

Southside Santa Fe Residents Gain Access to Farmer's Market

by: Bonnie Lochner

SUMMARY

Thanks to collaborative efforts by La Familia Medical Center and the REACH Community Leadership Team more than 27,000 residents, 73% of which identify as Latino/Hispanic, have access to a sustainable and vibrant farmer's market. With access to a convenient and affordable farmer's market, residents of these food desert areas are now reporting higher consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables and due to demand by both vendors and consumers, the Southside Farmer's Market hopes to extend its market season next summer.



CHALLENGE

Obesity is a growing problem which disproportionately affects the Santa Fe Hispanic and Latino community. According to the NM Department of Health "Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Report" in Santa Fe County, the obesity rate among Hispanics (25.4%) is over twice that of White Non-Hispanics (11.2%)

High rates of obesity in this population lead to higher rates of other chronic diseases like heart disease and

diabetes. One of the principal drivers of the obesity epidemic in our community is poor nutrition. The factors that influence and affect access to healthy food options among the Santa Fe Hispanic community are myriad and include poverty, lack of education, chronic stress, and the fact that a large portion of the Hispanic community live in low-income, car-dependent, "food-desert" neighborhoods which restrict their access to healthy foods and physical activity.

YOUR INVOLVEMENT IS KEY

Improving health outcomes in our racially diverse communities of Santa Fe are the fundamental goals of La Familia Medical Center and the Community Leadership Team (CLT). We are searching for community members from the Southside of Santa Fe to take a leadership role by becoming involved with the CLT. We invite you to join the CLT and make a difference in creating a healthier Santa Fe, a healthier Southside community and ultimately a healthier environment for your family and friends.

"By visiting the Southside Farmer's Market, I was able to try lots of different vegetables with my son. He especially liked the food demos and actually cooked at home the green bean recipe he was shown at the market. -Southside resident"

- Alondra Hernandez

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SOLUTION

La Familia Medical Center Healthy REACH/CENA project worked with the REACH Community Leadership Team (CLT) consisting of 25 community leaders, non-profits, farmers and community members to address the obesity epidemic by working to increase access to healthy foods. The CLT identified a sustainable farmer's market as an important means to promote healthier food. They created effective, culturally appropriate communication about the farmer's market through local media and social networks. They addressed environmental and policy constraints to a farmer's market and reduced cost and other barriers to healthy foods through expanded use of EBT at the farmer's market.

RESULTS

Results of these collaborative efforts were a culturally-sensitive, sustainable and incredibly successful four month farmers market in the Southside corridor of Santa Fe between the months of July and October of 2013 and 2014. The market became a vibrant center of large assortments of vegetables and fruits during its weekly Tuesday market. While past attempts at farmers markets in the area resulted in limited vendor and customer participation, this new Southside Farmer's Market boasted hosting over 16 vendors weekly, recorded customer participation as high as 250 people per market and was a demonstration of an effective incentives SNAP redemption approach by offering up to \$30.00 matching dollars with EBT usage and had record-breaking SNAP redemption at the Southside Farmer's Market.

SUSTAINING SUCCESS

The future goal for the Southside Market is to have a permanent space that would allow for year-round vendors to provide fresh, local, vegetables and fruits in the Southside corridor of Santa Fe. The Santa Fe Farmer's Market Association, Santa Fe Farmer's Market Institute, Santa Fe Metropolitan Planning Organization, La Familia Medical Center, City Councilor Carmichael Dominguez and Quality of Life Initiative's community members are working together on a feasibility study for location of a permanent site, the findings of which will be proposed to policy makers of Santa Fe.