



State Funding through the Legislature for Farm Direct Nutrition Incentives

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About this Series

Authored by experts in the fields of farm direct operations, farmers market management, and nutrition incentive administration, this series of practitioner papers supports operators as they expand their own incentive projects. Each paper strives to meet at the crossroads of research in the fields of nutrition, agriculture, and economy and the on-the-ground experiences of practitioners in farm direct.

Nutrition incentives encourage customers to shop with farm direct retailers by offering additional value to match money spent at farm direct sites, such as farmers markets, farm stands, and through Community Supported Agriculture (CSA). In the 2014 Farm Bill, the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program codified the importance of nutrition incentives to the farm direct model. This program was reauthorized and renamed the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) in the 2018 Farm Bill, which created federal support for nutrition incentive and produce prescription projects to address the gap in access to healthy foods that many Americans experience. GusNIP reflects the understanding that nutrition incentives play a central role in making farmers markets, farm stands, and CSAs the accessible, equitable, and community-supportive spaces that they must be in order to remain relevant within the broader food system. It also supports the understanding that farm direct operations, in turn, are innovators and incubators of incentive project design.

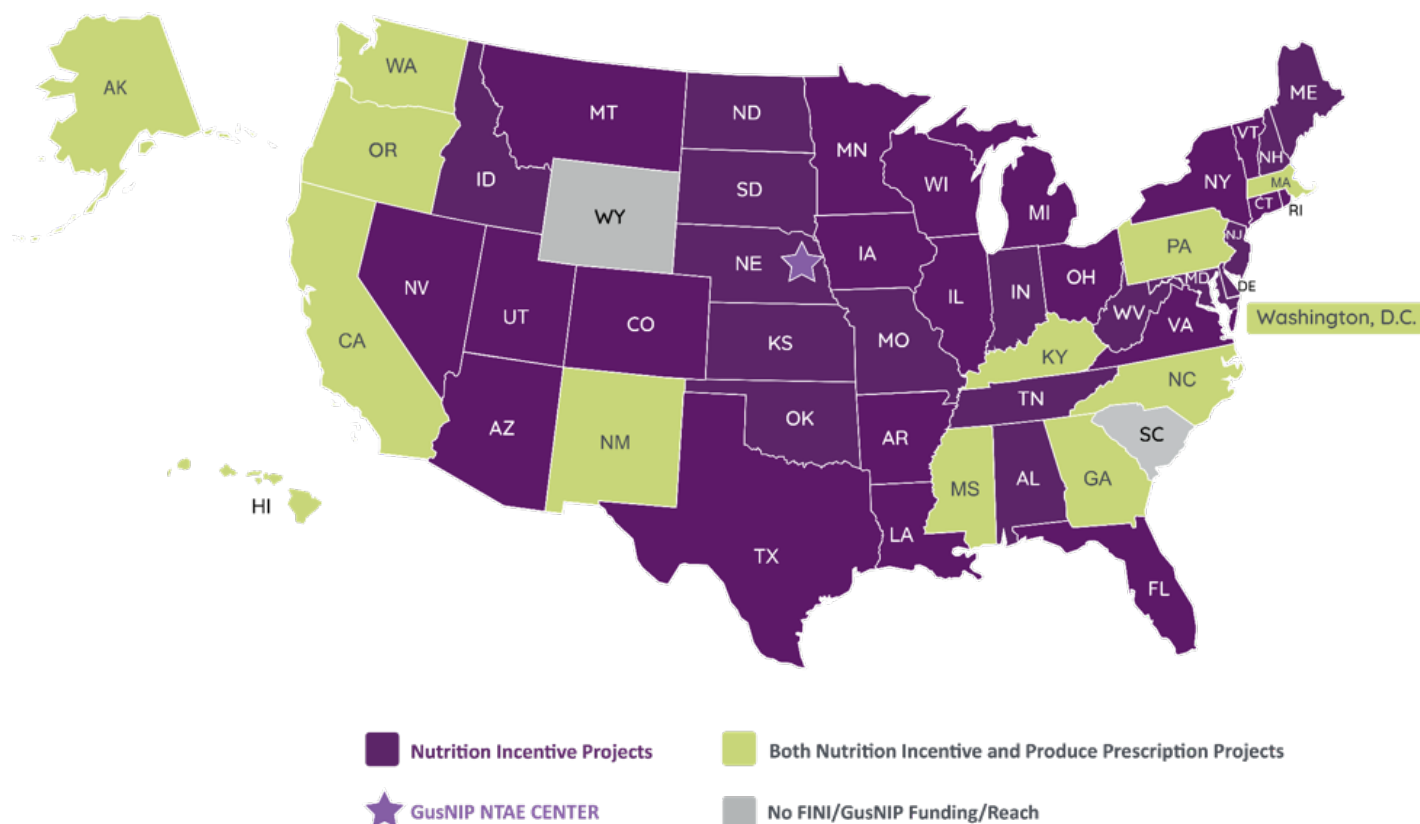
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Introduction: Incentive Projects and the Need for State Funding

