

## **FY 2012 - Suitland Family and life Development**

**\$77,863** to Suitland Family and Life Development, Lanham, MD, to buy equipment and infrastructure to establish a new farmers market with a professional market manager that will serve low income residents of a food desert.

[Final Report](#)

## Farmers Market Promotion Program

### Final Performance Report

For the Period of October 1, 2013 – September 30, 2014

**Date:** February 12, 2015  
**Recipient Name:** Suitland Family and Life Development Corporation, Inc.  
**Project Title:** Prince George's Urban Agriculture Center  
Suitland Food Desert Project  
**Grant Number:** 12-25-G-1577  
**Project Location:** Suitland, Maryland  
**Year of Grant Award:** 2012  
**Amount Awarded:** \$77,863  
**Contact:** Sylvia L. Quinton – (240) 463-5179 - [Sylvia@suitlandonline.us](mailto:Sylvia@suitlandonline.us)

#### Program Summary:

The goal of the Prince George's Urban Agriculture Center - Suitland Food Desert Project was to increase access to healthy food for low-income consumers in Suitland, Maryland, by establishing a new Farmers Market. Our objective was to serve 100 consumers each week through direct produce-to-consumer marketing. The beneficiaries were residents in the Suitland community and collaborators included local farmers, producers, vendors and the local middle school. Our most impressive measured result was the consistency of the market; healthy food was available to the consumers every Tuesday from the first week of June through the last week of October for two years--rain or shine--with the exception of the government shut-down in 2013. Prior to this grant activity, there were limited healthy food options for low-income residents. Implementation of the Suitland Farmers Market increased the energy, consciousness and awareness of healthy food and healthy eating.

#### Goals and Objectives:

Goals of the Suitland Farmers Market were 1) to increase access to high-quality fresh locally grown produce for low-income residents by conducting weekly Farmers Market from the first week in June through the first week of November, 2) to increase distribution points (from 3 distribution points to 4) for locally grown produce in Suitland, 3) to increase healthy eating and active living in Suitland serving 100 new low-income customers each week, and 4) to increase the awareness of and promote healthy eating and active living through urban agriculture, nutritional programming, and related activities and events for Suitland residents.

There was a great need for the Suitland Farmers Market because low-income residents had limited access to healthy food and nutrition education in the community. With liquor stores, convenience stores and fast food restaurants outnumbering grocery stores, low-income residents lacked healthy food options. The Suitland Farmers Market provided a festive atmosphere for relaxing, shopping and gaining education about healthy food, healthy eating and active living.

**Activities:**

1. Conducted massive cleanup of the premises to obtain an Occupancy Permit each program year.
2. Advertised in local newspapers for contract positions (Market Manager and Market Mentors).
3. Interviewed farmers, producers and other venders.
4. Recruited volunteers to operate market.
5. Rented Jiffy Johns for patron convenience.
6. PRIMARY ACTIVITY: Conducted weekly Farmers Market from June-November in Year 1 and June-October in Year 2. In Year 1, the market hours were noon – 5:00pm. In Year 2, the market hours were changed to 3:00 – 7:00pm. The hours were changed to better align with the foot traffic.
7. Conducted weekly debriefing meetings with volunteers, market staff and other members of project team.
8. Developed a stream of 70 customers at the Farmers Market each week. Collected baseline data from customers in Year 1 and Year 2.
9. Increased the awareness of healthy food and healthy eating by conducting nutrition education and food preparation demonstrations at the Farmers Market. UnitedHealthcare visited the market monthly and supported a Chef that conducted educational demonstrations using produce that was sold at the market. Chef Gail provided a Market to Mealtimes program. She provided recipes for use, food preparation, take home material, and information on including more fruits and vegetables (fresh produce) in your diet. Nine demonstrations were conducted: 5 during Year 1 and 4 during Year 2. UnitedHealthcare also has a van with healthy living information that visited the market monthly. Prior to the Suitland Farmers Market, no healthy fresh, locally-grown food options or nutrition education information was easily accessible for low-income consumers in Suitland.
10. In partnership with the local 4H, conducted an educational demonstration on “Using Rain Barrels.” Participants learned how to recycle rainwater for use on their property while also combating storm water pollution entering the Chesapeake Bay.

