



Feeding People, Feeding Communities

An Evaluative Summary of the 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Prepared by Flourish Community Development Co-operative
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1.0 Executive Summary

The 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program was the fourth iteration of a program first piloted in May 2019. This iteration upheld the same three key objectives as the previous three iterations:

1. To provide financial support to those in need to access healthy food, recognizing that over 1 in 5 people in Nova Scotia are food insecure¹;
2. To provide an experience that supports physical, mental, and community health; and
3. To support local producers and farmers in developing a robust and resilient food system in Nova Scotia.

With funding support from: the Nova Scotia government department of Communities, Culture, Tourism and Heritage (\$494,800); Second Harvest; Nova Scotia Young Farmers; and Off Beat Farm – FMNS distributed \$397,440 worth of food coupons over an 8-month period to 585 households (an average of approximately \$679 per household) across 33 markets, including all markets that participated during the first three years. These 33 markets were:

Markets Continuing from Previous Years	
Annapolis Royal Farmers' and Traders' Market	New Germany Farmers' Market
Antigonish Farmers' Market	New Glasgow Farmers' Market
Avon Community Farmers' Market	North Mountain Farmers' Market
Barrington Farmers' Market	Novalea Farmers' Market
Bridgewater Farmers' Market	Privateer Farmers' Market
Cape Breton Farmers' Market	Prospect Communities Farmers' Market
Chester Farmers and Artisans Market	Spryfield Farmers' Market
Fairview Clayton Park Farmers' Market	Tatamagouche Farmers' Market
Halifax Brewery Farmers' Market	Truro Farmers' Market
Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market	Wolfville Farmers' Market
Hubbards Farmers' Market	Yarmouth Farmers' Community Market
Kentville Farmers' Market	Merigomish SchoolhouseMarketplace
Lunenburg Farmers' Market	Musquodoboit Harbour Farmers' Market

¹ New data on household food insecurity in 2022. PROOF. (2023, May 4). <https://proof.utoronto.ca/2023/new-data-on-household-food-insecurity-in-2022/>

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Mabou Farmers' Market	
New Markets for 2023	
Alderney Landing Farmers' Market	Pugwash Farmers' Market
The Fairgrounds Farmers' Market	Shelburne Guild Hall Farmers' Market
Hope Blooms Farmers' Market	Tantallon Farmers' Market

By nearly any measure, the 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program was a great success. Consider the following highlights:

1. **High redemption rates:** Coupon redemption rates were extremely high, with 96.5% of all coupons being used. This figure is higher than the first, second, and third iterations of the program (88.9%, 86% and 86.5% redemption rate, respectively).
2. **Healthy spending choices:** Despite having no restrictions on how their coupons could be redeemed, participants overwhelmingly made healthy spending decisions on locally sourced food, demonstrating a clear need. More than 74% of all coupons redeemed were used directly towards the purchase of foods, which included produce, prepared foods, value-added foods and other agri-food products (compared with 78% last year). Almost a quarter (23%) of all redemptions were for produce.
3. **Engaged participants:** 362 participants (62% of all program participants) completed an exit survey at the conclusion of the program to evaluate their experience (results included within the report). This is a significantly high response rate for this type of engagement.
4. **Tangible benefits:** When asked to evaluate the overall benefit of the program, 95% of respondents indicated that the program provided either 'an extreme amount of benefit' or 'quite a bit of benefit' (This is up from 80% in 2021). Four percent said the program offered 'some benefit but not much', and just 1% of respondents indicated they received no real benefit at all.
5. **Expanding social networks:** 79% of participants indicated they made at least one new friend or social contact through their participation in the program. This is up somewhat from the first three years of the program (57%, 43% and 61%), which may be in part a result of lowered social distancing protocols.
6. **Diversifying dietary choices:** 89% of participants purchased foods that were not part of their diet previously (Comparative to 88% and 82% in the previous two years of the program).
7. **Expected long-term dietary changes:** 82% of participants expect to make long-term changes to their diet because of their participation in this program (Up from 61%, 62% and 50% in the first three years of the program).

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8. **Increased sense of community belonging:** 86% of participants report feeling a greater sense of belonging to their community because of their participation in this program. This is consistent with 85% during the pilot and 92% during the third year of the program.
9. **Eating healthier:** 91% of participants reported eating healthier foods than usual during their participation in the program (up slightly from 81%, 87% and 85% in the first three years of the program).
10. **Freeing budgets to meet other needs:** 94% of participants – as a result of this program – felt they had more money to meet their other (non-food/grocery) needs. This is consistent with 88%, 85% and 94% during the first three years of the program.
11. **Good value for money:** 97% of participants believe they received good value for their Food Bucks overall (This is consistent with 97% during the pilot, and slightly up from 93% during year two and 91% in year three).
12. **Spending time browsing and socialising:** 59% of all respondents reported that they stayed at the market for more than 30 minutes each week (up from 41% last year), while an additional 26% said they stayed between 21-30 minutes. Only 15% of participants reported staying less than 20 minutes.
13. **Making it a social outing:** 56% of respondents either always or often attended the market with a family member or friend. 17% of respondents sometimes attended the market with someone else, while 27% of respondents either always or almost always attended the market by themselves.
14. **Extended reach of purchased foods:** 61% of all respondents indicated that other people in their household regularly consumed products they purchased using Food Bucks (slightly down from 73% in 2021). On average, participants regularly shared their purchased foods with 2.35 other people (up from 1.87 in 2021). Therefore, less participants regularly shared their purchased foods in 2022 compared to 2021, however of the people who did share, they shared with a larger number of people in 2022 than in 2021.
15. **Injecting more money into the local economy:** 66% of participants reported spending money during their market visits *in addition to* their Food Bucks. 37% of participants reported spending more than \$10 of non-Food Bucks money per visit, on average, with 21% of that group spending more than \$20 of non-Food Bucks money per visit, on average. An estimated average additional expenditure of all participants was \$8.46 per visit.
16. **Economic impact** – though not directly measured – is presumed to be significant. All coupons were redeemed for locally produced foods and goods, resulting in minimal economic leakage. Many participants noted that knowing they were supporting local producers when using their Food Bucks was an important aspect of their program experience.
17. **High Interest in further participation:** 98% of participants would – if given the opportunity – participate in the program again.

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18. **Continued market visits:** 64% of participants would like to continue visiting their Farmers' market on a regular basis now that the program has ended. Notably, of the other 46% of participants, many indicated that while they would like to continue visiting, they do not have the funds to do so.
19. **Significant, positive impact:** 80% strongly agreed that the program 'had a significant, positive impact on my life'.

In addition to these measures, participants from all 33 markets offered **glowing endorsements** of the program. Here are several examples:

"It's been an overwhelming experience - I've learned so much this year including zucchini and how good it tastes and how to cook/prepare; a great deal about herbs. It's an experience that gave me something to look forward to and there was always new adventure. Plus it gave me a sense of this is for me...my me time. Thx :) <3"

"I honestly don't know how I would feed my family the way I've been able to while using this program. I absolutely LOVE it and thank you for it. Because of this program, I have been able to dive into the world of canning & preserving foods. I have shelves filling up with homemade & local "goodies" which are all in jars & shelf stable. Jams, jellies, sauces, veggies, even sticks! The list goes on. Also, buying some items at the market meant I was able to free up more money in my grocery budget for things you can't get at the market (but wish you could!)"

"It's been a wonderful and truly helpful program. It's been a heart's joy to prepare nourishing foods for my family. We ate much better when we had access to Food Bucks and the market."

"Thank you so much for organising such a program. My family and I are so blessed to have been involved. I do hope with all the positive feedback the program is able to continue. We have gained so much more than just some aid in feeding our family. The market is a safe and welcoming place to all. I am happy to have met everyone I have."

"This program provided myself and children and friends with the greatest gifts of opportunity. It's the BEST program I have ever participated in, thus far."

"The program is fantastic, it helped me save on my grocery bill and the food and people at the farmers market were always amazing."

"It is a great program, and I would definitely recommend it. My kids enjoyed it so much, we went every Saturday. They made new friends, and love going to each vendor, and picking their own veg/fruit and it helps us on our grocery bill this summer a lot."

"Thank you for receiving us in this program. Being a single mother, sometimes paying for, choosing and preparing meals can be a lonely job. Feeling supported by my community in this constant task was nourishing, not just physically but also mentally".



2.0 Acknowledgments

FMNS Staff	
Justin Cantafo, <i>Executive Director, Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia</i>	Alicia Steeves, <i>Membership and Programs Lead, Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia</i>
Emily Lawrence, <i>Communications and Creative Lead, Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia</i>	Rebekkah Hyams, <i>Administrative Lead, Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia</i>
Hannah Estabrook, <i>Interim Membership and Programs Lead, Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia</i>	
Market Staff and Volunteers	
Jennifer Bolt, Kelly Marie Redcliffe, Annita Nichol, Erika Bout, Jenny Rose, Sofia Munoz, Wolfville Farmers' Market	Rachael Browne & Emily Alexis, Annapolis Royal Farmers and Traders Market
Annette Tarrant, Antigonish Farmers' Market	Andy Magee, Jennifer West and Carolyn Low, North Mountain Market
Kristi Russell, New Glasgow Farmers' Market	Melonie Swinamer, New Germany Farmers' Market
Sarah MacKenzie, Musquodoboit Harbour Farmers' Market	Trudi Rhynold & David Hillier, Merigomish Schoolhouse Marketplace
Kerry Walkins & Susan Geddes, Mabou Farmers' Market	Whitney Cruikshank, Lunenburg Farmers' Market
Karen Cooper, Avon Community Farmers' Market	Frances Young, Barrington Farmers' Market
Rita Landgraf, Bridgewater Farmers' Market	Carol Goodwin, Kentville Farmers' Market
Dane George & Siena Armstrong, Novalea Farmers' Market	Veronica Gutierrez, Jessie Jollymore & Taylor MacDonald, Hope Blooms Farmers' Market
Kim Frank, The Fairgrounds Farmers' Market	Sarah Rector, Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market
Alison Lynes, Andrea Ritchie, & Simone Reade, Halifax Brewery Market	Debbie MacKinnon & Marion Munro, Fairview Clayton Park Farmers' Market
Ashley Marlin, Chester Farmers & Artisans Market, Hubbards Farmers' Market, Lunenburg Farmers' Market	Margaret's House/ Feeding Others Of Dartmouth (F.O.O.D)
Lisa Jowsey & Ryan Fraser, Alderney Landing Farmers' Market	Margaret Ells & Sera Senakovicz, Truro Farmers' Market
Ashley-Rose Goodwin, Brian Saville & Willo Treschow, Privateer Farmers' Market	Amy Hockin, Jessica McCarron & Erin Poorooshab, Prospect Communities Farmers' Market
Rebecca Taylor, Pat McGinnis & Marsha Amanova, Pugwash Farmers' Market	Alison Chappell, Natasha Amalfa & Therese Cruz, Shelburne Guild Hall Market
Jenn MacKay-Myra & Stephanie Osberg, Spryfield Farmers' Market	Jeani Mustain, Tantallon Farmers' Market
Ashley Crouse & Shawn Crouse, Tatamagouche	Scott Nickerson, Sundae Wiser & Shelley Vail,

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Farmers' Market	Yarmouth Farmers' Community Market
Square Roots	Family Matters Lawrencetown
Pauline Singer, Cape Breton Farmers' Market	Annapolis Area Food Bank Society
Eastern Shore Food Bank	Eastern Shore Family Resources Center
The Old School Gathering House	Pictou County Big Brothers and Big Sisters
District One Development Society	We'koqma'q Family Healing Centre
Inverness Housing Authority	Big Brothers & Big Sisters South Shore
Second Story Women's Center	The Community Soup Kitchen
Hubbards Food Bank	Valley Community Learning Association
Hope Blooms	Adsum for Women and Children
North Mountain United Tapestry	Chester Lighthouse Food Bank
Access 808/Caper Base	HERS Project Sydney
Whitney Pier Youth Club	Boys and Girls Clubs of Cape Breton
Better Together Family Support Centre	Schools Plus
St. John in the Wilderness Anglican Church/ Anglican Parish of New Germany	Tusket Seniors Group
The Salvation Army	Wolfville School
Kings County Family Resource Centre	Third Place Transition House
Colchester East Hants Branch CMHA	Maggie's Place Family Resource Centre Colchester
The Sunset Community	Chebucto Connections
Chebucto Family Centre	United Church
Family Resources Institute (FRI) @ St. Paul's	Shelburne Loyalist Food Bank
Pugwash Food Bank	Queens County Food Bank
Mulgrave Park Caring and Learning Centre	

A special ongoing acknowledgement is in order from FMNS to the following:

- *Jessica Wall*, former Acadia University Community Development Student, who first brought the Food Bucks program to the Wolfville Farmers' Market in 2016.
- *The British Columbia Association of Farmers' Markets*, which generously enabled FMNS to follow their Nutrition Coupon Program. FMNS would especially like to thank BCAFM staff, who have graciously shared their time, knowledge, and experiences.



“I appreciated the market program not only for financial aid but because it encouraged me to come to the market regularly every weekend. I was able to meet so many members of my own community I may not have otherwise met and developed relations with. I now have a resource of people who I can reach out to anytime to learn from or get support from for my family. I am very happy to have had this experience”.

3.0 The 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program: Background

The 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program was an 8-month program instituted at 33 different farmers' markets across Nova Scotia. These markets were Alderney Landing (Dartmouth), Antigonish, Avon Community (Windsor), Barrington, Bridgewater, Cape Breton (Sydney), Chester, Fairview Clayton Park, Halifax Brewery, Halifax Seaport, The Fairgrounds (Hants County), Hope Blooms (North Halifax) Kentville, Lunenburg, Mabou, Merigomish, Musquodoboit Harbour, New Germany, New Glasgow, North Mountain (Harbourville), Novalea (Halifax), Privateer (Liverpool), Prospect, Pugwash, Tantallon, Tatamagouche, Truro, Shelburne, Spryfield, Wolfville, and Yarmouth. The program aimed to expand on the success of both the 2019 pilot program (of the same name), the second iteration in 2020 and the third iteration in 2021. Led and overseen by the Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS) Cooperative, the program had three main objectives.

1. To provide financial support to those in need to access healthy food;
2. To provide an experience that supported physical, mental, and community health; and
3. To support local producers and farmers in developing a robust food system in Nova Scotia.

FMNS and its partners built the case for this evolving program around four realities:

- Over 1 in 5 Nova Scotian households are food insecure².
- Nova Scotia has the most farmers' markets per capita in Canada; therefore, these markets were assumed to be well positioned to support Nova Scotians in need.
- Farmers' markets are social and economic hubs that have been proven to play a key role in reducing both food insecurity and social isolation.
- The first three iterations of the program were by most accounts a major success.

Beginning in May 2022, each of the 33 participating farmers' markets worked with 1 to 3 community agencies to identify households (individuals, couples, and families) who could benefit from the program. Once participants were identified and agreed to participate in the program, they were given a predetermined number of food coupons per week (sometimes referred to as 'Food Bucks' or 'market money'), redeemable at their respective farmers' markets. In early May 2022 (dates varied somewhat depending on the market), the program officially re-launched as markets began distributing the food coupons to participants.

To ensure that participants could best meet their needs, they were given no conditions or restrictions about how the food coupons could be redeemed. Rather, they were given the opportunity to spend the food coupons on any product or product category available at the

² New data on household food insecurity in 2022. PROOF. (2023, May 4).
<https://proof.utoronto.ca/2023/new-data-on-household-food-insecurity-in-2022/>

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market³ (ranging from fruits and vegetables to wine, spirits, and crafts). The redemption rate by product category is seen later in this report.

As noted, this innovative program was not the first of its kind. In fact, it was based partially on British Columbia's long standing Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program (launched in 2007 and with a current annual budget of more than \$12 million), and also on similar projects undertaken by both the Wolfville and New Glasgow Farmers' Markets. The 2016 Wolfville Project – launched as a research project by Acadia University Community Development student Jessica Wall – supported 27 households and was widely considered a major success.

In addition to the program's three stated goals (seen above), FMNS' 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon program aimed to:

- Build on the positive outcomes of the previous three iterations;
- Experiment with some new processes and methodologies (based on learnings from previous programs, and from the research carried out by Erika Bout in 2021⁴);
- Ensure that the program is having an equitable and representative impact on communities experiencing food insecurity; and
- Ensure that our program is part of the wrap around services of support in this province.

The 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program was also aimed at moving the program closer to a sustainable and more self-sufficient funding future, which is discussed in Section 9.

³ While most of the 33 farmers' markets offer similar products, some markets are much larger than others and feature more diverse offerings. As such, all program participants did not have access to identical products.

⁴ Bout, E. (August, 2022). Exploring the Impacts of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program: A research summary report. Retrieved from <https://farmersmarketsnovascotia.ca>

4.0 A New Normal: Coming Back Together

In 2021 it was predicted that based on COVID-19 projections, that 2022 would most closely resemble the 2019 pilot. With almost all COVID-19 restrictions lifted in 2022, most participants were able to fully participate in-person once again. This allowed the program to return to a format that resembles its original intent, which is to provide a wrap-around support that changes the way people connect with and access resources in their community. 2022 had the highest percentage of participants report that they made at least one new friend or social contact as a result of their time in the program. Without COVID-19 restrictions, the 2022 program was better able to foster community building and social connections that are essential for supporting physical, mental, and community health.

It should be noted that despite the lifted regulations, not everyone feels safe entering into these spaces again. However, those with access to the online shopping option were able to continue to benefit despite safety concerns. One participant shared that, “as a person with a disability including being immunocompromised, my market staff were very accommodating, enabling me to use foodbucks through the online ordering system. I loved the ease of pick up and that I still had fun social interactions with staff, but without the worry of increased exposure to COVID.” Therefore, some of the necessary changes that were brought about by the pandemic, including more access to online ordering, continue to benefit participants.

We do not know what is in store in the coming years, but Farmers Markets of Nova Scotia and the Nourishing Communities program have demonstrated an ability to shift and transform in order to continue meeting the needs of their communities, despite the immense challenges that the pandemic brought.

5.0 Evaluation Methodology

Ideally, a program of this nature would be evaluated twice: once – immediately following the program’s completion – to measure instant reaction, outputs, and reflections; and once again – much farther out from the program’s completion – to determine whether the program had a sustained impact. This two-pronged evaluative approach would help us to see the full picture, ensuring fully informed decisions about how best to carry forward. Given that the program has just concluded, however, we can only evaluate its short-term outcomes at this time. An evaluation of longer-term outcomes should be considered at a later date.

