SOWING SEEDS OF CONNECTION:

AMPLIFYING FARM TO SCHOOL INITIATIVES IN NORTH ADAMS

By Daniela Sanchez, Maya Goldstein, and Patrick Theveny
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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
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/CHIP/WIC
3. DRURY SALAD BAR
4. STUDENT INTERNS FOR NAPS DINING
5. GRANTS
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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.
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
Existing Flyers

SNAP can help!

Am I Eligible for SNAP?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>Monthly Income (before taxes)*</th>
<th>Monthly Maximum SNAP Amount*</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>$2,430</td>
<td>$291</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>$3,287</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>4</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>$5,857</td>
<td>$1,155</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>+ $857</td>
<td>+$219</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Details: [SNAP.gov](https://www.nicic.gov) / SNAP

For more information or to apply for SNAP:

- **DTACConnect.com**
- **877-382-2363** Mon – Fri 8:15 am-4:45 pm
- Mail or Fax a paper application

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

Find a location near you: [Mass.gov/ContactDTA](https://www.mass.gov/contactdtad)

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**Berkshire Ag Ventures (BAV)**

Doubling 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:

[berkshiragrowns.org](http://berkshiragrowns.org) / berkshire-farmers-markets

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**WIC Locations**

**WHAT FOODS CAN I GET FROM WIC?**

To find an office near you, visit [WIC.org](http://WIC.org)

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**Double SNAP at the Farmers Market**

**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 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 $50.
5. Spend your tokens at any stand selling SNAP-eligible food.

**Thank you to our 2020 market match fund sponsors:**

- Berkshire 4-H
- Berkshire County Cooperative Extension
- Berkshires Growers Network
- Farmers Market at Community Church of Great Barrington
- National Grid
- Taconic Women’s Fund
- Williamstown Farmers Market

Thank you to all the generous individuals and organizations who make contributions to support the Wellness of Our Community.
Our Alternate Flyer

SIGN UP FOR SNAP TODAY

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
677-382-2363

BERKSHIRE COUNTY

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
DTACoNNECT.com
Our Alternate Flyer

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.

- Apply to SNAP and receive EBT card
- Visit one of 10 Berkshire located farmers markets
- Swipe EBT Card for up to $30 in tokens. Cost of tokens goes back on your EBT Card.
- Locate the information tent
- Use tokens and EBT card at any stand, get more food for less
- Turn $30 into $90 in food monthly at any farmers market

Apply to SNAP here: https://dataconnect.earhs.mass.gov/
Learn more about BAV: berkshireagventures.org
Learn more about HIP here: https://www.mass.gov/info-details/financial-incentives-program-hip
Our Alternate Flyer

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.

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

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.

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)663-8700 *formula only*
Super Stop & Shop, 876 State Road, 01247, (413)664-8100
Walmart Stores, 1415 Curran Memorial Hwy, 01247, (413)664-4004

Berkshire Branch
Director Melissa King
mking@talud.org
53 North St, Suite A
Pittsfield
(413) 447-3405

North Adams Branch
16 Railroad St, 3rd floor
North Adams, 413-993-3012

Apply here
1-800-942-1007
https://www.mass.gov/wic
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
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GRANTS

[USDA and PLANTS Grant logos]
**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

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https://www.massfarmtoschool.org/about-us/


https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/nutritional-psychiatry-your-brain-on-food-201511168626


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