



## INTRODUCTION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides households with incomes below 185% of federal poverty level with up to \$668 per month in food purchasing assistance. Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is an electronic system that allows a recipient to authorize transfer of their SNAP benefits to a retailer account to pay for products received. Farmers' markets accepting EBT are acting as an important source for low-income families to get access to healthy food and fresh produce that they cannot afford otherwise. This could help the obesity epidemic because one of the causes for obesity in low-income families is poor diet quality, including insufficient intakes of fruits and vegetables, due to lack of access and low affordability. The number of households on SNAP in Boston has been increasing these years. In 2009, more than 35,000 (14%) of Boston households received SNAP, increasing from about 25,000 (12%) in 2006. It's imperative to know whether households on SNAP in Boston have access to redeem EBT benefits for fresh produce in farmers' markets. Therefore, this project aimed to assess whether farmers' markets in Boston are meeting the need of households on SNAP to redeem EBT benefits for fresh produce, and identify the suitable locations for new farmers' markets.

## EVALUATION OF EXISTING FARMERS' MARKETS

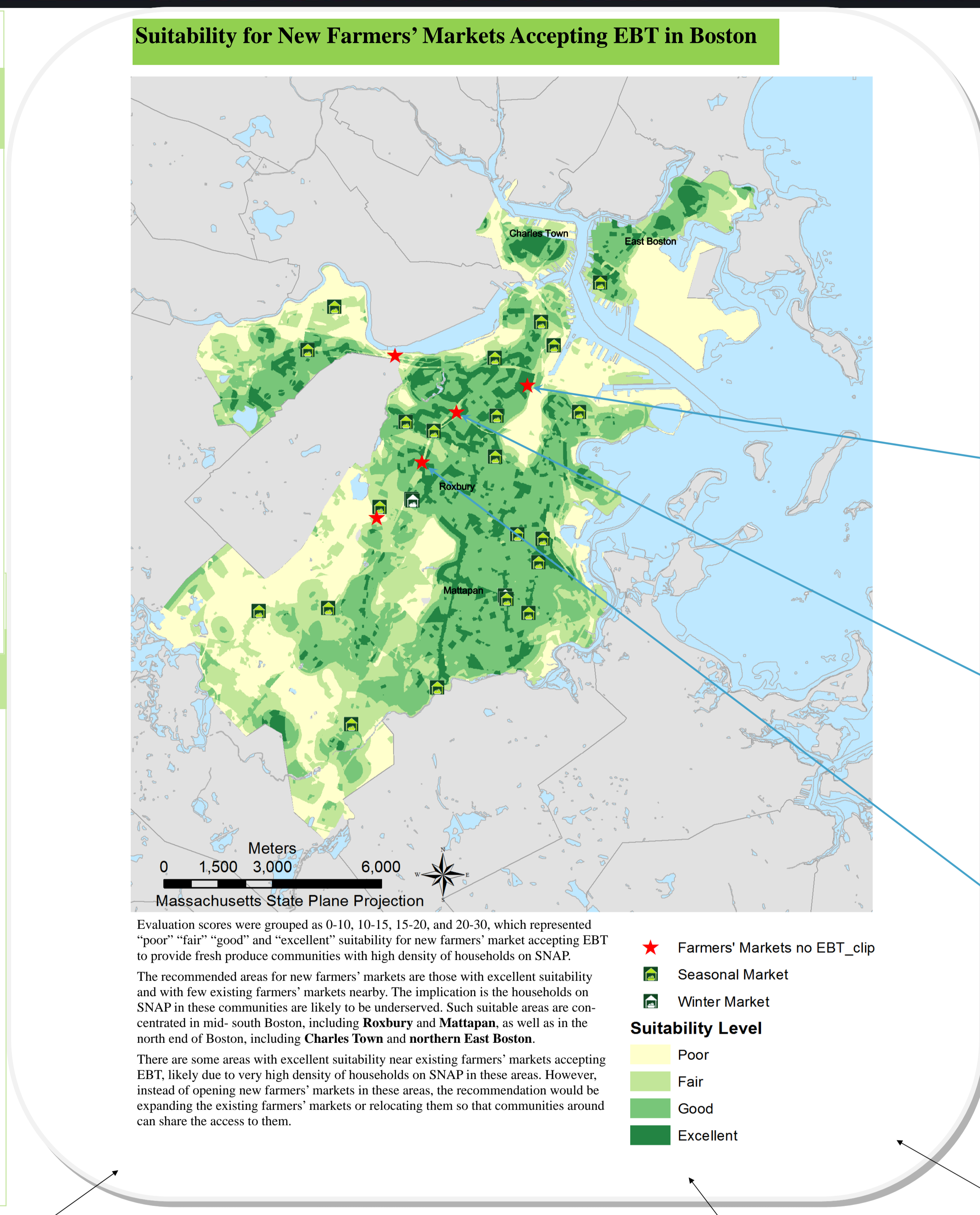
**Location and Categorization of Existing Farmers' Markets**  
All existing farmers' markets registered in Massachusetts Department of Agricultural Resources (DAR) database were mapped. The status of accepting EBT benefits was indicated.