The 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon program evaluation consisted of two steps:

Post-program Questionnaire

When the program concluded in the fall and winter of 2022, all participants were provided with a short (10-15 minutes) questionnaire, either in digital format or hard copy (notably, most chose to complete this survey online). This questionnaire was largely intended to determine the outcomes and impacts the program had for participants. The questionnaire offered space for participants to share stories, testimonials, or anecdotes, some of which are included in this report. This survey also contained a series of questions aimed at helping us understand the demographic characteristics of the participants. A copy of the post-survey questionnaire can be seen in Appendix C. 362 participants completed this survey, for an impressive response rate of 62%.

Coupon Redemption Data Collection

Throughout the entire program, each farmers’ market diligently tracked the redemption of all coupons. Although doing so required considerable administration, it was vital to ensuring that important data could be captured. Of particular interest was tracking: (a) what percentage of coupons were redeemed, and (b) on which product categories were the coupons redeemed. This data is seen later in the report.

It is important to note that unlike previous years, the 2022 methodology did not include a pre-program survey. FMNS's decision to eliminate the pre-program survey was based on consultation from the Acadia Entrepreneurship Centre. The data from the past three years continued to show that the answers in the pre-program surveys remained consistent. On top of this, asking participants to fill out two surveys is a lot of work and adds potential stress for this community. The post program survey results, however, continue to offer the most value in terms of the data. This decision is further supported given the recommendations from Acadia University Honours student Erika Bout, who undertook an extensive study that explored the impacts of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program on participants and their communities. Her report encourages program administrators to "become more aware and critical of surveillance and paternalistic practices"⁵.

⁵ Bout, E. (August, 2022). Exploring the Impacts of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program: A research summary report. Retrieved from <https://farmersmarketsnovascotia.ca>

“It’s a great experience, helps with the cost of food and feeding my family. It’s important to support local farmers as they have increasing difficulties with maintaining their own livelihoods, and it helps our economy. And meeting new people is important as well”.



6.0 Key Outcomes and Participant Characteristics by the Numbers

Investment, Participation, and Coupon Redemption

- Total value of food coupons distributed (all markets): \$397,439.77 (compared with \$264,210 in 2021, \$78,235 in 2020 and \$42,000 in the 2019 pilot; a 846% increase)
- Total value of food coupons redeemed (all markets, as of January 31, 2022): \$383,608.35 (compared with \$228,602 in 2021, \$67,555 in 2020 and \$37,367 in 2019).
- Overall food coupon redemption rate: 96.5% (compared with 87% in 2021, 86% in 2020 and 88.9% in 2019). It is important to note, that this rate is influenced by the spending of unredeemed coupons from 2021, which did not have an expiry date. Expiry dates on coupons were first introduced in 2022 to prevent bucks from the previous year being used, and encourage higher redemption rates.
- Total number of food coupon recipients (all markets): 585 households, directly impacting over 1,400 people. This included 125 individuals, and 1,067 families of 2 or more.
- Number of food coupon recipient households by market:

Market	# of Households	Market	# of Households
Annapolis Royal Farmers' and Traders Markets	36	New Germany Farmers' Market	5
Antigonish Farmers' Market	22	New Glasgow Farmers' Market	19
Avon Community Farmers' Market	13	North Mountain Farmers' Market	6
Barrington Farmers' Market	9	Novalea Farmers' Market	7
Bridgewater Farmers' Market	12	Privateer Farmers' Market	30
Cape Breton Farmers' Market	50	Prospect Communities Farmers' Market	29
Chester Farmers and Artisans Market	57	Spryfield Farmers' Market	12
Fairview Clayton Park Farmers' Market	8	Tatamagouche Farmers' Market	22
Halifax Brewery Farmers' Market	20	Truro Farmers' Market	23
Halifax Seaport Farmers' Market	20	Wolfville Farmers' Market	29
Hubbards Farmers' Market	9	Yarmouth Farmers' Community Market	25

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Market	# of Households	Market	# of Households
Kentville Farmers' Market	7	Merigomish SchoolhouseMarketplace	6
Lunenburg Farmers' Market	19	Musquodoboit Harbour Farmers' Market	18
Mabou Farmers' Market	15	Pugwash Farmers' Market	21
Alderney Landing Farmers' Market	4	Shelburne Guild Hall Farmers' Market	9
The Fairgrounds Farmers' Market	5	Tantallon Farmers' Market	8
Hope Blooms Farmers' Market	10	Total	585

Sex and Gender

Much like previous years, the participant group was not equally distributed with 84% of participants identifying as female (notably, 5% higher than last year) and 12% identifying male. 3 respondents (1%) identified as non-binary, and 5 preferred not to answer.

Age

Age distribution among food coupon recipients was fairly evenly distributed during this iteration of the program, with the exception of the youngest age group. Over two thirds (69%) of respondents fall between 25 and 54 years old.

Age Categories	% of Respondents
18 - 24	2%
25 - 34	20%
35 - 44	30%
45 - 54	19%
55 - 64	17%
65+	12%

Population Characteristics

18% of program participants self-identified as living with a disability. 4% respondents were from the LGBTQ+ community, 3% were Acadian/Francophone, 7% were Indigenous, and 6% were African Nova Scotian. 7% indicated they had immigrated to Canada within the last 10 years. A clear majority of respondents (60%) identified as Caucasian. Other populations that were submitted

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included: Caretaker of a person with a disability, Middle Eastern, living with a Mental Illness, single parent, Nigerian, Metis and Chinese.

Food Coupon Redemption by Category

Product Category	Total Amount Redeemed (\$)	% of Total 2022 Program Food Coupons	% During 2021 Program
Produce	89,519.83	23.3 (-)	28.0
Other agri. products	90,389.09	23.6 (-)	25.4
Prepared foods	83,510.88	21.8 (-)	24.6
Value-Added Foods	21,471.21	5.6	N/A
Beer, wine, and spirits	12,778	3.3 (-)	3.7
Personal Hygiene	18,007.24	4.7	N/A
Artisans/Crafts	53,807.63	14.0 (-)	15.3
Unclassified/other	14,124.00	3.7 (+)	3.0

It is important to note that, in order to maximise personal choice and individual decision-making, pilot program participants were issued no restrictions on how their coupons could be redeemed. Overwhelmingly, however, participants opted to spend their coupons on locally grown or made food products. 74% of all coupons were redeemed for produce, prepared foods, and other agri-food products (compared with 84% during the pilot program, and 78% last year). While this year had a slightly reduced percentage, there were also two new redemption categories added, which may have increased confusion as to what products and which vendors fall best into each category. This is especially true for vendors who sell products that fall into multiple categories. There was an increase in the “other” category this year, which further confirms this confusion. Farmers’ Markets of Nova Scotia is committed to looking into reducing this confusion for the next iteration of the program.

Social, Inclusion and Community Outcomes

- 93% of participants report feeling more connected to their community because of their participation in this program. This is consistent with 85% during the pilot, 92% during the second year of the program and 86% in the third year of the program).
- Participants strongly or somewhat agreed that their existing relationships were strengthened by the program (89%) and felt welcome at the Farmer’s Market (95%).

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- 79% of participants indicated they made at least one new friend or social contact through their participation in the program. This is up from the first three years of the program (61%, 57% and 43%).

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
This program helped me feel more connected to my community	2%	5%	32%	61%
I felt welcome at the Farmer's Market	2%	3%	14%	81%
My existing relationships were strengthened by the program	4%	8%	36%	53%
I made at least one new friend or social contact through this program	8%	13%	35%	44%

Nutritional and Health-Related Outcomes

- 89% of participants purchased foods that were not part of their diet previously (compared with 88% in 2021, 82% in 2020 and 98% in the 2019 pilot)
- 79% of participants believe they cooked from scratch more frequently as a result of being in the program.
- 83% of participants expect to make long-term changes to their diet because of their participation in this program (up from 61%, 62% and 50% in the first three years of the program).
- 91% of participants reported eating healthier foods than usual during their participation in the program (up from 81%, 87% and 85% in the first three years of the program).

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
During this program, I bought and consumed foods that were not part of my regular diet before	4%	8%	38%	51%
I ate healthier foods than usual while I was participating in this program	2%	7%	32%	59%
I cooked from scratch more frequently during my participation in this program	7%	14%	32%	47%

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	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I believe my long-term eating habits have changed somewhat as a result of this program	6%	13%	45%	38%

Financial Outcomes

- 94% of participants – as a result of this program – felt they had more money to meet their other (non-food/grocery) needs. This is consistent with 88%, 85% and 94% during the first three years of the program.
- 93% of participants – as a result of this program – worried less about having enough to eat
- 95% of participants believe they would have benefited from receiving more Food Coupons, if they were available.
- 97% of participants believe they received good value for their Food Coupons overall (Slightly up from 91% in 2021 and 93% in 2020, but on par with 97% during the pilot).
- 66% of participants reported spending money during their market visits *in addition to* their Food Coupons. 37% of participants reported spending more than \$10 of non-Food Coupons money per visit, on average, with 21% of that group spending more than \$20 of non-Food Coupon money per visit, on average. An estimated average additional expenditure of all participants was \$8.46 per visit.

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
While participating in this program, I worried less about having enough food to eat	3%	5%	35%	58%
During this program, I found that I had more money to meet my other (non-food/grocery) needs	2%	5%	36%	58%
I would have benefitted from receiving more Food Bucks, if they were available	2%	4%	26%	69%
I believe I received good value for my Food Bucks, overall	1%	1%	20%	77%

Accessibility and Food Security Outcomes

- 58% of participants found farmers’ market prices to be higher than the grocery store (2021: 65% 2020: 54% pilot: 63%).
- 20% of participants found it difficult to find transportation to and from their market (pilot: 17%)
- 22% of participants feel many of the foods they want are not available at the farmer's market.
- 7% of participants feel they do not have enough time to shop at the Farmers’ Market regularly.
- Less than 1% of participants feel the Farmers’ Market does not feel like a safe or welcoming space for them.
- Other reasons that participants feel impact their ability to continue visiting the Farmers’ Market include, but are not limited to: Cannot afford the prices, hours of operation are limited and not always in line with when participants are able to go, not handicap accessible, too many people/too crowded, vendors stop coming, and Market is far away from home.

Overall Evaluation

- When asked to evaluate the overall benefit of the program, 95% of respondents indicated that the program provided either ‘an extreme amount of benefit’ or ‘quite a bit of benefit’ (This is up from 80% in 2021). 4% said the program offered ‘some benefit but not much’, and just 1% of respondents indicated they received no real benefit at all.
- A significant percentage of participants said they *strongly agree* that they looked forward to visiting the Farmers’ Market each time (79%); had positive interactions with vendors (84%); their mental health was better because of participating in the program (59%); and the program had a significant, positive impact on their life (79%).

	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
I looked forward to visiting the farmers' market each time	1%	1%	12%	85%
Overall, I had positive interactions with the vendors at my farmers' market	1%	1%	13%	84%
My mental health was better because of participating in this program	2%	4%	35%	59%
I want to participate in this program again	1%	1%	7%	91%

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	Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree
This program had a significant, positive impact on my life	2%	2%	17%	79%

7.0 In Their Own Words: Participant Experiences

At the end of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program, we asked each participant (through their exit survey):

What was your favourite part about participating in this program? What stood out for you?

The financial benefit of the program was of course a significant benefit of the program, however it was by no means the only benefit. When asked what their favourite part of the program was, participant answers consistently included: The flexibility of the market money, connecting with vendors and the community, meeting new people, having a reason to get out every week, being able to connect with family, not having to say no to their kids when they want a treat, buying nutritious food, try new food and being able to support their local vendors. Below are a few quotes that highlight what stood out most to participants.

Meeting new people who are so friendly and accommodating was the highlight. The cooking is fantastic! I buy a lot of the fresh fruit and vegetables because they are so fresh and last longer than store bought veggie's.

Deep gratitude for access to local and nourishing food. Being able to support and encourage local farmers.

That ability to choose whatever you liked, and that dollars could be carried over. Absolutely godsend for low income!!

Taking the family out and seeing the kids wanting to get fresh veg/meat, and most of all going to each vendor and getting the opportunity to buy things and try things we may not have been able to normally get.

I appreciated the market program not only for financial aid but because it encouraged me to come to the market regularly every weekend. I was able to meet so many members of my own community I may not have otherwise met and developed relations with. I now have a resource of people who I can reach out to anytime to learn from or get support from for my family. I am very happy to have had this experience.

If you were approached by someone who was about to participate in the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program, and they asked you for your opinion or advice, what would you tell them?

Respondents answered this question with much enthusiasm in their recommendation to take part in the program. They shared the many benefits of the program, including the financial, social, and nutritional benefits, as well as improvement on mental health, the ability to give back to the community and the overall positive experiences they have had. A few

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respondents also brought up the potential embarrassment people may feel, but reassured them that there was no need to be.

That it's a great experience, helps with the cost of food and feeding my family. It's important to support local farmers as they have increasing difficulties with maintaining their own livelihoods, and it helps our economy. And meeting new people is important as well.

Get enrolled in the program right away. Visit your local market every weekend. If anyone feels they are missing that sense of community - the best place to find it is at the market!

Do it!! It's been a wonderful and truly helpful program. It's been a heart's joy to prepare nourishing foods for my family. We ate much better when we had access to Food Bucks and the market.

I am very grateful for the program, we were able to purchase fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, meat and poultry, as well as some breakfast that we could not afford at the time. We should never be embarrassed to use such a wonderful program during difficult times.

That the program was run with compassion and sensitivity towards me as an individual. That the stalls containing healthy foods were abundant during the season and that vendors were very nice towards me while using the program and I would use it again as needed.

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program?

A significant number of participants responded with their gratitude for the program and everyone behind it, and re-stated the many ways the program has benefited them. There was also a strong emphasis on wanting the program to continue, to help others and themselves.

This program, aside from benefiting me and my family financially, provided me with an opportunity to reconnect with friends and the market. It was a major help for my mental health to have this time. Thank you so much!

I would like to thank all of those that make it possible for me to go to the farmers market in the first place, so I can share some great moments with my family, I otherwise would not be able to. Thank you, so very much :)

It was an amazing experience overall. It helped with things like finances and mental health. Being able to get out plus being able to spend time with my children and provide good nourishment for next to nothing is always a good feeling. :) Thank you so much, I hope the program continues!

It was amazing. I'm so appreciative of all the hours of labour that go into keeping programs like this running. Would love to see it expanded to help other families."

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Please keep this program, and expand it. Living with food insecurity AND complex health issues is psychologically traumatising. Being forced to choose between 'eating to avoid hunger knowing you'll be sick' and eating too little but foods "good" for health issues' is horrid. This Program helps ensure I have enough fresh unprocessed food and I'm able to afford my prescription medications. And I can't stress enough how good it feels that I'm not "getting a hand out." My community is supporting me, as I support them.

8.0 Possible Opportunities for Program Enhancement

Better Vendor Education

Several respondents indicated that, occasionally, market vendors didn't know about the Food Coupon program, and/or did not accept their Food Coupons. This caused confusion for some respondents, such as one respondent who felt they had to ask every vendor if they accepted Food Coupons and other respondents who wished vendors had signs indicating whether or not they accept Food Coupons. Another respondent noted that this confusion caused "a heated debate between two vendors after one told [the respondent] they wouldn't take the 'bucks'." A few respondents said they had to educate vendors on what the program was. Although we cannot evaluate whether this was a pervasive problem, it is not difficult to imagine that this could put Food Coupon recipients in an uncomfortable situation as they attempt to make their purchases. Respondents stated that they felt "embarrassed" and "awkward" having to ask and/or be told they were not accepted. One strategy to alleviate this issue could be to host a mandatory vendors information webinar on the Nourishing Communities Program at the beginning of the year, and recording it so that it can be shared with new vendors who join later in the season as part of their on-boarding process. These webinars should be completed by FMNS to ensure consistency in messaging.

Market Staff & Volunteer Education

Respondents indicated that they were told misleading information by others at the market about how they can and cannot use their Food Coupons. It is difficult to know who told participants the misleading information as it could have been market staff or volunteers, but it could also have been vendors, customers or even other participants. However, the more understanding staff and volunteers have of the program and how it works, the better they will be able to intervene when issues arise and answer questions for both vendors and participants when needed. A similar webinar like the one suggested above for vendors, designed for staff and volunteers, could help increase their understanding of the program and how to step in when program discrepancies or conflicts arise.

Improved Participant Orientation

Respondents have suggested having more information and clarity about the program would be helpful. Some suggestions include, having an orientation to the physical market space, having a contact at the market to ask market-specific questions to, and an orientation on how to use the online ordering systems, including knowing when the cut off times are and how to interact with the site. There was confusion expressed by a number of respondents around the logistical aspects of the program as well. For example, participants were unsure when the food coupons expired, where and how they could spend their coupons (one respondent was told they could only spend it on food products), by when they need to have used their coupons, and whether they needed to spend it all every week or keep it for future trips. Overall education about the program is needed for participants, alongside vendors and staff. Ideally, offering in-person

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orientations would help address this challenge, however, it would interfere with participants' anonymity. Therefore, FMNS should offer an online orientation video for participants, which they can access from their own Markets' website or social media channel.

Improved Physical and Environmental Accessibility

While some of the more developed markets have made considerable investments to become more accessible, some smaller markets (mostly due to location or resource constraints) have not yet been able to reach their desired standard. This was noted by a few participants, who had accessibility needs, such as wheelchair access, more space to accommodate mobility issues, a place to sit and rest, access to drinking water and more accessible parking spaces. A couple respondents indicated that the environment itself was not accessible. This included having dogs at the market, and not having a fragrance-free space. Several respondents noted that the space was very crowded, which was difficult mobility wise, as well as for other disabilities, including PTSD. One respondent stated, "It was so cramped with mobs of people that it made it slightly unsafe to bring my young children along with me. The risk of them being trampled was greatly high." Continuing to build and provide more accessible spaces for market-goers should continue to be a significant priority for both the markets themselves and FMNS.

Expand and Deepen Program Impact

Many respondents noted that the amount of Food Coupons they received did not go far enough, and especially with the increasing prices of food. These comments were consistent with the findings that showed 95% of participants believe they would have benefited from receiving more Food Coupons if they were available. A few other participants stated that the program should be offered to more people. One respondent stated that they would like "to have more newcomers join the program." Participants seem to be aware of the possible scale of impact the program could have if given the resources to reach more people. FMNS should continue to request more government funding to be able to expand the program to more food insecure people across Nova Scotia, and deepen the impact the program has on participants by offering more weekly food coupons.

