

Double Up Food Bucks Colorado 2017 Report of Findings



**DOUBLE UP
FOOD BUCKS™
COLORADO**



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I. Executive Summary

The Double Up Food Bucks Colorado (Double Up) evaluation focused on measuring the impact of the program on Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients, farmers, and retailers, as well as identifying implications for community partnerships and engagement and for program operations in 2017. The Double Up evaluation team used a variety of methods, including financial reporting, surveys, interviews, website feedback, analytics of the marketing strategy, and facilitated symposium discussions to determine the impact of the program and implications for implementation in the future.

The evaluation results revealed the program does have positive self-reported results for both SNAP participants and vendors/retailers. SNAP participants report buying and eating more fruits and vegetables and also trying new varieties. Vendors and retailers also reported their economic gains from increased due to produce sales and new customer bases. In total, \$334,074 in SNAP plus Double Up incentives were spent in 2017, a boost in business for farmers and retailers of Colorado-grown produce.

While the evaluation report focuses a great deal on the self-reported results of the two groups primarily impacted by Double Up, results also highlight other successes and lessons learned from the 2017 season. These successes and challenges identified affect how the program is implemented around program operations and community partnerships and engagement.

The major evaluation findings span across all areas of program implementation. Growth of the program will continue to be a priority, with a strong focus on removing barriers identified by customers and partners. Examples of some of the barriers include: the seasonality of farmers markets, limiting year-round access to fresh produce; the stigma sometimes experienced by SNAP participants at markets; and language barriers for non-English speakers. Lessons from the evaluation can contextualize these barriers and the learning can be used to support program growth and quality for SNAP recipients. Additionally, these data can guide how regional partnerships and the Community Food Advocate program support outreach, enhance relationships with customers and vendors, and act as a source of information for continuous improvement.

II. Introduction & Background

Double Up Food Bucks: An Overview

Recognizing the connections between food insecurity and public health, LiveWell Colorado, in collaboration with a vast network of partners throughout and beyond Colorado, launched the Double Up Food Bucks Colorado (Double Up) program in 2016 with a three-year United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program grant. The program was initiated as a way to address hunger and the food and nutritional needs of Colorado residents.

The Double Up program works at the nexus of food, family, and community. The overarching goal of the program is to strengthen opportunities for healthy food purchases and ultimately to increase Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) recipients' fruit and vegetable consumption across urban, suburban, and rural communities. It achieves this in three ways: increasing available food dollars for SNAP recipients; keeping food dollars in the local economy; and, directing more dollars to Colorado farmers. The program uses a multipronged approach that strengthens farmers market environments and program offerings; engages institutional partners to support and sustain the program; and provides social support for SNAP participants, vendors, and market managers. The program is modeled after Fair Food Network's Double Up Food Bucks program, which was established in 2009 to make it easier for low income Americans to purchase and eat fresh fruits and vegetables, while also supporting local farmers and local economies [3].

The program matches SNAP benefits spent at participating farmers markets, farm stands, food box programs, and small and large retail sites, dollar for dollar, up to \$20 per visit. For example, if a SNAP recipient spends \$15 of their benefits on any SNAP-eligible food item at a participating site, they would receive \$15 in Double Up Food Bucks, which can only be spent on fresh, Colorado-grown fruits and vegetables. In order to implement and sustain this program, LiveWell Colorado partners with farmers, farmers market managers, nutrition educators, human resource agencies, food advocates, and public health professionals across Colorado (see Appendix A for full list of partners). Importantly, the program connects SNAP recipients to these resources by improving market environments, sharing educational resources, and strengthening social and institutional support in communities.

Program Snapshot

The first year of the Colorado Double Up program operated from June to December of 2016. In this pilot year, Double Up partnered with 42 participating markets in 20 counties and served 1,171 unique SNAP customers. The program distributed \$72,294 in incentives at Double Up locations, of which 95 percent were redeemed, totaling \$160,946 in SNAP and Double Up redemptions combined. Moreover, 58 percent of redemptions were made by households with children under 18-years old. Over a third of participants surveyed self-identified as Hispanic or Latino and almost 50 percent represented rural areas of Colorado.

In 2017, the Double Up program expanded its geographic and participant reach. The program's second year launched in April 2017 and operated through December 2017 at 85 individual locations in 28 counties. Figure 1 illustrates the markets that participated in Double Up in 2017, in relation to county poverty levels. Approximately 5,755 unique SNAP customers redeemed \$145,898 in incentives in 2017. In all, a total of \$334,074 in SNAP dollars plus Double Up incentives

were spent at participating sites. Over 3,000 (56 percent) participants had children. While most customers surveyed identified as White (71 percent), 25 respondents (10 percent) identified as Native Alaskan or American Indian, and 25 respondents (10 percent) identified as Hispanic or Latino.

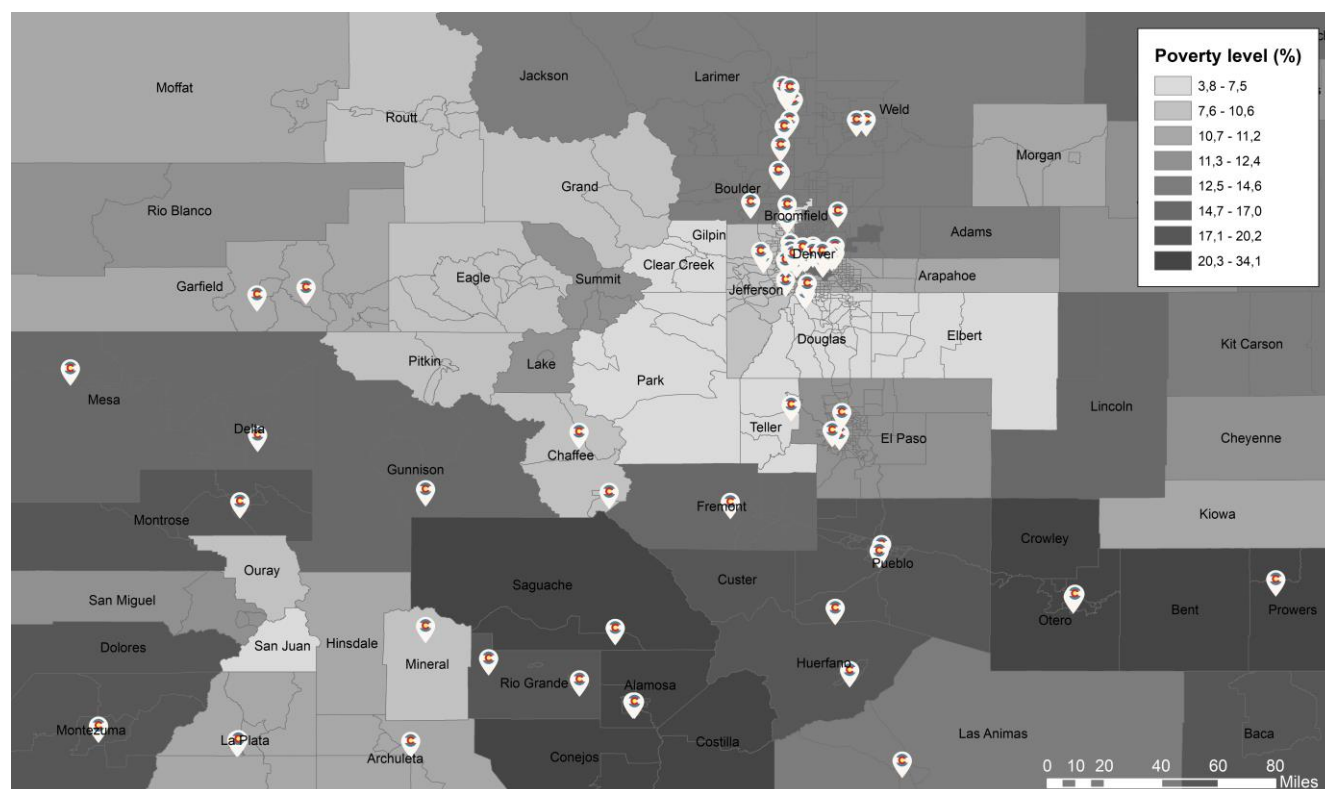


Figure 1: Map participating Double Up venues throughout Colorado

New Approaches to Program Expansion & Engagement

In 2017, multiple new partnerships and approaches made reaching new participants both possible and effective. New approaches and areas of expansion in 2017 included:

Grocery Expansion

Lowe's Mercado, a supermarket chain based out of Texas, launched a version of Double Up Food Bucks in June 2017 at two of their stores. When SNAP shoppers purchased Colorado-grown produce at Lowe's, they received 50 percent off those items at the point of sale.

Denver Department of Health and Environment has managed the Denver Healthy Corner Store program since 2014. In August 2017, the program selected six stores in the Denver metro area at which to offer Double Up Food Bucks. These stores, originally stocking low amounts of Colorado-grown produce, partnered with local growers and distributors to expand their selection of local produce and offer the Double Up program to SNAP participants.

Double Up at the Farm

Three Colorado farmers offered Double Up Food Bucks on their farm in 2017. This included both pick-yourself options and pre-picked produce. In rural areas, with limited access to grocery stores,

direct farm sales make a deep impact and farmers demonstrate flexibility to move product county to county without relying on brick and mortar stores or farmers market locations.

Community Food Advocates

LiveWell piloted a Community Food Advocate program to increase participation of SNAP recipients in the Double Up program in summer 2017. The pilot launched with six Advocates in Denver, Archuleta, La Plata, and Montezuma Counties. This was followed by a larger roll-out in fall 2017—supported by a USDA Community Food Projects Grant. The program works with local ambassadors to share the Double Up program with community members and organizations in order to increase community participation. Advocates also play a vital role in informing and guiding Double Up outreach strategies in Colorado; sharing ideas and advising on decisions regarding the program; and making recommendations for best practices to support welcoming, accessible, and inclusive markets and other participating retailers. Advocates are often, but not always, community members enrolled or previously enrolled in SNAP and current and past participants in the Double Up program.

