Hello Meeker-McLeod-Sibley Community Partners and Stakeholders,

As a collaborative we are working hard to provide you with the most current information related to the work we are doing in our community. Each quarter, Healthy Communities will distribute a media toolkit that will be shared with those we work with.

This quarter we are sharing information on food access and healthy eating. Please look through the attached materials. Feel free to distribute this to your staff, partners and clients to educate them on the work we are doing to make the communities we provide services in a healthier place to be.

Also remember to share the work you’re doing around this topic or an event related to this topic with us via our website Share a Story or Share an Event. Also watch for more toolkits to come out during the rest of 2018. June 2018 will be Health Eating, September 2018 will be Senior Health and December 2018 will be Healthy Choice and Behaviors.

If you have questions about the content of this toolkit or want to become involved with the Healthy Communities Collaborative you can contact Kerry Ward at kerry.ward@co.mcleod.mn.us or via phone at 320-864-1512.

Thank you,

Lori Rice
Meeker-McLeod-Sibley Healthy Communities Chair
Partners Call to Action: We need communities that support our healthy choices. We all need access to fresh fruits and vegetables. We need healthy choices in our workplaces and communities. Our children deserve to be offered healthy choices in school.

Newspaper Article:

Working together to make the healthy choice the easy choice...

Even though Minnesota is seen as a rich agricultural state, not everyone has access to healthy and affordable food. In some communities, finding fresh food means traveling long distances from home or paying unaffordable prices. Too many Minnesotans cannot find fresh fruits and vegetables near their homes or what they can find is limited and expensive. We need communities that support our healthy choices. We all need access to fresh fruits and vegetables. We need healthy choices in our workplaces and communities. Our children deserve to be offered healthy choices in school. Across Minnesota, communities are working together through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) to expand healthy eating and active living opportunities. With this concern in mind, the Minnesota Department of Health (MDH), Meeker McLeod Sibley Community Health Service (MMS CHS) and community partners like Meeker McLeod Sibley Healthy Communities (MMS HC) are working to increase access to and the selection of healthy foods to improve health and reduce chronic diseases for all by implementing community-based healthy eating strategies.

Current initiatives in Meeker, McLeod and Sibley Counties include work with farmer’s market, schools, and food shelves. Through SHIP funding, MMS Healthy Communities and its partners have been working to bring programming to Farmer’s Markets like Power of Produce and Market Bucks. Our School partners are working on Farm to School, School gardens and CSA work. Food shelves like the McLeod County Food Shelf have implemented weekly produce only pick-ups. This offering is in addition to the once every 30 day general grocery distribution and helps stretch budgets as well as move the perishables quickly. They have also been piloting a Health Partners program known as the SuperShelf Program. The objective is to transform food shelves, creating welcoming environments for communities to access appealing, healthy food. All the details can be found at https://www.supershelfmn.org/

Obesity rates can have a major impact on health care costs for related chronic diseases like diabetes. All of our communities hard work has benefited our residents with a decrease in obesity rates across Minnesota. “Minnesota’s obesity rate is markedly lower than our surrounding states and we were still able to achieve a greater decrease in 2015 than our neighboring states,” said former Minnesota Commissioner of Health Dr. Ed Ehlinger. “Achieving healthy weight for all Minnesotans is one of the
key objectives for our Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) and its community and private sector partners. By working together we’ve been able to increase opportunities for healthy eating and physical activity for all Minnesotans in every corner of the state.”

The goal of the Statewide Health Improvement Program (SHIP) is to help Minnesotans live longer, healthier, better lives by preventing risk factors that lead to chronic disease. MMS CHS and the Meeker-McLeod-Sibley Healthy Communities Collaborative have been working for the past 4 1/2 years to help create good health where residents, live, work, learn and play. They are working together on making the Healthy Choice the Easy Choice! You can find out about the work they do together at http://www.mmshealthycommunities.org/

Newsletter/Blog Article:
Even though Minnesota is seen as a rich agricultural state, not everyone has access to healthy and affordable food. In some communities, finding fresh food means traveling long distances from home or paying unaffordable prices. Too many Minnesotans cannot find fresh fruits and vegetables near their homes or what they can find is limited and expensive. We need communities that support our healthy choices. We all need access to fresh fruits and vegetables. We need healthy choices in our workplaces and communities. Our children deserve to be offered healthy choices in school. Across Minnesota, communities are working together through the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) to expand healthy eating and active living opportunities. With this concern in mind, the Minnesota Department of Health, Meeker McLeod Sibley Community Health Service and community partners like Meeker McLeod Sibley Healthy Communities are working to increase access to and the selection of healthy foods to improve health and reduce chronic diseases for all by implementing community-based healthy eating strategies.