Clear, Consistent, Discreet, and Accessible Coupon Pick-up Locations

Several respondents indicated that they had difficulties picking up their Food Coupons. There were at least two different kinds of pick-up locations noted by respondents, suggesting the Food Coupons pick up process varies by location. A few respondents noted that they had to stand in a vendor line with other patrons to pick up their Food Coupons. One respondent suggested "Maybe have a dedicated individual to pass out the envelopes on the side of the ice cream stand so that the collection can be discreet for the person picking up the market bucks, rather than have the individual stand in line with the rest of the patrons who are grabbing coffee or ice cream, to lower anxiety or concerns." Another respondent said they had to track down the general manager to get their Food Coupons, which was not always an easy task, as they were usually busy talking with others. Timing was also a challenge for one respondent, who said they were often working

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during the time they had to pick-up the coupons. Most participants pick up their coupons directly from their partner organization, only a few markets have participants pick up at the market. Therefore, having clear, consistent, accessible and discreet pick-up locations for these specific markets could help address this issue.

Expand Online and In-Person Market Access

Participants continue to ask for longer hours, more accessible times, and year-round access. Several respondents indicated that the current market hours are limiting, and several more indicated that the seasonality of the program makes winters hard. A lack of variety and vendors was also a challenge brought up by several respondents. Therefore, continuing to support farmers' markets in expanding their capacity will help to address these issues.

Another solution, which has already been implemented in some markets, is the online ordering option. An online ordering system can provide an accessible format of shopping for participants who cannot attend the market in person for various reasons including health, disabilities and conflicting schedules. One participant shared that "due to [her] chronic fatigue and dizziness [she is] unable to get to the market every week, especially in the winter when it's harder to walk. [She] relied heavily on the online market and delivery service. Because of this [they were] able to order more and heavier items like potatoes that [they] can't manage to walk with on [their] own." Another participant stated that they "loved the online ordering because [they] can't get out every week." However, not all respondents like the online ordering system, and instead stated that they prefer in-person shopping. Therefore, the online option should not replace, but rather complement the in-person market experience. Continuing to build and provide online ordering and pick-up options for market-goers should continue to be a priority for both the markets themselves and FMNS, and will also help them in developing market accessibility.

Continue Welcome Package, but with More Consistency

An overwhelming majority of respondents loved their welcome package, especially the tote bag. One respondent stated, "It is so lovely to have even a few items that are meant to be 'just nice items' and not related to base survival. I love my market tote and proudly use it. I love that even though I am severely income limited (to the point of food insecurity), I can still communicate with others that local matters." Other respondents said that the bag made them "feel a part of the farmers market family" and was useful for both market shopping and outside of the market. Some respondents provided suggestions to improve the packages which included, providing translated versions, and to provide more clarity in the information pamphlets on where the market bucks could be spent (which vendors, other markets) and how quickly they need to spend them. It was clear from the survey responses that consistency in terms of who received a welcome package and what was included was lacking. Some participants received extra goodies, while others did not receive a package at all. Some reasons this may have occurred is the timing of when participants joined the program and the capacity and space of partner organizations to hold onto the welcome packages. The welcome packages are well received, but they need to be more consistent to ensure everyone gets to benefit from them. Therefore, encouraging partner

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organizations to offer a time at the beginning and mid-way through the program (at a minimum) for participants to pick-up their welcome package could help in ensuring all participants, including those who joined later or missed the first pick-up day, to receive and benefit from the welcome package.

"This program is super effective and a major step up for people experiencing poverty and the isolation it brings...it gave me the ability to participate in holidays and other special occasions with my neighbors and friends. I can't say enough for that. There's a lot of dignity to be had in showing up for say Christmas dinner with some cookies or rolls or a card something other than nothing. Or maybe somebody did something really nice and I wanted to get a little something to say thanks. So simple, but goes so far".



9.0 Next Steps: Program Sustainability and Future Funding Models

FMNS and its partners have spent the past four years designing, rolling out, and continuously improving an exemplary and impactful program. In that short window of time, FMNS has grown this program from one that provides \$42,000 to 105 households across 6 markets, to one that distributed \$397,440 to 585 households across 33 markets. This is no small feat, especially given that two of those years were marked by a global pandemic, the impacts of which continue today. Still, FMNS has continually demonstrated that this program is both highly demanded and greatly impactful (at least on a short-term basis). There is much enthusiasm within FMNS and the community-at-large for sustaining the momentum and building on this program's clear success.

Next year will mark the 5th anniversary of the launch of the Nourishing Communities program, a significant landmark for any program. The first 5 years are often described as the most difficult as the foundation is not yet set. Therefore, 5 years is often a call for celebration, as it demonstrates a program's ability to succeed through the most difficult of times, and to remain stable, sustainable, and successful in its impact.

To continue increasing the sustainability of the Nourishing Communities program for years to come, FMNS also will continue to:

1. Work to expand the Nourishing Communities Donor Program, now live on the FMNS website, as part of the 2023 Strategic Plan.
2. Work with our program partners to diversify our funding model, including providing training and support for our markets to engage in local fundraising efforts at the market level. Training is scheduled for spring 2023. FMNS continues to identify other ways to support its markets to engage in local fundraising to fund a minimum of 25% of their total individual coupon program requirements on a year-to-year basis.

Nova Scotia's provincial governments department of Communities, Culture, Tourism, and Heritage (CCTH) mandated that it will provide at least \$422,400 per year to the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program, committing these funds permanently into the provincial budget. The 2022 Nourishing Communities program was the first to benefit from CCTH's increased investment, actually totaling \$494,800 in 2022 alone. CCTH has also expressed interest in signing a three-year multi-funding agreement for this program. This major investment, including proposed funding top-ups through the upcoming Nova Scotia Food & Beverage Strategy, has made it possible for FMNS to expand the program immediately, allowing the program to include 6 more markets in 2022 than 2021. This investment signals a major turning point and illustrates the government's recognition of the program's social and economic impact, and FMNS wishes to continue working with the Government to further grow this program in 2023 and beyond.

Thinking further into the future, FMNS' objective is to move towards complementing this generous annual funding from CCTH with a long-term resilient and diverse funding strategy to ensure that this program remains in place permanently. FMNS would like to make this a million dollar program that is supplemented by regional fundraising at the market level. To that end, FMNS proposes the following funding strategy for future years (2023 and beyond):

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1. In the coming year, FMNS will work with its project partners to create and roll out a long-term fundraising strategy built on a resilient and diverse funding model.
2. FMNS developed a donor program in 2021, allowing individuals, small businesses, and corporate sponsors to support FMNS and the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program. The donor program was launched in 2022, and will continue to be built and expanded over time.
3. FMNS will take a lead role in training each of its participating markets on how to create their own fundraising models, with the objective of enabling FMNS member farmers' markets to fund at least 25% of their individual coupon program requirements on a year-to-year basis.

FMNS acknowledges that the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon program will always require some level of government investment, and it recognizes the need to find creative revenue models to minimise its reliance on government contributions while demonstrating continued community support. FMNS also believes this multi-pronged funding approach will allow the organisation to continue to work effectively with the government to ensure this program continues to grow and deepen its impact.

10.0 Conclusion: A Program that is Here to Stay

Having collected and analysed four years' worth of qualitative and quantitative data, and having closely followed the execution and rollout of this program, we are confident making the following statement: The Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program is 'here to stay'.

This program has evolved from an uncertain pilot to a well-established program that has demonstrated an ability to succeed even in the most trying of circumstances. At this point, there is little reason to wonder whether this program can achieve what it has set out to achieve. An abundance of evidence points clearly towards seven things:

1. People across all parts of Nova Scotia – and across all subsets of the population – have clearly shown the program is needed and wanted. Subscription is a non-issue.
2. Participants overwhelmingly report that their experience with the program is positive and beneficial, both financially and socially.
3. Participants overwhelmingly indicate that, as a result of this program, they are trying new and healthier foods and wish to continue doing so to the extent that they can afford to do so.
4. FMNS and its participating markets have proven that they can operationalise, administer, and scale-up this program effectively with minimal challenges. Further, they have done so in an accountable way that provides precise tracking of coupon redemption and participant outcomes.
5. This program is bringing many people to farmers' markets who would not otherwise attend, either for financial reasons or social reasons.
6. In addition to the \$383,608.35 that has been directly channelled to local producers in 2022 (through the program's budget), 66% of participants are choosing to spend their own money on locally produced goods every week; money that, without this program, would most likely otherwise be spent in ways that have a higher ratio of economic leakage.
7. 56 number of grassroots community organisations across Nova Scotia are supportive of this program, illustrating this by participating directly in it.

At this stage in the program's evolution, after three iterations of the program, we have ample qualitative and quantitative evidence to be confident that these findings are accurate, and will remain accurate barring unforeseen circumstances or major changes to the program.

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At the same time, it is only fair to acknowledge that while this program has been largely successful (measured against its stated aims), there are still some important questions we cannot yet answer, such as:

- Do participants continue to purchase new or healthier foods after their participation in the program has concluded?
- What percentage of participants continue to visit their local farmers' market on a regular basis after they have completed the program?
- What is the total economic impact of this program on the local economy?
- How have individual vendors and businesses been impacted by the arrival of this program?
- What other positive short-term or long-term spinoff effects might this program have had on the lives of participants?

These are all important questions, and ones which FMNS has in some cases already begun to study. The answers to these questions will help FMNS and its partners further refine and improve the program as it continues to grow.

For now, it is appropriate to revisit the original aims of the program. The 2022 iteration of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program set out to do three things:

1. Provide financial support to those in need to access healthy food;
2. Provide an experience that supported physical, mental, and community health; and
3. Support local producers and farmers in developing a robust food system in Nova Scotia.

Having reviewed the totality of data and feedback collected before, during, and after the program, our assessment is as follows:

Objective 1 – Provide financial support to those in need to access healthy food: Achieved

FMNS and its 33 participating markets were very strategic in aligning with community agencies and social service groups (referenced in the acknowledgements section of this report). They did so very intentionally to ensure that those selected for the program (a) demonstrated a clear financial need, and (b) were interested in and well positioned to benefit from the program. On both of these measures, the program was a success. In total, 585 households meeting these criteria were selected to participate in the program. Although not all coupons were redeemed for items that would normally be considered 'healthy food', the data clearly shows that the majority of redemptions fell into this category. Questions such as 'While participating in this program, I worried less about having enough food to eat' and 'During this program, I found that I had more money to meet my other (non-food/grocery) needs', both answered affirmatively, providing further support that this objective that has been achieved.

Objective 2 – Provide an experience that supported physical, mental, and community health: Likely Achieved

Although this evaluation lacks sufficient depth to fully measure participants' physical, mental, and community health (resulting from the program), there is considerable evidence to suggest that success has been achieved in this area. For example, responses presented below all suggest that the program has made progress toward this objective:

- “I made at least one new friend or social contact through this program”,
- “I felt more connected to my community as a result of this program”,
- “During this program, I consumed foods that were not part of my regular diet before”,
- “I ate healthier foods than usual while I was participating in this program”, and
- “I think my long-term eating habits have changed somewhat as a result of this program”

Although self-reporting is often considered somewhat anecdotal, FMNS has plans to institute more in-depth behavioural research during future iterations of the program. This research will tell us even more about this outcome.

Objective 3 – Support local producers and farmers in developing a robust food system in Nova Scotia: Likely Achieved

Although our evaluation did not attempt to measure this outcome directly, it is generally accepted (as a result of numerous other studies) that investments in farmers' markets contribute to local food security and robust local food systems. In total, this pilot program directly injected \$383,608.35 into thirty three farmers' markets, and this figure does not account for any secondary, tertiary, and spinoff economic impacts. And while we can't say with certainty how much extra money the program's participants spent (in addition to their Food Coupons), we can say that 66% of participating households reported spending some of their own money at the market during each visit. The evaluation also did not study the extent to which local vendors improved their chances for profitability and sustained business success through this program, although it is presumed to have done so to some degree. While a future evaluation process may include primary research with market vendors, we are comfortable suggesting this objective has likely been met, even in the absence of data specific to this program.

By nearly every measure, all parties associated with this program – markets, participants, and community partners – believe the program was a major success both socially and economically. Although there was no reason to believe it wasn't going to be effective, it is worth acknowledging that many early-stage programs experience unexpected and unforeseeable snags along the way (resulting in less-than-expected results). Such has not been the case with the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon program; it has been overwhelmingly well supported, well subscribed, well administered, and well received. Even during a global pandemic, the program was able to meet its objectives, and continues to do so today. Although there are always opportunities for future refinement and improvement, Flourish is confident asserting that this program shows true promise in achieving its stated objectives not only on the current scale, but also on a much larger one.

Appendices

Appendix A: Key Learnings and Opportunities for Enhancement from Year 1 (2019), Year 2 (2020) and Year 3 (2021)

- 1. Transportation not a major issue:** it is well documented that transportation can be a major impediment for vulnerable populations, particularly in rural Nova Scotia. It is with some surprise, then, that we report that very few participants of the program cited ‘transportation to and from the market’ as a major challenge. In fact, only 17% indicated this. It should be noted, of course, that many participants were selected for the program *because* of their proximity to the market; it remains quite likely that many otherwise suitable participants for the program would not be able to find reliable transportation on a regular basis.
- 2. Limited hours a barrier:** by design (and for good reason), most farmers’ markets are open for only a short window of time during the week. For example, the Wolfville Farmers’ Market is open for 4.5 hours on Saturday and an additional 3 hours on Wednesday evening. This is not at all unusual for farmers’ markets, however a few participants did note that this presented a challenge for them due to a variety of foreseeable and unforeseeable obligations during those hours. Clearly, given the high redemption and participation rates, this barrier – though present – was not insurmountable.
- 3. Personal relationships with the markets are key:** one participant summed this up succinctly when she said *“I appreciated when staff accompanied me to the market. The market is overwhelming at the beginning.”* It was reported by both participants and markets that a key ingredient in the program’s success was for each market to have an ambassador; that is, someone to befriend each participant, orient them to the program, show them around, and generally be a resource for them throughout the program.
- 4. Product selection variance between markets is a concern to some:** it will come as no surprise that each of the six participating markets varies in size, scope, and product availability. While some markets have dozens of vendors, others have fewer than ten. Naturally, this means that participants in this program likely had a different experience depending on which market they attended. Although all participants had access to healthy and local food choices, the *extent* of those choices was not equal. Although this is a larger, structural issue (not one that can be easily resolved), future iterations of the program may wish to look for creative ways to ensure the most consistent experience possible across markets.
- 5. Acoustics present a barrier:** a few participants pointed out (as market goes occasionally do) that hearing was a challenge for them. According to one participant, *“eating inside was annoying as I was unable to chat with anyone due to the music volume.”* Although again this is a larger structural issue, it is one to take into consideration, as various hearing disabilities may prevent people from

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receiving the maximum benefit of the program. If they are to enjoy social interaction and learn about the products they are buying, they must be able to hear clearly.

6. More coupon denominations = more purchasing flexibility: a few participants noted that – ideally – they would have had access to a wider range of coupon denominations (in addition to the standard ones given out through the program). Although issuing more denominations would certainly increase the overall administrative requirement for the program, it may also encourage participants to spend their allotments more strategically, and to greater personal benefit.

7. Vendor onboarding is key: the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon program can only work if all market vendors (a) buy into the program and (b) understand exactly how to participate. Although feedback suggests that the vast majority of vendors were well acquainted with the program, there were a few noted instances where this was not the case. Ensuring that all vendors are well educated in the program’s procedures will eliminate potentially difficult or embarrassing conversations for the program’s participants.

8. Consider connecting participants...to each other: it was generally assumed at the outset that – for a variety of reasons – most participants of the program would prefer to remain relatively anonymous. And on the whole, this is probably correct. However, there were at least a few participants who suggested that they would have welcomed an opportunity to get to know some of the other participants, so that they could develop a friendship or share the market shopping experience together. This will be something to consider in future iterations.

9. Consider carts for accessibility: although this is certainly not a new concept for any farmers’ market, a couple of participants – due to mobility concerns – indicated they would have preferred to have a shopping cart. While introducing carts may present various logistical challenges within already-crowded markets, it is important to recognize the accessibility needs of program participants.

10. Monthly coupon distribution effective: although each market distributed its coupons in slightly different ways, at least one market was very pleased with its decision to disburse food coupons on a monthly basis (in contrast to a weekly basis). This market felt there were three advantages to monthly lump-sum disbursements: a. It reduced the administrative requirements of the program (one disbursement per month instead of four).

1. b. It gave program participants more flexibility in how and when they spent their coupons. For example, rather than spending the same amount each week, participants could purchase more one week and less the next (to better meet their needs).
2. c. It provided the market with a better opportunity to collect and add supplemental information to the participants’ coupon envelopes.

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11. **Partners willing, able to participate in coupon distribution:** some participating markets did not distribute their food coupons directly at all, opting instead to pass them along to social service agencies to do so. This decision worked well because (a) it ensured an added layer of confidentiality or privacy to the participants (b) it encouraged the social service agencies to buy-in and assume a more active role in the program and (c) it lessened the administrative requirement for the farmers' markets (whose staff and volunteers are often at or near capacity)
12. **Food Coupon Pilot Program reduces food insecurity stigma:** although many food banks have made great efforts to reduce stigma and shame for their users, several people associated with this program remarked that the Nourishing Community Food Coupon program took stigma reduction to a new level. Simply put, there is no way for other farmers' market patrons – or vendors – to know who is using coupons associated with the pilot program. The unique coding process applied to the food coupons ensured that only the program administrators could track which coupons were part of the pilot program (and which were non-program coupons, which are also sold by various markets).
13. **More transparency is helpful in the selection process:** naturally – and especially as the program expands – there will be people who wonder how its participants are selected. Although the six markets worked very closely with their community partners to identify people who were well-positioned to benefit from the program, the lack of publicity around eligibility criteria has the potential to create challenges in the future. Although no major questions were raised during the pilot program, FMNS and its markets must continue to work together to strike an appropriate balance between participant confidentiality and program transparency.
14. **Better vendor education:** several respondents indicated that – at least on occasion – market vendors either didn't know about the Food Bucks program, or had a minimal understanding of how it worked. Although we cannot evaluate whether this was a wide-scale problem, it is not difficult to imagine that this could put Food Bucks recipients in an uncomfortable situation as they attempt to make their purchases.
15. **More visible price lists:** a few respondents indicated that they were either timid or embarrassed about asking vendors about the prices of their items (to determine whether or not they could afford to purchase those products). Although there may be cases where it is not logistically viable for this to occur, we believe visible price lists would enhance the participant experience considerably. It may be worth considering increased online shopping opportunities as well, as this would enable participants to study both the products and their prices privately and without social pressure.
16. **Greater product diversity and a more consistent experience across markets:** although this is likely obvious to most markets (and something many are probably working on), several respondents did express disappointment at the small range of items for sale. This is likely especially true at

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

smaller, less-established markets. As each market continues to grow, this problem will likely subside. The interim solution to this may be to manage participant expectations more effectively, by telling them at the beginning of the program what products they are (and aren't) likely to find at each market.

