



Food Access in Action: Crossroads Community Food Network

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Crossroads Community Food Network

MFANN Conference- October 13, 2011



Bringing fresh, local, healthy food to individuals of all backgrounds and incomes

+ Goals

- ❖ Improve food security through development of a **sustainable and equitable local food system**
- ❖ Cultivate community interest in and commitment to **sustainable agriculture and healthful eating**
- ❖ Provide opportunities for local, sustainable producers, particularly **new, minority, immigrant, and refugee farmers**
- ❖ Develop a **replicable food access model** for widespread implementation and customization



+Crossroads Community Food Network



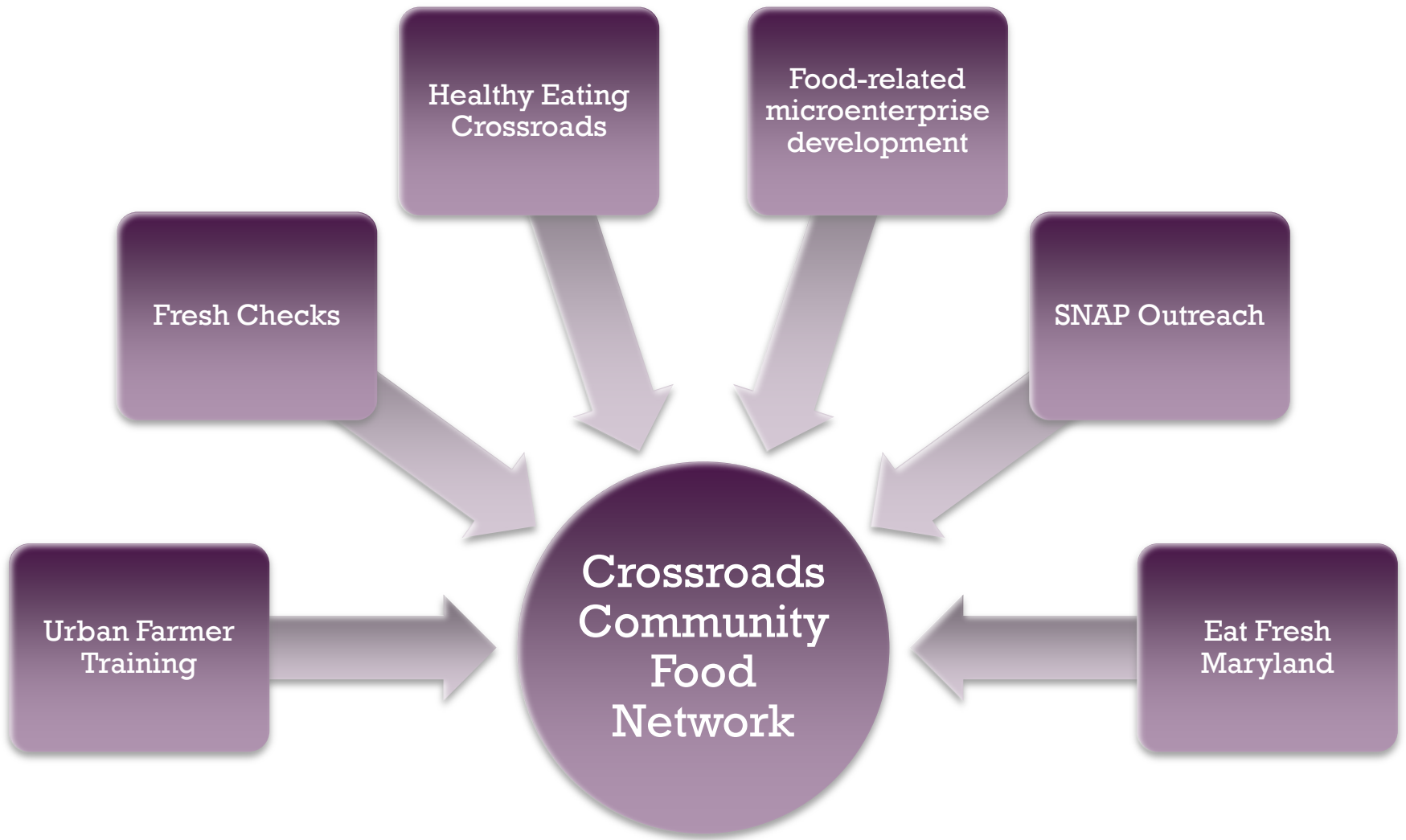
- ❖ Founded in 2007 as Crossroads Farmers Market
- ❖ Located at the Takoma Park/Langley Park Crossroads, Maryland's "International Corridor"- in front of WIC office
- ❖ Vision: Alternative means for accessing fresh, affordable food for underserved community
- ❖ First farmers market in Maryland to accept federal nutrition benefits (SNAP, WIC and Senior FMNP)
- ❖ First in the USA to develop double-dollar incentive program ("Fresh Checks")
- ❖ 2009- Expanded into year-round operation
- ❖ 2011- Crossroads Community Food Network



