

Increasing Equity in Food Access Through Doubling SNAP Benefits at Farmers' Markets

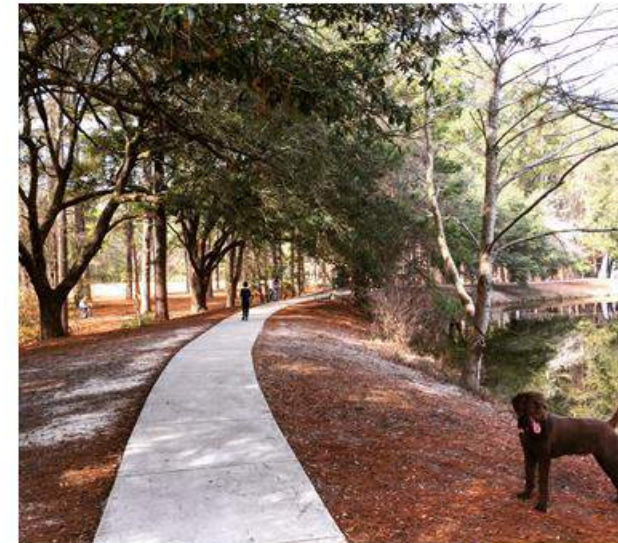


Kelsey Allen, MPH, CHES
Eat Smart Move More South Carolina





Mission - Advance community-led change to reduce obesity by making the healthy choice the easy choice for every South Carolinian.



Statewide Partners in SNAP at the Farmers' Market work in SC



Jamie Gibson
SNAP Champion at
Hub City Farmers Market



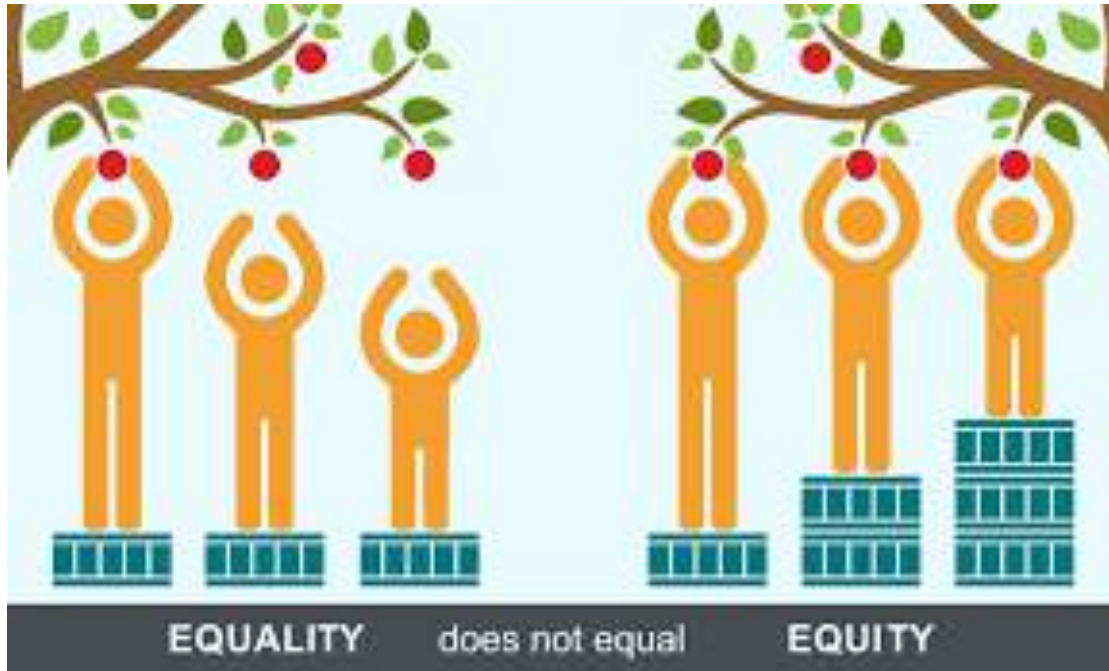
UNIVERSITY OF
SOUTH CAROLINA

Carrie Draper
Director of Policy and Partnership Development
Center for Nutrition and Health Disparities
University of South Carolina

Outline

- ▶ Food access and health equity
- ▶ Overview of SC Farmers Market Grant
- ▶ SNAP in South Carolina
- ▶ Evaluation results
- ▶ Hub City Farmers Market: digging deeper
- ▶ Conclusions and Next Steps

Health Equity and Healthy Food Access



“Health inequities are avoidable differences in health between groups of people that result from systematic differences, social conditions, and processes that determine health.” (Wilder Research)

Healthy Food Access: Who is affected?

