

HARTFORD FOOD SYSTEM

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HARTFORD FOOD SYSTEM ANNOUNCES FIRST-YEAR IMPACT OF 2016 HARVARD PILGRIM HEALTHY FOOD FUND GRANT

Hartford Food System provided Hartford neighborhoods and families with a yearly increase of 25% in fresh fruits and vegetables

Hartford, CT, May 2, 2017 – Hartford Food System has announced the first-year impact of its 2016 Harvard Pilgrim Foundation Healthy Food Fund grant. Based on an independent evaluation, Hartford Food System increased the amount of local produce available and sold to the Hartford families it serves by 25 % over the same period the previous year. The Hartford Mobile Market joins farmers markets and other retailers as a consistent and important factor in the community's food system.

"Since 2015, the Hartford Mobile Market has been able to make fresh fruits and vegetables available in many Hartford neighborhoods where it is not always easy to get fresh food," said Martha Page, Executive Director of Hartford Food System. "Thanks to the founding financial support of Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation, we were able to launch the Mobile Market and their ongoing funding makes it possible for Hartford Food System to offer produce to thousands of community members, helping to ensure healthier mealtimes in Hartford households."

In total, the amount of healthy, local produce distributed to low-income families in the region increased 87 percent as a result of Harvard Pilgrim Foundation's Healthy Food Fund contributions; and the amount of produce sold increased 63 percent to 827,000 pounds. The total dollar value of healthy food reaching households in communities across the region in 2016 is \$2.2 million.

Of the 26 Healthy Food Fund projects in Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire, 17 are selling healthy local food through Farmers' Markets, Mobile Markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, and farm stands. A total of 20 are distributing produce through free-to-recipient channels such as gleaning, food banks, community meals, and youth agriculture programs.

"We are so pleased we can show how relatively small investments in local organizations can measurably improve access to healthy food," according to the Harvard Pilgrim Foundation's President, Karen Voci.

CREATING A BETTER FOOD SYSTEM IN HARTFORD
SINCE 1978

In 2016, more than \$1.4 million in grants was distributed to the Foundation's Healthy Food Fund initiatives within the region, with funds supporting programs that grow, distribute and/or market fresh food for low-income families and communities across the region. Healthy Food Fund grantees in Connecticut include:

- Hartford Food System, *Hartford Mobile Market*
- New Haven Farms and New Haven Land Trust, *Farm-Based Wellness, Cooking and Nutrition Program, incubator garden*
- Green Village Initiative (Bridgeport), *Community Gardens Program*
- Brass City Harvest (Waterbury), *Healthy Corner Store Initiative; Cooking and Nutrition Classes*
- CT Food Bank (East Haven), *Farm-to-Pantry program*

About Hartford Food System

Since 1978, Hartford Food System has been dedicated to addressing problems of food security in Hartford. Our mission is to fight hunger and improve nutrition in our community. We are one of the nation's oldest organizations promoting the concept of community food security; we work to assure access by all persons at all times to enough nutritious, culturally acceptable food in their community for an active, healthy life. We implement programs that improve access to nutritious and affordable food, we help consumers make informed food choices, we advocate for a robust and economically sound food system, and we promote responsible food policies at all levels of government. For more information, please visit www.hartfordfood.org.

About The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation

Created in 1980, The Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation supports Harvard Pilgrim's mission to improve the quality and value of health care for the people and communities we serve. The Harvard Pilgrim Foundation provides the tools, training and leadership to help build healthy communities throughout Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. In 2016, the Harvard Pilgrim Foundation awarded more than \$2.4 million in grants to more than 900 nonprofit organizations in the region. Since its inception in 1980, the Foundation has awarded \$140 million in funds and resources throughout the four states. For more information, please visit www.harvardpilgrim.org/foundation.

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