

Implementation Report

Gainesville - Alachua County Hunger Abatement Plan

Presented by the Alachua County Nutrition Alliance
on November 10, 2010



Introduction

We are pleased to present to you the Gainesville – Alachua County Hunger Abatement Plan (HAP) Implementation Report, on this 10th day of November, 2010. Due to the length of this report on implementation of the 90 recommendations in the HAP, and the consequent abbreviated length of the individual reports on accomplishments, the credit for the work of agencies and citizen volunteers, the generous donations of the public and businesses, the people involved, the barriers overcome, and many other details, are not fully presented. Please be aware that we owe a great debt of thanks to all those who have worked together to achieve the successes reported here.

The Gainesville – Alachua County Hunger Abatement Plan was originally and remains the product of dedicated citizens of the community. The HAP stated in its introduction that

“The Hunger Abatement Plan (HAP) was created here, and will become reality here, only if the community as a whole embraces its goals and insists on its implementation.”

“The hungry and malnourished in Gainesville and Alachua County are citizens who are not able to adequately access one of the critical needs for life – food. Hunger is a manifestation of poverty. Poverty is growing. Hunger is growing. The consequent costs to society and individuals are growing. The long term consequences of hunger will haunt our community for decades, if not generations. This plan represents an option for an alternate future.”

Those words from the June 2009 HAP are as true today as they were then.

The HAP contained a recommendation that was intended to ensure the actual implementation of the plan in the form of a feedback mechanism – an Implementation Report to the Community

So, who has been overseeing the implementation of the HAP? The Alachua County Nutrition Alliance (ACNA) has done so since September 2009. ACNA is a voluntary association of local, state and federal nutrition assistance agencies and programs, as well as interested citizens. It was created to pursue implementation of the HAP and to assist its members collaboratively act to enhance their efficiency and effectiveness. The HAP was the product of local residents, local non-profit and faith-based organizations, and state and federal nutrition assistance programs. This report on the status of efforts to implement the HAP

was produced by staff of the Alachua County Poverty Reduction Program, in collaboration with the ACNA and its member agencies.

As this Implementation Report indicates, quite a few of the recommendations have been acted upon or have been fully implemented. Some recommendations however, remain as work yet to be accomplished, or work to be improved upon. A few of the recommendations have turned out to be infeasible, and are reported as such. While this report represents a collaborative effort to accurately reflect the implementation of the HAP, if you see anything within its pages that you feel is not accurate, please do not hesitate to contact the ACNA by way of its web site (www.feedalachua.org) or better yet, attend their next meeting.

“Ultimately, the community will be the responsible entity for achieving the reduction of hunger and food insecurity in Alachua County. Federal, state and local changes will not occur without certain knowledge among responsible entities that their actions and progress will be observed, measured, and judged as to whether they are either 1. helping to reduce hunger, or 2. helping maintain the status quo.” *June 2009 HAP*

We have altered the food security status quo in the direction of progress. ACNA has expanded its purview from a focus on immediate hunger and food security matters to include the sustainability of individuals and their families, as well as the sustainability of food production and distribution systems. ACNA’s sustainability vision acknowledges the essential role of proper nutrition (quantity and quality) in promoting and maintaining the health of our citizens and the community at large.

Congratulations Gainesville and Alachua County, for the progress achieved to date, and for the commitment to stay on task. There is much yet to be done.

John Skelly & Caroline Schultz
Alachua County Poverty Reduction Program

Hunger Abatement Plan – Logic Models

Goal 1: Ensure the implementation of the Hunger Abatement Plan

Objective 1: Establish the ‘Alachua County Association of Nutrition Assistance Providers’ (ACANAP)

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Solicit volunteers from among co-chairs and/or members of Hunger Abatement Committees to become the Board of Directors of a coalition of food and nutrition assistance service providers. Possible name: <i>Alachua County Association of Nutrition Assistance Providers</i> (ACANAP)	Oversight of implementation of HAP, forum for information sharing, identify new missions/projects for resource utilization, more effective and efficient use of existing resources, development of new resources/capacity building, serve as media focus point, coordinate recruitment and use of volunteers, improvements in food acquisition & distribution systems	The Alachua County Nutrition Alliance (ACNA) was formed, established bylaws, elected a board of directors, & has met monthly since Summer of 2009 to address this strategy and address the desired outcomes.
2. Seek and acquire additional funding (such as grants from government, foundations & corporations, or donations from individuals and other sources) for local nutrition assistance agencies to build capacity and expand/improve service delivery	ACANAP and the member agencies it serves, will build capacity, and expand quality, quantity, and timeliness of services delivered.	Some individual member agencies of ACNA have obtained additional grant funding to expand capacities and quality of services, however, ACNA as an organization has not obtained funding largely due to its status as an unincorporated voluntary association.

Goal 2: Increase the utilization of government programs

Objective 1: Florida government and DCF will improve the intake and eligibility determination systems, and enrollment status maintenance systems, now in place, by implementing actions (including providing additional funding) which address known barriers to enrolling and maintaining enrollment of eligible residents in the program.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Florida should pursue its application to USDA to restore the waiver that allowed for passive interviews for recertification of applications following the approval of initial application for benefits.</p>	<p>DCF staff will be able to focus on tasks associated with intake of new applications instead of twice yearly recertification processes. Food Stamp benefits recipients will avoid another hurdle involving potential loss of benefits due to lack of or untimely communication with DCF staff twice per year.</p>	<p>DCF repeatedly requested that USDA restore the waiver, but after consistent denials, is no longer pursuing this option.</p>
<p>2. Florida should request that federal legislation increase the monthly benefit amounts. This applies especially to the minimum amount of \$16 per month, to which elder citizens who are receiving retirement benefits, are often entitled. Minimum monthly amount should be \$30.</p>	<p>Elders will be motivated to engage with the federal and state bureaucracy of the program.</p> <p>Individuals and families will receive a more realistic amount of support, while still using Food Stamps/SNAP as ‘supplemental’ to other food & nutrition resources.</p> <p>Individuals and families will need to depend less on local charities, churches, etc. to get through the month.</p>	<p>Federal government has not increased monthly benefit amounts, but has allowed states to use state funds to supplement federal benefits if they choose to do so. Florida is not currently using state funds to supplement federal benefit amounts.</p>
<p>3. After appropriate training, “Partner agencies” of the DCF ACCESS program should be allowed to conduct intake interviews (performed after an application has been received by DCF but prior to full determination by DCF regarding eligibility. Currently only DCF employees conduct intake interviews.</p>	<p>Staff at local agencies already partnering with DCF through the ACCESS program would be able to perform work to assist the initiation of new cases. This would allow DCF to redirect the efforts of state employees to accomplish functions which only state employees can perform in conformance with federal regulations.</p>	<p>DCF ACCESS program is currently trying to establish such a project with Alachua County Social Services.</p>
<p>4. Physically consolidate the 2 separate locations even ‘online ‘applicants must visit (One Stop Career Center – for non-parenting able bodied adults; and Child Support Enforcement offices – for parenting adults). Many must visit both.</p>	<p>The barrier created by the mandated face to face interviews at separate locations about 12 miles apart will be removed. The transportation barrier will be mitigated.</p>	<p>No action has occurred regarding this recommendation.</p>

