

2020

Suffolk County Food Policy Council



The steps and actions taken by the Suffolk County Food Policy Council in 2019 and an evaluation of next steps.

3/11/2020

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I. MISSION AND GOALS

- **The Mission of the Food Policy Council:**
 - **Promote the production, distribution, and awareness of locally grown food.**
 - **Strengthen and prioritize policies that will improve food access, health, and nutrition.**
 - **Enhance the regional food system by utilizing local agriculture, fishing and shellfish aquaculture.**



III. MEMBERSHIP

Name	Organization	Representing
August Ruckdeschel (Chair)	SC Department of Economic Development & Planning	SCEDP
Gregson Pigott	SC Department of Health Services	SCDHS
Stephen Kramarcik	SC Department of Social Services	SCDSS
Rob Carpenter	Long Island Farm Bureau	LIFB
Michael Haynes	Long Island Cares	Food Equity Advocate
Randi Shubin Dresner	Island Harvest	Food Equity Advocate
Melissa Buonadonna- Hernandez	Buonadonna's ShopRites	Food Retailers
Diane Shulman	Jerry Shulman Produce Shipper, Inc.	Food Processor
Vacant		Food Distributor
Michele Gervat	American Heart Association	Community-Based
Kim Schultz	Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc.	Community-Based
Nikki Kateman	RWDSU Local 338	Local Food Workers
Janet Sklar	NYSNA	School Nutrition Administration
Vacant		Presiding Officer Designee
Josephine Connolly- Schoonen	Nutrition Division SBUMC	EPA Chair Designee
Vacant		Seafood Industry
Zahrine Bajwa	Cornell Cooperative Extension	County Executive Designee

Advocacy Subcommittee

The Advocacy Subcommittee of the Suffolk Food Policy Council includes members from Long Island Cares, Inc.—The Harry Chapin Food Bank (Michael Haynes), NYSNA (Janet Sklar), Family Residences and Essential Enterprises, Inc. (Kim Schultz), and Island Harvest Food Bank (Allison Puglia). This Subcommittee aims to advocate on timely public policy initiatives related to the Council's goals of promoting the production, distribution, and awareness of locally grown food; strengthening and prioritizing policies that will improve food access, health, and nutrition; and enhancing the regional food system by utilizing local agriculture, fishing and shellfish aquaculture. The Advocacy subcommittee was created in 2019 employ aspects of strategic advocacy to develop or sustain existing efforts and support new initiatives. The subcommittee will help the Council prioritize advocacy efforts related to local food policy and will share information on federal, state, and county nutrition programs with the Council to help set appropriate courses of action. SNAP and the National School Lunch Program are good examples of federal policies that have significant local impact. As advocates the subcommittee members help educate the Legislature, the public, and media on all relevant findings and actions we take as a Council.

Initiatives the subcommittee is currently exploring:

- On a federal level, we will be monitoring all legislative and budgetary matters related to SNAP. In 2019, USDA proposed 3 SNAP rules changes which if enacted would take food away from millions of hungry Americans in need. One rule limits each state's flexibility to protect people in areas with insufficient jobs from a three-month time limit on SNAP eligibility (known as the Able-Bodied Adults Without Dependents, or ABAWD, waiver rule). It is projected that this rule would take food off the tables of nearly 700,000 people. USDA also proposed a rule which would undermine states' Broad-Based Categorical Eligibility (Cat EI) option to get SNAP to more people working their way up the economic ladder. Specifically, states could no longer eliminate SNAP asset tests or apply a SNAP gross income test higher than 130 percent of the Federal Poverty Level. It is projected that this rule would eliminate SNAP benefits for 3.1 million people and jeopardize free school meals for 1 million children. Lastly, USDA proposed a rule which would revise Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) regulations to standardize the methodology for calculating standard utility allowances (SUAs or standards). It is projected that this would cut SNAP benefits by \$4.5 billion over 5 years.
- On a state and county level, we will be monitoring all measures designed to increase the amount of fresh, local foods served in schools. Specifically, we will be monitoring the Farm-to-School program, the No Student Goes Hungry Initiative, and the newly implemented NY Thursdays program, which ensures that at least one day a week, school lunch menus use locally produced food.

