



## Healthy Food Access Portal

### Research Your Community

## Report for Monroe County, PA

This report provides information about the population living within the county and their food environment.



## Demographics

Accessing healthy food is a challenge for some Americans - particularly those living in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. Research has shown that, if a person is Black, Hispanic or living in a low-income block group they are more likely to live in an area with limited access to a full service supermarket.

Current estimates show that the area has steadily grown since 2000 and the total population is 167,126 people. According to 2012-2016 American Community Survey (ACS) data, the population of a minority race was 31.88% and 14.64% were of Hispanic ethnicity. In terms of age, 21.18% were children under age 18, while 14.95% were over age 65.

### Demographics in Monroe County, PA

Monroe County	2000	2010	2012-2016
Total Population	138,687	169,842	167,126
Pct. Hispanic	6.6%	13.1%	14.6%
Pct. Minority	15.0%	29.5%	31.9%
Pct. < 18 Years	26.6%	23.9%	21.2%
Pct. 65 or Older	12.2%	12.8%	14.9%

### Median Household Income

	Monroe County	Pennsylvania
Median Household Income (2012-2016)	\$58,980	\$54,895

Source: Census 2000, Census 2010, Census ACS 2012-2016

## Workforce and Unemployment

Some communities look to improve access to food for existing residents by meeting both the demands from the daytime population (workforce) and the residential population. The table at right shows

the number of people in the workforce that are employed within the area and the number of people who reside in the area who are part of the workforce. This data tells us that 43,434 people work in Monroe County, while 56,814 workers reside in Monroe County according to the Local Employer-Household Dynamics data. Increasing the number of healthy food retailers can lead to jobs and may be a force of revitalizing economically distressed communities.

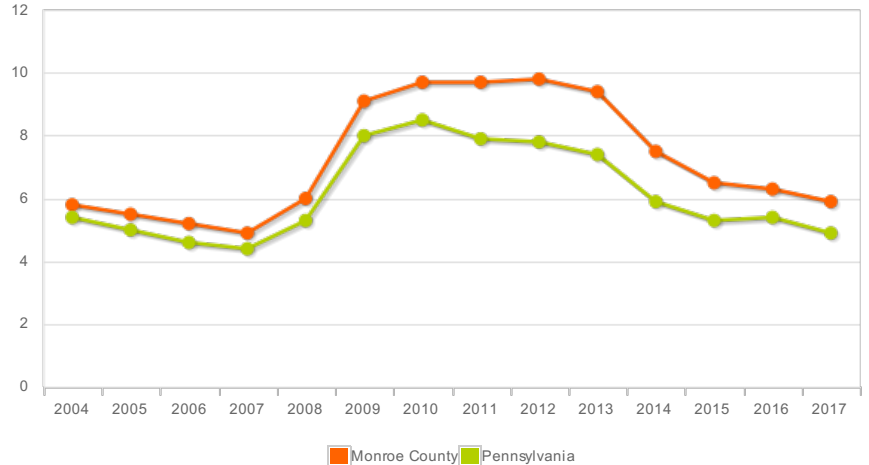
Local Employment in Monroe County		
	Resident	Employed
<b>Total Workers (2015)</b>	56,814	43,434

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Employment-Household Dynamics

Monroe County's unemployment rate is 5.9%, compared to the statewide unemployment rate of 4.9%. The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest domestic hunger safety net program (according to the USDA). It serves many low-income people, including those who are currently unemployed.

Within Monroe County, 13.41% of people received SNAP benefits in 2011, amounting to \$34,017,000 in benefits to program participants.

### Annual Unemployment



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Employment-Household Dynamics

## Food Environment

Determining if a community is underserved by healthy food retailers can be a complicated process that includes a variety of factors including population density, car ownership rates, and the quality and location of supermarkets, grocery stores and farmers markets. Researchers have produced many studies and online tools to help communities to identify areas with limited access to supermarkets and sources of healthy food. Methods and measures vary but two studies and national online data tools are Reinvestment Fund's [Limited Supermarket Access \(LSA\) Study](#) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) [Food Access Research Atlas](#). These studies seek to provide guidance on how to understand whether a new supermarket, an expansion of an existing store, or a farmer's market is the appropriate strategy to pursue.

In 2016, there were 17 full service supermarkets located in Monroe County. There are 25 Limited Service stores located within the study area, and 4 farmers' markets. SNAP benefits are accepted at 109 participating stores, farmer's markets, social service agencies or other non retail providers in this community.