Partnership with Cooking Matters

In summer 2017, Share Our Strength's Cooking Matters – Colorado offered market tours in Southwest Colorado, Garfield County, the San Luis Valley, Larimer County, and Denver County. These tours focused on healthy shopping on a budget, and were often accompanied by samples or cooking demonstrations. Shoppers were offered a \$10 incentive to participate. Fifty-four percent of surveyed Double Up participants received nutrition or cooking information at a Double Up location. Of those who received information, 86 percent agreed that it increased their likelihood of buying more fruits and vegetables.

III. Evaluation Methods

Evaluation Approach

In order to assess, understand, and ultimately strengthen the program's ability to meet its goals, the Double Up team designed a program evaluation to answer the following questions:

Impact on SNAP recipients:

- What is the impact of the Double Up Food Bucks Colorado incentive program on fruit and vegetable purchasing and consumption patterns of SNAP recipients? How have SNAP recipients' food purchasing behaviors changed over the three-year FINI program?

Impact for farmers and retailers:

- What is the financial impact of the Double Up Food Bucks Colorado incentive program on farmers, markets, and retailers? What other impacts does the program have on farmers and markets' connections and partnerships?

Implications for community partnerships and engagement:

- What environmental, social, and institutional features best support redemption of SNAP benefits to purchase fruits and vegetables?

Implications for program operations:

- What are the factors and conditions that can affect the implementation of an effective healthy food incentive program?

- What are the revenue and cost implications of implementing the incentive program?

Customer, Market & Vendor, and Community Food Advocate Data Collection Tools

The evaluation used a mixed-methods approach to answer the key evaluation questions. A summary of these methods can be found in Table 1. The Double Up evaluation team collected information on the impact of the program from a diverse number of audiences including customers, vendors, market managers, and Community Food Advocates. This was in the form of customer surveys, daily customer transaction reports from farmers markets and retail locations, vendor surveys, vendor reports on redemption, market manager surveys, surveys and interviews with a cohort of Double Up participants, interviews with Community Food Advocates, notes from four Regional Symposiums, and comments collected through the Double Up website portal.

With the exception of the daily customer and vendor reports, participation in all evaluation tools was highly encouraged but not mandatory for any of those partners and/or participants in Double Up. Those who participated in the Double Up cohort received a stipend for participating in the phone interview and a commitment to receiving additional stipends for planned future interviews. Survey, interview, and market data remained confidential throughout the evaluation process. While some survey participants provided contact information, all survey data was reported in aggregate to the Double Up team. Similarly, interview data was not linked to individual interviewees and these results were reported in themes.¹

¹ The evaluation team used unique IDs to estimate unique customers assigned by linking the last four digits of the EBT card number and the zip code provided by the customer at the point of sale. However, this method is a conservative estimate of individual and repeat customers.

Table 1: Evaluation Tools to Measure Program Reach and Impact

Tool	What was measured	How was it implemented	Responses (2016)	Responses (2017)
Customer Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer experience Customer demographics Fruit and vegetable intake Increase in F&V purchases 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper surveys offered by market managers Some administered by a surveyor on a tablet 	<p>228 customers</p> <p>25 markets</p>	<p>248 customers</p> <p>34 markets</p>
Customer Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAP spending Double Up dispensed EBT Transactions Number of HHs with children Zip code Market events 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed daily at each market at central tent Conversation with customer as they received Double Up vouchers 	<p>7,748 transactions</p> <p>30 managers</p>	<p>10,229 transactions</p> <p>64 managers</p>
Vendor Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vendor experience Sales activities Vendor demographics Changes in farming variety, capacity, equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Paper surveys Offered by market managers 	<p>70 vendors</p> <p>13 markets</p>	<p>98 vendors</p> <p>14 markets (53 vendors did not specify market)</p>
Vendor Reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SNAP redeemed Double Up redeemed Vendor Name 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Completed daily, weekly, or monthly when market managers pay vendors for SNAP and Double Up vouchers collected 	--	--
Market Manager Survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manager experience Feedback of program structure and LWC support Feedback on media and outreach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Survey monkey Emailed by LiveWell staff 	22 market managers	20 market managers
Double Up Cohort Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Customer follow-up interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone interviews 	--	20 participants
Community Food Advocate (CFA) Interviews	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CFA post-season interviews 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Telephone interviews 	--	8 participants
Regional Symposiums	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> LiveWell sponsored regional symposiums to engage customers, institutional partners, and food advocates around Double Up implementation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Roundtable discussions and analysis of meeting minutes 		<p>4 Symposiums</p> <p>82 participants</p>
Double Up Website	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stakeholder impressions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sidebar on website 	391 entries	1648 entries

Marketing & Media Impact Evaluation

LiveWell Colorado developed and implemented a marketing and communications strategy to promote Double Up to eligible SNAP recipients. In order to measure the reach and impact of the marketing and media efforts, LiveWell reviewed web and social media analytics available through Google and Facebook, media monitoring data available through Meltwater, media impressions tracked by Explore Communications, the media buyer that placed the advertisements, and data collected through the form submissions on the Double Up website.

IV. Customer Reach & Impacts

Customer Transactions

Every time a customer receives Double Up incentives, this transaction is added to the market's customer transaction report. The customer transactions allow LiveWell to track benefits distributed to customers and whether the customer is a new or repeat shopper.

In 2017, according to customer transaction reports:

- Approximately 5,755 unique customers visited Double Up venues throughout Colorado
 - The number of unique Double Up customers increased 129 percent when compared to participation in 2016 (n=2,507)
- 56 percent of customers reported having children under the age of 18
 - 4,080 customers provided information about the number of children in the home
 - 2,268 customers reported having one or more children under the age of 18
- 10,229 individual transactions were recorded
 - The number of individual Double Up transactions grew 136 percent from 2016 (n=7,748) (Figure 2)
 - 56 percent of customers visited the market only once and 44 percent visited the market more than one time

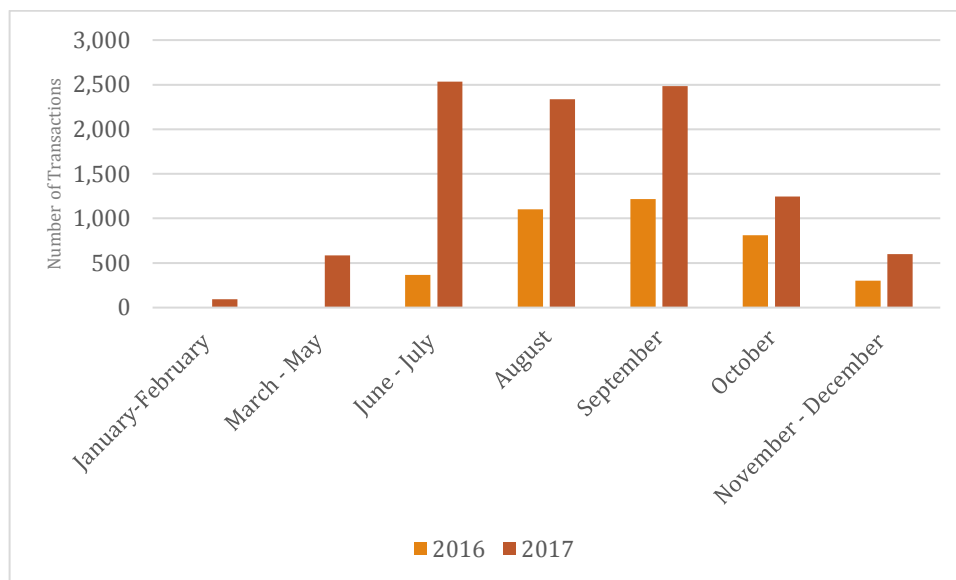


Figure 2: Number of Double Up transactions in 2016 and 2017 by Month

Table 2 provides information about SNAP and Double Up average and total distributions by market type and geographic area. Most Double Up distributions occurred through Double Up-affiliated direct farmers market retailers (75 percent of funds distributed). SNAP and Double Up together distributed \$334,074 in support of food purchases by low-income customers at farmers markets throughout Colorado. In 2017, Double Up also engaged corner stores, local neighborhood grocery stores, and retail spaces, including two supermarket chain stores: Lowe's Mercado and Food King. Retailers distributed \$77,147 in financial benefits of SNAP and Double Up.

Table 2 also provides information about program activity each month of the calendar year. The Double Up program is most active over the summer and early fall. This is to be expected given the seasonal availability of Colorado-grown produce. However, a programmatic goal is to increase participation of winter markets and help improve awareness and access to these markets. Over time, the evaluation will track participation over the calendar year to see if this programmatic goal is reached.

Table 2: Sales and Use by Season and Geography

Variable	SNAP Average Expenditures	Total SNAP \$ Distributed	Double Up Average Expenditure	Total Double Up \$ Distributed
Market Type:				
Large Chain Supermarket	n/a	\$ 7,322.00	n/a	\$ 7,322.00
Small Store or Corner Store	\$ 23.00	\$ 32,317.00	\$ 11.00	\$ 15,058.00
Farmers Market	\$ 18.00	\$ 127,682.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 115,348.00
Direct Farm	\$ 18.00	\$ 11,907.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 8,960.00
Farm Stand	\$ 2.00	\$ 2,027.00	\$ 6.00	\$ 5,270.00
CSA	\$ 25.00	\$ 3,632.00	\$ 12.00	\$ 1,827.00
Month/s:				
Jan, Feb	\$ 21.00	\$ 1,972.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 1,340.00
March, April, May	\$ 18.00	\$ 10,529.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 9,329.00
June, July	\$ 17.00	\$ 43,911.00	\$ 15.00	\$ 38,505.00
August	\$ 17.00	\$ 39,398.00	\$ 17.00	\$ 34,076.00
September	\$ 19.00	\$ 48,098.00	\$ 19.00	\$ 37,694.00
October	\$ 18.00	\$ 22,486.00	\$ 18.00	\$ 19,126.00
Nov, Dec	\$ 19.00	\$ 11,120.00	\$ 19.00	\$ 8,988.00
Geography:				
Front Range	\$ 19.00	\$ 119,301.00	\$ 16.00	\$ 100,143.00
Rest of Colorado	\$ 17.00	\$ 65,587.00	\$ 14.00	\$ 53,642.00

Customer Demographics

In addition to the customer reports described above, the LiveWell evaluation also used convenience sampling to survey customers at Double Up venues.

