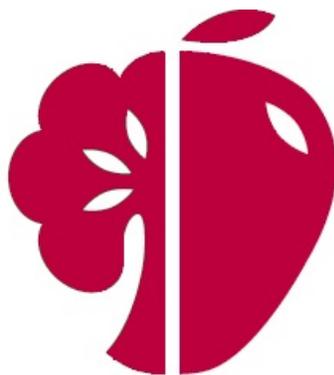


DOUBLE VALUE PRODUCE PERKS

2014

Report





The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition's vision is to establish Cleveland and Cuyahoga County as a model for food security through regional food system development, ensuring that every resident has access to fresh, healthy, affordable food.

To learn more visit www.cccfoodpolicy.org



• **DOUBLE VALUE** •
PRODUCE PERKS

The Double Value Produce Perks incentive program is offered to all Cuyahoga County residents receiving SNAP benefits each time they shop at a participating market. (In Ohio, benefits are accessed through the Ohio Direction Card).

This program is made possible due to generous support from: The George Gund Foundation, Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation, Saint Luke's Foundation, The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland, and Wholesome Wave.

To learn more visit www.cccfoodpolicy.org



The Produce Prescription program connects public health agencies and healthcare providers to farmers' markets and encourages fresh fruit and vegetable consumption among patients and clients in order to increase healthy birth outcomes while allowing participants to gain a better understanding of assistance programs like Produce Perks that help stretch food dollars at farmers' markets.

To learn more visit www.cccfoodpolicy.org



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

5 PROGRAM OVERVIEW

6 FRESH FOOD ACCESS IN NORTHEAST OHIO

- Regional Interest and Opportunity

11 PROGRAM UPDATES

- Reaching Customers & Community
- Produce Prescription: 2013 Pilot Program
- Produce Prescription: Program Highlights
- Market Perspectives
- Produce Perks: 2011-2014

18 RECOMMENDATIONS

20 PARTNER ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS





PROGRAM OVERVIEW

Over the past five years, Double Value Produce Perks (DVPP) has sought to increase access to high quality fresh fruits and vegetables sold at farmers' markets for Cuyahoga County residents.

DVPP, developed by partners of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (FPC) and administered by Ohio State University Extension, Cuyahoga County, strives to meet objectives in the following areas of our food system:

1. Improve access and affordability of fresh local produce for low-income residents utilizing the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).
2. Provide first-time SNAP customers with the positive experiences necessary to ensure changes in shopping and consumption patterns related to fresh produce and farmers' markets.
3. Contribute to the growth of our regional food system by supporting small- and mid-size farms by increasing their direct sales and bringing new customers to the market.
4. Influence policy at all levels (local, regional, state and national) that will improve federally supported nutrition programs and contribute to a more sustainable food system.

This report seeks to demonstrate the impacts achieved over the course of the 2014 season as well as those realized after the program pilot. Additionally, evaluation enables FPC to communicate opportunities, challenges and points of continued collaboration to meet our objectives for the DVPP program going forward.

We are eager to share the outcomes of this effort and hope to continue to engage local communities to improve health, equity and the economy in 2015.

FRESH FOOD ACCESS IN NORTHEAST OHIO

Interest in incentive programming like Double Value Produce Perks has increased drastically in the past several years. The current federal Farm Bill includes for the first time language and resources to support incentive programming at farmers' markets across the country. In addition to this recent federal support, groups across Ohio are working to develop programs that meet the needs of their communities by tapping into local resources offered by national and local foundations as well as private businesses.

By looking at other incentive programs throughout Ohio, like Countryside Conservancy's Carrot Cash in Summit County, Veggie SNAPs in Franklin County, and the multi-partner Produce Perks pilot in Hamilton County, we can begin to consider the kind of impact these programs can have at a regional and statewide level.



