



**PUBLIC HEALTH INSTITUTE  
OF WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS**  
PARTNERS FOR HEALTH EQUITY



YMCA OF GREATER SPRINGFIELD

# Go Fresh Mobile Farmer's Market 2018 Season Report



Thank you to all our funders who continue to make this project successful and to support its growth:

- City of Springfield Health and Human Services
- Baystate Health
- Boston Medical Center HealthNet Plan
- Health New England
- PeoplesBank
- STCC Foundation
- Trinity Health of New England/Mercy Medical Center
- Davis Foundation
- Beacon Communities
- Springfield Housing Authority
- Appleton Corp/Linden Towers

A project of:

- YMCA of Greater Springfield
- City of Springfield Department of Elder Affairs
- Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts
- Gardening the Community
- Next Barn Over
- Mountain View Farm
- Caring Health Center



## OVERVIEW

The Go Fresh Mobile Farmer's Market (Go Fresh) has been serving residents of Springfield since 2011, successfully increasing access to fresh fruits and vegetables as a strategy of the Live Well Springfield campaign. A large portion of Go Fresh customers experience food insecurity, chronic disease and participate in the SNAP program. Go Fresh continues to be a critical healthy food access point for residents.

Go Fresh is managed by the Public Health Institute of Western Massachusetts (PHIWM) and the YMCA of Greater Springfield oversees all of the day to day operations. The partners advising the project include representatives from city departments, local farms, health centers and community organizations. We are grateful to our sponsors who make each season possible.

### 2018 SEASON

The 2018 season ran from August 7 to October 26 and was limited to 12 weeks due to staff changes and weather. There were 14 stops (see box at right) that covered 12 of 17 neighborhoods in Springfield. Sales totaled \$15,294 for close to 9000 pounds of food sold or donated.

### Customer Survey

Customer satisfaction surveys were conducted in person at 11 of the 14 Go Fresh stops in October of 2018. Fifty customers completed the survey, which were self-administered on paper. The survey was available in English and an interpreter was available in Spanish. The following sites were missed due to either the market being closed or inclement weather: Baystate Place, Caring Health Center, and Saab Court.

### Who We Serve

- The neighborhoods most represented by the survey included Liberty Heights, Sixteen Acres, Boston Road, East Springfield, Mason Square, Forest Park and Brightwood/Memorial Square
- Go Fresh serves across the lifespan: 12% were under age 30, 38% were ages 30-49, 50% were over 50 years old.
- 38% of customers live alone, while 30% live with children under 18 and another 33% live with other adults.
- 37% were Latino, 37% White, 18% African American, 2% Asian and 6% other/declined to answer.

### 2018 Go Fresh Sites

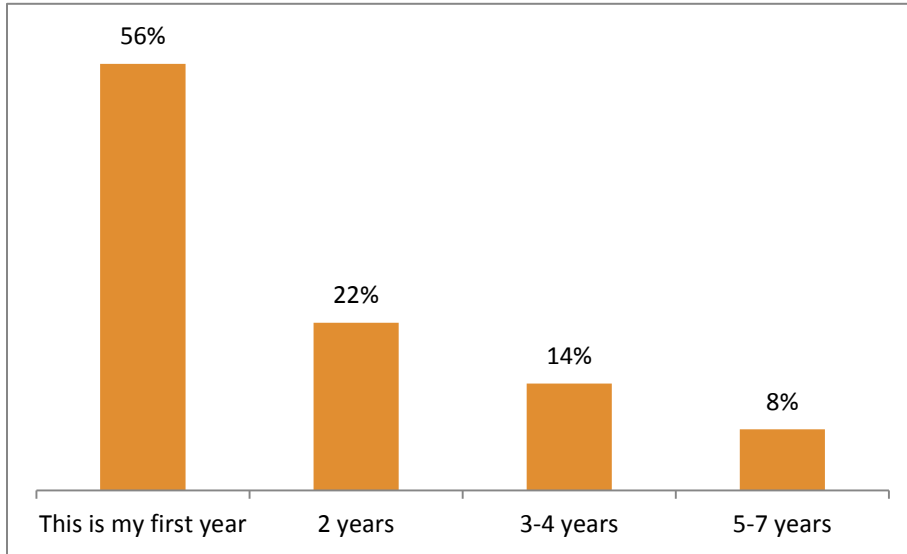
- Baystate Place
- Caring Health Center
- Children's Study Home
- Colonial Estates
- E. Springfield Library
- Gentile
- Independence House
- Linden Towers
- Mercy
- Mosque 13
- Riverview Senior Center
- Saab Court
- Sullivan Apartments
- YMCA

### A Trusted Source of Local Fruits & Vegetables

- Customers consistently reported high satisfaction with the market and its ease of access.

- Go Fresh has a strong customer base: 72% had visited Go Fresh before and almost half (44%) had visited the market in previous years (Figure 1).
- 100% would be interested in a winter market.

