



Hunger Network: Fueling a Healthy Choice Pantry Model

Cuyahoga County OH – Food Pantry

REGION 1: Northeast

Ashtabula, Cuyahoga, Lorain,
Mahoning, Stark, Summit, Trumbull

26

Total Grants
Awarded

86

Total Sites
Served



THE NEED

Food insecurity in Cuyahoga County sits at 16.6%, fueled by poverty and chronic illness. Across 14 high-need zip codes, network pantries lacked basic equipment like shelving, carts, and bags. Without transport tools, walking clients frequently had to decline heavy produce or frozen proteins simply because they could not carry them home.

THE GRANT AT WORK

Funding transformed 10 sites, including MidTown Market and Lakewood Community Services, into "healthy choice" pantries. The grant provided heavy-duty shelving, carts, transport wagons, and reusable bags requested by pantry managers. This infrastructure boosted healthy food visibility and deepened partnerships with the Greater Cleveland Food Bank, Produce Prescriptions Working Group, and County Board of Health.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

- **Removed Transport Barriers:** Wagons and reusable bags eliminated physical hurdles, while strategic shelving made nutritious options prominent. As the Program Director noted, giving a client a wagon completely changes behavior, turning produce refusals into successful trips home.
- **Proven Scale:** The project serves an average of 6,202 households (15,445 individuals) monthly.

Another Region 1 Success

Cuyahoga Valley Farmers Market

Summit County, OH

"For Cuyahoga Valley Farmers Market, this mini grant closes a gap we have felt for years. We run Produce Perks and Carrot Cash at our summer and winter markets, and we know they work.

What we lacked was a visible way to tell shoppers they exist, so families didn't have to discover food assistance by accident."

— NEIGHBORS COMMUNITY FARM
DANIE WHITE, COMMUNITY GARDEN SUCCESS



CASE WESTERN RESERVE
UNIVERSITY
Mary Ann Swetland Center
for Environmental Health

Healthy Choices Mini Grants support healthy eating and active living strategies at food pantries, farmers markets, early childhood education centers, K-12 schools, and community gardens.

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