

# **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 20 18 project toward an updated CFA



# **OUR GOAL:**

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



# WHAT IS FARM TO SCHOOL?



<u>USDA</u>: "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





# BERKSHIRE MOBILE MARKET





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





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 SN 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 2/1/2022	*Effective 10/1/2022

### For more information or to apply for SNAP:

DTAConnect.com





Scan code with phone

camera to apply online

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

Rev. 10/01/2023

# **Existing Flyers**



regularly scheduled markets in your town or nearby, selling fresh fruits and













#### **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







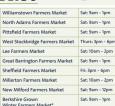
Berkshire Ag Ventures (BAV) doubles your SNAP \$1-for-\$1 at any partner farmers market!



other benefit matching programs. For a list of all Berkshire County farmers markets, visit:

berkshiregrown.org/

berkshire-farmers-markets



BERKSHIRE AGRICULTURAL

VENTURES

Berkshire Grown Winter Markets run November - Apr.

WHAT YOU CAN BUY

FOOD STAMP/EBT TOKENS

### 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

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

THANK YOU TO OUR 2023 MARKET MATCH FUND SPONSORS





× BerkshireBank 30s 8 Guardian Berkshire Taconic

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



### Don't let anything stop you!

Within Reach

No computer, no problem!

Kiosk located at 160 North St, Suite 201, Pittsfield

Application support a phone call away

Find out if you are elibible 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**





# **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 WIChelps

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)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@bhs1.org 510 North St., Suite #5 Pittsfield (413) 447-3495

### North Adams Branch

Tu-Thu-Fr, 8-4:30 wic@bhs1.org 71 Hospital Ave, 3rd floor, North Adams, 413-663-3012

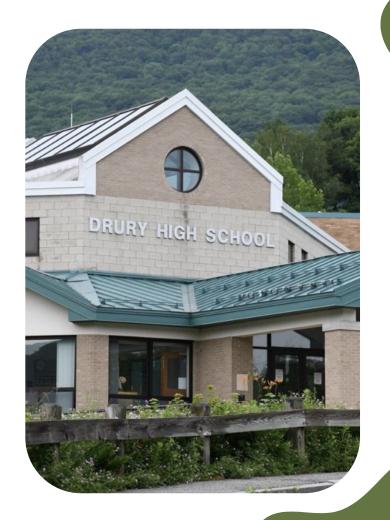


### *Apply here* (1-800-942-1007)

https://www.mass.gov/wic Q



# DRURY SALAD BAR





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





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**





Lack of funding for Farm to School ventures.

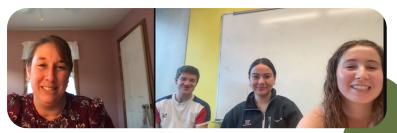
### WHO WE CONTACTED

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

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

https://www.berkshirehealthsystems.org/assets/documents/community-benefit-reports/bhs 2022 chna final.pdf

https://www.northcentralmass.com/why-its-important-to-buy-local-first-2/

https://ced.msu.edu/upload/reports/why%20buy%20local.pdf