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# PRESS RELEASE

**For Immediate Release**  
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## **City Harvest Brings Produce to Bronx Residents With The Help of NYCHA**

The scene outside of Melrose Houses in the South Bronx today mirrored that of many New York City fresh produce markets. People wandered from table to table selecting fresh fruits and vegetables, and had them weighed and packaged to take home to their families. But this market had one noticeable difference: the food was free.

The new initiative, called *Mobile Market*, was launched today at the Classic Community Center at Melrose Houses in the South Bronx by City Harvest, in partnership with the New York City Housing Authority (NYCHA), the largest housing authority in North America, in an effort to fight hunger in New York City's most underserved communities. Residents from three NYCHA developments, Melrose, Jackson and Morrisania Air Rights, are served at the Classic Center.

"*Mobile Market* is City Harvest's comprehensive approach to our city's hunger crisis," said Susan Ruth Marks, City Harvest Chair. "One in five New Yorkers now relies on emergency food programs, and we hope this new program will directly combat that problem."

Residents of Melrose Houses pre-registered with City Harvest in order to shop at the market, which will continue to run there on the second Saturday and fourth Wednesday of every month. Upon entering the market, participants picked out vegetables and calculated the portions according to their family size at one of five weigh stations. Food that was not used was donated to two nearby community food programs.

NYCHA Chairman Tino Hernandez emphasized that "this special partnership with City Harvest gives NYCHA residents not only an opportunity to pick up fresh produce right outside their door at no cost, but to get information about services that will help them lead healthier lives." Hernandez added that "it is not always easy for many people in low-income communities to get access, or to afford healthy food like the produce offered at today's market."

Eric Ripert, Executive Chef and Owner of Le Bernardin, and Keltus Campo, City Harvest Agency Relations Coordinator and Chef, were on hand at the event to serve a special recipe created for residents at Melrose Houses, using ingredients available at the market. Ripert also oversaw preparations and personally served the residents.

“As a New Yorker, it’s important to me to contribute to the health of my community,” said Ripert. “As a chef, showing others how to make healthy, delicious food for their families at a reasonable cost completes that circle.”

In addition to food, *Mobile Market* will provide nutrition education classes in both English and Spanish throughout the course of its first year of operation to residents who participate in the program. This includes on-site cooking demonstrations, as well as educational materials on nutrition content and safe food handling. Simple, healthy recipes in English, Spanish and French are also available. NYCHA and City Harvest also set up tables with information on issues from combating high blood pressure to healthy eating habits, as well as the latest information on food stamps, school meals, the Earned Income Tax Credit and resident employment services for residents to visit as they picked up their food.

*Mobile Market* is slated to begin operations at additional NYCHA developments in the city in 2005. When fully operational, the goal is to meet 50 percent of the minimum amount needed of fresh fruits and vegetables for good health and development of the residents who are registered for the program.

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