

Ohio Produce Perks

2018 Program Findings

May 2019

Produce Perks: Ohio's Nutrition Incentive Program

Produce Perks is Ohio's nutrition incentive program, which seeks to increase access to fresh and healthy food options for families who use Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. The program also strengthens local farms and economies. Produce Perks matches the value of SNAP benefits when they are spent on fruits and vegetables (e.g., for every \$1 in SNAP spent on fruits and vegetables, customers using SNAP receive an extra \$1 to spend on additional produce). The program is offered at both direct to consumer (DTC) sites such as farmers' markets and community supported agriculture and at grocery stores. This program is federally funded by the USDA Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) Grant Program. Evaluation is led by Case Western Reserve University's Mary Ann Swetland Center for Environmental Health in partnership with Produce Perks Midwest and Wholesome Wave.

2018 Statewide Totals

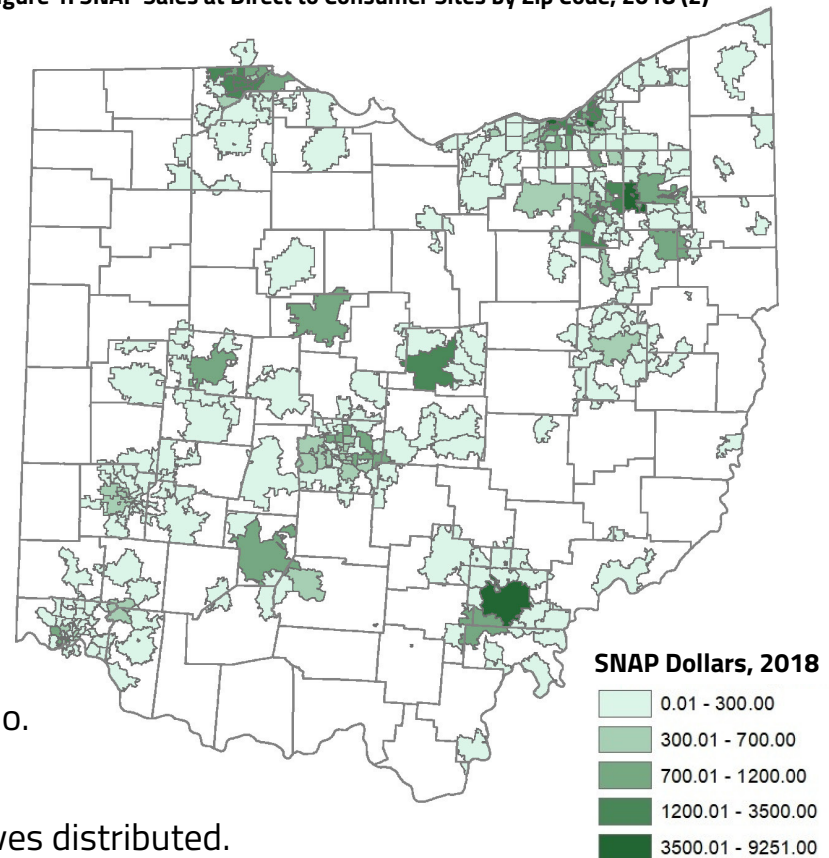
For the first time in program history, both direct to consumer sites (DTC) and retail locations were fully operational in 2018. Produce Perks was offered at 94 locations across the state, including **79 DTC sites** and **15 grocery stores**. Over \$842,500 in Produce Perks SNAP incentives were distributed to customers. Of this, \$319,621 (37.9% redemption rate) in Produce Perks were used to purchase fruits and vegetables. Over 37,400 transactions utilizing Produce Perks were made by SNAP customers at participating locations (1).

Direct to Consumer Locations

Direct to consumer sites experienced exponential growth in 2018 compared to those reported in 2017:

- **19%** increase in zip codes reached across Ohio.
- **22%** increase in SNAP sales.
- **50%** increase in Produce Perks SNAP incentives distributed.

