Fresh Access Bucks (FAB) is a USDA-funded statewide nutrition incentive program that increases the purchasing power of SNAP recipients to buy fresh fruits and vegetables at farmers markets, produce stands, CSAs, mobile markets, and community grocery outlets. FAB’s approach to addressing food access, affordability, and nutrition education aims to work with the entire food system: from producer to consumer to build healthy, resilient communities supported by robust local food systems. Learn more about how Fresh Access Bucks works at our different outlets at www.feedingflorida.org/food-access/fresh-access-bucks/how-fab-works.

Florida Impact and Feeding Florida have partnered to implement the Voices for Healthy Kids campaign to increase access to healthy foods through SNAP programs. The campaign also includes other valued organizations, such as Florida Policy Institute, Hebni Nutrition Inc., and United Health Partnerships (UHP).

Together we will help expand Feeding Florida’s Fresh Access Bucks program across the state to areas that need it the most.
SNAP is the largest federal food program serving low-income populations in the country. In Florida, one out of eight people face hunger. Our work in the community has highlighted an unmet need for more access to fresh produce.

Focus groups have shown that SNAP recipients place value on their health and nutrition, but mention accessibility and cost as primary barriers to them making healthier choices.

SNAP is also helping individuals and families that have been severely impacted by economic hardship, more recently by the COVID-19 pandemic. Through federal dollars, SNAP allows for a monthly allowance to be spent on buying foods for those who otherwise can hardly afford it.

We have found that the communities mostly impacted have been low-income and minority-occupied regions. Many of the residents of these communities have long suffered from obesity or obesity-related diseases. Both of which can be linked to lifestyle habits and diets.

Take a look at the press release put out by us and our partners at Florida Policy Institute; Central Florida Alliance to End Hunger; Concerned African Women, Inc.; Tampa Bay Network to End Hunger; and Whole Child Leon. at www.rebrand.ly/snap-healthy-eating-barriers. It goes over a recent report showing the barriers in healthy eating on SNAP.
Florida Impact is also working on the recent expansion of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) that now allows post-secondary students to be temporarily eligible for SNAP benefits, provided they meet all other eligibility criteria.

Currently, in the State University System there are approximately 64,000 students who meet the new SNAP criteria. Researchers surveyed 43,000 college students at 66 schools and found that 36% of students on U.S. college campuses are considered “food insecure,” meaning they do not get enough to eat.

One of the biggest issues for students is affording healthy food, with 46% of community college students and 40% of four-year college students reporting an inability to pay for balanced meals. Individuals can use SNAP food assistance benefits to buy breads, cereals, fruits, vegetables, meats, fish, poultry, dairy, and plants and seeds to grow food for themselves to eat.
This month at Florida Impact we chose to highlight the tomato in all its versatility! Tomatoes grow best here in Florida October through May. Around the world there are over 10,000 varieties of tomatoes. They vary widely in color and shape and are used in almost every cuisine. Tomatoes have many health benefits and are a great source of natural vitamins and minerals. They contain high levels of the antioxidant lycopene which helps protect your body’s cells from any oxidative damage. It also is very beneficial for your immune system and has properties that help lower LDL cholesterol levels. Tomatoes are also high in potassium, vitamin B and E. These vitamins and minerals are good for your heart health and reduce overall metabolic disease risk.

Each month Florida Impact, in partnership with Live Healthy Miami Gardens, hosts a recipe contest featuring a different ingredient of the month. After the ingredient is announced the contest commences between Miami Gardens residents.

Submitted recipes must contain the key ingredient and must be from a Miami Gardens area resident. Each month we will review recipe submissions and announce a winner who will receive $25 to their local Florida Healthy Corner store to stock up on some food.

Entries may be submitted on the Florida Healthy Retail store website at this at www.floridahealthyretail.org/contest.
April is National Minority Health Month! Congress established national minority health month to “promote educational efforts on health problems facing minorities and other health disparity populations.”

We’d like to take this opportunity to highlight the disparities minorities in Florida face not just in their healthcare but specifically during the COVID-19 Pandemic.

The COVID vaccine available for all adults in Florida at no cost, and sites can be found at www.vaccines.gov.

For 2022, the theme for the entire month is Give Your Community a Boost!

We want to encourage everyone to get the right facts about COVID vaccines and boosters, practice up to date safety measures, and most importantly get vaccinated if you’re able.

There are over 1,000 vaccination sites across Florida, not only at local health departments and pharmacies but in community and faith-based organizations.

