



## WHY VT FRESH?

VT Fresh supports Vermont Foodbank partners to implement strategies for improving the food environment with displays, promotions, recipes, simple taste tests and messaging tools. A key impact of the program is expanded access, improved availability and increased consumption of fruits and vegetables in communities across Vermont.

With the support of VT Fresh mini-grants, partners transform how fruits and vegetables are displayed and distributed as well as implement creative food access projects. The program supports partners to beautify their spaces and make these spaces more welcoming and dignified for our neighbors too!



# VT Fresh Strategies

## to increase access to fruits and vegetables

- **Displays / Storage :** Create attractive produce displays (shelving, baskets, outdoor set-ups, storage bins, etc.)
- **Signage / Printed Materials:** Promote produce with signage (banners, posters, shelf labels, printed materials etc.)
- **Community Engagement Activities:** Engage in creative community engagement activities (produce distribution days/events, advertising, and/or hosting other types of community events for community conversations, special community meals, etc.)
- **Reach Priority Populations:** Implement innovative and more equitable distribution systems to reach priority populations (home delivery, accessibility of produce for people living with a disability, translation services & translation of materials/signage, ease of access for unhoused, outreach to BIPOC, immigrant, LGBTQ+ households, etc.)\*
- **Recipe Kit Project:** Distribute recipe kits (i.e. bundled ingredients) as a strategy for individuals and families to integrate more fruits and vegetables into their diet and try new recipes
- **Cooking Demos:** Implement taste tests, cooking demos, classes, et.
- **Convenience:** Implement ways to make produce more convenient and accessible such pre-packaging, very small-scale food processing, etc.
- **Systems:** Develop systems to procure and distribute more produce (increase variety through local purchasing and donations, systems for receiving and sorting, etc.)
- **Increase Access:** (Consider policy changes such as expanded hours for produce, client choice, remove or adjust rules around quantity limits on produce, etc.)
- **Culturally Diverse Foods:** Integrate culturally diverse foods into community meals, food boxes, and/or food distribution

\*Priority populations are disproportionately more likely to be food insecure. In Vermont, this defined as individuals who live rurally, live with a disability, with incomes below the poverty line, are Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC), and/or Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer (LGBTQ+)





# VT Fresh Mini-Grants

Receive funds to increase access to fruits and vegetables.

## 2025 VT Fresh Grant Requirements:

- Organizations are required to have a **Vermont Foodbank Agency #** and be an **active Network or Program Partner of the Vermont Foodbank**.
- All funds received through this program must be used to **INCREASE ACCESS to FRUITS AND VEGETABLES**.
- **\$500-\$2000 Grants cover the costs of:** displays and signage, equipment, supplies, and materials to implement strategies and projects to help make it easier for food shelf visitors to choose fruits and vegetables.
- **VT Fresh Funds CANNOT be used to purchase: produce or food, staff wages, refrigerators, coolers or freezers.\***
- Note: Purchases condiments and spices for recipe kits and demo ingredients are allowable.
- **Due FRIDAY January 17th, 2025.**
- All funds must be spent AND final reports due by **Wednesday, October 15, 2025**.
- Email or Call Amy Boudreaux with any questions or support [aboudreaux@vtfoodbank.org](mailto:aboudreaux@vtfoodbank.org) 802-249-7411

\*If you have a capacity need which falls outside the scope of the VT Fresh Grant, other funds may be available for emergent needs. For more information, please contact McKayla Baker at [mcbaker@vtfoodbank.org](mailto:mcbaker@vtfoodbank.org).

VT Fresh is funded in part by the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer. In Vermont, SNAP is called 3SquaresVT. It can help low-income people buy foods for a better diet.



# Community Engagement

As your organization puts together your grant request and implements projects...

We encourage you to engage your local community members with lived experience of hunger and poverty to inform how this grant money is spent and what projects you focus on.

Partners engage community members in different ways including:

Formally gathered ideas (surveys, questionnaires, etc.)

Informally gathered ideas (conversations, etc.)

Advisory group with individuals with lived experience.

Board of Directors with members with lived experience.

Community or group conversations with individuals with lived experience.





## VT FRESH

### Ideas and Links for Mini-Grant Funding Requests

- Please note you can purchase items from any website, linked items are just examples.
- Feel free to get creative in funding requests. Below are just ideas on what funding can be used for.
- All fruit and vegetable project ideas welcome!