11. Closed average sales of \$25 per customer each week.
12. Attended state training to provide SNAP and WIC for low-income customers. Operated one EBT terminal in Year 1, with sales of \$294. Did not use the terminal in Year 2 because of low usage.
13. Developed and designed collateral material to advertise the availability of fresh locally-grown produce and acceptability of EBT. Advertising included 8.5x11 flyers, postcard flyers, yard signs and posters (images of advertising provided via email dated 2/27/15). These advertising formats were developed based availability and accessibility. Marketing collateral was distributed at businesses, local schools, local stores, the Suitland Metro Station, and apartment complexes in Suitland, including Windsor Crossing, Sussex Square and Whitehall Square Apartments.
14. Developed Facebook page (<http://www.SuitlandFarmersMarket>, also see attached screenshot of FB page). Distributed a weekly e-newsletter that included nutrition education information, recipes, the market calendar and other useful information (see attached e-newsletter). Our online presence developed as we accumulated emails/online contact information at the market. E-group distribution included lists provided by constituents from the Office of the County Executive, the County Councilmember, and Civic Association. No survey was conducted at the market to determine who many customers learned of the market through the various advertising.
15. Became participants and developed relationships in the State and County Farmer Market network.
16. In Year 1, developed "Quick Steps to Operating a Farmers Market" to guide our process for in Year 2 (copy provided via copy attached hereto and email dated 2/27/2015).
17. Collected contact information from customers interested in receiving Suitland Farmers Market emails and e-newsletters.

**Accomplishments:**

1. Provided healthy locally-grown food options to approximately 70 customers in the Suitland community each week. Before our market, no retail locations existed where residents could purchase locally-grown food. We did not reach our projected goal of 100 customers in Year 2.
2. Increased the awareness, energy and consciousness of low-income residents and others regarding healthy food options and healthy eating. Before Suitland Farmers Market, no nutrition education, healthy food preparation demonstrations and healthy eating tips were available to residents in Suitland. Every Tuesday from May 2012 (12 noon to 5:00 pm) to October 2014 (3:00 pm to 7:00 pm), the market created a community presence, at a highly visible community location, with one-pointed focus on local fresh produce and healthy eating. We transformed the energy in the community with tents, food

trucks, farmers, county leaders, and community stakeholders gathering with a concentration (focus) on eating fresh local produce and making local produce accessible in a food desert. Every Tuesday a blighted, distressed community came alive with uncommon positive activities. People gathered to talk and discussed healthy foods as opposed to the negative activity that is normally the highlight of the community.

Rain or shine, we opened the market to build trust with the residents; to let the residents know that we were committed to providing them with consistent fresh produce. On way heavy rainy day, a regular customer came by just to win a bet with a friend. She told the friend, "I know they are open, I know they are there." So memorable is the excitement in her eyes when she saw that we were opened, using trash bags as rain coats and not minding that we were getting soaked from head to toe. We continued to bring forth the joy and light with bright smiles and customer engagement despite the weather conditions. We weathered (pun) the elements to ensure our residents had access to fresh produce that they had become accustomed to having access to on Tuesday's.

We consciously discussed the importance of the perception in the community that every Tuesday, despite the challenges, we had to be open. A key part of our promotion strategy was consistency with the residents. We would say, "McDonald's does not close because of rain or a community murder and neither do we. If McDonald's is open, then we open as well."

Imagine a distressed community, where the buildings and individuals looked beat down and worn out, yet on Tuesday's the energy in the community shifts because people were not just walking with their heads down going from point A to point B. But it was a place created for them to stop and be recognized. All types of people stopped by the Farmers Market.

During the summer months, the president of the Suitland Action Team, the community police officers, residents, and employees at the Census Bureau would eat watermelons and talk about how they were going to prepare the food they had just bought from the market. This transformed the energy in the community and raised the consciousness about eating local produce.

One day a senior citizen came and the farmer had eggplant. Because community stakeholders were gathered discussing eggplants she was able to enter into a discussion about eggplants. She said that she always wanted to know how to cook eggplant. We

were able to have this discussion with her and raise her awareness about foods that she was less familiar.

The Suitland Farmers Market provided a fun, relaxing and safe environment (“meeting place”) for residents to gather each week to discuss healthy eating and nutrition. Prior to the Suitland Farmers Market, no such meeting place existed for the residents.

3. Introduced approximately 20 farmers, producers and vendors to the Suitland community, for the potential of new business outside of the market.
4. Engaged stakeholders in the community, including Federal workers, school students and parents, residents, business owners. Provided an opportunity to various sectors to connect that would not otherwise.

