ABSTRACT

The goal of this project practicum was to provide information to help improve food security in Mountain View, a neighborhood located in Anchorage, Alaska, by facilitating increased access to fresh, healthy, and affordable food for low income populations. A mobile farmers market in Anchorage could help achieve this goal. Mobile markets are effectively farmers markets on wheels, allowing food to meet consumers where they live. Such markets are gaining popularity in the Lower 48 and data documenting their successes have been emerging. This project aimed to compile information for a mobile farmers market that could: 1) increase access to, and utilization of, fresh, healthy, and affordable food for Mountain View, and 2) create positive relationships between local food and disadvantaged populations. Data from key informant interviews, surveys and existing research on local foods, financial and business considerations were utilized to characterize how to best serve the identified populations through a mobile market. Key informant interviews stressed the importance of consistency, convenience and reliability in any new business as the Mountain View community has a history of businesses not following through on promises. Surveys from potential market customers showed strong interest in the market selling locally grown foods such as root vegetables, greens, corn and berries. Grants from federal and state sources could provide funding needed for the market, including grants which cover EBT machines, which are essential when providing access to customers on federal assistance programs. It was found a successful mobile farmers market in Mountain View could improve food security by increasing community access to food, much locally grown. Increased purchasing of local foods could help develop local food systems, allowing consumers’ money to stay in state, supporting local economies and link local markets.