



Mobile Farm Market puts an end to food deserts

Posted: Nov 10, 2014 7:11 PM EST
Updated: Nov 11, 2014 10:03 AM EST

By Alexandra Koehn [CONNECT](#)

A mobile farm market is making a difference in Michigan one vegetable at a time. Andrews University said due to its success this summer they are going to expand next year.

According to the USDA, there are four large food deserts in Berrien County. They include a part of Benton Harbor, Niles, Buchanan, and Berrien Springs. Every Monday the market would stop at the Ferry Street Resource Center so residents could buy nutritious food.

One woman said she loved the recipes the dietitian would provide.

Pauline Washington said, "They picked it that morning and they brought it, they were selling it, plus showing us how to cook it!... the grocery store is not close to where I live! nothing is close to where I live!"

The director of the student gardens at Andrews University said his data shows that the program was a great success.

Garth Woodruff said, "60% of the people felt that they were eating healthier inside their own homes. 47% of the people heard their neighbors talking more about health than they did the summer before."

Woodruff said that students grow the majority of the fruits and vegetables that they sell in the truck.

Woodruff said, "Somebody with an EBT card which is food stamps, buys fresh produce at a farmers market, they can get a two for one deal so they can basically spend two dollars for everyone dollar of cost."

He said 30% of their patrons paid with food stamps. Stephen Erich said "It was kind of a dream, a dream opportunity."

Erich drove the mobile farm market to the Ferry Resource center in Niles every Monday this summer.

Erich said, "When I first got there there were maybe four kids that would come every week! At first when they would come they wouldn't know what to do and they were really shy and then they started helping out! So then they jumped in and they would help us unload the stuff and put it back up and then they would ask for their pay."

Andrews University said they hope to expand the program into the fall next year, and they are also looking into a delivery service where vegetables would be taken straight to people's front door.