**Identification of households on SNAP**  
In the American Community Survey, respondents were asked, "In the past 12 months, did you or any member of this household receive benefits from the Food Stamp Program or SNAP?" Those answered "yes" were identified as on SNAP for that survey cycle.

**Evaluation of Existing Farmers' Markets**  
To evaluate the accessibility of existing farmers' markets to communities with high density of households on SNAP, an Evaluation Score was created based on three components, 1) density of households on SNAP in each census group, named as Need Score, 2) proximity to residential areas, named as Residential Score, and 3) distance to MBTA rapid transit stations, named as Transit Score. Three components are weighted using the following formula:

$$\text{Evaluation Score} = 3 \times \text{Need Score} + 2 \times \text{Residential Score} + \text{Transit Score}$$

Each component ranges 0-3, evaluation score ranges 0-18.



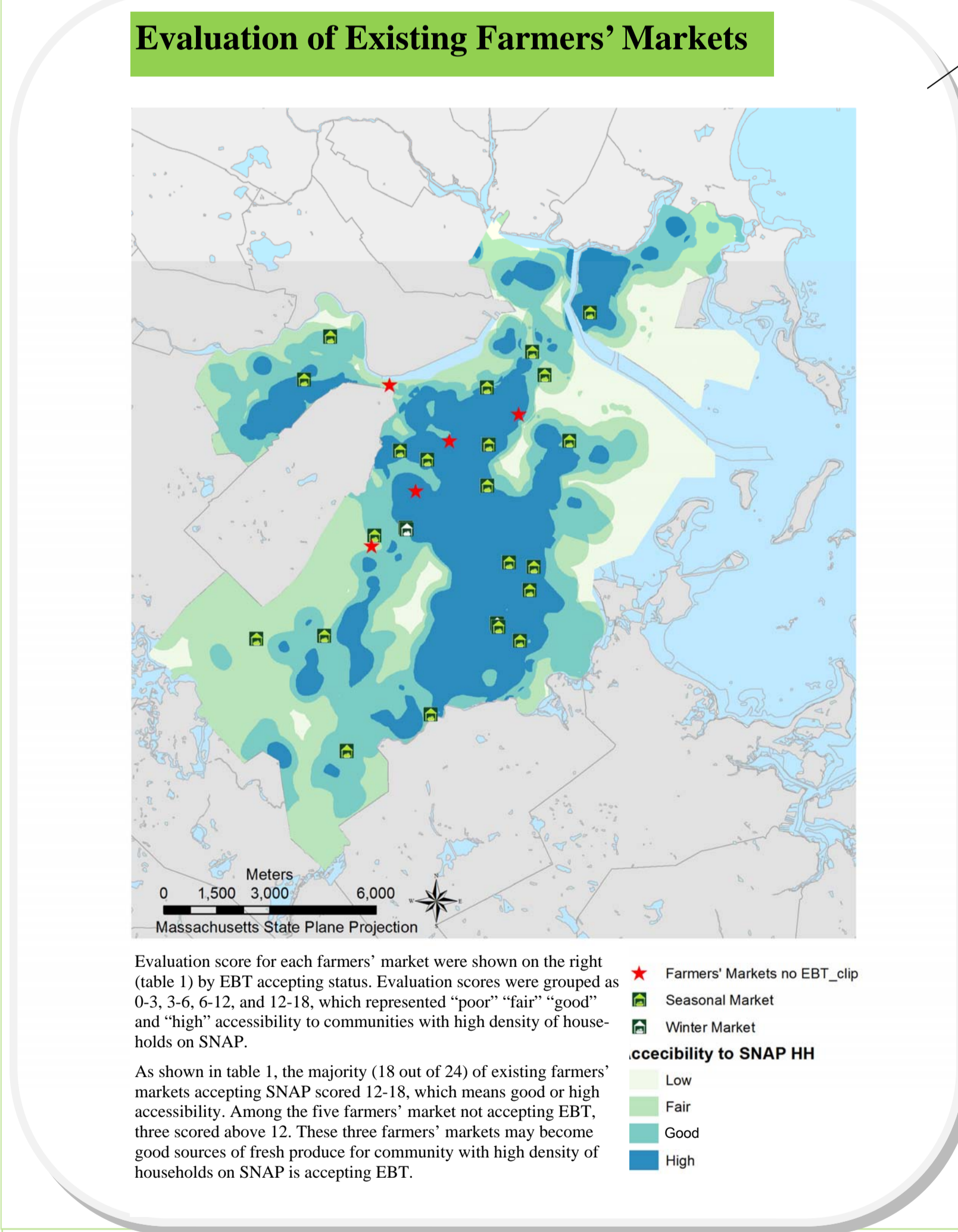
## CONCLUSION

Most of the existing farmers' markets accepting EBT in Boston are accessible to communities with high densities of SNAP households. But there are still areas that are underserved and suitable for opening new farmers' markets accepting EBT. Three farmers' markets that do not accept EBT are identified as good candidates to accept EBT to better serve communities with high densities of households on SNAP, which are:

- Farmers' Market at SOWA**  
Sun 10 am - 4 pm, May - Oct  
Thayer Street, off Harrison Avenue, Boston, MA 02118
- Orleans Winter Farmers' Market**  
1st & 3rd St Sat 9-12 am, Dec -  
70 Route 28, Nauset Regional Middle School, Orleans, MA 02653
- Jackson Hole Farmers Market on Town Square**  
Fri 12-5 pm, Jul - Oct  
225 Centre Street, Boston, MA 02130

