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 1033181

Project Title

Closing the Gap: Equitable Approaches to Statewide Nutrition Incentive Program Expansion and Impact in Ohio

Project Details

Sponsoring Institution National Institute of Food and Agriculture	**Project Status** COMPLETE
Funding Source NIFA Non Formula	**Grant Year** 2024
Grant No. 2024-70415-43712	**Cumulative Award Amt.** $2,852,190.00
Proposal No. 2024-06478	**Multistate No.** (N/A)
Project Start Date Sep 01, 2024	**Project End Date** Apr 25, 2025
Program Code [FLSP] FINI Large Scale Project	

Project Director

Foreman, T.

Recipient Organization

PRODUCE PERKS MIDWEST INC

1 CROWNE POINT CT STE 130

CINCINNATI, OHIO 452415411

Performing Department

(N/A)

Non Technical Summary

Produce Perks Midwest and the Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network will complete a two-year nutrition incentive project aimed at developing equitable approaches to statewide expansion and impact of Produce Perks, Ohio's SNAP-matching nutrition incentive program. Losses in SNAP benefits and a significant rise in food costs have affected Ohio's 1.3 million SNAP recipients. In response, this project aims to deepen the impact within underserved communities, ensuring equitable access and participation.The project will generate $2.7M in fruit and vegetable purchases, engage 15 BIPOC-owned food businesses, expand to 25 new sites, increase incentive transactions by 20% and redemption rates by 45%, and establish community engagement practices.Goals include:1) Develop community engagement practices to nurture lasting, authentic community relationships and increase beneficiary satisfaction;2) Equitably deepen impact within underserved communities and underutilized sites;3) Increase equity within program impact, with a specific focus on enhancing racial equity and improving access to programming for underserved communities; 4)

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Increase cross-agency collaboration and resource sharing for statewide infrastructure development and eventual transition towards technology advancements.Activities include establishment of a Community Advisory Group, development of a Steps-To-Success tool to boost program utilization at lower performing sites, implementation of community-informed outreach strategies to increase awareness and repeat users, partnership building with BIPOC-owned food businesses, and state agency partnership building and joint needs assessments.This project represents a concerted effort among Ohio stakeholders to address food insecurity and build a more equitable food system for all Ohioans.?

Animal Health Component

Animal Health Component: 0%

Research Effort Categories

Basic	50%
Applied	0%
Developmental	50%

Classification

Knowledge Area (KA)	Subject of Investigation (SOI)	Field of Science (FOS)	Percent
704	6099	0001	100%

Knowledge Area

[704] Nutrition and Hunger in the Population

Subject Of Investigation

[6099] People and communities, general/other

Field Of Science

[0001] Administration

Keywords

Nutrition incentives, collaboration, food insecurity, food system resilience, BIPOC

Goals / Objectives

Goal 1: Develop community engagement practices to nurture lasting, authentic community relationships and increase beneficiary satisfaction.Objective 1.1: Establish a diverse Community Advisory Group.Objective 1.2: Conduct and apply feedback from 350 SNAP consumer interviews.Goal 2: Equitably deepen impact within underserved communities and underutilized sites to reach $2,700,000 in fruit and vegetable purchases.Objective 2.1: Develop and deliver a customized Technical Assistance (TA) Steps-To-Success Framework to increase PP sales by 50% at Opportunity Sites.Objective 2.2: Increase number of incentive transactions by 20% and overall redemption rate by 45% through marketing best practices and piloting 5 community informed outreach plans.Goal 3: Increase equity within program impact, with a specific focus on enhancing racial equity and improving access to programming for

underserved communities.Objective 3.1: Hold 5 partner meetings to address barriers to site application/participation and revise New Site Application for a more inclusive and equitable pathway to join Produce Perks.Objective 3.2: Implement PP with at least 15 additional BIPOC-owned sites.Objective 3.3: Use community feedback to recruit 10 new sites in 5 new counties.Goal 4: Increase Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network cross-agency collaboration and resource sharing.Objective 4.1: Conduct 24 network meetings, annual 1-on-1 member meetings, and recruit 5 new members from new regions and underrepresented groups.Objective 4.2: Recruit state agencies ODJFS/WIC and attend 8 quarterly State Nutrition Action Council meetings.Objective 4.3: Conduct a needs assessment of PP site capacity to adopt new incentive technology and convene an Incentive Technology Working Group to create shared goals.

Project Methods

For Goal 1: Nurture lasting, authentic community relationships.Convene the CAG, recruiting 5-10 members, including SNAP users, farmers, market managers, and store owners, ensuring diversity in geography, race, ethnicity, age, gender, and socioeconomic status. Members will be compensated and provided with facilitation support for bi-monthly meetings over the two-year project. Using a group-led process, the CAG will inform OHNIN strategy, expansion, outreach, and evaluation. PPM will conduct 300 quantitative surveys and 50 qualitative interviews/focus groups with SNAP recipients and share findings.For Goal 2: Equitably deepen impact, reaching $2,700,000 in PP purchases. Develop a Steps-To-Success Framework, conduct site assessments, and engage at least 60% of Opportunity Sites to establish site-specific goals, providing tailored support, including vendor recruitment, capacity building, and outreach. Convene a national Community of Practice to disseminate findings. PPM will utilize industry best practices for statewide marketing, including distributing 150,000 multilingual marketing materials; increasing traffic to a web-based site locator tool by 40%; increasing social media impressions by 60% through retargeted ads (targets users who have previously visited a website or interacted with PP online); providing 200 hours of Technical Assistance (TA) and shared learning to sites; creating a communications toolkit and best practice checklist, adopted by a minimum of 2/3 (90) sites. PPM will also recruit program beneficiaries to co-create and pilot community-informed outreach plans.For Goal 3: Expand to diverse new sites.Develop an inclusive recruitment and application process, expanding to at least 15 additional BIPOC owned businesses. Convene an OHNIN working group, organize community meetings to understand barriers to PP application and implementation, revise New Site Application criteria, determine a baseline measurement of BIPOC farmer impact, and work with partners to engage new and rural communities in least 5 new counties, implementing PP at 10 new sites.For Goal 4: Develop state-level shared goals and infrastructure.Strengthen collaboration and coordination among state-level stakeholders and prepare for program expansion by hiring an OHNIN facilitator, conducting regular meetings and annual one-on-one sessions with members, creating a new member application, and recruiting 5 new OHNIN members from underrepresented groups; building relationships with key state agencies including ODJFS and WIC and attending State Nutrition Action Council meetings; and identifying and engaging populations at risk for limited technology adoption through a needs assessment with ODA, ODH, and OFMN, convening quarterly Incentive Technology working group meetings, and ensuring effective dissemination of learnings.?