



North End Farmers Market

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Contact:

Eliza Cole
Community Health Center, Inc.
(860) 262-2546, eliza@chc1.com

Izzi Greenberg
North End Action Team
(860) 346-4845, izzi@neatmiddletown.org

MIDDLETOWN'S NORTHEND FARM MARKET PROVIDES COMMUNITY WITH ACCESS TO FRESH, AFFORDABLE, LOCALLY GROWN PRODUCE

In Partnership with NEAT, Community Health Center, Inc. encourages healthy lifestyles within urban area through two innovative programs - North End Kids Market and Prescription for Produce

Middletown, Conn. (June 30, 2011) – The North End Action Team's (NEAT) North End Farmers Market returns on Friday, July 1st, 2011, 10:00 am – 2:00 pm, to its location at 575 Main Street (in front of Its Only Natural). Community Health Center, Inc. (CHC) is generously supporting the return of two successful programs that were introduced last year – "Prescription for Produce" and the North End Kids Market. Both programs seek to combat obesity among the local community and encourage healthy eating habits by broadening patients' access to fresh produce.

The "Prescription for Produce" program is now in its second year. Community Health Center will be giving vouchers to their patients to attend the North End Farmers Market and "purchase" fresh fruits and vegetables. Patients can inquire with their provider about their eligibility, and providers will "prescribe" the vouchers to patients at their discretion. Patients bring their vouchers to the market and redeem them for market coins which they can spend on a variety of fresh, CT-grown vegetables and fruits. The program aims to distribute 200 \$5 vouchers during the months of July and August, reaching approximately 20 patients per week.

Dr. Nwando Olayiwola, chief medical officer for CHC describes why the farmers market is such an integral part of CHC's mission, "Good health starts outside of the doctor's office and in the home...healthy eating habits are a great way to promote good health for children. Building off of the value of local farmer's market, CHC has created a model by which all of its communities will benefit from easy access to a resource of fresh and healthy, locally grown foods."

The Kids Market - a program that gives approximately 80 kids per week access to free, farm-fresh produce - is available for children attending local summer programs including Salvation Army's Free Summer Lunch Program, Green Street Arts Center's Summer Arts and Science Camp, and Macdonough School's summer program. Children will visit the market on a weekly basis, as part of the program they are involved in, where they can use vouchers supplied by Community Health Center to purchase food from any of the produce vendors. As children "purchase" fresh produce at the market each week, they will learn about nutrition and healthy lifestyles as they gain skills about budgeting and business.

"We want kids to know what good food is," said Izzi Greenberg, executive director of NEAT. "We want them to be excited by it and bring that enthusiasm back home to share with their families. This is an opportunity to change the way kids eat, creating a healthier lifestyle that will stick with them for the rest of their lives."

Mark Masselli, president and CEO of Community Health Center, Inc. is thankful for the opportunity to be an integral part of the success of the North End Farm Market. "We are excited to bring back the "Prescription for Produce" program as well as the North End Kids Market to help expose local families to delicious, healthy, local food every week and encourage them to further explore their neighborhood."

The Market is a festive community event, held every Friday, July 1 – October 28, from 10:00 am – 2:00 pm. In addition to fresh CT grown produce, the market features specialty products like soaps and jams, live music, a special KidZone craft table, health and nutrition activities and sample recipes.

The North End Farmers Market was created by NEAT to increase access to fresh, affordable, local food, and Community Health Center is proud to support this initiative and make it accessible to its patient population. The market is one of the few in the state that accepts EBT Food Stamps, WIC and FMNP Nutrition Vouchers.

About Community Health Center, Inc.

Since 1972, Community Health Center, Inc. has been one of the leading healthcare providers in the state of Connecticut, building a world-class primary health care system committed to caring for special populations. CHC is focused on improving health outcomes for its more than 100,000 patients as well as building healthy communities. Currently, CHC delivers service in 173 locations statewide, offering primary care in medical, dental and behavioral health services.

About The North End Action Team

The North End Action Team (NEAT) is a community-based organization whose mission is to empower residents and stakeholders to participate in and advocate for the interests of the North End of Middletown, CT. Over the last 13 years, NEAT has worked successfully to counteract the negative factors that affect the quality of life in North End, as well as to restore the neighborhood's reputation as a vibrant, historic and valuable part of Middletown's downtown.

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