

May: *Why Double Up Food Bucks?*



BOARD STUDY INSTRUCTIONS

***REMINDER:** *In order to make the most out of our Board Study discussion, we ask you to please read these research materials before coming to the Board of Directors meeting on May 17.*

SYNOPSIS: Access has always been one of the most critical Ends policies for La Montanita's Board of Directors throughout its 40 years of operation - yet, as consistent as the cooperative has been in providing the community with healthy, organic, and locally-grown foods, it has struggled providing this same quality product assortment to lower income populations.

- ❖ *In this Board Study, the Board of Directors and meeting attendees will cooperatively explore La Montanita's opportunities in launching the Double Up Food Bucks program. Attendees will also review the history of Double Up Food Bucks and how it has become a model for communities nationwide. The Board of Directors will utilize insights from the discussion to identify next steps for promoting and expanding the program.*

Key goals of this Board Study include:

1. *Reviewing the history of Double Up Food Bucks in Detroit and discuss how it has become a model for communities nationwide.*
2. *Learning more about New Mexico's Farmers Market Association's 2016 advocacy efforts to expand the Double Up Food Bucks program to nearly 70 retail sites*
3. *Learning more about the New Mexico Farmers Market Association's continuous role in supporting Double Up Food Bucks programs throughout the state*
4. *Identifying opportunities for La Montanita in piloting the Double Up Food Bucks program in a grocery store and how to bring it to other grocery stores throughout the state*
5. *Identifying action steps for La Montanita to spread the word about Double Up Food Bucks*
6. *Utilizing Detroit's model of a "Telephone Town Hall" to engage in a community conversation about accessibility and affordability of healthy food options*

A) INTRODUCTION / RESEARCH (10 minutes):

1. An Overview: Nutrition Incentive Program Receives Continued Support from the State of New Mexico - News Article written by Denise Miller of NMFMA

Summary: At the end of February 2016, Governor Susana Martinez signed a \$6.2 billion state budget (House Bill 2), that includes \$390,300 for the Double Up Food Bucks program that provides incentives for SNAP participants to increase their purchase of New Mexico-grown fruits and vegetables. (SNAP refers to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program formerly known as food stamps.)

Next Steps: The program relies on a wide range of stakeholders across the state to assist with program outreach and education. Individuals or organizations that would like to get involved with the program can locate resources on the Double Up website (www.DoubleUpNM.org) or contact the New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association at 505-983-4010.

2. Double Up Food Bucks Board Study: Access to Food and Information* by Jeff Hertz of La Montanita

Summary: Access has always been one of the most critical Ends policies for La Montanita's Board of Directors throughout its 40 years of operation - yet, as consistent as the cooperative has been in providing the community with healthy, organic, and locally-grown foods, it has struggled providing this same quality product assortment to lower income populations. Identifying appropriate marketing methods, strategies, and channels for reaching these populations is sometimes an even more difficult task. At the intersection of the cooperative's Ends policies dedicated to food education and access, La Montanita believes it has found a way to level the playing field in our current local food movement.

**This is an article that was published in La Montanita's May Newsletter (on page 8) and can be accessed here: <https://issuu.com/lamontanitacoop/docs/2016maycomplete?e=5971602/35370743>*

3. Helping Food-Insecure Households in New Mexico Afford Healthier Choices through the SNAP Double Up Food Bucks Program (Policy Brief) by Armelle Casau, Ph.D. and published by New Mexico Voices for Children

Abstract: New Mexico is a poor state with high rates of food insecurity and with too many adults and children suffering from nutrition-related chronic conditions,

including obesity and diabetes. Programs that incentivize consumption of locally grown, healthy, fresh produce to food-insecure individuals offer both health benefits to low-income communities as well as economic benefits to local farmers.

Summary: The USDA estimates that every \$5 spent in SNAP benefits generate \$9 in local economic activity. This leads to a very positive economic multiplier effect for communities across New Mexico while increasing the food security and health outcomes of vulnerable children and adults in the state.

Policy Recommendations (only a few are listed here):

1. *Support and Expand SNAP DUFB:* New Mexico's farmers' markets currently generate around \$9 million in annual sales, according to the New Mexico Farmers' Marketing Association. Those participating in DUFB in 2015 earned more than \$350,000 in combined SNAP and SNAP DUFB sales. By 2016, more than half of all farmers' markets will be participating in the DUFB program. Expanding the program to more farmers' markets (including those in food insecure countries like Torrance, Lea and Chaves), to farm stands and co-op grocers will help increase access to healthy, nutritious foods for food-insecure New Mexicans while increasing demand for locally grown produce. Since SNAP DUFB state funding will likely leverage matching federal USDA funds, future recurring state funds should bring an additional \$2 million in federal funds into the state during the next four years.
2. *Increase participation in SNAP DUFB:* Barriers to SNAP DUFB participation include insufficient access to information about the program; limited hours and locations of farmers' markets; misconceptions around actual and perceived prices; inability to do bulk or one-stop shopping; unfamiliarity with how to prepare less-common produce; and limited marketing budgets that make it difficult to reach broad target audiences.
3. *Strategies for improving SNAP DUFB participation include:* promoting the program directly to SNAP participants through the New Mexico Human Services Department; increasing training and outreach to statewide Income Support Division personnel who work directly with SNAP participants; increasing the administrative capacity of farmers' markets staff and volunteers to run the program; conducting cultural competency training to increase the capacity of farmers' market staff and volunteers to engage with, and better serve, diverse audiences; increasing the production and distribution of locally grown food to corner stores and other grocery stores so SNAP DUFB is available at more retail outlets; creating additional marketing materials (and translate into Spanish) that can be more widely disseminated in libraries, banks, post offices, DMV locations, child care sites, and schools; conducting more outreach via cooking demos on site and other community locations; leveraging SNAP-Ed funding to further crosslink nutritional

education efforts; and working with health professionals to spread the word about the program.*

