Virginia SNAP-ED Works

To Improve Food Access and Availability

**Focus Areas**

- Increasing access to affordable, locally grown fruits & vegetables for limited income Virginians
- Supporting small farmers by increasing SNAP redemptions at farmers markets
- Leveraging school and community gardens as nutrition education sites
- Assessing the availability of healthy food options at retail outlets across Virginia

**The SNAP-Ed Solution**

**Support for Farmers Market Managers**

- Providing technical assistance for accepting SNAP at farmers markets, including an online toolkit
- Building a statewide network of markets

**Nutrition Education for Farmers Market Shoppers using SNAP**

- Cooking demonstrations at SNAP markets using local produce
- Orientation lesson that explains how to shop on a budget at a farmers market
- Healthy, simple recipes using fruits and vegetables grown around Virginia

**FARMacy Garden Prescriptions**

- Partnership with doctors and nurses to “prescribe” gardening and fresh food to patients
- Promotes home gardening, and purchase of SNAP-approved seeds and seedlings
- Program participants learn to garden and cook what they grow

**Healthy Food Retail**

- Assessment of healthy food choices sold in SNAP-authorized dollar stores and drug stores in Virginia
- Building partnerships to support affordable and nutritious foods in food deserts

**Social Marketing**

- Comprehensive campaigns with marketing and direct education in 9 Virginia communities promoting SNAP at farmers markets
The Results

**Virginia SNAP-Ed has reached 7,900** individuals with nutrition education and cooking demos at farmers markets.

- **74%** of those surveyed said they eat a variety of **fruits and vegetables** a day.

**Virginia is number 9 in the country** for number of farmers markets, according to USDA’s 2017 National Farmers Market Directory. From 2007 to 2017, the number of markets in the state jumped from about 100 to more than 250.

An online toolkit was created to provide farmers market managers with technical assistance for running successful SNAP programs. Since its publication, **the online toolkit has been visited over 2,000 times**.

Virginia SNAP-Ed’s support for farmers market managers has contributed to **doubling the number of** farmers markets in Virginia that accept SNAP benefits.

The FARMacy garden resulted in over **1,000 pounds** of produce being given to participants.

**The Eat Smart, Move More — It’s A Snap to use EBT at Farmers Markets** social marketing campaign reached over **89,000 people** and helped create awareness of SNAP benefits at farmers markets.