



# GrowNYC's Healthy Exchange Project 2015

*Increasing food access, improving health,  
building community, growing the economy  
and improving farm viability in the  
New York State Region*





***“ON A HOT JULY DAY IN 1976,***  
in an empty lot across from the 59th Street Bridge,  
a handful of farmers took a chance on selling  
their fresh produce to the people of New York City.  
By midday, there was nary a vegetable to be had;  
they had completely sold out. From that  
first day, Greenmarket has been an unqualified  
success story for both city dwellers and our region’s  
family farmers alike. ”

**— Marcel Van Ooyen,**  
***GrowNYC Executive Director***



# TABLE *of* CONTENTS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>Introduction</b> ..... 2   | <b>GrowNYC’s Impact: Improve Health and Nutrition for NYC Communities</b> ..... 18   |
| Profile of Food Disparity and Nutrition Issues in NYC..... 3  | Daily Cooking Demonstrations and Greenmarket “Affordable Eats”..... 19               |
| Profile of Agriculture in Our Region..... 3   | Healthy Eating Education with Youthmarket and Fresh Food Box..... 20                 |
| <b>Introduction to GrowNYC’s Food Programs</b> ..... 4  | Stellar Farmers Markets and Farmers Markets for Kids..... 20                         |
| GrowNYC Food Programs Map..... 6  | Cornell Cooperative Extension..... 21  |
| Greenmarket..... 7  | Greenmarket Youth Education..... 22  |
| Greenmarket Co..... 8   | Greenmarket Seniors..... 23  |
| Youthmarket..... 9  | <b>GrowNYC’s Impact: Build Community</b> ..... 24                                    |
| Fresh Food Box..... 10  | Greenmarkets..... 24   |
| Wholesale Greenmarket..... 11   | Greenmarket Co., Youthmarket, and Food Box..... 25                                   |
| Fresh Pantry..... 11  | Coming Together After Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, and Superstorm Sandy . 26 |
| <b>GrowNYC’s Impact: The Healthy Exchange Project, Access to Healthy Food for All</b> ..... 12        | <b>GrowNYC’s Impact: Grow the Regional Economy</b> ..... 28                          |
| SNAP..... 12  | SNAP..... 29   |
| SNAP Screenings..... 14   | Greenmarket Co..... 30   |
| Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program..... 15   | Youthmarket..... 31  |
| WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks..... 15  | <b>GrowNYC’s Impact: Improve Farm Viability</b> .... 32                              |
| Greenmarket’s Healthy Exchange Project: Increasing Affordability with Healthy Food Incentives..... 16 | FARMroots..... 32  |
| Health Bucks..... 16  | <b>Looking Forward</b> ..... 34  |
| WIC +..... 17   | <b>Appendix: Overview of Other GrowNYC Programs</b> ..... 36                         |
| Greenmarket Bucks..... 17   |  |
| FVRx™..... 17   |  |



# INTRODUCTION



At every Greenmarket in the city, customers receiving SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, formerly Food Stamps) can swipe their EBT card at the market manager's tent to receive wooden tokens good for any SNAP-eligible product.

Shayla Hunter

**G**rowNYC is a hands-on non-profit that improves New York City residents' quality of life through environmental programs that transform communities block by block and empower all New Yorkers to secure a clean and healthy environment for future generations. GrowNYC was originally created in 1970 as the Council on the Environment of New York City. Born out of the spirit of the first Earth Day, the Council was initially a policy-based organization, writing comprehensive reports about quality of life issues like air quality, traffic, and noise. Today, **GrowNYC is the sustainability resource for New Yorkers, providing free tools and services anyone can use in order to improve our City and environment.** GrowNYC is composed of four main programs: Open Space Greening, Zero Waste Programs funded by the NYC Department of Sanitation, Environmental Education, and Greenmarket.

Through its Greenmarket program, GrowNYC has changed the way New Yorkers eat and farmers sell their locally grown products for forty years. **More than 50 farmers markets across the five boroughs ensure that all New Yorkers have access to healthy food to feed their families.** To broaden the response to food access issues and support for regional farmers, Greenmarket has launched multiple additional food programs in recent years. These programs have changed the landscape of access and agriculture in our region.

**This report explores the ways that GrowNYC's food programs—retail Greenmarkets, Greenmarket Co., Youthmarkets, Fresh Food Box, the Wholesale Greenmarket and Fresh Pantry—**increase healthy food accessibility, improve the health and nutrition of New Yorkers, increase farm viability and develop the regional economy.

How GrowNYC Gets fresh food to NYers:



GREENMARKETS

GREENMARKET CO.



FRESH FOOD BOX

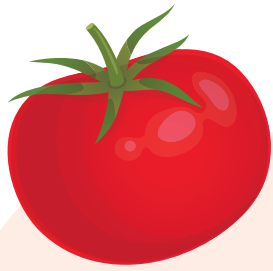


WHOLESALE GREENMARKET



YOUTHMARKET





**3.5 MILLION  
NEW YORKERS**

**live in neighborhoods  
with serious rates  
of diet-related illness  
and significant barriers  
to access healthy foods.**

## Profile of Food Disparity and Nutrition Issues in NYC

**New York City is widely recognized as one of the food capitals of the world**, known for both Michelin Star chefs and hot dog carts. We host North America's largest distributor of food in Hunts Point, and national food trends such as the Waldorf salad and Reuben sandwich start in our Boroughs. **Despite the over-abundance of food in our city, the 2011 New York City Supermarket Need Index (SNI), reported that 3.5 million New Yorkers live in neighborhoods with serious rates of diet related illness and significant barriers to access healthy foods.** Neighborhoods such as Central and East Harlem and Washington Heights in Manhattan; Bushwick, Bedford Stuyvesant, East New York and Sunset Park in Brooklyn; Corona, Jamaica and Far Rockaway in Queens; areas of the South Bronx, Williamsbridge/Wakefield and portions of Pelham Parkway in the Bronx; and St. George and Stapleton in Staten Island show the greatest need.

In 2013, PolicyLink and The Food Trust published "Access to Healthy Food and Why It Matters". The review found overwhelming evidence that accessing healthy food is still a challenge for many families in the United States, particularly those living in low-income neighborhoods and communities of color. Recent studies conducted by the United States Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (USDA ERS) and The Reinvestment Fund have found that 25 to 30 million Americans (9% of the total population) are living in communities that do not provide adequate access to healthy food retailers, such as supermarkets or grocery stores, within a reasonable distance from their home. Further, communities that lack access to healthy food retailers are saturated with fast-food restaurants, liquor stores, and other sources of inexpensive, processed foods with little to no nutritional value.

## Profile of Agriculture in Our Region

Agriculture is critical to New York State's economy, contributing to employment, income and tax revenues across the state. Furthermore, New York is home to more than 35,500 farms, 98% of which are family owned, and the average size of a farm in New York is 202 acres—less than half the national average of 434 acres. New York ranks third in the nation for sales of milk, and is a top-ten producer of apples, grapes, onions, sweet corn, tomatoes, maple syrup and a wide variety of other fruits and vegetables.

Farming has long been crucial to our region's economy, but New York farms are failing at a higher rate than the national average: since 1950, New York has experienced a 70% drop in the total number of farms and a 76% loss in farmland acreage (compared to 20% nationally). Farmers are an aging population in New York with an average age of 55 and more than three-quarters of farmers over the age of 45. (*The Importance of Agriculture to the New York State Economy*, Office of the State Comptroller, March 2015). Over 4000 New York farms have been lost to real estate development in the past 35 years and almost a half million acres has been lost in the past 25 years (American Farmland Trust). 70% of the farms that GrowNYC works with are located in New York. Farmland accounts for nearly 25% of New York State's land area and in 2011, the total estimated agricultural impact on the New York economy was \$37.6 billion. GrowNYC's food programs provide critical resources and marketing opportunities to regional farmers helping them to stay in business. This ultimately prevents the loss of the farms and farmland that fuel our economy, preserve our environment, and provide our food supply.



# INTRODUCTION TO GROWN NYC'S FOOD PROGRAMS

**S**ince 1970 GrowNYC has been a resource to New Yorkers who want to create a healthier city for themselves, their neighbors and the next generation. GrowNYC pairs education with action, creating spaces where New Yorkers can learn about environmental issues, get trained on recycling rules, understand why buying local food is better for the environment and then utilize these opportunities by shopping at the Greenmarket, starting community gardens, and dropping off food scraps for composting. Every year approximately three million New York City residents participate in GrowNYC programs. GrowNYC's programs reach those who need them the most: community gardens in the South Bronx, food access programs in Central Brooklyn and East Harlem, and hands on education for children with little to no access to green space. We hope to weave sustainability into every component of New York City life because more healthy food, more green space, and cleaner air and water make a better city for everyone.

**With over 50 Greenmarket farmers markets, 15 Youthmarkets, 21 Fresh Food Box sites and 250 Greenmarket Co. wholesale buyers in 2015, GrowNYC is dramatically increasing the availability of healthy food across New York City and reducing food access disparities, while keeping regional family farms in business.** Greenmarket works with 300 small and mid-sized producers from a region stretching 250 miles to the north, 120 miles to the south, and 170 miles east and west of New York City. Nearly 70% of participants are based in New York State, though additional states represented at market include New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Vermont. Greenmarket vendors represent the wide array of Northeast agriculture and produce vegetables, fruit, meat, dairy, maple syrup, fish and value-added products. Together the farms that attend Greenmarket keep over 50,000 acres in agriculture.



3

MILLION

residents participate in  
GrowNYC programs

**“EBT in Greenmarket is great because it has made locally grown produce available and accessible to a larger community.”**

**—Cristomo Angel of Angel Farms**



Greenmarket's mission is to support small and midsize family farms to ensure that they remain viable, while providing access to fresh food for all New Yorkers.

Beyond retail Greenmarkets, **Greenmarket Co. works with more than 50 midsize producers** whose businesses are structured for wholesale volumes rather than retail.

GrowNYC has long recognized the need to couple access with education and customers are offered onsite opportunities to learn alongside all of our food programs. As one example, our staff provides weekly cooking demonstrations and distributes free recipes at every Greenmarket. Purchasing from farmers scaled for wholesale allows us to address food disparity, including GrowNYC's own food access programs as well as other community-based food access initiatives.

The following sections give a brief overview of GrowNYC food programs and their major accomplishments in 2015.

