

Support Funding for the Massachusetts Food Trust Program

Good for Jobs, Good for Communities, Good for Health



THE PROBLEM

Too many Massachusetts communities have poor access to healthy food and lack strong local job opportunities. A study by the Massachusetts Grocery Access Task Force found that large swaths of urban and rural Massachusetts lack good access to grocery stores and other healthy food retailers. Research shows that access to grocery stores is linked to lower rates of obesity, diabetes, and other diet-related diseases. Many of these same communities are struggling economically and lack appropriate job opportunities for local residents.

THE SOLUTION

Flexible financing to meet community needs. The Massachusetts Food Trust Program, established in law in 2014, would provide loans, grants, and technical assistance to support new and expanded healthy food retailers and local food enterprises in low and moderate income communities. This could include supermarkets, corner stores, farmer's markets, mobile markets, community kitchens, food co-ops, food truck commissaries, indoor and outdoor greenhouses, and food distribution hubs. This program was a recommendation of the Grocery Access Task Force, a public-private partnership which met for two years to tackle this problem.

Better access to healthy food = more jobs. Increased access to food retail options can drive economic growth:

- The PA Fresh Food Financing Initiative has supported 5,000 jobs
- The CA FreshWorks Fund has created or retained 1,362 jobs
- The NY Healthy Food Healthy Communities Fund has created or preserved 1,006 jobs

Public financing has leveraged significant private investment. Other states, including NY and PA, have leveraged between \$9-15 dollars in private and federal funds for every \$1 of state funding.

Local food enterprises create opportunity. Food enterprises provide good paying jobs to people with varying levels of skills, education, and language proficiency – and they can't be outsourced. For example, Commonwealth Kitchen, recently expanded to a second site in Boston, has launched over 100 businesses since August 2009, providing support and training for new companies and job opportunities for neighborhood residents.

For more information, contact Maddie Ribble at the Massachusetts Public Health Association:
mribble@mapublichealth.org, 617-697-2107.



Supporting Organizations

(as of October 15, 2015)

Act FRESH Campaign	Hispanic-American Institute
Allston Brighton Community Development Corporation	Historic Boston Inc.
Allston Brighton Health Collaborative	Hockomock Area YMCA
American Academy of Pediatrics - Massachusetts Chapter	H.P. Kendall Foundation
American Heart/Stroke Association	Holyoke Food & Fitness Policy Council
Be Well Berkshires	Joint Coalition on Health
Berkshire Interfaith Organizing (BIO)	Local Enterprise Assistance Fund
BOLD Teens/Codman Square Neighborhood Council	Madison Park Development Corporation
Boston Alliance for Community Health	Massachusetts Alliance of YMCAs
Boston Community Capital	Massachusetts Association of Community Development Corporations
The Boston Foundation	Massachusetts Association of Councils on Aging
Boston Public Health Commission	Massachusetts Association of Health Boards
Brighton Main Streets	Massachusetts Dietetic Association
Brockton Neighborhood Health Center	Massachusetts Farm to School
Brockton 21 st Century Corporation	Massachusetts Food Association
Children's Health Watch	Massachusetts Law Reform Institute
CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture)	Massachusetts Public Health Association
CitySprouts	Mattapan Food & Fitness Coalition
CommonWealth Kitchen	Metropolitan Area Planning Council
Community Health Network Area 9	MetroWest Moves
Community Servings	Mill City Grows
Conservation Law Foundation	Neighboring Food Co-op Association
Conservation Law Foundation Ventures	Northeast Harvest
Cooperative Fund of New England	Old Colony YMCA
Dorchester Bay Economic Development Corporation	Partners for a Healthier Community/Live Well Springfield
Dorchester Community Food Coop	Regional Environmental Council of Central MA
The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts	Roxbury in Motion
The Food Trust	Springfield Food Policy Council
Franklin County Community Development Corporation	Springfield Partners for Community Action
Fun 'N FITchburg	Sustainable Nantucket
Greater Lowell Health Alliance	The Food Project
Groundwork Lawrence	United Neighbors of Fall River
Health Care For All	Voices for a Healthy South Coast
Health Care Without Harm	Worcester Food & Active Living Policy Council
Health Resources in Action	

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