**Beneficiaries:**

1. The Farmers Market is located in Suitland, Prince George’s County, Maryland, and borders Southeast Washington, DC. A predominately African American community (91%), the per capita income is approximately \$26,000, with approximately 7.4% below the poverty line. The direct beneficiaries of the grant activities were residents in the community, including the residents of neighboring apartment complexes and parents of students of Suitland Elementary School located directly behind the Farmers Market. Also, according to our baseline data, employees from the Suitland Federal Center located directly across the street would also visit the market occasionally.
2. Though we made EBT available for low-income customers, EBT usage was very low in Year 1, at only \$249. Low-income customers were the majority of our patrons.
3. Local farmers and vendors reported consistent sales each week at approximately \$25 per customer. Local businesses were not surveyed to determine if their traffic increased on the days that the market was open.

**Lessons Learned:**

1. Late afternoon/early evening hours worked best for our Market location; the best market hours for Suitland: 3:00pm – 7:00 pm. Patrons enjoyed visiting the market after work instead of midday.
2. Consistency is mandatory and this was a great accomplishment. Regular customers relied on the market each week regardless of weather conditions or low foot traffic.
3. More education and outreach are required to significantly impact the health behaviors of our community. Though our market was successful, in that we provided access to locally-grown, healthy food options, changing the eating habits of the community will require more education to increase participation.

4. If we could do it over, we would integrate more nutrition awareness activities, and engage more stakeholders, especially the federal employees, the County school system and the media.



**EVERY TUESDAY**  
**3PM - 7PM**

**SUITLAND**  
  
**FARMERS MARKET**  
*"Healthier choices close to you."*

**SUITLAND TECHNOLOGY CENTER - PARKING LOT**  
**4508 Suitland Rd. Suitland, MD 20746** (next door to the Shell Gas station)  
**We except WIC, SNAP/ EBT and FMNP DEBIT. CREDIT. CASH.**

4508

**SUITLAND  
FARMERS MARKET**  
**EVERY TUESDAY**  
**3-7pm**  
Suitland Technology Center  
Parking Lot Next to Shell Station

# NATIONAL BIKE TO WORK DAY



## MAY 16, 2014



You can now register at [www.biketoworkmetrodc.org](http://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org) for Bike to Work Day.

**Register**



**Suitland**

Register at the Suitland Pit Stop  
and receive a free T-shirt

4508 Suitland Road,  
Suitland, MD 20746

[www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/suitland](http://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/suitland)

**Bowie**

15606 Emerald Way  
Bowie, MD 20716

[www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/bowie-town-center-pit-stop](http://www.biketoworkmetrodc.org/bowie-town-center-pit-stop)



United States<sup>™</sup>  
**Census**  
Bureau



**SUITLAND  
FARMERS MARKET**

**EVERY TUESDAY  
3-7pm**

Suitland Technology Center  
Parking Lot Next to Shell



Columbia Heights

@10.5

itasing

erolq79116MVT







Customer: A man wearing a light blue long-sleeved button-down shirt, dark grey trousers, and a light blue bucket hat. He is standing on the left side of the stall, facing the vendor.

Vendor: A man wearing a grey t-shirt, dark shorts, and a tan and black baseball cap. He is standing on the right side of the stall, facing the customer.

Produce items on the table:

- Green Beans
- Red or White Potatoes
- Asparagus
- Hydroponic Tomatoes

Green Beans  
\$3-

Red or White Potatoes  
\$3.50/qt

Asparagus  
\$5.00

Hydroponic Tomatoes  
\$2.59/lb



Car Steres  
Steps

San Francisco

USED

8-PF R15A1





SUTLAND  
FARMERS MARKET  
EVERY TUESDAY  
3-7 PM

Squash &  
Zucchini  
\$2.50/lb





GONE GREENS LLC  
FEATURES  
COLLARD GREENS GROWN  
IN  
SUITLAND MD

Collard Greens Grown In Suitland



PLEASE TRY FREE SAMPLES

PUSH

Suitland  
Farmer  
Market  
Today  
4508 Suitland  
Between Shell S  
And Post Offi

SPACE HEROES



WATERMELON

FROM EASTERN  
SHORE

SIGNICADE  
SIGNAGE  
CORPORATION  
1000  
1000  
1000

**Suitland  
Farmers  
Market  
Today**

**4508 Suitland Rd**  
Between Shell Station  
And Post Office



## MARKET TO MEALTIME!

*Greens, Roots, and Fruits*

### GREEN OF THE MONTH: KALE

Kale is in season from May to June,  
and September to November.

cooked

## Kale with Nuts & Raisins



#### Ingredients:

- 1 bunch of kale, washed and dried
- 2 cloves garlic
- 2 tablespoons of olive oil
- handful of nuts (any kind is fine) and raisins
- salt to taste

#### Directions:

1. Remove kale stems and chop kale finely.
2. Heat oven to 350°. Toast nuts for 5 minutes.
3. Heat olive oil in medium frying pan. Cook chopped garlic for 30 seconds. Toss in kale and cook on medium-low for 4 minutes. Toss in raisins and cook for 1 more minute on low. Turn off heat, add toasted nuts, and mix. Add salt to taste.

