

University of California Sustainable Agriculture Research & Education Program
2021-2022 Sustainable Agriculture & Food Systems Competitive Grants Program



Final Report: June 30, 2022

Project Title: CalFresh Eats Farm Fresh

Principal Investigator:

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Project Location: City of Napa, Napa County

Proposal Category: Education & Outreach Grant

Priority Area: Supporting Urban & Rural Communities

Grant Amount: \$6,812

Objectives

Goal #1: Strengthen connections between producers and CalFresh households in the City of Napa through meaningful story telling about farmers from diverse background (Latine, female, young farmers).

Goal #1 Objectives:

- 1) Identify and capture stories of three to four farmers from diverse backgrounds (Latine, female, young farmer, etc.).
- 2) Develop messages and materials (including two mailers, electronic documents, social media posts, etc.) with Napa County Health & Human Services and Puertas Abiertas Community Resource Center staff.
- 3) Distribute materials to 2,000 CalFresh households in or around the City of Napa via two mailings.
- 4) Evaluate impact of the materials based on evaluation methods design with the project team.

Goal #2: Expand access to healthy, sustainably produced, culturally appropriate foods among CalFresh households in the City of Napa through increased awareness of and participation in the Napa Farmers Market CalFresh Market Match program.

Goal #2 Objectives:

- 1) Develop materials to include information about the Napa Farmers Market CalFresh Market Match program.
- 2) Distribute materials to 2,000 CalFresh households in or around the City of Napa via two mailings.
- 3) Track participation in the CalFresh Market Match program at the Napa Farmers Market.

Update on Objectives 1.3, 1.4, 2.2, 2.3: Due to an unforeseen problem, the Napa County Health & Human Services Agency CalFresh Office was unable to send the first mailer until June 6, 2022. The first mailer was supposed to go out in October 2021 and second in April 2022. This majorly affected our ability to distribute and evaluate the impact of the planned activities. Instead of doing a second mailing, we developed a bilingual Harvest of the Month poster featuring a peak season fruit and vegetable for every month. The posters will be distributed via the CalFresh office, local organizations serving the target population, and at the Napa Farmers Market.

Summary

The CalFresh Eats Farm Fresh Project was developed to expand access to healthy, sustainably produced, culturally appropriate foods and strengthen connections between producers and CalFresh consumers in the City of Napa. The project developed and distributed culturally appropriate, bilingual materials telling the stories of farmers from diverse backgrounds and highlighting peak season fruits and vegetables available at the Napa Farmers Market. Materials also included information on the CalFresh Market Match program, which doubles CalFresh (formerly known as “food stamps”) benefits dollar-for-dollar to purchase fruits and vegetables at the Napa Farmers Market.

Two farmer profiles were highlighted: Carine Hines (female, young farmer), Sun Tracker Farm (Certified Organic), Yolo County and Anna Ramos (female, Latina farmer), J & J Ramos Farms, Stanislaus County, in a bilingual brochure mailed to 2,000 CalFresh household directly from the Napa County Health & Human Services Agency. Both farmers shared their perspective that they value and appreciate CalFresh customers spending their food assistance benefits at their stalls in the Napa Farmers Market. Both farmers have positive experiences forming relationships with return CalFresh customers, which speaks the ability to strengthen connections between producers and consumers, regardless of income level, in the venue of farmers markets.

In development of the materials, gender inclusive language was included in the Spanish language content by using gender neutral “e”, i.e., Latine. Gender neutral “e” was used to illustrate gender inclusivity within existing Spanish language pronunciation, while “x” does not flow naturally in the language.

Unfortunately, the project experienced a major setback: due to unforeseen circumstances the Napa County Health & Human Services Agency CalFresh Office was unable to send the first mailer until nearly the end of the grant period. As a lesson learned, future projects will have contingency/back up distribution plans in place if mailing materials is not possible. Further, due to the delay in sending the mailing, the impact on CalFresh Market Match participation was not able to be measured during the grant timeline.

Instead of a second mailing, a bilingual and vibrantly illustrated Harvest of the Month poster featuring a peak season fruit and vegetable for every month was developed for distribution at the Napa County Health & Human Services Agency CalFresh Office, local organizations serving the target population, including Puertas Abiertas Community Resource Center, and at the Napa Farmers Market.