# GROWN NYC FOOD PROGRAMS 2015

## GREENMARKETS

- |                                  |                             |                             |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Staten Island Ferry/Whitehall | 20. Columbia University     | 37. Forest Hills            |
| 2. Bowling Green                 | 21. Sugar Hill              | 38. Greenpoint              |
| 3. Water Street                  | 22. Ft Washington           | 39. Williamsburg            |
| 4. City Hall Park                | 23. 175th Street            | 40. Brooklyn Borough Hall   |
| 5. Tribeca                       | 24. Inwood                  | 41. Fort Greene             |
| 6. Tompkins Square               | 25. Poe Park                | 42. Carroll Gardens         |
| 7. St. Mark's Church             | 26. NY Botanical Garden     | 43. Grand Army Plaza        |
| 8. Stuyvesant Town               | 27. Parkchester             | 44. Bartel-Pritchard Square |
| 9. Union Square                  | 28. Bronx Borough Hall      | 45. Windsor Terrace PS 154  |
| 10. Abingdon Square              | 29. Hostos*                 | 46. Parkside                |
| 11. Dag Hammarskjold Plaza       | 30. Lincoln Hospital        | 47. Cortelyou               |
| 12. Rockefeller Center           | 31. Socrates Sculpture Park | 48. Boro Park               |
| 13. 57th Street                  | 32. Astoria                 | 49. Sunset Park             |
| 14. Tucker Square                | 33. Jackson Heights         | 50. Bay Ridge               |
| 15. 79th Street                  | 34. Corona                  | 51. Bensonhurst             |
| 16. 82nd Street                  | 35. Elmhurst                | 52. St. George              |
| 17. 92nd Street                  | 36. Sunnyside               | 53. Staten Island Mall      |
| 18. Mt. Sinai Hospital           |                             |                             |
| 19. 97th Street                  |                             |                             |

## YOUTHMARKETS

- |                             |                               |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. Gouverneur Health        | 9. Ridgewood                  |
| 2. Lower East Side          | 10. Cypress Hills             |
| 3. El Barrio Youth Marqueta | 11. Brownsville Pitkin Avenue |
| 4. Learn It Grow It Eat It  | 12. Brownsville Rockaway      |
| 5. Marble Hill*             | 13. Kensington                |
| 6. Norwood                  | 14. Flatbush Junction         |
| 7. Riverdale                | 15. Rockaway Beach            |
| 8. Long Island City*        |                               |

## FRESH FOOD BOX

- |                                |                          |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Two Bridges                 | 11. Adventureland        |
| 2. 1 Centre Street             | 12. Jacob Riis*          |
| 3. Gods Love We Deliver        | 13. Queens DoH           |
| 4. Bellevue Hospital           | 14. Hunters Point South  |
| 5. Hudson Guild Children's Ctr | 15. Ace Head Start       |
| 6. Lenox Hill Nbhd House       | 16. YMCA                 |
| 7. East Harlem DoH Office      | 17. Halsey Comnty Garden |
| 8. Nicholas Cardell Day Care   | 18. Inner Force Tots     |
| 9. BronxWorks                  | 19. St. Marks Head Start |
| 10. Claremont Nbhd Center      |                          |

## GREENMARKET Co. WAREHOUSE

## WHOLESALE GREENMARKET

\* sites that closed after the 2015 season







**ALMOST  
HALF  
(49%)**

**of our markets are located in communities with a less-than-average median household income (\$50,711 in 2012). 20% of our markets are located in communities where the median household income is 20% or more below the citywide average (less than \$40,000).**

Greenmarket shoppers have access to incredible diversity: some farmstands offer more than 75 varieties of tomatoes. Many shoppers visit the market to purchase fresh ingredients that aren't available anywhere else.

## Greenmarket

“Food Access begins with availability”, says Greenmarket Director Michael Hurwitz. For 40 years, GrowNYC has been a leader in providing New Yorkers with access to locally produced food through our network of over 50 Greenmarket farmers markets. **The Greenmarket program supports more than 250 farmers, fishers, bakers, and processors, providing them with opportunities to sell in the NYC marketplace and keep their family businesses thriving.** Markets operate 2,500 days annually and enable residents in all five boroughs to enjoy fresh, healthy fruits, vegetables, and other farm products from small- and mid-sized farmers from our region. **Almost half (49%) of our markets are located in communities with a less-than-average median household income (\$50,711 in 2012). 20% of our markets are located in communities where the median household income is 20% or more below the citywide average (less than \$40,000).** Many markets, while not located specifically in under-resourced areas, bridge communities and neighborhoods, drawing customers with a wide variety of income levels and from diverse backgrounds.

Education is a major focus of the programming offered at Greenmarkets throughout the city. As a producer-only market, where farmers must sell what they grew, caught or raised themselves, GrowNYC encourages customers to ask farmers about their growing practices. In addition, every Greenmarket has a dedicated information tent with free recipes and cooking tips, and many offer additional nutrition education workshops through partners like the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene and Cornell Cooperative Extension. Market managers conduct cooking demonstrations every market day to showcase easy, healthy, delicious ways to enjoy seasonal items from the market. GrowNYC also runs programs like Greenmarket Seniors and Youth Education which teach children and seniors about healthy eating and agriculture in our region.

**GrowNYC’s Greenmarket program aims to increase New York City families’ access and ability to purchase fresh and nutritious food while supporting regional family farmers by providing them the opportunity to sell their products directly to consumers.** At the core of this goal is the Healthy Exchange Project, which provides the

framework for making healthy, regional food affordable to all New Yorkers by overseeing GrowNYC’s work to promote and accept SNAP, Health Bucks, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks, and Greenmarket Bucks. **GrowNYC is proud to operate one of the most successful SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) in farmers markets programs in the country.** Allowing customers to exchange their federal, state and city benefits for healthy food from farmers markets improves community health and wellness, supports family farms and keeps food dollars in our regional economy.



Shayla Hunter

## Greenmarket Co.

In 2012 GrowNYC founded Greenmarket Co. a mission-driven regional food distribution program that provides profitable wholesale opportunities for local growers while increasing the availability of fresh, healthy, and local foods in communities throughout NYC. **Though farmers' markets throughout the country are thriving, 99% of the food that New Yorkers consume each year passes through wholesale channels.** To address the city's demand for local products in wholesale volumes, GrowNYC launched Greenmarket Co., NYC's first local food hub. **Greenmarket Co. aggregates and delivers high-quality food grown by regional farmers to wholesale buyers such as retail stores, restaurants, and institutions, and through innovative distribution models focused on affordability.** By providing the distribution infrastructure that connects farmers to buyers, Greenmarket Co. acts as a critical link between low-income communities and access to fresh food.

Greenmarket Co. currently operates in a warehouse in Hunts Point, Bronx that is quickly reaching capacity. To accommodate the tremendous growth that is forecast, GrowNYC is currently working to establish the NYS Greenmarket Regional Food Hub, a crucial piece of infrastructure that will give Greenmarket Co. a permanent home and increase the opportunities for connections between upstate farmers and the downstate wholesale market.

**Greenmarket Co. has developed relationships with more than 50 wholesale growers and upstate hubs to procure fruit, vegetables, grains, dried beans, eggs, mushrooms, honey, and maple syrup. Greenmarket Co. has distributed to more than 300 wholesale buyers throughout the city.** Types of buyers vary significantly, from fine dining restaurants and specialty retailers to senior centers and bodegas. Buyers serving low- to mid-income consumers e.g. Youthmarket farm stands, food pantries, community based organizations and institutions represent more than 65% of total Greenmarket Co. sales. To date Greenmarket Co. has distributed more than 3 million pounds to buyers serving the underserved. Greenmarket Co. is looking to work with large institutions like hospitals and universities. Additionally Greenmarket Co. is seeking to expand opportunities for midsized growers to sell institutionally and recently worked with the Department of Citywide Administrative Services to create a fresh produce bid specifically for New York State products, paving the way to get increased quantities of regionally grown food into large City institutions including the Department of Corrections and Division of Youth and Family Justice.

Further, because of its infrastructure, Greenmarket Co. is able to aggregate farm

product to power two of GrowNYC's other food programs: Youthmarket and Fresh Food Box. These two programs purchase food wholesale from farmers through Greenmarket Co. and resell it in underserved communities at affordable prices. These food access programs are thriving: thanks to Greenmarket Co., Youthmarket can worry less about picking up food from retail farmers markets in traffic and can focus instead on our youth curriculum and community outreach. Since Greenmarket Co. was established, we've grown our Youthmarket program from 11 to 16 sites, and our Fresh Food Box program, which couldn't even exist without Greenmarket Co., grew from 3 sites in 2012 to 24 today.

### 2016 UPDATE

In August 2016 Governor Andrew Cuomo announced **New York State will invest \$15 million in the construction of a New York State Greenmarket Regional Food Hub in the Bronx.**

## How Greenmarket Co. Works



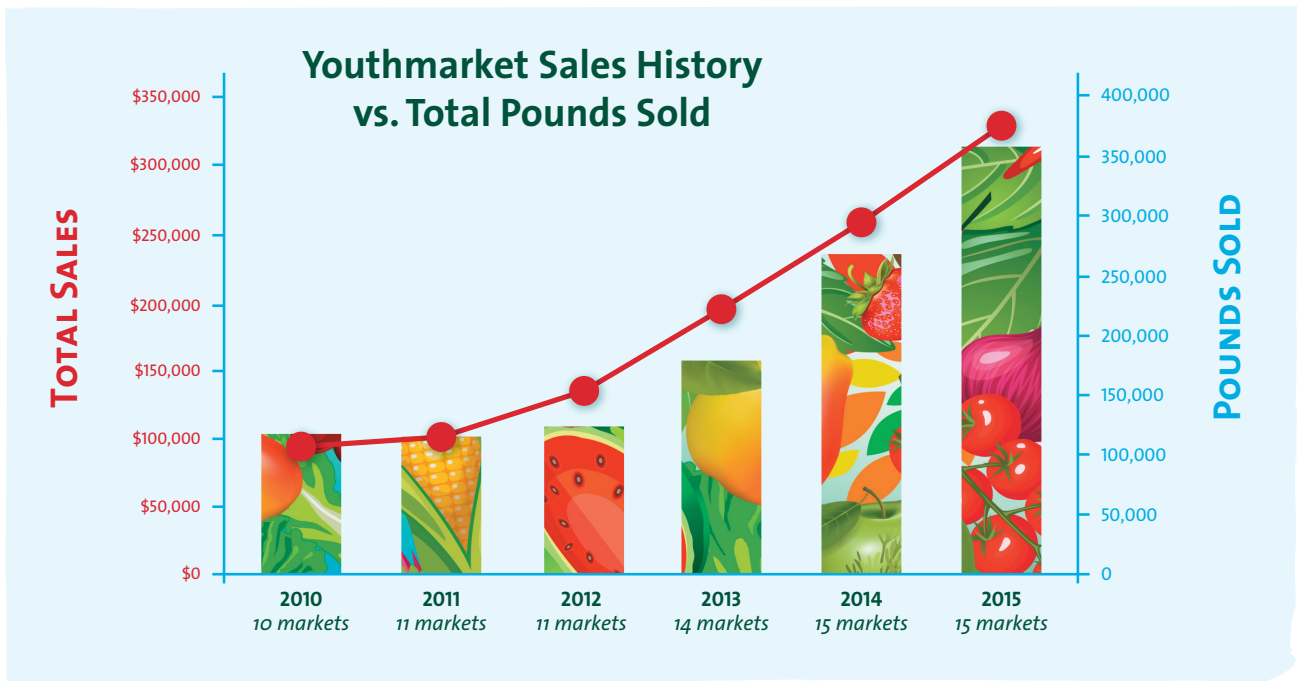
**Local farmers deliver their fresh produce to Greenmarket Co.'s warehouse**



