

[More Fresh Fruits and Veggies, Please](#)

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The campaign to improve access to fresh, healthy food for New Orleans residents, spearheaded by the Prevention Research Center at Tulane, moved an important step ahead on Thursday (Jan. 10) as the New Orleans City Council approved a list of recommendations and creation of a task force to implement them.



The Prevention Research Center at Tulane hopes to encourage New Orleanians to improve their diets with more fresh fruits and vegetables. (Photo by Sonya Etchison, shutterstock.com)

Nationally, there are an average of 8,800 residents per supermarket. At present, there are more than 18,500 residents per supermarket in Orleans Parish. Many residents, especially those in low-income neighborhoods, shop frequently at corner stores for groceries, but these stores often carry little if any fresh produce.

The New Orleans Food Policy Advisory Committee has released a list of [10 recommendations](#) that provide achievable ways for both the city and state to improve resident access to fresh food products.

The recommendations won the unanimous approval of the New Orleans City Council, which in May 2007 had authorized the advisory committee to study the issue of access to fresh, healthy food in New Orleans and to make recommendations to improve access in underserved areas.

Tulane's Prevention Research Center, part of the School of Public Health and Tropical Medicine, played a key role in the [creation](#) of the committee and has continued to provide [coordination](#) to help the committee develop its recommendations.

The committee consists of local and national grocers, public health professionals, banking and financial leaders, local food and child welfare proponents, hunger and poverty advocates, government officials and other stakeholders.

Specific recommendations from the committee include making fresh food retail a priority in city redevelopment, providing tax incentives that encourage smaller retailers to sell fresh food and developing a state financing program to provide grants and loans to encourage development of food retail projects in underserved areas.

The Food Policy Advisory Committee will work with the City Council task force to develop implementation strategies. Implementation will require policy changes at both city and state levels.

The Prevention Research Center and The Food Trust, based in Philadelphia, will co-publish a detailed report to complement the recommendations. The report, to be released in February, will be used to garner support at the state level.

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