*Makes 5 1-cup servings*



*Always wash your hands,  
fruits, and vegetables  
before preparing food*



## MARKET TO MEALTIME!

*Greens, Roots, and Fruits*

raw

### Kale Salad



### KALE: DID YOU KNOW?

During the Middle Ages, kale was one of the most common vegetables across Europe.

#### Ingredients:

8-10 kale leaves (1 bunch), washed and dried  
2 tablespoons of lemon juice  
2 garlic cloves  
1-2 tablespoons of olive oil  
salt  
1 tablespoon of tahini (optional)  
plain bread crumbs (optional)  
a handful of nuts and/or raisins (optional)  
any grated cheese (optional)

#### Directions:

1. Remove kale stems and chop kale finely. Place in a large bowl.
2. Chop garlic finely. In a small bowl, add garlic, olive oil, lemon juice, tahini (optional), and salt to taste.
3. Pour dressing over kale and toss well.
4. Let salad sit for at least 5 minutes. Mix in optional ingredients.

Note- You can easily substitute these ingredients for similar ingredients available.

**Makes 5 3/4-cup servings**

MARYLAND  
EXTENSION



**EVERY TUESDAY**

**JUNE 3rd - NOV 4th**

**SUITLAND TECHNOLOGY CENTER - PARKING LOT**

**12PM - 5PM**

**SUITLAND**



**FARMERS MARKET**

*"Healthier choices close to you."*

**4508 Suitland Rd.**

**Suitland, MD 20746**

(next door to the Shell Gas station)

**We accept WIC, SNAP/ EBT and FMNP**

**DEBIT, CREDIT, CASH.**



**Suitland  
Farmers  
Market  
Today**

**4508 Suitland Rd**  
Between Shell Station  
And Post Office

**Borinquen  
Lunch Box**



*We Cater*  
Special Events  
Private Parties  
Birthdays  
Anniversaries

**EVERY TUESDAY**

**JUNE 4th - Nov 5th**

SUITLAND TECHNOLOGY CENTER - PARKING LOT

**12-5 PM**

**SUITLAND**

**FARMERS MARKET**

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Suitland, MD 20746**

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**EVERY TUESDAY**

**JUNE 3rd - Nov 4th**

SUITLAND TECHNOLOGY CENTER - PARKING LOT

**12PM - 5PM**

**SUITLAND**

**FARMERS MARKET**

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Suitland, MD 20746**

(next door to the Shell Gas station)

**We accept WIC, SNAP, EBT and FMNP  
DEBIT, CREDIT, CASH.**

ENCE

# SUITLAND FARMERS MARKET

*EVERY TUESDAY*  
*3-6pm*

Suitland Technology Center  
Parking Lot Next to Shell Station

**Suitland  
Farmers  
Market  
Today**

**4508 Suitland Rd  
Between Shell Station  
And Post Office**

**EVENT TUESDAY**  
**12 PM - 5 PM**  
**SUITLAND FARMERS MARKET**  
*Healthier choices close to you.*  
**SUITLAND TECHNOLOGY CENTER - PARKING LOT**  
**4508 Suitland Rd. Suitland, MD 21076** (next door to the Shell Gas station)  
**WE ACCEPT WIC, SNAP, EBT and FMAP. DEBIT, CREDIT, CASH.**



A photograph of an outdoor market stand. The stand is covered by a blue canopy with a white sign that reads "GREEN FARM FRESH PRODUCE" and a phone number "443-803-9442". A man in a blue shirt is leaning over a table of fresh produce, specifically several trays of red cherry tomatoes. Other people are visible in the background, and a white truck is parked behind the stand. The scene is set outdoors on a paved area under a clear blue sky with some clouds.

GREEN FARM  
FRESH PRODUCE  
443-803-9442

**Farmers Market  
Nutrition Program  
(FMNP - WIC & Seniors)  
Checks  
and  
WIC Fruit &  
Vegetable Checks**

**WELCOME HERE**



Sponsored by:  
Maryland WIC Program 1-800-242-4WIC (4942)  
Maryland Department of Agriculture 1-800-495-5590  
Maryland Department of Aging 1-800-243-3425

USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.