**Produce is aggregated in our NYC warehouse...**



**...and distributed to restaurants, retail outlets, non-profits, and institutional clients!**



## How Youthmarket Works



Kori Petrovic

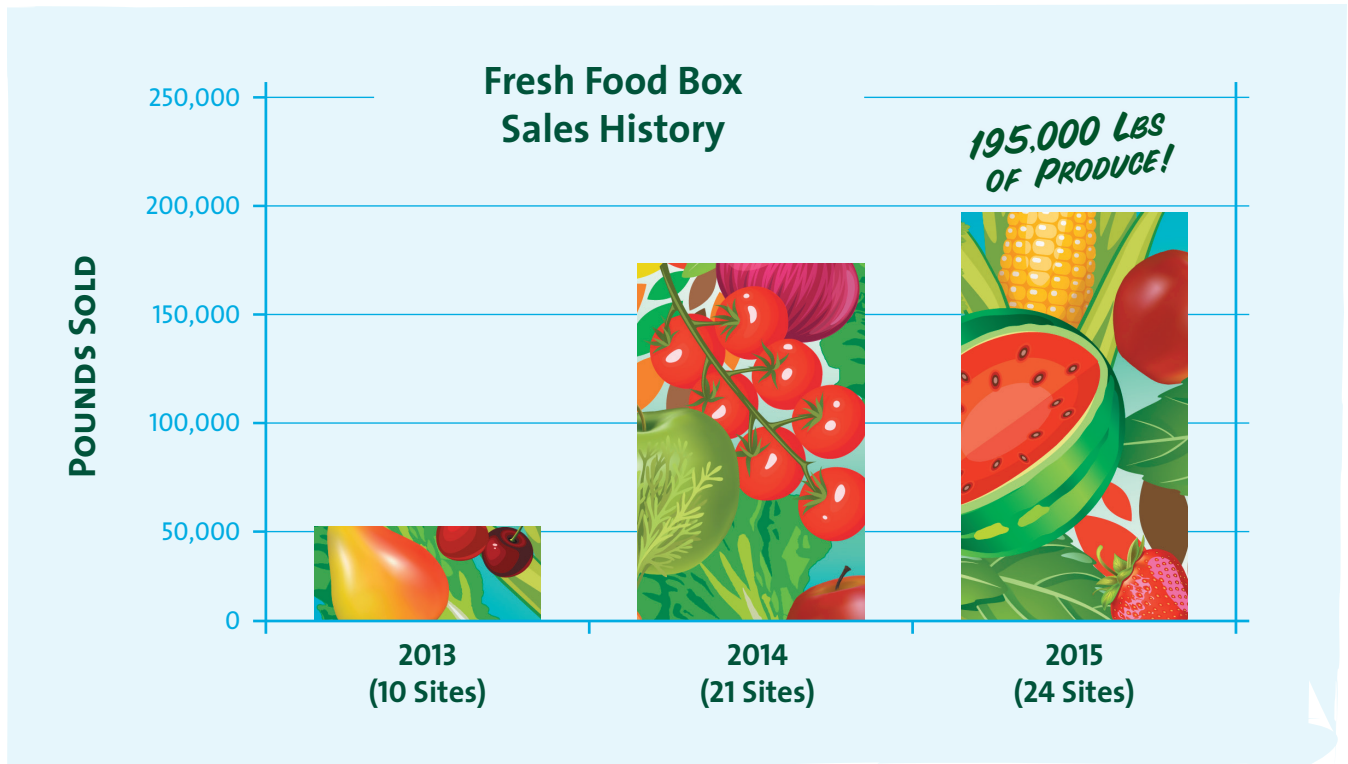
**The Youthmarket program provides more than 60 teens a year with training, education, and seasonal employment, helping them to become ambassadors of good food and good health in their own neighborhoods.**

## Youthmarket

**Youthmarket is a network of urban farm stands operated by neighborhood youth, supplied by local farmers via Greenmarket Co., and designed to bring fresh fruits and vegetables to communities throughout New York City.** From July-November 2015, GrowNYC, in collaboration with community partner organizations, operated 15 Youthmarket farm stands throughout the city. Youthmarkets are an important source of fresh, healthy, local produce, at affordable retail pricing, and our ability to accept SNAP benefits, Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and other healthy food subsidies makes shopping at Youthmarkets accessible to low-income families. In 2015 more than 195,000 pounds of produce were distributed to underserved neighborhoods via Youthmarkets, and like Fresh Food Box, these products are all sourced from local farms via Greenmarket Co.

**The Youthmarket program provides more than 60 teens a year with training, education, and seasonal employment, helping them to become ambassadors of good food and good health in their own neighborhoods.** This experience empowers youth to provide their families, friends, and neighbors with nutrition information, cooking tips, and a source of high-quality fresh produce from local farms. They also earn a stipend for their work, and regional farmers access an otherwise unavailable revenue stream. Many staffers return the following season to help manage the stands and usher in the next crop of trainees. In addition to supporting teens, Youthmarket provides regional farmers with an otherwise unavailable revenue stream.

During the 21 weeks of the season, all Youthmarkets accept Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, SNAP benefits, Health Bucks, and other nutrition assistance programs, which help provide the ability for all New Yorkers to purchase local and seasonal produce.



## Fresh Food Box

Fresh Food Box is a cooperative buying program aimed at increasing access to affordable, quality produce. **Fresh Food Box customers pick up a weekly box filled with seasonal produce, fruit and grains from the midsize farmers who sell to Greenmarket Co.** The Fresh Food Box Program is different from a CSA in that customers pay for each week's box one week in advance, not months in advance for the entire season, making it easier to participate on a budget. And, instead of being reliant on the harvest of a single farmer, the box's contents are aggregated from a variety of farmers to ensure a balance of items better suited to the average customer's cooking habits.

**In 2015, the Fresh Food Box program operated 24 distribution sites, 9 of which were located at Head Start programs and targeted primarily low-income parents. The program has grown impressively since it began. In 2013, at only 10 sites, the program distributed 68,000 lbs of produce; in 2015 we distributed 195,000 lbs.**

Customers purchasing a Fresh Food Box typically pay \$12 for a box that would sell retail for \$25. One food box provides a typical family of four with enough vegetables for one week. The low price of the Fresh Food Box is possible because the food is purchased in wholesale quantities from Greenmarket Co. Food Boxes can be purchased with SNAP and Health Bucks, making good health and good food truly affordable.



Nicole Tucker

### Fresh Food Box

**Fresh Food Box is a weekly box filled with seasonal produce, fruit and grains from midsize farmers. In contrast to a CSA program, the Fresh Food Box is purchased only one week in advance, making it easier to participate on a budget!**

Farmers donated almost  
**900,000 LBS**  
 of regionally grown produce and baked goods to local food pantries, homeless facilities, soup kitchens, and community centers in 2015!

## Wholesale Greenmarket

New York City's long-running wholesale farmers market has been operated by GrowNYC since 2009. It is located in an expansive lot adjacent to the fish and meat markets in Hunts Point, Bronx, on a main artery in the City's wholesale food Mecca. **From 2 am-8 am Tuesdays through Saturdays, eleven wholesale family farmers from New York and New Jersey sell their produce and plants directly to grocers, restaurateurs, processors, landscapers, and community-based food programs such as small farmers market operators.** By giving wholesale shoppers an opportunity to purchase fresh, local products directly from the farmer, Wholesale Greenmarket is putting more money directly into the pockets of regional family farms and offering New York City businesses increased opportunity to provide local produce to their customers.

## Fresh Pantry

In a city with as much wealth as New York, many of its residents struggle putting food on the table. That's why Greenmarket helps connect regional farmers with food pantries and partners with organizations like the Food Bank for New York City, City Harvest and New York City Coalition Against Hunger so unsold fruits, vegetables and baked goods at the end of a market day go to help feed New Yorkers in need. **In 2015, farmers from 41 Greenmarkets donated almost 900,000 pounds of regionally grown produce and baked goods to local food pantries, homeless facilities, soup kitchens, and community centers in all five boroughs.** Because these facilities typically rely on canned goods and shelf-stable items, nutritious, fresh produce is especially valuable and helps to nourish those who cannot afford to feed themselves.



At the end of the day what farmers don't sell is frequently donated to neighborhood food pantries through our partners, who rely on Greenmarkets for fresh foods to balance the typical donation of canned goods.

Kori Petrovic



# GROWN NYC'S IMPACT: THE HEALTHY EXCHANGE PROJECT, ACCESS TO HEALTHY FOOD FOR ALL

**S**ince its inception GrowNYC has made the acceptance and promotion of federal benefits spent in farmers markets a priority, and as GrowNYC launches new initiatives, this remains a keystone of our food access work. GrowNYC's Healthy Exchange Project provides the framework for making healthy, regional food affordable to all New Yorkers by overseeing GrowNYC's work to promote and accept SNAP, Health Bucks, the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) Checks, WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks, and Greenmarket Bucks.

## SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the United States hunger safety net. As of August 2015, 1.69 million New York City residents received SNAP and in New York State the average monthly SNAP benefit per person is \$138. This means that in 2015 SNAP provided more than \$2.9 billion of federal funding for food purchases in New York City alone (NYC Human Resources Administration).

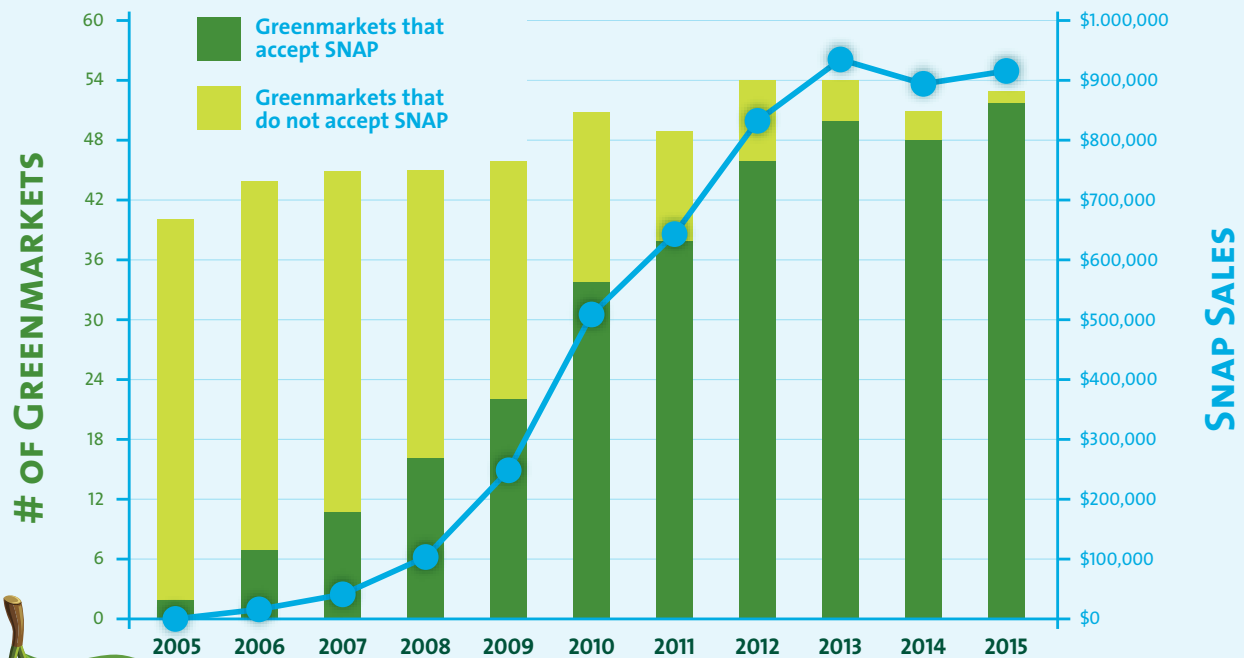
Since 1976 GrowNYC has been a leader in providing New Yorkers with access to locally produced food through our network of Greenmarket farmers markets, located in the diversity of neighborhoods throughout New York City. GrowNYC pioneered the promotion and use of SNAP and FMNP in farmers markets. Recipients have been able to spend their benefits at farmers markets since Greenmarket began in 1976. In 2001 Congress mandated that Food Stamps be converted from paper coupons to Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, which work like a debit card. Farmers markets that once redeemed thousands of dollars in Food Stamps became limited to cash and FMNP sales because the technology wasn't available to accept the cards. The Farmers Market Federation of NY, the NY State Office of Temporary & Disabled Assistance, and the New York State Department of Agriculture & Markets piloted a number of programs utilizing battery-operated, wireless point-of-sale terminals at farmers markets. In 2005 GrowNYC implemented the central terminal token model in Greenmarket farmers markets so that customers visited a "central terminal" operated by our staff – allowing GrowNYC rather than our farmers to shoulder the tech burden. Prior to 2005, these programs emphasized distributing individual terminals directly to farmers. The central terminal was an immediate success and quickly became a national model.

