

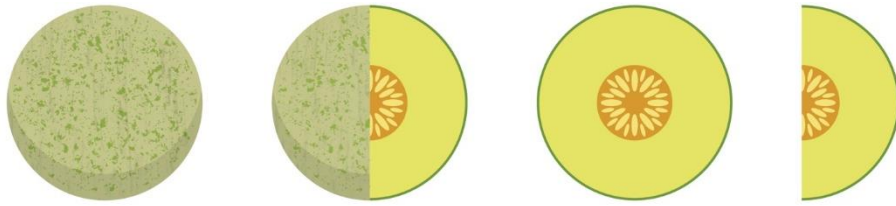
*Formerly Emergency  
Foodshelf Network*

GOOD FOODS IN THE GOOD FIGHT AGAINST HUNGER



## Cultural Competency at Your Food Shelf

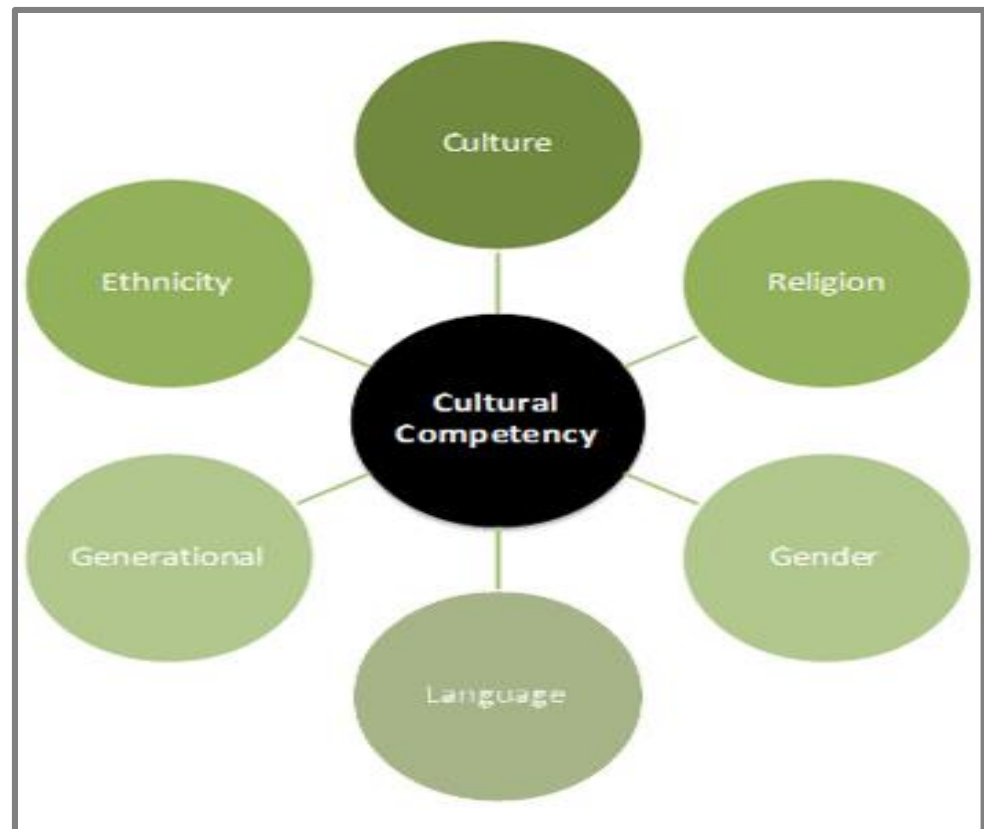
What does it mean, Why is it important, and How can we improve?



# What is Cultural Competence?

An ability to interact with and provide services effectively to people of different cultures.

This is a continuous process of learning and responding to the cultural contexts of the communities and people you serve.



