

Regional Funding

Fiscal Year 2021 - Partner Funding Application

Virginia Community Food Connections

Agency Information

General Information

Agency Name	Virginia Community Food Connections
Physical Address	PO Box 7664, Fredericksburg, VA, 22404, U.S.A.
Mailing Address	PO Box 7664, Fredericksburg VA 22404
Agency Phone Number	(540) 845-4267
Federal Tax ID #	811346510
Web Address	virginiacfc.org
Agency Email Address	elizabethborst@virginiacfc.org

Agency Mission Statement

Virginia Community Food Connections' mission is to ensure the availability, access, and affordability of locally-produced food by connecting local farmers and all members of the community through programs, awareness and advocacy. In Planning District 16 (PD 16), 11.2% of residents are 'food insecure', or unable to access sufficient nutritious food for an active and healthy life. Two thirds are families with children. PD 16 has significant food deserts (limited access to healthy food) and food swamps (high-density of fast/junk food). Many struggle with hunger, especially the working poor. Obesity is tied to food insecurity, has significant economic costs (healthcare, lost earnings) and is an indicator of the community's overall health. Obesity rates in PD 16 exceed the state average of 27.2%, with Caroline the highest at 41.2%. Concurrently, agriculture is Virginia's largest industry, but small and midsize local farmers are struggling.

Federal benefits that target food insecurity include SNAP (Supplemental Food Assistance Program) and WIC (Women Infants and Children) and benefit the local economy. Last year, 41,179 PD 16 residents participated in SNAP and 5,322 received WIC benefits.

Through food access, distribution programs, and community partnerships, VCFC connects low-income families with available local produce. This is a proven strategy for addressing food insecurity, increasing farm sustainability, and improving community health. VCFC's main program, Virginia Fresh Match (VFM), provides fruit and vegetable incentives to SNAP recipients who shop at local farmers markets using their SNAP benefits, doubling the value of SNAP while creating additional revenue for farmers. Produce Packs and Nutrition Education (PPNE) supports WIC by providing fresh produce and education to young families. Farm to Pantry connects food pantries with local produce farmers. Fredericksburg Food Access Forum connects community partners working on food security in the region.

Number of Years in Operation	11
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Main Contact

Main Contact Elizabeth L. Borst, phone: (540) 940-7829, email:
BethAustin@viriniacfc.org

Job Title Executive Director

Localities Served

Please select any/all localities your agency serves.

- Caroline**
- Fredericksburg**
- King George**
- Spotsylvania**
- Stafford**

Collaborative Impact

Describe in detail how the community would be impacted if your agency were dissolved or merged with another partner agency.

VCFC serves an important, and often hidden need in the community. By tackling food insecurity and promoting access to fresh produce, these programs address the rising rates of obesity and preventable diet-related diseases. Unequal access to nutritious food, the high cost of quality food, and poor diet habits create health disparities that affect vulnerable populations and have economic impacts that affect the community.

Encouraging use of farmers markets as a source of affordable, locally grown produce is an effective intervention that is being deployed throughout Virginia and nationwide. By maintaining and doubling SNAP benefit dollars circulating in the local economy, VCFC builds local economic impact. Collectively, VCFC programs generated \$193K in 2018, dollars that stay in the local economy, support hungry families and provide income to farmers. Agriculture is central to the region's heritage, identity, and economy but there are few organizations actively supporting farmers. VCFC is the only area program connecting local produce with struggling families. By focusing efforts on fresh, locally grown produce, local agriculture is supported, farmers receive added income, and struggling families have access to high quality fruits and vegetables that would otherwise be out of reach.

Unlike free food at emergency food pantries, VCFC provides food-insecure families the choice to buy the produce they need and want. VCFC is giving people the power to choose healthy food, with funds that are not a handout but a boost to healthier eating habits. VCFC is filling a significant need within the community, with no other entity performing these roles. There would be a loss to community health, food security and the agricultural economy if VCFC ceased operation.

Community Impact

Please provide at least 2 examples of how your services have impacted members of our community.

Example 1

Too many area families live on the edge of having sufficient income to cover basic expenses. Fluctuations in life circumstances can quickly place a family in the position of needing help.

VCFC clients, Shab B. and John M. have been on and off SNAP several times. They became regular Spotsylvania Farmers Market shoppers last season after learning about VFM from market signage. Shab has been recovering from an injury and just reapplied for SNAP benefits. They returned to the market for the first time in August to use EBT and obtain the full \$30 match that doubles their benefits for fresh healthy food.

Like many VCFC clients, Shab and John have a favorite market, but being able to use SNAP and VFM tokens interchangeably at all VCFC's PD 16 markets provides flexibility to shop when and where it is convenient for them, to ensure weekly access to fresh produce. Together, they choose fruits and vegetables to combine with ingredients they have at home. John explains that he works construction and eats a lot of fresh fruit to help him re-hydrate after working in the summer heat. He packs salads for his lunch every day using produce he obtains at the market. Eating local fresh produce has made a big impact on his health and a cleaner diet has completely alleviated his stomach issues.

Shab says that using SNAP and VFM incentives make a big difference, and she feels more comfortable buying produce now that she has the tokens. As we hear so often, produce can be a luxury for a low income family. "I no longer feel bad about buying produce – the tokens make it more affordable, and I don't feel like I am splurging when I bring home lots of fruits and vegetables". When asked what they would say to our funders if they could, they looked at each other and simply said "Thank you. We love this program. Don't go away."

Example 2

Rose M. is both a customer who receives SNAP benefits and utilizes the VFM Program, and a farmers market vendor. She has a unique perspective on how the VFM Program benefits children, families, farmers and the community.

Rose has been using her SNAP benefits at the farmers market for almost 3 years. As a single mother of 4 children ages 2-18, she explains that "it has made a big difference in how I am able to shop and feed my family. At the farmers market, I use SNAP tokens to purchase the reasonably priced, but higher quality meats, and all of the matching tokens go towards buying fresh vegetables. Using my benefits at the market has been a big budget savings, significantly increasing the amount of produce I can afford, and everyone is eating better."

