

Ohio Produce Perks

2019 Program Findings

June 2020

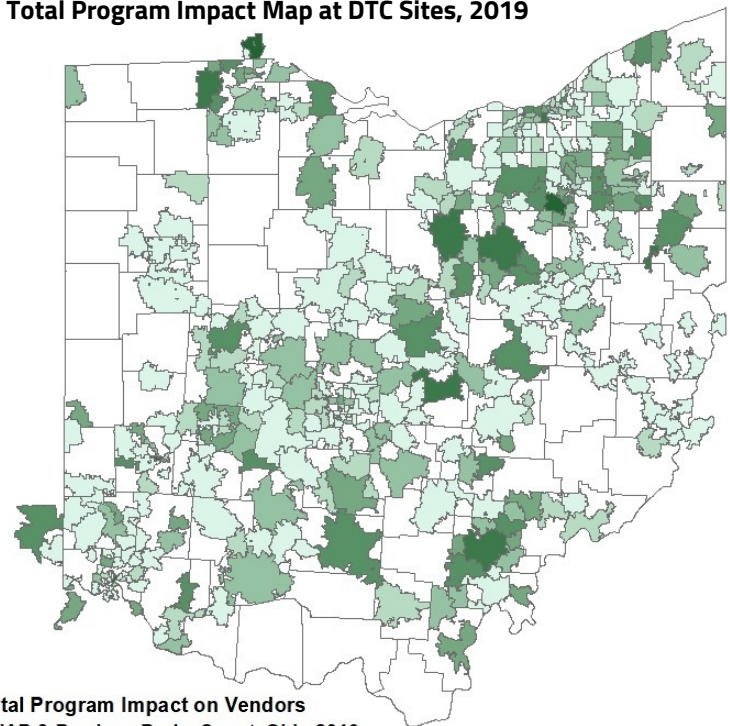
Produce Perks: Ohio's Nutrition Incentive Program

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.

2019 Statewide Totals

From 2018 to 2019 there was a 12% increase in the number of locations that offered Produce Perks, including 85 DTC sites and 20 retail stores. In 2019, over \$1,065,000 in Produce Perks incentives were distributed to customers at all participating sites. SNAP sales at DTC sites amounted to \$197,000 and at retail sites, regional chains (n=11) recorded \$612,887 in SNAP sales (when a Produce Perks Coupon was used) and independently operated stores (n=9) recorded \$195,422 SNAP sales (when an incentive were either distributed or redeemed). Over 42,700 transactions utilizing Produce Perks were made by SNAP customers at all participating locations, which is an increase from 37,400 transactions in 2018. The total program impact on DTC vendors can be seen in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Total Program Impact Map at DTC Sites, 2019



Direct to Consumer Locations

DTC sites experienced exponential growth from 2018 to 2019. Significant changes included:

- **12% increase** in number of participating sites
- **14% increase** in incentive redemption rate
- **31% increase** in number of SNAP transactions

Produce Perks Redemption Rate

The redemption rate represents the percentage of Produce Perks redeemed divided by the amount distributed. The percentages to the right represent the redemption rate for Produce Perks at DTC sites in 2018 and 2019.

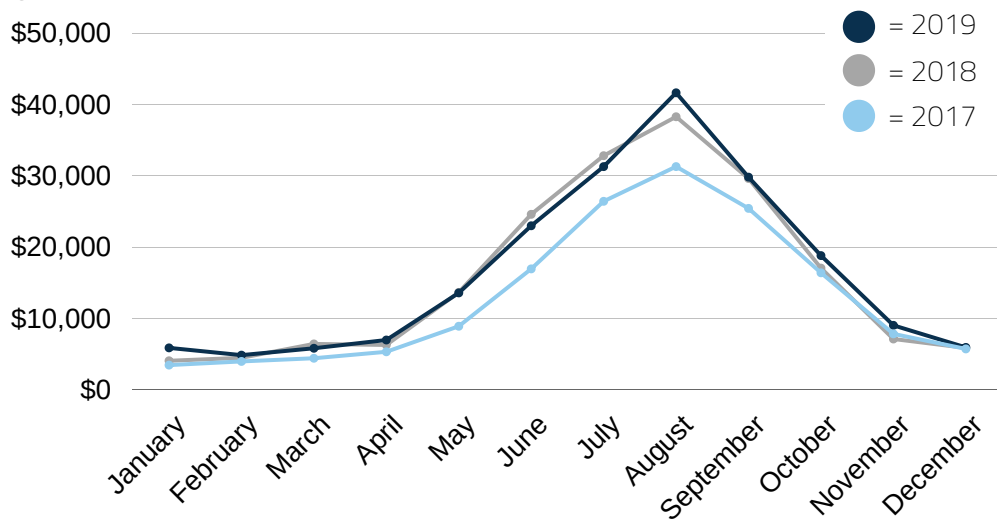
The Redemption Rate Increased from **81.8%** in 2018 to

93% At DTC Sites



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Figure 2. SNAP Sales at DTC Sites, 2017-2019



In Ohio from 2017 to 2019, there has been an increase in SNAP recipients, both individuals and households, but a decrease in total benefits.* Figure 2. displays the SNAP sales at DTC sites from 2017 to 2019. SNAP sales over this three year period have increased each year and the trend of SNAP sales occurs in the summer months during farmers' markets peak season. The Produce Perks program matches SNAP dollars up to \$20, per market day.

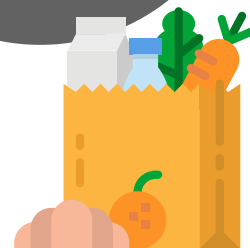
Retail Store Trends

At retail locations, the Produce Perks program operates differently depending on the retail store, and provides SNAP customers with a printed coupon or paper voucher when they purchase fruits and vegetables using their SNAP/EBT. Produce Perks matched up to \$10 per transaction at all sites. Retail programming was first piloted in 2017 with 2 locations, expanded to 12 sites in 2018, and in 2019 was available at 20 sites across Ohio. Between 2018 and 2019, there was an \$260,000 increase in SNAP sales and \$120,000 increase in SNAP dollars spent on fruits and vegetables. The redemption rate for all participating stores in 2019 was 24%**.

26,436
Produce Perks
transactions

\$342,000
was spent on fresh
fruits and vegetables (at
regional chain stores)
when a Produce Perks
coupon was used at
checkout

81%
increase in SNAP
Transactions from
2018 to 2019



*Ohio SNAP data can be found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap>

** The 24% redemption rate that reflects the average of all participating stores (n=20) does not reflect the wide variation of stores that offer the Produce Perks program. There is significant variation in participating stores: SNAP sales, incentives distributed, incentives redeemed, and redemption rates. This analysis does not detail the varying retail program operations, but rather presents the totals as a whole.

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

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