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The DFR No Cost Grocery Program (NCGP) is a resident-led model to decrease stigma of traditional food pantries. Community participation empowers each neighborhood to create a program that is appropriate for their culture and community.
No Cost Grocery Programs

Participant Numbers

5,562 unduplicated families
18,688 unduplicated individuals
8,762 unduplicated youth

34,412 Number of Visits

182,119 Total Visits and Reach in Household
Spirit of the Sun

Spirit of the Sun is Denver Food Rescue’s first new program partner of 2021. An Indigenous womxn-led nonprofit located on Očhéthi Šakówiŋ, Núu-a-gha-tʉ-ŋʉ (Ute), Tséstho’e (Cheyenne), hinono’eino’ biito’owu’ (Arapaho) land, Comanche, and 48+ other tribes sacred land, working to empower Native communities, one youth at a time.

Birdseed

Their NCGP has been active since February 2014. Located in the Globeville Neighborhood, Birdseed Collective is a small community & arts non-profit organization directed by two former long-time residents. One of their goals is to create opportunities for positive community and artistic programs. With years of experience implementing many projects and programs, Birdseed Collective and volunteers have committed to running a weekly resident-based food distribution program called “The Globeville Free Healthy Food Distribution and Preservation Program.”
M.E.N.D. (Mind Exercise Nutrition Do it!)

MEND is a multi-component community-based childhood obesity intervention for overweight and obese children ages 7-13 and their families. It has been shown to decrease BMI and waist circumference and improve cardiovascular fitness, physical activity levels, and self-esteem. The original MEND classes provide nutrition education, exercise, and behavior change topics. Starting in 2015, Denver Health began offering MEND in-house to reduce barriers to participation by running the program in a familiar medical home setting and improving communication with primary care providers. Rigorous analysis has shown that MEND at Denver Health is popular with patients and effectively shows statistically significant behavior change and reductions in weight, BMI, and blood pressure. One important challenge we have faced over the years is that many of our patients experience food insecurity. Educating on the importance of eating fruits and vegetables has limited efficacy if families lack access to fresh produce. Beginning in February 2019, Denver Food Rescue partnered with Denver Health to provide fresh weekly produce to families attending MEND at the Westside Pediatrics clinic. During the second hour of the class, when kids play outside, the parents remain inside and “shop” for produce at the cost-free grocery tables. Then part of the parent discussion in the class is dedicated to discussing ideas for how to use the items received.
Healthy Food for Denver's Kids

Through a 2018 Denver Ballot Measure, the Healthy Food for Denver’s Kids (HFDK) Initiative proposed to establish a fund for healthy food and food-based education for Denver’s youth. The City and County of Denver is expected to generate approximately $11 million dollars annually. The funds are distributed through grants to non-profit organizations with an emphasis on serving low-income youth. HFDK was the primary funder of DFR in 2021.

Youth employees

Healthy Food For Denver's Kids is a grant fund voted for by Denver's residents. As part of our grant allocations, we are able to hire summer youth employees.

Self Sufficiency and Nutrition (SAN) Program

Classes take place twice per week. Each session will last eight weeks throughout the school year. Curriculum topics include Hand-washing, safe and sanitary cooking environment; Planting, potting and harvesting plants; Canning and food preservation; Food and cooking utensil identification (safety); Food identification, reading food labels; Food preparation, storage; and Food Disposal.

Delivery

During Covid, DFR received severe requests for a program that included food delivery to people's homes. The idea for our food box delivery was created. Denver Food Rescue makes 75 deliveries to family homes in 29 zip codes each week.
Healthy Choice Food Boxes

1,300
Deliveries Made

1,503
Families Served

29,791
Lbs of Food Delivered

10 zip codes we visited the most

- 80237: 4.2%
- 80239: 29.3%
- 80249: 11.8%
- 80204: 13.7%
- 80219: 9.9%
- 80223: 8.7%
- 80207: 8.4%
- 80221: 6.8%
- 80231: 4.2%
- 80231: 4.2%
In 2016, a group of forward-thinkers from three Denver organizations came together from Denver Food Rescue, Denver Urban Gardens, and Groundwork Denver to pilot a new idea that would become Fresh Food Connect. They asked the question: "If gardeners had an easy avenue to participate in hunger relief efforts, would they?" The answer was resoundingly YES! Thus, Fresh Food Connect was created, giving gardeners easy access to donate their extra produce. Fresh Food Connect is a tech-based non-profit that engages gardeners to easily donate excess garden produce to hunger relief organizations in their own area.

5454.36
Lbs of produce were picked up from community gardeners

79
Gardeners contributed produce from their home gardens

7
Couriers traveled 701.87 miles for 318 deliveries
Donors

Kinds of food

- Produce: 67.7%
- Baked Goods: 10.5%
- Fresh Prepared: 8.5%
- Dairy: 6.9%
- Other: 1.5%

684,446.35 lbs donated
Donor Highlights

Replate

Replate is our community partner that focuses on food rescue for businesses. They share our mission is to reduce food waste and alleviate food insecurity in communities everywhere. Replate manages the food donations of caterers, offices with meal services, and other surplus food generators. **Replate donates to DFR 5 days a week.**

UNFI

United Natural Foods, inc. is a natural and organic food company. The largest publicly traded wholesale distributor of health and specialty food in the United States and Canada. It is Whole Foods Market's main supplier. **UNFI was DFR's biggest donor in 2021.**
E-Bikes

5 volunteers used our new E-bikes to travel 24.8 miles to rescue 2,289 lbs of food from 4 of our donor locations.

In 2020, Denverites voted to raise the local sales and use tax to create the Climate Protection Fund. This unique fund raises $40M+ a year to eliminate greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution, support climate adaptation and create new jobs. Denver Food Rescue was awarded a grant in 2021 from this fund too purchase E-bikes.

In November, our volunteers started using our new E-bikes. By using E-bikes we hope to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, increase the amount of food that can be rescued by bike, and broaden our volunteer community. In 2021, our volunteers were able to rescue 457.8 lbs on average during each shift.
Volunteers

213 Volunteers

5,191 Volunteer Hours

437,880 Lbs Rescued by Volunteers

177 Bike Shifts

1,658 Miles Biked

72,543 Lbs Rescued by Bike

0.55 Tons of CO2 Saved
DFR relies on a diverse group of corporate and individual contributors to promote our mission. With their support, our work to achieve food and health equity in Denver neighborhoods is possible.
Our Impact

Key Metrics

- **22** NCGP locations
- **18,668** people served
- **$1.7 M** in grocery savings
- **29** zip codes
- **213** volunteer
- **80** gardeners
- **3,400 lbs** donated garden surplus