

SOWING SEEDS OF CONNECTION:

AMPLIFYING FARM TO SCHOOL INITIATIVES IN NORTH ADAMS

By Daniela Sanchez, Maya Goldstein, and
Patrick Theveny
Fall 2023



INTRODUCTION



WHO WE ARE

Williams College students working with Anne Goodwin at MCLA, building off of a similar 2018 project toward an updated CFA



OUR GOAL:

To boost Farm to School initiatives in North Adams Public Schools (NAPS).

WHAT IS FARM TO SCHOOL?



USDA: “a variety of activities conducted by child nutrition program operators that connect children with the source of their food, improve health and education outcomes, promote equity in the food system, and inspire youth toward careers in agriculture.”



**Anne Goodwin urged us to understand Farm to School as an initiative that transcends school cafeterias.*



WHY IS FARM TO SCHOOL BENEFICIAL TO NAPS?



ECONOMY

- Keeping money invested in the community helps boost the local economy ([N. Central Mass Chamber of Commerce](#))



MENTAL HEALTH

- Rising Rates of Adolescent Depression in the United States (Wilson & Dumornay, 2022)



FOOD INSECURITY

- 12% of Berkshire County residents experience food insecurity & 27% are children (BCCFA, 2019)



FARM TO SCHOOL - NAPS CHALLENGES

COORDINATION

- Capacity
- Communication
- Delivery

FUNDING

- Bureaucracy



METHODOLOGY



INTERVIEWS

Reached out to:

- Food Services Director
- Superintendent
- Various Farms
- Community Leaders



RESEARCH

Various topics:

- North Adams
- Food Insecurity
- Existing Programming



SITE VISITS

We visited:

- Farm
- Brayton Elementary
- Berkshire Mobile Farmers Market



OUR 5 PROPOSALS

1

BERKSHIRE MOBILE
FARMERS MARKET

2

PROMOTING
SNAP/HIP/WIC

3

DRURY SALAD BAR

4

STUDENT INTERN FOR NAPS
DINING

5

GRANTS

1

BERKSHIRE MOBILE MARKET





CHALLENGE/GAP ADDRESSED

Affordable Food w/ Accessible
Locations

WHO WE CONTACTED

Alyssa VanDurme, Stacy Parsons,
Barbara Malkas

NEXT STEPS

Continue to keep in touch with Van
Durme, Parsons will help facilitate this.



2

PROMOTING SNAP/HIP/WIC



CHALLENGE/GAP ADDRESSED

SNAP is underutilized.

WHO WE CONTACTED

Meg Bantle, Stacy Parsons, Beth Ziemba

NEXT STEPS

Flyer Distribution, possible collab with BMM



Need help buying groceries? SNAP can help!



SNAP can help you buy healthy food.

- It is fast & easy to apply
- Buy food in stores & online (multiple retailers)
- SNAP is not considered in a "public charge" test
- If you are not a US citizen or eligible immigrant, it is safe for you to get SNAP for an eligible family member (like your US citizen child)

Am I Eligible for SNAP?

Household Size	Your Monthly Income (before taxes)*	Monthly Maximum SNAP Amount*
1	\$2,430	\$291
2	\$3,287	\$535
3	\$4,143	\$766
4	\$5,000	\$973
5	\$5,857	\$1,155
8+	+\$857	+\$219

*Effective 7/1/2023 *Effective 10/1/2023

For more information or to apply for SNAP:

DTAConnect.com

877-382-2363 Mon – Fri 8:15 am-4:45 pm

Mail or Fax a paper application
Get a paper application: Mass.gov/SNAP

In the community: local kiosk, SNAP outreach partner, DTA office

Find a location near you: Mass.gov/ContactDTA



Scan code with phone camera to apply online

Existing Flyers

Earn More SNAP Dollars with the Healthy Incentives Program!

Spend your SNAP dollars on farm-fresh fruits and vegetables at participating Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) retailers and have the amount of your purchase instantly added back to your EBT card!

Farmers Markets

Look for participating farmers at regularly scheduled markets in your town or nearby, selling fresh fruits and vegetables.

Farm Stands

On-farm stores where you can buy fresh fruits and vegetables, right from the hands that picked them.