Farmers Market → Food Network

- Expand programming within Crossroads area
- Connect statewide stakeholders
- Develop and share best practices
- Address local, state, and federal policy
- Explore new food access alternatives
- Participate in all aspects of food system (production, distribution, consumption)





+ Urban Farmer Training Program





Healthy Eating Crossroads Initiative



+ Food-Related Microenterprise

■ Green jobs!

- Low-rent commercial kitchen
- Food preparation and preservation workshops
- Multilingual/culturally appropriate
- Targeting unemployed and under-employed residents
- Identifying markets for sale



+ “Fresh Check” Program



- ❖ “Extra bucks” program for WIC, SNAP, seniors
- ❖ \$8/week - WIC and seniors
- ❖ SNAP match- up to \$20/week
- ❖ Market reimburses farmers for Fresh Checks





Federal Nutrition Benefits at Maryland Farmers Markets



- ❖ Women, Infant, Children Program (WIC)
 - WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)
 - WIC Fruit and Vegetable Checks (FVC)
- ❖ Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)
- ❖ Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps
 - Distributed through Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT)

+ Why Fresh Checks?

Incentivize federal nutrition assistance clients to use their benefits at farmers markets

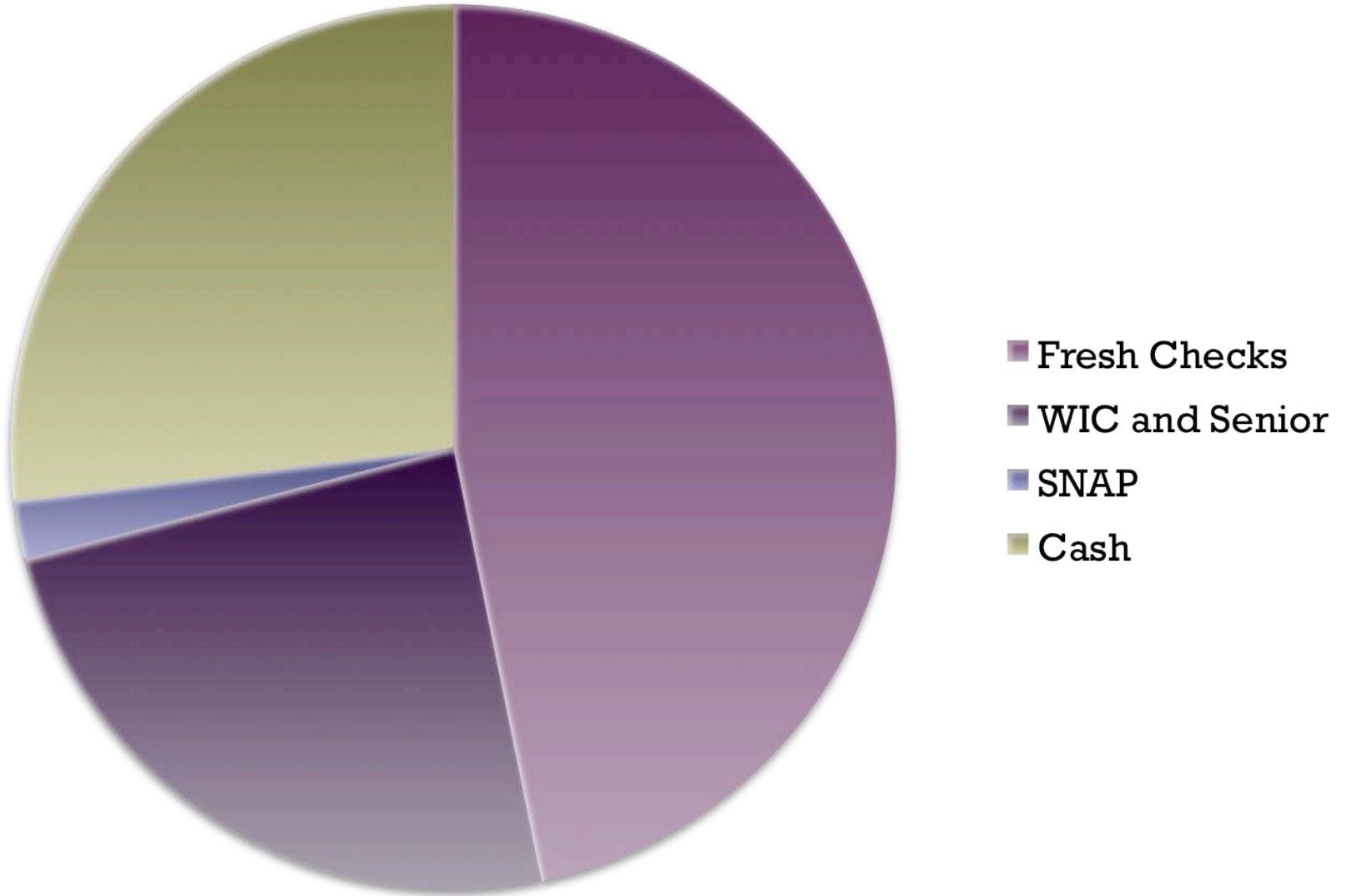
Outcomes:

- ❖ *Health*- Increase consumption of fresh foods in target populations
- ❖ *Support for farmers*- Offer growers a better chance of success selling in low-income areas
- ❖ *Local economic development*- Federal nutrition dollars go to local farmers

Fresh Checks by the Numbers

Year	Fresh Checks Distributed	Fresh Check Households	WIC	Senior	SNAP
2011*	\$47,312*	1,521*	981*	273*	267*
2010	\$39,225	1,247	930	188	129
2009	\$14,077	758	593	141	24
2008	\$10,206	574	496	71	7
2007	\$7,000	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a

2010 Crossroads Sales



+ **CFM SNAP Outreach**

- Launched June 2010
- Two SNAP Outreach Workers- also Community Connectors with Montgomery County HHS
- Outreach at weekly market, local WIC agency, community centers and events, other local farmers markets, food bank pick-up sites
- General outreach, pre-screenings, application assistance, follow-up





+ **Policy Success: SNAP Outreach Plan**

- 50% federal match for SNAP outreach activities
- Community agencies written into state plan
- Eligible activities: general outreach, eligibility pre-screenings, application assistance
- Two farmers markets written into state SNAP Outreach Reimbursement plans (City Heights-San Diego, CA and Crossroads)

Stamps - Independence Cards,
SNAP coupons, debit & credit



Interested in applying
for Food Stamps?
¿Tiene interés en aplicar
para Estampillas de Comida?
Get information here!!
¡¡ Recibe información aquí !!

Are you interested in
applying for SNAP -
Food Stamp benefits?
Get information HERE!
¿Tiene interés en
aplicar para las
estampillas de comida?
¡ Recibe info
AQUÍ !

