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**Farmers Market Coalition Offers Free EBT Equipment for Farmers Markets
and Direct Marketing Farmers**

Program works to increase food access for families and income for local farmers

June 19, 2017 - The [Farmers Market Coalition](#) (FMC), a national nonprofit dedicated to strengthening farmers markets, announces funding available for free electronic benefit transfer (EBT) processing equipment offered through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's [Free SNAP EBT Equipment Program](#). The program, administered by FMC and funded by USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), has provided equipment necessary to accept [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) benefits (SNAP, formerly Food Stamps) to more than 1,000 farmers markets and direct marketing farmers across the country. Additional funding has been made available, and new applications are being accepted. Interested farmers markets and farmers can [apply online](#) now through November of 2017; however, funding is limited, and available on a first-come, first-serve come basis.

“When farmers markets accept SNAP, it increases revenue for small and beginning farmers, while making it possible for low-income families to access healthy, affordable food,” said Jen Cheek, Executive Director of FMC. “It’s the ultimate win-win. We’re thrilled that USDA and FMC can keep the momentum going.”

For approved applicants, the program will cover the costs of purchasing SNAP EBT equipment and services (set-up costs, monthly service fees, and wireless fees) for up to three years. Approved applicants can choose their own SNAP EBT service provider from a list of [participating companies](#): Marketlink, MerchantSource, PaymentSpring, and TSYS. Marketlink, MerchantSource and TSYS offer equipment able to accept EBT as well as debit and credit transactions, with all transaction fees being the responsibility of the participant. PaymentSpring will offer a completely fee-free EBT-only equipment option, with all EBT transaction costs included.

For information on eligibility requirements, [visit FMC's program page](#). To apply to the Free SNAP EBT Equipment Program, navigate to the application toolbox at [FMCToolbox.org](#). To apply for a SNAP permit or learn about how the USDA is supporting farmers markets and SNAP shoppers, [visit the USDA SNAP and Farmers Markets website](#).

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The Farmers Market Coalition (FMC) is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to strengthening farmers markets for the benefit of farmers, consumers, and communities. For more information about the Farmers Market Coalition, visit www.farmersmarketcoalition.org