Email or Call Amy Boudreaux with any  
questions or support  
[aboudreaux@vtfoodbank.org](mailto:aboudreaux@vtfoodbank.org)  
802-249-7411





# IDEA: Displays, Shelving & Storage

- [Large Uline storage shelf](#)
  - [Order casters for this to be on wheels](#)
- [Uline wire basket shelving](#)
  - [Order casters for this to be on wheels](#)
  - Explore Uline for a variety of metal shelving options
- [Wooden shelving from Displays2Go.com](#)
- [Wicker shelving from CandyConceptsinc.com](#)
  - Must purchase wheels separately if wanted
- [Wooden cart](#)
- [Chalkboard storage bins](#)
- [Wooden crate](#)
- [Clear bins for refrigerator](#)
- [Extra large, stackable bins](#)
- [More clear bins!](#)





# IDEA: Outdoor Farmers Market Displays

- [Pop-up tent](#)
- [Pop-up tent with weights and wheelie bag](#)
- [Folding table](#)
- [Wire basket shelving on wheels](#) (to move inside and outside easily), wheels and casters sold separately
- [Decorative tablecloths](#)
- For outdoor volunteers: warm gloves, hand warmers, heated vests, portable heaters etc.
- [Cart to move produce](#)
- Wooden shelving
- Coolers for food





# IDEA: Signage, Printed Materials & More!

- Posters/ Paintings/ anything to help bring more beauty into the space
- Nutrition education materials
  - [Tearpads, handouts and posters](#)
  - [Activity kits for kids \(see Appendix for VT Fresh suggested items at end of slide deck!\)](#)
  - [Posters and more!](#)
- Murals! (Funds can be used for supplies and design of a mural in your space)
- New ideas from our partners!
  - Plants to bring warmth to the environment
  - Speakers to play music for welcoming atmosphere





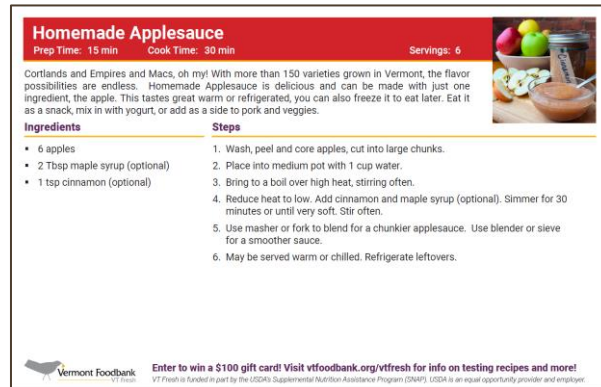
# IDEA: Printing Recipes and Resources

## Product Ideas:

- [Color printer](#) & [color ink](#)
- [Pocket laminator](#) & [laminating sheets](#) for printed signage and recipes!
- Professional printing services
- Translation services for any printed items or messaging
- Create your own recipe book!

## Print and Display Recipes:

- Acrylic recipe holders to highlight and display recipes! These fit our new ½ page recipe template perfectly!
- [4 tier display](#)
- [Single pocket holder](#)
- [Wall holder](#)



We can provide you electronic copies of all our NEW VT Fresh recipes and quick tips, making it easy to just click and print!

Check out <https://www.vtfoodbank.org/nurture-people/vt-fresh/cooking-with-vt-fresh> for other resources to explore and print

## Project Examples:

- Vershire Food Shelf designed and sent a postcard to every household in their town advertising the fresh, healthy produce available at the Food Shelf. The hope is to reduce the stigma sometimes associated with needing help and let neighbors know what is available to them.



- Woodstock High School VVG used their VT Fresh funds to design and print a beautiful zine focused on preparing winter veggies





# IDEA: Community Engagement Activities

VT Fresh funding can be used in a variety of ways to implement creative community engagement activities to increase fruit and vegetable access. Here are a few examples:

- Host open house or other event to invite the public in, gather community input, and foster relationships. Funding can be used to purchase tables, tablecloths, print materials, table display products, etc.
- Gather fruit & vegetable recipes from community members to create a cookbook – funding can be used for professional binding and print services.
- Host “Eat Your Fruits and Veggies” poster or reusable bag design contest – funding can support the purchase of posters & customized bags!
- Purchase printers and ink for surveys and questionnaires to gather input around produce offerings, recipes, and inform decisions.
- Funding for supplies such as a pop-up tent, table, tablecloths, and signage to set up at community events and farmers markets to engage with community members. Provide educational materials, have conversations, and gather input! Some partners have coupled this with a produce distribution.
- Any other ideas around engaging the community to increase fruit & vegetable access are welcome! Reach out to Amy to discuss possibilities!