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Facebook Post:
Communities can work with Minnesota Department of Health, local public health and other partners to increase access to and the selection of healthy foods and active living to improve health and reduce chronic diseases. Learn how Meeker McLeod Sibley Healthy Communities is working to better the health of their community.

[https://www.mmshealthycommunities.org/collective-action/obesity/](https://www.mmshealthycommunities.org/collective-action/obesity/)

**Twitter Post:**

Despite Minnesota’s reputation of being a diverse and rich agricultural state, not everyone has access to healthy and affordable food or active living opportunities. Learn how Meeker McLeod Sibley Healthy Communities is working to better the health of their community.

[https://www.mmshealthycommunities.org/collective-action/obesity/](https://www.mmshealthycommunities.org/collective-action/obesity/)

**Community Opportunities:**

- **Farmers Markets:** please see the attached handout on where to find the local farmer’s markets in your area.

- **Power of Produce/Hands on Produce (PoP/HoP):** The Power of Produce (PoP) Club is a farmers markets incentive program for children offered at farmers markets throughout the nation. Each week, children ages 4 to 12 receive a $2 token to spend on fresh fruits and vegetables. The intent of the PoP Club is to engage children at farmers markets and empower them to make healthful food choices. It also aims to increase family participation at farmers markets, increase vendor revenue, and build healthier communities.

  [https://www.extension.umn.edu/family/health-and-nutrition/toolkits-and-resources/power-of-produce/](https://www.extension.umn.edu/family/health-and-nutrition/toolkits-and-resources/power-of-produce/)

- **Market Bucks:** Everyone should have access to fresh, healthy, local food. Market Bucks help SNAP customers stretch their dollars at the farmers market making healthy food more affordable. Market Bucks match SNAP-EBT spending dollar-for-dollar (up to $10) at participating farmers markets across Minnesota. There are three easy steps to using SNAP-EBT at the farmers market:
  - Buy tokens at the EBT booth. Get Market Bucks to match dollar-for-dollar (up to $10).
  - Use tokens (and Market Bucks) to buy SNAP-eligible foods from market vendors.
  - Keep unused tokens for future visits or return them at the EBT booth.


- **Heart of Hutch Taste Testing:** Hutchinson Farmers Market on 3rd Saturday of the month 8am-12pm. When visiting the Farmers Market this summer make sure to stop at the Heart of Hutch table for a taste of a special recipe prepared by the Eat Smart Committee using fruits/vegetables being sold at the Farmers Market. Visitors are also invited to pick up a free
recipe sheet with more ideas for using Farmers Market produce. This year the McLeod County Master Gardeners will be featuring some gardening tips at their booth for those fruits and vegetables being sold. Both organizations welcome everyone to take the time to stop at their booths this summer. https://heartofhutch.com/event/food-tasting-11/2018-06-16/

- **Heart of Hutch Community Events:** There are many fun and get out and move events that are family-friendly in the Hutchinson area to participate in. Don’t miss out on things like walks, runs, bike rides, yoga and paddle sports. https://heartofhutch.com/communityevents/

- **Summer Eats Minnesota:** The app, called Summer Eats Minnesota, is free at the Apple App Store and the Google Play Store. Powered by GPS, it shows locations of summer food sites, their menus and days/hours of operation. Kids 18 and under can show up without prior signup for free meals at these open site locations, including park and recreation sites, community centers, libraries and schools. The app shows the distance and directions to the nearest sites. The app is in partnership with the Minnesota Department of Education to reach more children around the state.

**Additional Resources:**

- People who have obesity are at an increased risk for many serious chronic health conditions. Use this step-by-step guide to get started losing weight. http://bit.ly/2i6erVi

- Meeker McLeod Sibley Healthy Communities website https://www.mmshealthycommunities.org/

- What's going on in Minnesota communities through efforts with the Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP)? http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdrr/nutrition/communities/

- Put Good Food where your mouth is – food tips http://www.health.state.mn.us/divs/hpcd/chp/cdrr/nutrition/foodtips/
Creating BETTER HEALTH TOGETHER through healthy food access

Despite Minnesota’s reputation of being a diverse and rich agricultural state, not everyone has access to healthy and affordable food. In some communities, finding fresh food means traveling long distances from home or paying unaffordable prices.

