



HEALTHY FOOD, HEALTHY CITY: GREENMARKET EBT 2011 PROGRESS REPORT



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SECRETS TO SUCCESS: GREENMARKET EBT PROJECT

In 2011 Greenmarket's EBT sales exceeded \$638,000 – up from \$505,000 in 2010 – and since 2008 our EBT customer base has increased by 90% annually. The exponential growth in EBT sales and EBT customers since the project began in 2005 are the direct result of the following efforts:

- In 2011 43 Greenmarkets accepted EBT – and 14 of those markets are open year-round, an increase from 9 in 2010.
- Our partnership with the New York City Council and Speaker Christine Quinn, who have provided Greenmarket with essential operating funds, has ensured that all New York City residents who receive Food Stamps have the opportunity to spend them at one of many neighborhood Greenmarkets. Partnerships with the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Farmers Market Federation of New York, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, as well as other non-profits and foundations including Wholesome Wave and the Food Bank have enabled us to expand and enhance the ways in which we serve low-income consumers.
- Our expanded multi-lingual promotion, advertising and outreach campaign including Spanish, Polish, Arabic, Russian, Chinese, Korean and Yiddish languages reaches diverse communities across New York City.
- The consistency and expertise provided by a full-time dedicated EBT Project Manager cannot be underestimated. The manager, along with a part-time Project Associate and bookkeeper, train and support our at-market staff on the wide variety of tasks needed to successfully operate our EBT Program.
- The NYC Human Resource Administration mailing to EBT enrollees in three NYC District Public Health Office catchment zones (neighborhoods experiencing disproportionately poor health outcomes) informing them of Health Bucks and EBT-eligible farmers markets had an immediate impact on EBT sales. In 2009 ten percent of customers surveyed reported that they found out about the program from the mailing.
- Expanded buying power incentives like Health Bucks, which are \$2 coupons provided to EBT customers for every \$5 spent at the market, operated by the NYC Department of Health & Mental Hygiene, are a vital component to the success of the EBT Program.
- Greenmarket conducts outreach and forms strategic partnerships with community groups, Food Stamp offices, hospitals, WIC and senior centers, soup kitchens, food pantries, local churches, city officials, community boards and numerous other community-based organizations serving local residents.

Executive Summary

In 2011 the Food Bank for New York City released “NYC Hunger Experience 2011: Sacrifice and Support,” a report following annual trends in difficulty affording food among New York City residents. “NYC Hunger Experience” reports several troubling trends. As of October 2011, the unemployment rate in New York City was 8.2 percent; far from the pre-recession level of 4.7 percent. Additionally, in 2011 the number of New York City residents having difficulty affording needed food was 35 percent (approximately 2.9 million people). Moreover, in order to stretch their food budget New York City residents are cutting back on the quantity and quality of the food they are purchasing: more than one in three residents (35 percent) reported buying less meat, poultry, or fish; more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying less dairy; and more than one in four (27 percent) reported buying fewer fresh fruits and vegetables. (NYC Hunger Experience 2011, Food Bank for New York City, 2011)



The good news is that Food Stamps are making a big difference for families. As stated, an alarming 35 percent of New York City residents reported difficulty affording needed food in 2011. This is actually lower than 2010 and lower than even pre-recession levels of 38 percent in 2007, but significantly higher than it was in 2003 (25 percent). The Food Bank attributes the recent decline in part to increased participation in the Food Stamp program (also known as the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP). As of October 2011, there were 1.83 million New York City residents receiving Food Stamps, up 62 percent from 1.12 million at the start of the recession in December 2007, and up 2 percent from 1.79 million one year ago in October 2010 (NYC Hunger Experience 2011, Food Bank for New York City, 2011).

Food Stamps provided more than \$3.2 billion of federal funding for food purchases in New York City alone in 2011 (NYC Human Resources Administration). Moreover, according to the US Department of Agriculture, each Food Stamp dollar spent generates \$1.84 in economic activity, and when spent in farmers markets, this represent an enormous revenue opportunity for regional farmers and plays a significant role in strengthening our local and regional economies.

GrowNYC's Greenmarket program operates 53 farmers markets in the five boroughs of New York City and has been providing healthy, fresh produce to New York City communities for 35 years. Our producer-only markets include more than 230 farmers from the Northeast, including parts of New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and New England.

To increase New York City families' consumption of fresh and nutritious food, we must increase their access and ability to purchase fresh and nutritious food. This means strengthening hunger and nutrition programs like SNAP and WIC, and improving access to fresh, healthy and affordable foods. While increasing access and affordability is key, providing opportunities for learning about nutrition and cooking in New York City is also fundamental. Greenmarket's Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) in Farmers Market Program, along with the Health Bucks Program, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and the WIC Vegetable and Fruit Check program lay the groundwork for achieving these goals.

As part of GrownNYC's health and nutrition initiatives and as a direct result of continued funding from Speaker Christine Quinn and the New York City Council, as well as additional support from The Farmers Market Federation of NY and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Greenmarket has established a national model for operating EBT at farmers markets. In just six years the project has greatly expanded access to healthy, fresh, local food in New York City. In 2005 only three of our markets had the capacity to accept EBT; **in 2011, EBT cards could be used at 43 Greenmarkets, and sales exceeded \$638,000**—a 63,000% increase from when the program began in 2005. In some markets, daily EBT sales have reached over \$6,000. Additionally, EBT has become a critical source of income for farmers who depend on these markets for survival, with some farmers reporting EBT sales comprise between 25-50% of their total income.

2011 was the first full year that the EBT in Farmers Market Project operated in our largest Greenmarket, Union Square. Union Square EBT sales totaled over \$165,000, averaging an incredible \$3000 per week. The world-famous Union Square Greenmarket operates year-round, four days per week, and in peak season has 140 participating regional farmers, fishermen, and bakers. Union Square is one of New York City's great public spaces and up to 80,000 additional pedestrians pass through on market days. Public awareness of the EBT in farmer's market project increased significantly when we began accepting EBT at the flagship Union Square Greenmarket. This market is a hub for all sorts of communities; people visit the market from every borough and well beyond New York City; and market staff report that everyday someone new learns that they can use their EBT card at Greenmarket.



A RECENT HISTORY OF GREENMARKET FOOD STAMP SALES

2001 – 2005: Addressing the Digital Divide

2001: Congress mandated that Food Stamps be converted from paper coupons to Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. Farmers markets that once redeemed thousands of dollars in Food Stamps became limited to cash and FMNP sales—reducing access to fresh produce and preventing farmers from accessing the billions of dollars of federal EBT money that flows into the city.