Figure 1. SNAP Sales at Direct to Consumer Sites by Zip Code, 2018 (2)



Produce Perks Redemption Rates

Redemption rate represents the percentage of Produce Perks redeemed divided by the total amount of SNAP incentives distributed. Here are the average redemption rates by store type.

81.8%

Direct to
Consumer Sites

26.5%

Retail Sites



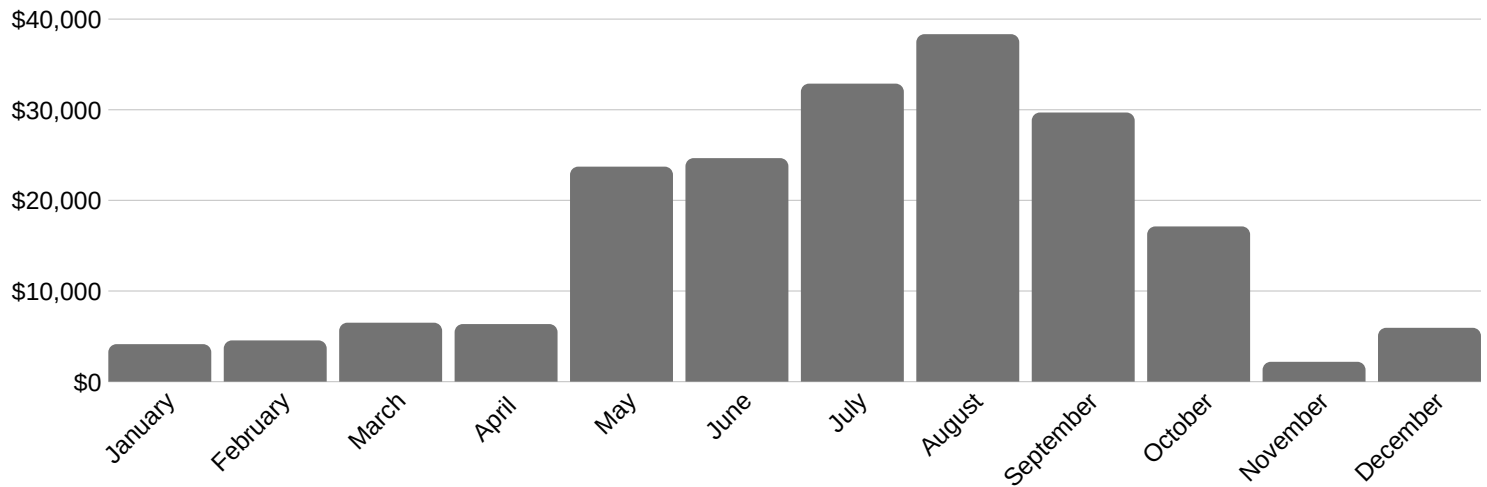
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Figure 2. SNAP Sales at Direct to Consumer Sites, 2018 (N = 76)



Grocery Store (Retail) Trends

At retail locations, Produce Perks coupons or vouchers are given to customers who purchase fruits and vegetables using their SNAP/EBT (up to \$10 per transaction). In 2018, Produce Perks was offered at 12 individual locations across Ohio including two local grocery chains (multiple locations) and four independently owned and operated stores. Produce Perks was first offered at 2 locations in 2017 and expanded to 6 counties in 2018.

\$202,817

Spent on fruits & vegetables when a Produce Perks coupon was redeemed at a retail site

14,596
Produce Perks Transactions



(1) Statewide totals include all locations supported by the Harvesting Health in the Heartland: Ohio Produce Perks FINI Grant and locations in and around Youngstown, Ohio which are supported by a separate USDA FINI grant that is managed by Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation.

(2) There was approximately \$50,000 SNAP sales at Direct to Consumer sites with no recorded zip code in 2018.

(3) Retail chain locations offering Produce Perks operate the program automatically through a Point of Sales (POS) system. A POS system allows for more data to be captured, differing from program operation at independently owned and operated stores, which offer the program through write-in Produce Perks vouchers or a discount model on SNAP eligible purchases.

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For more information about the Ohio Produce Perks program, please visit www.produceperks.org.

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