

# Nurture Nature Center nets \$56,918 from USDA to spur local produce purchases

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By [Kelly Huth | Special to lehighvalleylive.com](#)

green beans

The grant money will help to get locally-grown veggies and fruits into the hands of SNAP participants.

*(The Plain Dealer photo)*

[Nurture Nature Center](#) in Easton will receive \$56,918 from the United States Department of Agriculture to get more locally grown fruits and veggies in the hands of those in need. The money will help to spur [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) participants to buy locally grown fruit and vegetables at farm stands, farmers markets and farm share programs in eight Northampton County communities, according to a news release. Thirty-one organizations received a total of \$31.5 million from the USDA.

"Encouraging low income families to put more healthy food in their grocery baskets is part of USDA's ongoing commitment to improving the diet and health of all Americans," Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack said in the news release. "These creative community partnerships also benefit regional food producers and local economies along with SNAP participants."

The Nurture Nature Center will work with [Buy Fresh Buy Local of the Greater Lehigh Valley](#), the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley and Northampton County to make the program work.

"The incentives provided by the grant will reduce the cost of fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables, ultimately resulting in increases in local produce purchases by SNAP participants," Lynn Prior, director of the local Buy Fresh Buy Local initiative, said in the news release. "The recipients, our local farmers, and our communities will all benefit."

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