

# **Building Health and Wealth**

## **Assessing Potential Benefits and Raising Awareness of the WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY**

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## **How to Use this Toolkit**

This toolkit provides resources for advocates interested in how the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program increases access to healthy foods for low-income mothers and children while growing economic opportunities for farmers. The toolkit is divided into two main sections. The first section assesses need for the WIC FMNP in Louisville, Kentucky and potential benefits of the program. The second half consists of tools and examples for raising community awareness and support for the program. Each chapter has been written so that it can be understood independently of the others. The *Table of Contents* links directly to information that addresses specific interests or needs.

## **Acknowledgements**

Creating this report and toolkit has required the hard work, advice, and expertise of many people. I am particularly grateful to Jessica Anderson at the Kentucky Department of Agriculture for sharing about the WIC FMNP, to Cynthia Sullivan and Susan Borders for helping me to navigate information about WIC, and to the WIC nutritionists of West Louisville for sharing their stories and passion for the women and children they serve.

I am also grateful for the staff at the organizations that have supported my work, especially to Deborah Webb, Director at the Community Farm Alliance, for her ideas and to John Kelly of the Congressional Hunger Center for his guidance and support.

Finally, special thanks to Samuel Raskin, fieldsite partner and fellow Emerson National Hunger Fellow, for challenging me and for sharing my enthusiasm for fighting hunger.

The Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellowship, a project of the Congressional Hunger Center, is a program that develops effective leaders with a deep understanding of hunger and poverty and empowers them to find innovative solutions to end hunger.

Each year fellows work for six months in community-based organizations all over the country involved in fighting hunger at the local level and then complete the year with six months of work at national organizations in Washington D.C., including national advocacy organizations, think tanks, and federal agencies.

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# *Need and Potential*

**A WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program  
in  
Louisville Metro, KY**



# The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

## Executive Summary

Congress established the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in 1992 to increase access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables for low-income mothers and young children and to grow market opportunities for farmers. This report examines health outcomes and disparities, food access issues, and the needs of small-scale farmers in Louisville Metro, Kentucky. It then looks at how the WIC FMNP might address these issues based on benefits it has provided to other communities. The case in Louisville Metro provides an example that other communities can use to guide their own advocacy for the program.

### Assessing the Need

Limited food budgets and lack of access to supermarkets threaten the ability of low-income families living in the West End of Louisville to protect their health by eating well.

- In 2004, 50.6% of White women and 71.1% of African American women in Louisville Metro were overweight or obese.
- In West Louisville and East Downtown, home to more than 4,000 WIC participants, only 3 supermarkets serve nearly 75,000 people.
- In these same neighborhoods, more than 30% of households do not have access to a vehicle. Residents often shop at nearby convenience stores that sell little produce.
- Though fruits and vegetables fight obesity and chronic disease, WIC nutritionists in Louisville Metro report that only 1 in 10 of their patients eat five servings each day.
- Children in food-insecure households are 90% more likely to report fair or poor health.

As low-income families in Louisville Metro are struggling to access and afford healthy foods, Kentucky farmers are struggling to replace their dependence on tobacco with new crops.

- In 1996, two out of three Kentucky farmers raised tobacco.
- The federal Tobacco Support Program enabled tobacco farms to remain small. The program ended in 2004.
- Kentucky lost 2,000 farms between 2003 and 2004.

### Potential Benefits

Examining the WIC FMNP in other Kentucky counties demonstrates the potential of the program to address these issues facing farmers and families in Louisville Metro.

- 84% of Kentucky WIC FMNP participants ate more produce because of the program.
- 80% said that they plan to eat more fresh produce *throughout* the year.
- 93% of participating Kentucky farmers increased sales as a result of the WIC FMNP.
- Kentucky would generate an extra \$7.9 million in farm-level income if farmers were to raise per farm direct marketing of fruits and vegetables to the national average.
- Strong farmers' markets also increase traffic to local businesses and provide a market from which urban food entrepreneurs can launch new products.

The people of Louisville Metro and the state of Kentucky hang in a balance between a healthy future and one of ever-rising chronic disease and a floundering farm economy. The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, because it builds *both* health and wealth, proves an effective tool to tip the balance in favor of the former.

# The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

## Background

### **What is WIC?**

In 1972, Congress established the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, popularly known as WIC, to safeguard the health of low-income women and their children. WIC provides supplemental food, nutrition counseling, education and referrals to health and social services to low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, infants and children up to the age of five who are found to be nutritionally at-risk. In 2003, more than 7.5 million participants each month used vouchers to purchase nutritious foods at 46,000 merchants nationwide.

### **What is the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program?**

Congress established the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) in 1992 to supplement the WIC program. In 2005, 44 state agencies operated the FMNP to achieve two main goals. First, the FMNP enhances the WIC food package by enabling qualified WIC recipients to access fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. Second, the program supports local farmers by growing the customer base and sales of farmers' markets.

A partnership between federal and state government funds the FMNP. Federal cash grants cover 100% of the food costs of the program. In each state, administrative costs can make up only 19% of the total cost of the program. The federal grants pay 70% of these administrative costs. State governments must match the remaining 30%. Thus, states must provide only 5.7% of the entire cost of the program. States may choose to exceed the required matching amount in order to expand the program.

State health or agriculture agencies distribute coupons that WIC recipients then redeem for unprepared, fresh vegetables, fruits and herbs at approved farmers' markets. In 2003, more than 2.3 million WIC participants received farmers' market coupons nationwide. They used these coupons at 2,345 farmers' markets, benefiting 16,226 farmers authorized to accept them.<sup>1</sup>

### **WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)**

- *The WIC FMNP provides low-income pregnant, breastfeeding and non-breastfeeding post-partum women, infants and children less than five years old access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. It also benefits farmers by increasing use of farmers' markets.*
- *In 2003*
  - *2.3 million WIC recipients participated.*
  - *16,226 farmers participated.*
  - *The FMNP generated \$24.4 million in revenue for farmers.*

<sup>1</sup> United States, Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, "WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program," 22 September 2005, 20 October 2005, <<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/WIC-Fact-Sheet.pdf>>.

## The WIC FMNP in Kentucky

### Background

In Kentucky, the Department of Agriculture operates the WIC FMNP in cooperation with the Nutrition Services Branch of the Cabinet for Health and Family Services. WIC nutritionists distribute coupons to the program participants and provide the nutrition education component of the program during their consultations with patients. The Division of Food Distribution within the Kentucky Department of Agriculture coordinates the program and reimburses farmers with federal funds.

In 2005, Kentucky received a grant worth \$239,705 to cover 100% of the food costs and 70% of the administration costs of the state's WIC FMNP. The grant equaled approximately 1.2% of the \$19.8 million that Congress appropriated nationwide for the program. Additional funding from the state government met 30% of the administrative costs for the program.<sup>2</sup>

***In 2005, Kentucky received a federal grant worth \$239,705 to cover the food costs of the WIC FMNP.***

***At the current funding level, only 43 of Kentucky's 120 counties are able to participate.***

Each state participating in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program determines the amount, between \$10 and \$30, that it wishes to provide to participants and also whether the coupons will be distributed to family units or to each individual participant in the WIC program. During the 2005 farmers' market season in Kentucky, each participant received \$20 worth of coupons. The state issued coupons to more than 27,000 participants. If each participant used the full \$20, these funds benefited a minimum of 12,660 women and children. It is more likely, however, that not all participants spent the full amount. This means that probably far more than 12,660 participated and were impacted by the program.<sup>3</sup>

***In 2005, the Kentucky WIC FMNP benefited***

***More than 12,660 WIC recipients***

***And***

***480 farmers who gained \$253,224 in revenue***

### ***Which Counties Participate in the Program?***

Current funding levels for the WIC FMNP are too low for every county in the state to participate. In 2005, only 43 of Kentucky's 120 took part in the program. Each year, the program administrators in the Division of Food Distribution determine which counties receive funding for the program. According to the Kentucky program coordinator, geography influences how the money is allocated, as the federal grant must be used across the state. The following Web address

<sup>2</sup> Jessica Anderson, Telephone interview, 13 December 2005.

<sup>3</sup> Anderson, 2005.

links to a list of Kentucky counties serviced by the program in 2005:  
[http://www.kyagr.com/cons\\_ps/food/programs/FMNP/countymarketarein.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/cons_ps/food/programs/FMNP/countymarketarein.htm)

Individual markets can apply to participate in the program without the entire county participating. To participate, a market must first satisfy a preliminary set of criteria, including being registered as a legal entity with the Secretary of State's office. It must also have a person willing to work with the Kentucky Department of Agriculture to collect coupons from farmers and reimburse them with program funds. If the market meets these conditions, the program coordinator then looks at a number of factors to determine whether or not the market will receive funding the following year. See page 63 for criteria used to evaluate an applying market.

### ***Jefferson County as a Case Study***

Though it has the largest population of any county in the state, Jefferson County, Kentucky, does not participate in the WIC FMNP. The county has 19 farmers' markets operating in the Louisville Metro area that could grow with the economic impetus provided by the WIC FMNP coupons. Nearly 15,000 WIC recipients in the county could benefit from the enhanced nutrition opportunities that the program provides. However, the program coordinators have been unable to expand into Jefferson County as a result of current funding levels. The

number of potential participants in Jefferson County is greater than the total number of participants in the program last year. One official explained that the state cannot fund Jefferson County with its current budget or it would have nothing left for the rest of the state.<sup>4</sup>

***Jefferson County has 19 farmers' markets and nearly 15,000 WIC recipients that could gain health benefits and economic opportunity through the WIC FMNP.***

Jefferson County is only one of the 77 Kentucky counties in which WIC recipients do not benefit from the WIC FMNP. Expanding the program to reach into more of these counties could prove highly beneficial for the health of the low-income women and children who receive WIC and could provide economic opportunity for farmers. It could also bolster the health of other members of the community because strong farmers' markets increase the availability of fresh produce for all. The

following sections of this report focus on the situation in Jefferson County to provide an example of the need for the WIC FMNP in Kentucky and the benefits it could potentially provide to counties currently not participating. Though the numbers here pertain to Jefferson County, they provide a framework for finding similar connections between food access, health, and this program in other cities and for making a strong case to organize support for the program within the community and at all levels of government.

***Jefferson County is one of seventy-seven counties in Kentucky that does not receive funding for the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.***

<sup>4</sup> Anderson, 2005.

## **The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY**

### **Assessing the Need**

#### **Introduction**

Small-scale farmers, WIC recipients, and residents living in areas of limited food access across Kentucky would benefit from increased funding for the WIC FMNP. This report uses Jefferson County as a case study to evaluate potential benefits of the WIC FMNP because of the work of the Community Farm Alliance (CFA) in the Louisville Metro area. The Community Farm Alliance, a statewide grass-roots organization that works on issues of importance to family-scale farmers, has worked in Louisville, Jefferson County, since 2003. CFA and its members focus their Louisville efforts on creating urban-rural connections that increase access to fresh, local foods in underserved areas while building new markets for local farmers.

In 2003, CFA worked with farmers and residents to establish a farmers' market in the Portland neighborhood of West Louisville. The market accepts Electronic Based Transfer (EBT) cards, enabling residents to use public benefits to shop at the market. The following summer, the residents of the Smoketown and Shelby Park neighborhoods of East Downtown worked with CFA to organize a second new market. In 2005, CFA began a community food assessment to look at demographic data and food availability data and determine which communities in Louisville are underserved by the current food system.

These projects have provided a wealth of data about food access in West Louisville and the frustrations of residents who struggle to feed their families quality, healthy food, both because they cannot afford it and also because they cannot find it near their homes. When these data and personal stories are examined in combination with the high rates of chronic disease, socioeconomic health disparities in the county and the difficulties family-scale farmers face across the state to remain on their farms, they demonstrate the need for action that will help both groups of people.

The WIC FMNP provides a unique combination of benefits to both WIC participants and farmers. During the 2006 farmers' market season, the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park Farmers' Markets will conduct a pilot project to gauge the need for the WIC FMNP in Louisville. The results of that project, along with the information provided in this report, will help organizers and residents of Jefferson County raise awareness of the program.

#### **Jefferson County and Louisville Metro**

In 2003, the government of Jefferson County merged with that of its largest city, Louisville. The new urban area has nearly 700,000 inhabitants. The mayor of Louisville now serves as the head of the government and twenty-six members form the Louisville Metro Council. For the remainder of this report, Jefferson County will be referred to by the official short form of this new urban entity, Louisville Metro.

The Community Farm Alliance focuses its work in the neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown. These neighborhoods are home to approximately 75,000 people. The child poverty rate in the neighborhoods averages 53% compared to a countywide average of

18.8%.<sup>5</sup> At the time of the last census, the median household income averaged across census tracts in West Louisville hovered around \$20,900 as compared to the county average of \$39,457.<sup>6</sup> In some parts of the West End, the median household income drops below \$10,000 per year. In the East Downtown neighborhoods, the median household income averages only \$14,333. More than 4,000 WIC recipients live in the zip codes that make up these neighborhoods.<sup>7</sup>

The remainder of this chapter looks at health trends in Louisville Metro and specifically among WIC participants who visit the clinics located in West Louisville and East Downtown. It also looks at the availability of fresh produce and quality grocery stores in these neighborhoods. Finally, the chapter concludes with an explanation of the unique circumstances of small-scale farmers in Kentucky and their need for new market opportunities.

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<sup>5</sup> United States, U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey Office, *2003 Data Profile: Jefferson County*, 28 June 2005, November 2005

<<http://www.census.gov/acs/www/Products/Profiles/Single/2003/ACS/Tabular/050/05000US211113.htm>>.

<sup>6</sup> "P53. Median Household Income in 1999 (Dollars): 2000, Census Summary

File 3 (SF 3). Jefferson County, Kentucky," *American FactFinder*, 2000, Bureau of the Census, 29 January 2006 <<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>.

<sup>7</sup> Susan Borders, Personal interview, 28 October 2005.

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Assessing the Need

#### Hurting for Health

Louisville Metro currently battles the same distressing trends in public health and chronic disease that are sweeping the rest of Kentucky and the nation. Assessment by the Louisville Metro Health Department reveals chronic disease rates that exceed the national average in numerous categories. As risk factors can often be reduced through proper nutrition, the WIC FMNP could provide a weapon to help low-income women and children battle the diseases discussed below. Furthermore, by supporting the growth of farmers' markets in neighborhoods with limited food access, the FMNP could increase consumption of disease fighting foods for men and women not participating in the WIC program, but living in food deserts in Louisville Metro.<sup>8</sup>

#### Deadly Diseases

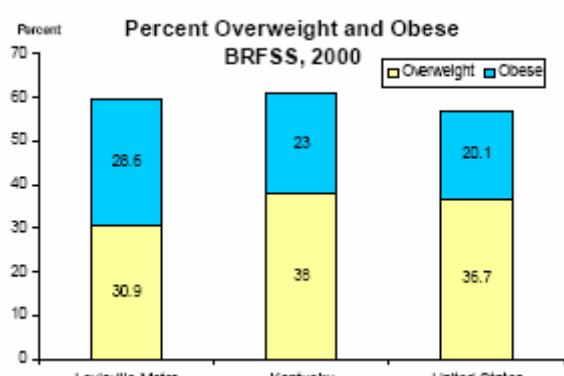
Chronic diseases - many of them preventable with a combination of exercise, healthy eating, and healthy behavior choices - are the leading killers in Louisville Metro and impact the women and children participating in the WIC program. Diseases of the heart, lung cancer, and stroke top the list of leading causes of death. Current Louisville Metro rates for these three diseases far exceed the *Healthy People 2010* Objectives, a set of national health objectives designed to identify preventable health threats and create plans to address them.

The *Healthy People 2010* goals for diseases of the heart aim for 166 annual deaths per 100,000 people. In

2004, the Louisville Metro rate reached 286.8. For stroke, the Louisville Metro data reported 60 deaths per 100,000, while the *2010 Goals* aim for no more than 48. Finally, the rate of deaths due to lung cancer in Louisville Metro exceeds the *2010 Goal* by 66%!<sup>9</sup>

**“Being overweight increases your risk of having a stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure and type-2 diabetes.”**

**Louisville Metro Health Department**



Graph: Louisville Metro Health Dept., 2004

Overlapping factors contribute to the development of these leading diseases. These factors include smoking, high blood pressure, high levels of blood cholesterol, lack of exercise, diabetes, and poor diet. The Louisville

<sup>8</sup> Unless otherwise noted, the figures in this section were taken from the *2005 Health Status Assessment Report* produced by the Louisville Metro Health Department.

<sup>9</sup> Louisville Metro Government, Louisville Metro Health Department, *2005 Health Status Assessment Report*, Louisville: Office of Policy Planning and Evaluation, 2005.

