

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## The Food Trust and Anthem Foundation Sustain Food Access in Communities

*Grant supports continuation of community-based food retail programming aimed at improving health outcomes in select cities in California, Indiana and New Jersey*

Philadelphia, PA — **The Food Trust** is announcing its continued partnership with the Anthem Foundation, the philanthropic arm of Anthem, Inc., to implement its community-based approach to **increasing access to healthy food** and **promoting health equity**. The \$300,000 grant will help support programming in San Jose, California; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Camden, New Jersey.

The ongoing pandemic and food access needs have exacerbated the challenges many families face in accessing healthy food. Building upon programming established in 2018, the new year-long grant will advance efforts with a focus on capacity-building, strategic partnerships, coalition-building and infrastructure improvements.

The unique, innovative programs implemented by The Food Trust are as follows:

- **Healthy Food Retail Initiative:** provides direct investment and technical assistance for food retailers to stock and sell heart-healthy, culturally relevant and locally grown fresh produce. Through improved merchandising, marketing efforts and community outreach, store owners can prominently display and build demand for healthy items.
- **Heart Smarts:** The USDA SNAP-Ed nationally certified program activates stores as convenient, trusted community spaces where customers can access nutrition education and health screenings provided by healthcare partners. This evidence-based program partners with community residents, *promotoras* and community health workers to provide preventive care service to participants, who also receive \$4 in Heart Bucks incentive coupons that can be used to buy heart-healthy items in the store after completing a nutrition lesson or screening.

“We are proud to continue our partnership with The Food Trust, and further our efforts to improve lives and communities by removing barriers and providing access to heart-healthy foods,” said **Felicia Norwood**, Executive Vice President and President for Anthem, Inc.'s Government Business Division. “Together we are creating connections between communities and healthcare providers to address the critical issue of food insecurity facing our country, and providing solutions that will bring about positive change for adults and children in our communities.”

Results from the prior grant exceeded programming goals in each of its three target cities, providing technical assistance for 39 retailers to serve over 9,500 individuals, and implementing Heart Smarts programming in 17 stores for over 3,900 customers over a 12-month period. In total, \$22,081 in Heart Bucks were redeemed toward healthy food purchases, benefiting shoppers as well as local retailers in the three cities.

“With Anthem Foundation’s continued support, we can help thousands of shoppers to make healthy decisions this year, as well as give store owners the tools they need to provide more affordable, quality healthy foods in neighborhoods



# The Food Trust

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ENSURING THAT EVERYONE HAS ACCESS TO AFFORDABLE, NUTRITIOUS  
FOOD AND INFORMATION TO MAKE HEALTHY DECISIONS

across the country,” says **Mark Edwards**, President & CEO of The Food Trust. “By focusing on equity and engaging with key community stakeholders like residents, community food business owners, local food growers and suppliers, healthcare providers and community-based partners, we aim to focus on systems-level solutions while meeting communities where they are.”

None of this work would be possible without the consistent involvement and dedication of local partners to impact real lasting change in our food system and community retail environments.

“Increasing access to nutritious, affordable food is vital to preventing diet-related diseases such as heart disease, stroke and diabetes, particularly in neighborhoods where supermarkets are not readily available,” says **Virginia A. Caine, M.D.**, Director at the Marion County Public Health Department. “Small stores are critical assets in neighborhoods, and we are so pleased to help small stores to stock and sell more nutritious foods. This important collaboration is generating collective interest and action, building community spirit and social capital, and helping to build a culture of health in Marion County.”

“Because nutrition is the primary driver of unhealthy weight, and unhealthy weight is linked to chronic conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and cancer, access to healthy, affordable food is critical for the health of our neighborhoods and communities,” says **Julie Burns**, CEO of partner organization Jump IN for Healthy Kids in Indianapolis. “We are excited and grateful to the Anthem Foundation for continuing to support the healthy corner store work we started with The Food Trust in 2017. Community partnerships like this are essential for sustainable system-level change.”

Individuals and families in low-income, high-need communities are facing challenges accessing healthy foods. In partnership with Anthem Foundation, The Food Trust will continue to provide community support to ensure small food retailers remain in place, and continue their vital transformations to community “health hubs.”

## **About The Food Trust**

The Food Trust, a nonprofit founded in 1992, strives to make healthy food available to all. Working with neighborhoods, schools, grocers, farmers, and policymakers, The Food Trust has developed a comprehensive approach that combines nutrition education and greater availability of affordable, healthy food. To learn more about The Food Trust, visit [thefoodtrust.org](http://thefoodtrust.org).

## **About Anthem Foundation**

The Anthem Foundation is the philanthropic arm of Anthem, Inc. and through charitable contributions and programs, the Foundation promotes the inherent commitment of Anthem, Inc. to enhance the health and well-being of individuals and families in communities that Anthem, Inc. and its affiliated health plans serve. The Foundation focuses its funding on strategic initiatives that make up its Healthy Generations Program, a multi-generational initiative that targets: maternal health, diabetes prevention, cancer prevention, heart health and healthy, active lifestyles, behavioral health efforts and programs that benefit people with disabilities. The Foundation also coordinates the company’s year-round Dollars for Dollars program which provides a 100 percent match of associates’ donations, as well as its Volunteer Time Off and Dollars for Doers community service programs. To learn more about the Anthem Foundation, please visit <http://www.anthem.foundation> and its blog at <https://medium.com/anthemfoundation>.