Table 3: Customer Demographics

Variable	2016		2017	
	Count N=228	%	Count N=248	%
Educational Attainment				
8th Grade or Less	7	3	1	0
9th to 11th Grade	8	4	7	3
12th Grade or GED	35	16	33	13
Some College	54	25	66	27
College Degree or Higher	112	52	128	52
Race / Ethnicity				
Native Alaskan or American Indian	0	0	25	10
African American	0	0	9	4
Asian	0	0	4	2
White	160	70	175	71
Hispanic or Latino	35	15	25	10
Other	0	0	10	4
Gender				
Male	40	19	62	25
Female	157	73	153	62
Gender not specified	17	8	16	6
Missing	--	--	17	7
Age				
18 to 24	23	11	20	8
25 to 34	68	31	59	24
35 to 44	53	24	45	18
45 to 54	21	10	37	15
55 to 64	36	16	31	13
65 to 74	16	7	36	15
75 plus	2	1	5	2
Household Size				
1 Person	64	28	71	29
2 Persons	44	19	43	17
3 to 4 persons	69	32	73	31
5 or more persons	38	18	46	19
Households with Children under 18 years old				
Yes	118	58	120	48
No	87	42	105	42
Missing	--	--	23	9
Households Participating in Food Assistance Programs				
Women, Infants and Children (WIC)	1	0.4	21	9
Free and Reduced Lunch	50	22	67	27
Other	--	--	18	7
Not Applicable	14	6.1	104	42
Missing	--	--	38	15

In 2017 (see Table 3: Customer Demographics, above):

- 248 customers completed the customer survey
- 52 percent of customers surveyed had a college degree or higher
- Women continued to be the majority of users
 - However, the percentage of male respondents surveyed increased from 19 percent in 2016 to 25 percent in 2017
- While most customers identified as White (71 percent), 25 respondents (10 percent) identified as Native Alaskan or American Indian, and 25 respondents (10 percent) identified as Hispanic or Latino
- The percentage of respondents in the 45-years old and over category increased from 34 percent in 2016 to 45 percent of the sample in 2017
- Customers with children under the age of 18 represented almost half of the sample (49.8 percent)
- Almost 10 percent of respondents reported using Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) benefits, up from less than 1 percent in 2016

- This is significant because of the programmatic improvements in Year 2 to engage institutional partners from WIC in the Double Up program

Customer Impacts

Of those surveyed, 70 percent of 2017 customers surveyed had not used Double Up prior to the 2017 season. The significant number of customers that completed the survey (50 percent) were first time visitors at the market. Another 10 percent had shopped at the market only one to two times before completing the survey. For those who reported using Double Up in the previous year, 83 percent had already shopped at the market two or more times in 2017.

In 2016, more than half of all customers surveyed learned about the Double Up initiative through the farmers market or Double Up retailer they visited, and almost 20 percent through family and friends (see Table 4: Customer Use and Awareness of Double Up Benefits). In 2017, only 30 percent of customers learned about the market through their farmers markets, CSA, farm, or Double Up retailer. More 2017 customers reported learning about Double Up through flyers and door hangers, social media, and contact with agency representatives such as WIC personnel. This reflects a multi-pronged outreach effort to engage SNAP participants who had not previously shopped at farmers markets, community based stores, etc.

Consistent with 2016, half of customers surveyed received information about how to prepare and/or purchase fruits and vegetables during their visits to markets, and over 80 percent of those respondents agreed that it was likely they would buy more fruits and vegetables because of this information. Receiving information at farmers markets, together with modest financial incentives, has been shown to be an important lever for improving diet quality for families receiving federal food assistance (see Table 4: Customer Use and Awareness of Double Up Benefits) [4].

Table 4: Customer Use and Awareness of Double Up Benefits

Variable	2016		2017	
	Count N=228	%	Count N=248	%
How did you hear about the Double Up Food Bucks Program?				
Farmers' Market	98	43	76	31
Family or Friends	37	16	27	11
Door Hangers	0	0	25	10
Human Services or SNAP Personnel	25	11	23	9
Human Services Flyers	0	0	16	7
Community Flyers	18	8	13	5
Social Media	0	0	11	4
Public Health or WIC Personnel	0	0	9	4
Community-based Organizations	21	9	9	4
Food Pantries	0	0	9	4
Advertisements	15	7	8	3
Billboards	0	0	8	3
News Story	12	5	4	2
Schools	0	0	3	1
Health Care Partners	0	0	2	1
Meal Program	0	0	2	1
Did you participate in DUFB last year? (2016)				
Yes	--		87	35
No	--		155	63
Before today, how many times have you used Double Up Colorado this year? (2017)				
This is my first visit	74	34	98	40
1 time	--	--	26	11
2 to 3 times	49	22	42	17
4 to 6 times	53	24	41	17
7 or more times	47	21	60	24
How difficult is it to purchase fruits and vegetables in your neighborhood?				
Not Difficult	103	47	94	38
Somewhat Difficult	75	34	75	30
Difficult	25	11	29	12
Very Difficult	17	8	28	11
Not Sure			11	4
Have you received information about cooking or purchasing F&V at this market?				
No	113	50	115	46
Yes	111	50	126	51
How likely are you to buy more F&Vs because of this information?*				
Very Likely	74	66	78	60
Somewhat Likely	38	34	30	23
Neutral/Unsure	--	--	15	11
Somewhat Unlikely	--	--	2	1
Very Unlikely	1	1	6	5

*This reflects a subset of respondents that answered "yes" to the question about receiving information at market (approximately 50 percent responded positively.) In 2016, 111 out of 224 answered "yes" and in 2017, 126 out of 241 answered "yes."

Customer Attitudes and Behaviors

Changes in Attitudes

An important aspect of the Double Up Food Bucks initiative is its focus on producing a high-quality environment to support healthy eating. This includes recognition that customers' perceptions of fruit and vegetable selection, quality, and price are important precursors to making purchases at the market. These factors can be influenced by the supports at Double Up markets and retail settings by offering fruit and vegetable tastings, cooking demonstrations, and socially-oriented and culturally-relevant eating environments. The combination of improving access by offering financial incentives, working with markets that are placed in underserved neighborhoods, increasing exposure to cooking demonstrations, experiencing the community atmosphere of farmers markets, and receiving information about food preparation and shopping for families (e.g., partnership with Cooking Matters) sets customers up for success in consuming more fruits and vegetables [4, 5]. Approximately 80 percent of customers surveyed at Double Up markets

perceived the selection of fruits and vegetables as better than the locations where they usually shop and almost 90 percent of customers perceived Double Up markets to have higher quality produce when compared to where they usually shop (See Table 5: Customer Attitudes).

Table 5: Customer Attitudes

Variable	2016		2017	
	Count	%	Count	%
Attitudes about produce selection, quality, and price at DUFB sites compared to where customers usually shop...				
The selection of fruits and vegetables is...				
Much Better	147	65	139	56.0
Slightly Better	34	15	52	21.0
About the Same	28	12.3	28	11.3
Slightly Worse	0	0	18	7.3
Much Worse	0	0	1	0.4
Not Sure	0	0	4	1.6
The quality of fruits and vegetables is...				
Much Better	171	75	182	73.4
Slightly Better	31	13.6	36	14.5
About the Same	12	5.3	12	4.8
Slightly Worse	0	0	1	0.4
Much Worse	0	0	2	0.8
Not Sure	0	0	8	3.2
The price of fruits and vegetables is...				
Much Better	92	40	84	33.9
Slightly Better	39	17	37	14.9
About the Same	41	18	46	18.5
Slightly Worse	33	14.5	45	18.1
Much Worse	0	0	10	4.0
Not Sure	0	0	18	9.5

Table 6: Average Ratings of Customer Attitudes illustrates scores for the ratings customers made about selection, quality, and price of fruits and vegetables. A scale from one to five was assigned to level of agreement, with one corresponding to Strongly Disagree and five corresponding to Strongly Agree. The evaluation team used this scale to calculate the average customer response to each question across demographics and family characteristics. From 2016 to 2017 customers reported an increase in price at Double Up sites compared to where they usually shop. This may reflect overall rising prices of produce. Market price reports from Colorado State University provide important context. When comparing average per pound prices for conventional apples in 2016 and 2017 on the Western Slope, the cost increased by 20 percent, from \$1.54 to \$1.86. Similar changes were observed for apples sold in Longmont. Comparing 2016 and 2017 average per pound prices for conventional apples, prices rose by 33 percent, from \$2.25 per pound to \$3.00 per pound (Colorado State University Extension Market Reports, <http://www.wr.colostate.edu/ABM/marketreports.shtml>).

