



Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation, and Information Center (GusNIP NTAE):



Impact Findings Year 1: September 1, 2019 to August 31, 2020



**Nutrition
Incentive Hub**

CREATED BY GUSNIP NTAE CENTER

Developed by Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition,
GusNIP NTAE Center Project Lead

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Overview

Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)

The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA), and formerly known as the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program (FINI), supports projects to increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables (FVs) among low-income consumers by providing incentives at the point of purchase. FINI was directed specifically towards providing incentives for SNAP participants. The funding for GusNIP was authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill. In addition to nutrition incentive (including SNAP incentives) projects, a new component of the program included produce prescription projects, allowing medical professionals to provide “prescriptions” in the form of financial incentives for the purchase of FVs to patients who experience diet-related chronic illnesses and/or food insecurity.



Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation and Information Center (NTAE)

The GusNIP Training, Technical Assistance, Evaluation and Information Center (NTAE) was established through the [2019 Request for Applications](#) (RFA) as a competitively awarded cooperative agreement with the USDA NIFA. The NTAE prime awardee organization is the [Gretchen Swanson Center for Nutrition](#) (GSCN), a nonprofit research center based in Omaha, Nebraska. The Gretchen Swanson Center in partnership with [Fair Food Network](#) assembled a coalition of national partners, including the Farmers Market Coalition, National Grocers Association Foundation, Michigan Farmers Market Association, Ecology Center, Colorado School of Public Health, Ingredients Consulting, University of California San Francisco, Betty Irene Moore School of Nursing at UC Davis, and University of Michigan, among others. The coalition, referred to as the ‘[Nutrition Incentive Hub](#)’, comprehensively and effectively works on providing support in reporting and evaluation (R&E) and technical assistance & innovation (TA&I) for GusNIP nutrition incentive (NI) (i.e., SNAP incentive) and produce prescription (PPR) grantees; herein collectively referred to as GusNIP grantees.

During year 1, the NTAE was established as a coordinating center and numerous key objectives were achieved. The NTAE worked directly with GusNIP grantees to understand their needs and appropriately build responsive capacity across program implementation and R&E. The overarching goals of the NTAE are as follows:

-  **GOAL 1 (R&E) – To develop systems, infrastructure, and collaborative relationships using a community-informed approach to support grantees’ R&E while building sustainability and capacity.**

-  **GOAL 2 (TA&I) – To maximize the effectiveness and efficiency of GusNIP projects in meeting GusNIP priorities, increasing fruit and vegetables (FV) purchases, and improving the nutrition of participating households.**

Glossary: nutrition incentive (NI); produce prescription (PPR); fruits and vegetables (FVs); farm direct (FD); brick and mortar (B&M)



The first year of the NTAE was intentionally formative in nature, and further flexibility and adaptations were made to meet the changing and often unforeseen needs of grantees during this unprecedented year. A collaborative approach was adopted and utilized by the NTAE and serves as a foundation to help to move the field of NI and PPR projects forward (see [Appendix 1](#) for core partner structure). In early 2020, as the COVID-19 pandemic intensified disparities related to basic needs, such as food acquisition and income, the NTAE rapidly adapted our support systems to ensure that we were quickly helping GusNIP grantees to distribute FVs to households and to meet new challenges they were encountering. This report provides detailed reporting of firm-level findings as well as descriptions of key accomplishments and activities that the NTAE and Nutrition Incentive Hub carried out in year 1.

Highlighted accomplishments in Year 1 include:

- Created the Nutrition Incentive Hub, a nationwide coalition of partners focused on advancing the goals of GusNIP.
- Launched a [public website](#) of resources and information to support incentive projects.
- Established core minimum datasets for NI and PPR projects, including core metrics (firm -and participant- levels) in order to establish impact across all projects.
- Provided tailored services, training opportunities, and a suite of resources for each grantee to implement and evaluate their projects.
- Provided technical assistance (TA) to 165 organizations with 349 TA instances/requests.
- Triaged TA using Zendesk (i.e., responding to requests with the appropriate core partner and tracking TA utilization).
- Formed Communities of Practice around salient topics (e.g., NI, PPR, nutrition education).
- Released a competitive request for proposals (RFP) from the NTAE to identify a technology firm to develop a public website and secure web portal, selected [RBA Inc.](#) to conduct this work, and RBA, Inc. completed the initial discovery phase and moved into implementation.
- Worked with grantees to secure Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval for human subjects research. NTAE staff worked with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) IRB to include grantees that could not secure their own IRB approval.
- Developed and implemented interim technology solutions for firm-level reporting using Smartsheet and consumer-level reporting using Qualtrics.
- Hosted approximately 30 webinars, including a 3-day intensive practitioner convening that included GusNIP grantees and other practitioners in sessions around R&E, engagement with USDA NIFA staff, incentive technology, and COVID-19 response strategies.
- Recruited and convened an expert Advisory Committee members (across R&E and TA&I).
- Awarded \$300,000 in grants to 31 organizations, through NTAE's Capacity Building and Innovation Fund, to support innovations and adaptations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic



Core Metrics – Nutrition Incentive Projects



Core Metrics – Produce Prescription Projects



Institutional Review Board



Supplementary and Recommended Metrics

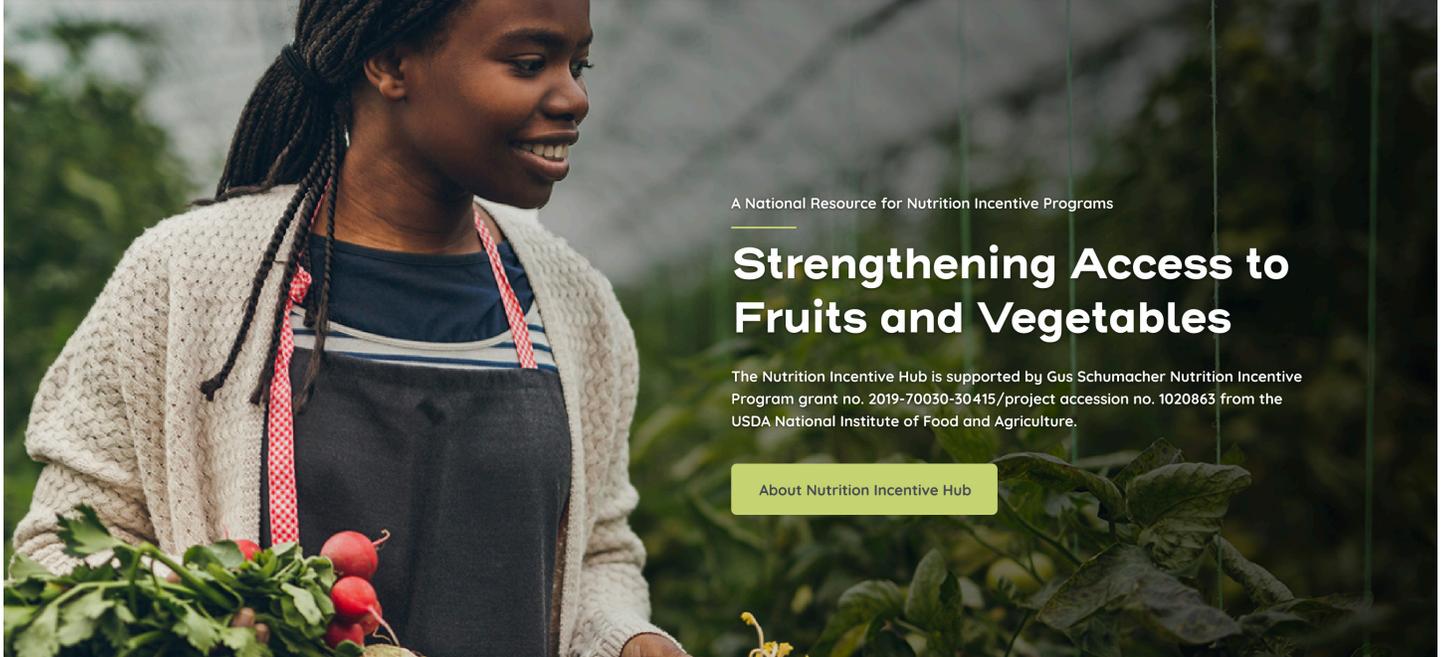
Public Website and Web Portal

In year 1, the NTAE developed and launched a public website, as well as interim online reporting solution for GusNIP grantees. The intent of developing a comprehensive and integrated web portal and public website is to facilitate online reporting to collect and compile data and outcomes for all grantees, as well as to administer associated training and ongoing TA to grantees. This online platform will allow for a seamless, streamlined user experience with robust functionality for all grantees and partners. Work is ongoing and the new online resource—a revised public website and a newly developed password-protected web portal for data collection, reporting, accessing resources, and other functions—will be launched in year 2 (summer 2021). Key accomplishments related to the public website and web portal in year 1 include:

- Launched an initial [public website](#) in March 2020.
- Developed and uploaded information about [core metrics](#) for NI and PPR grantees, including core metrics currently required of GusNIP projects at the participant and firm levels.
- Formed a public website/web portal working group, sought input from end-users, and engaged technical consultants to assist with defining and prioritizing project requirements and drafting a competitive RFP for software design/ architecture vendors.
- Issued an RFP through the NTAE for vendors in May 2020, reviewed proposals and selected a vendor ([RBA Inc.](#)) and commenced project work in July 2020.
- Developed and implemented interim solutions for TA, data collection, reporting, and evaluation.

Technology Solution Details

The technology solution under development in year 1 by the NTAE and our vendor/solution partner RBA, Inc. has three primary components: publicly accessible content on a publicly available site; a secure, password-protected portal for grantees, NTAE staff, and other authorized users; and administrative functionality for content management and ongoing system maintenance. Work on the redesigned website and portal is ongoing, with a minimum viable product (MVP) launch is expected in summer 2021.



A National Resource for Nutrition Incentive Programs

Strengthening Access to Fruits and Vegetables

The Nutrition Incentive Hub is supported by Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program grant no. 2019-70030-30415/project accession no. 1020863 from the USDA National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

[About Nutrition Incentive Hub](#)

This image is a preview of the home page for the new website and secure portal.

The **publicly available website** will house general information about GusNIP, FINI, the NTAE, NI and PPR projects TA resources and a link to a Help Desk (Zendesk); R&E resources for grantees and applicants; other resources and training materials; highlighted feature stories from GusNIP projects; data snapshots about the program reach across the U.S.; a searchable database of GusNIP grantees; and a searchable database of publicly available NI and PPR reports, studies, and other materials. The publicly accessible online site will allow for dissemination of annual reports and incentive project information in an anonymized format that protects confidential, personal, or other sensitive data.

Portal access will be password secured and users will receive access to only the information and data for their specific project. The portal will support the administration of GusNIP grantee and firm data, as well as the collection and approval of core participant metrics. All grantees and firms will have secure access to the portal to view, and if authorized, modify information about their projects. Dashboards will show project reporting status per grantee and provide insights into past performance and trends through data visualization. All data will be housed in a single data store – which forms a

‘single source of truth’ for the data – and supports efficient, robust reporting with high data integrity. Microsoft PowerBI will be used to develop ad hoc reports and generate insights from the aggregate program data through data visualization. Logged in users will receive access to collaboration tools that will allow peer-to-peer engagement amongst the grantees, other authorized users, and project staff and partners to share success stories, as well as program implementation guidance.

From a technical perspective, the website is being built using Umbraco, an open-source Content Management System. The online site and the corresponding data will be housed in Azure, the set of cloud services available from Microsoft. Access to the resources in the cloud are limited to GSCN personnel – as the NTAE – and select members of RBA, Inc and USDA. Content administration will be handled by GSCN personnel.



Results

The 2019 GusNIP RFA required all grantees, with the exception of GusNIP Pilot Projects, to report on a core set of firm-level metrics to ensure common program tracking and enable meaningful comparisons across all projects.

The results presented in this report correspond to the results from the Year 1 (September 1, 2019-August 31, 2020) GusNIP NTAE Progress Report to Congress completed and submitted to USDA in November 2019. The dataset used to inform that report has changed slightly in recent months because of additional firm-level reports being submitted, advances in data management protocols (e.g., disaggregating reports for some firms) and data cleaning processes (e.g., recategorizing “other” responses for multi-select questions). Future reports with results from the 2019-2020 GusNIP grant year may show slightly different values from what are presented here.

