



REGION 3: Central

Crawford, Fairfield, Franklin,
Hardin, Marion, Pickaway,
Richland

10

Total Grants
Awarded

41

Total Sites
Served

Pickaway County Public Health: Hydroponic Nutrition Education

Pickaway County, OH – K-12 Schools



THE NEED

Pickaway County faces significant health disparities: 40% of adults are obese, 28.8% are physically inactive, and 13% lack reliable food access. Preventable chronic disease risks stem from poor childhood nutrition, yet rural transportation, income constraints, and seasonal limitations frequently prevent families from accessing fresh produce and health education.

THE GRANT AT WORK

Pickaway County Public Health (PCPH) launched the Hydroponic Nutrition Education Initiative across six school sites in partnership with the Pickaway County Educational Service Center (ESC) and four local school districts. Supported by equipment funding from Case Western Reserve University and sustained through local PCPH funds, the project:

- Installs year-round indoor hydroponic growing systems in classrooms and wellness spaces.
- Embeds practical agriculture directly into daily STEM, health, and wellness curricula.
- Empowers students to plant, monitor, and harvest fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs.

COMMUNITY IMPACT

Reaching 600 students and staff within its first six months, this program removes socioeconomic barriers to fresh food access. Integrating interactive growing into the school day expands nutritional knowledge and encourages healthy eating habits among rural and underserved youth.

Another Region 3 Success Community Kitchen & Market Success

*The Welcome HOME Foundation
(Franklin County, OH)*

"This Healthy Choices Mini-Grant will help The Welcome HOME Foundation create lasting improvements in access to nutritious foods and practical healthy-eating resources for SNAP recipients and SNAP-eligible households in Franklin County. The award will support materials for two community sites, strengthen our F.R.E.S.H. Community Market and T.H.R.I.V.E. Community Kitchen strategies, and help residents make healthier choices where they live and gather. These materials will remain in use beyond the grant period, allowing us to continue nutrition education, healthy food access, and youth-led wellness activities."



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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