Table 6: Average Ratings of Customer Attitudes

Variable	Selection of Fruits and Vegetables		Quality of Fruits and Vegetables		Price of Fruits and Vegetables	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Families Attending Market						
No Children	4.6	4.3	4.7	4.8	3.6	3.4
Children	4.5	5.3	4.8	4.6	4.1	3.8
Age of Consumers						
18-24 years	4.5	4.3	4.7	5.0	4.4	3.8
25-34 years	4.6	4.3	4.8	4.6	4.0	3.6
35-44 years	4.6	4.2	4.8	4.7	3.9	3.6
45-64 years	4.5	4.3	4.6	4.7	3.6	3.7
65 years plus	4.6	3.8	4.8	4.7	4.1	4.0
Race or Ethnicity						
White	4.5	4.3	4.7	4.7	3.9	3.6
Hispanic or Latino/a	4.7	4.5	4.8	4.7	4.0	3.6
Other	--	4.3	--	4.7	--	3.7
Educational Attainment						
Less than College	4.5	4.2	4.7	4.7	4.0	3.7
College degree or higher	4.6	4.4	4.7	4.7	3.9	3.6
First Time Visit to Market						
First Time	4.5	4.3	4.7	4.7	4.2	3.7
Repeat Customer	4.6	4.4	4.8	4.7	3.8	3.5

Changes in Behaviors

Customers were asked in the survey to evaluate if they buy more, eat more, and try new fruits and vegetables as a result of Double Up and if they visited the market because of the program. Almost 85 percent of customers at Double Up venues agreed that as a result of Double Up, they bought and ate more fruits and vegetables. Moreover, almost 65 percent of customers tried new fruits and vegetables and 73 percent visited a market or retail venue because of the Double Up program (Table 7: Behavior Changes as a Result of Double Up). A scale from one to five was assigned to level of agreement, with one corresponding to Strongly Disagree and five corresponding to Strongly Agree. The evaluation team used this scale to calculate averages for customer responses to these questions. For example, a score of 4.0 indicates that participants, on average, “agreed” with the statement that they visit the market because of Double Up.

Table 7: Behavior Changes as a Result of Double Up

Variables	2016		2017	
	Count	%	Count	%
As a result of Double Up Food Bucks, ...				
I buy more fruits and vegetables				
Strongly Agree	143	63	151	61
Agree	45	20	60	24
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0	5	2
Disagree	0	0	1	1
Strongly Disagree	22	9.6	17	7
I eat more fruits and vegetables				
Strongly Agree	133	58	141	57
Agree	50	22	66	27
Neither Agree or Disagree	0	0	10	4
Disagree	11	5	1	1
Strongly Disagree	20	9	17	7
I tried new fruits and vegetables				
Strongly Agree	98	43	101	41
Agree	50	22	57	23
Neither Agree or Disagree	27	12	32	13
Disagree	17	8	25	10
Strongly Disagree	24	11	18	7
I visited the market because of DUFb				
Strongly Agree	114	50	130	52
Agree	40	17.5	51	21
Neither Agree or Disagree	28	12	26	11
Disagree	15	6.6	10	4
Strongly Disagree	20	8.8	19	8

Table 8: Average Ratings of Behavior Changes explores average scores for customers so LiveWell can understand the shopping experience and whether it varies for people with more or less education, for people across different age groups, for people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds, for people with and without children, and for people with different levels of experiences shopping for local produce. The same Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree scale from previous survey questions was used, so the table shows averages based off a five-point Likert scale. In general, the experience of shoppers was uniformly positive across all groups and generally more positive in 2017 when compared to 2016.

Table 8: Average Ratings of Behavior Changes

Variable	Buy More Fruits and Vegetables		Eat More Fruits and Vegetables		Try New Fruits and Vegetables		Visit the Market because of DUF8	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Families Attending Market								
No Children	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.7	3.8	4.0	4.0	4.4
Children	4.3	4.6	4.2	4.6	3.9	4.2	3.9	4.4
Age of Consumers								
18-24 years	4.6	4.6	4.8	4.8	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.3
25-34 years	4.6	4.6	4.7	4.5	3.9	4.2	4.1	4.3
35-44 years	4.4	4.7	4.3	4.8	3.5	4.4	4.1	4.5
45-64 years	4.2	4.7	4.2	4.6	3.6	4.0	3.9	4.4
65 years plus	3.7	4.3	3.1	4.3	3.4	2.8	3.5	4.0
Race or Ethnicity								
White	4.4	4.7	4.4	4.6	3.9	4.1	4.1	4.4
Hispanic or Latino/a	4.4	4.5	4.1	4.6	3.7	4.0	3.6	4.1
Other	--	4.6	--	4.5	--	4.0	--	4.3
Educational Attainment								
Less than College	4.3	4.7	4.2	4.6	3.7	4.2	3.8	4.3
College degree or higher	4.5	4.7	4.5	4.6	4.0	4.0	4.2	4.5
First Time Visit to Market								
First Time	4.4	4.6	4.3	4.5	3.8	3.9	3.9	4.3
Repeat Customer	4.3	4.6	4.3	4.6	3.9	4.3	4.0	4.4

Results from the Cohort Interviews

In November 2017, the LiveWell evaluation team contacted 20 Double Up customers who indicated they would be interested in participating in follow-up interviews to help the Double Up team learn more about the customer experience. A primary goal of these interviews was to determine if customers experience an increase in fruit and vegetable consumption over a longer period of time, and specifically when markets are not in season. These individuals participated in a 20-minute phone interview with structured and open-ended questions. They were asked about changes in their fruit and vegetable consumption after the Double Up intervention, but responses about market experience, demographics, and potential improvements and gaps in the Double Up program were also captured. Sixteen of the twenty customers interviewed were from the Front Range of Colorado, including Pueblo, Fort Collins, Loveland, Greeley, and Denver. Three participants were from the San Luis Valley and one participant was from Durango. Because of the small sample size and the geographic area represented by cohort participants, the findings from these interviews should be used to inform the program team's understanding of the customer experience. The data from the cohort interviews also helped contextualize patterns observed from the customer survey responses.

Food Insecurity

Customers were asked two questions about food insecurity. Ninety percent of the respondents indicated they experienced some food insecurity, with over 50 percent indicating they were

unable to feed themselves and members of their household because of cost and that they had to compromise on healthy or balanced food items because of budget concerns.

Frequency of Use and Experience at the Market

Over two-thirds of the customers interviewed shopped at the participating location before using Double Up incentives and 60 percent of the cohort had used the market site at least five times in 2017. Customers stated that they continued using the market for a variety of reasons, which include:

- Quality of food
- Price of food
- Opportunity to eat new foods and improve diet
- Convenience of the location and accessibility to the market
- Feelings of comfort at the market
- Friendliness and the welcoming environment

One customer stated, “the market has really diverse vendors, incredible tomatoes—all really fresh and local—really competitive prices [compared] to the grocery store, usually a lot better than the grocery store.” Because of Double Up, the customer was able to buy fruits and vegetables at a price similar to other venues where they usually shop. Customer survey respondents reported slightly higher prices at Double Up markets compared to where they usually shop. In 2017, the cohort interview results suggested that with more shopping experience, the higher prices are not a concern because customers can more readily navigate the market and find the food they want to buy at a price they can afford. Another customer described the role of the SNAP and Double Up benefits in the following statement: “[I] could only get out once a week [...]. I ate solely off of that.”

Food Purchasing Experience

When describing the food purchasing experience, another customer stated, “I would buy stuff I would normally not buy. People would tell me and I would research and figure out how to cook it. Kinda fun.” In this statement, the customer is intrinsically motivated to participate in the market and try new foods because it is “fun.” This intrinsic motivation is crucial for sustainable long-term behavior change[6, 7]. When describing the facets of food selection at the markets, one customer stated, “I wasn't making much, so I was eating very poorly, and then when I got Double Up I ate much better—salads, and homemade tamales...” These insights are consistent with the customer surveys collected throughout Colorado, which suggested high satisfaction with the selection and quality of fruits and vegetables at Double Up sites.

Comfort at the Market

When describing level of comfort at the market, one respondent shared the following: “Sometimes people have a little bit of bigotry towards people needing assistance, NONE of the vendors did. [It was a] 10-15 foot [walk from the car to the] double-up booths, the woman there was wonderful; she taught me how to do it. I got confused between the paper and the chips and the people who would take the paper or the chips, until I got it. Loved vendors who would take both.”

One-Time Shoppers

Customers who only visited the market one time suggested that location, logistics, awareness about the program, schedule, and remembering the market as an option were reasons for not returning to the Double Up sites. One participant explained “that [the market] was in Longmont,

and we live in Aurora. The only reason we got to go, we were visiting my brother in law, really couldn't find any one close to us.”

Encouragement to Support Repeat Visits

Customer respondents suggested that there were four main factors that influenced whether a customer would return to the market. These included:

1. Market hours and seasonal extension
2. Reminders to visit the market
3. Location
4. More information about schedules and locations of winter markets

Of the twenty cohort interview participants, five said they had used Double Up in the winter (November or later). Respondents who had not used the program in the winter expressed interest in learning about winter Double Up sites. One customer shared: “...I understand why they are from April to October; I wish they were more year-round. I understand there is the one year-round one, but that one is really hard for me to get to. Last year [I used Double Up] at The GrowHaus in December—I couldn't get to the all year-round market before April. Once I get food stamps again I'm hoping to go back to The GrowHaus or the all-year-round one.”²

Sense of Belonging

When asked about feeling a sense of belonging at the market, the majority of respondents shared they often or always feel connected with vendors and shoppers at the market and they often or always feel they belong at the market. The majority of respondents explained they felt at ease at the market, the market environment was friendly, and the market managers and vendors were friendly. One respondent commented that “everybody is just really nice, [it's a] small community; I've been introduced to some people [and] I go back to their booth all the time. Very nice there, even if not a Food Buck thing. Customer service is good at the farmers market.” Several respondents mentioned they felt they did not feel as welcome at the market or were not comfortable talking with people at the market. One customer explained the following: “I haven't gone to an actual outdoor farmers market, because I was nervous about using my SNAP benefits—it's nice if they have the little sign that says SNAP accepted here, then you don't have to ask somebody, you can just get what you need. With GoFarm, I already knew I didn't have to ask somebody or feel nervous ...” Other respondents commented they liked the informal aspects of the market, such as sharing information and feeling they were known. On this topic, a customer described the following experience: “I got to know everybody down there ... a purple bell pepper—I had never seen one. They got to tell me which part [of the market] to go to, they told me about the tomatoes, they told me which one: ‘use this tomato, not this one.’ They asked what I'm going to cook [and] told me which one [to use]—that's how nice they were [...]. Everybody got to know me.”

