

Inkster Community Food Assessment

With the fastest rising diabetes prevalence in Winnipeg, the highest rate of hypertension in the city, and limited access to healthy foods, Inkster faces significant food challenges.

Inkster's geographic isolation and disconnected neighbourhoods have resulted in a number of food security challenges related to poor food access and limited public transportation, while its demographics reveal disparities in income and health.

There is significant disparity between Inkster East and West. The average household income in Inkster West is

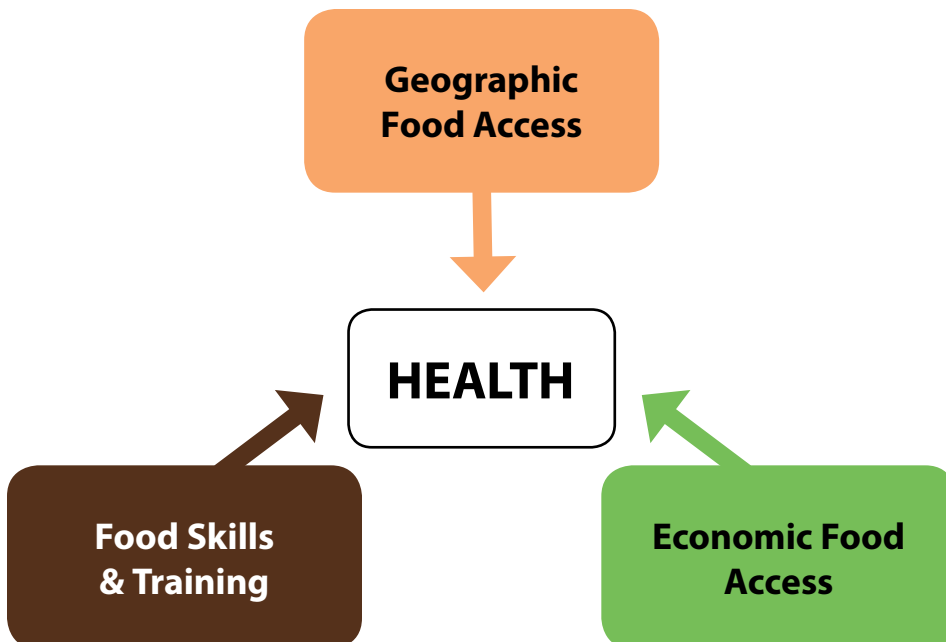
nearly \$30,000 higher than Inkster East, life expectancy is ten years longer in Inkster West than East, and teen pregnancy is over 5 times higher in Inkster East than West.

Despite challenges, there is much to celebrate in Inkster. One of Inkster's strengths is its ethnically diverse community. Over half the population in Inkster West, for example, are visible minorities and there is strong immigration to the neighbourhood, particularly from the Philippines. Meanwhile, the new NorWest Community Food Centre will provide some new opportunities for capacity and community building.

Key Challenges for Food Security in Inkster

- Inkster is home to some of Winnipeg's lowest income neighbourhoods. Out of 178 Winnipeg neighbourhoods, Brooklands ranks 135th, Burrows-Keewatin ranks 148th, and Weston ranks 158th.
- There are few options for purchasing full-service grocery stores and the lack of density makes transportation and accessibility difficult.
- Inkster has been historically overlooked for funding and programming.

Key Challenges for Food Security in Inkster

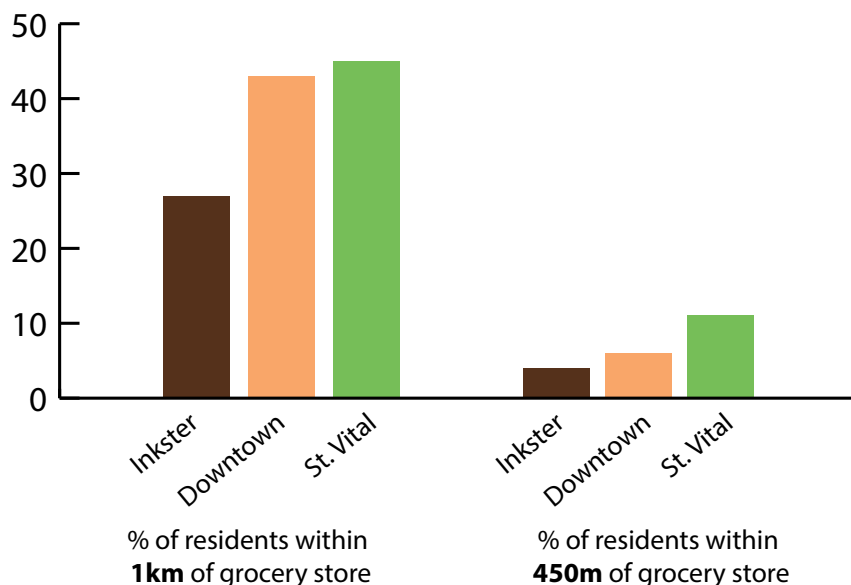


Map of City of Winnipeg Defined Communities. Maps created using mypeg.ca.