Mobile Markets

Markets that bring farm-fresh produce right to your community.

CSA Farm Shares

Membership-based service that provides your family with fresh fruits and vegetables every week.

Look at what you can earn each month! (based on household size)

\$40 1-2 PEOPLE | **\$60** 3-5 PEOPLE | **\$80** 6+ PEOPLE

WIC LOCATIONS

To find out about WIC, call 1-800-852-2097 or a program near you.

WHAT FOODS CAN I GET FROM WIC?

WIC makes it easier for you to provide the healthy choices that you and your child need to grow up strong. WIC provides free healthy food, including:

- Baby food
- Breast milk
- Canned fish
- Canned fruit
- Canned juice
- Canned or instant baby foods
- Eggs
- Infant formula
- Milk
- Peanut butter
- Teriyaki
- Whole grain cereal and pasta
- Tofu
- Yogurt

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WIC
GOOD FOOD and
A WHOLE LOT MORE!
www.mass.gov/wic

Double SNAP at the Farmers Market

Berkshire Ag Ventures (BAV) doubles your SNAP \$1-for-\$1 at any partner farmers market!

Farmers markets not listed may offer other benefit matching programs.

For a list of all Berkshire County farmers markets, visit: [berkshirefarmers.org/berkshire-growers-markets](https://berkshirefarmers.org/)

Market Name	Schedule
Williamstown Farmers Market	Sat: 9am - 1pm
North Adams Farmers Market	Sat: 9am - 1pm
Pittsfield Farmers Market	Sat: 9am - 1pm
West Stockbridge Farmers Market	Thurs: 3pm - 6pm
Lee Farmers Market	Sat: 10am - 2pm
Great Barrington Farmers Market	Sat: 9am - 1pm
Sheffield Farmers Market	Fri: 3pm - 6pm
Millerton Farmers Market	Sat: 10am - 2pm
New Milford Farmers Market	Sat: 9am - 12pm
Berkshire Grown Winter Farmers Market*	Sat: 9am - 1pm

*Berkshire Grown Winter Markets run November - April

How it Works

- 1 Visit a Berkshire County farmers market.
- 2 Locate the information tent or table and look for the Market Manager.
- 3 Swipe your EBT card to purchase as many wooden tokens as you'd like. These tokens act as cash at the market.
- 4 Markets included in BAV's Market Match Fund will match \$1-for-\$1 when you check out – up to \$30!
- 5 Spend your tokens at any stand selling SNAP-eligible foods.

TOKENS DON'T HAVE AN EXPIRATION DATE! Unused tokens can be used the next time you shop at the farmers market. Tokens are specific to each market.

WHAT YOU CAN BUY WITH YOUR FOOD STAMP/EBT TOKENS

Learn more about BAV's Market Match Fund and other initiatives that support local farmers at berkshireagventures.org

BAV is a 501(c)(3) organization. Contributions are tax deductible and directly support our work. We're an equal opportunity employer.

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 MARKET MATCH FUND SPONSORS

GREYLOCK FOUNDATION

FEIGENBAUM FOUNDATION

PHI PROSPECT HILL FOUNDATION

BerkshireBank

Josephine de Louise Crane Foundation

Guardian

Berkshire Taconic Company

THANK YOU TO ALL THE GENEROUS INDIVIDUALS WHO MADE CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUPPORT THE WELLBEING OF OUR COMMUNITY

Our Alternate Flyer

Technical Assistance

THE FOOD BANK OF WESTERN
MASSACHUSETTS HAS A DEVOTED
SNAP OUTREACH TEAM

413.992.6204

Help available 9-4, Mon-Fri



Benefits:

- Increased food budget
- Minimal Documentation
- Easy EBT card use

Over 34% of North Adams residents receive SNAP benefits however many more are eligible but may not know. Join your neighbors! It only takes 20 minutes, and The Foodbank of Western Massachusetts is here to help you every step of the way. Call to register today

 877-382-2363

BERKSHIRE COUNTY

SIGN UP FOR SNAP TODAY



USDA

Supplemental
Nutrition
Assistance
Program

Putting Healthy Food
Within Reach

Don't let anything stop you!