Food Equity Subcommittee

The Food Equity Subcommittee of the Suffolk Food Policy Council includes members from the Office of Minority Health Suffolk County Department of Health Services; Island Harvest Food Bank and Eat Smart New York (ESNY) Cornell Cooperative Extension. This Subcommittee aims to identify actionable steps to achieve greater equity within the regional food system and to create best practices that will be recommendations to the entire Food Policy Council and the Legislature, while offering suggestions on legislation to achieve those steps.

Initiatives the subcommittee is currently exploring:

- Increase and capitalize on customer spending power. Promote resident participation in nutrition assistance programs such as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and the Women with Infants and Children program (WIC) to bolster the purchasing power of local residents, while ensuring that retailers accept WIC and SNAP benefit cards.
- Building relationships with store owners to help them feel supported and provides an opportunity to better understand the owners' needs and concerns. Corner stores are businesses and need to make money. It is important to position healthy products as a strategy for increasing profits. By working with owners to understand their stores' particular customer base and operations, we are able to help owners decide which products would work best for the store and determine what additional support may be needed to ensure success.

2019 Accomplishments:

This past year the Food Equity Subcommittee focused its efforts on strengthening the *Suffolk County Healthy Corner Stores Initiative* and started a new initiative called **Healthy Food Pantry**

The Healthy Food Pantry goal is to make healthier foods available to all our neighbors, and to empower them to choose the most healthful options at the food pantry.

Implementing changes - *Promotion and Materials*

- In-pantry messaging
- Selection guides

Activities

- Tabling/recipe tasting
- *Nutrition education*

Increased selection of healthy food

- Increased donations of healthy food
- Pantry satisfaction

- Strength of partnerships
- During 2019, the subcommittee members worked with the current stores - *Neighborhood Country Market Mastic Beach, Weirs Community Market Medford, La Tiendita"- Latin Grocery Southampton, and Riverhead Supermarket Riverhead* participating in the Healthy Corner Stores Initiative.
- Newsday featured **Goal of Healthy Corner Stores Project is more Fresh fruit vegetables in households** August 13, 2019

The article reported----- Market owner Abdul Rattu said the nutritional education and coupons spurred a spike in sales of low-fat milk since his store became the first on the Island to join the program in 2015. Sales of other nutritious products also are strong, so he now offers a wider variety and larger quantity of produce, he said. Degrall lives two blocks from the store and likes how "if I'm out of something, I can come here. I don't have to run to the supermarket. And for people without cars — and there are a lot of people around here without vehicles — it's very convenient." At Riverhead Supermarket, sales of water skyrocketed after the program began there, and sales of sugary beverages declined, said owner Ramón Castillo. Juice sales also rose, he said. Castillo's market always has sold a variety of produce, but the project's promotional assistance helped increase sales, he said. Customer Sara Gonzalez, 47, of Calverton, said she has a better diet because of the recipe books and tips from the project. "I've learned how to cook healthier meals, with more vegetables and less oil," Gonzalez said in Spanish as she carried plastic bags bursting with cilantro, onions, chayote squash and other produce. Castillo's store is in one of a number of areas on Long Island that the U.S. Department of Agriculture deems as having low access to nutritious foods. Full video and article can be viewed at <https://www.newsday.com/news/health/healthy-eating-fruits-veggies-1.34950632>

- We recently signed a contract to work in a new corner store located in Patchogue; the Bravo Supermarket. It is a larger store with 3 cash registers. We are in the process of placing window signage and label design to promote water, low fat dairy, fruits and vegetables and whole grains.
- Stock low-sodium canned goods and canned fruit in 100% juice. Most of the salt and sugar we eat comes from packaged, processed and store-bought food. The stores already stock canned goods, so it makes sense to provide healthier alternative with existing products.
- Based on assessments, we developed enhancement strategies for improving store layout, lighting, storage space, refrigeration, pricing, signs, and façade improvements. Staff shared strategies with store owners for feedback and to solidify steps for moving forward in each store. These strategies included these main components:
 - Creating a produce display that can be seen upon entering the store.
 - Incorporating other healthy foods and recipes in the display.
 - Placing grab-and-go items such as bananas, oranges, and apples at the point of purchase.