- ▶ Low-income zip codes have 25 percent fewer supermarkets and 1.3 times as many convenience stores as middle-income zip codes.
- ▶ Zip codes with predominately Black residents have about half as many supermarkets as zip codes with predominantly white residents and predominantly Latino areas have only a third as many as predominately White areas.

Healthy Food Access: Why it matters

- ▶ Adults living in neighborhoods with supermarkets and grocery stores have lower obesity rates (21 percent) as compared to those living in neighborhoods with no supermarkets (32 to 40 percent).
- ▶ Residents are more likely to meet dietary guidelines for fruit and vegetable consumption when they live in a census tract with a supermarket.
- ▶ For African Americans, produce consumption increases by 32 percent when they have these amenities.

Why it matters: An economic argument

- ▶ Grocery stores, corner stores, and farmers markets that accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits bring federal dollars into communities. This, in turn, produces economic benefits for stores, and spurs broader economic stimulus across states, regions, and the nation. Specifically, every \$5 in new SNAP spending generates as much as \$9 of economic activity.

SNAP in South Carolina

- ▶ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (formerly known as food stamps)
- ▶ Administered by USDA's Office of Food and Nutrition Services/eligibility tested at state level



Average monthly SNAP benefit for each household member:

Fiscal Year 2016

\$127

Average SNAP benefit per person per meal:

\$1.41

Average Monthly SNAP Benefit By Demographic Group, FY 2015, South Carolina

All households



Households with children



Working households



Households with seniors



Households with non-elderly disabled individuals



Background: SNAP in South Carolina



2016 in SC: 1 in 6 (16%)

- ▶ More than 72% in families with children
- ▶ More than 28% in families with elderly or disabled members
- ▶ More than 43% in working families

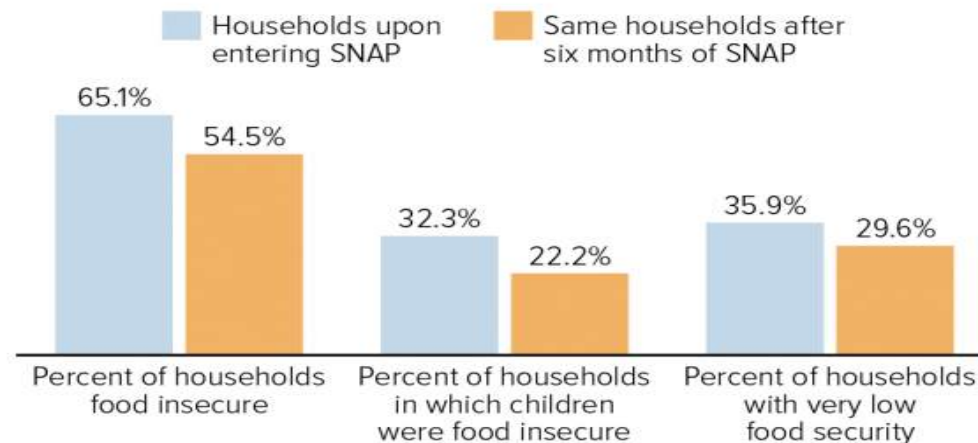
SNAP in South Carolina

- ▶ SNAP can be used to purchase...
 - ▶ Any food or food product for home consumption



- ▶ SNAP cannot be used to purchase...
 - ▶ Beer, wine, liquor
 - ▶ Vitamins and medicines
 - ▶ Food that will be eaten in the store
 - ▶ Hot foods

SNAP Helps Families Afford Adequate Food



How Does SNAP Benefit the Economy?

Moody's Analytics estimates that in a weak economy, \$1 in SNAP benefits generates \$1.70 in economic activity.

SNAP benefits pumped about \$1.2 billion into South Carolina's economy in 2016.