2001 – 2004: The Farmers Market Federation of NY, the NY State Office of Temporary & Disabled Assistance, and the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets (NYSDOAM) piloted a number of programs utilizing battery-operated, wireless point-of-sale terminals at farmers markets. Prior to 2005, these programs emphasized distributing individual terminals directly to farmers. However, due to underperforming technology and very limited publicity and promotion, few farmers wanted to participate and few Food Stamp dollars were spent at farmers markets. For example, although representing a 40% increase from 2003, in 2004 only 55 farmers in all of New York State made EBT sales, totaling \$35,200.

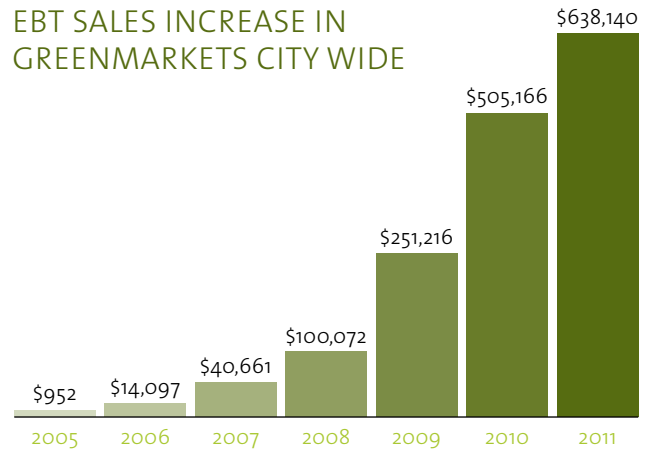
2005-2011: Scaling Up EBT Sales

2005: In an effort to improve results, in 2005 GrowNYC, in partnership with the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, implemented a pilot utilizing the Central Terminal token model at three Greenmarkets. Rather than encouraging individual farmers to purchase a wireless terminal, the market manager operated a central terminal where EBT cards could be swiped in exchange for tokens to be spent as cash at market. In 2005, farmers earned \$1,000 in EBT dollars at the three markets.

2006: With funding from Speaker Quinn and the New York City Council, Greenmarket expanded the program to six additional markets and saw sales increase from \$1,000 to \$14,000. This growth convinced us that we were headed in the right direction despite the challenges associated with operating EBT at farmers market such as: insufficient technology (terminals frequently lost signal), increased staffing costs, administrative burdens, and the lack of a supportive third-party processor that fully understood the particulars of operating EBT at the farmers market.

2007 – present: Since 2007, GrowNYC has received continued funding from Speaker Quinn and the NY City Council as well as the USDA to operate an effective EBT initiative. The initiative includes: coordinating a targeted outreach and advertising campaign; hiring staff including an EBT Project Manager; purchasing and maintaining wireless terminals; and providing back-end administrative and accounting services to our farmers and our markets. Building on the experience and achievements of previous years and solidifying the strategic partnerships that are so crucial to administering this project successfully, Greenmarket met our 2011 goals, demonstrating what can be accomplished with adequate funding, consistent programming, and extensive community outreach.

EBT SALES INCREASE IN GREENMARKETS CITY WIDE



Health Bucks and EBT

Though many incentive programs and partnerships have been extremely helpful in increasing EBT sales and supporting low-income consumers, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's Health Buck (DOHMH) program has been absolutely critical to the ongoing success of Greenmarket's Food Stamp initiatives. Health Bucks are paper vouchers, worth \$2 each, developed and distributed by NYC DOHMH District Public Health Offices since 2007. They can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets. For every \$5 a customer spends using EBT, s/he receives one \$2 Health Buck coupon. According the Human Resource Administration, the average monthly benefit for an individual in 2011 is about \$150; this 40% increase in buying power stretches a Food Stamp budget and encourages shoppers to spend more of their monthly Food Stamp allotment on fresh produce from the market. This innovative program helps Greenmarket provide additional opportunities for residents to buy fresh and affordable produce while supporting regional farmers.



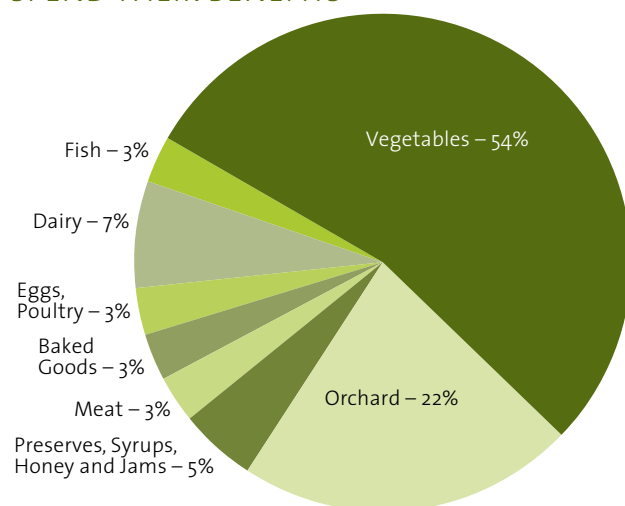
The Health Bucks program has dramatically increased EBT spending in our farmers markets. Food Stamps sales in our Cortelyou, Brooklyn and Inwood, Manhattan markets more than doubled from 2008 to 2009, due in large part to the introduction of the incentive. In addition, **survey data showed that in 2009 more than 90% of farmers market customers bought more fruits and vegetables because of the Health Buck incentive** (*Farmers Markets Initiatives 2010 Report*, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene). In 2011, Greenmarket distributed over \$123,000 in Health Bucks at 20 markets.

In 2010 the Farmers Market Federation of NY surveyed the 81 fruit and vegetable farmers participating in the Health Bucks program and all farmers that responded were pleased with the opportunity the program gave their customers and the income potential it afforded their farms. To find a market near you that accepts Health Bucks go to: www.nyc.gov/healthbucks.

Filling a Gap in Food Access

The EBT project is just one of GrowNYC's many good food/ good health initiatives (www.grownyc.org/goodfood) that increase access to fresh and healthy affordable food and at the same time introduce revenue streams to local farmers. In 2011, Greenmarket EBT shoppers are spending their money primarily on those items most difficult to find in their neighborhoods. **Of the total 2011 Food Stamp dollars spent at Greenmarkets 75% were spent on fresh vegetables and fruit**, 5% were spent on honey and preserves, 3% on free range eggs and poultry, 6% on sustainable caught fresh fish and grass-fed meat, 7% on hormone and antibiotic free dairy products and 3% on baked goods (a 5% drop from 2010).

