



A SUMMER YOUTH INITIATIVE OF FAYETTE COUNTY'S FARM TO SCHOOL PROGRAM

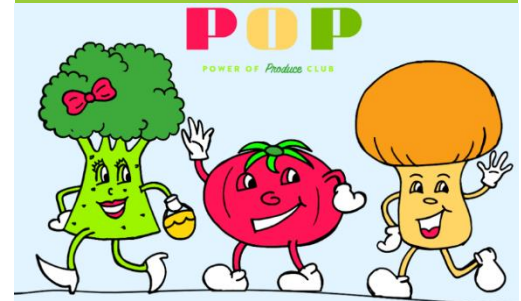
In its second year, the Power of Produce (POP) Club in Lexington has become incredibly popular among Lexington youth and families. The Power of Produce (POP) Club started as a national program to increase youth involvement at local farmers markets by creating interactive activities and distributing vouchers in order to incentivize healthy food purchases among children. Last summer, FoodChain's Farm to School Council decided to bring this widely celebrated national initiative to the Lexington Farmer's Market.

Throughout the season, we were at the market for 10 weeks to engage kids with agriculture- and food-related activities, taste tests of different fruits and vegetables grown in Kentucky, and to pass out \$2 vouchers (POP Bucks) to be

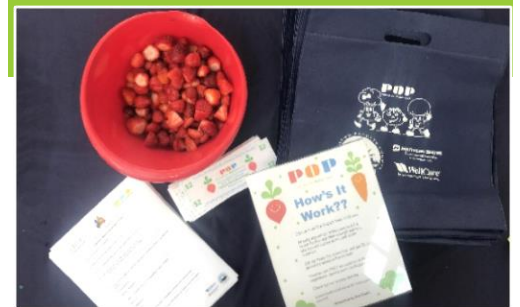
spent on any fruit/vegetable at the market. The number of POP Club participants exceeded last year's attendance with more than 350 children and families involved in the program. There was an average participation of 46 kids each week.

Upon registration in the Club, participants received reusable shopping bags to further persuade utilizing vouchers. This year, we completed a farmer's market scavenger hunt, MyPlate throughout the market, learned about local products in a delicious salsa recipe, made patriotic fruit kabobs, learned about composting and planted tomato seeds. We also learned about the difference between fresh and canned produce and made thank you cards for our local farmers. As an incentive, "prizes" of Lexington Farmers Market t-shirts

# Power of Produce Club



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were given to all children who participated in at least half the summer activities (having 5 of 10 stamps in weekly Passports).

There were 11 children that achieved this participation goal and are now more likely to share healthy food opinions with their families. A total of 60 kids participated in POP Club 2 or more weeks of the program, indicating more “one-timers” than last year.

For the entire program, 90% of participants redeemed their POP Bucks for fresh, local produce. These vouchers increase economic confidence among children, the amount of fresh produce in homes, knowledge and familiarity with local items (i.e. kohlrabi), and economic stability of Kentucky farmers. Over 20 local producers received a total of almost \$920 this summer through POP Bucks redemption and local ingredient taste tests. This has a direct impact to our local farms along with our local economy.



FoodChain plans to continue to grow the POP Club in upcoming years. This work was made possible through strong community partnerships between FoodChain’s Farm to School Council, Lexington Farmer’s Market, Lexington-Fayette County Health Dept., WellCare of Kentucky and Southern States Cooperative as well as many other supporters and volunteers.

Without these partnerships this program would have never been possible. As funding permits, the Farm to School Council hopes to

expand the POP program next year, offering engaging promotional events and a presence at both weekend markets (i.e. downtown and Southland Dr.) enabling a greater impact on Lexington youth and Kentucky farmers. If you are interested in helping support this program, please email [info@foodchainlex.org](mailto:info@foodchainlex.org) for sponsorship opportunities.

