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A food chain for the desert biome

Food deserts often go hand in hand with food insecurity. Food insecurity means people aren't sure where their food comes from. Moreover, they have little to no access to nutritious food and are likely to have unbalanced diets and skip meals. There are nearly 1 billion food insecure people in the countries with the lowest income levels [source: USDA]. In 2006 alone, 35.5 million people in the United States lived in food insecure homes -- mostly at risk are people living below the poverty line, Hispanics, African-Americans, households with children and people led by single women [source: USDA and Food Research and Action Center]. How did it come to this? Economy. Fifty years ago, small neighborhood mom-and-pop markets were common in urban neighborhoods and small towns. But today, such markets make up only 17 percent of the grocery landscape in the United States [source: Hirsch]. Store owners want to make a profit and go where they can serve the most people while achieving their own financial goals. Ad But retailers are only part of the picture - store size also factors in it. People love a bargain, and although bargain-oriented superstores can seem hard to escape, they're often too big for rural communities, but don't fit easily into tightly packed urban neighborhoods. Many grocers and supermarkets wind up clustering in the suburbs. The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that groceries sold in food deserts cost an average of 10 percent more than groceries sold in suburban markets, meaning people in low-income communities affected by food insecurity can pay more money for their food [source: Hirsch]. While mainstream supermarkets with an affordable variety of food may be lacking or far away, many communities in food deserts actually have access to food. The buffet includes a selection of unhealthy processed foods - known as fringe food - from fast food restaurants, corner supermarkets and liquor stores. Compare the distance between the nearest fast-food restaurant and nearest grocery store -- this is the food balance factor. When a fast-food restaurant is significantly closer to your home than a grocery store, things are unbalanced. The supermarket on the corner gas station is not as convenient as you want to include fruits and vegetables in your diet. Chips can be tasty, but they've never been part of the USDA's food pyramid. Living on edge food is bad for your wallet and it's also bad for your health. Obesity is linked to non-nutritious food, and it's a drain not just on the body, but on health care, employers and the government. The estimated cost to the U.S. health care system due to obesity and problems is \$100 billion a year [source: Gallagher]. Diet-related health problems are disproportionately higher in food deserts than in regions served by regular grocers. You are what you eat, as the saying goes, and poor quality foods are also chronic diseases, cancer, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, hypertension and even premature death. When nutritious foods are not available, it is difficult to eat healthily. No one has the answer for how to get food to deprived areas, but interest groups are working on it. An innovative solution is a new mobile food supply program -- yes, a market in a van -- that brings healthy food directly to the people. Residents in rural food deserts benefit from online community supported agriculture (CSAs), where they order products from local farmers. And if all else fails, do it yourself: Gardening grows in some cities, at