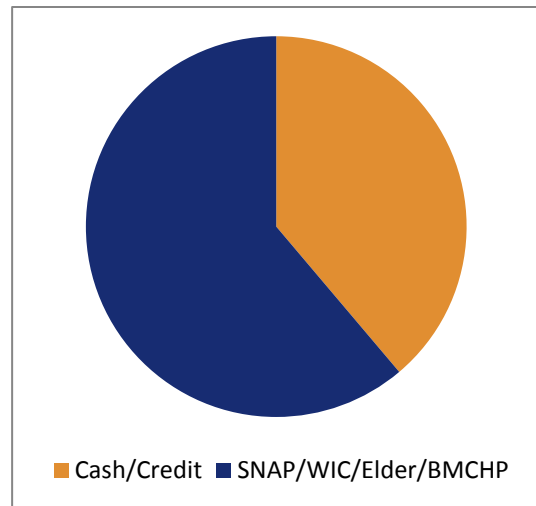
**Figure 1. Number of Years Shopping at Go Fresh Mobile Farmer’s Market, 2018**



### Increasing Food Access

- The majority (61%) of sales were using low income sources including SNAP, WIC, Elder coupons and BMCHP coupons (Figure 2).
- Go Fresh is one of only four Springfield locations for residents to participate in the Healthy Incentive Program (HIP), which allows individuals who are eligible for Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP) to double the amount of fruits and vegetables that they can purchase. Approximately 43% of Go Fresh customers took advantage of the HIP benefits to increase their access to fresh, healthy food.

**Figure 2: Sales by Type of Transaction**



### Nutrition Education

- By partnering with the UMass Extension, Go Fresh provides an opportunity for nutrition education. UMass Extension provided 17 food demonstrations using food available from the market for 324 people throughout the 2018 season.

## Food Insecurity

Through multiple years of surveying, we understand that Go Fresh is an important access point for Springfield residents that are experiencing food insecurity. The 2018 survey results again show this to be true.

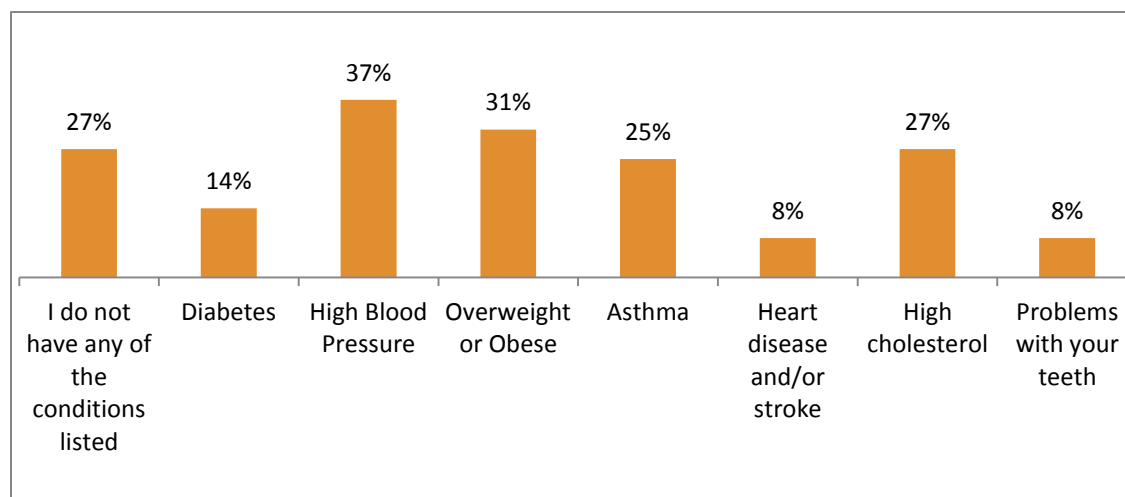
- A large number of Go Fresh customers report food insecurity: Of the Go Fresh customers surveyed in 2018, one-quarter (24%) **ran out of food** and didn't have money to get more, in the 12 months prior to the survey. Almost a third (32%) reported that they worried about running out of food. This is almost double the estimate for Springfield as a whole (17%- Coalition on Hunger).
- Overall there was an increase of fruit and vegetable consumption by customers with 14% reporting they were achieving the national recommendation of 5 servings or more daily.



## Health

Go Fresh is an important source of healthy food for residents with health problems. Although fewer customers report ill health, over two-thirds (72%) of survey respondents reported at least one chronic health problem, including 37% with high blood pressure, 31% overweight or obese, 27% with high cholesterol, 24% with asthma, 14% with diabetes, and 8% with heart disease and/or a history of stroke (Figure 3).

**Figure 3. Presence of Chronic Medical Conditions, 2018**



## IMPACT- CUSTOMER STORIES

Go Fresh has a loyal following. The following comments are just some of the favorable feedback we have heard from customers.

- “I love the Go Fresh Mobile Farmer’s Market. A Convenient place that always have fresh fruits and vegetables and the best honey I ever had served with love and beautiful smiles. Thank you for your healthy service you’re bringing to our neighborhoods and for the support of the local farmers!! Love Phoenix
- “If I could come everyday, I would! This is great for the community and my neighbors” – Keturah