Key Differences Between NI and PPR Projects

As a preface to the results that follow, it is important to note that the structure and mechanisms by which NI and PPR projects are intended to function are different from one another. This is due to varying project objectives, which impacted the volume of incentives that flowed through these projects.

NI projects are designed to be higher reach – that is, reach larger numbers of participants with relatively ‘low’ touch points, such that incentives (\$) redeemed tend to be lower dollar value per participant, but a higher number of incentives are redeemed overall due to larger numbers of participants. NI projects are intended to yield a trifecta of benefits:

- 1) Increased purchase (and ultimately, consumption) of FVs among low-income customers who use SNAP;
- 2) Increased produce sales and expansion of customer base at farm direct (FD) and brick and mortar (B&M) firms¹; and
- 3) Increased economic impact to communities through incentive dollars generating a multiplier effect. NI projects generally operate (that is, incentives are distributed and redeemed) at the firm level (e.g., FD and B&M sites).

Conversely, **PPR projects are focused on addressing chronic disease and/or food insecurity among low-income populations through health care provider prescriptions (i.e., vouchers) for FVs.** Given the health care setting and generally narrower focus on addressing chronic disease, the volume of participants and sales of FVs tends to be lower than NI projects.

PPR projects typically follow a specific cohort of patients that match certain eligibility requirements (e.g., participating in Medicaid, screening positive for food insecurity, presenting with a chronic health condition) over a specified length of time (e.g., 6 months). While the number of participants is lower compared to the number of participants in NI projects, each participant generally has a higher dose – that is, participants generally receive incentives (\$) with higher dollar values, more nutrition education opportunities, and/or more clinic consultations. The overarching benefit of PPR projects also includes potential health care utilization and costs saved through patient health improvements and chronic disease reduction. In contrast to NI projects, PPR projects generally operate at a clinic, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) or within another health care setting.

¹ Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Project Overview

The 2019 GusNIP grantees represented 22 projects across the U.S. – three GusNIP Pilot Projects (FPP), four GusNIP Projects (FIP), six GusNIP Large Scale Projects (FLSP), and nine PPR projects ([Appendix 2](#)). Pilot projects were not required to submit data, therefore, all results hereafter will refer to 19 total projects (nine PPR and ten GusNIP NI). The core program dataset that is required of GusNIP grantees is shown in [Appendix 3](#). Out of 19 projects, the majority (74%) were either continuations, modifications or expansions to existing projects, while five (26%) of these projects (four PPR and one NI) were newly developed projects.

Firm Descriptions

Across the 19 projects, a total of 773 firms participated, including 207 (26.8%) B&M sites, 533 (69.0%) FD sites, and 33 (4.2%) health care organizations (**Figure 1**). Of these firms, 586 (75.8%) firms served urban populations, 156 (20.2%) firms served rural populations, and 9 (1.1%) firms served tribal (*urban*) populations, and 22 (2.9%) firms served tribal (*rural*) populations (data not shown). [Appendix 4](#) displays a U.S. map with GusNIP-funded projects and firms by populations served and project-type.

The average number of months that firms operated using GusNIP funds in 2019 was 4.0, 4.5, and 7.8 months for B&M firms, FD firms, and clinics, respectively (data not shown). (*Please see [Appendix 5 for all data tables, Tables 1-14](#)*). Most B&M firms (89.8%) were open daily, while most FD firms (86.0%) of were open once per week ([Table 1](#)). B&M firms, FD firms, and clinics operated, on average, for 14.2, 5.6, and 4.7 hours per day, respectively (data not shown).

In terms of other federal nutrition assistance programs that firms accepted, the majority of B&M firms accepted the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children, also known as WIC (n=99, 90.0%²), while 99.6% (n=265) of FD firms accepted WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program, and 72.6% (n=193) of FD firms accepted Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (**Figure 2**; [Table 2](#)).

² Note: percentages reported are inclusive of those that reported offering other nutrition assistance programs at their firm (i.e., excluding those firms that selected “none”). 237 firms selected “none” as a response option.

Figure 1. Firm Type

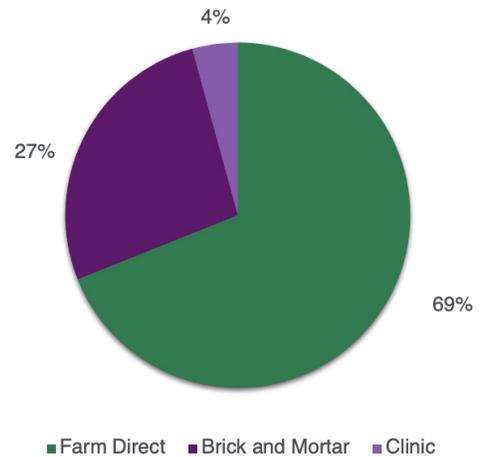
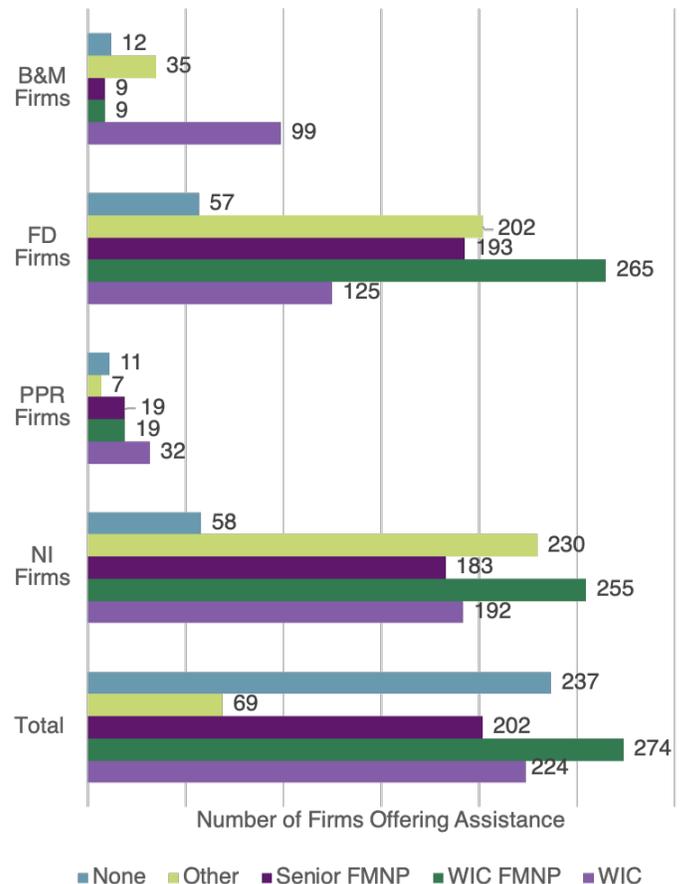


Figure 2. Other Nutrition Assistance Programs Accepted





Incentive Issuance, Redemption, and Economic Impact

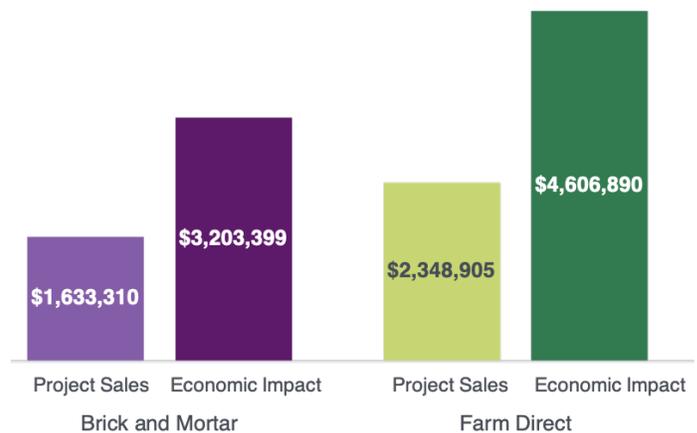
Out of 19 projects (NI and PPR) that were required to submit data, \$3,030,965 in GusNIP funds were spent and \$2,076,211 (68.5%) of GusNIP funds were used for direct incentives (data not shown). Across all NI and PPR projects (588 firms), \$5,061,863 total incentives were issued, and \$4,061,755 total incentives were redeemed, yielding an 89.6% mean redemption rate across all firms (Table 4). The total local economic impact of 2019 GusNIP projects was \$7,966,290 (\$4,606,890 for FD, \$3,203,399 for B&M, and \$156,001 for Clinics), meaning that this value represents the amount of money that was generated for the communities surrounding the participating 588 firms based upon dollars in incentives redeemed (Figure 4).

Financial Instrument for Incentives

There were variations in the type of financial instrument used by FD and B&M firms. Among FD firms, the most common financial instrument was tokens (n=285; 60.9%³) followed by paper vouchers (n=152; 32.5%). Among B&M firms, the most common financial instrument was loyalty card (n=67; 35.1%), automatic discounts at the register (n=41; 21.5%), paper vouchers (n=37; 19.4%), and coupons (n=27; 14.1%) (Figure 3; Table 3). Further descriptive statistics of the financial instruments (e.g., PPR, NI, clinics) can be found in Table 3.

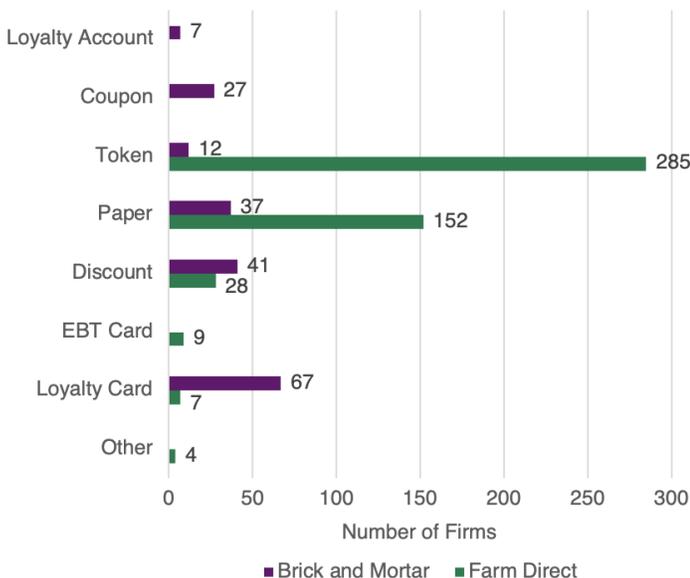
³ Percentages do not add up to 100 since firms could select multiple financial instruments

Figure 4. Local Economic Impact by Firm Type*



*Most clinics did not redeem incentives but there was a total of \$79,540 in clinic incentive redemption with a local economic impact of \$156,001 that is not shown here.

Figure 3. Financial Instruments by Firm Type



Eligible FVs for incentives

The majority of B&M firms reported that the incentive is triggered with a purchase of all fresh FVs (65.5%) while the majority of FD firms reported that the incentive is triggered with all SNAP eligible items (93.5%; Table 5). FVs eligible for incentive redemption were mainly all fresh FVs for both B&M (77.0%) and FD (85.5%) firms, with more varieties also being included in B&M locations (Other (e.g., select state grown FVs; dried herbs and spices) (24.1%); frozen FVs (15.2%), and canned FVs (6.3%); Table 6). On the other hand, some FD sites also included a further stipulation on FVs eligible for incentive redemption to only include state or regionally grown FVs (18.2%; Table 6).

Firm Characteristics for NI & PPR Projects

NI Projects

Firms participating in NI projects largely served urban populations (76.8%) compared to rural populations (23.2%) (**Figure 5**). Participating NI firms were mostly FD (75%), with fewer B&M (25%) (**Figure 6**). Among NI projects, the number of FD firms grew overall throughout the program year, but experienced some fluctuations, in part attributed to pandemic-related shutdowns. For FD sites specifically, the dramatic increase in late Spring 2020 may have been partially attributed to the warming weather and nationwide efforts to support food distribution and address rising food insecurity during the pandemic. B&M firms were less likely to have shut down, and experienced large growth in the spring and summer of 2020 when many grantees began operating their grocery programs (**Figure 7**).

The majority of NI firms (72.5%) allowed any SNAP-eligible purchase to be the *trigger* for issuance of the nutrition incentive (**Table 5**). Any fresh FVs qualified for *incentives* in most firms (81.6%), while 15.7% firms required that the incentive be used for only state- or regionally-grown FVs (**Table 6**). The average incentive cap (i.e., maximum) allowed per day by all firms was \$20.47 (data not shown) and a straight 1:1 match was used by 93.7% of participating firms (**Table 7**).

