



# TOGETHER WE CAN SOLVE HUNGER

2016 Agency Capacity,  
Programs and Nutrition  
Learning Conference



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# VT Fresh: Transforming the Food Environment at Local Food Pantries

**CHRIS MEEHAN**

**VERMONT FOODBANK**

BARRE, VT

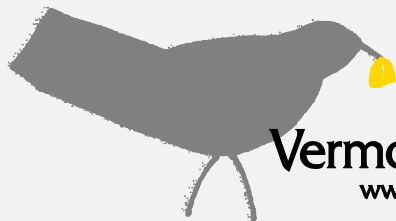


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# Vermont Foodbank Network

# 153K

## VERMONTERS SERVED ANNUALLY



**Vermont Foodbank**  
[www.vtfoodbank.org](http://www.vtfoodbank.org)



# 33%

OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE A  
MEMBER WITH  
DIABETES



# 46%

OF HOUSEHOLDS HAVE  
A  
MEMBER WITH HIGH BLOOD  
PRESSURE



# 72%

OF HOUSEHOLDS PURCHASE IN  
EXPENSIVE  
UNHEALTHY FOOD

2014 National Hunger Study Data.

# Chronic Food Insecurity

1:4

VERMONTERS  
AT RISK OF HUNGER &  
FOOD INSECURITY

+

225

FOOD PANTRIES  
AND MEAL  
PROGRAMS

+

10M

POUNDS OF FOOD  
DISTRIBUTED

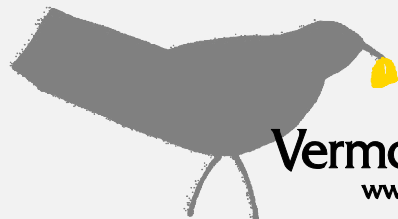
=

1.2 M

VISITS  
ANNUALLY

=

8.3 TIMES PER YEAR



Vermont Foodbank  
[www.vtfoodbank.org](http://www.vtfoodbank.org)

2014 National Hunger Study Data.

## CDC State Indicators, Vermont 2013

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption  
for adults living at 185% FPL  
(about \$3000/month for a family of three)



**24%**  
CONSUME VEGETABLES LESS  
THAN  
ONE TIME A DAY



**41%**  
CONSUME FRUITS LESS THAN  
ONE TIME A DAY

# Vermont Foodbank

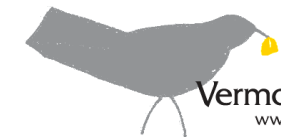
## VT Fresh



Art by Eileen Maloney

# VT FRESH

INSPIRED BY  
BEHAVIORAL  
ECONOMICS  
RESEARCH



Vermont Foodbank  
[www.vtfoodbank.org](http://www.vtfoodbank.org)



Sharing the  
Joy and Beauty  
of Fresh Food



What would happen  
if the food shelf environment  
was set up to  
encourage people  
to **CHOOSE** more  
**FRUITS** and  
**VEGETABLES**?





What if fruits  
and vegetables  
were displayed in  
a more **VISIBLE,**  
**ATTRACTIVE**  
and even  
**BEAUTIFUL** way?



Vermont Foodbank  
www.vtfoodbank.org  
For more information about the VT Foodbank's Gleaning Program  
Michelle Wallace, Program Director 802-477-6025  
Hannah Pika, Coordinator - Southern Region 802-244-0955  
Andrew Scarsini, Coordinator - Northern Region 802-473-8280

fresh BEETS  
\*Steam and dice, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper.  
\*Dice raw into any salad.



CARROTS BEETS

Vermont Foodbank  
Gleaning Program  
VOLUNTEER TODAY!  
Help us harvest food from local farms!  
Contact Us!

Vermont Foodbank VT Fresh  
Beets  
\*Dice and toss with olive oil.  
\*Dice and toss with salad.  
\*Dice and toss with chicken or turkey.  
\*Dice for dinner, 3 minutes, or add to soups. Alternatively, bake at 375°F for 2-3 hours. Let cool, then dice and toss with olive oil and pepper for a simple vinaigrette.  
\*Dice in pot roast, chili, and soups.  
\*Dice and use with other meats.

fresh KALE  
\*Sauté with garlic and butter/oil.  
\*Bake 10-15 minutes at 350° with olive oil and salt to make kale chips.



KALE

fresh POTATO  
\*Bake, boil, grill, roast or sauté with seasoning of choice.  
\*Make breakfast hash browns.  
\*Add to soups and stews.



fresh CARROT  
\*Eat raw with hummus or dip.  
\*Add to soups, salads, stir-fry.  
\*Roast with other root veggies.



