FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Contact: Heather Burnette, PIO
(419) 309-0153

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Healthy Food, Small Market Program Kickoff

The Toledo-Lucas County Health Department, in partnership with the City of Toledo, is celebrating the official kickoff of the Healthy Food, Small Market Program, a local initiative that increases access to healthy foods and beverages in neighborhood markets across Toledo.

WHO: Toledo-Lucas County Health Department
Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz, City of Toledo
Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur
Participating Store Representatives

WHAT: Kickoff of the Healthy Food, Small Market Program

WHEN: Friday, October 24, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.

WHERE: Main Library - Toledo Lucas County Public Library, Meeting Room 2
325 N Michigan St, Toledo, OH 43604

"This program is a key part of our ongoing efforts to support the health and wellness of families across Lucas County," said Health Commissioner Karim Baroudi. "When people can access fresh, nutritious food close to home, it creates healthier communities and stronger neighborhoods."

Now moving into full operation, the program allows the health department to partner with small, locally owned markets to increase the availability and promotion of healthy foods such as fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains. Participating stores have received equipment, marketing support, and technical assistance to make it easier for residents to find and choose nutritious options close to home.

Access to affordable, healthy food is essential to community well-being. Many Toledo residents live in areas where healthy options are limited or difficult to reach.

"The Healthy Small Market Pilot is about meeting families where they are and strengthening the local businesses that serve them," said Toledo Mayor Wade Kapszukiewicz. "By investing in neighborhood markets and supporting them with nutrition programming, this pilot is taking a meaningful step toward addressing food insecurity and community development in a holistic way. This is Forward Toledo in action, building a city where every resident can access the healthy, affordable food they deserve. We look

forward to continuing to support the Health Department in these efforts and to seeing this pilot succeed and expand in the future."

"Whenever we can connect our people with healthy foods from small family-owned markets it is a real win-win," added Congresswoman Marcy Kaptur (OH-09). "I grew up helping my dad at his own small local family-owned grocery store and know the pride he took in serving our community. By connecting consumers with locally grown fruits, vegetables, and grain, we make our community healthier and ensure our farmers, producers, and growers, who make and grow what makes and grows America, have another market for their local products."

This effort is a collaboration with the City of Toledo and is supported by City of Toledo ARPA funds, as well as the Ohio Department of Health's Creating Healthy Communities program.

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