For more information on SNAP, including South Carolina-specific information, please see:

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities Chart Book: <http://www.cbpp.org/research/food-assistance/chart-book-snap-helps-struggling-families-put-food-on-the-table>

USDA SNAP data: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

South Carolina state SNAP program: <http://dss.sc.gov/content/customers/food/foodstamp/index.aspx>

SNAP Healthy Incentive Programs

Current Research

Is Price a Barrier to Eating More Fruits and Vegetables for Low-Income Families?

RESULTS: The 2005 Dietary Guidelines market basket would require *a low-income family to devote **43% to 70% of their food budget to fruits and vegetables***

CONCLUSION: Public policies should examine *ways to make fruits and vegetables more affordable* to low-income families.

RESULTS: The *odds of achieving significant improvements in **FV consumption increased** for diabetics **using financial incentives** for payment at the FM and for those frequenting the FM more often*

CONCLUSION: Results reveal a dose-response relationship between the intervention and FV improvements and emphasize the ***importance of addressing economic barriers to food access.***

A farmers' market at a federally qualified health center improves fruit and vegetable intake among low-income diabetics

Darcy A. Freedman ^{a,b,*}, Seul Ki Choi ^{b,c}, Thomas Hurley ^b, Edith Anadu ^d, James R. Hébert ^{b,e}



\$5 SNAP = \$10 in Healthy Bucks for FV

<https://dss.sc.gov/assistance-programs/food-and-nutrition-programs/healthy-bucks/>

SNAP at Farmers' Markets

- ▶ Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program
- ▶ Local Food Promotion Program
- ▶ Farmers Market Promotion Program
- ▶ Nutrition education resources
- ▶ Free or low-cost equipment options
- ▶ SNAP Healthy Bucks (state-level)
- ▶ Farmers Market SNAP Support Grant (FMSSG) Program



FMSSG Program

- ▶ **Goals:** to increase SNAP accessibility and participation at farmers' markets, and support the establishment, expansion, and promotion of SNAP/Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) services at farmers' markets.
- ▶ **Funding usage:** 1) to conduct tasks that are necessary for *SNAP to operate at farmers' markets*, and 2) to *increase the number and effectiveness of farmers' market participation in SNAP*.

Farmers Market SNAP Support Grant: 2015-2017

Year 1 Goal (2016): Grow SNAP sales
by 60% over 2014

Year 2 Goal (2017): Grow SNAP sales
by 75% over 2014

5-10 Year Impact:

- ▶ By 2020, SNAP will grow 125% over 2014
- ▶ Users will grow by 50%
- ▶ Repeat use will grow by 150%

Hub City Farmers' Market FMSSG Background

Opportunities

- State-wide SNAP healthy incentives program
- 1 billion annually in SNAP

Challenges

- Only 1/3 of SC FM accepting SNAP
- Low participation at participating markets

Hub City Farmers' Market FMSSG Background

Markets

- Don't understand SNAP
- Perceived/real “hassles” getting set-up
- Lack of capacity

SNAP Shoppers

- Low awareness
- Not sure how to use SNAP at the market
- Transportation
- Lack of variety
- Don't feel comfortable/embarrassing

SNAP Champion Model



“The SNAP Champion will develop relationships with community organizations and potential users of SNAP at the market, market SNAP benefits accepted, and collect data in order to grow SNAP participation ...

Through this grant, the SNAP Champion will help to develop a model which organizations across the state can use to increase SNAP participation at their Farmers’ Markets. The ideal candidate will be community-oriented and have a fearless attitude with strong relationship-building, listening, organization, and presentation skills.”

Pre and Post Model Implementation

Market 1

\$9,100 SNAP

\$15,000 SNAP

Market 2

1 SNAP shopper

30 SNAP shoppers

Market 3

Not set-up to accept SNAP

Set-up to accept SNAP -
handful of customers

Evaluation: Shopper Perspectives

“ The Double SNAP program. I probably wouldn’t shop there otherwise. Most things are not cheaper there than the grocery store, but with Double SNAP they are.”

“Getting to know the farmers and showing my children where food comes from. They learn about what is in season so it is educational for the kids and they get excited.”

Variety

“... a little shame associated with using EBT, so keeping it discreet helps ...”