Times are tough.  
Applying for 3SquaresVT doesn't have to be.  
3SquaresVT can fill your grocery cart with more nutritious food!  
Vermont Foodbank caresVT application. Let one of our volunteers assist you.  
For 3SquaresVT

Vermont Foodbank VT Fresh  
Quick Tips  
KALE CHIPS  
BEANFEST MENU

WHAT IF...

fruits and vegetable  
displays  
included  
VIBRANT SIGNAGE



# PRODUCE BANNERS



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and  
SHELF  
LABELS



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like you  
might  
see at a  
**FARMER'S MARKET?**



What if  
the food shelf was filled  
with the **COMFORTING**  
and  
**WELCOMING** smells  
of sautéed onions  
and garlic?



And visitors  
had a chance to  
**TASTE** a particular  
vegetable  
they thought  
they didn't like?





**Vermont Foodbank VT Fresh**



**Beets**

- You need to peel, only wash them.
- Cooker size may vary.
- Cooker size may vary.
- Steam for about 15 minutes, or until tender. Alternatively, boil for 20-30 minutes. Steam or boil in salted water. Once cooked, peel and chop.
- Tip: To remove skin, cook and be sure to peel them with your hands.

**Let a Rainbow!**  
Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.



**fresh BEETS**



- \*Steam and dice, toss with olive oil, salt and pepper.
- \*Grate raw into any salad.

**Vermont Foodbank VT Fresh**



**Let a Rainbow!**  
Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.



**MyPlate**

**Vermont Foodbank VT Fresh**



**BEET SALAD**

**INGREDIENTS**

- 8-10 small to medium red or golden beets
- 2 cups water
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- Pepper to taste
- 1-2 drops olive oil

**DIRECTIONS**

- Bring water to a boil, add whole beets and boil until tender about 15 minutes.
- Drain the cooked beets.
- Peel skins with your hands, they should slip right off.
- Cut each beet into eighths and toss with salt, pepper, vinegar and oil.

**Let a Rainbow!**  
Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Fresh food tastes delicious and is easy to prepare.



Vegetable Taste Test

1. **BEFORE** Taste Test

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Dislike Dislike Like Very Like

**AFTER** Taste Test

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Very Dislike Dislike Like Very Like

2. **AFTER** Taste Test

Are you likely to EAT this VEGETABLE again?

Less Likely Same likelihood More Likely



What would happen if this change in the  
**FOOD ENVIRONMENT**  
also created a space to  
**CONNECT**  
with one another,  
**TALK** about **FOOD**  
and **SHARE** ideas and **STORIES**  
about **WHAT WE EAT** and  
**WHERE OUR FOOD COMES FROM?**



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**BEHAVIORAL  
ECONOMICS RESEARCH**  
has offered us  
creative and intuitive strategies to  
“NUDGE” people  
in a way that makes  
**FRUITS AND VEGETABLES  
THE EASIER CHOICE**

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— WE HAVE LOTS OF —

# FRESH PRODUCE

APPLES



TURNIPS



ORANGES

CARROTS

ONIONS

CABBAGE

BEEETS



# What are we learning?

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Individuals are  
more receptive to  
**ADDING FOODS THAT ARE  
HEALTHIER**  
to their diet than  
they are to eliminating  
unhealthy foods.



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Photo: BROC Rutland

People respond  
to **SENSORY**  
**EXPERIENCES**  
and immediate  
gratification



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Displaying  
healthy foods  
**PROMINENTLY**  
draws attention  
to them and may  
increase their consumption





An **ATTRACTIVE**  
presentation  
may influence  
choosing  
healthy food  
over unhealthy food

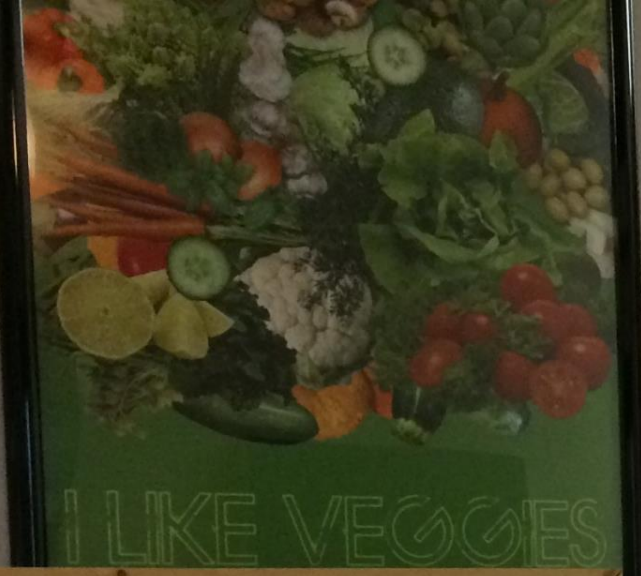


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Changing the  
**PHYSICAL PLACEMENT**  
of specific food items, to  
make them stand out can  
increase their  
consumption





