

Creating healthy eating/healthy nutrition environments in SC:

- DHEC has been working with Eat Smart, Move More SC and Alta Planning + Design to establish a baseline measurement of county comprehensive plans that include principles addressing access to healthy eating and active living. A policy analysis tool is also being created along with model language that can be used in county comprehensive plans to create greater access to healthy food and accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists. Examples of the integration of local food systems and healthy eating principles in county comprehensive plans include:
 - Improving access to farmers' markets (markets could be allowed in commercial zoning districts)
 - Improving access to community gardens (space could be set aside for community gardens in a city's parks)
 - Improving access to supermarkets/grocery stores (inclusion of economic incentives and workforce development strategies)
 - Reducing access to fast-food restaurants (decrease concentration of fast-food restaurants, similar to the number and location of liquor stores allowed in an area)
 - Support new opportunities for the agricultural production of fruits and vegetables (incentives provided to farmers to grow more produce for initiatives such as farm to institution)
- The SC Farm to School Program is a collaborative effort between DHEC, SC Department of Agriculture, SC Department of Education, and Clemson University. Core components of the program include: purchase SC grown fruits and vegetables directly from a farmer, from a farmers' market, through distributors/processors who buy from local farmers, or from a grower's cooperative; incorporate at least two locally grown fruits and vegetables per month to be served as a part of the school meal; integrate nutrition and agriculture education into the school curriculum (in classroom and out of classroom); and establish a school vegetable garden.
 - During the 2011-2012 school year, 52 schools were funded to implement the program. An additional 33 schools and 9 child care centers/preschools are participating in the program in 2012-2013.
 - Trainings have been provided to teachers and food service personnel. The trainings provided cover a wide spectrum of topics including culinary boot camps, teacher lesson planning, and garden workshops.
 - Technical assistance and trainings have also been provided to farmers. The SC Farm to School Program supports farmers in obtaining Good Agriculture Practices (GAP) certification so that they may be eligible to sell directly to schools. To date, SC has over 42 farmers who have obtained GAP certification, which is more than a 200% increase since prior to the establishment of the SC Farm to School Program.
 - With resources leveraged through the Preventive Health-Health Services Block Grant, the SC Farm to School Program will be extended to three priority counties in SC (Bamberg, Fairfield, and Lee Counties). The SC Farm to School Program staff have started working closely with the food service directors and Farm to School teams at schools in these districts. Technical assistance will be provided to include skills trainings for cafeteria staff in preparing fresh produce, hands-on garden workshops, support in local procurement practices, and marketing fresh produce to students.

- Many underserved, low-income urban and rural areas of the state have been identified as food deserts with limited access to healthy foods. The Lowcountry Housing Trust, a Community Development Financial Institute, has been working with partners throughout the state, including DHEC and the SC Food Policy Council, to establish a SC Healthy Food Financing Initiative. The goal of the Initiative would be to attract investment in underserved communities by providing critical loan financing to fresh food retailers and distributors. Resources would help retailers overcome the higher initial barriers to entry into underserved, low-income communities, and would support renovation and expansion of existing stores so retailers can provide healthier foods.
- DHEC has been partnering with the Catawba Farm and Food Coalition. This five county coalition (Chester, Fairfield, Lancaster, Union, and York) has been working to increase access to locally grown foods and has a focus on nutrition and job creation in the agricultural industry.
 - Through USDA funding, Chester County is establishing a farmers' market that will accept SNAP/EBT, WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program vouchers. The Chester County market will include a commercial kitchen.
 - The Catawba Farm and Food Coalition is assisting Fort Mill, Winnsboro, Lancaster, and Fort Lawn in the establishment of community farmers' markets.
- DHEC has had tremendous success working with the SC Department of Social Services Child Care Quality Improvement System (QIS) to improve nutrition and physical activity environments for child care centers.
 - With Communities Putting Prevention to Work funding, DHEC and the SC Child Care QIS established and implemented nutrition and physical activity standards for child care centers, impacting an estimated 85,000 children.
 - Funding from the Preventive Health-Health Services Block Grant has been utilized to provide training and technical assistance to child care centers implementing the recently established nutrition and physical activity standards.
- The Eat Smart, Move More, Grow Healthy (ESMMGH) toolkit was developed by DHEC.
 - The toolkit uses a three pronged approach targeting the policies and practices in the child care center, the children, and their families.
 - The core component of the toolkit is the ESMMGH Child Care Assessment. This SC-specific assessment outlines best practice recommendations for nutrition and physical activity and is used to assess policies, practices and the environment of a child care center. By completing the assessment, child care center directors determine how policies, practices and the environment at their center align with national and state best practice recommendations.
 - The assessment is inclusive of the recent nutrition and physical activity standards adopted by the SC Child Care QIS. Training using the toolkit to support implementation of these standards will be offered to providers participating in the SC Child Care QIS.
 - The ESMMGH toolkit can be made available to all child care centers throughout the state through an approved toolkit training process.
- DHEC has worked with the SC Breastfeeding Coalition on the SC Ten Steps Program and the Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative.
 - The SC Breastfeeding Coalition developed a recognition program, the SC Ten Steps Program, to promote and support breastfeeding policies and practices in hospitals and birthing centers statewide. The SC Ten Steps Program, based on the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (as

