Closing the Food Gap: A Historical Review and Future Perspective

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Section A

History
Emergence: The 1960s

- Hunger and poverty
- Social, economic, and racial disparities
- Organic food
- Environmentalism
Emerging Trends and Responses: The 1970s

- Supermarket abandonment of urban and rural communities
- Federal anti-hunger programs (food stamps)
- Anti-poverty programs (Head Start)
- Farmers’ markets, community gardens, food co-ops, etc.
Emerging Trends and Responses: The 1970s

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Divergence: The 1980s

- Decline in anti-poverty initiatives (Reagan)
- Rise in food banks and other private charity
- Growing interest in organic food and organic certification (*60 Minutes* exposé on Alar)
- Organic and anti-hunger movements miss opportunity to work together
- Justice and sustainability go their own ways
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The Food Gaps: 2009

- Hunger and food insecurity (49 million)
- Overweight, obesity, and diet-related illness (65% overall; higher in those with lower incomes)
- Lack of food democracy
- Food deserts (over 20 million people; 800 rural counties)
- Growth in organic food and awareness of link between health and diet
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Results: Trends Go Awry

- Food relief (poverty management) takes priority over reducing poverty

- Calories more important than food quality

- Fast food takes over; community development and wealth building decline

- Obesity and diabetes for many, local and organic for more