Rose has a full time job and takes college classes. In addition, she is a vendor at Spotsylvania Farmers Market on the weekends, selling produce for a large regional fruit farmer. She sees, firsthand, the value of the program from a farmer's perspective. "The token program provides our business with a substantial amount of additional income that we would not otherwise receive." She reiterates that for too many families, healthy produce is a luxury, and fruit is no exception.

The best part for Rose is seeing parents being able to introduce their children to produce they could not otherwise afford. "As a daycare teacher, I see many children who don't eat any fruits or vegetables, often because they've never been exposed to them. When families can use the tokens to try new produce, children discover how delicious freshly picked fruit can taste. This experience sets them up for a lifetime of good eating habits." She continues, "I'll never forget the first time I saw a child walking through the market eating a tomato like an apple – it made me so happy! This program is a win for families and a win for farmers. Please know that we count on it and appreciate your role in keeping it going."

Example 3 (Optional)

Recognizing that food insecurity exists in families that may not meet SNAP income limits, and that young families with small children are particularly vulnerable, the PPNE partnership provides WIC families with a bag of fresh vegetables that can be refilled 3 times at farmers markets in 3 localities, plus recipes, and cooking/storage instructions. By encouraging repeated market visits, PPNE builds familiarity with choosing, preparing, and eating healthy fruits and vegetables, creating positive behavior change for these families.

Marlen and her toddler visited SCFM for her 3rd bag refill, after receiving a Produce Pack bag at her Spotsylvania WIC clinic visit. She has visited the market before, and getting Produce Pack encouraged her to return. It has enabled her to bring home produce for the entire family and they have fully utilized the refills, choosing apples, peaches, onions, peppers and tomatoes that are her daughter's favorites. About the program, Marlen says, "It helps out with what I like to cook and is very useful." She adds, "Kids are the future of the community and we need to nurture them."

At Bowling Green Farmers Market, J&A Produce is the designated vendor for refilling the bags. Daughter and UMW student, Tatiana, runs the booth with her mother on Saturdays.

Tatiana loves PPNE and explains "I wish it could be offered to more WIC moms. It is really important for families to learn to eat fresh produce and refilling the bags at the farmers market is a great way to introduce them to the market". She's noticed that many WIC moms are very young, and some come with their own mothers, who provide transportation and shopping advice. Tatiana says "I like working with these customers and teaching them about our produce. So many customers don't know anything about fruits and vegetables or how to use them." And she's gaining new customers. Out of every 5 WIC moms she sees with bags each summer, roughly 2 or 3 will return after the bags are done.

Virginia Community Food Connections

Agency Budget Narrative

Administrative Expenses

Provide an overview of the administrative costs for your agency.

VCFC administrative costs include accounting expenses, operating expenses, marketing expenses, and program-specific expenses.

Accounting expenses include accounting services, banking and merchant service fees, and audit services.

Operating expenses include insurance, office supplies and services, telecommunication equipment and services, computer equipment, software fees and services, and travel expenses.

Marketing expenses include social media services, graphic design services, and printing and publication services.

Program-specific expenses include the equipment and materials costs for each program and contracted services for seasonal work required by several programs. These expenses also include payment of vendor redemptions for the VFM Program and payment for produce purchases for the Farm-to-Pantry and Produce Packs & Nutrition Education Programs.

If your agency is requesting an increase or decrease in administrative funding, please describe in detail the reasons for these changes.

VCFC is seeking an increase in administrative funding. This increase is accounted for in its entirety by the first-time request for funding for our Produce Packs and Nutrition Education (PPNE) Program. The administrative funding will be used to defray the accounting, operating, marketing and program-specific expenses incurred in the execution of the PPNE Program.

Please provide justification for and specific amounts of administrative costs that are defrayed by locality funds.

Specific administrative costs that are defrayed by locality funds are expenses allocated to the VFM and PPNE Programs:

- Accounting expenses (\$12,890) include accounting services specific to the VFM and PPNE Programs (e.g., processing SNAP revenue, vendor redemption payments, produce purchase billings).
- Operating expenses (\$17,524) include operating expenses specific to the VFM and PPNE Programs (e.g., hotspots used at farmers markets for internet connectivity, bank ACH fees for vendor redemption payments, produce bags, nutrition education materials).
- Marketing expenses (\$4,450) include VFM and PPNE program-specific marketing and promotional materials (e.g., outreach flyers and posters distributed throughout PD 16, vegetable storage and cooking instruction sheet distributed with produce packs).
- Program-specific expenses (\$233,050) include program equipment and materials, seasonal contractor services, vendor redemptions, and produce purchases.

Capital Expenses

Please provide an overview of the capital costs for your agency.

VCFC does not have any capital expenses at this time, so this section is not applicable.

Please provide justification for and specific amounts of capital costs that are defrayed by locality funds.

VCFC does not have any capital expenses at this time, so this section is not applicable.

Salary & Benefit Expenses

Please provide an overview of any increases or decreases in general personnel expenses for your agency.

VCFC is seeking an increase in salary & benefit funding. This increase is accounted for in its entirety by the first-time request for funding for our PPNE Program. The salary & benefit funding will be used to defray the compensation of staff operating the PPNE Program. Specifically, these funds will defray the cost of the newly established part time position of PPNE coordinator. To more effectively and efficiently execute the PPNE Program, program operation and oversight functions that were previously distributed among several VCFC staff members are being consolidated in the PPNE coordinator, streamlining program execution and coordination.

Please provide a description of any changes to agency benefits structure or cost.

There have been no changes to VCFC's benefits structure or costs.

Budget Issues

Provide any legislative initiatives or issues that may impact the agency for the upcoming year.

At this time, VCFC is not aware of any legislative initiatives or issues that might affect the agency for the upcoming year.

If you are aware of "outside" funding sources that will expire or be reduced on a set cycle or date, please note those below and how you are planning for them.

Funding for the USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Program continues to be provided for through the most recent Farm Bill approved by Congress. However, the federal FINI funding for the statewide VFM network, through which VCFC receives its FINI funding, is only secured through April 2021 at this time.

At the state level, efforts are underway to develop long-term funding for nutrition incentives through legislative and/or budget approaches. These efforts are being championed by Governor Northam's Children's Cabinet, Food Security Work Group, on which VCFC's Executive Director serves.

Please detail any identified agency needs or areas of concern that are currently not being addressed in your funding request.