outlined by UNICEF-WHO), is voluntary and facilities self-report through online surveys administered annually by the SC Breastfeeding Coalition. The recognition program is divided into Bronze, Silver, and Gold categories. Facilities meeting at least 6 of the Ten Steps are recognized at the Bronze level; 8 of the Ten Steps are recognized at the Silver level; 10 of the Ten Steps are recognized at the Gold level. As of October 2012, 6 hospitals received Bronze status, 2 hospitals Silver, and 1 hospital received Gold (the first in the state) for the SC Ten Steps Program. The hope is these hospitals and birthing centers recognized for their progress will then be encouraged to progress towards national Baby-Friendly Hospital designation.

- The Healthy SC Initiative (CTG) has provided funding for healthy eating activities to include:
 - Charleston Tri-County supported a chefs-in-schools initiative for school staff to help increase healthy food options in the school cafeteria. Training and support to school staff was provided by local chefs. This initiative also included incorporation of the culinary arts program students from local high schools to assist school staff in meal preparation and promotion of the healthy food items to their peers.
 - Richland County and York County were awarded HSCI funds to create breastfeeding-friendly environments. They are working with local businesses to establish lactation rooms and promote lactation support programs.
 - Three hospitals (Greenville Memorial Hospital System, Oconee Medical Center, and Tuomey Healthcare System) received HSCI funding and have been progressing towards Baby-Friendly Hospital designation. The Baby-Friendly Hospital Initiative recognizes and awards hospitals and birthing facilities who successfully implement the Ten Steps to Successful Breastfeeding (as outlined by UNICEF-WHO). Hospitals or birthing centers embark on the 4-D Pathway to Baby-Friendly Designation (Discovery, Development, Dissemination and Designation), and hospitals earn designation by successfully completing all 4 phases. As of early this year, Greenville Memorial Hospital System was in the Development phase, Oconee Medical Center was in the Discovery phase, and Tuomey Healthcare System was in the Development phase.
 - Healthy Greenwood Neighborhoods implemented the Greenwood Gardening to Health and Wellness project. Additional community garden sites have been established throughout the county.
 - York County has been implementing farmers' markets and community gardens.
 - Allendale County (2013) – Implement a farmers' market that will accept SNAP/EBT. Nutrition education classes will be conducted.
 - Bamberg County (2013) – Implement a farmers' market that will accept SNAP/EBT. Market will be operated by academically and/or developmentally challenged youth. The youth will learn job skills while helping to increase access to healthy foods in the county.
 - Orangeburg County (2013) – Expand the hours at the farmers' market located at the Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) and provide additional nutrition education and cooking classes to help further increase SNAP/EBT sales.
 - Beaufort/Jasper Counties (2013) – Establish community gardens with numerous sites for distribution of produce, to include a local food bank.
 - Hampton County (2013) – Expand previous community garden efforts funded initially through CTG and create additional gardens. New funding will also help to enhance and expand school gardens.
 - Laurens County (2013) – Establish community and school gardens for teaching purposes.
 - Barnwell County (2013) – Establish additional farmers' markets that will accept SNAP/EBT.

