



Mercy Regional
Medical Center
Centura Health®



EMPLOYEE PRODUCE SHARE PROGRAM



THE PROGRAM

The Roots of Health Employee Produce Share Program is the result of a unique partnership between Centura Health, Mercy Regional Medical Center, and the Good Food Collective. The program links Mercy associates with fresh, nutritious Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares from our local farmers. Through benefitting producers and consumers, CSA programs are instrumental in cultivating sustainable food systems!

For its second year, we've integrated participant and farmer feedback and refined our strategies to better achieve each of the program's goals...

- 1) increase immediate and long-term food security among Centura associates
- 2) support local agriculture and build community
- 4) promote healthy behavior and improve health outcomes
- 5) enhance associate awareness of local food insecurity

"I loved it. I love that it helps the community get more expensive local food and it helps the farmer make those connections and conserve precious time"

- 2021 Roots of Health Farmer

THE IMPACT

- 110 CSA participants
- 4 local, small-scale, organic farms supported
- over \$46,000 invested in our local farmers
- Our farmers provided associates with ~14,000 pounds of healthy, sustainably grown produce
- 170 unclaimed shares redistributed to food assistance providers
- 76% of participants reported being better able to provide healthy food for their household through this program
- 72% of participants agreed or strongly agreed they now have an increased awareness of food assistance resources to support themselves and patients
- 100% of farmers reported that the program significantly or moderately impacted their ability to make a living by farming

I know I am healthier. I am learning to cook new and from scratch dishes which is fun and therapeutic too!"

- 2021 Participant



1) SUPPORT LOCAL AGRICULTURE

Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs are increasingly important for small-scale farmers due to the financial stability that they provide. Many of these producers lost their wholesale accounts due to pandemic-induced system challenges. Luckily, the CSA model acts as a sort of insurance for farmers since growers and eaters (like you) take on the risk together!

2) BUILD COMMUNITY

Mercy Hospital employees are united through the shared interest to nourish your bodies with fresh, healthy food. Your enthusiasm for this aspect of the program was evident in your eagerness to share recipes with each other and to communicate gratitude to the farmers for their hard work. Thank you for expressing your appreciation for the program overall. Last, but not least, this program sought to show appreciation for individuals working on the frontlines in the healthcare industry. Your work is incredibly important, and your health is our top priority.



3) PROMOTE HEALTHY BEHAVIOR

The CSA model goes against what so many of us have come to expect from a modern food system: relatively easy access to an extensive variety of foods year-round! Each week, the veggie goodie bag consisted of different and sometimes unfamiliar items. This aspect of the program challenged each of you to expand your pallet, eat seasonally, and cook creatively!

Furthermore, this program aimed to break down common barriers to food security such as time, transportation, money, and availability of healthy foods. We tackled each barrier through the following tactics:

- offering a convenient pick-up location
- adjusting pick-up times to fit the needs and schedules of associates
- offering a sliding-scale payment option
- providing access to simple and relevant recipes



WHAT'S IN STORE FOR 2022

We are so excited to enter the third year of our Employee Produce Share program! To increase our impact, this year we will be providing 125 CSA shares, have expanded our team, and have adjusted our communications strategy to raise awareness about food insecurity and local food assistance resources. We will also be launching a Produce Prescription Program for Mercy Hospital patients! Subscribe to the Good Food Collective's biweekly newsletter to continue to learn about our programs and fun ways to get involved in the local food system! Visit www.goodfoodcollective.org