Nutrition incentives have succeeded at farm direct sites across the United States in bringing greater purchasing power for fruits and vegetables to shoppers who use the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). As nutrition incentive projects grow in size and reach, they distribute more money into the hands of shoppers. This, in turn, means more farm direct products purchased, more money in the pockets of farmers, and more local food on the tables of community members (Becot et al., 2018, p.94). With success, however, comes the ever-expanding challenge of fundraising. Projects must raise the money they distribute as incentives, and they must also raise money to support the additional administrative capacity needed to manage these growing projects. Contributing to this challenge, food insecurity has risen dramatically over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic (Edwards,

2020). This paper highlights that one way to meet these fundraising needs and stabilize program capacity over the long term is to seek funding through state legislatures. While many organizations may think that state funding is out of reach due to lobbying restrictions on 501c3 nonprofits, this is not necessarily the case, as this paper will discuss. We suggest that state funding can work in tandem with GusNIP funding as an important facet of a project's overall funding strategy, especially as state-wide projects grow in scope and scale. In particular, this paper lays out the stories and strategies of two state-wide networks, Virginia Fresh Match (VFM) in Virginia and Farmers Market Fund (FMF) in Oregon, each of whom began campaigns to achieve state funding for nutrition incentives in 2019. After telling the stories of these two campaigns, this paper offers broader lessons for projects that may be considering state funding as a next step in their own growth. While these lessons are derived from the experience of organizations focused on funding for farm direct incentives, many of the ideas here may be applicable across project types.

Figure 1. Map of the United States showing the total reach of FINI and GusNIP between 2015-2020.