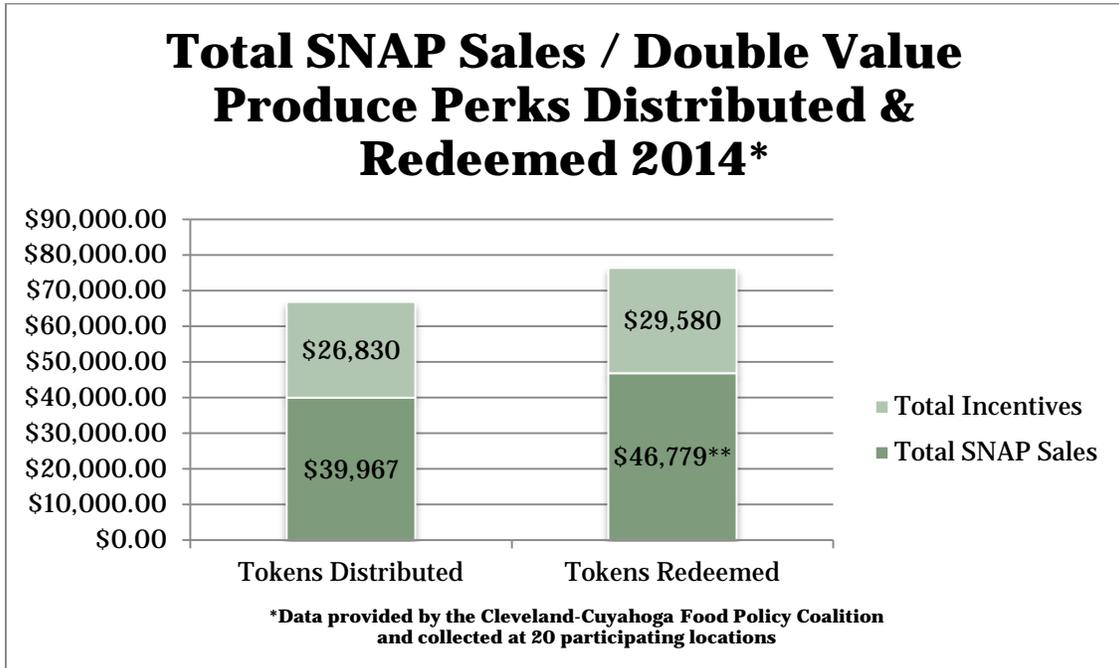
In 2014, 34 farmers' markets in Summit, Franklin, Hamilton and Cuyahoga County recorded nearly \$70,000 in SNAP sales. During fiscal year 2013, the USDA (United States Department of Agriculture) reported a total of \$183,870 in SNAP sales at Ohio farmers' markets - based on these numbers Summit, Franklin, Hamilton and Cuyahoga County account for over 38% of the state's SNAP sales at farmers' markets.

Franklin and Hamilton Counties both piloted farmers' market incentive programs in 2014. In Franklin County, the Veggie SNAPS program was introduced at 6 farmers' markets, with a total of \$4,985 in incentives distributed. In Hamilton County, the Double Value Produce Perks program was implemented at 5 farmers' markets, modeled after Cuyahoga County's program, with a total of \$6,469 in incentives distributed.

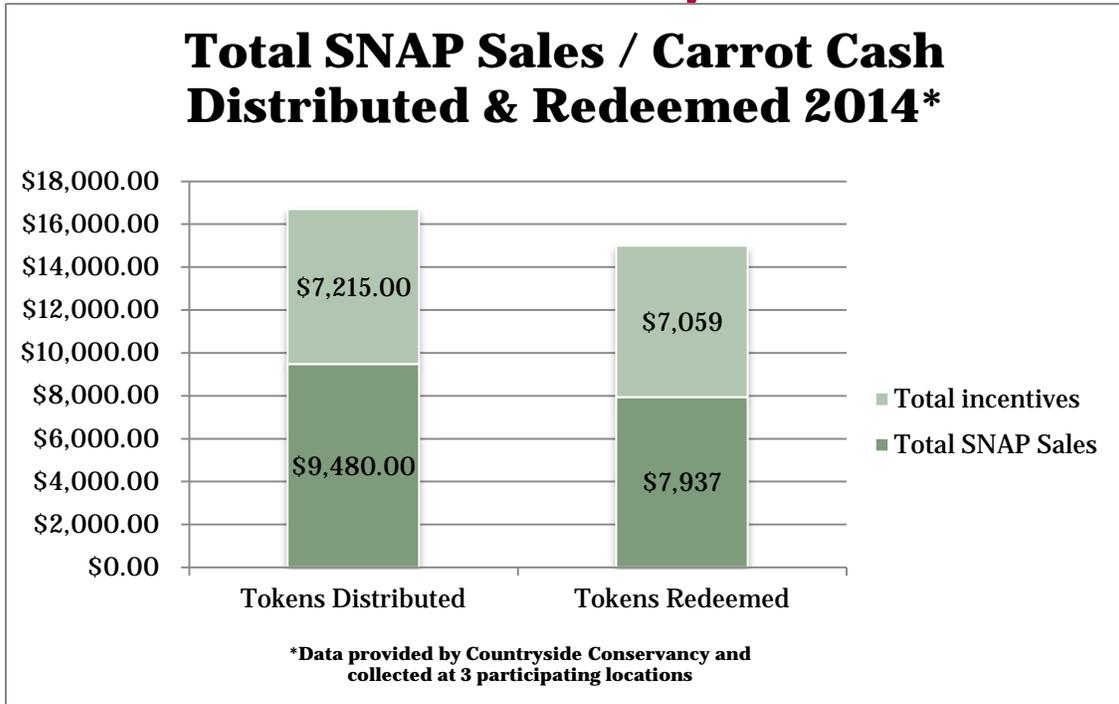
Starting in July 2015, the Toledo Farmers' Market will begin offering the Double Up Food Bucks incentive program at 2 locations.