Too many Minnesotans cannot find fresh fruits and vegetables near their homes or what they can find is limited and expensive. In fact, nearly 235,000 Minnesotans live more than 10 miles away from a large grocery store or supermarket. Minnesota ranks 7th worst in the nation for the share of residents with low access to healthy foods and is second only to Texas, with the worst access in rural areas.¹

SHIP increases access to and the selection of healthy foods to improve health and reduce chronic diseases for all by implementing community-based healthy eating strategies.

SHIP is making an impact

- 366 partner sites are creating options that give more than 2 million people opportunities to choose healthy foods.

SHIP supports health and the local economy

During the 2016 season, sales from EBT and Market Bucks transactions alone totaled $10,435. Farmers markets included in this total were Marshall, Worthington and Redwood Falls.

- Margaret Palan
United Community Action
Marshall


SHIP increases healthy food access by partnering with:

132 COMMUNITY-BASED AGRICULTURE SITES
90 are increasing access and availability of healthy food for those with limited choices

76 HUNGER RELIEF ORGANIZATIONS
32 are supporting prominently displaying and promoting healthy food or beverage options to increase healthy food choices

66 FARMERS MARKETS
17 sites added use of SNAP/EBT to increase healthy food access to those with the greatest need

60 FOOD RETAILERS
32 sites have vendor contracts incorporating healthy food, making healthy choices possible

14 FOOD POLICY COUNCILS
58% of partner sites have leadership roles, advancing the work of the councils to increase local and regional access to healthy foods

11 COMPREHENSIVE PLAN PARTNER SITES
55% of partner sites have engaged with populations that have limited choices for healthy, affordable food

SHIP in action

Three Rivers Park District is one of Minnesota’s largest park systems, serving suburban Hennepin, Carver, Dakota, Scott and Ramsey counties. It has an estimated 11 million annual visits.

Recognizing the demand and need for healthier food and beverage options, community partnerships were developed to make changes.

With support from Hennepin County Public Health and SHIP, the Three Rivers Park District committed to having at least 50 percent of foods and beverages served at the parks to be healthy. This means that park visitors will now have an easier time purchasing healthy options, such as fruit, non-fried vegetables, whole grain-rich products, and healthy beverage options at concessions, snack and meal areas, and vending machines throughout the parks.

"We serve a lot of people, including school-age children, and it’s important to have these healthier food choices available," said Lynn Stoltzmann, Director of Facility Services for Three Rivers Park District.

March 2017
A visit to a local farmer’s market is a wonderful experience. There is a huge array of summer fruits, local grown vegetables, fresh herbs, flowers and more!

What a way to support local growers and revamp the creative juices in your kitchen! Start with simple items that you know like potatoes, corn and tomatoes. Make a selection of fruit for treats. And try something new!

The fresh tomatoes are astounding - they are so ripe, juicy and delicious. Serve some of them sliced fresh with just a little oil, vinegar and black pepper. Or try this roasted marinara sauce:

Roasted Marinara Sauce:

**Ingredients:**
- 3 large, ripe tomatoes, cored, halved and seeded
- 1/2 onion, peeled and quartered
- 1/4 cup fresh chopped basil
- Dash granulated garlic
- Dash dried oregano
- 4 tablespoons grated Parmesan
- 1/4 teaspoon cracked black pepper

**Directions:**
1. Preheat your oven broiler.
2. Place tomatoes and onion skin side up in a large baking dish. Roast the vegetables under the broiler until skins turn very brown and blisters - about 10 minutes.
3. Place herbs and onions into a food processor; process briefly until basil is chopped fine then add the tomatoes and puree until almost smooth. Reheat to use with pasta.

Why should you attend a farmer’s market?
- A cheap family outing and fun event
- Some exercise and Vitamin D from walking around outside
- Learn more about produce
- Try new things
- Eat more fruits and vegetables
- Get items that are fresher, better tasting and naturally ripe
- Support local growers
- Great bargains on local seasonal produce

Here is what you should bring:
- Cash
- Hat/sunglasses
- Water - if it is hot outside you might get thirsty on your expedition
- Bug spray if there are mosquitoes near you
- A bag or box to carry your items home
- Cooler with ice in case you have other errands to run afterwards - some items like leafy lettuce and fresh herbs are more delicate and may not hold up that well in a hot car.