In addition to operating the VFM and PPNE Programs, VCFC also conducts other regional food access activities that connect low-income families to available local food. These activities include:

- Farm-to-Pantry Program, which sells after-market produce to emergency food pantries for distribution throughout PD 16.
- Fredericksburg Food Access Forum, which convenes regional organizations working on food security for greater collaborative impact.

VCFC has effectively piloted Medicaid Incentive and Fruit and Vegetable Prescription programs with Moss Free Clinic, but funding has yet to be secured. VCFC intends to be operating a mobile farmers market in PD 16 within 3 years, at which our market-specific programs will be offered just as they are at our other farmers markets. While funding for these programs is not requested at this time, it is important to note the cumulative impact of these programs on regional food security, on community food access partnerships, and on farmer income.

Virginia Community Food Connections

Agency Total Budget

In the boxes below provide an overview of the administrative costs associated with your total agency budget.

Expenses

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Salary			138,744.00	193,123.00	203,426.00
Benefits			0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Expenses			237,727.00	262,315.00	305,901.00
Capital Expenses			0.00	0.00	0.00
Other Expenses			0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	0.00	376,471.00	455,438.00	509,327.00

Revenues

Please include revenue associated with your entire organization. This section represents the TOTAL revenue your organization is receiving. The revenue associated with specific programs will be listed within your program budgets; this section represents total revenues. (For example if your organization requests funding for multiple programs the total amount requested from each locality or other entities goes within this section)

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Caroline			9,861.00	10,000.00	15,000.00
Fredericksburg			0.00	15,000.00	25,000.00
King George			0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Spotsylvania			0.00	15,000.00	25,000.00
Stafford			0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
United Way			0.00	0.00	0.00
Grants			221,548.00	258,248.00	266,039.00
Client Fees			0.00	0.00	0.00
Fundraising			2,500.00	10,000.00	20,000.00
Other (Click to itemize)	0.00	0.00	143,353.00	141,500.00	156,000.00
Total	0.00	0.00	377,262.00	459,748.00	517,039.00

Surplus / Deficit

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Surplus or Deficit	0.00	0.00	791.00	4,310.00	7,712.00

Virginia Community Food Connections

Locality Information

Locality Notes

Please use the spaces below to provide any locality specific notes or statements that may be relevant to your application.

Caroline County

In 2020, VCFC requests \$10K to support the VFM Program, \$5K in new funding to support PPNE, for a total increase of 50%. Caroline has 11% food insecurity, 5,238 individuals on SNAP, \$386K in SNAP issued monthly, and extensive USDA food deserts and food distribution shortfalls. VFM has operated for 2 ½ seasons in Caroline and has been well received by clients and vendors. In Bowling Green, more community events contributed to a stronger market, and VFM participation remained steady. Route 639 Market attendance declined, and VFM participation dropped as a result. In 2020, to reach more SNAP families and increase VFM usage, VCFC will increase outreach through schools and senior communities and continue to support outreach efforts by the Caroline Resource Council (including DSS, VDH, VCE, and other partners). In 2020, VCFC will continue the PPNE Program that provides Caroline WIC families with free produce, introducing them to local vegetables and farmers market shopping.

City of Fredericksburg

In 2020, VCFC requests \$15K to support the VFM Program, \$10K in new funding to support PPNE, for a total increase of 67%. Fredericksburg has a 15% food insecurity rate, the highest in PD 16. 5,807 individuals receive SNAP benefits. The city has a high SNAP usage rate and several USDA food deserts, per the Regional Food Security Map. Fredericksburg Farmers Market (FXFM) has been a long-time partner with VCFC, participating in and piloting a number of food access programs that serve the community. While disappointing that the market at Dixon Park closed mid season, the VFM incentive program at Hurkamp Park showed 18% growth. As our partnership with FXFM evolves, in 2020 Parks & Rec's market management team will continue to operate the market but VCFC will set up a separate booth for VFM & PPNE Programs. This staffing and operations change will take some load off market management, while centralizing food access functions under VCFC at the market with their approval and support.

King George County

For 2020, VCFC requests \$5,000 funding to support the VFM Program, with no increase. In King George, 3,185 individuals received SNAP with an issuance of \$220K per month. KG has a high SNAP usage rate, high food insecurity index and several USDA food deserts, per the Regional Food Security Map. King George Farmers Market (KGFM) is a longtime partner with VCFC, piloting and participating in food access programs that serve the community and position KGFM as a healthy food resource for KG citizens. VCFC works with DSS and RAHD on outreach, participates in the DSS monthly food pantry and works with VCE, school nutrition and others to distribute VFM outreach material to summer feeding programs, backpack programs, and preschools. In 2020, VCFC will continue to work with KGFM management to increase VCFC-VFM program outreach throughout the county, with a focus on reaching SNAP families through the school system, area churches, and social media.

Spotsylvania County

VCFC is requesting \$15K for the VFM Program, and \$10K in new funding for PPNE, for a total increase of 67%. Spotsylvania has 8% food insecurity, 15K individuals on SNAP and \$1.1M in SNAP issued monthly. Parts of the county have higher food insecurity, low vehicle access and USDA food deserts, per the Regional Food Security Map. With DSS support, the region's first SNAP incentive program started at Spotsylvania Farmers Market (SCFM) in 2009, now the #2 VA incentive market. SCFM contributes 60% of SNAP sales at PD 16 markets. In 2020, we will expand our outreach partnership with Spotsylvania Public Schools to reach additional families, a strategy we have successfully applied elsewhere. We will also build on our relationships with Germanna to address student hunger and increase outreach through the summer feeding program. In 2020, VCFC will continue the PPNE Program that provides Spotsylvania WIC families with free produce, introducing them to local vegetables and farmers market shopping.

Stafford County

For 2020, VCFC requests \$5,000 funding to support the VFM Program, with no increase. In Stafford, 11,964 individuals receive SNAP benefits with a monthly issuance of \$1,059,728. According to the Regional Food Security Map, Stafford has a medium food insecurity index, areas of low vehicle access and USDA food deserts. VCFC does not operate the VFM Incentive program in Stafford, despite repeated efforts to work with a market partner. Stafford DSS has been supportive of these efforts so their clients can benefit from the regional program, as well as other VCFC market programs like PPNE. Many Stafford residents use and get value from the program at FXBG, SCFM, and KGFM, representing 13% of total program clients. To align with regional efforts and increase their collaborative impact, Stafford school counselors seeking resources and connections with other area agencies, and food access organizations such as SERVE, participate in VCFC-led Fredericksburg Food Access Forum.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program

Program Overview

You may save your work at any time by clicking on the "Save My Work" link/icon at the bottom or top of the page.