**Fresh Produce**

Cauliflower • Broccoli  
Lettuce  
Asparagus • mushrooms

**Fresh Produce**

POTATOES!  
&  
SPROUTS

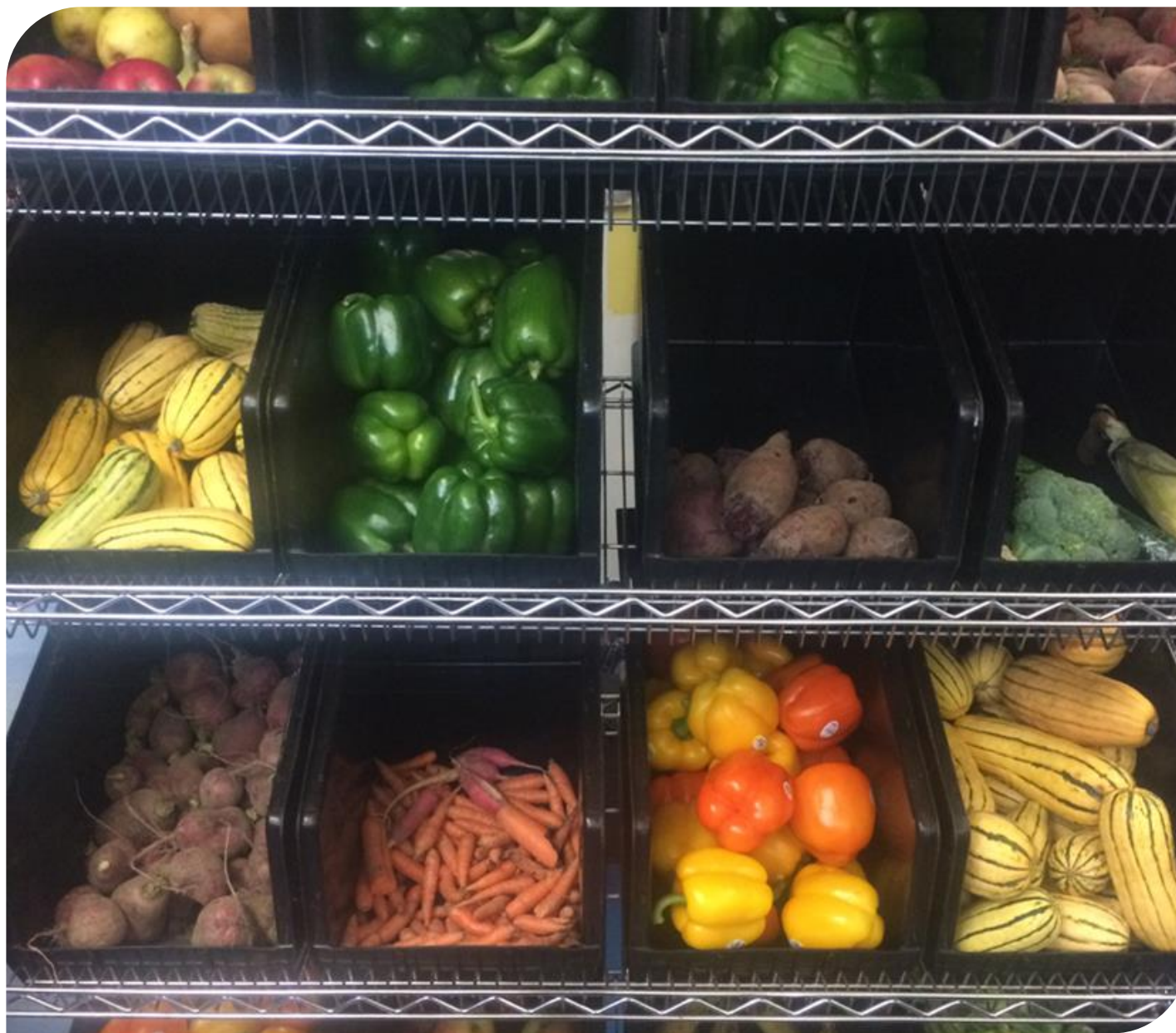
fresh CARROT  
fresh POTATO  
fresh TURNIP



Simply  
providing people with a  
**GREATER VARIETY** of  
healthy foods increases  
the consumption of them



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**Changing the CONTAINERS  
used to display certain  
foods, such as attractive  
baskets and bowls can  
influence someone's choice  
to eat those foods.**



Combining with  
**ATTRACTIVE SIGNAGE**  
draws attention to items  
and can increase  
selection of those items





Vermont Foodbank  
VT Fresh



fresh

## WINTER SQUASH



- \*Slice and roast at 375° with oil/butter, salt and pepper for 30 minutes.
- \*Mash or puree as a side dish.
- \*Add to hearty soup or stew.