PPR Projects

Firms participating in PPR projects served various populations: urban (70.4% of firms), tribal (*rural*) (19.4% of firms), tribal (*urban*) (7.1% of firms), and rural (3.1% of firms) (**Figure 5**). Participating PPR firms included FD (25.5%), B&M (39.4%), and clinics (35.1%) (**Figure 6**). All PPR firm types experienced growth across the program year. However, among FD and clinic sites, a decrease in number of firms was seen at the onset of the pandemic when shutdowns were occurring (**Figure 7**). In addition to fresh FVs (96.7%), 18.3% and 41.7% of PPR firms allowed incentives to be used on canned FVs and frozen FVs, respectively (**Table 6**).

Figure 5. Population Served by Project Type

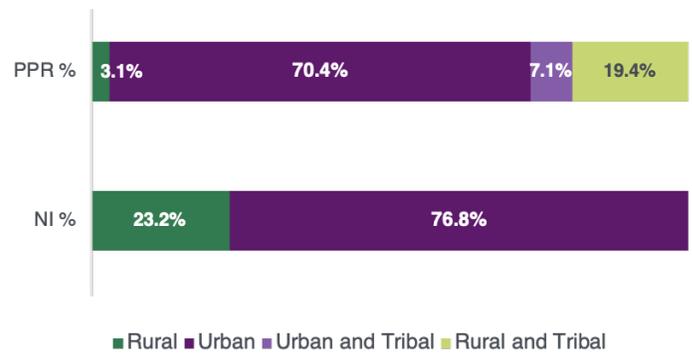


Figure 6. Firm Type by Project Type

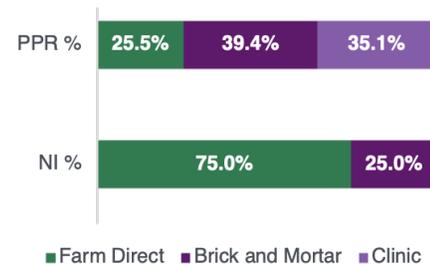
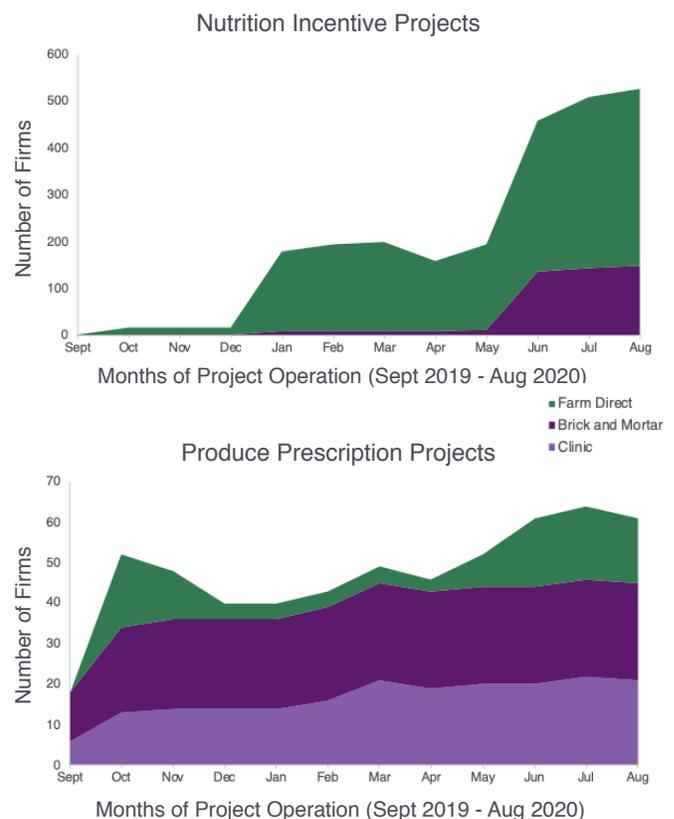


Figure 7. Firm Participation by Month of Project Operation





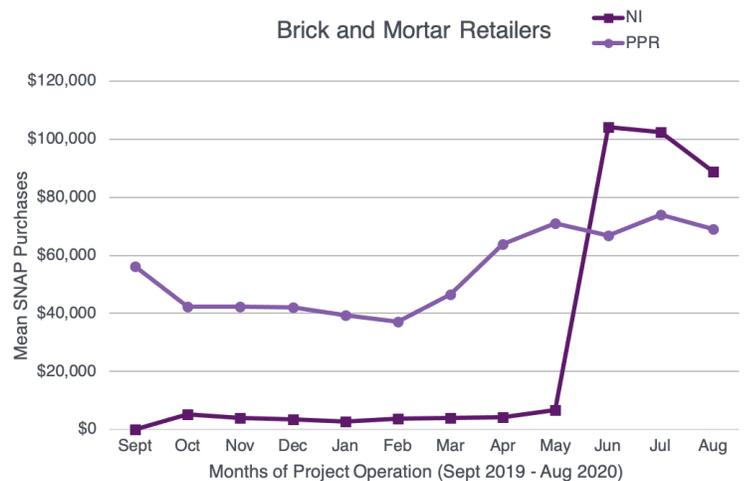
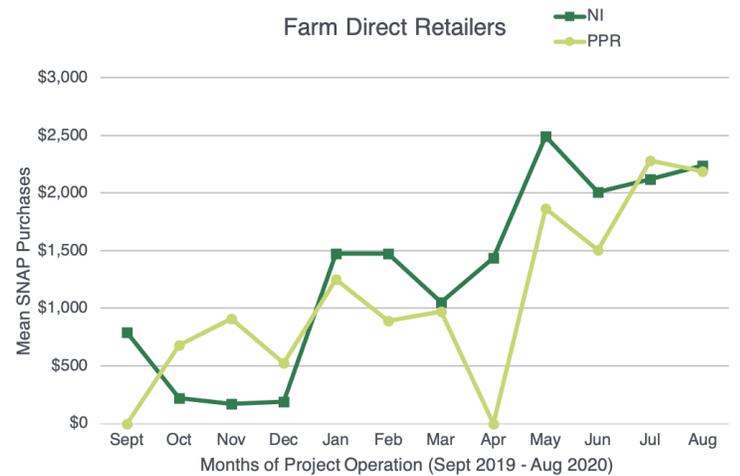
Sales and Transactions for NI & PPR Projects

NI Projects

Total SNAP purchases for NI firms totaled \$45,947,901 overall (Table 8). Averages for monthly SNAP purchases by firm-type (B&M, FD) saw a general increasing trend throughout the year, but spiked in May-June 2020, which is likely a result of firms starting to launch their projects, warmer weather (especially for FD firms), and increased SNAP participation during the pandemic (especially for B&M firms) (Figure 8).



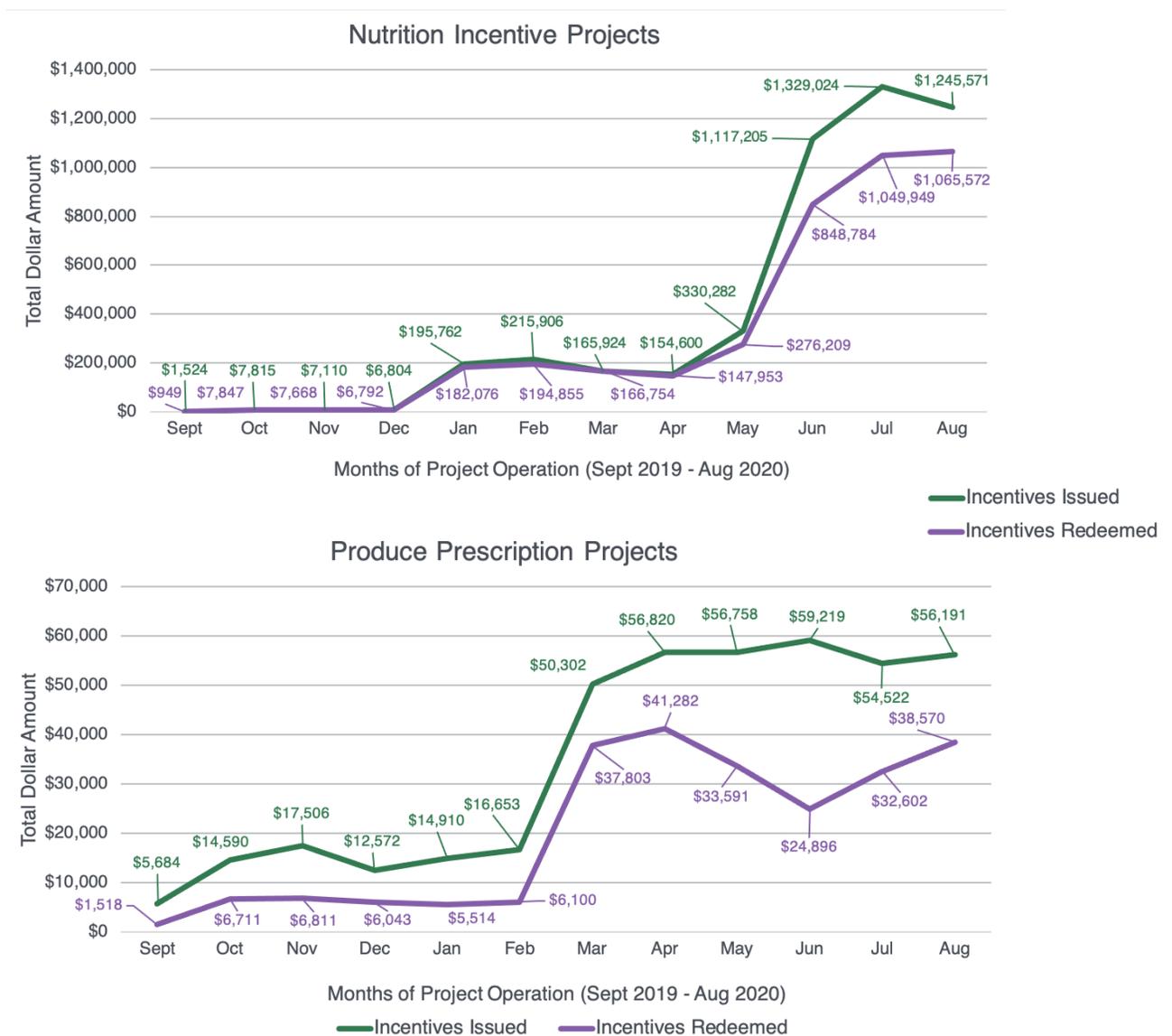
Figure 8. Average Monthly SNAP Purchases by Program Type





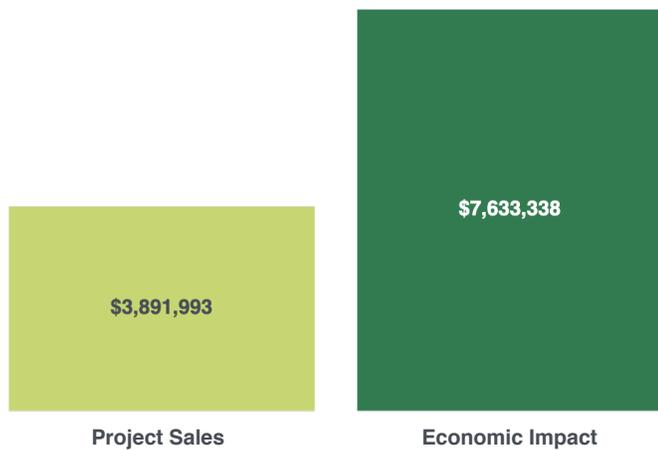
For NI projects, a total of \$3,891,993 incentives were redeemed across 576 firms, with an average of \$6,757 incentives redeemed per firm (Table 4). A total of \$4,777,458 incentives were issued, resulting in an 90.3% total annual mean redemption (Table 4). Among NI projects, incentive issuance and redemption were both lowest in September 2019 (\$1,524 and \$949, respectively) and highest in July 2020 (\$1,329,024 for issuance) and August 2020 (\$1,065,572 for redemption). We would expect issuance and redemption to be highest at this time as many NI grantees began operating their projects in late spring/early summer 2020, and late summer is peak farmers market season in many regions (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Total Monthly Incentive Issuance and Redemption



NI projects by design are meant to introduce new funding streams into local economies – the NI projects represented in the 2019 GusNIP NI cohort brought a total of \$7,633,338 into communities (Figure 10).⁴ The average number of unique participants at each NI firm was 806 (Table 9), out of an average of 2,858 eligible participants per firm (Table 10). For NI projects overall, the average incentive value redeemed per participant was \$16.82 for the year (Table 9). This value may appear low, however, there were wide ranges in the amount of incentives that were redeemed, with some participants only redeeming a small dollar value.

