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**U.S. Department of Agriculture Awards \$16.8 Million to help SNAP
Participants Purchase Healthy Food**

Colorado Receives \$450,000 through LiveWell's Double Up Food Bucks program

DENVER — The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) recently announced the award of \$16.8 million in Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) grants nationwide to encourage SNAP recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. As a subgrantee on a 2017 FINI grant, LiveWell Colorado will now be able to expand its Double Up Food Bucks (DUFB) program to larger retailers and pilot new loyalty-card technology to streamline participation in DUFB for both consumers and markets.

DUFB launched last summer through a statewide partnership effort led by LiveWell Colorado, Colorado Department of Human Services, the Colorado Farmers Market Association, Cooking Matters-Colorado, and Boulder County Public Health. The program, which is funded by a 2016 USDA FINI grant to LiveWell, enables Coloradans with Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to receive up to \$20 worth of free, locally grown, fresh fruits and vegetables per visit, when they use their SNAP dollars at participating farmers markets and grocers.

Building off of year one successes, DUFB has significantly expanded the number of locations participating in the program in 2017. This summer, DUFB is operating at 90 locations in Colorado including 70 farmers markets, 10 grocery stores, and 10 food box locations in 28 counties, including two large grocery chains.

The lead grantee for the 2017 FINI grant project is Fair Food Network (based in Michigan) with additional partner Field and Fork (based in New York). LiveWell's portion of the project budget is \$450,000 over three years, and covers an expansion to retailers, including Lowes Mercado (based in Aurora off of Colfax) and Food King (based in Greeley). "Both of these stores serve SNAP shoppers right in their neighborhoods, and provide food options that are culturally relevant and tailored to the surrounding community," says Wendy Peters Moschetti, LiveWell Colorado Director of Food Systems. "This grant also allows LiveWell to help some of its retail partners, farm stands, and farmers markets to upgrade their technology to accept DUFB with a loyalty card."

A DUFB year-one evaluation revealed that 90 percent of SNAP customers agreed that the program helped them buy more fruits and vegetables. Moreover, 81 percent of customers strongly agreed that they ate more fruits and vegetables and 69 percent reported that the program inspired them to try new fruits and vegetables.

Currently, SNAP serves just shy of 500,000 Colorado residents each monthⁱ, providing a critical buffer to food insecurity, helping decrease the burdens of poverty, supporting positive long-term health outcomes, and benefitting childrenⁱⁱ. Coloradans who receive food stamps are provided

\$1.41 per meal or \$4.23 per day on averageⁱⁱⁱ, making it challenging to have enough money to buy food for the whole month.

“There are so many benefits to the Double Up Food Bucks program. It helps close the food-spending gap over the entire month, reducing the risk of turning to unhealthy foods, particularly for children under the age of 18 who constitute almost half of SNAP participants,” said Gabriel Guillaume, President and CEO of LiveWell Colorado. “In addition to families taking home more healthy food, farmers earn more money and the local economy benefits from having dollars spent locally.”

Additional information and a map of participating sites can be found at www.DoubleUpColorado.org.

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LiveWell Colorado (www.livewellcolorado.org) *LiveWell Colorado is a statewide nonprofit organization committed to increasing access to healthy eating and active living by removing barriers that inequitably and disproportionately affect low-income communities and people of color. LiveWell focuses on policy, environmental, and systems changes that advance opportunity for healthy behaviors. Working with partners in communities across the state, LiveWell aims to ensure that all Coloradans live in environments with equitable access to the nourishing food and physical activity they need to be healthy.*

Double Up Food Bucks was created by Fair Food Network (www.fairfoodnetwork.org) in 2009. It began at five farmers markets in Detroit, spread statewide to more than 150 sites across Michigan including grocery stores in one of the first pilots in the country, and has since become a model for healthy food incentives implemented by communities nationwide. Today, Double Up programs are active in 20 states nationwide.

ⁱ Food Action and Resource Center report: Profile of Hunger, Poverty, and Federal Nutrition Programs – updated January 2016. Accessed at: http://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/01/snapdata2016_jan.pdf

ⁱⁱ White House Council of Economic Advisors Long-term Benefits of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. December 2015

ⁱⁱⁱ USDA Food and Nutrition Service SNAP Program Data