

VT Fresh: Transforming the food environment of local food distribution sites



Vermont Foodbank
gather · share · nurture



Sharing the Joy and Beauty of fresh food

- VT Fresh aims to expand access, improve availability and increase the utilization of fruits and vegetables by transforming food environments and food distribution.
- VT Fresh incorporates strategies for improving the food environment with displays, messaging tools, simple taste tests, storage and other systems that help make it easier for food shelf visitors to access and choose fruits and vegetables.
- Since 2014, VT Fresh has been implemented at over 120 food shelves, meal sites, SASH Sites, and other food distribution sites in Vermont.

GOALS

- VT Fresh aims to increase access to fruits and vegetables amongst food insecure households. Inspired by behavioral economics research.



Change the FOOD ENVIRONMENT in community food shelves by increasing the prominence, convenience and availability of fruits and vegetables.



Facilitate PREFERENCE CHANGE and increase knowledge, awareness and skills for selecting and preparing these foods through cooking demos and taste tests.



Affect fruit and vegetable CONSUMPTION DECISIONS by improving displays, signage and promotion of these foods.



STRATEGIES

1. Layout and prominence of produce displays
2. Point-of-decision prompts and signage to influence choices for fruits vegetables.
3. Procurement to increase availability and variety





STRATEGIES

4. **Storage** to increase availability and distribution

5. **Convenience** to increase accessibility

6. Enhance taste expectations and facilitate preference change



FOOD SHELF BEFORE AND AFTER



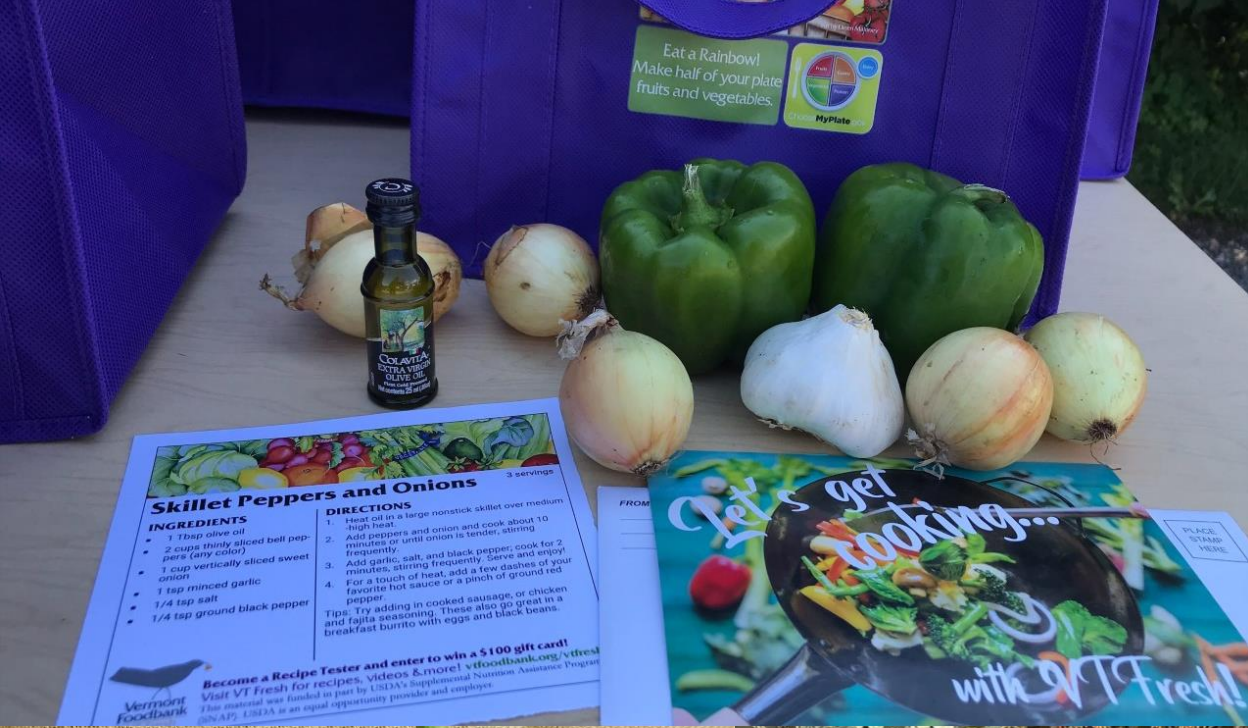
FOOD SHELF BEFORE AND AFTER



TASTE TEST COOKING DEMOS

- Food is a great way to connect with people!
- An individual's willingness to try something new and decide that they will like it is greatly influenced by the people around them.
- Create your own cooking demo set up!
 - All the demo materials we use are linked on our website!
 - Reach out for more info!