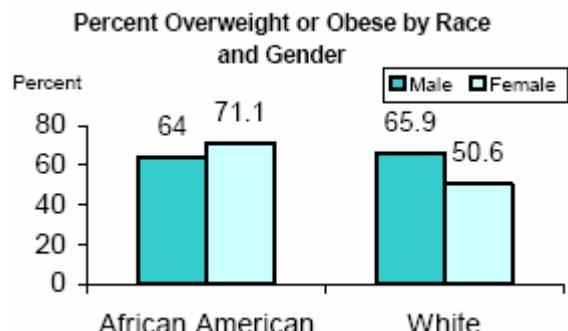
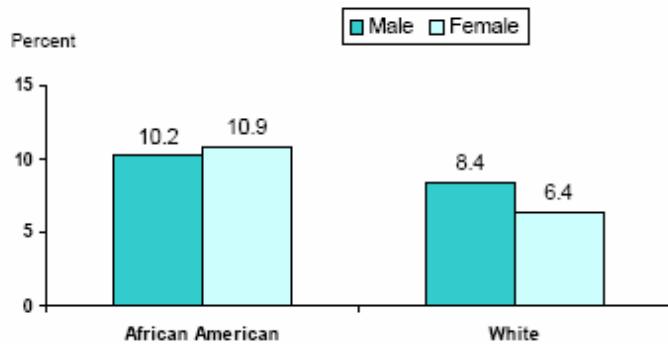
Metro Health Department also cites overweight and obesity as major risk factors contributing to Coronary Heart Disease (CHD) and stroke. This strong link makes sense because obesity increases an individual's risk of high blood pressure, high cholesterol, and diabetes and often reflects a lack of exercise or nutritious diet.<sup>10</sup> According to the U.S. Surgeon General's Call to Action, diseases associated with overweight and obesity will soon "rival cigarette smoking as the leading cause of preventable premature death and disability in the United States."<sup>11</sup> In 2004, nearly 60% of the Louisville Metro population qualified as overweight or obese.

### ***Distressing Disparities***

As worrisome as the health trends in Louisville Metro are, the health disparities between non-Hispanic White populations and the county's minority populations are even more distressing. Louisville Metro's minority population comprises 24% of the total population. Because African Americans make up more than three-fourths of the non-White population, the *2005 Health Status Assessment Report* gives detailed comparisons of the White and African American populations of Louisville Metro.

African Americans report a higher mortality rate in three of the five leading causes of death in Louisville Metro. Particularly important to this discussion of the WIC FMNP are the diseases in which diet often plays a key role. Data gathered in 2004 reports a 10.5% average rate of diabetes for African Americans in West Louisville compared to only 7.4% of the White population (see graph above). The rates of overweight and obesity, causal factors in the development of diabetes, also reflect these disparities among women. While the rate of obesity among White and African American men is almost identical (65.9% and 64% respectively), the percentage of African American women is much higher at 71.1% than the 50.6% of White women who are overweight or obese.<sup>12</sup>

Percent Reporting Diabetes by Race and Gender  
Louisville Metro, 2004



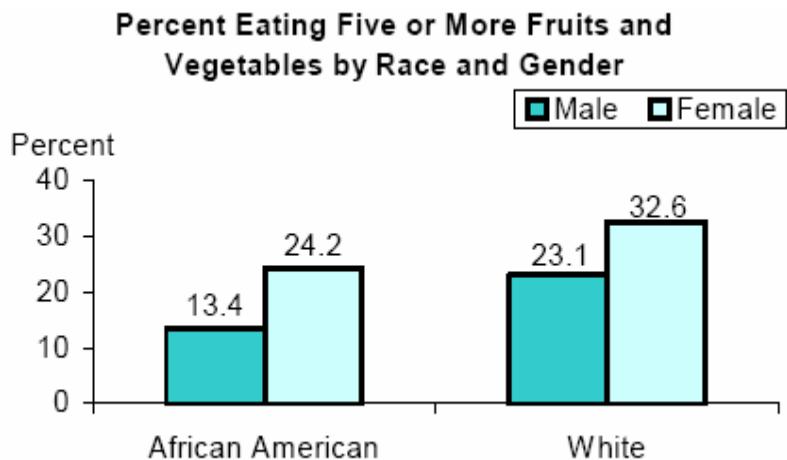
The Health Status Assessment Report reminds readers that a nutritious diet "is important to an individual's ability to prevent diseases and to prevent complications from existing diseases." Yet, just 26.6% of the county's population eats the minimum recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables each day that help fight the diseases cited above.

<sup>10</sup> Louisville Metro Health Department, 2005.

<sup>11</sup> Patricia Crawford et al., "How Can Californians be Overweight and Hungry?" *California Agriculture*, 58.1 (2004): 12-17, November 2005 <<http://californiaagriculture.ucop.edu/0401JFM/pdfs/obesity.pdf>>.

<sup>12</sup> Louisville Metro Health Department, 2005.

Fruit and vegetable consumption also reveals disparities. While 23.1% of White males surveyed ate the recommended five daily servings of fruits and vegetables, only 13.4% of African American males did. The rate for African American women, 24.2% of whom reported reaching this goal, also fell behind the 32.6% of White women who did. When parents fail to eat properly, their children also fail to reach daily dietary recommendations.<sup>13</sup>



The disparities in fruit and vegetable consumption combined with those in overweight and obesity rates provide a piece of the explanation for the disparity in mortality rates from chronic diseases such as heart disease, stroke, and diabetes between the African American and White populations of Louisville Metro.

### ***WIC Patients Fare Worse on Fruit and Vegetable Consumption***

The women and children participating in the WIC program show even lower rates of fruit and vegetable consumption. In independent interviews, WIC nutritionists working at five different health clinics in the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods said that they believe that fully 90% of their patients do not eat the minimum five daily servings of fruits and vegetables. Their patients are more likely to eat enough fruits than vegetables, but mostly in the form of fruit juices.<sup>14</sup> Fruit juices, targeted to increase Vitamins A and C in the diets of WIC participants, are currently supplied by the WIC food package.

***“Probably 90% of our [WIC] patients do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. If they do get enough fruit, it’s the juices.”***

**WIC Nutritionist  
Family Health Center  
West Louisville**

The nutritionists cite the heavy consumption of juices as a contributing factor to the rising rate of overweight they are encountering in their young patients. One explained that they see children gaining a pound each month whereas an average toddler should gain two pounds every six months. The children “will be almost 100 lbs by the time they turn six. Some of these kids will probably be diabetic by the time they are ten.”<sup>15</sup> Staff at another clinic said they see a case of Type-II diabetes almost every day. This type of diabetes, also known as adult-onset diabetes, typically does not affect children. Some of these children have already developed high blood pressure and cholesterol levels.

Where WIC participants drink too much fruit juice, they lack quantity and variety of vegetables. The nutritionists reported that the favorite vegetables eaten by their patients

<sup>13</sup> Louisville Metro Health Department, 2005.

<sup>14</sup> Kelly Ball, R.D., Personal interview, 13 December 2005.

<sup>15</sup> Dena Greer and Sharry Mallory, Personal interviews, 5 December 2005.

include potatoes, corn, greens, and green beans. A few mentioned having clients that eat green beans every day. A healthy body needs a varied diet to ensure that it gets a full range of nutrients. The nutritionists sometimes find that "it's a challenge to get them to think about broccoli, cauliflower or sweet potatoes."<sup>16</sup>

### **Why Aren't People Eating Well?**

If eating fruits and vegetables can help prevent and treat the leading causes of death and rate of overweight and obesity in Jefferson County then why are the vast majority of WIC patients and the broader population not eating the five recommended servings each day?

**"Most of my patients (90%) would say they do not get enough fruits and vegetables because they cannot afford them."**

**WIC Nutritionist  
East Downtown Louisville**

Part of the complex answer to this question includes factors that fall outside the scope of this report including taste and preferences, hectic lifestyles that favor convenience foods requiring little or no preparation, and a loss of knowledge on how to prepare whole fruits and vegetables. **Arguably more important than these, two major factors impact the ability of low-income women and children to meet the five-a-day fruit and vegetable goal and help protect themselves from these deadly diseases: high cost and low availability.**

The WIC nutritionists spoke about the need for convenience as a factor in patients' inability to meet the five-a-day mark. Many of the WIC families in Louisville Metro are either single-parent households

or have two parents where both work long hours to make ends meet. They sometimes lack time to chop and cook fresh vegetables or the energy to do so after a long day. Also, some leave older children at home to care for younger ones and hesitate to let them cut fruits and vegetables or watch younger siblings to prevent choking. Prepackaged, prepared foods are easier to work into their routine.

Lack of knowledge on how to prepare whole foods also works against ensuring that families meet their five-a-day requirements. All of the WIC nutritionists interviewed said that clients would like to eat more vegetables, but some do not know what to do with them. Because the WIC FMNP includes mandatory nutrition education, it can help to increase cooking skills. Furthermore, many markets like those in West Louisville hold cooking demonstrations and offer recipe cards to expose market customers to new vegetables and fruits and simple ways to prepare them. Vendors in West Louisville claim that the cooking demonstrations significantly increase their sales of the item cooked that day, demonstrating the value of the markets as an educational tool. Customers take the knowledge to heart and take the produce home and put it to use.

**Despite these obstacles, many WIC participants do have the skills to prepare healthy whole foods for themselves and their children and would like to do so, but cannot afford them or find them readily in their neighborhoods.** The section *Potential Impacts* outlines the impact of these barriers on WIC recipients in Louisville Metro.

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<sup>16</sup> Mallory, 2005.

## **What is at Stake? The Future of Our Children**

A nutritionally inadequate diet, a consequence of a limited budget in food insecure households like those of WIC participants, increases a child's risk of physical and psychological health problems. The Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program (C-SNAP), a national network of pediatricians and public health researchers gathering data to inform policy decisions that promote children's health, measures the impacts of food insecurity on low-income families with children under three years old. They categorize a family as food insecure if it lacks resources to obtain enough food for a healthy, active lifestyle for all family members at all times. The researchers understood that because infants and toddlers grow and develop rapidly, even mild undernutrition can have serious long-term negative impacts on their development. They designed the study to determine if food insecurity impacted the toddlers' nutrition status and health.

The researchers found that food insecurity, even *without* hunger, severely impacts children's health. Toddlers living in food insecure households are nearly twice as likely to report fair or poor health and 30% more likely to have a history of hospitalization than those with access to sufficient healthy foods. The results demonstrate that a child can have enough food to fill him or her up and still suffer negative health consequences if, "the nutritional quality of food were reduced . . . or if the variety of foods available in those households were severely constrained (e.g. if fresh fruits and vegetables were not available)." <sup>17</sup>

To protect their children from hunger, food insecure families sometimes choose inexpensive foods that are high in calories and fat but low in nutrients. These lower quality foods put children at significant health risks for vitamin and mineral deficiencies. The deficiencies hinder the body's ability to heal and fight disease and thus increase a child's chance of needing hospitalization. The nutrient deficiencies can also increase a child's risk for being overweight. Finally, children in food insecure households are also at higher risk for cognitive development and behavioral problems that can later hurt their success in school.<sup>18</sup>

Of the low-income families that participated in the study, 22% received WIC benefits and approximately 25% received Food Stamps.<sup>19</sup> These valuable federal safety net programs thus do not guarantee protection from food insecurity and accompanying health risks to children. The WIC FMNP, by increasing their ability to access whole, fresh fruits and vegetables, empowers low-income women to provide their children a more nutritionally adequate diet.

**Toddlers in food  
insecure households  
are nearly twice as  
likely to have fair or  
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to healthy foods at all  
times.**

Child Sentinel Nutrition  
Assessment Program  
2005

<sup>17</sup> John T. Cook et al., "Food Insecurity is Associated with Adverse Health Outcomes among Human Infants and Toddlers," *Journal of Nutrition*, 134 (June 2004): 1432-1438, 12 December 2005 <<http://www.nutrition.org/cgi/content/full/134/6/1432>>.

<sup>18</sup> Deanna Wilson, "Hunger and Food Insecurity among American Children: Consequences and Prevention," *C-SNAP Report: March 2005*, 12 December 2005 <[http://dcc2.bumc.bu.edu/csnappublic/report\\_March2005.pdf](http://dcc2.bumc.bu.edu/csnappublic/report_March2005.pdf)>.

<sup>19</sup> Cook et al., 2004.



## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Assessing the Need

#### Limited Access to Healthy Food

Many of the women and children who participate in the WIC program in Louisville Metro as well as a large percentage of the African American population reflecting the health disparities discussed in the *Hurting For Health* section live in neighborhoods that lack a reliable source of fresh produce or lack a car to easily get to one. The few produce items available at convenience stores or gas stations are of poor quality and more expensive than they would be at a supermarket. The WIC FMNP would provide a valuable fresh food resource for women and children living in these food deserts.

#### **What is a Food Desert?**

A British Low Income Project team defined food deserts as, "areas of relative exclusion where people experience physical and economic barriers to accessing healthy food."<sup>20</sup> These physical and economic barriers include the inability to walk to grocery stores for health reasons, the lack of a car or reliable public transportation to get to stores further away, and the relocation of stores that leave low-income neighborhoods seeking "safer" neighborhoods and a more affluent clientele.

#### **Are There Food Deserts in Louisville Metro?**

##### *West Louisville and East Downtown Lack Supermarkets*

The neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown are home to nearly 75,000 people. The child poverty rate in the neighborhoods averages 53% and the median household income averaged across census tracts in West Louisville hovered around \$20,900.<sup>21</sup> In some parts of the West End, the median household income drops below \$10,000 per year. In the East Downtown neighborhoods, the median household income averages only \$14,333.<sup>22</sup>

Louisville Metro has 72 full service food retailers. These retailers include supermarkets, discount grocers, superstores such as Wal-Mart and health food stores. These 72 retailers serve a countywide population of approximately 686,000.<sup>23</sup> Thus, each store serves an average of 9,527 residents. By comparison, the neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown have only five such retailers. Each store serves an average of 15,000 residents.

<sup>20</sup> "What is a Food Desert?" 7 February 2004, November 2005 <<http://www.fooddeserts.org/images/whatisfd.htm>>.

<sup>21</sup> "QT-P32. Income Distribution in 1999 of Households and Families: 2000, Census Summary File 4 (SF 4). Jefferson County, Kentucky," American FactFinder, 2000, Bureau of the Census, 12 November 2005 <<http://factfinder.census.gov/servlet/BasicFactsServlet>>.

<sup>22</sup> Bureau of the Census, 2000.

<sup>23</sup> American Community Survey Office, 2003.

*Of the 72 full service food retailers in Louisville Metro, only 5 serve the neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown.*

*That averages one store per 15,000 residents.*

*The countywide average is one store per 9,527 residents.*

Food access becomes even more constrained when we remove discount grocers from the equations. Discount grocers are smaller stores that offer lower quality goods and are unable to serve the volume of customers that a supermarket can manage. Two of the five retailers in West Louisville and East Downtown are discount grocers. These neighborhoods also have neither superstores nor health food stores. Thus, without counting discount grocers, the number of full service shopping options drops to three. The ratio of customers increases to 25,000 customers per supermarket. Countywide, subtracting discount grocers brings the number of food retailers down to 52. The county average of 13,192 residents per store is then about half the average in West Louisville. Access to quality food is distributed unevenly across various parts of the county.<sup>24</sup>

Small convenience stores and service stations, however, abound in the area. The Community Farm Alliance surveyed 24 of those convenience stores and found that their frequency in no way increased the availability of fruits and vegetables. Though 88% of them sold milk and alcohol, only 25% sold food from all five basic food groups. Stores that sold vegetables carried mostly onions and potatoes, very few sold fruits, and none of them sold leafy green vegetables.<sup>25</sup>

### ***Short on Transportation***

The neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown are not the only places where Louisville Metro residents lack grocery stores within one half mile, a generally acceptable walking distance. However, food deserts impact the people living in these neighborhoods more dramatically because far fewer people have access to personal vehicles than residents in wealthier sections of town.

***“It’s hard to find good fresh produce at the store . . . I bought Iceberg lettuce at the store and it looks good, and then when I cut it open it’s not good inside, it’s all brown and wilted.”***

2005 Portland Shawnee Farmers’ Market Customer

In the neighborhoods that make up West Louisville and East Downtown, an average of 30.7% of households do not have access to a vehicle. Thus, nearly one-third of all households rely on rides, public transportation, or walking to buy groceries for their families. In some neighborhoods, up to 70% of families do not have access to a vehicle.<sup>26</sup>

Relying on public transportation and walking limits the amount of groceries a person can carry. Walking and public transportation prove especially difficult for parents with young children who have to transport groceries while watching over their children. In areas where food deserts overlap with limited car ownership, many families struggle to keep a consistent supply of quality foods on hand.

Samuel Raskin, an Emerson National Hunger Fellow working

<sup>24</sup> Samuel Raskin, “Why it’s easier to get a Burger than Broccoli on West Broadway: The Demographics of Food Insecurity in Louisville with a Focus on the West End and East Downtown,” *Community Farm Alliance: Louisville Office*, Congressional Hunger Center: Washington D.C., 2006.

<sup>25</sup> “West Louisville Food Facts,” Fact Sheet, Community Farm Alliance: Louisville, July 2004.

