AAMC supported 179 vulnerable families in 2018, matching subsidized benefits and offering a fresh fruit and veggie prescription plan to their patients.

AAMC Improves Healthy Food Access in Anne Arundel County

Farmers markets help reduce risks of diet-related diseases

Since 2011, Anne Arundel Medical Center (AAMC) has been selling locally grown, nutritionally dense produce at its annual farmers market.

In 2017, the AAMC Farmers Market increased access to healthy foods for vulnerable populations by becoming one of only two markets in Anne Arundel County to accept SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) and participate in the Maryland Matching Money project (MMM).

In 2018, AAMC launched its first mobile market at Bowman Place and developed the Fruits and Vegetables Prescription Program in collaboration with AAMG Diabetes and Endocrine Specialists and the AAMC Community Clinics at Forest Drive and Morris Blum.

AAMC recognizes the impact that diet has on health and will be expanding programs and partnerships in 2019 to foster a greater sense of community centered around food.
Locally Grown Food- *Full of Flavor and Health Benefits*

4 Reasons to Support Your Local Farmers Market

*Shopping locally at farmers markets is a great way to access fresh produce to improve your health, promote good environmental stewardship and support the local economy.*

1. Eating a diet high in fruits and vegetables is associated with a decreased risk of many chronic diseases. Traveling shorter distances lessens the time between harvest and your table making food fresher, better tasting and more nutritionally dense.

2. Getting to know your farmer at a local farmers market is a great way to know where your food is grown or raised and what farming practices are used. Knowing your farmer allows you to choose food that is grown with the least pesticide practices and can limit your exposure to toxins.

3. Food that spends less time in transit decreases miles traveled and reduces our carbon footprint. Maintaining open farmland and promoting green spaces is good for farmers and the environment.

4. Shopping with local farmers supports a more sustainable economy. Money is spent locally and is reinvested into our community.

---

**Dates:**

Fridays, 10:30 am - 1:30 pm
June 1 - October 26

**Location:**

2001 Medical Parkway
Hospital Pavilion South Tower
Lower Level by the Southport Eatery

**Vendors:**

H&H Farm (Prince Georges County)
Diehl's Produce (Anne Arundel County)
Black Bottom Farm (Kent County)
Providence Center (Anne Arundel County)
SNAP: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provides income-eligible families with monthly allocations of financial assistance to buy eligible food items at food retail locations, including farmers markets. SNAP is distributed electronically via debit-like cards that can only be used on SNAP-approved devices.

FMNP: The Farmers Market Nutrition Program provides income-eligible seniors (SFMNP) and FMNP-WIC program participants with $5 paper vouchers. These vouchers can only be used to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs from farmers at farmers markets. Seniors can use their vouchers for honey as well.

FVRx: Fruits and Vegetables Prescription - provides patients with vouchers to spend at the market for fresh produce, leveraging the power of a prescription for healthy eating. Patients returning for check-ups were given additional vouchers to redeem each month, throughout the season.

MMM: Maryland Market Money, a statewide incentive program managed by the Maryland Farmers Market Association (MDFMA) that aims to increase the purchasing power of customers spending nutrition benefits at participating farmers markets by providing up to $5 per customer per market day in one-to-one match. Customers then spend these bonus "matching" dollars on SNAP-eligible foods at the market, thus bolstering not only their market basket but local producer's sales as well.

143 food-insecure households received $1,460 in MMM matching dollars, of which $1,379 was spent at our market;

15 families spent $396 in SNAP benefits at the market;

139 market shoppers opted to utilize the market's newly instituted FVRx program and spent $890 in prescription vouchers;

4 different market vendors earned a combined $5,035 in revenue as a result of AAMC's partnership with MDFMA.
UMD- Food Supplemental Nutrition Education (FSNE) participated in 10 markets and 2 special events this season, providing recipes and education. Campers from First Christian Community Church, Annapolis Maryland sampled a FSNE recipe - kale chips, prepared by AAMC Chef Calvin Watkins, learning how nutritious and delicious they are. The children were given a voucher to shop at the market and while most chose strawberries, there were a few who were looking for the kale.

AAMC's first mobile farmers market supported residents from Bowman Place who had difficulty receiving FMNP vouchers and visiting area farmers markets due to transportation barriers. With the help of our community partner, Anne Arundel Department of Aging and Disabilities, qualifying seniors were able to receive their FMNP vouchers and had the option to shop with H&H Farm. Also, popping-up at the event was UMD FSNE providing education, samples of watermelon and tomatoes, and the Maryland Farmers Market Association matching up to $5 in benefits, adding extra fruits and veggies to everyone’s market basket.

SNAP & MARYLAND MARKET MONEY in Anne Arundel County

Participating with the Anne Arundel County Department of Aging and Disabilities FMNP voucher distribution had a positive impact on senior participation at the market.

Seniors from the Annapolis Senior Center scheduled monthly trips to the market. Jackie Haines, trip organizer said, "shopping at the market and enjoying lunch at the Southport Eatery makes for a fun day out in the community." Seniors doubled their spending by taking advantage of the MMM matching money at the market.

RECLAIMING PRODUCE for residents at Morris Blum

The Better Breathers Club at Morris Blum, established by Jenny Sayles, Pulmonary Disease Nurse Navigator at AAMC, supports residents with chronic respiratory conditions.

In 2017, market vendors donated produce to be distributed at their monthly support group. In 2018 Diehl Produce offered to develop a more sustainable program by inviting volunteers from Morris Blum to visit her Annapolis produce stand on a weekly basis. Reclaimed produce, while lacking a uniform beauty, still tastes great is packed with nutritional benefits.