



Harvard Pilgrim
HealthCare Foundation

newsrelease

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**HARVARD PILGRIM HEALTH CARE FOUNDATION AWARDS \$970,000 IN
NEW HEALTHY FOOD FUND GRANTS TO 20 NOT-FOR-PROFIT
COMMUNITY FOOD PROGRAMS THROUGHOUT CT, ME, MA, and NH**

Brings total Harvard Pilgrim Healthy Food Fund grants in 2015 to \$1,390,000; funding programs that improve access to fresh, local food for low-income families

Wellesley, Mass. – Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation today announced it has awarded \$969,276 in new Healthy Food Fund grants to 20 not-for-profit community food initiatives that grow, distribute and/or market fresh food in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. Grant awards are renewable for two additional years. These new grants bring the total amount of Healthy Food Fund grants in 2015 to \$1,390,000.

“Our goal for the Harvard Pilgrim Healthy Food Fund is to make fresh, local food easily accessible and affordable for more low- and middle-income families in our region,” said Karen Voci, president of the Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation. “We have been inspired by the many not-for-profit organizations in New England – farmers’ markets, community gardens, urban farms, food co-ops -- that are making fresh and local food easier to find and buy.”

Voci added that the Foundation is also focused on funding organizations that support the demand for nutritious foods, such as programs that implement nutrition education and cooking classes.

“While we are supporting community growers and markets on the supply side, we are also helping programs that build consumer demand for healthy food,” added Voci. “Through cooking classes, nutrition and shopping education, as well as coupons that double a family’s purchasing power, we can continue to increase customers’ demand for the food grown right here in New England. That’s great for our health, for our environment, and for our economy.”

This past spring, Harvard Pilgrim Foundation awarded its first round of Healthy Food Fund grants totaling \$220,000 to local garden and community farming programs. Harvard Pilgrim Foundation has also awarded \$200,000 in Healthy Food Fund grants to support mobile farmers’ markets in Worcester and Lowell, Mass., Hartford, Conn., and Lewiston/Auburn, Maine. A fifth mobile market is expected to be operational in Manchester, N.H., in 2016.

The new 2015 Healthy Food Fund grant recipients are as follows:

2015 Healthy Food Fund Grant Recipients: Connecticut – Total Amount: \$184,697

- Brass City Harvest, Inc., Waterbury: \$44,697

To increase consumer demand for fresh food through cooking and nutrition courses for 100 WIC clients in Greater Waterbury, and engaging local corner stores in a Healthy Corner Initiative.

- Connecticut Food Bank, Inc., East Haven, New Haven, Waterbury, Bridgeport: \$40,000

To expand the Farm-to-Pantry program by supporting farmers' ability to harvest excess produce for donation to food pantries through the Food Bank network, increasing the amount of fresh produce by 150,000 pounds in the first year.

- Green Village Initiative, Bridgeport: \$50,000

Utilizing Bridgeport's network of community gardens to meet customer demands for fresh foods at pantries and markets, Green Village Initiative will support gardeners in developing opportunities between community gardeners and local hunger relief organizations.

- New Haven Farms – New Haven Land Trust: \$50,000

Funds will support the Farm-Based Wellness Program, expand the jointly-run Incubator Garden program, support community garden education through the New Haven Land Trust, and provide subsidized CSA shares.

2015 Healthy Food Fund Grant Recipients: Maine – Total Amount: \$199,836

- Cultivating Community; Portland, South Portland, Westbrook: \$49,836

To expand subsidized CSA shares for low-income families, engage with farmers to more effectively package produce and with employers to provide payroll deductions for CSA costs, and offer free group nutrition and cooking education classes. The goal is to increase CSA shares by 40 percent, from 200 to 280 over the potential three years of the program.

- Healthy Communities of the Capital Area, Southern Kennebec County: \$50,000

To expand gleaning and food processing efforts that will increase distribution of fresh, local fruits and vegetable to local food pantries and food banks. The Restorative Community Harvest Program of the Kennebec Sheriff's Office and Kennebec County Correctional Facility will be the lead gleaning agency for this project. For the project's first expansion year, a 5 percent increase of the current 40,000 pounds of food is expected.

- Maine Farmland Trust; Biddeford, Portland, Saco, S. Portland, and Westbrook: \$50,000

To provide incentives to SNAP and low-income consumers to purchase fresh, local foods in six target Maine communities at farmers markets, CSA programs, food hubs and co-ops. Harvard Pilgrim Foundation funds will be matched 1:1 by USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) funding.

