



2022 TALKING POINTS

Thank you for advocating on behalf of Double Up Food Bucks in Iowa. Here are some talking points that you can use when speaking with lawmakers about why a state appropriation for the program is needed.

REQUEST: A direct, annual \$1 million appropriation from the state of Iowa to support Double Up Food Bucks, a statewide nutrition incentive program, at Iowa farmers markets and grocery stores.

What can \$1 million of state funding provide?

- 65 more retail grocery locations across the state of Iowa
- 1 million more servings of fresh produce in the hands of hungry Iowans
- Access to Double Up Food Bucks for 30,000 more Iowa families

Double Up Food Bucks is a Triple Win!

1. Iowa Families: Double Up Food Bucks stretches food dollars on fresh fruits and vegetables for food insecure families.
2. Iowa Economy: Double Up Food Bucks are spent only at Iowa-owned grocery stores and farmers markets, keeping dollars in the local economy.
3. Iowa Farmers: Double Up Food Bucks helps produce farmers gain new customers and earn more money.

Double Up Food Bucks is a solution to a problem: Despite our reputation as an agricultural state, Iowa ranks near the bottom nationally on consumption of fruits and vegetables. Iowans are also suffering from food insecurity and may be experiencing nutrition deficiencies as a result. Double Up Food Bucks offers solutions to *both* issues.

Public-Private Partnerships: Double Up Food Bucks is a program of the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative, a 501c3 nonprofit organization established in 2011 to make Iowa the healthiest state in the nation. Double Up Food Bucks is made possible through public private partnerships with Iowa-owned businesses (Hy-Vee, Fareway, food co-ops), Iowa produce growers and farmers markets. Interest in Double Up Food Bucks is growing exponentially! State investment is necessary to meet demand.

Specialty Crop Market:

- Double Up Food Bucks provides motivation for Iowa farmers to grow specialty crops in order to diversify their commodity-market offerings.
- Double Up Food Bucks embraces innovation to ensure a continuously creative, diverse, and competitive agricultural economy for Iowa.
- Growing the specialty crop market is especially helpful to smaller, local farms that are family-owned, small businesses.

Local Economic Impact:

- Consumers are visiting both their local farmer's markets AND the grocers through this program. There is enough demand for both to benefit.
- All Double Up Food Bucks are spent with *Iowa-owned* grocers (as opposed to national chains) and local producers, motivating customers to shop here.
 - Making the connections between the consumer and the producers, as well as the producers to the grocers helps reduce the reliance on non-Iowa trade and food source. It can all be done in Iowa!
- For every \$1 spent on incentives like Double Up Food Bucks, there is a \$1.90 contribution to Iowa's economy!

Controlling the costs of the Medicaid Program:

- In the most recent Community Health Needs Assessment (CHNA), 89 of Iowa's 99 counties cited nutrition and weight status (obese or overweight) as a priority adverse health effect.
 - Negative health outcomes caused by these indicators increase the likelihood of other, more costly, chronic health conditions like diabetes, some cancers, stroke and heart disease.
 - Families who are SNAP participants may also be enrolled in Medicaid. The Double Up Food Bucks program is one, strong strategy for incentivizing optimal health and decreases future Medicaid costs.

- SNAP participants are incentivized to buy healthy fruits and veggies first, before they are eligible to purchase more. They must proactively choose the ideal behavior first.

Expanded funding opportunity through federal GusNIP grant:

- Double Up Food Bucks in Iowa is currently funded through public-private partnerships, including investment from private Iowa businesses.
- The USDA Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP), authorized by the 2018 Farm Bill, is an opportunity for a 1:1 match for all non-federal funding. The non-federal funding may come from state government, local or private sources.
- Investment of state funds secures an equal investment of federal funds with no cap included. Additional private funds are also matched.

Health & Wellness for Iowa Families:

- Access to healthy fruits and vegetables are needed in low-income homes, especially. This removes a barrier to choosing to be healthy.
- Healthier children are more prepared to learn and do better in school. A good education is one strategy for breaking the cycle of poverty. It's also an investment in the health of Iowa's workforce in the short-term (adults) and long-term (children and adolescents).
- Double Up Food Bucks also helps control the costs of the Medicaid Program (*see above*).

Farm-to-Table Movement:

- Double Up Food Bucks incentivizes farmers to offer more diverse commodities that are more directly beneficial to Iowa families, like fruits and vegetables.
- Double Up Food Bucks is complementary to the current farm-to-table social movement.
- Double Up Food Bucks will reduce the costs of produce for all Iowans as it moves into the mainstream agriculture economy.