Apply for SNAP
SNAP
Base





Barriers to SNAP Redemption



- **Legal immigration status**
 - SNAP vs. WIC requirements
 - Confidentiality and security concerns
- **Location**
 - At border of two counties (Montgomery and Prince George's)
 - Relationship with local WIC agency
- **Language/cultural barriers**
 - Limited access to accurate information



SNAP Outreach Best Practices



- Community member conducting outreach
- Language/cultural appropriateness
- Familiarity with federal benefits programs
- Partnerships with local agencies and community organizations
- Personal attention to and support for clients



SNAP Outreach Successes



- June 2010-September 2011:
 - 7,000+ outreach
 - 3,627 eligibility pre-screenings
 - 1,516 applications completed
 - **~90% applications approved**
- 2010 SNAP redemption at CFM increased over **500%**

+ Policy Success: WIC FVC

2010- Maryland DHMH approves use of WIC FVC at farmers markets

THIS CHECK IS VOID WITHOUT A BLUE & RED BACKGROUND AND AN ARTIFICIAL WATERMARK ON THE BACK. HOLD AT ANGLE TO VIEW.

	AGENCY	PARTICIPANT ID NO.	NAME OF PARTICIPANT (LAST, FIRST, MI)			CHECK NUMBER
	010112	300 003 498	SAMPLE, CHECK			10504396
	FIRST DATE TO SPEND	May 11, 2009	DATE REDEEMED	STORE USE ONLY	LAST DATE TO SPEND	CASHIER FILL IN EXACT AMOUNT OF SALE
					June 10, 2009	
FOOD PACKAGE: Z-CHILD PACKAGE STANDARD (Beans and PB) TO BE USED FOR THESE ITEMS & QUANTITIES ONLY. PARTICIPANT OR PROXY SIGN FOR PRICE CORRECTION ONLY.						DOLLARS
6 (six) dollars for Fruits and Vegetables						CENTS
Fruits and Vegetables						\$
Maryland WIC Program Payable through FSAC An Affiliate of Security State Bank Howard Lake, MN 55349 Account Number: 806610						CHECKS NOT VALID UNLESS STAMPED BY AUTHORIZED WIC VENDOR
SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT OR AUTHORIZED PROXY X					VENDOR MUST DEPOSIT WITHIN 30 DAYS OF LAST DATE TO SPEND	

⑈ 10504396⑈ ⑆ 021606674⑆ 193⑈ 081513⑈

Sample of WIC Fruit & Vegetable Check (FVC)



+ WIC FVC and WIC/Senior FMNP





Eat Fresh

MARYLAND





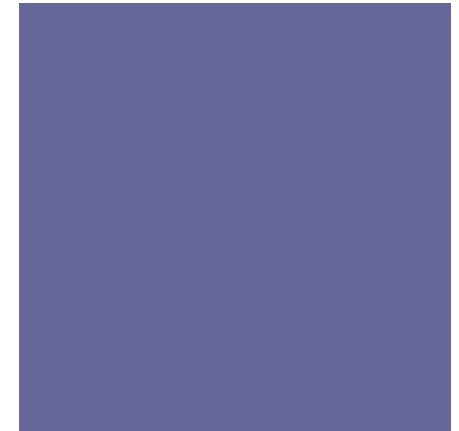
Maryland Farmers Market Network: “Eat Fresh Maryland”



- Launched January 2011
- USDA and MDA funded (FMPP and SCBG)
- Collaborative effort to **increase SNAP and WIC redemption at farmers markets**
- 15+ markets, Maryland Hunger Solutions, Future Harvest-CASA, WIC, MDA, UMD Extension
- Creating shared outreach and education materials, developing best practices, and pooling resources



Everyone's Eating Fresh...



Highlandtown and Catonsville Farmers Markets



Crossroads Farmers Market



Challenges: State and Local



- Conversion to electronic WIC
- Difficulties obtaining/funding EBT machine
- Lack of centralized FMNP distribution
- Difficulties obtaining 501(c)(3) status
- Zoning regulations (e.g.- commercial kitchen access in Montgomery County)

+ Montgomery County Food Council

- Policy supporting local food system
- Centralizing food-related initiatives
- Emphasis on food access, local production
- Currently: 10-member Advisory Board
- Next steps: identifying goals, council members, county-specific policy concerns





Whenever possible,
please use debit
instead of credit. It
lowers the taken fees
paid by the farmers &
other food producers.
We appreciate your
thoughtfulness!



+ For More Information:



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<http://thecrossroadsfarmersmarket.org>