Photo Credit: Waterbury Common Market Facebook Page (Harvest Garden Party)

*“Through the VT Fresh grant we were able to put together a mobile fresh food stand. We purchased a pop-up tent, signage, tables and tables clothes. We were able to host numerous events (12 in total) that supported community member fresh food access. We coupled this grant funding with the Vermonters Feeding Vermonters grant to offer our best impression of a farmers market. We also hosted community cookouts in the park that we coupled with fun events such as lawn games, slate-paper-scissor tournament, etc. All of these events helped provide food access to folks in need, while also promoting the need for creating greater food access.” – Slate Valley Cares*



# IDEA: Reach Priority Populations

## Home delivery

- VT Fresh funding can support the implementation of home delivery programs where produce will be delivered!
  - Packaging supplies and materials
  - Funding to print recipes
  - Mileage reimbursement for volunteers or staff related to fresh produce deliveries\*
  - Any other ideas around this welcome!



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## Local advertising to promote produce distribution

- Grant funding can be utilized to purchase advertisements for your local Front Porch Forum, Facebook, or local newspaper, or radio station to promote your distribution of fruits and vegetables. (Email or call Amy for ideas/examples)
- Outreach/advertising to specific populations that may not know about your resources
- [Signage](#) to let neighbors know they everyone is [welcome](#) to visit & receive fresh produce at your location!
- Translation services for materials & signage!





# IDEA: Recipe Kit Project

We have a how-to manual / guidebook to make creating and distributing Recipe Kits a breeze! Click this link [Recipe Toolkit](#) to learn how to assemble, find accessible recipes, and get links to supplies & ingredients!

VT Fresh can purchase supplies needed for recipe kits:

- [Produce Bags](#)
- Zip lock bags for recipes (to keep them dry)
- [Small reusable tote bags](#)
- Printer, Ink and paper for printing recipes
- Label maker and supplies
- Peelers, wooden spoons, simple cooking materials
- Small sample size condiments, spices, etc.
  - [Olive Oil](#)
  - [Honey](#)
  - [Maple Syrup](#)

Reminder: Funds cannot be used for food/produce purchases; however, sample sized condiments are allowed.

Bundling ingredients or slightly transforming/processing produce is a great way to make it more accessible for folks without access to kitchens or who have difficulty chopping and processing

*"Participants really enjoyed having the option to grab a recipe kit at a Cupboard distribution. We had a variety of meals served throughout, and guests said it gave them healthy options and ideas for cooking." ~Rally Cat's Cupboard*



*"[Recipe kits] helped people to take more produce. They got excited because everything was all together with everything they needed." ~Waterbury Common Market*



# IDEA: Cooking Demos / Taste Tests

Taste tests are a great way for people to try an unfamiliar vegetable or a new way of preparation. Try pairing a taste test with a recipe kit distribution as a convenient way for folks to try recipes at home!



- [VT Fresh tips and tricks for organizing a portable kitchen](#)
- [Induction stove](#)
- [Slow cooker](#)
- [Folding table](#)
- Decorative tablecloths
- [Mini disposable serving dishes](#)
- [Miniature disposable utensils](#)



- Pots and other cooking materials
- Printer, ink and paper for printing recipes
- [Small baskets](#) and displays for the table
- [Tabletop chalkboard](#) and [chalk markers](#)





# IDEA: Cooking Classes

- Some sites have used VT Fresh funds to host cooking and/or food preservation classes
- If your community has expressed interest in classes, funds can support:
  - ✓ [Cooking](#) & kitchen supplies
  - ✓ Recipes
  - ✓ Preservation supplies (cans, jars vacuum sealers, dehydrators, etc.)



Heineberg Senior Center hosted cooking classes where participants received recipe books & crock pots



Circles VT hosted canning workshops. VT Fresh funded the supplies for preservation.

# IDEA: Convenience Supplies

## Produce Convenience

- [Food processor](#)
- [Vacuum sealer](#) & [bags](#)
- Knives, cutting boards, kitchen supplies, spiralizers, etc.
- Materials and supplies for light processing to preserve produce
- Packaging for convenience and accessibility
- Tools for folks to take home to use to prep produce (peelers, can openers, etc.)



H.O.P.E in Lyndonville used funds to purchase and distribute food prep bags which included tools to help recipients prepare produce.

