

Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)

Year 6 Impact Findings Executive Summary

September 1, 2024 to August 31, 2025

Developed by the Center for Nutrition & Health Impact
in collaboration with Fair Food Network and the
University of California San Francisco.

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Executive Summary



Between September 1, 2024 and August 31, 2025, the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) generated over \$128 million in economic impact and facilitated fruit and vegetable (FV) purchases totaling more than \$62 million across 5,500+ project sites in 42 states, Washington, D.C., and two territories of the United States (U.S.). During the same period, GusNIP participants reported increased FV intake, higher food security, and improved health. By increasing consumer purchasing power for FVs, GusNIP advances the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s commitment to strengthen federal nutrition programs and prevent diet-related chronic diseases. As demonstrated by the robust economic impact, GusNIP also supports local communities and farmers by expanding markets for FVs.

The GusNIP portfolio is a collection of three competitive grant programs funded by the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA) in collaboration with the Food and Nutrition Administration (FNA). GusNIP brings together partners from food and healthcare systems to improve the health and nutrition status of participating households, support economic growth in American communities, and inform best practices. Generally, GusNIP supports projects that distribute incentives to individuals with low income in order to increase access to FVs.

Through a competitive grant process in 2019 and again in 2023, USDA NIFA selected the **Center for Nutrition & Health Impact**, a national nonprofit research center, to lead the NTAE. CNHI partners with **Fair Food Network**, the **University of California San Francisco**, and a coalition of national partners (referred to as the **Nutrition Incentive Hub**). The NTAE and Nutrition Incentive Hub provide comprehensive training, technical assistance, reporting, and evaluation support to all GusNIP grantees and applicants. In this report, the NTAE and the Nutrition Incentive Hub are collectively referred to as "NTAE."

This report presents the national impact of GusNIP-funded NI and PPR projects based on participant- and site-level results from data collected by grantees and the NTAE during Year 6.

GusNIP supports three competitive grant programs:



Nutrition Incentive Program (NI):

Provides matched incentives to individuals participating in USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) or Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) for the purchase of FVs without added sugars, sodium, or fats.



Produce Prescription Program (PPR):

In coordination with a healthcare entity, provides a prescription for free or reduced cost fresh FVs to people with low income and at risk for diet-related chronic disease(s).



The Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (NTAE):

Improves GusNIP projects' efficiency and effectiveness through training, technical assistance, reporting, and evaluation; conducts and disseminates a national evaluation to measure impact across all GusNIP-funded projects.

Overview of GusNIP in Year 6

USDA NIFA continued to strengthen strategies to promote healthy families and communities by administering current and funding new GusNIP projects. That is, NIFA is currently administering funding authorized and appropriated through GusNIP, the 2021 Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program COVID Relief and Response (GusCRR) program, and the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) (P.L. 117-2).

In Year 6 (September 1, 2024, to August 31, 2025), **GusNIP experienced substantial growth and expansion; specifically, USDA NIFA:**

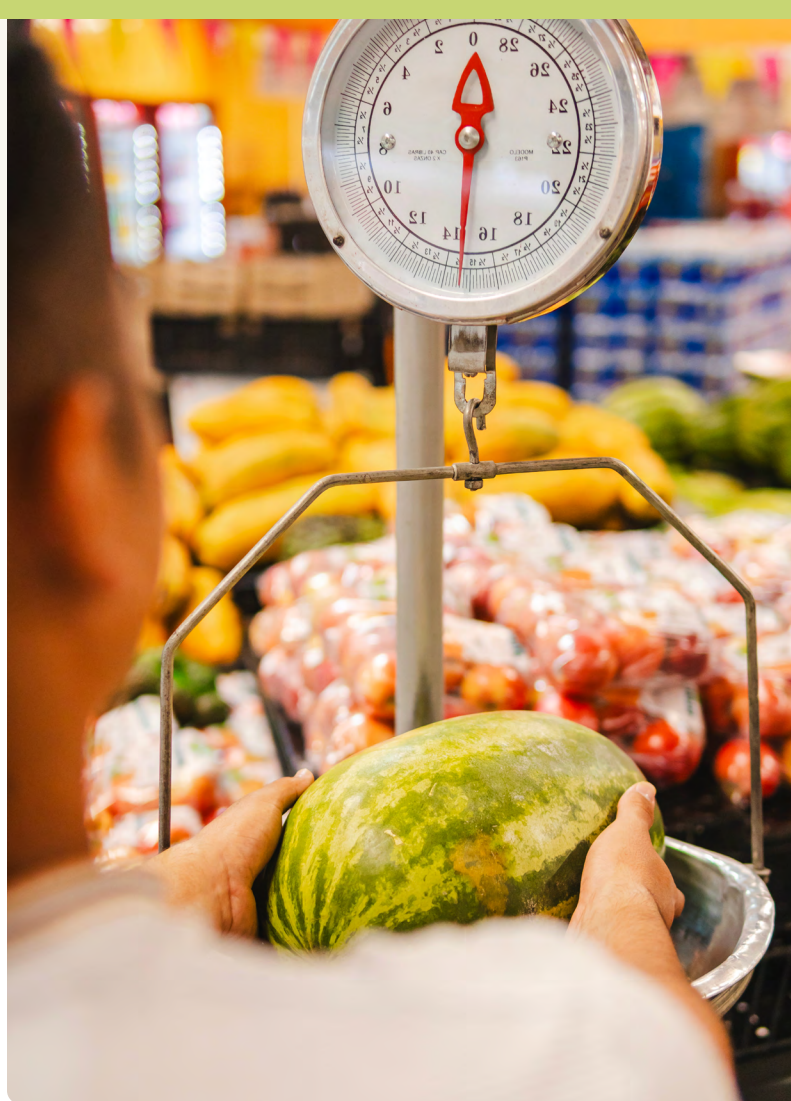
- 1 Invested more than **\$42M** in new GusNIP projects: **\$36.3M to 14 NI projects** and **\$5.8M to 12 PPR projects**.
- 2 Supported **187** active GusNIP projects.
- 3 Provided **\$7M** of its total investment to the NTAE to increase efficiency and effectiveness of projects and thereby maximize GusNIP investments.
- 4 **Strengthened partnerships** with grantees and implementing partners to support best practices and expand program reach.