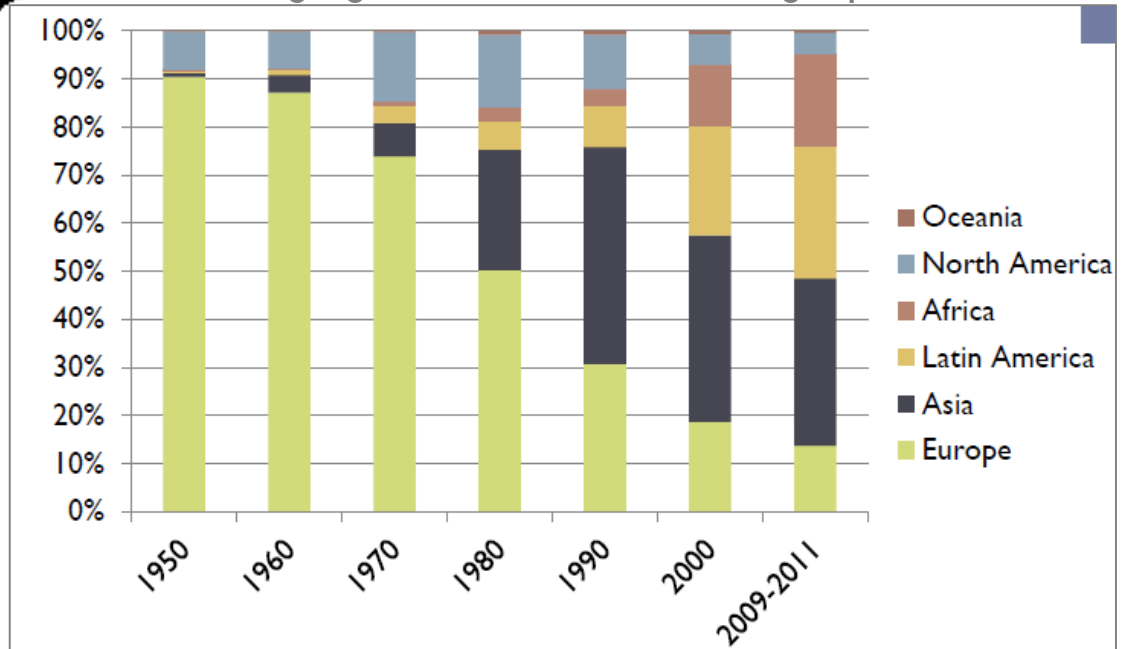


# Why is it Important & Relevant for Food Shelves?

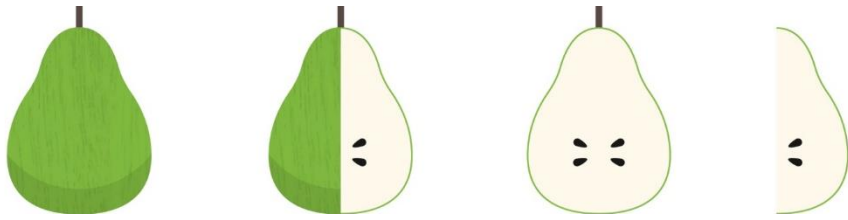
Over the past three decades, MN's demographics have diversified



Changing Percent of MN Demographics

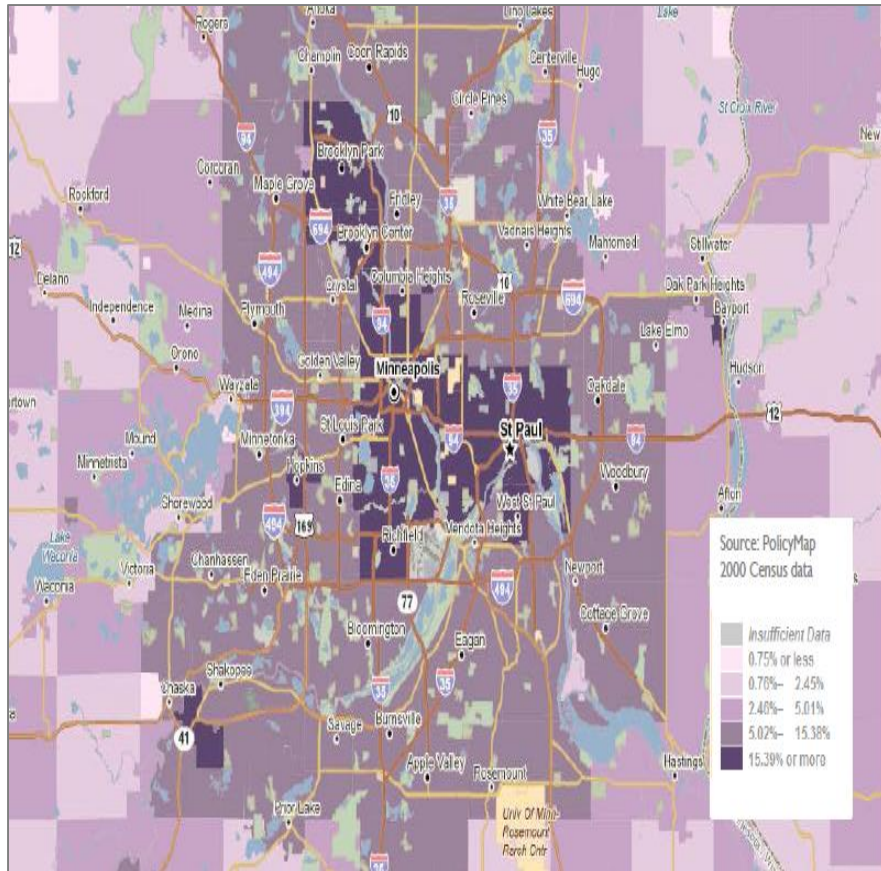


Source: Tabulated by the MN State Demographic Center from the Integrated Public Use Microdata Series. Presented by state demographer Susan Brower at the Minnesota Department of Administration January 28<sup>th</sup>, 2014