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Cuyahoga County



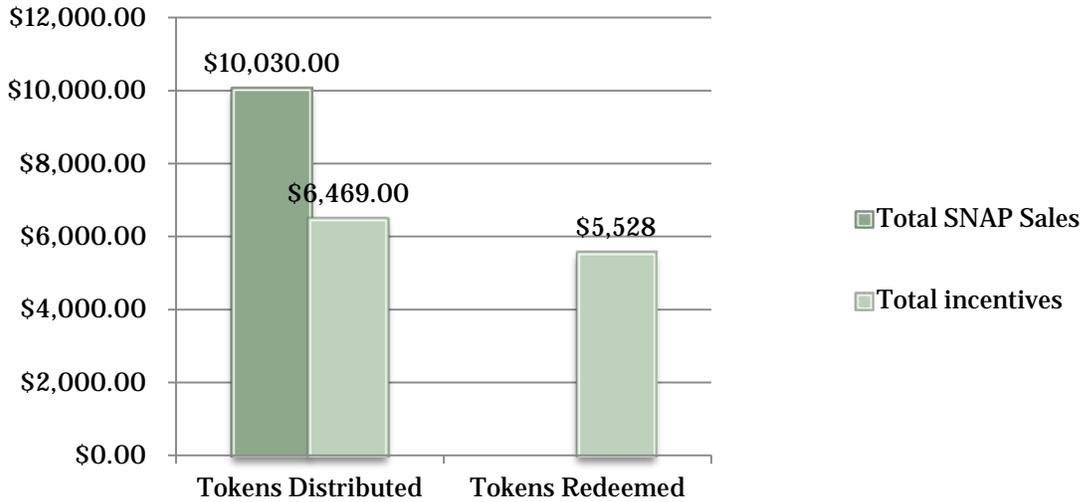
Summit County



**In Cuyahoga County, the discrepancy in the amount of SNAP tokens shown (more redeemed in 2014 than distributed) could be the result of participants using tokens saved from previous seasons and/or errors in bookkeeping at some farmers' markets.

Hamilton County

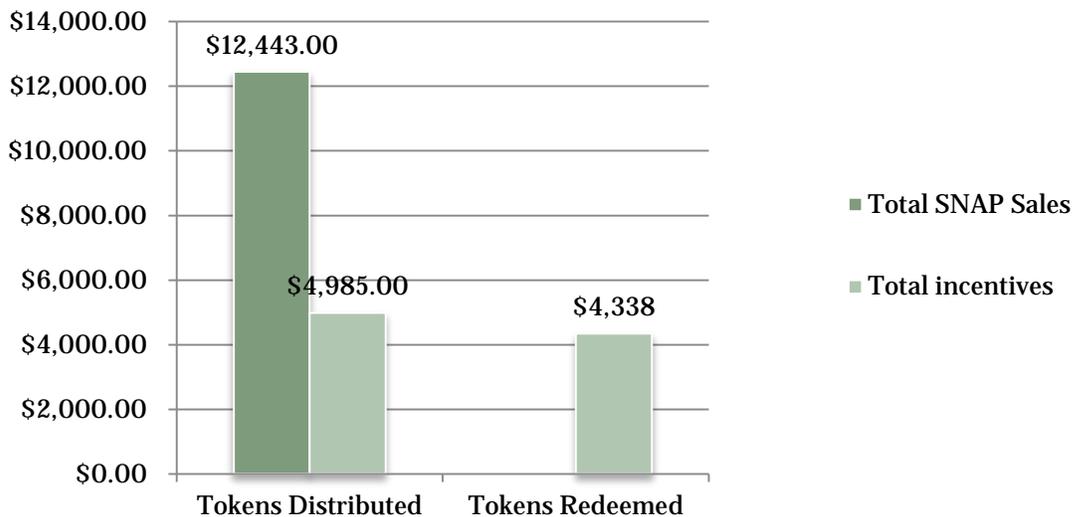
Total SNAP Sales/Double Value Produce Perks Distributed & Redeemed 2014*



*Data provided by the Cincinnati Health Department and collected at 5 participating locations--SNAP redemption data unavailable at this time

Franklin County

Total SNAP Sales & Veggie SNAPS Distributed & Redeemed 2014*



*Data provided by Amy Bodiker Consulting and collected at 6 participating locations--SNAP redemption data unavailable at this time

In the 17 county Northeast Ohio (NEO) region, there are significant opportunities to expand SNAP acceptance and incentives at farmers' markets.

COUNTY	AVG# SNAP RECIPIENTS IN COUNTY*	TOTAL # FARMERS' MARKETS	# FARMERS' MARKETS CURRENTLY ACCEPTING SNAP	# FARMERS' MARKETS PROVIDING INCENTIVE
Ashland	5,307	2	0	0
Ashtabula	20,472	4	1	0
Columbiana	17,391	3	0	0
Cuyahoga	268,332	33	23	20
Erie	11,825	1	0	0
Geauga	3,899	2	0	0
Huron	8,650	2	0	0
Lake	21,097	7	1	0
Lorain	42,294	4	2	2
Mahoning	45,857	2	1	1
Medina	10,852	5	1	0
Portage	16,264	8	1	1
Richland	21,274	7	2	0
Stark	57,085	6	3	0
Summit	85,283	16	3	3
Trumbull	32,879	2	0	0
Wayne	12,266	3	1	0
NEO TOTAL	681,027	107	39	25

* Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Public Assistance Statistic Report, State Fiscal Year 2014

REGIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

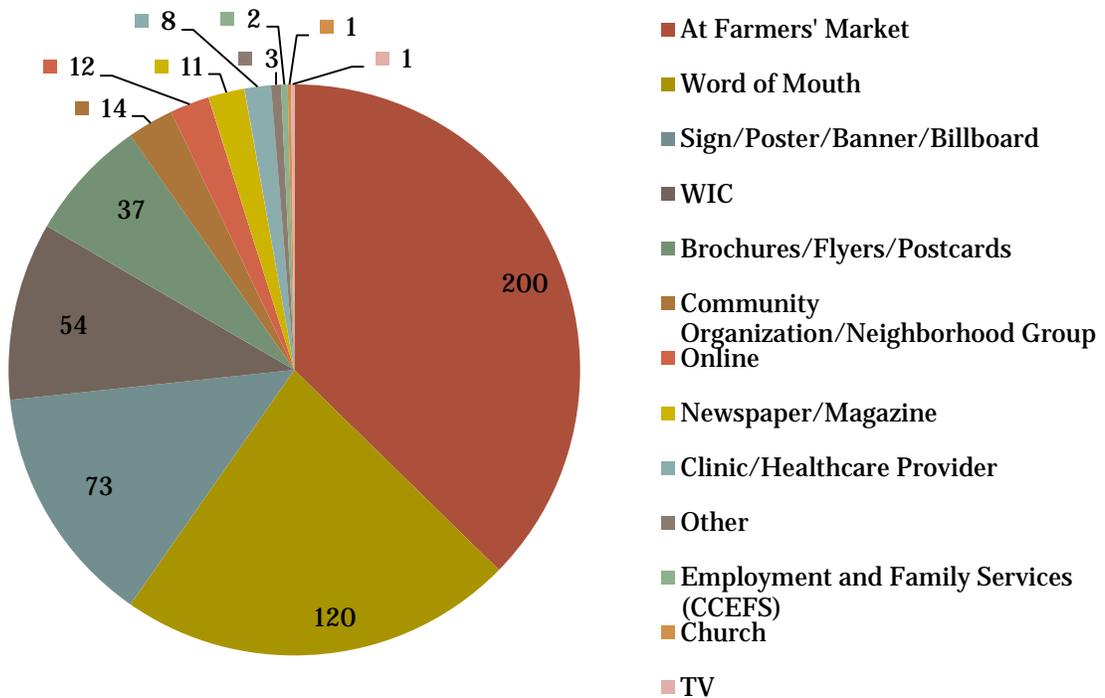
- Of the 17 NEO counties, 9 counties have 15-20% of their population receiving SNAP.
- The average SNAP allotment is between \$113-\$131 per recipient per month in NEO.
- If only 1% of the SNAP dollars allocated in the 17 NEO counties were spent at farmers' markets, over \$10 million would have been funneled into the regional economy in 2014.



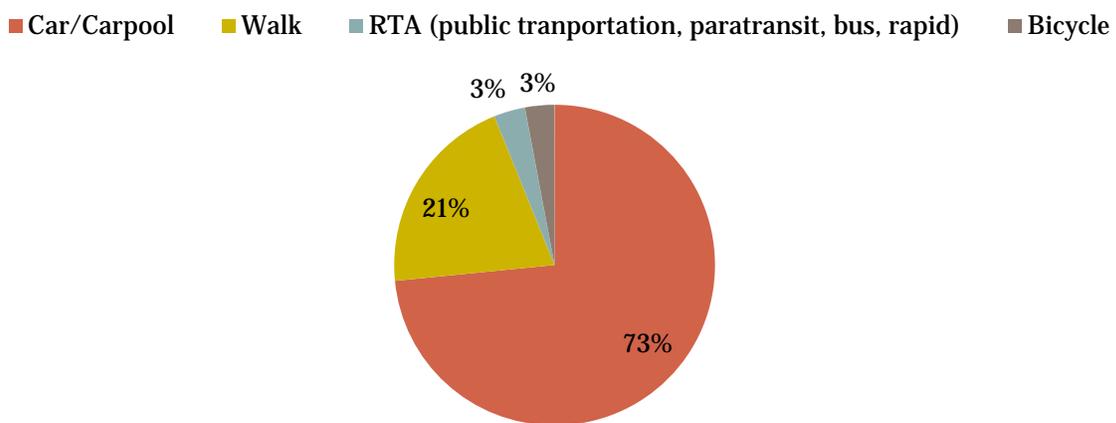
REACHING CUSTOMERS & COMMUNITY

Through customer surveys at every transaction, FPC and its partnering farmers' markets collect data to help inform each season. By understanding how customers got to the market, how they heard about the program and how often they came back, we can consider the best ways to promote the program to create opportunities for return visits.

