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## **Community rallies for healthier food options**

*Recommendations offered to improve access*

[City, state] - Harlem, a neighborhood that lacks enough supermarkets to meet neighborhood needs, has the highest rates of obesity and diabetes in New York City. The Harlem community is rallying for healthier food options. East and Central Harlem residents, in conjunction with the Harlem Food & Fitness Consortium, are hosting a press conference on April 28 to release a report on food justice, which gives recommendations on how to improve community health by increasing access to healthy, affordable food in Harlem.

Community members and advocates will address the press at 5:30 p.m. on Tuesday, April 28 on the northeast corner of 103rd St. and Lexington Ave., at a now-vacant lot where a supermarket once stood. The press conference and report will share community visions for the changes that residents would like to see in supermarkets and food access.

“We wanted to make sure we documented the burdens that Harlem residents experience in trying to purchase nutritious food,” said <name, title, organization>. “The diseases that we face in such large numbers cannot be addressed by better nutrition education alone. We need to make sure that efforts are made to preserve current supermarkets and develop new ones as well as other venues for good food. Our lives depend on it.”

The report is being released now to give a voice to community members, so that their concerns can shape the public policies being designed to promote healthy food access. Recommendations include using government subsidies and incentives to establish new supermarkets and preserve existing ones on the condition that stores provide good jobs, healthy and affordable foods, universally accessible shelves, a clean environment, and good service. The report also highlights possible sites for new supermarkets in Harlem.

The activism of Harlem residents makes clear that food access is about justice and community empowerment. As <name, title, organization>, says, “When we work together in unison, we understand how to solve problems that affect all of us.”

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