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PRESS RELEASE

Baker-Polito Administration Awards $3 Million in Food Security Grants

Also Announces Selection of 39 New Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) Vendors

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito

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LYNN — Today, the Baker-Polito Administration announced nearly $3 million in grants to address urgent food insecurity for Massachusetts residents as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic and make the Commonwealth's food system more resilient. This funding is being awarded as part of the first round of the new $36 million Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program, created following recommendations from the Administration's COVID-19 Command Center's Food Security Task Force, which promotes ongoing efforts to ensure that individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth have access to healthy, local food.

The Administration also announced the first round of new vendors for the Healthy Incentives Program (HIP), funded through $5 million in additional funds recommended by the Food Security Task Force. Thirty-nine new vendors were selected based on their ability to respond to the needs of populations and communities most significantly impacted by the pandemic including communities of color and older adults, serve areas designated as food deserts or low-access areas, and reach SNAP client populations disproportionally impacted by COVID-19.

"During this pandemic, Massachusetts' food supply chain has faced significant challenges and there is an urgent need for food security to support our most vulnerable residents," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "This new funding is a $3 million investment in the infrastructure we need to continue to respond to the impacts of the pandemic, while creating a system that provides more equitable access to nutritious, local food in the Commonwealth."

"Increasing food security and the resiliency of our food system is essential to protecting public health and local jobs," **said Lieutenant Governor Karyn Polito.** "Our Administration's new grant program will help ensure the

Commonwealth's farmers, fishermen, food banks, and other food businesses can continue contributing to our economy and connect fresh, local food with Massachusetts residents."

The Food Insecurity Infrastructure Grant Program was **announced** (/news/baker-polito-administration-invests-56-million-to-combat-food-insecurity-in-massachusetts) in May 2020 as part of a $56 million investment by the Baker-Polito Administration to combat urgent food insecurity for Massachusetts families and individuals as a result of COVID-19. The Administration also announced $12 million for the provision of 25,000 family food boxes per week through a regional food supply system, and $3 million in funding as an immediate relief valve to food banks.

"The Command Center's Food Security Task Force has been pursuing strategic investments to bolster the food system and provide emergency supplies to meet residents' immediate needs," **said COVID-19 Command Center Director and Health and Human Services Secretary Marylou Sudders**. "These investments are targeted to support organizations across the Commonwealth in producing and supplying food to communities in need, and will help strengthen the system that has been strained by the COVID-19 pandemic, and beyond."

"This ongoing crisis has highlighted the importance of ensuring that the food grown and produced here in Massachusetts reaches all our residents, especially vulnerable populations and those struggling with food insecurity," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Kathleen Theoharides.** "This grant program provides a great opportunity to strengthen our diverse food system, allow for greater access to local food in a way that supports customer and worker safety, and address systemic inequities around access to fresh, local food."

"The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the strengths and weaknesses of the food system," **said Department of Agricultural Resources Commissioner John Lebeaux**. "These Food Security Infrastructure Grants will help to strengthen the resiliency of Massachusetts' farmers and fishers, and better connect locally grown and produced food products with the Commonwealth residents most underserved by healthy, fresh food options."

The Administration today also launched a food assistance decision tree, to help residents in need determine which programs they might be eligible for. This tool can be accessed at **mass.gov/findfoodhelp** (/decision-tree/find-food-assistance).

Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program

The goal of the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program is to ensure that individuals and families throughout the Commonwealth have access to food, with a focus on food that is produced locally and equitable access to food. The program also seeks to ensure that farmers, fisherman and other local food producers are better connected to a strong, resilient food system to help mitigate future food supply and distribution disruption.

The first round of the grant program includes 26 awards totaling $2,941,838 to fund investments in technology, equipment, increased capacity, and other assistance to help producers distribute food, especially to food insecure communities. When evaluating the applications, considerations included equity, economic impact and need, sustainability and scalability of efforts, and ability to support producer readiness to accept SNAP and HIP benefits.

Applications will continue to be evaluated on a rolling basis through September 15, 2020. Eligible grantees include entities that are part of the Massachusetts local food system including production, processing and distribution, the emergency food distribution network, Buy Local, community and food organizations, school meal programming, urban farms and community gardens, non-profits, and organizations that provide business planning, technical assistance and information technology services. The Request for Responses for project proposals is available **here** (/service-details/food-security-infrastructure-grant-program).