When you have completed all questions on the form, select the "Save My Work and Mark as Completed" link/icon at the bottom or top of this page.

You may also SWITCH between forms in this application by using the SWITCH FORMS feature in the upper right corner. When switching forms, any updates to the existing form will automatically be saved.

General Information

Program Name Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program
Is this a new program? No

Program Contact

Name Beth S. Austin
Title Nutrition Incentive Coordinator
Email BethAustin@viriniacfc.org
Phone (540) 940-7829

Program Purpose / Description

Provide an overview of this program

Virginia Community Food Connections (VCFC) connects low-income families with nutritious, locally grown fruits and vegetables to support a healthy diet and improve food security for all residents. The Virginia Fresh Match (VFM) Program is an incentive program operated by VCFC that provides affordable fresh food access to low-income Virginians who shop at local farmers markets using SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or food stamps). It also generates significant income for local farmers. Families that use their SNAP benefits at participating farmers markets can receive, at no cost, up to an additional \$30 in VFM incentives each week to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables, effectively doubling the value of SNAP spent. By doubling the value of SNAP dollars, food insecure families can access healthy, locally grown produce that may otherwise not be affordable. Evidence shows that when people can't afford produce, they don't purchase it, but when produce is available and affordable, they buy and consume more. Thus, VCFC's VFM Program attracts new shoppers to area farmers markets, increases affordability and encourages consumption of nutritious, local fruits and vegetables, creates revenue for farms and keeps benefit dollars in the local economy. VCFC also provides a token program that enables customers to use their credit or debit cards at the market. This program serves all market customers, is a service for vendors and creates additional farmer revenue.

Client Fees

Please describe the fees clients must pay for the services by this program.

To participate in VFM, clients must receive SNAP benefits and use their benefits at the market. There is no fee, beyond spending SNAP funds to "trigger" the VFM incentive match. To accept SNAP, the market, or an agent such as VCFC, is authorized by USDA Food & Nutrition Service as a SNAP retailer. Once infrastructure is in place (bank account, processing equipment, tokens, signage), the market accepts SNAP at a central location like the market manager or token booth. The SNAP client swipes their EBT card for the amount they choose to spend. They receive blue \$1 wooden tokens to spend on any SNAP eligible food. VCFC matches every \$1 in SNAP spent with red \$1 VFM tokens to be used for additional fresh fruits and vegetables only. This effectively doubles their benefits, allowing customers to purchase more produce. Clients can receive up to \$30 in VFM tokens each week which can add up to \$120/month - a significant addition to a family's budget when the average SNAP benefit is \$127/month.

Justification of Need

Please state clearly why this service should be provided to the citizens of the region and why the localities should consider this funding request.

Despite a robust economy, 1 in 11 PD 16 residents are food insecure. Paradoxically, hunger, obesity and diet-related diseases go hand-in-hand, resulting in increased healthcare costs and lost productivity. A proven prevention strategy ensures that low-income residents have access to affordable healthy foods, which VCFC offers through the VFM Program. At a time when small and midsize farmers are struggling, VCFC builds farmer income; in 2018, farmers earned \$193K from all VCFC programs. SNAP and VFM incentives can be 10-15% of a farmer's sales revenue at market. VFM also has a positive impact on the local economy. More than \$3.2M/mo in SNAP is disbursed in PD 16. When some of these SNAP dollars are spent at farmers markets, the multiplier rate is great - every \$1 spent at a market translates into \$3 in local spending. Locality support for this funding request helps ensure a healthy diet for vulnerable residents, continues support for local farmers and builds the regional economy.

If this is a new program, be sure to include the benefits to the region for funding a new request.

This is the 2nd year requesting locality funding for a program that has served PD 16 for 11 years. Localities provided indirect support via member fees to GWRC (VCFC's fiscal agent until 2017). Direct funding enables VCFC to continue to partner with agencies to support their SNAP and WIC clients with access to healthy, affordable food. Despite declining SNAP participation, the need within this vulnerable population remains high. VFM Program growth is evidence that we are effectively serving new and existing clients, indicates ongoing need for the program, and is a strong measure of its value to the community. Other VCFC food security roles include expanding the Farm to Pantry Program's local produce distribution and facilitating community collaborations through Fredericksburg Food Access Forum. VCFC also works with Virginia partners to advance nutrition incentives, with localities benefiting from the region's \$388K share of a \$1.8M Virginia FINI grant which requires 100% local match.

Target Audience and Service Delivery

Describe the program's intended audience or client base and how those clients are served.

Our clients are low income residents who receive SNAP benefits. In PD 16, 17,169 households and 41,179 individuals are on SNAP. 69% are in families with children and 33% have members who are elderly or disabled. 75% of SNAP families had at least 1 working adult in the last year (per DSS). These families are unable to make ends meet, and consistent access to healthy food can be a significant challenge. With stringent income limits for SNAP eligibility, they represent the most vulnerable residents in our community. To serve this population, the program operates at 6 PD16 farmers markets: Fredericksburg, 2 Spotsylvania markets, Route 639 and Bowling Green in Caroline, King George, and at Dale City Farmers Market in Woodbridge. Stafford SNAP clients also utilize these markets. SNAP recipients access the program by using their EBT card at these markets to purchase healthy, locally grown foods. A SNAP purchase "triggers" distribution of matching VFM tokens for additional fresh produce.

If your program has specific entry or application criteria, please describe it here.

Clients are qualified for SNAP by local DSS offices, following federal/state eligibility guidelines. VCFC is not involved with this process. However, once residents become SNAP participants, they have to know the VFM incentive program exists and how to use it. VCFC works closely with DSS, RAHD and many other stakeholders who have direct SNAP client contact to conduct outreach to build program awareness and usage. Clients also learn about the program through VCFC tabling events, outreach materials in public locations, referrals from school counselors and food pantries, social media and word of mouth. Because the SNAP population is continually in flux, this is an ongoing process - multiple touch points and ongoing direct contact through trusted sources are essential. Program usage is also dependent on the ability of the client to identify and prepare fresh produce. We partner with VCE, DYP and others to provide nutrition education and additional touch points with these clients.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program

Program Budget Narrative

Please indicate in detail reasons for increases or decreases in the amounts you are requesting.

