



TO: Milwaukee County Board
 DATE: May 20, 2022
 RE: File 22-597, Funding for the Milwaukee Market Match program

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated food insecurity, and rising grocery prices make it even harder to put food on the table. The Milwaukee Market Match (MMM) program helps families stretch their grocery budgets and buy healthy foods. It also keeps FoodShare dollars local, supporting small businesses and the local economy. **Please support File 22-597, allocating \$1.1 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding to the Milwaukee Market Match program.**

The MMM program provides matching dollars to individuals and families participating in FoodShare to purchase additional fruits and vegetables at participating farmers markets. For example, if a family spends \$20 FOODSHARE at the farmers market, they are given an additional \$20 MARKET MATCH to spend at the market on culturally appropriate produce. Match dollars are capped at \$20/day/participant.

Nationally, these programs are referred to as SNAP nutrition incentive programs, and they exist in states and communities across the United States. The MMM program is in its infancy, but the potential is significant. In 2020, a 10-week pilot program ran late in the season, with only 5 markets participating, served 793 unique Foodshare households. Similarly, in 2021, a 13-week program operating at 4 markets served 1,697 unique FoodShare households. Each pilot year served families from nearly every zip code in the county (2020— 30 zip codes and 2021—34 zip codes).

With \$1.1 million in ARPA funding, MMM could run throughout the growing season for calendar years 2022, 2023 and 2024. Participating markets are throughout the County and would include Brown Deer Farmers Market, Fondy Farmers Market, Greenfield Farmers Market, Jackson Park Farmers Market, Oak Creek Farmers Market, Riverwest Farmers Market, South Shore Farmers Market, Shorewood Farmers Market, Tosa Farmers Market, Walker Square Farmers Market, and the West Allis Farmers Market.

Nutrition incentive programs offer us a way to address upstream root causes of health disparities by increasing the *amount* and *quality* of food a person can buy. Increasing produce access and

consumption through Milwaukee Market Match helps address diet-related health disparities such as diabetes and obesity, and it is a way to invest in health and equity for individuals and families in our community.

In addition to the health benefits, these programs have been shown to yield economic benefits. New research from the USDA Economic Research Service on the multiplier effects of federal spending on low-income programs, such as SNAP, shows that for every \$1 in new SNAP benefits, up to \$2 of economic activity is generated.

Milwaukee Market Match benefits families, farmers and our local economy. Families can stretch their food dollars further and buy more nutritious options. Farmers benefit from increased sales, and our local economy wins when dollars are spent locally.

This proposal passed the ARPA Task Force 6-0 on April 14 and the Finance Committee 7-0 on May 19. **Please support File 22-597.**

If you have questions or would like additional information, please contact Nicole Hudzinski, Government Relations Director with the American Heart Association, at 608-225-4042 or nicole.hudzinski@heart.org.