

## Catalyst Consulting

<u>Name</u>	<u>Year</u>	<u>Major</u>
Astrid Chase	2025	Economics/Sustainability Management
Will Crabtree	2025	International Business
Sofia Cabral	2026	International Business
Dermot Sheehan	2026	International Business/Sustainability Management
Jacqueline Cororan	2027	International Business

**Advisor(s):** Astrid Schmidt-King

**Topic Title:** Groceries for All: Proper Production, Equitable Distribution, Healthy Consumption.

**Audience:** Whole Foods Leadership Team

### Sustainable Development Goal

**SDG #12:** Responsible Consumption and Production: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns.

### Executive Summary

Whole Foods’s mission is “to nourish people and the planet.” As impactful as that statement is, the distribution of and access to healthy food remains inequitable; access, or lack thereof, is often determined by one’s socioeconomic status. Food deserts, which are found in various urban centers across the U.S., are defined as an area where 33% of the population lives at least a half mile away from the nearest grocery store. In Baltimore City, 64.58% of the city is considered a food desert. The community on York Road is one of the many in Baltimore that suffers from being a food desert, defined by lack of investment in grocery stores in this area, transportation barriers, and socioeconomic inequality. As a result, these neighborhood residents rely on what is locally available from corner stores and fast-food chains which impacts their livelihood and health. Less than 3 miles away, there is a thriving Whole Foods providing healthy options to a different community who does not suffer from food deserts and disinvestment.

Though Whole Foods has made admirable efforts to carry out this mission through company run foundations like Whole Cities and Whole Planet, we believe they can build upon these initiatives to address food insecurity in low-income areas. We, Catalyst Consulting, acknowledge Whole Foods’ desire of “community partnership” and recognize an opportunity for them to share their resources and diversify their operations into new communities. As a pilot project, we propose that Whole Foods start a franchise called “Whole Access”, a brand sponsored store by Whole Foods in the York Road community, run by and employing individuals within the local area. “Whole Access” will act as a depot to save fresh produce, selling them at a discounted rate, that would otherwise go to waste with Whole Foods because, for example, they have a bruise. Although its focus is providing accessible produce, healthy snacks, and meal options, Whole Access will also provide household goods. Overall, we hope that Whole access can be a proxy to proper production, equitable distribution, healthy consumption, for all people regardless of their economic status leading to the fulfillment of SDG #12.