VCFC's VFM Program is well-established throughout PD 16 and continues to aid greater numbers of food insecure families each year. For FY2021, VCFC will be funding the growth in the VFM Program through other funding sources and is not seeking additional funding for this program in this request. VCFC continues to be committed to ensuring that this much needed program continues to thrive and to better serve the citizens of PD 16 who have come to depend upon it for incorporating nutritious, fresh fruits and vegetables into their family's diet. The VFM Program also directly provides increased revenue for local farmers and indirectly benefits overall community health by reducing the likelihood of diet-related diseases.

If an increase is being requested, please describe the impact not receiving an increase would have on the program.

VCFC is not requesting an increase in funding for the VFM Program in FY2021. However, this program is satisfying a significant need for fresh, affordable produce within the community. No other organization is performing this role in PD 16. Without the requested funding, the VFM Program would be diminished and there would be greater food insecurity in PD 16, a higher risk to community health, and a weakening of the agricultural economy in the region.

Additionally, without the requested funds, it will be a challenge for VCFC to satisfy the 100% match requirement for the VFM FINI grant, which is providing over \$100,000 per year for the next two years to address food insecurity in the region.

In particular, please describe in detail if any increase is sought for new positions or personnel.

VCFC is not requesting an increase in funding for the VFM Program in FY2021. While a seasonal token operator will be hired for the Fredericksburg Farmers Market (FXFM) beginning in the 2020 market season, a function previously performed by the FXFM market management staff, VCFC is funding this position from other sources.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program

Program Specific Budget

Please provide your program specific budget below.

Expenses

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Personnel		74,020.00	76,013.00	96,056.00	155,786.00
Benefits		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Operating Expenses		178,619.00	184,629.00	220,817.00	236,190.00
Capital Expenses		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	252,639.00	260,642.00	316,873.00	391,976.00

Revenues

This section represents revenue specifically associated with your program. Revenue that supports the implementation of your program and the services provided to the community.

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Caroline		9,861.00	9,861.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Fredericksburg		0.00	0.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
King George		0.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
Spotsylvania		0.00	0.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
Stafford		0.00	0.00	5,000.00	5,000.00
United Way		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Grants		140,108.00	152,678.00	164,629.00	224,039.00
Client Fees		0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Fundraising		0.00	0.00	0.00	5,000.00
Other (Click to itemize)	0.00	108,613.00	100,000.00	106,000.00	118,000.00
Market Token Sales		108,613.00	100,000.00	106,000.00	118,000.00
Total	0.00	258,582.00	262,539.00	320,629.00	397,039.00

Surplus / Deficit

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021

Surplus or Deficit	0.00	5,943.00	1,897.00	3,756.00	5,063.00
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Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program

[View Diagram](#) Goals and Objectives

Goals

Goal:

Provide SNAP processing and Virginia Fresh Match incentives at VCFC farmers markets to build local farmer income and support the regional agricultural economy

Objectives		2017 Year End	2018 Baseline	2018 Year End	2019 Baseline	2019 Year End	2020 Baseline
Objective 1: In 2020, VCFC will successfully distribute \$121,540 in SNAP benefits and VFM nutrition incentives as evidenced by vendor market token redemptions	Total # Clients Served	113,650		115,981	118,000		121,540
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful	113,650		115,981	118,000		121,540
	% Achieved / Successful	100	0	100	100	0	100
Objective 2: In 2020, VCFC will support 97 regional vendors with SNAP and VFM token payments to increase farmer income at farmers markets.	Total # Clients Served	87		103	94		97
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful	87		103	94		97
	% Achieved / Successful	100	0	100	100	0	100

Explanation & Overview

If your outcomes are significantly less than your stated objectives, please note any reasons why this might be the case

IMPORTANT NOTE: One of the data points from last year’s application was auto-populated incorrectly by eCimpact into this year’s application. Under this second goal, Objective 1, 2019 Baseline, Total # Served and # of Clients Achieved/Successful should BOTH be 118,000, for 100% achieved/success rate. 11,800 is incorrect in both fields.

This has been a very successful season for VCFC’s VFM Program and we have exceeded our objectives prior to 2019 year end. Because the VFM Program is a mature program that has been successfully operating in the region for 11 years, we are anticipating it to maintain its strong track record, and project a modest growth of 3% for 2020.

Updates for FY2018

Please note any changes you plan to make to the program, or the stated goals and objectives, given the data you have reported

Objective 1: In 2020, VCFC will successfully distribute \$121,540 in SNAP benefits and VFM nutrition incentives as evidenced by vendor market token redemption. Objective 2: In 2020, VCFC will support 97 regional vendors with SNAP and VFM token payments to increase farmer income at farmers markets.

Other than those noted, no additional program changes are anticipated but VCFC is exploring new partnerships to be developed more fully in 2020. These include: Fredericksburg Food Coop, which has a food access and equity mission; Micah Ministries is using fresh produce in job training and is developing a Community Cooler with donated coolers; The Table is increasing produce purchase and distribution in low-income neighborhoods; Germanna is buying produce for student pantries; UMW has a new on-campus pantry. Through Fredericksburg Food Access Forum, VCFC connects many partners and programs for greater impact. All of these advance the VFM program and build awareness about food insecurity.

If you are restating the goals or objectives for the prior calendar year, please include those here

Goal: Provide SNAP processing and Virginia Fresh Match incentives at VCFC farmers markets to build local farmer income and support the regional agricultural economy

Goal:

Deliver SNAP processing and Virginia Fresh Match incentives at VCFC farmers markets to provide SNAP recipients with access to affordable and nutritious local food.