How Customers Heard About Produce Perks



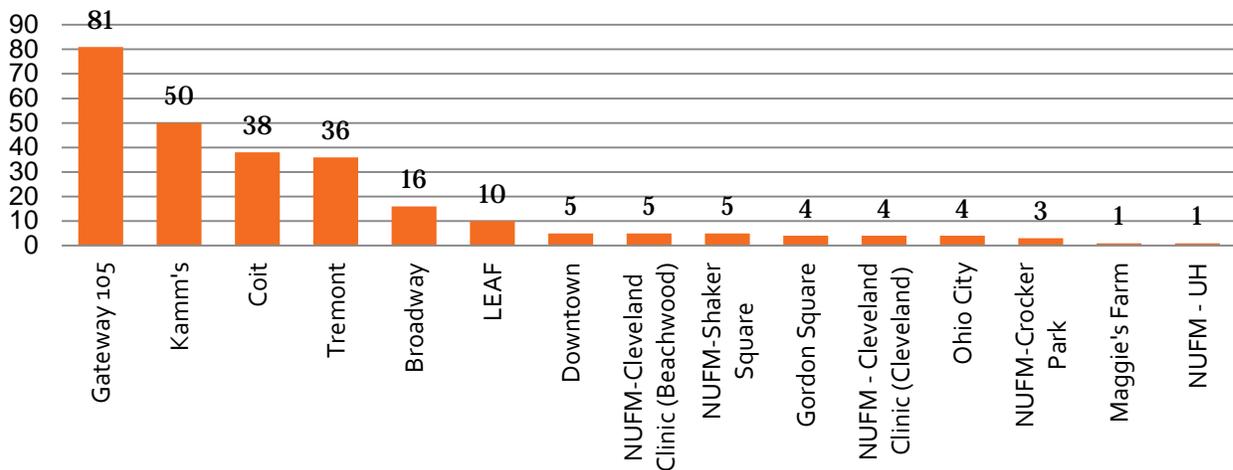
How Customers Got to the Farmers' Market



During 2014, 263 SNAP customers reported shopping for the first time at a farmers' market.

2014 saw the emergence of one of our younger markets, Gateway 105, as the top destination for first time farmers' market customers, attracting over 80 new patrons or shoppers. While the other three top markets for new customers are larger and more established, the rest of the markets in our network showed consistency and minimal variability in the number of first time shoppers. North Union Farmers' Market at University Hospitals is still in its infancy and had the lowest number of first time customers.

Total First Time Customers in 2014



- 1,059 different SNAP recipients used the program in 2014 (almost 25% of these were first time customers to a farmers' market)
- Of the recipients utilizing the program in 2014:
 - 11% shopped over 6 times
 - 32% shopped 2-5 times
 - 57% shopped once*
- 85% of customers feel that the incentives are "Very Important" in bringing them to the market.

*Data collected by OSUE Cuyahoga County 2011-2014. Based on last 4 digits of SNAP card recorded at farmers' markets. Numbers do not reflect changes to SNAP card numbers for recipients due to changes in eligibility or consider the length of time an individual receives SNAP.

PRODUCE PRESCRIPTION—2013 PILOT PROGRAM



Capitalizing on the rapid growth of farmers' markets in the last decade and the success of Produce Perks, the Produce Prescription (PRx) program, now entering its third season, is the result of a partnership between the FPC, the Cuyahoga County Board of Health (CCBH), Ohio State University Extension (OSUE), and the Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods (PRCHN) at Case Western Reserve University (CWRU) which seeks to improve fruit and vegetable consumption among low income pregnant women.

By connecting public health agencies and healthcare providers to our market locations, PRx encourages fresh fruit and vegetable consumption among pregnant women in order to increase healthy birth outcomes while allowing participants to gain a better understanding of assistance programs, like Produce Perks, that help stretch food dollars at farmers' markets.

During the 2013 pilot program, each participating healthcare provider enrolled interested women up to 25 weeks pregnant at the beginning of the market season (June-October) into the program. All participants were then provided with \$40 in PRx vouchers at each of their regularly scheduled monthly gestational visits up until October. During each monthly visit, the provider counseled participants on their nutrition-related health goals and encouraged them to include more fruits and vegetables in their diets in addition to addressing any barriers that the participants may encounter in shopping at a farmers' market and preparing healthy meals. The participants then visited a nearby Produce Perks farmers' market to redeem their vouchers for fresh fruits and vegetables.

