



January 16, 2023

The Honorable Maura Healey, Governor
Massachusetts State House, Room 280
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Governor Healey,

The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) has had a profound impact on Massachusetts families and farms, resulting in positive health outcomes for some of the Commonwealth's most vulnerable families, and supporting farm sustainability through millions of dollars in increased sales. HIP has been a national model for many, and led to Massachusetts being the only state cited as an example in the [Biden-Harris Administration National Strategy on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health](#) in the run up to the White House conference on Nutrition and Health.

We urge you to include \$24 million for HIP (4400-1004) in your Fiscal Year 2024 budget proposal, level to the amount provided to the program in FY23. Doing so will demonstrate a commitment to healthy families and sustainable local farms, both of which are critical to Massachusetts' response to the ongoing rise in inflation and recovery from the pandemic. This amount will support year-round operation of the program, continued growth in participation both from farmers and SNAP client households, and education and outreach efforts to ensure the program is equitably reaching all communities in the Commonwealth.

Your administration has an opportunity to take strong, innovative public health measures to improve the long-term health of the Commonwealth. HIP is one example of this kind of innovative approach, and this investment would build upon that success. Program use has grown 30% this fiscal year, similar to previous years, and the Department of Transitional Assistance's tools like the [DTAfinder map](#) of HIP points of sale and text alerts to its client base are succeeding in attracting more people to the program, which translates into more low-income households eating healthy food and more sales for the state's farmers.

Through HIP, families purchased more than \$7.2 million in produce from Massachusetts farmers in the first five months of the fiscal year alone. Every dollar dedicated to this program is a direct investment in the health of Massachusetts residents and communities, our local economy, and our natural resources, and the \$43.6 million of incentives earned since the program's launch in April 2017 has had a profound impact on tens of thousands of households, and hundreds of farms.

The Healthy Incentives Program provides a dollar-for-dollar match, up to a monthly limit dependent on household size, for SNAP dollars spent on fruits and vegetables purchased at participating farmers markets, farm stands, mobile markets, and community supported agriculture (CSA) programs across the Commonwealth.

HIP is the only nutrition incentive program that operates on this scale nationwide, continuing Massachusetts' legacy of national leadership in innovative policy approaches to relieving hunger and supporting local agriculture. We urge you to invest in HIP so that this innovative program can continue to improve the health of our residents, sustain our farms, and support a healthy environment and economy for all residents of Massachusetts.

The Massachusetts Food System Collaborative was established to promote, monitor, and facilitate implementation of the [Massachusetts Local Food Action Plan](#), accepted by the state in 2015. In 2020, the Collaborative released [Massachusetts Local Food System: Perspectives on Resilience and Recovery](#), suggesting further policy priorities that had arisen in the ensuing five years, particularly in light of the COVID pandemic.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this input.

Sincerely,



Winton Pitcoff, Director

On behalf of:

Organizations

AARP Massachusetts, Statewide	Coastal Foodshed, New Bedford
About Fresh, Boston	CommonWealth Kitchen, Dorchester
Alchemy Initiative, Pittsfield	Community Action Agency of Somerville, Inc., Somerville
All Farmers, Springfield	Community Action Pioneer Valley, Greenfield
Alliance of Massachusetts YMCAs, Boston	Community Health Network of North Central Mass, 27 North Central towns
Allston Brighton Health Collaborative, Boston	Community Servings, Jamaica Plain
American Academy of Pediatrics, MA Chapter, Waltham	Community Teamwork, Greater Lowell
American Farmland Trust, Northampton	Conservation Law Foundation, Boston
American Heart Association and American Stroke Association, Waltham	Easthampton Community Center, Easthampton
Amherst Food Co-op, Amherst	Ethos, Jamaica Plain
Amherst Survival Center, North Amherst	Falmouth Service Center, Inc., Falmouth
Arlington EATS, Arlington	The Family Pantry of Cape Cod, Harwich
Arlington Food Pantry, Arlington	Farm Aid, Cambridge
Arlington Regional Model United Nations, Arlington	Florence Congregational Church, Florence
Arise for Social Justice, Springfield	The Food Bank of Western Massachusetts, Hatfield
Backyard Growers, Gloucester	Food For Free Committee, Inc., Cambridge
Be Well Berkshires, Pittsfield, Great Barrington, Lee, Lenox, Stockbridge	The Food Project, Lynn
Berkshire Community Action Council, Inc., Berkshire County	FoodCorps, Boston
Berkshire Farm & Table, Sheffield	FoodXChange, Boston
Berkshire Grown, Berkshire County	Franklin County Community Development Corporation, Greenfield
Blue Cross Blue Shield of Massachusetts, Natick	Franklin County Food Council, Greenfield
Boston Area Gleaners, Inc., Waltham	Friedman Food Policy Action Council, Boston
Boston Children's Hospital, Boston	Friendly House, Inc., Worcester
Boston Mayor's Office of Food Access, Boston	Friends of Sholan Farms, Leominster
Boston Public Health Commission, Boston	Gardening the Community, Springfield
Buy Fresh Buy Local Cape Cod, Barnstable	Ginny's Helping Hand, Inc., Leominster
Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee, Cambridge	Greater Boston Food Bank, Boston
Cape Ann Farmers' Market, Gloucester	Greater Boston Nazarene Compassionate Center , Inc., Mattapan
The Carrot Project, Boston	Greater Fall River Community Food Pantry, Tiverton
Catholic Charities Worcester County, Worcester	Greater Lynn Senior Services, Lynn
Central Mass Grown, Worcester	Greening Greenfield, Greenfield
Central West Justice Center, Worcester	Groundwork Lawrence, Lawrence, Methuen & Haverhill
Children's HealthWatch, Boston	Grow Food Northampton, Northampton
CISA (Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture), South Deerfield	Growing Places/Fitchburg Farmers Market, Leominster
Citizens for Citizens, Inc., Greater Fall River	Habitat for Humanity of Greater Lowell, Westford
CitySprouts, Boston	Harvard Pilgrim Health Care, Wellesley
Clean Water Action, Statewide	Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, Wellesley
Coalition for a Healthy Greater Worcester, Worcester	Health Care For All, Boston
Coalition for Social Justice, Southeastern Massachusetts	Health Care Without Harm, Statewide
	Healthy Chelsea, Chelsea

Healthy Hampshire, Northampton
 HESSCO, Sharon
 Hilltown Community Health Center, Worthington,
 Huntington
 Holyoke Office of Planning and Economic
 Development/Holyoke Mass in Motion, Holyoke
 Hopkinton Harvest, Inc., Hopkinton
 Island Grown Initiative, Tisbury
 IUW-CWA Local 81776, Marblehead
 Jewish Alliance for Law and Social Action, Boston
 Just Roots Inc., Greenfield
 Let's Talk About Food, Cambridge
 Lettuce Be Local, Sterling
 LifePath, Inc., Greenfield
 Loaves and Fishes Food Pantry, Worcester, MA
 Lynn Economic Opportunity (LEO), Lynn, Nahant,
 Swampscott, Wakefield, Saugus and Marblehead
 Marion Institute, Marion
 Martin Luther King Family Services, Inc., Springfield
 Mass Audubon, Statewide
 Mass Farmers Markets, Waltham
 Mass In Motion - Fall River
 Mass In Motion - New Bedford
 Mass In Motion - Salem
 Mass In Motion - Springfield
 Mass Law Reform Institute, Boston
 Massachusetts Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics,
 Statewide
 Massachusetts Association of Community Development
 Corporations (MACDC), Boston
 Massachusetts Association of Health Boards, Plainville
 Massachusetts Councils on Aging, Statewide
 Massachusetts Farm to School, Statewide
 Massachusetts Fruit Growers Association, Statewide
 Massachusetts Health Council, Statewide
 Massachusetts Health & Hospital Association, Burlington
 Massachusetts Public Health Association, Boston
 Mattapan Food and Fitness Coalition, Boston
 Merrimack Valley Food Bank, Lowell
 Metropolitan Area Planning Council, Boston
 Mill City Grows, Lowell
 Mount Grace Land Conservation Trust, Athol
 Murray UU Church Food Pantry, Attleboro
 NAC Food Pantry, Whitinsville
 New England Vegetable & Berry Growers Association,
 New England
 New England Small Farm Institute (NESFI) , Belchertown
 New Entry Sustainable Farming Project, Lowell
 newedibles.com, Colrain
 North Adams Council on Aging, North Adams
 Northampton Survival Center, Northampton
 Northeast Organic Farming Association, Massachusetts
 Chapter, Barre
 Nourishing the North Shore, Newburyport