<sup>26</sup> Raskin, 2006.

at the Community Farm Alliance, mapped food and vehicle access in West Louisville and East Downtown with GIS technology. See the map at the end of this section for a visual representation of how West End families struggle to find fresh food.

### ***Complaints About Quality***

Even when residents can access grocery stores, the quality of fruits and vegetables available in stores located in low-income neighborhoods often does not compare to that of stores in more affluent neighborhoods. One young mother surveyed at CFA's Portland Shawnee Farmers' Market commented, "It's hard to find good fresh produce at the store. I bought Iceberg lettuce at the store and it looks good, and then when I cut it open it's not good inside, it's all brown and wilted."

Not only are fruits and vegetables less appetizing as they lose their freshness, but their nutritional value also diminishes. Studies show that almost all stages of the "farm-to-fork" chain reduce nutrition levels in fresh foods.<sup>27</sup> Large grocery stores often source produce from distant states. The ingredients of an average American meal travel 1,300 miles from farm to dinner plate.<sup>28</sup>

Small convenience stores like those mentioned above often carry "hard vegetables" like potatoes, carrots, and onions because they spoil less rapidly than others and do not require expensive refrigeration equipment. These vegetables may still look edible after several days, but during travel and time on the shelves, "the vitamin content [has] decayed so nutritionally the effects may be as if they had not actually been eaten at all."<sup>29</sup>

By contrast, the fruits and vegetables sold at most farmers' markets are hand picked within days of the market. WIC participants gain much needed access to fresh, nutrient dense foods through farmers' market vouchers.

### ***Access Does Not Mean Affordability***

Though the number of mothers and children living in food deserts is significant, not all WIC recipients in Louisville Metro lack access to produce. However, many of these low-income women who can access produce cannot afford to purchase it with meager food budgets.

Conversations with WIC nutritionists revealed the struggle that these women face in providing produce for their families. At a WIC clinic in East Downtown Louisville, one nutritionist said, "Most of my patients, (90%) would say that they do not get enough fruits

***"After my bills I have about \$50 [for the month] left. There's no way I can buy fruits and vegetables. I'm going to go with pasta and macaroni and cheese so I can get more."***

***WIC Recipient  
West Louisville***

<sup>27</sup> "Healthy Fruit and Veg Compounds Being Lost in Processing," Food Navigator Europe, 3 November 2005, Hosted by Decision News Media SAS, 3 November 2005

<<http://www.foodnavigator.com/news/printNewsBis.asp?id=63661>>.

<sup>28</sup> Andrew Kimbrell, ed, *Fatal Harvest: The Tragedy of Industrial Agriculture*, Island Press: Washington 2002.

<sup>29</sup> "What is a Food Desert," 2004.

and vegetables because they cannot afford them.”<sup>30</sup> Nutritionists at four other West Louisville and East Downtown clinics said the same.

One nutritionist shared a conversation she had with a patient at West Louisville’s Park DuValle Community Health Center. A mother who qualified for WIC, but not Food Stamps, said, “After my bills I have about \$50 [for the month] left. There’s no way I can buy fruits and vegetables. I’m going to go with pasta and macaroni and cheese so I can get more.” The nutritionist added that many of her patients ask about the FMNP. She believes they would purchase more vegetables if they could afford them in their food budgets.<sup>31</sup>

Considering the difficulties that WIC mothers and children in Louisville Metro face in finding and affording fresh, quality produce, the fact that 90% of them do not eat enough fruits and vegetables is hardly surprising. The WIC FMNP provides one response to this health risk. By supplementing the WIC food package with vouchers specifically targeted to increasing fruit and vegetable consumption and providing nutrition education at farmers’ markets, the program could directly impact the eating behaviors of WIC recipients in Louisville Metro and thus reduce their risk for chronic disease. Furthermore, by bringing much needed dollars to new markets working to gain hold in predominantly low-income neighborhoods, the FMNP would support the growth of these markets and thus increases the availability of healthy foods for all residents living in food deserts, including those who can afford to purchase them on a regular basis.

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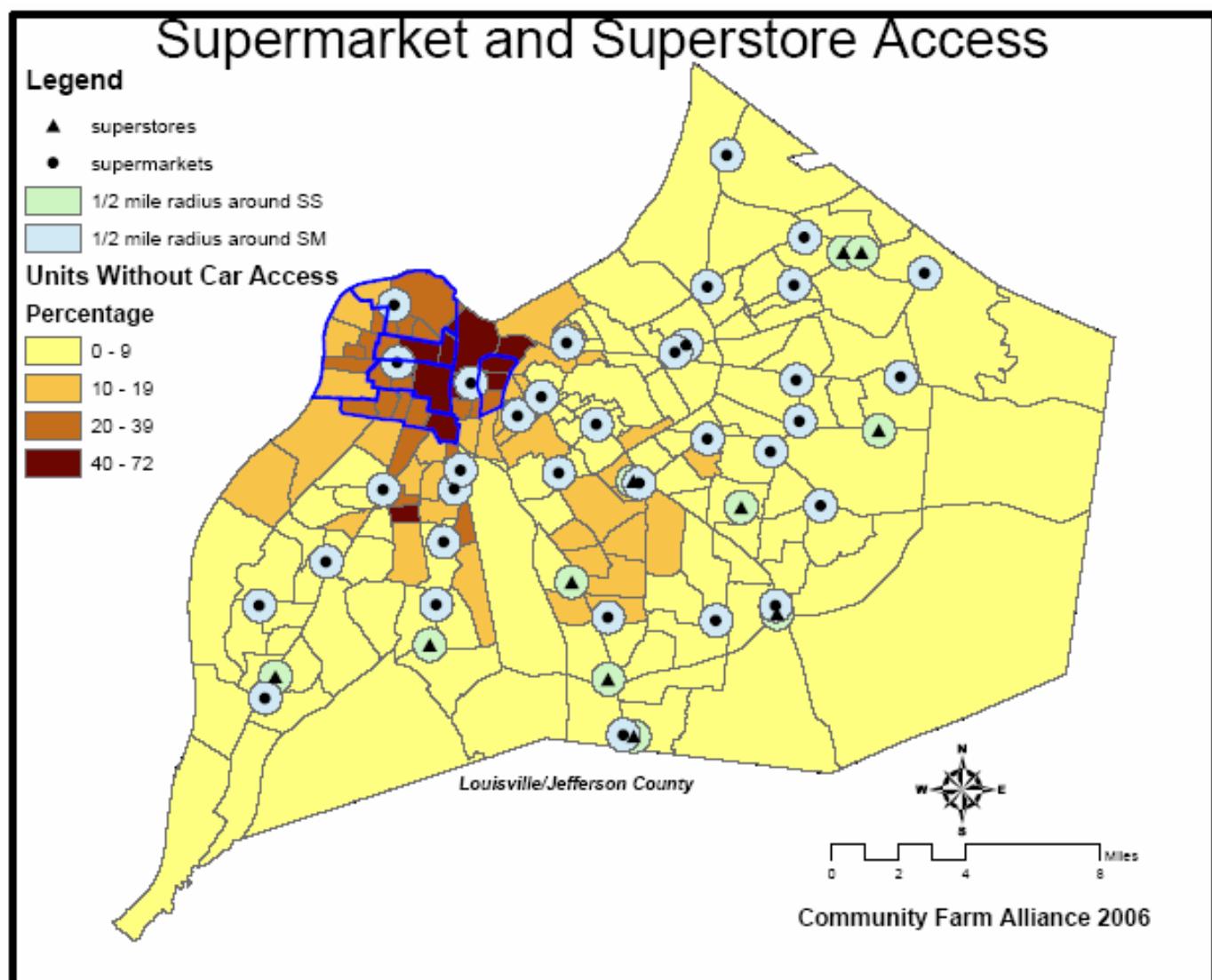
<sup>30</sup> Joy Williams, email to the author, 7 November 2005.

<sup>31</sup> Cora Billingslea, Personal interview, 6 December 2005.

## Mapping Supermarket Access in Louisville Metro

This map shows supermarket and superstore access in Louisville Metro overlaid with data on families' access to vehicles. The dots and triangles on the map represent supermarkets and superstores. The circles drawn around the dots and triangles show a ½-mile radius, a generally accepted walking distance to a grocery store. The blue lines outline the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods.

Areas of darker color are areas with the highest percentages of people who do not have access to vehicles. Notice that these areas correspond with East Downtown and West Louisville, where there are few supermarkets for residents to walk to.



\* This graph is found in the report, "Why it's easier to get a Burger than Broccoli on West Broadway: The Demographics of Food Insecurity in Louisville with a Focus on the West End and East Downtown," written by Emerson National Hunger Fellow Samuel Raskin, 2006.



## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Assessing the Need

#### Kentucky Farmers Losing Their Livelihood

The state of Kentucky has a unique agricultural history and sits at a transition point between past tobacco production and an uncertain agrarian future in which farmers need crops and new market opportunities to remain on their land.

***The high per acre value of tobacco sales makes it critical to the income of the growers and important to the economies of the major producing states.***

The tobacco economy has shaped the Kentucky farm landscape. Tobacco has been grown commercially in the state since settlers began to farm the land. As cigarette smoking increased following the Civil War, tobacco became the staple crop of the region and key to the prosperity of many of Kentucky's rural communities and some commercial economies in towns and cities. Kentucky and North Carolina alone produce 65% of the U.S. tobacco crop.<sup>32</sup> In 1996, two out of three Kentucky farmers raised tobacco.<sup>33</sup>

The Tobacco Price Support program, begun under the New Deal, enabled this tobacco production to take place on small-scale farms. The federal program was designed to stabilize prices for farmers and support their incomes. It operated two ways: A quota system limited the quantities that each farm could market and a loan program guaranteed minimum prices. While the programs intended to increase tobacco prices by

reducing supply, they also had the effect of keeping tobacco farms small and diversified. Thanks to these quotas, Kentucky ranks second in the nation in the number of family farmers per capita.<sup>34</sup>

However, a number of forces have recently begun to threaten the existence of these family farms. A 1998 lawsuit between the four largest tobacco companies and 46 states resulted in a Master Settlement Agreement that requires the companies to pay the states \$206 billion over 25 years. The MSA threatened the stability of small-scale farmers who, "knew that the companies would try to make up that money from [their] income." Tobacco quotas fell by 66% between 1998 and 2003. In addition to falling quotas, the average annual farm income in Kentucky remained low at \$12,000.<sup>35</sup>

***The number of farms in Kentucky fell from 87,000 in 2003 to 85,000 in 2004.***

<sup>32</sup> Jasper Womac, "Tobacco Price Support: An Overview of the Program," *Congressional Research Service Reports 95-129*: 6 July 1998, Sponsored by the National Council for Science and the Environment, 3 January 2006 <<http://ncseonline.org/nle/crsreports/agriculture/ag-61.cfm?>>.

<sup>33</sup> William Sprague, *Testimony before the United States Senate Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition and Forestry*, 105<sup>th</sup> Cong., 1<sup>st</sup> Sess., Washington, 1997, 3 January 2006 <[http://agriculture.senate.gov/Hearings/Hearings\\_1997/sprague2.htm](http://agriculture.senate.gov/Hearings/Hearings_1997/sprague2.htm)>.

<sup>34</sup> Womac, 1998.

<sup>35</sup> Roger Blobaum and Pernell Plath, *Bringing Kentucky's Food and Farm Economy Home*, n.p.: Community Farm Alliance, 2003.

Finally, the federal Tobacco Support Program ended at the close of 2004. Small farmers will face difficulties remaining on their land without these price supports and as production becomes increasingly concentrated in large operations, following trends well underway in other states. The number of farms in Kentucky decreased from 87,000 in 2003 to 85,000 in 2004.<sup>36</sup>

To continue farming on their land, many of Kentucky's farmers seek to transition away from a dependency on tobacco to other crops. Many producers in Jefferson and surrounding Counties have turned to fruits and vegetables to supplement their farm income as they seek an alternative to tobacco. Programs and policies that support the growth of farmers' markets and other direct marketing opportunities can help to make these crops not only supplements to current farm incomes, but viable alternatives for these local farmers.

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<sup>36</sup> United States, Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, *State Fact Sheets: Kentucky*, 2005, 8 December 2005, 15 September 2005 <<http://www.ers.usda.gov/statefacts/KY.htm>>.

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Potential Impacts

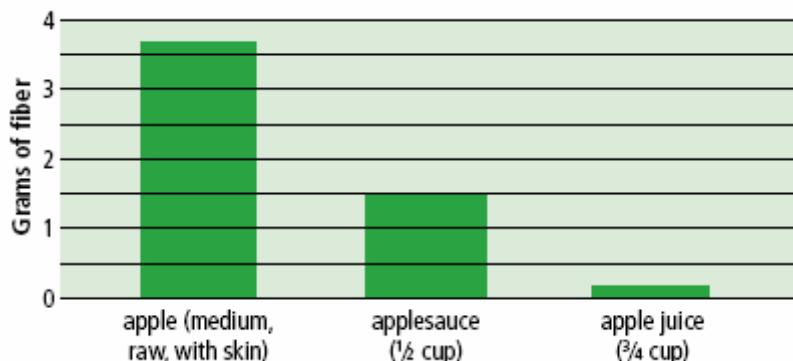
#### Changed Eating Patterns = Improved Health

##### Fruits and Vegetables Promote Health

The WIC FMNP has the potential to improve the health of Jefferson County WIC participants by increasing the amount of fruit and vegetables they eat. Studies show a correlation between fruit and vegetables intake and good health. Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and may be a useful tool in preventing and treating obesity. Diets high in fiber, found in fruits and vegetables, have been linked to lower body weights.<sup>37</sup> Reducing obesity reduces the risk of other diseases such as diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure.

Studies also link higher intake of fruits and vegetables to reduced risk of cardiovascular disease, stroke, and certain cancers.<sup>38</sup> Scientists believe that a combination of fiber, micronutrients, antioxidants, and compounds called flavonoids provide this protective effect. Though available in supplements, antioxidants in supplement form have not shown to impact cancer risks. The American Cancer Society advises, "To reduce cancer risk, the best advice presently is to consume antioxidants through food sources."<sup>39</sup>

Furthermore, not all food sources of these nutrients provide equal benefits. All of the WIC nutritionists interviewed at clinics in Louisville said that their patients got their fruit requirements almost entirely through fruit juices. The federal *Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion* encourages Americans to eat cut up or whole fruits and vegetables rather than juices. In comparison to whole foods, juices have little or no fiber, an important protective component in fighting chronic diseases. For example, one medium apple with the skin on contains more than 3.5 grams of fiber. By comparison,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of apple juice contains only 0.25 grams.<sup>40</sup>



Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, 2005.

stroke lead the list of causes of death in the Louisville Metro area. Yet, just over

The disease fighting powers of fruits and vegetables are important in light of the current state of health in Louisville Metro area (reported above in *Assessing the Need*). In 2004, nearly 60% of the Louisville Metro population reported being overweight or obese. Diseases of the heart, lung cancer, and

<sup>37</sup> Diane Nelson and Elisabeth Schafer, Iowa State University Extension, *The Health Value of Fruits and Vegetables* PM 1855, 2000, 16 November 2005 <<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM1855.pdf>>.

<sup>38</sup> Nelson, 2000.

<sup>39</sup> American Cancer Society, "Common Questions about Diet and Cancer," 21 February 2002, 16 November 2005 <[http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED\\_3\\_2X\\_Common\\_Questions\\_About\\_Diet\\_and\\_Cancer.asp](http://www.cancer.org/docroot/PED/content/PED_3_2X_Common_Questions_About_Diet_and_Cancer.asp)>.

<sup>40</sup> Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion, United States Department of Agriculture, "Fabulous Fruits, Versatile Vegetables," 15 November 2005 <<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Pubs/Brochures/FabFruits-screen.pdf>>.

25% of the population reported eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables daily (see graph).<sup>41</sup>

### **WIC FMNP Participants Eat More Fruits and Vegetables**

Jefferson County WIC nutritionists that serve clients living primarily in West Louisville, where access to healthy foods is limited, estimate that 90% of their patients do not eat enough vegetables. When their patients do get enough fruits, they do mostly through fruit juices. They believe the high sugar content in the juices contributes to the rapid weight gain of some of the participating children.

WIC FMNP participants across the country are eating more whole foods as they gain both access to fresh, local produce and education on how to prepare them at farmers' markets. In a survey of 24,800 WIC FMNP participants nationwide conducted by the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP) for the U.S. Department of Agriculture, more than 40% of respondents admitted that they had never visited a farmers' market before participating in the program. The exposure to the markets "was instilling new awareness regarding the benefits of fresh fruits and vegetables."

