

*Town of Weymouth
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Press Release

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Weymouth Farmer's Market rated "Best in Class" in nationwide contest

The farmer's market took 1st in Massachusetts and top 25 nationwide for markets committed to bringing fresh local food to people who need it most.

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Weymouth, MA – September 21st marked the end of American Farmland Trust's summer-long *Farmers Market Celebration* – an annual online contest that asks shoppers nationwide to identify the best of America's farmers markets. Weymouth's farmers market took 1st place in Massachusetts and top 25 nationwide for markets committed to bringing fresh local food to people who need it most ("Healthy Food for All").

"The farmer's market continues to play an important role in building a healthier, more sustainable Weymouth," **said Mayor Robert Hedlund.** "Emphasizing fruits and vegetables is key to any balanced diet, but our market goes the extra mile by providing families with the resources they need to bring fresh, local, and healthy food home."

For the past two years, the Weymouth Farmer's Market has teamed up with the Weymouth Food Pantry to make fresh produce and other local food more accessible to families in need. Through the market's Farm to Family program, families receiving federal food assistance can redeem their public benefits and receive a "market match" up to an additional \$20 a day. This means families can purchase *twice* the amount of food than they otherwise could by shopping at the market. In addition, match dollars are offered to food pantry clients regardless of their qualifications for food stamps. Funding for this program was provided in 2016 by the Dunkin' Donuts & Baskin-Robbins Community Foundation.

“51 percent of people who need food assistance in Weymouth are working families who earn just a little too much to receive food stamps,” **explained Food Pantry Director Cas Casados**. “But these families have just as much need for assistance as those that qualify for help. The Farm to Family program has been a big step forward in helping all families meet their nutritional needs.”

Since June 1st, the Weymouth Farmer’s Market has helped low-income families purchase over \$4,600 in fresh local food through its Farm to Family program. 43 percent of this food was purchased with match dollars. This is nearly double the value of food purchased in the first year of the program (2015).

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