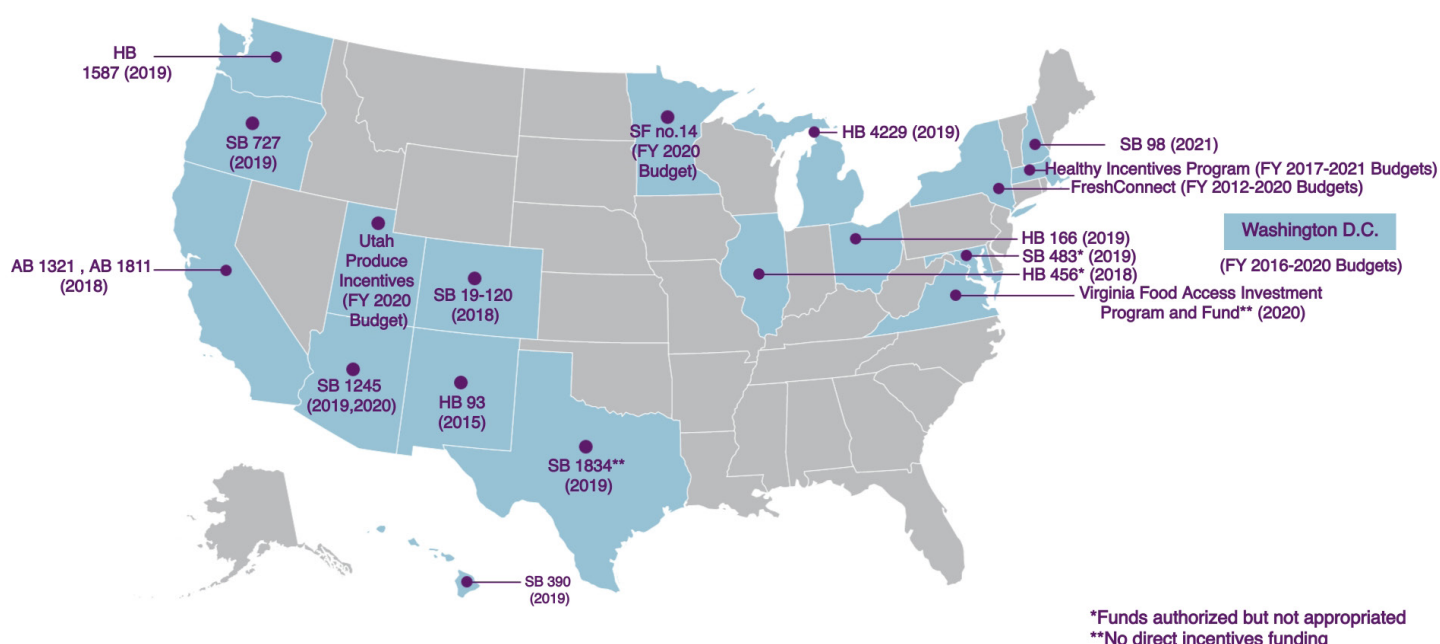


As shown in Figure 1, the federally-funded GusNIP program has helped nutrition incentive projects to expand to almost every state. The program went from distributing \$100 million over five years in 2014 to \$250 million over five years in 2018 (“Agriculture Improvement Act,” 2018). While GusNIP funding has provided a pathway for projects to grow, no single funding source can be a permanent solution to the needs of statewide nutrition incentive networks as they rapidly scale. One major challenge with relying on grant funding, for example, is that there is no guarantee of future funding after the grant period ends, which can lead to a boom-and-bust cycle that undermines shoppers’ confidence. In addition, grants that require a dollar-for-dollar match for all money requested create a challenge, both for smaller organizations who may not have the capacity to raise sufficient matching funds from private donors (Winne, 2020) and for state-wide projects whose operations have grown large enough to exceed the availability of philanthropic dollars in their state. Finally, reflecting a pattern that exists across the nonprofit sector, many donors focus funding on outcomes rather than organizational capacity (Weerawardena et al., 2010; Le, 2019). For nutrition incentive networks, this can leave successful awardees with expanded reach, but without the means to cover administrative costs. For example, although GusNIP budgets allow for administrative costs, there is still a strong preference

for organizations to use a majority of funds directly on incentives, which can be a challenge for both small and large organizations (NIFA, 2020).

In an effort to mitigate these needs, some state-wide networks have sought funding appropriations through their state legislatures (see Figure 2). There are many reasons why states make attractive funders. For example, states frequently have flexibility with their budgets and are able to support funding for capacity building and administrative needs that smaller philanthropic organizations may not be able to fund. A multi-million-dollar investment in nutrition incentive projects can seem like a “drop in the bucket” in relation to the scale of a state’s budget, but such investments can create a pathway for state-wide projects to scale rapidly. In addition, states rarely require matching funds themselves, which means that state funds can be used to supply a match for other grants, allowing applicants to request the scale of funding they need for growing projects. Finally, nutrition incentive projects can be attractive programs for legislators to champion, since incentives offer “multiple wins” in the areas of food access, health improvements, and economic growth, in-line with the goals of multiple state agencies such as the Department of Agriculture, Department of Human Services, and Department of Economic Development.

Figure 2. Map showing which state legislatures have passed bills supporting and/or funding nutrition incentives.



This paper tells the stories of two state-level campaigns to secure funding in support of nutrition incentives in Virginia and Oregon and shares some of the strategies they developed through their processes. While state funding can appear as an ideal approach to funding an incentive project, and an obvious next step for any organization with a GusNIP grant, the authors' experience in the process of seeking funding through the legislature were multifaceted and their outcomes were complex. Drawing on these experiences, the authors' goal is to help other nutrition incentive practitioners determine whether seeking state funding is the right choice for them at this time and to orient practitioners toward the kinds of partnerships and information they will need to pursue to be ready. To this end, the authors begin by offering the stories of their individual network's path to state funding and then focus on the central strategies that helped both FMF and VFM become ready to achieve successful appropriations. Ultimately, readers will find that both "ready" and "successful" are relative terms. The effort of securing state funding is not a one-time push, nor is there a "one-size-fits-all" model that will work for any coalition in any state. Instead, this process is an ongoing negotiation between local leaders and food access advocates that will take place over the course of many legislative sessions. Regardless of whether a network is successful in achieving state funding in a given year, there will always be room for relationships to grow, priorities to shift, and commitments to solidify.

State Funding Campaigns in Virginia and Oregon

In 2019, VFM in Virginia and FMF in Oregon independently pursued state funding for their state-wide nutrition incentive projects. Neither organization felt perfectly prepared; neither had experience working in the legislature, and both had limited staff and funding to support a campaign. Despite the challenges they faced, both campaigns were successful in securing some funding, and FMF and VFM believe their legislative campaigns were worth the investment in time and resources. In addition to securing funding, they developed valuable new relationships and laid the groundwork for ongoing state appropriations.

