**Food Venue Survey**

**Montgomery County Community Food Project**

**Instructions for Volunteer**

Within this Google Drive folder you will find a Spreadsheet that lists all food venues for Montgomery County or just over the border. You’ll be calling each one and following the script to find out more information on the foods they have available. You may want to print the script to have in front of you during the survey. Copies are available in the Blacksburg Farmers Market office, too. Please call between regular business hours (8-5pm) unless directed to do otherwise. You can do so from home on your own time, or you can schedule a time to come to the office.

For each venue, mark in the Google Spreadsheet when you called and your name. You can either fill the survey responses directly into the Google Spreadsheet in their respective columns or record responses on a separate sheet of paper and type them into the Spreadsheet after the call. All responses must end up in the Spreadsheet.

If you have any questions, call or email Jessica: 814.873.2580 / schultz.jessica.vt@gmail.com

**Information about the Montgomery County Food Project**

The Blacksburg Farmers Market has received funding from the USDA and Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education program (SARE) to conduct a food system assessment of Montgomery County. The Montgomery County Farm to Community Planning Project will bring together diverse stakeholders to create a framework for addressing the challenges inherent in supporting a vibrant local community food system that is accessible to all. Montgomery County, Virginia has seen a blossoming of the local food economy over the past decade, with farmers markets, community gardens and CSA's becoming standard sources of food for many residents. But with almost a quarter of the population living below the poverty line, concerns have arisen that participation in the local food system by low-income consumers is still very limited. Little attention has been given to possible barriers to access, such as transportation issues and negative perceptions of cost.

Friends of the Farmers Market (FFM) is a 501c3 non-profit organization that supports the work of the Blacksburg Farmers Market and strives to educate the community on the benefits of locally grown and sustainably produced food. FFM has worked on several initiatives designed to increase the participation of low-income consumers in the local food system, and to foster the community's capacity to find creative and sustainable solutions to the challenges inherent in making this happen. Through the Montgomery County Farm to Community Planning Project, FFM will be joined by a broad spectrum of community partners, including the Virginia Tech (VT) Department of Human Food, Nutrition and Exercise (HFNE), the VT Civic Agriculture and Food Systems minor (CAFS), social service agencies, hunger relief programs, and churches, to design and administer a community food security assessment, with a focus on a) the accessibility of local foods to low-income populations, b) the availability of local food at retail stores, schools and institutions, food pantries, and other locations where food is routinely obtained, and c) the potential benefits to local farmers of participation in initiatives that increase the community's capacity to meet these needs. An effort will be made to engage a broad and diverse sample of the affected population at every level of the assessment process. The resulting data will be used by Working Groups to inform the development of potential policy and project solutions, as they explore the next steps needed to support the development of a more accessible local food system. A Community Forum will bring together representatives from all stakeholder groups to learn about best practices in other communities, share survey results, receive recommendations from the Working Groups, and take first steps toward employing new initiatives. Project outcomes will ultimately enhance food security in the community and may include the formation of a Local Foods Council, farm to school/institution programs, and alternative food production and distribution programs. The inclusive involvement of representatives from all affected sub-groups (including low-income consumers and farmers) will increase the capacity of the community to make significant and sustainable changes that result in a more equitable and thriving local food system.

**Phone Survey Script**

**Hi! My name is \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_, and I’m calling from the Friends of the Blacksburg Farmers Market. May I please speak with someone who is knowledgeable about inventory and purchasing procedures for your store?**

(If s/he is not available, please ask when is a better time to call, and write this down in the “NOTES” column in the spreadsheet. Likewise, if the person you speak to next is not available to speak now, ask when is a more convenient time to call.)

**Thank you! We’re conducting a survey of all food venues in Montgomery County through the Blacksburg Farmers Market as part of our research to determine how local fresh produce can be made available to more people. I just have a few questions for you about sourcing your produce at \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_** (name of venue)**. Only information about this business and NOT you personally will be collected. It won’t take more than 5 minutes and you can hang up at any time. Would you like to participate?**

1. **Do you accept SNAP (formerly called Foodstamps) as a form of payment?**
2. **Do you currently sell fresh fruits and vegetables at your store?**

2.1 (IF YES) **What kinds are consistently offered?**

2.2 (IF YES) **Approximately how much money is brought in monthly through its sales?**

2.3 (IF YES) **Where do you source your produce? (Ex: through distributor –** GET NAME **/ Direct from farmer** GET NAME**)**

2.4 (IF NO) Go to Question 4

1. **Do you currently sell any LOCAL fresh fruits and vegetables at your store?** (Local = Regional)
	1. (IF YES) **What kinds are consistently offered?**
	2. (IF YES) **Where is the produce grown?** (Name of town/city/county)

3.3 (IF YES) **Approximately how much money is brought in monthly through its sales?**

3.4 (IF YES) **Where do you source your produce? (Ex: through distributor-** GET NAME **/ Direct from farmer-** GET NAME**)**

3.5 (IF NO) Go to Question 4

1. **Through this survey, we’re trying to figure out what needs to be done in order to get more locally grown produce into Montgomery County food venues. What would you say are the primary reasons you do not source more LOCAL produce? I have list of possible reasons. Please listen and tell me if ANY of these are reasons. You can pick more than one or add one of your own.**

Possible responses (all pertaining to LOCAL produce):

**Not appropriate for this venue**

**No perceived demand from customers**

**No known source**

**High cost**

**Not available through my supplier**

**No way to keep fresh/cool/refrigerated**

**No interest**

**Other\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

1. **Do you have any suggestions or comments for how locally grown produce can be made more accessible to your store?** OPEN COMMENT

**Thank you very much for your time and consideration. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact the Blacksburg Farmers Market at 540.239.8290. Have a great day!**