

# Kentucky's Vision for Access to Healthy Foods

**All Kentuckians at all times will have access to safe, affordable, culturally acceptable and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life.**

Farmers' markets are one way to improve access to healthy foods in communities by establishing markets in underserved areas and supporting the acceptance of federal food assistance benefits in existing markets.



# What's so great about farmers' markets?

## HEALTH

**Variety of Nutrients** | Farmers' markets provide a one-stop-shop for a wide variety of types and colors of produce so your body gets the mix of nutrients it needs to be healthy.<sup>1</sup>

**Reduce Risk of Disease** | Eating fruits and vegetables helps maintain a healthy weight and reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, including diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and stroke.<sup>1</sup>

**Reduce Obesity** | Evidence indicates convenient, affordable healthy options lead to increased purchasing and eating of healthy food. Over time, improved eating habits results in obesity reduction.<sup>2</sup>

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

**Know Your Farmers** | Farmers' markets offer the opportunity to talk directly with local farmers, build personal relationships between producer and consumer, and learn where and how their food is grown.

**Know Your Neighbors** | They provide a safe place for people to gather and get to know neighbors, farmers and local community members.

**Know Your Food** | In addition to making fresh produce more accessible to customers, farmers' markets offer a fun place for community members to sample unfamiliar foods and learn how to clean, prepare and cook fresh, healthy foods.

## FOOD EQUITY

**Affordability** | People with lower incomes typically spend a greater percentage of their wages on food. Accepting federal food assistance benefits is just one way farmers' markets can make healthy produce more affordable to all Kentuckians.<sup>3</sup>

**Accessibility** | Farmers' markets are unique food retailers because their physical location follows the people. Positioning the market within walking distance of public transportation or community "hot spots" improves accessibility of fresh foods.

**Culturally Acceptable** | Direct interaction between local producers and consumers increases access to foods that are culturally acceptable to all community members.

## SUSTAINABLE FOOD SYSTEM

Sustainable food systems meet a community's nutrition, economic and social needs without compromising the environment.<sup>4</sup>

**Supply & Demand** | When consumers demand healthier foods, it stimulates production and improves the availability of fruits & veggies.<sup>3</sup>

**Support Local Farms** | Supporting local food and farming systems helps secure jobs and local revenue, stimulate small and midsized farms, preserve farmlands and improve access to adequate, nutritious foods for all residents.<sup>3</sup>

**Support Local Economies** | Local vendors, such as farmers' markets, reinvest their income in the community three times more than chain retailers.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fruits & Veggies—More Matters

<sup>2</sup> Policy Link, Economic and Community Development Outcomes of Healthy Retail (2013)

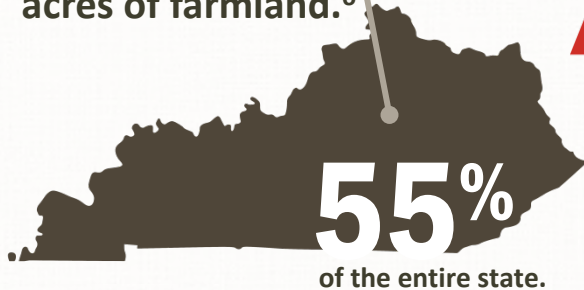
<sup>3</sup> Neff, Palmer, McKenzie & Lawrence. Food Systems and Public Health Disparities (2009)

<sup>4</sup> Principles of a Healthy, Sustainable Food System

<sup>5</sup> American Independent Business Alliance. The Multiplier Effect of Local Independent Businesses

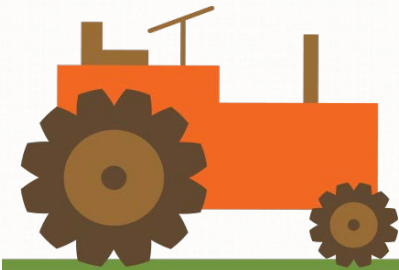
# Kentucky has a rich history of agriculture tradition & family farms.

Kentucky has 14 million acres of farmland.<sup>6</sup>



Kentucky is home to 85,500 farms. Over 60% are small family-run operations.<sup>6</sup>

Yet, children are at least three generations removed from the family farm and no longer understand where food comes from.



Agriculture provides jobs for 263,301 Kentuckians.<sup>6</sup>

Farmers only receive 15.8 cents of every food dollar spent in chain retailers but receive 100% of profits from farmers markets.<sup>7</sup>

Farmers' markets provide consumers with access to fresh produce grown just miles away while supporting the livelihood of their neighbors—local Kentucky farmers.

<sup>6</sup> Kentucky Farm Bureau, Kentucky Agriculture Facts (2013)

<sup>7</sup> USDA, Economic Research Initiative (2011)

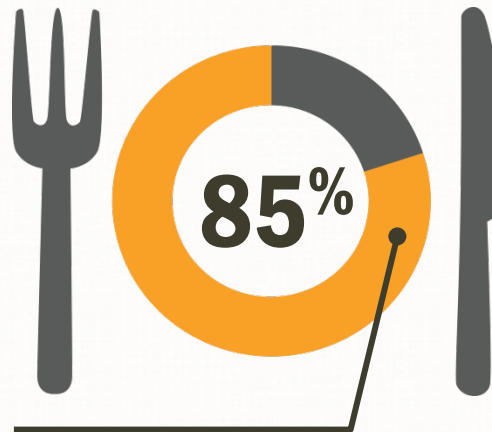
# Kentuckians are hungry for affordable and accessible healthy fruits and vegetables.



