

Connecting National Resources to Local Consumers

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INTRODUCTION

Ohio State University Extension in Lucas County recognized gaps in the promotion of federal programs:

- Use of SNAP benefits to purchase seeds and plants to grow vegetable gardens
- Growing and producing urban agriculture
- Celebration of Farm to School Month
- Participation in the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)

A county information campaign was designed to increase health literacy, and to connect local citizens with national resources.



AIM

The goal was to share information about national and state programs available in the local community.

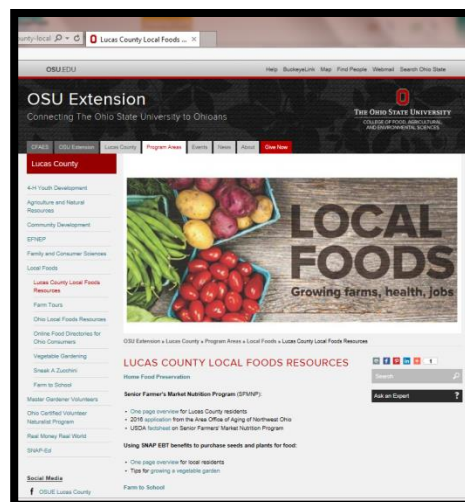
The information needed to be *simple for individuals and families to obtain, understand, and act on for healthier eating at every stage of life.*

METHODS

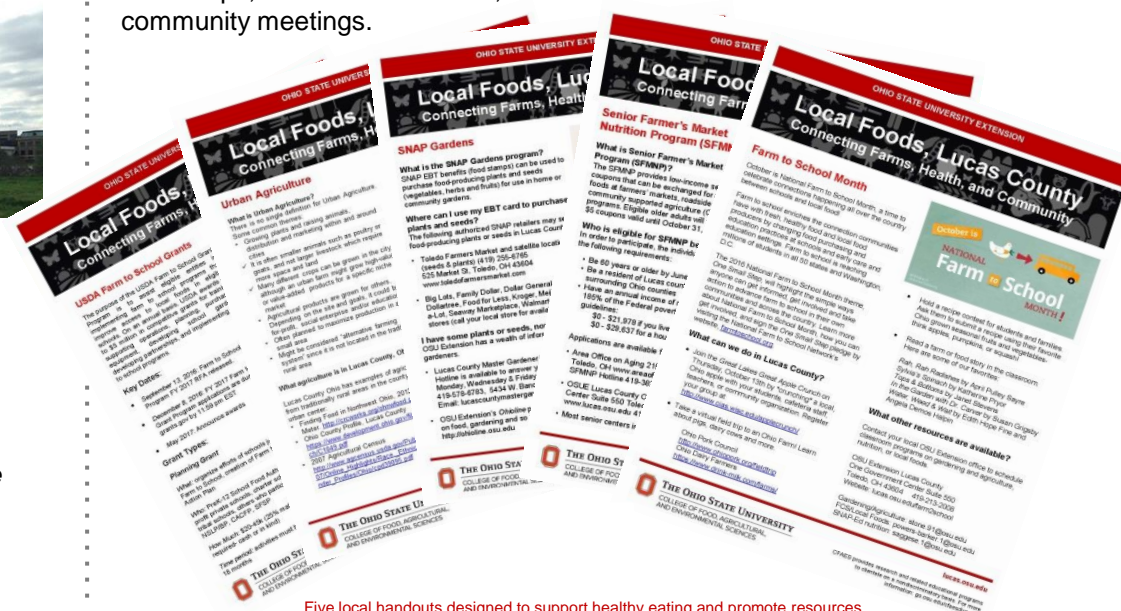
The information campaign included a series of five new handouts titled, *Local Foods, Lucas County: Connecting, Farms, Health, and Community.*

The *Local Foods, Lucas County* campaign was intended for all Lucas County community members interested in accessing and learning about local foods, but targeted to limited resource families, senior citizens, educators, and urban farmers.

The printed handouts were shared at different community settings including nutrition classes, agriculture workshops, farmers markets, and community meetings.



The handouts were also available on the Lucas County Extension website on the webpage titled “*Lucas County Local Foods Resources.*”



Five local handouts designed to support healthy eating and promote resources.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS

The handouts were shared along with additional information for consumers to take advantage of local opportunities. For example, the 2016 application for the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program from the Area Office of Aging was distributed with the *Local Foods, Lucas County* one page overview of SFMNP.

The handouts also contained information on local resources including Extension, the local library system, as well as local farmers and retailers that accepted SFMNP coupons and the Ohio Direction/SNAP EBT (electronic benefit transfer) card.



CONCLUSIONS

This information campaign helps link OSU Extension's Impact Areas of Health and Wellness, Thriving Across the Life Span and Sustainable Food Systems with local, state and national resources for county residents. Lucas County will continue to use this tool to create opportunities for integrated work across program areas as well as with other community partners.

Lucas County will share this information campaign as a template for other Extension professionals to address information gaps in their own counties, while making connections by engaging local consumers.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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RESULTS

Anecdotal information provided positive feedback about the information campaign:

- Used SNAP benefits to purchase seeds for gardens for the first time
- Signed up to participate in the SFMNP in 2016
- Participated in the 2016 Lucas County Master Urban Farmer class