<p>5. Allow DCF local offices and District Administrations to engage in marketing the Food Stamp program using advertisements, special events, billboards, etc.</p>	<p>Lifting the current DCF (Tallahassee) administrative policy prohibiting marketing the Food Stamp program to eligible residents would increase the percentage of eligible residents who apply for and receive Food Stamp benefits.</p> <p>Numerous ‘best practices’ examples in other states demonstrate the effectiveness of this strategy in overcoming stigma, misinformation, and other barriers to receiving Food Stamp benefits.</p>	<p>DCF staff in individual communities place outreach materials in offices of local ACCESS partner agencies, as well as special events where eligible residents are assisted with applications, but larger scale advertising/marketing efforts are not occurring.</p>
<p>6. Establish compatible and up to date IT systems for data recording and data exchange (communication) among DCF, Child Support Enforcement (CSE) and Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI). Current archaic and incompatible systems allow erroneous decisions, actions, sanctions, etc. being applied to Food Stamp applicants and recipients</p>	<p>Applications could be processed with less delay, with fewer errors, and fewer consequent erroneous sanctions and other adverse actions and consequences for applicants and recipients.</p>	<p>While this specific strategy has not been fully accomplished, AWI and CSE do share some client information with DCF by accessing DCF’s record keeping network and adding information to individuals’ records.</p>
<p>7. All written communications with Food Stamp applicants and recipients should be written in clear, simple and logical language so as to be understood. DCF, CSE, and AWI should complete its review and editing of standard letters, forms and other communications regularly being sent to applicants and recipients.</p>	<p>Food Stamp applicants and recipients will be able to understand written directions, rules, procedures, etc. and thus be able to avoid terminations, sanctions, and other adverse actions unnecessarily disrupting the receipt of Food Stamp benefits.</p>	<p>DCF notices have been rewritten to be more easily understood by those applying for or recertifying SNAP benefits. Agency for Workforce Innovation (AWI) has done the same. It has not yet been determined whether Child Support Enforcement (CSE) has pursued this strategy.</p>

<p>8. Data on total dollar amounts flowing into local economies on a monthly basis through use of Food Stamp benefits, and the economic impact of such expenditures, should be transmitted to local Chambers of Commerce and local elected officials, news media, etc.</p>	<p>Local business interests will become much more supportive of the Food Stamp program and efforts to enroll eligible applicants when they understand the impact on the ‘bottom line’. This support will be considered by DCF and state elected officials as they make decisions regarding how best to facilitate access to the Food Stamp program by eligible residents.</p>	<p>The number of SNAP recipients in the County is currently shared regularly with local DCF partner agencies. DCF data on actual dollar amounts are also made available, and could be shared with additional local entities which are interested in using them.</p>
<p>9. The State of Florida should change its calculations associated with determining SNAP benefits level to use 4.0 times the average weekly pay instead of the 4.3 times average weekly pay, as is the current practice.</p>	<p>This measure would potentially increase the benefits of an average SNAP recipient by \$16 to \$20 per month</p>	<p>It was discovered that this would require a change to the Medicaid eligibility process also. This would increase Medicaid costs to the state. This change is therefore not likely to be approved by the state.</p>

Objective 2: Local nutrition assistance agencies and other state programs will become partners with the DCF ACCESS program and collaborate with both their customers and DCF to encourage and facilitate submission of applications from likely eligible customers.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. DCF and Women, Infants & Children Program (WIC), School District, and other USDA funded programs will collaborate to inform, encourage and facilitate submission of applications from their customers to other existing federal, state and locally available programs and resources</p>	<p>When “federal assistance eligible” individuals and families are better able to address nutritional needs by way of participation in the various programs, they will be less dependent on local resources, and the community will more fully and comprehensively address the nutritional needs of elders, children, individuals with disabilities, working poor, and other needy residents.</p>	<p>SNAP benefits recipients are automatically eligible for several other federal programs administered by the state and local entities, and these programs are using this methodology to enroll residents.</p>

<p>2. Local nutrition assistance programs and agencies will collaborate with DCF Access program and all other USDA funded food assistance programs to encourage and facilitate participation</p>	<p>Local agencies will assist their customers gain access to available federal resources, taking pressure off local resources that can be better used to assist individuals and families in need, but who are not eligible for federal assistance.</p>	<p>DCF ACCESS program has established numerous local partner agencies. Local agencies that provide assistance to food-insecure residents strongly encourage their customers (and often assist them) to apply for and obtain SNAP and other federal nutrition assistance.</p>
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Objective 3: Additional USDA financial and programmatic resources available to USDA funded agencies and local nutrition assistance agencies will be identified and pursued.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. USDA Food Stamp “Outreach” and “Participation” grants will be secured by coalitions of nutrition assistance agencies such as DCF, faith based organizations, non-profit agencies, etc.</p>	<p>Many local organizations want to assist their customers gain access to federal programs, and funding from USDA for this purpose is available for successful applicants. Successful programs would increase the percentage of eligible residents who receive Food Stamp benefits. A positive economic development impact, better nourished healthier citizens, and more productive work force are among the benefits of these programs.</p>	<p>Outreach Grant Requests for Proposals (RFP) will be posted in November 2010 by USDA, and local entities are encouraged to collaborate to develop and submit a proposed outreach program.</p>
<p>2. The State of Florida should allocate sufficient funding to establish the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program in Alachua County to educate recipients about the most effective use of assistance; where to purchase low cost nutritious food; food preparation; basic home economics including household budgeting; and other self sufficiency promoting subject matter.</p>	<p>The program (now operated in only 22 of 67 counties in Florida) would assist Food Stamp recipients make best use of available resources, reduce the need for local agencies to rescue Food Stamp recipients toward the end of each month when Food Stamp benefits have most often been exhausted, and promote self sufficiency among assistance recipients.</p>	<p>The state government has chosen to not expand the Nutrition Education Program despite the 50/50 match provided by USDA. Florida’s efforts cost \$1.50 per SNAP recipient in 2008. At the same time, the national average expenditure among states was \$8.50 per recipient for this effort. Alachua County is still not among the counties funded to participate in this program, despite the concerns about obesity and diabetes as nutrition-based diseases, and other concerns about wise use of the resource.</p>