Figure 10. Local Economic Impact of NI Projects



Although NI projects were not required to offer nutrition education, 69 firms (12.5%) did report some form of nutrition education. The most commonly reported nutrition education offered was “other” (e.g., recipes and cookbooks) (75.4%). Also commonly reported were taste test or cooking demonstrations (36.2%), grocery tours/market navigators (15.9%), and SNAP-Ed program (31.8%) (Table 11).⁵

⁴Local economic impact was calculated using the [Local Economic Impact Calculator](#), developed by a team of economists supported by USDA. The impact estimate is a rough estimate of the economic impact an initiative may have. It includes both direct effects (e.g., sales at participating firms) and indirect effects (e.g., how firms spend the extra revenue, such as on hiring, marketing, etc.).

PPR Projects

The average incentive cap (i.e., maximum) allowed per day by all firms was \$17.25 per day (data not shown), which is equal to approximately \$517.50 per month of incentives per patient. Out of nine PPR projects, seven projects were actively enrolling patients, while two were delayed due to restrictions imposed on the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process due to the pandemic. Eligibility requirements for PPR projects varied and categories included being on Medicaid (51.6%), receiving SNAP benefits (35.5%), screening positive for food insecurity (41.9%), and screening positive for a chronic health condition (e.g., type 2 diabetes) (64.5%) (Table 13).

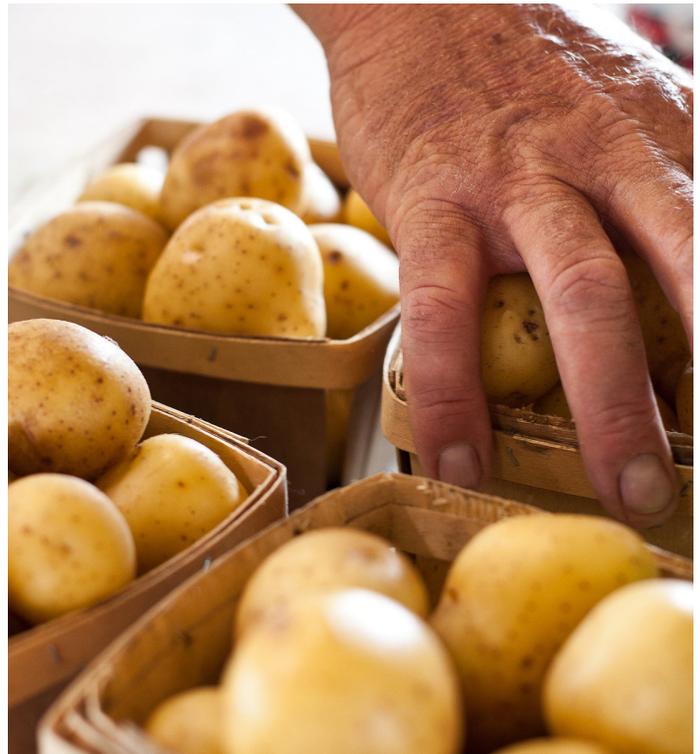
A total of 1,346 nutrition education activities (Table 11) were offered across 31 PPR firms, the majority of which were offered in clinics (96.8%) (data not shown). These nutrition education activities included Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) classes (27.6% of firms), USDA SNAP-Ed programs (31.0%), 1-on-1 coaching (37.5%), individualized consultation with a registered dietitian (44.8%), and taste tests/cooking demos (48.3%) (Table 11).⁵ Other services provided included transportation services (43.5%), shopping assistance (34.8%), and fitness programs (21.7%) (Table 12).

Out of the seven active projects, a total of \$169,762 incentives were redeemed across 12 firms (8 clinics and 4 redemption firms such as mobile markets), with an average of \$14,147 incentives redeemed per firm (Table 4). The average number of participants was 44 (Table 9), out of an average of 83 eligible participants per firm (Table 10). For PPR projects overall, the average incentive value redeemed per participant was \$102.51 per year (Table 9) (Note: The mean incentive value redeemed represents the average incentive value redeemed per participant over one year for each firm in the corresponding column. Most firms were not able to provide data on number of unique participants, which is needed to calculate incentives redeemed per participant).

⁵Note: These are inclusive of those that reported offering other nutrition education at their firm (i.e., excluding those firms that selected “none”). 484 firms selected “none” as a response option.

Similar to NI projects, averages for monthly SNAP purchases by firm-type (B&M, FD) saw a general increasing trend throughout the year, but spiked in May-June, which is likely a result of firms starting to launch their projects, warmer weather (especially for FD firms), and increased SNAP participation during the pandemic (especially for B&M firms) (Figure 8).

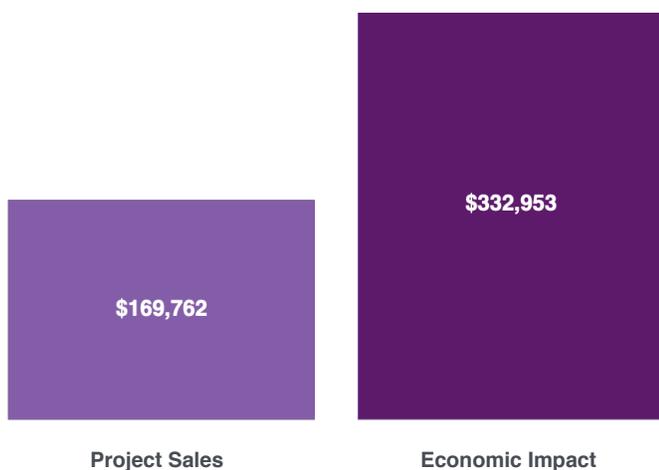
A total of \$284,405 incentives were issued, resulting in an 53.9% total annual mean redemption rate over the fiscal year (Table 4). Among PPR projects, incentive issuance was lowest in September 2019 at \$5,684, and highest in June 2020 at \$59,219. We would expect incentive issuance to be highest in June as many grantees began issuing incentives in late spring/ early summer 2020. PPR incentive redemption was lowest in September 2019 at \$1,518 and highest in April 2020 at \$41,282 (Figure 9). The increase in issuance and the decrease in redemption for PPR projects in late summer 2020 may be partially attributed to program adaptations made to accommodate participants during the pandemic (e.g., removing voucher expiration dates, mailing vouchers in bulk). PPR projects, by design, focus on participant health outcomes and improvements in health care utilization and costs, and are not necessarily meant to introduce new funding streams into local economies. However, the nine PPR projects represented in the 2019 GusNIP grantee cohort brought a total of \$332,953 into communities (Figure 11).



Participant-Level Outcomes

As previously discussed, in year 1 the NTAE established a core minimum dataset in response to the Agricultural Act of 2018 which was comprised of measures to assess the impact of NI and PPR projects on program participants. This core minimum dataset (outlined in Appendix 3), administered in survey format, assesses FV intake, food security status, health status, NI and PPR program use, participation in other federal assistance programs, and demographics, among other key outcomes of interest. Year 1 was intentionally formative in nature, including efforts to define metrics and prepare grantees to systematically report on variables in the core minimum dataset. In addition, the COVID-19 restrictions introduced some further delays in the ability for grantees to collect participant-level survey data in year 1. At the time of this report, a majority of grantees are now in the process of collecting survey data from program participants, through a variety of methods including in-person, online, and via telephone. We anticipate being able to report participant-level results beginning in year 2 and in all future years of the GusNIP funding cycle.

Figure 11. Local Economic Impact of PPR Projects





Challenges, Resolutions, and Opportunities

Modifications and Impact of the Pandemic on GusNIP Projects

Given the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, the NTAE surveyed grantees and firms about the impact(s) on their project and adaptations they made to respond to the changing food system and food insecurity landscape. In addition, key informant interviews were conducted with grantees to better understand needs and provide an expanded understanding of the adaptations made.

Findings from Qualitative Interviews

Several GusNIP grantees described changes that were made to their project due to the COVID-19 pandemic (see [Appendix 6](#) for a more detailed description of lessons learned from grantees). Strategies that grantees used to adapt to COVID-19 conditions included:

- Waiving or extending the expiration dates for vouchers.
- Modifying timing of when participants received their incentives (i.e., fewer times in larger sums to limit the number of times participants need to shop).
- Expanding the eligibility of FVs included (e.g., frozen or canned).
- Supplementing the amounts of incentives so they were larger to help address increases in food insecurity.
- Adapting delivery modes to be social distanced (e.g., drive-thru pick-ups, FV boxes).
- Adding safety measures to farmers markets (e.g., hand washing stations, increased spacing between tents, staff enforcing 6 feet of social distancing, staff helping customers pick items rather than handling individual items).

Findings from Quantitative Surveys

In quarterly reporting from grantees (quantitative survey), program implementation adaptations that were made due to COVID-19 included: mailing vouchers (n=2), reducing or expanding requirements (n=2), bulk distribution of vouchers (n=2), shift to delivery or drive-thru pick-up (n=4), and using produce boxes (n=1) (note: many grantees were delayed or interrupted on program implementation, n=15). Due to social distancing recommendations, several grantees also made changes to how they delivered nutrition education: virtual (n=6), phone (n=2), and shortened the education component of their program (n=1). In addition, evaluation methods had to adapt to include virtual surveys (n=4), and mail-in or phone surveys (n=3), and recruitment (n=1) (note: many grantees were delayed or interrupted on participant-level data collection, n=17).

FD and B&M firm staff were queried via a survey about the impact of COVID-19 on their operations. Findings indicated that online ordering was a response commonly taken (online or phone orders for all customers (n=37), online SNAP/EBT redemption (n=6), online incentive redemption (n=6)). Delivery options that firms added to accommodate social distancing included: customers paying outside using 'click and collect' (n=17), drive-thru or curbside pick-up services (n=40), and delivery services (n=11). In addition, many firms had to close temporarily due to COVID-19 (n=41). Given the spike in food insecurity (at least due in part to COVID-19), firms reported an overall increase in SNAP sales (n=87). For more information on COVID-19 findings see [Appendix 6](#).

Other Challenges, Resolutions, and Opportunities

Beyond COVID-19, a few other key challenges addressed by the NTAE included:

- Funding delay for GusNIP grantees and the NTAE occurred due to the transition of NIFA from Washington, DC, to Kansas City, MO; however, those issues have been largely resolved and were not experienced by the 2020 GusNIP grantees.
- Some grantees did not have access to a local Institutional Review Board (IRB) in order to secure required human subjects protections for R&E. This delayed data collection at some sites. Our solution to this challenge was multifaceted. First, GSCN has a formal relationship with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) and their IRB. NTAE staff worked with the UNMC IRB so that grantees who need IRB assistance could be added to the overarching GSCN IRB. Second, the NTAE developed an [IRB toolkit](#) which includes template language for protocol, informed consent, informed assent, and recruitment materials. Third, the NTAE created checklists and examples of approved NI and PPR IRB protocols such that grantees with little or no prior IRB experience could better understand requirements. Finally, our GusNIP NTAE Program Advisors worked one-on-one through series of conference calls with several sites to ensure they had the support they needed to establish their own local IRB approval.
- Defining the core minimum dataset was determined based on confluence of a variety of factors including: RFA language, grantee capacity, and scientific validity of measurement tools. The NTAE worked with consultants and an Advisory Committee to further refine the core minimum dataset (note: participant-level data was not able to be collected this year.)
- Initiated development of a web portal through release of a competitive RFP through the NTAE and worked with the selected technology firm ([RBA Inc.](#)) to complete the initial discovery phase. Established interim solutions while the portal is being fully developed.