Fruit and Vegetable Consumption

Fruit and vegetable consumption was assessed by asking the number of times individuals ate different types of fruits and vegetables over the past month (data collected from December 2017 through February 2018) [8]. Thirty-two percent of our cohort met national recommendations for

² Note: The GrowHaus actually operates and redeems Double Up year-round, but this quote illustrates the need for more season extension and stronger messaging about where and when sites are open.

fruit intake and 57 percent met national recommendations for vegetable intake. To put these percentages into perspective, the CDC reported in 2015 that only 12.2 percent of adults met fruit consumption recommendations and only 9.3 percent of adults met vegetable consumption recommendations. The percentages of the population meeting these recommendations was worse for men, young adults, and adults living in poverty [9]. To assess if levels of fruit and vegetable consumption are sustained at higher levels for Double Up shoppers, the cohort will be interviewed two more times over a period of 12 months.

Primary Influencers for Customers

Central to the success of Double Up is the network of partners LiveWell has assembled to support the program throughout Colorado. While the partnerships are vast, the ways in which the partners work together vary from one community to the next. As part of the evaluation, the LiveWell team is always trying to learn more about the Double Up partners and what's working and not working to support the program. One mechanism designed to elicit knowledge from LiveWell's multi-sectoral partnerships are regional symposiums. Four half-day symposiums were organized across Colorado towards the end of 2017 and beginning of 2018 in Longmont, Pueblo, Grand Junction, and Durango. The convenings varied in size, but in total included 82 participants, representing vendors, market managers, advocates, SNAP and WIC enrollment agency personnel, community organizations, SNAP recipients, and partners such as Cooking Matters Colorado (CMCO).

Through the use of two breakout sessions and subsequent reporting back sessions, partners worked in small groups and then shared group findings with the full group. Each group had a facilitator and a note taker. The notes from these sessions were analyzed for the following themes:

1. Perceived successes
2. Perceived challenges
3. Partner engagement

Perceived Successes

Western Slope and Front Range symposium participants were energized by the Double Up program. From vendors to market managers to agency personnel to Double Up customers, there was universal belief that Double Up was on the right track for making an impact. They described a range of tactics and activities that were working at Double Up markets. Success was discussed as it related to tactics and activities to support customer engagement and key partnerships.

Related to tactics and activities, the symposium participants felt that the multi-layered marketing strategy was necessary and effective in spreading the word about the program. Importantly, one-size-fits-all marketing approaches will not work across Colorado. There is a need for multiple strategies at different scales to communicate about the program. Such strategies included print media, social media, flyers, billboards, radio, and TV. While billboards were perceived to be effective in one area, they may have not necessarily been effective in other areas. Moreover, these methods need to be linked to ongoing strategies in the community so LiveWell can leverage other investments that aim to address healthy eating, food access, and social justice. For example, a number of stakeholders mentioned linking Double Up to the physician-led programs that prescribe fruits and vegetables. Along this theme, many partners mentioned aligning with hospitals, healthcare organizations, and parks and recreation departments to distribute print materials. Others described success working with school resource navigators and school personnel to generate awareness of the program.

Another area of success includes key partnerships with organizations such as Cooking Matters Colorado. This partnership was crucial, according to partners across Colorado, because of the ability to show customers the potential impact of Double Up through cooking demonstrations and education around how to shop and what to buy. Many partners throughout Colorado emphasized the need to show, and not tell, that customers need to directly experience the markets and once they have this experience, they will be more likely to return to market. Along these lines, other organizations described opportunities to advertise Double Up through gardening programs and cooking classes as well as hosting community events to attract potential shoppers.

Perceived Challenges

Partners engaging in Double Up were passionate about the program and believe in its vision, mission, and goals. However, the partners and participants were realistic about the challenges that lie ahead for the program. Partners cautioned that reaching the Latino community may be complicated by the fact that Latino families fear giving more personal information to the government, not fully understanding that Double Up is not a government agency and as such has no formal reporting or relationship with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). Because of these fears, many families would rather forgo the benefits rather than risk deportation or other challenges to immigration. Additionally, symposium participants repeatedly raised the issue of the stigma of being a low-income shopper using federal food assistance at participating markets as a challenge for potential shoppers. Symposium participants discussed the need to train market managers and vendors in working with low-income shoppers to address this issue. Another challenge is the messaging of Double Up by LiveWell and the need to simplify the message so that potential shoppers understand what Double Up is, what “local” means, and how to use the program. Moreover, participants described the need to communicate about the benefits of the program to the local economy, the farming community, and vendors and retail sites.

Timing and frequency of the markets were identified as important challenges because people who work multiple jobs may not be able to attend Saturday markets. These customers want to be home with their families and catch up on personal matters. Finally, partners described a feeling of not quite knowing about the resources available in each community and SNAP recipients’ proximity to these resources. They felt that the use of geographic and other surveillance data would be helpful to better target resources and strategies for outreach and engagement.

Partner Engagement

Symposium participants emphasized the need to show people the program and not just tell them about it. They opined that market leadership is crucial to the success and sustainability of the program. Moreover, partners such as CMCO are essential in making connections with shoppers and farmers and showing how the market works and what to do with the food once you buy it. CMCO is an important connector between market managers, vendors, and LiveWell, as well as between customers and the organizations that refer shoppers to Double Up markets.

Moreover, symposium participants stressed the need to engage young people in the Double Up program. Working with schools and school-based counselors can provide an important mechanism to engage youth and their families. Community Food Advocates can help leverage the reach of the program by interfacing with other community partners and potential shoppers. Tactics such as giving tours and increasing exposure to the program become essential to support participation. Advocates and other partners can help achieve this goal.

V. Market & Vendor Impacts & Experiences

Overview of Participating Markets

In 2017, 85 markets (including farmers markets and retailers of all types) participated in the Double Up program, representing a 92 percent increase from 2016 (n=42 markets). Moreover, 66 percent of Double Up markets were located outside the Front Range in 2017, extending the reach of Double Up throughout Colorado (See Figure 1 for location of sites).

Market Manager Experiences

Twenty market managers completed the market manager survey in 2017, which asked about the usefulness of key training and market support materials offered through the Double Up program. Generally, managers felt the markets were effectively supported by LiveWell and the Colorado Farmers Market Association (CFMA). Many market managers also reported having internal support from their own team, which could be made up of both paid staff and volunteers. Sixty-five percent of market managers surveyed reported having paid staff at their markets, with the majority reporting one to five staff members. Almost all market managers (85 percent) also reported the use of unpaid market volunteers with almost half of markets staffing at least five volunteers. Since market staff capacity varies market to market, this may affect the success of Double Up or the ease of administering the program.

Vendor Experiences

Ninety-eight vendors completed the vendor survey in 2017, the purpose of which was to gather insights about vendor demographics and vendor experiences with the Double Up program. Slightly less than 50 percent of vendors had sold produce at their respective markets for five years or longer (Table 9: Vendor Perspectives about Program Impacts). Moreover, almost 70 of the vendors surveyed participated in the Double Up program in 2016, an important precedent for better implementation and increased sustainability of the program.

When asked about vendor improvements because of the Double Up program, the majority of vendors agreed that they increased their revenue from produce sales (60 percent), they improved their customer base (60 percent), they sold more fruits and vegetables (57 percent), and the market became stronger (66 percent) (see Table 9: Vendor Perspectives about Program Impacts). These findings are consistent with results from 2016 vendor survey and from data from the Michigan Double Up program, which found that 65 percent of surveyed farmers and vendors reported that they sold more produce, made more money, and improved their customer base because of SNAP incentives [3].

Vendors also bring extensive experiential knowledge to Double Up venues. For example, 50 percent of vendors reported at least ten years of farming experience. Of the vendors who reported annual farm sales data, 25 percent generated less than \$25,000 in annual farm sales and 16 percent generated between \$25,000 and \$99,000 dollars in annual farm sales. Of total annual farms sales, 40 percent of vendors estimated that almost over 50 percent of sales came from farmers markets (data not shown).