***In Kentucky, 84% ate more fresh produce because of the program.***

***Nearly 80% said that they plan to eat more fresh produce throughout the year.***

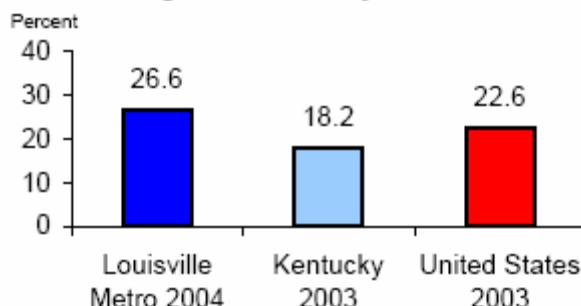
***72% would continue to shop at the market even without coupons.***

As a result of that growing awareness, 73% of the WIC participants nationwide reported that they ate more fresh produce than the previous summer. ***In Kentucky, 84% ate more fresh produce because of the program. More significantly, nearly 80% said that they plan to eat more fresh produce throughout the year and 72% would continue to shop at the market even without coupons.*** The program impacts eating habits not only during market season, but also after the vouchers are used. Participants in the FMNP incorporate fruits and vegetables into their diet on a more consistent basis year round.<sup>42</sup>

Even in their first few seasons, the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park farmers' markets in West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods of Louisville have shown a similar impact on the eating habits of residents. Weekly surveys completed at the Portland Shawnee market in July of 2005 indicated that 25% of the customers tried a recipe

that they got at the market, 25% tried a new vegetable, 25% ate more fruits and vegetables because of the market, and 25% spent more money on fruits and vegetables

**Percent Eating Five or More Fruits and Vegetables Per Day BRFSS**



<sup>41</sup> Louisville Metro Health Department, 2005.

<sup>42</sup> National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs, "Program Impact Report for the 2002 WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program," Summer 2003, 25 October 2005  
<http://www.nafmnp.org/ImpactReports/2002%20Impact%20Report.pdf>.

because of the market. Also, people who were trying new recipes were not necessarily the same people who were spending more money. Seventy-five percent of all respondents answered yes to one or more of the questions.<sup>43</sup>

### ***Invest Now, Save Later***

Increasing access to foods that help to fight disease by supporting the growth of farmers' markets will save costs to taxpayers who support the increasingly high health care costs related to chronic diseases. The poor state of health in Kentucky – ranked among the five worst states in the nation for cancer deaths, smoking, lack of exercise, and cardiovascular disease and seventh worst for obesity - influences tax bills, insurance premiums, and the rising cost of health care. Because illnesses make workers less productive, increase absenteeism, and cause hikes in insurance premiums, these health outcomes also make the state less attractive to businesses looking to relocate their operations.

In the fiscal year ending in June of 2003, the state's major chronic diseases cost the Medicaid program a small fortune. Medicaid spent \$372 million on coronary artery disease and \$728 million on chronic obstructive pulmonary disease. Diabetes cost the program \$611 million, while cancer rang up at \$422 million. Medicaid spending alone on chronic diseases in the state totaled a staggering \$2.13 billion.

Furthermore, Kentucky pays hidden costs of poor health in lost economic opportunity as employers look warily at investing in the state. A population's overall health increases the cost of employer's health

insurance premiums. Health status also impacts the productivity of its workers. Research on obesity reveals that obese workers, "take more sick days and are at risk for expensive chronic diseases."<sup>44</sup> Currently, 28% of the Louisville Metro population is obese and a full 60% are overweight. Some workers suffer so seriously from obesity or other chronic diseases that they *cannot* work. Poor health shrinks the size of an employer's potential workforce. As poor health increases, incentive to invest in the state decreases.

Evidence from successful programs around Kentucky and the nation demonstrates the value of the FMNP for preventative health and provides powerful evidence of the value the program would have for the WIC participants of Jefferson County. Fifteen thousand mothers and children could benefit from increased access to fruits and vegetables that they cannot currently afford and an increased chance to stay healthy for years to come.

***In 2003, the leading chronic diseases in Kentucky cost the Medicaid program more than \$2.13 billion.***

<sup>43</sup> Community Farm Alliance, *Community Food and Nutrition Program Grant Final Report*, Louisville, Community Farm Alliance, 2005.

<sup>44</sup> Laura Ungar, "Huge Medical Bills Cost Taxpayers Millions," *The Courier-Journal*, [Louisville] 17 July 2005, 28 September 2005 <<http://www.courier-journal.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20050717/NEWS01/507170346>>.



## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Potential Impacts

#### Economic Opportunity for Kentucky Farmers

Farmers' markets prove an effective way to support small-scale farmers. They reduce insurance and advertising costs. By selling directly to customers, farmers also reduce "middle-man costs," such as processing, packaging, and distribution. Nationwide in 2003, 16,226 farmers redeemed Farmers' Market Nutrition Program coupons and gained more than \$24.2 million in revenue.<sup>45</sup> During the 2005 market season, 480 Kentucky farmers accepted WIC vouchers. These farmers made \$253,224 in WIC FMNP sales.<sup>46</sup>

The National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs' *2002 Impact Report* further demonstrates the positive impacts of the WIC FMNP on farmers. Nationwide, nearly 90% of farmers surveyed reported that the program increased their market sales. Fifty-eight percent of Kentucky farmers who participated in the survey had increased fruit or vegetable production in response to the WIC program and 96% would recommend the program to other farmers in their area.<sup>47</sup>

#### Markets Help Save Small-Scale Kentucky Farms

The WIC FMNP can be a powerful economic development tool in a state facing a unique agricultural opportunity. Kentucky's small-scale farmers are currently hanging in a balance between finding an alternative to the tobacco production that long sustained them and losing their family farms. Increased local purchasing of produce and the growth of farmers' markets could make fruits and vegetables a viable alternative. In 1983, a project funded by the Rodale Institute, the *Cornucopia Project*, assessed the amount of food consumed in Kentucky that was produced outside of the state. In 1980, Kentucky imported nearly 100% of its fruits and vegetables. The state lost \$1.8 billion in revenue, 100,000 jobs and paid \$90 million in transportation costs to this imported food.<sup>48</sup>

Though the report has not been updated, more recent sector-specific data is available. In 2001, Kentuckians consumed 2.75 billion pounds of fruits and vegetables, yet the amount produced in the state remained small. Though this figure includes tropical fruits such as bananas and out-of-season fruits and vegetables, "it is clear that current production is severely lacking in terms of meeting in-state needs and that there is enormous potential for future expansion on Kentucky farms."<sup>49</sup>

**"[Farmers' markets] . . . play a vital role in enabling small to medium sized growers to gain access to consumers. Without this access the existence of many small-sized growers would be threatened."**

USDA  
In Friends of the Earth Briefing  
Updated June 2001

<sup>45</sup> Food and Nutrition Service, 2005.

<sup>46</sup> Anderson, 2005.

<sup>47</sup> National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs, 2003.

<sup>48</sup> Blobaum, 2003.

<sup>49</sup> Blobaum, 2003.

To take advantage of this economic potential, farmers need to expand outlets for their produce. In 2002, almost 78% of the state's vegetable growers were involved in direct marketing and that most of their sales took place at farmers' markets. In 2002, these markets already contributed \$6,720,000 to Kentucky's economy. Yet, the producers identify lack of markets as one of the barriers they face to continued expansion. According to 2003 estimates Kentucky would generate an extra \$7.9 million in farm-level income and a total \$15.8 million statewide if it were to raise its per farm direct marketing to the national average.<sup>50</sup>

***Kentucky would generate an extra \$7.9 million in farm-level income if it were to raise its per farm direct marketing to the national average.***

Because participants can purchase only local, Kentucky-grown produce with their vouchers, expanding the WIC FMNP would support farmers in Jefferson and surrounding counties to expand their markets, capture some of this potential revenue, and successfully diversify out of tobacco production.

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<sup>50</sup> Blobaum, 2003.

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Potential Impacts

#### Economic Opportunity for Urban Economies

##### ***Strong Farmers' Markets Support Local Economies***

Expanding the WIC FMNP could boost local non-farm economic opportunity by increasing the number and size of farmers' markets. Increasing income to farmers' markets in turn boosts local economies both because vendors often reinvest local dollars in local businesses and because markets provide a space for urban entrepreneurs to launch new business ventures.

Vouchers spent on healthy foods at farmers' markets rather than at large supermarkets keep local dollars circulating in the community through a force termed the "multiplier effect." Strong farmers' markets support small organic farms. These farms tend to need between 20% and 100% more labor than larger conventional farms, thus creating more jobs. These people, in turn, spend their wages in the community.

Second, local farm owners spend more often on locally owned services than corporate farms do. A study of two California communities, one surrounded by small-

scale family farms and the other by large corporate farms, revealed that, "in towns surrounded by family farms, the income circulated among local business establishments, generating jobs and community prosperity. Where family farms predominated, there were more local businesses."<sup>51</sup>

The estimated value of this multiplier effect varies widely. State officials in Maine estimate that every dollar spent at their farmers' markets generates an additional \$0.58 in the local economy while other sources put the amount at as much as \$3.00.<sup>52</sup>

***"Public markets can succeed as self-sustaining incubators for new businesses in low- and moderate-income communities."***

Project for Public Spaces  
Making Places Newsletter  
October 2005

***"Farmers are economic engines in the communities in which they live. Their participation in farmers' markets feeds the trend of getting back to community-based activities."***

Mary Ellen Johnston  
Head of Marketing  
Maine Department of Agriculture

<sup>51</sup> Blobaum, 2003.

<sup>52</sup> Associated Press, "Farmers' Markets Yield Economic Fruits," *Portland Press Herald*, [Portland] 5 September 2005, B2.

Urban farmers' markets also provide a low-cost space for people to launch new business ventures. The Project for Public Spaces, a non-profit dedicated to sustaining public places that build community, surveyed 157 entrepreneurs at 8 public markets across the country.<sup>53</sup> Eighty-three percent of the entrepreneurs had succeeded in financing their own business.<sup>53</sup>

These entrepreneurs can capture some of the middleman costs that farmers avoid when they sell at markets by processing and packaging locally sourced foods into products such as jams, salsas and sauces. Local processing then benefits local farmers *and* the entrepreneurs. The Community Farm Alliance in Louisville currently works with a group of 15 urban food entrepreneurs interested in growing new businesses. Many undertook food handling and licensing courses during the summer of 2005, and will begin selling at the CFA supported-markets in West Louisville during the 2006 market season.

Regenerating the link between farms and the towns they support, increasing traffic on market day to neighborhood businesses and increasing opportunities for urban entrepreneurs strengthens towns and cities and encourages local development. This sort of development has already begun slowly at the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park farmers' markets in Louisville. Expanding the WIC FMNP would help to grow these markets and spur further economic growth in these communities and the surrounding rural communities. The FMNP creates a win-win situation. WIC participants gain health benefits while farmers and urban entrepreneurs increase their economic self-sufficiency and growth.

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<sup>53</sup> Benjamin Fried, "A New Kind of Market Economics," *Making Places Newsletter*, (October 2005), 27 October 2005 <[http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/october2005/markets\\_economic\\_development](http://www.pps.org/info/newsletter/october2005/markets_economic_development)>.

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Conclusion

*Need and Potential: A WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY* has combined an assessment of health outcomes and disparities, limits on urban food access, and small-scale farming needs with an examination of the potential impacts of the WIC FMNP to address these issues in Louisville Metro. The case study provides just one example that other communities can use to draw similar connections from research in their own areas.

Louisville Metro desperately needs to build stronger health and economic opportunity. This report has shown that without a change in diet and physical activities, low-income families in Louisville Metro face a dangerous future rife with chronic disease. These families, especially those living in the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods, struggle to make healthy eating choices not only because of their limited food budgets, but also because there are very few supermarkets near to them that provide quality produce. This lack of access and affordability in West Louisville and East Downtown must be addressed because it not only limits healthy dietary choices for all families in these neighborhoods but also helps to perpetuate racial health disparities.

While low-income families in Louisville Metro struggle to access and afford healthy foods, family farmers in Kentucky struggle to replace their dependence on tobacco with new crops and new markets. As the tobacco quota system that supported a high concentration of small-scale farms in the state has ended, Kentucky will continue to lose family farms if farmers cannot diversify to hold on to their land.

Examining the benefits of the WIC FMNP in other Kentucky counties and states demonstrates convincingly the potential of the program to address these issues facing farmers and families in Louisville Metro. Kentucky mothers participating in the WIC FMNP reported eating more fruits and vegetables throughout the year as a result of the program while farmers gained more than \$250,000 in sales from the program in 2005. Strong markets also strengthen business opportunities in the surrounding communities.

The people of Louisville Metro and the state of Kentucky hang in a balance between a healthy future and one of ever-rising chronic disease and a floundering farm economy. The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, precisely because it builds *both* health and wealth, proves an effective tool to tip the balance in favor of the former. By raising awareness of the WIC FMNP and advocating for increased support for the program at all levels of government, communities make an investment for families of diverse backgrounds in one bright future.



## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

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# *Building Health and Wealth*

**A Toolkit for Raising Awareness  
about the  
WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program**



# The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

## Advocacy Toolkit Introduction

The preceding report provided a brief history of the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program and assessed the need for and potential benefits of expanding the program, using Louisville Metro (Jefferson County), Kentucky as an example. The remainder of this report provides an organizing toolkit for advocates of the program. The toolkit begins with background about the political process that impacts funding for the program. The remaining sections provide tips for creating organizing tools to raise awareness about the program. Examples are specific to the work of the Community Farm Alliance in Louisville Metro, Kentucky, but could be altered to fit other places. For further help, please see the sources used to compile this toolkit, which are listed in the *Toolkit Bibliography*.

The toolkit is divided into the following sections:

### ***Understanding the Funding Process***

- How and When the Federal Budget Process Impacts the WIC FMNP
- How Changes to the WIC Food Package Might Impact the WIC FMNP and How Farmers and Advocates Might Respond

### ***Creating a Pilot Project***

- Designing a Successful Pilot Project
- Sample Record Keeping Forms
- Sample WIC FMNP Coupons
- Flyer for WIC Participants
- Kentucky FMNP Market Requirements
- Kentucky FMNP Market Application Form

### ***Organizing Awareness of the WIC FMNP***

- **Partnering With the Media**
  - Crafting a Quality Press Release
  - Sample Press Releases
- **Organizing Communities for Advocacy**
  - Writing a Quality Newsletter Article
  - Sample Newsletter Articles
  - Creating a Fact Sheet
  - Sample Fact Sheet for Farmers' Market Customers
  - Sample Fact Sheet for Kentucky Farmers
  - Sample Fact Sheet for Louisville Metro Organizations
- **Resources for More Information and Support**
  - Contact information for institutions and organizations at the national, state, and local level that may have helpful information about or interest in the WIC FMNP.



## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Advocacy Toolkit

## Understanding the Funding Process

In 2005, the Kentucky Department of Agriculture used 100% of its federal grant for the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. That year, the state requested an additional \$50,000 to expand the program to some of the counties on its waiting list. The state did not receive the funding it requested. Before the WIC FMNP could be expanded to improve nutrition and economic opportunity for more Kentucky families, the program will need increased funding.

Advocates for the WIC FMNP should understand how funding is allocated in the legislative process. This section of the advocacy toolkit provides a basic background about the federal funding process and upcoming changes that may impact the WIC FMNP.

### How does the federal legislative process impact the WIC FMNP?

Understanding how the federal government creates legislation and budgets can seem daunting. This section does not explain every detail involved in the process by which a program becomes law and then receives funding from Congress. Instead, it gives a summary of the process through which the WIC FMNP receives federal funding.

#### ***Authorization***

Before the WIC FMNP receives funding, Congress must approve it by law. Laws that establish, continue or modify federal programs are called *authorization laws*. Congress must pass authorization laws before it can set aside money in the annual budget for programs that benefit Americans.

Laws that authorize programs concern various time periods. Some authorization laws are permanent and remain effective until Congress passes legislation to change them. Others cover only a certain period of time ranging from one to five fiscal years. When Congress authorizes a law for only a certain time period, it can renew the law through a process called a *reauthorization*. Reauthorization bills can make changes and additions to the original laws and authorize the continuation of programs without creating a new bill from scratch.

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is authorized and funded under the WIC title of the Child Nutrition and WIC Act. Congress reauthorizes the Child Nutrition and WIC programs every five years. Most recently, the 108<sup>th</sup> Congress debated and passed the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act in 2004. The president signed the bill into law on June 30<sup>th</sup> of that year. The decisions made in the 2004 Child Nutrition Reauthorization act will remain in effect through 2009.

The 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act provided official support to the WIC FMNP through 2009 in Section 203 of the law, saying, "There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this subsection such sums as are necessary for each of fiscal years 2004 through 2009." The Reauthorization act also made amendments to the WIC FMNP

that strengthened the affordability of the program for states and its impact on WIC participants. The 2004 Act added roadside stands as locations that could accept FMNP vouchers, in addition to farmers' markets. The bill also increased the maximum benefit for each participant from \$20 to \$30. The most helpful amendment passed by the 2004 Act concerned state matching requirements. Beginning that year, states no longer had to match 30% of the funding needed for the program. Instead, states now provide only 30% of the *administrative* costs of the program. With this smaller financial obligation, more states can afford to participate in the program.