<p>3. The State of Florida should contract with local restaurants that agree to participate with the SNAP to provide hot meals to homeless individuals, as allowed under federal legislation</p>	<p>Local homeless individuals would be able to obtain hot meals at local restaurants. Local restaurants could increase their sales.</p>	<p>DCF has established the SNAP Restaurant Homeless Pilot project in Alachua County in collaboration with the Alachua County Coalition for Homeless and Hungry, the Gainesville-Alachua County Office on Homelessness, and the Alachua County Poverty Reduction Program. Over 200 homeless persons and 6 area restaurants are participating in the project, which may be able to include elderly and disabled SNAP participants in the future, with additional restaurants involved in the project.</p>
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Objective 4: Mitigate the barriers to receiving Food Stamps/SNAP benefits created by the online application process implemented by the State of Florida.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. DCF and USDA funded nutrition assistance programs, as well as all other local nutrition assistance programs, should hand out more paper applications to potential applicants who cannot or (for a variety of reasons) do not use the online application process.</p>	<p>Previously discouraged or frustrated Food Stamp/SNAP eligible residents will begin the application process and receive the assistance required to complete the application and intake processes. For example, elderly grandparents who have custody of grandchildren, and are not ‘internet able’, would have option to use paper application.</p>	<p>Approximately 95% of applications for SNAP benefits are made online. Paper applications are available upon request at any site where applications can be submitted online.</p>
<p>2. More local nutrition assistance agencies need to enter into partnership with the DCF ACCESS program to be trained how to assist with the paper application process</p>	<p>Assistance to local residents would be available from multiple agencies which have regular contact with nutritionally needy who have not applied for Food Stamp benefits because of real or perceived barriers associated with the online application process.</p>	<p>DCF ACCESS program has expanded partnerships with interested agencies/faith based groups who provide assistance to low income residents, if those agencies are willing and able to assist with the submission of the on-line or paper application or act as an informational site to direct customers on how they can apply.</p>

Objective 5: Facilitate access to federal food & nutrition assistance programs to improve food security for the community.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. All Food & Nutrition Assistance providers should encourage customers to apply for Food Stamps/SNAP and other federal programs customers may be eligible for, such as WIC, School Meals, Senior Farmers market, etc.	Reduce burden on non-USDA , Food & Nutrition Services (FNS) local agencies, increase participation in federal programs, improve overall community food security	All local nutrition assistance agencies we are aware of are encouraging their customers to apply for federal nutrition benefits, so as to reduce or eliminate the demand for nutrition assistance services from local sources.

Objective 6: Expand DCF ACCESS program participation among local nutrition assistance providers

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. All Food & Nutrition Assistance providers should become partner agencies with DCF ACCESS Program	Increased access to DCF economic services (Food Stamps/SNAP and Medicaid) Improved food security for community	DCF ACCESS program has expanded to include any and all agencies that provide nutrition or other assistance to low income residents, if those agencies can accept the electronic equipment provided by DCF (or use their own) and collaborate with the ACCESS program to assist with SNAP application processes.

Objective 7: Establish Alachua County Nutrition Assistance Map

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Create on the County WEB site a GIS based mapping service that identifies locations and other information to increase access to services	The public, service providers, and news media will be able to access comprehensive information regarding existing systems and agents of food and nutrition service delivery	The Alachua County Web site section about the Poverty Reduction Program contains a link to “Assisted Food Service Providers” that provides locations and operational information about 16 area nutrition assistance agencies in Alachua County. http://www.alachuacounty.us/Depts/CSS/PRP/Pages/AssistedFoodServiceProviders.aspx

Objective 8: Provide up-to-date information on service availability to citizens receiving nutrition assistance

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Local nutrition assistance agencies should distribute (along with non-perishable food) flyers, brochures or other promotional and informational materials regarding area nutrition services, especially WIC information to pregnant women and families with young children.</p>	<p>More eligible residents will become aware of the community programs.</p> <p>Increased participation in WIC will increase overall community food and nutrition resources.</p> <p>Increased WIC participation (above the 62% of eligible residents now participating) in federally funded programs will reduce the need for local non-federal programs to provide assistance, enabling them to focus on needs of other ‘food insecure’ residents.</p> <p>Better nourished fetuses and young children will be healthier and avoid nutrition deficiency based problems such as subnormal pre natal development and poor post natal development.</p> <p>We will reverse the situation wherein Alachua County, over the past 15 years, has lagged about 10% below the statewide average of eligible citizens who participate in the WIC.</p>	<p>Some local agencies have promotional/informational flyers available for customers about the WIC program and recipes using WIC-approved ingredients. It is unknown whether agencies that provide non-perishable foods are placing such materials in bags of groceries for distribution to customers.</p>

Objective 9: Overcome transportation barriers and enable easier access to services by rural residents in need of assistance

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Bring services closer to those in need by physically locating (at least periodically) a presence within rural communities	Increased access to resources, at least equivalent to access available in Gainesville Metropolitan Area	Rural mobile food distribution programs are operated by several nutrition assistance providers. DCF ACCESS program has expanded partnerships with interested agencies/faith-based groups who provide assistance to low income residents, if those agencies are willing and able to assist with the submission of the online or paper application or act as an informational site to direct customers on how they can apply.

Objective 10: WIC participation will increase to 65% of the potentially eligible Alachua County population by July 2010.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Use Government Access Channel 12 and other communications tools of the City of Gainesville and Alachua County to disseminate information about the program, application process, benefits to fetuses and young children, etc.	More eligible residents will become aware of the program and its benefits. Pregnant women will have the advantage of nutrition counseling and supplemental food throughout their pregnancy. Good counseling will increase the number of women who breastfeed their infants resulting in better nourished children.	USDA, Alachua County and the local WIC program managers developed a public service announcement that has been airing on Channel 12 since February 2010. In addition, the PSA was aired on Cox Cable Channels including CBS, NBC and MY 11. Data on current percentage of eligible residents participating will be available sometime in 2011.

<p>2. Develop a radio PSA for use on stations with a high percentage of WIC eligible listeners. Example KISS105</p>		<p>A radio PSA promoting use of healthy WIC approved food items was developed by the same above listed entities and was distributed to all local radio stations for airing.</p>
<p>3. Meet semi-annually with local OB/GYN and Pediatric practitioners and their staff to increase knowledge about eligibility criteria, emphasize benefits of early participation, and request assistance in promoting enrollment in the program, even before medical care begins.</p>	<p>Increased participation, increased early participation, more acceptance and support from the medical community to promote participation and consequent benefits.</p>	<p>WIC staff meets with local OB/GYN and pediatric practitioners to address this strategy.</p>
<p>4. Provide marketing and referral information annually to pregnancy centers and other sites that provide pregnancy tests and/or pregnancy services.</p>	<p>Increased participation, increased early participation, more acceptance and support from the pregnancy and birthing community to promote participation and consequent benefits</p>	<p>Information dissemination is ongoing. Referral information and marketing resources are provided to pediatricians and OB/GYN offices. Whether the materials are placed in public view (or not) in all such offices has not been determined.</p>
<p>5. Increase collaboration among WIC, Healthy Start, and Healthy Families programs to encourage women to enroll all eligible family members in WIC, emphasize importance of keeping appointment, and otherwise support and market the WIC program</p>	<p>Multiple points of marketing and encouragement directed at eligible women will increase participation in WIC.</p>	<p>The WIC and Healthy Families programs are co-located for constant collaboration. Healthy Families and Healthy Start encourage participants to enroll in WIC. At multiple points of contact with customers, all 3 programs promote participation in the other programs. Administrative collaboration among all 3 programs is taking place.</p>
<p>6. Initiate regular communications with area faith-based organizations, especially ministerial groups, and ACTION Network to promote enrollment in WIC of eligible women and children</p>	<p>This forum would be an opportunity to reach out to eligible participants.</p>	<p>While WIC distributes referral and program information to area faith-based entities, the ACTION Network ministerial group is currently developing an action plan to more fully implement this strategy.</p>