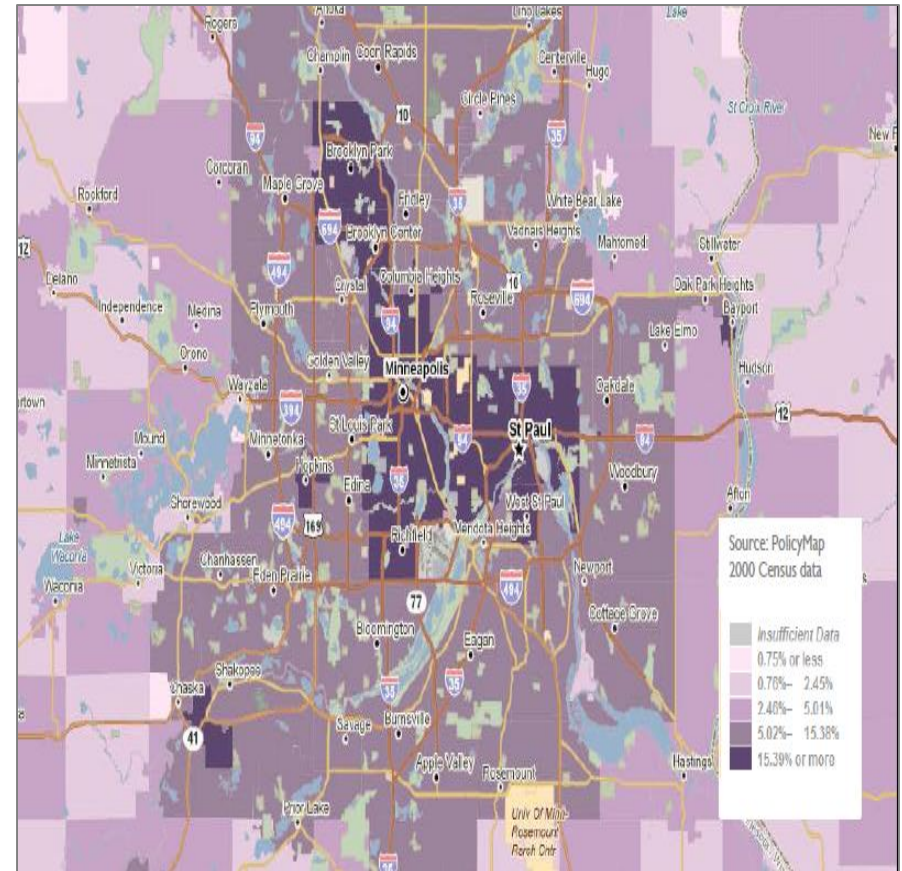


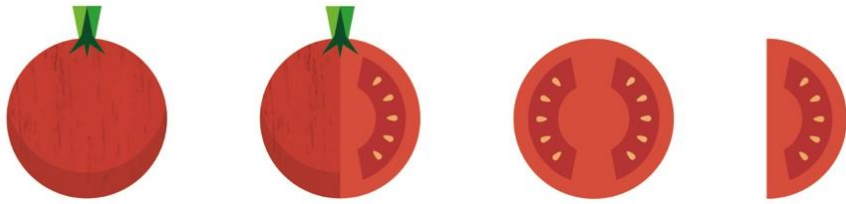
# MN is Becoming More Diverse

2000 Census Data  
Few Cities had Populations of Color >15%



2010 Census Data  
Many Cities had Populations of Color >20%

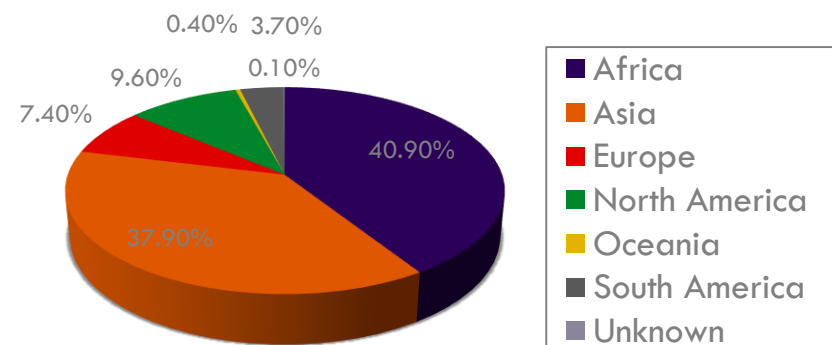




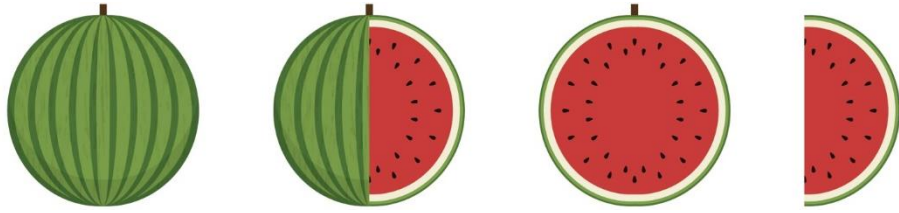
# What Has Led to MN's Demographics Changing?

- Jobs and opportunities, family ties and community, and low crime rates are among the most common reasons immigrants come to MN
- Many countries around the world have had conflict and unrest causing refugees to have to flee their countries.
- MN has very active VOLAGs (Voluntary Resettlement Agencies)
  - VOLAGs contract with the State Department and help refugees get settled and learn how to begin a new life.
  - Active VOLAGs in MN include: Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Charities, and Arrive Ministries.

Proportion of Immigrants in Minnesota by Region of Birth, 2010



Data Source: MN Department of Administration



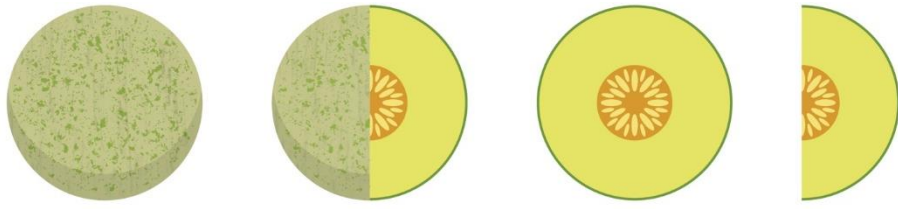
# What Does This Mean for Agencies?

