

MASSACHUSETTS HEALTHY INCENTIVES PROGRAM (HIP)

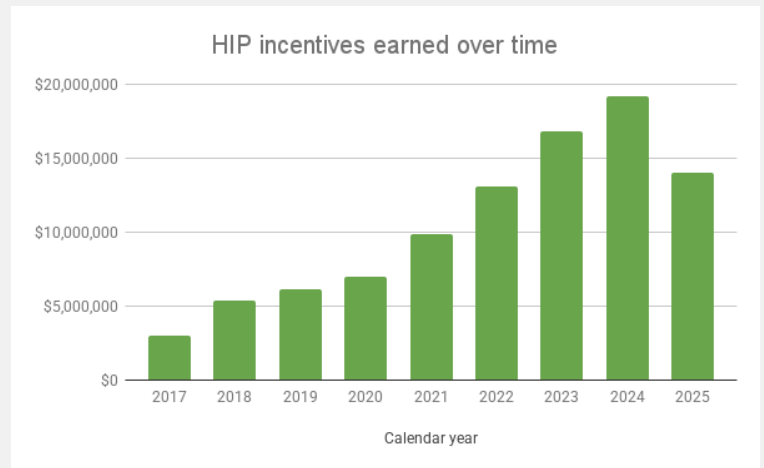
The Healthy Incentives Program means healthy families, sustainable farms, and a strong local economy. Operated by the Massachusetts Department of Transitional Assistance (DTA), the program provides a dollar-for-dollar reimbursement when SNAP users buy fresh, healthy, local food directly from Massachusetts farmers.

SINCE HIP BEGAN IN APRIL 2017:

According to data from DTA, SNAP households have purchased more than \$95 million from local farmers in healthy, local foods. More than 230,000 households / 345,000 individuals have used HIP.

In a recent month:

- 60% of those families include a senior, who needs less medical attention when they eat healthy foods.
- 21% of those families included children, who do better in school when they eat healthy food.
- 36% of those families include a person with a disability.



285

HIP farmers across the Commonwealth sell food at farmers markets, CSAs, farm stands and mobile markets at almost **600 points of sale**.

1.23

daily servings of fruits and vegetables per person purchased on average by HIP customers, reducing the incidence of dietary related illnesses and public health care costs

100

new vendors added in 2022 to address disproportionately low usage among African American SNAP clients and SNAP clients with disabilities

\$179M

additional local economic impact

Each HIP dollar spent results in an additional \$2 in local economic impact, when farmers spend those dollars on local goods and services. HIP also helps decrease MA's estimated \$2.4B in avoidable costs related to food insecurity and hunger by increasing access to healthy foods for vulnerable people

PLEASE SUPPORT:

**\$29.7 MILLION FOR HIP, LINE ITEM 4400-1004,
IN THE FISCAL YEAR 2027 BUDGET**

AND THE HIP ENABLING BILL, H.222/S.3029

HIP helps build an economically sustainable food system, helping make healthy food available to more people, and supporting farmers to be able to charge fair prices for what they grow, allowing them to better steward their land, protect natural resources, and contribute to the local economy.

HIP'S IMPACT

IMPACT STORIES

“Participating in HIP has given us an ability to actually provide fresh produce to customers who wouldn’t have access to it otherwise. Our SNAP sales have increased 40% since the HIP program started, and has been able to fund our expansion to more markets and a CSA that offers delivery for customers who can’t make it to the markets. We feel much more integrated into our local food system and able to provide in ways that we couldn’t before.”

- Mill City Grows, Lowell

“My family needs the mobile market. Cooking is what we do. It’s part of our culture, and you can’t cook with bad ingredients. [This market] has the best ingredients I’ve seen in Boston, and I can actually afford it.”

- HIP customer, Roxbury YMCA Trustees mobile market

“Since HIP has been introduced in Massachusetts, I have been able to eat much healthier. As a senior citizen in treatment for incurable cancer, I have lowered immunity. Particularly during the holidays, it is a blessing to have that extra \$40 per month of guaranteed fresh produce for an immunity boost, and with inflation and obvious rising food costs, my SNAP dollars stretch farther due to HIP.”

- Marcia M., HIP customer, Dennis



“HIP helps consumers and farmers. It is a brilliant, simple, effective method for subsidizing healthy vegetables and stimulating the local economy.”

- Elena Colman, Small Farm, Stow

“Berkshire Grown hosts winter farmers markets, November – April, and we do significant outreach to educate shoppers about the benefits of HIP. Berkshire families face empty fridges and hard choices without the full HIP benefit.”

- Margaret Moulton, Berkshire Grown, Great Barrington

The Caucus chose HIP as a priority because it demonstrates the connections between public health, local food, food access, the local economy, and the environment, and proves that public investments in comprehensive programs can have far-reaching impacts.

- MA Legislative Food System Caucus

MDAR is proud of our collaboration with DTA in connecting our farmers with SNAP recipients to allow them greater access to fresh and nutritious products through HIP. It’s truly a win-win and showcases our commitment to a more just and equitable local food system in Massachusetts.

- MDAR Commissioner Ashley Randle

The Healthy Incentives Program improves access to fresh, locally grown produce for families in need while directly supporting our farmers. It creates meaningful benefits for both food security and our local agricultural economy, while bringing our community together around shared values.

- Former DTA Commissioner Jeff McCue

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The more than 300 supporters of the Campaign for HIP Funding have advocated and won \$111 million for HIP since 2017. Join us in supporting this essential program!