Hunger Strategies: Experiences that have worked

A Case Study: New York State’s Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program and the Emergency Food Relief Network
Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program (HPNAP)

“Healthy Food For Hungry People”

A Food and Nutrition Program of the NYS Department of Health Division of Nutrition
HPNAP Mission:

The Hunger Prevention and Nutrition Assistance Program, in partnership with emergency food relief organizations, is dedicated to improving the health and nutritional status of people in need of food assistance in New York State. The Program accomplishes this by:

- enhancing the accessibility and availability of nutritious food and food related resources;
- developing and providing comprehensive nutrition education programs;
- assessing customer needs and hunger-related issues to strengthen Program effectiveness; and
- empowering hungry people to increase their independence from food assistance programs.
When There Is No Where Else To Turn

Emergency Food Relief Organizations (EFRO’s)
Provide A Helping Hand

EFRO’s: Food Banks, Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens, Kids Cafes and Emergency Shelters
HPNAP Funding

- Approximately $30 Million in State Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program funds, including approx. $2 million in Food Stamp Nutrition Education Funds (JSY and Stellar Farmer’s Markets)
Emergency Food Contracts

- 48 contracts
  - 8 regional food banks
  - 40 service projects
    - Including 2 special projects
    - Food recovery-7
Emergency Food Relief Organizations

- 2,500
  - Includes soup kitchens, food pantries and emergency shelters providing 165 million meals annually
  - HPNAP supported meals must include 3 of the 5 food groups and one must be a fruit or a vegetable
HPNAP Emergency Food Relief Organizations: (EFROs: Food Banks, Food Pantries, Soup Kitchens & Emergency Shelters)

- **Food Banks:** food organizations which collect & distribute purchased & donated foods to agencies serving the hungry

- **Food Pantries:** agencies providing food to be prepared & consumed in the home by hungry individuals & families

- **Soup Kitchens:** agencies serving congregate, prepared or ready-to-eat meals to hungry individuals & families

- **Kids Cafes:** agencies serving congregate, prepared or ready-to-eat meals and snacks to hungry children after school or during the summer

- **Emergencies Shelters:** agencies serving both meals and housing to persons in need. HPNAP funding is dedicated to emergency rather than residential shelters.
All persons are eligible.

People living in poverty are at increased risk for most chronic diseases.
The Need for HPNAP Services

- Children receive approximately 28% of all emergency meals distributed.
- Almost 35% of New Yorkers have incomes at or below 200% of the federal poverty level.
Hunger Prevention...
Food Purchasing

$1 HPNAP Funds = $2.75 of food & $15.00 donated food

Training and monitoring to promote efficient, cost effective and nutritious food purchases
Food Safety and Sanitation

Technical assistance and staff training in safe food handling practices

Provides thermometers, disposable gloves and other food sanitation supplies
Operations Support & Capital Equipment

- Staff, space utility costs
- Disposable food service supplies
- Food service equipment
Transportation Project

☐ $1 HPNAP funds = $85 of delivered, donated food

☐ Brings food across the nation to New York State
Nutrition Assistance...
“Just Say Yes to Fruits and Vegetables Program”

Nutrition Education for individuals and families that are Food Stamp eligible who access food pantries
Nutrition Resource Managers

Nutrition Education for Emergency Food Relief staff and participants

Hunger Abatement and Health Promotion Activities

Liaison between Food Banks and Community regarding Nutrition Initiatives
HPNAP NUTRITION POLICIES

- Food packages are based on minimum nutrition standards
- Milk must be 1% or fat-free fluid milk
- More than 10% of HPNAP purchased funds must be spent on fresh produce and more than 2% must be spent on fluid 1% or fat-free milk
- Food Banks must have whole grain cereal in stock
- Food Banks must have 2 lean protein items in stock
Focuses on these Eat Well Play Hard (EWPH) initiatives

- Increased consumption of fruits and vegetables
- Increased consumption of 1% or fat free milk
- Increase developmentally appropriate physical activity
- Whole grain cereal
- Lean meat
Risk Factors for Obesity Associated with Poverty

- Low-income neighborhoods lack full-service supermarkets
- When available, healthy food is more expensive
EFRO BARRIERS TO PROVIDING FRESH PRODUCE

