

NEWS RELEASE | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | Sept. 4, 2019

Lena's Farmers Market in Rolla now accepting Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits

11 farmers markets in North Dakota accept SNAP benefits

BISMARCK, N.D. – Lena's Farmers Market in Rolla is the latest North Dakota farmers market to accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits via electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards. SNAP helps qualifying low-income households buy food.

The market offers a variety of homegrown fruit, vegetables and other food items that can be purchased using SNAP benefits. Lena's Farmers Market has a dollar-for-dollar incentive program up to \$10 that can be used for fruit, vegetables, seeds or fruit producing plants, and is open on Wednesdays and Saturdays from 8:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. in Rolla's Centennial Park on Main Street.

"We are grateful that more farmers markets in both large and small communities are accepting SNAP benefits," said Michele Gee, Economic Assistance Policy Division director for the North Dakota Department of Human Services. "This means more low-income households, many with children and seniors on fixed incomes, have access to fresh and healthy fruit and vegetables."

There are 11 farmers markets in North Dakota who accept SNAP benefits. These include the BisMarket Farmers Market in **Bismarck**; Aspen Hills Produce in **Bottineau**; Reemtsma Produce and Handcrafts in **Cando**; Bill Erbes Farmers Market and Red River Market in **Fargo**; Grafton Farmers Market, **Grafton**; Town Square Market in **Grand Forks**; Lena's Farmers Market in **Rolla**; 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.

Gee said other farmers markets also offer incentives and use other creative ways to encourage SNAP households to purchase fresh produce and help make their monthly benefits go further.

The BisMarket Farmers Market 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.

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 North Dakota 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.

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Select farmers markets accept SNAP benefits

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In July 2019, the federally-funded Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program provided about 23,000 qualifying low-income North Dakota households with benefits to purchase food at approved grocers, participating farmers markets and other vendors. The program tends to serve mainly low-income children, often in single-parent families, people with disabilities and seniors on fixed incomes.

Individuals interested in learning more about incentive programs offered at select farmers markets or the mobile farmers market in Grand Forks, can visit www.nd.gov/dhs/services/financialhelp/foodstamps.html.

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, 711 (TTY) , or dhsea@nd.gov. An online application is also available at www.fns.usda.gov/snap/retailer-apply.

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