The New York City Council has provided funding to help Greenmarket accept SNAP since 2006, aiding the project's continued expansion and success. In the first year, three pilot Greenmarkets processed \$1,000 in sales. **In 2015, nearly 180,000**



**The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) offers nutrition assistance to millions of eligible, low-income individuals and families and provides economic benefits to communities. SNAP is the largest program in the United States hunger safety net.**

## Annual Greenmarket SNAP Sales vs. Number of Greenmarkets that Accept SNAP

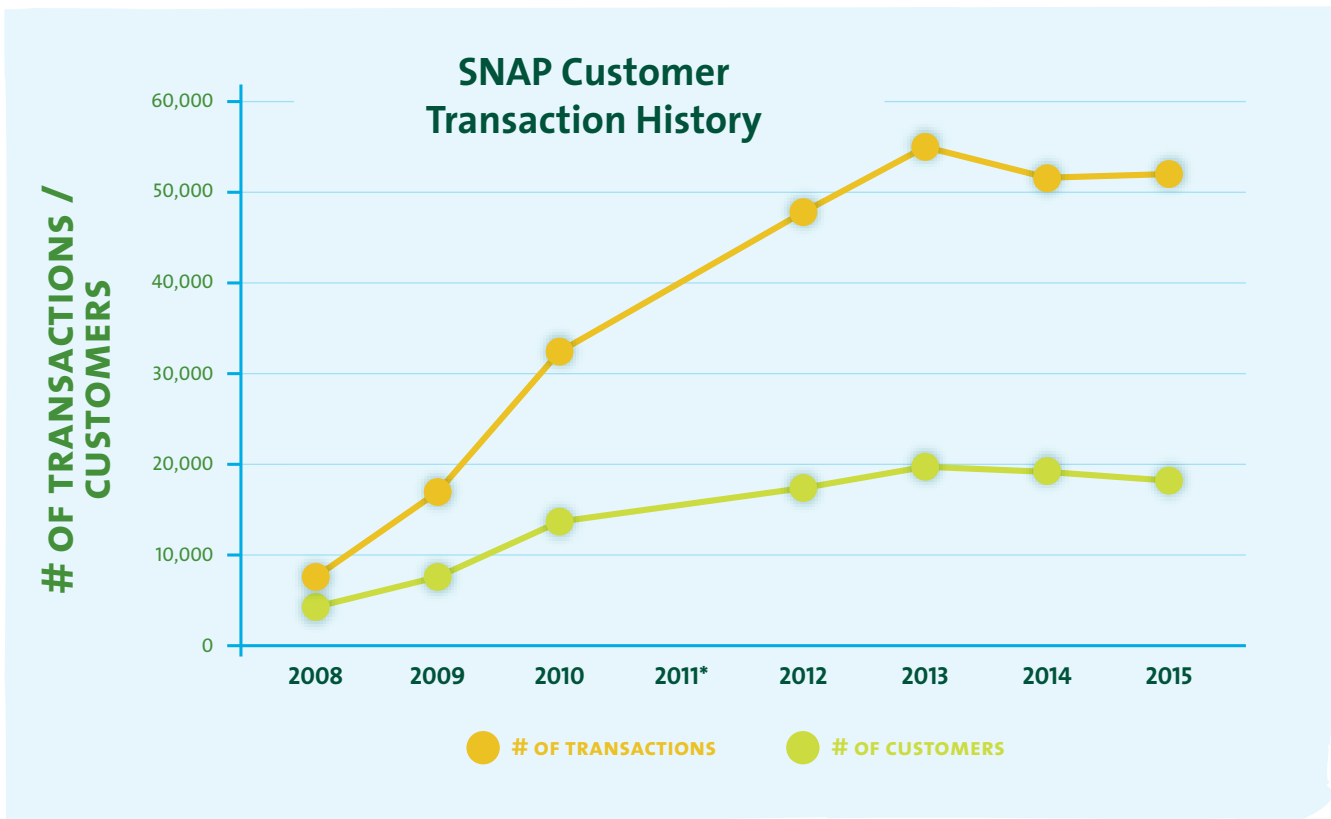


In 2015, nearly  
**18,000**  
 individual New Yorkers used their SNAP cards at 53 farmers markets, totalling over \$918,000 in sales. The average transaction in 2015 was about \$18 and 49% of shoppers visited the market more than once during the year.

individual New Yorkers used their SNAP cards at 53 farmers markets, totaling over \$918,000 in sales. The average transaction in 2015 was for about \$18 and 49% of shoppers visited the market more than once during the year. Greenmarket farmers are required to accept SNAP and Health Bucks coupons for eligible market products.

While SNAP sales at Greenmarkets are impressive, in 2015 they represented only 0.03% of SNAP dollars spent in New York City. There is an opportunity to significantly increase the purchases made at farmers markets using SNAP, and GrowNYC continues to explore new promotional strategies, including a high-profile citywide ad campaign that will launch in 2016.

In 2015, Greenmarket shoppers using SNAP spent their money primarily on those items most difficult to find in their neighborhoods. Of the total 2015 SNAP dollars spent at Greenmarkets 63% were spent on fresh vegetables and fruit, 7% on maple syrup, preserves and honey, 3% on sustainably caught fresh fish, 7% on meat, poultry and eggs, 8% on dairy products and 12% on whole grains, flour and baked goods.

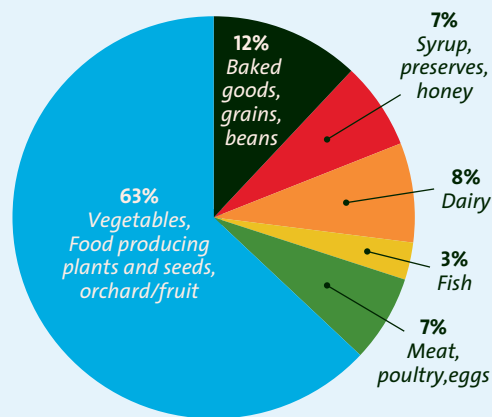


\*No data available for 2011

## SNAP Screenings

Despite the New York City SNAP participation of 1.69 million residents in 2015, there still remains a gap in the participation rate. In New York City, one in three people who are eligible for the SNAP program are not enrolled (SNAP/SNAP Participation Data, Food Research and Action Center). This means that at a minimum, 845,000 NYC residents are living at or below the poverty level and are not receiving the benefits to which they are entitled to purchase food. **SNAP screenings—where trained workers lead potential SNAP recipients through a questionnaire to determine eligibility—reportedly increase a potential applicant’s chance of registering by 50%** (Making SNAPs Work, Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger). In 2015, Greenmarket partnered with the Food Bank, the New York City Coalition Against Hunger, Met Council, Seedco, and Community Health Action of Staten Island to hold regular SNAP screenings in Greenmarkets and help New Yorkers determine if they are eligible to receive SNAP. **We were able to provide over 600 screenings in 15 different markets, including regular screenings in our largest Greenmarket, Union Square, while promoting the use of SNAP at farmers markets.**

## How Customers Spent their SNAP Benefits in 2015







By accepting SNAP at the farmers market, we not only make it possible for every New Yorker to purchase fresh, healthy food; we also bring crucial dollars to our farmers' pockets to help them stay in business.



## Farmer's Market Nutrition Program

The New York State Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) is a federally funded and state administered program that connects fresh, unprepared, locally grown produce to low-income seniors and WIC recipients, and expands the awareness of and sales in farmers markets. FMNP provides \$4 checks redeemable for fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets only, including all 53 Greenmarkets. FMNP is critical to the continued success of some Greenmarkets, such as Poe Park in the Bronx, 175th St. in Manhattan and Corona, Queens. At these markets, farmers receive few cash sales, with customers relying on federal and state nutrition programs to feed their families healthy foods. **In 2015, \$2.58 million worth of FMNP checks were redeemed by Greenmarket producers—almost half of the total FMNP dollars available in New York State.** FMNP remains the most frequently used program at our markets, despite having its funding cut multiple times over the past 5 years. New York State is a national leader with regards to the FMNP and has remained one its most steadfast supporters.

**\$2,580,000 IN FMNP CHECKS**

were redeemed by Greenmarket producers—almost half of the total FMNP dollars available in New York State. FMNP remains the most frequently used benefit program at Greenmarket.

## WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) provides federal grant funding to states for health care referrals, supplemental foods, and nutrition education for women who are pregnant or have small children and are found to be at nutritional risk.

To offer foods that are lower in fat, higher in fiber and more culturally suitable there was an alteration to the WIC food package in 2009. Of these changes, one was made to offer more produce through monthly Vegetable and Fruit checks. These checks, valued at \$6, \$8, \$10 and \$15 can be used to purchase fresh, frozen and canned produce at supermarkets. Since the summer of 2009 these checks can be redeemed for fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets in New York, making ours the first state to accept these checks in farmers markets thanks to the hard work of the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets. This represents a noteworthy revenue stream for our producers. In New York State alone there is \$33 million distributed annually, but in 2015 just over \$44,700 of WIC V&F checks were redeemed in Greenmarkets—only a fraction of a percent of this program's potential.

## Greenmarket's Healthy Exchange Project: Increasing Affordability with Healthy Food Incentives

**Incentives that increase a food budget and encourage vegetable consumption among low-income consumers have proven effective in growing average daily SNAP sales in farmers markets and access to fresh fruits and vegetables in low income neighborhoods** (The Impact of New York City's Health Bucks Program on EBT Spending at Farmers Markets, CDC, September 2013). Increased consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables reduces the risk of heart disease, stroke, type 2 diabetes and some cancers. Wholesome Wave reports that over 700 farmers markets across the country participate in some sort of incentive program. In 2015 Greenmarket offered four types of incentives in our farmers markets, detailed below.

### Health Bucks

The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene's (DOHMH) Health Buck program has been vital to the continued success of Greenmarket's SNAP Project. Established by the NYC DOHMH Bronx District Public Health office in 2005 as the nation's first at-market incentive program, for every \$5 a customer spends using SNAP, s/he receives one \$2 Health Buck to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables in participating farmers markets. This groundbreaking model directly supports Greenmarket's mission, expanding opportunities for New York City residents to buy fresh and reasonably priced produce while supporting regional family farms.

**The Health Bucks incentive has dramatically increased SNAP spending at neighborhood Greenmarkets.** Health Bucks provide a 40% budget increase so shoppers have more money to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables and other whole foods found in the farmers markets. In 2009, survey data demonstrated that more than 90% of customers shopping with SNAP purchased more produce because of the Health Buck incentive (*Farmers Markets Initiatives 2010 Report*, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene).

In 2015 Health Bucks were accepted at every farmers market in New York City including all 54 Greenmarkets and 15 Youthmarkets. In 2015, Greenmarkets and Youthmarkets distributed over \$300,000 in Health Bucks as a SNAP incentive from July-November.