Though enhancement strategies primarily leveraged existing structures in each store to better display healthy foods, staff created standard signs and supplied displays with produce baskets and pricing labels. Window clings served as exterior enhancement strategies to attract community members to the fresh produce and other healthy food offerings.

- Conducting customer engagement activities - organized kick-off events. Press releases and ads for community-based newspapers.
 - Recipe and cooking demonstration by Bilingual Eat Smart New York nutritionist educators to healthy meals that could be prepared with ingredients sold at the store.
 - Healthy food recipes and tastings promoted decreasing sugary beverages, high fat and high sodium foods.
 - Coupons to promote healthy food items
 - Included sales on healthy food and beverage items, free re-usable shopping bags for customers (with purchase of sale items),
 - A survey to gauge customer perceptions of healthy food options available at the store, educational materials on healthy eating and lifestyle, and free recipe booklets.

Next steps (subject to change per subcommittee guidance):

The Food Equity Subcommittee will convene in March 2020 to discuss next steps moving forward and identify goals for the coming year. Potential priorities include:

- Continue promotion of the Healthy Corner Stores and food pantries Initiative and development of a best-practices toolkit.
- Promote and increase local food access by promoting and expanding farmer’s markets, increasing SNAP benefit (EBT) usage at farmer’s markets explore new ways to expand the reach of seasonal and local foods to low income families.
- Assemble and distribute information about state and local regulations for cooking demonstrations and food sampling, and identify and explore possible changes in policy to encourage more use of cooking demonstrations as educational tools at farmers’ markets in a safe, appropriate manner.
- Continue to support work on nutrition standards for foods and beverages purchased and served by agencies, organizations, and worksites.

School Administration and Food Education Subcommittee

The mission of the School Administration and Food Education Subcommittee is to strengthen, promote and prioritize policies that will improve education, health and nutrition through school programs and community involvement.

Initiatives the subcommittee is currently exploring:

New York has introduced several bills encouraging expansion of the Farm to School Program, Education and Child Health:

- **AB 1209/SB 3804** would create the New York farm to school and school garden fund and allow individuals to make a gift on their personal tax form for such fund. The fund would be used to establish school gardens and purchase equipment and educational materials to promote students' consumption of local products conducted in cooperation with the department of agriculture and markets. Amended, re-referred to the Assembly Education Committee. 5/17/2019
- **AB 1547** would prohibit the use of food service ware that contains polystyrene foam by food service providers, including state departments, contractors, and lessees of the state, as well as restaurants and retail food vendors. This bill would require food service providers to use alternate products that are compostable or recyclable, unless no affordable alternative exists. The Department of Environmental Conservation would create a list of available, affordable compostable or recyclable products. Introduced, referred to the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee. 1/15/2019
- **AB 1624/SB 1472** would require public schools to offer plant-based food options to a student upon request by a student or request by a person in parental relation to the student. Introduced, referred to the Assembly Education Committee. 1/16/2019
- **AB 3433** would authorize the commissioner of education to establish the school breakfast incentive program to provide grants to eligible school buildings or programs that increase participation in the school breakfast program by Introduced, referred to the Assembly Education Committee. 1/29/2019
- **AB 4788/SB 1098** would require that food service facilities operated by State agencies, municipalities, local education agencies, or their contractors or lessees prevent and divert food waste by participating in food donation and other organics recovery programs. Introduced, referred to the Assembly Environmental Conservation Committee. 2/5/2019
- **AB 5110** would amend state law to require contracts for food service management to be awarded through a request for proposal procurement process, and include criteria such as quality, cost and nutrition. Introduced, referred to the Assembly Education Committee. 2/7/2019
- **AB 5322** would establish a comprehensive interdisciplinary program to combat childhood obesity. Among the changes in this omnibus bill, it amends state law regarding school lunch periods to require “ample time to consume lunch and to engage in physical exercise or recreation.” Introduced, referred to the Assembly Agriculture Committee. 2/8/2019
- **AB 6733/ SB 252** would remove the limits on local agricultural product purchasing for local school boards from New York’s general municipal law. Introduced, referred to the Assembly Education committee. 3/18/2019
- **AB 7607** would direct the commissioner of education to establish a New York state model wellness policy for local educational agencies which shall set forth guidelines and procedures for the local wellness policies required by the federal Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010. Introduced, referred to the Assembly Education Committee. 5/13/2019

