

Food Desert To Oasis Overview

The goal to change a food desert into food oasis. Over half of the zip codes in Cleveland are classified as food deserts.

The 4 Biggest Obstructs to transforming food deserts into oasis are:

1. The community buying into and being a part of the task and effort of a desert to oasis project.

Hiring people for a food desert to oasis project, the priority must be hiring community residents when ever possible. Training depending on the position, are all 1-2 day classes for each skill training element for working within our project. Like cashier, safe serve, person in charge, portion control, operating rice and noodle cooker, induction cooking equipment, steam table, rethermalizer and chill down processes. For some positions a valid drivers license would be required.

2. Having commercial kitchen to support the transformation two options.

OPTION A: Within some of food desert areas their are commercial kitchens at churches and community centers that can not be used because of how they are licensed. If Cleveland's governing body would amend the rules to allow these locations to be used within food desert the issue could be addressed. Additional equipment could be added to support mobile food options. This is a job creation and revenue element.

OPTION B: Build innovative commercial kitchens using induction cooking, rice cookers, rethermalizer equipment and food pouch warming/chill down process. The cost to build 50% or less than a standard commercial kitchen. The cost of outfitting a commercial kitchen for a small food business usually ranges from about \$15,000 to about \$100,000 as of 2013. It could operate 24/7 with options like monitoring cost control and billing would use a combination of Simply Grid technology and a Cleveland State designed utility monitoring system (I) Meter along with traditional camera/card control technology to cut the cost of operation by a 1/3 or more. This is a job creation and revenue element for desert to oasis projects.

3. How to supply fresh produce to the food desert areas.

Use a application like freshdirect.com for cell phones/ tablets / computers to order from one or more partner supermarket(s) or Food Bank or Local growers for what is available. Giving resident in food deserts the ability to order from home or a local staging area. The cost per order would be less than bus fare round trip. This will save time and money and improve the quality of life in a food desert.

By set schedules for ordering and pickups from or delivered by supplier to community kitchen or staging location(s), we can lower to barriers of assist and time. We would like to offer a saving and convenience feature from Europe shelf stable milk, cheese and juices at the locations, that customers could pickup or add to a order for delivered to customer for less than bus fare round trip. This is a job creation and revenue element for desert to oasis projects.

4. Mobile platform(s) for quick and easy movement to where they are needed.

By using a mobile food unit called a Food Buggy we would be able to put 5 to 10 units into operation for the cost of one average food truck \$85,000. Platform to supply hot health food options like Asian cuisine from In The Pan Catering program, southern and creole cuisine from Sides To Go program and cuisine from a Nestles program. Along with linking with restaurants in and around the community. Unit the Buggy as a produce stand or demo platforms for introducing different food items and training on how to prepare food items and dishes. Jobs would be created by this. It would helpful if the The state would allow EBT cards to purchase heated food from desert to oasis zones. This is a job creation and revenue element for desert to oasis projects.

Key Food Buggy Benefits:

- 1. Lower start-up cost:** Food Buggy Kiosk range \$3,500- \$5,500 Pushcarts - \$7,000- \$10,000 Trailer \$10,500- \$15,000 per unit. Compared to the cost of a food truck Avg. of \$85,000 a concession trailer Avg. cost \$30,000 or a hot dog cart Avg cost \$5,000.
- 2. Lower support and license fees:** As a self-contained unit a Food Buggy eliminates or reduce the need for commissary support that can save thousands of dollars a year in commissary fees & special event license fees.
- 3. Lower operation cost:** The Food Buggy cart trailers are designed for towing with smaller vehicles average trailer towing weight of 900 lbs to 1800 lbs. We also offer designs that can be used as both a mobile and push cart.
- 4. Greater flexible for operating and to control costs:** The Food Buggy can be reconfigured to meet a wide range of needs with little down time and operate with Propane, Butane or Natural gas and Electric power from generators, battery packs, outlets or any combination even solar.
- 5. Greater location options:** With our smaller foot print the Food Buggy can be used in a wider variety of locations and quickly reconfigured to support different client needs.