

Community Assistance Network of Crescent City, CA received \$44,684 to expand existing EBT services at the Crescent City Farmers Market (CCFM), increase the availability of fresh produce to low-income residents, and strengthen both local farmers and the CCFM through promotion and advertising.

[Final Report FY 10](#)

FMPF Final Performance Report

Date: 29, April 2013
Recipient name: Community Assistance Network
Title of Project: Del Norte County Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Promotion Project
Grant number: CA-137-10
Location: Crescent City, CA
Contact name: Stuart Nichols
Telephone number: 707 464-9190 ext. 111
Final Report

Activities and Milestones

The Del Norte County Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Promotion Project has successfully raised EBT purchases at the Crescent City Farmers Market during the 2011/12 market season. We were able to leverage additional local funds to make our FMPF-funded work stronger and are on target to meet the participation goals set out in our grant.

Advertising/Promotion/Supplies

We have used a variety of traditional and social media outlets and outreach campaigns to reach CalFresh recipients. Our primary media purchases included four months of daily radio advertising supplemented with six weeks of newspaper advertisements throughout the season. Our target audience is primarily low-income residents who use CalFresh benefits, but all advertising included basic information about the Crescent City Farmers Market for a more general audience as well.

The radio advertising represents the bulk of our advertising budget. The radio campaign delivered a variety of messages about the importance of eating fresh fruits and vegetables in addition to the main message that EBT cards are accepted at our farmers market, including messages from two local pediatricians; a spot in English, Hmong, and Spanish; and a spot highlighting our local hospital's sponsorship of a market match program. Newspaper advertising spanned the first month of the market, concentrating on the availability of EBT, the market's opening day, and the times and place of the market. A mid-season ad buy stressed the market match program and the peak of the season produce.

In addition to media outlets, we created multiple brochures, flyers, and posters for distribution and display throughout the community. Brochures about the program generally and a flyer about the market match program were distributed through the Del Norte Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) offices, through both of our local food banks, at the WIC offices, and other venues likely to reach our target audience.

EBT/Credit/Debit Technology

The Crescent City Farmers Market has a central EBT machine and uses a token system for payment at individual booths. The market manager and a volunteer staff are centrally located

at the main entrance to the market with large banners advertising the EBT machine and services. In our grant application, we set a target to double EBT purchases at market compared to 2010, which was the first year EBT cards were accepted. For the complete 2010 season, EBT purchases totaled \$1,904. As of the September 24th market, 2011 EBT purchases are \$2,725, with an additional \$1,005 in market match purchases, for a total of \$3,514.

Producers

There was no formal survey of the market producers to evaluate the success from their perspective. Several vendors have indicated higher sales in conversations with them, with one vendor averaging about \$100/week in EBT tokens. For a small market, that is a significant income, representing more than five weeks of vendor fees.

Education/Training/Technical assistance

During the pre-season vendors meeting, the market manager conducted refresher training about EBT use at the market. He covered allowable and non-allowable purchases and the token system. During the market season, all vendors were supplied with laminated cards detailing EBT use, allowable products, and the token system. Similar cards were available to consumers when they used the EBT station to purchase tokens.

Establishing new market

N/A

Commercial kitchen/Increasing farmer income

N/A

Problems and Delays

Our one significant hurdle in this project was a change in the way our local DHHS sends mail to CalFresh recipients. As part of our original plan, DHHS was going to send our EBT information to all recipients and we had budgeted for those mailing costs. Over the winter, however, they changed from doing their own mailings to using a central state services office in Sacramento and no longer have the ability to include additional materials. This definitely affected our ability to reach all recipients and we worked around it as much as possible. DHHS still sends mail directly to recipients living in local RV parks and included brochures in mailings to approximately 300 RV recipients. We provided brochures, flyers, and posters to caseworkers who sign up and renew CalFresh benefits, so all new recipients received EBT information. We also provided a short training to DHHS staff about how the EBT system works at the farmers market so they would be able to answer questions clients raised. Previously, we had learned that many of the caseworkers were unaware of the program (in 2010).

Funding to Date

As originally planned in the grant, the bulk of our promotion efforts and funding focused on Year One of the grant. We have expended most of our media budget and a considerable portion of our staffing. Due to minor changes and our inability to mail out information to all

recipients, we do have more funding available for Year Two than originally planned. This will help us continue to promote EBT at the market in 2012 on a larger scale.

We have not made any significant changes or amendments to our line-item budget and we do not anticipate doing so over the next year.

Additional Information

As mentioned briefly above, we were able to leverage our FMPP funding to secure a local match to initiate a market match program. Our local hospital, Sutter Coast Hospital, provided \$2,000 in matching funds. This allowed us to provide an incentive for people to shop at the CCFM, especially first-time consumers. When consumers used their EBT cards to purchase at least \$10 in market tokens, they received \$5 worth of free tokens in addition to their purchase.