Virginia Fresh Match

Virginia Fresh Match (VFM) is a network of small nonprofits working regionally to create SNAP-based incentive projects across the state. VFM has grown organically since 2009, when the first farmers market applied for a USDA waiver to accept SNAP. Over time, more markets across the state began accepting SNAP and operating their regional incentive projects. In 2014, markets were still responsible for raising their own incentive funding, resulting in on again, off again program inconsistencies. These issues were alleviated by federal funding in 2018, when VFM received a grant from the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program (the predecessor to GusNIP) to support the expansion of their work. Midway through the grant cycle, VFM wanted to plan for the future by creating a path towards post-FINI sustainability for their project. Having experienced funding inconsistencies in the past, they sought state funding to ensure that participants would not experience a gap in the availability of incentives once FINI funds ran out.

Multiple circumstances made 2019 an appealing year to seek state funding for nutrition incentives in Virginia. First, state legislative priorities were supportive of food access projects at that time. The Governor had formed a "children's cabinet" to look at the issue of childhood food insecurity. In addition, some of the groundwork had already been laid by an existing coalition called "The Grocery Investment Fund," which was led by the American Heart Association (AHA) and the Virginia Poverty Law Center. The Grocery Investment Fund had been working to get healthy food financing legislation passed for several years with the goal of constructing independent grocery stores in high-need areas. VFM proposed to join this coalition. As part of the basis for its participation, VFM advocated, with other members, for the inclusion of SNAP incentives and innovative food access projects as part of the new legislative approach. The Grocery Investment Fund agreed and became the Virginia Food Access Coalition (VFAC), a rebranding that made room in their advocacy efforts for retail outlets other than grocery stores.

Once rebranded, VFAC began the process of identifying bill sponsors and supporters in both the State House and Senate. The coalition relied on pro-bono lobbying efforts provided by partners in the

Virginia Poverty Law Center as well as the Virginia chapter of the AHA. The VFM team and network partners played active support roles, writing letters, making phone calls, and educating legislators at each step in the House, Senate, and Budget Committee process. They met with the Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services leadership in the summer before the legislative session to tour an urban farm, a SNAP and VFM mobile market, and a fixed market. They laid out the case to legislators that market managers care about food access; however, fundraising for and administering nutrition incentives adds yet another layer to an already overburdened role, given that fewer than half of Virginia farmers markets have a full-time paid staff member (Virginia Farmers Market Association, 2019).

The Virginia Food Access Investment Program and Fund (VFAIF) was funded at \$1.25 million dollars (the request was for a two-year, \$6 million budget). Despite the fact that the VFAIF request was partially funded, it remains a victory, since this marked the first time that direct food access legislation was passed in Virginia. On the nutrition incentive side, however, funding was achieved only indirectly. The Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services agreed to work with public and private sector partners to increase the number of SNAP retailers who participate in the Virginia Fresh Match Incentive Program, and the appropriations fund a grant that requires applicants to accept SNAP and offer Virginia Fresh Match. Though these commitments require more retailers to accept Virginia Fresh Match, the legislation offers no direct funding for incentives or administrative costs for incentive projects. Even though it does not directly support nutrition incentives, passing VFAIF was nevertheless a big step forward in making food access a focus of the legislative agenda. While it did not meet all the goals that VFM had in setting out on this legislative path, it helped lay the groundwork for continued advocacy.

Farmers Market Fund

Oregon's Farmers Market Fund (FMF) began in 2009 as a side project of the Portland Farmers Market and was incorporated as an independent 501(c)(3) focused on food access in 2012. In 2015, the organization's focus expanded dramatically with the receipt of a \$499,000, three-year grant from FINI. With this new funding, FMF adopted

Double Up Food Bucks (DUFEB), a type of nutrition incentive program, state-wide. At the time, Oregon's per-market SNAP and DUFEB sales were among the highest in the country. In spite of this success, funding remained a concern. By the conclusion of the grant's three-year cycle in 2018, many local funders had shifted their focus, making it difficult to raise the required matching funds to apply for a new grant. Unable to continue supporting a state-wide DUFEB program, FMF offered a series of smaller grants focused on rural markets that would otherwise be unable to support their DUFEB programs. With the goal of avoiding program inconsistencies like these in the future, FMF approached the idea of funding nutrition incentives through the state legislature.

