



# Our Daily Veggies

## A Fresh Bonus for Struggling Families



**Our Daily Bread** is in its seventh year of bringing fresh, locally grown produce to its clients through the **Our Daily Veggies Farmers Market Voucher Program**.

**P**roviding the opportunity for families to have access to better food while also benefiting local farmers and businesses means that everyone wins.

From May through November, the Our Daily Veggies program provides vouchers to the organization's Food Bridge Program clients so they can purchase fresh produce from participating vendors at Fairfax County area farmers markets. The vouchers supplement the food and grocery store gift cards that clients receive through ODB's Delivered Food Program.

Food Bridge Program clients are working Fairfax County area residents who receive supplemental food for several months while

they work through a financial crisis. The food assistance they receive through ODB helps free up their funds to devote to catching up on rent, utilities or other necessary expenses so they can stay in their homes and retain their financial self-sufficiency.

During the summer, Our Daily Bread's staff invites clients to attend a special workshop with a nutrition expert to receive nutrition advice and prepare some simple, healthy recipes that incorporate some of the produce they can purchase from the markets. The workshop attendees then go to the Fairfax City Community Farmers' Market near ODB's office and use their vouchers at the participating farm stands at the market.

Kuhn Orchards of Pennsylvania runs farm stands at many Farmers Markets in Northern Virginia each year, and has been a participating vendor in Our Daily Veggies since the program began in 2010. Owner Sidney Kuhn said, "The Our Daily Veggies vouchers help to provide fresh fruit and vegetables to families who may not always have the means to buy them. We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to purchase healthy produce from local farmers."

ODB Food Bridge Program client Julie wrote a note of thanks upon receiving her vouchers. "I went to the farmers market this morning and it was AWESOME! Not only was it nice to get fresh fruits and veggies for once...but the produce was 100 times better and fresher than anything in a store. Plus, I love the fact that it's supporting local growers."

Our Daily Veggies has received support for several years from Good Shepherd Catholic Church in Alexandria. The 2016 Program is also made possible by a \$4,000 grant from Junior League of Northern Virginia. The organization will also provide 30 hours of volunteer service to help ODB run the program. Beatriz Duque Long, President of Junior League of Northern Virginia, said "Our community initiatives are focused on increasing the number of children in low-income communities who are empowered to make healthy eating and active living a priority. Partnering with Our Daily Veggies Program will allow us to support access to healthy food for area families."

Young artist Benjamin Breaux, whose art work displayed at ODB's 2015 Artful Living event won the People's Choice Award, also donated \$600 to help run the 2016 program. The funds represent half of the proceeds from the sale of his art at a local craft fair. Ben is a 15-year-old Fairfax resident who has non-speaking autism. Using a therapy called Rapid Prompt Method (RPM) to communicate his thoughts, his mother Sara Breaux, conveyed this message from him: "I chose to donate to the Our Daily Veggies Program because, when possible, I think it is important to focus on eating organic food and food directly from farms."

To learn more about the Our Daily Veggies Program, visit: [www.ODB Fairfax.org](http://www.ODB Fairfax.org).



OUR DAILY BREAD CLIENTS AND STAFF TAKE A TRIP TO THE FARMERS MARKET.



VIRGINIA AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION AGENT KATIE STRONG (LEFT) TALKS WITH A CLIENT ABOUT HEALTHY EATING.



A CLIENT SHOWS HER PURCHASES FROM THE FARMERS MARKET.