PRODUCE PRESCRIPTION: PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

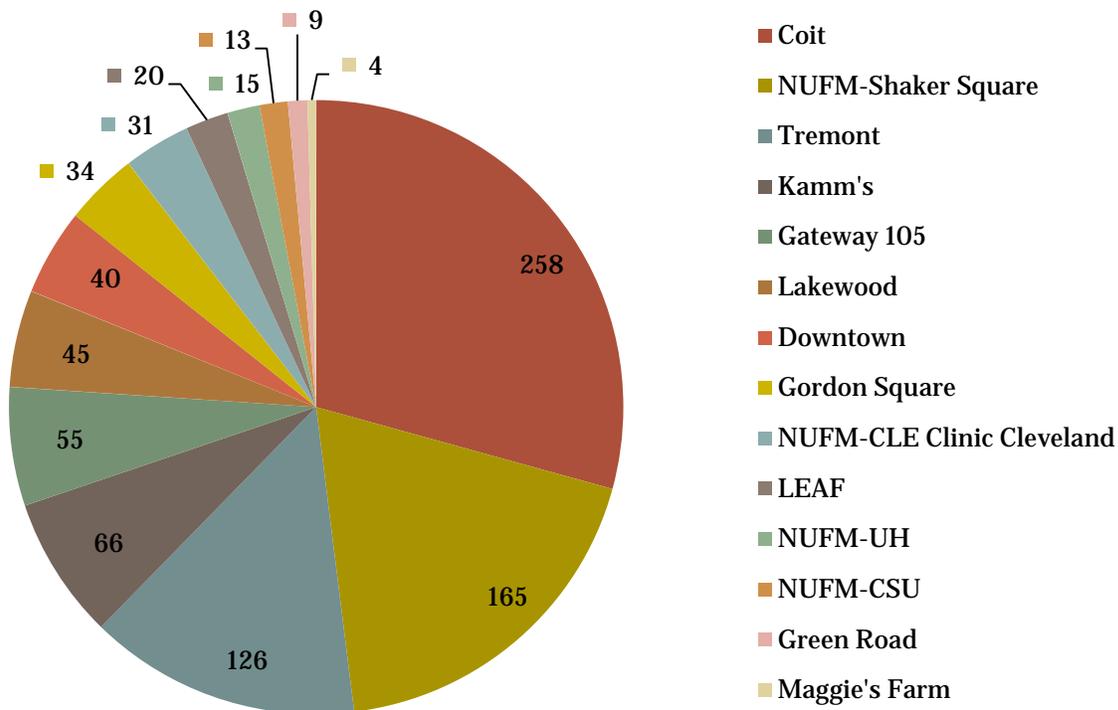
2013 Pilot Highlights

- Over 48 pregnant women were enrolled in the program from June-October
- Over 42% of participants who redeemed their vouchers had never visited a farmers' market before
- 42 participants redeemed over \$3,300 in PRx vouchers over 5 months

2014 PRx Program Expansion*

- Program capacity was increased to 200 participants and included pregnant women or women of childbearing age with a child ≤18 months in the home
 - All program evaluation tools were revised and shortened
- All educational and evaluation materials were translated into Spanish

PRx Vouchers Redeemed by Market, 2013-2014**



*Final evaluation data from the 2014 PRx program expansion is not yet available

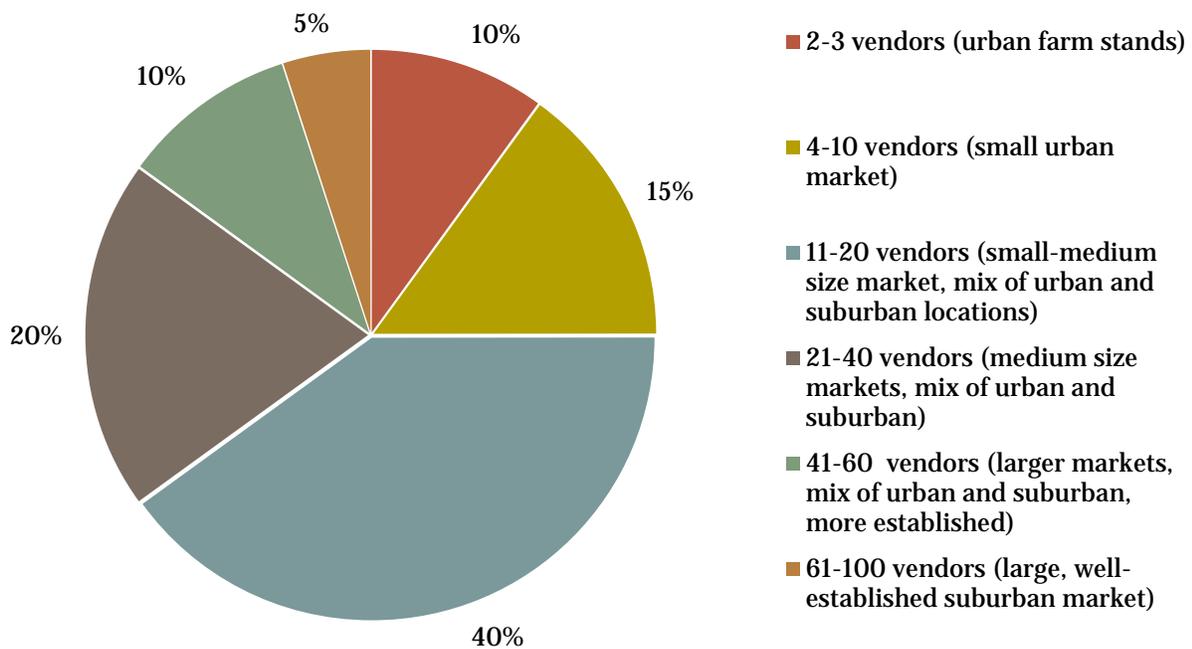
**Combined redemption data from 2013 and 2014 was collected at 20 participating farmers' markets—not all markets had vouchers redeemed



MARKET PERSPECTIVES

More than half of the 20 farmers' markets participating in 2014 have been partnering with OSUE and the Food Policy Coalition since 2011. Four years of consecutive participation not only allows us to better consider how program success can vary by market size and type but also provides market managers an opportunity to innovate and improve the program.