Authorization laws divide funding of government programs into two types: mandatory spending and discretionary spending. If a program receives mandatory spending money, the authorization law that creates the program also states the amount of money to be spent on it. Programs that receive mandatory spending money are typically permanent programs.

The WIC FMNP belongs to the second type of program funding, discretionary spending. For discretionary programs, the authorizing laws provide guidelines for operating a program and suggest an appropriate level of funding. Sometimes the authorization laws recommend specific dollar amounts, called "definite authorizations." In other instances, the law recommends "such sums as are necessary." This type of recommendation is called "indefinite authorization." In the 2004 Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act, the WIC FMNP was authorized with indefinite discretionary funding, which means that Congress can determine each year the amount that it thinks appropriate for the program.<sup>54</sup>

## ***The Budget Process***

Once authorized by law, programs receive funding for the next fiscal year through what is known as the budget process. Funding is referred to as *appropriations* in the budget process. The fiscal year begins on October 1<sup>st</sup> of each year, but the budget process begins long before that date. This section looks at how the WIC FMNP travels through the budget process to receive annual funding from Congress.

### ***Budget Resolution***

The WIC FMNP budget process begins in the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). The agency that runs the WIC FMNP, the Food and Nutrition Service, puts together a budget estimate of the amount of money it would like for the program in the next fiscal year. The FNS submits that request to the USDA Office of Budget and Program Analysis. The Office of Budget and Program Analysis (OBPA) gathers budget requests from the various programs that fall under the Department of Agriculture and prioritizes those programs to create one budget for the Department of Agriculture.

Once the various programs and the OBPA have agreed on a budget for the department, the Secretary of Agriculture sends the USDA budget to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), the budgeting arm of the executive branch. The OMB looks at the budget proposals from all of the government departments along with priorities of the administration and creates the President's Budget for the following fiscal year.

In early February, the President submits his budget to Congress along with documents and information intended to convince Congress of the value of proposals and programs within his budget. Then, budget committees in both the House and Senate go to work drafting a

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<sup>54</sup> United States, United States Senate, Committee on Appropriations, "Authorizations and Appropriations: What's the Difference?" *The Budget Process*, 18 January 2006  
<<http://appropriations.senate.gov/budgetprocess/budgetprocess.htm>>.

budget resolution. After the committees finish their drafts of a budget by early April, each house debates and adopts a final version of the draft. When each house has passed a resolution, members of both houses come together to iron out the differences between the versions and write a compromise budget called the *conference report*. The conference report, once it has the approval of both houses, provides a roadmap for how federal money will be given out to the different agencies and programs.

### ***The Appropriations Process***

Once both houses of Congress approve the conference report budget, they move to the appropriations process. The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program receives its funding during this process. The amount of money that the Appropriations Committees in the House and the Senate can divide among programs is determined by the budget resolution. The Appropriations Committees may not give more money than allowed in that resolution.

Just after the President submits his budget in early February, each member of Congress puts out a request to his or her constituents to gather their concerns and requests. Congressmen and women then prioritize their issues from the feedback they get from their constituents and submit those requests to the Appropriations Committees to be taken into account when money is given to departments and programs.<sup>55</sup>

As subcommittees try to balance a variety of programs and interests, the requests of senators and representatives who actually serve on the subcommittees often carry weight. The Executive Director of the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs remarked, "If an issue makes the number one or two spot on the list of all members of a committee, it's likely to get strong support."<sup>56</sup>

After the budget has been set, the appropriations process begins in the House. The 65-member House Appropriations Committee receives a total amount of money to divide among government agencies and programs. The committee then divides that total among thirteen Appropriations subcommittees. Each subcommittee creates a spending plan for the following fiscal year for programs that fall under its area of expertise. The subcommittees consider the submitted President's Budget, the previous year's spending, and new priorities of interests in Congress when deciding how to appropriate the money. The WIC FMNP falls under the *Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies*.

Once each House subcommittee has finished its work, it submits its spending plan to the House Appropriations Committee. The full committee makes changes and then submits the final appropriations bill to the House. The House Appropriations Committee aims to finish their general bill by June 10<sup>th</sup> of each year. The House then sends its bill on to the Senate for consideration.

The Senate Appropriations Committee is the largest committee in the Senate. The 109<sup>th</sup> Congress committee has 28 members. Like in the House, the Senate *Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development, and Related Agencies* handles funding for the WIC FMNP. The subcommittees hear testimony from government officials and citizens, review the President's Budget and make changes to the House Bill. They then submit their changes to the full Senate Appropriations Committee. When the Appropriations Committee agrees on the changes, the Senate Appropriations Bill is passed to the Senate floor for all members to consider.

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<sup>55</sup> Phil Blalock, telephone interview, 6 January 2006.

<sup>56</sup> Blalock, 2006.

Once the Senate passes its version of the Appropriations Bill, it can solve disagreements with the House in several ways. The chambers can pass the bill back and forth until they agree or they can form a conference committee to negotiate about discrepancies and write a joint bill together. Once both houses approve an identical version of the Appropriations Bill, the President can sign it into law and the money can be spent by agencies and departments. In some years the appropriations process carries over past the start of the fiscal year (October 1) and even into the new calendar year.<sup>57</sup>

## **WIC Food Package Changes: Potential Impacts and Responses**

Potential changes to the standard WIC food package, likely to be implemented soon by the USDA, include efforts to increase fruit and vegetable consumption through monthly WIC vouchers. These likely changes reflect a welcome and needed effort to update the foods provided to WIC participants and bring them in line with current dietary recommendations. However, they could threaten future support and funding for the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. This section explains these upcoming changes and suggests potential responses to the initiative that embrace its beneficial change for the health of women and children without hurting farmers.

### ***Changing the WIC Food Package to Include Fruits and Vegetables***

In the fall of 2003, the Food and Nutrition Services of the Department of Agriculture awarded a contract to the National Academy of Sciences' Institute of Medicine (IOM) to do a 22-month study of the WIC food package, keeping in mind current scientific and nutrition information as well as comments from WIC participants, advocacy groups and WIC staff. The IOM committee included nutrition, health, economic and risk assessment experts. Based on their study, the committee then had to recommend changes in WIC food items that did not result in any cost increases for the program.

The IOM committee released its final report on the program and recommended specific changes to the WIC food package on April 27, 2005 in a report called, *WIC Food Packages: Time for a Change*. The Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 that reauthorized the WIC program requires that the Department of Agriculture make final decisions and issue a rule about the packages within 18 months of receiving the report. The USDA is currently reviewing the IOM recommendations. Policy experts at the Food Research and Action Center, the nation's leading nonprofit organization working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and under-nutrition in the United States, feel that, "It's a fairly sure bet that [the changes] will go through."<sup>58</sup>

The IOM Committee felt that the WIC food package should make it easier for all families to provide more fruits and vegetables to their children to build healthy eating patterns from a young age. It recommended that the WIC food package include cash-value vouchers of \$8 per month for young children, one through four years old, and \$10 per month for women. Women would be able to use these vouchers to purchase a variety of fresh produce for their families. Canned or frozen options would only be allowed if fresh options were unavailable.

To include fruits and vegetables while keeping the costs of the food package unchanged, the IOM Committee recommended reductions in the amount of juice, milk, cheese and eggs provided. Reducing the cheese from the four to five pounds currently allowed to just one

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<sup>57</sup> Blalock, 2006.

<sup>58</sup> Geri Henchy, telephone interview, 18 January 2006.

pound per month (two for fully breastfeeding women) also helped to lower the saturated fat in the WIC food package.<sup>59</sup>

### **Potential Impacts and Responses**

The IOM recommendations have been celebrated as long-overdue positive changes for the health of women and children who participate in the WIC nutrition program. The IOM Committee recognized the importance of fruit and vegetable consumption and committed to the need to encourage it through changes in the WIC food package. The food package changes, while positive for the WIC participants, could impact the farmers who rely on the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for increased customers and sales of their produce.

The proposed changes to the WIC food package recommend providing WIC participants with \$8 and \$10 vouchers **each month** to purchase fruits and vegetables. Participants in the WIC FMNP, in contrast, receive a maximum of \$30 **per season**. Decision makers looking to save costs and shift money between numerous important nutrition programs may argue that the FMNP is no longer necessary and propose ending the program. A policy staff member at the Food Research and Action Center described the WIC food package changes as potentially, "...a huge blow to the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program."

Eliminating the FMNP because of the changes in the WIC food package, however, ignores the second goal of the program, which is to increase awareness of and sales at farmers' markets. Phil Blalock, Executive Director of the National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs underlined the importance of the program for farmers: "The FMNP ensures that small farmers get support. It is the only program in the Department of Agriculture that helps small fruit and vegetable farmers."<sup>60</sup>

The produce that WIC participants would purchase at supermarkets would not likely be supplied by small, local farmers. Thus, eliminating the FMMNP would also eliminate investments in local economies, small farm job creation and opportunities for local food entrepreneurs to build their businesses at farmers' markets. Furthermore, WIC participants taste and learn new recipes and healthful ways of cooking fresh fruits and vegetables at the markets. Large supermarkets rarely promote this nutrition education or personal interaction.

Supporters of the WIC FMNP certainly will not want to block changes to the WIC food package. However, the programs can coexist as they serve different goals. Advocates for the WIC FMNP can use the arguments presented in the paragraphs above and in the chapter entitled *The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY: Potential Impacts* (pages 29-36) to make a case for the continued importance of creating a local food system through farmers' markets.

One policy expert also suggested that farmers who sell at farmers' markets work proactively to ensure that they and their markets are included in the rules that will determine how the new fruit and vegetable vouchers can be spent. Farmers could work with the USDA to make sure that vouchers can be redeemed at farmers' markets as well as supermarkets. She suggested that farmers' markets would be most likely to be included in the WIC food package changes if they could provide an example of how this would work.<sup>61</sup> The following paragraphs describe one such example by farmers' markets in Los Angeles that have been participating in a fruit and vegetable pilot program.

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<sup>59</sup> National Academy of the Sciences, Institute of Medicine, "WIC Food Packages: Time for a Change," Report Brief, April 2005, 12 July 2005, 16 December 2005

<<http://www.iom.edu/Object.File/Master/28/119/wic%208%20pager--with%20tables.pdf>>.

<sup>60</sup> Blalock, 2006.

<sup>61</sup> Henchy, 2006.

Researchers at the University of California Los Angeles School of Public Health conducted a pilot project that showed that WIC recipients used fruit and vegetable coupons as often at farmers' markets as at grocery stores when they had the choice. The project entailed giving 602 WIC recipients a \$10 voucher every week for six months. The women could use the voucher to buy fruits and vegetables at a local farmers' market or supermarket.

The researchers found that the women used their coupons as much at the farmers' market as the supermarket. Both sites had a coupon redemption rate of 90% (nine out of ten coupons given out were actually used). Also, the pilot found that women bought similar types of produce at each site, but that they bought a larger number of items at farmers' markets (2,398 items) than supermarkets (1,762 items).<sup>62</sup> Project organizers said that the participants, "were very happy to go there and definitely enjoyed the freshness of the produce and the experience of going to the market."<sup>63</sup>

Farmers and advocates could work with departments of agriculture to discuss this pilot project and design others like it to demonstrate how farmers' markets can be incorporated into the changes in the WIC food package. For more information about the CA pilot project, contact Dena Herman at the UCLA School of Public Health. She can be reached via email: [dherman@ucla.edu](mailto:dherman@ucla.edu).

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<sup>62</sup> DR Herman, GH Harrison and E. Jenks, "Are economic incentives useful for improving dietary quality among WIC participants and their families?" Ann. Nutr. Metab. 2005; 49 (suppl 1): 967.5 (abs), Presented at Experimental Biology 2005, April 1-5, 2005, San Diego, CA.

<sup>63</sup> Herman, E-mail to the author, 24 January 2006.

## **The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY**

### **Advocacy Toolkit**

## **Creating a Pilot Project**

To make a case for the importance of the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, the Community Farm Alliance began a pilot project in August of 2005 at two farmers' markets in West Louisville. Using a private grant, the organization will work through the end of the 2006 market season to provide farmers' market vouchers to WIC recipients living in the zip codes nearest to the markets. Market managers will track the number of vouchers redeemed and submit the information to the Kentucky Department of Agriculture along with applications for the markets to participate in the WIC FMNP during the 2007 market season.

Advocating for support for the WIC FMNP does not require conducting a pilot project first. However, pilot projects provide an opportunity to gather data that point to a need for the program. They also provide a powerful opportunity to organize the families that would benefit from the WIC FMNP around their lack of access to quality foods.

This section briefly outlines steps for designing a pilot project and provides sample vouchers and record keeping forms.

### ***Planning the Project***

#### ***Step One: Talk to Your WIC FMNP State Agency***

The way you set up your pilot project should reflect the needs of your community and how the particular market is organized. The WIC and WIC FMNP coordinators in your state can be great resources to help you decide if a FMNP pilot project is right for your area and how to run the project. The coordinators in Kentucky recommended structuring the Louisville Metro pilot as much like the state program as possible so that if the affected markets were to receive funding in the future, the vendors, WIC customers, and nutritionists will be able to switch easily to the state format. Updated contact information for the WIC FMNP representative in each state can be found on USDA's Food and Nutrition Service Website:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/farm.HTM>.

#### ***Step Two: Design the Logistics of the Pilot Project***

Currently, organizers at the Community Farm Alliance coordinate the pilot project with nutritionists at five clinics located in the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods that surround the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park farmers' markets. The nutritionists help distribute vouchers for the pilot during their consultations with WIC participants and help publicize the markets and the project. The managers at each farmers' market then track the amount of money spent at the markets and the number of project participants each week.

The sample vouchers below were designed after the pilot project was first attempted for several months *without* vouchers. In the original pilot, WIC nutritionists verbally encouraged mothers and caretakers of WIC children to bring their monthly WIC check to the market. The market manager at each market then verified the participant's eligibility, recorded her name or the child's name in a binder organized alphabetically by last name, and provided her with ten \$1 tokens to use to purchase produce from farmers. Each week, the market manager tracked the number of participants, the number of tokens given out, and the number of tokens redeemed by vendors on a weekly market report form.

This system had both positive and negative aspects. It proved convenient because there were no costs or labor associated with printing vouchers. Also, it did not require WIC nutritionists to track the number of vouchers they handed out. However, interviews with the nutritionists revealed problems with the word of mouth system. Because they did not receive a separate farmers' market voucher, some WIC recipients feared that their regular monthly WIC voucher would be collected at the market. These participants mistakenly believed that they would have to give up their WIC food package to gain access to fruits and vegetables and so hesitated to come to the market. The nutritionists agreed that approaching the market manager to ask about the program without a voucher for the market goods seemed intimidating for some of the WIC recipients.

To make attendance at the market as easy and attractive as possible and to encourage a high voucher redemption rate, information such as market times, maps, and products available at the market were added to the vouchers below. In addition to providing potential participants with a tangible reminder of the market, the vouchers eliminate the need to exchange wooden tokens at the market and allow participants to shop with a currency more like customers who purchase goods with cash.

The WIC nutritionists hand out \$10 worth of vouchers to each WIC participant along with her standard monthly WIC food package vouchers. Each participant receives the \$10 once during the season. The nutritionists keep a tally of the number of vouchers that they distribute and record in the client's file that she received a voucher. Farmers accept the vouchers at the markets and redeem them through the market managers who reimburse farmers with checks from the markets' bank accounts. Private funding designated to support the pilot project reimburse the farmers' market bank accounts.

The market managers track the pilot project outcomes each week. The following section explains this record keeping.

### **Step Three: Record, Record, Record!**

To use the pilot project results to advocate for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, you must keep consistent records. The numbers of participants and percentage of distributed vouchers that are redeemed will help you demonstrate the need for the program and its potential to impact the nutrition and health of women and children and economic growth for farmers in the area.

At the West Louisville markets, market managers record the following information about the pilot project on a weekly basis:

- The number of WIC participants who shopped at the market with their voucher
- The number of vouchers spent at the market
- The total dollar amount spent in WIC vouchers - Because participants cannot receive change when using vouchers, this amount can be easily determined by multiplying the number of vouchers by the value of a single voucher.
- The approximate total sales of the vendors at the market - This number will allow you to determine the percentage of total sales that attributable to the FMNP. A high percentage provides evidence that the program strongly supports market growth and farmer incomes.

The pages following the sample vouchers provide examples of record keeping forms that may work for your pilot project. The Community Farm Alliance uses the first form on each market day to record any WIC program activity. Because the markets also support Electronic Based Transfer (EBT) cards and provide food to a community Kids Café, you will find both of those programs on the recording form. Those programs may or may not apply to your market, so be sure to adapt the form to your needs.

The second sample form shows a sample of a *Voucher Tracking Form* for the WIC nutritionists distributing the pilot WIC FMNP Vouchers. You will need to know the number of vouchers distributed as well as the number of WIC participants who received them in order to calculate the percentage of them redeemed. This form allows space for the WIC nutritionists to keep a simple tally of vouchers and participants each week as they hold their scheduled appointments. You can then compile all of this information in a spreadsheet that will allow you to add totals or find averages for each category.