Geographic Food Access

Access to food is a key concern for Inkster residents. Over half the land in Inkster is not residential and the neighbourhood is home to industrial parks and railways. This means that grocery stores can be far away and difficult to access, particularly for people without vehicles. Only 27% of Inkster residents live within one kilometer of a grocery store – worse than other neighbourhoods in Winnipeg where community food assessments have been completed.



While Inkster residents have poor access to grocery stores, they have ready access to fast food. Using a calculation called “food balance” – comparing distance to grocery stores and distance to fast food restaurants – Inkster fares poorly, particularly the neighbourhoods of Brooklands, Weston, and Shaughnessy Park.

What can be done to improve geographic food access to fresh, healthy food?

- Develop fresh food markets at community organizations in neighbourhoods with the least access to healthy food.
- Adjust bus routes to improve service to grocery stores.
- Host drop-off locations for Winnipeg Food Share Co-op’s Good Food Box program.



Good food balance
Poor food balance
Very poor food balance

Map prepared using ArcGIS Explorer.

“When it’s -30° Celsius it’s really hard to use public transportation to go all the way to Sobeys, Extra Foods, or Safeway if they live too far and traveling with young children can be very difficult.”

- Inkster agency staff person

INKSTER FACTS:

Inkster is home to **19 convenience stores** but only **2 full service grocery stores**. Inkster is home to **41 restaurants**. Inkster’s diversity is reflected in its **7 specialty/ethnic stores** and **12 ethnic restaurants**.

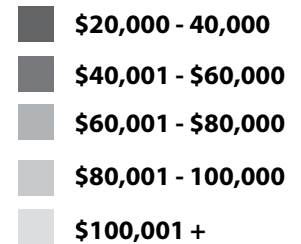
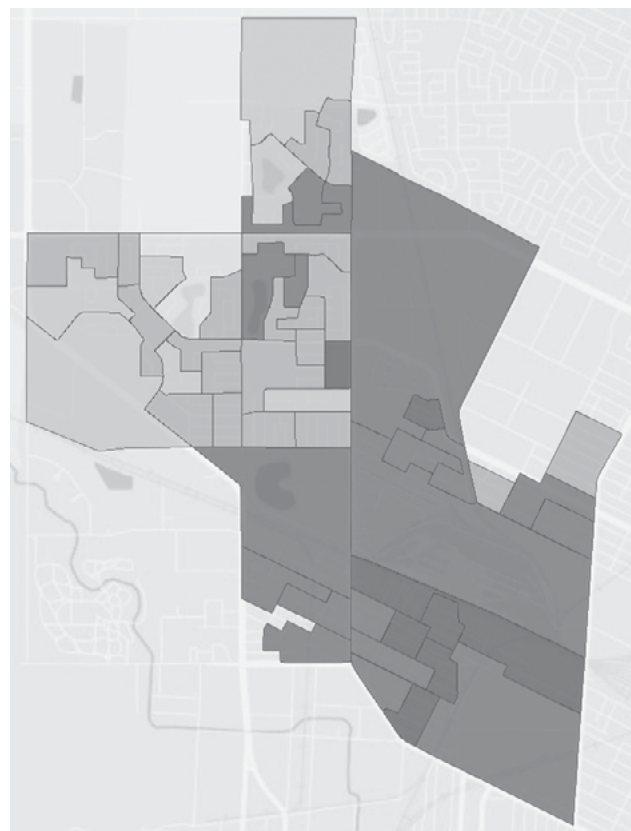
Economic Food Access

Inkster is a community of diverse incomes, ranging from a median household income of \$31,766 in Weston to over \$70,000 in Tyndall Park (the city median is \$49,790). In some pockets of Inkster, household incomes are even lower, reaching as low as \$15,030 in the Gilbert Park area. Low incomes are particularly a challenge in Weston, Brooklands, Shaughnessy Park, and Burrows-Keewatin. This means that some residents of Inkster face challenges in accessing healthy food.

Milk Prices:

Milk is one of the basic staples that all people, but particularly young families, rely on for a healthy diet. Twenty-two stores were surveyed as part of this assessment. The average cost of 1% milk in these stores was \$1.76 for one litre, \$3.78 for two litres, and \$5.85 for four litres.

The legal regulated price for a one litre container of 1% milk is \$1.56. Over half of stores surveyed were selling milk for well above the legal price, with prices ranging from \$1.53 to \$2.00.