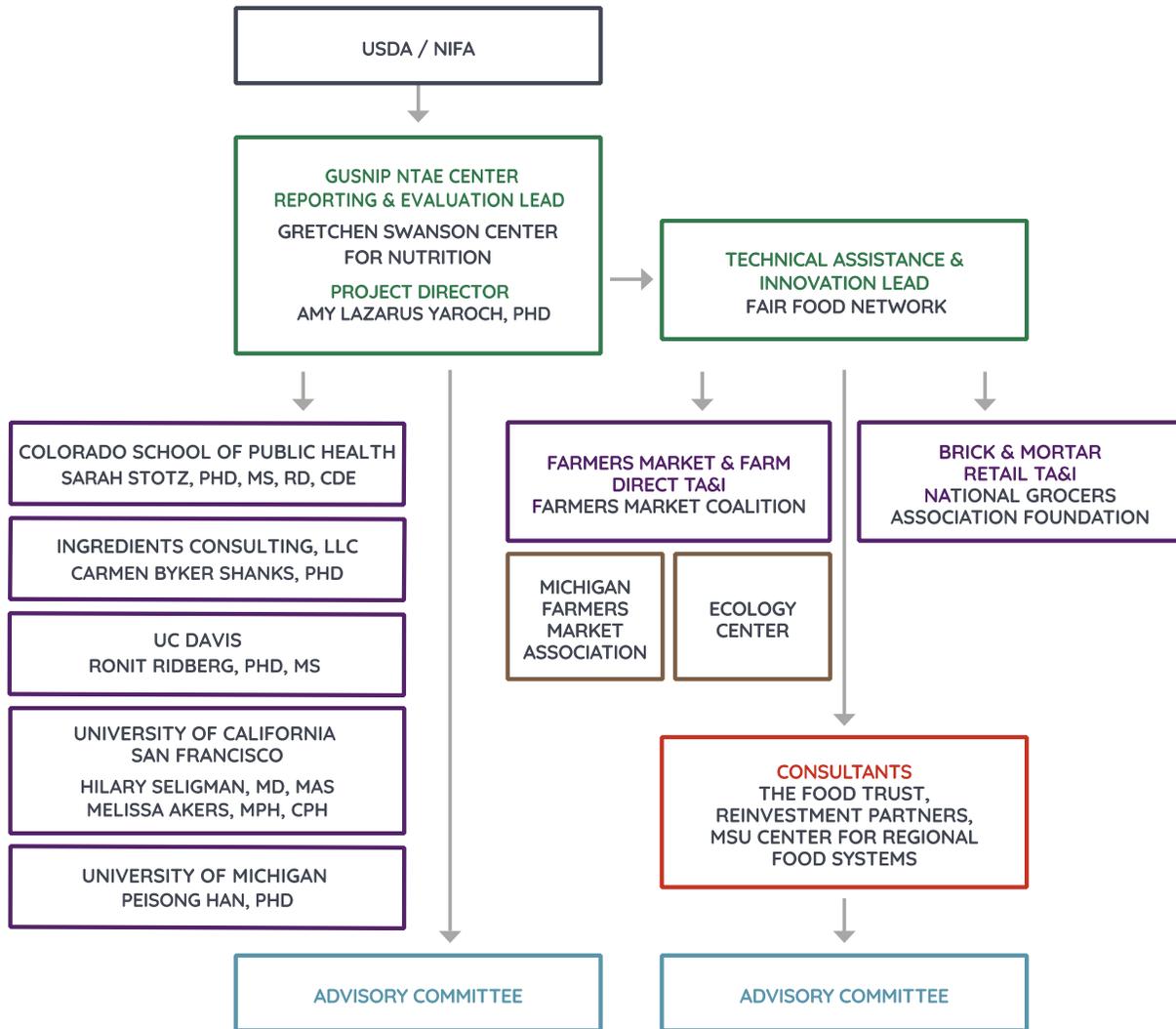


Next Steps and Future Years

With the tremendous foundation of partners, resources and systems that were put into place in year 1, we entered into year 2 with significant momentum. Year 2 will include both carry over from those tasks that were impacted by funding delays and/ or COVID-19, and new accomplishments. Year 2 will bring a new round of 2020 GusNIP grantees, deeper understanding of the impact and reach of incentives, more proactive TA&I to support capacity-building, continued intensive support tailored to each grantee's needs and the launch of an enhanced public website and secure web portal, enabling an efficient and robust platform for data collection and visualization, reporting, and communications that will be relevant to and informed by all program partners and recipients. In Year 2, grantees will focus more on collecting participant-level surveys to help better understand the impact of incentive programs on key outcomes such as FV intake and food insecurity. In Year 3 and beyond, the GusNIP NTAE Center will continue to work collaboratively and iteratively with USDA NIFA through the cooperative agreement to engage new annual rounds of GusNIP grantees and to shape the future and sustainability of R&E, and TA&I, for GusNIP grantees and incentive practitioners more broadly.

Appendices

Appendix 1. Organization Chart for GusNIP NTAE and Nutrition Incentive Hub Partners



Appendix 2. Description of GusNIP Grantees by Type

Description of 2019 GusNIP Grantees: GusNIP Pilot Projects (FPP)

The table below describes key elements of the three GusNIP Pilot Projects (FPP) funded in 2019, including grantee name, amount funded, award term, geographic reach of the project, the type and number of firms offering the incentive, and a brief project initiation description. GusNIP FPP support the development of projects with an infusion of federal dollars to pilot innovative strategies to **increase FVI and decrease FI among project participants**. Awards are up to \$100,000 and the project period is one year.

| Grantee | Total Grant Amt. and Time Period | Geographic Reach | Type and # of Firms (retailers, farmers markets, clinics) | Project Initiation Description |
|---|----------------------------------|----------------------------|--|---|
| Central Louisiana Economic Development Alliance | \$51,750 over 1 year | Colfax and Greensburg (LA) | 2 Rural Farmers Markets | Will test a model for capacity and leadership building for small, rural farmers markets in two parishes, by launching NI with 4 farmers at 2 new rural markets and support and facilitate market leaders and vendors. The program provides a 3:1 SNAP match on fresh FVs. |
| Glynwood Center, Inc. | \$48,524 over 1 year | Hudson Valley (NY) | 5 Farms with CSA | Will implement scalable regional community supported agriculture (CSA) NI at 5 farms, for low-income households who are new to CSAs to be enrolled and receive 30% off a half CSA share. |
| Heritage Ranch, Inc. | \$100,000 over 1 year | San Juan County (WA) | Farmers Market, Food Coop, Small Grocers, and Rural Health Centers | Will reach low-income households with incentives and nutrition education utilizing multiple modes of incentive delivery: direct purchase coupons, point of sale cards, and produce prescriptions. Each participant can access \$100-\$300 in incentives depending on their level of project engagement. |

Description of 2019 GusNIP Grantees: Produce Prescription Projects (PPR)

The table below describes key elements of the nine GusNIP Produce Prescription Projects (PPR) funded in 2019, including grantee name, amount funded, award term, geographic reach of the project, the type and number of firms offering the incentive, and a brief project initiation description. PPR are aimed at groups developing county, multi-county, and state-wide programs that partner with one or more health care entity, and have included as their goals to **increase FV intake (FVI) and decrease food insecurity (FI) among project participants**. Awards are up to \$500,000 and project period is up to three years.

| Grantee | Total Grant Amt. and Time Period | Geographic Reach | Type and # of Firms (retailers, farmers markets, clinics) | Project Initiation Description |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Boston Medical Center Corporation | \$507,284 over 2 years | City of Boston (MA) | 1 Mobile Market serving multiple community sites, one clinic | Will compare 300 patients in a control group versus intervention group. Intervention group will receive \$30 in incentives weekly for up to 52 weeks. Goals: intervention participants will: report higher FVI, lower FI, lower utilization and total cost of care. |
| Community Farm Alliance | \$496,620 over 3 years | Statewide (KY) | 2 Farmers Markets 14 Clinics | Will work with expectant mothers between 21-40 weeks gestation. Participants will receive up to \$20 a week to redeem at participating farmers markets. Goals: healthier eating habits, regular purchase of local produce, a reduction in health care use/costs, and increased sales at markets. |
| County of Alameda | \$507,258 over 3 years | Alameda County (San Francisco Bay Area) (CA) | 1 Farm Direct organization provides 3 clinics with FVs | Will recruit participants to a 16-week "Behavioral Pharmacy" group medical visit program. Incentives redeemable for FVs at the onsite Farmacy in the clinic are provided. Goals: Improvements in indicators of chronic conditions, decrease in emergency room utilization, and lower FI. |
| Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment Program, Inc. | \$507,309 over 3 years | Navajo Nation (NM/AZ/UT) | 13 Stores 9 Clinics | Will work with Navajo households who receive tribal health care services. Program provides up to \$5/day (\$1 per household member) for 6 months (pediatric cohorts) or 9 months (maternal cohorts) and participants attend monthly health coaching sessions. Goals: increase FVI and decrease household FI. |
| DC Greens | \$503,737 over 3 years | Ward 8 (District of Columbia) | 1 Supermarket 6 Clinics | Will work with Medicaid beneficiaries with diet-related chronic disease. Will provide up to \$20 per week to purchase fresh or frozen FVs at a local supermarket for up to 6 months. Goals: implement payment technology that will allow expansion of the program into 2 small retailers, expand PPR to other clinics, and refine program through data-driven and community-led process. |

| Grantee | Total Grant Amt. and Time Period | Geographic Reach | Type and # of Firms (retailers, farmers markets, clinics) | Project Initiation Description |
|--|----------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Forsyth Farmers Market | \$455,772 over 3 years | Chatham County (Savannah area) (GA) | 1 Farmers Market 1 Mobile Market service 4 Clinics with FVs | Will partner with 4 health care clinics to recruit participants to receive brief health screening and attend a dietitian led nutrition class. Will provide \$10 per week/patient and \$5/ week for additional family members. Goals: increased FVI, decreased FI, and increased dietary knowledge (including of locally grown FVs). |
| Reinvestment Partners | \$507,340 over 3 years | Forsyth and Sampson Counties (NC) | 2 Clinics refer patients to Food Lion Grocery Stores in a 2-county region (~20 stores) | Will work with low-income Medicaid and SNAP-beneficiary patients. Provide a monthly prescription of \$40 (via store loyalty card) to purchase qualified FVs from major grocery retailers. Goals: work with health clinics to tailor program to each clinic's area of interest, develop a training program for clinic personnel, and improve technology-based incentive redemption. |
| The Food Trust | \$507,340 over 2 years | Pittsburgh (PA), Philadelphia (PA) Camden (NJ) | 32 Farm-Direct or Retail Stores 11 Clinics | Will work with 9 health care partners to provide patients in PA/NJ with \$20-30/week of incentives. Goals: increase FVI, decrease FI, increase number of participating supermarkets, corner stores, and farmers markets. |
| Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation | \$507,340 over 3 years | YKHC Delta Region (Beth and 8 surrounding villages) (AK) | 9 Village Stores 1 Farm Site (with produce box delivery) 1 Clinic | Will recruit adult Medicaid patients with diabetes. Will provide \$45/month for purchase of fresh, frozen, or canned FVs (up to 24 vouchers throughout the length of the program). Goals: increase number of individuals accessing FVs, collect prescriptions and refills metrics, improve health by evaluating blood sugar control. |

Description of 2019 GusNIP Grantees: GusNIP Large Scale Projects (FLSP)

The table below describes key elements of the six GusNIP Large Scale Projects (FLSP) funded in 2019, including grantee name, amount funded, award term, geographic reach, the type and number of firms offering incentives, and a brief project initiation description. FLSP aim to create multi-county, state-wide and regional incentive programs, and often involve the expansion of an existing incentive program. FLSP have included as their goals to **increase FVI and decrease FI among project participants**. Awards are \$500,000 or greater and the project period is up to 4 years.

| Grantee | Total Grant Amt. and Time Period | Geographic Reach | Type and # of Firms (retailers, farmers markets, clinics) | Project Initiation Description |
|---|----------------------------------|--|---|---|
| California Department of Food & Agriculture | \$7,166,877 over 4 years | Statewide (CA) | 326 Farmers Markets/Farm Direct sites or Grocery Stores | Expand existing NI to distribute \$8,345,789 of California grown FVs through incentives. Goals: use technological innovation to pilot real-time data entry, implement outreach and promotional strategies. |
| Fair Food Network | \$12,500,000 over 4 years | Statewide (MI) | 150+ Farmers Markets 110+ Grocery Stores | Expand NI in Michigan. Goals: increase demand for Michigan-grown FVs, expand program to be in every county of the state, and increase FVI. |
| Jackson Medical Mall Foundation | \$841,000 over 3 years | Statewide (MS) | 7 Farmers Markets 3 Grocery Stores | Launch a new NI. Goals: develop redemption system that will reach SNAP participants, increase purchase of FVs, integrate nutrition education, transportation, and delivery options. |
| The Food Basket | \$985,652 over 2 years | Statewide (HI) | 1 Farmers Market 1 Mobile Market 37 Grocery Stores | Expand existing NI in Hawaii. Goals: to increase SNAP household purchase of community supported agriculture (CSA) and purchase of Hawaiian grown FVs at participating sites. |
| University of California, San Diego | \$3,415,200 over 4 years | Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties (CA) | 42 Grocery Stores | Expand existing NI to reach more SNAP households. Goals: increase average monthly redemption of financial incentives to approximately \$40,000 per month and determine most appropriate financial incentive amount and dose for SNAP recipients. Provide participants with 2:1 match or 4:1 match, up to \$100 a month for fresh FVs. |
| Utah Department of Health | \$1,999,942 over 4 years | Greater Salt Lake City Area (UT) | 20+ Farmers Markets | Expand NI to continue to provide a 1:1 match on FVs (up to \$20/day). Goals: increase amount of FV purchases at firms, increase number of participants, and develop technology strategies to facilitate efficient redemption. |

