



## PRESS RELEASE (NATIONAL)

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### **Michigan Good Food Fund Launches to Grow Michigan's Good Food Future**

*First of its kind approach working to increase access to  
healthy food and drive economic development*

**June 9, 2015 | Lansing, Mich.** – The Michigan Good Food Fund—a new public-private partnership loan and grant fund created to address lack of healthy food access in rural and urban communities alike by supporting good food entrepreneurs across the state—launches today.

The Michigan Good Food Fund addresses the significant need for healthy food access in rural and urban communities alike. While Michigan is the second most agriculturally diverse state in the nation with food and agriculture contributing \$101.2 billion annually to the state's economy, more than 1.8 million Michigan residents—including 300,000 children—live in lower-income communities with limited healthy food access. The lack of access to affordable and nutritious food has serious implications for the health of our children and families—more than 30 percent of Michiganders are obese, the second highest rate of obesity in the Midwest region. Communities of color are disproportionately impacted.

“There are far too many families who have to travel many miles just to get to a grocery store,” said U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow, ranking member of the Senate Committee on Agriculture. “The Michigan Good Food Fund is changing that equation in Michigan.”

Created by a coalition of food sector, nonprofit, higher education, government and philanthropic partners, the fund provides financial capital and business assistance to businesses that grow, distribute and sell fresh and healthy food that reaches low-income populations. This effort will increase access to healthy food, improve the health of all Michigan residents and drive economic development and job creation.

Core partners include the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, fund manager Capital Impact Partners, and Fair Food Network and Michigan State University Center for Regional Food Systems who will co-lead business assistance and pipeline development.

“An investment in good food is an investment in Michigan’s future,” said Governor Rick Snyder. “The fund is leveraging our state’s robust food economy to transform the health of our residents and spark economic opportunity.”

The fund is modeled after the pioneering Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative, the California FreshWorks Fund and other similar successful statewide efforts. However, unlike other healthy food financing initiatives, which primarily focus on retail efforts, the Michigan fund will work to create financial and social impact throughout the food supply chain.

The Michigan Good Food Fund supports efforts across the value chain including healthy food production, distribution, processing, marketing and retail projects. It will offer financing through flexible, competitive loans as well as grants investments with a mission-driven approach targeting those enterprises often overlooked by traditional sources of financing. Lending will be bolstered by business assistance to help entrepreneurs grow their ventures and build a pipeline of investment-ready projects.

At launch, fund investors include the W.K. Kellogg Foundation, one of the largest philanthropic foundations in the United States committed to partnering with communities where children come first, and the Max and Marjorie Fisher Foundation. The goal is to grow the fund to \$30 million.

The fund is committed to supporting projects that benefit traditionally underserved communities through increased access to nutritious food as well as capital and job opportunities. It also encourages the sourcing of locally grown food and sustainable environmental practices. It presents an opportunity not only for entrepreneurs, but also for foundations and other investors looking to amplify their work for greater impact in service to low-income children and families.

“One in five Michigan residents live in lower-income communities with limited access to the nutritious fruits and vegetables they need to thrive,” said La June Montgomery Tabron, W.K. Kellogg Foundation president and CEO. “The Michigan Good Food Fund is fueling our state’s good food economy and increasing access to healthy food with direct benefits for our most vulnerable children and families.”

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**About the Michigan Good Food Fund:** The Michigan Good Food Fund is a new public-private partnership loan and grant that provides financing and business assistance to healthy food production, distribution, processing, marketing, and retail projects that benefit underserved communities across Michigan. Learn more at [www.MIGoodFoodFund.org](http://www.MIGoodFoodFund.org), or email [info@MiGoodFoodFund.org](mailto:info@MiGoodFoodFund.org), and join us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#) ([@MIGoodFoodFund](https://twitter.com/MIGoodFoodFund)) using the hashtag #MGFF.

*In June, fund partners will host a series of community engagement events in Lansing, Grand Rapids, Detroit and Traverse City to introduce the fund and build awareness among fund recipients and local partner organizations.*