The CDC and the Office of Minority Health recognize that racial and ethnic minority groups are disproportionally effected by this pandemic and aims to provide equitable health benefits to everyone.

For more information please visit www.minorityhealth.hhs.gov/nmhm.
National Nutrition Month

National Nutrition Month® is an annual campaign created by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During the month of March, everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits.

This year’s theme was ‘Celebrate a World of Flavors’ emphasizing healthy food of all cuisines, and trying new flavors from around the world to vary your diet.

Team Nutrition of the USDA Food and Nutrition Services have a few newly implemented updates to celebrate National Nutrition Month. Recently they added Spanish captioning for their free online webinar and interactive Food Buying Guide interactive demonstration. They also updated their Food Buying Guide online tool and mobile app to implement more user friendly technology.

In Kissimmee, they celebrated National Nutrition Month with a Meals on Wheels fundraising event at Lakefront Park!
FRAC Anti-Hunger Conference

Florida Impact to End Hunger was happy to virtually participate in the Anti-Hunger Policy Conference Sponsored by Feeding America and the Food Research and Action Center (FRAC). Speakers presented information on a vast number of topics all pertaining to ending hunger in America. This event invited anti-hunger advocates, members of federal, state and local governments, nutrition organizations and many others, and brought them together to go through interactive training, education sessions and networking with policy makers.

Some of the topics covered:
- Applying a Racial Equity Lens to End Hunger
- Boosting School Breakfast at the Pandemic Continues
- Building Food Bank Partnerships with Local Growers
- Homelessness, incarceration, and the Collective Wisdom of a Speakers Bureau
- Child Nutrition Updates with USDA

Good Friday Meals Around The World

Holidays are celebrated differently around the globe. One common factor is the love of sharing a meal with our families. Here are some healthier variations of meals enjoyed across cultures on Good Friday. Please visit www.rebrand.ly/our2ndnewsletter to find links to each recipe. Enjoy, and please send us pictures if you cook anything from the list!

- Cuban Camaron fricase (Shrimp simmered in a red tomato sauce with peppers and onions and plantains)
- Haitian Fish and Rice with Beans and Beets
- American Cornmeal-Crusted Catfish with Corn Salsa
- Brazilian Bacalhau a Gomes de Sa (Salt cod fish, potatoes, onions, olives and hardboiled eggs)

Photo credit: www.oliviascuisine.com
This month for SNAP at work in our community, we chose to highlight one of our focus group members from the Homestead Food Access Coalition.

Carolina Luis (pictured) currently lives in Homestead and works as a medical chart auditor and reviewer at a local nursing home. She is the mother of a 16 year old daughter and her parents also live with them splitting their time between homestead and Colombia. Carolina indicated SNAP has been a huge benefit to her life permitting her to purchase items she wouldn’t otherwise be able to afford.

She is the primary source of income within her home and SNAP has been able to provide food not only for her daughter but her parents as well. SNAP has afforded her family the ability to consumer culturally appropriate meals. Carolina has been receiving SNAP benefits for 4 years, but saw a massive decrease to her monthly benefits after a divorce. Due to work and family obligations, most of Carolina’s time is spent out of the house from early morning until late at night, and this makes food pantries difficult to attend.

Despite these difficulties Carolina enjoys the time she spends with Florida Impact helping increase food access for her community as well as her family. In her free time, Carolina loves enjoying Latin American food, specifically, Colombian, Peruvian, and Dominican. Carolina thanks Florida Impact for allowing her to be a member of the Homestead Food Access Coalition to be a voice for change in food access within her community.
More About Us

Since its inception in 1979, Florida Impact to End Hunger has worked tirelessly fighting for our community members who have struggled with keeping hunger at bay due to lack of resources used for obtaining basic nutrition. Florida Impact to End Hunger has worked closely with community leaders to set in place policies and programs aimed at addressing hunger in our state. Our organization has conducted aggressive outreach strategies at both the state and community levels to ensure that federal food and child nutrition programs are fully accessible to those who need it the most within our community. We have actively coordinated and informed the direct involvement of community leaders in advocating for more responsive public policies, programs, and budget priorities.

Our president, Kim M. Johnson, has worked on the frontlines of underserved communities for over 30 years. Alongside our team of project coordinators Asheena Moses, Darneshia Darling, and Kelli Greene, Florida Impact has implemented over 10 valuable programs within the community.

Our mission is to mobilize communities to maximize access to federal, state, and local food and nutrition programs with a focus on Florida’s most vulnerable populations.

Find the web version of this newsletter at www.rebrand.ly/our2ndnewsletter