Sample coupons and an informational flyer follow the tracking forms. Finally, a list of requirements for participation in the Kentucky FMNP follows the coupons. Also, you will find the application form for new markets interested in participating in the program. As each state will have different requirements and applications, you should contact your state FMNP coordinator. The most recent requirements and application for the state of Kentucky can be found at the following address:

[http://www.kyagr.com/cons\\_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/cons_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm)



## **2006 WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Pilot Children & Youth Clinic**

Total Number of WIC Pilot Vouchers Received from CFA: \_\_\_\_\_

### **WIC Vouchers Distributed by WIC Nutritionists**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Number of Vouchers Issued</b>	<b>Number of Participants Receiving Vouchers</b>
April 2 <sup>nd</sup> -8 <sup>th</sup>		
April 9 <sup>th</sup> -15 <sup>th</sup>	SAMPLE Voucher Tracking Form	
April 16 <sup>th</sup> -22 <sup>nd</sup>		
April 23 <sup>rd</sup> – 29 <sup>th</sup>		

## Portland Shawnee Farmers' Market – 2006 Season

### Weekly Market Report

Date:

Customer Count:

Vendor Count:

Program	# Tokens Given	# Redeemed by Vendors	# of Participants	Total Amount Spent by Participants	Total Lbs of Food Purchased (Kids Café)
EBT (Tokens)					
WIC (Vouchers)					
Kids Café					

#### Vendor Information:

Vendor Name	Market Fee Paid	Approximate Sales (\$)

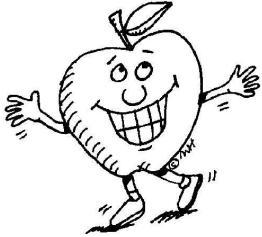
#### Financial Information (Record Checks on Reverse):

Total Money In:

Total Money Out:

#### Comments:

Report Prepared by: \_\_\_\_\_



# Market Money

This Coupon Entitles

\$5

---

To shop for

\$5

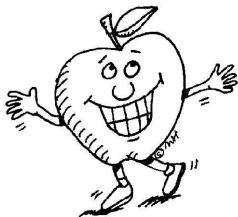
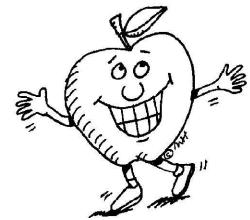
## \$5 of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

(No change given, while funds last)

**Good Only at Portland & Smoketown Farmers' Market**

Every Saturday 9 am – 1 pm

Questions? Call the Community Farm Alliance 775-4041



# Market Money \$5

This Coupon Entitles

---

\$5

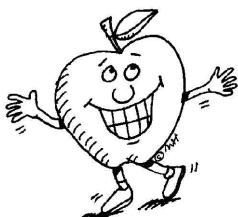
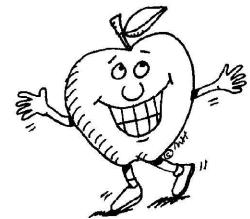
## \$5 of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

(No change given, while funds last)

**Good Only at Portland & Smoketown Farmers' Market**

Every Saturday 9 am – 1 pm

Questions? Call the Community Farm Alliance 775-4041



# Market Money \$5

This Coupon Entitles

---

\$5

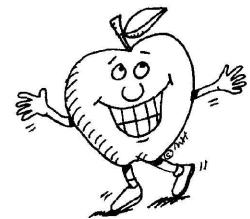
## \$5 of Fresh Fruits and Vegetables

(No change given, while funds last)

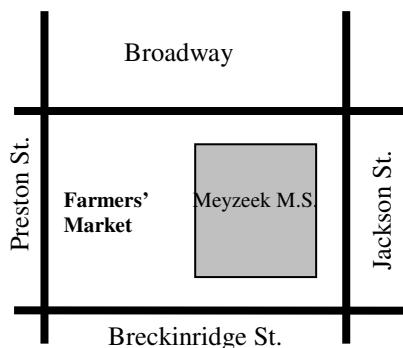
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Every Saturday 9 am – 1 pm

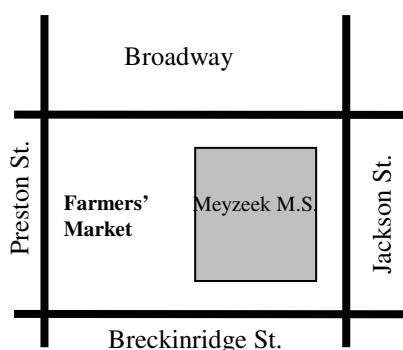
Questions? Call the Community Farm Alliance 775-4041



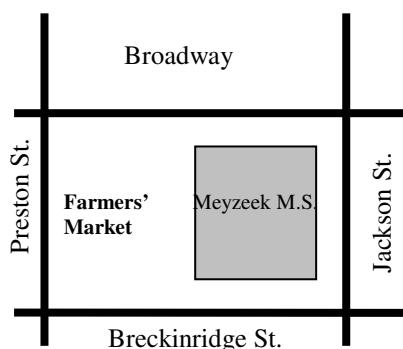
**Smoketown/Shelby Park  
Farmers' Market**  
Meyzeek Middle School



**Smoketown/Shelby Park  
Farmers' Market**  
Meyzeek Middle School



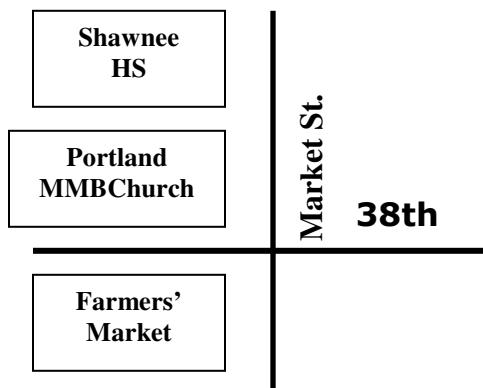
**Smoketown/Shelby Park  
Farmers' Market**  
Meyzeek Middle School



Farm fresh tomatoes,  
corn, green beans,  
melons, peppers and  
more!

Saturdays  
9 am-1 pm

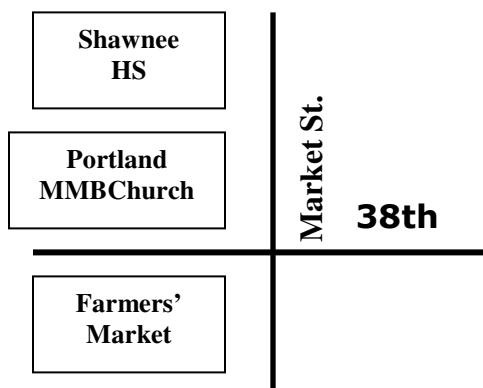
**Portland Shawnee  
Farmers' Market**  
38<sup>th</sup> and Market St.



Farm fresh tomatoes,  
corn, green beans,  
melons, peppers and  
more!

Saturdays  
9 am-1 pm

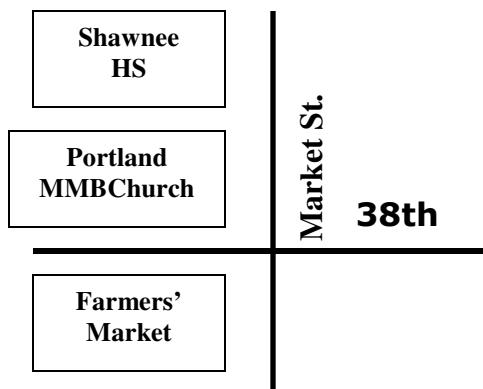
**Portland Shawnee  
Farmers' Market**  
38<sup>th</sup> and Market St.



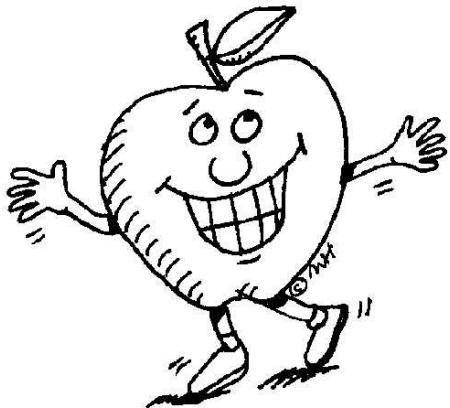
Farm fresh tomatoes,  
corn, green beans,  
melons, peppers and  
more!

Saturdays  
9 am-1 pm

**Portland Shawnee  
Farmers' Market**  
38<sup>th</sup> and Market St.



# **Free Fruits and Veggies at the Farmers' Market!!**



- Fruits and vegetables help protect your kids from obesity
- Fruits and vegetables help kids fight sickness

**Show your WIC voucher at the Portland  
Shawnee Farmers' Market or the  
Smoketown Shelby Park Farmers' Market and get \$10 free to  
shop at the market!**

- Cooking demonstrations
- Easy recipes that your kids will love
- Come and taste test!

**Join us at the Portland Shawnee  
Market at 38<sup>th</sup> and Market St. or  
the  
Smoketown/Shelby Park Market at  
Meyzeek Middle School**



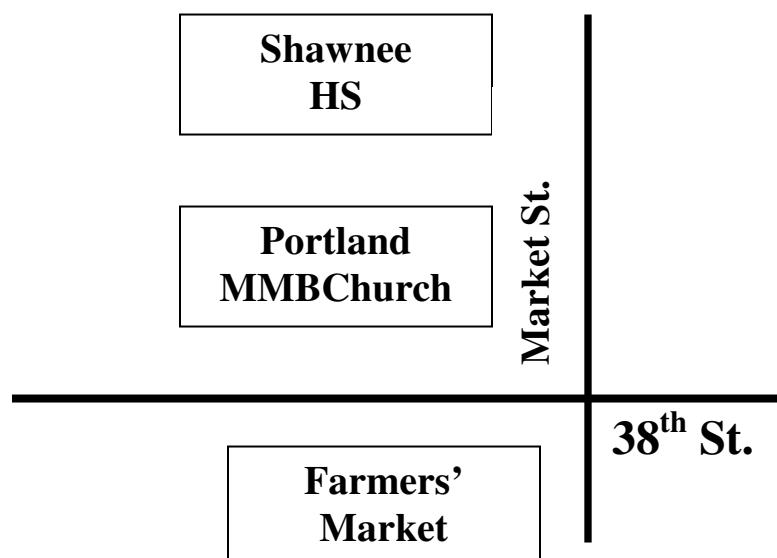
**Every Saturday from 9 am– 1pm.**

For more information, call the Community Farm Alliance at 502-775-4041.

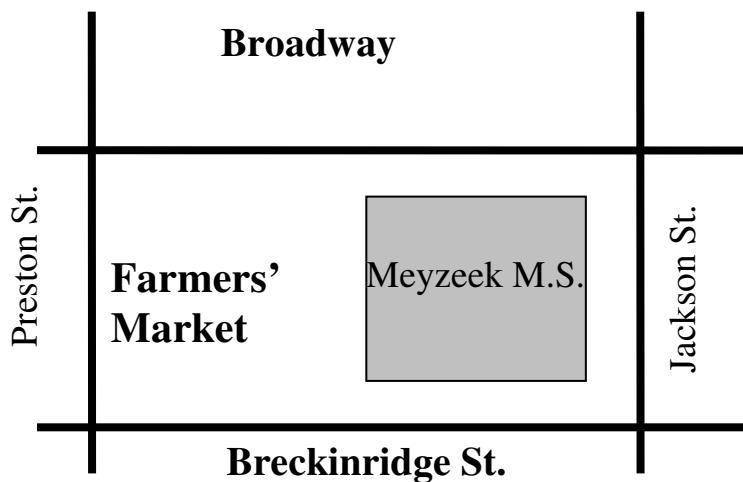
# **Visit the Farmers' Markets Every Saturday from 9 am- 1 pm**

*Farm fresh products: vegetables, honey, eggs, cheese, breads, fruits, flowers, rabbits and more!*

Portland ♦ Shawnee  
**FARMERS' MARKET**  
38<sup>th</sup> St. and Market St.



Smoketown ♦ Shelby Park  
**FARMERS' MARKET**  
Meyzeek Middle School



# **Kentucky Farmers Market Nutrition Program**

## **Market Requirements for Participation**

The Kentucky Department of Agriculture requires markets interested in participating in the WIC FMNP to meet the conditions below. States may have varying requirements and regulations. Check with your state FMNP contact for the requirements in your state. These requirements and the sample application on the following page were taken verbatim from the following site:

[http://www.kyagr.com/cons\\_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/cons_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm)

A list of state FMNP contacts can be found at the following Web address:

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/farm.HTM>

Before applying to participate in the WIC FMNP in Kentucky, a farmers' market must meet the following requirements:

- Be an established market. To be considered "established" the market must be registered as a legal entity with the Secretary of State's office.
- The market must have been listed with KDA for a minimum of one growing season before application.
- The market must have a representative willing to work with KDA during the season who will be responsible for collecting coupons, getting them to KDA in an appropriate manner, and disbursing the money to the farmers in a timely manner.
- The local coupon distribution agencies must meet qualifications for participation in FMNP (i.e. - have staff, willingness to participate, etc.)
- The market must be open at least once a week in an established location, with consistent days and operating hours.

If a market meets the criteria above, then markets will be rated according to the following items:

- Did the market participate in the program last year? (A market that participated last year and had no serious violations will be weighted positively).
- What is the percentage of WICFMNP or SFMNP eligible persons in the county? (A higher percentage will be weighted positively).
- What is the historical length of the market season? (A longer season is weighted positively).
- Is the number of participating farmers sufficient to provide an ample variety of eligible produce? (A higher number of farmers per capita is weighted positively).

Any updates of the above guidelines can be found at the Kentucky FMNP Web site:

[http://www.kyagr.com/cons\\_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/cons_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm)



## Farmers' Markets Nutrition Program Application

Kentucky Department of Agriculture

Division of Food Distribution

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

County \_\_\_\_\_

Farmers' Market \_\_\_\_\_

Farmers' Market Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Farmers' Market Information

Market Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of years in operation \_\_\_\_\_

Months the farmers' market is open (i.e. July-Sept.) \_\_\_\_\_

Market days and times (i.e. Monday 8-12am) \_\_\_\_\_

Number of farmers in the farmers' market \_\_\_\_\_

List produce items being sold \_\_\_\_\_

I want our county Farmers' Market to be on the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program because...  
\_\_\_\_\_

\*Note. If the market is selected for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, the coordinator must have access to a phone so that the department and coordinator will be available for communication. Also the farmers' will be responsible for completing one day training.

Return completed form no later than September 30<sup>th</sup> for following fiscal year for enrollment.  
**Please feel free to include any additional information or comments on this application.**

Mail to: Kentucky Department of Agriculture  
107 Corporate Drive  
Frankfort, KY 40601

**OR**

Fax to: (502)573-0304

Any Questions?  
Contact Steve Castanis or Jessica Anderson  
(502)573-0282

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Advocacy Toolkit

## Partnering With the Media

When used effectively, the media can play a powerful role in community organizing campaigns. Positive media coverage builds awareness of your issue, educates the public about the solutions you propose, and builds credibility for your organization and campaign. Media has the resources to magnify the voices of community members and stretch the staffing capacity of your organization. Thus, using media allows you to reach deeper into your community and expand into new communities before you have had an opportunity to make direct contact with their members.

Collaborating with the media takes consistent effort and patience, but does not need to be as daunting as it sometimes seems. Media work begins with building relationships. Aim to establish common interests and trust with reporters long before you would like them to write about your work or event. Building that relationship may require you to do some research before you make contact to discover how your work fits in with the reporter's interests or past writing experience. It also requires that you follow through on promises like providing further information or contacts.

The following pages contain a few basic tools to help you begin your own media work. Before you begin, make sure that your media contact list is up to date. Media outlets experience quick turnover, so update this list often. Track details about a reporter's focus area and the way s/he likes to receive press releases (e-mail, fax, mail, etc). This information will enable you to better target the right person with your press releases or media kits and increase the likelihood of published.

Tips on writing a quality press release follow this introduction. Crafting a press release that captures the interest of the reader requires care and practice. The skill is worth learning, as the press release is often the first contact you have with a reporter or editor about an event or issue.

Following *Crafting a Quality Press Release* you will find *Sample Press Release Format*. The formatting sample does not contain a story of any sort, but rather gives the skeleton of a press release to demonstrate proper formatting. Next, two sample press releases about the community organizing that the Community Farm Alliance will do in 2006 provide examples that incorporate both writing tips and formatting guidelines.

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Advocacy Toolkit

# Crafting a Quality Press Release

#### **Format Well**

- Use 8 ½ x 11-inch paper and 1-inch margins.
- Use bold text to emphasize headlines.
- Do not split a paragraph at the bottom of a page. Move the entire paragraph to the next page instead if necessary.
- If your press release runs onto a second page, put the word “more” at the bottom center of the first page (see example format).
- Put three number symbols after the last paragraph to indicate the end of the release.