2019 Accomplishments:

New York has enacted new legislation that encourages expansion of the Farm to School Program, Education and Child Health; the most important is the ERP (Elimination of the Reduced Price Meal.)

- **NY EDUC. DEPT. Program Description Handbook 2018- 19** New York Provides funding to eliminate the reduced-price category for breakfast and lunch.
- **8 N.Y. CODES. R. & REGS. § 114.1** New York does not mandate participation in the NSLP. However, New York requires all elementary and secondary schools with 70% of students certified for free or reduced price meals are required to establish a breakfast after the bell program starting in 2019.
- **8 N.Y. CODES. R. & REGS. § 114.1** New York State Education Department (SED) has been provided funding in the amount of \$7,000,000 to be distributed to eligible public schools in New York State through a noncompetitive grant. These funds will allow eligible schools to purchase food service equipment that will assist in the implementation and success of a “Breakfast After the Bell” program. Each eligible school may receive funding up to a maximum of \$5,000. New York provides an additional reimbursement of \$0.1013 per free breakfast, \$0.1566 per reduced price breakfast, \$0.0599 per paid and free lunch, and \$0.1981 per reduced-price lunch served for school year 2018-2019.
- **NY EDUC. DEPT. Program Description Handbook 2018-19** Schools who purchase at least 30% of food for lunch in the 2018-19 school year that was grown, harvested, produced or processed in NYS can receive additional State subsidy for lunch for school year.
- **N.Y. Educ. Law § 908** All public school districts and charter schools that participate in the national school lunch program or school breakfast program in which there is a school at which all pupils are not eligible to be served breakfast and lunch under CEP shall develop a plan to ensure that a pupil whose parent or guardian has unpaid school meal fees is not shamed or treated differently than a pupil whose parent or guardian does not have unpaid school meal fees. The plan shall include, but not be limited to, the following elements: make every attempt to determine if a student is directly certified to be eligible for free meals, no school district shall publicly identify or stigmatize a student that unable to pay for a meal or owes a meal debt.
 - Federal and State procurement requirements and guidance: <http://www.cn.nysed.gov/content/procurement-information>
 - Federal and State procurement thresholds: <http://www.cn.nysed.gov/content/guidance-procurement-methods>
 - Purchasing local food for use in schools including how to apply geographic preference: <http://www.cn.nysed.gov/farmtoschool> & <https://www.fns.usda.gov/farmtoschool/procuring-local-foods>
 - To find New York State products, please visit: <https://www.agriculture.ny.gov/f2s/FoodServiceDirectors.html> .

Next steps (subject to change per subcommittee guidance):

Organizations such as NY School Nutrition Association (NYSNA) propose an increase in the poverty threshold for reduced-price meals from 185% to 200% - 21% of New York children live in poverty, and more than one in three children are near poverty.¹ Expanding access to reduced-price meals would ensure that the nutritional needs of all New York Students are being met. Based on 30% of students eating breakfast and 60% of students eating lunch each day, they estimate that this would cost the state approximately \$8 million to feed these students.