Eat a Rainbow!  
Make half of your plate  
fruits



Food is a great way to  
**CONNECT** with people



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An individual's willingness  
to try something new  
and decide that they  
will like it is greatly influenced  
by the PEOPLE AROUND THEM.

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This process of connecting  
people over food can  
**INFLUENCE**  
how likely they are to try  
**NEW FOODS**  
and recipes.



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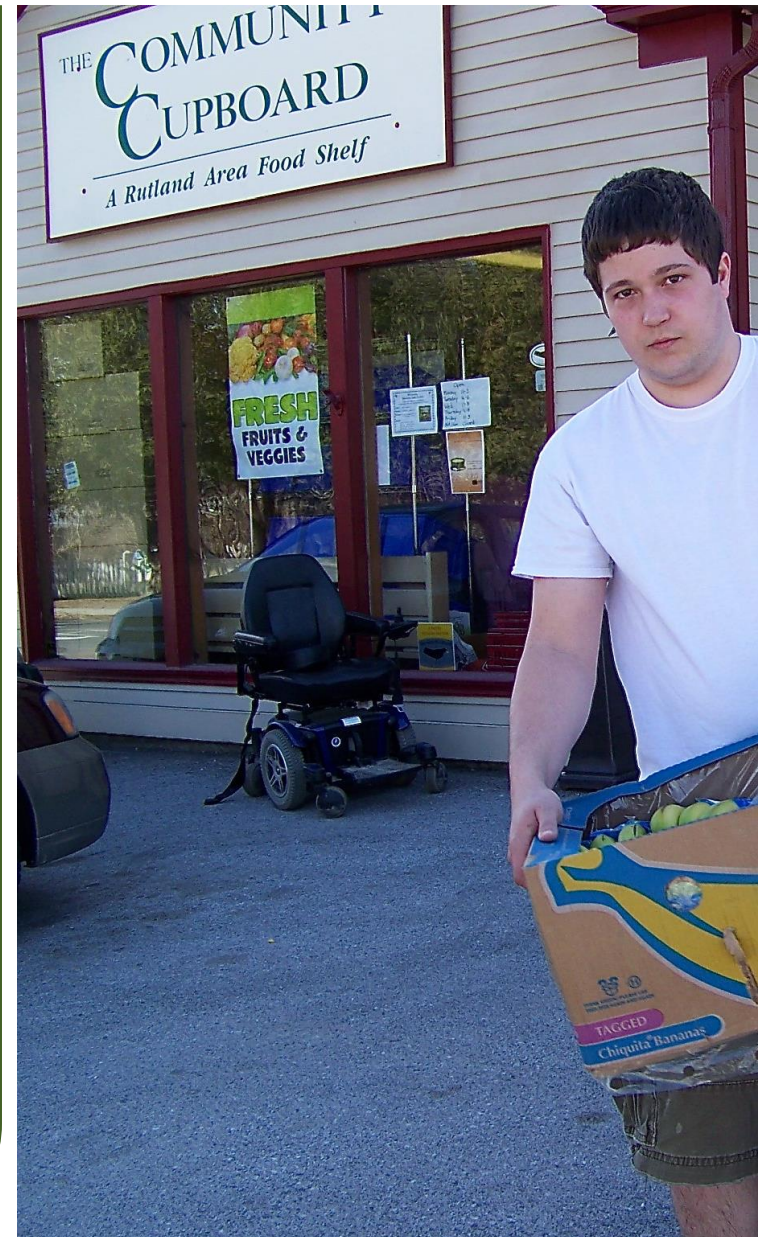
The power of  
**WORD-OF-MOUTH ADVERTISING**  
has an impact far greater  
than simply providing information about  
why we should make healthy  
**FOOD CHOICES**

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...food pantries have an untapped potential to make an even **BIGGER IMPACT** at an individual and community level.

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# 6 Strategies

1. Produce Tastings & Cooking Demos
2. Displays
3. Procurement
4. Storage
5. Convenience
6. Signage & Point of Decision Prompts




## Program Impacts

18	food shelves
24	months
425	cooking demos
5396	participants
7936	contacts



# PRE/POST REFLECTIVE SURVEY

MEASURED THE CHANGE IN TASTE PERCEPTION ABOUT ONE SPECIFIC VEGETABLE AND THE INTENTION TO EAT THE VEGETABLE AGAIN

Vegetable: \_\_\_\_\_ 

1. **BEFORE** Taste Test | **AFTER** Taste Test

(circle one)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 | 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Don't Like | It's OK | Liked | Don't Like | It's OK | Liked

2. **AFTER** Taste Test

Are you likely to **EAT** this **VEGETABLE** again? (circle one)

**Less** Likely (-) | **Same** likelihood (=) | **More** Likely (+)



41%

LIKED IT MORE  
(at least 30% more)



70%

Said they were more  
LIKELY TO EAT IT AGAIN

31 types of vegetables demoed!

