

Shared Infrastructure for Locally Rooted PRx Programming in Cuyahoga County

Perspectives of Local Farmers

July 2026

Background

What are produce prescriptions (PRx)? PRx is a way for healthcare providers to give patients a script to obtain fruits and vegetables in the health care setting or the community. Patients then use the produce to make nutritious meals, supporting better health.

Who benefits from PRx programs? PRx programs improve health outcomes, promote nutrition security, contribute to healthcare savings, increase revenue for farmers and retailers, and build wealth in the local economy.

Why source produce locally? Prioritizing the local procurement of produce through PRx programs can have great economic benefits. According to a [report](#) by the Rockefeller Foundation, programs rooted in the local food system can result in more than \$257 million in profit for Ohio farmers, create 16,120 jobs, and add \$2.3 billion to Ohio's GDP.

What is the Produce Prescription Working Group (PPWG)? A collective of 60+ individuals and organizations in Cuyahoga County, Ohio, established in June 2024 to advance policies that support the expansion of locally rooted PRx programs. A subcommittee, Building Relationships for Shared Resources, formed in November 2025 to conduct surveys and interviews with local farmers about their interest in partnering with PRx programs and establishing shared infrastructure and resources. This data brief highlights what we learned.

Our Approach

- **Design:** Surveys and interviews (virtual)
- **Population:** 10 local growers interested in integrating produce into PRx programs (10 for surveys and 7 for interviews)
- **Setting:** 8 zip codes across Cuyahoga County
- **Analysis:** Qualitative coding, inductive

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Top 3 Takeaways

1. **Local farmers have the capacity** to supply produce to local PRx programs, and can support increased demand with the right support.
2. To integrate local food into PRx programs, **shared infrastructure is needed.**
3. It is **unclear how this shared infrastructure should be funded and how local policies can be supportive** (e.g. procurement policy within a healthcare institution).

 We have a well oiled machine. We have a good system in place. We have transportation, we have labor. We have all of the pieces, we have the produce.

 We see [produce] as medicine and [want to] integrate [produce] into a prescription program... we want to support preventative health, and it aligns with the work we're already doing with food education and community wellness. - ID 6

Recommendations for Shared Infrastructure Development

Farmers Are Interested In

- Transportation
- Staffing & resources
- Tools & equipment
- Evaluation
- Marketing
- Packaging



Most farmers don't have the administrative capacity to keep up with the back-end work...to make sure that a lot of that information, data [is] collected in a timeful fashion.

It's a little bit easier for me as a farmer to not have to take it to market, or deliver it. Delivery is a challenge, because I don't have a refrigerated truck.

If someone didn't have access to land...I have space to rent...which also gets you access to the tools I do have...season extenders and things like that.

How Can Shared Infrastructure Work for Farmers?

- Management Staff, Training & Fair Pricing
- Infrastructure Development (e.g. bulk ordering, transportation support for farmers and patients, inventory tracking)
- Funding, Communication & Partnerships

Is the farmer, gonna be...adequately compensated for the produce?

Having an outlet for local farmers is really a game changer if it's done right, but you need the resources and the infrastructure to really pull it off, and the coordination as well.

Coordination, someone or a team making sure everything, runs smoothly.

Funding Sources for Shared Infrastructure

- Grants from foundations
- Contributions through contract arrangement with healthcare partners
- Public funds from the city or county government
- One time payment by farmers

If that aggregator could be funded by some outside resource, and didn't have to take a cut from the farmers, that would...make it more attractive for farmers to participate.