- With an increased threshold, approximately 19,000 children would qualify for reduced-price meals.
- This number does not include students in New York City nor those students whose school districts participate in the Community Eligible Provision.
- The 200% threshold is currently already in use by the Head Start and TANF programs.
- This idea builds on New York's past successes in safeguarding against child hunger such as this year's initiative whereby the State assumed the student cost of reduced-price meals, relieving a major burden on many struggling New York families.

NYSNA proposes transferring the Child Nutrition Program (CNP) from the New York State Education Department (SED) to the New York Department of Agriculture & Markets (Ag. & Markets)

The CNP encompasses six federal school food programs², some of which are supplemented by New York funding. Currently the CNP is administered by SED. Unfortunately, due to SED's size and necessary emphasis on education programs, the CNP can get overlooked. Agriculture & Markets however, focuses on the production of fresh food and is the logical place to house a program dedicated to child nutrition.

- In addition to working directly with NY's food producers, Ag. & Markets already takes the lead for the NY School Milk Task Force, the NY State Farm to School Coordinating Committee, the Farm to School Grants, and the Governor's Council on Hunger and Food Policy.
- The CNP is administered via the U.S. Department of Agriculture and is more in-line with the work that Ag. & Markets already does.
- New York would join New Jersey, Florida, Nevada, and Texas as the fifth state to have their Agriculture & Markets agency administer and oversee the CNP.
- These four states have reported that the CNP is a greater priority under Ag. & Markets, which has helped enhance connections with farmers and solve various distribution challenges.

The State of New York's Children, Databook 2019, Schuyler Center for Analysis and Advocacy; January 2019; p.3-4

¹ The six federal programs are: National School Lunch Program, National Breakfast Program, Summer Food Service Program, Afterschool Snack Program, Special Milk Program, and Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program.

“Why Buy Local?” Subcommittee

The “Why Buy Local?” subcommittee of the Suffolk County Food Policy Council serves to promote the production, distribution and accessibility of locally grown and harvested food. The subcommittee aims to facilitate access to local healthy food, enhance food security, promote sustainability, and expand economic opportunities for local agricultural and fishing harvesters, growers, processors, and distributors.

Initiatives the subcommittee is currently exploring:

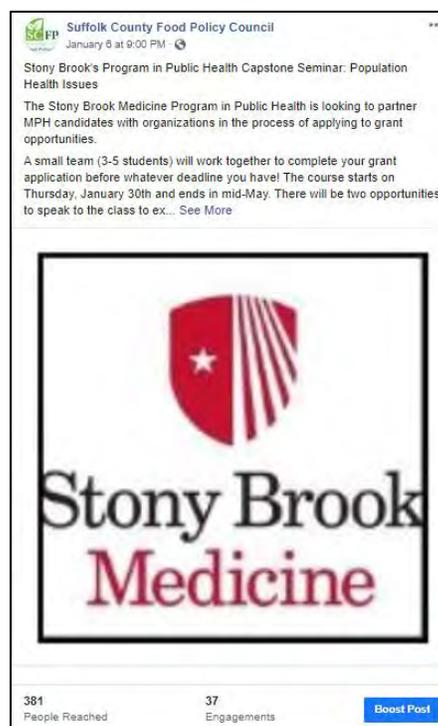
- The Council has been engaged by commercial fishermen and baymen to expand the time and attention dedicated to the marketing, regulatory, and environmental challenges to this heritage Long Island industry. A survey has been circulated within this community via the Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning, the Long Island Commercial Fishing Association, NY Sea Grant, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County, and the NY State Department of Environmental Conservation to assess the needs, challenges, and opportunities within this critical heritage industry. 75 responses were collected and a report is expected in 2020.
- Identify additional funding sources, branding opportunities, and marketing resources for the “Choose LI – Local and Independent” campaign launched in June 2018.

