

# The Boise Farmers Market

## SPROUTS KIDS CLUB

The Sprouts Kids Club a program modeled after a national program called Power of Produce. The mission of this program is to educate and encourage children to take part in their local food system and understand the benefits of eating nutritious foods. By providing the opportunity to participate in activities that will allow kids to engage with local farmers we will encourage a better understanding about farmers and where food comes from. By empowering kids to make healthy choices we hope to improve future health outcomes of childhood obesity and diabetes while encouraging a new generation of informed, healthy Market shoppers.

The Sprouts Kids Club is free to all children ages 5 - 12, with a specific emphasis on children with less access to fresh, local healthy food options. The broader goal of the Sprouts program is to encourage more participation of S.N.A.P. participants at farmers markets. By creating programs that educate the children about healthy food choices we hope to increase awareness in their parents.

There are multiple components of this program which include but are not limited to weekly produce & food scavenger hunts, special Sprouts tokens given to kids to shop only for fresh fruit or veggies each week, kids cooking classes, physical activities, seed planting, worm composting as well as other activities centered around food, nutrition and the food system.

In order to track the success of the program certain measures for some of the components would need to be implemented. The ability to track the number of participants each season, including new and returning kids as well as tracking weekly attendance, monitoring the kids purchases with their Sprouts tokens, and following upon any additional activities or parental participation is vital to the success of the program. In addition to attendance and purchase records, information from both kids and their parents regarding eating habits, shopping habits and health benefits may be collected through "dot surveys" of both parents and children. Good documentation and the ability to monitor the success of the program will help make this a model that can be replicated easily. Additionally, this documentation would serve as a basis for garnering sponsorship and community support.

## HOW SPROUTS KIDS CLUB WORKS:

- \* Free to all KIDS - Ages 5 - 12

\*“Passport To Health” - Basically these are registration cards with a calendar on the back that has room to stamp each visit. Passports must be kept at the Information Booth or Sprouts booth. Each week when kids check in they are given a sticker or a stamp to put on their passport. Special incentives may be given when a child collects a certain number of stickers -(increments of 10)

In addition to the Passport, kids receive the following:

- \* A reusable Sprouts shopping bag
- \* \$2 in special Sprouts tokens EVERY time they come to the Market. The Sprouts tokens to be spent on fresh fruits and veggies & food producing plants **ONLY**
- \* Weekly activities such as cooking classes & tastings( Salad Making, Pizza Making, & more)
- \* Seed Planting ( lettuce, beans, sunflowers, pumpkins)
- \* Weekly Scavenger Hunt for fresh. in season fruits & vegetables
- \* Seed spitting contests

Program Expenses:

- \* Special Sprouts shopping bagTokens (cost of tokens)
- \* Passport cards ( creation & printing
- \* Supplies for activities - food, seeds, etc.
- \* Marketing/advertising - brochures or ads, printing of activities)
- \* Seed money for farmer reimbursement
- \* Administrative assistance as well as on-site facilitation of activities.

The different components of this program may be implemented in steps or as a complete program, depending on the ability and finances of each market.

Example:

1. Start with signing up kids and the passport that they can get a stamp on each week. This can be as simple as signing the kids up to attend a specified number of markets over the course of the summer. Also included could be the challenge to try 1 new fruit or vegetable per week over the summer. Once they have attended 10 markets and have tried (whatever number of fruits & veggies each week) you could offer a coupon for something from the market - a free apple, etc. After the first season compile your data and use it to help garner sponsorship for the program in the 2nd season.
2. The 2nd year the tokens & the shopping bag could be implemented. The point to remember is that either the farmers have to be willing to donate the food the kids purchase with their tokens or the market has to be financially able to reimburse the amount of tokens given to each farmer. An arrangement whereby the market reimburses \$1 for every \$2 turned in.
3. The next season the activities could be implemented. There are many low cost activities that can be put in place - scavenger hunts - worksheets - celebration of Dairy Month ( maybe get stickers from the dairy association, etc.) As the program progresses the activities can become more interactive and more informative. The goal is to keep activities totally food and nutrition oriented, not arts and crafts project. Information from ISDA regarding food and nutrition (perfect plate magnates, etc.) Tasting and cooking lessons are some of the more expensive activities but there are many more creative ideas that are less expensive.
4. The major cost of the program to start with are the shopping bag and the tokens. There may be less expensive options on bags but the tokens are the best route to take for inventory and reconciliation data.