HOW EBT CUSTOMERS SPEND THEIR BENEFITS



Challenges in 2011

Though sales grew significantly in 2011, some markets sales did not increase at the same rate as past years' and a few markets even saw a decrease in sales. The most significant reason for this was the dramatic weather conditions in the Northeast in 2011, though several other conditions likely contributed to this as well.



Hurricane Irene hit the Northeast in late August, followed directly by Tropical Storm Lee in early September. These storms were devastating to many of Greenmarket's regional farmers. Many counties in New York, New Jersey, and Vermont were flooded and declared "major disasters" by the federal

government. We estimate that 80% of Greenmarket farmers were impacted, with about 10% reporting severe loss—80-100% of their products. As such, many of our markets were severely impacted. In September and October, usually the most abundant and plentiful times of the season, there was less product available and fewer farmers attending markets. Entire market days were canceled due to Hurricane Irene in New York City. Once the storm had passed through and left the city unscathed, the markets felt the effect that the storms left though our region. Poe Park, Lincoln Hospital, and Corona Greenmarkets, which generally post some of our highest volume EBT sales, suffered the greatest losses of product and farmers. Customers still came to shop at the market, but there were fewer products to purchase.

In addition, in 2010 the Department of Health issued an extra \$22,000 in Health Bucks for Greenmarket to distribute as an EBT spring incentive in April and May. This funding was not available in April and May of 2011, which directly impacted EBT sales at markets.

2011 was also the first full year that our largest market, Union Square, accepted Food Stamps. Overall, this was a tremendous boon to EBT customers because of the market's convenient location and diversity of product. However, this likely attracted customers away from some of our smaller neighborhood markets resulting in small declines in some markets' sales. Despite these challenges EBT sales increased by over \$130,000 between 2010 and 2011.

GREENMARKET CUSTOMER SURVEY FINDINGS

This summer Greenmarket surveyed 559 shoppers at random in 8 markets that accept EBT.

25%

of customers reported it difficult to buy fruits and vegetables in their neighborhood

ALMOST 75%

of respondents said that their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables had increased some or greatly as a result of shopping at the farmers market

94%

(nearly everyone surveyed) said that the quality of the produce was very important in their decision to come to the farmers market.



REACHING COMMUNITIES WITH PROMOTION AND ADVERTISING

Outreach, advertising and education are critical in drawing shoppers using EBT to farmers markets and overcoming barriers to EBT use in farmers markets. Barriers include: a misconception that farmers markets are too expensive and cater to the wealthy; the time constraints of working EBT recipients who don't have time to make it to our markets or time to cook the food available for purchase; lack of education about healthy diet choices; lack of cooking skills, especially with unfamiliar vegetables and fruits; and language barriers.

We have three goals for our annual promotion and advertising campaign:

- Every person walking through a market that accepts EBT is aware that they can shop with their EBT cards.
- Residents of New York City with EBT cards who are already interested in healthy, local, fresh produce, but who don't know about our program, will learn about it and shop at our markets.
- Help educate New York City residents about the myriad benefits of shopping at Greenmarket such as taste and freshness, improved health, community building, and the positive environmental and economic impacts it provides.

In 2011, we continued our community outreach and awareness efforts with an intensive, multilingual media outreach campaign utilizing print ads, bodega posters, bus, and subway platform advertisements. We began with a newspaper ad campaign that ran in three different papers from the end of June through October. This targeted campaign was aimed at both specific neighborhoods and the city overall. We also produced English and Spanish posters which were hung in 18 different subway stations, outside 50 bodegas and inside 200 buses. All were located in close proximity to our EBT markets and advertised that Greenmarkets accept EBT cards.

Our extensive community outreach, conducted on a year-round basis, including when markets are not in operation, targets community groups, Food Stamp offices, soup kitchens, food pantries, local churches, city officials, community boards and numerous other community-based organizations serving local residents. In addition Greenmarket continually sends fliers and gives presentations to neighborhood organizations/service providers and community groups to spread the word. Prominent multilingual market signage is also critical in making customers aware that they can use their EBT cards at that market.

Distribution of Educational Videos

In 2011 GrowNYC created a series of three educational videos on how to use EBT, FMNP and WIC V & F checks at Greenmarket. These videos are located on our website at <http://www.grownyc.org/greenmarket/ebt/howtouse>. Greenmarket staff distributed over 150 of these videos to WIC centers, senior centers and CBOs. These videos are used as tools to educate clients/participants on how to use these programs at farmers markets.

Another crucial piece to spreading the word about EBT and Health Bucks is the NYC Human Resource Administration's mailing in late June informing all Food Stamp recipients that live in the Health Buck catchment zones that they can receive a \$2 Health Buck coupon for every \$5 spent in Food Stamps at farmers markets. This mailing brings many new customers to the market and the increased discount encouraged customers to spend more of their Food Stamp dollars on fresh fruits and vegetables. In 2008 EBT sales increased 33% the week after the mailing.

OUTREACH AND ADVERTISING

Our outreach and advertising included Spanish, Polish, Arabic, Russian, Chinese and Yiddish languages. The newspapers included: *Manhattan Times*, *Metro NY*, *El Diario*, the *Daily News*, *Queens Courier*, *El Correo de Queens* and the *Staten Island Advance*.