Table 9: Vendor Perspectives about Program Impacts

Characteristic	Count	Percent	Characteristic	Count	Percent
How long have you sold produce at this farmers' market?			As a Result of DUFB, I will purchase or lease new equipment		
This is my first year	16	16.3	I did this within the past 12 months	3	3.1
1-2 years	12	12.2	Very likely	4	4.1
3-4 years	16	16.3	Likely	5	5.1
5 or more years	43	43.9	Neutral	16	16.3
Did you participate in DUFB last year (2016)?			Not likely	19	19.4
Yes	67	68.4	Not at all likely	24	24.5
No	18	18.4	Not applicable	13	13.3
Missing	12	12.0	As a Result of DUFB, I will start or expand use of season extension techniques, such as hoop houses		
Food Assistance Programs Accepted by Vendor			I did this within the past 12 months	3	3.1
SNAP / EBT	82	83.7	Very likely	5	5.1
DUFB	87	88.8	Likely	12	12.2
WIC Fruit and Vegetable Vouchers	31	31.6	Neutral	12	12.2
Materials are Useful in Promoting DUFB			Not likely	18	18.4
Yes	60	61.2	Not at all likely	20	20.4
No	16	16.0	Not applicable	16	16.3
Missing	22	22.0	As a Result of DUFB, I will hire more employees		
As a Result of DUFB, I increased my revenue from produce sales			I did this within the past 12 months	1	1
Strongly Agree	29	29.6	Very likely	3	3.1
Agree	30	30.6	Likely	6	6.1
Neither Agree or Disagree	17	17.3	Neutral	15	15.3
Disagree	4	4.1	Not likely	24	24.5
Strongly Disagree	5	5	Not at all likely	26	26.5
As a Result of DUFB, I have a new customer base			Not applicable	10	10.2
Strongly Agree	24	24.5	As a Result of DUFB, I will increase the variety of crops grown		
Agree	35	35.7	I did this within the past 12 months	1	1
Neither Agree or Disagree	13	13.3	Very likely	10	10.2
Disagree	4	4.1	Likely	10	10.2
Strongly Disagree	5	5.1	Neutral	18	18.4
As a Result of DUFB, I sell more fruits and vegetables			Not likely	17	17.3
Strongly Agree	23	23.5	Not at all likely	20	20.4
Agree	33	33.7	Not applicable	11	11.2
Neither Agree or Disagree	16	16.3	As a Result of DUFB, I will put more land into production		
Disagree	6	6.1	I did this within the past 12 months	2	2
Strongly Disagree	5	5.1	Very likely	8	8.2
As a Result of DUFB, this market is stronger			Likely	8	8.2
Strongly Agree	39	39.8	Neutral	12	12.2
Agree	26	26.5	Not likely	18	18.4
Neither Agree or Disagree	9	9.2	Not at all likely	24	24.5
Disagree	4	4.1	Not applicable	13	13.3
Strongly Disagree	5	5.1			

In the vendor survey, vendors were asked a variety of questions about their attitudes and behaviors regarding the market environment and changes in strategies to support expansion of vendor activities because of Double Up. On a scale from 1 to 5, vendors described the likelihood they would make changes as a result of Double Up that relate to using technology to extend the season, hiring more employees, increasing variety of crops grown, and putting more land into production. Vendors in 2017 were generally more likely to make these changes and these perceptions were independent of whether they participated in the program in 2016 (data not shown). For example, when asked about using season extension techniques, the average score was 3.8. This indicates that vendors thought it was likely that this type of change would occur. In the second set of questions, using a scale of 1 to 5, vendors responded on a continuum of “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” to statements regarding the following themes: increased revenue from produce sales, new customer base, more fruits and vegetables sold, and the strength of the market.

From these responses, the evaluation team learned that vendors agreed, on average, that the market is stronger because of Double Up. Moreover, attitudes and behaviors assessed in 2017 are

more positive overall than in 2016, further informing our understanding of the Double Up program and perceived satisfaction with the program in 2017. Figure 3: Vendor behaviors and attitudes in 2016 and 2017 illustrates vendor survey responses.

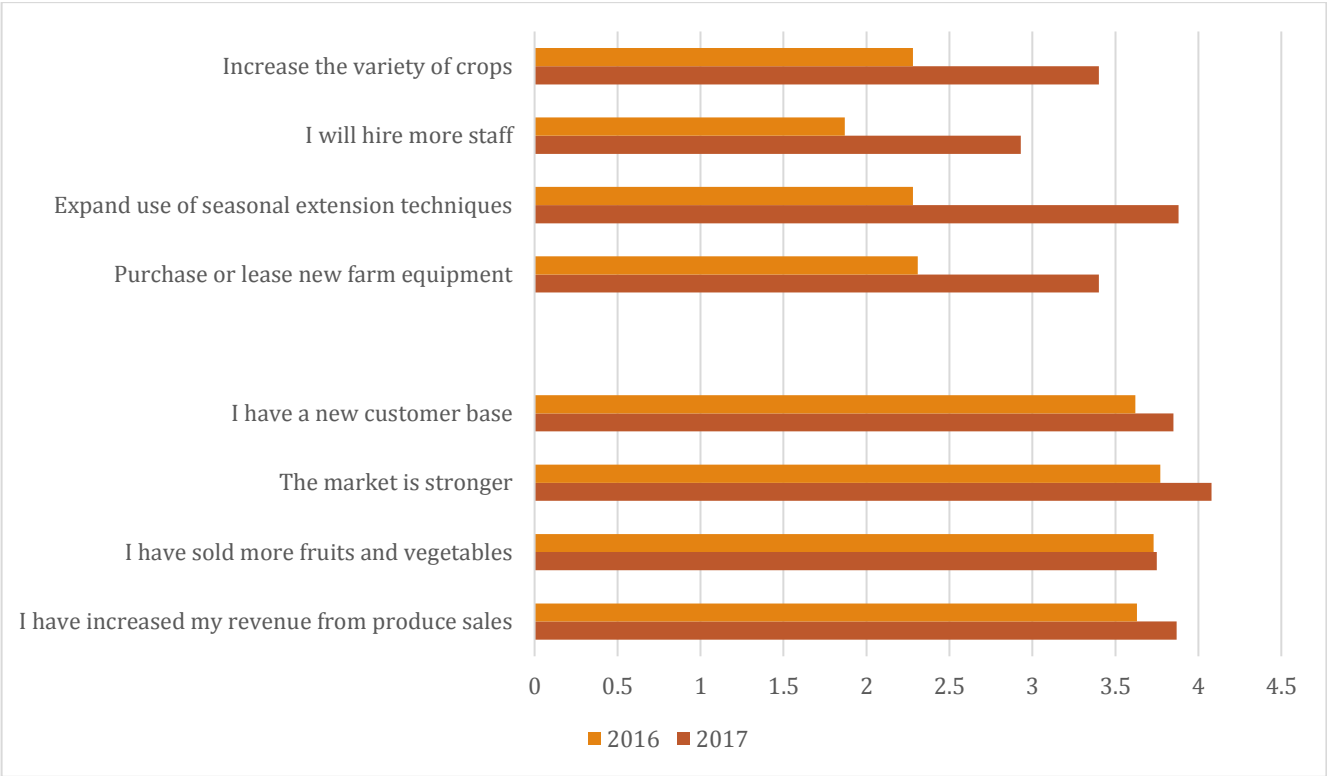


Figure 3: Vendor behaviors and attitudes in 2016 and 2017

VI. Program Learning from Community Food Advocates

Eight Community Food Advocates (Advocates) from Denver and the Southwest completed post-season interviews in fall 2017. These conversations provided important insights into the following areas: outreach, implementation, institutional strengthening, community readiness, barriers to participation, skills-building, program improvements, and recommendations for future Advocates. Insights from Advocates informed program learning around both the consumer and market/vendor experiences and also provides guidance on how to strengthen engagement of all stakeholders.

Outreach Strategies

Advocates reported a range of tactics and activities to increase participation in the Double Up program, which resulted in bringing new customers to the markets and retail settings. Advocates emphasized the importance of personalized and face-to-face interactions with potential customers. Most Advocates mentioned working with supermarkets to engage customers and connecting with community organizations to raise awareness about the program. They interfaced with churches, newspaper and radio outlets, and other institutions that have a role in promoting Double Up. Advocates also used social media and flyers and made formal presentations to share information about the program.

Implementation Challenges

Advocates shared various challenges they faced when helping to implement the Double Up program. One specific challenge identified was the difficulty of explaining a “complex” or “confusing” program in a way that was understandable to potential customers. Some Advocates did not feel prepared to engage with different ethnic, linguistic, and cultural communities and lacked the ability to identify the best way to communicate once connections were made. Recognizing the causes and consequences of food insecurity, Advocates understood the need to be nimble in their approaches due to fluctuations in customers’ financial circumstances—and hence their SNAP eligibility—over the course of the season. The reality that customers’ SNAP eligibility may not be consistent complicated Advocates’ ability to do outreach and form relationships in the community.

Institutional Strengthening

Most Advocates (six out of eight) conducted outreach with institutions and other community organizations. Advocates generally reported positive interactions with agency personnel, although one indicated that it was difficult to obtain a response from one specific organization. Advocates agreed that scheduling meetings was important to best explain how the Double Up program works, who is eligible for benefits, and how to refer potential customers to the program.

Community Readiness

Advocates suggested readiness for program adoption and implementation appeared to be low in some communities. Advocates perceived there was limited knowledge of the program when engaging potential customers. In contrast to individual customers, community organizations and institutions seemed excited about Double Up and were eager to promote the program.

Barriers to Participation

Advocates identified several barriers to participation for Double Up customers. Commonly identified barriers, both in Southwest Colorado and in Denver, include language barriers, lack of cooking experience, and negative perceptions about markets as being unwelcoming and elitist. Moreover, inconvenient market days and times can be an obstacle for potential customers. For example, Advocates reflected that most markets are held on Saturday mornings, which is not an ideal time for those who work long hours and multiple jobs during the week. Additionally, the location of the markets can be a barrier to customers. A market may be in a location that requires extra driving time and expense, particularly in rural areas in Southwest Colorado. Advocates in both regions also thought cultural differences in food preferences and shopping norms might prevent shoppers from trying a Double Up site. Finally, among Latino communities, Advocates warned that there was considerable distrust of federal programs. Although some Latino families may already receive SNAP benefits, potential customers were concerned about revealing their personal information to people they did not know. Advocates shared that some of these SNAP recipients feared that drawing attention to themselves would have negative consequences for their immigration status.

Skills Building Competencies for Advocates

Additional training in the areas of communication, leadership development, advocacy, service coordination, and capacity building were designed to support the Advocate program. When Advocates were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the initial training sessions, they, in

general, felt that the training prepared them to accomplish the goals of the program. However, they were less satisfied, on average, with the skills-based core competencies training. Over time, only half of the Advocates felt their competencies improved over their tenure in the program. Those who did notice improvements, felt they improved their communication skills, learned to work remotely, and were able to adapt their communication styles and strategies for different communities.