Evaluation: Vendor Perspectives

“I’ve seen an increase in overall crowd flow and diversity of people coming to market. The market tended to be middle and upper class customers, but this has really been reaching out to the lower-income families that otherwise wouldn’t consider the market as an outlet for purchasing produce.”

“They are doing a great service by increasing SNAP participation.”

(Recommendation) Having a featured vendor so they become more aware of who is able to accept the SNAP program; rotating this vendor each week throughout the season, highlighting their products and also incorporating this with recipe ideas which are often questions that SNAP consumers in particular have.

Barriers Identified

- ▶ Location
- ▶ Stigma/culture of market
- ▶ Lack of variety of and culturally appropriate goods available



Hub City Farmers Market: digging deeper

Hub City Farmers Market



SNAP at HCFM



HOW TO USE SNAP AT THE HUB CITY FARMER'S MARKET

01

VISIT HUB CITY FARMER'S MARKET

Hub City Farmers Market is open every Saturday morning from 8:00 am until noon. Local farmers sell fresh produce, dairy and meat products, jams and jellies, breads and cereals, and many other SNAP-eligible grocery items.

02

GO TO THE MARKET MANAGEMENT BOOTH

Staff at the Market Management Booth assist all customers. They can help educate SNAP customers on cost-saving programs, sign them up for the programs, and exchange their SNAP dollars for tokens to be spent at the market.

03

JOIN THE DOUBLE SNAP PROGRAM

Joining the cost-savings programs is simple. Tell staff you want to join, give them your SNAP/EBT card, and you'll get tokens. If you don't use all of your tokens, don't worry. You can use them on your next visit at the Hub City Farmer's Market.

OUR PROGRAMS



Use your card to get tokens equal to the cash amount you want to spend



Spend \$40 in SNAP and get up to \$40 in FREE tokens



Spend \$5 in SNAP and get \$10 in FREE tokens

2009 Accepts SNAP

2013 Creates Double SNAP Program

2014 SC Healthy Bucks

2015 SNAP Support Grant

Double SNAP Program + SC Healthy Bucks



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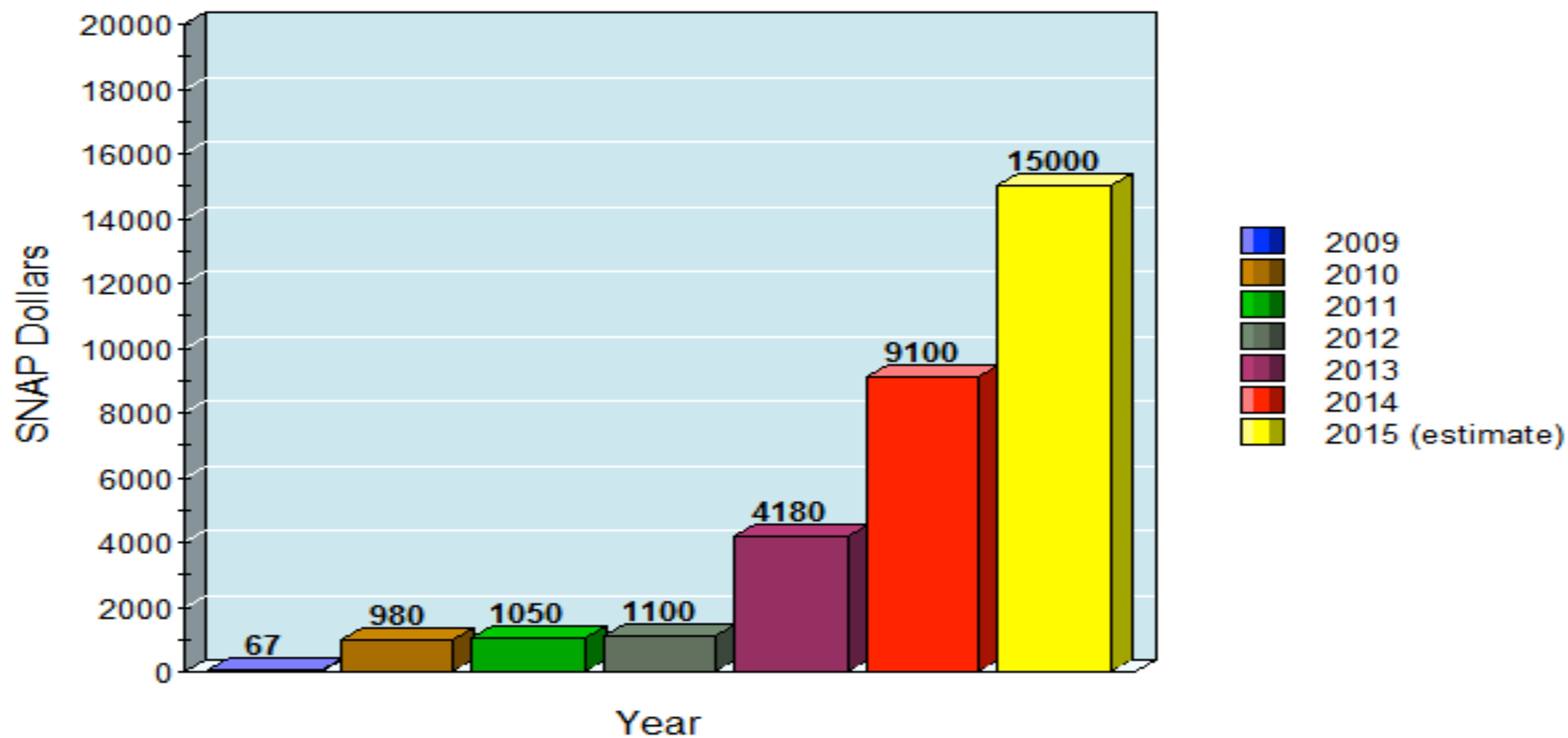