According to the USDA, 4 of 33 census tracts in Monroe County are Low-Income, Low-Access tracts. ([Show/hide list of USDA Low-Income, Low-Access Tracts](#))

Food Retailers in Monroe County	
Full Service Supermarkets	17
Limited Service Stores	25
SNAP Retailers	109
Farmers' Markets	4
Fast-food and Takeout Restaurants	106

Source: USDA ERS Food Access, Census County Business Patterns, USDA Agricultural Marketing Service, Reinvestment Fund Study of Low Supermarket Access

Based on Reinvestment Fund's 2018 analysis, there are 4 LSA areas within Monroe County. 42,205 people live in one of these LSA areas and are considered to have limited access to a supermarket. The estimated leakage for this area is \$53,081,000; this represents the amount that residents spend at stores located outside of the LSA. Please see the [PolicyMap Data Directory](#) for Reinvestment Fund's methodology.

Limited Supermarket Access in Monroe County	
Population within LSA	42,205
Total Grocery Leakage	\$53,081,000

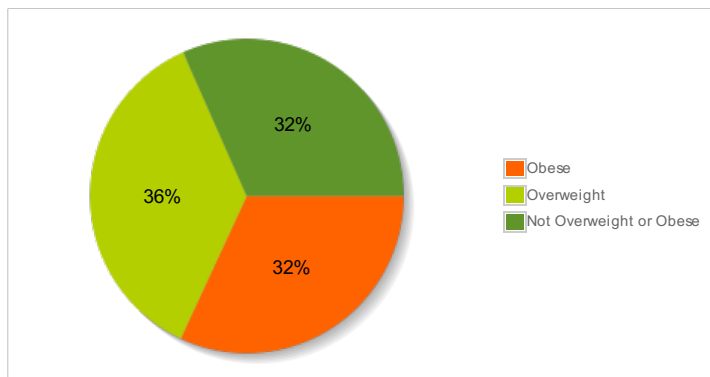
Source: Reinvestment Fund Study of Low Supermarket Access.



# Health

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) provides survey data about the health of the residents within an area. The chart at right displays the Body Mass Index (BMI) classification for adults in Monroe County. It reports that 36.46% of the population is considered overweight and 31.91% is considered obese.

**BMI Classification in 2013, Monroe County**

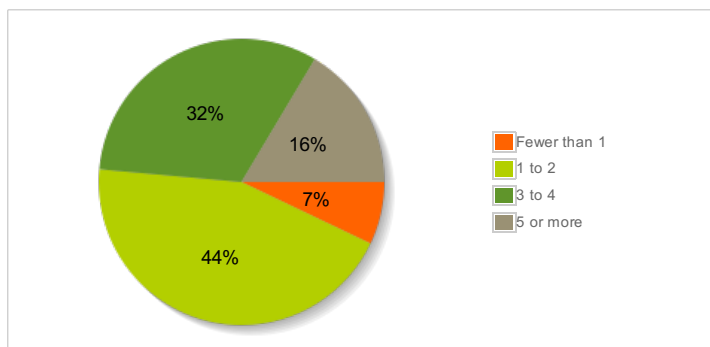


Source: CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2013, ACS 2009-2013

## Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

According to the CDC, fruits and vegetables are critical to promoting good health. Most adults need to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables they currently eat to get the amount that's recommended every day. The CDC reports that the recommended level of consumption depends upon an individual's age, weight and current level of physical activity. Visit [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) for specifics on how many servings to eat. Of the adult residents in Monroe County, 84% reported eating fewer than 5 fruits and vegetables per day, and 16% report eating five or more per day.

**Number of Fruits/Vegetables Consumed per day in 2013, Monroe County**



Source: CDC Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2013, ACS 2009-2013

## Federal Programs & Investments

Areas within Monroe County may be targeted for economic development or community development activities. By working within these areas, community development entities or commercial operators may be able to seek grants or loans to finance intervention strategies that address the community's lack of food access. Some certified Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs) operate specific programs designed to finance food retailers that choose to locate in an area that otherwise lacks healthy food access. The New Markets Tax Credit (NMTC) Program is another federal incentive structure that can provide financing to large commercial developments in eligible areas.

Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) eligible block groups are places that the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) has designated for targeted resources. Within this target area, there are 0 CDBG eligible block groups and 0 NMTC eligible tracts. There are 33 CDFIs working to improve distressed areas of the state. [\(See list of certified CDFIs in Pennsylvania\)](#)

Federal Program and Investment Dollars in Monroe County, PA	
New Markets Tax Credit Investments (QLICI) 2005-2012	N/A
CDFI Loans/Investments 2003-2012	\$160,977

Source: CDFI Fund, HUD

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