

# MASSACHUSETTS HEALTHY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (HIP)



Fresh. Canned. Dried. Frozen.  
It's **HIP** to be healthy!

Since April 2017 HIP has meant better health outcomes for vulnerable families, and better sustainability for local farms.

## FAMILIES



SNAP families purchased **\$9 million** in fresh, healthy, local foods.



**55,000 families** earned HIP incentives.



**102,000 individuals** increased their fruit and vegetable intake by **1 serving** per day.



That increase in healthy eating can mean annual savings of more than **\$1.9 million** in health costs.



**46% of those families included seniors**, who spend less time in the emergency room when they eat healthy foods.



**30% of those families included children**, who do better in school when they eat healthy foods.



More than **70% of MA SNAP recipients are employed**. Eating healthy food increases productivity in the workplace.

## FARMS

More than **200 farms** sold **\$9 million** more of the fresh fruits and vegetables they grew.



SNAP sales at farm retailers increased by **nearly 600%** from 2016 to 2017, thanks to HIP.



That increase in sales helps generate **40-60 new jobs** in the farming sector.



Each dollar spent results in an **additional \$1.12** in local economic impact, as farmers contribute to the local economy, spending those dollars on goods and services.



Increased farm sustainability means farmers are better able to **protect their land**, stewarding **natural resources** that benefit the environment.



In 2017 there was a **65% increase** in the number of direct-to-consumer SNAP retailers.



# What is the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP)?

Launched in April 2017, the Healthy Incentives Program provides monthly incentives to SNAP households of up to: \$40 for families of 1-2; \$60 for families of 3-5; and \$80 for families of 6 or more, when they purchase fresh, local, healthy vegetables and fruits from Massachusetts farmers at farmers markets, farm-stands, CSAs, and mobile markets. The money they spend at these retailers is immediately added back to their EBT cards, and can be spent at any SNAP retailer. The program is administered by the Department of Transitional Assistance, in partnership with the Department of Agricultural Resources and the Department of Public Health, and is supported by a grant from USDA, state financing, and private donations.

## What are people saying about HIP?

My family needs the mobile market. Cooking is what we do. It's part of our culture, and you can't cook with bad ingredients. [This market] has **the best ingredients I've seen in Boston**, and I can actually afford it."

- HIP customer, Roxbury YMCA Trustees mobile market

Thanks to HIP, my farm has the privilege of feeding people that need it most, and that in turn, feeds us, literally and figuratively. It's rare to witness a program so successful in **supporting a balance of complex social, economic, and environmental interests.**

- Julia Coffey, Mycoterra farm, South Deerfield

Having HIP has not only enhanced my diet and made me feel better by eating healthier and losing weight, it has also made me ... get out of the house and **feel good about myself** because I was taking steps to become healthier and I made friends with the vendors that accept HIP. It is "good for my head," besides being good for my body.

- HIP customer, Agawam

On the coldest, rainiest market day of the season this fall at Copley – a day we would normally expect to be slow as mud – we had lines of HIP customers from opening bell to closing. This is **the kind of reliable customer base I've been dreaming about** through my first two decades of farming, and have just found.

- Chris Kurth, Siena Farms, Sudbury

HIP is helping our **SNAP clients to eat better and live healthier** by giving them a greater opportunity to purchase nutritious fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, farm stands, mobile markets, and through Community Supported Agriculture farm shares.

- DTA Commissioner Jeff McCue

The program has been a **success by every measure**, from its implementation by the Department of Transitional Assistance and the Department of Agricultural Resources, to the farms and agricultural organizations providing the services on the ground, and finally to our residents that are choosing to feed their families with healthy produce when given the chance.

- Senator Anne Gobi (D-Spencer)

The collaboration between MDAR and DTA on the HIP program has been a **true success story** for farmers' markets and the communities they serve.

- MDAR Commissioner John Lebeaux

It is of the utmost importance that we continue to advance the Healthy Incentives Program and provide for **equity across the Commonwealth** in offering this cutting-edge, community focused initiative

- Representative Hannah Kane (R-Shrewsbury)