## PROGRAM IMPACTS

**ALL SITES DOCUMENTED  
SYSTEMS AND  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
CHANGES**

**AIMED AT INCREASING  
CONSUMPTION OF FRUITS AND  
VEGETABLES**

175%

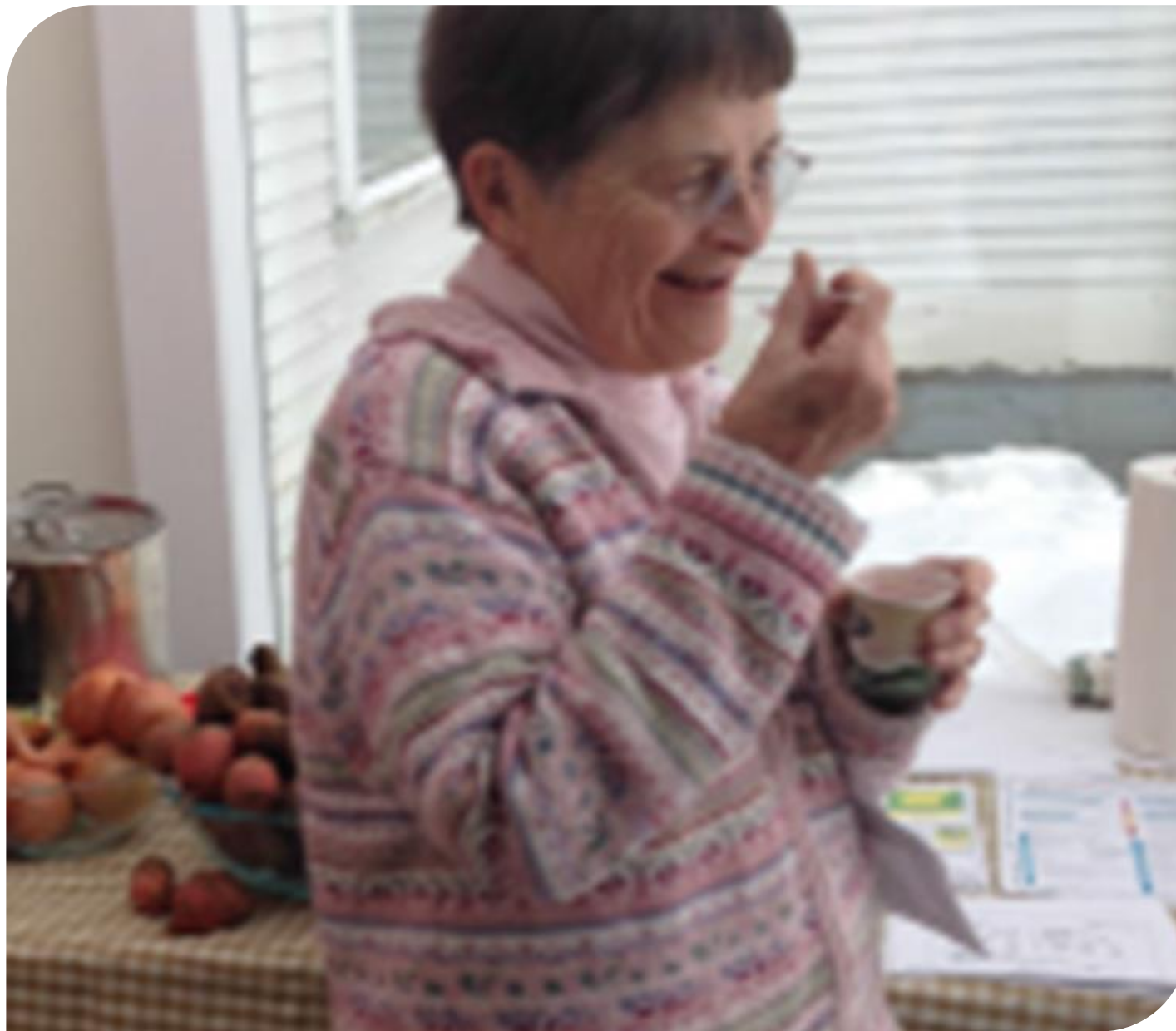
average INCREASE  
in PRODUCE DISTRIBUTED  
by sites over two year  
period

**“ I never knew collard greens could taste so good!  
It’s great to get out of my normal routine of cooking meat and potatoes”.**

**– women, early 70’s**



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**“ We are getting rave reviews, the most important to me, are the comments about how it is making our recipients feel more at ease and more likely to come to the Foodshelf”**