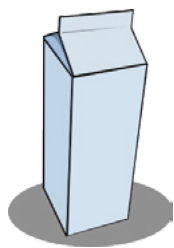
Median Family Income.
Map prepared using ArcGIS Explorer.

"I buy in bulk as much as I can and am always shopping around for deals with flyers and coupons. Saving \$10 a week means I can afford to share a cab with my neighbour, which saves me up to 1.5 hours on a bus."

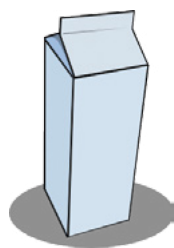
- Inkster resident

Legal Cost of 1% milk

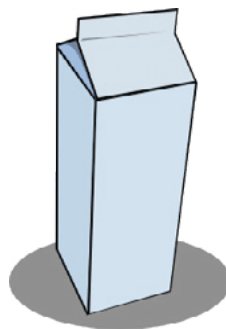
Average Cost of 1% milk



\$1.56/1 litre



\$1.76/1 litre



\$3.78/2 litre

What can be done to improve economic food access to fresh, healthy food?

- Offer access to affordable healthy food purchasing programs such as good food boxes.
- Increasing Employment and Income Assistance and minimum wage rates.

INKSTER FACTS:

To purchase a nutritious food basket, an Inkster family of four would have to spend **\$808 per month**. The employment rate in Inkster East is only **59%**, far lower than Inkster West (**73%**). The most common sources of employment in Inkster are manufacturing, health care and social assistance, retail, and warehousing.

Food Skills & Health

Diabetes, hypertension and heart disease are key health concerns in Inkster, and all are connected to diet. Inkster has the fastest increase in diabetes prevalence in the city (an increase of 32% between 2004-2007 and 2009-2012) and now has above average diabetes prevalence rates. Inkster also has the highest rate of hypertension (29%) in the city and the second highest rate of heart attacks (4.92 per 1,000 residents). Heart attack rates are over twice as high in Inkster East than Inkster West.

The community food assessment found a variety of ways to equip community members with healthy food skills to address these high, and quickly growing, disease rates.

- Providing health information and classes in different languages, particularly Tagalog.
- Hiring more Aboriginal health workers and providing more Aboriginal-focused programming.
- Incorporating the food traditions of neighbourhood residents into food programming to equip residents with healthy food skills and celebrate food traditions.
- Provide intergenerational learning opportunities.

Schools can also be a key partner in food education by:

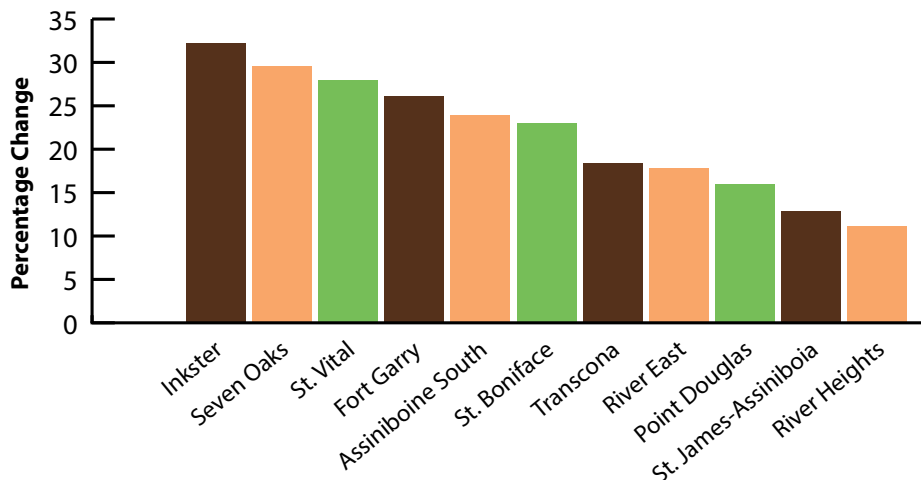
- Allocating a portion of their green space to a garden for use by classrooms and/or community programming.
- Partner with community organizations to provide after school programming.

"I tried selling fresh produce, but nobody bought it. I would be interested in trying again if I knew that the community would buy it. However, I am limited by what I can bring in because I am still a small store."


-Inkster business owner

INKSTER FACTS:

Inkster East has a higher diabetes prevalence (**13.1%**) than Inkster West (**10.9%**), but both are rising quickly. Inkster has the third lowest rate of diabetics who had an eye exam (an indicator of diabetes care) in Winnipeg and the third highest rate of lower limb amputations.



Diabetes Prevalence Change (2004-2007 to 2009-2012)

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This community food assessment was completed in partnership with the NorWest Co-op Community Health Centre.