Description of 2019 GusNIP Grantees: GusNIP Projects (FIP)

The following table describes key elements of the four GusNIP Projects (FIP) funded in 2019, including grantee name, amount funded, award term, geographic reach of the project, the type and number of firms offering incentives, and a brief project initiation description. FIP target mid-size groups developing incentive programs at the local or state level and typically have established relationships with partners and collaborators. FIP have included as their goals to **increase FVI and decrease FI among project participants**. Awards are up to \$500,000 and the project period is up to four years.

| Grantee | Total Grant Amt. and Time Period | Geographic Reach | Type and # of Firms (retailers, farmers markets, clinics) | Project Initiation Description |
|---|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Hunger Task Force, Inc. | \$276,305 over 4 years | Milwaukee, Racine, Kenosha (WI) | 2 Mobile Markets, each serving ~30 unique sites monthly | Expand existing NI to target low-income customers through marketing, adding a Mobile Market and hospital-based grocery store. Goals: to provide culturally appropriate local and regional FVs and offer auxiliary services. Will provide low-income households 25% off their purchase of all eligible products. |
| MountainWise | \$377,252 over 4 years | Rural Appalachia region (Western NC) | 16 Farm Direct sites | Expand existing NI program through expansion of all types of retailers. The program will provide a 1:1 match up to \$20 per day. Goals: increase FVI and FV purchasing, improve overall health, increase knowledge among staff. |
| Sustainable Food Center, Inc. | \$155,096 over 2 years | Houston and Austin (TX) | 12 Farmers Markets/Farm Direct sites | Expand NI in Texas to reach 32 firms. Goals: launch a dual language direct-to-consumer marketing campaign using a <i>promotora</i> model; establish a steering committee; develop a toolkit. Provides a 1:1 match up to \$20/day on qualifying FVs. |
| Together We Can | \$482,402 over 2 years | Clark and Washoe Counties (NV) | 4 Farmers Markets 4 Grocery Stores | Expand existing NI to reach more SNAP participants. Goals: increase FV purchases, increase FVI and FV knowledge, and increase the number of participating firms. |

Appendix 3. Core Program Dataset

Firm-level Data: Site and Project Information

- Management or organizational structure of the program
- Financial instrument used for SNAP and incentive purchases (tokens, scrip, electronic, etc.)
- Retail locations, mobile routes, or other pertinent information to understand how the project
- Improves access to healthy food for underserved, low-income consumers
- Months of operation and operating days and hours
- Whether it is a new SNAP incentive program or the continuation, expansion, or modification of an existing program
- Whether program sites accept other nutrition assistance program benefits
- Whether program sites collaborate with nutrition education programs or offer other experiential nutrition education activities
- Expenses associated with establishment and operations of the program

Firm-level Data: Incentive Program Information

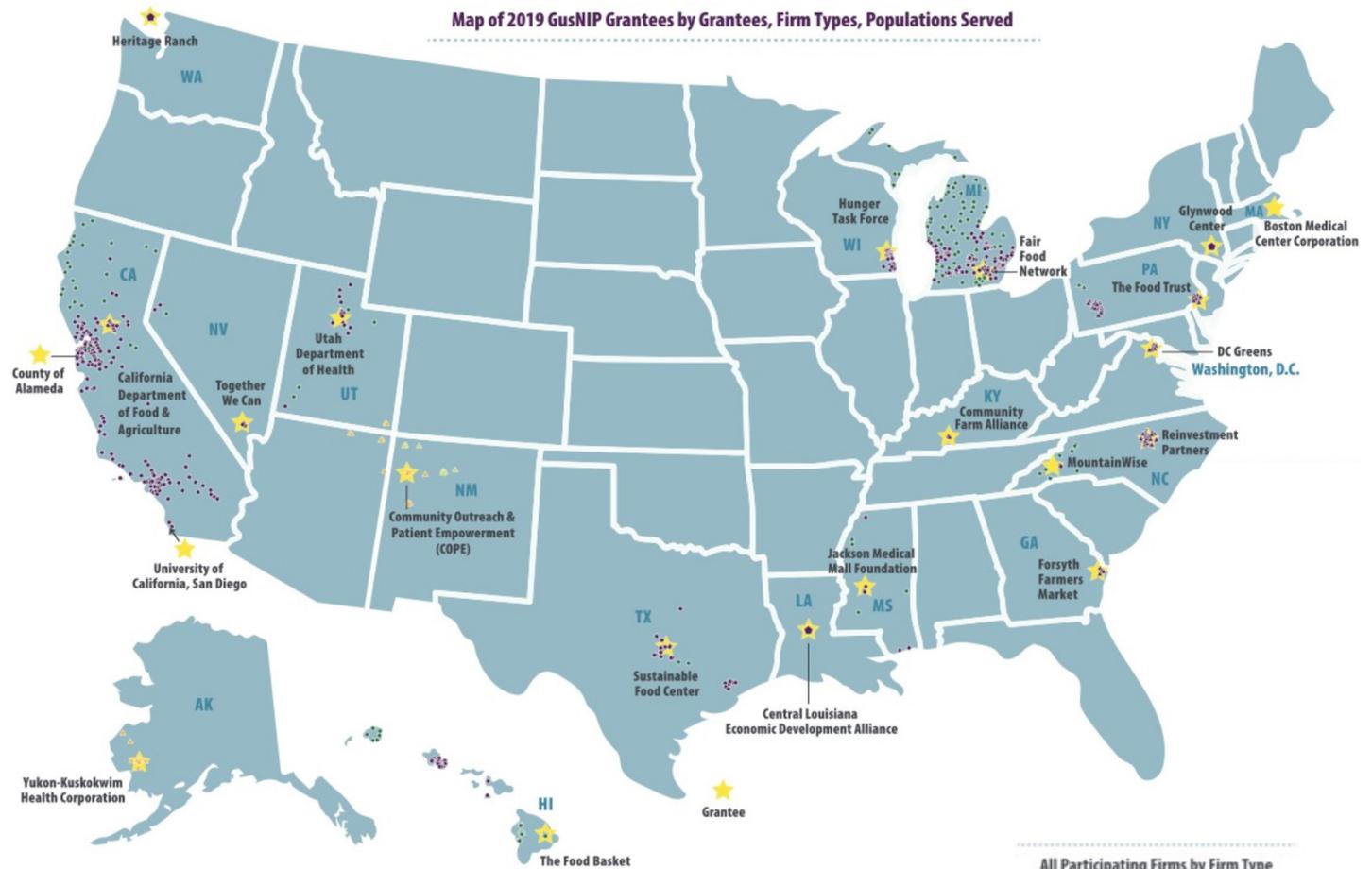
- Fruit and vegetable products eligible for incentives
- Incentive level (ratio and maximum)
- Incentive delivery mechanism
- Number of eligible participants (per site/per year)
- Dollar value of SNAP purchases (per site/per year)
- Number of SNAP transactions (per site/per year)
- Dollar value of incentives issued (per site/per year)
- Dollar value of incentives redeemed (per site/per year)
- Average incentive value redeemed per recipient (weekly/monthly/annually)

Participant-level Data

- Food assistance program and SNAP participation
- Incentive program use
- Firm types
- Program satisfaction
- Fruit and vegetable intake
- Food security
- Impact of COVID-19
- Perceived health
- Sociodemographics
- Geography (i.e., zip code)

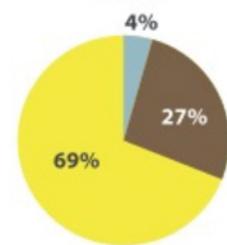
Appendix 4. Map of GusNIP-Funded Firms

The map below depicts the locations of all 2019 GusNIP grantees and their active firms. The populations served by the firms across urban, rural, tribal (*rural*), and tribal (*urban*) is also represented.

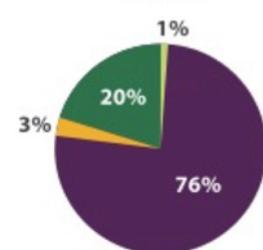


| PROGRAM TYPES | POPULATIONS SERVED | FIRM TYPES |
|---------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| ▲ PPR | ■ Urban | ■ Farm Direct |
| ● NI | ■ Rural | ■ Brick and Mortar |
| ◆ Pilot | ■ Tribal/Rural | ■ Clinic/FQHC |
| | ■ Tribal/Urban | |

All Participating Firms by Firm Type
(n=773)



All Participating Firms by Populations Served
(n=773)



Appendix 5. Data Tables for 2019 GusNIP Grantee Projects

Table 1. Firm operating days by project type and firm type ^a

| Firm operating days ^b | PPR firms (n=90) n (%) | NI firms (n=589) n (%) | B&M firms ^c (n=186) n (%) | FD firms ^c (n=463) n (%) | Clinic (n=30) n (%) | All firms (n=679) n (%) |
|---|---|---|---|--|--|--|
| Less than 1 day per week | 11 (12.2%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 11 (36.7%) | 11 (1.6%) |
| 1 day per week | 23 (25.6%) | 381 (64.7%) | 2 (1.1%) | 398 (86.0%) | 4 (13.3%) | 404 (59.5%) |
| 2-3 days per week | 4 (4.4%) | 43 (7.3%) | 6 (3.2%) | 40 (8.6%) | 1 (3.3%) | 47 (6.9%) |
| 4-6 days per week | 17 (18.9%) | 20 (3.4%) | 12 (6.5%) | 12 (2.6%) | 13 (43.3%) | 37 (5.4%) |
| Daily | 40 (44.4%) | 149 (25.3%) | 167 (89.8%) | 17 (3.7%) | 5 (16.7%) | 189 (27.8%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report firm operating days were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may only select one option per report. Nine firms selected two or more different responses for firm operating days in separate reports: 5 Produce Prescription, 4 Nutrition Incentive; 1 Brick & Mortar, 4 Farm Direct, 4 Clinics. The rows in these columns will not add up to the number of firms (n)

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 2. Other federal food assistance benefits accepted at redemption sites by project type and firm type ^{a,b}

| Other nutrition assistance benefits ^{b, c} | PPR firms (n=60) n (%) | NI firms (n=553) n (%) | B&M firms ^d (n=145) n (%) | FD firms ^d (n=468) n (%) | All firms (n=613) n (%) |
|--|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| WIC | 32 (60.4%) | 192 (59.4%) | 99 (90.0%) | 125 (47.0%) | 224 (59.6%) |
| WIC FMNP | 19 (35.8%) | 255 (78.9%) | 9 (8.2%) | 265 (99.6%) | 274 (72.9%) |
| Senior FMNP | 19 (35.8%) | 183 (56.7%) | 9 (8.2%) | 193 (72.6%) | 202 (53.7%) |
| Other (e.g., CSFP; FDPIR) ^e | 11 (20.8%) | 58 (18.0%) | 12 (10.9%) | 57 (21.4%) | 69 (18.4%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on other nutrition assistance benefits were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Pandemic-EBT (P-EBT) is included for as a nutrition assistance benefit for all SNAP authorized firms

^c Firms may select multiple options for auxiliary services so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n). 288 firms selected two or more different responses for other nutrition assistance benefits in separate reports: 23 Produce Prescription, 265 Nutrition Incentive; 12 Brick & Mortar, 272 Farm Direct. 237 firms selected “None” as a response option; 7 Produce Prescription, 230 Nutrition Incentive; 35 Brick & Mortar, 202 Farm Direct. Cell percentages include all responses that were not “None”.