The awardees for the first round of the Food Security Infrastructure Grant Program include:

Grant Recipient ()	Project Description	Grant Amount
Franklin Public Schools	Franklin Public School's Food Service Program will expand outreach to the community by implementing a remote ordering system that can allow families to place meal orders online.	$5,304
Red Apple Farm	This grant will fund infrastructure changes needed at the farm that include increased refrigerated storage, purchase of a refrigerated delivery van, and a computerized inventory and delivery account system.	$88,109
Adams Farm Slaughterhouse LLC	Adams Farm Slaughterhouse will purchase a walk-in freezer, air conditioning for the processing and packaging area, expansion of the processing and packaging area, and a new merchandising case.	$304,963
Chestnut Lot Farm	Chestnut Lot Farm will purchase welded stainless pans to increase production.	$6,485
Boys & Girls Club of Greater Haverhill, Inc.	This grant will fund additional equipment to store, prepare, and distribute meals for their grab-n-go dinner program.	$9,358
Pioneer Valley Growers Association	The Pioneer Valley Growers Association (PVGA) will build a new cold storage facility, install a new inventory tracking computer software system, and provide technical assistance to PVGA staff and members.	$439,707
Mexirico	Mexirico will buy a delivery truck or van to deliver food to people who are SNAP recipients in need.	$40,000
Walpole Public Schools	Walpole Public Schools will purchase mobile food stations and accompanying signage. The mobile food stations will allow their school nutrition department to safely and efficiently serve students.	$327,964

Food 4 Kids/Church of the Holy Spirit	This grant will fund coolers to transport meals safely to distribution sites.	$2,500
Map Academy Charter School	The school will purchase three vans to allow for the delivery of meals throughout the summer and beyond. The vans will be used to provide daily food deliveries to students and their families.	$122,664
Clarkdale Fruit Farms Inc.	This grant will fund the purchase of a refrigerated delivery vehicle to facilitate safer deliveries of produce and allow for expansion of markets and wider distribution.	$44,327
Franklin Public Schools	Franklin Public Schools will purchase insulated food carriers to expand its food delivery capability both onsite and offsite to help deliver more food to those in need.	$6,328
Colchester Farm	Colchester Farm partners with Farm & Community Collaborative, Inc., a local nonprofit organization that improves access to local farm fresh produce for underserved populations within the Gateway cities of Brockton, Fall River, New Bedford, and Taunton. The farm will purchase additional equipment to bring 10 more acres into production.	$58,000
Farm and Community Collaborative, Inc.	This grant will fund the purchase of a refrigerated distribution vehicle with sufficient capacity to accommodate the farm's increase in produce distributions.	$74,873
Springfield Public Schools	Springfield Public Schools aims to provide 100% prepackaged meals to 25,000 students both in school and provide meals for students to take home when they are e-learning for the 2020-21 school year. This grant will fund the cost of packaging machinery, a refrigerated truck, and additional insulated bags for classroom meal delivery.	$485,248
Rockland Public Schools	This grant will fund the purchase of two new vehicles with coolers built in to meet the need of serving breakfast and lunches to children every day.	$69,292
Harvest Farm Produce LLC	Harvest Farm will install an efficient vacuum cooler and a portable engine driven irrigation pump. These investments in production and processing infrastructure at Harvest Farm will leverage the farm's existing specialization in wholesale production to scale up and meet the increased demand for locally grown food during the COVID-19 pandemic.	$308,133

North of Boston Farm	This grant will expand the farm's home delivery model and expand to those with language and cultural barriers. This grant will fund the purchase of a refrigerated/heated van, mobile farm stand trailer, cooler/heater unit and insulation for existing box truck, Khmer translation services, and English/Khmer farmers market pandemic safety signs and barriers.	$90,000
Pembroke Ps	This grant will fund a cooler for each elementary classroom so students can receive pre-ordered breakfast and lunch meals in a safe manner.	$4,560
Dedham Public Schools	This grant will fund a refrigerated food truck to expand Dedham Public School's meal distribution program to reach more students/residents in need.	$60,000
The Salem Pantry	This grant will fund the development of a new food storage and distribution warehouse. This warehouse space will expand Salem Pantry's storage capabilities for fresh produce, frozen meats, dairy and eggs. This grant will also fund the purchase of a new van to support expanded food distribution to food insecure residents as well as new office equipment for inventory management.	$128,000
Ward Aquafarms, LLC	Ward Aquafarms will build a walk-in cooler installation so they can begin direct sales on shellfish.	$31,371
Stone Soup LLC dba Langwater Farm	This grant will fund the purchase of farm production equipment, a tractor, and a delivery van to produce 40% more certified organic and transitional organic fruits and vegetables.	$195,157
Acushnet Public Schools	This grant will fund additional equipment and supplies for Acushnet Public Schools to prepare, store, and serve individual meals in the classroom and to send home to students who are learning remotely. This will include food sealing machines, additional refrigeration and heated storage units and insulated containers to transport the meals to classrooms.	$31,190