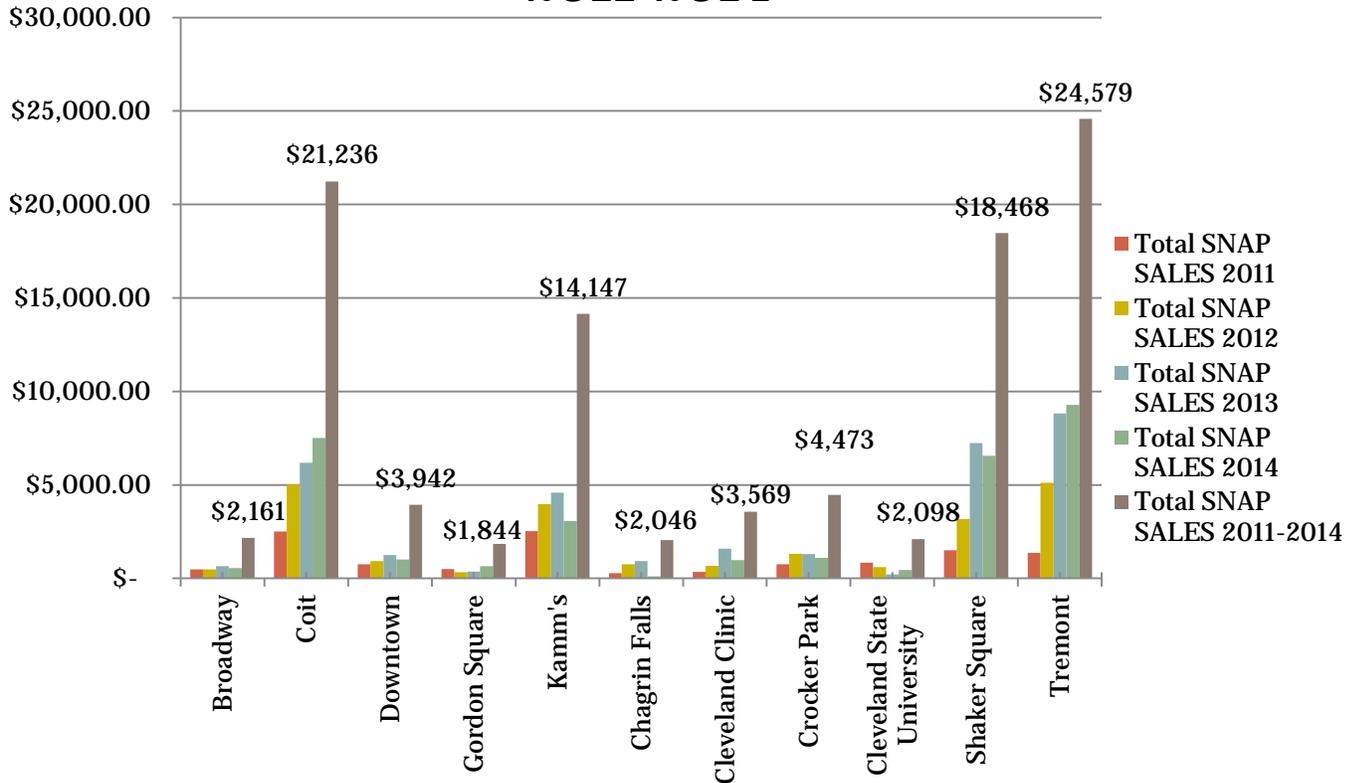
Farmers' Markets by Size and Type (Total Participating locations, 20)



Of the 11 farmers' markets that have participated in Produce Perks since 2011, 9 have increased SNAP sales (4 of which have done so by over 100%). What started as a pilot of only four farmers' markets has grown to an increasingly comprehensive network of 18 farmers' markets and two farm stands.

PRODUCE PERKS: 2011-2014

SNAP Sales by Farmers' Market 2011-2014*



*Only includes 11 locations participating every year since 2011

- Market managers reported the top challenges in administering Produce Perks were customer confusion on eligible purchases with incentives, customer uncertainty of what to do with fresh produce, and marketing and promoting the program.
- 91% of market managers reported that Produce Perks has increased the amount of SNAP customers at their market.
- 100% of managers reported that Produce Perks were important to the farmers' market's total sales.

Changes to SNAP Sales since 2011

- Broadway: + 16%
- Coit Road: +200%
- Downtown: +35%
- Gordon Square: +33%
- Kamm's: +22%
- Chagrin Falls: -61%
- Cleveland Clinic: +184%
- Crocker Park: +45%
- Cleveland State University: -47%
- Shaker Square: +337%
- Tremont: +578%

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. *Policy and program rollout*

While support for farmers' markets in accepting SNAP and incentives is included in the most recent federal Farm Bill, local, state and federal agencies administering SNAP and coordinating grant opportunities to support SNAP at farmers' markets should work closely with one another to communicate information well in advance of the peak season (before April/May) to ensure market managers and vendors can be prepared and take advantage of programs while they are offered. This may take working with local food policy councils, Extension offices, farmers' market management networks and agriculture departments and agencies.

