



Prevention Research Center
at Case Western Reserve University

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Neighborhood Environmental Assessment Project (NEAP)

The Neighborhood Environmental Assessment Project (NEAP) is a systematic environmental mapping initiative. NEAP provides accurate and timely data, tools, and mapping resources to organizations committed to strengthening neighborhood assets that affect health, such as food retail and parks. Stakeholders gain access to rich local data that is made visually appealing by our team. We produce tools for data collection, static maps to guide intervention planning, interactive maps for exploration, and data sets to combine with other data to answer important questions about neighborhood environment and health.

Since 2012, the NEAP team, including faculty, staff, students, and a significant number of interns, has driven the streets of our community to identify, map, inventory, and update lists of food retail outlets in the city of Cleveland and select suburbs. In addition, the NEAP team conducts periodic inventories of:

- community gardens and other urban agriculture sites (e.g., market gardens or farmers' markets),
- parks and green spaces, and
- school food environment in Cleveland K-8 schools.

NEAP consists of two major initiatives, Map Resources and Tools. Each of these components allows researchers, partner organizations, and community members to explore the assets associated with health within the Greater Cleveland area.

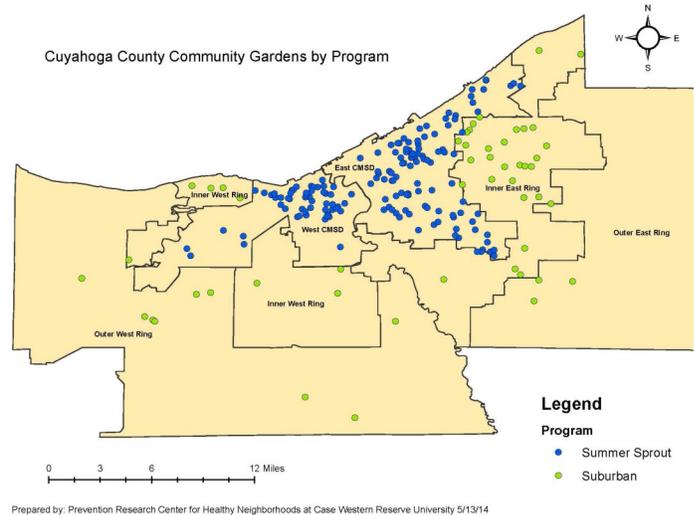
NEAP Searchable, Interactive Maps

NEAP specializes in creating maps that show distributions of assets within a neighborhood as well as relationships between social indicators and neighborhood assets. For example, a map can show what neighborhoods have (or don't have) access to food system indicators associated with a healthy lifestyle, such as a full-service grocery store, a park, a community garden, or a farmers' market.

NEAP Maps allow residents, program planners, and applied researchers to explore food resources and other assets within particular neighborhoods, especially food access assets within Cuyahoga County. NEAP displays static, downloadable maps as well as interactive, searchable maps. It also combines local resource maps with deprivation indicators to illuminate inequities within the local food system. The vulnerable footprint is one such deprivation map, displaying the geographic distribution of high prevalence of low-income and low-education populations at the census tract level.

NEAP Tools

Interested in the tools NEAP uses to survey community resources? By relying on new and established environmental assessment tools, we undertake primary data collection within Cuyahoga County using evidence-based research methods. The data we collect provides detailed contextual insights. Because NEAP captures rich contextual data annually, its data sets are ideal for spatial-temporal trend analyses.



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