Healthy Incentives Program New Vendors

The Healthy Incentives Program (HIP) provides matching benefits for SNAP households who purchase locally grown produce from participating Massachusetts vendors. HIP vendors include farm stands, farmers markets, mobile markets, and CSA farm share programs. Learn more at **mass.gov/HIP** (/healthy-incentives-program-hip).

The majority of the newly selected HIP vendors are local, small-scale farmers who live in or have close ties to the communities and populations they intend to serve, while other selected applicants are local agricultural vendors with demonstrated capacity to serve high-need communities through delivery, mobile markets, and

targeted outreach. Sixty-six percent of the selected vendors will serve families in a Gateway City, 49% of the selected vendors will serve multiple communities, and 23% will expand access to towns with no HIP vendors in 2019. The Department of Transitional Assistance received 90 applications in response to a Notice of Opportunity **announced** (/news/baker-polito-administration-announces-availability-of-41-million-in-support-for-food-security) on June 11.

New Vendors:

Vendor Name	Primary Locations To Be Served
2 Cents Homegrown	Springfield
40 Acres Farms	Springfield
All Farmers	West Springfield, Springfield
Back Azimuth Farm	Wareham, Boston, Brockton
Barnabas Forndia	Worcester, Auburn, Webster, Holden
Black Seed Farmers Market	Milford, Worcester
Checkerberry Farm	Orleans
Chris Farm Stand	Bradford
Coastal Foodshed	New Bedford, Fall River, Wareham
Dick's Market Garden	Quincy, South Boston, and additional locations
Effloresce Culture & Design	Mattapan, Dorchester, Roxbury, Marlborough, Chelsea
Everett Community Growers	Everett

Fabiola Nizigiyimana	Worcester
Full Well Farm	Adams, North Adams, Cheshire
Great Falls Farmers Market	Turner's Falls
Growing Places Garden Project Inc	Athol, Ashburnham, Clinton, Fitchburg, Gardner, Lancaster, Leominster, Westminster, Winchendon
Hilltown Mobile Market	Cummington, Huntington, Worthington
Holyoke Farmers Market	Holyoke
Many Hands Farm Corps/Amherst Mobile Market	Amherst
Marie Romaje	Roslindale
Mycoterra Farm	Quincy, Lynn, Billerica, Bedford, and delivery throughout Berkshire, Franklin, Hampshire, Hampden, Worcester, Middlesex, Essex, Suffolk, and Norfolk counties
New Entry Sustainable Farming Project	Gloucester
Orange Farmers Market	Orange
Oriental Farm	East Boston
Regional Environmental Council, Inc.	Worcester, Webster, Southbridge
Riquezas del Campo Cooperative Farm	Springfield, Northampton, Greenfield
Roots Rising	Pittsfield

Round the Bend Farm	New Bedford
Sibling Organic Crops, LLC	Brockton, Dorchester, Waltham
Small Farm	Stow, Hudson, Maynard
Sunderland Farm Collaborative	Delivery to Sunderland, Whately, Deerfield, Hadley, Hatfield, Montague, Amherst, Northampton, Florence, Easthampton, Greenfield, Holyoke and Springfield
Sustainable CAPE	Truro, Provincetown
The Common Good Project	Dorchester
URGE (Urban Resources & Garden Economics)	Springfield
Valley Opportunity Council/Chicopee Farmers Market	Chicopee
We Grow Microgreens	Hyde Park and additional locations
World Farmers	Worcester, Boston, Springfield, Lancaster, Somerville
Yellow Stonehouse	North Westfield
Yia Li	Brookline, Ashland

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Office of Governor Charlie Baker and Lt. Governor Karyn Polito
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EEA seeks to protect, preserve, and enhance the Commonwealth's environmental resources while ensuring a clean energy future for the state's residents. Through the stewardship of open space, protection of environmental resources, and enhancement of clean energy, the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs works tirelessly to make Massachusetts a wonderful place to live, work, and raise a family.

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