



OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
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**READOUT: MAYOR RAHM EMANUEL CONVENES MEETING WITH LEADING GROCERY CHAINS
TO ADDRESS FOOD DESERTS IN CHICAGO**

Mayor Rahm Emanuel today met with executives from six major grocery chains to open a serious dialogue about eliminating food deserts in six targeted communities in Chicago, including: North Lawndale, Douglas, Englewood, Chatham, Roseland and West Pullman.

"It is unacceptable that 450,000 Chicagoans do not have access to healthy, fresh foods for their family and I am committed to eliminating food deserts in our city" said Mayor Emanuel "I am grateful to the executives who joined me today and their commitment to working together to ensure that all Chicagoans have access to the produce they need to make healthy choices for themselves and their families."

Participating executives included: Gregory Wasson, President and CEO, Walgreens; Bill Simon, President and CEO, Walmart USA; Steven Burd, President and CEO, Safeway; Bob Mariano, CEO, Roundy's; Pete Van Helden, Executive VP, Supervalu; Charles Youngstrom, Co-President, Aldi; and Jason Hart, Co-President, Aldi. Other companies were not able to participate due to scheduling conflicts.

At the meeting, each executive was given the opportunity to speak about their plans to expand into communities that lack access to fresh foods, and to begin a discussion with Mayor Emanuel about next steps.

Mayor Emanuel showed a map of food deserts in Chicago that used new data sets to create a much more refined map, and then built detailed business cases for specific plots of land in each desert area. The Mayor discussed the opportunities with the executives and encouraged them to develop a new store in these areas.

Additionally, the Mayor and the executives discussed areas in which stores hit obstacles - transportation, security, real estate and bureaucratic red tape - and agreed to work on the issues and reiterated that the executives have a partner in him.

Mayor Emanuel also said that the City will be working with the White House to set up a national model for healthy eating and living.

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