Program Improvements

Several Advocates felt a disconnect between the goals of LiveWell and the needs on the ground to implement the program. For example, some Advocates believe time spent building relationships in the community should be valued, yet these efforts were not easily recorded in Advocates' activity logs, which were designed to capture outreach efforts. These advocates also requested other ways to provide feedback to LiveWell other than the monthly calls. They perceived the staff at LiveWell to be distant at times and felt they would benefit from regular, individual check-ins. Finally, the Advocates felt the expectations for respective scopes of work did not align with the compensation they received.

Recommendations for Future Program Implementation

Advocates offered recommendations for future cohorts of the program, including encouraging LiveWell to facilitate more opportunities for in-person meetings and collaboration among Advocates. They also recommended LiveWell support Advocates in establishing institutional relationships early in the season before markets are in full-swing and while managers and Double Up partners are less consumed with market and retail operations. Advocates also suggested that maps that detail their territories and related resources would be helpful to understand the extent and distribution of outreach efforts and to identify target areas where enrollment is lacking.

Summary of recommendations from Advocates:

- Host events at farmers markets
- Provide promotional media and materials to be used on social media and in ways that are tailored to local and cultural means for communication
- Expand social media presence
- Provide understandable materials that explain how Double Up works and how customers can use their benefits
- Create more opportunities for Advocates to get together and work together
- Establish institutional relationships early in the season
- Establish a regular schedule and flow of communication among advocates
- Map areas in the community that have been reached

Implications

The Advocate program aims to increase participation in the Double Up program in communities across the state. It also strives to prepare Advocates to work with organizations, institutions, and customers to build readiness for the program and increase the amount of benefits used to purchase fruits and vegetables at Double Up sites. Advocates can serve as vital connectors in communities, helping activate networks of professionals and community members to promote the Double Up program. Finding the right balance of tactics and activities will be necessary to ensure

future Advocates are set up for success in achieving the goals of the Advocate program and making a difference in the path to behavior changes among Double Up customers.

VII. Role of Marketing & Communications

The Double Up program implemented a paid media campaign and a communication plan to market the program across the state. In total, the paid media campaign in 2017 created more than 42,000,000 impressions, which is the number of times someone had the potential to see or hear an advertisement for Double Up. In order to reach Coloradans who participate in SNAP, the media buy targeted low-income audiences in both English and Spanish. The media also targeted residents in the counties that had participating markets.

In addition to driving foot traffic to the markets, the paid media campaign also drove traffic to DoubleUpColorado.org. From April through December of 2017, DoubleUpColorado.org had more than 74,616 visits from 56,501 unique visitors who stayed on the site for an average of 1 minute and 54 seconds. More than half of the total web visitors came directly to the site, meaning they typed in the web page rather than clicking through to it from a search engine or another online location. Another 36 percent of visitors came to the site from Google or another organic search. On the website, 1,670 entries were made to the online survey form, indicating general enthusiasm for the program.

Digital advertising on mobile banners, Facebook and paid search generated 5.38 million impressions and 32,412 clicks through to the Double Up website, making up 43 percent of total website traffic. The majority of impressions were served on mobile phones, and tablet users had the highest click-through rates.

LiveWell was able to place outdoor advertising in 18 different communities throughout Colorado, generating more than 19 million impressions, and enabling paid media reach into the more rural parts of Colorado. The campaign intentionally placed billboards in locations near markets that accepted Double Up. The out-of-home advertising campaign also included 25 bus tails in Denver, a bus bench in an area where the nearest billboard was not available, and a mobile billboard in a rural county without sufficient out-of-home advertising options.

LiveWell also purchased radio advertisements in all of the major media markets in Colorado (Denver, Colorado Springs, Fort Collins, Grand Junction, and Durango), which generated over 17,000 impressions and also enabled four markets to be featured in remote broadcasts with specific stations.

To complement the Double Up advertising efforts, LiveWell developed and distributed a variety of collateral materials to markets and other vendors as well as partners to aid in outreach and point-of-sale marketing. Collateral pieces included flyers (statewide and regional), banners, door hangers, POS signage, posters, and vouchers. Each region received a supply (quantities varied based on location), and partners had the ability to order additional materials through LiveWell as the season progressed. In some cases, they could also download the templates and customize documents.

Finally, the paid media campaign included print ads in 14 community newspapers around the state, including two Spanish-language papers. The print ads generated 573,000 impressions and ensured targeted outreach into communities with Double Up locations.

In addition to the paid advertising campaign, press coverage about Double Up generated 3,684,444 impressions in communities where Double Up was available. Some examples of press coverage are included below.

[South Fork and Creede plan farmers markets](#)

Valley Courier

Both markets accept SNAP and Double Up Food Bucks, which doubles the value of federal nutrition (SNAP or food stamps) benefits spent at participating markets, helping participants bring home more healthy fruits and vegetables and supporting area farmers.

[Doubling Up Food Stamp Dollars Makes Sense to Promote Healthy Eating](#)

CBS Denver

Low-income families in the Denver metro area can now both find and afford healthy food. That's thanks to a federal grant, local farmers and convenience stores willing to offer fresh fruits and vegetables.

[Double up food bucks program leads to more healthy eating](#)

KJCT8

All families, even those struggling in the Grand Valley can now find affordable local produce at the downtown Grand Junction farmer's market.

[Pagosa Farmers Market supports SNAP shoppers with Double Up Bucks](#)

Pagosa Springs Sun

The Pagosa Farmers Market is the recipient of a grant from the national organization, Farmers Market Coalition, in the form of an EBT terminal that will accept SNAP, thus allowing the market to initiate the Double Up Food Bucks program supported by Live Well.

Double Up Food Bucks (Double Up) launched at Lowe's Mercado in Aurora and Food King in Greeley on Wednesday, June 14th and garnered televised news coverage on [9news](#), Entravision, and Telemundo, as well as [Denverite Newspaper](#).

LiveWell also used its own social media channels to promote Double Up. Posts on Facebook related to Double Up generated 46,408 organic impressions (not counting those garnered through the paid Facebook campaign). There were 19 posts related to Double Up over the course of the year, with an average of 1,726 impressions per post. Over the course of the year, 812 users engaged with Double Up posts, for example by commenting on, liking, sharing, or clicking on particular elements of the post.

Website visitors indicated that they heard about Double Up from a range of different sources (Table 10). Fifty-nine percent of website visitors learned about the program through LiveWell Colorado or its paid advertising campaign (radio, billboard, web, bus ad, Facebook, LWC, or newspaper ad), demonstrating the value of LiveWell's marketing efforts in driving people to the website. However, the customer survey (Table 11) also asked respondents to identify where they heard about Double Up, and the responses were markedly different from those received on the website (note that respondents to the customer survey could select more than one option, while the website form was limited to just one answer.) Notably, only 4 percent of customer survey responses indicated that they heard about Double Up through paid advertising. The customer

survey was a much smaller sample size but may have been a better indicator of those who actually participated in Double Up rather than simply visiting the Double Up website.

Table 10: How People Hear About the Double Up Program

Source	Number	Percent of Total
Radio ad	455	27%
Human Services / SNAP office	230	14%
Friend / family	155	9%
Web	148	9%
Billboard	116	7%
Bus ad	99	6%
Facebook	87	5%
LiveWell Colorado	76	5%
Other	61	4%
News story	41	2%
Public Health / WIC office	35	2%
Flyer / poster	34	2%
Food pantry	32	2%
Healthcare provider	30	2%
Farmers market	25	1%
Food distribution or meal program	18	1%
Newspaper ad	11	1%
Food store	10	1%
Postcard	4	0%
Door hanger	3	0%
Totals	1,670	100%

Table 11: How Double Up Customers Heard about the Program

Source	Number	Percent of Total
At the farmers market	97	32%
Friend or family	41	14%
Flyer or poster at Human Services / SNAP Office	26	9%
Someone at Human Services / SNAP Office told me about it	26	9%
Flyer or poster at another community location	20	7%
Community organization	13	4%
Advertisement (on TV, radio, or newspaper)	12	4%
Someone at Public Health / WIC Office told me about it	11	4%
At a food pantry	10	3%
Billboard	9	3%
At the grocery store	8	3%
At a food distribution or meal program	6	2%
Story or interview on the news	5	2%
Healthcare provider	5	2%
Door hanger	3	1%
Mail received at home	3	1%
School	3	1%
Agency	2	1%
Bus stop ad	1	0%
Gas pump topper	0	0%
Web / Facebook / Twitter	0	0%
Totals	301	100%

VIII. Discussion & Next Steps

Primary Take-Aways from 2017

A key success from 2017 was the significant growth in partner sites from 2016. The number of Double Up sites doubled from 2016 to 2017. This brought in many new customers—63 percent surveyed reported not having participated in the program in 2016. The number of individual transactions also grew by 136 percent and number of unique customers by 129 percent.

Growth can also be attributed to new approaches in outreach, such as engaging institutional partners from WIC in the Double Up program. Customers who reported also participating in WIC increased from 0.4 percent in 2016 to almost 10 percent in 2017. The Double Up team also adjusted and added new forms of outreach between the two program years. Our data showed that 10 percent of customers learned about the program through door hangers, 7 percent through human services flyers, and 4 percent through social media in 2017 (2016 data showed no respondents reporting these as a method for learning about the program). The results of these new approaches display modest gains, and could mean that diversification in outreach approaches could be a primary reason.

Additionally, several partnerships supported Double Up's healthy eating goals throughout 2017—especially LiveWell's partnership with Cooking Matters. Approximately 50 percent of customers reported receiving information about cooking or purchasing fruits and vegetables at the market and 80 percent of those who received information agreed they were more likely to buy more fresh produce in the future.

