



Fresh Food Initiative

WHAT WORKS PROJECT 14 IN MONTANA

GOALS AND ACTIVITIES

The Fresh Food Initiative aims to increase residents' access to healthy food and local products.

Major activities include: The Helena Food Share Garden revitalization; distribution of locally grown food through the mobile farm stand; increasing nutritious food options through the Grocery Share program; securing healthy donations through the Grocery Rescue program; introducing healthy options in the Kid Packs like Kamut; SNAP cooking and nutrition classes with MSU Extension; holiday food distribution that includes fresh produce; distribution and marketing of locally grown specialty crops like lentils; incentives, such as crock pots, to encourage preparation and stretching of wholesome meals; a recipe board and product demonstrations to encourage healthy food consumption and cooking habits.

POPULATIONS SERVED

Individuals and families in the Greater Helena Area who are in need of food assistance.

MAJOR PARTNERS AND FUNDERS

Helena Food Share, Montana State University Extension, Helena Community Gardens, The Fresh Food Collaborative, 6th Ward Garden (Helena City Parks and Recreation), Montana Partnership to End Childhood Hunger, Timeless Seeds Inc., Lewis and Clark Brewing Co., The Ten Mile Creek Brewing Co., Big Sandy Organics, Wheat Montana, The Boy Scouts of America, Montana Conservation Corps, AmeriCorps Members, Helena Farmer's Market, St. Peter's Hospital, and all the area grocery stores

MAJOR OUTCOMES

Increased fresh food donations from local grocers and growers.

Increased nutritious food options available through the Grocery Share program.

INGREDIENTS FOR SUCCESS

Community engagement and collaboration is critical to all things we do at Helena Food Share. In regards to our Fresh Food Initiative, from our garden revitalization and growing our own food to partnering with local businesses to be able to purchase local products to offer on our shelves, it truly has been a community effort.

Having all interested parties at the table is key in the brainstorming phase and is important for steering the project, but it is imperative that one agency is willing to take the lead in coordinating the details. We listen to our customers and let their needs lead our Fresh Food Initiative.

ADVICE FOR OTHERS

“Improving the community begins with knowing those you serve and building trust. Brainstorm with the community; involve them in the cause. People are motivated to collaborate when you find common and innovative intersections in each other's missions. We have found success by developing partnerships, working with a large volunteer force, and caring deeply about the people we serve.”

—Kim Dale and Kara Snyder, Helena Food Share