Steps to a Healthier Cleveland provides information, resources, support and services to Clevelanders seeking to make healthy lifestyle changes. The program educates residents about the health risks of physical inactivity, poor nutrition, and tobacco use and exposure.

The Cleveland Department of Public Health, the administrator of the Steps program, commissioned the Center for Health Promotion Research at Case Western Reserve University to evaluate one of the outstanding program activities of the Steps program, the enhancement and development of community gardens within Cleveland neighborhoods.

Matt Russell, a Center for Health Promotion Research Project Coordinator, explains that the goals of the Steps to a Healthier Cleveland program include “increasing access to fresh and healthy foods, and increasing levels of physical activity among residents.”

In his 2006 Community Garden Report, Matt highlighted ten of the sixteen Steps community gardens in Cleveland. The garden profiles included an overview of the program, and description of the garden that included information on the age of the garden, the number of gardeners, how the produce is used, and other garden facts.

Matt utilized NEO CANDO in order to provide an overview of the neighborhoods in which the individual gardens are located. Matt says, “I wanted to provide the reader with a context of the social and demographic makeup of the residents in the neighborhoods.”

In order to create this basic demographic profile of Cleveland neighborhoods, Matt accessed the Quick Profiles of NEO CANDO, and downloaded reports for each neighborhood. In the report Matt included the total population, the racial/ethnic makeup of the population, age groups, and educational status. Matt says using NEO CANDO “gave me the information that I wanted and was user-friendly.”

See the full report at http://www.case.edu/affil/healthpromotion