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**The 2017 Application Website for the SNAP EBT Equipment Program for Farmers Markets and Direct Marketing Farmers will Close on November 21<sup>st</sup>**

November 15, 2017—Funding for free electronic benefit transfer (EBT) processing equipment for eligible farmers markets and farmers is available through the [Free SNAP EBT Equipment Program](#), administered by the [United States Department of Agriculture \(USDA\) Food and Nutrition Service \(FNS\)](#) in partnership with the [Farmers Market Coalition](#) (FMC). The Program has provided equipment necessary to accept [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program](#) (SNAP) benefits, to more than 1,600 farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers across the country. The 2017 application site will close on November 21, and USDA FNS anticipates reopening the program in 2018 at a date to be determined. Interested farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers may [apply online](#) before the 2017 funding period closes on midnight on November 21, 2017.

“The opportunity to purchase fresh, local foods should be available to Americans of all income levels. Farmers markets nationwide are connecting local agricultural enterprises directly with customers, allowing farmers to grow their businesses while supporting healthy families,” said FMC’s executive director, Jen Cheek.

Across the country, more and more farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers are making it possible for SNAP participants to purchase fresh, local food for their families. [According to the USDA](#) SNAP redemptions at farmers markets are on the rise; SNAP-participating families purchased more than \$20 million worth of food from farmers markets in 2016, in comparison to just \$2 million in 2008.

“This increase in SNAP purchases at authorized farmers markets is reflective of the rising demand for healthy, local food in communities across the country, and also of the success of programs that offer SNAP outreach and incentives,” said Cheek. “When farmers markets accept SNAP, it makes it possible for low-income families to access healthy, affordable food, while increases revenues for small and beginning farmers. It’s the ultimate win-win. We’re thrilled that the SNAP EBT Equipment Program can fuel the momentum.”

Farmers markets and direct-marketing farmers interested in obtaining equipment through this Program once it reopens in 2018 should email [FarmersMarket@fns.usda.gov](mailto:FarmersMarket@fns.usda.gov) to be placed onto a wait list.

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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](http://www.farmersmarketcoalition.org)