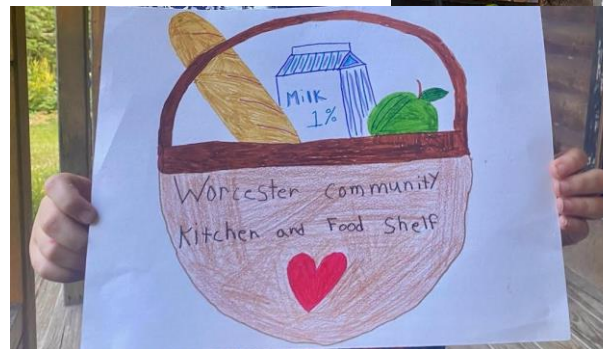


# IDEA: Convenient Reusable Bags!

- [Plain reusable grocery bags](#)
- [Customizable reusable grocery bags](#)



Worcester Community Kitchen Food Shelf invited children from the community to design the logo for their new tote bags





# IDEA: Other Materials and Supplies for Systems and Food Access

- [Trolleys/carts](#) for folks to borrow to transport produce to their homes. Some food shelves have started implanting a trolley loan program. Very helpful for those who walk or take public transportation.
- [Walk-to-shop program](#)



- Supplies to support gleaning of fresh, local produce
- Scale to weigh/track produce purchases and donations
- Hydraulic lift to assist in lifting heavy produce
- Mileage reimbursement for volunteers for procurement and distribution of produce \*



\*Please note: This grant cannot be used to pay for staff wages.



## Shopping Local with VT Fresh

When and If possible, we encourage shopping local. Below are a few potential options.

- Steiger Restaurant Supply –Rutland
- Singer Kittredge –Williston
- Big Apple Restaurant Supply-Colchester
- Green Mountain Restaurant Equipment – Milton
- W.B. Mason.

Reach out to Amy to brainstorm or if you are unsure if your idea fits into the VT fresh Mini-Grant  
802-249-7411 [aboudreaux@vtfoodbank.org](mailto:aboudreaux@vtfoodbank.org)

**Looking for more ideas of how to use funds?  
Check out the appendix in the next two slides  
where you can find a list of suggested VT  
Fresh items along with the links to purchase!**



# Appendix: Here is a list of resources and links that you may be interested in purchasing with your grant funds.

Please keep in mind, all items purchased should be used for increasing access to fruits and vegetables



[2 Pack Lawn Signs](#)



[Chalkboard Sandwich board sidewalk sign](#)



[Dry Erase Sandwich Board Sidewalk Sign](#)



[Tabletop Chalkboard](#)



[Fresh produce Flag Kit 2](#)



[Chalkboard Marker Set](#)



[Regular Chalk Set](#)



[Expo Dry Erase Markers](#)



[Narrow Produce Bags](#)



[Standard Produce Bags](#)



[Produce Stand](#)



[Compostable produce bags](#)



[Produce Scale](#)



[Rubbermaid Digital Scale](#)



[Acrylic Sign Holder Clips](#)



[Wood Table Number Holders](#)



[Fruit and Veggie Farm Bookmarks](#)



[Stickers! Fun giveaway item for the kids!](#)



[Eat Local Stickers](#)



[Garden Heroes Temporary Tattoo Set](#)



[Diabetes MyPlate Handouts](#)



[Catch a Rainbow Hand Outs](#)



[Vegetable Nutrition Facts Hand Outs](#)



[Top 10 Ways to Eat More Fruits & Vegetables Handouts](#)



[Grocery Shopping List Notepads](#)



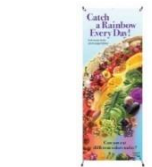
[Why Eat Fruits and Veggies Handouts](#)



[Super Cart Grocery Shopping Hand Outs](#)



[Physical Activity MyPlate Handout](#)



[Banner with Stand](#)



# Appendix Continued



[Banner with Stand](#)



[Catch a Rainbow Sign Set](#)



[Eat a Rainbow Sign Set](#)



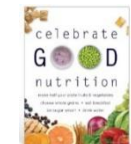
[Eat a Rainbow of veggies Poster](#)



[Vegetables Poster](#)  
[Fruits Poster](#)



[Eat a Rainbow Poster](#)



[Celebrate Good Nutrition Poster](#)



[Fruits and Veggies by Color Poster Set](#)



[Veggie Subgroup Poster Set](#)



[Fruits and Veggies by Color Poster Set](#)



[Why Eat Fruits and Veggies Poster](#)



[Gardening: Grow for it! Poster](#)



[Energy In Energy Out Poster Set](#)



[Farm Fresh Poster](#)



[Energy In Energy Out Poster Set](#)



[Canvas Wall Art](#)



[Farm Fresh Produce Banner](#)



[Fresh Produce Banner](#)



[Chalkboard – perfect for chalk markers!](#)



[Wooden Crate](#)



[Chalkboard Storage Bins](#)



[2 Wooden Display Baskets](#)



[Small 3 Tier Produce Display](#)



[Countertop Storage Baskets](#)