Nubian United Benevolent International Association
 (NUBIA) Inc., Boston
 Old Colony YMCA, Brockton
 The Open Pantry of Greater Lowell, Lowell
 Open Table, Maynard and Concord
 Plainfield Agricultural Commission, Plainfield
 Positive Change for Animals, Clinton
 Project Bread-Walk for Hunger, East Boston
 Public Health Institute of Western MA, Western MA
 Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts
 (PHENOM), Statewide
 Quabbin Harvest, Orange
 Quabbin Food Connector, Inc., Orange
 Rachel's Table, Worcester
 Regional Environmental Council of Central MA, Worcester
 Revere on the Move, Revere
 Rosie's Place, Boston
 Roxbury in Motion, Boston
 SeniorCare, Inc., Gloucester
 The Senior Center in Shelburne, Shelburne
 Shape Up Somerville, Somerville
 Somerville Food Security Coalition, Somerville
 Southbridge Food Share, Southbridge
 Southcoast Food Policy Council, Marion
 Southeastern Massachusetts Agricultural Partnership, South
 Dartmouth
 Southeastern MA Food Security Network, New Bedford
 Springfield Food Policy Council, Springfield
 St. Anthony's Pantry at Sacred Heart-St. Catherine of
 Sweden Church, Worcester
 St. James food Pantry, South Grafton
 St. James Outreach Group, South Grafton
 Stone Soup Cafe, Greenfield
 Sustainable CAPE, Truro
 Sustainable Nantucket/Community Farm Institute,
 Nantucket
 Tapestry, Florence
 Temple Sinai, Sharon
 The Nutrition Center, Inc., Great Barrington
 The Open Door, Gloucester
 The Trustees, Statewide
 Toxics Action Center Campaigns, Boston
 United Neighbors of Fall River, Fall River
 Urban Farming Institute, Boston
 Waltham Fields Community Farm/Community Farms
 Outreach, Inc., Waltham
 Western Area Mass Dietetic Association, Springfield
 Western Massachusetts Health Equity Network, Amherst
 WHEAT Community Connections, Clinton
 Women's Lunch Place, Boston
 Worcester County Food Bank, Shrewsbury
 Worcester Food Policy Council, Worcester
 YMCA Southcoast, New Bedford

Farms and Farmers Markets

Amherst Winter Farmers' Market, Hadley
 Apponagansett Farm, Dartmouth
 Arrowhead Farm, Newburyport
 Ashfield Farmers market, Ashfield
 Ashmont Farmers Market, Dorchester
 Barrett's Mill Farm, Concord
 Berberian Farm, Northborough

Belchertown Farmers Market, Belchertown
 Beverly Farmers' Market, Beverly
 Bowdoin Geneva Farmers Market, Dorchester
 Braintree Farmers Market, Braintree
 Bree-Z-Knoll Farm, Leyden
 Breezy Gardens, Leicester
 Brewster Historical Society Farmers Market, Brewster

