Awards issued prior to January 20, 2025, were funded under previous Administrations and may not reflect the priorities and policies of the current Administration.

United States Department of Agriculture
Project Initiation

Project Data for Accession Number 1020889

Project Title

CSA is a SNAP

Project Details

Sponsoring Institution National Institute of Food and Agriculture	**Project Status** COMPLETE
Funding Source NIFA Non Formula	**Grant Year** 2019
Grant No. 2019-70030-30397	**Cumulative Award Amt.** $48,524.00
Proposal No. 2019-04684	**Multistate No.** (N/A)
Project Start Date Sep 01, 2019	**Project End Date** Dec 31, 2021
Program Code [FPP] FINI Pilot Project	

Project Director

Larmer, M.

Recipient Organization

GLYNWOOD CENTER, INC.

362 GLYNWOOD RD

Cold Spring, NEW YORK 10516

Performing Department

(N/A)

Non Technical Summary

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA), as it is traditionally structured (up-front, lump-sum purchase), makes it challenging for households who rely on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to afford the healthy, local produce that is offered through this type of distribution. Yet, the model helps farmers because the early season income helps balance their revenue throughout the rest of the year. Although many CSA farmers would like to serve more SNAP customers, this fundamental disconnect, along with the challenges of becoming a SNAP-authorized firm/retailer, reduces the ability of these CSAs to serve SNAP customers. In NY's Hudson Valley, areas of which experience very high food insecurity and have significant SNAP-eligible population centers, few customers use their SNAP dollars to participate in CSA and the mean household income of CSA members in the HVCSAC catchment is $127,800 as evidenced by recently completed market research commissioned by the Glynwood Center for Regional Food and Farming.By leveraging the structure, assets and experience of Glynwood's Hudson Valley CSA Coalition

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(HVCSAC) -- a growing network of 80+ CSA farms across 11 counties in NY's Hudson Valley -- this FPP project will pilot an innovative regional CSA nutrition incentive program ("CSA is a SNAP") that seeks to increase participation in Hudson Valley CSA by SNAP customers. The pilot is innovative in that it uses GusNIP funds to capitalize a revolving incentive fund, paying farmers upfront for the full value of their share while giving SNAP customers the flexibility to pay week-to-week and the benefit of a 30% discount off the purchase price of a half-share. Additionally, through this project, Glynwood will: (1) create a working group of five "CSA is a SNAP" farms comprised of three SNAP-authorized, HVCSAC farms experienced with serving low income households, alongside two SNAP-authorized HVCSAC farms who would like to improve their ability to do so; (2) work with additional HVCSAC member farms to encourage and train more of them to become SNAP-authorized farms; (3) offer administrative and technical support for low-income shares such as processing alternative payment methods; (4) partner with local social service agencies and community partners to reach and enroll SNAP customers in the "CSA is a SNAP" pilot; and (5) expand marketing outreach efforts in localized areas of high SNAP enrollment. As a result of this project, 140 SNAP households who are new to CSA will spend up to $35,000 additional SNAP dollars on locally-grown CSA fruits and vegetables, thanks to the $50,000 in incentives that this grant will allow us to distribute over the 2020 CSA season. If the pilot is successful, and the model proves effective, we will plan a region-wide rollout of the project in 2021. This project builds on a 2016 FMPP grant Glynwood received to build the capacity of the Hudson Valley CSA Coalition (USDA-AMS-FMPP-16FMPPNY0044), as well as leverages the expertise of CSA leaders working to increase food security nationally through a 2018 FMPP-funded CSA community of practice project in which Glynwood is a sub-awardee (USDA-AMS-TM-FMPP-AM1090100G103).

Animal Health Component

Animal Health Component: 0%

Research Effort Categories

Basic	0%
Applied	75%
Developmental	25%

Classification

Knowledge Area (KA)	Subject of Investigation (SOI)	Field of Science (FOS)	Percent
604	6299	3030	40%
805	6050	3010	40%
724	6099	3020	20%

Knowledge Area

[604] Marketing and Distribution Practices

[805] Community Institutions and Social Services

[724] Healthy Lifestyle

Subject Of Investigation

[6299] Marketing, general/other

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[6050] Communities, areas, and regions, including states and their institutions and organizations

[6099] People and communities, general/other

Field Of Science

[3030] Information and communication

[3010] Economics

[3020] Education

Keywords

Community Supported Agriculture, Food Access, Regional Food Systems, SNAP, Nutrition Incentives

Goals / Objectives

Project Goals and Intended OutcomesGusNIP supports USDA's Strategic Plan Goal 7 "to provide all Americans access to a safe, nutritious and secure food supply," by supporting projects that are intended to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables by low-income consumers participating in SNAP by providing incentives at the point of purchase. This pilot project -- "CSA is a SNAP" -- has two primary GOALS which support the goals of GusNIP:Goal 1: Increase the amount of locally-produced fresh fruits and vegetables sold through CSA to existing SNAP customers, thereby providing those customers with season-long access to affordable healthy produce, and providing the CSA farmers with an expanded customer base.Goal 2: Enable more CSA farms in NY's Hudson Valley to successfully engage, market to, and build relationships with SNAP customers.To advance these goals over a one-year FPP pilot, we will pursue the following discrete OBJECTIVES:Objective 1: Develop and pilot a scalable regional CSA nutrition incentive program at five HVCSAC member farms (henceforth referred to as "CSA is a SNAP" farms) to be rolled out with the 2020 CSA Season.Objective 2: Provide training and education to at least 50 HVCSAC member farms (beyond the "CSA is a SNAP" pilot farms) on how to become and/or operate as a SNAP-authorized firm so they are better positioned to serve SNAP customers, even independent of this pilot project.Objective 3: Partner with key local social service agencies and community partners in "CSA is a SNAP" farms' catchment areas, in order to reach and enroll up to 140 SNAP households in the pilot project by May 2020.

Project Methods

The activities described earlier in this report comprise the methods associated with achieving our project goals. This includes: convening a working group of CSA farms, connecting with the expertise of front line organizations serving SNAP/EBT recipients, and developing promotional materials to engage our target audience in these activities.This project is in its early stages of development -- perfectly suited for an infusion of federal funds to pilot innovative strategies. As an FPP project, Glynwood will conduct a process analysis resulting in a self-assessment of our success in developing a viable long-term project. This analysis will include documentation of process, challenges, and successes we faced in our pilot year, along with recommendations for program adaptation and evolution. Primary Analysis and data management will be managed and conducted by PD Megan Larmer (phD Candidate, Director of Regional Food), with support from Glynwood's Program Coordinator, Katharine Anstreicher. Primary data sources used to measure progress toward intended outcomes will likely include farmers' end of season surveys, weekly pick-up records, and hopefully surveys and interviews with SNAP customers. We will provide the preliminary results of our self-assessment report -- including the extent to which we achieved our intended objectives -- to NIFA, NYS Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, and project partners (farmers, HVCSAC, local social service agencies). Finally, the project team is fully committed to participating in the program evaluation conducted by the Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation and Information Centers.