- Short shelf life
- Lack of cold storage
- Maintaining temperatures during transportation
- Poor quality of some donated produce
- Limited service time at EFROs
  - Some only open 1 day/month
- No garbage/dumpster services at EFRO
- Lack of food preparation skills of consumer
Increased Access Fruits & Vegetables

- Produce Policy
  More than 10% of HPNAP Contractor’s allocation must be spent on fresh produce
  Applies to all Food Banks, United Way and direct service contractors
  Started at 5% in 2003/2004 and was increased to 10% in 2005/2006
Increased Access to Fruits & Vegetables

THIS YEAR (09-10)
HPNAP Contractors Produce Requirement--
  -$1,705,492

Amount Actually spent this year On Produce is Expected to Exceed---
  $2.7 million
July-March=$2,012,760
Increased Access to Fruits & Vegetables

2 Special Projects focused on increasing access to high quality fresh produce for limited income populations

Local Produce Link
Taste and Take/Veggie Mobile
Local Produce Link

- Collaborative program between United Way and Just Food in NYC
- A Model for Providing Soup Kitchens and Food Pantries with Locally-Grown Fresh Produce
- In 2009--38 Emergency Food Programs in NYC received 178,476 pounds of fresh local produce
Local Produce Link

In 2009

- NYS farmers were paid $244,470 supporting local agriculture

- Provided NYC EFROs with 70 different varieties of NYS fresh produce
Each week the farmer delivered the produce to the host site
Food pantries received 3 different vegetables each week: a root, a green, and a seasonal item.
Sample bag of vegetables
EACH PANTRY HELD COOKING DEMOS
Farm trips and food education got people excited about eating their vegetables!
Local Produce Link

COMMUNITY CHEF PROGRAM

- Part of Local Produce Link
- Train The Trainer program for volunteers and staff at food pantries
- Paid a small stipend
- Used a developed curriculum to teach guests of Emergency feeding Sites how to prepare fresh produce
- Empowering to both trainers and guests
Taste and Take Program

- Capital District Community Gardens launched this program to give low income neighborhoods increased access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

- Veggie Mobile makes regularly scheduled 1 hour stops at public housing projects in the Capital District to have people **TASTE** a sample and **TAKE** a bag of fresh produce home.
Taste and Take Program

In 2008/2009 contract year

- $29,400 worth of high quality fresh produce was distributed
- 7,652 bags of fresh produce were distributed
- 64,636 pounds of fresh produce was distributed
The Veggie Mobile Hits the Streets!
Taste and Take Program Sample Bag
## They Provided Recipes and Storage Information Each Week

### Veggie Mobile Recipes, Facts, and Storage Tips

**Broccoli, Sweet Potatoes, Kiwis**

**Broccoli**
- Broccoli is a true nutritional powerhouse!
- The leaves, stems, and florets of broccoli contain high concentration of nutrients and cancer fighting chemicals.
- Fresh broccoli can be served raw with dips or in salad. Broccoli can be used as a side dish or in stir-fries.
- The stalks and leaves of broccoli are edible (consider using them in soups, purees, or stir-fries). The Broccoli florets cook faster than the stalks so cut off the florets and cook the stalks for a few minutes before adding the florets.
- Refrigerate your broccoli but do not wash it before storing it. This will encourage the growth of mold.

**Sweet Potatoes**
- Sweet Potatoes are high in fiber and rich in vitamins and minerals. It’s also low in calories!
- The orange color of the Sweet Potato means there are carotenoids, which protect against heart disease and certain form of cancers.
- The skin of sweet potatoes is completely edible! It contains an important amount of nutrients.
- Do not store sweet potatoes in the refrigerator but rather in a cool and dry place, like the pantry.

**Kiwi**
- Kiwi has a delicate, tart, sweet and complex flavor!
- Kiwi is great on top of sorbet or on top of frozen yogurt and in smoothies!
- It’s also low in calories and fat!
- Kiwi is rich in many nutrients including vitamin C, vitamin E dietary fiber, potassium, folate, magnesium and kiwi which reduces the risk of cataracts.
- A ripe kiwi may be fragrant and will yield to gentle pressure, to ripen a kiwi place them in a paper bag with an apple, banana or pear, and let stand for a day or two or store them temperature controlled.
- It is possible to eat kiwi skin although you should rub off the fuzz that is on the skin. You may prefer to peel the kiwi with a vegetable peeler or sharp paring knife, which is easier if the ends are cut off first.