Objectives		2017 Year End	2018 Baseline	2018 Year End	2019 Baseline	2019 Year End	2020 Baseline
Objective 1: In 2020, VCFC will successfully	Total # Clients Served	2,340		2,423	2,450		2,525

serve SNAP beneficiaries as evidenced by 2525 SNAP transactions at VCFC markets.	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful	2,340	2,423	2,450	2,525
	% Achieved / Successful	100	0 100	100	0 100
Objective 2: In 2020, VCFC will successfully attract 775 new SNAP shoppers at VCFC farmers markets.	Total # Clients Served	703	1,104	750	775
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful	703	1,104	750	775
	% Achieved / Successful	100	0 100	100	0 100

Explanation & Overview

If your outcomes are significantly less than your stated objectives, please note any reasons why this might be the case

This has been a very successful season for our VFM Program at area markets, and we exceeded all stated objectives prior to 2019 year end. Despite strong program usage, one metric, the number of unique individuals served, was less than projected for all localities except Fredericksburg. This tells us several key things - first, our total transactions (2,773 in FY19) and new customers (838 in FY19) remain high, showing that we are effectively serving our client base. Second, our clients are using the program well. SNAP clients are returning to the market multiple times during the season and maximizing the \$30/\$30 match - a shift from prior years when we saw many more lower dollar transactions, evidenced by total transactions and individual transaction data collected at the market. Thru DSS, we know that the SNAP rolls are declining, and beneficiaries tend to receive benefits for shorter time periods. Reaching new clients is an ongoing challenge and a program goal, at which we succeed.

Updates for FY2018

Please note any changes you plan to make to the program, or the stated goals and objectives, given the data you have reported

The objectives for Goals 1 and 2 will be increased 3% as a result of this season's success. Objective 1: In 2020, VCFC will successfully serve SNAP beneficiaries as evidenced by 2525 SNAP transactions at VCFC markets. Objective 2: In 2020, VCFC will successfully attract 775 new SNAP shoppers at VCFC farmers markets.

In 2020, we will set up a dedicated VCFC token booth at Fredericksburg Farmers Market, increase outreach in Caroline County, and partner with school districts across the region to reach additional low income school families. To expand and diversify our organizational income, as well as widen our client reach, we will take steps to build program awareness, name recognition and funding sources within the community. We have recently hired a Development Director, who plans to build our social media presence and put up a new website. We anticipate that in the coming year, these efforts will be productive in strengthening our role within the community.

If you are restating the goals or objectives for the prior calendar year, please include those here

Goal: Deliver SNAP processing and Virginia Fresh Match incentives at VCFC farmers markets to provide SNAP recipients with access to affordable and nutritious local food.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program

Number of Individuals Served

Localities

Please provide the actual numbers of individuals served in this program during FY2017, FY2018, and FY 2019, the estimated numbers of individuals served in FY2020 and the projected numbers of individuals served in FY2021.

Locality	FY2017 (Actual)	FY2018 (Actual)	FY 2019 (Actual)	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Projected
Fredericksburg City	204	183	182	191	236
Caroline County	22	54	63	71	68
King George County	89	84	82	86	34
Spotsylvania County	536	332	404	424	298
Stafford County	90	115	98	103	68
Other Localities	311	477	554	590	646
Total	1,252	1,245	1,383	1,465	1,350

Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Community Food Connections - Virginia Fresh Match Program

Collaborative Impact

Efforts and Partnerships

Describe in detail examples of collaborative efforts and key partnerships between your program and the other programs or agencies in the area.

VCFC works in close partnership with social services and community organizations to conduct outreach to build awareness and program usage. DSS Directors and staff across the region continue to be our strongest program partners and advocates, ensuring DSS clients receive information about using VFM to double their SNAP benefits at area markets. Outreach partnerships have been formed with RAHD, CRRL, VCE, Agency on Aging, Moss Free Clinic, DYP, RACSB, Head Start, Summer Food Service, Fredericksburg Regional Food Bank, food pantries, schools divisions, CFRRR, Mary Washington Healthcare, SRMC and others. Many participate in the Fredericksburg Food Access Forum (FFAF), an informal working group that VCFC facilitates to build connections between regional food access programs and develop effective food security strategies. One key FFAF output is the Regional Food Security Map, www.virginiacfc.org/FoodSecurityMap, developed to better understand regional food security and distribution gaps.

Collaborative Impact

Describe in detail how the community would be impacted if your program were dissolved or merged with another partner agency.

No other area organizations focus on connecting the most vulnerable members of our community with nutritious fruits and vegetables, making healthy food more affordable, and distribution more equitable. VCFC's programs create long term behavior change, introducing thousands of new customers to area farmers markets, empowering them to make healthy choices, and showing them the benefits of buying and eating local fruits and vegetables. Struggling families have access to high quality produce that would otherwise be out of reach. As community gathering places, farmers markets help combat social isolation, and are places where families receive nutrition education from producers, market staff, other shoppers, and community partners like VCE, not available at grocery stores. Without VFM, SNAP beneficiaries would be unable to use their benefits at markets or double the value for fresh produce, and farmers would miss out on SNAP shoppers and the significant income their purchases provide.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

Program Overview

You may save your work at any time by clicking on the "Save My Work" link/icon at the bottom or top of the page.

When you have completed all questions on the form, select the "Save My Work and Mark as Completed" link/icon at the bottom or top of this page.

You may also SWITCH between forms in this application by using the SWITCH FORMS feature in the upper right corner. When switching forms, any updates to the existing form will automatically be saved.

General Information

Program Name Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

Is this a new program? Yes

Program Contact

Name Elizabeth L. Borst

Title Executive Director

Email Elizabethborst@virginiacfc.org

Phone (540) 845-4267

Program Purpose / Description

Provide an overview of this program

Virginia Community Food Connections (VCFC) connects low-income families with nutritious, locally grown fruits and vegetables to support a healthy diet and improve food security. The goal of the Produce Packs and Nutrition Education (PPNE) Program is to connect vulnerable young moms and children on WIC with affordable fresh produce to help them learn the value of eating nutritious fruits and vegetables. The PPNE Program provides free sample bags of seasonal, local produce to WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) clients, along with fresh food education, sampling and recipes. The sample bags can be refilled free 3 times at area farmers markets, exposing limited-income families to affordable local fruits and vegetables and creating familiarity with shopping at the farmers market. An existing project with a successful history, PPNE is a food access and education partnership with VCFC, Rappahannock Area Health District (RAHD) WIC program, the Doctor Yum Project (DYP) and The Table at St. George's Episcopal Church food pantry. By approaching regional food access, food security and food literacy together, these strong community partners have greater reach and impact. This program works hand in hand with the successful Virginia Fresh Match Program at farmers markets. Nearly 800 WIC families can benefit from affordable, nutritious fresh produce available from local farms, while receiving friendly, hands-on sampling and education at WIC offices.

