

CENTERING  
*Community Voice*  
in Food Access

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THE FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INCENTIVES PROGRAM'S  
**COMMUNITY ADVISORY NETWORK**  
**2023 ANNUAL REPORT**





Access to affordable, nutritious food is a human right, but one of 12 people in Washington face food insecurity.<sup>1</sup> Washington is becoming better prepared to offer meaningful resources to struggling households. We do this by acknowledging that issues like racism, housing inequity, and food system barriers that make affordable nutrient-dense food, like fruits and vegetables, difficult to access. These resources are especially important as inflation, steep rent hikes, and increased food and gas prices weigh heavily on people.

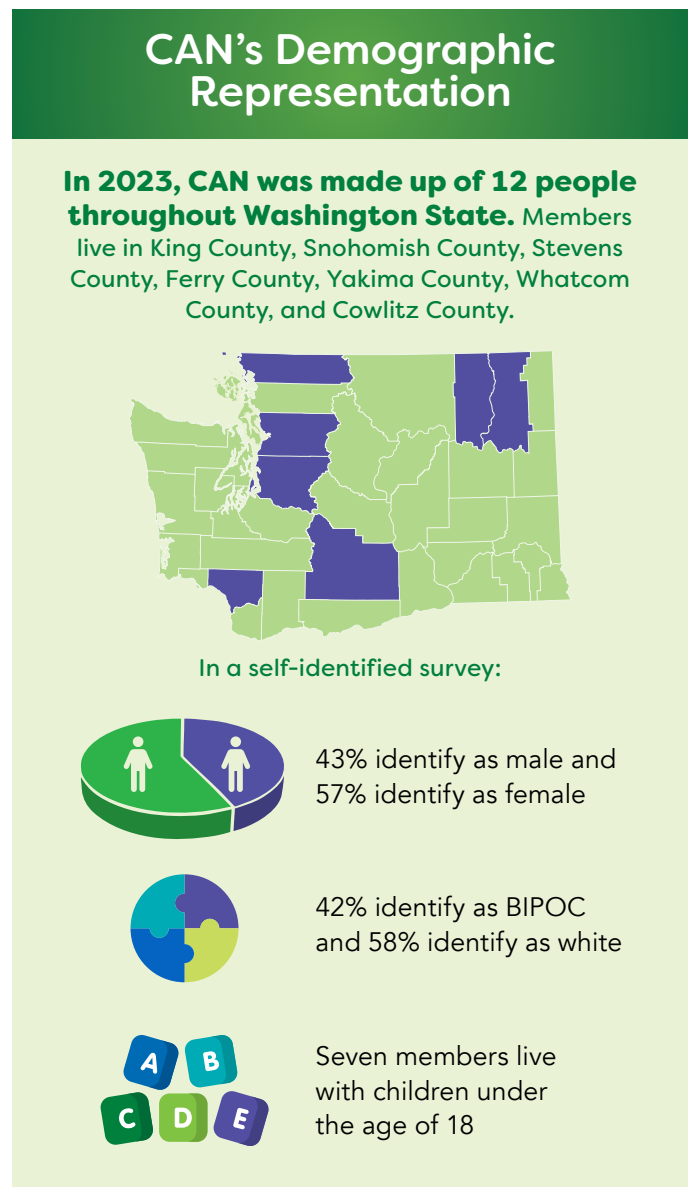
In Washington, the Department of Health's (DOH) [Fruit and Vegetable Incentives Program \(FVIP\)](#) and Department of Social and Health Services' (DSHS) [SNAP-Ed Program](#) support people who are eligible for, or use, SNAP in accessing healthy foods and being physically active.

## Community Advisory Network

CAN is made up of people who use SNAP benefits in Washington. They provide input and share first-person expertise that shape FVIP and SNAP-Ed's program development. The network began in 2021 and is coordinated by Northwest Harvest. You can read more about the network's history, founding principles, and values in the [2021 inaugural report](#) and the [2022 annual report](#). This 2023 Annual Report shares:

- Demographic representation of network members
- A summary of major activities

<sup>1</sup> U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE Economic Research Service, "[Household Food Security in the United States in 2022](#)", October 2023.





# Major Activities for 2023

## Reviewed SNAP-Ed social marketing campaign bids.

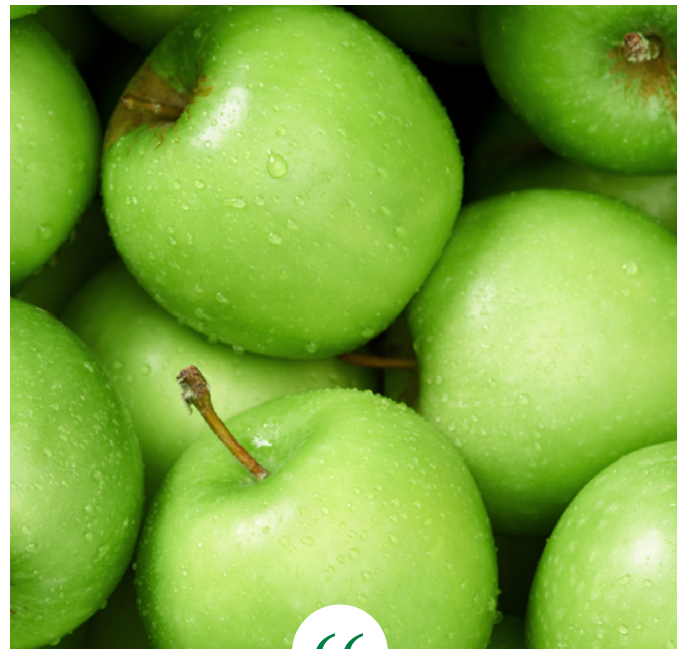
SNAP-Ed underwent a Request for Proposals (RFP) and competitive procurement process to recruit a social marketing firm in the winter of 2023. The purpose of the procurement was to develop a statewide promotional campaign for nutritious food and beverages and active living. Two members from the network sat on a panel of evaluators, where they reviewed proposals and held interviews with highest scoring bidders.