Brookfield Farm, Amherst
 Brookside Family Farm, Westminster
 Brox Farm, Dracut
 Busa Farm and Markets, Concord, Lincoln, Lexington
 Cambridge Winter Farmers Market, Cambridge
 Cape Ann Farmers Market, Gloucester
 Carlisle Farmers Market, Carlisle
 Central Square Farmers' Market, Cambridge
 Charles Square Winter Farmers Market, Cambridge
 Chestnut Hill Farm, Southborough
 Citysoul Farmers Market, Springfield
 Clarkdale Fruit Farms, Deerfield
 Cluck & Trowel, Westport
 Copley Square Farmers' Market, Boston
 Cotyledon Farm, Leicester
 Coyote Hill Farm, Bernardston
 Cricket Creek Farm, Williamstown
 Crimson and Clover Farm, Northampton
 Davis Square Farmers' Market, Somerville
 Dedham Farmers Market, Dedham
 Dufresne's Sugar House, Williamsburg
 East Boston Farmers Market, East Boston
 East Street Farm Stand, Tewksbury
 Easthampton Farmers' and Makers' Market, Easthampton
 Eastie Farm, East Boston
 Eden Pond Farm, Bernardston
 Elliot Farm, Lakeville
 F3 Farm, New Bedford
 Farm Direct Coop, Marblehead
 Farmer Dave's, Dracut
 Farmers' Market at Forest Park, Springfield
 Farm Direct Co-op, Marblehead
 First-Flower Farm, Great Barrington
 Fitchburg Farmers Market, Fitchburg
 Flats Mentor Farm, Lancaster
 Florence Farmers Market, Florence
 Flourish Farm, Brimfield
 Foppema's Farm LLC, Northbridge
 Four Star Farms, Northfield
 Freedom Food Farm, Raynham
 Fresh Truck, Boston
 Front Yard Farm, Ware
 Fungi Ally, Hadley
 Gibney Gardens, Danvers
 GO Farm, Amherst
 Good Bunch Farm, Conway
 Gooseberry Farm, West Springfield
 GraftonFarmers' Market, Grafton
 Granny's Place, Agawam
 Graylight Farm, Lee
 Grow Education, New Bedford
 Hager's Farm Market, Shelburne
 Harper's Farm & Garden, Lancaster
 Hart Farm, Conway
 Healthy Futures Farm, Westport
 Heart Beets Farm, Berkley
 Hill Orchard, Westford
 Holiday Brook Farm, Pittsfield, Dalton
 Holly Hill Farm, Cohasset
 Holyoke Farmers' Market, Holyoke
 Holyoke Food and Equity Collective, Holyoke
 Indian Line Farm, Great Barrington
 Intervale Farm, Westhampton
 Just Roots, Greenfield
 Justamere Tree Farm, Worthington
 Ladybug Farm Produce, Hubbardston
 Lane Gardens & Oakdale Farms, Dighton, Rehoboth, Seekonk
 Lanni Orchards, Lunenburg
 Langwater Farm, Easton
 Leominster Marketplace, Leominster
 Lexington Farmers Market, Lexington
 Long Life Farm, Hopkinton
 Lynn Central Square Farmers' Market, Lynn
 Lyonsville Farm, Colrain
 MacArthur Farm, Holliston
 Manda Farm, Plainfield
 Many Forks Farm, Clarkburg
 Many Hands Organic Farm, Barre
 Marini Farm LLC, Ipswich
 Mary's Garden, Southbridge
 Mattapan Farmers Market, Mattapan
 McKinstry Market Garden Inc., Chicopee
 Medway Community Farm, Inc, Medway
 Mill City Grows, Lowell
 Moonlight Farm, Ashby
 Moonlight rose, Swansea
 Movement Ground Farm, Berkley
 Mycoterra Farm, South Deerfield
 MX Morningstar Farm, Copake
 Natick Farmers Market, Natick
 The Neighborhood Farm, Boston
 Nest and Song Farm, Westport
 New Bedford Farmers Markets, New Bedford
 Next Barn Over Farm, Hadley
 The Newburyport Farmers' Market, Newburyport
 Newton Farmers' Market, Newton
 Northampton Farmers Market, Northampton
 Nuestras Raices, Holyoke
 Nutwood Farm, Cummington
 Oak Square Farmers Market, Brighton
 Old Friends Farm, Amherst
 Original Easton Farmers Market, Easton
 Out There Organics, Truro
 Overlook Farm, Brookfield
 Paradise Hill Farm/Boan Farm, Westport
 Park Hill Orchard, Easthampton
 Patti's Patch, Middleboro
 Pignatare's Farm, Westfield
 Quabbin Harvest, Orange
 Rainbow Harvest Farm, Greenfield
 REC Community Farmers Markets, Worcester
 Red Apple Farm, Red Apple Farm
 Red Fire Farm, Montague, Granby
 Revere Farmers Market, Revere
 ReVision Urban Farm, Dorchester
 Rice's Roots Farm, Petersham
 River Street Gardens, Halifax
 Riverdale Farm, Groton
 Roslindale Village Main Street, Roslindale
 Sabatia Flower Farm, Barnstable
 Sally Frank's Farmers' Market, Melrose
 Sapowsky Farms, Granby
 Seeds of Solidarity, Orange
 Sentinel Farm, Belchertown
 Shelburne Falls Farmers Market, Shelburne Falls
 Sibling Organic Crops, Brockton
 Siena Farms, Sudbury
 Silverbrook Farm, Dartmouth
 Simple Gifts Farm, Amherst

Skinny Dip Farm, Westport
Somerville Winter Farmers Market, Somerville
Souza Family Farm, Rehoboth
Springfield Central Downtown Farmers' Market,
Springfield
Stoneham farmers market, Stoneham
Stony Hill Farm, Wilbraham
Stoughton Farmers Market, Stoughton
Summit farm, Belchertown
Sweet Birch Herbals, Northampton
Sweet Morning Farm, Leyden
Tangerini's Farm, Millis, Natick
The Atherton Farm, Buckland
The Benson Place, Heath
The New Bedford Farmers Market, New Bedford
Three Sisters Garden Project, Ipswich
Trotwood Acres Farm, Westfield
Truro Educational Farmers' Market, Truro
Two Field Farm, Wayland
Under the Sun Farm, North Dighton
Under the sun farm, Raynham
Union Square Farmers Market, Somerville
Upingil, Gill
Upswing farm, Ashland, Holliston
Urban Artisan Farm Inc., Springfield
Urban Farming Institute, Dorchester
Valley Opportunity Council, Chicopee
Wakefield Farmers Market, Wakefield
Wally's Vegetables, Haverhill
Watertown Farmers' Market, Watertown
Wayland Winter/Summer Farmers' Markets, Wayland
We Grow Microgreens, Boston
Winchester Farmers Market, Winchester
Winchester Farmers Market Community Hub Inc.,
Winchester
Wright-Locke Farm, Winchester

Massachusetts Healthy Incentives Program (HIP)

The Healthy Incentives Program means healthy families, sustainable farms, and a strong local economy. Operated by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance, the program provides a dollar-for-dollar reimbursement when SNAP users buy fresh, healthy, local food directly from Massachusetts farmers.

