

Fresh Bucks Impact Brief

2021



Seattle
Office of Sustainability
& Environment





“2021 was another difficult year, many of our clients lost their job and faced a variety of health challenges. We also saw the cost of basic needs, like food and utility bills, go up. During these exceptionally difficult times, having a reliable resource like Fresh Bucks makes such a difference for the families we serve.”

MARIA MARTINEZ
Latino Community Fund
Health Program Coordinator

Investing in local partnerships to help Seattle residents afford fruits and vegetables.

Operated by the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and Environment, Fresh Bucks aims to eliminate disparities in healthy food access by reaching communities disproportionately harmed by systemic racism. Together, with 19 local organizations and 38 retail partners, we provide healthy food for Seattle residents in need.



19
local organizations



38
retail partners

Fresh Bucks became a more critical resource during the COVID-19 pandemic as food insecurity and health outcomes rose, especially among those who identify as Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC), and immigrant and refugee populations. Fresh Bucks prioritized serving communities hardest hit by the pandemic and transitioned to a new benefit delivery model to ensure participating households had access to healthy and affordable food.



Introducing a new way to shop.

Electronic benefits

Fresh Bucks launched a new electronic benefit system, replacing paper vouchers and creating a more equitable and enjoyable shopping experience. Every month, \$40 in benefits are loaded into customer accounts and can be spent on fruits and vegetables using a card or mobile app.



Easier shopping

E-benefits improved the shopping experience for over:



12,100

enrolled Seattle households



38

Fresh Bucks retailers

at

including



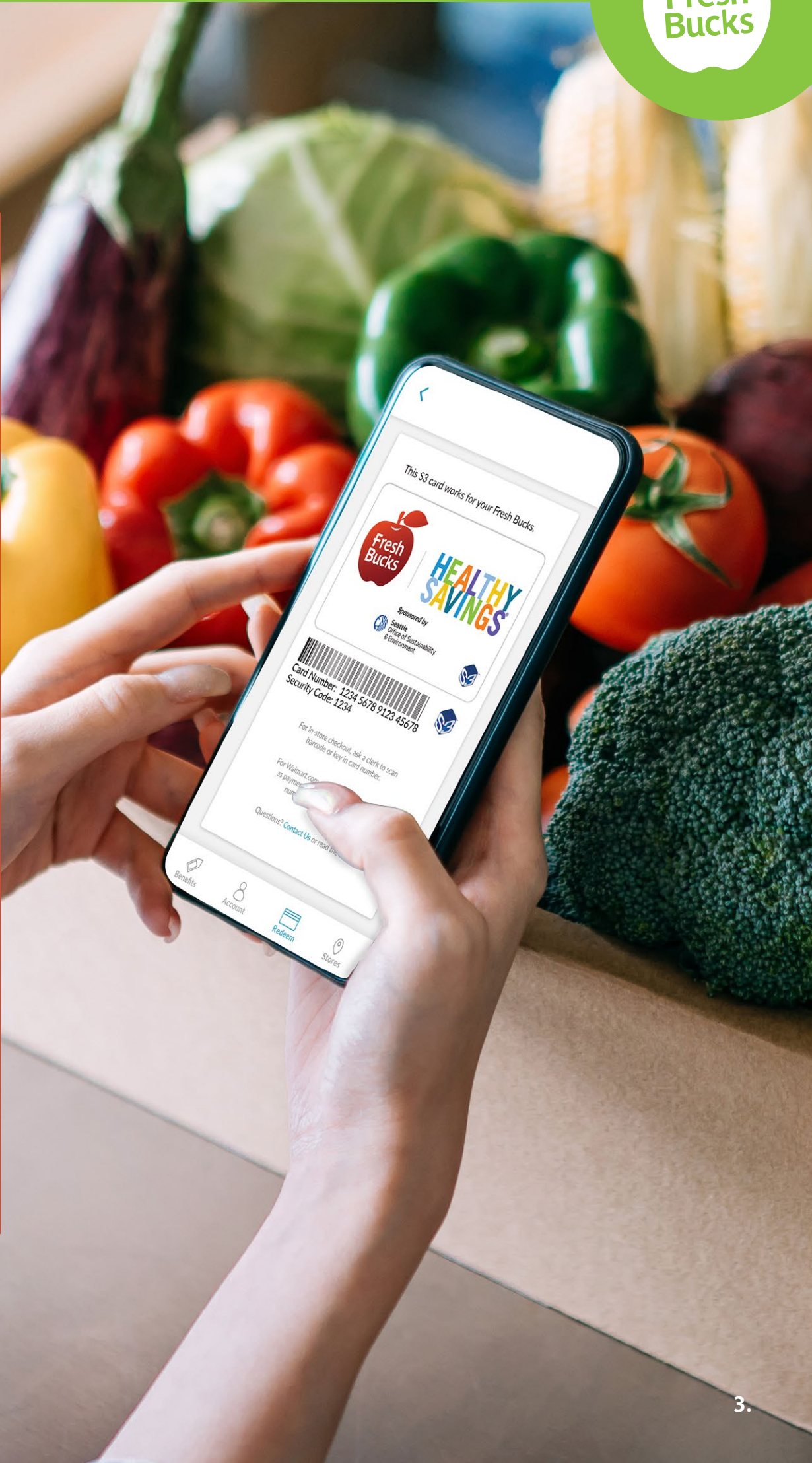
6

BIPOC-owned grocers



“With my Fresh Bucks Card, I can use my benefits at the start of every month – gone are the days of waiting for my paper vouchers to arrive in the mail. I feel confident using Fresh Bucks to pay for my fruits and vegetables at the checkout line now.”

MEI, FRESH BUCKS CUSTOMER



Increasing access to culturally relevant foods.

New local retailer

The new electronic benefits system also makes it easier for a variety of retailers to accept Fresh Bucks and is enabling expansion of the program into new grocery stores throughout the city. Fresh Bucks welcomed HT Oaktree Market, an independently-owned grocery store specializing in a variety of culturally specific food, as our newest retail partner.



"We cater to the diverse communities in North Seattle. HT Oaktree is stocked with foods that are not commonly found in other grocery stores in the area. Here you can find Hawaiian yams, Chinese winter gourd, and nance along with a wide variety of other fresh produce."

MIKE KEE, HT OAKTREE CO-OWNER



Advancing racial equity.

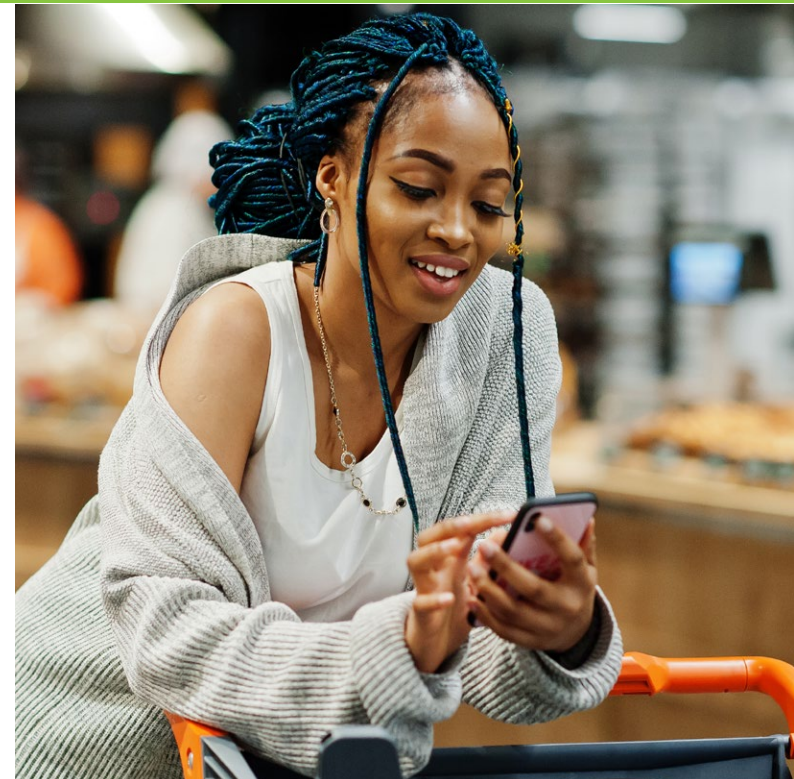
Fresh Bucks partners with local organizations on the frontlines of addressing systemic racism to reach community members most impacted by food insecurity and health disparities. We are also committed to the City of Seattle's Race and Social Justice Initiative (RSJI), which informs our priority communities.