**Lemon Broccoli**
- 4 C. broccoli florets, 3 Tbsp. lemon juice, 2 Tbsp. Butter, melted, 1/2 Tbsp. grated fresh lemon rind
  1. Steam florets until they are crisp-tender, about 6 minutes.
  2. Drain well.
  3. Toss with lemon juice, butter, and lemon rind.

**Baked Sweet Potato Fries**
- Nonstick spray coating, 4 small/2 large sweet potatoes, 1 Tbsp. oil/margarine or butter (melted), ¼ tsp. seasoning salt, 1 dash nutmeg
  1. Spray a baking pan with nonstick coating.
  2. Scrub potatoes, cut lengthwise into quarters, then cut each quarter into 2 wedges.
  3. Arrange potatoes in a single layer in pan.
  4. Combine oil/margarine or butter, salt and nutmeg.
  5. Brush onto potatoes.
  6. Bake in 450° oven 20 minutes or until brown and tender.

You can also substitute nutmeg and seasoning salt with other spices you enjoy!!

**Kiwi Muffins**
- 2 eggs, ½ C. sugar, ½ C. oil, 4 very ripe kiwis, mashed, ¼ tsp. vanilla, 1 Tbsp. lemon juice, 3 C. flour, 1 ⅛ tsp. salt, 3 tsp. baking powder, 1 ½ tsp. baking soda.
  1. Preheat oven to 350° grease 12 count muffin pan.
  2. Beat the eggs, sugar, and oil. Then add kiwi, vanilla and lemon juice.
  3. In separate bowl combine flour, salt, baking powder and baking soda. Mix well, then fold into the wet ingredients.
  4. Fill muffins cup and bake for 20-25 minutes.
Since Launching The Veggie Mobile in April 2007, they have Received Tremendous Community Support and Great Media Attention

- The New York Times
- The Today Show
- MSNBC
- Local Newspapers
- Local News Channels
They have had many Special Guests Including . . .
First Lady Michelle Paterson
And NYS Agriculture Commissioner Patrick Hooker
Increased fruits & vegetables

Other HPNAP Programs that increased access to fresh produce

*PROJECT GREEN THUMB*
*TRANSPORTATION PROJECT*
*PATROON LAND FARM*
*HEALTHY BUCKS*
*FOOD QUALITY INITIATIVE [FQI]*
Green Thumb

- The Food Bank for Westchester purchases fresh foods from local farmers and brokers.
- Each week volunteers pack up 1,200 bags of produce consisting of four different vegetables and two different fruits, with enough products to support a family of four for two to three days.
Green Thumb

- These bags are then distributed to member food pantries and sometimes soup kitchens
- Each bag also contains a recipe/food-handling flyer - in English and Spanish
- Food Bank for Westchester spends all its HPNAP funds-about $250,000 - on this produce project
Transportation Project

- HPNAP funds are used to transport donated/recovered food from across the United States into the Emergency Food Network in NYS

- Fruits & Vegetables play a major role in what is transported
Food Recovery

In 2009

☐ 49% of all recovered/donated food distributed to EFROs in NYS were fresh produce

☐ Equal to approximately 3.4 million pounds in 1 year
Transportation Project

- FRESH PRODUCE
  - 22% of all pounds distributed

- VEGETABLES-CANNED AND FROZEN
  - 9.2% of all pounds distributed

- 100% JUICE
  - 4.6% of all pounds distributed

- FRUIT-CANNED AND FROZEN
  - 1.8% of all poundage distributed
Transportation Project

Total # pounds fruits & vegetables transported 4,148,090

Feeding America Value

x $1.69

Retail Value of Donated or Recovered Food $7,010,272
Patroon Land Farm

In 1997 Pauline Williman placed her family’s 162 acre farm, located in the town of Knox, into the Patroon Land Foundation to protect it from development.

