

Farmers Market Workgroup Call Notes

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February 13, 2018

Agenda:

- Welcome
- Program Updates
- What should markets and partners do to get ready for the beginning of market season in relation to SNAP?
- Q&A

Updates:

- A new rule for retailer eligibility requirements went into effect on January 17, 2018. Markets and farmers may be asked to submit more information in order for their application to be processed, for both new applicants and those going through reauthorization.
 - Eligibility information can be found here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/my-store-eligible>
 - If a market or farmer has questions, they can contact the SNAP Retailer Service Center at 1-877-823-4369.
- A Request for Proposals (RFP) for the EBT Equipment Program closed in early February. It's in the review process. When we have more information, we will share what we can.
 - If you would like to be put on the waitlist, email FarmersMarket@fns.usda.gov.
- Farmers Market SNAP Support Grant (FMSSG) project
 - The 2 year projects have been completed and we are doing a mini evaluation of those programs.
 - The 3 year projects will be completed this year.
 - We have not yet been able to determine if this grant will continue. We will keep you posted.
- FNS will be hosting at least three more webinars this year. The first one will be in March, so please keep an eye out for more information to come.

How to get ready for market season?

- Consider performing a review of the community you are in – who makes up your community? What resources do they need?
- Are your vendors trained on how SNAP operates at your market?
- Do you have someone who is fluent in the languages that are spoken at the market? Are your materials translated?
- Do you have signage that says EBT is accepted at your market? If you are an authorized SNAP market or direct marketing farmer, you may order the SNAP poster by calling the Retailer Service Center at 1-877-823-4369. Please have your FNS number on hand prior to calling.
- What kind of partners would be helpful throughout the market season? Do your local social service offices know that SNAP can be accepted at your market? Are there schools you can partner with? Have you reached out to SNAP-Ed for nutrition education?

Q&A

- Incentives- the blanket waiver for farmers markets is still in effect. Instituting a bonus incentive project is one approach farmers markets are using to attract SNAP customers. These projects provide matching “bonus dollars,” in the form of tokens or paper coupons, for purchases made with SNAP benefits.
- Sign-Up Days- If you are interested in hosting a sign up day and would like FNS support on the day of, email Jacki and/or Patrick. They will get you in touch with the team that supports those sign up days as staffing schedules permit.
- Token Expiration- SNAP-authorized markets and farmers cannot put expiration dates on their tokens, because SNAP customers must be able to redeem tokens purchased with SNAP benefits at any time that the market is open for business. The market may reallocate unredeemed token funds for administrative expenses at the market, with the understanding that they must still honor that token if it is redeemed in the future.

Other Resources Shared on the Call

- Farmers Market Legal Toolkit: <https://farmersmarketlegaltoolkit.org/>
- National Farmers Market Week resources, start planning now: <https://farmersmarketcoalition.org/national-farmers-market-week/>