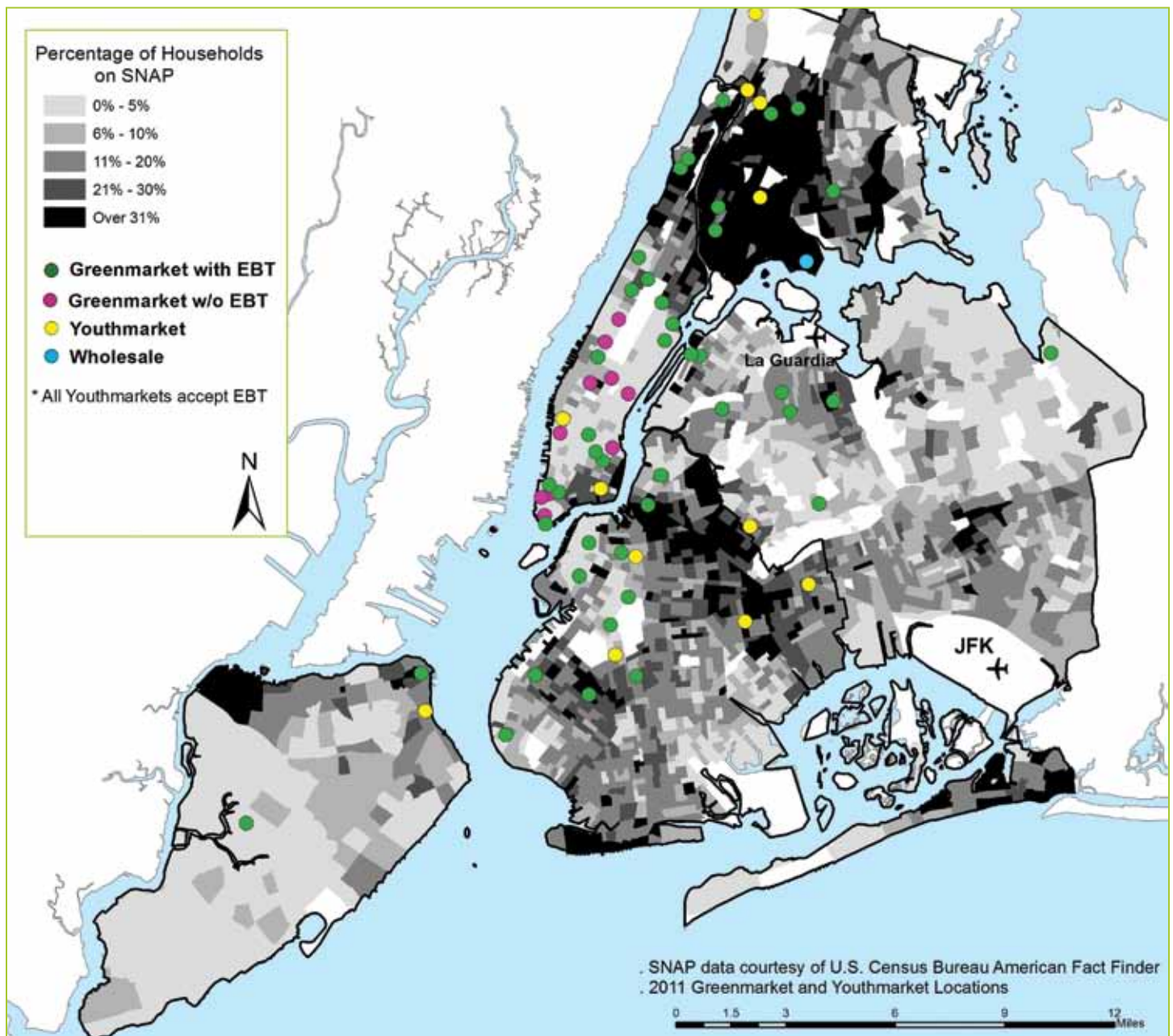


INCREASING ACCESS TO FOOD STAMP BENEFITS

The New York City Food Stamp program has reached record levels of participation with 1.831 million people in the city receiving Food Stamps in 2011. However, there still remains a gap in the participation rate. In New York City, one in three people who are eligible for the Food Stamp program remain unserved (*SNAP/Food Stamp Participation Data*, Food Research and Action Center). This means that at a minimum, 425,000 NYC residents are living at or below the poverty level and are not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled to purchase food.

To help address this disconnect, Greenmarket is partnering with the Food Bank and other community-based organizations to offer regular Food Stamp screenings at our markets. Many people who are eligible for the program do not know that they are eligible or do not know how much in benefits they will receive; Food Stamp screenings reportedly increase a potential applicant's chance of registering by 50% (*Making Food Stamps Work*, Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger). In 2011 we held regular Food Stamp screenings at 10 Greenmarkets, with over 400 contacts made. Additionally, the Food Bank held a training in May for our 2011 market staff on the fundamentals of enrollment in the Food Stamp program. In 2011 market managers at all Greenmarkets were an informational resource to market patrons on the Food Stamp program, its basic qualifications and the steps necessary to apply.

Greenmarkets and Youthmarkets with Percentage of Households on SNAP





THE FUNDAMENTALS OF IMPROVING NUTRITION: PARTNERSHIPS AND INCENTIVES

WIC and Senior FMNP (Farmers Market Nutrition Program)

The FMNP is a federally funded and state administered program, created to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants and low income seniors, and to expand the awareness and sales at farmers markets. The New York State Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provides \$4 checks redeemable for fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets including all 53 Greenmarkets. In 2011, \$2.732 million worth of FMNP checks were redeemed by Greenmarket producers – almost half of the total FMNP dollars available in New York State.

In appropriation for the current year 2012, WIC FMNP was cut nationally an estimated 30%. This means a \$1.3 million cut from the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) in New York State. Farmers who sell in markets in low-income communities depend heavily on programs such as FMNP and EBT/food stamps for their income. At some Greenmarkets, such as Lincoln Hospital in the Bronx, and Corona, Queens, farmers receive almost no cash sales, with customers relying on federal and state nutrition programs to feed their families healthy foods. Local, state and federal budgetary channels are being explored to minimize the impact of this cut for the 2012 market season, and ensure funding is fully restored in 2013.



WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks (WIC V&F Checks)

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides Federal grants to states for supplemental foods, health care referrals, and nutrition education for women with limited resources, who are pregnant or have small children and are found to be at nutritional risk.



To offer foods that are lower in fat, higher in fiber and more culturally appropriate there was a refinement to the WIC food package in 2009. One of the changes made was to offer more fruits and vegetables through monthly Vegetable and Fruit checks. These checks are distributed in increments of \$6, \$10 and \$15 and can be used to purchase fresh, frozen and canned vegetables and fruits. Thanks to the hard work of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, since the summer of 2009 these checks can be redeemed for fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets in New York, making ours the first state to accept these checks in farmers markets. This represents a significant revenue stream for farmers and crucial resource for families, as in New York State alone there will be \$33 million distributed annually compared to just over \$5.5 million in FMNP. In 2011 just over \$29,000 of WIC V&F checks were redeemed in New York State Farmers Markets and increase from \$13,000 in 2010, but only a fraction of a percent of this program's potential.