2. *Support for farmers' markets regionally and statewide*

An understanding of the capacity and interest of farmers' markets both regionally and statewide in accepting SNAP and incentives is needed to provide the necessary resources (technical assistance, funding, partnerships, etc.) to expand these programs. A statewide network with at least one allocated staff person could provide these services. On September 23, 2014, the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition and a number of partners hosted the Ohio Farmers' Market Incentives Summit in Columbus. All summit attendees were in support of building a statewide network of farmers' markets offering SNAP incentive programs here in Ohio.

3. *Promotion and advocacy*

If your local farmers' market does not accept SNAP and/or provide an incentive, reach out to your public officials, market sponsors, local businesses, food policy councils, and chambers of commerce to share potential impacts of these programs and advocate for some action! Tell friends and family that many markets are beginning to consider accepting SNAP and that some already do—with a matching incentive!

4. *Data collection and program evaluation*

Communicating impact is the only way to expand programs like Produce Perks. Without access to current and comprehensive data on SNAP across the nation, state and county, understanding the impact of this program is challenging. Farmers' market sales are also helpful indicators for incentive programming. Keeping track not only makes business sense but allows for easy evaluation of SNAP use as a percentage of total sales. All SNAP redemption data at farmers' markets in addition to other retail outlets should be regularly (yearly) accessible at the local and federal levels by the agencies collecting it. This coming season, FPC will begin using a novel iOS app to gather and manage healthy food incentive information electronically. Implementation of this technology will provide important information for FreshLink, the core research project of the Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods at Case Western Reserve University which seeks to examine farmers' markets as locations for the provision of food and nutrition interventions and identify bottlenecks and barriers to using programs like Produce Perks.

5. *Support your market*

Community support contributes to the amount of resources a market has to operate an incentive program and accept SNAP. Most markets are staffed by volunteers and accepting SNAP comes with a cost (transaction and service fees, machines, staff). By shopping at a farmers' market you are communicating that it is of great value and that it is at the right time, in the right place, with the right offerings. If your market falls short, let the market managers know. FPC has seen a strong connection between market capacity and consistency in operation and the success of Produce Perks. The market needs to hear from you!

6. *Innovation and technology*

Support through public grants to purchase innovative SNAP infrastructure needs to be available for both new SNAP markets **and** those that have been accepting it for years. Current federal eligibility guidelines make it hard for markets to access new technology that could help them better track SNAP sales through mobile and wireless devices (Most USDA grants are available only to markets that have not accepted SNAP before). Currently, two avenues exist for markets to acquire the necessary infrastructure: MarketLink, a program of the National Association of Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP), and a new offering through a partnership between the Farmers Market Coalition, the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Both programs use different qualifying criteria to determine market eligibility.

7. *Coordination with food banks*

There are many resources that can provide free fruits and vegetables to residents with little to no-income. However, in order to avoid an increasing demand on an already taxed system, food banks and other emergency feeding operations should build strong partnerships with farmers' markets that accept SNAP and provide free produce through incentives. This coordination should take place to ensure that eligible residents utilize SNAP benefits and receive incentives to purchase produce at farmers' markets and have access to free distributions available through food banks and their partner agencies at the end of the month when SNAP balances run low.

8. *Partner with healthcare organizations*

Healthcare organizations are encouraged to partner and support existing farmers' markets. Healthcare organizations could provide funding for incentive programming or operations while helping their patients and employees connect with fresh, local sources of produce at a farmers' market. Some Cuyahoga County markets have established relationships with hospital systems and health clinics already. Additionally, programs like Produce Prescription and Healthy Harvest at University Hospitals have forged active partnerships with healthcare providers to make fresh, local produce accessible to target populations. Working closely to link healthcare programs covering nutrition education and diet-related diseases to farmers' market is a great way to provide tangible resources to change eating and shopping behaviors.

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR PARTNERS

Our work could not happen without the generous support of our program partners.

Farmers' Markets

Broadway Farmers' Market, , Coit Road Farmers' Market, Downtown Farmers' Market, Gateway 105 Farmers' Market, Gordon Square Farmers' Market, Green Road Farmers' Market, Kamm's Corners Farmers' Market, LEAF Farmers' Market, Lakewood Farmers' Market, Maggie's Farm Stand, North Union Farmers' Market at *Chagrin Falls, Cleveland Clinic (Cleveland & Beachwood), Cleveland State University/Star Plaza, Crocker Park, Ohio City, Shaker Square, and University Hospitals*, Ohio City Farm Stand, and Tremont Farmers' Market

Philanthropic Partners

The George Gund Foundation, Mt. Sinai Health Care Foundation, Saint Luke's Foundation, The Sisters of Charity Foundation of Cleveland, and Wholesome Wave

Programming & Promotion Partners

Cuyahoga County Department of Job and Family Services, Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority, Greater Cleveland Food Bank, Hunger Network of Greater Cleveland, MetroHealth's Women, Infants, and Children Program, Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, Ohio State University Extension-Cuyahoga County, The Prevention Research Center for Healthy Neighborhoods at Case Western Reserve University, and the many community organizations comprising the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition.