



ProducePERKS

2023 Impact Report

In 2023, the Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network's three flagship, evidence-based nutrition incentive programs generated **\$3,093,343** in healthy food purchases for **27,364** low-income households, empowering families to choose **1,905,005** servings of fruits and vegetables.

The Fruit & Vegetable Program helps make produce more affordable for families with children. Eligible families receive either a Fruit & Vegetable Coupon booklet to spend at local food retailers or a home delivery of a produce box.

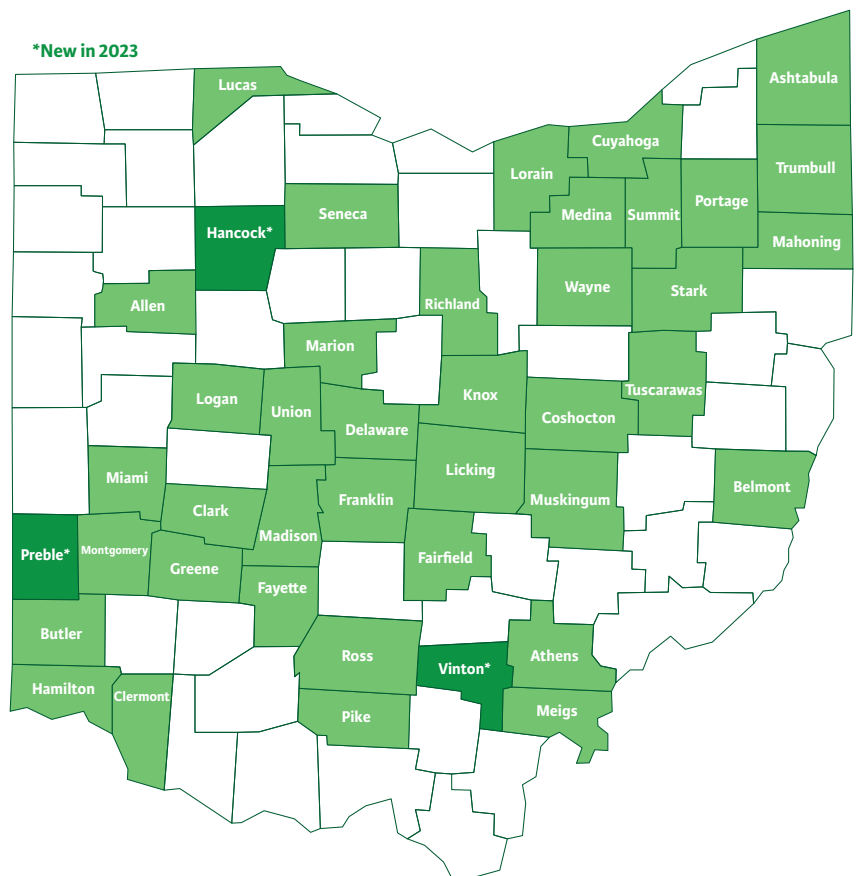
Produce Perks, with its \$1-for-\$1 SNAP/EBT match, empowers the nearly 2 million SNAP/EBT recipients in Ohio to purchase fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables from farmers and grocery retailers across the state.

Produce Prescription (PRx) helps clinicians provide monthly fruit and vegetable prescriptions to nutrition insecure patients, improving birth outcomes and supporting individuals with diet-related disease.

In 2023, emergency allocations ended at the same time as a rise in inflation, and many families have felt the strain. OHNIN's three nutrition incentive programs allow families to stretch their budgets further, and help farmers maintain sales. One farmer and program user shared her experience, stating that she's seen produce sales increase...

“As a low-income family and farmer, I am able to use my SNAP/EBT card to maximize my buying power with Produce Perks. With this program, we have increased fresh produce intake at home. Produce Perks give us the opportunity to give our children a set amount of tokens to have a chance to purchase what we need at the markets for the families meal for the week. They are also able to understand spending.”

Program Presence



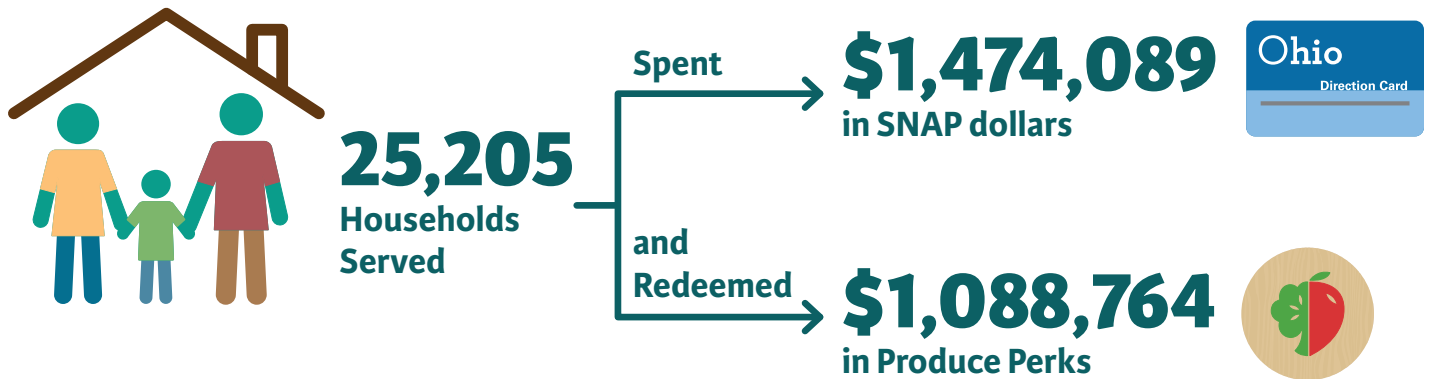
In 2023, the Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network provided nutrition incentive programming in communities with the highest need, increasing food security and food system resilience.



Produce Perks

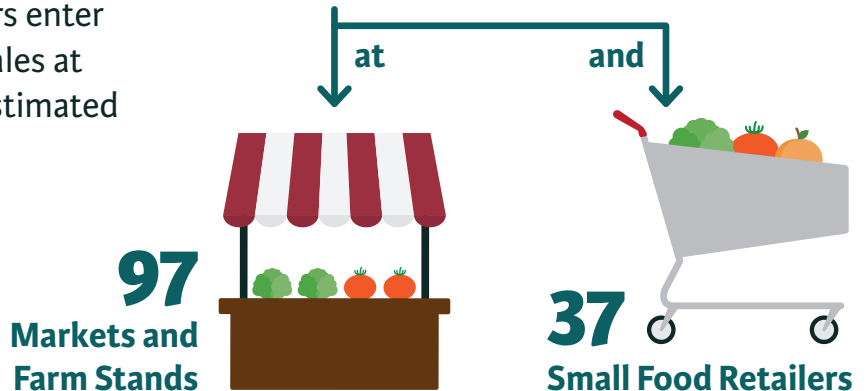
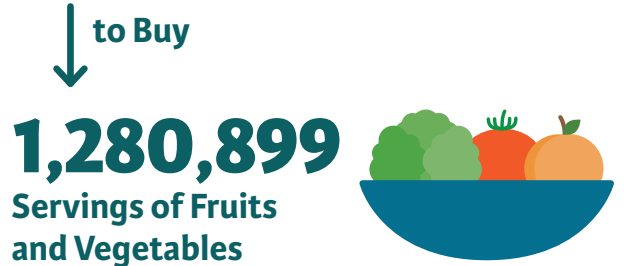
Ohio's Nutrition Incentive Program

Produce Perks empowers SNAP/EBT recipients to purchase fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables from Ohio farmers and grocery retailers across the state. We provide shoppers using SNAP/EBT a \$1-for-\$1 match to buy healthy produce, increasing affordable access to healthy foods for the nearly 2 million Ohio households who were eligible for SNAP in 2023. This work is supported by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.



2023 Program Impact

The Produce Perks program is a win/win/win. Healthy foods reach the homes of low-income families. By increasing customers' buying power, local farmers sell more produce. As sales increase, more local food dollars enter local economies. In 2023, program sales at farmers' markets alone spurred an estimated over \$5 million in economic activity.



PR_x Produce Prescription Program

The Produce Prescription (PRx) program for infant vitality helps clinicians to provide monthly fruit and vegetable prescriptions to nutrition insecure patients in the form of vouchers to spend on fruits and vegetables, or home delivery of a produce box. In 2023, thanks to partnership with the Ohio Department of Health, Bon Secours Mercy Health, and the Osteopathic Heritage Foundation, the program supported pregnant women and their newborns living in Ohio counties with the highest black infant mortality rates: Montgomery, Lorain, Lucas, Franklin, and Hamilton. PRx provides nutrition security to patients, deepens the patient's trust with health care and social service providers, improves health outcomes, and improves maternal/infant health by reducing pre-term births, low birth weight, infant death, and negative health outcomes associated with diet-related disease.

PR_x: Diabetes Management

In 2023, via USDA funding, we launched PRx programming for adult patients with diabetes. Patients can enroll to receive fruit and vegetable vouchers or produce box deliveries. This research study is investigating patient engagement and retention in voucher versus home delivery produce prescription programs. Over the course of two years, this project will reach:

240 Patients
and their families in
Cincinnati, Cleveland,
and Dayton



\$34,740 in fruit and vegetable
prescriptions distributed in 2023 alone!

PR_x: Infant Vitality



180
Pregnant Women Enrolled

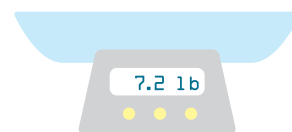
779
Household Members

\$145,552
in Produce Purchases



90%
of babies born at
37 weeks or later

82%
of babies born
at a healthy
birth weight



Serving Families with Children

Nutrition Incentive programs offered by the Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network increase availability and affordability of fresh produce for families with children.

1 The Fruit & Vegetable Program

Funding through the State of Ohio provided resources for Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) eligible families to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from Ohio farmers and grocery stores.



\$261,562
in fruits and
vegetables purchased
by **1,979** families.

Coupon



1,533 families with children received **\$140 coupon booklets** redeemable for fresh produce at participating farmers' markets and grocery stores.

\$168,405 in coupons
redeemed for fruits and vegetables

Delivery

Partners across multiple counties delivered produce to the home, making it easier for families to put fresh produce on the table.



Cuyahoga and Lorain Counties

CityFresh provided **\$32,480** in fresh produce to families.



Hamilton County

Findlay Marker and Mustard Seed Farm provided **\$20,185** in fresh fruits and vegetables to county residents.



Mahoning County

The Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation provided **\$15,652** in fresh fruits and vegetables to Youngstown residents.

Summit and Stark Counties

Front 9 farms, Let's Grow Akron, and the Akron Canton Regional Food Bank worked with DoorDash to deliver **\$24,840** in local fruits and vegetables from farmers to participants' homes.



② WIC Perks: Cuyahoga County

③ WIC Perks: Portage County

In two Ohio Counties, OHNIN partners with Women, Infants, and Children Program (WIC) for WIC Perks, which helps recipients stretch their food benefits. WIC supports income eligible (<185% of federal poverty line) pregnant and recently post-natal women, infants and children up to five years of age. WIC provides nutrition education, breastfeeding support, and financial support for highly nutritious food. WIC provides Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) vouchers to their participants. Clients receive \$30 for the purchase of Ohio-grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs at authorized farmers' markets and farms.



THE OHIO STATE
UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FOOD, AGRICULTURAL,
AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

Ohio State University Extension, Cuyahoga County

WIC Perks in Cuyahoga County is a partnership between Ohio State University Extension, the Cuyahoga County WIC Program, and local farmers' markets. Program partners collaboratively offer additional resources to WIC clients at markets where WIC is present to distribute FMNP vouchers. After receiving WIC FMNP coupons, families have the option to engage in a short cooking demonstration, taste testing, or educational activity. Families then receive an additional set of coupons for fresh fruits and vegetables, valued at \$20 in WIC Perks, and culinary tools. In 2023, Ohio State University Extension hosted 8 WIC Perks events at local farmers' markets in partnership with the Cuyahoga WIC FMNP program. WIC Perks participants redeemed \$12,645 in vouchers for fruits and vegetables.



Haymaker Farmers Market

In Portage County, Haymaker Farmers Market believes that all people deserve access to the fresh, healthy, local foods available at Market each week, and started a WIC Perks program in 2022 with the support of the "Socially Responsible Sweatshop of Kent". Customers who receive WIC benefits can show their WIC card at the market and receive \$10 in coupons for fresh fruits and vegetables at Market, every week. In 2023 they distributed a total of \$8,655 of fresh, healthy food to WIC families, helping to create healthy habits by encouraging customers to return weekly.



buckeye health plan. **Buckeye Fresh!**

In partnership with Buckeye Health Plan, Athens Farmers Market (Athens), Northside Farmers Market (Cincinnati), Kamm's Corners Farmers Market (Cleveland), Clintonville Farmers Market (Columbus), Haymaker's Farmers Market (Kent), Toledo Farmers Market (Toledo) hosted a total of eight Buckeye Fresh! Events to promote individual and family health, strengthen household food and nutrition security, and increase the purchasing and consumption of fruits and vegetables by Buckeye Health Plan members.

At each Buckeye Fresh! Event, Buckeye Health Plan members received \$15 in Buckeye Fresh! Bucks to spend at the farmers' market. Children of Buckeye Health Plan members each received a \$1 Buckeye Fresh! Kids Buck to spend at the market.

Program Impact



1,365
Buckeye Health
Plan Members
Received Incentives

\$17,869
Spent on fruits
and vegetables



\$403
Buckeye Kids Bucks
redeemed



Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network

The Ohio Nutrition Incentive Network (OHNIN) is a multi-sector coalition working toward a shared vision of affordable access to healthy, local foods and a healthy, equitable and resilient Ohio food system. OHNIN represents diverse regions of Ohio and collaborates to advance nutrition incentive programming statewide. Produce Perks Midwest serves as the Network Hub, providing administrative support to the Network, its programs, and partners.

Our Vision

All Ohioans have equitable access to healthy, locally-grown foods within their communities, and the resources to procure them. Diet-related health diseases and disparities are no longer a public health crisis. Ohio agriculture is an economically viable and ecologically regenerative industry. It is an integral component of the Ohio food system; its products are widely available. Ohio farmers and food workers are valued, respected, and appropriately compensated for their contribution to the health and well-being of their communities.

Our Mission

Increase nutrition security while strengthening Ohio's local food system

Our Values

We believe in:

- Access to healthy food as a basic human right; good food has the power to promote health and prevent chronic disease.
- Diversity, equity and inclusion in staff, Network members, volunteers, and audiences, including full participation in programs, policy formulation, and decision-making.
- A resilient and sustainable local food system, where farms and food businesses are valued and viable.
- Collective impact and leveraging our network resources to effectively address complex social issues and systemic inequities.
- Innovation and community-centric solutions.
- Advocacy and education as tools to form a healthy, equitable, and sustainable food system.
- An ecological approach to farming, with a focus on biological diversity and soil health, is essential to the wellness of the earth and its inhabitants.

2023 Members

- Produce Perks Midwest
- FairShare CSA Coalition
- Farmers' Market Association of Toledo
- Jenna Eastman, Nutrition Incentive Program Expert
- Local Matters
- Mary Ann Swetland Center for Environmental Health at Case Western Reserve University
- Ohio Department of Aging
- Ohio Department of Health
- Ohio Farmers Market Network
- Ohio State Extension, Cuyahoga County
- Ohio State Extension, SNAP-Ed
- Rachel Tayse, Farmer
- The FARE Project

OHNIN uses a “hub and spoke” model as its Network structure to leverage the expertise and experience of strong regional program coordinators.