Wholesome Wave and WIC X 2

Wholesome Wave is a national non-profit organization dedicated to supporting small and midsize farms, and making fresh, healthy, locally grown fruits and vegetables available to all people, regardless of income. Wholesome Wave partners with farmers markets, community leaders, healthcare providers, like-minded nonprofits and government entities to implement programs that benefit both consumers in underserved communities and the farmers who provide for them.

In the spring of 2011 Wholesome Wave awarded Greenmarket \$7,500 to launch the WIC X 2 program. WIC X 2 doubles the value of the WIC Vegetable and Fruit checks when used at participating Greenmarkets. Many WIC recipients do not know they can use these checks at farmers markets as this has only been possible for two years; additionally, they may not be aware of the benefits of shopping at farmers markets. By doubling the value of WIC V&F checks at Greenmarkets, GrowNYC/Greenmarket can incentivize WIC participants to visit their local farmers markets and purchase the freshest, healthiest and tastiest fruits and vegetables in New York City for a very affordable price.

The WIC X 2 program was extremely successful its first season. We implemented the program at seven markets and doubled over 1,000 checks. More than 600 families came to shop at the market for the first time. Also, three farmers enrolled in the WIC V & F program directly because of the incentive. Thanks to another grant from Wholesome Wave we will continue and expand this program in the 2012 season.

Stellar Farmers Markets and Cornell Cooperative Extension

Many New Yorkers spend little time thinking about food and how it's prepared, which has resulted in a loss of food knowledge and reliance on unhealthy, more processed food. To help combat this issue Greenmarket is partnering with the NYC DOHMH Stellar Markets program and Cornell Cooperative Extension's Farmers Market Nutrition Education Program.

Greenmarket regularly hosted the NYC DOHMH Stellar Markets program at 7 Greenmarkets in 2011. This initiative promotes the benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables and improves the capacity of New Yorkers to prepare healthy meals using locally grown, seasonal produce. Using the "Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables" curriculum, Stellar Farmers Market nutritionists provide free, comprehensive nutrition education workshops and cooking demonstrations at select farmers markets throughout NYC. Workshops include topics such as healthy eating, food resource management, food safety, and tips on saving money when food shopping. Overall Stellar Markets reached 20,389 Greenmarket shoppers via 650 nutrition education and cooking workshops and through the distribution of nutrition handouts, recipes and taste samples.

Staff and volunteers from Cornell Cooperative Extension's Farmers Market Nutrition Education Program perform cooking demonstrations at our markets using available seasonal ingredients to encourage consumption of locally-grown fruits and vegetables and promote proper use of FMNP checks. Their goals are to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables, motivate participants to purchase and increase their consumption of these foods, and promote both New York State growers and the farmers markets where they sell their products. Cornell regularly attended 5 markets in 2011.

Mt. Sinai Hospital

Since 2008 Greenmarket has partnered with Mt. Sinai Hospital to distribute Mt. Sinai Prescription for Healthy Living coupons; almost \$12,000 worth were redeemed at the Mt. Sinai Greenmarket this past season. These \$2 coupons are distributed to encourage Mt. Sinai staff, patients and residents of nearby public housing to shop more frequently at the Mt. Sinai Greenmarket.

Columbia Presbyterian Hospital

Greenmarket also partners with Columbia Presbyterian Hospital's Choosing Healthy Lifestyles and Active Living program (CHALK). In 2010 we jointly launched the Green Bucks Program. Green Bucks are \$2 coupons customers can use to buy fresh and delicious produce at area Greenmarkets. Green Bucks are funded through various programs at New York-Presbyterian Hospital/Columbia University Medical Center. CHALK's goal is to increase availability, awareness and demand for fresh, local and healthy foods in Northern Manhattan for the neighboring community, and for hospital and university staff, students and patients. In 2011 just over \$1,600 of these coupons were redeemed by our farmers.



Greenmarket Bucks

The spring of 2011 was the official launch of the Greenmarket Bucks program. Greenmarket Bucks are \$2 coupons that can be used to purchase any Greenmarket product. Greenmarket Bucks are sponsored and distributed by organizations who want to promote the consumption of fresh food and shopping at farmers markets to their clients and/or members. The Bucks are intended to both assist consumers in developing healthy diets by introducing them to the fresh foods available at our farmers markets and to generate additional income for regional farmers. This season Greenmarket Bucks were purchased by Slow Food, the Palette Fund, Studio in a School and Solar One. In 2011 the Bucks were primarily distributed to students K-12 who visited Greenmarkets through our School Tours program and who qualify for the federal free lunch program.

Greenmarket Health Day

In July and August Greenmarket launched its first ever series of "Health Days" at the Union Square Greenmarket. Invited partner organizations provided services including blood pressure and diabetes screenings by Beth Israel, Food Stamp screenings by the Food Bank, information about the WIC program from Public Health Solutions and nutrition demonstrations by the youth participants of GrowNYC's very own Learn it Grow it Eat it Program. It was a great way for Greenmarket patrons to check their health and connect their health and nutrition to eating fresh food from Greenmarkets.

GrowEBT

Many EBT users do not know that Food Stamps can be used to purchase seeds and edible plants. If you have a green thumb, this can be a great way to stretch Food Stamp dollars. In the spring of 2011 Greenmarket launched our GrowEBT campaign, encouraging customers to “grow their garden” with their Food Stamps. We provided posters and flyers, prizes and at-market gardening demonstrations to teach the benefits of growing your own food.

Additionally, GrowNYC’s Open Space Greening Program holds a Spring Plant Sale in order to provide community groups with perennial and annual flowering plants, herbs, ground covers, and vegetables from Greenmarket farmers at wholesale prices. The 2011 Spring Plant Sales accepted EBT for the purchase of edible plants and EBT sales totaled over \$1,000.

A colorful poster for the 'Grow your Garden with EBT' campaign. The top half features the title in a large, pink, cursive font. Below the title is a stylized illustration of green leafy plants growing from dark brown soil. In the upper right corner, there is a graphic of a New York State EBT card. The bottom half of the poster has a solid pink background with white text. It includes the instruction 'Use your EBT card to purchase edible plants at Greenmarket', a sentence about the economic and health benefits of growing food, the website 'WWW.GROWNVC.ORG', and the 'grow NYC GREENMARKET' logo which includes the words 'GARDEN • TEACH • RECYCLE' around a circular emblem.

