



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Mini grants address food insecurity in North Country

ANCA's FarmShare Fund awards five local food projects

SARANAC LAKE, N.Y. — In an effort to address food insecurity in the North Country region — where over 200,000 households lack sufficient income or wealth to afford basic necessities — the Adirondack North Country Association (ANCA) is awarding five grants as part of its 2019 [FarmShare Fund](#) Mini Grant Program. The initiative augments existing hunger relief and food security efforts in the region.

Grant awards ranging from \$675 to \$1,500 will fund local food access projects led by the following organizations: Cornell Cooperative Extension (CCE) of Hamilton County, CCE of Oneida County, the Essex County Public Health Department, GardenShare and the North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council.

“Our goal for the FarmShare Fund is to encourage initiatives that directly benefit low-income families while introducing convenient and cost-effective options for accessing healthy local food,” said Josh Bakelaar, ANCA Local Economies and Agriculture Director. “These projects often work in parallel with supplemental nutrition and education programs that combat hunger as well as public health challenges like obesity, diabetes and chronic heart disease.”

[CCE of Hamilton County](#) will use its mini grant to develop a teaching garden at a local school and to create a mobile market for distributing fresh produce locally.

“We’re excited to deliver a new gardening program which allows youth to develop horticultural skills and engage with their community,” said Jamila Page, Senior Issue Leader for the organization. She said students will donate produce grown in the school garden to a local food pantry and a modified mobile market, connecting young gardeners to the broader community.

[CCE Oneida County](#)’s project, which will be coordinated through the [Eat Well Play Hard in Child Care Centers](#) program, will develop a local food access plan for a local child care center, implement classroom lessons and manage a “Power of Produce Club” token program, where children receive two-dollar tokens to spend at area farmers markets.

The [Essex County Public Health Department](#) will use grant funds to support programs for families including a new [Women, Infants and Children](#) (WIC) activity, “WIC Fun and Food Fridays.” These events

will offer local food cooking demonstrations for parents while their children play. The project will also provide basic kitchen tools and meal kits to encourage the preparation of fresh foods at home.

[GardenShare](#), a Canton-based nonprofit that works to strengthen food security in northern New York, will provide a Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) cost sharing program for eligible families through its [Bonus Bucks Program](#). The Bonus Bucks cost sharing program allows recipients to stretch their food dollars, support local farmers and enjoy nutritious food from the St. Lawrence Valley.

[Healthy Families Jefferson County](#), a program of the North Country Prenatal/Perinatal Council, will use its grant to support local food outreach activities for families, including participation in a local CSA share, educational books, cookbooks, nutritional materials and cooking classes.

“Healthy Families Jefferson County is committed to partnering with parents who want to improve their children’s health, nutrition and developmental outcomes,” said Joe Paté, Healthy Families Program Manager.

“ANCA’s FarmShare grant will help Healthy Families support parents in our community who are faced with inadequate income,” Paté said. “The funding will provide fresh, healthy, nutrient-rich produce from local farmers and give children in a strong foundation that will help them thrive for years to come.”

“We believe these projects will empower and inspire people, especially kids, to develop healthy eating habits, support local farm and food businesses and even create their own business someday,” said Bakelaar. “These small grants are helping to address a number of economic and social issues and guide our communities toward greater self-reliance.”

ANCA’s annual [Bike the Barns](#) farm-by-bike event is the main source of funding for the FarmShare Fund and the mini grant program. This year’s Bike the Barns will take place on Sunday, September 29, 2019 at Tucker Farms in Gabriels and will highlight small farms and local food businesses in the Saranac Lake and Vermontville areas. All proceeds from the event go to the FarmShare Fund.

[ANCA](#) is an independent nonprofit organization growing the New Economy in northern New York. Using an integrated approach to sustainable economic development and prosperity where economic health, community vitality and ecological stewardship are equally important outcomes, ANCA focuses on creating opportunity for people with diverse backgrounds, experience and education levels.

Attached: one (1) PDF document and two (2) photos

Photos provided by Healthy Families Jefferson County: Mini grants from ANCA’s FarmShare Fund will support Healthy Families Jefferson County local food outreach activities including cooking classes and access to local CSA farm shares.

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