- Wolfe's Neck Farm Foundation, Greater Bath and Brunswick : \$50,000

To expand the production capacity of the Teen Agriculture (Teen Ag) program, including winterizing greenhouses and tractor attachments, and expanding the amount of donated year-round produce to local

food banks and SNAP subsidized CSA shares. Nutrition and cooking training will also be provided. In the first year of the program, total pounds of food produced is expected to increase from 8,800 to 10,500.

2015 Healthy Food Fund Grant Recipients: Western/Central Massachusetts – Total Amount \$191,783

- Community Harvest Project, North Grafton: \$42,000

To expand the acreage in production for the Volunteer Farming initiative, providing an additional 97,000 pounds of food to those in need, and reaching 300 families with healthy food and educational programming in the Farm-to-Health Center program.

- Gardening the Community, Springfield: \$49,783

For expansion of the Walnut Street site to increase production and create an on-site permanent farm stand. Funds will also support educational workshops and a partnership with Community Involved in Sustaining Agriculture.

- Grow Food Northampton: \$50,000

To establish Food Access Northampton, providing fruits and vegetables to community members in need. Funds will support increasing the acreage of the Giving Garden, subsidizing CSA shares, and connecting farmers to hunger relief organizations.

- Growing Places, Leominster: \$50,000

To support Growing Places' ability to provide hands-on technical assistance and education to gardeners in Leominster and Fitchburg through support of the Teaching Garden, Garden on the GO, and monthly cooking classes.

2015 Healthy Food Fund Garden Grant Recipients: Eastern Massachusetts – Total Amount \$279,095

- Boston Area Gleaners, Inc., Waltham: \$50,000

Funding will cover a new delivery and gleaning assistant, and the purchase of a used cargo van for distribution, to expand gleaning regions in Massachusetts by 25% per year.

- Boys & Girls Clubs of Boston: \$100,000

For the Farm-to-Family initiative which brings fresh, healthy, local food to the Clubs' food service programs and to support Farm-to-Family bi-monthly dinners featuring cooking demonstrations and nutrition education for families.

- Groundwork Lawrence: \$50,000

To increase community participation and use of subsidy/incentive tools at three farmers markets and a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) program; a youth-led urban agriculture program; and a series of culturally relevant educational workshops on gardening, cooking/nutrition, shopping on a budget, and food preservation at their new teaching kitchen.

- Mass in Motion, New Bedford: \$29,095

To partner with two low-income housing authority sites to pilot a subsidized CSA program including training on cooking, nutrition, and food storage for more than 60 families in the first year.

- YWCA Greater Newburyport – Nourishing the North Shore, Newburyport, Amesbury, Salisbury, Rowley, Newbury, West Newbury: \$50,000

To support garden expansion, a greenhouse, expansion of food delivery systems and skills development including cooking and nutrition classes for adults and children in preschool through third grade, as well as job training for seniors, teens and developmentally disabled adults. More than 500 families will benefit from this project.

2015 Healthy Food Fund Grant Recipients: New Hampshire – Total Amount \$113,865

- Lakes Region Partnership for Public Health, Inc., Laconia: \$50,000

To create a pop-up farmer’s market, a mobile food cart for cooking demonstrations and taste testing, construction of community gardens and development of educational resources to help increase access to and consumption of healthy foods for low-income families.

- Tamworth Community Nurse Association: \$28,175

For expansion of the Tamworth Farmers’ Market and to hire a SNAP coordinator to help with transportation for local residents in need.

- Women’s Rural Entrepreneurial Network (WREN), Berlin: \$35,690

To support the Berlin Farmers’ Market Grow Healthy initiative, engaging new vendors and providing more opportunities for community members to obtain fresh local food. An outdoor teaching kitchen will be constructed at the market for cooking lessons and samples.

About The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation

Created in 1980, The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation supports Harvard Pilgrim's mission to improve the quality and value of health care for the people and communities we serve. The Foundation provides the tools, training and leadership to help build healthy communities throughout Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In 2014, the Harvard Pilgrim Foundation awarded nearly \$2.9 million in grants to 710 not-for-profit organizations in the region. Since its inception, the Foundation has granted nearly \$133 million in funds and resources throughout the four states.

Starting in 2015, the Foundation began expanding its focus on preventing childhood obesity to help families and communities eat healthier by launching the Harvard Pilgrim Healthy Food Fund. This grants program is aimed at supporting healthy food initiatives that increase access to fresh, healthy, and whenever possible, local food for families and communities in all of Harvard Pilgrim’s five markets across the region. For more information, please visit www.harvardpilgrim.org/foundation.

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