More diverse individuals coming to the food shelf  
from many different backgrounds

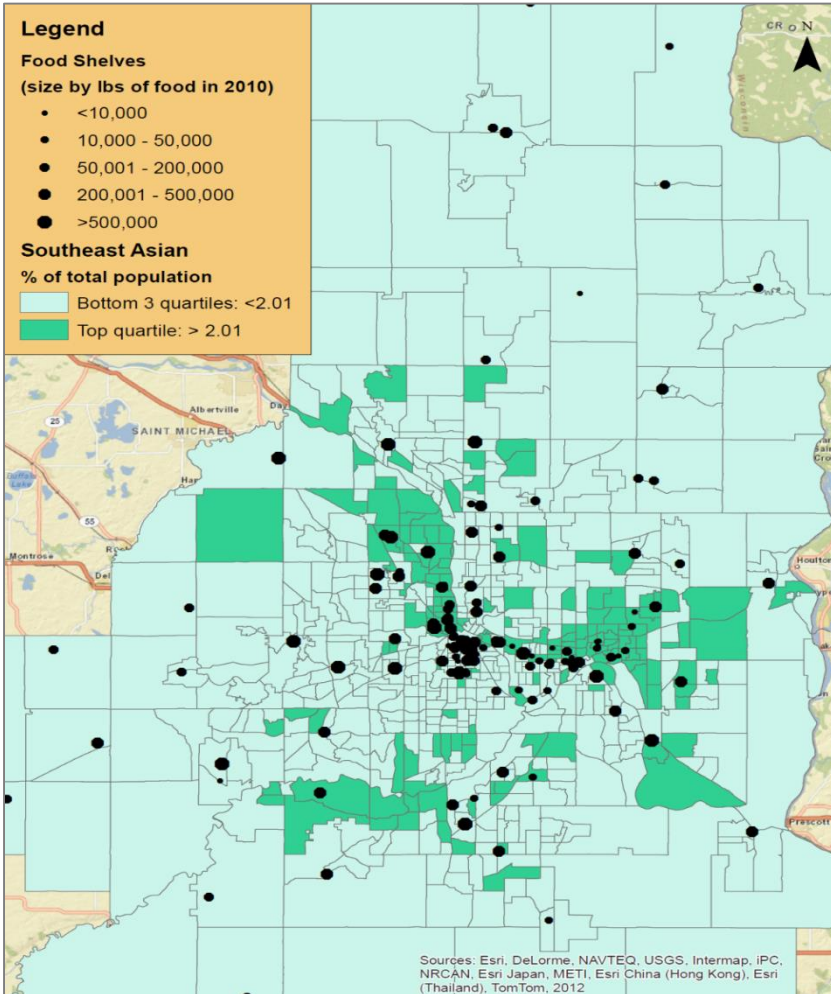


The need to  
learn and  
understand how  
to serve the  
diverse  
individuals  
coming for food  
and services

Provide a dignified and familiar experience for those we serve



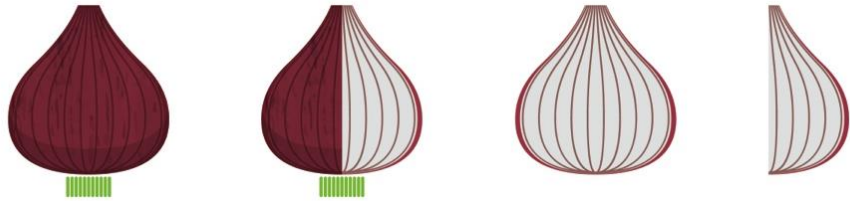
# Diversity at Twin Cities Food Shelves



In the Twin Cities, food shelves are located in areas with the highest concentrations of many immigrant groups