#### **Write Well**

- Make sure your first sentence grabs the reader’s attention. Journalists judge a press release within seconds, so tell your story concisely.
- The first paragraph should contain the five Ws – *who, what, when, where, and why*.
- Write in a reverse pyramid style with the most important information first. Start with a general summary of key information, give specifics and background information in the second paragraph, and tell readers how to get more information in the third.
- Keep it simple. Avoid using too many adjectives and use short paragraphs.

#### **Know Your Audience Well**

- Know the audience of a publication. Creating a unique angle for a specific publication or readership may require writing the same information several ways, but it will increase your chances for getting published.
- A good press release tells the audience why they should care. Ask yourself, “How can people relate to this?”
- Think creatively to find new audiences. Do not forget electronic media, radio, and foreign language media if you can translate the information. Information about nutrition programs might interest health care providers, agricultural groups, faith communities, social service providers, community-based organizations, etc.

#### **Maintain Relationships Well**

- Each media outlet has its preferred method of receiving releases. Find out if you should send by mail, fax, or e-mail for each. Do not send email attachments as they can block an inbox or take too long to download.
- Reporters have deadlines. Send your release at least five days before an event.
- Be persistent! Follow up with a phone call but do not leave repeated messages.
- Provide as much contact information as possible including an evening phone number. Journalists may not have time to call you twice.
- Build relationships *before* you want your news published. If you have a history with a journalist s/he is more likely to pay attention to your release.

## **The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY**

### **Advocacy Toolkit**

## **Sample Press Release Format**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact  
Contact Person  
Organization Name  
Telephone Number  
Fax Number  
Email Address  
Web Site Address

### **Headline**

City, State, Date – Opening paragraph (*who, what, when, where, why*).

Remainder of body text.

If there is more than 1 page, at the bottom of the first page use:

- more -

(Top of next page):

### **Abbreviated headline (page 2)**

Remainder of text.

(Restate contact information after your last paragraph):

For additional information, contact:

###  
(Indicates end of press release)

# Community Farm Alliance



Frankfort office: 614-A Shelby St., Frankfort, KY 40601, (502) 223-3655

Louisville office: 2130 Portland Avenue #1, Louisville, KY 40212, (502) 775-4041

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Contact

Natalie Halbach

Community Farm Alliance

Phone: 502-775-4041

Fax: 502-775-4039

[natcfa@bellsouth.net](mailto:natcfa@bellsouth.net)

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)

## Building Health and Wealth: Farmers' Markets Open in West Louisville

**Louisville, KY (May 29, 2006)** - Combine live music, farmers chatting with smiling neighbors, the scent of grilling vegetables, and children's games and you've got opening day at the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park Farmers' Markets. The events will kick off the 2006 market season at each market from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Saturday, 3 June.

This year the markets will launch a project designed to help low-income families eat more healthy produce. Women and children who participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) will receive a \$10 to spend at the markets when they show their WIC voucher. The project may provide one of the only means some families have to purchase fruits and vegetables that help to fight obesity and chronic diseases.

In addition to providing coupons for WIC participants, the market accepts EBT cards from shoppers receiving public benefits. In the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods, where only 3 supermarkets serve almost 75,000 residents, the *Portland Shawnee* and *Smoketown Shelby Park Farmers' Markets* provide a needed source of fresh local foods.

The markets also provide activities that unite and serve residents in the surrounding neighborhoods. Committees of residents and farmers have planned family events, regular cooking demonstrations, children's activities, and services such as voter registration.

Residents can visit the Portland Shawnee Market at the corner of 38<sup>th</sup> and W. Market St., and the Smoketown Shelby Market at Meyzeek Middle School. Both markets operate every Saturday through the end of October, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Both markets were founded with the help of the Community Farm Alliance (CFA). CFA is a statewide, grassroots organization that works on issues of concern to family-scale farmers. Members see the markets as central to their goal of building a Local Independent Food Economy (L.I.F.E.). Call 502-775-4041 to volunteer or to receive information about either market.

###

# Community Farm Alliance



Frankfort office: 614-A Shelby St., Frankfort, KY 40601, (502) 223-3655

Louisville office: 2130 Portland Avenue #1, Louisville, KY 40212, (502) 775-4041

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## Contact

Natalie Halbach

Community Farm Alliance

Phone: 502-775-4041

Fax: 502-775-4039

[natcfa@bellsouth.net](mailto:natcfa@bellsouth.net)

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)

## Farmers' Markets Sprout Anti-Hunger Organizing

**Louisville, KY (August 1, 2006)** – Each Saturday, amidst tables mounded with tomatoes and greens, members and customers of the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park Farmers' Markets work to end hunger. They are raising awareness about the nationwide Farmers' Market Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC FMNP).

The WIC FMNP provides \$20 coupons each season to low-income women and children to help them purchase fresh, locally grown produce. Though the program is win-win, improving nutrition while growing economic opportunity for farmers, current funding does not meet the need across the state. Only 43 of the state's 120 counties participate. Jefferson County is not one of those counties.

Farmers' market customers are advocating for the program because the need is great. Many of the nearly 15,000 WIC recipients in Jefferson County, whose incomes fall below 185 percent of the poverty line, cannot afford to buy fresh fruits and vegetables. One West Louisville WIC mother said, "After my bills I have about \$50 [for the month] left. There's no way I can buy fruits and vegetables. I'm going to go with pasta and macaroni and cheese so I can get more."

Families struggle not only to afford produce, but also to find it. In the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods where the farmers' markets operate, only five full-service food stores serve 75,000 people. Nearly one-third of West Louisville households do not have cars to get to these stores and may resort to convenience stores that sell little produce.

The health of women and children suffers when they cannot eat properly. Nutritionists at five WIC clinics in West Louisville and East Downtown estimate that 90% of their patients do not eat enough fruits and vegetables. They also have seen a rising rate of overweight children who have type-II diabetes and hypertension before the age of ten.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program helps to address these problems. In a survey done in other Kentucky counties, 84% of the WIC FMNP participants reported eating more fruits and vegetables because of the program. Fruits and vegetables help with weight control and aid in preventing cancer, stroke, and heart disease.

- more -

## **Farmers' Market Organizing (page 2)**

WIC participants are not the only people who benefit from the program. The vouchers help to grow markets for small-scale farmers trying to transition out of dependency on tobacco production. Last year, Kentucky farmers made more than \$253,000 in sales to WIC participants. Also, small-scale farmers spend their income at local businesses more often than industrial farms. This multiplier effect can generate anywhere from \$.58 to \$3 for the local economy for every \$1 spent at a farmers' market.

Market goers and members of the Community Farm Alliance, the organization that supports the markets, are working to organize support for the program. Those interested should visit the Portland Shawnee Market at the corner of 38<sup>th</sup> and W. Market St. or the Smoketown Shelby Market at Meyzeek Middle School. Both markets operate every Saturday through the end of October, from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Contact the Community Farm Alliance at 502-775-4041 for more details.

The Community Farm Alliance is a statewide, grassroots organization that works on issues of concern to family-scale farmers. Members work to build a Local Independent Food Economy (L.I.F.E.) that supports local farmers while improving access to healthy foods in underserved communities.

###

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Advocacy Toolkit

## Organizing Communities for Advocacy

The Community Farm Alliance bases its work on community organizing. Community organizing is a participatory process through which people with common issues and interests come together to make change. Community members involved in organizing take ownership over their needs and recognize the power of their own ideas and solutions.

The Midwest Academy, a leader in organizing strategy, sets forth three principals of direct action organizing. First, direct action organizing should win concrete improvements in people's lives. Breaking a larger vision into smaller goals helps groups measure progress. Second, direct action organizing should give people a sense of the power they already have by showing the value of united action. People build confidence by taking charge of their own decisions and the direction of a campaign. Building this power is as important as reaching a goal on the issue. Finally, organizing should alter the relations of power by building the power of an organization's members to gain positions in public office and address issues important to the group.<sup>64</sup>

The Community Farm Alliance has organized in West Louisville since 2003. Community members and farmers have joined forces to increase the availability of healthy food through urban farmers' markets. Currently, they are working on a community food assessment to examine food access issues and needs of community members.

In 2006, organizers and community members will focus some of their advocacy time on increasing access to fresh local foods for women and children on the WIC FMNP. The group will use various strategies to build awareness of the program, including the pilot project explained earlier in this toolkit. They will also raise awareness of food access, the struggles of WIC families to eat healthily, and the benefits of the WIC FMNP.

This section of the toolkit contains tips for writing newsletter articles and fact sheets to educate members of an organization and community.

Following the tips you will find sample articles and fact sheets that organizers at the Community Farm Alliance may use to build awareness of the WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro. The fact sheets use data specific to Louisville Metro, but provide an example from which you can work and substitute information from your own community.\*

*"Community organizing is a values-based process by which people - most often low- and moderate-income people previously absent from decision-making tables - are brought together in organizations to jointly act in the interest of their 'communities' and the common good."*

<http://www.nfg.org/cotb/07whatisco.htm>

<sup>64</sup> Kimberley Bobo, Jackie Kendall and Steve Max. *Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy Manual for Activists*. Santa Ana; Seven Locks Press, 2001.

\* Fact sheets and newsletter articles often provide specific next steps for readers to take action.

## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Advocacy Toolkit

## Writing a Quality Newsletter Article

Newsletter articles can be an effective way to educate your organization's membership and build concern and action around an issue. Newsletter articles must be simple. They give people an overview without a lot of details. If your issue is hard to understand, provide links, resources, and contact information so that your readers can learn more.

This handout provides tips for writing effective articles. The general tips below are followed by examples that support the goals of organizers at the Community Farm Alliance to build awareness of the benefits of a WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program in Louisville Metro. For guidance on creating a newsletter, see the resources at the end of the handout.

### Consider Your Audience

- Ask yourself, "What does my audience want to know?" Try to imagine what interests your audience to find the best angle for the story.
  - *The Community Farm Alliance publishes a bi-monthly newsletter for its 3,000 members across the state of Kentucky*
- Help your readers use your news. Include dates of events, ways to learn more about the issue, related Web links, and possible action steps.

*"Learn the distinction between simple information and a story. Information comes to life as a story when someone talks about it."*

### Write Effectively

- **Grab Attention.** Your readers will decide in a few seconds whether to read an article and may skim it. Start with line that tells the five Ws – *who, what, when, where, and why*.
- **Be Succinct.** Make your points quickly and clearly. Try bullets, short sentences, and many short paragraphs to help your reader follow the ideas easily. If you produce a regular newsletter, consider breaking a longer article into shorter ones.
- **Make it Visual.** Try graphs, charts, or illustrations to support the information you provide. Pictures should capture attention and support your information. Make sure to include a caption and the photographer's name.
- **Use Quotes or Stats.** Quotes from people involved in your issue give the article credibility and flavor.
- **Proof Read.** Ask others to proof read your articles also. Reading backward from the end can also help you to capture mistakes.

Al Czarnecki  
Communications, Public Relations  
& Social Marketing  
Toronto Canada

# Louisville Communities Hurting for Health

Part One of a Three-part Series on Food Access and Healthy Eating

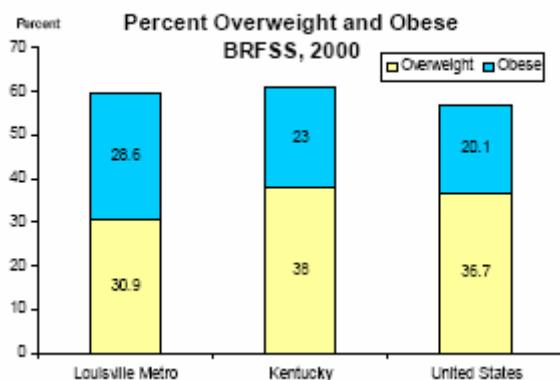
Like people all across Kentucky, Jefferson County residents suffer from high rates of chronic disease. A team of community members, University of Louisville faculty, CFA members and staff has been working on a *Community Food Assessment* to show how a lack of access to healthy foods in West Louisville contributes to diseases.

This article is the first in a series of three about the results and CFA efforts to increase food access in Louisville Metro.

## Hurting for Health

Chronic diseases like heart disease, stroke and cancer are the leading killers in Louisville Metro.

- Smoking, high blood pressure and cholesterol, lack of exercise, obesity and poor diet equals increased risk for disease.
- **In 2001, nearly 60% of the Louisville Metro population qualified as overweight or obese.**



## Distressing Health Disparities

In 2005, the Louisville Metro Health Department's found differences between the health of white and minority populations in West Louisville.

- African Americans in West Louisville were more likely to have diabetes than the White population.
- African American women were nearly 20% more likely to be overweight or obese than White women.

*Diseases associated with overweight and obesity will soon, “rival cigarette smoking as the leading cause of preventable premature death and disability in the United States.”*

*U.S. Surgeon General*

## What's Diet Got to Do With It?

Fruits and vegetables help prevent diseases and are essential to the physical and mental development of children. Kids in food insecure homes are more likely to need hospital stays than well-fed kids. CFA supports some food-insecure families at our farmers' markets in West Louisville.

- Only one out of four people in Jefferson County eats five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- White men and women in Louisville Metro reported eating fruits and vegetables more often than African American men and women.
- Moms and kids who receive WIC nutrition assistance fare even worse.  
**Only one in ten eats 5-a-day!**

**The Community Food Assessment team found that many of the people who are not eating fruits and vegetables to protect their health live in neighborhoods where fresh food is hard to find.**

Continue reading next month or call the Louisville office to find out more.

\* Graph from 2004 Louisville Metro Health Status Assessment Report.

# Louisville Families Struggle to Find it Fresh

Part Two of a Three-part Series on Food Access and Healthy Eating

## A Review on Louisville Health

Last month we saw that people in Louisville Metro are fighting high rates of chronic disease. Though fruits and vegetables help prevent obesity and other diseases, only one out of four people in Jefferson County eats five servings per day. We also saw that African American men and women and low-income families eat fewer fruits and vegetables than the average White man and woman.

This month we look at information gathered by CFA's *Community Food Assessment* team (community members, U of Louisville Faculty, CFA members and staff) that might help to explain why people aren't eating enough fresh food.

## Failing to Find Fresh Foods

Nearly 75,000 people live in the neighborhoods of West Louisville neighborhoods and East Downtown. More than half of the children live in poverty. The average median family income falls about \$4,000 below the poverty line. Seventy percent of Louisville's African American population lives in West Louisville.

- Louisville Metro has 52 full-service supermarkets.
- Only three serve the neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown.
- Each store serves an average 25,000 residents. These crowded stores have almost twice as many customers/store as the average in the county.

## Transportation Troubles

The neighborhoods of West Louisville and East Downtown are not the only places where Louisville Metro residents lack grocery stores within walking distance. However, far fewer people have access to

vehicles than residents in wealthier sections of town.

- One in three households in West Louisville and East Downtown do not have access to a vehicle.
- In some neighborhoods, 70% of families do not have a vehicle.
- These families rely on rides, public transportation or walking to shop.

Walking and public transportation are tough for parents who have to carry groceries while watching young children. Families often have to shop at corner stores and struggle to keep quality foods on hand.

## Complaints about Quality

There are plenty of convenience stores and service stations in West Louisville and East Downtown. However, fresh food is scarce.

- Only one in four convenience stores sold food from all five food groups.
- Residents complain that produce at convenience stores is not fresh. As produce loses its freshness it also becomes less nutritious.

CFA has worked with community members and local farmers to start two farmers' markets in these neighborhoods to increase the availability of quality fruits and vegetables.

**"It's hard to find good fresh produce at the store . . . I bought Iceberg lettuce at Kroger and it looks good, and then when I cut it open it's not good inside, it's all brown and wilted."**

2005 Portland Shawnee Farmers' Market Customer

**Next month we will look at one CFA project that helps low-income families afford to shop at the markets.**

# Farmers' Markets Growing Healthy Kids

Part Three of a Three-part Series on Food Access and Healthy Eating

## WIC Pilot Invests in Louisville Families

Each Saturday at the Portland Shawnee and Smoketown Shelby Park Farmers' Markets, CFA helps low-income families walk away from the market with fresh produce and healthy recipes. The Louisville markets are continuing a

project started last season that provides \$10 to 1,000 WIC recipients who present their WIC vouchers (WIC = a federal nutrition program for low-income women, infants and children). The market organizers hope to demonstrate a need for the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) in Louisville Metro.

Though fruits and vegetables help fight obesity, heart disease and cancers, **WIC nutritionists in West Louisville say that only 1 out of 10 WIC recipients eats enough of them each day.**

WIC children who do get their fruit servings often get them from sugary juices. Nutritionists think juice is a main cause in the rising number they see who are overweight and have diabetes by 10 years old.

Many WIC families cannot afford fruits and vegetables. Others do not have cars to get to the supermarket. Some have to shop



often at convenience stores that do not sell fresh fruits and vegetables.