17. Specify market bucks allocation dates: as one respondent insightfully pointed out, *“my only suggestion is to make participants aware of the exact date funds will be provided. For people living on 45% of the poverty limit, the date you are able to shop is a significant part of how to plan/attempt to stretch resources to try and have food for the whole month.”* There is little paraphrasing that could describe this insight better than this respondent.

18. Making market bucks ‘universal’: while it may be logistically complex (and potentially not especially necessary), one respondent indicated their desire for market bucks to be usable *across* markets (i.e., the same bucks could be used at both the Brewery Market and the Spryfield Market). Another respondent indicated that her Food Bucks were usable, ‘only at the Saturday market, but not the Wednesday market’ and that she could not use them at the market store (presumably referencing the Wolfville Farmers’ Market). While the benefits of such changes must be weighed against the costs, it is reasonable to suggest that a more ‘universal’ system for Food Bucks redemption may enhance the participant experience.

19. Easily distinguishable market buck denominations: another small but notable suggestion came from one respondent who indicated they found it difficult to quickly identify the value of their various Food Bucks. This participant suggested it may be helpful to fashion FMNS Food Bucks similarly to Canadian banknotes, which can be easily identified by their colour.

20. Market bucks inflation: it is no secret that Canada has recently experienced above average levels of inflation (and many expect this trend to continue). To that end, one participant wondered whether future market bucks allocations would reflect the shrinking purchasing power of a dollar. While this is almost certainly a long-term policy decision for FMNS and its partners, it is notable that at least one participant (and likely more) is noticing food price inflation.

21. Online shopping opportunities: although it was originally presumed that most program participants would be keen to do their purchasing in-person (at the market), there is evidence to suggest that at least some would prefer to shop online. About a quarter of program participants not only reported making their purchases online, but largely reported having an easy time doing so. Moreover, well over half of participants indicated that they *would* feel comfortable making their purchases online if necessary. While FMNS must weigh this against other program priorities (i.e., bringing people to the market for a prolonged social/community experience), it should also consider how to best meet the needs of all participants.

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22. More reliable product availability: it is widely understood that the 27 participating markets come in all different sizes and scopes. Some – like the Wolfville or Halifax Markets – are longstanding and offer a wide variety of goods, while others are in their infancy and have far fewer vendors. This discrepancy has been noted by many participants, one of whom stated: *'it would be great if the program included the local café-market, as the farmers' market is so small that it doesn't include dairy products or much variety. If it rained, there were almost no vendors at the market, so no groceries that week.'* Although there is no obvious or easy solution to this challenge, it is one that FMNS and its partners should continue to explore as time goes on.

23. More market coupons: once again, and somewhat unsurprisingly, the most frequently cited opportunity for improvement (among participants) was for an increase in the amount of food coupons distributed. Although this request can likely be expected on an ongoing basis, it may be particularly notable this year given the impact inflation has had on prices over the past year. Numerous participants noted they felt prices were high, and according to one participant, *"I just wish the prices were lower so that we could continue to go to the Farm Market where the program is over now."*

24. Longer hours/more accessible times: once again this year, several participants noted that they simply could not always attend the market within the designated times (the market's regular operating hours). Although the vast majority of participants did not find this to be a major problem (given the high coupon redemption rates), individual markets may wish to explore flexible alternatives to accommodate those participants who cannot make it to the market during scheduled operating hours.

25. Consistent coupon distribution: when asked how the program improved, one participant replied, *'not having to go weekly to pick up bucks. Sometimes we'd forget and have to get them the following week.'* This is an anecdotal comment and may be an isolated situation, however it does suggest that there may be some differences in how different markets distribute their food coupons. Ideally, there would be a standardised method for all participants at all markets.

26. Gas certificates: interestingly, a couple of participants suggested that while the market coupons were very helpful, the fast-rising price of gas has caused them some financial strain in relation to the program (this may be a bigger issue in rural areas, where participants have to travel longer distances to attend the market). While these are also somewhat anecdotal comments (and possibly outside the scope of the program), they do suggest that it may be worthwhile for FMNS and its partners to consider the user's *entire* A text message received from a participant in the Truro Farmers' Market program

experience with the program, and not just what occurs once they arrive at the market.

27. Input on food box content/food box distribution: although the vast majority of program participants (87%) did not receive a food box as part of this program (and the vast majority of those who did report being satisfied with the box), there were some who suggested that there are opportunities for improvement in that area. A couple of participants, for example, indicated that they did not have any input into the contents of their box, while another participant worried that the food in her box (which she was occasionally unable to pick up as planned) would go to waste. These are minor concerns overall, but worth considering as part of FMNS' efforts to fully satisfy all participants.

28. Wheelchair accessibility: while some of the more developed markets have made considerable investments to become more accessible, some smaller markets (mostly due to location or resource constraints) have not yet been able to reach their desired standard. This was noted by a few participants, one of whom explained, *'I am disabled and as long as I could walk with my cane or walker, I could manoeuvre. I could not with my wheelchair, so had to ask a friend to pick up what I wanted.'* This should continue to be a significant priority for both the markets themselves and FMNS.

Appendix B: Coupon Redemption by Market

Market	Product Category							
	Produce	Other Agr. Foods	Prepared Foods	Value-added Foods	Beer, Wine, Spirits	Personal Hygiene	Artisans/ Crafts	Other
Alderney Landing	\$6,650.00	\$3,480.00	\$3,055.00	\$75.00	\$175.00	\$340.00	\$1,515.00	\$0
Annapolis Royal	\$6,386	\$737	\$3,460	\$3,280	\$1,384	\$419	\$1,940	\$1,264
Antigonish	\$5,735	\$7,410	\$6,395	\$0	\$290	\$470	\$5,180	\$0
Avon Community	\$1,481	\$716	\$1,535	\$7	\$31	\$146	\$953	\$0
Barrington	\$720	\$1,432	\$1,887	\$491	\$0	\$822	\$1,148	\$0
Bridgewater	\$1,518.64	\$1,158.95	\$1,256.29	\$819.85	\$89.00	\$666.95	\$1,125.05	\$82.09
Cape Breton	\$1,817	\$350	\$4,855	\$621	\$0	\$1,097	\$7,987	\$2,497
Chester	\$1,850	\$2,100	\$875	\$490	\$355	\$190	\$180	\$0
Fairview Clayton Park	\$3,180	\$0	\$1,245	\$0	\$0	\$280	\$215	\$60
Halifax Brewery	\$1,465	\$10,525.82	\$2,530	\$185	\$110	\$80	\$95	\$7,855.08
Halifax Seaport	\$3,270	\$4,030	\$2,280	\$1,250	\$970	\$1,030	\$4,130	\$260
The Fairgrounds Farmers' Market	\$1,321	\$1,121	\$265	\$0	\$0	\$65	\$150	\$76
Hope Blooms	\$1,000	\$1,190	\$810	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
Hubbards	\$3,190	\$1,885	\$2,200	\$1,075	\$880	\$560	\$870	\$0

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Market	Product Category							
	Produce	Other Agr. Foods	Prepared Foods	Value-added Foods	Beer, Wine, Spirits	Personal Hygiene	Artisans/ Crafts	Other
Kentville	\$908	\$2,091	\$456	\$1,038	\$60	\$0	\$1,214	\$280
Lunenburg	\$4,910.00	\$8,045.00	\$3,450.00	\$3,455.00	\$1,165.00	\$1,060.00	\$1,775.00	\$0
Mabou	\$1,637.50	\$967.50	\$1,745	\$1,170	\$320	\$390	\$1,755	\$20
Merigomish Schoolhouse	\$695	\$295	\$1,480	\$480	\$0	\$100	\$950	\$215
Musquodoboit Harbour	\$2,667	\$2,206	\$1,963	\$324	\$741	\$1,794	\$4,670	\$268
New Germany	\$55	\$215	\$0	\$330	\$0	\$135	\$1,120	\$0
New Glasgow	\$1,525.00	\$6,165.00	\$6,910.00	\$650.00	\$1,215.00	\$2,620.00	\$3,905.00	\$0.00
North Mountain	\$1,850	\$625	\$2,350	\$0	\$0	\$175	\$0	\$0
Novalea	\$2,035	\$1,727	\$204	\$22	\$16	\$719	\$90	\$42
Privateer	\$367	\$993	\$597	\$0	\$0	\$567	\$1,049	\$152.00
Prospect Communities	\$4,791.69	\$3,427.07	\$3,935.59	\$974.36	\$13.17	\$483.29	\$83.58	\$58.13
Pugwash	\$1,935	\$1,165	\$270	\$2,185	\$1,210	\$740	\$4,155	\$45
Shelburne Guild Hall	\$1,250	\$0	\$2,520	\$0	\$0	\$395	\$655	\$50
Spryfield	\$4,275	\$0	\$2,560	\$155	\$25	\$515	\$420	\$30
Tantallon Village	\$1,420	\$1,180	\$537	\$52	\$945	\$0	\$459	\$0
Tatamagouche	\$3,260.00	\$8,185.00	\$5,385.00	\$120.00	\$585.00	\$420.00	\$1,300.00	\$50.00

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Market	Product Category							
	Produce	Other Agr. Foods	Prepared Foods	Value-added Foods	Beer, Wine, Spirits	Personal Hygiene	Artisans/ Crafts	Other
Truro Farmers'	\$8,441	\$6,029	\$7,143	\$1,111	\$120	\$0	\$2,055	\$715
Wolfville	\$6,405	\$8,517	\$6,350	\$1,111	\$995	\$792	\$1,451	\$0
Yarmouth	\$1,509	\$2,420.75	\$3,007	\$0	\$1,084	\$936	\$1,213	\$105

Appendix C: Post-Program Participant Questionnaire

Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia

2022 Nourishing Communities Program

Participant Exit Survey

Greetings,

On behalf of Farmers' Markets of Nova Scotia (FMNS), we would like to thank you for your participation in the 2022 Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program. We hope that your experience with this program was positive and rewarding.

We would like to ask you some questions about your experience. This will help us evaluate whether the program was successful and will help us make improvements to it in the future.

This survey will take you about 15-20 minutes to complete.

This is an anonymous and confidential survey unless you choose to leave your name. Your responses will not be shared with anyone except the FMNS project evaluation team. Please try to answer all questions, however you may skip any questions you don't feel comfortable answering.

Please complete this survey as soon as possible and return it to the individual or organisation that provided it to you. Thanks for your cooperation. If you have any questions about the survey, please let your host organisation know and we'll answer them for you right away.

Please tell us which Farmers' Market you visit most frequently:

Question 1: What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-34
- 35-44
- 45-54

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- 55-64
- 65+
- Prefer not to answer

Question 2: Do you consider yourself to be a member of any of the following populations (choose all that apply)

- Indigenous/Aboriginal
- African Nova Scotian
- Person with a Disability
- LGBTQ2IA+
- Acadian/Francophone
- Immigrant (within the last 5 years)
- Caucasian
- Other

Question 3: How many people regularly consumed the products you purchased with your Food Bucks (this might include partners, children, housemates, etc.)?

- Just me (nobody else)
- 1 other person
- 2 other people
- 3 other people
- 4 other people
- 5+ other people
- Prefer not to answer

Question 4: Do you identify with any of the below?

- Female
- Male

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- Non-binary/third gender
- Prefer to self-describe (please do so below)

- Prefer not to answer

Question 5: Was this your first time participating in the Nourishing Communities program?

- Yes, it was my first time
- No, I participated at least one other time

Question 6: What was your favourite part about participating in this program? What stood out for you?

Question 7: At the start of this program, you received a welcome package (tote bag and printed materials). Do you have any comments or suggestions about the contents of the welcome package?

Question 8: Please think for a moment about the SOCIAL aspects of the Nourishing Communities program and tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements:

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
This program helped me feel more connected to my community				
I felt welcome at the farmers' market				

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My existing relationships were strengthened by the program (perhaps by providing a weekly activity to do together, or providing opportunities to cook or eat meals together)				
I made at least one new friend or social contact through this program				

Question 9: Please think for a moment about the *NUTRITIONAL and HEALTH-RELATED* aspects of the Nourishing Communities program and tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
During this program, I bought and consumed foods that were not part of my regular diet before				
I ate healthier foods than usual while I was participating in this program				
I cooked from scratch more frequently during my participation in this program				
I believe my long-term eating habits have changed somewhat as a result of this program				

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Question 10: Please think for a moment about how the Nourishing Communities program affected you FINANCIALLY and tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
While participating in this program, I worried less about having enough food to eat				
During this program, I found that I had more money to meet my other (non-food/grocery) needs				
I would have benefitted from receiving more Food Bucks, if they were available				
I believe I received good value for my Food Bucks, overall				

Question 11: Please think for a moment about your OVERALL EXPERIENCE with the Nourishing Communities program and tell us whether you agree or disagree with each of the following statements.

Statement	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
I looked forward to visiting the farmers' market each time				
Overall, I had positive interactions with the vendors at my farmers' market				

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

My mental health was better because of participating in this program				
I want to participate in this program again				
This program had a significant, positive impact on my life				

Question 12: On average, about how much money did you spend each week at your farmers' market in ADDITION to your Food Bucks?

- I didn't spend any additional money (I only used my Food Bucks)
- \$1-2 per week
- \$3-5 per week
- \$6-10 per week
- \$11-20 per week
- More than \$20 per week

Question 13: On average, how much time did you spend at the market per visit?

- 10 minutes or less
- 11-20 minutes
- 21-30 minutes
- 31-60 minutes
- More than an hour

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Question 14: How often did you bring someone else with you to the farmers' market (i.e. a friend or family member)

- Never; I always went by myself
- Rarely; once or twice I attended the market with someone else
- Sometimes I attended the market with someone else
- Often times I attended the market with someone else
- I always went with someone else

Question 15: How much benefit did you receive from your participation in the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program?

- No benefit at all
- Some benefit, but not very much
- Quite a bit of benefit
- An extreme amount of benefit

Question 16: Would you like to continue visiting the farmers' market on a regular basis now that the Nourishing Communities program is finished?

- Yes
- No; if there are no further Food Bucks, I'm not really interested / able to visit the market
- Unsure

Question 17: Listed below are some of the reasons people might choose not to continue visiting their farmers' market. Which ones (if any) apply to you? (choose all that apply)

- Food is more expensive at the farmers' market than at the grocery store
- Many of the foods I want are not available at the farmers' market
- The farmers' market is difficult for me to get to
- I don't have enough time to shop at the farmers' market regularly
- The farmers' market does not feel like a safe or welcoming space for me

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Other (please tell us in the space below)

Question 18: If you were approached by someone who was about to participate in the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program, and they asked you for your opinion or advice, what would you tell them?

Question 19: Listed below are some of the challenges people may have with this program. Please tell us which ones apply to you (choose all that apply).

- I felt nervous or anxious about participating in this program or attending the market
- I felt worried about being judged for using Food Bucks
- I found the pricing of the products unclear at the farmers' market
- I found the guidebook I was given difficult to follow
- The farmers' market did not feel like a safe or welcoming space for me
- The farmers' market was not a physically accessible space for me

Question 20: Were there any other challenges you encountered during your participation in this program, or any changes you could recommend to improve the program?

Question 21: Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program? If so, please tell us here.

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your input is extremely helpful for this program and for future participants.

Appendix D: All Participant Quotes and Statements

What was your favourite part about participating in this program? What stood out for you?