New York City's Health Buck program very quickly became a national model and healthy food incentives programs like Health Bucks are helping families across America buy healthy, fresh food at farmers markets. Because of the tremendous success of Health Bucks and similar incentive programs across the country, the 2014 Farm Bill includes \$100 million to support the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grants program, allowing for the growth and expansion of healthy food incentive programs. The USDA is providing grants to nonprofit groups and government agencies to incentivize the purchase of produce to the tune of \$90 million in 2015, 2016, 2017, and 2018.

### Achievements of the Health Buck program include:

- **Health Bucks provide a significant income stream to regional farmers**
  - In 2015 Greenmarket distributed over \$300,000 in Health Bucks as a SNAP incentive
  - Since 2006 Greenmarket has distributed close to \$1.2M in Health Bucks as a SNAP incentive
- **In recent years when FMNP funding was cut, the Health Buck Program was a crucial income source to regional farmers who sell in lower-income communities**
- **Health Bucks increase the use of SNAP at farmers markets**
  - SNAP sales more than doubled after nearly all Greenmarkets markets began providing Health Bucks as SNAP incentive
- **Health Bucks encourage customers to buy more fruits and vegetables**
  - A CDC funded evaluation found that 71% of Health Buck users reported that the coupons made them more likely to buy fresh produce



**“Health Bucks make the farmers market more affordable than the grocery store.”**

**— Shopper at the 97th St Greenmarket on the Upper West Side**

## WIC +

Greenmarket has been operating WIC+ successfully in select Greenmarkets since 2011. Similar to the Health Buck model, **WIC+ incentivizes WIC participants to spend their WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks in Greenmarkets by providing an extra \$2 for a \$6 check, an extra \$4 for an \$8 or \$10 check and an extra \$6 for a \$15 check.** Over the past five years, funding for the incentive has been provided by the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, Wholesome Wave, the Partnership for a Healthier NYC, Farm Credit East and Greenmarket's operating budget. The program has not only encouraged the use of WIC Vegetable and Fruit Checks in the farmers market and brought increased income to farmers; it has successfully introduced new customers to markets in their communities, and they will hopefully become regular shoppers. **Since the program began almost \$50,000 in WIC CVV and over \$27,000 in incentives have been spent in the participating Greenmarkets; 6,085 checks have been used in the Greenmarkets and 2,578 people visited the Greenmarkets for the first time.**

## Greenmarket Bucks

Greenmarket Bucks are \$2 coupons that are sponsored and distributed by hospitals, businesses, community-based organizations and non-profit organizations who want to promote the consumption of fresh food and shopping at farmers markets. They are typically distributed as incentives or rewards to clients, employees or community groups. Two types of Greenmarket Bucks are available: one for fruits and vegetables only and the other for any market product. Greenmarket Bucks are a great tool to incentivize healthy eating for targeted populations. Sponsors have the option of purchasing a package where a portion of their purchase is donated to help low income students and seniors purchase fruits and vegetables from Greenmarkets. The Bucks are intended to both assist consumers in developing healthy diets by introducing them to the fresh foods available at farmers markets and to generate additional income for regional farmers. Hospitals have been early adopters of the program. Mount Sinai Hospital distributed \$12,000 in Greenmarket Bucks coupons in 2015, and Columbia Presbyterian distributed nearly \$2,000 while providing at-market nutrition information through their CHALK program, Choosing Healthy & Active Lifestyles for Kids. **Over \$30,000 in Greenmarket Bucks were distributed in 2015, and over \$150,000 have been distributed since the program began in 2010.**

## FVRx™

Wholesome Wave's Fruit and Vegetable Prescription Program (FVRx™) measures health outcomes linked to increased fruit and vegetable consumption. FVRx™ promotes innovative partnerships between healthcare providers, farmers markets and families with diet-related diseases. In 2015, Wholesome Wave partnered with Greenmarket and the New York City Health and Hospitals Corporation for a second year to continue the FVRx™ program in New York City. Selected hospital patients received monthly prescriptions from Elmhurst Hospital that could be redeemed for fruits and vegetables in the Elmhurst and Jackson Heights Greenmarkets. **The program was incredibly successful, with over 1,626 patient visits to the farmers market and \$59,994 redeemed from prescriptions throughout the season.** This is a tremendous increase from 2014, when 980 patients visited and spent \$17,322 in prescriptions.



**OVER \$30,000  
IN  
GREENMARKET  
BUCKS**

**were distributed in 2015,  
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began in 2010.**



# GROWNYC'S IMPACT: IMPROVE HEALTH AND NUTRITION FOR NYC COMMUNITIES



Shayla Hunter

**I**ncreasing the availability of healthy food retail and reducing disparities in access is critical to improving New Yorkers' ability to change their diets, but it only addresses one side of the problem. It is equally important to promote healthy eating behaviors through education. Providing nutrition lessons, teaching meal planning skills, demonstrating cooking techniques, and incorporating culturally tailored messaging have been linked to improved attitudes toward fruit and vegetable consumption and improved confidence in cooking skills (Mixed-Methods Evaluation of SNAP-Ed Farmers' Market-Based Nutrition Education Program, Journal of Nutrition Education and Behavior, November 2015).

By providing tastings and cooking demonstrations every market day, Greenmarket staff introduce customers to new and unusual varieties, simple preparations, and the best ways to eat healthy on a budget.



GrowNYC staff

This “Affordable Eats” cooking demonstration showcases a recipe for a vegetable sauté that feeds a family of 4 for \$3.75 per person.

A lack of time and increased dependence on processed and prepared foods has resulted in a loss of cooking and food knowledge and unhealthy eating habits. GrowNYC knows that it is essential to educate the public about how and why to purchase fresh foods at the farmers market, and what to do with them at home in the kitchen. Introducing customers to new products and demonstrating simple ways to prepare delicious, affordable meals with fresh products help fight these challenges in our communities and introduce shoppers to easy, healthy recipes and cooking techniques. Between GrowNYC staff, the NYC DOHMH Stellar Farmers Markets program, and Cornell Cooperative Extension’s Farmers Market Nutrition Education Program, cooking demonstrations occur daily at all Greenmarkets and GrowNYC food programs.

## Daily Cooking Demonstrations and Greenmarket “Affordable Eats”

Every Monday at the **Union Square Greenmarket** GrowNYC hosts a **cooking demonstration that shows customers how to feed a family of four for less than \$5 per person**. Ingredients are sourced directly from the market and displayed by producer and actual cost so that shoppers can replicate the meal at home. Free samples and recipes are provided to the public. This program is a more in-depth example of the cooking demonstrations that happen every market day at Greenmarkets across the city, where the goal is always to showcase how affordable, easy, tasty and nutritious it can be to cook a local, seasonal Greenmarket meal.

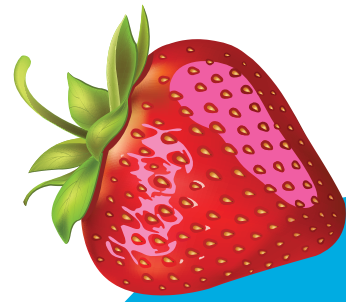
## Healthy Eating Education with Youthmarket and Fresh Food Box

Youthmarkets regularly engage interns and other volunteers to conduct cooking demonstrations and nutrition education at markets. Further, as part of their curriculum, youth who participate in GrowNYC's Learn It, Grow It, Eat It (LGE) program visit and conduct cooking demos and nutrition workshops at the Youthmarket that they operate in the South Bronx.

In 2015 nine Fresh Food Box sites were located at Head Start and other daycare centers in partnership with the NYC DOHMH Farm to Preschool program. This program provided nutrition workshops alongside the box distributions. Fresh Food Box staff also offers cooking demonstrations where possible and on a weekly basis give out free recipes to educate customers on how to prepare seasonal products in simple, healthy and delicious ways.



Christophe Tedjaskumana



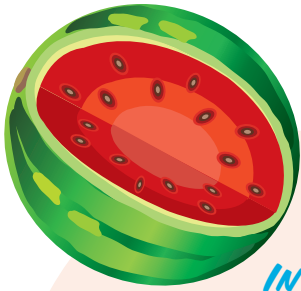
GrowNYC's  
**LEARN IT,  
GROW IT,  
EAT IT (LGE)**

visit and conduct  
cooking demos and nutrition  
workshops at the  
Youthmarket that they  
operate in the South Bronx.

A Stellar farmers market team at the Corona Greenmarket prepares for their next cooking demonstration and nutrition lesson.

## Stellar Farmers Markets and Farmers Markets for Kids

Greenmarket has been hosting the NYC DOHMH Stellar Farmers Market program since 2011, and in 2015 the program also operated at two Youthmarkets. **Stellar Farmers Markets promotes the benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables and improves the ability of city residents to prepare healthy meals using local and seasonal produce.** Using the "Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables" curriculum, Stellar Farmers Market nutritionists provide cooking demonstrations at select farmers markets throughout NYC coupled with free, comprehensive nutrition education workshops in English and Spanish. Topics include healthy eating, food resource management, food safety, and tips on saving money when food shopping. Every participant receives a \$2 Health Buck to spend on fresh fruits and vegetables at the completion of the lesson.



**IN 2015  
STELLAR MARKETS  
REACHED 25,917  
EAGER GREENMARKET AND  
YOUTHMARKET SHOPPERS  
AT THESE LOCATIONS:**

**175<sup>th</sup> St. Greenmarket**  
Manhattan

**Bronx Borough Hall  
Greenmarket**  
Bronx

**Corona Greenmarket**  
Queens

**Hostos Greenmarket**  
Bronx

**Jackson Heights Greenmarket**  
Queens

**Lincoln Hospital Greenmarket**  
Bronx

**Parkchester Greenmarket**  
Bronx

**Poe Park Greenmarket**  
Bronx

**Sunset Park Greenmarket**  
Brooklyn

**Williamsburg Greenmarket**  
Brooklyn

**La Marqueta Youthmarket**  
Manhattan

**Cypress Hills Youthmarket**  
Brooklyn



Amanda Gentile

Students connect art with nutrition at the farmers market during Greenmarket's Seed to Plate curriculum, which teaches fifth graders about the impacts that food choices have on our environment, our communities, and our bodies.

As part of the Stellar Markets Program, Farmers' Markets for Kids provides free, bilingual food-based activities for children ages 3-11 at select farmers markets from July through November. Each workshop includes a 10-minute participatory lesson on topics such as smart snacking, eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables and exploring the path food takes from farm to market. The workshops conclude with a cooking demonstration and guided tasting of the featured recipe. Child participants and one adult caregiver receive a \$2 Health Buck to spend at the farmers market. In addition, caregivers receive lesson-specific family activity handouts and tip sheets to incorporate their children into meal planning and preparation. In 2015, Farmers Markets for Kids took place at three Greenmarkets with a total of 4,994 participants.

## Cornell Cooperative Extension

GrowNYC has been working with Cornell Cooperative Extension on nutrition education initiatives since 1972. Starting in 2005 staff and volunteers from Cornell Cooperative Extension's Farmers Market Nutrition Education Program have performed cooking demonstrations at Greenmarkets using seasonal ingredients to encourage consumption of locally-grown fruits and vegetables and promote proper use of FMNP checks. Their goals are to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables, motivate participants to purchase and increase their consumption of these foods, and promote both New York State growers and the farmers markets where they sell their products. In 2015, Cornell served five Greenmarkets, completing 239 nutrition classes with 16,757 participants.

