

## HAC Fresh Food Access

### Agenda

307 First Street South, Virginia, MN 55792

Room 2R Large

Tuesday, November 21<sup>st</sup>, 10:30 -11:30am

**10:30am** Welcome/Introductions

**10:35am** Food Project Updates

- Virginia Farmer's Market Square
  - EBT
  - P.O.P
  - Hand Washing Station
  - Food Prep. Demonstrations
- AEOA Grocery Bus Virginia
- Healthy Corner Stores
  - Brenda's input
  - Next Steps
- Canning Classes at Harvest Festival
- Farm to Head start
- Recipes and Signage at Food Shelves
- Garden Mentor Program
- Head start and community gardens
- Smarter Lunch Rooms
- CSA's
- Chisholm Mobile Food Shelf
- Born to Thrive

**11:15am** Additional Expansion Ideas?

**11:25am** Next Steps/Next Meeting

Next Meeting:

**Tuesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2017**

**10:30am – 11:30am**

**Northland Office Building, Room TBD**

**Fresh Food Access**  
**November 21, 2017**  
**Northland Office Building**  
**10:30 a.m. – 11:30 p.m.**

**In Attendance:** Ray Jobe, Emily Caouette, Chris Strand and Sara Ferkul

**On the Phone:** Brian Bluhm

**Updates:**

Brian gave an update on how the Farmer's Market went this summer. Snap-Ed/EBT and matching programs were a part of the market this year, in Virginia and Hibbing markets. AEOA sponsors the Snap-Ed/EBT program for the Hibbing and Virginia markets, with addition to the Cook market next year. They are hoping to have market bucks available at the Cook market as well. Also hoping to continue and expand the Power of Produce program in the Cook market. Brian from the Ely market, may need assistance to help build the Power of Produce program or additional programs. Possibly someone that could work at the Cook and Ely markets since they are on different days. The goal would be to have one point person at each market that would handle all the different programs.

**EBT Data/Numbers:**

**Virginia:**

Vendors: 7 different farms/16 vendors  
183 Snap transactions – Additional EBT data to come  
It did expand from last year.  
75 different snap customers at the Virginia market.

**Hibbing:**

69 snap transactions  
41 different snap customers.  
They did have some setbacks in the beginning of the season. Switching over of machines caused several issues and they were not resolved quickly.

**Power of Produce:**

**Virginia:**

201 different participants  
440 visits totals

**Hibbing:**

315 different participants  
733 visits total  
\*\*The Hibbing farmers market is open more than once a week. It is believed that is the reason for the large difference in numbers.

### **Grocery Bus**

The grocery bus in Virginia ran from August through October on Thursday afternoons. Rides were not as high in volume as we hoped. The bus did not run if people did not request use of it. Some people did use the bus on a consistent basis. Preliminary numbers for the bus are 58 passes over a 13 week timeframe. When the data is completely analyzed the numbers may change slightly. There has been a lot of more interest in the Aurora grocery bus. KBJR 6 wants to do a story on the grocery bus. MPR will also be doing an interview with Brian. Ray also reached out to Curt Antilla, who in turn, got Ray in touch with the City Administrator of Aurora. The city will be including a flyer on the bus with the utility bill. Residents that would be utilizing the bus would have to call by 8 a.m. to schedule a ride. Brian would also like to work with stores to offer to certain deals/promotions to the bus riders.

### **Healthy Cornerstores**

There was a kickoff event held at Brenda's Minimart on November 17. Overall everything went well during the 2 hour event. Surveys were distributed, 19 responses were collected. Signage has been added into the market and Ray will begin to track purchases to see if the signage has made a difference. Ray will also be tracking the food that is purchased through Essentia as well to see if there is a rise and fall in healthy food purchases. They would like to offer a monthly recipe in the market that will utilize the food that is brought in. At the kickoff event they did a food demo, they made pumpkin pie pudding. Residents did purchase the ingredients after the event. There was an assessment completed prior implementing the changes, after a period of time an additional assessment will be completed.

### **Additional Updates**

The farm to headstart discussion will be pushed to January, after the holidays. Would like to tie it with Snap-Ed.

Chris gave an update on the signage and recipes at food shelves. Chris will be reaching out to the food shelves that took part in a training in Duluth to give them a little nudge in certain directions to implement tools they learned.

There is a hope that the garden mentor program will grow and expand next year.

Chris has been trained in smarter lunch rooms. The Virginia School district does not qualify to have Chris do the training because of the amount of the free and reduced lunches that they have in their district.

CSA's were delivered to two locations this year, Bill's House and the Senior High-rises. The boxes went over very well at the senior high-rises but did not go over very well at Bill's house. There was also a CSA that was used for the AEOA senior services, the food was incorporated into their meals.