

**NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services
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SNAP for healthy eating, select ND farmers markets accept SNAP benefits

BISMARCK, N.D. – Matching incentive programs and a mobile farmers market are ways some North Dakota farmers markets are helping Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) households double their spending power and enjoy increased access to fresh home-grown fruits and vegetables.

There are nine farmers markets in 10 North Dakota communities that accept electronic benefits transfer (EBT) cards through the program, which helps qualifying low-income households buy food.

The markets include BisMarket Farmers Market in **Bismarck**; Aspen Hills Produce in **Bottineau**; Bill Erbe's Farmers Market and Red River Market in **Fargo**; Grafton Farmers Market, **Grafton**; Town Square Market in **Grand Forks**; Twin Town Gardeners Market in **Wahpeton**; Hildebrant's Farmers Market in **West Fargo**; and Skyline Ranch Produce with farmers markets in **Beulah, Bismarck, Hazen, and Washburn**. For locations and hours of operation, visit www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/foodstamps.html.

"Fresh produce from local farmers markets is the cornerstone of healthy family meals during the peak growing season," said Arlene Dura, assistant director of the North Dakota Department of Human Services' Economic Assistance Division. "We are so grateful for all of the participating farmers markets who are encouraging healthy eating and finding creative ways to make locally-grown produce more accessible to SNAP households."

The BisMarket and the Red River Market offer an incentive program where SNAP households can receive a dollar-for-dollar match up to a certain amount on their fresh produce and other healthy food purchases. The Town Square Market in Grand Forks has refurbished a trolley into a mobile farmers market.

Dura said the SNAP EBT Farmers Market program is open to any food producer in North Dakota. Interested farmers markets need to apply to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and follow federal SNAP rules and policies.

The Department of Human Services has funds available to reimburse markets for costs up to \$1,200 for the purchase of point-of-sale machines including wireless devices that scan EBT cards. Other funding opportunities are available through the USDA to help more farmers markets cover startup costs.

The federally-funded program provides about 25,000 North Dakota low-income households with benefits to purchase food at approved grocers, select farmers markets and other vendors. The program tends to serve mainly low-income children, working families, people with disabilities and seniors on fixed incomes.

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For more information on the SNAP EBT Farmers Market program or to become an authorized market, contact the department at 701-328-2328, toll-free 800-755-2716, ND Relay TTY 800-366-6888, or dhsea@nd.gov. An online application is also available at <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-apply>.

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