Client Fees

Please describe the fees clients must pay for the services by this program.

There are no client fees associated with this program, which provides free local vegetables and supplemental nutrition education to vulnerable young mothers and children who receive WIC benefits. WIC provides federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for low-income pregnant, breastfeeding, and non-breastfeeding postpartum women, and to infants and children up to age five who are found to be at nutritional risk, providing benefits to program participants to buy nutritious food. To be eligible for WIC, clients must meet eligibility guidelines (income limits are between 100 percent and 185 percent of federal poverty guidelines) set by VDH and administered locally by RAHD. Unlike SNAP, WIC does not have citizenship requirements. The PPNE Program supports WIC in offering fresh, local vegetables and supplemental nutrition education to WIC clients.

Justification of Need

Please state clearly why this service should be provided to the citizens of the region and why the localities should consider this funding request.

VA and our region are facing a growing crisis, with VA leading the nation in overweight preschoolers on WIC (20%). Lack of cooking skills, reliance on processed foods and 43% of meals eaten away from home contribute to high rates of overweight and obesity in children. Governments and communities can work together to address the complex, connected problems of undernutrition, hidden hunger, and obesity. PPNE addresses a need for improved access to affordable produce and education about nutritious food for young families. This vulnerable population, who may earn a little too much to receive SNAP, is food insecure and lack access to affordable fruits and vegetables, essential to healthy, growing kids. PPNE utilizes a system already in place - WIC clinic visits, to assist families in making healthy food choices. Intentional community investment in health, agriculture and food security have long term benefits to the region - healthier kids, a strong local food system and a better economy.

If this is a new program, be sure to include the benefits to the region for funding a new request.

PPNE has operated for 4 years, but this is the first time VCFC is requesting locality support. It has a strong track record at reaching a vulnerable and underserved population - young families with limited resources and limited knowledge about nutritious foods. Initially supported by a VDH CDC grant through RAHD, PPNE is part of a community effort to reach beyond SNAP to a broader low income population, with fresh food access and education. WIC participants can be enrolled in the benefits program for more than five years, a relatively long benefits window that provides opportunity for interventions over time, which can reinforce long term behavior change. At the farmers markets, we strive to create a friendly, welcoming environment for this vulnerable population, creating a sense of community and support around healthy food for young moms and their children. Support from the region will enable the program's stable continuation and possible growth, to better serve the community.

Target Audience and Service Delivery

Describe the program's intended audience or client base and how those clients are served.

The target audience is low income mothers and children on WIC in Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania and Caroline. Clients are served through the delivery of Produce Packs (PP) and Nutrition Education (NE) at WIC clinics in 3 localities, along with 3 free refills at area farmers markets. 780 PP bags will be distributed over 13 weeks, Jun-Aug. Bags will contain 4 types of seasonal vegetables and instructions for washing, storing and preparing. PP bags may be refilled with produce from Jun-Sep (17 weeks). Clients from prior years can also have their bags refilled.

PPNE is estimated to reach 3,120 people over the project period. 780 heads of household will receive PP bags and lobby education (+ average 3 family members). 10% are expected to refill PP bags at a farmers market, plus refills of previously distributed bags, for a total of 350 projected refills.

Farmers are paid for produce delivered (\$25/crate) and bags refilled (\$8-10/bag for 3-4 vegetables, or 2-3 vegetables + 1 fruit).

If your program has specific entry or application criteria, please describe it here.

WIC, along with SNAP, is a federal benefit program that makes up the national hunger safety net. WIC is focused on healthcare and nutrition of low-income pregnant and postpartum women, and children under the age of 5, and provides benefits to WIC participants to buy nutritious food. Evidence shows that children's taste preferences are set in the first 3 years of life so early exposure to a varied diet rich in fruits and vegetables is essential for a lifetime of healthy weight and disease prevention.

VCFC supports WIC clients but is not involved in the WIC enrollment process. To receive PPNE, clients must be actively enrolled in WIC and scheduled for a WIC Clinic visit during the summer months. PPNE takes a hands-on, partnership approach to fresh food access and education, providing economically vulnerable families with fresh vegetable samples, tools for building food literacy, and the opportunity to visit the farmers market multiple times for additional free produce.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

Program Budget Narrative

Please indicate in detail reasons for increases or decreases in the amounts you are requesting.

For the first time, VCFC is seeking community partner funding for our Produce Packs and Nutrition Education (PPNE) Program. This request for funds accounts for the entire increase in the funds requested by VCFC. VCFC has successfully operated the PPNE Program for 4 years. For the first three years, the PPNE Program was funded through a CDC grant provided to the Rappahannock region WIC offices. Because of changing priorities, the CDC grant was not renewed in 2019. In that year, the Rappahannock Area Health District and VCFC partnered to provide the necessary funding to continue the program. Sadly, VCFC is not able to continue to fund this program from the organization's financial reserves. To ensure that this much needed program continues to serve the citizens of PD 16, VCFC is now seeking community partner funding to augment the funds that have been made available by other sources.

If an increase is being requested, please describe the impact not receiving an increase would have on the program.

The PPNE Program connects vulnerable young mothers and children who receive Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits with affordable fresh produce to help them learn the value of eating nutritious fruits and vegetables. The PPNE Program provides free sample bags of seasonal, local produce to WIC clients, along with fresh food education, sampling and recipes. The sample bags can be refilled free 3 times at area farmers markets, exposing limited-income families to affordable local fruits and vegetables and creating familiarity with shopping at the farmers market. Research has shown that by the age of 2-3, children have established healthy or unhealthy eating patterns. Without this funding, the PPNE Program will not reach a population of significant need – about 800 WIC families and 2,400 children, nor expose them to the locally available and nutritious fresh produce, thereby increasing the likelihood of diet-related disease later in life.

In particular, please describe in detail if any increase is sought for new positions or personnel.

