How Does It Work?

Step 1: Farmers apply to the Michigan Farmers Market Association (MIFMA) to receive funding to build a new hoophouse.

Step 2: MIFMA works with community partner organizations, such as Head Start and Great Start Readiness Program agencies, to distribute vouchers to vulnerable families participating in their programming. The Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems (MSU CRFS) helps establish a Farm to School relationship between a qualifying school and a participating farmer if desired.

Step 3: Families use the vouchers to buy produce from participating Hoophouses for Health farmers at local farmers markets, while farmers also provide produce to schools.

Step 4: Farmers submit their vouchers and Farm to School sales records to MIFMA to pay off their “loan.”

The Result: Families get access to fresh, healthy, Michigan foods, and farmers get a new hoophouse through a zero-interest, five year “loan.”

www.hoophousesforhealth.org
**Hoophouses for Health Benefits:**

**Farmers**
- Receive capital for a new hoophouse, inputs, and tools
- Extend their growing seasons
- Build farm infrastructure, debt-free

**Families**
- Receive vouchers to purchase locally-grown produce
- Gain access to multiple food assistance benefits at farmers markets

**Farmers Markets**
- Earn new customers
- Increase awareness and use of other food assistance benefits

**Childcare, Preschool, K-12**
- Receive food assistance vouchers to distribute to families, increasing their healthy food access
- Receive financial incentives to purchase and serve fresh, local foods

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**Program Snapshot**

- **53** farmers participating statewide in 2016
- **$118,098** in total payback achieved in 2016, meaning that the equivalent value of local foods was distributed to vulnerable families in Michigan
- **191,064** square feet of hoophouse growing space funded over the life of the program
- **26** community partner agencies & **17** farmers markets participated in 2016

- **$213,101** disbursed to farmers in 2016 to build 15 hoophouses on 13 farms
- Approximately **1,410** families received Hoophouses for Health vouchers in 2016
- **$46,712** in total value of Farm to School sales in 2016

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