<p>7. Local offices of OB/GYN, Pediatrics practitioners, and other health care providers should distribute marketing materials for the WIC program</p>	<p>More eligible residents will become aware of the program and its benefits.</p> <p>Increased participation in WIC will increase overall community food and nutrition resources.</p> <p>Increased participation (above the 62% of eligible residents now participating) will reduce the need for local non-federal programs to provide assistance, enabling them to focus on needs of other ‘food insecure’ residents.</p> <p>Better nourished fetuses and young children will be healthier and avoid nutrition deficiency based problems such as subnormal pre natal development and poor post natal development.</p>	<p>Information dissemination is ongoing. Referral information and marketing resources are provided to pediatricians and OB/GYN offices.</p> <p>Whether the materials are placed in public view (or not) in all such offices has not been determined. This strategy was intended to address the reports that some OB/GYN offices were choosing to not distribute WIC materials.</p>
<p>8. To overcome the stigma (among both health care professionals and eligible residents) of WIC being a ‘welfare’ program, WIC should develop new marketing materials that visually and in written format emphasize benefits to fetuses and children, while de-emphasizing the ‘low income’ federal program funding and identity.</p>	<p>Medical practitioners will be more enthusiastic about distributing materials in their offices if they do not appear to be associated with government funded assistance to low income families. Eligible residents will be more enthusiastic about receiving nutrition assistance for their fetuses and children once the ‘stigma factor’ is removed not working as a barrier to participation.</p>	<p>Current WIC marketing materials do not specify the income-based eligibility nature of the program, so as to not present the program as government welfare, but as nutrition for pregnant women, breastfeeding women, mothers, infants and children up to age 5.</p>

<p>9. As stated in the Food Stamp Program recommendations, both Food Stamps/SNAP and WIC offices should be cross referring customers who are possibly eligible for the programs. Both WIC and Food Stamp office should also be cross referring customers to local nutrition assistance programs.</p>	<p>More eligible residents will become aware of the program and its benefits.</p> <p>Increased participation in WIC will increase overall community food and nutrition resources.</p> <p>Increased participation (above the 62% of eligible residents now participating) will reduce the need for local non-federal programs to provide assistance, enabling them to focus on needs of other ‘food insecure’ residents.</p> <p>Better nourished fetuses and young children will be healthier and avoid nutrition deficiency based problems such as subnormal pre natal development and poor post natal development.</p>	<p>Both WIC and SNAP eligibility determination processes can determine if the applicant is currently receiving benefits from the other program. However, there is currently no reported system of referrals of applicants from WIC to SNAP or vice versa .</p>
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Objective 11: Improve the percentage of WIC participants who enter the program during the first trimester of pregnancy. Early (first trimester) participation is a major goal of the national program.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. WIC will review the overall application, intake, certification and enrollment process now in place to try to determine whether the marketing (stigma factor), application (long waiting time for first appointment), and/or intake procedures (high caseloads for staff and high no-show rates for appointments) are creating barriers to early enrollment.</p>	<p>Shands (which operates the WIC program in Alachua County) and interested parties will be able to have a better idea about the causes of low early participation in WIC, and develop strategies to address those causes locally, as well as make any appropriate recommendations to the State and/or federal agencies which would facilitate earlier participation.</p>	<p>WIC marketing materials have addressed the low income stigma issue by focusing on providing a healthy start for mothers, infants and children. Applicants wait no longer than 10 days for the initial appointment. No show rates have been addressed by adding positions that make appointment reminder calls.</p>

Objective 12: Improve retention of children in the WIC program by reducing the frequency of re-certifications needed to keep children enrolled, and by convincing women enrolled that when they only use WIC for infant formula, they are wasting the opportunity for nutrition assistance until the child reaches 5 years old.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. When WIC is being considered for reauthorization by Congress and the President, the ACANAP and other supporters of WIC should visit, write to or otherwise contact elected officials to encourage reducing frequency of recertification.</p>	<p>Retention in the WIC program and associated benefits therefrom.</p>	<p>WIC has advocated through the National WIC Association for reducing frequency of recertification. ACNA may still be helpful in this effort.</p>
<p>2. WIC program will implement ‘best practices’, marketing strategies, etc. promoted by USDA and other organizations to consider actions that may encourage, reward, incentivize, or otherwise promote retention of children, beyond infancy, in the program</p>	<p>Children in need of nutritional support and who are eligible for WIC (which is based on much higher income allowance – 185% of Federal Poverty level - compared to Food Stamp Program) will be retained in the program and will benefit from supplemental nutrition assistance.</p>	<p>While not carried out specifically to encourage, incentivize, or promote the retention of children beyond infancy, the USDA implemented WIC food package changes in October 2009 which placed additional foods on the program for children up to age 5. All WIC program literature clearly states that children to age 5 are eligible. At multiple points of contact, WIC employees inform participants of the program’s coverage for children</p>

Objective 13: Local government, nutrition assistance agencies, and the general public should contact federal elected officials and use any organizational resources available (such as lobbying consultant firms) to educate Congress about the benefits of the WIC Farmers Market and Senior Farmers Market programs and the need to expand funding to better serve the target populations.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Alachua County and City of Gainesville will use their lobbying consultant to: promote reauthorization of the WIC Farmers Market and Senior Farmers Market programs; increase funding; make the programs ‘entitlement’ programs.</p>	<p>Both programs will be reauthorized, additional funding will be provided to improve program performance (such as improved outreach and participation), and both program will become entitlement programs to establish administrative and programmatic stability and enable farmers to consistently rely on their ability to participate in providing produce for the programs.</p>	<p>Both WIC Farmers Market and Senior Farmers Market programs have been reauthorized, but neither has received significant funding increases nor status as entitlement programs. Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agendas for Washington D.C. and Tallahassee, as well as through the Florida Association of Counties lobbying efforts.</p>
<p>2. Local nutrition assistance agencies will contact Congress, and encourage their supporters and the general population, and especially the programs’ target population to: promote reauthorization of both programs; increase funding; make the programs ‘entitlement’ programs.</p>		<p>Both WIC Farmers market and Senior Farmer Market programs have been reauthorized, but neither has received significant funding increases nor status as entitlement programs.</p>