*Grow your Garden
with EBT*

NEW YORK STATE
BENEFIT
IDENTIFICATION CARD
XXXXXXXX 000111 1100 0011 010 01
01/14/2008
BUY LOCAL
ACCESS NUMBER 0000 0000 000
01

Use your EBT card to purchase edible plants at Greenmarket

Using food stamps to start a garden is an economical way to get your hands on the health benefits of fresh, local produce throughout the season.

WWW.GROWNVC.ORG

GARDEN • TEACH • RECYCLE
grow NYC
GREENMARKET



LOOKING FORWARD

GrowNYC has always believed that eating high quality fresh fruits and vegetables is a basic right and that the demand for healthy choices exists throughout our city. We know that if you provide access and affordability, you can fill that demand. By pairing education and opportunity, and with the help of many dedicated partners, you can create it. Below are some of the ways that Greenmarket hopes to enhance services to low-income shoppers.

Increase in the Number of Greenmarkets that Will Accept EBT

GrowNYC's goal is to equip all markets serving under-resourced communities with the capacity to accept Food Stamps.

The Health Buck Program Will Continue

The Health Bucks program has been a tremendous success in encouraging EBT recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets. In 2011 over \$123,000 in Health Bucks were distributed through Greenmarket. A benefit to both farmers and communities, the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will continue the program in 2012.

Greenmarket is Increasingly a Resource for Farmers Market Organizations Around the Country

GrowNYC's Greenmarket EBT program has become widely recognized as a successful model for farmers market programs around the country and we are constantly being contacted by farmers market organizations and community groups seeking our advice and expertise.

Greenmarket's partnership with Wholesome Wave has brought us into their "learning community". This is a great platform for us to share our insights as one of the largest farmers market organizations in the country. Our 53 markets are extremely diverse in their size, location, customer base, and needs, which gives us a large frame of reference to support other market operators. This partnership also

provides us the opportunity to learn about the successful strategies and programs of other market operators around the country.

Additionally, Greenmarket has extensive community outreach plans for each of our markets. We also have at-market programming and outreach 'how-to' sheets including activities like: cooking demos, featuring market products, and reaching out to senior centers, WIC centers, and schools. These 'how-to' sheets give tips on the methods we have found to be the most successful and would be relevant for any farmers market. We are in the process of posting these sheets on our website in special section devoted to resources for other market operators.

WIC Curricula

Greenmarket is in the process of developing an "all about farmers markets" curricula to assist WIC centers in teaching their clients about the benefits of shopping in farmers markets. This curricula will be colorful, bright, catchy and easily understood information on the health benefits of shopping at market and market tips for first time shoppers. The WIC curriculum will be available in both Spanish and English.



Continued Partnership with the Food Bank

Greenmarket will continue our partnership with the Food Bank and offer regular Food Stamp screenings regularly at selected Greenmarkets in 2012. The Food Bank will again participate in the training of the 2012 market managers.

Seniors at Market

Expanding on GrowNYC's work to engage active older adults to be agents of change in the good food, good health movement, in collaboration with Harvest Home, Greenmarket will launch a Senior Initiative in the 2012 season, with a goal of increasing the number of seniors that patronize farmers markets. Greenmarket is creating a senior programming toolkit, with materials specifically designed for seniors, like farmers market bingo, a senior recipe series, and senior-specific nutrition information. Additionally, Greenmarket will reach out to senior centers and regularly conduct farmers market tours for seniors.



BEYOND THE FARMERS MARKET

GrowNYC offers a variety of programs that help to address food access, affordability, and nutrition in the City while supporting regional farmers:

Youthmarket

Youthmarket is a network of urban farm stands operated by neighborhood youth, supplied by local farmers, and designed to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to communities throughout New York City. Through Youthmarket, families in all five boroughs now have increased access to farm fresh food; youth participants earn salaries and learn small-business skills; and farmers in the New York City region are achieving higher revenue through access to underserved markets.

Youthmarket, which is based on the Greenmarket model, seeks to address food inaccessibility linking regional farmers with underserved consumers in New York City. Communities benefit from an influx of fresh, healthy food and farmers access new markets without the costs associated with retailing. In 2011 all 13 Youthmarkets accepted EBT.

Yum Fresh Food

YUM Fresh Food is a group buying program aimed at increasing access to affordable, quality produce in the Washington Heights community. YUM Fresh Food allows residents of Washington Heights to purchase fresh produce at wholesale prices in variety bags that change from week to week. Since the onset of the program in June 2010, YUM has distributed more than 70,000 pounds of fresh produce in the Washington Heights area.

A partnership between GrowNYC and Isabella Geriatric Center, a senior care and resource center in Washington Heights, YUM also seeks to create opportunities for senior citizens to actively address issues of food access. Isabella finds and trains seniors who work with GrowNYC and Isabella staff to choose which foods the program will offer, plan food packaging, create marketing and educational materials, and conduct outreach to the greater Washington Heights community.

Brownsville

As part of the New York State Department of Health's "Creating Healthy Places to Live, Work, and Play" grant, in 2011 GrowNYC and the Brownsville Partnership, a community development organization, launched four coordinated strategies to reduce the incidence of obesity and type 2 diabetes through policy, system, and environmental changes to Brownsville, Brooklyn. Kings County, where Brownsville is located, is known for higher rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes than the majority of other counties in New York State. Additionally, Brownsville registers significantly higher rates of obesity and type 2 diabetes than Kings County as a whole.

To help address these concerns, GrowNYC is giving residents greater access to fresh produce by operating two Youthmarkets in Brownsville, bringing that program's success to the community. GrowNYC is also working with a total of 8 bodegas, green grocers, and supermarkets to distribute produce grown by Wholesale Greenmarket farmers, significantly increasing consumers' access to fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables. GrowNYC staff work directly with store owners to select products and create displays that encourage customers to purchase more produce, providing advertising materials, in-store display equipment, and technical assistance for proper storage.



Wholesale & Greenmarket Co.

In September 2009, GrowNYC assumed management of the Wholesale Farmers Market located in the New Fulton Fish Market in the Hunts Point Section of the Bronx. The growers that sell there represent the remaining group of farmers that once sold at the flourishing Bronx Terminal Market. This outdoor market offers regional farm-fresh products at competitive wholesale prices.

Working with this group of farmers is but one of GrowNYC's many efforts to help local wholesale farmers access new and viable markets. In 2011 GrowNYC launched an initiative to deliver locally grown produce and provide refrigerators to corner stores in the Brooklyn communities of Bedford-Stuyvesant and Brownsville, which have few grocery stores and a great need for fresh foods. This program, which delivers to twelve retail outlets including an Associated Supermarket, has served as a stepping stone to what is soon to become a significantly larger distribution program.

