



FALL 2023

METROWEST FOOD COLLABORATIVE NEWSLETTER

Introducing the MetroWest Food Collaborative's (MWFC) new quarterly newsletter! For updates on all things MWFC related, including food policy news, advocacy opportunities, food resources, local initiatives, and more!

Sincerely,

Kali Coughlan

MetroWest Food Collaborative Coordinator

In the News

State Budget Overview of Food Policy Wins!

- *Universal School Meals became permanent*
- *The MWFC received two earmarks to support our work*
A huge thanks to Speaker Pro Tempore Hogan & Senate President Spilka for securing these earmarks!
- *Regional Transit Authority funding increase*
- *Local Food Policy Grant Program continued funding*
- *Food Literacy in School new funding*

Learn more [details](#) about these important investments in the food system that we helped advocate for and please [thank your legislators](#) via email, phone or in person!



MWFC UPDATES

MEET OUR COORDINATOR, KALI!

Kali Coughlan has officially taken on the role of MWFC Coordinator thanks to generous funding from the state budget and grants from the MetroWest Health Foundation, the Sudbury Foundation, and the Department of Agricultural Resources (MDAR). Kali will continue building upon existing relationships, managing all MWFC logistics, and working to expand capacity for food systems advocacy, fund development, and organizational management.



THANKS TO OUR SUMMER INTERN, NICOLE!

Nicole, a Tulane University student studying Public Health, joined our team this summer to help out with several projects! In her time with us, Nicole started and ran our Instagram, created informational flyers, worked on our website, ran our “Farmer Spotlight” series, tabled at resource fairs/farmers markets, and helped conduct surveys with local COAs and food pantries.



L to R: Kali, Nicole and Leah from Project Bread tabling at the MetroWest Care Connection Resource Fair in Downtown Framingham.

MWFC WORKING GROUP UPDATES

FOOD EQUITY & JUSTICE

Kali and working group members conducted community listening sessions with over 40 residents in the MW region from varying backgrounds. We had relaxed conversations to hear their thoughts about food access in their community. We asked questions about their experiences with food access, what food support programs they were aware of, where they go to find information about resources, and how we could work together to create action. Thanks to the MDAR grant, we were able to offer grocery gift cards, childcare and dinner to help minimize barriers to participation and to show our appreciation.

Lessons Learned from the Community Listening:

- Dignity matters, and participants want to be able to choose their food in a dignified way.
- Participants identified access to fresh food, like vegetables and dried beans, being preferred over canned.
- It's important to provide information on food resources in a variety of formats and channels (translated, print, online, going where people are, etc.) in order to effectively reach people.



Kali & Lani, from Public Health Shared Services, handing out resources and flowers at Open Table's Drive Up Food Pantry

HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS

This Working Group recently conducted surveys with local food pantries and Councils on Aging to gain insights into if they are assisting clients with SNAP and WIC applications. With this valuable feedback, Kali has started to partner with the Greater Boston Food Bank and Project Bread to provide resources to residents at pantries to help make strides towards closing the "SNAP & WIC gap" in our community. We are also beginning to plan for our 2nd Annual Food Access Summit.

Interested in joining a working group?

Email us at: MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com

ADVOCACY OPPORTUNITIES



Thank your Legislators!

Thank your legislators for their investments that support food policy:

- Free School Meals becoming permanent in MA (use [this email template](#))
- \$150 million in operating dollars to support communities with Regional Transit Authorities
- \$250,000 for Local Food Policy Council Grants
- \$1 million for Food Literacy in Schools



Spread HIP Awareness!

Spread awareness about the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) at your local farm or market, by promoting accessible fresh produce for all SNAP users. Here's how you can help:

- Download and share our [educational flyers](#) (also available at the end of our newsletter)
- Invite your legislator to join you at a market to see HIP in action



Share Your Voice!

Provide your own testimony to support a case for these bills to become law. Or send us examples that we can include in our testimony from the MWFC by October 27th.

RTA Advancement Bill
H.3272/S.2277
([Learn more](#))

HIP Enabling Legislation
H.150/S.85
([Find our more](#))

Basic Needs Assistance for
Mass. Immigrant Residents
S.76/H.135
([Take Action](#))



**Help us plan the
2nd Annual Food Access Summit
Get in touch!**

MetroWestFoodCollaborative@gmail.com

RESOURCES FOR YOU:

[Click here](#)

Food Resource
Calendars & Food
Distribution Flyers by
City/Town

(In English, Spanish & Portuguese)

Project Bread's
FoodSource Hotline:
1-800-645-8333

Monday-Friday: 8am-7pm
Saturday: 10am - 2pm

Assistance in 180 languages.

[Click here](#)

Local Farmers'
Markets Info &
Educational Flyers

[Click here](#)

Community
Supported
Agriculture

What makes a community
healthy & strong?