As in Virginia, 2019 appeared to be a promising time to begin a state legislative campaign in Oregon. The Oregon Legislature meets in two-year cycles, with a "short session" held in even years and a "long session," where the bulk of legislation is brought forward, held in odd years ("About," 2021). Because 2019 was a "long session" year, it was more likely that new legislation could be passed. In addition, at the end of the 2017 Legislature, the Farm Direct Nutrition Program, which funds fruit and vegetable purchases for Seniors and Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infant, and Children (WIC)-enrolled women and children in Oregon, had received an unexpected additional \$1.2 million in state funding (Maluski, 2017). This windfall suggested that there might be legislative interest and political opportunity to support nutrition incentive work. Despite this potential, FMF was hesitant because the organization had less than one full-time employee, no dedicated funding to support a campaign, and no experience in legislative work.

However, like VFM, FMF had a network of partnerships developed through the implementation of their original FINI grant. These partners included the Oregon Food Bank, who employed two full-time state lobbyists. These lobbyists made DUFEB one of their priority issues during the legislative session. FMF also developed a relationship with their state's AHA, whose lobbyist agreed to take on the bill pro-bono. FMF's coalition was completed by Friends of Family Farmers (FoFF), the Oregon Farmers Markets Association (OFMA) and the Portland Area CSA Coalition (PACSAC). These partners, though without paid lobbyists, were also invaluable in creating a strong coalition. When Oregon's senate

bill progressed to committee, for example, OFMA was able to draw on their existing relationships with more than 120 farmers markets across the state and bring a wide range of constituents to testify in support of a bill requesting \$3 million in funding.

House Bill 5050 passed, including \$1.5 million in one-time funds for DUFb in Oregon (HB 5050, §104). Though the request FMF made was only partially funded, FMF and their coalition were prepared. One of the best pieces of advice FMF received early on was to develop a strategy among coalition partners about which pieces of the proposal would be cut in the event of partial funding. When FMF ultimately received only \$1.5 million of the original \$3 million-dollar funding request, all of the partners were on the same page regarding priorities for funding and plans for the future. This infusion of state funds would facilitate the expansion of DUFb to more than 60 farmers markets, more than 30 CSAs, and eight rural grocery stores over the next two years.

Overall, FMF's initial foray into legislative work was a positive experience. The state appropriation supports the expansion of DUFb over the biennium, making it possible to expand to grocery stores and to revive a DUFb CSA program. FMF applied a portion of state funds as matching funds for a successful GusNIP proposal, further expanding the DUFb Oregon program. As a result of FMF's work in the state Capitol, relationships have been strengthened with legislators, Department of Human Services staff, as well as with organizations across the state working on policy related to health and agriculture. Beyond the financial support and strengthening of relationships, receiving a state investment has added credibility to the DUFb program, raising public awareness.

Figure 3. Side-by-side comparison of campaigns for state funding in Virginia and Oregon.

STATE	OREGON	VIRGINIA
LEAD ORGANIZATION	Farmers Market Fund (FMF)	Virginia Food Access Coalition (VFAC)
KEY COMMUNITY PARTNERS	Oregon Food Bank American Heart Association Oregon Farmers Markets Association Portland Area CSA Coalition	Virginia Fresh Match (VFM) Grocery Investment Fund Virginia Poverty Law Center American Heart Association
AGENCY PARTNER	Department of Human Services	Department of Agriculture
BILL NAME	Senate Bill (Details and Testimony): SB 727; House Bill (Funding Appropriation): House Bill 5050, 80th Oregon Legislative Assembly §104	Virginia Food Access Investment Program and Fund. Code of Virginia Title 36 Chapter 10.2 §36-156.3-6
FUNDING AMOUNT & PARAMETERS	\$1.5 Million over biennium (one-time appropriation)	\$1.25 Million annually
OUTCOMES FOR NUTRITIONAL INCENTIVES PROGRAMMING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Matching Funds for a 2020 GusNIP Grant • Expansion of DUFb to 60+ farmers market • Expansion of DUFb to 30+ CSAs • Expansion of DUFb to 8 rural grocery stores 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No direct funding included for nutrition incentives • Commitment to increase number of SNAP retailers participating in VFM Incentive Program • New grantees obtaining funds through VFAIF grant program required to accept SNAP and offer Virginia Fresh Match

Strategies for State Funding

While Oregon and Virginia's campaigns for state funding had quite different strategies and outcomes (see Figure 3), organizers in both programs have identified a number of strategies that were consistently useful across their efforts. This section identifies these strategies, which may help other practitioners prepare for their own state funding campaigns.

Understand the Legislative Process

Working in their state's capitol for the first time, neither FMF nor VFM felt they fully understood the nuances of how a bill becomes a law. The state legislative process is often unfamiliar, complex, and non-intuitive. The legislative landscape has specific language, structure, and norms with which many practitioners have no prior experience. Early in the planning stage, nutrition incentive projects can map the road ahead through independent research into the structure of a state's legislature. Determining the broad strokes of the legislative process, such as when and how often lawmakers are in session, can help prepare an organization to begin.

