

Let's Grow Act of 2012

Rep. Marcia L. Fudge is introducing the Let's Grow Act of 2012 to provide assistance and opportunity for the creation and support of sustainable agriculture activities in America's cities and to improve access to healthy nutrition in America's cities.

Title I: Improving Access to Fresh and Nutritious Food

- **Healthy Corner Store Initiative** – Assists local corner stores with offering fresher and nutritious food options.
- **Virtual Farmers Markets Program** – Allows families to access fresh and nutritious foods through schools and other easily accessible venues.
- **Local Food Insecurity Assessments** – Creates private and public partnerships to conduct assessments on the availability of nutritious foods, quality of foods served to children through federal feeding programs and the cost of nutritious foods.
- **Fresh Incentive Program** – Incentivizes the use of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits to purchase vegetables and fruits from local farmers.
- **EBT Farmers Market Accessibility** – Promotes expansion of SNAP benefit use at farmers markets across the nation.
- **Farm-to-Preschool Program** – Fosters the connection between preschools, Head Start, childcare, daycare, and kindergarten readiness programs in K-12 school districts and in-home childcare facilities with small or medium sized agricultural producers.
- **Expanding and Improving the Affordability and Nutritional Integrity of the USDA Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)** – Amends the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act to improve the administrative affordability and operational requirements for FFVP by providing free access to and consumption of healthy fruits and vegetables in all forms – this program is especially important for schools serving a high percentage of low-income children and those facing budget shortages.

Title II: Creation of the Healthy Food Financing Initiative

- Establishment of Healthy Food Financing Initiative to create a private and public financed initiative to improve food access in food deserts.

Title III. Development of Sustainable Urban Agriculture

- **Community Gardening Grant Program** – Grants for the creation and sustaining of community gardens.
- **Conversion of Abandoned and Foreclosed Property to Urban Agriculture Uses** - Grants for eligible individuals and entities to acquire abandoned or foreclosed properties in urban areas to convert for agricultural uses.
- **Expansion of HarvestCorps** – Nationalizes the HarvestCorps program, which provides outreach services through statewide public benefit assistance, direct-service support for hunger relief through entities like food banks and pantries, and the development of anti-poverty initiatives.

- **Acquisition of Publically Owned Land and Conversion to Urban Farms and Community Gardens** – Supports the conversion of public land to usage for urban farms and community gardens.
- **Urban Agricultural Workforce Training Pilot Programming** - Grants to develop and implement urban agricultural workforce training programs.
- **Urban Agriculture Development Grants Program** - Grants to assist with the development of urban agricultural activities.
- **Clean and Safe Drinking Water for Urban Areas and Waterways** – Amends the Food Security Act to provide opportunities to improve water quality in urban areas.
- **Extension of Assistance to Socially Disadvantaged Urban Farmers and Ranchers** – Amends certain laws to allow socially-disadvantaged farmers to access funds and other subsidies and incentives comparable to those accessed by traditional farmers.
- **Urban Entrepreneur and Microenterprise Assistance Program** - Establishes an urban entrepreneur and microenterprise assistance program that includes training and operation support for prospective and struggling urban farmers.
- **G.O. F.A.R.M. Program (Growing Opportunities For Agriculture and Responding to Market)** – Establishes a program to provide loans for local farms, ranches and market gardens to improve health and nutrition and reduce energy consumption.

Title IV. Eradicating Hunger

- **Weekends and Holidays without Hunger** – Provides nutritious foods on weekends and during school holidays for at-risk and hungry children.
- **Extension of the Healthy Incentives Pilot Program** – Continues the pilot program that incentivizes the use of SNAP benefits to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables.
- **Expansion and Modernization of the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)** – Increases seniors' eligibility threshold from 130% of federal poverty guidelines to 185% of poverty and increases program funding and expansion of CSFP to more states beyond the 39 currently being serviced.
- **Expansion and Modernization of The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)** – Makes funding for TEFAP food more responsive to changes in need through the creation of a trigger that ties funding to unemployment.
- **Food Bank Equipment and Technology Program** – Provides funds to assist food banks with updating their technology to increase efficiency and output.

Title V: Go Green

- **Green and Sustainable Museums, Schools and Libraries Grant Program** – Provides grants to assist museums, schools and libraries in making their facilities more energy efficient.