Fresh produce, fresh meat and local crafts
Really nice people
Getting out on a Sunday to get fresh foods
Helped with budgeting and monthly food costs.
It got me out of the house to mingle with many nice people and their pets
The accessibility to things not normally able to afford or items considered to be treats.
Loc food, friendly vendors
Trying new foods and meeting new people/vendors
Social
Best part was having fresh food for my children
Food
The atmosphere, so many people attend.
People who attended
Very useful
The food
Taking time to connect with friends on Saturday,Ãs
The "Outing" and sights and smell at the seaport market
Amazed at the farmers market. Saturday mornings I was always doing something else in previous years. Sister referred me to the program. Some of the vendors I knew previously.
All of it. Got me out of the house.
Being able to can some food so we can have food to last after the market finishes
meeting farmers and people at the market
Having access to the farmers market
Having more money for our household
Being able to use the money provided and as well as getting fresh food and veggies. The fact that its fresher
Something to do on Saturdays
Good friendly service
The community spirit and getting to meet people

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

I was able to see what was available at the market
Free food
Free food
Getting help with food
It was much less stressful knowing we had market dollars and didn't have to worry about if we had cash. Left funds open for other necessities.
I appreciated the flexibility to use the market money for anything at the market, the amount provided and the ability to use them over an extended time frame.
Very helpful and kind
I really enjoyed being able to afford to have a big variety of fresh vegetables and fruit, produce and meat to pick from.
Better access to fresh produce and home grown meat.
I loved knowing that my family would have local foods to eat and that we were supporting our community.
Being able to survive the food shortage and price increases. Meeting vendors before the market opened outside to purchase food and re-connecting. They were very accommodating unlike the Antigonish building which violates fragrance-free policies and creates an accessibility barrier for persons with disabilities (enviro illness mcs) and other health conditions such as asthma, migraine and heart issues.
The fact that I got to go to the market and purchase items that I could not afford honey, cheese and fruits, veggies and plants.
I can buy stuff that I need
Lots of vegetables. I,Ãm a diabetic and celiac so I live on veg and fruit
I enjoy good food. The market is an event/social.
There was more market bucks than I initially expected
Purchasing food. Trying new food.
I liked going to the market
I enjoyed the good food and spending time with my son.
I don't know
Eating more salad
Different foods
Trying new foods from different vendors
The community
local food

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Local food and artists
variety, quality and freshness
Vegs
The opportunity to experience new things!
The friendliness of the vendors
All the different vendors and all the best value for your money
It meant that I could get a better variety of foods and healthier foods.
The kindness the help with groceries was a tremendously beautiful atmosphere.
The food, conversation and the music!
The food and the social interaction
The various vendors
Socialising and meeting new people learning new skills
looking forward to going shopping without the worry of money
Access to fresh fruit and produce
ability to obtain fresh produce and products that I normally couldn't afford
Meeting new people who are so friendly and accommodating was the highlight . The cooking is fantastic! I buy a lot of the fresh fruit and vegetables because they are so fresh and last longer than store bought veggies.
The amazing woman the way the place makes me feel it's absolutely amazing program
The social skills I learn by interacting with different vendors. It's amazing all home grown items, food and crafts.
Feeling more like a part of the community
Loved getting to try new foods
It (wasn't? spelling hard to read) that I could get a better variety of foods and healthier foods
I love the socialising part and the good products at the market
Being able to purchase free produce and meat products
Fresh food
I always enjoy participating in this program and contributing to purchasing from local farmers
Fresh produce and meat and seafood
Trying new food
Fresh veges
Local and fresh food
A better selection of foods and more healthy

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Meat cookies pickess
Fresh veggies
Fresh local produce
Free food. Having different food to eat.
Kindness
Participating in the local farmers market and picking fresh berries!
Friendly atmosphere, quality goods, helpfulness
Healthy food and supporting local farmers ect.
Talking to local vendors and getting to know what they offer and their products.
Having the ability to purchase and support local vendors, and to see some of our land artists work.
Getting food from my community
Getting products that couldn't have purchased on a fixed income
Free food
Fresh vegetables and seafood. Hearty breads. Friendly vendors. Community experience.
How everyone was welcoming and accepting of the Food Bucks and didn't treat us differently.
yes
Meeting new people
The fresh food and vegs
Being able to get fresh local produce.
Being able to pick out healthy food items to eat.
Fresh vegetables and fruits, I could try different ones.
Helps out a lot for food.
The fresh produce.
Meeting the people at the farmers market. See the vendors and what they sell.
The great food.
Being able to bring my children, they love buying fresh fruits, produce.
nutritious foods
It was a help with getting healthy food.
Quality of products, friendly vendors.
It was wonderful to share meals with people to be able to help others.
As a senior, it helped with my grocery shopping.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

all home made crafts
Access to nutritious foods that I cannot always afford.
To be able to feed myself with fresh food and the vegetables stood out most.
Getting the food I need without cost
Receiving the box.
The sense of community and being able to access healthy foods for myself and my child.
Amount of Food Bucks, very helpful for food, veggies
Variety of foods and crafts
Meeting the vendors
Lovely people. Variety of vegetables.
Very helpful with the budget. Got us out of the house, different experiences. Got to fry new foods. Loved it.
Having a scheduled little family outing each week was wonderful
I felt good about being able to take my kids each week and have money going back into the community and bringing home good food and showing the kids.
Being able to get fresh, locally grown produce weekly for my family.
The fresh produce veg & fruit home made good
Being able to let kids choose something just for them. 9 times out of 10 it was donuts
It was a very welcoming space for me and my 2 children. It really helped us find out about so many things that are available for us having just moved here from the Ukraine.
I could only make it to the market once a month but many of the vendors I was able to call before hand and they would put stuff aside for me which was really nice
It was a way to support local during a tough year of inflation
Being able to get out with my children and shop for products we like and will use.
The vendors were all very accommodating and you can literally choose anything
The yummy food
Fresh meat from the farms was my favourite
Being able to buy local
That we were able to choose from any of the vendors from the market and actually keep the items. I loved supporting them all.
All the fresh produce, bread and crystals
Enjoyed having the opportunity to purchase farm fresh meals, poultry and vegetables for my family
The variety of vegetables and breads

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Choosing the products we needed Blending with other community members accessing the market
The people. They were very nice and respectful and the program was very sufficient for my family.
Fresh food
The hope blooms team was so accommodating and offered the prices in the city.
There was a wide variety of food. I would also sell my own cakes.
The team at Hope Blooms had the most community involvement and great market prices
Cheap food
The sense of community
Spending time with my family, listen to music, get my groceries
I sold my food in the market. It was great to see people eating my family recipes.
That ability to choose whatever you liked, and that dollars could be carried over. Absolutely godsend for low income!!
Deep gratitude for access to local and nourishing food. Being able to support and encourage local farmers.
Fresh food
The market bucks were a very needed help. Also the kindness of the work.
The market bucks were a big help
All the different things I could buy.
Buying treats you can't get at the store
Friendly service
The personnel are fantastic
Having a chance to buy things with the farmers bucks at our local farmers market
Being able to get fresh products
All the different things you could buy. Not only food but gifts.
Good quality food
Got to see the different vendors and the knitting stood out the most. I also like getting homemade food for my family.
Taking the family out and seeing the kids wanting to get fresh veg/meat, and most of all going to each vendor and getting the opportunity to buy things and try things we may not have been able to normally get.
The good food especially the baking
The baked goods were really good. fresh vegetables

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fresh vegetables - helping us with fresh produce to nourish the body
Seeing all the vendors with their products and heir friendly faces
All of it
Getting an opportunity to interact with all the vendors, found and learned about other products we were not aware of. Learned so much. I tried another new veg this year.
Meeting people - really enjoy going
I believe the friendship. I also enjoyed the music. Also meeting new and other people.
I could use the market bucks to buy things, not having to use my own money.
All the nice people that we got to meet. Knowing that we had an outing to go to every Sunday, that helped us so very much.
Access to healthy meat, the feed NS survey and farmers market passport
The ability to afford quality meat and fish
Access to organic food the energy vendors, it is a happy experience
I really enjoyed being able to look thoroughly through all the vendors, carefully select what I needed and wanted for something special. Feeling connected to the community.
Fresh vegetables, healthy eating
Being able to get out and go to the market and to be able to get items I couldn't afford before :)
My favourite part was seeing my grandson pick out fruit/veggies and proudly paying using barn bucks (sp?) and also being able to spend time with family.
number of people, i didn't know about this market
how smooth the program ran
Going to the market and shopping
My favourite was getting my son off devices and out walking and meeting new people. What stood out was baked goods (for my son!! :P) and the friendly help. And forgiving! I spilled coffee on one ladies tablecloth. Oops.
My kids were happy to be able to purchase whatever they wanted at the farmers market. The food was great, especially the strawberries and the Jamaican food truck.
Looking forward to Thursdays. I would use the fresh veggies + meat to make a great meal for my family.
Being able to try foods from local vendors
So much to choose from, all great stuff :) nice people, a nice outing. Everyone is very helpful and kind.
Good quality food for affordable prices
all the help that's being given. trying the ready cooked food at the market,

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The fact the school offered the help. It's taken a lot of stress off my shoulders.
I love eating healthy foods with my family. Great selections and fresh seafood too!
going to the market with my kids and getting them to help me pick out the stuff
It was a huge help for my family getting food. I am a single mom and can not get meat from the food bank
Being able to get local organic and wholesome food that supports the vendors.
Being able to get organic and wholesome local food that supports local vendors.
Going there personally and picking out my own things.
This program is so special because as my community supports me, I in turn support my community (purchasing local food from local growers).
Being able to shop at the market when convenient and have a box prepared when I couldn't
Flexibility to get a box delivered if we couldn't make the market.
Fresh fruit and veggies I could buy for my kids
Being able to treat our family to a meal out.
Fresh fruit
This extra bit helped our family out so much. Whether it was for food or homemade items. We love shopping at the farmers market. People are always friendly and so welcoming
My son being able to participate in his weekly school outing to the market and using his portion of our bucks to try new things, chat with the sellers/creators at the market and learn some budgeting, forethought and generosity through bringing something back to school for his little brother who is too young for the market outings. And we bought our birthday cakes and Christmas Turkey with the bucks, which saved me tons. So grateful.
Taking my children to help pick out items
The generosity of the community.
Socialising and all the fresh or home made goodies. There are so many wonderful vendors
All the people
How good the people were
I like fresh and local food and vegetables
Everyone was so friendly and all the varieties of fresh vegetables
The fresh fruits and veggies. How easy it is to use the coins.
The freshness of the products, how easy it was to use the coins. Able to try different foods.
The vendors were always friendly and informative. I always had fresh fruit and vegetables.
I like it because it was cheaper than the grocery store e.g. potatoes and fruits
Being part of the community and building relationships with the vendors. It has helped relieve

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some of the financial pressures as well
Taking my kids to the market every Saturday morning
Getting to try new foods. Spending time with family and friends. Seeing beautiful pieces of art and speaking with people about different things.
Spending time together as a family. Trips to market. Enjoying high quality food.
Welcoming
The generosity was amazing and the opportunity to try new food items, normally not accessible.
How can you turn down free fresh food? The best part is it's free food.
This made it possible for me to have weekly fresh foods that I would have not been able to afford.
I really liked the soap and homemade dish cloths
The surprise of what was in the bag.
How easy it was to order and how much everyone was here to help us!
Having a reason to go to the market every week and supporting the vendors, we definitely tried to rotate supporting everyone and my 2 year old looked forward to going every week and getting a ,Äütreat,Äù
Fresh vegetables delivered
Fresh, healthy food and supporting local farms and businesses.
like the baked goods and vegetables
I loved that my Schools Plus worker could solve any problem for me. Aaron Rice was fantastic!
The many options from different farmers/locals
Convenient and felt no judgement using the coupons
It's nice to have someone bring me items I selected online and get the \$30 every 2 weeks. It definitely helps
Being able to buy fresh, local meat and produce that I might otherwise not be able to afford.
free food in time of need
We like the fresh vegetables and eggs the most.
My kids really loved the ready-made meals. Having them delivered to the house helped us a lot.
The opportunity to try food and products that we would not have had the opportunity to try otherwise.
Lots of options
Lots of options

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Great products. The vendors was very friendly and helpful.üèè
I enjoyed seeing everyone's homemade products and awesome foods
It,Äôs a go
I felt rich!
Liked the seafood, seafood is usually expensive
The freshness of all the foods can not compare to that which is sold in stores.
I like fresh and local food and vegetables
Choosing the products we needed and having them fresh and local
My favourite is the relationships you build with the vendors.
How helpful and kind everyone was
trying things I wouldn't normally.
generosity in a time of need.
For me, it was the excitement of being able to purchase things that I normally wouldn't be able to..
Interacting and socialising with others
Mainly just a chance to go an be able to get fresh food for my family
I loved all of the vendors, the people were so welcoming and friendly. There was home made food, cute crafts and tons of things to get. Nothing better than home grown/locally grown.
Variety of fresh products.
Having access to food products
It is so welcoming. It makes me happy to go there to meet everyone there.
This program allows my family to eat healthy food and helps offset the cost of inflation, which is deeply affected our monthly budget
I appreciated the market program not only for financial aid but because it encouraged me to come to the market regularly every weekend. I was able to meet so many members of my own community I may not have otherwise met and developed relations with. I now have a resource of people who I can reach out to anytime to learn from or get support from for my family. I am very happy to have had this experience.
I could buy veggies and meat that I would not be able to afford
The vendors great produce etc
Can't pick a favourite part because I enjoyed it all!
The variety of things I could choose from ranging from food to pet toys to bath bombs
Was able to purchase food items that we would never purchase as they are very expensive
Being at the market! Vendors are friendly, products are good quality and I love supporting

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local!!
Being able to get fresh produce and baked goods.
Pick out what I needed
Being able to meet local Farmers and makers.
Product
The generosity
Being able to spoil my children with wholesome, local food without feeling worried about paying for it.
Get customer service.
Saturday morning shopping and socialising
Being able to provide my family with fresh and local products that i would never have the money to purchase on a regular basis
The fresh food
thank you so much for the support and the Favourite part is that helping us to get some good free from those people who also need support
It got me out, I've been very paranoid since covid and I wasn't going anywhere, got me out and interested in going at least once a month.
The welcome bags and gardening sets, very uplifting and compassionate. I also appreciated the vendors' reception to receiving the market bucks without judgement.
I can't say enough good about this program. It provided me with tons of local healthy food. I have health problems so this was a major boost for that. It allowed me to participate in social events which I otherwise wouldn't have been able to. This program was my first real step back into social anything after 2 years of home alone due to covid. Thanks for everything
I enjoyed everything here. especially the Cafe.
Meeting the vendors and getting unprocessed food
Bringing my girls and watching them enjoy the market
Trying new foods/products... learning about our local merchants/artists/talents/culture. My son is a special needs adult and looks forward to the market days, ù£Ô[]è Always a treat! üðÉ
My favourite part was I was able to buy things I normally couldn't afford, and it gave me and my children an activity to do once a month as we would go to the farmers market and get groceries and they would get a chocolate treat from the chocolate stand
Everyone was kind and there was no fuss about taking the market money
The people(vendors) and the various things available. It was also a routine for me to go every Saturday, it was a lovely experience.
Being able to provide my family with farm fresh, locally sourced foods has been great!

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Our favourite part was having a family outing every Saturday. Sometimes it,Äôs hard to schedule family time so this was perfect.
My favourite part is that it was all local and fresh. The people were very friendly and that is what stood out to me .
The friendliness. Getting to know people in the Community.
Being able to purchase more expensive produce that my kids have wanted to try
The delivery of the package
The delivery of the package
I liked the homemade things
It help my family to get a good food
I didn't get over to get any Food Bucks. Something always came up
It allowed us to buy lots of fresh and special items we could not have afforded otherwise. From fresh veg to the special pretzel for my son, it has been very uplifting and nourishing.
I love how easy it is, I love feeling out of "crisis" mode when my child wants to go to the farmers market. Sometimes I only have a few dollars and tell him " no." And then I remember there are nourish dollars waiting for us!!!
Being able to afford fresh produce that tastes better than the grocery store. This program keeps me from having to rely on the food bank. Also loved the online ordering because I can't get out every week nor can I go out of town to get the products that were listed from outside Truro. Please bring it back.
My children were able to choose veg, fruit and a treat from the market without me having to say I'm sorry I can't afford it
being able to try new foods that otherwise we couldn't afford, and meet new people in the farmers market community!
Respect extended to customers, and the exceptionally fresh produce. Also, the cleanliness of the site. Great job.
I was able to provide the children with fresh vegetables
Getting fresh vegetables near my home
How much it helped each week with my food bill.
Being able to purchase foods I would not normal
The ability to fulfil my needs (funds are high for celiacs)
I loved the variety of fruits, vegetables and other products available at the market that I normally would not consider due to money concerns.
Non judgemental!
Lots of options for fresh food

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The ability to purchase HEALTHY local produce. Not produce shipped in from elsewhere that,Ãs probably covered in preserving chemicals. This is produce that has come from field to market to table within a few days.
It helped a lot with being able to afford fresh produce.
The friendliness of everyone involved. The market was well organised.
I can bring my son to go to the Market. Plus, the vegetables are very fresh and tasty.
Being a part of the community and meeting and supporting local farmers and artisans. The food!!!
Supporting local farmers

At the start of this program, you received a welcome package (tote bag and printed materials). Do you have any comments or suggestions about the contents of the welcome package?

Nice things
Thank you!!!
Great idea to include items. Wouldn,Ãt change anything.
The bag is good quality
Love the tote bag, use it every time
I use my tote bag every week
The recipes and tote were very nice.
Bag was great
No
Very informative.
None
No
No
No
No it was great
no it was great
no comments
no
it was great thank you
no

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No, they did a great job
No
Unsure
No, greatly appreciated
It was helpful information and bag was useful
No
No
no
Loved the tote bag. Use it all the time! Lots of great information as well.
It was a nice touch and provided good information.
Nope
The welcome package was fantastic. Great tote bag and the information was helpful.
Bag came in handy
No.
I really liked getting the tote bag and printed material. I found it very informative.
No
Tote bag was awesome! Don't recall any printed materials.
The bag was great.
I like it and my husband likes it.
It was nice to get it. It was appreciated.
No
The bag is beautiful
It was useful
No
Helpful
No
The stuff was nice, a kind - of present
No
No it is all great
Maybe a pamphlet that shows some of the different things offered at the farmers market
no
no

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no
No
May be helpful for clients to have understanding/definition/expectation on how quickly one is expected to use market dollars. Tote bag - awesome!
No just that I loved it
They were wonderful thanks so much
excellent! Informative
I received my inquiries about the market and the bag was well used
Love my bag
N8 I loved it thx
beautiful package, would be nice to have bus tickets included
The bag is super useful and sturdy
It was a beautiful bag to use when shopping
The bag is perfect for me to load my things in. The logo is bright and very noticeable. I loved the reading material.
I I thought it was absolutely phenomenal that we got a bag full of goodies and thank you very much for it
It was great as I really enjoyed the information as to what is available at the market.
I thought it was a great gift, thanks!
Ou perfect.
No, it was fine
No
I enjoyed the welcome package. Thank you
No
no
no
Not really
yes
Never got one
I love my farmers market bag
No
It was great and helpful
Didn't receive one

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Didn't receive one sorry.
It was fantastic, very helpful
No
No, I didn't not get one
No I did not.
No
If you mean the free supper pickups they are not something that we are used to eating so didn't enjoy it but ate it
Awesome. I use it all the time.
Did not receive
Just loved the bag and info that was inside.
No
No
No
Thank you
It's a great program and im thankful I was accepted
No.
Everything great
Love it! Thank you
Everything is appreciated.
Thank you very much.
Love the tote bag and including a roasted veggie recipe was a great idea.
I can only say thankful I lost my husband and this made me feel happy and thankful some people I never met before who cared.
No
It was a really nice package
Just thank you.
It was perfect!!
Great
Do not receive anything. Did not get \$40 from Jessica at Acadia at the start and end of the program.
I loved the welcome package!!
Loved my apron

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Enjoyed it a lot
Loved it!
Love my tote bag
It was great. I really enjoyed it. Very welcoming. I didn't get a guidebook (Q19)
The welcome package was delightful - the bag was very practical
It was a nice package but maybe more information as to where we can spend our bucks as I ended up not being able to use them all at the Annapolis as there was not the variety of family foods we were looking for available.
It was great!
No
It was nice
It was such a lovely gesture, we loved the artists work
Loved the bag, I took it every week and still use it now
It was nice that the bag was different than last years
No, they were great! I use the tote bag all the time. Thank you
I came into the program later when another participant stopped collecting their bucks but the package sounds amazing.
Beautiful work
Love my bag. I get comments on it all of the time
No
It was great
Yes it was great
The welcome package provided info that was useful and I liked the bag it came in
Provide translated versions when possible.
They're very helpful.
We got recipe cards
I joined later, and received verbal instructions... no tote but that was ok
Excellent. Loved receiving the bag. Used it each week.
It was awesome
Only that it (and the market bucks) was very helpful and a sturdy shopping bag
It was great
Really liked the tote bag.
Didn't read the papers. I use the bag every time I go to the market.