**-Foodshelf Volunteer**



# Implementation Steps for New Partners

IDENTIFY PARTNERS  
& RFP for MINI GRANTS



IMPLEMENT PROGRAM  
work with partners for  
approximately 3 years



BE INSPIRED  
and Share Best Practices  
Across the Network

FY2015 VT FRESH Program  
Special Fund for Network Partners  
October 2014 – September 2015



APPLICATION DUE: October 24, 2014

**Guidelines:**

Vermont Fresh aims to increase access and improve availability of fruits and vegetables at community food shelves. The program model combines research and evidence-based approaches to:

- 1) Help change the FOOD ENVIRONMENT in community food shelves by increasing the prominence, convenience and availability of fruits and vegetables.
- 2) Facilitate preference change and increase knowledge, awareness and skills for selecting and preparing these foods through COOKING DEMOS and TASTE TESTS.
- 3) Reinforce core nutrition messages and affect fruit and vegetable consumption decisions by improving DISPLAYS, SIGNAGE and PROMOTIONS of these products.

A primary goal of the VT Fresh Program is to support Network Partners to increase a food shelf's capacity to handle more fresh produce and increase the demand for fruits and vegetables amongst clients. Up to \$700 will be provided to food shelves to build capacity to increase access and improve availability of fresh fruits and vegetables.

In addition, Vermont Foodbank staff and volunteers will offer cooking demonstrations and taste tests 1-2 times per month at the food shelf. Our hope is that this will engage visitors of community food shelves by providing an opportunity to taste recipes that use a specific fruit or vegetable as the primary ingredient. Our goal is that this will increase the use of fresh fruits and vegetables that are commonly available but often times uncommonly chosen in food shelves. By giving visitors an opportunity to learn about healthy cooking, basic nutrition, and food safety we aim to empower them to make healthier food choices.

**Deadline:** Friday, October 24, 2014, 5:00 pm. (no late applications will be accepted)

**Decisions:** Decisions will be made by October 31, 2014.

**Grant size:** Up to \$700.  
Plus... \$150 worth of signage and point-of-decision prompts

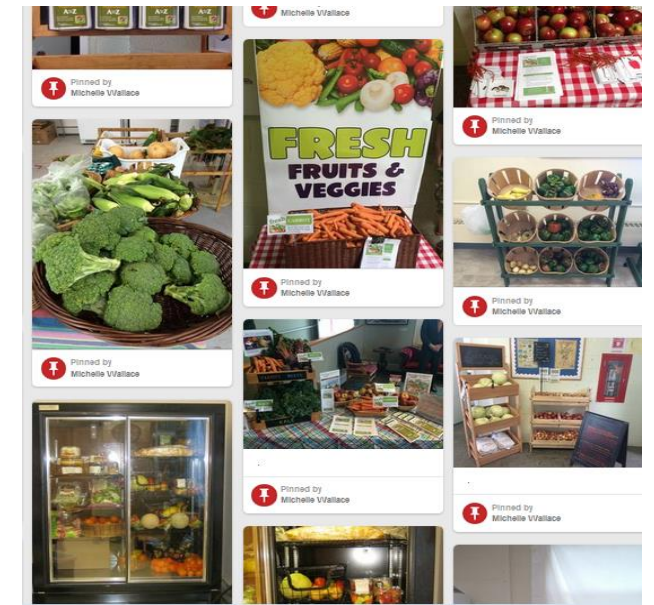
**Total amount available:** Funds are available for approximately 16 Network Partner sites.

**Who is eligible:** Applications will be accepted from sites that have been invited to apply and are Vermont Foodbank Network Partners in good standing.

**What we fund:** The Vermont Foodbank will look for applications from food shelves seeking funding to implement strategies that build capacity to improve the ability to handle more and increase the amount of fresh produce sites can distribute. Please see the attached ideas and suggestions. Strategies must address at least 2 or more of the following:

- a. Layout and prominence of produce displays
- b. Procurement to increase availability and variety
- c. Storage to increase availability and distribution
- d. Convenience to increase accessibility
- e. Point-of-decision prompts and signage to influence choices for fruits and vegetables.
- f. Additional produce tastings and cooking demos to increase fruit/vegetable consumption

**What we don't fund:** The funds are not to be used for the direct purchase of food for distribution. Funds should also not be used to pay staff.  
**How to submit your application:** Email to Michelle Wallace, at [mwallace@vtfoodbank.org](mailto:mwallace@vtfoodbank.org). If you have questions, please email Michelle or call 802-477-4125