Dark Green: Areas with the highest concentration of Southeast Asian immigrants

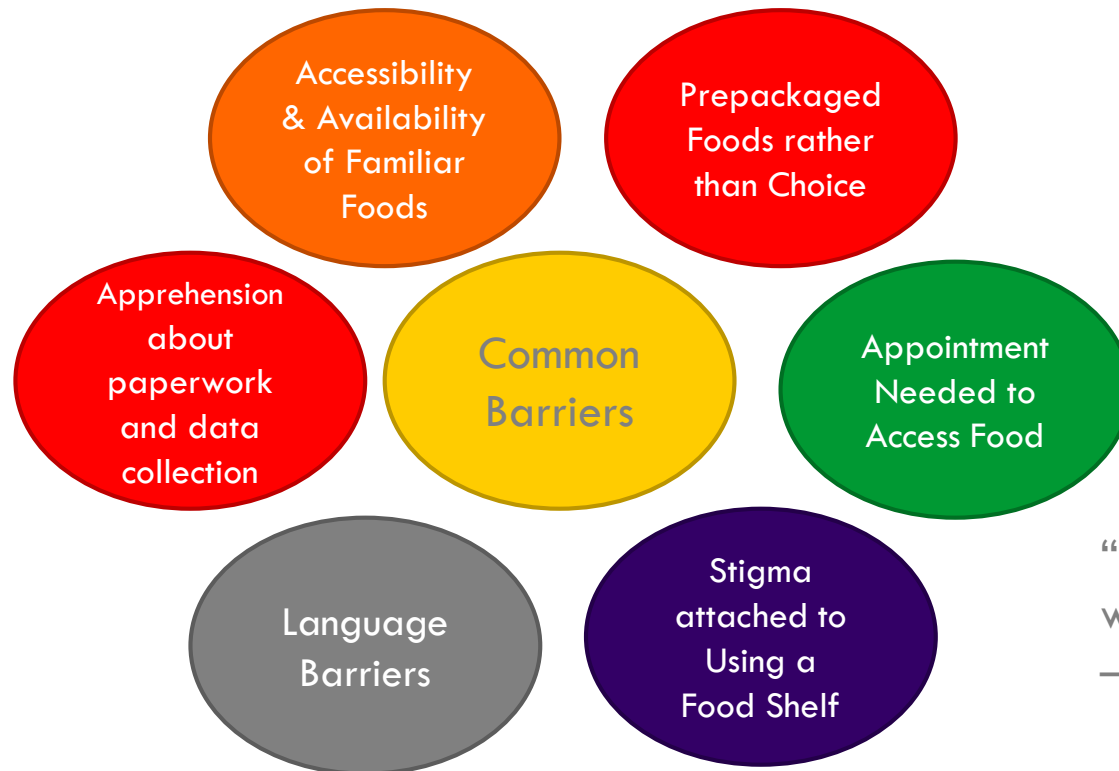




# Common Barriers

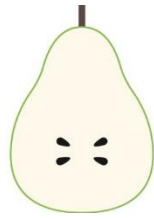
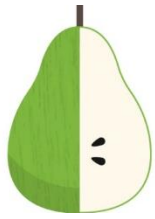
Individuals have expressed the following barriers can be difficult and frustrating to their food shelf experience.

“They couldn’t understand me on the phone and I couldn’t understand them, so I stopped trying.”  
-Food Shelf Client

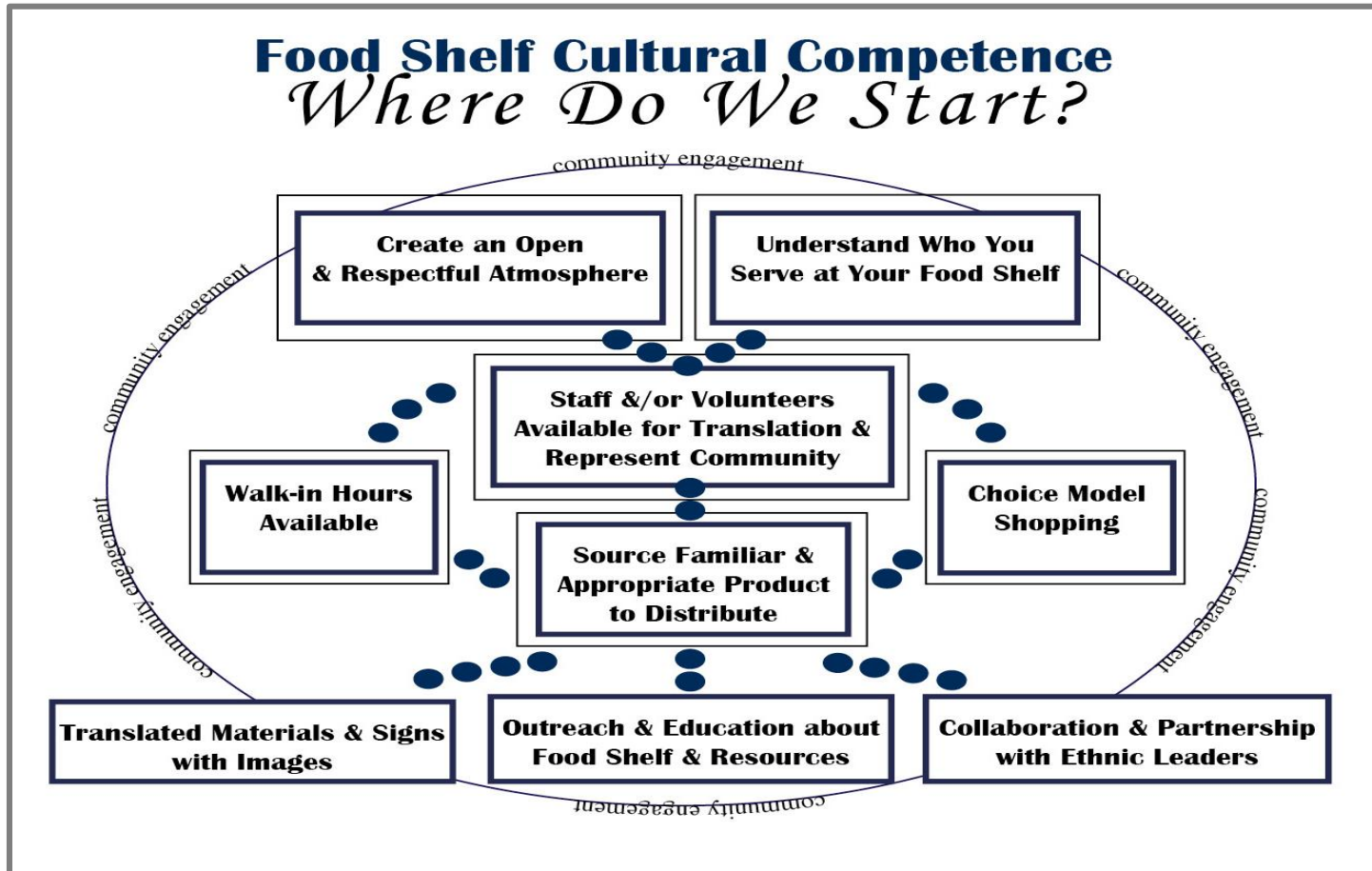


“We want food that we can cook.”  
-Food Shelf Client

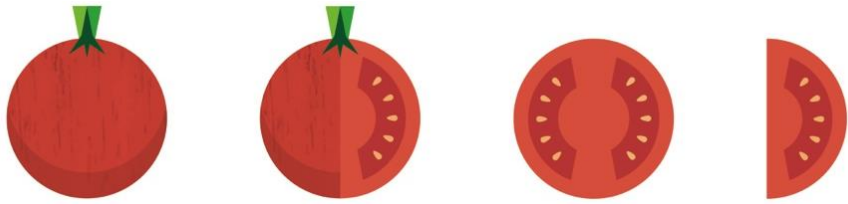
Findings from The Food Group needs assessment on cultural competency in agencies (2012). Through focus groups, agency interviews, and community meetings we discovered the above barriers to be most prevalent.