Once the basics are clear, it's time to reach out to knowledgeable experts for a more nuanced perspective. These may include paid lobbyists or advocates for related initiatives, who can do much more for a coalition of partners than the narrow definition of educating legislators on a specific bill. For VFM and FMF, lobbyists aided in the architecture of the programs' campaigns from start to finish. Lobbyists may be found through partner organizations or can be hired by a coalition of partners through an RFA process. In either case, however, lobbyists should offer strengths that the organization lacks, including direct experience in state-level legislative advocacy and relationships with legislators who don't typically see farmers markets as an interest of their constituency and so might be otherwise inaccessible to food access organizers. The goal is to connect with those who can help to navigate this unfamiliar terrain because they do this professionally, year after year.

Create Strong Coalitions

Neither FMF in Oregon nor VFM in Virginia could have advocated successfully for state funding on

their own. Partnerships enabled the success of each campaign by providing insight and experience in the legislative process and hours of labor in lobbying, educating legislators, and testifying before committees. Most importantly, the partnerships created and strengthened through this process are ultimately among its most valuable outcomes, and they are one strategy that organizations can begin to implement no matter how far off their campaign for state funding may be. It is important to recognize, however, that partnerships always involve tradeoffs in melding disparate goals and priorities. Like any relationship building, this starts with identifying the common thread issues that potential coalition partners share, such as food access, food security, health, or agriculture.

Understand the Limits to Advocacy

Many leaders within nonprofit organizations operate under misconceptions regarding the limits placed on tax-exempt organizations around advocacy, lobbying, and political education (for resources on these terms, see Appendix 1). In fact, many of the activities nonprofit organizations would wish to engage in are allowed (Harmon et al., 2011, p.2). Per the IRS, "In general, no organization may qualify for section 501(c)(3) status if a substantial part of its activities is attempting to influence legislation (commonly known as lobbying)." A key word here is "substantial." The IRS says that "501(c)(3) organizations may engage in some lobbying, but too much lobbying activity risks loss of tax-exempt status." Lobbying is a highly specific term referring to attempts to influence the outcome of voting or legislative processes in advocacy for a specific referendum, ballot initiative, constitutional amendment, or similar procedure ("Lobbying," 2021).

Of course, to pass legislation, work that falls squarely within the IRS's definition of lobbying is unavoidable. For the work of advocating directly with legislators on behalf of the Oregon and Virginia bills, lobbyists were essential, and access to these lobbyists was another benefit of strong coalitions of partners. In Oregon, for example, three partner agencies included DUFBA as a priority bill in their lobby days, resulting in hundreds of meetings with advocates focused on food security, public health, and sustainable agriculture.

Educate Legislators

While FMF and VFM avoided engaging in direct advocacy, they could educate legislators on the value of nutrition incentives to their constituents. Legislators bring their own history and priorities into the bill-making and budgeting processes. Educating these leaders on the value of your organizations' goals, both to their constituents and to their own priorities, is key to a successful campaign.

FMF in Oregon and VFM in Virginia used an array of means to make the education of legislators a possibility. In Oregon, the coalition's advocacy began with informative meetings with key legislators, practicing a pitch, updating their one-page information sheet (see Appendix 2), and building energy around DUFB in the Capitol. For legislators who were unfamiliar with DUFB, it was most effective to introduce them to the project by playing a short 3-minute video including the voices of shoppers and farmers at the start of meetings. Again, here, respect for the different needs and priorities of diverse communities across the state was essential. The "triple win" of DUFB allowed different key messages to be used to target different legislators: supporting family farmers resonated with conservative legislators from rural areas of Oregon, while supporting the health and nutrition of vulnerable communities resonated with more liberal legislators from the Portland area.

Seek Out a Dedicated Agency Partner

One key aspect of state funding architecture in both Oregon and Virginia is that state legislative funds must flow through an agency budget. The most intuitive agency for market leaders seeking to support nutrition incentives may be either the Department of Agriculture or the Department of Human Services. Ultimately, Oregon chose to work with the Department of Human Services because they are the state agency that administers SNAP and were already strong champions of DUFB due to the relationship they had developed with FMF during their FINI grant. In Virginia, VFM chose to work with the Department of Agriculture because leadership at the department named food access among its top three priorities and built a strong food security workgroup.