# MINI GRANTS

## Identify strategies and activities






GOAL	SUPPORTING RESEARCH	Plan to implement in FY2015 Yes or No?	STRATEGIES
1 IMPROVE THE PROMINENCE AND LAYOUT OF PRODUCE DISPLAYS	Making fruit and vegetables prominent and highly visible is one of the most important strategies for increasing their consumption.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Create prominent, well-lit, attractive and well organized displays. Consider a "farmer's market" style display.</li> <li>➤ Make displays highly visible and centrally located.</li> <li>➤ Develop systems to clean, sort produce, discard or remove spoiled items and improve presentation.</li> <li>➤ Other Strategy: (describe)</li> </ul>
2 IMPROVE PROCUREMENT AND STORAGE TO INCREASE THE AVAILABILITY AND VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES	People consume more fruits and vegetables when they have more options to choose from.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Make fruits and vegetables a larger share of food distributed.</li> <li>➤ Increase the variety, offer different types of fruits &amp; vegetables.</li> <li>➤ Offer different forms - fresh, frozen, dried and canned.</li> <li>➤ Improve storage capabilities. Use display coolers with glass doors or other specially designed coolers for produce. Consider improving systems for root storage and winter crop storage.</li> <li>➤ Improve systems to procure more fruits and vegetables. Consider additional pick-ups of produce from the VT Foodbank, engage staff and volunteers to glean from local farms and farmer's markets, implement a grow-a-row program (community members donate produce from their gardens), etc.</li> <li>➤ Consider adopting food policies and certain nutritional standards for purchased foods.</li> <li>➤ Other Strategy: (describe)</li> </ul>
3 INCREASE THE CONVENIENCE OF FRUIT AND VEGETABLES	Convenience and accessibility is a significant predictor of fruit and vegetable consumption.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Consider new and creative ways to schedule produce distribution days for increased convenience and accessibility. For example, community dinners combined with produce distribution and/or other special produce distribution days.</li> <li>➤ Pre-package / pre-bag fruits and vegetables for added convenience, accessibility and appeal.</li> <li>➤ Lightly process to better preserve and stabilize produce.</li> <li>➤ Other Strategy: (describe)</li> </ul>
4 PROVIDE	Many people are interested in opportunities to eat a little better, but they		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Promote produce with signage, posters and other printed materials - including photos.</li> <li>➤ Promote healthy foods with shelf labels highlighting healthy options that are client favorites.</li> </ul>

# MINI GRANTS


Making it easy for sites to purchase signage and materials.



## SIGNS

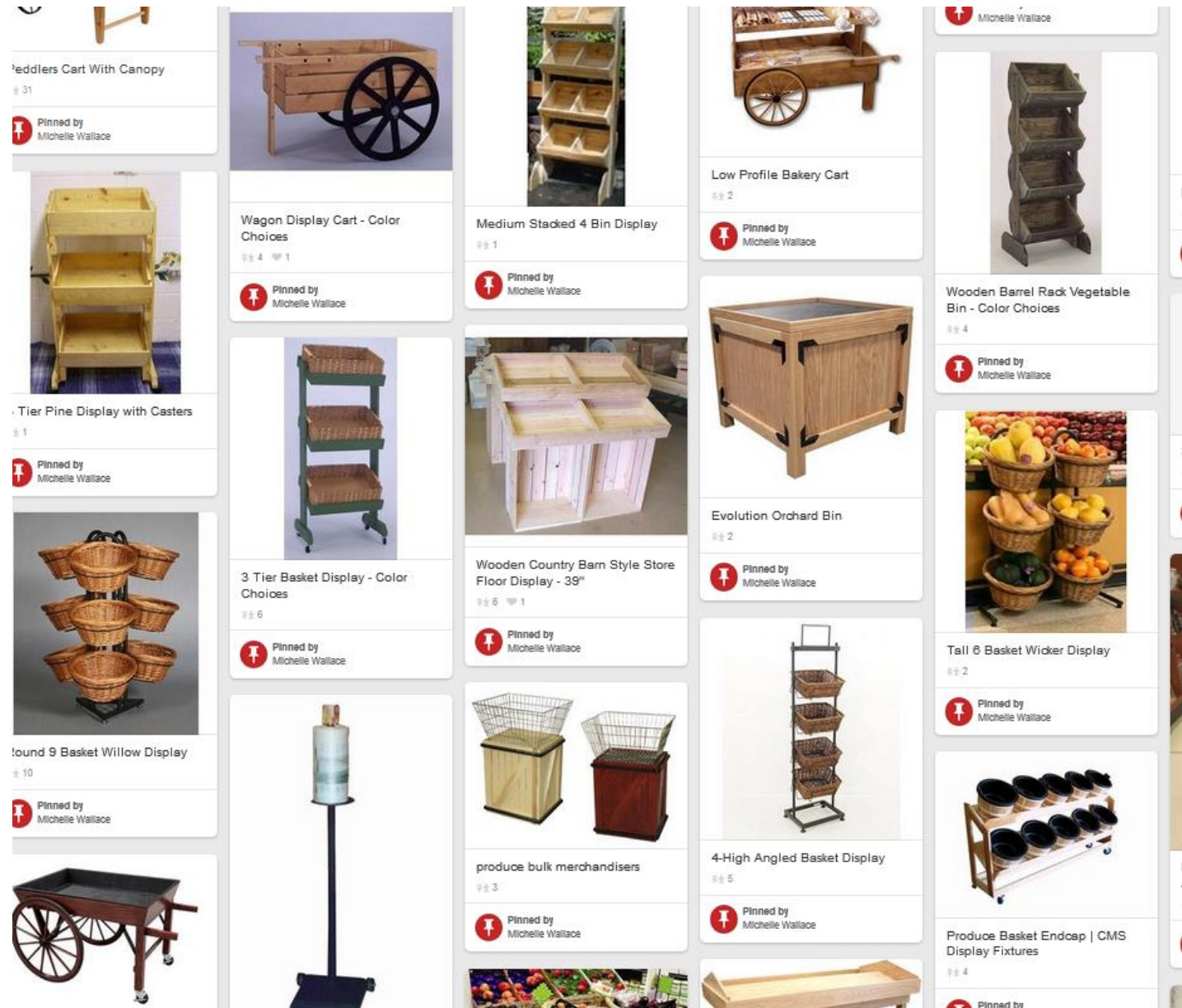
Item and Web Site Link	Photo	Description	Cost	# of items requested
<a href="#">Slide-In Sign Holder Stands for 8.5 x 11 Signage (Floorstanding)</a>  <a href="#">Includes a 6-1/2" Diameter Weighted Plastic Deck Base</a>	 <p>Overall Adjustable Height 26-1/8" - 37"</p>	These slide-in sign holder stands with optional wet-erase board. Either insert your own 8 1/2 x11 graphics or use the wet-erase board. Users can write their own messages with liquid chalk. The write-on surface is easy to clean using a damp cloth.	\$18	
<a href="#">18 x 26 A-frame Chalkboard, Black Wet Erase Surface, Double Sided - Black</a>		Designed for use with liquid chalk. Double-sided, 18" x 26" blackboard for displaying messages back-to-back. Features metal hinges for long term use.	\$68	
<a href="#">Liquid Chalk Markers 8 Pack</a>		Designed to be used on surfaces that are approved for liquid chalk. Creates bold strong lines of color – better than dry erase markers.	\$19	