home and on shared urban community plots. Related HowStuffWorks Articles End Hunger NetworkFeeding AmericaHealthy Corner Store Network Achenbaum, Emily. Roseland wants more supermarkets in 'food desert'. Chicago Tribune. 2008. 0,1864985.storyEisinger, Peter K. Towards an End to Hunger in America: Hunger and Food Assistance Policy in the United States. 1998.Food Research and Action Center. Hunger in the U.S. Mari. Brother, you save an Apple? The Huffington Post. 2008. C. Clare and Thomas A. Lyson. Remaking the North American Food System: Strategies for Sustainability. 2008.Hirsch, J.M. Petrol stations as supermarkets in 'food deserts' where the poorest pay the most. Associated Press. 2004. 595082829.00.htmlHolben, David H. The Concept and Definition of Hunger and its Relationship to Food Insecurity. National Academies: Advisors of the Nation on Science, Engineering, and Medicine. S., D. Cohen , B. Finch , S. Asch. You Are Where You Shop: Grocery Store Locations, Weight and Neighborhoods. American Journal of Preventive Medicine , Volume 31. 2006.Mari Gallagher Research and Consulting Group. Research on the impact of food deserts on public health in CHICAGO. 2006. Lois Wright, Ella Annette Bitto, Mary Jane Oakland, Mary Sand. Solving the Problems of Iowa Food Deserts: Food Insecurity and Civic Structure. National Sociological Society Business Office. 2005. Midwest Institute. 'Food Desert' Study. Connell, Jonathan. Food desert. Washington Business Journal. Mr. Punam. Fighting the phenomenon of food desert. Balanced Living Magazine. 2007. 2007. Fighting%20the%20Food%20Desert%20Phenomenon.htmRosen, Stacey, Shahla Shapouri, Kathryn Quanbeck and Birgit Meade. Food Security Assessment, 2007. Economic Research Service. Department of Agriculture of the United States. 2007. Antonio Food Bank. Facts about hunger. 2006. Antonio Food Bank Among First to Receive Innovative Mobile Pantry From Kraft Foods and Feeding America. PR Newswire. 2008. Food Desert Website. Mari Gallagher Research and Consulting Group. States Department of Agriculture -- Economic Research Service. Food security in the United States: conditions and trends. 2007. States Department of Agriculture -- MyPyramid.gov. Dietary guidelines. 2008. Jonathan Weiss/ShutterstockIn 1946, there wasn't much chicken at Dwarf Grill in suburban Atlanta. Later, the restaurant became known as The Dwarf House, with signage including the Chick-fil-A logo we know today. Truett Cathy created the simplest of sandwiches (chicken and two pickles on a bun) in 1964, and eventually, the Dwarf bit fell off as the empire grew. Chick-fil-A lovers, here's what's really in their secret sauce. Eric Gay/ShutterstockFor the maker of the famous A-frame burger shack, bigger was just better. In the mid-20th century, there was nary a patty larger than four centimeters. But Harmon Dobson dreamed of a square five. A burger so grand, in fact, that it would make an exclamation, What a burger! And the name of his necklace is a tribute to that dream. dcwcreations/ShutterstockEver since he was a boy, Dave Thomas knew he wanted to have a restaurant. And after 20 years in the biz, he did just that, opening the first Wendy's in 1969 in Columbus, Ohio. Wendy was the nickname of one of his children, Melinda. But he didn't play favorites -- he experimented with all five of his children's names before settling down. See the very first locations of 8 of your favorite fast food restaurants. Chatchai Somwat/ShutterstockIn 1954, brothers Dick and Mac McDonald had a small but successful hamburger joint in San Bernardino, California. But it was the opportunistic Ray Kroc who bought the restaurant and the name, built the system around it and turned it into the global powerhouse it is today. Francis Joseph Dean/ShutterstockIn 1960, brothers Jim and Tom Monaghan bought a Ypsilanti, Michigan, pizza shop called DomiNick's. After some drama and the subsequent increasing success of the company, the original owner decided to retain the rights to the name. With a looming deadline for ad in the phone book (remember which?), rumored that a delivery man named Jim Kennedy came up with Domino's Pizza. Find out what the most popular fast fast restaurant was the year you were born. Jonathan Weiss/ShutterstockIt was a bit of a eureka moment when founder Steve Ells coined the name Chipotle. It was like a light bulb went off, he told Bloomberg. While others close to him said it was dark or too difficult to pronounce, he stuck with it. And now, for the burrito-hungry, the name is on the tip of their tongue. Discover the 18 secrets Chipotle employees don't tell you. Settawat Udom/ShutterstockIn 1965, after the med school didn't work, Frank DeLuca and his friend Peter Buck opened Pete's Super Submarines in Bridgeport, Connecticut, which set a goal of having 32 places in ten years. The sandwich garlands changed the name to Pete's Subway a few years later. But in 1974, with only 16 locations in the state, they decided to franchise the company in an effort to achieve their goal. The name? Just, Subway. Nils Versemann/ShutterstockThe story of how Starbucks got its name literally starts with st. When co-founder Gordon Bowker was brainstorming name ideas with some friends, an ad agency colleague stated that he thought words starting with st were powerful. The group later came across an old map that included a city called Starbo. The name immediately reminded Bowker of the Moby-Dick character Starbuck, creating an empire. Before they settled on Starbucks, though, they considered going with Pequod, the ship's name in Moby-Dick, too! Then look back at the fast food scandals that have turned the industry upside down. Originally published: August 23, 2019Edent published on Taste of Home Home

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