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Up to \$40 in SNAP + Matching SNAP Dollars + Healthy Bucks = Up to \$90

SNAP Dollars Accepted



SNAP Champion Model

Recommendations

Full-time or Part-time

Best Practices

Two Distinct Functions

- ▶ 1) Community Outreach
- ▶ 2) One-on-one Communications



SNAP Champion Model: Best Practices

- List Servs
- Membership Associations
- Research
- Consultations/Email
- Nutrition Incentives
- Evaluation Data Collection
- Signage



JOHNS HOPKINS
CENTER *for* A LIVABLE FUTURE



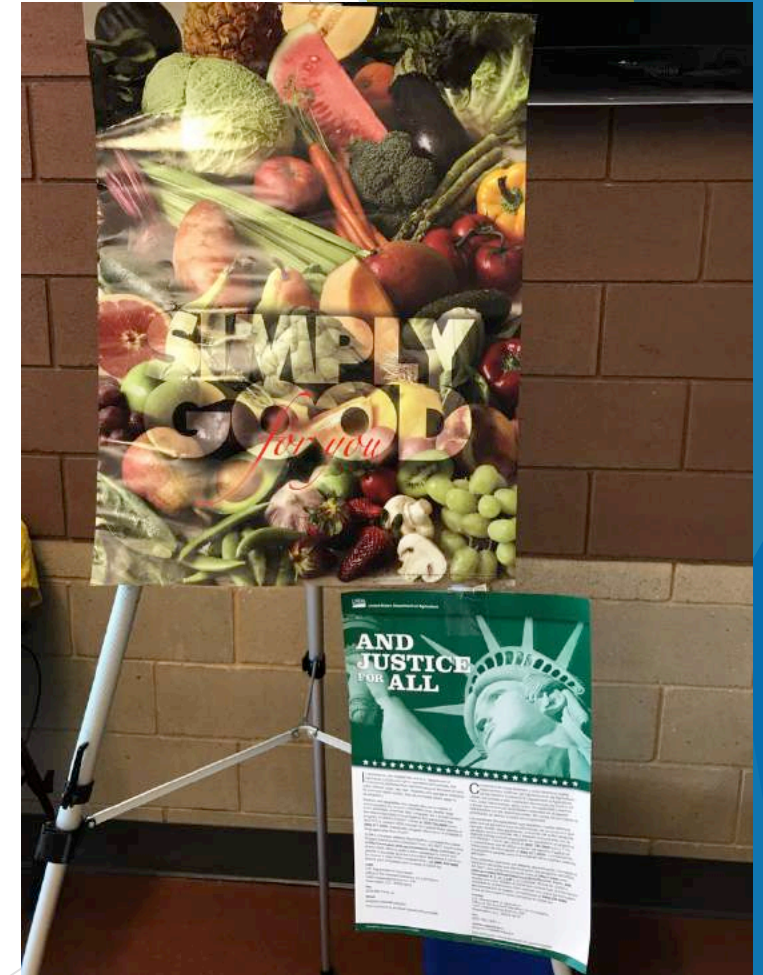
SNAP Champion Model: Creating Outreach Materials