Your voice.

Help us
understand your
barriers to
improved health!
(Available in 11
languages)



Take the survey today.

www.mass.gov/healthsurvey



Use Your SNAP & HIP Benefits at Farmers Markets

To find HIP-eligible food, visit www.mass.gov/hip, call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline at **1-800-645-8333**, or look for the HIP logo at local markets.



The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) provides families with monthly help to buy healthy foods. If you receive SNAP benefits, **you are automatically enrolled in the MA Healthy Incentives Program (HIP).**



HIP puts the SNAP dollars you spend on local fruits and vegetables back on your EBT card instantly. **You can get \$1 back on your EBT card for every \$1 spent on fruits and vegetables at the Farmers' Market this summer!** Once the money has been put back on your EBT card, you can spend it at any SNAP retailer like always.

How much HIP you can use every month depends on your household size:

Household Size	HIP Monthly Cap
1-2 people	\$40
3-5 people	\$60
6+ people	\$80

HIP Eligible Foods:
Any fruits and vegetables sold by HIP vendors are eligible!



Fresh. Canned. Dried. Frozen.
It's **HIP** to be healthy!

Learn more at Mass.gov/HIP

Not enrolled in SNAP or Need additional Food Resources?

Call Project Bread's FoodSource Hotline: **1-800-645-8333**

Hotline Hours: Monday-Friday: 8am - 7pm and Saturday: 10am - 2pm

Food assistance in 180 languages.

Use sus beneficios de SNAP y HIP en mercados de agricultores

Para encontrar alimentos elegibles para HIP, visite www.mass.gov/hip, llame a la línea directa FoodSource de Project Bread al 1-800-645-8333 o busque el logotipo de HIP en los mercados locales.



El Programa de Asistencia Nutricional Suplementaria (SNAP) proporciona a las familias ayuda mensual para comprar alimentos saludables. **Si recibe beneficios de SNAP, se inscribe automáticamente en el Programa de Incentivos Saludables de MA).**



HIP pone los dólares SNAP que gastas en frutas y verduras locales de nuevo en tu tarjeta EBT al instante. **¡Puede obtener \$1 de vuelta en su tarjeta EBT por cada \$1 gastados en frutas y verduras en el mercado de agricultores este verano!** Una vez que el dinero se ha devuelto a su tarjeta EBT, puede gastarlo en cualquier tienda SNAP como siempre.

La cantidad de HIP que puede usar cada mes depende del tamaño de su hogar:

Tamaño del hogar	Límite mensual de HIP
1-2 personas	\$40
3-5 personas	\$60
6 personas	\$80

Alimentos elegibles para HIP:
¡Todas las frutas y verduras vendidas por los vendedores de HIP son elegibles!



Fresh. Canned. Dried. Frozen.
It's **HIP** to be healthy!

Obtenga más información en
Mass.gov/HIP

¿No está inscrito en SNAP o necesita recursos alimentarios adicionales?

Llame a la línea directa de Project Bread: **[1-800-645-8333](tel:1-800-645-8333)**

Horario de la línea directa: Lunes-Viernes: 8am - 7pm y Sábado: 10am - 2pm

Asistencia alimentaria en 180 idiomas.

Use seus benefícios SNAP e HIP em Farmers Markets



Para encontrar alimentos elegíveis para HIP, visite www.mass.gov/hip, ligue para a linha direta FoodSource do Project Bread no número 1-800-645-8333 ou procure o logotipo HIP nos mercados locais.



SNAP oferece ajuda mensal às famílias para a compra de alimentos saudáveis. **Se você receber benefícios do SNAP, você estará automaticamente inscrito no programa Healthy Incentives (HIP) e poderá comprar alimentos frescos nas feiras públicas.**



O valor que você gasta em frutas e legumes nas feiras públicas volta para seu cartão EBT instantaneamente. **Você pode receber US\$ 1 de volta em seu cartão EBT para cada US\$ 1 gasto em frutas e vegetais nas feiras neste verão!** Depois que o dinheiro for devolvido ao seu cartão EBT, você poderá gastá-lo em qualquer revendedor SNAP, como sempre.

O valor de compras em feiras livres que você pode usar todo mês depende do tamanho da sua família:

Tamanho da família	Limite Mensal HIP
1-2 pessoas	\$40
3-5 pessoas	\$60
6+ pessoas	\$80

Qualquer frutas e legumes vendidos por fornecedores HIP são elegíveis!

Mais Informação Mass.gov/HIP



Fresh. Canned. Dried. Frozen.
It's **KIP** to be healthy!

Não está inscrito no SNAP ou precisa de recursos alimentares adicionais?

Ligue para a Project Bread: **1-800-645-8333**

Horário de funcionamento: Segunda a sexta: 8h às 19h e sábado: 10h às 14h

Assistência alimentar em 180 idiomas.