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was great
Not at this time
It was great! :)
Thank you
Really like the tote bag. A lot of stuff to read. Didn't read it all
All great
I liked the way the welcome package was done up.
It was very useful and great to get and to be able to enjoy with the kids
Really liked the tote bag. Didn't read the papers
No
A nice welcome for the year!
No
No
I absolutely loved the welcome package and the printed materials expanded my horizons to new recipes etc. The bag/tote bag has sure come in handy not only for the market but daily.
Liked the tote bag
I like the tote bag and the information was a great help.
I like using the tote bag when I go to the farmers market.
No, it was all very good. We loved it!
I was very pleased with the tote bag and the information supplied was very informative
No I found it informative
No it was very useful and informative
I found it informative, I was surprised to receive it
It was wonderful! Thank you. I enjoyed reading the booklet - I will care for the canvas bag - will last so long.
Nice gesture. All good.
Awesome!! I use my market tote bag all the time. Washable, durable, just great
Very informative
love it
thank you, very appreciative
It was nice to receive!
It was awesome to have the reusable bag to shop with and feel a part of the farmers market family.

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The tote bag is great!! I use it all the time
No
No
I sport around with my bag on my arm like a proud shopper. Great for advertisement.
no
I did not receive one.
I really love the bag that we got! Lots of information in the pamphlet
It was lovely.
It was lovely.
Does not remember getting a tote bag
Yes I received a welcome package. It is so lovely to have even a few items that are meant to be "just nice items" and not related to base survival. I love my market tote and proudly use it. I love that even though I am severely income limited (to the point of food insecurity) I can still communicate with others that local matters.
Loved the bag to put my items in when I shopped
The reusable bag was great for carrying my items as I had to walk to and from the market.
I don't remember everything in the welcoming package. The fact of getting one is the best part. I do remember and still use the reusable fm bag.
No. It was nice and informational.
Yes I did receive the welcome package. When I received the package I wasn't aware if only some or all the vendors accepted barn bucks. I'm still unsure if they do or not, as well I'm not sure if it's true as I heard a vendor tell someone who was working their booth that people purchase the barn bucks when they don't have cash on them. It would be nice to know as I felt some people who were shopping at the market seemed to watch us more, and how we had spent the barn bucks
It was perfect
No
No it was very good
I didn't receive a welcome package but I received all the time coins to buy every week and everything was good.
Very inspiring
I use my tote every time I go to the market.
Love the package, I always use the pretty bag. I tried the soup recipe with the veggies I got at the market, very good.
It was a strong bag and I can still use it. "Thank you I like it"

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The tote bag was beautiful and we use it weekly!!

The bag was beautiful. The information was misleading. The written information was a contradiction to what I had been told in person. I had been told not to tell anyone of the Program while the pamphlet stated I should invite friends and spread the word. If I invite friends, they will see I use Market Bucks and therefore it is not a secret. Most vendors seemed unaware of the fact that they were supposed to take the "bucks." In a recent conversation I was told that I was actually only supposed to be using the "bucks" towards food. This next statement is a direct quote from the pamphlet inside the bag: "Food bucks are market money! You can use your Food Bucks to buy food and other products from any vendor at your farmers market" which then goes on to list multiple food items and "handmade crafts." After all the secrecy around the Food Bucks I actually ran into a family that made it quite clear that they in fact were part of the Market Bucks Program. I confirmed with them the amount that they received as a family of 8 is just as much as a family of 3 was given (We feel blessed in this case but does seem completely unfair for them) in the pamphlet it does again clearly state that "The more people you live with, the more Food Bucks you'll get to feed all of you." There was some concern about expiry dates which I believe will be adjusted in Jan. However, mine came with no dates and as a smaller family we only got what we needed and continued to use them even after the program ended for us. There was never any mention that I HAD to use them that Saturday and I truly believe there would have been no way to use all of them in one day. I would never go out and spend that type of money in real cash in one sitting. Why would I do it with my "bucks"? So after saving my "bucks" to use appropriately I was told that they would no longer be accepted and that I would have to use them in the next two weeks. This information was not given to me by a team or staff member, it was given to via grapevine. I feel completely rushed to use them and am now unsure of how to use them because of all this misinformation.

No, it was lovely.

I didn't receive one

I love the tote and used it each time we visited the market.

It was nice.

Yes. I would have also liked ,Äüflyers,Äü or something from my local farmers market to know what to expect etc.

It was very nice.

Not at this time.

Nope perfect the way it was!

I did not get this

I was very appreciative of receiving the cloth tote and welcome package. Beautifully designed.

Just my opinion, but I thought the tote bags were not necessary. I, personally, would have preferred more vegetables. But everyone else probably loved them.

Nope

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Nope
I didn't get a tote bag from what i can remember
very useful
No
No
No, the beautiful bag and lovely stickers and welcome letter were wonderful. Bookmarks, logo stickers, fridge magnets, pins, etc. to promote further your program and get the word out, to support the program.
It was okay.
It was great
It was my first time going to a farmers market here so I wasn't sure what to expect. I really appreciate the information and the bag ect. üëç
Nope. Nice bag, though I already have a hundred (don't we all)
It was fine
It was wonderful to have a tote bag big enough to carry all that was purchased away :) Thank you, thank you, thank you.
I didn't receive a welcome package, but I received all the time coins to buy every week and everything was good.
No
It's was very useful
no the welcome kit is very welcoming
it was informative
It was wonderful
That was very nice and useful, thank you so much.
No, it was all beautiful.
Super cute, welcoming and helpful!
The package was really good. They surprised me.
It was great I loved it
It is great. I see more people use that bag. I thought it'd be a great idea to contain the information of all the sellers like where they are from or their greetings if possible.
It was a great welcoming pack
We make sure to always bring our farmers market bags with us!
It was great. Strong bag! Holds lots.
Everything was perfect

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No
No it was great
Love the tote bags, still use them!!
All great things.
No
I love the bag and use it at every market!
It was so appreciated
Thank you. These were sweet.
No it was great
Liked it very much
They were awesome
It was a nice package
all good thank you so much
I don't recall. I got a tote bag later on, I'm not sure what they could do differently.
I found them to be well put together and useful.
I thought it was very kind. Much appreciated
Everything was good.
No thank you for the bag
Loved it
We loved the package! Made us feel special/welcomed ,ù£Ô[]è
I love my tote bag! Maybe if it is doable, have a small pouch of some sort to keep the farmers cash in.
I wish the bag was slightly smaller.
We love the bags!
The tote bag is wonderful.
Yes I did . No, I do not .
Yes
It was great
recipes
The tote bag was nice
No, it,Ãs good
I didn't receive that

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The bag was really nice.
I think it was a nice touch. Thank you.
Loved all of it
The tote is beautiful! It made me feel so lovely to have been given such a nice bag!
It was excellent!
no
None
The bag and materials were useful, thanks.
No it was very informative and I am so thankful that I was accepted as a participant. As a senior it was a wonderful experience
Very well put together and informational!
It was an excellent welcome package. I have gotten very good use from the tote bag.
None
The tote was lovely
It's a lovely welcome package. But as a repeat user of the program, I didn't really need it
None
The welcome package was great. The only thing I would change would be to let people know how long the program lasts. No one was able to give me a definitive answer.
I didn't receive any tote bags and printed materials. I only received the market bucks.
No, it was all perfect!

If you were approached by someone who was about to participate in the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon program, and they asked you for your opinion or advice, what would you tell them?

Farmers market became a very positive outing on Saturdays with my ASD child. It was wonderful to watch her confidence improve each week, to feel like a part of the community.
It is a very good program. They have everything there.
Do it.
It has helped my life with both extra food and a good reason to go visit with some wonderful people.
Allows access to items that might not normally buy or have access to
It,Äôs a good program
Do it!

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Yes, yes, yes!!!
It is a great program where you go and shop using market tokens instead of money.
Support the farmers market and participate in the program
None
That the food coupon program allows me to get things that I normally don't purchase.
Nice atmosphere
The food coupons are great!
Great!
Participate in program overall great experience
Excellent opportunity, jump at this offering if an option.
it's absolutely awesome
Great, really good for both sides of the program
This program has been an absolute blessing for our single income family.
it was really nice to be a part of the program
I felt lucky to be able to have access to this program
great program if you can get signed up
Definitely awesome program to be a part of because not only are you getting the freshest produce but getting to meet the farmers as well.
Participate in a program, good for getting things that you are not able to purchase at other times.
Welcome
Very nice program
To go and check it out! It's in a beautiful spot by the water and there is free music to listen to by different performances each week.
It's ok
It was good
It's a great program
Absolutely do it! Wonderful experience.
That the program provides substantial benefits to motivate socialising, buying local and supporting family food sovereignty, enjoy!
That they do a great job
I would tell them it is an absolutely fantastic program. The \$80/month can really make a difference in choosing healthy meat and vegetables and cooking homemade more often.

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Go check it out, a great program that really benefits people.
I would say you can't beat the freshness. Fresh home grown meat, fresh baked goods, fresh veggies and amazing cheese selection.
I would tell them that this program is amazing! If they participate in it, I would highly recommend it. I was never disappointed with my purchase from the farmers market. I don't recall any negative interactions with any of the vendors we visited.
Really good program
Do it! Eat clean and reduce health issues and be part of a community that cares about you.
Try it because it gives you an opportunity to go to the market and it gives you an opportunity to try new foods.
It's a really good program and you should try it.
Well, try it! I like it.
Good program
It is helpful
I don't know
Do it
Go for it
Why not? It's a good program.
Good but not enough for my family have 9 people good for small family
It's a great opportunity and financial help
Enjoy the experience
it helps
Its great, local, variety, great people
It was great!
Good program
Take advantage of trying new things and meeting new people!
I would share all my positive comments, pointing out benefits and encourage them to join.
I would tell them to go. It is welcoming and the people are so nice and the vendors are reasonably priced
That it's helpful
A good program
It's helpful, fun and something to do every weekend super quality.
I would tell them it's a good interactive experience - also, educational in the way of local food and artisan products (local)

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

It I very good The variety of food is very good You would be foolish to not participate in the program There are so many benefits to mention
Keep up the good work
Love it
It's a great program
If you have a chance to participate, do it!
Great community atmosphere
it was extremely beneficial
Yes
Yea
It is a great service for people struggling in the community to have resources to have food and healthy food at that.
To absolutely give the program a try because it has wide-reaching values and even when the program is done you'll keep going back.
Fantastic program!
A good program
To use the money in meet (or meat? - spelling was difficult to read)
Receive the free bucks and purchase the meat, produce, and meats - it's a great help.
Very helpful
It is a good program and they most likely would benefit greatly from it.
Do it
Good fresh veggies
That it is worth it
A worthwhile program
Smile
Loved the market
It helps offset the food I can afford
I am working on the day they are there so I can't reply.
It's a great idea
It's a well received program helping those in need. my kids loved it
I would advise them to take part in the program
Wonderful program and get out and enjoy all the tasty treats available.
Great place, friendly, educational and so worth the time.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

I would tell them it is a great opportunity to get to the local community in a setting that you're not able to afford on the regular. It is a great program, and opens many doors.

Excellent program

It is a great program and I was able to enjoy our community from the market.

It is a good idea as helps people get out in our community and meet people that are very friendly also all food is fresh or fresh frozen

Great experience

It's nice to get fresh food

I would suggest this program as its a way to get out ad interact

Good program

It is a great program you will benefit from it

The program is fantastic, it helped me save on my grocery bill and the food and people at the farmers market were always amazing.

It's a great program but don't be greedy and take advantage of this program.

Sign up!

It's a great opportunity

It was great

It is a good program. You meet many people who sell a variety of items you may not otherwise know about.

Go for it! It was a great experience.

I would explain how lovely it is to have any kind of help. Also the people that work there are amazing.

It's a great place to go for healthy foods and many other products such as soaps, deodorant.

Go for it!

I would say it caused me to go out more. I met many old friends there plus made new ones. There is so much to see or to buy I just love going there.

Do it and hold your head up high!

Definitely a good thing.

It's a great time to make new friends and to buy things you cannot find in other stores.

Get ready to taste the freshest food ever!

Excellent

You wont regret it!!

Highly recommend

Go for it.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

I would tell them that it is a great and helpful program to be a part of. It helps with not only the financial aspect, but the health and social aspects as well.
Go for it! Very worthwhile.
Please join it. Loved it :)
Go for it!
Great program
Go for it, strongly recommend.
To go it's a great place to get fresh fruit or vegetables, baked goods or just about anything else!
Absolutely do it! It's such a wonderful activity and very beneficial to overall health
It's worth looking into because it was good for my family.
Absolutely join, it is 100 percent beneficial to you and your family.
I enjoy the farm market
It's great you can choose whatever you want
Absolutely do it. Myself and my children would not have made the friendships that we currently have without the market.
You do not have to go every week if that doesn't work for you. Go biweekly or monthly if that works better and ask your favourite vendors if they can hold stuff for you.
It,Ãs ok to need this program, do not feel ashamed, everyone is really approachable and respectful
I would tell them it's an amazing program! It helped relieve some food cost, it allowed me to to spend quality time with my children with barely any out of pocket expense if there is no extra. It is a welcoming environment.
Take a look at all the vendors before you decide what to get. Unless a vendors has a huge line, their items are generally worth the wait
It,Ãs a very helpful program
It,Ãs a super helpful program
Try it, it is great
I would tell them what a welcoming and positive space it is and how I,Ãve met so many wonderful people. Lots of treasures and friends to be found.
They should check it out. It,Ãs great!
I would strongly recommend the program as I feel it is an excellent benefit to myself. Without it I would not be able to afford to buy food directly from a farm, which is a much higher quality than I would normally buy at a grocery store. Tastes so much better and much healthier with no fat or fillers.
It is a great opportunity to try different vegetables, pickles, and jams; the breads are delicious.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

to accept this valuable opportunity and participate.
I would definitely recommend it.
I would tell them to do it
My opinion it is very community oriented and fun
It was a wonderful initiative
This program is a lot about community and connecting with people as well as getting fresh food.
I would tell them to go
I would tell them it was a huge help for me and my family.
Absolutely. Wonderful program
Do it!! It's been a wonderful and truly helpful program. It's been a heart's joy to prepare nourishing foods for my family. We ate much better when we had access to Food Bucks and the market.
It,Äôs a blessing
Swallow your pride and do it. I never thought my financial situation would come to this, but as my late husband's cancer advanced and our finances dwindled I did swallow my pride so that I could feed him decent food.
Keep market bucks
Oh yes, definitely participate. Us on income assistance can't afford most things at the market. With market bucks we can.
Go for it
Participate (Can't go wrong)
Get involved. I am very pro.
It is a great program for the community. I really enjoy it.
Do it
I would tell them it's a great thing
Quality is good, people are excellent
It's a good place to get fresh fruits and vegetables
It is a great program, and I would definitely recommend it. My kids enjoyed it so much, we went every Saturday. They made new friends, and love going to each vendor, and picking their own veg/fruit and it helps us on our grocery bill this summer a lot.
It is a great program. Healthy food.
The farmers market is a real good place I would tell everyone about it
Farmers Market at Windsor Community Centre a great place to get fresh produce with friendly

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

smiles.
The program is a benefit to anyone who uses it and the people are very friendly, get involved if you can
They would find it very positive
It's been an overwhelming experience - I've learned so much this year including zucchini and how good it tastes and how to cook/prepare; a great deal about herbs. It's an experience that gave me something to look forward to and there was always new adventure. Plus it gave me a sense of this is for me...my me time. Thx :) <3
Go for it!
I would tell them that this program would be a very good opportunity for them. To buy produce and etc, to meet other people and the food coupons would help them afford food products that they may want at a grocery store but they won't buy on their own.
It is a very good program for people as the food offered is not as expensive as it is in the grocery store.
I think it's all great, but I don't like the fact that people take their dogs, they are not always safe or friendly
This food coupon program is amazing. I would recommend it to everyone who is in need.
It is a great way to meet new people to support local producers to make connections to know where your (food is??) coming from
It is very valuable and very helpful to me. It has made food to me that I wouldn't have had otherwise.
I would say it's the best food experience and social experience. It is so inclusive. They identified and supported a group of people that normally would fall through the cracks.
It is an amazing opportunity! If the time you have is limited it's helpful to think ahead about what you like to get.
It's a good program. Lots of healthy fresh vegetables and foods.
Great program, really great benefits. Helps a lot of people that can't afford to get food they normally can't afford. meet friendly people...
I feel it is a good program. It got us interacting more at the market. We also were able to buy things we normally wouldn't be able to
It,Äôs the best market even and it provides healthy food
sure go, it is beautiful and worth while
please go
I would tell them the program is good and the farmers market is pretty fair in prices
Absolutely go for it! Good friendly people and lots to choose from even bought as a gift.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

This program was amazing and opened a lot of opportunities to socialise and enjoy local foods. Stress free. Always able to find something to use for dinners. We were happy to use the Food Bucks and the vendors welcomed us and the Food Bucks. It was awesome as we were nervous at first to see some of the vendors' reactions.

It helps and is a nice experience.

It's a great way to discover new local foods and great wonderful vendors.

It's Awesome :) Helps out a bit, very helpful, great vendors, lots to choose from

Absolutely great place to shop because the food is very good quality and the prices are if not better than the stores.

there's lot of support and lots to try

It's a great program and the different foods were amazing

go for it

it is very helpful and try some different food

It is a wonderful program.

do it, absolutely

I would tell them to participate, and that my market was able to accommodate my disability to ensure my ease of access and participation.

The vendors are so pleasant Boxes are a great second option

Ask for boxes on weeks you can't get there. My work schedule interferes with me getting there and they were very helpful in getting me items.

Go early to shop as some of the fruit vendors sell out quickly

Treat yourself once and awhile when you are there. But supper or a nice item for you to feel special.

