

Poor people cannot find fresh and healthy food

By The Philadelphia Inquirer, adapted by Newsela staff on 08.24.14

Word Count **325**



Customer Alvaro Maduro (left) speaks with Maria Vanegas with The Food Trust about whole grain tortillas at the Indiana Food Market in Philadelphia. Mom-and-pop convenience stores in poor neighborhoods in Philadelphia have been getting healthier through the “Fresh Corner” initiative, an effort designed to help residents eat better in places considered to be food deserts. Photo: AP Photo/Matt Rourke

PHILADELPHIA — Poor people have a hard time finding food. There are few food stores in poor neighborhoods. What is worse, the food is often not safe.

Poor places have few markets. The poor mostly shop at corner stores. Scientists checked the food in corner stores.

What the scientists found was not good. The food is often rotten. It is full of germs. Eating this food can make people sick.

The customers agree. Rodney Jenkins ate bad fruit from a corner store. He got sick. He worries about giving bad food to his children.

Bad Food

Jennifer Quinland is a food scientist. Her team visited many corner stores. The scientists looked for germs.

The scientists looked at milk, eggs and vegetables. They also checked lunch meats and sandwiches. They found a lot of germs.

Bad food doesn't just make poor people sick. It also wastes their money. If food goes bad, you have to throw it out. This often happens with milk.

Sometimes the corner stores wait too long to put the milk in a refrigerator. Milk that gets warm goes bad faster. Bad milk starts to smell. No one wants to drink smelly milk. Customers do not know it is bad until they open it. Then they have to throw it away. It is like throwing money away.

Frozen Food

Quinlan said that poor people should try to get fresh food. But sometimes the food is rotten. She said it is better to throw it away.

Fresh fruits and vegetables go bad quickly. Quinlan said that frozen food is a safe choice. People can also buy canned and dried food. These foods last longer.

But sometimes people do not have frozen food. Or they cannot pay for canned and dried food. They have to eat whatever they can find.

Benjamin Chapman works on food safety. He said he understands why the poor eat unsafe food. It is better than eating nothing at all, he said.

Quiz

- 1 Which sentence BEST shows the main idea of the article?
- (A) What is worse, the food is often not safe.
 - (B) There are few food stores in poor neighborhoods.
 - (C) The poor mostly shop at corner stores.
 - (D) What the scientists found was not good.
- 2 Select the paragraph from the section “Bad Food” that explains two problems with bad food.
- 3 Read the sentence from the article.

Customers do not know it is bad until they open it.

Which sentence gives an example of a “customer”?

- (A) Rodney Jenkins ate bad fruit from a corner store.
 - (B) The scientists looked at milk, eggs and vegetables.
 - (C) Benjamin Chapman works on food safety.
 - (D) Jennifer Quinland is a food scientist.
- 4 Read the sentence from the article.

Benjamin Chapman works on food safety.

What does Benjamin Chapman do?

- (A) He tries to make sure food has a good price.
- (B) He tries to make sure people learn how to eat healthy.
- (C) He tries to make sure food tastes good.
- (D) He tries to make sure people eat safe and healthy food.