^d Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

^e The majority of “Other” responses were PPR firms offering SNAP incentives and NI firms offering PPR programs.

Key: CSFP = Commodity Supplemental Food Program; FDPIR = Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations; FMNP = Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program; WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children

Table 3. Financial instruments for incentive redemption by project type and firm type ^a

| Financial instruments ^b | PPR firms (n=71) n (%) | NI firms (n = 599) n (%) | B&M firms ^c (n=191) n (%) | FD firms ^c (n=468) n (%) | Clinics (n=11) n (%) | All firms (n=670) n (%) |
|---|---|---|---|--|---|--|
| Token | 2 (2.8%) | 295 (49.2%) | 12 (6.3%) | 285 (60.9%) | 0 | 297 (44.3%) |
| Paper voucher | 67 (94.4%) | 133 (22.2%) | 37 (19.4%) | 152 (32.5%) | 11 (100.0%) | 200 (29.9%) |
| Loyalty card | 0 | 74 (12.4%) | 67 (35.1%) | 7 (1.5%) | 0 | 74 (11.0%) |
| Discount at register | 0 | 69 (11.5%) | 41 (21.5%) | 28 (6.0%) | 0 | 69 (10.3%) |
| Coupon | 0 | 27 (4.5%) | 27 (14.1%) | 0 | 0 | 27 (4.0%) |
| Online loyalty account | 1 (1.4%) | 6 (1.0%) | 7 (3.7%) | 0 | 0 | 7 (1.0%) |
| EBT Card | 0 | 9 (1.5%) | 0 | 9 (1.9%) | 0 | 9 (1.3%) |
| Other (e.g., online form) | 1 (1.4%) | 4 (0.7%) | 1 (0.5%) | 4 (0.9%) | 0 | 5 (0.8%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on financial instruments for incentive redemption were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may select multiple options for financial instruments for incentive redemption so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n). One brick and mortar firm reported two financial instruments. Fifteen farm direct firms reported two or more financial instruments for incentive redemption

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.

Table 4. Annual incentive issuance and redemption by project type and firm type ^a

| Incentive issuance and redemption | PPR firms (n=12) | NI firms (n=576) | B&M firms ^d (n=148) | FD firms ^d (n=432) | Clinic (n=8) | All firms (n=588) |
|-----------------------------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|-------------------|
| Annual incentives issued | | | | | | |
| Total | \$284,405 | \$4,777,458 | \$2,269,335 | \$2,649,518 | \$143,010 | \$5,061,863 |
| Mean | \$23,700 | \$8,294 | \$15,333 | \$6,133 | \$17,876 | \$8,609 |
| Annual incentives redeemed | | | | | | |
| Total | \$169,762 | \$3,891,993 | \$1,633,310 | \$2,348,905 | \$79,540 | \$4,061,755 |
| Mean | \$14,147 | \$6,757 | \$11,036 | \$5,437 | \$9,943 | \$6,908 |
| Annual redemption rate | | | | | | |
| Total ^b | 59.7% | 81.5% | 72.0% | 88.7% | 55.6% | 80.2% |
| Mean ^c | 53.9% | 90.3% | 85.9% | 91.6% | 50.1% | 89.6% |

^a Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Total annual redemption rate is the total annual incentives redeemed over the total annual incentives issued in each column as a percentage. Note that this is a different calculation from mean annual redemption rate

^c The mean presented here is the average annual redemption rate for all firms with complete data for annual redemption rate. Annual redemption rate is the annual value of FV incentives redeemed over the annual value of FV incentives issued for every firm with a non-zero value of annual FV incentives issued as a percentage. Note that this is a different calculation from total annual redemption rate

^d Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.).

Table 5. SNAP purchases/products eligible to trigger incentives by firm type (Nutrition Incentive projects only)^a

| SNAP purchases/products eligible to trigger incentive^b | B&M firms^c (n=154) n (%) | FD firms^c (n=445) n (%) | All NI firms (n=559) n (%) |
|--|--|---|---|
| All SNAP Eligible items | 18 (11.7%) | 416 (93.5%) | 434 (72.5%) |
| All fresh FVs | 101 (65.5%) | 42 (9.4%) | 143 (23.9%) |
| Canned FVs (no added salt/sugar) | 4 (2.6%) | 3 (0.7%) | 7 (1.2%) |
| Dried FVs (no added salt/sugar) | 0 | 7 (1.6%) | 7 (1.2%) |
| Frozen FVs (no added salt/sugar) | 6 (3.9%) | 3 (0.7%) | 9 (1.5%) |
| Plants that produce herbs and FVs | 3 (1.9%) | 25 (5.6%) | 28 (4.7%) |
| Seeds that produce herbs and FVs | 1 (0.6%) | 6 (1.3%) | 7 (1.2%) |
| Only state or regionally grown FVs | 6 (3.9%) | 21 (4.7%) | 27 (4.5%) |
| Only organic grown FVs | 0 | 5 (1.1%) | 5 (0.8%) |
| Other (e.g., select state grown FVs; dairy; bread) | 32 (20.8%) | 4 (0.9%) | 36 (6.0%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on SNAP purchases/products eligible to trigger incentive were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may select multiple options for SNAP purchases/products eligible to trigger incentive so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n)

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 6. Fruits & vegetables (FVs) eligible for incentives by project type and firm type ^a

| Fruits & vegetables eligible for incentives | PPR firms (n=60) n (%) | NI firms (n=599) n (%) | B&M firms ^c (n=191) n (%) | FD firms ^c (n=468) n (%) | All firms (n=659) n (%) |
|--|---|---|---|--|--|
| All fresh FVs | 58 (96.7%) | 489 (81.6%) | 147 (77.0%) | 400 (85.5%) | 547 (83.0%) |
| Canned FVs (no added salt/sugar) | 11 (18.3%) | 5 (0.8%) | 12 (6.3%) | 4 (0.9%) | 16 (2.4%) |
| Dried FVs (no added salt/sugar) | 0 | 5 (0.8%) | 1 (0.5%) | 4 (0.9%) | 5 (0.8%) |
| Frozen FVs (no added salt/sugar) | 25 (41.7%) | 7 (1.2%) | 29 (15.2%) | 3 (0.6%) | 32 (4.9%) |
| Plants that produce herbs and FVs | 0 | 57 (9.5%) | 5 (2.6%) | 52 (11.1%) | 57 (8.6%) |
| Seeds that produce herbs and FVs | 0 | 20 (3.3%) | 2 (1.0%) | 18 (3.8%) | 20 (3.0%) |
| Only state or regionally grown FVs | 3 (5.0%) | 94 (15.7%) | 12 (6.3%) | 85 (18.2%) | 97 (14.7%) |
| Only organic grown FVs | 0 | 4 (0.7%) | 0 | 4 (0.9%) | 4 (0.6%) |
| Other (e.g., select state grown FVs; dried herbs and spices) | 13 (21.7%) | 41 (6.8%) | 46 (24.1%) | 8 (1.7%) | 54 (8.2%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on fruits and vegetables eligible to trigger incentive were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may select multiple options for eligible fruits and vegetables so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n)

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 7. Incentive-level ratio by firm type (Nutrition Incentive projects only) ^a

| Incentive-level ratio ^b | B&M firms ^c (n=154) n (%) | FD firms ^c (n=445) n (%) | All NI firms (n=559) n (%) |
|---|---|--|---|
| 1:1 | 136 (88.3%) | 266 (96.7%) | 402 (93.7%) |
| 2:1 | 1 (0.7%) | 6 (2.2%) | 7 (1.6%) |
| 4:1 | 1 (0.7%) | 0 | 1 (0.2%) |
| 25% off | 2 (1.3%) | 0 | 2 (0.5%) |
| 50% off | 43 (27.9%) | 6 (2.2%) | 49 (11.4%) |
| Other (e.g., no ratio) | 1 (0.7%) | 5 (0.2%) | 6 (1.4%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report incentive-level ratio were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may select multiple options for incentive-level ratio so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n). 38 firms selected more than one option for incentive-level ratio

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provide produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers markets, farm stands, CSAs, mobile markets, etc.).

Table 8. SNAP purchases and transactions by project type and firm type ^a

| SNAP purchases and transactions ^b | PPR firms (n=41) | NI firms (n=596) | B&M firms ^c (n=170) | FD firms ^c (n=467) | All firms (n=637) |
|---|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---|--|------------------------------|
| SNAP purchases | (n=41) | (n=596) | (n=170) | (n=467) | (n=637) |
| Total | \$11,473,089 | \$45,947,901 | \$53,524,609 | \$3,896,381 | \$57,420,990 |
| Mean | \$279,831 | \$77,094 | \$314,851 | \$8,343 | \$90,143 |
| SNAP transactions | (n=32) | (n=585) | (n=152) | (n=465) | (n=617) |
| Total | 235,598 | 1,809,496 | 1,769,756 | 275,338 | 2,045,094 |
| Mean | 7,362 | 3,093 | 11,643 | 592 | 3,315 |

^a Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b SNAP purchases and transactions include data only during the time that GusNIP funds were being used. For instance, if a grantee did not receive or start using GusNIP funds until May 2020, SNAP purchase and transaction data at the grantee's firms from September 2019 through April 2020 will not be included here

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 9. Participant reach and redemption by project type and firm type ^a

| Program reach and participant redemption | PPR firms (n=32) | NI firms ^d (n=95) | B&M firms ^e (n=29) | FD firms ^e (n=68) | Clinic (n=30) | All firms (n=127) |
|---|-----------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------|------------------------------|
| Number of unique participants ^b | | | | | | |
| Total | 1,392 | 76,566 | 72,112 | 4,500 | 1,336 | 77,948 |
| Mean | 44 | 806 | 2,487 | 66 | 45 | 614 |
| Incentive value redeemed per recipient ^c | | | | | | |
| Mean | \$102.51 | \$16.82 | \$12.59 | \$29.97 | \$87.31 | \$34.35 |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on other number of eligible participants were removed from the sample

^b This metric is difficult for participating firms to report, therefore, total estimates will be low. Incentive value redeemed per transaction may be more feasible for the majority of firms to report.

^c Incentive value redeemed per recipient is the annual dollar value of incentives redeemed over the total number of participants for the year for each firm, excluding reports that did not have data for number of participants or incentive value redeemed. The mean here represents the average incentive value redeemed per participant over one year for each firm in the corresponding column. A minority of firms provided data for both metrics in this calculation so the resulting statistic is not likely to represent most firms

^d Produce Prescription Programs reported cumulative values for unique eligible participants and actual participants for the year while Nutrition Incentive Programs reported these values monthly and were not able to account for unique participants across all months of operation. The resulting annual statistics for Nutrition Incentive Programs for this metric may be inflated because they likely include repeat individuals

^e Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 10. Participant eligibility by project type and firm type ^a

| Number of eligible participants | PPR firms (n=8) | NI firms ^c (n=103) | B&M firms ^d (n=52) | FD firms ^d (n=51) | Clinic (n=8) | All firms (n=111) |
|--|----------------------------|--|--|---|-------------------------|------------------------------|
| Total ^b | 663 | 294,387 | 259,810 | 34,577 | 663 | 295,050 |
| Mean | 83 | 2,858 | 4,996 | 678 | 83 | 2,658 |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on other number of eligible participants were removed from the sample. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b This metric is difficult for participating firms to report, therefore, total estimates will be low. Mean # of eligible participants across firms may be a more meaningful metric to approximate eligibility.