2019 Accomplishments:

- **Choose LI: Local and Independent** – The Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning launched “Choose LI – Local and Independent” in the summer of 2018. “Choose LI” is a collaborative initiative to raise awareness, advocate and inspire the community to support local and independent businesses by spending 10% of their weekly food allowance on local and seasonal food goods across Suffolk County, Long Island. New Yorkers spend \$176 a week on Food (US Bureau of Labor Statistics). Suffolk County, NY has 474,311 households. If 10% of Suffolk County households commits to spending 10% of their weekly food allowance on local food goods over a typical harvest season for Suffolk County, that spending would add 19 million dollars into the Suffolk County economy. 19 million dollars in direct spending will create 33 million dollars in total economic activity and create nearly 1,000 local jobs. Nearly 100 Choose LI signs were printed and distributed in 2019. The site includes information about the availability of seasonal produce and fish and it is the first website and inventory ever of every single farmstand, farmers market, vineyard, brewery, distillery, and fish market in Suffolk County. Direct-to-consumer flower retailers and restaurants carrying locally grown and harvested oysters were added to the map in 2019.
- **Suffolk County Farmland Preservation** – The Council has supported Suffolk County efforts to restore credibility and stability to Chapter 8, the County’s farmland preservation program. The County won its most recent court case, overturning a previous judgment against the County, and once again permitting the construction of agricultural support structures, including greenhouses, barns, fencing, etc. on preserved agricultural land. Additionally, the NY State Court of Appeals has denied the Pine Barrens Society (PBS) latest request for an appeal in the lawsuit against the County’s farmland preservation program. Nevertheless, the Council continues to support a push for state legislation to protect the long-term viability of the agriculture industry here in Suffolk County. We will continue support language in the 2021 budget

to preserve the long term integrity of the program. The Peconic Land Trust, the Long Island Farm Bureau, the American Farmland Trust, Cornell Cooperative Extension, the NY League of Conservation Voters, the Long Island Wine Council, Farm Credit East, Suffolk County Executive Steve Bellone, Senator Ken LaValle, Assemblyman Fred Thiele, and County Legislators Al Krupski and Bridget Fleming have all been important allies in this effort.

- **Agricultural Visitor's Campus** – Planning and design efforts continue on the Agricultural Visitor's Campus at the Suffolk County Farm in Yaphank. The Suffolk County Department of Public Works and the Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning have been working with Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) and the chosen planning and design firm, Burton Behrendt Smith (BBS) on the designs of this facility. The new "agricultural complex" will serve the following functions 1) Act as the "Greeting and Visitors Center" for guests to the Suffolk County Farm 2) Serve as the Administrative heart and classroom center of County funded and CCE administered 4-H programming. 3) Create a comprehensive training ground for "next generation" farmers 4) Promote local agritourism and drive Long Island visitors to nearby agricultural destinations such as farmstands, U-Pick farms, and beer, wine, hard cider, and spirits tasting rooms. 5) Create a sustainable, green campus center that will serve as a learning laboratory for both young students and established architects, engineers, and consultants and planners in the region. This century old working farm already draws over 25K visitors a year. Increased attendance will then expose thousands of new visitors to the agritourism activities available across Long Island. A construction RFP should be released in Summer/Fall 2020.
- **Online web presence** - The subcommittee continues to maintain the Facebook account (<https://www.facebook.com/SuffolkCountyFoodPolicyCouncil/>) and a Twitter account (<https://twitter.com/SCFoodCouncil>). Editorial control currently resides in the Suffolk County Department of Economic Development & Planning. The Facebook account has 211 "Likes" which is a ~10% increase since 2018. The Twitter account continues to struggle and has just 34 followers.



Next steps (subject to change per subcommittee guidance):

