

Brooklyn Park Farmers Market



Summer 2018 | Annual Report

ANNE ARUNDEL COUNTY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Improving Food Access in Brooklyn Park



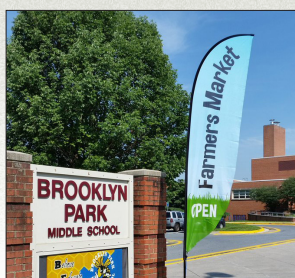
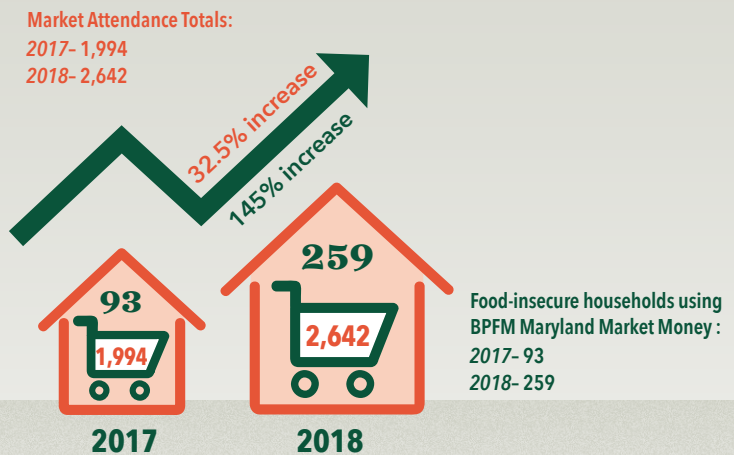
Anne Arundel County Public Schools and the Anne Arundel County Department of Health's Community Education Program partnered again in 2018 to improve county residents' access to fresh and healthy food.

A collaborative group of county agencies transformed Brooklyn Park Middle School into a hub of nutritious provisions every Monday between June 18 and August 27 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. As part of the initiative, neighborhood youth enjoyed free meals provided through the United States Department of Agriculture Summer Meals Program, and community members filled their shopping bags with fresh fruit and vegetables from the farmers market.

Customers using SNAP at the market were able to swipe their Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) card at the market manager tent in exchange for \$1 wooden tokens to spend at the market.

The market also participated in the Maryland Market Money (MMM) program again this year, providing matching dollars to customers using their federal nutrition benefits.

Overall, Brooklyn Park Farmers Market's third season was one of growth and expansion. Compared to 2017, the number of benefits transactions and amount of benefits spent at the market grew by 189 percent and 35 percent, respectively. The amount of MMM matching dollars distributed increased 178 percent from last year and 86 percent of all MMM distributed at the market was then spent at the market, demonstrating a high rate of usage.



Brooklyn Park Summer Meals

Anne Arundel County Public Schools Food and Nutrition Services once again utilized the Brooklyn Park Middle School as a site to provide free breakfast and lunch to area youth ages 2-18.

Breakfasts Served – 885
Lunches Served – 2,258



The Farmers Market 2018 At a Glance

In 2018, the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) transactions far outpaced all other benefits transactions at the market. This may be secondary to the continued promotion and increased presence of WIC at the market. The number of SNAP transactions decreased and is reflective of statewide trends.

Additional data was collected to determine how far federal nutrition benefits customers were traveling to come to the market. Overall, 26 percent of customers using benefits lived within 2 miles of the market and another 23 percent lived within 3 to 5 miles. Of the 31 percent that lived in the Brooklyn Park ZIP Code, 90 percent were Anne Arundel County residents.

Successes

- ◆ The market was highlighted and promoted via various media outlets, including newspaper articles, cable TV and radio spots, Facebook and Twitter posts, and website calendars.
- ◆ Promotional yard signs were provided to all 12 schools in the North County Cluster. Signs were also provided to Brooklyn Park Community Library, Brooklyn Park Volunteer Fire Company, Northern District Police Station and North County Health Services. In addition 2,000 promotional magnets were provided to all students at Brooklyn Park Elementary, Hilltop Elementary, and Brooklyn Park Middle.
- ◆ The passport to Produce incentive program was piloted. Children who visited each health education and safety table received a free produce coupon valued between \$3 and \$5 dollars. An average of 59 children participated each week.
- ◆ Children attending the market could select a free new book each week provided by AACPS Media Services. The Anne Arundel County Public Library provided Summer Reading program sign-ups and incentives.
- ◆ Fresh fruit and vegetable samples were provided to children and adults.
- ◆ The market engaged both children and adults with games and educational activities, such as basil seed planting, bean bag toss and spin the wheel of health.
- ◆ The market team provided market tours and promotion packets every week to organizations and community leaders, including three Hispanic church leaders, Iglesia Cristiana De Restauracion (Pasto Castillo), Iglesia Emanuel de Brooklyn Park (Pastor Samuel Portillo) and Light of the World Family Ministries (Pastor Sheryl Menendez).



Community-Supported Agriculture

A weekly community-supported agriculture (CSA) \$20 produce bag was available for purchase by the partnering agencies to help support the market and support staff wellness. An average of 43 bags were purchased each week which is 30 percent more than the summer of 2017.