Priority communities

- Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
- Black/African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
- Immigrants and refugees

We welcomed two new community partners in 2021

- Neighborhood House
- Chinese Information and Service Center



70%

of Fresh Bucks customers were from priority communities.



35%

of customers had children in the household.



42%

of customers were older adults (60+).



44%

of customers preferred a language other than English.

The Fresh Bucks program prioritized serving BIPOC communities hardest hit by the pandemic and transitioned to a new delivery model to ensure participating households had access to healthy and affordable food.



Investing in local communities.

Economic impact

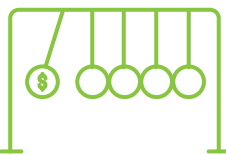
Fresh Bucks helps create a more vibrant local economy with customers spending Fresh Bucks and SNAP benefits at local retailers, including small grocers, farmers markets, farm stands, and supermarkets.



\$5.6M

Fresh Bucks spending

led to



\$8.9M*

in economic impact in 2021



**The economic impact of Fresh Bucks is based on the [Local Food Impact Calculator](#), a tool designed to estimate the impact of a local project might have on the surrounding economy.*

SNAP Match program

The SNAP Match program doubles SNAP (food stamp) benefits. SNAP recipients who spend their benefits at participating retailers earn Fresh Bucks dollars to buy fruits and vegetables.



\$479K

redeemed in SNAP Match benefits

which is an



84%

increase year-over-year in SNAP Match use

Spending at farmers markets increased

The University District Farmers Market, one of 15 participating farmers markets, saw a 50% increase in SNAP Match participation in 2021 compared to previous years. This was in part due to increased SNAP participation and allocations, and the addition of Pandemic-EBT to address rising rates of food insecurity caused by COVID-19.

Supporting small businesses

We also invest in our local partners and provide financial support to participating small businesses and community organizations.

\$361K

was dedicated to partnering with community-based organizations and independently-owned small grocers who are key to creating an accessible, equitable food system.





Our partners

Fresh Bucks is proud of the partnerships forged with community-based organizations, healthcare clinics, farmers markets, farm stands, and local retailers.

Our funders

PRIMARY FUNDING

City of Seattle: General Fund and Sweetened Beverage Tax Fund

ADDITIONAL FUNDING

Washington State Department of Health

LEARN MORE AT

SeattleFreshBucks.org



Retail partners

- African Community Housing & Development
- Ammana Warehouse & Grocer
- Delridge Grocery Co-op
- Fruteria Sandoval
- Hameyn Halal Grocer
- HT Oaktree Market
- Mendoza’s Mexican Mercado
- Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance
- Pike Place Market Foundation
- Pike Place Market Preservation and Development Authority
- Queen Anne Farmers Market
- Safeway Corporation
- Seattle Farmers Market Association
- Tilth Alliance Rainier Beach Urban Farm & Wetland Farm Stand

Enrollment partners

- Atlantic Street Center
- Casa Latina
- Children’s Home Society of Washington
- Chinese Information and Service Center
- Got Green
- Harborview Medical Center
- Horn of Africa Services
- Interim Community Development Association
- Kaiser Permanente
- Lake City Collective
- Latino Community Fund
- Neighborcare Health Systems
- Neighborhood House
- Odessa Brown Children’s Clinic
- Public Health Seattle & King County
- Seattle Indian Health Board
- Somali Health Board
- United Indians of All Tribes Foundation
- Villa Comunitaria