# What Can We Do?



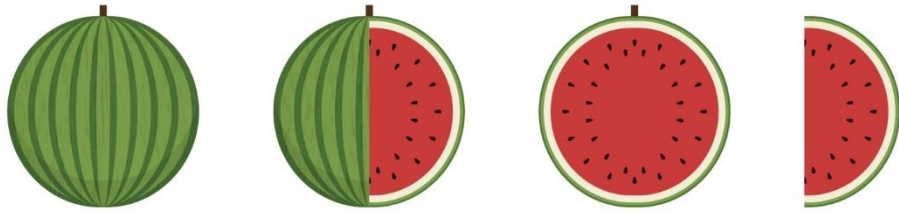
In 2012, The Food Group conducted a needs assessment on cultural competency in agencies. Through focus groups, agencies interviews, and community meetings we discovered the above stratifies to be most effective.



# Where Do We Start?

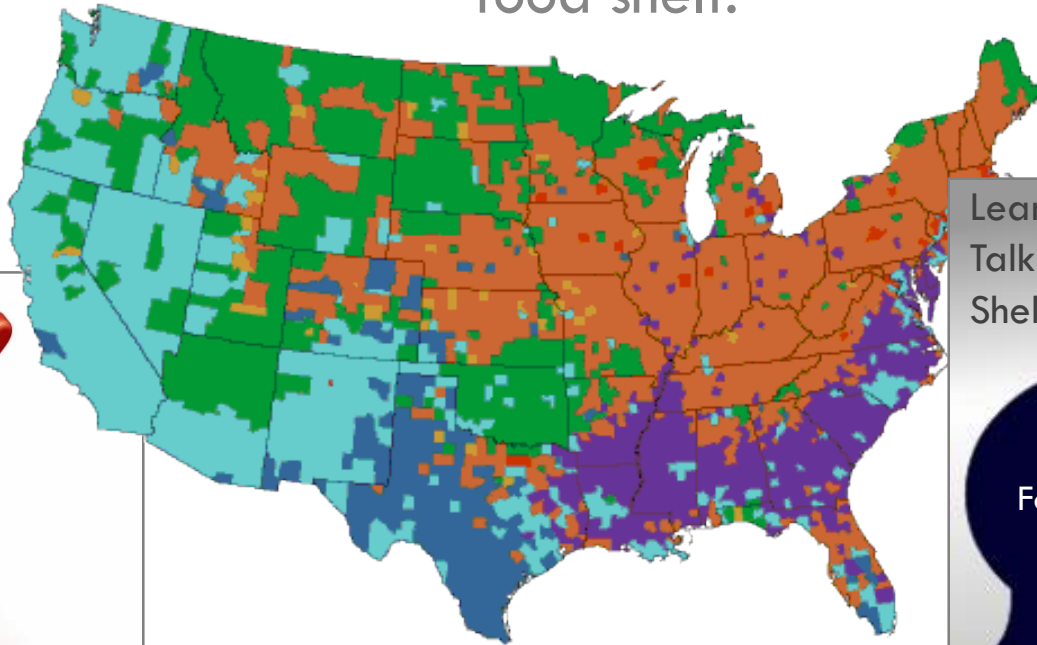
Staff & volunteers create an open, respectful, and comfortable atmosphere for all food shelf guests.





# Understand Who You Serve

Know the demographics of your service area and those you are serving. Learn and listen from the community and those visiting the food shelf.



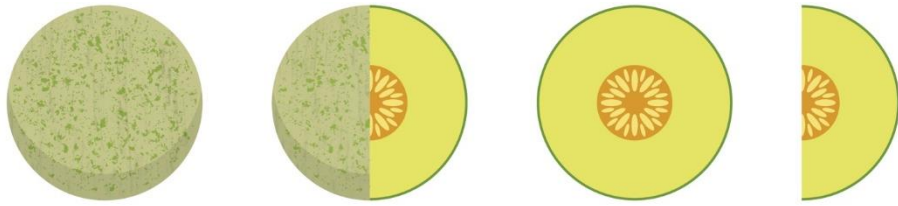
Learn from Demographic Maps



Survey: TEFAP

Learn from Talking with Food Shelf Guests

- Advisory Groups
- Focus Groups
- Listen & Gain Feedback

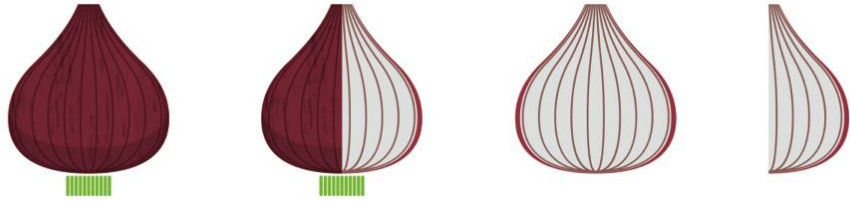


# Have Available Translation

Not being able to communicate is frustrating and can cause misunderstanding. Hire staff or recruit volunteers to help with communication barriers.

Strive for the cultural background of your staff & volunteers to reflect those you are serving.