It was a great help during the summer months. People were friendly.

100% take it. This is an amazing program and who doesn't want/need a little extra to help out with food or whatever. I will always recommend the farmer's market

You must do it. It will change your outlook on groceries and give you a boost of confidence. Maybe even make new friends and enable you to try new recipes.

I am very grateful for the program, we were able to purchase fresh fruit, vegetables, bread, meat and poultry, as well as some breakfast that we could not afford at the time. We should never be embarrassed to use such a wonderful program during difficult times.

I would tell them that it is an amazing program and they definitely should try it.

I would tell them it's a great place

Go for it

It's a very good program for all people

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

It's very fresh food, many local vegetables, nice people, and you can find Mexican peppers.
It not only got me out of the house socially but expanded new vegs and food that I never ate before.
Please participate. It's a wonderful program. I enjoyed getting FRESH fruits from NS
Take advantage of it, you will love it and the rewards of having all the fresh fruits and veggies.
It is a good place to shop from
That it is an amazing program and to take advantage of it! It helps not only financially, but helps to build relationships in our community.
I would tell them the overall experience is what you make of it. I believe there's a certain demographic that will use these "bucks" and that not everyone will be accepting of that. My experience is still happening both positive and negative but I will continue to go to the Farmer Market and form relationships and connections with those who are genuine and really make the experience worthwhile.
It is a great program. It helps with the rising costs of living. And it is a great family event.
That it is a great program and I highly recommend it.
Do it! What is there to lose?
To make use of them weekly and spread it out. It made a huge difference for my children.
I really liked it
I really enjoyed being a part of it and receiving the help which my family does need.
That it is such an amazing program and to use your bucks wisely to feed your family and try new foods
Join because it,Äôs a great program
It's a great program to help supplement food supplies. Vendors are supportive and friendly. Lots of choices for healthy food from local sources
gives you farm vegetables and local food
If the opportunity to participate is offered to you, and you either like to cook from scratch or are willing to learn, there really is no negative side to this. I fully enjoyed picking out my vegetables every 2 weeks.
It,Äôs a great program and I,Äôm sure they will love it and all the kind people
Sign up, be a part of the program. It's worth it.
Good initiative
It's a great program where you can have fresh food from local farms.
Liked the program. It was a big help to my family.
That the Social contacts, mental health and nourishment are extremely valuables of a lifetime, granted through the participation of the program.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

It helped us.
The fruits and vegetables are fresh, lots of delicious food, not to mention the vendors are very helpful and friendly, a great place to bring your family or friends.
It's a great program, we look forward to spending this together eating fresh every time people are awesome too.
Family
Get ready to eat quality food
It is a welcoming place and one well worth any effort needed to take part it :D Yes eggs are cheaper at shoppers drug mart but not as fresh :D
It's very fresh food, many local vegetables, nice people, and you can find Mexican peppers.
Well worth it.
The Market and all its vendors are a really welcoming and helpful bunch. And they don't make you feel bad about only using Food Bucks.
Absolutely, it's super helpful and allowed me to afford both vegetables and meat when stores have gone crazy.
I would tell them that it's a great opportunity to meet new people in the community. maybe try foods they had not tried before. fresh produce.
I would tell them it is a wonderful opportunity, and I've enjoyed it very much!
I would advise them to do so.
They'll definitely enjoy it.
I would tell them how great this program is. I have four little girls to feed at home and the prices of groceries these days are so hard. Feeding my girls healthy and delicious food from the market has made a positive impact in my life as a mom.
The program is really helpful, you don't need to worry about getting food during the program. Always are good things you can get for your family.
I'd strongly recommend it. I actually have been introducing this program and witnessed so many families enjoy it.
A lot more families to participate
Get enrolled in the program right away. Visit your local market every weekend. If anyone feels they are missing that sense of community - the best place to find it is at the market!
That it is great!
Absolutely do it. Great experience.
Yes
Do so as you get to purchase the most fresh produce, baked items, meat and so much more. The market is absolutely necessary and with the market dollars you can actually afford the

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

items.
I would tell them to absolutely participate and to check out their local farmers market. It is an overall great experience!!
If you're struggling, definitely sign up for the program.
Would say it was good
Buy the little, expensive things that you would normally do without. Local Maple syrup, local Honey, local preserves and a treat!
Great
Enjoy
Highly recommended. A great way to be able to get more healthy, local food into your diet, connect with our community and a weekly excursion with your kids where you can treat them without jeopardising the rest of your budget.
It's a great place for fresh veggies and meat
Explain the get the receipt from the vendor to pay at the Farmers Market table, then take the receipt back to the vendor
I would tell them how much it has helped my family and made our lives so much healthier and made us more financially stable
Yes
friend, brother
I would tell them it's a very beneficial program for their health, social life and financial life, as well as nutritionally.
That the program was run with compassion and sensitivity towards me as an individual. That the stalls containing healthy foods were abundant during the season and that vendors were very nice towards me while using the program and I would use it again as needed.
Question 18 - Needs a 4th option! Yes, but without the Food Bucks I'm not able to Question 19 - I would tell them it was awesome! And that it's a privilege. And that they're gonna love it. And that even though it can seem a bit overwhelming sometimes.. it's best to just say thanks and enjoy it all :)
It's a good place to go.
I really enjoyed going and getting the food as it was always fresh
Go early and enjoy. I gave my kids their own farm bucks and they really enjoyed shopping themselves
Fabulous program! It's a win! Win! Something for everyone! Those with food allergies will be happy to know that there are options at the Farmers Market !!! You really see quality. Meet so many lovely merchants... Great opportunity to participate in the program! üòÉüëç
That it is a great way to be able to try new things for your family when you might not be able to

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

afford said things usually.
Absolutely. So many healthy options at no extra cost, as well as awesome products.
Please take this opportunity. The vendors are amazing and so are the many options available.
I would suggest they save and accumulate their weekly bucks, in order to purchase more at once! We are a family of 5 getting \$30per week, we need to go with \$60before we can get enough items for a whole meal!
Absolutely a wonderful program! There are zero drawbacks or negative aspects of the program.
That they would love it and to definitely check out the lady with the cherry tomatoes ! They are so good !
That is a great program and my family benefited from it.
Do it!
It is a nice thing
I liked the preserves because I could save them
It is a nice program
It's a fantastic program. Try it out. It really helps with your grocery budget and being able to obtain some local, fresh food.
Yes and I would be glad to introduce new people to the market and I like to talk about food with single mothers!
Visit all the vendors and be open to new things.
Enjoy being able to get food and veg that you might not be able to get. Make a meal plan. Have fun!
that they should definitely try the program, they can try new foods and meet new people that otherwise they wouldn't have been able to, like myself!
The food coupon program is excellent
Encourage them to give the farmers market a try
I am thankful for Food Coupon program
A great program.
definitely do it - wonderful!
This is a very beneficial program. Not only does it help financially but it also helps with my mental health and social skills
Well worth getting into for sure, all my needs are met minus travel
I would tell them to absolutely participate, that there is no reason not to participate. I would tell them that the market experience is not only of nutritional benefit but that it is a great social outing and an excellent way to feel connected with the community.

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Do it! It was a big help!
It's a great way to get fresh foods that a lot of people can no longer afford
Do it, it's a wonderful program. Make sure you know your seasons for fruit & veg harvests. I like to wait until things are in season, then bulk buy & preserve.
It's a great program and there are lots of great people there. It's a great way to try new things without worrying about spending out of pocket
The vegetables are very fresh, and the farmers work so hard to grow them, it's good to support them with the food coupon program. It helps people financially and the farmer.
That it, it's a great experience, helps with the cost of food and feeding my family. It's important to support local farmers as they have increasing difficulties with maintaining their own livelihoods, and it helps our economy. And meeting new people is important as well.
It's a great program that encourages buying healthy food and supports local farmers.

Were there any other challenges you encountered during your participation in this program, or any changes you could recommend to improve the program?

No challenges. Was (is) a very positive place.
No
No
More variety of food.
No changes or challenges
No
Some vendors had funny looks when I gave them the market bucks.
This program is great!
Please continue to offer this program
No
None
None
None
More bucks to spend
No
not that i can think of
Getting the family ready on time to leave on saturday mornings
having an orientation for the market

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Having a contact with the market for questions
the weather wasn't always nice for an outdoor market
no
No
Unsure, maybe taxi to get food home rather than walking and lugging
None
No
No
Sometimes the weather
N/A
Sometimes attending regularly was a challenge because I live outside of town, am a single mom with 2 small children and if I wanted to attend by myself it was sometimes a challenge getting childcare.
Only with my work schedule (mostly Monday - Friday) sometimes it was harder to get to the pick up spot for the market coupons. In this case AWRC.
Nothing
No
The only challenges I faced during this program were outside of the program. I had vehicle troubles and was unable to make it to the market a few times.
Enforce provincial policy fragrance-free policy and have fines to vendors who sell synthetic toxic products. Fine the market as a Business and put strict guides. It is against the law to deliberately create an accessibility barrier for people with disability. Fragrance-free allows most vulnerable people to access clean safe food. I especially felt worried about being judged when only our money had an expiry date on it. A bit if a freak-out by vendors when expiry date was noticed on back of market money. Definitely not a welcoming building. I can't even get in the door without being hit with fragrance (physical assault), it triggers asthma and extreme pain for days afterwards. There are hundreds of people with mcs in Antigonish who cannot enter the building. Some go to New Glasgow farmers market. I don't own a car to do this. Vendors are welcoming and accommodating. Management/building is not. Refuse to acknowledge my disability and follow fragrance-free policy. Prices went up during the program. I.e. eggs doubled in price.
I thought the program was great however I thought that the bucks did not go far enough because of the price of the products.
Want it to be year round
No
I would like Year round market bucks

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

No
I would like heat round market bucks, the winter is hard
Remembering to go
No
If received Food Bucks I may have went to market
Time was an issue and remembering what day the market was on
no
no
no
no, and nothing above
N/A
With responsibilities at home, the hours of musq. market limit the # of visits I could make. More food vendors, food staples, such as veg/fruit/dairy/breads.
Can't think of any
None
None. It's great already.
No
No
No
No
transportation sometimes
transportation was difficult sometimes, perhaps bus tickets would help
No
No
I loved the 2 years of the program and the more months that it has the bucks my mental health is better as I'm able to consume fresh fruits and vegetables.
I don't think I'd change anything
People are very welcoming all the way around.
More market bucks - \$25 these days doesn't go very far
Too many people for my disability
The space is very crowded and difficult to get to some vendors and once at a vendors table it was difficult to know who was next in line.
No

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no
no
No
No
not at this time
no
I couldn't go because I was working so a friend went for me. Note: This affected the participants ability to complete the survey, as some questions did not apply
It's a great idea
Its very busy at the market lol Was worried about being judged but I got over it
It was great
No
Knowing earlier to be able to take advantage of the different produce through the season
Being better informed of when and how to apply
No
Not enough parking for people with walking problems. No, not really other than parking.
No
The challenge was figuring out what to do with the few Food Bucks offered.
No it was great
No it's good to have Food Bucks it helped me
No
No
The salvation army people are wonderful and explained everything so I could understand.
No, I think it's a great program for the community.
No
The program is very good. The only thing I noticed is that space is limited at the farmers market, but other than that everything is good.
Bigger bucks, not just one dollars
No
No.
Make it possible for a wheelchair to go through.
No, for me it's a wonderful place.
No

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

A bigger place for the vendors to display their goods. It's quite cramped in the building when there's a lot of people shopping. It's hard to shop at your leisure when it's so cramped. It would be great if they were opened for longer hours, twice a week.

I don't know if the farmers market would be physically accessible to me, but I am hoping to be well (enough) to travel next year and must use a wheelchair. This year the Food Bucks arrived later than last year so I wasn't able to freeze as much produce for winter (in soups and stews). Though disappointing, I am grateful to receive them at all. (the freshness of vegetables was just missed for longer).

More time / open more. One a week is not enough.

We would prefer to receive coupons not the box because then we can choose what we want and not get things we don't know what they are.

It would be super helpful if the vendors were given more clear and noticeable signs that they accept the market bucks. A lot of vendors didn't have signs at all and it felt awkward to have to ask every vendor I went to.

No

No

No

No

Not really any need to change

Better communication on what the markets have to offer.

No

No

I couldn't get there every week but we really tried to go more during their outdoor season

My children, English was not the greatest when we first got here but everyone tried really hard to help them out which was huge having just gotten here and not knowing anyone

Just near the end with moving

No

Maybe have a list of vendors that do not accept the Food Bucks. I was a little embarrassed when I was told they didn't accept them.

None

No

No changes

No

None

Absolutely not

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I participated in the box delivery. I would like to see the breads labelled. There were several breads I really liked but when I went to the market I did not know which ones they were.
I wish the online shopping and delivery option continued throughout the program.
No
None that I can think of
Finding more of the foods family are in need of
More money weekly
No
I do not like long surveys
None, other than the program ending0
Although I did feel embarrassed or ashamed at some moments about using the bucks, it was my own internal feelings - not that someone at the market was unkind. It still can feel hard to accept support and to have shoppers witness that. And, it was possible for me to do. And I was very grateful.
Not really
Only my own mental health. The Christmas food basket really helped. I do not need the Christmas gifts, save them for the families. I am just grateful for the food.
None
Nil
No just my disability
There was no challenges
No
No
No
No
No
Karen is a very nice person and communicator made me feel welcome and if I had questions I was advised to ask. A great job done by all!
No
None
I thought I'd lost a medical device while attending the market and found the vendors very helpful and when I returned the following week they remembered and asked if I found it <3. Heart of my community is the Farmers Market.
1. It gets hot some days between 11 - 2. I am surprised there are not more people coming to

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this market 2. I feel this is a very good program
No
I think people should have their dogs at home
No changes necessary. Every vendor went above and beyond to make everyone's experience a pleasure.
Access to drinking water at the market would be helpful.
No
No
No
We loved everything about the program. It was very helpful to us.
None
no
no
More vendors, more choice
Maybe if it was opened a tiny bit longer. Or maybe if it was more than one day a week. Just in case kids have sports to attend.
No.
No.
Order on-line or Saturday's r' best very early. not much on Sundays.
More advertisement. More vendors.
None
hard for me and the kids to take the bus
hard to get to the market
prices are high
As a person with a disability including being immunocompromised, my market staff were very accommodating enabling me to use foodbucks through the online ordering system. I loved the ease of pick up and that I still had fun social interactions with staff, but without the worry of increased exposure to covid.
Getting to and from the market regularly
I have no complaints. This is an amazing Opportunity. I would recommend it to anyone. I love to support local and with the farmers market bucks it helped and I was able to shop here a lot more than I normally can.
Not that I can think of.
No farmers market in my area after mid October. Have to travel further

Evaluation Summary of the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program

Other than overcoming my own personal insecurities I have no recommendations
No
Having a walking disability some chairs where a person could sit down for a bit
No
No
Question 20: Only felt worried the first time. Some items were expensive and not the best quality and other vendors made up for it and gave me more for my buck. 2 soup bones for the price of one.
No
No
No
No not at all the vendors were all helpful and great
None
Vendors were unaware of the fact that they were supposed to be receiving these "bucks." I watched a heated debate between two vendors after one told me they wouldn't take the "bucks." I was questioned by a child who told me I could be "just making copies and using them to steal from the vendors." Also, the cards do say that you are unable to use them at the NSLC which is located in the building but you know that craft alcohol vendors are set up in at least five different sections and are able to take Market Bucks. If you don't want people to drink with them then that should be made more clear. A 9 year old figured out this loophole.
No
None at this time
Nope
There were no issues.
None it was good
No
Not at this time.
No
The website doesn't load for me
no
This last week, I missed the cutoff time to place my order. The very first order I placed didn't go through, and I didn't realise that.
No
I would love to see a Farmer's Market closer to me involved in this program, or for there to be a WFM2Go hub closer to me. Moving to Kingston made participation in the program much

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more difficult than I anticipated.
Use of tech to shop as I am not good with that
no
It was so cramped with mobs of people that it made it slightly unsafe to bring my young children along with me. The risk of them being trampled was greatly high. In an emergency, I believe Alderney Landing Market would not fare well.
Not enough meat options
No challenges.
No
The list above (Question 20) are in fact excuses or lame reasons to talk oneself out of participating. However they are the very reasons I personally moved beyond them to enjoy all offered. Thank you. I only felt worried about being judged for a moment - then gratitude prevailed. :D I found pricing unclear sometimes, at first.
No
No
No, it's a wonderful program.
a few vendors were not up to knowledge on the farmers bucks program. I did have a vendor refuse me purchase. It was a vendor who sold only blueberries in the Lunenburg market and as I have participated in this program for a few years now and go weekly when I can, this vendor is only there maybe 2 or 3 times.
Not so many challenges.. I really miss the big baked goods vendor, and the sweet little old lady when she's not there! üòä
None whatsoever
During the summer, it got so popular that we didn't have enough parking space. Since I went there with my toddler, it was hard for us to get around. It'd be nice if we had more parking spots during the busiest season.
The market was excellent. And Sean the organiser was fantastic.
None
Should be a dog free environment.
No
I had to explain to a few vendors about the program
Better pricing is shown on the baked goods tables.
If u used the cards, the people selling would put a fee on top of ur total
The way payment was processed, I would have to choose my purchases, pay somewhere else and then return to get my paid for items. This made a lot of leg work with young kids. It could

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be easier but I'm not sure how.
No
Never
I can't think of anything.
Maybe have a dedicated individual to pass out the envelopes on the side of the ice cream stand so that the collection can be discreet for the person picking up the market bucks, rather than have the individual stand in line with the rest of the patrons who are grabbing coffee or ice cream, to lower anxiety or concerns.
Make it available to more people, and make it available year round! Be great if it didn't end before the need was removed. Maybe someday somehow the Dept of Community Services can learn from this, and maybe they could even help
no, everything was great
AT first, some vendors tried to reject the Food Bucks they did know what it was about
No. It has been a great experience!üöä
I would have the farmers cash being handed out somewhere other than the ice cream shop as my daughter always wanted ice cream first when I had to pick it up but I wait till we are ready to leave to get her ice cream
It's an excellent program.
Sometimes I feel like it is hard to find the market manager, and if they are chatting I hate to be in the way. Market managers are so nice though. I would rather grab my envelope at the office at a designated time like every hour on the hour, or have a self help location.
Love having this program. It's a huge weight lifted knowing I can afford groceries that aren't cheaply processed.
It was great
Just to have more newcomers join the program
Mobility is my biggest challenge.
Not knowing if all vendors took market bucks
None.
None
My only challenge is making it each week with 3 young children in tow. But, being able to save that week's bucks for the next week certainly helps. It can be somewhat stressful though, shopping with little ones in an open, public space
Let people know when the Food Bucks end so they don't show up and have nothing to use, especially if they are counting on them
More farmers

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No

Is there anything else you would like to tell us about your experience with the Nourishing Communities Food Coupon Program? If so, please tell us here.

