PRESS RELEASE

**Date:** September 29, 2022

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**Heading:** National Produce Prescription Collaborative Holds Day of Action in Washington, DC

**Subheading:** Collaborative’s first in-person convening timed to respond to the food-as-medicine platform presented at the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition, and Health, and to establish a strategic plan for further embedding the produce prescription model into standard healthcare practice over the next two years.

September 29th, 2022 - Washington, DC - Today the community-benefit nonprofits, healthcare providers, food retailers and distributors, researchers, and funders who make up the National Produce Prescription Collaborative (NPPC) will hold a Day of Action event in Washington, DC. The event will feature a comprehensive presentation of the Produce Prescription (PRx) model, the scientific research, its role in health equity, as well as case studies about the model’s use as a treatment and prevention intervention for patients and providers across the country.

Formed in 2019 by PRx practitioners, advocacy organizations, and academic institutions for the purposes of embedding the PRx model as standard healthcare practice, the collaborative quickly established the formal definition for the model, and in 2021 published the Produce Prescription Field Scan, highlighting diverse and effective PRx programming across the country. The collaborative successfully advocated for the funding of demonstration projects at Veterans Health Administration and Indian Health Service in the FY2022 appropriations bill. September 1, 2022, The Rockefeller Foundation made a two-year commitment to financially support important elements of the NPPC’s work.

NPPC members were pleased to see the produce prescription model integrated into the White House Conference agenda, and particularly the announcements around advancing PRx in Medicare, Medicaid, Indian Health Service and Veterans Health Administration. The attention of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health and the inclusion of PRx in government-sponsored health plans in a multitude of position statements and comments by an independent task force, NPR, Senator Cory Booker (NJ), and many more stakeholders, make this a pivotal moment in advancing the utilization of PRx for treatment and prevention of diet related disease and food insecurity.

Michel Nischan, Wholesome Wave Co-Founder and Chairman said: “Nutrition incentives have demonstrated the power of healthy food in improving the lives of vulnerable community members while increasing income for farmers and grocers. We should be embedding
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preventative and disease management programs like Produce Prescriptions in government sponsored health plans and beyond. Doing so will ensure that every American, regardless of race, age, ethnicity, or income can feed themselves and their families well – and avoid the devastation and expense of diet-related diseases that cost over $1.4T annually. $1.4T would pay for a lot of healthy food!

“We are seeing growing evidence that PRx can be a bridge between good food and health for Americans, and we are thrilled to see the momentum for advancing these and other Food is Medicine programs coming out of the White House Conference on Hunger, Nutrition and Health and today’s day of action,” said Devon Klatell, The Rockefeller Foundation’s Vice President, Food Initiative, USA. “The Rockefeller Foundation is proud to support and collaborate with the National Produce Prescription Collaborative on the equitable expansion of these programs to help prevent diet-related diseases and reduce their burden on our current healthcare system.”

“This is a rare moment for dynamic growth of high-impact healthy food programs” said Neal Curran, Director of Food Programs, Reinvestment Partners

"Not only do produce prescription programs make it easier for families to put healthy food on the table, but they also bring important revenue to farmers and small businesses, stimulating local economies. Today is a momentous occasion, and The Food Trust is proud to serve on the NPPC Steering Committee,” says Mark Edwards, President & CEO of The Food Trust (a national nonprofit whose mission is to ensure delicious, nutritious food for all).

Adam Shyevitch, Chief Program Officer at About Fresh, says: “The White House commitment to expand food prescription infrastructure is a powerful source of momentum for the NPPC agenda and will increase health equity for people struggling with food insecurity. About Fresh has been building food prescription technology in anticipation of this moment and we are committed to ongoing collaboration with the NPPC and policymakers to uplift data, insights, and a demonstration of scalable impact that accelerates healthcare adoption of food care."

“The inclusion of produce prescription policy in the White House Conference strategy is a monumental step forward in the federal government connecting dietary quality to healthcare costs and outcomes in a meaningful way, says Mollie Van Lieu, VP of Nutrition and Health at the International Fresh Produce Association. “We cannot achieve the Conference’s goals of reducing diet-related disease by 2030 without a true shift in how we treat and prevent these diseases. Embedding produce prescriptions in the healthcare system is simply our best at advancing equitable and scalable access to fruits and vegetables.”

“Produce Prescriptions should be an essential part of health care to ensure that everyone has access to the healthy foods they need to prevent, manage, and treat diet-related chronic conditions. We’ve been saying this for a while, but the nation is listening now,” said Kristin Sukys, Health Policy Specialist, DC Greens. “As a member of NPPC, DC Greens is eager to monitor the implementation of the White House’ recommendations and step up our advocacy to fully integrate these critical programs into health care delivery and financing models across the country. This is a health issue. This is an equity issue.”
“As a produce management and procurement company, Produce Alliance (PA) is a proud member and champion of the NPPC and its policy and advocacy making produce prescription accessible and ending the leading cause of death for Americans, diet related disease.” Melissa Ackerman, President of Produce Alliance, continued, “I am passionate about using our supply chain expertise in produce to build and scale PRx programs nationally to foster healthier citizens and resilient communities and also bring food service grade produce to programs and communities who in recent decades have increasingly marginalized access and exposure to diverse, quality produce.”

“Food as Medicine is a key pillar of our newest initiative, Instacart Health, which is designed to deliver the ingredients for healthy living,” said Sarah Mastrorocco, Vice President and General Manager of Instacart Health. “We’re proud to be building products that will help nonprofits and others in the health space give more people access to fresh, nutritious foods with dignity, speed, and convenience. We’re grateful to be working alongside experts from the National Produce Prescription Collaborative in this space who share our commitment to helping ensure everyone has access to the nutritious food they need to live healthier lives.”

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Press are invited to attend today’s NPPC Day of Action, use the contact information above for details.