^c Produce Prescription Programs reported cumulative values for unique eligible participants and actual participants for the year while Nutrition Incentive Programs reported these values monthly and were not able to account for unique participants across all months of operation. The resulting annual statistics for Nutrition Incentive Programs for this metric may be inflated because they likely include repeat individuals

^d Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 11. Nutrition education activities offered by project type and firm type ^a

| Nutrition education activities offered ^b | PPR firms n=88 n (%) | NI firms n=553 n (%) | B&M firms ^c n=145 n (%) | FD firms ^c n=468 n (%) | Clinic n=28 n (%) | All firms n=641 n (%) |
|--|---|---|---|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Diabetes Prevention Program (DPP) classes | 8 (27.6%) | 2 (2.9%) | 0 | 2 (3.2%) | 8 (33.3%) | 10 (10.2%) |
| SNAP-Ed programs | 9 (31.0%) | 22 (31.9%) | 8 (72.7%) | 22 (34.9%) | 1 (4.2%) | 31 (31.6%) |
| 1-on-1 Coaching | 11 (37.9%) | 0 | 0 | 1 (1.6%) | 10 (41.7%) | 11 (11.2%) |
| Support groups | 0 | 2 (2.9%) | 0 | 2 (3.2%) | 0 | 2 (2.0%) |
| Individualized consultation with a Registered Dietitian | 13 (44.8%) | 1 (1.4%) | 1 (9.1%) | 2 (3.2%) | 11 (45.8%) | 14 (14.3%) |
| Teaching Kitchens | 0 | 5 (7.2%) | 1 (9.1%) | 4 (6.3%) | 0 | 5 (5.1%) |
| Grocery tours | 3 (10.3%) | 11 (15.9%) | 2 (18.2%) | 11 (17.5%) | 1 (4.2%) | 14 (14.3%) |
| Taste tests/cooking | 14 (48.3%) | 25 (36.2%) | 11 (100.0%) | 23 (36.5%) | 5 (20.8%) | 39 (39.8%) |
| E-Interventions | 3 (10.3%) | 0 | 0 | 0 | 3 (12.5%) | 3 (3.1%) |
| Other (e.g., recipe cards; garden tours) | 9 (31.0%) | 52 (75.4%) | 7 (63.6%) | 47 (10.0%) | 7 (29.2%) | 61 (62.2%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on nutrition education activities were removed from the sample. Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on number of firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may select multiple options for nutrition education activities so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n). 61 firms selected two or more different responses for nutrition education activities in separate reports: 9 Produce Prescription, 52 Nutrition Incentive; 7 Brick & Mortar, 47 Farm Direct, 7 Clinics. 543 firms selected “None” as a response option; 59 Produce Prescription, 484 Nutrition Incentive; 134 Brick & Mortar, 405 Farm Direct, and 4 Clinics. Cell percentages include all responses that were not “None”.

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 12. Auxiliary services offered by project type and firm type ^a

| Auxiliary services offered ^b | PPR firms (n=88) n (%) | NI firms (n=530) n (%) | B&M firms ^c (n=122) n (%) | FD firms ^c (n=468) n (%) | Clinic (n=28) n (%) | All firms (n=618) n (%) |
|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|---|--|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Transportation services | 10 (43.5%) | 7 (10.1%) | 7 (43.8%) | 4 (6.8%) | 6 (35.3%) | 17 (18.5%) |
| Fitness programs | 5 (21.7%) | 6 (8.7%) | 0 | 6 (10.2%) | 5 (29.4%) | 11 (12.0%) |
| Shopping assistance | 8 (34.8%) | 36 (52.2%) | 10 (62.5%) | 27 (45.8%) | 7 (41.2%) | 44 (47.8%) |
| Other (e.g., SNAP application assistance) | 20 (87%) | 40 (58.0%) | 3 (18.8%) | 40 (67.8%) | 17 (100.0%) | 60 (65.2%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that did not report on auxiliary services were removed from the sample.

Percentages are column percentages. Number of firms (n) in each column header is based on firms that have data for this metric, not the total number of firms participating (n=773)

^b Firms may select multiple options for auxiliary services so the rows in each column will not add up to the number of firms (n). 32 firms selected two or more different responses for auxiliary services in separate reports: 14 Produce Prescription, 18 Nutrition Incentive; 4 Brick & Mortar, 16 Farm Direct, 12 Clinics. 526 firms selected “None” as a response option; 65 Produce Prescription, 461 Nutrition Incentive; 106 Brick & Mortar, 409 Farm Direct, and 11 Clinics. Cell percentages include all responses that were not “None”.

^c Brick & Mortar firms are traditional business serving customers (e.g., supercenters, grocery stores, wholesale, etc.). Farm Direct firms are venues that provides produce directly from farms (e.g., farmers market, farm stands, CSA, mobile market, etc.)

Table 13. Eligibility criteria for PPR program participation

| Eligibility criteria | AK^a n (%) | DC^a n (%) | GA^a n (%) | KY^a n (%) | NC^a n (%) | NM^a n (%) | PA^a n (%) | Total^a n (%) |
|---|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Medicaid recipient | 1 (100.0%) | 5 (100.0%) | 3 (100.0%) | 1 (100.0%) | 0 | 1 (12.5%) | 5 (45.5%) | 16 (51.6%) |
| SNAP recipient | 0 | 0 | 3 (100.0%) | 0 | 2 (100.0%) | 0 | 6 (54.6%) | 11 (35.5%) |
| Screen positive for food insecurity | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 (100.0%) | 5 (45.5%) | 13 (41.9%) |
| Screen positive for a chronic health condition (e.g., diabetes) | 1 (100.0%) | 5 (100.0%) | 3 (100.0%) | 0 | 2 (100.0%) | 8 (100.0%) | 1 (9.09%) | 20 (64.5%) |
| Other | 1 (100.0%) | 5 (100.0%) | 2 (66.7%) | 1 (100.0%) | 0 | 1 (12.5%) | 6 (54.6%) | 16 (51.6%) |

^a Sample sizes are based on firms that reported a numeric value (e.g., 0 or higher). Firms that listed NA were removed from the sample.

Key: AK = Yukon-Kuskokwim Health Corporation (1 clinic); DC = DC Greens (6 clinics); GA = Forsyth Farmers Market (4 clinics); KY = Community Farm Alliance (1 clinic); NC = Reinvestment Partners (2 clinics); NM = Community Outreach and Patient Empowerment Program, Inc. (9 clinics); PA = The Food Trust (11 clinics); Total = 34 clinics

Note: Programs that did not operate before Sept 2020, these grantees did not have data for the variables of interest: MA = Boston Medical Center Corporation; CA = County of Alameda

Appendix 6. 2019 GusNIP Grantee COVID-19 Impact

Purpose and Methods

From March through May 2020, the NTAE R&E team conducted semi-structured video calls with current GusNIP grantees in order to receive progress updates on program implementation and evaluation, discuss any challenges or barriers, and more specifically, discuss the impact of COVID-19 on their grant projects. The overarching goals of the calls were to: (1) assess the progress of each grantee's project with regard to implementation and evaluation; (2) identify barriers or issues, particularly around the COVID-19 pandemic; (3) and determine ways that the NTAE could help grantees obtain their goals.

Video calls took place between March and May 2020. Broadly, grantees were asked about the following: Whether grantees had received their funding; Current status of project implementation; Current status of project evaluation; Impacts of COVID-19 on project implementation and evaluation; grantees' questions related to core metrics or other evaluation topics. Calls typically lasted 60 minutes. Calls were recorded with grantees' permission and transcribed verbatim. Typewritten notes were also taken. Below is a summary of key takeaways from the interviews.

Key Takeaways

Funding

During the March to April 2020 quarter, 22 GusNIP grantees participated in a video call with the GusNIP NTAE R&E team. Of the 22 grantees, 11 reported funds being approved, but a few grantees reported not being able to access their funding. Five grantees had not received any funds, one grantee did not know the status of their funds, and funding information was not captured for five grantees during the interviews. Fortunately, the delay in funding had minimal or no impact on most grantees (18); for two grantees, the lack of funding halted program operation, while a few others were able to utilize other funds or re-direct funds for the short-term (3). One grantee shared they were able to engage in planned activities but had to shut down all GusNIP-related spending until they received their USDA funding.

Program Implementation Status

Grantees were asked to provide updates on their project implementation status during the video call. Based on the conversations during the calls, grantees were in varying different stages and points in their program. The majority of grantees (18) reported continued operations in some capacity, with 14 grantees reporting that at least some of their firms were able to continue with operations. Five grantees shared they were continuing work on recruiting firms, and three grantees were waiting on IRB approval. Other common updates on program implementation status mentioned were Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) status and communication and marketing work.

Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic

Grantees were also asked about the impact of COVID-19 on their projects. All grantees reported that their organizations and grant projects were being impacted by COVID-19 in some way. Challenges with and delay in recruitment were common themes among grantees. Five grantees reported firms closed due to COVID-19. Eight grantees reported identifying alternative ways to distribute food for their project and as part of the larger emergency food assistance response, two reported having less volunteers, and two grantees mentioned state-level policies that were working to deem farmers markets essential in order to keep them operational. Grantees with FD firms reported having implemented or were considering alternatives to farmers markets such as: Drive thru/pick up system; Food box or CSA (those who are not already doing CSA); Offering remote or pre-order options; Mobile market.

Due to COVID-19, many states had implemented social distancing guidance at the time of the calls. Many grantees shared concerns about administering the participant-level surveys due to social distancing guidelines and consideration for participants' and survey administrators' safety. As one grantee shared, "*The challenge there of course, how long are people going to want to hang around? Are we going to have to schedule people to come at certain slots? There's like a lot of questions around that.*" Taking into consideration the challenges

with participant-level data, grantees have considered alternatives to administering surveys such as: phone; online; US postal mail; QR code with receipt for personal device; texting.

Despite the challenges and delays that COVID-19 caused grantees, all grantees have been working hard and pushing to make food more accessible for their communities. In doing so, three grantees have changed and altered their incentive requirements. One grantee increased the daily limit from \$20 to \$50 in large grocery chain stores and removed the limit for their farmers market and independent stores in hopes of bringing more fresh produce into homes. With the unforeseeable future of COVID-19, grantees have maximized communications with community partners, shoppers, and firms to bring awareness to the availability of GusNIP projects.

The table below describe program adaptations made due to COVID-19

| Adaptations made | Quote |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Waiving or extending the expiration dates for vouchers • Modifying timing of when participants receive their incentives (i.e., fewer times in larger sums to limit the amount of times participants need to shop) • Expanding the eligibility of fruits and vegetables included (e.g., to include frozen or canned) | <p><i>"... Instead of going to their doctor every three months to renew prescriptions, all prescriptions are valid, no matter the expiration date. [Also], we are giving out vouchers for the whole month at one time, so that participants have more flexibility and reducing the amount of times they have to go to the grocery store. Before the voucher was only for fresh fruits and vegetables, and now it's also for frozen fruits and vegetables."</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supplementing the amount of incentives/produce prescription vouchers to be larger to help address increases in food insecurity | <p><i>"We wanted to try and find a way to help families be able to get more food into their homes at this time. So, we removed the daily earning limits at farmers markets and increased the earning cap in grocery stores. Previously it was \$20 a day that you could earn. Now the farmers' markets that are still open and removed the limit. In our grocery stores, they have increased their earning limits of \$50."</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adapting delivery mechanisms to be more social distances (e.g., drive-thru pick-ups, fruit and vegetable boxes) | <p><i>"At the beginning, when there was nothing in place, they were coming to our warehouse and we're trying to really avoid crowds. Now we have a community distribution schedule where they have to go to a drive through."</i></p> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adding safety measures to farmers markets | <p><i>"At our farmers markets, we have integrated more hand washing stations, hand sanitizer, all of that. We are going to have them open tomorrow, but we've beefed up those precautions a little bit more, added an extra spacing between the tents. We're going to have staff really enforcing like an individual spacing policy, keeping the people at least six feet away from each other. We are instructing vendors to not let customers pick things themselves. The customers will tell them what they want and they'll bag it all up for them. Trying to avoid hand to hand contacts when exchanging cash or cards or anything like that."</i></p> |

Evaluation

The GusNIP NTAE Center has developed core metrics that grantees are being asked to measure, both at the participant-level and firm-level. Grantees were asked via telephone calls whether they had or foresaw issues in conducting the evaluation. Prior to collecting data, grantees were recommended to complete their Institutional Review Board (IRB) applications. From the calls, five grantees reported completion of their IRB application or waiting to hear back, six grantees cited their IRBs were in progress, and seven grantees reported being unsure whether IRB would be applicable to them or had not started. When asked whether they have other institutions through which they can submit an IRB, five grantees shared they have partners, two did not have connection to any IRB partners, and one site had its own IRB. Regarding firm-level metrics, eight grantees had already been collecting some type of firm-level data and were confident in providing that data to the GusNIP NTAE moving forward. For participant-level data, three grantees reported already having their own platform for collecting surveys and were either considering using Qualtrics or using their own platform and provide data in a spreadsheet to the GusNIP NTAE for analysis.

Other Needs

As each grantee and their associated grant projects are unique, their needs varied. Some grantees had concerns about COVID-19 and the impact it would have on their grant, such as whether there would be a no-cost extension available given significant delays or suspended activities. Other concerns and questions grantees had pertained to payment equipment, stipends for survey participants, having more WIC and SNAP customers, and survey translation.