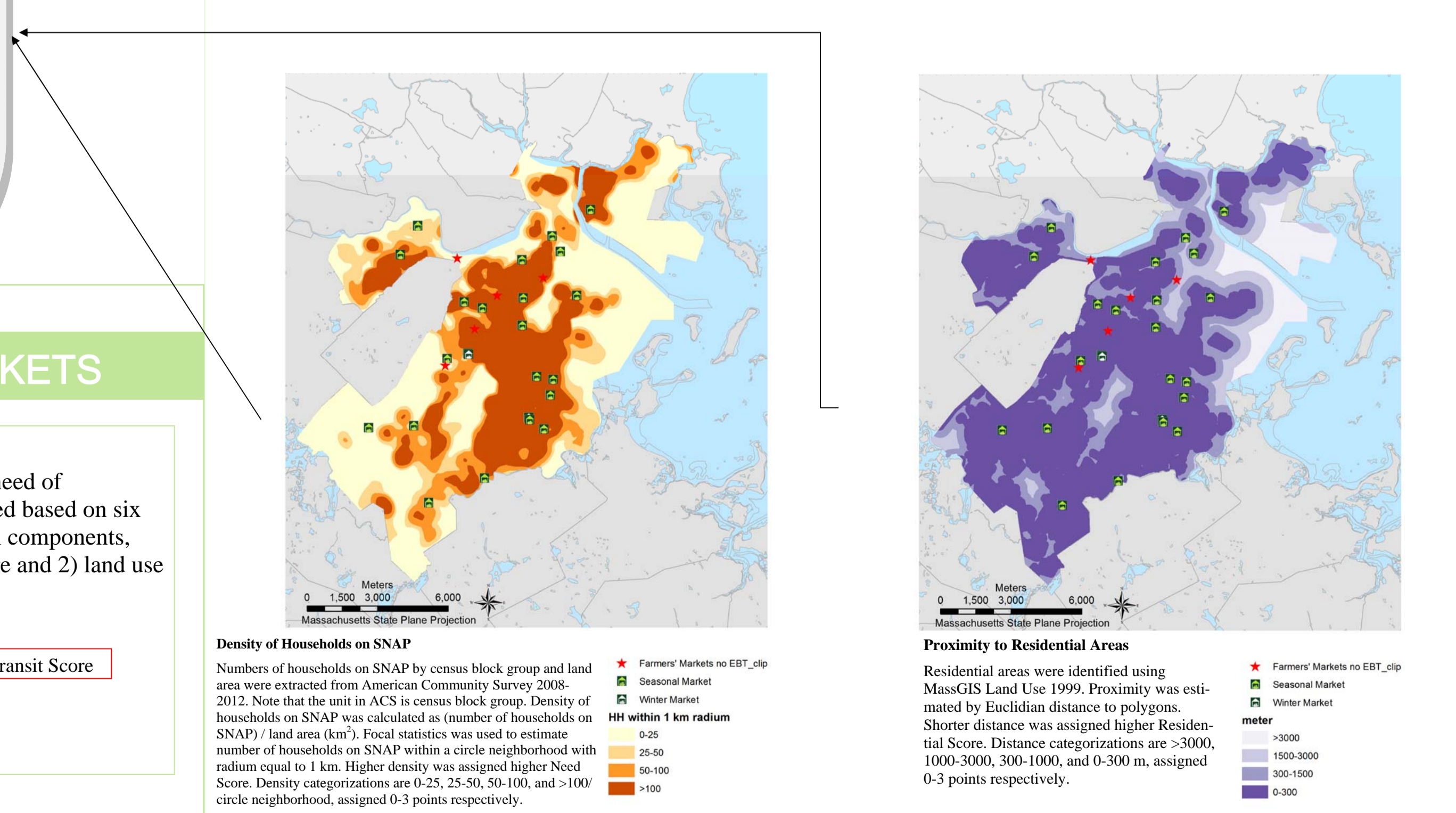
**REFERENCES**

Citation: Boston Indicator Project. The Measure of Poverty: A Boston Indicators Project Special Report, 2011.  
 Data Sources:  
 MassGIS (Farmers' Markets, MassDOT Roads, Protected and Recreational OpenSpace, MassDEP Hydrography, Community Boundaries (Towns))  
 American Community Survey: U.S. Census Bureau, 2008-2012  
 Zoning Districts: BostonGIS, 2015



**Table 1. Evaluation of existing Farmers' Markets**

Name	Type	Evaluation Score	Town
<b>Accepting EBT</b>			
East Boston	FM	18	Boston
Mission Hill	FM	17	Mission Hill
Roxbury/Roxbury Crossing	FM	16	Roxbury
Allston Village	FM	15	Allston
South Boston	FM	15	South Boston
Dorchester/Dorchester House	FM	15	Dorchester
Roxbury/Dudley Town Common	FM	15	Boston
Dorchester/Fields Corner	FM	15	Fields Corner
Dorchester/Winter	WM	15	Dorchester
Dorchester/Coldman Square	FM	15	Dorchester
Dorchester/Bowdoin Geneva	FM	15	Dorchester
Boston Medical Center	FM	15	Roxbury
Dorchester/Ashmont Peabody Square	FM	15	Dorchester
Boston Public Market/Greenway	FM	13	Boston
Egleston	FM	12	Jamaica Plain
Mattapan	FM	12	Mattapan
Hyde Park	FM	12	Hyde Park
Egleston Winter	WM	12	Jamaica Plain
Boston/Copley Square	FM	10	Boston