Objective 14: Mitigate barriers to participation in the WIC Farmers Market program among WIC enrolled mothers, who tend to be young, are often not well educated about cooking and food preparation, and are unfamiliar with many of the foods available from farmers markets.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Access to WIC Farmers Market program produce will be improved by expanding the number of locations convenient to WIC participants	WIC participants will be able to shop locally at convenient sites close to their homes/neighborhoods. The WIC Farmers Market retailing ‘environment’ will be more familiar and comfortable to WIC participants.	There are currently 7 WIC Farmers Market locations spread throughout Gainesville and Alachua County.
2. Farmers will produce foods that are more familiar and acceptable to WIC program participants, and ensure that sufficient supplies of produce are available at sales locations and times advertised.	WIC participants will have amply quality produce to choose from (food will not ‘run out’ or be of low quality/eye appeal) and will be able to purchase familiar foods they know how to prepare and serve.	No information about supplies of various WIC-approved foods or the quality of such food at area Farmers Markets has been obtained.
3. ACANAP will work with the Florida Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services to review farmers market sites for appropriateness regarding value of products, amount of produce available and times/places of these sites	Review of sites will remove those sites that are not providing enough opportunities for use of WIC coupons and will add new sites that offer more value and availability of locally grown fresh produce	No activity is being reported by local nutrition assistance agencies or ACNA regarding this strategy.

Objective 15: The School Board of Alachua County Food and Nutrition Department will expand current meal delivery models to additional schools, and will further address the issue of stigma which causes children to avoid participation in the meals programs.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Expand breakfast programs to include in classroom programs in low-income areas	Increase in-classroom breakfast program participation	School Board of Alachua County (SBAC) is in the discussion phase with the 32609 Zip Code area schools and has plans to implement breakfast in the classrooms in the near future. The current Fresh Fruit and Vegetables program is paving the way for implementation of the breakfast meals in the classroom.
2. Expand grab and go breakfast in secondary schools	Increase in-classroom breakfast program participation	The current lunch time Cooperative Food Cart program is paving the way for possible implementation of expansion to the breakfast period as well.
3. Develop methods/techniques to eliminate /reduce the stigma attached to free & reduced food service program to increase participation in secondary schools	Increase participation in secondary schools	SBAC has installed computers at the majority of secondary school point of sale outlets in order to allow free and reduced status students to be able to purchase the same foods at any of the serving lines. This way, students cannot see who or who is not receiving nutrition assistance.
4. The food backpack program operating at Alachua Elementary School that provides a backpack full of food for children to carry home on Friday afternoons should be expanded to more schools.	Children of low income families will be able to carry home food for meals over the weekend, since school meals are not available on Saturday and Sunday. The program could expand beyond its fairly small scope a present. Children will return the empty backpacks on Mondays to the school, and program operators will fill packs again for the following Friday.	SBAC Food and Nutrition Services is coordinating with United Way, Bread of the Mighty Food Bank and various other participating organizations to expand the existing services and number of schools participating. Alachua County Board of County Commissioner recently provided \$90,000 to United Way to expand the School Backpack food program.

Objective 16: Participation will be improved by coordination of marketing between the programs operated by Alachua County School Board Food and Nutrition Department and Bread of the Mighty Food bank (BOTM), and by local nutrition assistance agencies assisting with marketing the programs. The barrier created by lack of transportation available to feeding sites is recognized and will be addressed by further planning efforts of local nutrition assistance agencies.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Develop a brochure/flier identifying available summer sites and contact information	Awareness and participation of summer feeding programs	SBAC developed and distributed summer feeding flyers, brochures, and banners as well as media announcements. BOTM felt that their infrastructure resources could not handle additional children (compared to the previous Summer) so they chose not to work towards expanding the number of participants.
2. Distribute flier to appropriate contacts, i.e. Churches, food banks and schools	Awareness and participation of summer feeding programs	SBAC widely disseminated marketing materials, Public Service Announcements, etc. and achieved a 38% increase in breakfast services and a 55% increase in lunch participation compared to the previous Summer.
3. Contact media for stories about summer feeding programs	Awareness and participation of summer feeding programs	SBAC used numerous venues, methods and opportunities to promote participation in the Summer Food Program. The state funded local city buses to be painted, advertising the summer feeding program.
4. Research transportation issues related to summer feeding and develop potential plan	Increased capacity to get to and participate at summer feeding program sites	As a result of a pilot project in Gilchrist Co., BOTM has plans to deliver food directly to rural or distant neighborhoods next year. SBAC is conducting a needs assessment to determine areas of low participation where transportation may be a barrier to participation.

Objective 17: Local government and nutrition assistance agencies will use their administrative and/or lobbying resources to encourage Congress and USDA to amend program recordkeeping/paperwork requirements and provide funding to address transportation barriers that limit participation in the summer youth food programs.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Contact federal elected officials and USDA regarding need to streamline federal paperwork requirements	Reduction in paperwork and administrative expenses	Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agendas for Washington D.C. and Tallahassee, as well as through the Florida Association of Counties lobbying efforts.
2. Support (and promote public support) for increased federal and state funding for transportation/access to feeding sites, especially in rural areas	Federal & state financial support for transportation	Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agendas for Washington D.C. and Tallahassee, as well as through the Florida Association of Counties lobbying efforts.

Objective 18: Local governments and nutrition assistance agencies, and the general public, will contact federal elected officials and USDA FNS administrators in support of easing eligibility criteria and access to Free and Reduced Meals programs. Local governments and nutrition assistance agencies, and the general public, will contact federal elected officials and USDA FNS administrators in support of reducing administrative costs of operating Free and Reduced Meals programs.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Free meal eligibility should be expanded in the upcoming Free and Reduced Meals reauthorization by Congress, so that children from households with incomes up to 185% of the Federal Poverty Level can receive meals at no charge	Combine the ‘reduced price’ category with the ‘free’ category in order to increase participation, reduce administrative costs and paperwork, and increase assistance for needy families.	While Congress did not act to combine categories of eligibility, SBAC and other local entities did request this action.
2. Increase federal meal reimbursement rates to accommodate the provision of quality school breakfast (and lunch) that keep pace with the high cost of fresh produce, grains and dairy (10 point plan)	The reimbursement rate will cover the real cost of nutritious food and actual expenses involved in producing a meal. Higher quality meals and more attractive meals will be served to youth in need of nutrition assistance.	SBAC is hoping that this will be a part of the final reauthorization plan when it is introduced for consideration by Congress.
3. Establish federal reauthorization of Free and Reduced Meals programs, funding for breakfast commodities, which is currently available only to the school lunch program	More nutritious and attractive breakfast meals will be eaten by more eligible children.	SBAC Food and Nutrition Services will continue to collaboratively lobby for the Child Nutrition Reauthorization Act to be updated to include breakfast participation in the calculating of the commodity allocation.

