

The Carle Mobile Market is more than a food delivery system: It's a key part of Carle Health's strategy to improve well-being in Champaign County.

"Food insecurity can severely affect a person's health – physical, mental and emotional," said Julianna Sellett, vice president of Carle Community Health Initiatives. "When a person's basic needs are met, they can focus on other important aspects of their life, such as education and health."

Through a collaborative partnership with Champaign-Urbana (CU) City Farms, the Mobile Market van travels to pre-determined locations at least twice a week, selling fruits and vegetables at reduced prices. The van also travels alongside Carle's Mobile Health Clinic, which provides medical care, screening, education and more to residents of underserved neighborhoods.

Carle Health provides the Mobile Market's van driver and handles maintenance, insurance, marketing and fuel costs. CU City Farms works with community partners to stock and staff the van.

Rebecca McBride, the founder and CEO of CU City Farms, said the Mobile Market is a catalyst for workforce development, employment and education while increasing access to fresh, local and nutritious food in underserved communities. According to a 2020 study from Feeding America, 15.7% of Champaign County residents have experienced food insecurity since the pandemic began.

In the Mobile Market's first year of operation, the van delivered more than 6,878 pounds of food to local families.

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