While evaluation results show the incentive program to have a general positive impact on behavior change around customers buying more, eating more, and trying new fruits and vegetable, attitudes about the shopping experience may still be a barrier. Between 2016 and 2017 survey results reveal a raise in reported price of fruits and vegetables at the Double Up site compared to where customers usually shop. This increase could be attributed to overall rising prices of fruits and vegetables. The Double Up evaluation team hopes to continue to identify the impact of this program on long-term behavior change through the Double Up participant cohort interviews.

An important missing component of the evaluation is adequate data about the gender, education, and racial/ethnic diversity of Double Up participants by outcomes. There are, however, general descriptive statistics about participants in the program. For example, customers with a college degree or higher are over-represented in consumer surveys, with 52 percent of respondents in both 2016 and 2017. At this stage, there is not enough data to understand demographic representation of the program at the local and regional levels. Future evaluation goals include measuring participation and outcomes by demographics (e.g. X percent of women self-report increase in consumption). Further research is needed to understand representation of our sample, how data collection methods impact sample representation, accuracy of demographic information, and other variables to determine how participation and outcomes compare to population-level data (e.g. Double Up Evaluation findings vs. Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System findings).

New outreach approaches, combined with new expansions such as Double Up at large retail sites (Lowe's) and at individual farms that redeemed a great deal of incentives, meant a new customer base and more money for farmers' businesses.

In both program years, vendors reported generally positive attitudes about how the program impacted their business. Results from the vendor survey also revealed the direct benefit to vendors with 60 percent of vendors agreeing they saw an increase in revenue from produce sales and 60 percent agreeing they developed a new customer base as a result of the program. In 2017 alone, \$334,074 in SNAP and Double Up incentives went to vendors and farmers participating in the program. While some markets might still have accepted SNAP if Double Up was not operating, we know from customer surveys that 73 percent of customers agreed they came to the market because of the Double Up program. These types of data can be key in recruiting vendors and reinforcing to vendors and market managers the benefit of participating in Double Up.

The 2017 Double Up Food Bucks evaluation continues to show the progress of the program. It continues to reinforce that the approach is creating triple wins in communities— supporting local economies, supporting local farmers, and providing access to healthy food for low-income Coloradans. As the program and the evaluation evolve, additional research will be needed to understand how Double Up is creating equity, changing behaviors of participants, strengthening outreach and partnerships, measuring economic impact, and quantifying how Advocates play a key role in supporting the goals. While there are data to support many of these trends, continuing to refine and leverage methods will be essential next steps.

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X. Appendix A: Recommendations from the Advisory Team

Lesson Learned from 2017

The Double Up Food Bucks Advisory Team consists of diverse partners from public health, county agencies, nonprofits, and other community organizations who share ideas and provide perspectives on decisions being made regarding Double Up Colorado. The Advisory Team's primary roles and responsibilities involve discussing and serving as thought partners around a variety of actions including 1) the Double Up evaluation; 2) fundraising and development; and 3) communications and outreach for the program.

In June 2018, LiveWell Colorado staff convened the Advisory Team to share and review a draft 2017 Double Up Food Bucks evaluation report. The purpose was to engage the team to share their initial impressions, support LiveWell staff in the interpretation of the results, and generate a list of lessons learned. These lessons learned were prioritized by what could be done immediately, what could be done with some additional resources, and what could be done with significant resources. This dialogue resulted in the eight lessons learned below. They will be used to guide the direction for Double Up Food Bucks moving forward.

1. **Capacity building for markets is important:** 85 percent of Double Up Food Bucks markets operate with unpaid volunteers. This limits the capacity of market staff to bring awareness to the program (such as hanging signs), to train and explain the program succinctly to customers on-site, and to offer reminders for customers to return to the market.
2. **Double Up Customers need to be engaged consistently:** Slightly less than 50 percent of customers shopped at a Double Up Food Buck' market more than one time in 2017. Four main factors to encourage repeat market visits were identified through the cohort interviews, including reminders to visit the market location and reminders about winter locations. Customers need to be engaged as the seasons shift, new fruits and vegetables are in-season, etc. in order to continue to visit market locations.
3. **Increased work with grocery stores is important:** Seasonal extension of the program was also identified by customers as a need. Many Double Up farmers markets operate for only three months of the year, leaving gaps for customers. Continuing to work with grocery stores, both independent and chain stores, increases the engagement of customers, even when produce is limited.
4. **Messaging needs to be simplified:** Double Up participants in the cohort interviews and the four symposiums identified that the 2016 and 2017 messaging was unclear. Both "stretch your food dollar" and "buy 1, get 1" messaging left it unclear to consumers how to actually use the program. Messaging needs to be simplified and offered with instructional information in order to motivate customers to try the program, overcome stigma associated with local food spaces, and to understand the diversity of options in utilizing Double Up Food Bucks.
5. **Farmers could be more engaged:** Only 66 percent of vendors agreed that Double Up Food Bucks makes their market stronger. To understand the barriers for farmers accepting Double Up Food Bucks, opportunities to give feedback need to be strengthened.
6. **Nutrition education and incentive programs pair well together:** Over half of customers reported receiving information, and of that, the majority (86 percent) agreed the

information resulted in them purchasing and consuming more fruits and vegetables. This type of partnership should be expanded in the future.

7. **Stigma remains a barrier:** Advocates identified that markets can still be perceived as elitist and unwelcoming. This claim is supported anecdotally at the symposiums when SNAP recipients shared their hesitation in trying a program.

What to Expect in Year Three

1. **Simpler Messaging:** The outreach and messaging campaign will include instructions on how to use the program, videos for each site type, and an improved location feature offered both online and through a text number.
2. **New ways to engage customers:** To increase customer retention, the Double Up team will offer a bimonthly e-newsletter, text campaigns, and an expanded partnership with Cooking Matters.
3. **Expanded Community Food Advocate Program:** The Community Food Advocate program will expand to include Garfield County, Montrose, the San Luis Valley, and Adams County.

XI. Appendix B: Core & Financial Partners

Core Program Partners

LiveWell Colorado increases access to healthy eating and active living by removing barriers that inequitably and disproportionately affect low-income communities and people of color. LiveWell convened the planning process for this grant opportunity, bringing together 35 organizations from 19 counties, to identify shared values and priorities, query local food policy councils through the **Colorado Food Policy Network**, and capture feedback from other local partners. LiveWell is the project director and supports all aspects of Double Up Colorado.

Colorado Department of Human Services (CDHS) is the state agency responsible for administering the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly food stamps) and fully supports the Double Up Colorado Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Project. Since 2011, CDHS has worked with the Colorado Farmers Market Association (CFMA) and markets and partners around the state to increase SNAP participants' access to fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets via electronic benefit transfer (EBT) machines and other supports. CDHS strongly believes that this program will benefit many Coloradans struggling to make healthy food choices and is committed to supporting outreach to SNAP participants in the relevant counties. CDHS has provided EBT machines at no charge to farmers markets in Colorado through a USDA grant for the past three years.

Colorado Farmers Market Association (CFMA) is a membership organization that includes 42 total markets located across the state. CFMA's role in Double Up Colorado is to provide guidance and technical support to participating markets, collaborate with LiveWell on market outreach and coordination, work with the evaluator to monitor progress toward program goals, share best practices among participating markets, and prepare project and financial reports. CFMA currently provides technical assistance to markets on SNAP and incentives and is evaluating the effectiveness of these efforts. Thirty-five farmers markets and farm stands participated in Double Up Colorado in year one.

Cooking Matters Colorado (CMCO) is a statewide SNAP-Ed provider of nutrition and food skills education, partners with more than 280 organizations, including farmers markets, grocery stores, food pantries, and other community organizations, to ensure low-income residents have access to healthy food. CMCO has connected more than 79,000 families in need with high-quality, research-based nutrition education in 51 of Colorado's 64 counties. CMCO offers onsite nutrition education to Double Up Colorado sites to increase participants' understanding of the nutritional value of fruit and vegetable consumption, as well as how to prepare these foods in delicious, healthy meals.

Boulder County Public Health (BCPH) implements Harvest Bucks, a program within BCPH's Built Environment and Healthy Eating Active Living (HEAL) Program that seeks to increase health equity by improving access to fruits and vegetables for Boulder County's low-income residents. The Harvest Bucks Program, a core partner of Double Up Colorado, incentivizes fruit and vegetable purchases at Boulder, Longmont, and Denver farmers markets for SNAP participants; provides education and outreach; and tracks and evaluates program effectiveness. Boulder is a StrikeForce county.

The Colorado Department of Agriculture, the Colorado Fruit and Vegetable Growers' Association, and Rocky Mountain Farmers Union collectively partner with the majority of fruit and vegetable growers all across the state. These organizations identify and elevate new direct market opportunities for Colorado growers, including to underserved and lower-income communities that might lack access to fresh foods. They support Double Up Colorado by encouraging their members to participate in the program at partner farmers markets and retailers and by educating their members about ways to communicate and engage with SNAP participants that will encourage repeat customer visits.

Financial Partners

The Colorado Health Foundation focuses on helping Coloradans live their healthiest lives by advancing opportunities to pursue good health and achieve health equity through grantmaking, policy and advocacy, strategic private investments, and convening to drive change.

The Anthem Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Anthem Inc. Since its establishment the foundation has granted more than \$165 million to organizations that support its Healthy Generations program.

- **Boulder County Department of Housing & Human Services**
- **Boulder County Department of Parks & Open Space**
- **Boulder County Farmers Market Association**
- **City & County of Denver Office of Children's Affairs**
- **City of Boulder**
- **City of Greeley**
- **Denver Department of Human Services**
- **Denver Environmental Health**
- **The Denver Foundation**
- **Denver Health Foundation**
- **Denver Urban Gardens**
- **Explore Communications**
- **First Southwest Bank**
- **Garfield County of Public Health**
- **GoFarm**
- **The GrowHaus**
- **North Colorado Health Alliance**
- **Region 10 League**
- **Saguache Works**
- **San Luis Valley Local Foods Coalition**