## Greenmarket Youth Education

**Greenmarket Youth Education connects thousands of New York City schoolchildren in grades K-12 with Greenmarkets and farmers each year.** Fun, interactive learning experiences help children gain an understanding of how food choices impact their bodies, their environment and their communities. The two main components of the project are School Tours at markets and Seed to Plate, a 10-lesson in-school standards-based curricula aimed at 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> graders and developed in partnership with Teachers' College led by Greenmarket Educators.

School Tours at Greenmarkets introduce the concepts of seasonality, local food and sustainable agriculture to New York City youth. **Tours are offered seasonally from April through December and served over 6,400 students from kindergarten through high school in 2015.** Tour curricula are grade-level appropriate and involve an exploratory walk-through of the market, fun seasonal tastings of Greenmarket farmer products, and take-home activities and recipes. Our interactive outdoor tours allow children to discover the diverse, unique varieties and delicious flavors of farm fresh food and explore and interact with the lively community created by farmers markets. Tours may be scheduled at any of our 50+ markets located within Manhattan, Brooklyn, Queens, Staten Island and the Bronx. During the summer months we partner with camps to offer tours and education at markets.

Thanks to sponsors like Slow Food NYC and the New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, schools with a student body of 70% or greater qualifying for free lunches are eligible for \$2 coupons—Greenmarket Bucks or Health Bucks—per student to use for purchasing a healthy fruit or vegetable snack. In 2015, almost half of the students that participated in school tours qualified for bucks.

In the classroom students can participate in the Seed to Plate program, a free, interdisciplinary, standards-aligned 5<sup>th</sup> & 6<sup>th</sup> grade curriculum addressing the need to teach New York City school children about our food system. Seed to Plate utilizes fun, interactive learning experiences while introducing students to why healthful, mindful eating is important not only for their personal health, but for the health of the environment and community that surrounds them. The curriculum is made up of lessons about agriculture, nutrition, farmers markets, and cooking. We reach about 500 students each semester.



GrowNYC staff

It's not only students that learn new things through Greenmarket School Tours; some teachers and parents have tried kohlrabi, rhubarb or blueberries for the first time on these field trips.



GrowNYC staff



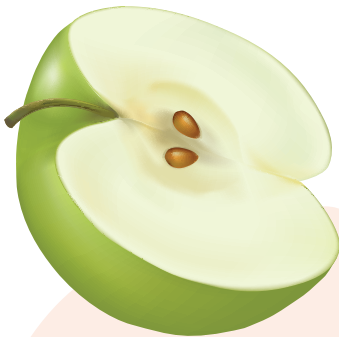
This group of seniors toured the Union Square Greenmarket through Greenmarket Seniors, which welcomes older New Yorkers to the farmers market where they can meet farmers and their neighbors while learning about shopping and nutrition.

## Greenmarket Seniors

Established in the fall of 2012, **Greenmarket Seniors aims to improve nutrition, enhance social interaction, and benefit the overall physical and emotional health of New York City’s older adults through presentations at senior centers and educational walking tours of farmers markets.**

Senior center presentations include information on GrowNYC programs, a healthy cooking demonstration, a nutrition lesson and a Q & A about Greenmarket farmers markets. Market tours build on what is learned in these presentations as seniors enjoy an exploratory walk-through of a Greenmarket. On the walking tours seniors discover the unique varieties and delicious flavors of farm fresh food and interact with the community created by farmers markets. Walking tours provide seniors the opportunity to speak with farmers, reconnect with their own personal food traditions, and meet their neighbors in a lively, outdoor setting.

During both presentations and market tours, seniors are provided with an orientation around the types of benefits and currencies accepted in the market including SNAP, Health Bucks, and the Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP). At the end of each tour participants may receive a \$2 Health Buck coupon to shop for fresh fruits and vegetables at the market. Greenmarket Senior tours count as nutrition credits that are required for senior centers to receive New York City Department for the Aging (DFTA) funding. In 2015 Greenmarket led 33 senior tours with approximately 650 participants.



In 2015 Greenmarket led 33 senior tours with approximately

**650**  
PARTICIPANTS



# GROWN NYC'S IMPACT: BUILD COMMUNITY



GrowNYC staff

**G**rowNYC's programs build community and enhance New Yorkers' quality of life by bringing neighbors together and reviving public spaces. GrowNYC partners with local hospitals, community groups, SNAP offices, WIC and senior centers, soup kitchens, food pantries, local churches, city officials, community boards and numerous other community-based organizations serving local residents to immerse our programs into the community and enhance the existing wellness programming of our partners.

## Greenmarkets

Greenmarket, which started in 1976, has revitalized city neighborhoods and rural communities by providing markets for farmers and healthy, fresh food in vibrant marketplaces for New Yorkers. The dramatic transformation of Union Square from a crime-ridden area with many commercial vacancies when Greenmarket opened in 1976 to a bustling community space and thriving neighborhood today is one incredible example.

In partnership with Center for Independence of the Disabled New York, Greenmarket led a tour in 2015 for Women on Wheels, a weekly support group of women with spinal injuries meeting at Mt. Sinai Hospital. The group engaged in a lively discussion of nutrition and our farmers' growing practices and explored this neighborhood resource together.



## OVER 20 LANGUAGES

are spoken at our Jackson Heights Greenmarket, which serve customers from all over the world, including Bangladesh, Korea, India, and countries throughout Central and South America.

By shopping at a Greenmarket, New Yorkers can get to know the true story behind their food and can ask questions of the person who grew it.



Shayla Hunter

Greenmarket introduced SNAP at Union Square, our flagship market, in fall 2010. In 2011 it became the #1 market for SNAP sales, and in 2015 SNAP sales at Union Square comprised 1/3 of total SNAP sales at Greenmarkets across the city. The Union Square Greenmarket is one of the largest urban farmers markets in the country and has become a destination that attracts New Yorkers from all neighborhoods as well as those who work, study, live or play in the area.

The 175<sup>th</sup> Street Greenmarket in Washington Heights was one of our first markets, opening in 1977. Our Poe Park, Bronx, Greenmarket has been in operation for almost 30 years. After Union Square, these two bustling locations receive the most SNAP dollars of any Greenmarkets (\$62,000 and \$65,000 respectively in 2015), with farmers' stands extremely busy throughout the day. Farmers are reliant on SNAP as well as FMNP for the bulk of their sales.

**Greenmarkets bridge communities and connect neighbors, inspiring them to exchange recipe ideas, discuss new products, and learn from each other.** There are over 20 languages spoken in our Jackson Heights market alone, which serves customers from all over the world: Bangladesh, Korea, India, and throughout Central and South America—all shopping at the market and preparing their own cultural cuisine.

The Grand Army Plaza Greenmarket in Brooklyn connects Park Slope and Crown Heights and serves Brooklynites from as far away as Bay Ridge and East Flatbush. More than \$51,000 in SNAP was spent at Grand Army Plaza in 2015, making it one of the top five Greenmarkets in the city for SNAP redemptions.

## Greenmarket Co, Youthmarket, and Food Box

GrowNYC food distribution programs Food Box and Youthmarket, which provide direct points of access and wholesale produce distributor Greenmarket Co. partner with community based organizations throughout the five boroughs to infuse neighborhoods with high-quality, locally grown produce. Member organizations including the Bed Stuy Campaign Against Hunger and ACE Head Start consistently report that Greenmarket Co. is the only distributor from whom they can purchase high-quality food.

**Community partners are instrumental to the work that GrowNYC does, and our services help to enhance the great programming they already provide in their communities.** Youthmarket is a perfect complement to organizations like Henry Street Settlement and East Harlem's Getting Out and Staying Out, who work with disconnected youth who benefit from job training and skill building. Fresh Food Box

is very much at home at BronxWorks, where hundreds of people already go for social and health services. In addition to operating programs in close collaboration with partners, GrowNYC also helps community organizations to run their own food access initiatives by providing education around best practices, technical assistance and produce distribution. Organizations including the Fortune Society, the Fountain House, Brotherhood Sister Sol, and West Side Senior Center all source local farm products from Greenmarket Co. to supply their farm stands, collaborative buying sites, and nutrition education programs.

Currently, the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets is providing funding to cover training costs for New York City-based organizations seeking to operate Fresh Food Box-style programs.



## Coming Together After Hurricane Irene, Tropical Storm Lee, and Superstorm Sandy

In 2011, Hurricane Irene hit the Northeast in late August, followed directly by Tropical Storm Lee in early September. Many counties in New York, New Jersey, and Vermont were flooded and declared “major disasters” by the federal government. We estimate that 80% of Greenmarket farmers were impacted, with about 10% reporting severe loss—80-100% of their products were destroyed. GrowNYC saw an overwhelming response from the Greenmarket shopper community that wanted to help affected farmers. Restaurants across New York City participated in Dine Out Irene, donating up to 10 percent of sales for a day to a GrowNYC fund that was dedicated toward helping local farmers. However, it was primarily individual donations from Greenmarket shoppers that contributed to the \$130,000 that GrowNYC distributed directly to impacted farmers.

In late October 2012, Superstorm Sandy hit the Northeast, devastating New York City and surrounding areas. Thousands of families were left without electricity, their homes flooded or severely damaged, and without access to daily necessities like transportation, health care and fresh food. Fortunately, few Greenmarket farms were affected by the storm itself, and within 72 hours, all of our markets were up and running so that our farmers could bring fresh produce to New Yorkers who needed it. In addition, because Greenmarket’s SNAP terminals are wireless rather than depending on electricity, which was out in many neighborhoods, Greenmarkets were one of the only places SNAP customers could go to purchase fresh food.

**After Superstorm Sandy, GrowNYC used farmers markets as community hubs to help those in need.** Greenmarket launched a “Donate a Bag” program at markets, encouraging shoppers to buy extra produce for areas affected by the storm. GrowNYC vans and trucks were deployed to deliver those fresh products to kitchens that could turn them into hot meals for displaced individuals, seniors, the homeless, and the many others in need. Greenmarket shoppers kept the Donate a Bag program operating in 15 markets collecting over 45,000 pounds of fresh local food and produce through December 2012.

GrowNYC staff and volunteers collected over 45,000 pounds of fresh produce through our Donate a Bag program. All donated produce was delivered to soup kitchens and food pantries to provide groceries and make hot meals for individuals displaced by the storm.



Farmers who were devastated by severe storms in 2011 were aided tremendously by New Yorkers who donated to support their rebuilding; a year later, when Superstorm Sandy hit New York City, GrowNYC facilitated deliveries of local food from those farmers to feed neighbors without power or without homes.

In January, generous donations from Farm Credit East and the Wholesome Wave Foundation allowed GrowNYC to continue helping by purchasing local produce directly from farmers and making weekly deliveries to Rockaway Rescue Alliance, Culinary Kids, Smallwater, and other Sandy Relief Kitchens. Each of these organizations were preparing meals and distributing food to communities still recovering from the storm. GrowNYC delivered more than 70,000 pounds of food to Sandy relief organizations, assisting thousands of New Yorkers as they worked to rebuild.