One in every five Kentucky adults reported difficulty getting affordable fresh produce where they live.<sup>8</sup>

In Kentucky, adults consume vegetables 1.6 times per day and fruits 1.1 times per day. Only 16.1% of high school students report eating fruits and vegetables 5 or more times a day.<sup>9</sup>

**FOOD INSECURITY** indicates reduced quality, variety, or desirability of available foods and reports of disrupted eating patterns or reduced food intake.



The estimated percentage of households in Kentucky that are *food insecure*.<sup>10</sup>

In many Kentucky communities, at least 25% of the population participate in federally funded nutrition assistance programs.<sup>11</sup>

There are 159 farmers' markets with more than 2,500 vendors in at least 105 counties across the state.

39 accept SNAP<sup>+</sup>

82 accept WIC<sup>+</sup>

63 accept SFMNP<sup>+</sup>

Markets that accept SNAP, WIC and SFMNP have the potential to reach a significantly larger customer base and increase revenue for farmers.

<sup>8</sup> Kentucky Health Issues Poll: Kentuckians' Experiences with Buying Healthy Foods (2010)

<sup>9</sup> CDC's State Indicator Report of Fruits & Vegetables in Kentucky (2013) and YRBS Data (2013)

<sup>10</sup> Feeding America, Hunger in America: State Report for Kentucky (2014)

<sup>11</sup> Kentucky Department of Agriculture (As of February 2016)

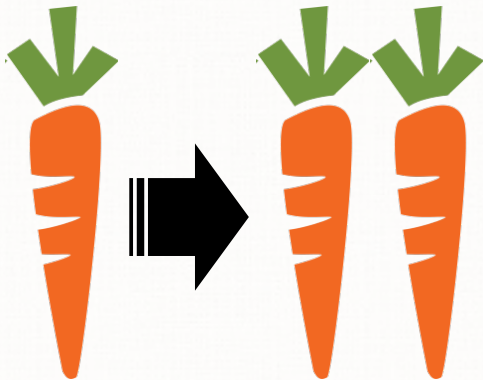
<sup>+</sup> Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Women, Infants and Children (WIC), Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)



# Nutrition Incentive Programs encourage people to seek out affordable, local, healthy foods.

## Double Dollars

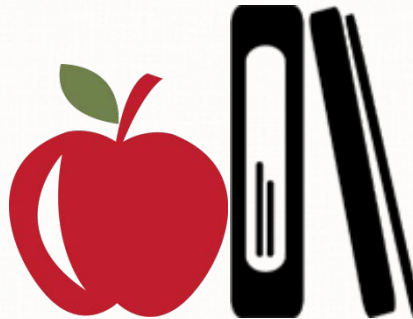
The Double Dollars program incentivizes customers to buy more fruits and vegetables at the market by matching the value of a customer's federal nutrition benefits (SNAP, WIC, Senior FMNP) when used to purchase fresh, local produce.



*Farmers' markets match SNAP, WIC or Senior FMNP benefits so customers can spend double the amount on fresh produce.*

## Summer Meals

The USDA-supported Summer Meals program provides kids under the age of 18 with free healthy meals when school is out of session. Any farmers' market in an eligible area can partner with a sponsor and apply to operate a summer meal site. All that is needed is a safe, supervised seating area for children to eat meals. The parents can browse among the vendors and shop for fresh foods while their kids get a healthy meal or snack prepared with local produce.



## Coupon Vouchers



**Farmacy** | Fruit and Vegetable Prescription programs empower healthcare providers to give families prescriptions redeemable for produce at farmers' markets, grocery stores, and other healthy food retailers.



**Healthy Bucks** | Worksite Wellness programs provide staff and families with Healthy Bucks redeemable at their local farmers' markets.

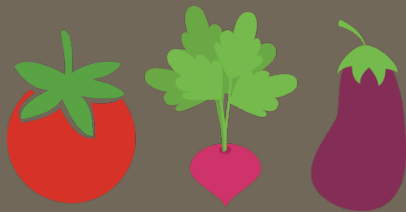


**Kids Bucks** | Rewarding kids for participating in tasting activities or cooking demonstrations with coupons gets kids excited about fresh food and encourage families to buy produce at their local markets.

# Let's feed *all* Kentuckians with Kentucky foods grown by Kentucky farmers.

## OUR VISION

All Kentuckians at all times will have access to safe, affordable, culturally acceptable and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs for an active and healthy life.



## STRATEGY 1

### Supportive Infrastructure

Provide capital support to hire market managers, secure a convenient location, initiate acceptance of federal assistance funds, and promote the market to a broader customer base for increased revenue.

## STRATEGY 2

### Training, technical assistance and networking opportunities

Provide opportunities for farmers and farmers' markets to learn how to function efficiently as competitive food vendors, interact with a wider customer base, and share with one another the successes and challenges of operating a market that accepts federal assistance.

## STRATEGY 3

### Engagement with the customers and community at large

Help consumers access healthy food options at affordable prices in farmers' markets, offer approachable solutions for cleaning & cooking techniques, and build relationships between farmers, consumers and healthy food.

# Contributing Partners

**Community Farm Alliance**

**Foundation for a Healthy Kentucky**

**Kentucky Association of Food Banks**

**Kentucky Department of Agriculture**

**Kentucky Department for Public Health**

**Kentucky Youth Advocates**

**University of Kentucky-Cooperative Extension**



For more information please contact  
[Elaine.Russell@ky.gov](mailto:Elaine.Russell@ky.gov) or [Shellie.Wingate@ky.gov](mailto:Shellie.Wingate@ky.gov)