<p>4. Lobby for nutrition education funding through the congressional reauthorization process for all child nutrition programs. This will provide children at all stages of growth and development with the skills necessary to make lifelong healthy choices</p>	<p>Promote and teach healthy eating as an essential tool to decrease childhood obesity and other diet-related health programs</p>	<p>Until funding is available through the Reauthorization process, SBAC has begun planning nutrition education as part of the 32609 initiative. SBAC Food and Nutrition Services is in the process of implementing nutrition curriculum at the pilot schools with the assistance of the teachers, administrators and volunteers such as UF students, community businesses and community leaders.</p> <p>Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agendas for Washington D.C. and Tallahassee, as well as through the Florida Association of Counties lobbying efforts.</p>
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Objective 20: Improve access to Food Stamps/SNAP through dispelling misconceptions

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Conduct further analysis regarding the reasons why some seniors do not utilize SNAP	Determine issues that need to be addressed for use in developing educational material	Elder Options and DCF have not conducted formal analysis, but feel confident they understand many of the reasons elders do not participate. Furthermore, both agencies are planning to conduct a survey of elders, and are collaborating to increase the participation among this population.
2. Develop a 1-page flyer that lists myths and facts, focusing specifically on seniors who do not apply for benefits	More people will apply for benefits once they realize the process is not the same as it used to be or as they imagined it to be.	Elder Affairs has developed marketing materials that address myths and promote ease of participation.
3. Combat the commonly held belief that it's not worth the time or the hassle to apply		Elder Options, ElderCare and DCF are combating (through various public events, meetings, use of area partner agencies, etc.) the negative misperceptions and misinformation that often discourage participation among elders.
4. Initiate a long range goal of consolidating process for multiple food related federal, state, and local programs and standardizing the eligibility criteria to the extent possible.		ACNA has not yet developed a plan to encourage federal legislation that would simplify federal program administration, eligibility processes, etc. Given the nature of federal government and bureaucracy, this long-range goal will be very difficult if not impossible to implement.

Objective 21: Educate the General Public on Available Assistance

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Coordinate with ACCESS to conduct training/assistance for applicants, potential applicants, and community partners who will help applicants and potential applicants	Facilitate the ability of people to apply for benefits and further promote the understanding of the program requirements in the community	Potential SNAP applicants have access to a viewable training program on using the web application and MY ACCESS Account. Agency staff has also been trained on usage.
2. Place trained people at places/events seniors gather/attend in order to educate and sign people up for SNAP benefits	Facilitate the ability of people to apply for benefits and further promote the understanding of the program requirements in the community	DCF and Department of Elder Affairs have initiated a pilot program that allows elders to call in, have an operator complete a SNAP application, and then sign the application using voice recognition technology.

Objective 22: Increasing Available Transportation Options for Food Related Trips

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Research volunteer options for taking seniors on grocery shopping trips, doing grocery shopping for seniors, etc.	Provide increased access to food and food related activities	No coordinated action to implement this strategy has yet been taken by local nutrition assistance agencies, though individual agencies do occasionally provide some limited transportation assistance. The Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) ride system operated by MV, Inc. does provide rides for grocery shopping (and other limited purposes) for those meeting their eligibility criteria.

Objective 23: Florida government and DCF will improve the intake and eligibility determination systems, and enrollment status maintenance systems, now in place, by implementing actions (including providing additional funding) which address known barriers to enrolling and maintaining enrollment of eligible residents in the program.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Florida should use the \$5.4 million Food Stamp Programs ‘productivity bonus’ awarded to the state during 2008 by USDA to supplement, not supplant, program appropriations.</p>	<p>Supplemental funding will allow additional staff to be hired, improvements in the call center operations, and technical improvements in the online application processes.</p>	<p>Legislative action in Tallahassee would be required to implement this, and this has not happened. The funds are largely used to supplement the state’s general revenue budget in ways unrelated to DCF or the SNAP program.</p>
<p>2. Establish in local DCF district administration budget additional funding to support “Food Stamp Hotlines” such as the one temporarily funded by the Alachua County Board of County Commissioners in 2009</p>	<p>Local residents who do not succeed in reaching the state call center (due to understaffing and under funding of the centers) will be able to contact DCF to: initiate the Food Stamp application process; receive information about local partner agencies that will assist them in applying for Food Stamps/SNAP; and receive services regarding existing Food Stamp cases.</p> <p>Readily available information on existing cases will help prevent disruption of receipt of Food Stamps/SNAP because of simple errors, miscommunications, etc.</p>	<p>While no additional funding from the county has been added, DCF has maintained the phone line which is sometimes able to be answered by a staff person, but only at times when they are not dealing directly with customers in the lobby. Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agenda for Tallahassee, as well as through the Florida Association of Counties lobbying efforts.</p>
<p>3. DCF Call Centers should receive additional funding for staff and technological resources. Current funding levels are directly responsible for inadequate capacity of the 3 statewide call centers to address the volume of calls being attempted daily.</p>	<p>Increased capacity will increase the number of eligible applicants who can initiate receipt of Food Stamps/SNAP and improve the retention of eligible recipients within the system, avoiding erroneous or unnecessary terminations of cases.</p>	<p>The State Legislature has not allocated additional funds for DCF to accomplish this strategy.</p>

Objective 24: Increase the number of DCF eligibility workers (Economic Self Sufficiency Specialist I) by 300 statewide

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Increase the number of Department of Children & Families (DCF) eligibility workers (Economic Self Sufficiency Specialist I)</p>	<p>Barriers to applying for and maintaining access to Food Stamp benefits that have been created by understaffing of local DCF Food Stamp offices, and understaffing of statewide call centers, will be addressed.</p> <p>The return on investment from increased access by eligible residents of Florida and Alachua County includes \$1.84 in economic development activity for each \$1 Food Stamp benefit spent.</p> <p>More of the (60 percent of Food Stamp ‘eligible’ but un-enrolled) residents of Alachua County will receive nutrition assistance for themselves and families.</p> <p>Local nutrition assistance agencies will experience reduced ‘demands for service’ as those recipients of local assistance who obtain Food Stamp benefits shift some or all of their need to receive nutrition support from local to federal sources.</p>	<p>The State Legislature has not allocated additional funds for DCF to accomplish this strategy.</p>

Objective 25: Expand DCF ACCESS program participation among local nutrition assistance providers

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Increase staffing for DCF ACCESS Program Community Partner Liaisons and increase support offered to local partner agencies	Improved and expanded collaborations, communications, and partnerships with local organizations serving residents eligible for Food Stamp and other federal nutrition assistance programs	The State Legislature has not allocated additional funds for DCF to employ additional ACCESS staff. However, DCF is offering increased support to ACCESS partner agencies through such projects as the one with Elder Options.

Objective 26: Improving DCF Documentation

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Develop an official large font versions of the Request for Assistance form with revised language for improved understandability	Increased ease in applying for benefits by producing by providing a larger font size and larger space for answers, as well as, language that is easier for the average applicant to understand	DCF has not yet been able to accomplish this due to cost constraints, such as additional paper and postage costs.

Objective 27: Extending Time Frame of Senior Farmer’s Market Program

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Advocate to extend the coupon expiration date to October 31 st of each year	Coupon expiration extended to October 31 will allow for a wider variety of foods and will reduce the sense of urgency many seniors feel to use their coupons in a short period of time	While the coupons continue to expire on July 31 of each year, unused funds as of July 31 are then used to purchase and distribute produce from farmers markets to Elder Care customers.

