



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
Monday, May 21, 2018

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Announcing the Stocked Full of Produce Grant Program ***Now available to retail stores in Stockton's urban Food Deserts***

STOCKTON, Calif. – A new opportunity is now available through the City of Stockton Economic Development Department, the Stocked Full of Produce Grant Program. This program offers retail stores grant funding of up to \$10,000 to assist with upgrades needed to promote the sale and storage of healthy food options. These grants can be used to make improvements to stores such as the installation of new refrigeration or shelving. Eligible properties must be retail outlets, such as corner or convenience stores, and must be located within areas designated as “Food Deserts.”

Many families rely heavily on neighborhood small, local convenience stores for food purchases, because they live in areas without easy access to other options, for example, supermarkets or farmers markets. These urban areas, where it is often difficult or impossible to purchase affordable healthy and good quality food, are referred to as “Food Deserts.” Families who live in these areas often lack transportation or resources and do not have access to a reliable supply or quantity of affordable and nutritious foods, which can result in what is known as food insecurity.

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Small neighborhood stores have the power to positively impact the health of community members by providing easier access to healthy foods, such as fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables, whole grain snack items, and low-fat dairy products. Without these options, neighborhoods can experience food insecurity. The [Stockton Food and Ag Action Plan](#), published in 2017, created a roadmap for addressing food insecurity, food manufacturing, and helping to provide the benefits and bounty of the Central Valley’s agricultural industry to the entire community. The Plan identifies where these conditions exist and supports leveraging federal funding sources such as Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to address food insecurity in Stockton. To strengthen the program, the City is partnering with San Joaquin County’s *Refresh San Joaquin* initiative, which also transforms small food markets by helping retailers to provide and promote healthier food and beverage options.

For additional information about the Stocked Full of Produce Grant Program, view the designated Food Deserts Map, and instructions for how to apply, please visit the Economic Development website at www.stocktonca.gov/produce or call 209-937-8539.

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