

# Karen Washington

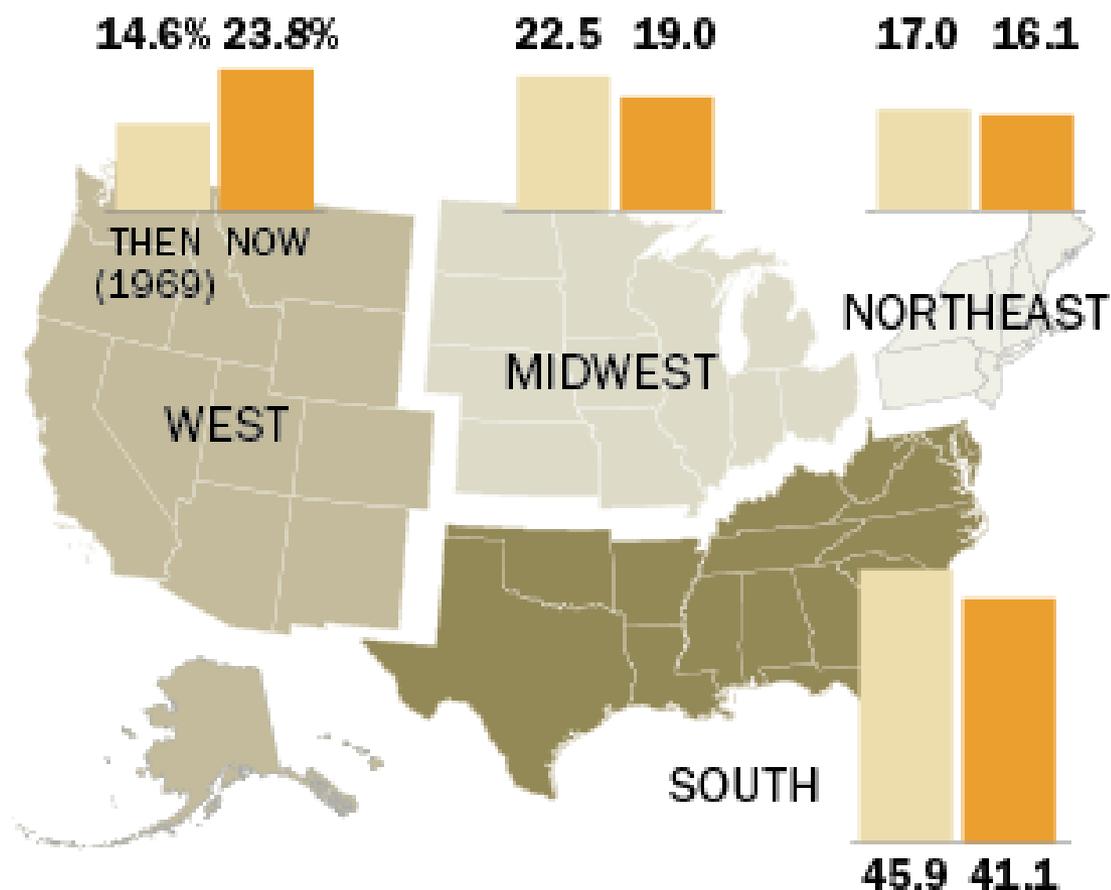


# Healthy Food Builds Health communities



# The Geography of America's Poor

*Percent by region of total U.S. below poverty line*



Source: Census Bureau

PEW RESEARCH CENTER

# Poverty

- In 2013, 45.3 million people (14.5 percent) were in poverty.
- In 2013, 26.4 million (13.6 percent) of people ages 18-64 were in poverty.
- In 2013, 14.7 million (19.9 percent) children under the age of 18 were in poverty.
- In 2013, 4.2 million (9.5 percent) seniors 65 and older were in poverty.
- In 2013, the overall poverty rate according to the Supplemental Poverty Measure is 15.5 percent, as compared with the official poverty rate of 14.5 percent.
- Under the Supplemental Poverty Measure, there are 49.7 million people living in poverty, nearly 3 million more than are represented by the official poverty measure (47.0 million).

## **FACTS**

- Globally, there are more than 1 billion overweight adults, at least 300 million of them obese.
- Obesity and overweight pose a major risk for chronic diseases, including type 2 diabetes, cardiovascular disease, stroke, hypertension, and certain forms of cancer.
- The key causes are increased consumption of energy-dense foods high in saturated fats and sugars, and reduced physical activity

1900's 40% of our  
population lived on  
farms, now only 2%.

early 1900's, we had over 5, 00,000 farms and 70% of our food was home grown. Today 2 million farms.

## **America's Obesity Epidemic**

- Today two-thirds of adults and nearly one-third of children struggle with overweight and obesity.
- If obesity rates stay consistent, by 2030, 51 percent of the population will be obese by 2030.
- Twenty years ago, no state had an obesity rate above 15 percent. Today there are 41 states with obesity rates over 25 percent, according to the Trust for American's Health.
- Since 1980, the rate of obesity in children and adolescents has almost tripled.
- 72% of older men and 67% of older women are now overweight or obese .

# The Three Food Groups

- **Processed Food-** new wave of food source. The food group of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. After all the TV dinner was supposed to revolutionize the food system.
- **Junk Food-** cheap, low cost, imitates the color and flavor of food with chemicals and additives.
- **Fast Food-** cheap, convenient, hidden dangers, addictive.

**WAR GARDENS**

FOR  
**VICTORY**



**GROW VITAMINS AT  
YOUR KITCHEN DOOR**

## **What are the health benefits of growing your own food?**

- Less stress
- Gives you power
- You grew it
- Exercise
- Community
- Tradition
- Culture
- Spirituality
- Education
- Health and well-being
- Flora and fauna
- Economics

## Challenges

- We are faced with an aging population in the food movement. The average age of a rural farmer who is predominately male is 57. If you started your garden in the 1970's or 80's and you were 40, you are now in your 70's and 80's and mostly female.
- We have a growing youth population that is inheriting food related illnesses normally associated with an aging population and a criminal justice system which has incarcerated mostly young men of color.
- We have an elder population that can remember getting food from farms and or backyards, living longer, but are now succumbing to the ills of processed food and tobacco.
- We have vacant land, inherited land, farms and community gardens that go idle because we have no one to work on them.
- Politics: land for development versus growing food. Red tape.
- Economics: volunteerism is all well in good, but most people are looking at ways to feed their families or make a profit; and many of our youth are seeking to get paid. Farmers and farm workers need to be paid a living wage for their product and work. Green Jobs.

## **Together we can change the food system by advocating for:**

- The right to have food and water that is healthy and safe.
- The right to have all food labeled.
- The right to have food that is organically or naturally grown, no pesticides or GMO in our food.
- The right for our farmers, farm workers, fishermen and restaurant workers to receive health benefits and a living wage and pay for their work and product.
- Tax breaks and incentives given to businesses that are willing to sell and provide healthy, food options to low income neighborhood as well a living wage jobs.
- Do away with antiquated laws that prevent people from obtaining land and growing food.

*I leave you with this, “To grow your food gives you power, you know who and why you grew it, you grew it for yourself, your family and your community”*

Karen Washington