Summary of Year 6 Key Findings

GusNIP grantees were steadfast in their dedication to implementing and expanding ongoing projects and gathering the data essential for the NTAE's evaluation of collective outcomes.

Key findings from Year 6 data include:

- **Annual Site Count:** GusNIP reached its highest annual site count to date: 5,538 food retail and clinic locations offered incentives during Year 6 (NI = 3,908; PPR = 2,070).¹
- **Incentive Redemptions:** NI and PPR participants redeemed \$62.2M worth of incentives in Year 6 using both federal and match² funding. This value is 123% of federal input,³ demonstrating a significant return on the federal investment.
- **Local Economic Impact:** The local economic impact⁴ of GusNIP was \$128M (\$48.2M for farm direct (FD); \$76.7M for brick-and-mortar (B&M); \$3.1M for clinics). This value is 16 times the estimated economic impact in Year 1, representing the largest annual local economic impact to date.
- **Participant Reach:**
 - NI projects reached an estimated average of 224,509 participants per month. More participants were reached each month in Year 6 than in Year 5 (n = 183,905). This is a clear indicator of gains in efficiency—there were fewer active NI projects in Year 6 (n = 73) compared to Year 5 (n = 77). NI projects typically reach more people with a less intensive intervention when compared to PPR projects.
 - PPR projects enrolled an average of 1,516 participants per month through 87 grantees that submitted data. This is comparable to Year 5 when PPR projects enrolled 1,804 participants per month across 94 PPR projects. PPR projects typically reach fewer people with a more intensive intervention when compared to NI projects.⁵



¹ Some food retail outlets and clinics operated both NI and PPR projects.

² Dollar-for-dollar match funding is required for all GusNIP funded NI projects. Grantees may meet their match requirement through cash and/or in-kind contributions, including third-party in-kind contributions fairly evaluated, including facilities, equipment, or services.

³ GusNIP NI and PPR projects spent \$50.6M in federal funding on all project costs in Year 6.

⁴ Local economic impact is the estimated amount of money generated for communities surrounding the locations that offered incentives. The estimated impact includes both direct effects (e.g., incentive redemption at participating sites) as well as indirect effects (e.g., how sites spend the extra revenue on hiring, marketing) and is indicative of the upper bound of economic impact an initiative (e.g., GusNIP project) may generate.

⁵ PPR projects typically reach fewer participants, but these projects provide a higher incentive amount and offer more support services than NI projects.



● FV Intake and Food Security:

- Participation in NI projects for six months or more was associated with higher FV intake and improved food security when compared to participation for the first time or for less than six months.
- Participation in PPR projects was associated with higher FV intake and improved food security at follow-up assessment when compared to baseline.

● **Program Satisfaction:** NI and PPR participants reported high program satisfaction. 89% of NI participants felt positive about the program and 94% of PPR participants felt positive about the program.

● **Health Outcomes:** PPR participants from a pilot study of four GusNIP PPR projects experienced significant improvements in glycosylated HbA1c and blood pressure, especially among those with poorly controlled diabetes and stage two hypertension.⁶ These outcomes are comparable to findings from a microsimulation study⁷ suggesting large-scale PPR programs could yield major healthcare savings.

Conclusions and Next Steps

Since 2019, GusNIP has strengthened the health and economic vitality of communities nationwide by increasing access to nutritious foods for families with low income while supporting U.S. farmers and food retailers. The program reaches people at elevated risk for diet-related chronic diseases and boosts demand for FVs, generating millions of dollars in local economic activity and supporting small, midsized, and specialty crop producers.

Findings gleaned from participant and site-level evaluation data in Year 6 confirmed GusNIP's positive impact on individual and community health. For the fifth consecutive year (note: no participant-level data were collected in first year), projects reported increased access to FVs, higher FV intake, improved food security, and stronger FV sales for farmers and retailers. NTAE researchers also published results of a pilot study demonstrating improved blood sugar and blood pressure among a subset of PPR participants.

Through partnership with USDA NIFA, the NTAE and Nutrition Incentive Hub played a central role in advancing program quality by providing technical assistance, facilitating collaboration, and supporting innovation. The work of the NTAE and Nutrition Incentive Hub helped ensure that GusNIP projects operate efficiently, improve healthcare linkages, and contribute to local economic resilience.

Looking ahead, the NTAE will continue to maximize the value of federal investments by strengthening program delivery, expanding reach, and maintaining rigorous evaluation. Key priorities include expanding training and funding resources, reaching more communities, modernizing delivery systems, enhancing local project effectiveness, disseminating evaluation findings, and deepening connections between families, farmers, and food retailers to sustain strong, healthy communities.

⁶ Zigmont V, Marriott J, Mitchell E, et.al. *Improvements in glycosylated hemoglobin A1c and blood pressure as measured through electronic health records across four produce prescription projects in the northeastern and Western United States*. Prev Med Rep. 2026;62:103394. doi:10.1016/j.pmedr.2026.103394

⁷ *True cost of food: Food is medicine case study*. Tufts University and the Rockefeller Foundation; 2023; https://tuftsfoodismedicine.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Tufts_True_Cost_of_FIM_Case-Study_Report_Sep_2023.pdf



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