In November Greenmarket partnered with Governor Cuomo's office to distribute \$12,800 in Fresh Connect Checks to storm victims. Fresh Connect Checks are \$2 coupons redeemable for fresh and local food at farmers markets. Greenmarket distributed \$3000 of these Fresh Connect Checks to several communities in Staten Island affected by the storm. Those affected by the storm received \$10 to spend at the Saint George or Staten Island Mall Greenmarket. Also, GrowNYC contributed over \$4,000 in Fresh Connect Checks to Added Value Farm in Red Hook, to distribute to customers at its farmers market. Finally, Greenmarket distributed the remaining money to two regional farms to provide six weekly deliveries of seasonal produce to the Rockaway Rescue Alliance and Culinary Kids, two organizations preparing meals for people living in neighborhoods severely affected by the storm. A total of 7,000 pounds of food was donated thanks to the Fresh Connect funding.

**During and after these severe weather events, urban and rural residents came together because of the relationships that are fostered every week at the farmers market.** The market is a place where neighbors and farmers connect and get to know each other, creating a mutual understanding between urban and rural communities that is rarely forged in New York.



## GROWN NYC'S IMPACT: GROW THE REGIONAL ECONOMY

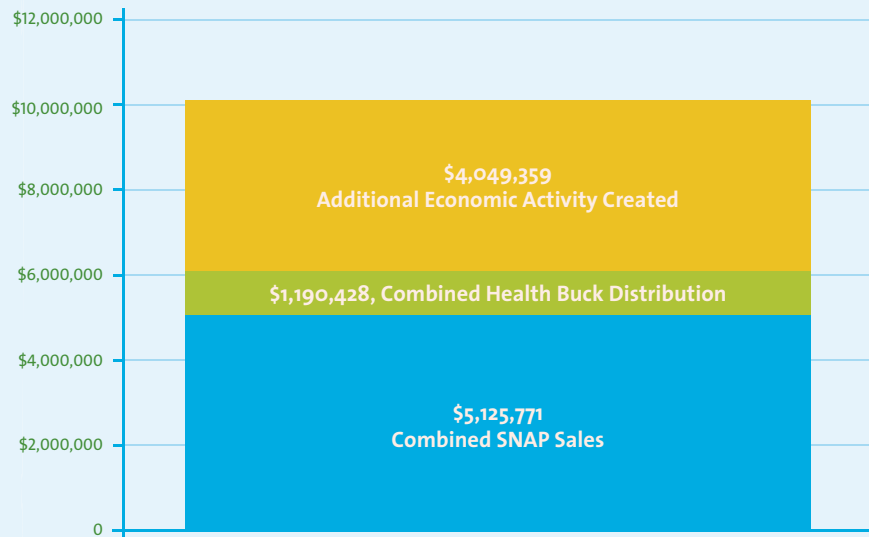
Greenmarket shoppers help build the regional economy by supporting small and midsize farms, who are able to keep their land in agriculture thanks to access that Greenmarket provides to the New York City market.



Shayla Hunter

**W**ith programs like SNAP in farmers markets, and Health Bucks, every dollar spent has a multiplier effect, providing a dollar in new sales for farmers, a dollar in real nutrition assistance, improving community health and keeping food money in local economies. Further GrowNYC programs boost foot traffic in the surrounding areas, increasing revenue for neighborhood businesses. Below are some highlighted ways GrowNYC food programs contribute to the commercial liveliness that helps regional economies thrive.

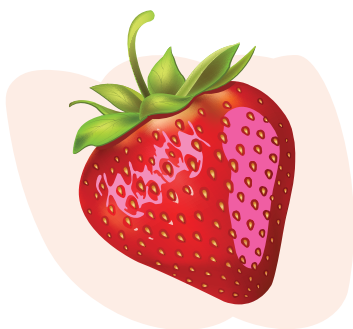
## SNAP in Greenmarkets Project Impact Since 2005



### SNAP

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest funding component to the Farm Bill. Steering a small percentage of SNAP funds toward healthy, locally grown food has a ripple effect on economic activity within the region. Farmers gain new customers, sell more produce, and make more money. This allows them to expand and diversify their crop plan, buy new equipment and hire more help. New Yorkers using SNAP buy more fresh fruits and vegetables, supporting better health outcomes and creating the potential for long-term healthcare savings. According to the US Department of Agriculture, each SNAP dollar spent generates \$1.79 in economic activity. When spent in farmers markets, this represents an enormous revenue opportunity for regional farmers and plays a significant role in strengthening our local and regional economies. The SNAP in Greenmarkets project has generated over \$10 million in economic activity since it began in 2005, representing an important economist boost to the region.

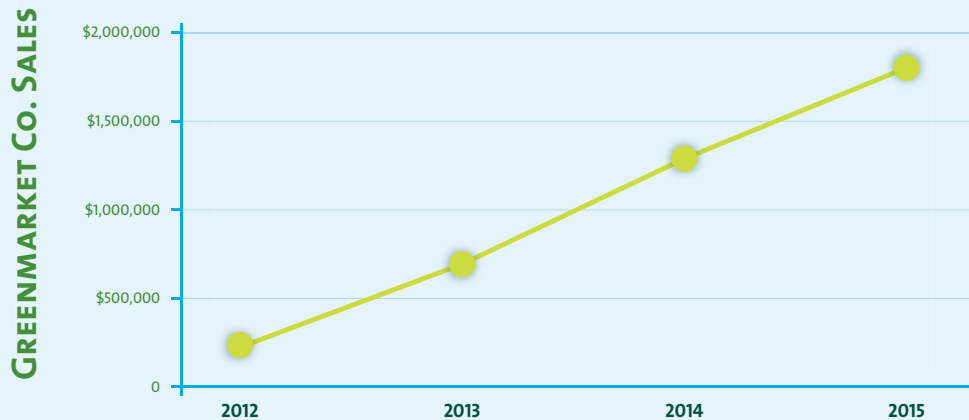
\*The U.S. Department of Agriculture estimates that for every dollar spent on SNAP, \$1.79 in economic activity is generated, mostly in local communities



**“We are making more money, and more people are coming to the market because they know that they can use their SNAP.”**

**—Sergio Nolasco of Nolasco’s Farm**

## Greenmarket Co. Sales History



Kori Petrovic

A mission-driven distributor, Greenmarket Co. equalizes access to regionally grown food by providing the same carrots to NYC's best restaurants as they do to organizations that prepare and give out free meals.

## Greenmarket Co.

Greenmarket Co. provides regional growers with access to underserved markets in New York City that they would not ordinarily be able to reach. In a report released in December 2014 through the USDA, researchers from Cornell found that medium-scale farms benefitted most from the services that food hubs provide, especially freight and storage facilities, and access to new wholesale markets. Further, every additional \$1 to food hubs results in an additional \$0.75 in the local economy ("Economic Impacts of Food Hubs", Becca Jablonski, Todd Schmit, and David Kay, Cornell University, 2014). Greenmarket Co. farmers are paid a fair price, our operations staff earns a living wage, and we serve as a placement site for organizations such as Center for Employment Opportunities and the Fortune Society who help formerly incarcerated individuals reenter the workforce.

**Moreover, our Youthmarket and Food Box food programs are thriving, thanks to the flexibility and ease of food delivery that Greenmarket Co. provides.** In 2015 Greenmarket Co. purchased more than \$1.7 million in farm products and distributed more than two million pounds of regionally grown fruits, vegetables and grains to wholesale buyers throughout New York City. In a short time, the list of clients making weekly and monthly purchases soared to more than 300. Eight new farms were added to the program this year, which allowed customers access to brand new products including organic produce, eggs, and local grains.

Since Greenmarket Co. formally opened its doors, sales have gone from \$272,000 in 2012 to \$1.7 million in 2015. This huge gain was accomplished with minimal staffing and a modest warehouse. GrowNYC expects huge programmatic growth from 2016-2020. With the rich supply of food available in our region and the demand we see from buyers across the spectrum, there is a great potential for Greenmarket Co. to continue to grow within NYC and become a model for this work.

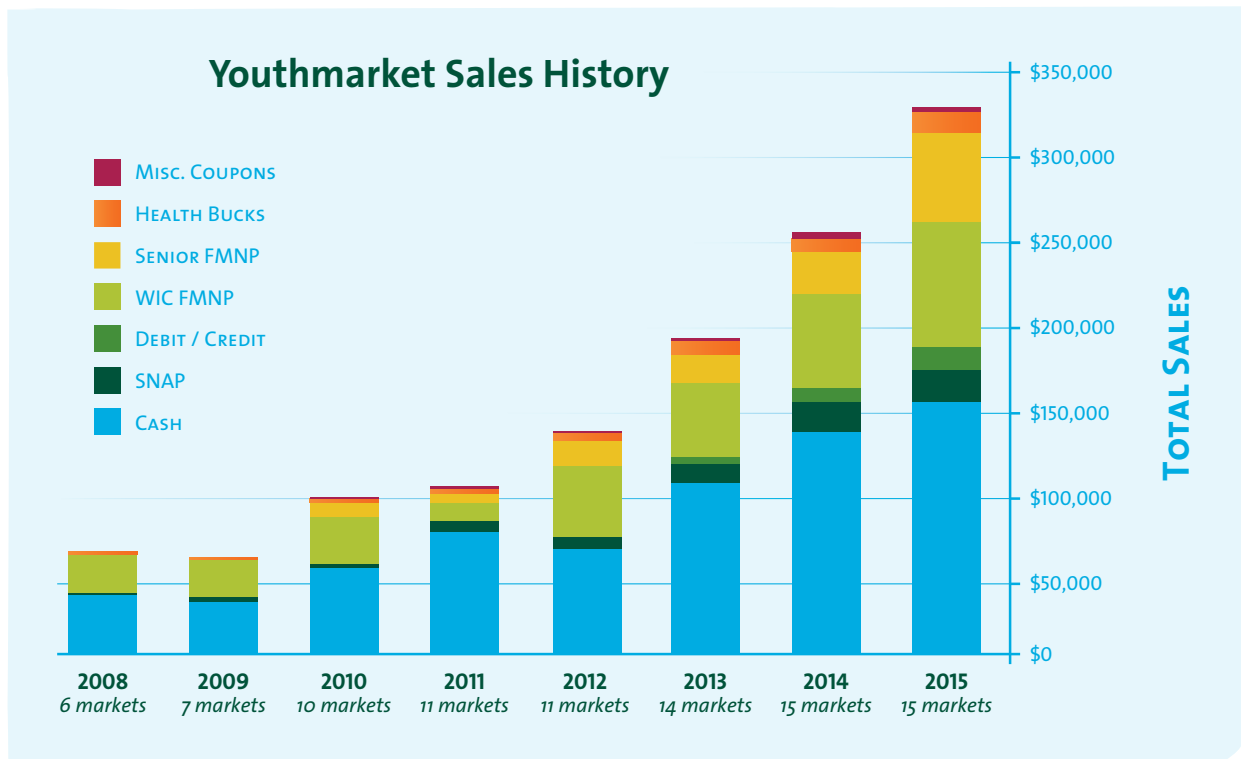




## Youthmarket

In 2015, the Youthmarket had its most robust year since it was established in 2006. **During the 2015 season, Youthmarkets throughout New York City provided over 60 jobs to local youth, purchased more than \$300,000 in produce from over 40 family farms, and distributed more than 350,000 pounds of fresh produce in underserved communities.** Youthmarket staff was hired from within their communities – helping to address underemployment of young people—and learned about agricultural systems, market operations, and nutrition. Further, staff gains entrepreneurial skills such as marketing, customer service and merchandising, helping to prepare the next generation of business leaders. All Youthmarkets accept every form of nutrition benefit– including: WIC and senior FMNP, SNAP, Fresh Connect, and Health Bucks, which provide an economic boost for customers and farmers.

