THE FUTURE OF FOOD ACCESS THROUGH THE EMERGENCY FOOD SYSTEM

Hunger Summit 2018
FOOD RECOVERY. SIMPLIFIED.

Feeding America's MealConnect links your food donations with local nonprofits. For free.
Food banks manage their enabled agency program on this web-based platform.

Donors post product on the MealConnect app, and agencies are matched in real time.

Vetted volunteers can elect to deliver a real-time donation to a matched partner agency.

Trucking companies can post a rejected delivery and be optimally routed to a nearby food bank.

Retailers scan product out for donation and the food bank is automatically notified.
1.6 Million pickups
720 Million pounds
5,000 hunger relief orgs
20,000 donor locations
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Director, Retail Information Services
Feeding America
Chicago, IL
jblock@feedingamerica.org
mealconnect.org

Feeding America wants to wipe out hunger and food waste with the power of a single app
Corey Chatman
Experimental Station
Link Up Illinois - Program Manager
Who we are

Wholesome Wave is our national partner, created the Double Value Coupon Program. Provides technical support and data collection.

Experimental Station administers the program and raise. Program began in 2011.

The Illinois Farmers Market Association provides outreach, SNAP expansion training, and helps to vet markets with capacity to run an incentive program.
What we do

Link Up Illinois “Link Match” program provides mini-grants to offer Healthy Food Incentives on SNAP purchases.

Other similar programs around the country:
Fair Food Network - **Double Up Food Bucks**
Wholesome Wave - **Double Value Coupon Program**
Link Match
Brings SNAP customers to the market

$25 worth of food

- Offers a 1:1 match (spend $1 in SNAP earn $1 coupon) for Fruits and Vegetables.
- Free consulting to Farmers and Farmers Markets to expand SNAP processing.
- Changed name from Double Value Coupon to Link Match in 2016.

$50 worth of food
Sales between 2011 and 2017 for partner markets.

$1,133,484 in SNAP + $831,492 in Link Match = $1,964,976 in SNAP/Link + Link Match sales
Sites supported
SNAP & Link Match

- Since 2010 Experimental Station expanded acceptance SNAP at Farmers Markets and Farm Stands in IL.
  - 2010 - 33
  - 2017 - 167

- Sites supported in Illinois with Link Match.
  - 2010 - 6
  - 2017 - 86
Connecting with Farmers Markets

- Statewide Brochure list sites that accept SNAP and Link Match
- Some of our partners offer Link Match on WIC FMNP.
- Connect your local market to nearest SNAP, Family Services, Health, and WIC office.
  - Many markets are volunteer ran.
  - Many services orgs are over extended.
  - In many cases both lack capacity for outreach.
- Supporting your local market will help your local farmer.
Future funding of Incentives

National level
● FINI - Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program is tied to Farm Bill.

State level
● Healthy Local Food Incentive Fund
  ○ Signed into law 2017
  ○ Calls for $500,000 annually for incentive programing
  ○ Funds never approbrated.
  ○ 2 new bills HB 4568 (passed House) and SB 2588 (expect to pass) seeks to strike 2019 end date to allow for program funding and implementation.
  ○ If passed and signed by Governor must work towards having funds appropriated.
Thank you!
Veggie Rx Program

Food As Medicine
Windy City Harvest

Four program components operating at 13 sites in Chicago area

- **Corps**
  - Justice-involved youth ages 17 to 21
  - Adult offenders

- **Apprenticeship**
  - Adults
  - Dislocated workers
  - Youth Farm and Corps graduates

- **Youth Farm**
  - Underserved youth ages 15 to 18
  - College-bound students
  - Vocational students

- **Entrepreneurship & Careers**
  - Career changers
  - Entrepreneurs
  - Apprenticeship graduates

**Transitional jobs-training program and job placement**

**Community college professional certificate**

**Youth leadership development program**

**Evening courses in food production and business planning**

Farm incubator program
- Access to expertise, markets, and business planning

Further education and/or employment

Further employment

Independent small business

Food Distribution Sites and Farmers' Markets
Veggie Rx Goals

• To increase vegetable consumption for SNAP/Link enrolled individuals with diet related illnesses
• To eliminate or reduce barriers around fruit and vegetable consumption in North Lawndale
• To build awareness about farmers’ markets
• To improve health outcomes for Lawndale Christian Health Center patients
Veggie Rx Partnerships

**Chicago Botanic Garden**
- Harvested and packed Veggie Rx Boxes
- Veggie Rx Intern and Youth Farm and Corps participants promoted and staffed distributions and farmstands

**Lawndale Christian Health Center**
- Health Providers wrote prescriptions for Veggie Rx
- Provided space for distribution, donation and sale of produce
- Used electronic patient scheduling platform to help schedule and remind patients to participate
Veggie Rx Partnerships

Chicago Partnership for Health Promotion
• Led cooking demonstrations
• Provided nutrition lessons
• Provided research and evaluation support

USDA
• Veggie Rx was funded through USDA’s Food Insecurity Nutrition Inventive (FINI) Program
Veggie Rx Box Example

8 crops per box
$15 value

Example:
• 1 bu. kale
• 1 bu. collards
• 1 bu. beets
• 2 cucumbers
• 2 tomatoes
• 2 bell peppers
• 2 squash
• 2 onions

80% of participants reported eating more than half their Veggie Rx box weekly
Veggie Rx Box Distribution Stats

- 733 total boxes distributed
- Average of 30 boxes distributed per date
- 25 weeks of twice weekly distribution (June 7–Nov 21)

I appreciate the box and the program. The box helps me to provide good nutrition to my kids and myself and I’m thankful because it’s expensive to eat healthy. I can’t afford to eat healthy as often as I’d like because of the prices and availability in my neighborhood. The program gives me valuable information that I can understand and incorporate in meals at home for my family. –Veggie Rx Survey
Patient Demographics

- 262 Participants
  - 126 participants came to more than 1 session
  - 53% had children
- Race
  - 58% African American
  - 36% Latino
  - 6% other
- Language preference
  - 21% Spanish-speaking
  - 78% English-speaking
- Gender
  - 78% Female
  - 22% Male
Veggie Rx Survey Results

Participants were surveyed at the beginning and end of the program

- 66% of participants visited a farmer’s market at least once a month
- 18% increase in the number of people who reported eating 2 or more cups of vegetables per day
- Most popular vegetable: Carrots
- Least popular vegetable: Beets
- Price was the #1 barrier to access to fresh fruits and vegetables at the beginning and end of the program
Veggie Rx Coupons at Market

The box is helpful. Me and my grandkids used all the vegetables every week.
– Veggie Rx Survey

- $15 in free market coupons given with each box
- $4,230 coupons redeemed at market
- Market held on Wednesdays from June – November at Lawndale Christian Health Center
- Indoor fall market created in Lawndale Christian Health Center for Veggie Rx patients
## Comparison of 2016 and 2017 Veggie Rx

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject/Item</th>
<th>2016</th>
<th>2017</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provider Participation</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boxes Gives</td>
<td>392</td>
<td>733</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average Boxes/Week</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Unique Participants</td>
<td>175</td>
<td>262</td>
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<tr>
<td>Returners</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>78% F 22%M</td>
<td>78% F 22%M</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Race                          | African American 66%  
Latino 29%  
Other 5%  
African American 58.5%  
Latino 36.3%  
Other 6.2% |
| $ Coupons used at Market      | $1,715 | $4,230 |
| Used Market 1x/month or more  | 62%   | 66%   |
Goals For LCHC in Next 4 Years if FINI grant is awarded

• Boxes distributed
  – 2018
    • 900 Boxes
  – 2019
    • 1215 boxes
  – 2020
    • 1580 boxes
  – 2021
    • 1974 boxes

• Farm on Ogden
  – Year round distribution of Veggie Rx prescriptions

• Expansion closer to other LCHC sites
QUESTIONS?

The Future of Food Access Through the Emergency Food system