Health & Human Services Committee Meeting

Food Security Initiatives Update
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Introduction

Agenda

• Brief overview of Food Security Initiatives
• Description of programs
• Progress to date of Public Health Food Security Goals
• Summary
• Next steps
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Residential Distribution in Mecklenburg County

~65% of SNAP participants live in the crescent zone
(173K FNS recipients in Mecklenburg County, 112K in crescent area).

~72% of Women Infants & Children (WIC) recipients live in the crescent zone
(21.8K WIC recipients in Mecklenburg County, 15.8k in crescent zone).

Mecklenburg County has 29 zip codes. The ‘Crescent zone’ has 11 zip codes including 6 Mecklenburg County Public Health Priority Areas. Source: Mecklenburg County Department of Social Services (Economic Services Division) - October 2021
Food As Prescription: Eat Well – brief video description
1,933 Medicaid, SNAP & WIC clients obtain Food as Prescription in Priority Areas

Goal 1: Expand Reinvestment Partners Food as Prescription program
- Medicaid clients enrolled through Atrium
- SNAP beneficiaries enrolled through DSS, WIC, Los Caminos
- Residence in Mecklenburg 12 zip codes with highest SNAP households and includes Public Health Priority Areas

Goal 2: Increase WIC-approved fruit and vegetable consumption
- $233,521 healthy produce distributed
- 360,000 additional servings of fruits and vegetables

Goal 3: Gauge sustainability based on program success
- Responsivity (Eat Well) - 5.25%
- Increased enrollment (82%) with the Eat Well text message self enrollment format versus Healthy Helping (18%) phone call format.
- 96% highly recommend Eat Well program to family and friends
Redemptions in Mecklenburg County Food Lion Stores May – November 2021

Redemptions May - November 2021

- $78,953.59
- $127,929.60
- $206,883.19

Zip codes- Non Crescent
Crescent Zip codes
All Zip codes
Farmers Markets and SNAP Double Up Bucks

Enhanced access and unlimited SNAP Double Up bucks in farmers markets

Goal 1: Increase by 50% markets accepting SNAP and Double Up Bucks

✓ 15 farmers markets implement SNAP Double Up Bucks (an increase from 10 in FY 21)

Goal 2: Expand Double Bucks with unlimited matching

✓ 93% of markets (14/15) implement unlimited match
✓ $43,858.00 disbursed in Double Bucks
✓ Triple bucks on Thanksgiving and Christmas
✓ Increased fresh produce purchase by SNAP clients

Goal 3: Pilot pop-up farm produce stands in food deserts

✓ 2 Pop-up farm produce stands with SNAP Double Bucks implemented
Farmers Market and SNAP Double Up Bucks

SNAP & Incentive Spending 2021

- **April**: $37,620
- **May**: $37,620
- **June**: $37,620
- **July**: $37,620
- **August**: $37,620
- **September**: $37,620
- **October**: $37,620
- **November**: $37,620
- **December**: $45,281

$82,902 worth of healthy food went into homes and the local food economy!

*Includes cash incentive & triple dollars promotions
Edible Landscapes

Seventeen edible landscapes in public health priority areas

Goal 1: Provide urban orchards and community gardens in food deserts and food insecure locations

✓ 60% increase in urban gardens with fruit trees in food insecure locations
✓ More than 30,000 households have access to gardens

Goal 2: Increase raised beds in community gardens in food insecure areas.

✓ ~80 raised beds established in community gardens to provide seasonal produce in food deserts
✓ Signage installed in all established gardens
Healthy Corner Stores Refrigeration Pilot

Refrigeration in 5 Healthy Corner Stores in food insecure locations.

Goal 1: Conduct refrigeration pilot in healthy corner stores in public health priority areas.
- ✓ 20% Healthy corner stores increase access to healthier foods
- ✓ Promotional signage, recipe cards, and QR codes provided to undergird expansion
- ✓ Store owners report increased client attendance

Goal 2: Provide healthy produce incentives to support refrigeration pilot.
- ✓ $5,160 distributed in coupons for fresh fruits and vegetables
- ✓ 86% coupon reimbursement rate in 5 stores with refrigeration pilot
Goal 1: Expansion of Online Mecklenburg County Regional Food Access Directory and Map

✓ ~30% increase in new and or enhanced data points

Goal 2: Enhance equitable access, utility and reach of online maps

✓ Virtual instruction modules created
✓ Marketing and communication social outreach linked to libraries created – initial focus West Blvd and Beatties Ford Rd Libraries
Food Security - Advertisement and Communication

Goal: Increase communication and visibility of healthy affordable local produce in low-income areas.

✓ Charlotte Area Transit System Advertisement (CATS):
  ▪ ~10 million media impressions (views)
  ▪ Six light rail stations, LYNX rail interior carts, and social media
  ▪ 24-week campaign

✓ National Cinemedia:
  ▪ 821,512 impressions in public health priority areas
  ▪ 8-week social media banner and video campaign
  ▪ Target: Farmers Markets, Corner Stores, and Refrigeration pilots
Goal: Increase access to culturally appropriate healthy foods in underserved low-income Hispanic/Latino communities.

✓ DSS Senior Citizen Nutrition Program
- Support fresh produce for 50 eligible Hispanic/Latino seniors.
- Provides 100 pounds of fresh fruit per week.
- Provides 5 culturally tailored meals/week - 1000 hot & cold meals per month.

✓ Latin American Chamber of Commerce of Charlotte (LACCC)
- Latino Healthy Corner Store Kitchen Hot Meals program to Latino low-income families/individuals in need.
- Three (3) Healthy Corner Store food vendors provide ~ 440 nutritious, culturally appropriate meals per week i.e. 3480 hot meals for 8 weeks.
Next Steps

- Expand food security programs with best practices.
- Increase physical and economic access to affordable local foods.
- Evaluate Food as Prescription (Eat Well) program.
- Explore Virtual Food delivery platforms - online grocery shopping and delivery.
- Implement culturally appropriate healthy eating and physical activity education and awareness campaign.
Question & Answers