “Someone is listening to people.”
- “Milk is available at food pantries.”