This project demonstrated the potential for sharing stories of diverse farmers to deepen the human connection between producers and consumers, regardless of income level, in our local food system at farmers markets. Farmers markets traditionally have not been welcoming

spaces to people of color and low-income customers. By seeking out and amplifying stories in outreach and education materials of diverse farmers who appreciate their experience serving customers using food assistance benefits, we can help change the narrative to demonstrate that low-income customers are valued and welcomed at farmers markets.

Specific Results

Objective: *Identify and capture stories of three to four farmers from diverse backgrounds (Latine, female, young farmer, etc.).*

Results: Four farmers were successfully recruited for the project

- Carine Hines, Sun Tracker Farm (Certified Organic), Yolo County: Female, young farmer
- Anna Ramos, J&J Ramos Farm, Stanislaus County: Female, Latina
- Fernando Calderon, The Patch (Sonoma County): Latino
- Koy Saichow, Stony Point Strawberry Farm (Sonoma County): Female, Asian

Two farmer profiles, Carine & Anna, were shared in the first mailing. It was important to share their perspective that as farmers they value and appreciate it when CalFresh customers spend their food assistance benefits at their stalls in the market. Both farmers shared positive experiences about forming relationships with return CalFresh customers.

Objective: *Develop messages and materials (including two mailers, electronic documents, etc.) with Napa County Health & Human Services and Puertas Abiertas CRC staff.*

Results: Messages and materials were developed in partnership and with input from project collaborators. Gender inclusive language using gender neutral “e” was included in the Spanish language content. Materials completed included a CalFresh Eats Farm Fresh brochure, CalFresh Market Match Program letter, and Harvest of the Month Poster.

Objective: *Distribute materials to 2,000 CalFresh households in or around the City of Napa via two mailings.*

Results: One mailing was sent to 2,000 CalFresh households in or around the City of Napa near the very end of the grant timeline (June 6, 2022). As a lesson learned, future projects will have contingency/back up distribution plans if mailing is not possible.

Objective: *Develop materials to include information about the Napa Farmers Market CalFresh Market Match program.*

Results: A bilingual letter focused on explaining CalFresh Market Match in detail was created in addition to basic program information on the project brochure.

Objective: *Evaluate impact of the materials based on evaluation methods design with the project team.*

Results: Due to the delay in sending the mailing, the impact was not able to be measured during the grant timeline.

Objective: *Track participation in the CalFresh Market Match program at the Napa Farmers Market.*

Results: Participation in the CalFresh Market Match program at the Napa Farmers Market was tracked, however due to the delay in sending the mailing, the impact was not able to be measured during the grant timeline.

Dissemination of Findings

The templates for the project materials (bilingual CalFresh Eats. Farm Fresh brochure and Harvest of the Month Calendar) were developed using Canva and are available to any organization that would like to use them by request to caramae@napafarmersmarket.org.

Benefits/Impacts on Agriculture and/or Food Systems

This project demonstrated the potential for sharing stories of diverse farmers to deepen the human connection between producers and consumers, regardless of income level, in our local food system at farmers markets.

Farmers markets traditionally have not been welcoming spaces to people of color and low-income customers. By seeking out and amplifying stories in outreach and education materials of diverse farmers who appreciate their experience serving customers using food assistance benefits, we can help change the narrative to demonstrate that low-income customers are valued and welcomed at farmers markets.

Impact on Target Audience

Number of adults reached: 2,000 CalFresh households.

Number of youth reached: Unknown

Number of farms reached: 4

<u>Gender</u>		<u>Ethnicity</u>		<u>Race</u>			
Man/Boy	uk	Hispanic/Latino	n/a	American Indian/Alaska Native	uk	More than one race	uk
Woman/Girl	uk	Not Hispanic/Latino	uk	Asian	uk	Race not listed	uk
Nonbinary	uk	Prefer not to state	uk	Black or African American	uk	Prefer not to state	uk
Gender identity not listed	uk		uk	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	uk		
Prefer not to state	uk		uk	White	uk		