We would love to do this again. So many life lessons for my ASD child.

No

This program has helped our family financially and improved our mental health

No

None

No

None

None

No

no

None

It is a great help

None

It was a positive programme over all

No

No

It was a huge help throughout the program. We were able to purchase a Christmas gift that otherwise would have been hard to afford (we saved market dollars for a few weeks). Thank you so much!!

To continue from the last question, this program, aside from benefiting me and my family financially, provided me with an opportunity to reconnect with friends and the market. It was a major help for my mental health to have this time. Thank you so much! (Signed name)

This is a great opportunity to be able to afford healthier stuff and fresh food - every Saturday or every 2nd Saturday I could go.

Thank the program for the money, it was greatly appreciated and really helped.

I think this is an amazing program! I am so happy that we were fortunate enough to be able to participate in this program. There were a few times that being in this program was the reason we were able to eat healthy meals!

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The building itself was not accessible. The vendors accommodated my disability by meeting me outside and we're kind. They also don't like breathing in toxic fragrances from Funky Monkeys bath bombs. One commented that a 2nd soap maker snow used fragrance oils which was super toxic. So problem is getting worse instead of resolved so folks with mcs and allergies can access the farmers market. Great program. Some vendors even dropped off items to my home. The farmers market association really must enforce the fragrance-free policy. It is against the law to create accessibility barriers synthetic fragrances are barriers that cause extreme harm. Fragrance also travels through the air and can land 20-80 feet away on produce making them no longer organic. Q10: The Food Bucks allowed for survival only.

I found the vendors were positive.

It's fun. My first time trying it. I like it.

It was really good.

No

Nothing

Thank you. I love it.

The bucks were good/helpful

It is a good program

Just to say thank you

I hope I can participate if you decide to do it again.

no

It was really good

thank you for letting me have this

no

N/A

This was an awesome program in which I was truly grateful to participate in and I looked forward to going to market and purchasing made stress free. Thank you!

Found the program a great program

It was perfect. Thank you from the bottom of my heart this has helped so much nutritionally and financially (signed name) <3

It was nice to see new and valued food and beverage vendors and observed new and creative artisan products that showed the diversity of local craft persons (signed name)

It would be very hard to keep my budget

It's really good help financially

No thanks

Just thanks for making these programs available

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Super helpful for low income families who wish to feed their kids healthy
I would love the opportunity to participate again. The amount of the Food Bucks weekly was low and with the increase in all the cost of food etc, the bucks should be at least \$50 per person if available or \$25 but a longer period of time.
It was fantastic!!!
To be honest I think it's a phenomenal program the coupons definitely work out for people it's a very successful program and I'm very thankful to be into it
Thank you so much for all of the Food Bucks program for two years so far and it would be wonderful if it continued. Better for socialisation and mental health as to not be isolated at home.
Thank you
Found the program, a great program
no
Helped with food prices
I really enjoy participating in this program and am very thankful I am asked to take part. Thank you so much :)
no
Everything is good
Learned about different food
A very worthy program
No
It was a pleasant experience
no
Great to get coupons
It was very appreciated! <3 <3 <3 (Signed name) :)
Very positive experience
I would like to thank all of those that make it possible for me to go to the farmers market in the first place, so I can share some great moments with my family, I otherwise would not be able to. Thank you, so very much :)
Most vendors were extremely kind. Never an issue using the coupons.
No
Great program, so happy its being offered
No
Great

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It is very much appreciated thank you
Thank you again for accepting me for this food coupon program is greatly appreciated.
I was just super grateful for the help in obtaining healthy foods as I have a very strict diet.
No
:)
No. Thank you :)
Thank you very much
Thank you!
I work "volunteer" for a youth wellness centre so I would meet whoever wanted to come to see and let them also buy things, they loved it.
Thank you very much for allowing me to participate.
No
It was a fun time.
It's always nice to visit with Peggy Boudreau who brings the Food Bucks to me. Again I am so grateful for the food. Thank you. Note: Participant wrote comments earlier in the survey explaining, "My friend shops for me as I'm disabled but I learn a lot about the vendors and products. (She keeps me on the phone while shopping)" She said that "even by phone" she strongly agreed with the overall experience question. She always 'attends' the market with her friend (because she goes for her and talks with her on the phone while there), and she also said that "my friend sometimes brings mutual friends." She wants to continue using the market, "but cannot afford to."
Very good program. Hope it continues and for longer.
I just want to thank everyone involved for helping me participate.
Great Program
No. Note: Participant did not receive coupons, instead they received food share boxes. Therefore, many of the questions in the survey were irrelevant to their situation.
Love this program
Awesome market and program
Such a great experience.
I think it,Äôs an amazing program and am so happy to be a part of it.
Thank you for helping my family during a hard time. This has been a great help
I am very grateful for being blessed to participate in the program!!
Everything is good. Thank you. Hope to be back next year see you 2023 (signed name)
We loved it

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My children and I have a group of friends and have settled into the community quite well. Because of this program people in the community helped me get a job and helped me find childcare for my children while not at school

It is a great program and everyone who is involved does a fantastic job

This program needs to continue not just for those who need an extra hand but for our local farmers and small businesses to continue

It was an amazing experience overall. It helped with things like finances and mental health. Being able to get out plus being able to spend time with my children and provide good nourishment for next to nothing is always a good feeling. :) Thank you so much. I hope the program continues! <3

As I can in later there weren't as many fruits and vegetables to choose from because of the season. But I was able to get bread, eggs and meat as well as fill my boys stockings for Christmas which I was worried they wouldn't have much for this year.

Everyone is very kind

Thank you so much for everything

No

Always a good mixture of vendors and lots of laughs. I,Äôm truly thankful I was able to be part of this. I've brought friends and shared my market dollars. I would love to be considered again.

No

No

I enjoyed receiving the boxes & was always anxious to see what was inside. I got to try a few new vegetables which I enjoyed.

no

No, it is a great program.

I love the hope blooms farmers market

Would love to see this type of market more around the city

This program has the way I look at food and how I appreciation of food

It was amazing. I'm so appreciative of all the hours of labour that go into keeping programs like this running. Would love to see it expanded to help other families.

I felt embarrassed

Please keep the market bucks! and thank you for having this available and honestly do not know how I would have survived without it. Q9: "Already know everybody"

It was a great program

Nil

Keep it going (signed name)

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It was great and helpful especially financial aspect and I and my son got to buy veggies that we haven't tried before
No
No
Showed us products we didn't realise that were made around our community. Meeting a lot of new people in our community
No
I enjoyed all
Please bring (sp?) it on again, poor people need it. Thanks Karen, Thanks Administration, Well done.
Nothing
I enjoyed the experience. Thank you. (Signed with his name and phone number)
It was extra special seeing some old but good friends...along with vendors from last year and seeing and meeting new people. Q18: "I doubt i'll be able to afford it"
Music was good really enjoyed that. Q 20: I found the guidebook difficult to follow - "I can't read very well"
It sure helped me Q20: I found the pricing of the products unclear at the farmers market - "Only with some vendors"
No
We both loved it, so thankful, without the help of the Food Bucks, we could not afford the beautiful eggs, meat or vegg. (Signed their names) Q18: Would you like to continue visiting the farmers market... "I don't have the income without the Food Bucks, but I would love to if I could"
The Food Bucks were more than helpful. Never left the market empty handed of vegetables, fruit, etc. Very pleased...would like to thank everyone involved in organising this program.
Thank you, I really appreciate all the work that goes into the program
I found it very useful because I could afford enough food to eat
It wasn't clear if all vendors take them Q: 11 I want to participate in this program again - They said "N/A moved"
Thank you again. I was able to make it a priority to go, and in turn ate wonderful seasonal produce and created some lovely meals.
N/A
No
Thank you for giving us the opportunity to participate in this program. It also gave the kids a chance to take part and help in counting money.

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No thanks everything was good to me
apples were expensive for living in the valley
more please
I'm glad to have had this experience. It helped in many ways Thank you!! :P Y.W.
This was an awesome experience that my kids and my family will always remember.
Great experience :) Q#12: "a lot more" than \$20 per week
No.
No
I had a wonderful time trying new food and having conversations and building relationships with vendors and customers. Q#19: "A little bit" worried about being judged for using Food Bucks
I really appreciated it and enjoyed it.
my family and I really appreciate the help
I appreciate those who have helped and have been involved in this program.
It was great for my son and I and we looked forward to it
Please keep this program, and expand it. Living with food insecurity AND complex health issues is psychologically traumatising. Being forced to choose between 'eating to avoid hunger knowing you'll be sick' and eating too little but foods "good" for health issues' is horrid. This program helps ensure I have enough fresh unprocessed food and I'm able to afford my prescription medications. And I can't stress enough how good it feels that I'm not "getting a hand out."..my community is supporting me, as I support them.
Please keep this going. People like myself and my family need things like this. Being offered this program helped my family in so many ways. Whether it is getting food on our table or finding the perfect gift for a loved one. Thank you so much.
It means so much to our family and has helped me to parent/feed my kids better while coping with health issues and divorce.
It is a very helpful and amazing program. Thank you for the chance to be a part of it.
I was reluctant to start but enjoyed it very much. Thank you! (signed name)
It's the best and we help local farmers
I think it was a fantastic program and glad I was able to participate and will continue going to the market at least 2 or 3 times a month living a few miles away.
The vendors are very welcoming. Always friendly and informative! Thank you!!
No
I looked forward to going every week. It was a nice outing for me and my daughter as she always came with me. Sometimes I bought a little treat for her and I, and we would eat it in the

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car and chat about the week. Loved the market. Question 17: I feel very lucky I had tokens all summer and could buy fresh fruit and veggies, much tastier than in store.
Yes it helped me a lot. I can't afford fresh veg.
Nothing
I think it was a great program because we got to experience something we wouldn't have otherwise but there was a lack of communication. Information was unclear. Overall the experience was confusing but we managed to come out of it educated, nourished, entertained and even employed! I know this program will get better and help many people who are struggling to make ends meet!
Excellent program. We met lots of new friends during our visits. All good things!
Thank you for the opportunity
Nope
My children do not have the experience regularly of getting to pick out what we eat and see touch explore the abilities to pay for things and pick them out. This made a huge impact on them being able to see what they wanted and buy it. It helped them understand money and it gave us a family outing every Saturday for market day.
Very nice to have access to this program
Not at this time.
We are just so grateful for these market bucks!
Great experience great people thank you
I was nervous about being judged at first but I quickly realised that I am deserving of this program and the benefits outweigh the negative judgement. I am very grateful to be involved in this helpful program.
All the positive social aspects - I would have enjoyed it, but it is online only.
Nope
Great program. An increase in the amount of Food Bucks will be highly appreciated as the price of groceries have gone up. Thank you!!
Thank you.
This program provided myself and children and friends with the greatest gifts of opportunity. It,Ãs the BEST program I have ever participated in, thus far.
A BIG!! Thank you to all the staff,vendors and to everyone who put this program together. I really appreciate you helping me take care of my family. May God continue to bless you richly.
No thanks
I felt unworthy, but lucky to be chosen. I definitely ate much better, and otherwise wouldn't be able to afford it as everything is twice as much or more than at the grocery store (but better quality). I feel nervous in crowds so I didn't socialise as much as I'd like to have done.

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I needed to be given a reason to get out and enjoy the day and what better way to do this than to have a goal set in time. Once a week, where we all come together to part take in the good weather, good food & good people :D It was my awesome privilege, joy, delight and great pleasure to take part in the community based Nourishing Program Nov.20/22 I asked my neighbour to come to the Farmers Market and he accompanied me there getting up to \$25.00 worth of food. He was happy to have the outing too. More notes written by the respondent throughout the physical copy of the survey: Question 3: Me mostly, but by times a friend or Neighbour may get a jar of jam or such Raspberries yummm Made two friends I would have benefited from receiving more Food Bucks... : It really was enough! Most often. would arrive as they finished setting up - I spent time speaking with the vendors too. I walked both ways most of the time as buses only come once an hour :D The people I asked to come with me would say it was too expensive - The market coins made the difference in my point of view as I can understand they asked a fair price for their goods. The walk there alone was a big benefit :D The goods offered even better. Well worth the time and effort it took to get there :D The experience gave me a window into all the farmers did to bring their goods to us who participated. Q. 17 Food is fresher :D in season is best of all :D Part of the joy was the walk :D The time to shop was set aside :D All who were there gladly answered my questions :D Lots of thank you's throughout, multiple on each page and smiling faces.

It's the best and we help local farmers.

No

I appreciate being able to participate so much! It really does help my family eat better and gets us out of the house as a family

I am very thankful for this program. I use it religiously. We all know the markets are pricey. It would be nice if there were more market bucks but I'm grateful for what I get and appreciate it very much.

I am just very thankful to have been given the opportunity.. It helped me alot when I was low and didn't have much for groceries in my home.. I think it's a great program!

It was all fine to me and it was felt by all, I know that I went there. Just a great place.

I really appreciate your support for my family

I personally appreciate the program on behalf of my whole family. My kid grew up learning to eat healthy organic food. It is true that we have to buy some cheap food here and there, but experiencing organic food through this program motivates me more to make the right choice. I was wondering if we could visit the farms of the sellers so that kids or consumers can see how their crops or livestock grow naturally. Thank you again

Thank you so much for organising such a program. My family and I are so blessed to have been involved. I do hope with all the positive feedback the program is able to continue. We have gained so much more than just some aid in feeding our family. The market is a safe and welcoming place to all. I am happy to have met everyone I have.

Amazing program thanks for the opportunity

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Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this program. It was a great few hours spent at the market with my whole family when all was available. We had so much fun with the most fresh produce. As well as other items that we would never have tried as they would not be available in a store. This is an amazing program thank you

Loved taking part in this program. Was able to spend family time at the market and connect with local vendors and enjoy all the amazing products they have to offer. I,Äôve found products at the market that I,Äôll continue to use and will continue to go back for the delicious food!

It's helped my kids connect with their school better since the market is right beside it. Their class sometimes goes to the market too. It's nice to be able to give my kids the coupons to get a treat rather than saying I don't have money for you this time.

My kids got to eat more fruit

I love being able to support local!

Thank you for receiving us in this program. Being a single mother, sometimes paying for, choosing and preparing meals can be a lonely job. Feeling supported by my community in this constant task was nourishing, not just physically but also mentally. Thanks to everyone who facilitated, from the vendors (especially RuhmTop who were so generous and kind), market staff and the BTFC.

No

The program is amazing and i really hope i get to participate in it again

No.

I really liked the flexibility it gave me to choose which vendors I went to each time as my needs changed depending on what was available for meats, vegetables and soaps. My primary spending at the market, with treats on occasion if I had any MB left over.

This program is super effective and a major step up for people experiencing poverty and the isolation it brings. This was a big part of my monthly budget. When I combined that with what I get from the food bank, I didn't have to worry as much. It also let me buy household goods I wouldn't have been able to get, and it gave me the ability to participate in holidays and other special occasions with my neighbours and friends. I can't say enough for that. There's a lot of dignity to be had in showing up for say Christmas dinner with some cookies or rolls or a card; something other than nothing. Or maybe somebody did something really nice and I wanted to get a little something to say thanks. So simple, but goes so far. I really love that you also provided supplies and motivation for people to learn to grow their own veggies too. I'm grateful for it all. Thank you

no

I really want to be apart of the program again it really help me out alot

It's a wonderful program! Would like to see more available opportunities. Good learning experience that many could benefit from. Builds community relationships, too.

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It was overall an amazing experience and I'm so glad I got to be a part of it. Thank you for the opportunity as it really helped our family out this year. It was a rough year with me losing my job and barely being able to make ends meet and the farmers bucks really went to good use getting lots of good food for my kiddos. Thank you again.

I would just like to say thank you and that my family benefited greatly from being able to visit the local market on a weekly basis.

Very helpful thank you

no

It was very beneficial for my son (age 13). He benefited from the social aspect of visiting the market a lot besides the nutritional aspects. Our small budget often causes me to avoid the market. Now, I had no issue buying him a pretzel and paying for locally produced vegetables.

This is the second time. I lost 20 pounds the first time. I have lost 30 pounds in total so far. Because I can afford more vegetables I don't eat as much filler food from the grocery store. I had been worried about my weight because I have heart disease and diabetes in my family. I feel better now.

Please keep it going. As I've written in a past letter I'm forever grateful and thankful for this program. Without it I'd be hungry, relying heavily on the food bank and would be sick from lack of nutrition and food in general. It's a relief knowing I won't go hungry anymore. I look forward to continuing on in this program.

This program helps so many people and families! Not just physically, emotionally and socially too! Thank you! I hope that this program will be offered again next year!

We loved it! We got to try lots of new things, our kids tried treats, we tried new bread, meat, different cultural foods, and bought some homemade items like clips, etc

N/A

Thank you for thinking of us and the work you do

It was very beneficial. Made me feel like I was home in my own country.

It was a great experience and I was very fortunate to be approached to be part of the program. I have nothing bad to say at all!

I very much appreciated being allowed to participate in this program!!

It was nice to be able to make a morning outing with my spouse every week

I honestly don't know how I would feed my family the way I,Äöve been able to while using this program. I absolutely LOVE it and thank you for it. Because of this program, I have been able to dive into the world of canning & preserving foods. I have shelves filling up with homemade & local ,Äúgoodies,Äù which are all in jars & shelf stable. Jams, jellies, sauces, veggies, even sticks! The list goes on. Also, buying some items at the market meant I was able to free up more money in my grocery budget for things you can,Äôt get at the market (but wish you could!).

This is a great program and I wish I could continue to visit the market when it's finished.

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However, it's a bit of a drive to get there.

I am very thankful for the food coupon program. It helps my family so much financially. My son and I went to the Market every week and we were so happy with those fresh vegetables. They are very tasty and healthy. I couldn't thank enough for this program.

I loved it, and hope it continues into next year! Thank you!