Jamaica Plain	FM	9	Jamaica Plain
Roslindale	FM	9	Roslindale
Boston/South Station/Dewey Square	FM	8	Boston
Allston	FM	7	Allston
West Roxbury	FM	6	West Roxbury
<b>Not Accepting EBT</b>			
Jackson Square	FM	16	Boston
Orleans Winter	WM	16	Orleans
Boston/SOWA	FM	13	Boston
Jamaica Plain/Loring-Greenough	FM	6	Jamaica Plain
Boston/Boston University	FM	5	Boston



## SUITABILITY FOR NEW FARMERS' MARKETS

**Suitability for New Farmers' Markets**  
To evaluate the suitability of opening new farmers' markets in terms of meeting the need of communities with high density of households on SNAP, a suitability score was created based on six components, including the three components of Evaluation Score, and two additional components, including 1) distance to existing farmers' markets accepting EBT, named as FM Score and 2) land use type, named as Land Use Score.

Five components are weighted using the following formula:

$$\text{Suitability Score} = 3 \times \text{Need Score} + 2 \times \text{Land Use Score} + 2 \times \text{EBT Score} + 2 \times \text{Residential Score} + \text{Transit Score}$$

Each component ranges 0-3, suitability score ranges 0-30.

See maps on the left for information on how the component scores were created.