As a funder, the agency a project chooses to work with will continue to affect the organization long after any bill is passed, so it is important to select the legislative advocates that are most committed to both nutrition incentives themselves and building capacity among local organizations that can support them. Of course, commitments can change over time, and as such, projects may want to cultivate relationships across multiple agencies, both in seeking the right fit for current projects and looking forward to a future when priorities might shift across the partnership.

Commit to the Long Game

There is no better teacher than experience, as both Virginia and Oregon learned through the partial successes they achieved in their first attempts to advocate for state funding. Even if initial attempts to secure funding do not result in a ratified bill, or only achieve partial funding, the relationships and exposure developed through this process create a cumulative benefit for projects.

In Virginia, for example, given VFM's lack of experience, they would have found it difficult to access the resources that partners provided without membership in a coalition, and while it would have been useful to work directly with elected officials to ensure they had a thorough knowledge of the history of the incentive network and its needs, VFM expects that the experience gained through this process, as well as the visibility it has created for the organization with legislative partners, will make future sessions more directly fruitful for VFM. This experience illustrates that working with state governments is a "long game," especially for small organizations working in partnerships, and VFM expects to see their coalition's priorities shift more directly towards nutrition incentives as its original aims are achieved.

Conclusion: Outcomes and Lessons Learned

Once a state project matures to the point of needing sustained, long-term funding, all funding paths need to be considered, and likely pursued. There is no single, one-size-fits-all strategy. State funding is one solution that can be part of a network's portfolio, along with other partnerships and approaches.

As organizations consider launching a campaign for state funding, they must prepare for partial success. In Oregon and Virginia, neither organization was ultimately able to address the need for sustainable and ongoing funds in their first legislative effort. In Virginia, no direct funding for either the incentives themselves or the cost of administering them was achieved, but the legislation was successful in helping to institutionalize SNAP and Virginia Fresh Match acceptance state-wide, which is an important building block in program expansion. In Oregon, FMF did successfully advocate for nutrition incentive funding and leverage state appropriations for a new GusNIP grant, but the bill was only partially funded, and as in Virginia, the work to support the priorities of all partners is still ongoing.

Overall, even considering the difficulty of securing significant funds to support state-wide nutrition incentive projects, the authors believe that state funding has the potential to be a sustainable, long-term solution. If an organization has capacity to engage in this work and support from partners in navigating the legislative process, it is an option worth pursuing. It is a long-term project, where building coalitions and power within the legislature may take many electoral cycles. Rather than thinking of the decision to undertake a legislative campaign as a simple yes or no, then, it may be helpful to consider the legislature as another stakeholder group that needs to be aware and supportive of your network's impacts and needs. Moving forward, VFM and FMF will each seek to develop independent touchpoints and relationships with legislators, building on the successes and failures of their initial campaigns to evolve a sustainable future for nutrition incentives funding at the scale of the state.



Appendices

A1. Additional Resources on Advocacy, Lobbying, and Political Education

Additional Resources

Voices for Healthy Kids is a joint program of the American Heart Association and the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation that funds coordinated state, local, and tribal public policy issue advocacy campaigns focused on access to healthy food and active living. Funding to increase access to healthy foods through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs is a grant-priority, and many state networks who have sought appropriations through their state legislatures have done so with support from Voices for Healthy Kids. Go to voicesforhealthykids.org to find grant opportunities as well as other resources such as fact sheets and fundraising toolkits.

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IRS rules around 501(c)3 advocacy can seem like a barrier to organizations who want to seek state funding, but rules around advocacy for nonprofits are far more generous than many people realize. According to the IRS, “no organization may qualify for section 501(c)(3) status if a substantial part of its activities is attempting to influence legislation (commonly known as lobbying).” A key word here is “substantial.” As the IRS notes in this same section: “A 501(c)(3) organization may engage in some lobbying, but too much lobbying activity risks loss of tax-exempt status.” So what is “too much” and what is “some” lobbying? For that matter, what is lobbying, since in this legal context, it has a specific and pretty narrow definition? You can find guidance around these questions in a number of places including the research library at Bolder Advocacy, which has a number of helpful resources including their guide to IRS lobbying regulations for nonprofits, as well as in the Farmers Market Legal Toolkit’s guide to business structures for farmers markets.

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The State Funding Listserv managed by partners in the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (GusNIP NTAE Center) is a forum for nutrition incentive projects to find community support and answers to questions. To join the listserv, send an email to nina@farmersmarketcoalition.org or acanepa@fairfoodnetwork.org

Additional Resources for nutrition incentive practitioners who are looking to pursue state funding are also available through the GusNIP NTAE Hub and its network of partners. See the FMC resource library for a round table discussion on state funding with the authors of this paper held during the 2020 Convening of the GusNIP NTAE Hub as well as the FMC Advocacy Toolkit, which contains brief videos on political advocacy for Farmers Markets.