- Plan your project
- Toolkits
- Determine Your Budget
- Implement Your Campaign



SNAP Champion Model: Community Outreach

- Target Population
- Key Stakeholders
- Local Community Partners
- Public Health
- Anti-hunger Organizations
- USDA
- SNAP Administrators
- SNAP ED/Outreach

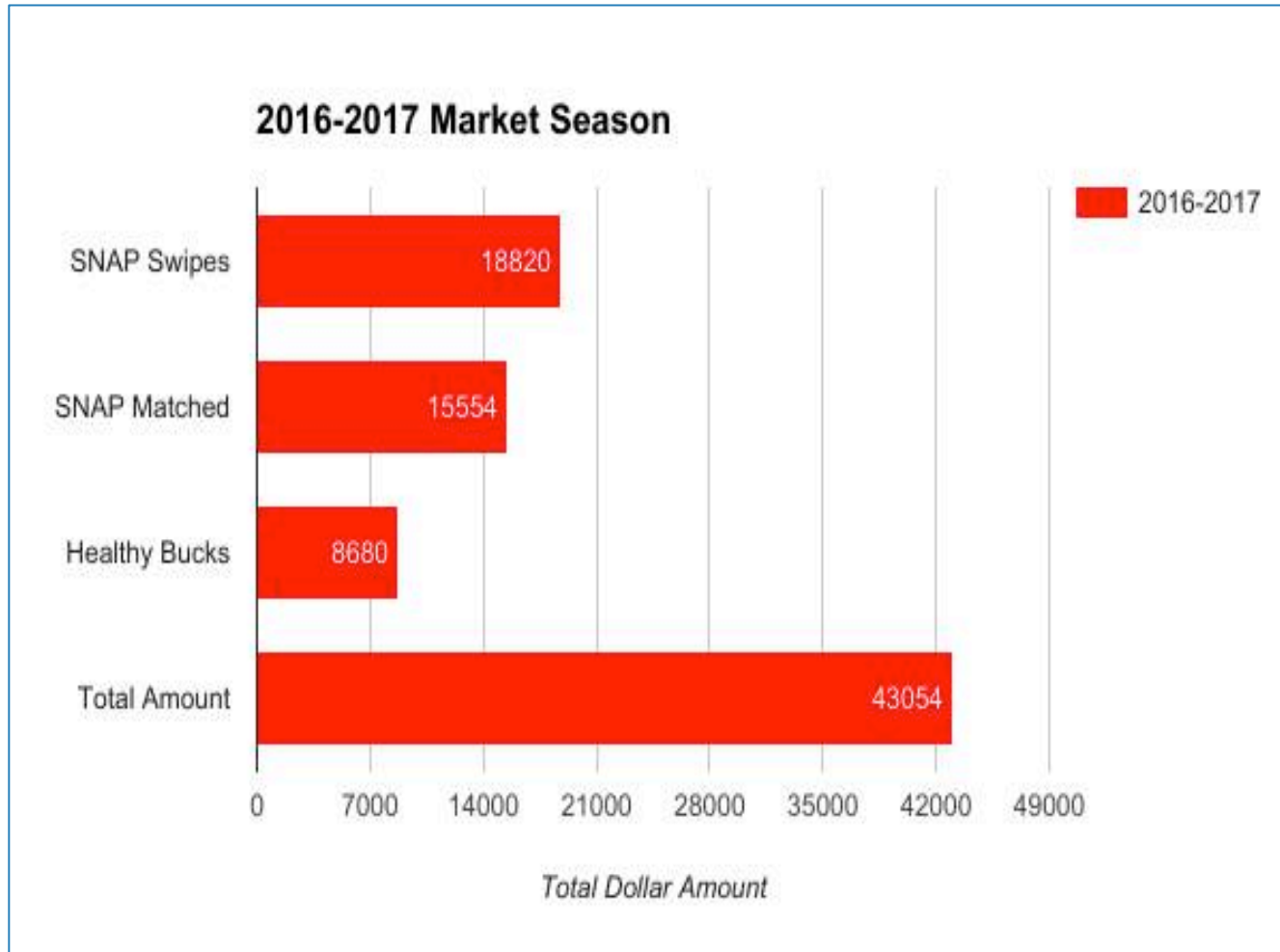


SNAP Champion Model: One-On-One Communication

- SNAP Shoppers Past & Present
- Familiarity With Low-Income Programs
- Welcoming Environment
- Advocate
- Market Tours
- Connect Outside of Market
- Courtesy Calls

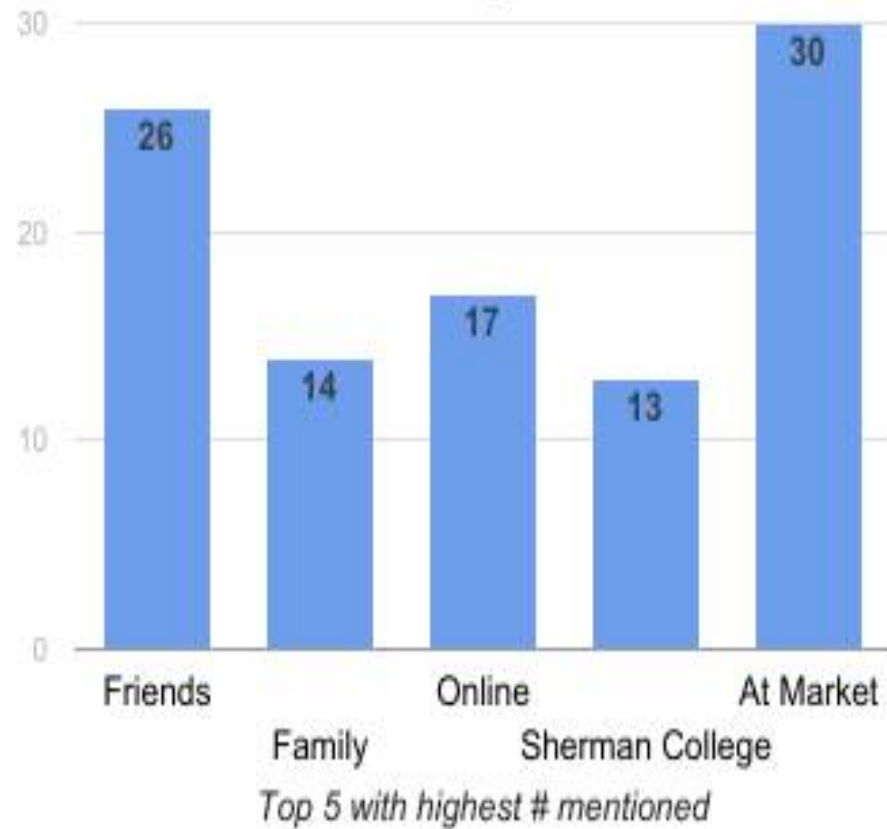


SNAP Champion Model: 2016-2017 Market Season



SNAP Champion Model: One-to-One Communication

*How Shoppers Heard About
Double SNAP Program*



HCFM addresses barriers by:

- ▶ Location of market
- ▶ Consistent signage, tokens, and training of all vendors
- ▶ Double SNAP can be used for any SNAP-eligible good
- ▶ Policies protect farmers and culture of the market
- ▶ Knowing their community-designated SNAP staff

Conclusions

- ▶ The importance of front end planning and prioritizing SNAP customers
- ▶ First year of SNAP at HCFM was less than \$100. It takes awhile and can require a shift in priorities.
- ▶ This model does address many barriers for shoppers and outreach, but not all. (Transportation, location, etc)

Next steps for SC

- ▶ Replicate the success of HCFM
- ▶ Bolster the existing healthy bucks program
- ▶ Improve technology for farmers markets interested in incentive programs
- ▶ Continue to educate the farming and market community on the value of SNAP at the farmers market



Thank you!

Kelsey Allen, MPH, CHES

Community Coordinator

Eat Smart Move More South Carolina

kelsey@eatsmartmovemoreesc.org