To more effectively and efficiently execute the PPNE Program, VCFC has established a part time position of PPNE coordinator. Program operation and oversight functions that were previously distributed among several VCFC staff members are being consolidated in the PPNE coordinator, streamlining program execution and coordination. The funds being sought in this request will in part fund the PPNE coordinator position.

Virginia Community Food Connections - Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

Program Specific Budget

Please provide your program specific budget below.

Expenses

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Personnel				10,349.00	12,275.00
Benefits				0.00	0.00
Operating Expenses				20,170.00	25,848.00
Capital Expenses				0.00	0.00
Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,519.00	38,123.00

Revenues

This section represents revenue specifically associated with your program. Revenue that supports the implementation of your program and the services provided to the community.

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Caroline				0.00	5,000.00
Fredericksburg				0.00	10,000.00
King George				0.00	0.00
Spotsylvania				0.00	10,000.00
Stafford				0.00	0.00
United Way				0.00	0.00
Grants				24,312.00	13,123.00
Client Fees				0.00	0.00
Fundraising				0.00	0.00
Other (Click to itemize)	0.00	0.00	0.00	6,207.00	0.00
Reserves				6,207.00	0.00
Total	0.00	0.00	0.00	30,519.00	38,123.00

Surplus / Deficit

	FY 2017 Actual	FY 2018 Actual	FY 2019 Budgeted	FY 2020 Budgeted	FY 2021
Surplus or Deficit	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00

Virginia Community Food Connections - Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

[View Diagram](#) Goals and Objectives

Goals

Goal:

Goal 1: Provide Produce Packs and Nutrition Education (PPNE) program for WIC clients in Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania and Caroline by leading PPNE program planning, implementation and evaluation

Objectives		2017 Year End	2018 Baseline	2018 Year End	2019 Baseline	2019 Year End	2020 Baseline
Objective 1: Provide Produce Packs to 780 WIC clients over 3 months in Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania, Caroline	Total # Clients Served			360			780
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful			360			780
	% Achieved / Successful	0	0	100	0	0	100
Objective 2: Provide Nutrition Education to 1,075 WIC clients at Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania and Caroline WIC clinics	Total # Clients Served			623			1,075
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful			623			1,075
	% Achieved / Successful	0	0	100	0	0	100

Explanation & Overview

If your outcomes are significantly less than your stated objectives, please note any reasons why this might be the case

Not applicable

Updates for FY2018

Please note any changes you plan to make to the program, or the stated goals and objectives, given the data you have reported

No changes, new program

If you are restating the goals or objectives for the prior calendar year, please include those here

No changes, new program

Goal:

Goal 2:

Provide Produce Pack refills to WIC clients and reimburse farmers at participating farmers markets in Fredericksburg, Spotsylvania and Caroline

Objectives		2017 Year End	2018 Baseline	2018 Year End	2019 Baseline	2019 Year End	2020 Baseline
Objective 1: Provide up to 332 total Produce Pack refills at farmers markets	Total # Clients Served			218			332
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful			218			332
	% Achieved / Successful	0	0	100	0	0	100
Objective 2: Reimburse up to 8 produce farmers for PPNE bag refills for WIC clients	Total # Clients Served			8			8
	Total # Clients Achieved/Successful			8			8
	% Achieved / Successful	0	0	100	0	0	100

Explanation & Overview

If your outcomes are significantly less than your stated objectives, please note any reasons why this might be the case

Not applicable

Updates for FY2018

Please note any changes you plan to make to the program, or the stated goals and objectives, given the data you have reported

Not applicable

If you are restating the goals or objectives for the prior calendar year, please include those here

Not applicable

Virginia Community Food Connections - Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

Number of Individuals Served

Localities

Please provide the actual numbers of individuals served in this program during FY2017, FY2018, and FY 2019, the estimated numbers of individuals served in FY2020 and the projected numbers of individuals served in FY2021.

Locality	FY2017 (Actual)	FY2018 (Actual)	FY 2019 (Actual)	FY 2020 Estimate	FY 2021 Projected
Fredericksburg City	518	512	352	1,104	1,042
Caroline County	267	211	216	227	216
King George County	0	0	0	0	0
Spotsylvania County	535	537	415	649	912
Stafford County	0	0	0	0	0
Other Localities	0	0	0	0	0
Total	1,320	1,260	983	1,980	2,170

Virginia Community Food Connections - Produce Packs and Nutrition Education

Collaborative Impact

Efforts and Partnerships

Describe in detail examples of collaborative efforts and key partnerships between your program and the other programs or agencies in the area.

PPNE is an example of outside agencies working together to advance the work of WIC, an agency facing repeated budget cuts. PPNE supports WIC nutrition goals and focuses on the vulnerable demographic of low income young moms and children. Community partners play the following roles in PPNE: VCFC is project lead, coordinating activities with partners, markets, farmers and contractors. WIC promotes PPNE to clients and trains staff to distribute PP bags, collect client data and make follow up calls. Doctor Yum Project (DYP) provides lobby education (samples, recipes, farmers market info) and produces weekly "what's in the bag" fliers. The Table at St. George's provides space for produce intake, packing and storage. Contractors manage these processes, deliver bags to WIC clinics, and handle at-market bag tracking. Multiple farmers receive income from produce delivery and refills. With partners working collaboratively, the impact of the program is amplified in the community.

Collaborative Impact

Describe in detail how the community would be impacted if your program were dissolved or merged with another partner agency.

We have a real world example of community impact if PPNE is discontinued. In 2016-2018, we leveraged CDC funding thru VDH to launch and operate the program. In 2019, RAHD agreed to fund the Fredericksburg portion, leaving the other 2 localities unfunded. The partners sought, but did not receive, funding from CFRRR. Faced with the possibility of discontinuing PPNE in Spotsylvania and Caroline, we reached out to all partners for guidance. WIC staff strongly urged continuation, given the popularity of the bags, refills and sampling with clients. DYP values getting their message about healthy family meals directly to young moms. The Table's mission is to address community hunger through abundant fresh produce. Chaplin Youth Center values the hands-on experience for at-risk youth volunteers. Collectively, we moved forward, resulting in the highest program usage rate by WIC mom's to date. These are strong indicators of the need for and importance of this collaborative partnership approach.