



Eligibility Requirements for FreshConnect Food Box Program

Objective: A maximum of \$10,000 per year is available to operate a FreshConnect Food Box Program site to increase the fruit and vegetable consumption by low income, SNAP eligible consumers, and to reduce their incidence of obesity and chronic disease.

Eligibility Requirements:

- The entity applying must be a non-profit with 501c3 status or able obtain fiscal sponsorship from a non-profit with 501c3 status.
- Located in New York City Metropolitan Area (Manhattan, Brooklyn, Bronx, Queens, Staten Island), Long Island, or Westchester.
- Your site needs to serve locations where 30% of the population is SNAP eligible. Data is available at <http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2016/overall/new-york/> If you are in a region that does not meet the 30%, please make the case and illustrate how your program will serve low-income and SNAP eligible individuals and households.
- In addition, your location can be based at a “priority site”, including senior centers, NORCs, settlement houses, low-income schools where more than 50% of children are on free and reduced-price lunch, WIC clinics, Public Assistance Employment Offices, or a community health center. To accept SNAP Ed funds, location of services must be in areas or at site locations where SNAP eligible clients frequent.
- Food Box shares should include 6-10 local farm products, or roughly 10-12 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Must be working with GrowNYC or a local distributor in establishing or growing a Food Box program. If you are considering sourcing from another distributor, please ask.
- Must commit to a goal of at least 25 shares per week for a minimum of 12 weeks.
- Must make arrangements for the Food Box program to be EBT/SNAP capable.
- Food Box share commitments must be on a week to week basis and purchased one week in advanced of actual share pick up.
- Food Box Site Coordinators will provide customers with nutrition education. This must include distribution of USDA approved nutrition materials such as MyPlate tip sheets, healthy low cost recipes, and instructions for storing produce. Additional activities may include conducting healthy cooking demonstrations.
- Food Box Sites may request additional funds for some “Nutrition Education Reinforcement Materials”. These are products given to the SNAP-Ed audience, which convey nutrition messages and promote healthy nutrition and physical activity practices. See “Rules for Nutrition Education Reinforcement Materials” for more information.

Process:

- A proposal (including project timeline) and budget is required and submitted to the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (Department).
- Proposal must have a recruitment and retention plan for Food Box share customers.
- Grant funds may not be used to purchase foods.
- Grant funds may not be used for the purchase of EBT hardware and to pay fees associated with the operation of the equipment. If equipment is needed, the organization can contact the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets for options.
- Goal: at least 10 percent of revenues for the Food Box shares in the form of SNAP benefits from SNAP participants.
- Must apply to USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to become an authorized SNAP vendor, if not already participating.
- If the proposal and budget are accepted, the organization will be requested by the Department to enter into a “Letter of Agreement” (LOA). The LOA is for one year. Grantees that successfully complete the first year will be given priority for a second year of funding.

Reporting & Evaluation Requirements:

- The location and number of Food Box sites operating; number of new sites.
- Number of Food Box Sites that operate SNAP-EBT terminals.
- The number of food box shares distributed to SNAP participants or SNAP eligible participants from each food box site.
- The number of recipes for fresh fruits and vegetables developed and distributed at each food box site.
- The number and amount of SNAP sales at each food box site and for food box sites.
- The pounds and variety of fruits and or vegetables in weekly shares.
- Create and distribute a survey for:
 - the usage of produce provided in the weekly share;
 - the consumption of produce provided in the weekly share;
 - the use of recipes provided with the weekly shares;
 - the use of concepts provided in MyPlate nutrition education materials;
 - Age distribution, sex, ethnicity of SNAP-Ed participants.
- Goal: 10 percent of the revenues for the food box shares will be in the form of SNAP benefits.
- Goal: 25 percent of food box participants report an increase in their consumption of fruits and vegetables as a result of purchasing weekly food box share(s).
- Goals: 25 percent of food box participants report utilizing one or more of the recipes provided with weekly food box share(s).

Reporting Schedule:

- Quarterly reports are expected to capture all the Evaluation metrics described above plus any additional narratives relative to the project. A template can be provided upon request.
- Quarterly reports due to the Department on January 15, April 15, July 15, with a fourth and final annual report due November 30. The final report must include all metrics, survey information, and other accomplishments pertaining to the Food Box Distribution Program, as well as include a plan for sustainability for after the term of the grant.

For more questions or inquiries please contact Tahirah Cook, Food Box Program Manager at tahirah.cook@agriculture.ny.gov or **(718) 722-2703**

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