

# **NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services**

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Aug. 12, 2013**

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### **New Bismarck Farmers Market Accepting SNAP Benefits**

*Five farmers markets in seven North Dakota cities accept SNAP benefits*

BISMARCK, N.D. – BisMarket Farmers Market in Bismarck is the latest farmers market in North Dakota to accept electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which helps low-income families buy food.

The Bismarck market joins these other participating markets who accept SNAP benefits: Skyline Ranch Produce with farmers markets in Bismarck, Hazen, Beulah, and Washburn; William Erbes Farm in Fargo; Hildebrant's Farmers Market in West Fargo; and North Prairie Farmers Market in Minot. Visit [www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/foodstamps.html](http://www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/foodstamps.html) for market hours and locations.

“Fresh produce from local farmers markets is the cornerstone of healthy family meals during the peak growing season,” said Arlene Dura, SNAP program director for the N.D. Department of Human Services. “The additional market will allow more people access to fresh home-grown fruits and vegetables.”

In 2010, the N.D. Department of Human Services launched an outreach effort to encourage individual and cooperative farmers market vendors to become authorized and licensed by the USDA Food and Nutrition Services to accept SNAP EBT benefits.

Dura said the department has funds available to reimburse 10 new vendors for costs up to \$1,300 for the purchase of wireless point-of-sale machines that scan the EBT cards. Other grant funding opportunities are available through USDA to help more farmers markets cover startup costs.

The SNAP EBT Farmers Market program is open to any food producer in North Dakota. Interested vendors need to apply to USDA and follow federal SNAP rules and policies.

Each month, SNAP helps about 56,600 qualifying low-income North Dakotans by providing about \$7 million in benefits that help individuals and families purchase food at over 450 participating grocers or farmers markets. Almost half of the program participants are children; many others are elderly or have disabilities.

For more information on the N.D. Department of Human Services' SNAP EBT Farmers Market program, or to become a licensed vendor, contact the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program at 701-328-2328, toll free 800-755-2716 or ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888.

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