- Circulate, collect, and tabulate results from Commercial Fishing Needs Assessment survey and utilize the information to create a “Request for Expressions of Interest” in bringing a fish processing facility to Suffolk County.
- Work with off-shore wind developers to identify and secure one-time and reoccurring funding streams to invest in waterfront infrastructure, processing facilities, and on-going seafood marketing campaign to support the local commercial fishing industry.
- Explore additional marketing opportunities for Suffolk County fishermen and shellfish farmers through Choose LI. Increase visitation to the Suffolk County FreedomFest as part of a larger brander effort and increased awareness campaign.
- Secure additional funds (federal/state/etc.) to close the funding gap on the Agricultural Visitor’s Campus in Yaphank.
- The Suffolk County Farm in Yaphank has 25.07 acres on the south side of the LIRR Train Tracks. Explore the legal and practical ability to install solar panels on these 25 acres of underutilized farmland acres with the express condition that the solar panels were installed and designed to facilitate co-location or agrivoltaic practices. This would involve different solar installations that would be constructed to allow different styles of animal and horticultural operations around the panels. These 25 acres would operate as a working laboratory for research trials that would allow other farmers explore co-location options on their own operations. It would create localized body of research that could inform best management practices for Suffolk County farmers.
- Expand online presence. Grow Facebook and Twitter accounts.

Other Initiatives - *Creating Healthy Schools and Communities*

Creating Healthy Schools and Communities is a NYSDOH funded project secured by BOCES with a subcontract to Stony Brook Research Foundation/School of Medicine Nutrition Division. In addition to increasing access to healthy foods and opportunities to increase physical activity within targeted school districts, the project aims to have a similar impact throughout the communities served by these school districts - Brentwood, Central Islip, Southampton (Shinnecock Reservation) and Wyandanch. Stony Brook nutritionists have been working with members of the Suffolk County Food Policy Council to plan and implement policy and environmental changes that can positively impact communities while also providing nutrition education to community members. Monthly meetings are valuable to network and share resources that allow for implementation of the projects described below.

2019 Accomplishments

- Successfully partnered with Heart of the Hamptons food pantry, East End Food Institute, Cornell Cooperative Extension and Share the Harvest Farm to distribute local produce throughout the year to pantry participants. The East End Food Institute flash freezes and vacuum seals the produce and nutritionists at Stony Brook and Cornell provide the educational support and materials for participants to utilize the produce.
- Shinnecock Senior Center's tower garden is thriving and provides an educational competent to seniors for on maintaining the garden and healthy nutrition. Continue to discuss the opportunity to incorporate the produce into their meals.
- Continued to work with the Shinnecock Wellness committee to draft nutrition standards for community-sponsored events, and support efforts to install a water fountain in the community center to encourage consumption of water and decrease consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages.
- Continued to work with Shinnecock Nation to implement a Complete Streets plan including clearing of excess shrubs on curved bend, purchase of speed bump and speed limit sign, and cross-walk project.
- Continue to partner with Federation of Organizations to create an obesity screening process with their Physician Assistants, with appropriate referrals to Stony Brook nutrition intern-run on-site education classes. Successfully developed a plan to implement healthier vending options consistent with NYSDOH vending guidelines and standards.
- Purchased a tower garden for Options of Community Living supportive housing and monitoring monthly to provide education on maintaining the garden and incorporating the produce into their meals.

Next Steps

- Continue with implementation and evaluation of projects noted above.
- Continue to conduct worksite wellness in multiple agencies across Long Island, including Tuckahoe Common School District, Southampton Intermediate School, Cordello School District, Rogers Memorial Library and more.
- Collaborate with Stony Brook Public Health Department on Healthy Library Initiative to provide resources to library patrons and staff on nutrition resources in the community.
- Continue to collaborate with Tuckahoe school district to implement vending standards for machines in faculty and staff areas to benefit teachers' and staff health and allow them to model healthy eating for students.
- Develop collaboration with Central Islip downtown revitalization grant-funded program to include healthy food retail in the downtown area.
Continue to seek additional funding to supplement the current grant to facilitate this work.

Other Initiatives - *Farmer's Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)*

A federal program to strengthen farmers' markets and help low-income families and seniors purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. In New York State, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets administers FMNP in collaboration with the NYS Department of Health, the NYS Office for the Aging, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County.