## SHELF LABELS

Item and Web Site Link	Photo	Description	Cost	# of items requested
<a href="#">4-1/8" Clip-On Deli Tags for Wet Erase Markers, 4.5" Clip</a>		Sign Clip Includes tag for Messages Tag is 4"x3" and Clip is 4.5"x0.9". Write-on display cleans easily with a	\$25 (for a set of 25)	

# Identify Display and Signage Items

- Produce Displays: [www.bit.ly/vtdisplays](http://www.bit.ly/vtdisplays)
- Produce Signage: [www.bit.ly/vtsignage](http://www.bit.ly/vtsignage)





# Be Inspired & Share Best Practices

[www.instagram.com/vtfreshprogram/](http://www.instagram.com/vtfreshprogram/)

Instagram



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vtfreshprogram

EDIT PROFILE



Michelle Wallace VT FRESH is a Vermont Foodbank program that celebrates fresh food & helps to transform community food shelves with beautiful displays & cooking demos. [www.vtfoodbank.org](http://www.vtfoodbank.org)

18 posts 5 followers 36 following

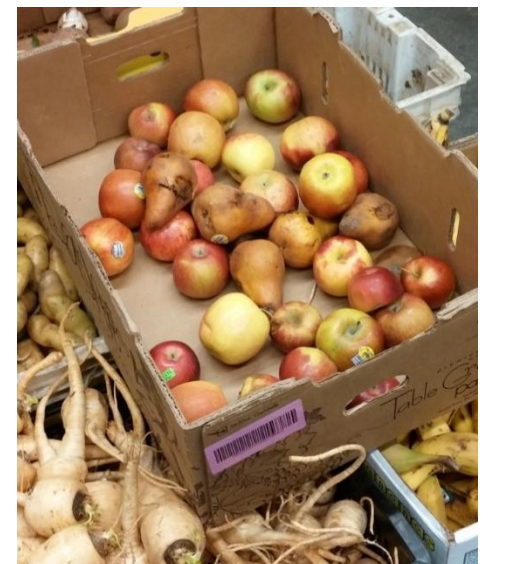


# CHALLENGES

Produce Availability & Quality

Staff & Volunteer & Time

Cardboard boxes just keep showing up!





**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**



**BEFORE**



**AFTER**

# THANK YOU



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# Thank you

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VERMONT FOODBANK

**ALL VT FRESH RESOURCES  
AVAILABLE AT:**  
[www.bit.ly/allvtfresh](http://www.bit.ly/allvtfresh)

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