Objective 28: Increase the flexibility of using the funding from the Older Americans Act to increase access to nutrition.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Advocate for the blending of Older Americans Act Title IIIC1 (Congregate Meals) and Title IIIC2 (Home Delivered Meals) into a single funding source</p>	<p>Allows for meals to be provided where the need presents itself. When a surplus of funding exists in congregate meals budget, funding could be used for expenses associated with home delivered meals, which never has enough funding to meet demands.</p>	<p>Approximately 3 years ago, a similar funding source (Title III-B) was in fact "bundled" together with many of the sub-services offered into one pot of money. ElderCare hopes that continued pressure from the Lead Agencies that provide meal services to seniors across the country will eventually lead to the combination of these two funding streams so each agency will have input into just how those monies are allocated since needs vary from area to area. Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agendas for Washington D.C.</p>
<p>2. Advocate for flexibility of funding from the Older Americans Act Title IIIC1 (Congregate Meals) to allow a portion of the funds allotted to be spent on transportation of participants to the meal site</p>	<p>Allow more seniors to attend senior meal sites where a nutritious lunch time meal can be eaten</p>	<p>ElderCare advocates for this strategy through its partnerships with larger organizations such as the Department of Elder Affairs and National Meals on Wheels Association.</p> <p>Alachua County has advocated for this through its legislative agendas for Washington D.C.</p>

Objective 29: Increasing Availability of Fresh and Healthy Options at Neighborhood Convenience Stores

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Investigate possibility of project to encourage and assist convenience stores to carry nutritious food suitable for seniors and to accept Food Stamps/SNAP for payment</p>	<p>Increased proximity of healthy foods will increase the purchase and consumption of these foods rather than of less healthy foods</p>	<p>New WIC regulations effective October 2009 require that all stores must stock a combination of two varieties of fruits and two varieties of vegetables, but they do not have to stock canned or frozen fruits and vegetables, which are also allowed by WIC. SNAP has no such requirement for participating stores. Local agencies, ACNA, etc. could begin work to encourage and assist “corner stores” or convenience stores to offer healthy fresh fruit and vegetable options.</p>

Goal 3: Expand the customer service capabilities of emergency food programs

Objective 1: Access low cost fuel and vehicle maintenance services by collaboration with Alachua County Public Works for Local Nutrition Assistance Providers

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Local nutrition assistance providers will contract with Alachua County to purchase low-cost fuel and repair/maintenance services from the county	Nutrition assistance providers will be able to apply funds saved from less expensive fuel and vehicle maintenance to service delivery.	After thorough review and consideration, Alachua County Public Works Department and the Board of County Commissioners determined that this recommendation was not feasible for a number of credible reasons, such as legality, liability, etc.

Objective 2: Reduce food waste of restaurants, caterers, and other food institutions and increase availability of food for those in need of assistance

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Develop greater physical infrastructure capacity (refrigerated space) available for short term storage (usually overnight) of donated perishable food	More perishable food will be safely used by those in need instead of going to the landfill	BOTM has significantly expanded its capacity to store and distribute refrigerated food. It has also obtained 3 additional refrigerated trucks to aid collection and distribution of perishable food stuffs. Over the last 2 years, BOTM has doubled the amount of food they distribute. Catholic Charities plans to expand its refrigeration capacities in the Spring of 2011.
2. Develop a larger organized system of volunteers who will <i>collect</i> perishable food donations from restaurants, caterers, etc.	More perishable food will be safely used by those in need instead of going to the landfill	United Way has initiated the “Volunteer Solutions” which is an online management system for volunteers and United Way partner agencies. However no program of coordinated, <i>multi-agency</i> volunteer recruitment has been established to collect donated perishable food.
3. Develop a larger organized system of volunteers who will <i>deliver</i> perishable food donations from restaurants, caterers, etc. to appropriate sites and systems	More perishable food will be safely used by those in need instead of going to the landfill	United Way has initiated the “Volunteer Solutions” which is an online management system for volunteers and United Way partner agencies. However, no program of coordinated, <i>multi-agency</i> volunteer recruitment has been established to deliver donated perishable food.
4. Vastly increase the number of restaurants, caterers, and other institutions that will donate perishable food	More perishable food will be safely used by those in need instead of going to the landfill. Reduce waste disposal costs for donating entities.	Gainesville Harvest has worked to expand food donation resources, including both volunteers to transport food as well as additional donor restaurants, grocery stores, etc.

Objective 3: Expand and intensify capacities of local agencies by utilizing energy, intelligence, transportation and other resources available from college student and other volunteers

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Develop an organized and managed system of volunteer recruitment, volunteer training and subsequent referral to agencies based on agency needs and individual volunteer availability and capacity</p>	<p>Under-utilized resources at local colleges will assist agencies serve their customers needs, and develop philanthropic capacities of students</p> <p>The nutrition assistance agencies will receive referrals of volunteers who have been screened according to established criteria and oriented to the needs and functions of the various agencies. Agencies will be better able to expand and improve quality of services by way of more effective volunteer assistance.</p>	<p>United Way has initiated the “Volunteer Solutions” which is an online management system for volunteers and United Way partner agencies. United Way is staffing the project with a position that will recruit and train additional agencies on how to use the system.</p>

Objective 4: Establish a weekend referral program to serve those needing immediate food/meals and to coordinate collection of perishable food items available by way of donations

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. In order to address immediate needs that arise on weekends, volunteers and/or staff of local nutrition assistance agencies should be available by way of the United Way 211 system or other coordinated information and referral system(s).</p>	<p>Residents in immediate need on weekends and holidays will be referred to available resources by the 211 system, ACANAP, voice mail referral (from phone systems of ACANAP members, and other referral systems. Donations offered by restaurants, caterers, and other institutions will be collected, and stored or distributed on weekends, to better use available resources and reduce landfill waste.</p>	<p>Gainesville Harvest has established a 24- hour hotline for prepared food donations. United Way has expanded its 211 system to offer online chat room inquiries 24/7 as well as the regular 24/7 phone-based 211 call inquiry and referral operations. Local nutrition assistance agencies have not been able to establish 24/7 operations using volunteer staff to be able to provide weekend services.</p>

Objective 5: Local agencies will become better able to accomplish their organization’s goals by way of professional development of Boards of Directors, administrators, staff and volunteers

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. Establish or locate locally available Board training services and/or Board training materials and establish regularly scheduled training events	Organizations will receive more effective policy development, and administrative, financial and programmatic oversight and guidance from their Boards of Directors	While preliminary identification of a potential training resource has occurred (the name of a faculty member at UF who teaches courses in non-profit boards’ organization, bylaws and functions), local agencies have not met to initiate planning to implement this strategy.
2. Plan and implement “Best Practices” workshops and training events for administrators and staff of local nutrition assistance agencies	Organizations will expand and improve quality of services through ongoing efforts to excel in achieving their missions by learning from each other and exemplary models outside of Alachua County	This strategy has not yet been implemented by local nutrition assistance agencies, educational services and educational institutions.

