Reviewer 2

This paper is clearly written and comprehensive. The topic is of public health interest and may encourage readers to think more broadly about accessibility to healthy food. The methodology is robust due to the use of the NEMS-S tool.

Some improvements to the understanding of the paper are:

Availability: Are there some foods which are less likely to be available at discount stores? Was there a reasonable variety of fresh fruit and vegetable items available at discount stores?

Thank you for your interest. While we did not do statistical analysis for each item, there were some things of note. We’ve added this to the paper. It now reads “Of note, no dollar discount stores carried pears and low fat ground beef, and 57% did not carry regular ground beef.”

Price: State which foods have healthier and regular alternatives. I assume that it is all the non fruit and vegetable items except for ground beef. Were both items of the pair generally available in the discount stores?

Again, we did not do statistical analysis here, but aside from regular and low fat ground beef (now added to the availability section), both options were generally available. Additionally, all categories outside of produce have a healthy alternative. This is part of the NEMS tool. For example, low fat and full fat milk, low fat and full fat hotdogs, low sugar and regular sugar cereal.

Line 98 - missing on (based on the acceptability)

Thank you for catching this, it is fixed.

Line 181, 182: Reference the statement that smaller neighbourhood markets have higher prices.

A reference has been added.

Line 198-205: Did you investigate whether the products are different brands were nutritionally similar? Or can you provide references for this statement.

References have been added

Line 200 has 'that' repeated.

removed

References: Carefully check reference list as some have mistakes or are missing details (2, 14, 26, 32, 36).

These have been corrected.