The FMNP helps families to afford fresh produce. Cooking demos at the markets also teach moms healthy recipes that their kids will love.

The program also benefits farmers. It increases their customers and sales. Kentucky fruit and vegetable growers rely on direct sales to sell their products, so strong markets are important to their livelihood.

Currently, only 43 of Kentucky's 120 counties receive funding for the program.

If you would like to learn more about the program, call the Louisville office at 502-775-4041.

*"After my bills I have about \$50 [for the month] left. There's no way I can buy fruits and vegetables. I'm going to go with pasta and macaroni and cheese so I can get more."*

*WIC Recipient  
Park DuValle  
Community Health Center*

To read more about the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, visit:  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/FMNP/FMNPFAQs.htm>



## The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

### Advocacy Toolkit

## Creating a Fact Sheet

Fact sheets support the information provided in a press release by giving more detail about a specific topic. They can break down complicated ideas into more manageable pieces and answer questions from the people you want to organize. A good fact sheet motivates action from readers.

### Plan Before You Write

- Choose ONE topic. Keep it simple. If you have more than one subject to cover, make separate fact sheets.
- Know your audience and what they already know about your topic.
- Consider your goals: What do you want your readers to understand? What action do you want them to take?
- Make sure to include facts, not opinions.

### Design a User-Friendly Fact Sheet

- Identify your organization clearly; use a logo if possible.
- Keep the fact sheet from one to two pages.
- Develop a clear message and use simple language to communicate that message.
- Use bullets, question-and-answer, or subheadings to break up information into smaller portions.
- Use few numbers. When using numbers, try to put them in graph, chart or picture form so they are easy to understand.

### Make it Easy to Take Action

- Provide contact information– name, telephone number, e-mail address and Website address.
- Provide other sources of information.
- Be clear about the specific action you want readers to take and give them the tools to do so (phone numbers, event dates, contact information, etc).

## Fact Sheet for Market Customers

# Community Farm Alliance

Frankfort office: 614-A Shelby St., Frankfort, KY 40601, (502) 223-3655

Louisville office: 2130 Portland Avenue #1, Louisville, KY 40212, (502) 775-4041

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)

## **WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Helps Families and Farms**

### **Poor Health in Louisville Metro**

- Fruits and vegetables help fight obesity and diseases like diabetes, heart disease and cancer.
- **Only 1 out of 10 low-income moms and kids who receive WIC nutrition assistance eats 5-a-day.**

### **Healthy Eating is Tough for WIC Families**

- There are only three supermarkets in the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods.
- WIC families without cars often cannot get to these supermarkets. They walk to convenience stores that do not carry fresh foods.
- Families sometimes cannot afford fruits and vegetables.

*"After my bills I have about \$50 [for the month] left. There's no way I can buy fruits and vegetables. I'm going to go with pasta and macaroni and cheese so I can get more."*

West Louisville WIC mother

### **The WIC FMNP Helps Families and Farmers**

#### **What is WIC FMNP?**

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides vouchers for low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women and children to buy locally grown fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets.

#### **How does the WIC FMNP help make families healthy?**

WIC FMNP vouchers help women afford and eat more fresh produce. Also, mothers learn new recipes at the market that help them to cook healthy foods. Families that eat more fruits and vegetables fight disease and obesity better.

#### **How does the WIC FMNP help farmers?**

Some Kentucky farmers cannot rely on tobacco anymore and are now growing fruits and vegetables. The WIC FMNP brings new customers to farmers' markets where farmers make most of their sales. Farmers' markets also help local city businesses by increasing traffic in the neighborhoods around the markets.

***Call the Community Farm Alliance at 502-775-4041 to learn more!***

## Fact Sheet for Kentucky Farmers

# Community Farm Alliance

Frankfort office: 614-A Shelby St., Frankfort, KY 40601, (502) 223-3655

Louisville office: 2130 Portland Avenue #1, Louisville, KY 40212, (502) 775-4041

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)



## Nutrition Program Grows Farmers' Markets

Since 2003, CFA has worked to link urban and rural in Louisville. CFA farmers' markets benefit neighborhoods that lack access to healthy, fresh foods. Many of the low-income families in these neighborhoods struggle to afford healthy foods that can them fight obesity and diseases like diabetes and heart disease. Support for the WIC FMNP can help ensure that more families can purchase healthy foods from KY farmers at markets across the state.

### What is WIC FMNP?

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides vouchers for eligible low-income women, infants and children to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets. The win-win program helps low-income families eat healthy foods and benefits farmers by increasing the use of farmers' markets.

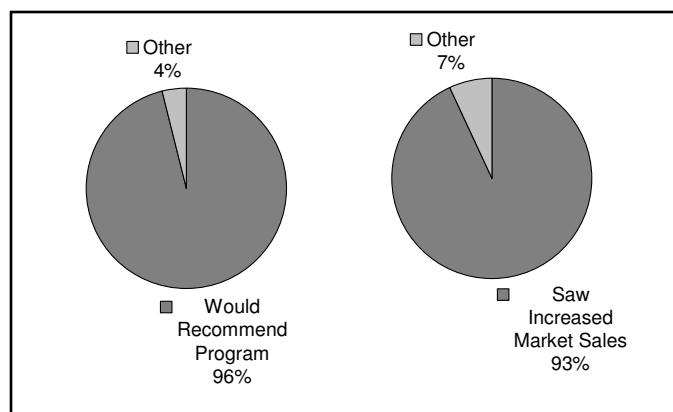
### How does WIC FMNP help KY Farmers?

Many Kentucky tobacco farmers who can no longer rely on subsidies and quotas now turn to fruits and vegetables as an alternative crop. Kentuckians eat many fruits and vegetables that could be grown locally.

Kentucky's vegetable growers already do most of their sales at farmers' markets; however, these markets have the potential to reach many more customers. If Kentucky farmers sold as much produce at markets as the nationwide

average, they could earn an extra \$7.9 million each year!

### Impact of WIC FMNP on KY Farmers 2002



The WIC FMNP supports Kentucky farmers by fueling the growth of markets. Last year 480 Kentucky farmers earned \$253,000 from WIC FMNP vouchers. Yet nearly 2,000 Kentucky farmers operate fruit, vegetable and nut tree farms. Many more could benefit from increased sales due to WIC FMNP.

### How many farmers benefit?

Currently, only 43 of Kentucky's 120 counties receive funds for the WIC FMNP. Funding is too low for new counties to participate. Contact the Community Farm Alliance to learn more about the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

In 2005

- **480 Kentucky farmers** gained customers and sales from the WIC FMNP
- **These farmers earned \$253,000** because of the program

However

- **There are 1,828 fruit, vegetable and nut farm operators** in Kentucky that could benefit from growing markets.
- **Yet only 43 of Kentucky's 120 counties** can participate in the program at current funding levels

## Fact Sheet for Louisville Metro Organizations

# Community Farm Alliance



Frankfort office: 614-A Shelby St., Frankfort, KY 40601, (502) 223-3655

Louisville office: 2130 Portland Avenue #1, Louisville, KY 40212, (502) 775-4041

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)

## **Nutrition Program Grows Healthy Families and Healthy Economies**

Families living in Louisville Metro fight the same distressing health trends that face communities across the country. The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides a weapon for some families to fight back.

### **Poor Eating = Poor Health**

#### ***Obesity strikes Louisville Metro***

In 2004, nearly 60% of the Louisville Metro population was overweight or obese. Obesity increases the risk for chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, cancer, and stroke. Fruits and vegetables help fight these diseases, yet only one in four of the people living in Louisville Metro eat five servings each day.

Low-income mothers and children who participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) fare even worse. WIC nutritionists in Louisville Metro report **that only 1 out of 10 of their patients eat enough fruits and vegetables**. WIC children get fruit through high-sugar juices that contribute toward the rising number who develop diabetes by the age of ten.

#### ***WIC families face barriers to healthy eating***

Mothers participating in the WIC program often cannot access or afford quality fruits and vegetables. More than 4,000 WIC participants live in the West Louisville and East Downtown neighborhoods. These neighborhoods have only three supermarkets. Families without cars to get to these stores often shop at convenience stores that do not carry fresh foods. Families that *can* get to the store often have to pass up produce for less expensive items.

*"After my bills I have about \$50 [for the month] left. There's no way I can buy fruits and vegetables. I'm going to go with pasta and macaroni and cheese so I can get more."*

West Louisville WIC Recipient

### **The WIC FMNP Can Help Louisville Metro Fight Back**

#### ***What is WIC FMNP?***

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides vouchers for eligible low-income pregnant and breastfeeding women and children to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables at farmers' markets.

#### ***How does the WIC FMNP help to grow healthy families in Louisville Metro?***

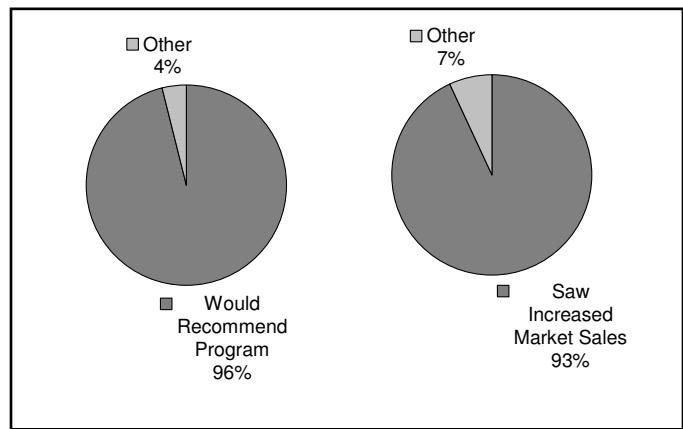
The fiber, vitamins and minerals in fruits and vegetables help to protect children *and* mothers from illness, obesity and diseases like diabetes and cancer.

The WIC FMNP increases fruit and vegetable consumption among low-income families. Across Kentucky, 84% of the women who received WIC FMNP vouchers in 2002 ate more fresh produce. Also, WIC FMNP participants learn new recipes and try new foods at the market. This education impacts their eating habits even after their vouchers are spent. Four out of five who were surveyed planned to eat more produce throughout the year.

### ***How does the WIC FMNP help to grow healthy economies?***

Small-scale Kentucky tobacco farmers who can no longer rely on quotas to support their crop are now turning to fruits and vegetables to save their farms. These growers make most of their sales at farmers' markets. The WIC FMNP brings new customers.

**Impact of WIC FMNP on KY Farmers  
2002**



Buying from local farmers also benefits the surrounding community. Small farms generate local jobs. Local farmers and their employees spend their earnings in the community and thus generate more local wealth. Communities can generate as much as \$3 for every \$1 that farmers earn!

Strong farmers' markets increase activity and traffic near local businesses on market days. They also provide an incubator for urban entrepreneurs looking to establish food businesses. Fifteen urban food entrepreneurs in West Louisville will soon begin selling their products at the markets.

### ***Want to learn more?***

The Community Farm Alliance builds connections between urban residents and farmers. CFA is currently organizing this group to increase access to healthy, fresh foods in Louisville Metro. Call the Community Farm Alliance at 502-775-4041 for to learn more about the WIC FMNP.



# The WIC FMNP in Louisville Metro, KY

## Advocacy Toolkit

### Resources for More Information and Support

The final section of this advocacy toolkit provides introductions and contact information for organizations and institutions related to the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. The entries appear in alphabetical order within the following subcategories: National Resources, Kentucky Resources, and Louisville Metro Resources.

#### National Resources

##### **The Congressional Hunger Center**

The Congressional Hunger Center is a nonprofit anti-hunger training organization founded by former Rep. Tony Hall and located in Washington, D.C. The CHC runs two leadership development programs for individuals interested in anti-hunger and anti-poverty work. Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellows spend one year working to fight hunger in the United States. The CHC keeps an archive of reports and work of its fellows and may have further information about the FMNP.

**Congressional Hunger Center**

229 ½ Pennsylvania Ave SE  
Washington, D.C. 20003

[www.hungercenter.org](http://www.hungercenter.org)

**Program Co-directors:** John Kelly and Kristin Anderson

**Telephone:** (202) 547-7022

**Fax:** (202) 547-7575

##### **The Food Research and Action Center**

The Food Research and Action Center (FRAC) is a national research and public policy center working to improve public policies to eradicate hunger and undernutrition in the United States. FRAC serves as a clearinghouse for information on public nutrition programs, conducts research on the impact of hunger on American families and serves as a watchdog to evaluate legislation that impacts federal nutrition programs.

**FRAC**

1875 Connecticut Ave., NW  
Suite 540  
Washington, DC 20009

[www.frac.org](http://www.frac.org)

**Telephone:** (202) 986-2200

**Fax:** (202) 986-2525

##### **National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs (NAFMNP)**

The National Association of Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs is a non-profit that represents the state agencies that administer the WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs as well as farmers' market associations, businesses, other non-profits, and individuals in a common effort to support the local economy and improve the health of families.

The NAFMNP is a great resource for information on the WIC FMNP and any changes or trends in funding and implementation of the program across the country.

**NAFMNP**  
P.O. Box 9080  
Alexandria, VA 22304

**Email:** phil@triangleassociatesinc.com  
**Telephone:** (703) 837-0451  
**Fax:** (703) 837-9304

Executive Director: Phil Blalock  
[www.nafmnp.org](http://www.nafmnp.org)

### **The WIC Program National Office**

Information about the WIC FMNP can be found at the program's Website:  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/FMNP/FMNPFAQs.htm>

**Email:** wichq-web@fns.usda.gov

Find contact information for state agencies administering the program at the following link:  
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/wic/Contacts/farm.HTM#W>

## **Kentucky Resources**

### **The Community Farm Alliance**

The Community Farm Alliance is a statewide, grassroots organization that organizes around issues of concern to family-scale farmers. CFA began its urban work in Louisville in 2003 and will continue to focus on the FMNP as it builds urban farmers' markets in Louisville Metro. The Louisville organizers will have information on how to set up a pilot project and tips for organizing community around the FMNP.

**Community Farm Alliance**  
2130 Portland Ave., #1  
Louisville, KY 40212

[www.communityfarmalliance.org](http://www.communityfarmalliance.org)  
**Telephone:** (502) 775-4041  
**Fax:** (502) 775- 4039

### **The Kentucky Department of Agriculture: Division of Food Distribution**

The Division of Food Distribution coordinates the WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs in Kentucky. The program coordinators can provide information about the current state of the programs, how to apply to participate, and the potential for future growth.

**Kentucky Department of Agriculture**  
Division of Food Distribution  
Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs

[http://www.kyagr.com/cons\\_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm](http://www.kyagr.com/cons_ps/food/programs/FMNP/FMNPfarmersmarket.htm)

### **The Kentucky Legislative Research Commission**

The LRC has acted as a fact-finding body for the Kentucky State Legislature since 1948. A full-time director and staff of researchers, attorneys, librarians, and fiscal analysts work to provide services and information to the state legislators and the public. The group maintains a reference library, prepares research reports, informational bulletins, staffs legislative committees, and drafts bills for the legislators. They are involved in analyzing

and evaluating potential policies and programs for the legislators. The LRC staff accepts information from constituents on various programs.

**LRC**, Room 300  
State Capitol  
Frankfort, KY 40601

**Telephone:** 502-564-8100  
**Fax:** 502-223-5094

[http://www.lrc.ky.gov/org\\_adm/lrc/aboutlrc.htm](http://www.lrc.ky.gov/org_adm/lrc/aboutlrc.htm)

## **Louisville Metro Resources**

### **Louisville Metro Health Department**

The Louisville Metro Health Department will have up to date information on the health status of the county. Staff may also be interested in looking at the results of community food assessments and pilot projects as they department has focused in recent years on socioeconomic health disparities.

**LM Health Department**  
400 East Gray Street  
Louisville, KY 40202

<http://www.louisvilleky.gov/Health/>  
**Telephone:** (502) 574-6859

### **Neighborhood House**

Located in the Portland neighborhood of West Louisville, the Neighborhood House works to help people live better quality lives through education, recreational, nutritional and fitness programs. It provides programs and services for all ages, focusing on educational enhancement, civic responsibilities, cultural enrichment health promotions, social skills development, employment opportunities and training.

**Neighborhood House**  
201 N. 25th Street  
Louisville, KY 40212

<http://www.nhky.org/contact.html>  
**Telephone:** 502.774.2322  
**Fax:** 502.774.2324

### **Presbyterian Hunger Program**

The Presbyterian Hunger Program works to eliminate hunger and its causes by providing grants to organizations working to address hunger in the United States and around the world. In Louisville, the PHP has been working to expand its Just Eating curriculum in churches around the city. They may be interested in incorporating some of this information into the curriculum and could also help to raise awareness about the WIC FMNP.

**Presbyterian Hunger Program**  
100 Witherspoon Street  
Louisville, KY 40202

[www.pcusa.org/hunger](http://www.pcusa.org/hunger)  
**Louisville Contact:** Andrew Kang Bartlett  
**Telephone:** 1-888-728-7228 x 5388



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