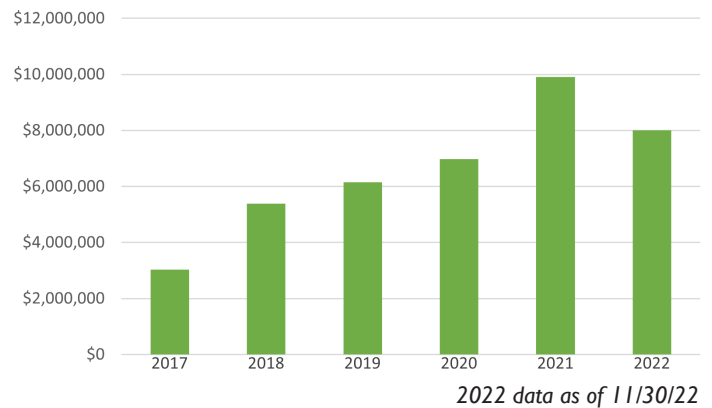
Since HIP began in April, 2017:

SNAP households have purchased more than **\$42 million** from local farmers in healthy, local foods.

More than **175,000 households / 280,000** individuals have used HIP.

- 44% of those families included seniors, who need less medical attention when they eat healthy foods.
- 30% of those families included children, who do better in school when they eat healthy food.
- 30% of those families include a person with a disability.

HIP incentives earned



294 HIP farmers across the Commonwealth sell food at farmers markets, CSAs, farm stands and mobile markets at **nearly 600 points of sale**.

In a study of program operations, HIP participants on average purchased **1.23 daily servings of fruits and vegetables per person**. This helps reduce the incidence of dietary related illnesses and public health care costs.

HIP helps **lessen MA's estimated \$2.4 billion in avoidable costs related to food insecurity and hunger** in MA by increasing access to healthy foods to vulnerable people.

Each HIP dollar spent results in an additional \$2 in local economic impact, when farmers spend those dollars on local goods and services. So HIP has resulted in **an additional \$84 million in local economic impact**.

To address disproportionately low usage among African American SNAP clients and SNAP clients with disabilities, **in 2022 the program added 100 vendors** who expressed a commitment to addressing these inequities.

HIP helps build an economically sustainable food system, helping make healthy food available to more people, and supporting farmers to be able to charge fair prices for what they grow, allowing them to better steward their land, protect natural resources, and contribute to the local economy.

HIP's Impact



“Participating in HIP has given us an ability to actually provide fresh produce to customers who wouldn’t have access to it otherwise. Our SNAP sales have increased 40% since the HIP program started, and has been able to fund our expansion to more markets and a CSA that offers delivery for customers who can’t make it to the markets. We feel much more integrated into our local food system and able to provide in ways that we couldn’t before.”

- Mill City Grows, Lowell

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

Since HIP has been introduced in Massachusetts, I have been able to eat much healthier. As a senior citizen in treatment for incurable cancer, I have lowered immunity. Particularly during the holidays, it is a blessing to have that extra \$40 per month of guaranteed fresh produce for an immunity boost, and with inflation and obvious rising food costs, my SNAP dollars stretch farther due to HIP.

- Marcia M., HIP customer, Dennis

HIP helps consumers and farmers. It is a brilliant, simple, effective method for subsidizing healthy vegetables and stimulating the local economy.

- Elena Colman, Small Farm, Stow



The Caucus chose HIP as a priority because it demonstrates the connections between public health, local food, food access, the local economy, and the environment, and proves that public investments in comprehensive programs can have far-reaching impacts.

- MA Legislative Food System Caucus

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

The Healthy Incentives Program is a powerful tool in our work to address food security issues across the state. The program not only increases access to fresh, locally-grown food for SNAP clients, but also brings critical economic support to our local farms and communities.

- Former DTA Comm. Amy Kershaw

The more than 300 supporters of the Campaign for HIP Funding have successfully advocated for \$59 million for HIP since 2017. Join us in supporting this essential program!

www.hipma.org