



Farmers Markets

Increase Access to Fresh, Nutritious Food

The number of farmers markets and farmers accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits has increased 40% on average every year since 2009.¹⁶ With affordable prices and special programs for low-income people, markets are expanding access to fresh, nutritious food.

- In 2014, over 5,000 markets and farmers accepted SNAP benefits.¹⁷ Some states that help farmers markets accept SNAP saw a ten-fold increase in the number of markets accepting SNAP between 2009 and 2014.¹⁸
- The amount of SNAP benefits redeemed at farmers markets increased nearly 450% from 2009 (\$4.2 million) to 2014 (\$18.8 million).¹⁷
- In 2014, 42 farmers markets in Washington, D.C. accepted EBT and credit/debit cards, up from 7 in 2010.¹⁸
- Of 216 shoppers surveyed at the Janesville, Wisconsin Farmers Market in 2012, 98% said that they would eat more fruits and vegetables as a result of their SNAP benefits and 30% said that they had not shopped at the market before SNAP benefits were accepted.¹⁹
- In 2012, New York City's farmers markets distributed over \$280,000 in Health Bucks, a health incentive coupon, to SNAP participants. Nearly three-quarters of Health Bucks users reported that the coupons made them more likely to buy fresh produce.²⁰
- From 2008-2013, the number of vulnerable seniors visiting Crescent City Farmers Market increased by 501%.²¹
- More than 1.5 million WIC participants and 835,795 low-income seniors bought fresh produce directly from farmers in 2013 through the WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs.²²
- A 2011 study of southeast and Appalachia markets found that in 74% of communities, conventional farmers market produce was less expensive than supermarket produce, on average by 22%.²³
- In one study, average produce prices were 17.9% lower at farmers' markets than at supermarkets in 12 North Carolina counties.²⁴
- A Vermont study found that prices for many conventional products and all organic products, with the exception of potatoes, were lower at farmers markets than at nearby supermarkets.²⁵

"[Increasing SNAP purchases] is a win-win-win situation. It helps farmers by increasing their sales, it helps the customer by gaining access to more fruits and vegetables, and it helps the market itself grow its customer base."

Amanda Shreve, Manager of Programs and Partnerships, Michigan Farmers Market Association

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