# Choice Model Shopping

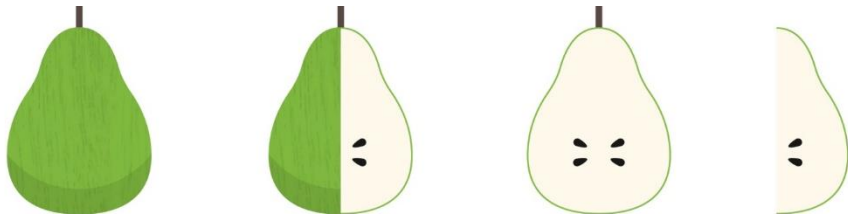
The ability to select foods that are familiar is very important. It provides a more comfortable and dignified experience and avoids distributing foods that are unfamiliar.

“By making our entire inventory available to our clients we are able to meet as many needs as possible.”

-Christine Pulver

Keystone Community Services





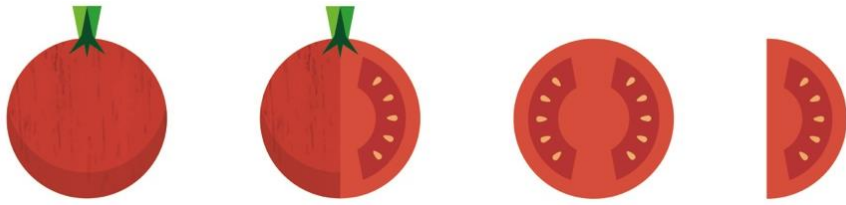
# Walk-In Hours Available

Having an option in addition to scheduled appointments breaks down communication and transportation barriers



“Walk-in hours have helped our food shelf serve more people from diverse backgrounds by providing flexibility and approachability. The need to schedule an appointment at all may be daunting and unfamiliar concept.”

-Asha Mohamud & Christine Miller  
Neighborhood House



# Sourcing Familiar Foods

## Culturally Specific Foods: What Do I Buy?



### West African

Fufu Flour  
Garri  
Maggi Cubes

### East African

Goat Meat  
Lentils  
Pasta

### SE Asian

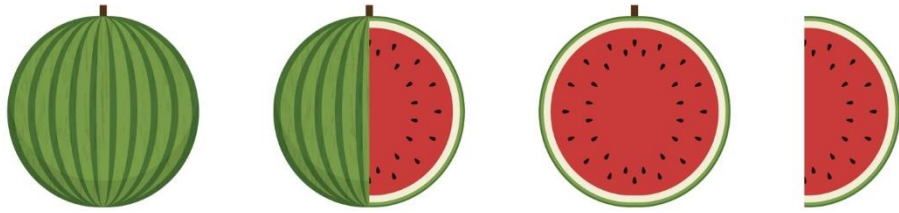
Rice Noodles  
Rice Flour  
Jasmine Rice

### Latino

Masa  
Dried Beans  
Rice

**Definition of Culturally Specific Foods:** The type of food items cultural/ethnic communities request and/or food that can be used to make culturally specific meals. Some examples may include: rice, beans, salsa, fish sauce, Asian sauces, and goat meat. Universal food items that can be used to make culturally specific meals may include: flour, oil, or sugar.