With the help of the CAN, SNAP-Ed was able to select a social marketing company, who is now undergoing formative evaluation and creative asset development for the upcoming campaign.

## Reviewed and provided feedback to the SNAP-Ed/WIC needs assessment.

Washington SNAP-Ed partnered with Washington Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) to conduct a statewide needs assessment on the nutritional and health needs of people living on limited income across the state.

After preliminary results were found, CAN reviewed findings and provided feedback, confirming results that resonated and calling out those that they found surprising. This feedback was included in the final needs assessment report. The report will be used to guide program planning, enhance equity, and develop program improvement efforts.



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**We share with each other,  
and we try to help each other,  
and we take that from our  
group and we try to use that  
to help everybody.**

— CAN Member

## Supported Department of Health's application for a Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program grant.

FVIP applied for a federal grant in spring 2023, called the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) grant. The goal of the GusNIP grant application was to increase the number of retailer locations offer SNAP Match Programs. The CAN provided suggestion on which grocery stores in their areas and across the state that would be a good fit for SNAP shoppers.

CAN members provided a letter of support to the Department of Health for the GusNIP grant. In fall 2023, DOH was awarded a \$7.7 million grant and will continue to work with CAN throughout the grant project.

## Provided feedback on outreach materials for SNAP Produce Match and SNAP Produce Rewards.

The Community Advisory Network reviewed promotional materials for SNAP Produce Match and provided input to increase the clarity of messaging. Promotional materials, like updated recipe cards, with these changes will be printed and distributed in 2024

A new pilot program launched at the Pasco Farmers Market in 2023, called [SNAP Produce Rewards](#). The program puts incentives onto SNAP participants electronic benefit transfer (EBT) card rather than relying on paper coupons like SNAP Match programs. Three CAN members provided input in the branding and name for the SNAP Produce Rewards program.

## Shared personal experiences to support anti-hunger initiatives.

All advocacy participation is funded by Northwest Harvest. No state funding is used to compensate participation in advocacy.

1

One CAN member worked with Northwest Harvest Communications staffers to write an op-ed in support of the Working Families Tax Credit (WFTC). This member shared personal experiences of how the WFTC would impact her family. The op-ed appeared during the 2023 legislative session in the Everett Herald.

2

Three CAN members were interviewed by an NPR reporter about SNAP and the Farm Bill. Members shared their personal experience and helped educate why SNAP funding is found in the federal Farm Bill.

3

CAN members offered expertise and advice on testimony at the 2023 Anti Hunger Nutrition Coalition's Hunger Action Day in Olympia. This included background on bills specific to SNAP funding, as well as tips for meeting with legislators that members have developed through membership in CAN.

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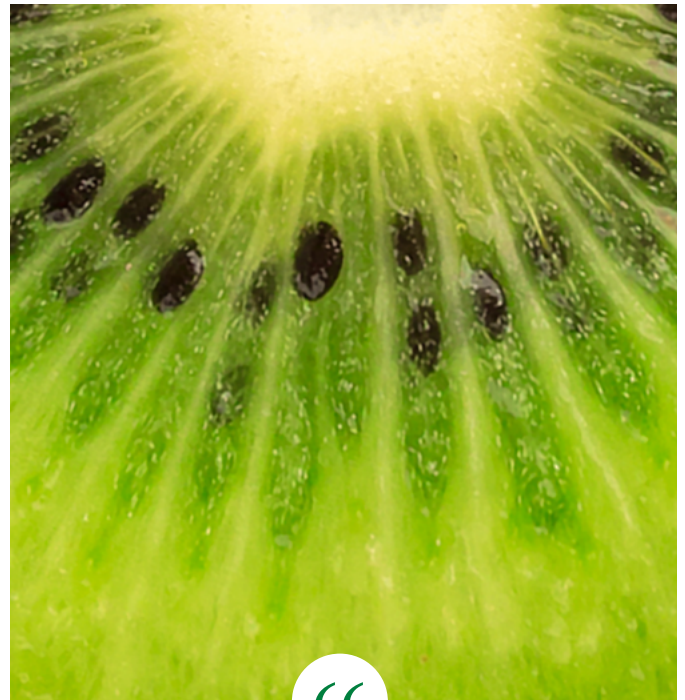
**Being able to use my experience as a SNAP beneficiary and have a voice in the process makes me feel hopeful and empowered.**

— CAN Member



## Looking Ahead

In 2024, we will be recruiting three new CAN members with the goal to increase our regional representation and ensure that this group is majority BIPOC. SNAP-Ed agencies in Spokane, the Tri Cities, Southeast Washington, Island, and Peninsula counties will be assisting in this search. CAN will continue to offer feedback and ideas to improve access and use of SNAP Match programs, especially in rural and less populated areas. We look forward to sharing what CAN contributes to our state in 2024.



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**I get to feel the camaraderie from fellow Washingtonians who may also be in similar situations as myself... and I feel connected to my community from the work I contribute to CAN.**

– CAN Member



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