In spring 2012, Greenmarket Co. will begin offering aggregation and delivery of regional products utilizing the new City Harvest warehouse in Long Island City, Queens. This operation will provide deliveries and product to retail food outlets, bodegas, restaurants, GrowNYC food access programs such as Youthmarkets, and more. By providing delivery and brokering services, GrowNYC will reduce barriers for both buyers and producers to regionally grown agriculture products. Moreover, GrowNYC continues to seek support to build a state-of-the-art wholesale facility to enable the hundreds of midsize farmers in our region to meet New York City's demand for fresh, local food.

Fresh Pantry Project

Each week during the height of the season, farmers from 35 Greenmarkets donate their fresh fruits and vegetables to local food pantries, homeless facilities, soup kitchens, and community centers in all 5 boroughs. In 2011, our farmers donated 825,435 pounds of food!



Since 1983, Greenmarket has partnered with City Harvest to distribute locally grown food from Greenmarkets to food pantries across the city. In 2008, the New York City Coalition Against Hunger and Greenmarket identified additional opportunities to donate produce and feed hungry New Yorkers. By connecting regional farmers with in-need New Yorkers, Greenmarket, the NYCCAH, and City Harvest are helping to address hunger and build community around healthy, local foods.

In addition to the above GrowNYC also builds and supports more than 70 community gardens, teaches young people about the environment, and helps New Yorkers recycle more and waste less. For more information about GrowNYC and its programs go to www.grownyc.org.



CONCLUSION

The myths that GrowNYC doesn't operate Greenmarkets in low income neighborhoods or that lower income shoppers cannot support a farmers market have clearly been dispelled by our experience. Over the past twenty-plus years, we have operated Greenmarkets in Washington Heights, the South Bronx, Sunset Park, and various locations in Queens, recognizing that all New Yorkers want to purchase the healthiest and best foods for their families. In fact, more than 40% of our markets are located in communities with median household income that is below the average for New York City (U. S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 5-Year Estimates, 2006-2010). In addition some markets attract customers from all five boroughs and all income levels as our experience at Grand Army Plaza and Union Square Greenmarkets.

The huge success and growth of the Greenmarket program is proof of the great demand for healthy, fresh, local products in New York City—by New Yorkers of all incomes. As farmers markets become increasingly vital to addressing community food insecurity and the survival of small family farms, it is crucial to equip farmers with the technology to serve all consumers.

Greenmarket's commitment to supporting regional family farms and providing all New Yorkers with fresh, local food extends beyond farmers markets and into local grocery stores, food pantries and institutions. In order to provide more access for those New Yorkers most in need and for EBT at farmers markets to be consistently and effectively implemented, government partnerships, sufficient funding and financial incentives are crucial. GrowNYC is extraordinarily thankful for the vital support we receive from Speaker Quinn and the New York City Council, as well as the USDA. With this assistance, GrowNYC and all of its partners in New York (multiple city agencies, Farmers Market Federation of NY, NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets, and numerous community-based organizations, tenant associations, and residents) will continue to be leaders and innovators in providing access to fresh, locally grown produce to all New Yorkers.

Hurricane damage photo on page 6 by June Russell.

Photos on pages ii, 17, 18, 19, 20 and 22 by Samuel-Christophe Tedjasukmana.

All other photos by Jameel Khaja.



DEFINITIONS

FMNP (The New York State Farmers Market Nutrition Program):

\$4 checks distributed to Families enrolled in WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman Infants and Children) and Senior Nutrition Programs. These checks are redeemable for fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets.

EBT (Electronic Benefits Transfer):

The electronic system that automates the delivery, redemption, and reconciliation of issued public assistance benefits including Food Stamps.

WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks:

Issued by WIC (Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Woman Infants and Children) as part of a refinement to the traditional WIC package, these \$6, \$10 or \$15 checks can be used at participating farmers markets in New York State.

Health Bucks:

Developed and distributed by New York City Department of Health, these \$2 coupons are distributed to EBT users and can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets.

Market Manager:

Greenmarket has a number of year round and seasonal staff to manage our farmers markets. The position involves enforcement of Greenmarket rules and regulations, operating the EBT program at market and at market promotional activities and outreach.

Third Party Processor:

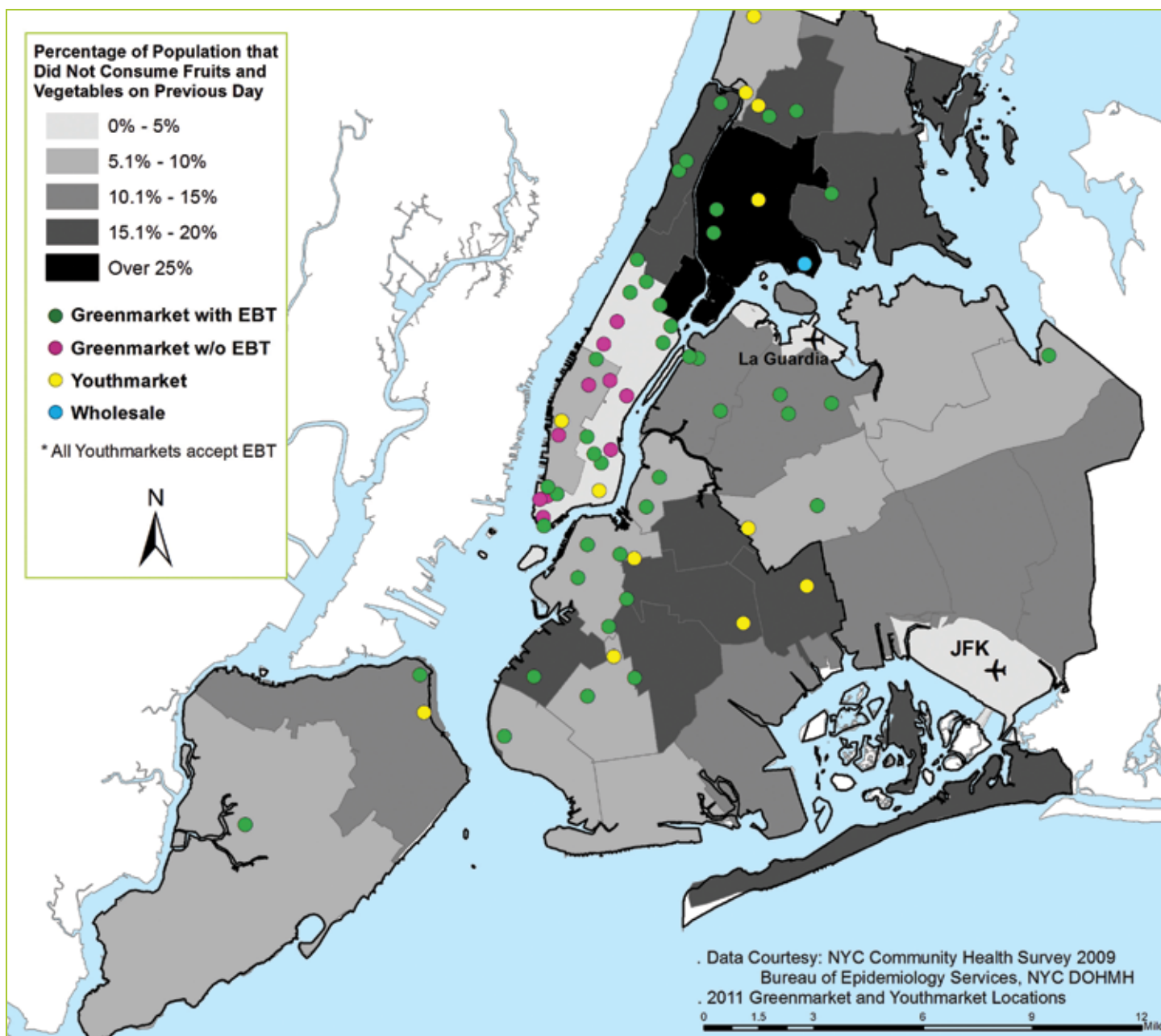
An institution acting under contract to/with credit card issuers or acquirers that processes payment cards, and other electronic transactions.