Youthmarket achieves a three-part mission of training, employing and empowering youth within the market’s neighborhood, providing access to nutritious, fresh food to communities that need it, and supporting regional farmers.





# GROWN NYC'S IMPACT: IMPROVE FARM VIABILITY

**G**reenmarket is a critical marketing outlet for participating farmers—80% of Greenmarket farmers report they would be out of business if it weren't for Greenmarket. There are over 230 farmers in the Greenmarket program with a combined rented and owned 51,000 acres of farmland. The access to millions of potential New York City customers that Greenmarket offers is unparalleled.

## FARMroots

In 2000 GrowNYC launched the New Farmer Development Project, a business-training program for immigrants new to the U.S. who had farming experience and were interested in starting farm businesses in the Northeast. The program offered an initial training class and farmers were subsequently provided ongoing technical assistance as they navigated unfamiliar financial and legal systems, often with a language barrier. A key component of the NFDP was the 0% peer reviewed microcredit loan fund. Most of the farmers trained through NFDP were from Latin America and once they established farms, they began to grow specialty products from their home countries that they then sold at Greenmarkets in Latino communities in New York City.

After conducting a land and business survey of Greenmarket farmers in 2011, GrowNYC recognized the need to provide established farmers with many of these same services. Many Greenmarket farmers were aging and did not have plans for the future of their land or their businesses. Younger farmers wanted to expand but did not know where or how to access land. Finally, many farmers in



Over the last two years FARMroots has completed over 20 marketing plans for farmers with an average sales increase of 18%

FARMroots has assisted more than 30 farmers on long-term succession plans, and more than 30 Greenmarket farmers on access to capital projects, resulting in over \$1.5 million secured through a variety of capital sources. These projects have a direct impact on individual farms and, collectively, on the viability of agriculture in our region.



GrowNYC staff

FARMroots' staff consults with Windfall Farms about conservation easement and planning for their next generation of farmers.



GrowNYC's FARMroots team brought together a group of experts that successfully advised an established Greenmarket farmer on how to ensure that his farmland was protected in perpetuity.

**FARMroots has helped start over 50 small farm business in the Northeast.** By providing instruction on how to run a successful farm business as well as offering ongoing support, **GrowNYC is ensuring that new farmers are able to make a living in agriculture.**

various stages of their careers wanted assistance in marketing their products. The FARMroots program was created to address these challenges while keeping to the NFDP's original mission of training new farmers.

GrowNYC's FARMroots program provides both aspiring and established Greenmarket farmers with business technical assistance and training designed to ensure the long-term viability of participating farms and farmland. Technical assistance is provided through both in-house services and through the engagement of cost-shared consultants.

FARMroots has increased Greenmarket farmers' sales through the development of strategic marketing plans. **Over the last two years FARMroots has completed over 20 marketing plans which has resulted in an average sales increase of 18%.** Further, this program works in assisting farmers with long-term land conservation, land transition, and estate planning. **Since the inception of the program in 2011 FARMroots has supported the purchase or conservation of over 500 acres of regional farmland.** FARMroots is currently working with more than 10 farmers on long-term succession plans. FARMroots has helped more than 20 producers create new legal structures for their business that further protect them from liability and has **supported more than 30 Greenmarket farmers on access to capital projects, resulting in over \$1.5 million secured through a variety of capital sources.** These projects have a direct impact on individual farms and, collectively, on the viability of agriculture in our region.

Finally, FARMroots is training the next generation of beginning farmers – critical in a region that is losing farmers and farms at an alarming rate. Through its 10-week business training program, mentorship opportunities, and on-going one-on-one support, **FARMroots has helped start over 50 small farm business in the Northeast.** By providing instruction on how to run a successful farm business as well as offering ongoing support, GrowNYC is ensuring that new farmers are able to make a living in agriculture. Additionally specially targeted efforts to recruit and train beginning farmers from a variety of populations including veterans and urban dwellers, are helping diversify the face of farm owners and products in the region.



## LOOKING FORWARD

**F**or nearly 40 years, GrowNYC has been a leader in providing New Yorkers with access to locally produced food. When urban communities connect with regional producers and food businesses, the connection expands marketing opportunities, drives the growth of new local businesses and jobs, and increases revenues for farmers. **GrowNYC's food programs not only increase food access and affordability, they improve health, build community, grow the regional economy and improve farm viability.**

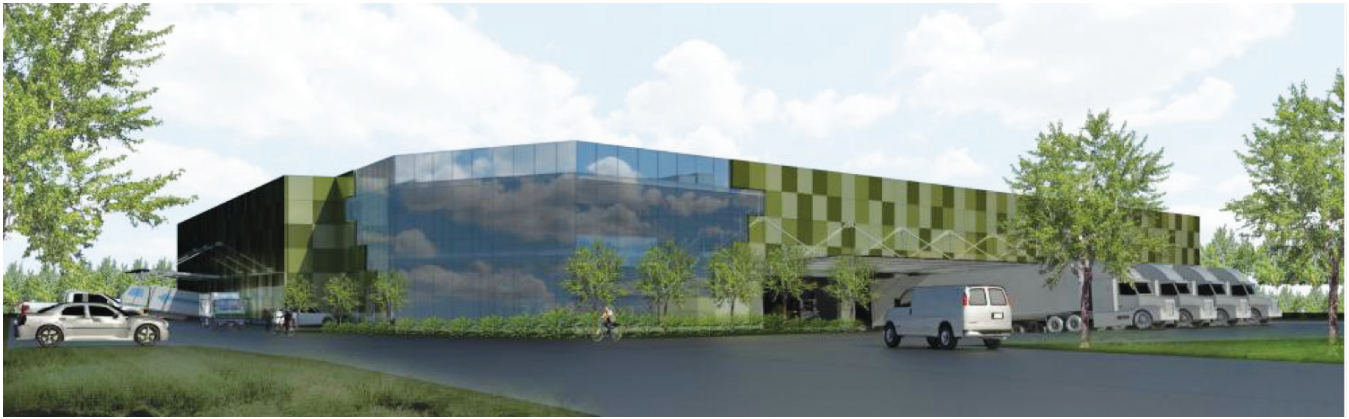
Through partnerships with local businesses, community block associations and non-profits, GrowNYC builds programs that meet the needs of New York's neighborhoods and have made impressive achievements towards improving the health and economic outcomes of communities that need it the most.

GrowNYC will continue to respond to the needs of the New York City community with a mission to improve health and economic opportunity throughout the region. From healthy food incentives and increasing the use of federal benefits in farmers markets, to expanding wholesale opportunities for regional farmers via Greenmarket Co., to teaching youth business skills by employing them to run farm stands and creating inspiring and educational experiences for senior citizens—our work has a bright and growing future. Below are some of things we look forward to most in the coming years.

GrowNYC's food access programs help New Yorkers eat better, get to know their neighbors and their farmers, and expose them to a wide variety of products not available elsewhere in the city.



Shayla Hunter



The NYS Greenmarket Regional Food Hub will include a wholesale farmers market and cold storage facilities for farmers. The Hub will allow Greenmarket Co to dramatically increase distribution capacity.

- In August 2016 Governor Andrew Cuomo announced **New York State's investment of \$15 million in the construction of a new NYS Greenmarket Regional Food Hub in the Bronx. The hub, which will be used by GrowNYC's Greenmarket Co. program, will be a state-of-the-art 120,000 square foot facility that will greatly increase New Yorkers' access to the freshest, most nutritious locally grown food the region has to offer.** The Greenmarket Regional Food Hub will be located in the Hunts Point neighborhood in the Bronx and will include a wholesale farmers' market, a cold storage facility for farmers, a food-processing center and other infrastructure to support local food businesses. The new food hub will work with a range of small- and mid-sized farms, providing unprecedented access to New York City's wholesale marketplace. The processing facility will also assist Upstate producers and processors in targeting institutional and private sector procurement opportunities. In addition, the food hub will facilitate the expansion of farmers' markets and youth markets in underserved communities.
- The New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene have been **awarded a grant from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for a Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grant. This grant will increase Health Buck funding and expand the New York City SNAP incentive program to be year round.** This will greatly increase the use of SNAP to purchase of fruits and vegetables in New York City farmers markets!
- **Greenmarket Co. is expected to reach \$2.2 million in sales** by the end of 2016.
- The **Youthmarket program will add 2-3 additional locations in 2016.**
- The **Fresh Food Box Program will grow by 3-4 sites**, while keeping 9 sites open year-round. The program will also train outside organizations to operate their own food distribution programs, further increasing access to the fresh and affordable food that GrowNYC's program offers.
- **FARMroots is looking forward to its 16th year. A 4-part skills workshop** series designed to help beginning farmers at 4 different development stages learn key skills for the success of their future farms. We are also looking forward to a **3-part succession planning workshop series** designed to assist farmers with transition into retirement and new mentorships to help beginning farmers learn from experienced ones.
- Additionally, **FARMroots will work with Greenmarket farmers to develop Point of Sale (POS) systems** to collect and analyze sales data to increase sales and help farmers with access to capital, access to land, business planning, and legal technical assistance projects.
- **In 2015 GrowNYC was awarded a USDA Farmers Market SNAP Support Grant to develop and implement an education and awareness campaign for GrowNYC's SNAP in Greenmarkets Project.** partnering with Edelman Global Communications and Marketing firm on a pro-bono basis. This campaign combined with the extension of the Health Buck program to be year round will dramatically increase the knowledge and awareness of the SNAP in farmer's markets program throughout the city and we expect SNAP sales at Greenmarkets to tremendously increase to well over \$1,000,000 by the end of 2016.



## APPENDIX: OVERVIEW OF OTHER GROWN NYC PROGRAMS

GrowNYC staff



### GrowNYC's Garden Program

Founded by Liz Christy in 1975, GrowNYC's garden program builds and sustains community gardens, urban farms, school gardens, and rainwater harvesting systems across New York City. To date, GrowNYC has built more than 90 gardens, and we support hundreds more through renovations, green infrastructure projects, technical assistance, volunteers days, an annual plant sale, and much more.

### Grow to Learn

Grow to Learn is GrowNYC's citywide school garden initiative that was established in partnership with The Mayor's Fund to Advance NYC in 2010. Working alongside partners from NYC Parks Department's Green Thumb division and the Department of Education's Office of School Food, Grow to Learn inspires, facilitates and promotes the creation of a sustainable school garden in each and every public school across New York City.

In 2015 GrowNYC built 7 new gardens totaling more than 80,000 square ft of new open space.

### Zero Waste Recycling Programs

We work to increase participation in New York City's curbside recycling program by providing workshops for residents and supers, community events centered on education, weekly collections for food scraps and textiles, Stop 'N' Swap® community reuse events, event recycling assistance, and more. In 2015 Zero Waste Recycling Programs provided hands-on recycling training, including e-waste, for 14,000 tenants across the city, making concerted efforts to reach under resourced neighborhoods, so that more New Yorkers are empowered to improve their quality life.

### GrowNYC's Environmental Education Programs

GrowNYC's education initiatives aim to foster environmental and community stewardship among young New Yorkers, school by school and classroom by classroom. Each year we provide programming to more than 30,000 youth through recycling and sustainability programs, school garden initiatives and support, nutrition education, Greenmarket school tours, in-school curricula, environmental education, and much more. We focus on New York City neighborhoods that fit GrowNYC's priority profile including high poverty, low consumption and limited access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and limited access to green space.

*For more information about these GrowNYC programs visit [www.grownyc.org](http://www.grownyc.org)*



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