RECIPE KITS

- Recipe Kits are “ingredient bundles” that research has shown increases appeal and encourages people to try new foods.
- Create your own with the help of our VT Fresh Recipe Kit Toolkit found on our webpage.
- Great for food shelves, meal sites, parent child centers, etc.
- Our recipe kits pictured here include:
 - A simple vegetable side dish recipe
 - Small tote bag
 - Miniature olive oils, maple syrups, honey, etc.
 - Needed produce ingredients



Program Impact

"As a result of our partnership with VT Fresh and the items given to us and purchased via the grant, we were able to really vamp up how we display fresh fruits and vegetables. We are now able to set up a mini farmers market every week during our weekly food distribution and our families that use the food shelf are now able to select fresh fruits and veggies themselves to take home. We are also able to use more fresh fruits and vegetables in our meal program because the new food processor saves us time in processing and serving them. The glass door refrigerator gives us a dedicated place to store fruits and vegetables that need refrigeration for the days in between pick-up from the food distribution. We have a lovely woman who is a single mother to four children from the community who uses our food shelf. There are many weeks where she would like the fresh fruits and vegetables but is not in need of the canned and shelf stable goods we put into weekly food boxes. With our farmers market set up she is able to come at her leisure and "shop" for just the things she needs to make her children's meals consist of the fresh fruits and veggies she has trouble affording." –RCPCC Brandon



VT FRESH MINI-GRANT

- Vermont Foodbank network partners and VeggieVanGo sites are awarded funding for items and projects that increase access to, and the availability and consumption of, fruits and vegetables.
 - Examples: refrigeration, shelving, displays, cooking class materials, taste test supplies, home delivery support and more!
- The VT Fresh Mini Grant cycle occurs once a year and is due in mid-January. Please reach out to Rbertola@vtfoodbank.org for more information.

Examples of Community Led Projects

Retreat Farm- Community Food Project, Brattleboro

- "The Vermont Fresh grant and free materials had a huge impact on the quality of our ability to successfully serve the community this year. Due in part to our participation in VT Fresh, we have been able to successfully serve upwards of 45 refugee families and 15 Brattleboro senior individuals and households through our free weekly CSA, and upwards of 50 households per week through our free Community Fridge. We feel we have done a great job at accomplishing the following VT Fresh objectives: Improving the visibility, prominence, and layout of produce displays; Improving procurement to increase the availability and variety of fruits and vegetables, despite unexpected challenges; and Optimizing convenience to increase accessibility of fruits and vegetables."



Woodstock Highschool WG, Woodstock

- Woodstock High School WG used their VT Fresh funds to design and print a beautiful zine focused on preparing winter veggies



Vershire Food Shelf



Hinesburg Community Resource Center



BROC Rutland



Windsor SASH



Family Center of Washington County



Reading-West Windsor Food Shelf



Slate Valley Cares Right to Food Center



Hope Lyndonville

VT FRESH WEB PAGE



- Click [Here](#) to Visit
- Find more information on implementing VT Fresh, recipes to download and print, cooking tips and more!



[Get Help](#)

[Get Involved](#)

[What We Do](#)

[DONATE](#)



Cooking With VT Fresh

Cooking with VT Fresh is fun, easy and saves money! Each recipe highlights a delicious fruit or vegetable grown in Vermont along with simple ingredients. Here you'll find seasonal recipes, including many kid-approved dishes! [Start cooking with VT Fresh!](#)



Kitchen Tips & Tools

Browse resources for quick access to tips for preparing, storing and choosing fruits and vegetables. We've compiled this list to help make eating nutritious foods more time-and-budget friendly. Dive in, have a look, and lets get cooking! [Explore our resources for cooks!](#)



Community Toolkit

VT Fresh supports food shelves and meal sites to transform their space with "nudges": simple taste tests, beautiful produce displays, recipe kits, signage and messaging tools that help make fruits and vegetables the easy choice. Since 2014, VT Fresh has been implemented at over 100 Vermont food shelves and mobile food pantry VeggieVanGo events and has been adapted by over 20 organizations across the country. [Here you will find tools and resources to implement VT Fresh at your site!](#)



About VT Fresh

VT Fresh expands access, improves availability and increases the



Get News, Event Updates, Recipes and More Delivered Straight to Your Inbox Once a Month!

[SUBSCRIBE](#)



Are You In Need of Help?

English ▾



PROGRAM IMPACT

- **73%** of VT Fresh participants indicated intention to eat more of particular fruits or vegetables as a result of activity.
 - **212** VT Fresh direct education activities completed
 - **728** VT Fresh Recipes Kits distributed
 - **14,164** Participant contacts of VT Fresh activities
- **120** community partners received VT Fresh mini grants to increase usage, distribution, and procurement of fresh produce and
 - These included community food shelves, meal sites, SASH sites, community partners, senior centers, school programs, etc.
 - Partnered with sites in all 14 counties!
 - **71%** of sites reported implementing a NEW strategy this year to increase usage, distribution, and procurement of fresh produce!