New York City DPHO (District Public Health Office):

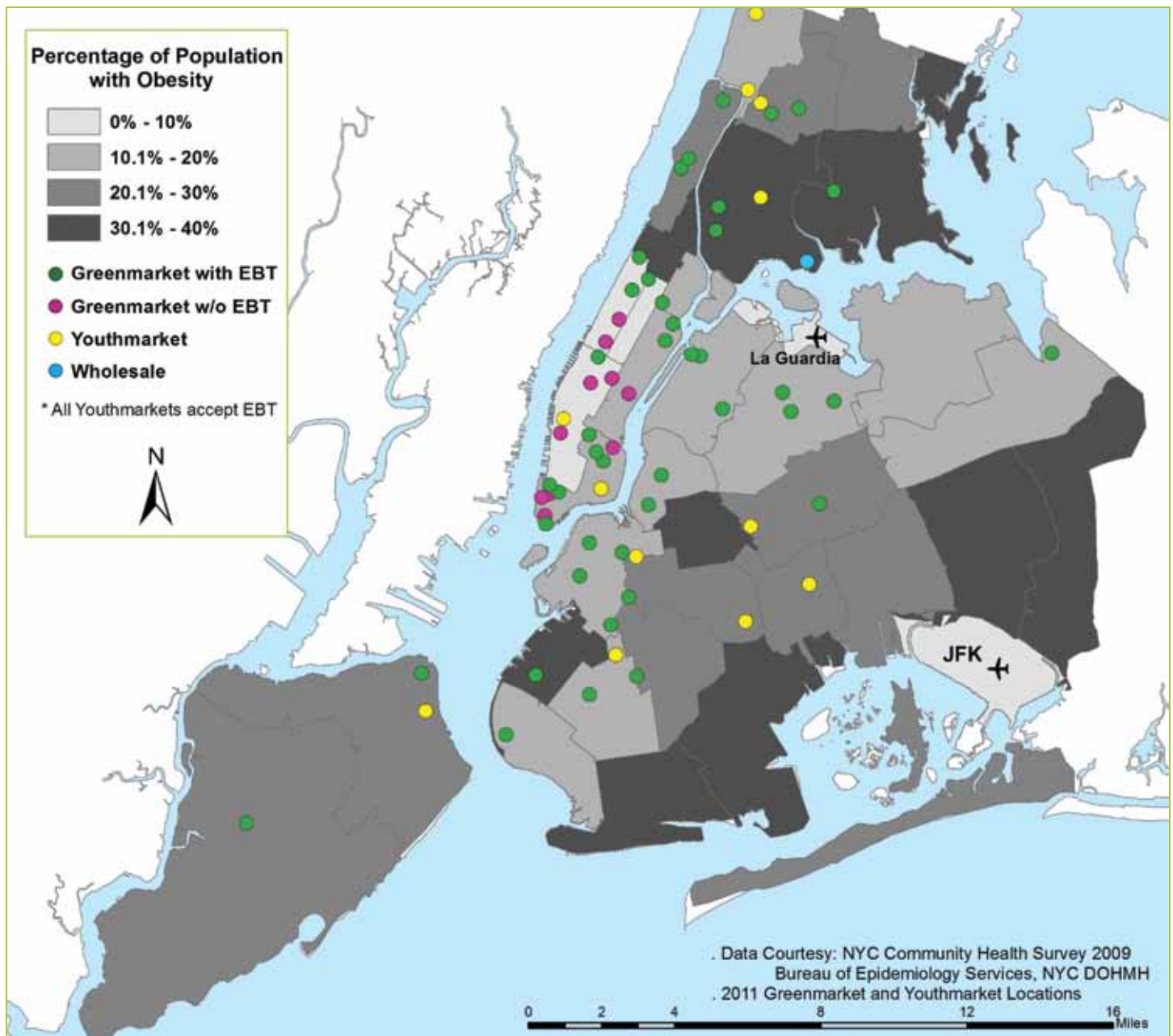
The mission of the District Public Health Offices is to reduce health inequalities across New York City by targeting resources, programs, and attention to high-need neighborhoods in the South Bronx, East and Central Harlem, and North and Central Brooklyn. The DPHOs work to ensure that conditions for good health—available, sustainable, high-quality services and efficient, effective systems—flourish in these neighborhoods.

APPENDIX

Greenmarkets and Youthmarkets with Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables



Greenmarkets and Youthmarkets with Obesity Rates



Greenmarkets and Youthmarkets with Diabetes Rates