ONLY

ONLY

FedEx  
Ground

PUSH BUTTON TO CROSS  
SUITLAND ROAD  
START CROSSING  
Watch For  
Turning Cars  
DON'T START  
Finish Crossing  
If Start  
TIME REMAINING  
To Finish Crossing  
PEDESTRIANS  
SHOULD NOT BE  
IMPULSIVE



Farmers Market  
**TODAY**  
WIC/ EBT Accepted  
→  
4508 Suitland Rd  
Between The Shell Station  
And Post Office



# Farmers Market

## Tuesdays 12-5pm

4508 Suitland Rd

Between the Shell Gas  
Station and Post Office



We Accept Food Stamps!



100% CASH & DOLLAR STORE

RES. BABY. KITCHEN. PARTY. TOOLS. SCHOOL

**NO DUMPING**  
VIOLATORS  
WILL BE  
PROSECUTED

**NO TRESPASSING,**  
INCLUDING  
SLEEPING,  
VENDORS OR  
LOITERING.  
Violators will be prosecuted  
in accordance with  
Article 27-577 of the  
Annotated Code of Maryland.

**Farmers Market  
TODAY**  
WIC/ EBT Accepted  
  
**4508 Suitland Rd**  
Between The Shell Station  
And Post Office

Unlimited  
**4G**  
internet

ATM  
**SUITLAND**  
**STORE**  
AGE TAG & TITLE

**USDA FARMERS MARKET  
APPLYING FOR TEMPORARY USE & OCCUPANCY PERMIT  
(180 days)**

1. Obtain site plan from Park & Planning at PG Administration Bldg. (\$3-8 per copy; 2 copies required)
2. Prepare an authorization letter on STEER letterhead for whoever will complete the permits process.
3. Go to permits office in Largo.
  - a. Complete U&O application (submit 2 site plans, \$85 check and completed application)
  - b. Walk through includes Structural Review and Fire Review.
    - i. For Structural Review – Indicate on the site plans the area that is designated for the FM
    - ii. For Fire Review – Be informed that the County will require a more detailed process if tents and other structures will be on the premises. Be sure to inform vendors that Fire Resistant Certifications must be provided if tents will be used. Also, have a fire extinguisher onsite. Please note that the Fire Inspection only takes place on Tuesdays and Thursdays so it is suggested to go through this process on either of these days. Also, expect to spend a full day to complete the application and review processes.
  - c. Pay cashier
  - d. Complete Issuance Review
  - e. Call Inspections to schedule site appointment – This appointment must be scheduled within 7 days after the Issuance Review.
4. Conduct Inspection – County Inspector will conduct a site visit.
5. Complete any tasks requested by the Inspector.

## QUICK STEPS TO OPERATING A FARMERS MARKET

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### **STEP 1: Create a Farmers Market Team**

January

Project Director: Sylvia Quinton

Site/Vendor Coordinator: Billo Harper

Permit Coordinator: Tanya Morrison

Market Managers: Jazmen Lively and Antionette McMullen

Market Set Up and Take Down: Thomas Richardson

### **STEP 2: Review General Farmers Market Operation Process and Rules**

January

- Verify USDA certified to accept SNAP/EBT
- Verify MDA certified to accept WIC, FVC, and FNMP
- Update Suitlandonline.us website (applications) and attachment A
- Establish key dates for operation

### **STEP 3: Connect with county and state farmers market associations/coalitions**

February

Prince George's County Farmers Market Meeting - Janna Howley; [jhowley@umd.edu](mailto:jhowley@umd.edu)

The Maryland Famers Market Association - Amy Crone; [acrone@marylandfma.org](mailto:acrone@marylandfma.org)

These organizations provide information on the "how to" in Farmers Market operations and trending policy and practices in the county and state.

### **STEP 4: Review lessons learned from previous year's operations**

March

Hold a debrief meeting on previous year farmers market

### **STEP 5: Create a contact list of key resources**

March

Health Department for food vendors: Debra Freeman: (301) 883-7694

Permits Office: Clarence Moseley (301) 883-5925; [cemoseley@co.pg.md.us](mailto:cemoseley@co.pg.md.us)

Inspector: Lorenzo Hill; (240) 832-8540

Outreach agencies:

**STEP 6: Secure Permit for the Farmers Market**

May

See attachment 1 for the permitting process

**STEP 7: Review process for accepting WIC, SNAP/EBT/ FMNP & DEBIT/CREDIT**

May

Secure current year instructions on EBT operations

**STEP 8 - Market Promotion**

May

- Bike to Work Day as Kick-off for Farmers Market
- Opening Day: balloons and signage
- PSA at local schools