Objective 6: Improve the percentage of WIC participants who enter the program during the first trimester of pregnancy. Early (first trimester) participation is a major goal of the national program.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
1. WIC will hire and train additional staff.	Additional staff will reduce wait times for appointments and thereby increase the percentage of original appointments kept.	Four new staff positions have been added since July 2009, bringing the total employee count to 56. New positions include intake staff, nutrition staff and two central office clerks who direct all phone calls.

Goal 4: Expand knowledge of economical food acquisition, nutritious and safe food preparation and storage, and general self-sufficiency actions among nutrition assistance recipients

Objective 1: Improve knowledge among nutrition assistance providers regarding food safety and customer self sufficiency training.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Provide technical assistance and training to nutrition assistance providers regarding food safety topics, including expiration date best practices, meal preparation, meal service, food storage, etc.</p>	<p>Safe, nutritious, economical, and effective use of donated food</p>	<p>Cooperative Extension has announced that they possess training materials that could be edited or amended to address this strategy. However, they and local agencies have not yet developed plans to provide and receive training on safe, nutritious, economical and effective use of donated food.</p>
<p>2. Provide “Train the Trainer” training to service providers regarding topics related to increasing self sufficiency of the agencies’ customers</p>	<p>Service providers will be able to train their customers about best practices to enable self sufficiency. Classes in basic ‘home economics’ (cooking ‘best practices’ about how to economically acquire nutritious food, prepare appetizing meals, plan meals, avoid dependence on fast food, household budgeting, avoiding exploitation based businesses, etc.)</p>	<p>Cooperative Extension and Catholic Charities have planned a pilot “train the trainer” project that will start in November 2010 that will address nutrition, food purchasing and preparation as well as household budgeting to maximize availability of funds to purchase food. The first training will address “Skillet Suppers” about meals which can be prepared on a stove, grill, electric skillet or camp fire.</p>

<p>3. Create DVD presentations and other training materials and tools for use by local nutrition assistance providers</p>	<p>Service providers will have access to professionally produced training materials and tools to reduce dependency and facilitate self sufficiency</p>	<p>Cooperative Extension has surveyed the training videos available from both USDA and UF that might address economical food acquisition, nutritious and safe food preparation and storage, and general self-sufficiency actions among nutrition assistance recipients. All samples that were found addressed use of high cost or seasonal foods, or were otherwise inappropriate for use for the intended purposes. Cooperative Extension will continue the effort to locate appropriate videos for use by service providers and/or nutrition assistance customers.</p>
<p>4. Provide more prepared and targeted information such as DVDs, printed materials, etc. to agency customers, along with food.</p>	<p>Customers will obtain and use: recipes for nutritious, economical meals; food safety information to avoid food caused illnesses; budgeting information about wise use of their resources;</p>	<p>It has not been determined whether local nutrition assistance agencies are implementing this strategy.</p>

Objective 2: Mitigate barriers to participation among WIC enrolled mothers, who tend to be young, are often not well educated about cooking and food preparation, and are unfamiliar with many of the foods available from farmers markets.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Cooperative Extension/IFAS will employ a “train the trainer” approach to train WIC program staff and area nutrition assistance agencies to train assistance recipients in the arts of fresh produce preparation, cooking, and preservation.</p>	<p>WIC participants & other assistance recipients will expand their participation in the WIC & regular farmers market programs, gain access to fresh produce, and enjoy with their families the benefits of improved nutrition, increased self sufficiency, and consequent confidence, self respect, etc.</p>	<p>SBAC has collaborated with Cooperative Extension regarding the student-based Family Nutrition Program. Cooperative Extension is also collaborating with Catholic Charities to offer money management and food budgeting classes to their customers. However, the “train the trainer” model has not been extensively utilized to train staff of nutrition assistance agencies on how to teach their customers and what subjects to educate their customers about regarding self sufficiency techniques, strategies, etc. IFAS/Cooperative Extension does have voluminous resources available to all who request them. Those include workshops on food preservation, elder nutrition brochures, etc.</p>

Goal 5: Increase the amount of healthy food available for distribution in the nutrition assistance system

Objective 1: Increasing Funding for the Senior Farmer’s Market Program

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. Schedule a meeting to discuss and determine the elements involved and how to progress with the plan of increasing funding for the Senior Farmer’s Market Program</p>	<p>Determine if and how additional funds can be obtained for this program. Learn how funding is determined (formula, history, number of active or participating markets, etc.)</p>	<p>Department of Elder Affairs explained that the entire federal allocation nationwide is only \$22 million, and that this year Florida only received \$110,000, while other states receive between \$1.2 million and \$1.9 million. This is because USDA awards most of the funds to states that were originally in the small project when it started 12 years ago. In Florida, Alachua County is among 11 counties that are funded, and Alachua County gets more than any other county in Florida. There is no realistic hope that the federal allocation to Florida will change, or that Alachua County will receive more funding next year. One program improvement is that any funds left over (coupons not used during the operational period) are being used by Elder Care to purchase and distribute fresh produce to elder customers.</p>
<p>2. If Strategy 1 determines that the problem is related to the funding allocation process, advocate for an equitable allocation of funds, based on need and capacity to use the funds, across the states that receive this funding</p>	<p>Secure more funding for the seniors in Alachua County to access fresh fruit and vegetables</p>	<p>See comments above. Department of Elder Affairs administrators believe Florida will not see expansion of the program or changes to the allocation methodology.</p>

Objective 2: Gleaning of produce available from local area farms will be increased by use of inmate labor available from the Alachua County Jail.

Strategies	Desired Outcome	Accomplishments
<p>1. The Alachua County Jail will develop plans to harvest and cut and package locally grown fresh produce and package it at the Jail’s certified kitchen. The prepared produce will be made available to schools, meal sites, BOTM and other nutrition assistance providers.</p>	<p>Fresh produce will be made available. Fresh produce that is eaten by residents in need of assistance rather than being plowed under or rotting in the fields will increase the effective use of available local resources.</p> <p>Inmates will experience the healthy satisfaction of honest labor that benefits residents in need of assistance.</p> <p>Fresh produce that is gleaned and processed and sold will create earned income that will subsidize future activities.</p>	<p>Due to both federal and state laws prohibiting work that incarcerated individuals can perform on private property, and due to limited staff at the jail to supervise food processing and packaging efforts, the Alachua County Jail administration informed the County Commission that this recommendation cannot be implemented. However, the jail administration is still considering how they might be able to establish a garden at the jail that would help feed residents detained there, and possibly be shared with area nutrition assistance agencies.</p>
<p>2. This gleaned produce will be available for sale to food programs locally such as schools who purchase fresh food products</p>		<p>State and Federal law prohibit work assignment of inmates on any private property, so gleaning of farmer fields by inmates is not an allowable practice.</p>