Future plans based on funding received from the recently submitted *State Public Health Actions to Prevent and Control Diabetes, Heart Disease, Obesity and Associated Risk Factors and Promote School Health, CDC-RFA-DP13-1305*:

- Work with Eat Smart, Move More SC and Alta Planning + Design to provide trainings for planners and planning commissions across the state in addition to health advocates on how to analyze county comprehensive plans for healthy eating and active living principles and how to incorporate model language to include access to healthy food and accommodations for pedestrians and cyclists into future planning efforts. DHEC will analyze all 46 county comprehensive plans for inclusion of healthy eating and active living principles and will provide technical assistance to communities with opportunities to improve these plans.
- Develop and/or adopt food service guidelines/nutrition standards for cafeterias, vending, and snack bars in worksites (state government).
- Establish farmers' markets in the underserved counties.
- Establish farmers' markets near FQHCs.
 - The FQHC in Orangeburg County, with its health center-based farmers' market program, will be used as a model. This market includes a successful double value program that has led to increased redemption of SNAP benefits, increased revenue in the rural community, and increased economic opportunity for small farmers in the area.
- DHEC and the SC Child Care QIS will further collaborate to establish nutrition and physical activity standards for more than 700 family and group homes providing child care services.
- Implement Farm to Preschool in the five underserved counties, where many of the child care centers participate in the SC Child Care QIS.
- Increase access to breastfeeding friendly environments by providing access to professional and peer support for breastfeeding.
 - The breastfeeding peer counselor network will be expanded to the underserved counties.

It's Your Health . . . Take Charge - Creating Healthier Children and Families through the Supplemental Nutrition Education Program (*SNAP Nutrition Education*)

- Through a contract with the Department of Social Services (DSS), the DHEC Nutrition staff delivers direct nutrition education that promotes healthier behaviors to low-income children, families and seniors.
 - The overarching goal of *SNAP Nutrition Education* is to prevent or delay chronic diseases such as obesity, heart disease, diabetes, and hypertension, in at-risk populations.
 - SNAP Nutrition Education focuses on lifestyle changes that promote healthier food choices and physical activity.
 - The *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* are the guiding principles for all education programs delivered through SNAP Nutrition Education Program.
 - Increasing consumption of whole grains
 - Reducing dietary fat
 - Consuming low-fat and fat-free dairy products
 - Increasing intake of fruits and vegetables
 - Reducing consumption of sugar-sweetened beverages
 - Maintaining a healthy weight
 - Balancing calorie intake

- SNAP Nutrition Education is delivered in seven (7) counties and targets the following low-population groups:
 - Preschool children, ages 3-5, enrolled in Head Start
 - Child care centers
 - School-age children, kindergarten through 5th grade in schools with at least 50% free & reduced priced meal eligibility
 - Classroom-based nutrition education that meet the SDE curriculum standards
 - Adolescents enrolled in recreational programs
 - Faith-based institutions
 - Lifestyle University at University of South Carolina
 - Senior Centers
 - Congregate Meal Sites for Seniors
 - Living with Diabetes Program - Palmetto Richland Community Services
 - Emergency shelters and transitional programs for children and families
 - LRADAC
 - Public housing complexes, emergency feeding programs and other programs delivering services to low-income families and adults

2013-2014 Funding for SNAP Nutrition Education:

- The SC Department of Social Services 2013-2014 funding allocation from USDA for the State's SNAP Nutrition Education Program will increase to approximately \$1 million.
- USDA is requiring DSS to add another SNAP Nutrition Education Provider with the increase in funding to expand the reach of the program. Currently, Clemson University and DHEC, deliver SNAP Nutrition Education Services.
- SNAP Education Providers must select from a menu of evidence-based nutrition programs to implement in the state. South Carolina selected the following programs:
 - Sesame Street Healthy Habits for Life
 - Preschool Programs and Head Start Centers
 - Pick-A-Better Snack & Act
 - Appropriate for all ages and settings
 - Families Eat Better Together
 - Strategies for families on meal planning, cooking and eating together
- Effective in 2013-2014, SNAP Nutrition Education Services must include policy and environmental change strategies.
- The increase in SNAP Nutrition Education funding will increase the number of low-income families receiving SNAP Nutrition Education Services:
 - Women and children are the priority population for SNAP Nutrition Education services
 - Allow DHEC Nutrition staff to expand SNAP Nutrition Education Services into priority counties for obesity prevention