- No computer, no problem! ✓
- Kiosk located at 160 North St, Suite 201, Pittsfield ✓
- Application support a phone call away ✓
- Find out if you are eligible in minutes ✓
- Team of experts ready to help in English and Spanish ✓

SIGN UP NOW

Sign up for SNAP here
DTACconnect.com



Our Alternate Flyer

HIP X BAV

3X THE FOOD

SAME PRICE

Did you know that 70% of Berkshire residents report eating less than five servings of fruit and vegetables a day? Access to a healthy diet contributes to health and well-being. Don't let financial constraints hold you back from prioritizing you and your family's health. Thanks to Berkshire Agricultural Ventures and SNAP/HIP, they won't. If you receive SNAP benefits you could up to triple your budget at 10 participating farmers market sites throughout Berkshire County.

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graph TD; A[Apply to SNAP and receive EBT card] --> B[Visit one of 10 Berkshire located farmers markets]; B --> C[Locate the information tent]; C --> D[Turn $30 into $90 in food monthly at any farmers market]; D --> E[Use tokens and EBT card at any stand, get more food for less]; E --> F[Swipe EBT Card for up to $30 in tokens. Cost of tokens goes back on your EBT Card.]; F --> A;
```

Apply to SNAP here
<https://dtaconnect.eohhs.mass.gov/>

Learn more about BAV
berkshireagventures.org

Learn more about HIP here
<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-healthy-incentives-program-hip>

Our Alternate Flyer



Use WIC

Feed Your Family

If you are a parent with a child under 5, and you qualify for SNAP, you are entitled to free nutritious foods and health consultations. Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) at nutrition risk are more likely to experience health problems. Ensure your family is happy and healthy through this Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for WIC

How WIC helps

Beyond free food, WIC offers personalized nutrition consultations, referrals for medical and dental care, health insurance, child care, housing & fuel assistance!

Don't miss out!

If you already participate in SNAP then no additional documentation is necessary! 115,000+ caregivers in Massachusetts are already taking advantage of this program.

Lots of foods qualify

Baby food • Brown rice • Canned fish • Cereal • Cheese • Dried or canned beans/peas • Eggs • Fruit juice • Fruits & vegetables • Infant formula • Milk • Peanut butter • Tortillas • Whole grain bread and pasta • Tofu • Yogurt

Free money!

"Cash benefit value," usable on fruits and vegetables, at participating vendors. \$26 for child participants, \$47 for pregnant and postpartum participants, and \$52 for fully and partially breastfeeding participants.

Participating Vendors in North Adams

Big Y Foods, 45 Veterans Memorial Drive, 01247, (413)663-6549
CVS Pharmacy, Veterans Memorial Drive, 01247, (413)664-8712 *formula only*
Super Stop & Shop, 876 State Road, 01247, (413)664-8100
Walmart Store, 1415 Curran Memorial Hwy, 01247, (413)664-4004

Berkshire Branch

Director Melissa King
mking5@bhhs1.org
510 North St., Suite #5
Pittsfield
(413) 447-3495

North Adams Branch

Tu-Thu-Fr, 8-4:30
wic@bhhs1.org
71 Hospital Ave, 3rd Floor,
North Adams, 413-663-3012

Apply here

📞 1-800-942-1007
<https://www.mass.gov/wic>



3

DRURY SALAD BAR





CHALLENGE/GAP ADDRESSED

Fresh, local produce regularly stocked

WHO WE CONTACTED

NAPS Food Services Director;

NEXT STEPS

1. Work on contract between an interested farm and NAPS;
2. Decide which foods to plant
3. Create placards



4

STUDENT INTERN FOR NAPS DINING





CHALLENGE/GAP ADDRESSED

Lack of time to dedicate to establishing farm partnerships within NAPS.

WHO WE CONTACTED

Anne Goodwin

NEXT STEPS

1. Review Intern Duties & Responsibilities
2. Coordinate with Goodwin





5

GRANTS





CHALLENGE/GAP ADDRESSED

Lack of funding for Farm to School ventures.

WHO WE CONTACTED

Carrie Burnett, Stacy Parsons, Abby Getman Skillicorn

NEXT STEPS

Support Burnett on anything that arises re- grant application. Grant is due January 17th, 2024.





Thank you
Any questions?

References

<https://www.fns.usda.gov/f2s/farm-to-school>

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