**Exploring Efforts to Increase Participation of SNAP Recipients at Farmers' Markets, Emory University, 2015*

**The Food Assistance National Input-Output Multiplier Model and the Stimulus Effects of SNAP, 2010*

4. Double Up Food Bucks and Hunger

by Kate Fitzgerald for Fair Food Network

Summary: Fair Food Network works at the intersection of food systems, sustainability, and social equity to develop solutions that support farmers, strengthen local economies, and increase access to healthy food –especially in our most underserved communities. Fair Food Network's Double Up Food Bucks program provides SNAP program participants with matching dollars to buy additional produce when they spend their federal nutrition benefits on locally grown fruits and vegetables. The Double Up program began in five farmers markets in 2009 and has since expanded to more than 150 sites across the state including farmers markets, mobile markets, food share programs, and grocery stores. These field reports look at program evaluation data through a variety of lenses and discuss their policy implications.

Conclusion: Reports from the Council of Economic Advisors and the National Hunger Commission reaffirm that the SNAP program is a strong and crucially important food safety net. They highlight the connections between poverty, hunger, and good nutrition, and encourage careful experimentation with new ideas to enhance its efficacy. Fair Food Network's experience and careful external research indicates that the Double Up Food Bucks' approach incentivizing nutritious produce purchases among SNAP participants is an effective way to both reduce hunger and support healthy diets. Low-income American families should not have to choose between being hungry and being healthy. Implemented well, SNAP local produce incentive programs are an effective way to ensure families do not have to make that choice. Creating a market connection between farmers to consumers deepens the impact by injecting food dollars into the local farm economy and fostering a strong and resilient local civic culture.

5. Double Up Food Bucks: A Five Year Success Story

❖ *How Michigan's healthy food incentive program is benefiting families, farmers, and local economies - and how it can be replicated nationwide.*

Summary: Fair Food Network is a national nonprofit founded on the belief that vibrant local food systems can create health and economic opportunity for all. We pioneer win/win/win solutions that support farmers, strengthen local economies, and increase access to healthy

food—especially in our most underserved communities. *Dig deeper at fairfoodnetwork.org.* Fair Food Network's Double Up Food Bucks (Double Up) program makes it easier for low-income Americans to eat fresh fruits and vegetables while supporting family farmers and growing local economies. With a five-year track record, Double Up is a proven, innovative model that simultaneously delivers health and economic opportunity.

- ***Here's how it works:*** Double Up provides low-income Americans who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits with a one-to-one match to purchase healthy, locally grown fruits and vegetables. The wins are three-fold: families bring home more healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. Each has ripple effects across the community.
- ***History:*** Since 2009, Double Up has grown from five farmers markets in Detroit to more than 150 sites across Michigan and northern Ohio—and has become a model for communities nationwide. With its established, uniform design and centralized administration, the Double Up model reduces the burden placed on local markets and supports a diverse range of communities. The program is also defined by its comprehensive communications and strong partnerships including with statewide agencies. Double Up has now expanded beyond farmers markets into grocery stores, the critical next frontier in healthy food incentives. And Fair Food Network has developed two technology innovations to support mobile payment of healthy food incentives.

Fair Food Network pioneered the next leap forward in healthy food incentives by developing the first statewide program defined by its uniform design, centralized coordination, and local implementation.

B) PRESENTATION (45 minutes)

After discussing Double Up Food Bucks on the national scale, Lucy McDermott of the New Mexico Farmers Market Association (NMFMA) will provide us with an overview of the association's work and their continuing role in supporting Double Up Food Bucks programs throughout the state of New Mexico. Lucy will present on the following topics:

- Brief Overview of the NMFMA and our role in Double Up
- Brief history of how the program came to be - food security, food access ect.
- Overview of the success in 2015

- 2016 Legislative session and the successful procurement of funding
- Expansion in 2016 to grocery outlets, CSAs, markets and farm stands. (I'll focus primarily on grocery)
- How the program works in LMC grocery stores vs. other retail outlets
- Evaluation of 2015 and looking forward to 2020 in terms of expanding local food access and vending options for farmers. Local Ag Support.
- Discuss opportunities for forming partnerships and potential outreach efforts

Lucy McDermott will also bring some outreach materials to the meeting in case anyone wants to take some more information about NMFMA with them.

C) PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT (5 minutes)

Goal: Utilize the summary of Detroit's Telephone Town Hall as a model for initiating La Montanita's own Telephone Town Hall to promote the Double Up Food Bucks program.

Telephone Town Hall Summary:

- **WHAT:** Telephone Town Hall
- **WHY:** To create an opportunity for thousands of Detroiters to engage in a community conversation about accessibility and affordability of healthy food options.
- **HOW:** The Telephone Town Hall combines traditional communications methods with contemporary technology to create a highly interactive virtual town hall meeting, allowing thousands of participants to interact with a panel of experts in the food systems field.

Conclusion: The Telephone Town Hall engaged thousands of community members in this important conversation. They were heard; they asked questions; and their voices are being amplified to leaders and policy makers through the Strengthening Detroit Voices project at Fair Food Network.

For more information on Strengthening Detroit Voices, including the audio recording of the Telephone Town Hall, please visit: <http://www.fairfoodnetwork.org/what-we-do/projects/strengthening-detroit-voices>.