



The Twin Cities Mobile Market (“the Mobile Market”) is a grocery store on a bus, bringing affordable, healthy food to under-resourced neighborhoods across the Twin Cities. Launched in 2014 as a program through the Amherst H.

Wilder Foundation, the Mobile Market sells a wide variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy, meats, and staple dry goods year-round at below-market prices at sites throughout the Twin Cities. The program was designed to address local inequities in healthy food access by changing the food environment and bringing fresh foods to communities.

The Twin Cities Mobile Market in 2017

Since its launch, the Mobile Market has made weekly stops in Saint Paul neighborhoods where residents otherwise have limited access to affordable, high quality, and healthy food. In 2017, the Mobile Market launched a second bus to serve Minneapolis communities. During 2017, the Mobile Market had 20 Saint Paul and 15 Minneapolis stops.

Sales summary

18,875 transactions

Nearly
\$215,000
in net sales

46% of sales
from fresh produce

37% of sales
from Electronic Benefit
Transfer (EBT) transactions¹

282 customers provided feedback in a customer survey about their experience shopping at the Mobile Market.

Because of shopping at the Mobile Market:



The top three reasons people shop at the Mobile Market include:



¹ This figure does not include non-EBT sales from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).



From customers:²

"I used to pass vegetables up... I buy a lot more vegetables now than I used to."

"I walk on that bus, I know it's healthy. And that makes me feel good."

"I can have a lousy day and go down to the grocery bus...and there are so much smiles and hugs going on down there, that by the time I get the groceries back in the house the rest of the day is great"

"I have to take public transportation [and it's] almost impossible to get to a grocery store. I do 75 percent of my shopping on the bus."

Moving forward

In 2018, the Mobile Market scaled back operations to explore changes to more sustainably serve the community while keeping food affordable. Initial steps included reducing the number of stops from 35 to 28 and the frequency of stops from weekly to biweekly. The Mobile Market is also continuing to innovate in ways to increase access to fresh, healthy, and affordable foods. Current efforts include:

- ➔ Piloting the Fruit and Veggie Rx program, in partnership with Fairview Health Services and HealthEast, which provides patients with prescriptions for fresh fruits and vegetables.
- ➔ Providing a free bag of produce with every \$10 purchase through a partnership with Loaves and Fishes.
- ➔ Piloting the Fresh Bucks program in collaboration with Northside organizations, which provides 50 percent off all fruit and vegetable purchases for North Minneapolis SNAP and EBT customers.
- ➔ Continuing to offer Market Bucks, which provide a dollar-for-dollar match (up to \$10) to SNAP and EBT customers for every fresh produce purchase.
- ➔ Offering a more volunteer opportunities and ways for corporations and others to support the Mobile Market's work.

For more information about the Mobile Market, visit www.twincitiesmobilemarket.org

Wilder Research

Information. Insight. Impact.

² The last quote is from a customer survey administered by the Mobile Market and Wilder Research. All other quotes are from focus groups conducted with customers as part of a research study led by M. Horning through the University of Minnesota School of Nursing and funded by a Grant-in-Aid from the University.

For more information

For more information about this report, contact Amanda Hane at Wilder Research, 651-280-2661.

Author: Amanda Hane

MAY 2018