For More Information
To find a farmer’s market near you, visit [http://www.localharvest.org](http://www.localharvest.org)
Farmers Markets

Meeker

- Litchfield – Thursdays 2-5:30 pm: 915 E Hwy 12 (old VFW parking lot)
- Dassel – Fridays 2:30 – 5:30pm: Downtown Dassel in the Bandstand Park

McLeod

- Hutchinson – Wednesdays 2:30 – 5:30 pm: 25 Adams Street SE
  Saturdays 8 am – 12 pm: 25 Adams Street SE
- Glencoe – Thursdays 3-6 pm: 1107 11th Street (adjacent to Glencoe City Center)

Sibley

- Arlington – Mondays 4:00 -6:30 pm: Arlington Community Center Parking Lot
- Gibbon – Mondays 3-6 pm: Hwy 19 at Hillmann’s Backhoe and Tiling
- Henderson – Tuesdays 6 – 9pm: Henderson Classic Car Roll In
- Gaylord – Wednesdays 4 – 6pm: 5th Street and Main

Healthy food access might also increase in a school setting. Currently school gardens exist at these schools.

Meeker

- Dassel –Cokato

McLeod

- Glencoe- Silver Lake

Sibley

- Sibley East High School
- Sibley East Elementary
**COLLECTIVE ACTION PLAN: OBESITY**

Obesity is a significant contributor to chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and cancer, which often lead to premature death and raise health care costs for both individuals and the state.

Strategies that improve nutrition and increase physical activity through policy, systems, and environmental change are fundamental to reducing obesity rates in children and adults.

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**Local Data**

MMS Community Health Behavior Survey

- **33.6%** of MMS adult residents, in 2013, self-reported that they were obese (by submitting height & weight).
- **Over 50%** of MMS residents utilize classes or activities through Community Education.

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**Highest Age-Adjusted Rates of Obesity**

**Gender & Age**

- **33.5%** Males
- **33.7%** Females

**Education & Income**

- **42.9%** Less than high school education
- **24.4%** Bachelor's degree or higher

**Residents Considered Obese**

- **37.2%** (Meeker)
- **33.6%** (McLeod)
- **35.4%** (Sibley)

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**45.7%** Highest Age Group with Obesity: 45-54 years

**37.7%** Highest Household Income with Obesity: Median

**Less than 20.5%** of MMS adult residents utilize public swimming pools, recreation centers, health clubs, fitness centers, or gyms.
IN 2014...

36.5% of U.S. adults had obesity

Obesity by age and ethnic background:

- **40.2%**
  - Middle-Aged Adults
  - 40-59 years

- **37%**
  - Older Adults
  - 60+ years

- **32.3%**
  - Younger Adults
  - 20-39 years

Obesity can also be affected by socioeconomic status

IN 2013...

- **35.6%** of MN adults were overweight
- **25.5%** of MN adults were obese

www.mmshealthycommunities.org
Healthy Eating in Meeker McLeod and Sibley Counties

3 out of 4 residents (78%) believe poor eating habits are a moderate or major concern in their county.

68% of residents felt that the inability to afford healthy food was a major to moderate concern.

Are our residents, in Meeker, McLeod and Sibley counties, healthy eaters?

More than 1/3 (36%) of adults in the tri-county region consumed five or more fruits and vegetables (CDC’s daily fruit and vegetable intake recommendation) during the previous day.

Source: Meeker McLeod Sibley Community Health Services Community Health Behavior Survey 2014

During the growing season:

7 out of 10 adult residents (68%) buy or get food from a farmer’s market or fruit/vegetable stand at least one time per month.

6 out of 10 adult residents (61%) buy or get food from a home or community garden at least one time per month.

In an average week:

Over 1/2 (57%) of adults eat out or order food from a fast food place at least once.

Over 1/2 (55%) of adults eat out at a restaurant that is not a fast food place at least once.

3 out of 4 adults (76%) eat out at least once (at a fast food place and/or non-fast food restaurant).

Support for healthy eating initiatives

Source: 2015 Meeker McLeod Sibley Community Health Opinion Survey

www.mmshealthycommunities.org
Free Family Swim Nights
Hutchinson Aquatic Center

WHEN
June 21 / July 19 / August 9
Extended Evening Hours:
5:00pm - 8:00pm

WHO
Hutchinson Area Families
Parents or Guardians MUST be present with Children at ALL times.
No drop-offs permitted.

SPONSORED BY
Hutchinson Health
Thrivent Financial