SB 727A

Make a wise investment in public health and our local economy by increasing access to Oregon grown produce for food insecure Oregonians.

Only **11%** of Oregonians consume enough fruits and veggies for a healthy life. But for the **one in eight Oregonians experiencing food insecurity**, the cost of eating the recommended servings of produce is unaffordable. Unhealthy diets and food insecurity cost the state and federal governments hundreds of billions of dollars per year in healthcare and other costs.

What is Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB)?

- DUFB is a nutrition incentive program that matches Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, or SNAP (formerly known as food stamps) benefits to enable participants to purchase additional fruits and vegetables.
- For every dollar spent on SNAP-eligible foods at participating farmers markets, farm share programs, and some groceries across the state, SNAP recipients receive an additional dollar to spend on Oregon grown fruits and vegetables, up to \$10 per visit.
- In Oregon, a successful pilot program ran from 2015–2018 when the Farmers Market Fund raised \$1.5 million (including \$500,000 from a USDA FINI grant) to run DUFB at 60+ farmers markets.



\$2.92

average meal cost in Oregon



\$1.40

average benefit from SNAP per meal

What can a \$3 million DUFB investment do for families, farmers & public health in Oregon?

- Increase consumption of fresh food for an estimated 150,000 low income Oregonians. A healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables helps lower the risk of many serious and chronic health conditions, including heart disease, high blood pressure and diabetes.
- Put money into the pockets of family farmers, creating greater resilience.
- Allow DUFB to be piloted in up to eight grocery stores in targeted under-served communities.

"This program is actually helping my kids grow! They have eaten more fruit this summer than ever before."

"Fresh fruits and veggies give me better quality of life. The only way I can afford produce is through this program."



Why should Oregon fund Double Up Food Bucks?

- To provide stability for and allow expansion of a successful program that has proven to provide support for low-income Oregonians.
- To leverage additional federal and private sector funds. The new Farm Bill includes \$250 million for DUFb and similar programs, but requires a dollar for dollar match of state and private funds.
- To join a National movement: CA, MA, MI, MN, NM, and Seattle all fund similar programs.



FAMILIES WIN

Low-income Oregonians consume more healthy food:

- **90%** of SNAP customers reported buying more fruits and vegetables because of Double Up Food Bucks
- **81%** of surveyed participants reported that the amount of food they have in their house increased because of DUFb



FARMERS WIN

Family Farmers gain new customers & a financial boost:

- **74%** of farmers surveyed said their customer base expanded
- **69%** reported making more money because of Double Up Food Bucks



OREGON THRIVES

DUFb helps grow local economies in Oregon:

- Every SNAP dollar spent at a farmers market can generate **\$1.79** in local economic activity*
- *Using this "multiplier", DUFb supported more than **\$4,500,000** of local economic activity



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About

About the Authors

Molly Notarianni has spent the past 15 years working at the intersection of food, justice, and community. She is the Executive Director of Farmers Market Fund in Portland, Oregon. Molly's work is informed by her years as a farmer, nutrition educator, organizer of beginning farmers, and manager of farmers markets in both Michigan and Oregon. She serves on the Oregon Community Food Systems Network Leadership team.

Elizabeth Borst has worked with farmers market nutrition incentives since 2009, when a news story about a new organization called Wholesome Wave led her to reach out to Gus Schumacher, for whom the GusNIP grant mechanism is named. With his support, she helped start a local incentive program that grew into Virginia Fresh Match, a regional network connecting markets, regional networks, and food access partners across the state.

About the Farmers Market Coalition

The Farmers Market Coalition is a nonprofit dedicated to strengthening farmers markets across the United States so that they can serve as community assets while providing real income opportunities for farmers.

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The Nutrition Incentive Hub

The Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information (NTAE) Center is led by the Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition. In partnership with Fair Food Network, they created the Nutrition Incentive Hub, a coalition of partners to support this work, including the National Grocers Association Foundation, Farmers Market Coalition, Michigan Farmers Market Association, Ecology Center, The Food Trust, Legend Consulting, Michigan University Center for Regional Food Systems, Colorado School of Public Health, and University of California San Francisco, among others. These partners are practitioners, retail experts, researchers, and evaluators from across the country bringing decades of experience and leadership in technical assistance, training, reporting, and evaluation. The Nutrition Incentive Hub is dedicated to building a community of practice to maximize program impact and ensure that all Americans have access to the healthy foods they need.

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