Regional Food Bank of NENY volunteers harvested crops & used its vehicles to transport produce to its warehouse for distribution to member agencies.
Patroon Land Farm

In March 2006, the Foundation offered a unique opportunity to the Regional Food Bank to manage and expand the farm
Patroon Land Farm

REGIONAL FOOD BANK GOALS

- Establish a self-supported source of large quantities of fresh, local, high-quality produce for distribution by the Food Bank to its member agencies in 23 counties of upstate New York
- Preserve the farm’s land base as agricultural land
- Provide hands-on educational opportunities for students so they can learn about growing food and helping the hungry
Patroon Land Farm

Fostered new links for RFB with community partners

- Patroon Land Foundation (landowner)
- 1,000 Member Agencies (receive and distribute food from the farm to low-income families)
- Local Colleges (source of Interns, funded by HPNAP)
- USDA Farm Service Agency (provide technical assistance and linkages to resources)
- Cooperative Extension and Local Farmers (provide technical assistance and linkages to resources)
- Schools and business (supply volunteers and financial support)
- Youth Gardening Organizations (participate in agricultural education programs)
Health Bucks

Patterned after the Farmers Market Health Bucks Program in New York City, the Food Bank of CNY Health Bucks Program provides coupons to low income consumers to be used to purchase fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables from participating farmers markets.
Health Bucks

The CNY Health Bucks are an effective incentive for low income consumers to try shopping at farmers markets, experience fresh, local food and begin to develop food purchasing habits that will impact their overall health and nutrition.
The coupons are distributed through food pantries, soup kitchens, and other anti-hunger organizations.
Health Bucks

In its pilot year, the overall redemption rate for CNY Health Bucks was 85%
Many CNY Health Buck consumers were pleased with their shopping experience and their conversations with farmers and felt that the program helped them to make better decisions with their food dollars and their diet choices.
Health Bucks

This program has shown that there is both an interest in having access to fresh, local foods and a need for the assistance that it provides for low income consumers and farmers at participating farmers markets.
Food Quality Initiative [FQI]

- Coalition of HPNAP, Food Banks and NYS Food Bank Coordinator

- Working together to improve food quality in the emergency feeding network
Among many other issues, currently working on developing connections between the Food Banks, emergency feeding organization sites and local farmers.

Will establish a Farm To Food Bank/EFRO Pilot Program in all areas of the state this year.
PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
EWPH Mini Grants-United way NYC

These mini grants supported

- Community Garden Programs
- Nutrition Education Programs including
  - After School/Youth Programs
  - Job Training Programs
  - Life Skills Programs
  - Shelter Programs
- Physical Activity Programs
1% and fat free milk
Increased 1% and fat free milk

BARRIERS TO PROVIDING FLUID MILK

- Short shelf life - waste
- Lack of cold storage at EFRO site or FB
- Maintaining temperatures during transportation
- Weight of product for consumers to carry
- Shelf stable milk is very expensive & not well accepted
Increased 1% and fat free milk

- HPNAP Policy requires all Food Banks spend a minimum 2% of HPNAP funds on Fat Free or 1% milk

- Started in 2003/2004

- Raised from 1% to more than 2% in 2005/2006
Increased 1% and fat free milk

In 2009/2010

- HPNAP Contractor’s Milk Requirement--- $264,297

- Amount Actually spent this year on Milk expected to exceed--- $550,000
- July-March $282,930
Milk Voucher Program

- Regional Food Bank of Northeastern New York started a voucher/coupon system with Stewart’s Shops
- Overcomes all barriers
- Replicated in other areas
- Evaluation of program planned for this year
Milk Voucher Program

- Stewart’s Shops already provided milk coupons and gift certificates, so FB contacted them to see if they would be interested.
- Cards specify that milk must be 1% or Fat Free Non-Flavored Milk.
Milk Voucher Program

- The cost per card has been low because a large quantity of cards are ordered.
- For the first year, cost per card/gallon was $1.75.
- Milk card costs rose to $2.30 per card/gallon for this Grant Year.
Milk Voucher Program

- Stewart’s Shops have moved to scanning recently so milk coupons are now bar coded for easier tracking and evaluation.

- Milk cards are allocated to agencies based on service levels (small, medium, large, extra large).
Milk Voucher Program

- Milk cards have been an extremely efficient way to meet the HPNAP milk requirement
- EFRO agencies appreciate the ease of use
- And most importantly ... clients receive high-quality, nutritious 1% or fat free milk
IN Conclusion

- HPNAP has been working hard to improve the health & nutritional status of the hungry in NYS