

County Executive Crowley: Praises passage of \$1.1M in American Rescue Plan Act funding for “Milwaukee Market Match” food program

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MILWAUKEE, WI - Today, the Milwaukee County Board voted unanimously to approve \$1.1M in American Rescue Plan dollars to fund the revival of the Milwaukee Market Match food program. Piloted for the last two years, the program will double the dollars of FoodShare participants at participating Milwaukee County farmers markets. The program will double up to \$20 per FoodShare account per day and is focused on helping low-income residents feed their families and stock their kitchens with fresh, healthy produce.

“Nutrition plays such an important role in health outcomes and too many families in our community live in food deserts or don’t make a high enough wage to afford fresh produce and healthy foods from area retailers,” **said County Executive David Crowley.** “Government can play a role in aiding people who need assistance accessing fresh produce and healthier options to feed their families. Today’s vote is another step-forward in our journey to bridge the gap in health disparities and achieve race and health equity in Milwaukee County.”

More residents are using FoodShare benefits at farmers markets. According to the Milwaukee Farmers Market Coalition, co-facilitated by UW-Extension FoodWise and Fondy Food Center, during the program’s first two pilot years FoodShare sales at farmers markets in Milwaukee County totaled \$73,000 in 2019 and increased by 47% for the 2020 season for a total of \$107,000.

According to data from researchers at the University of Wisconsin-Madison, Milwaukee Market Match was used by 793 households to purchase nearly \$20,000 worth of goods from five different markets across Milwaukee County during its first 10-week pilot program in 2020. During a 13-week pilot, the program was used by 1,697 households to purchase nearly \$80,000 worth of goods at four different markets across the county - with over 90 percent of dollars going to vendors at the Fondy Food Market.