



Module 11: Food

Part 5: Healthy Corner Store Network

So just by virtue of being here, The Fresh Grocer is providing, you can see it all around you, healthy and affordable food to pretty much the surrounding neighborhood. I think folks who live probably from one-half mile to a mile of this store all have much better access to healthy food than they did before this store was built about five years ago. So I think for something like this to come together you really need three things really to line up nicely; advocacy, resources and expertise.

We got started back in 1999 trying to raise awareness around the city of Philadelphia about the need for more affordable and healthy food in neighborhoods like North Philadelphia. When resources came into play in response to that advocacy in 2004, the state of Pennsylvania created The Fresh Food Financing Initiative. That set aside \$30 million for the development of new and expanded supermarkets in places like we're standing today.

Expertise came into play when that money was given to a community development bank called The Reinvestment Fund to provide flexible financing that it would take to get this store built, and that was combined with the business expertise of The Fresh Grocer to figure out how to run sustainable grocery stores here in North Philadelphia.

So once again it's these three things coming together; advocacy, resources and expertise, to really make something like this happen. I think if you bring those three things together, I think you could make this happen in a lot of places across the country.