2019 Accomplishments

- Through nutrition staff, Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk – Eat Smart New York provides support and outreach for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Staff provides educational programming to help participants of the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and low-income seniors and SNAP recipients select, store, and prepare fresh produce from the farmers' market.
- Outreach focuses on using CCE educators to increase capacity to serve as resources to nutrition assistance program participants, farmers, market managers, and community agencies involved in FMNP.
- Benefits: Participating in the FMNP supports economic development by increasing a farmer's sales at farmers' markets and farm stands. It also helps to promote the growth of family farms by creating a market for their fresh, local fruit and vegetables. For participants, the FMNP becomes a monetary supplement to encourage increased consumption of fresh, local fruits and vegetables and to improve their knowledge of how to purchase, store and prepare fresh fruits and vegetables.
- This year CCE staff visited farmers markets and reached over 600 adults with technical support on choosing fresh produce and increasing knowledge and skills on food preparation with low cost recipes
- **Fresh Connect** - We were able to provide 100 Fresh Connect Checks which provide a \$2.00 incentive check for every \$5.00 of SNAP benefit used at participating markets thereby increasing the purchasing power of SNAP consumers by 40 percent while supporting local farmers.

Next Steps Continue with implementation and expansion of project noted above.



Other Initiatives - The FRESH Truck Mobile Farmers Market



The FRESH Truck Mobile Farmers market kicked off on July 11, 2018 as an innovative way to increase accessibility to locally grown fruits and vegetables “via four wheels” in Suffolk County. The market used a retro-fitted donated mini-bus donated by Suffolk Transportation to deliver fresh, locally grown, affordable produce to designated Northwell Healthcare sites as well as Adelante of Suffolk County.

Family Residences and Essential Enterprise Inc. (FREE) in collaboration with Northwell Health’s DSRIP, and Cornell Cooperative Extension of Suffolk County served sites with a Mobile Farmer’s Market (MFM) from July through October of 2019. The truck was stocked with locally-sourced, fresh produce to sell at the designated sites. The sites selected have individuals and families that have limited funds and limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables. The Fresh Truck Mobile Market accepted EBT, WIC/Senior FMNP vouchers, Fresh Connect coupons, major credit cards and cash.

2019 Accomplishments

- The truck was stocked with locally-sourced, fresh produce to sell at the designated sites. The sites selected have individuals and families that have limited funds and limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables.
- The Fresh Truck Mobile Market accepted EBT, WIC/Senior FMNP vouchers, Fresh Connect coupons, major credit cards and cash. Additional support from the CCE Education Foundation provided \$10 voucher coupons distributed in high need communities enabling participants to purchase \$15 worth of fresh fruit and vegetables for only \$5. Each participant also received a reusable shopping bag and recipe book.
- Successes: Increased fruit and vegetable consumption for nearly 800 customers within high need communities. Over 100 patrons were re occurring. Each stop had 2-6 volunteers Eat Smart NY Nutrition Educators onsite offering nutrition tips for preparing fresh produce, tips for healthy eating and providing healthy recipes.
- Participants increased their knowledge of the importance of eating healthy and learned how to prepare budget friendly, nutritious, simple recipes using fresh produce. For the 2019 season, we increased our partnerships adding Hobbs Farm, 1-800-FLOWERS, Smile Farm, and IGHL for a greater variety of fruits and increased volume of fresh produce.

- Value Added:
 - i. Supported local farmers
 - ii. Veterans and differently abled individuals “worked” as volunteers on every scheduled day, learning skills and being productive
 - iii. Increased community engagement and expansion of working partnerships with key stakeholders
- On Saturday August 24th Eat Smart New York hosted a community day with our partner Mega Wash and Dry Laundromat in North Babylon. The community day included food tasting of some of our healthy summer recipes and as special treat Mobile Farmers Market was on site offering FREE fruits and vegetables to the patrons of Mega Wash. Owner Arty Barbato received a proclamation from Suffolk County Legislature Presiding Officer DuWayne Gregory. All participants thoroughly enjoyed the community and expressed their gratitude for our programs presence at the laundromat



Next Steps

- Continue with implementation and evaluation of projects noted above.
- Continue to seek additional funding to supplement the current grant to facilitate this work.