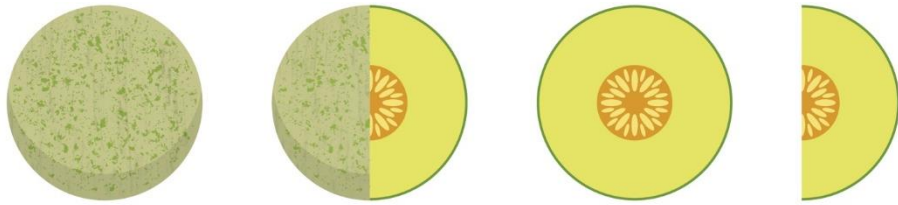


# Sourcing Familiar Products

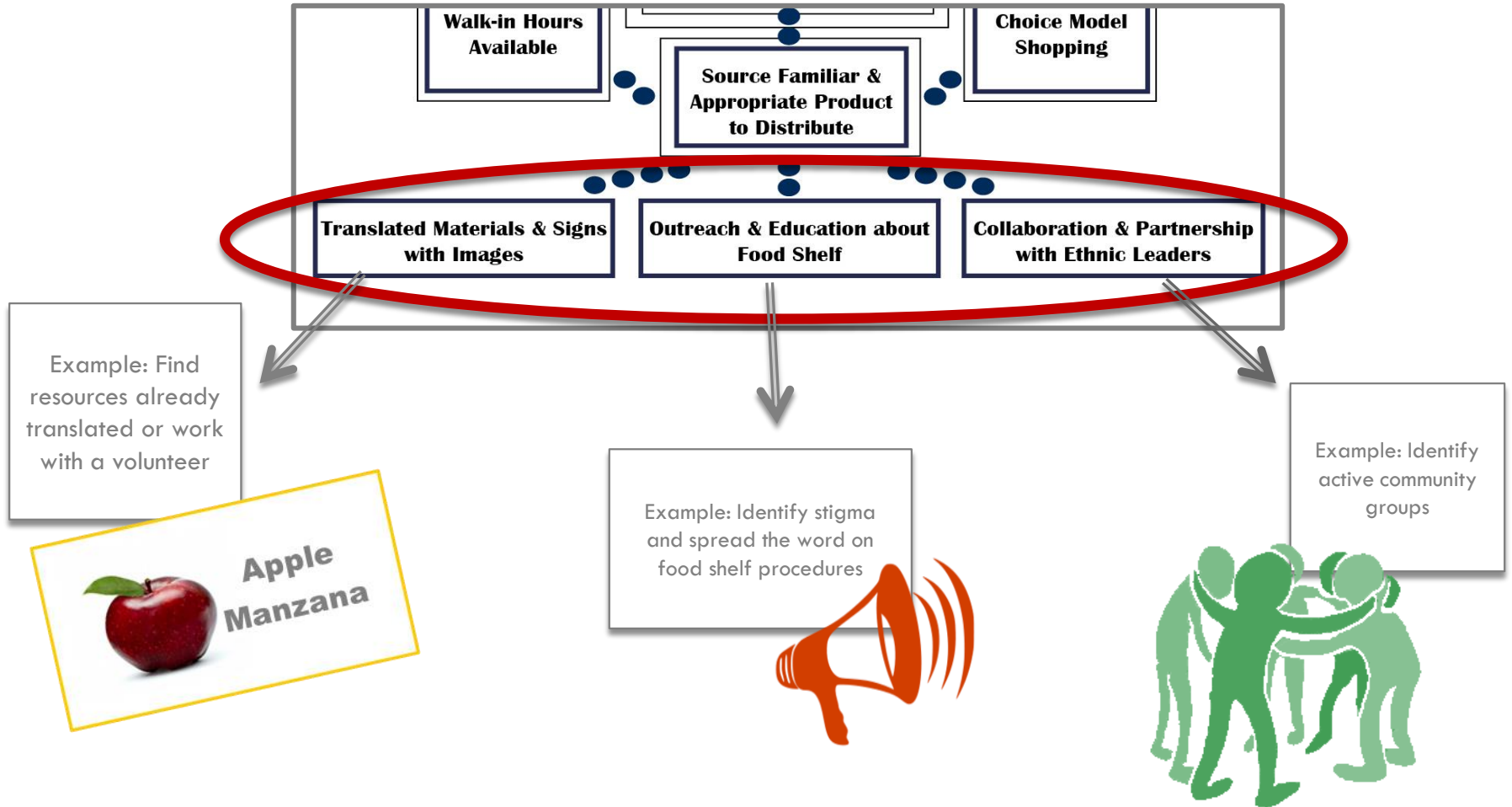
## How & Where Do I Buy These Foods?

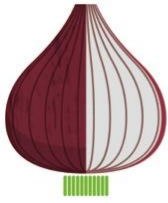


- The Food Group has culturally specific foods for purchase on the bulk purchasing ordering list
- Source directly from local wholesalers, a few examples include:
  - Star Ocean, J&P Trading, and CIS Whole Sale
- Coordinate culturally specific food drives with community partners and provide them a list with your most desirable items
- Solicit bulk donations of high demand culturally specific items



# Additional Strategies



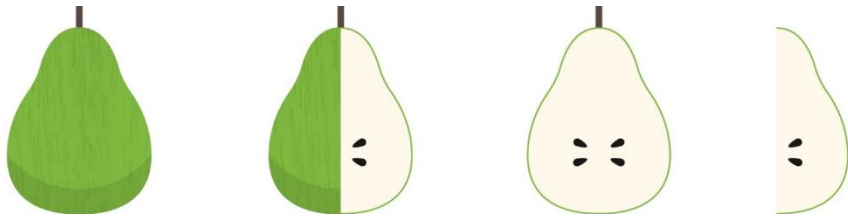


# Do We Have Support & What Resources Exist?

**The answer is Absolutely.**

The Food Group is available for technical assistance on this topic and would love to connect with you on how we can be helpful.

Lyncy Yang, Program Manager:  
763-450-3883 | [lyang@thefoodgroupmn.org](mailto:lyang@thefoodgroupmn.org)



## Additional Resources

### **Staff and Volunteer trainings on how to be Cultural Responsive when working in a Multicultural World**

Our staff will come out and give a presentation on cultural awareness and best practices for volunteers and staff working in a multicultural world; What to do, What not to do, How to respond and overcome barriers.

### **Sourcing Guidance & Assistance**

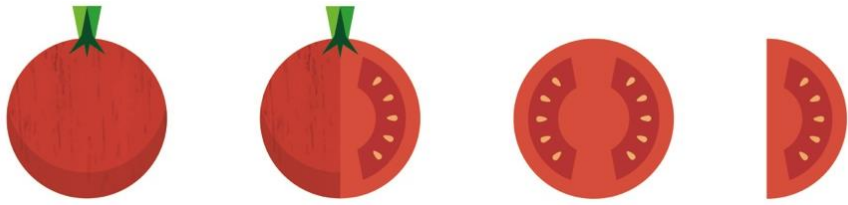
The Food Group offers culturally specific foods on our bulk purchasing list; however, we are available to help identify appropriate foods and troubleshoot creative solutions for sourcing and increasing donations.

### **On-site Consulting & Evaluation**

We offer advice and help with identifying and planning strategies as well as tools to measure impact.

Please use The Food Group as a resource and contact us with more questions.





# Food Shelves & Partners Involved

Brian Coyle Community Center  
CAPI USA  
CEAP  
Centro Inc  
Good in The Hood  
Hallie Q Brown Community Center  
ICA Foodshelf  
Isuroon Project  
Keystone Community Services  
Neighborhood House

North Point Healthy & Wellness Center  
Rescue Now Services  
Salvation Army Central NEED  
Salvation Army Eastside  
Salvation Army North  
The Aliveness Project  
University of Minnesota Department of  
Family Medicine & Community Health  
Waite House

All of the above organizations either participated in the 2012 Cultural Competency Needs Assessment Study, served as advisors in creating the cultural competency tool kit in 2014, or both.