

... At Farmers Markets

Ten Tips for Making Your Farmers Market SNAP Shopper Friendly

Taking the time to think about how to make your farmer's market more accessible to shoppers using SNAP can help to make your EBT program popular with both vendors and shoppers.

1. **Have clear signage**

Make sure that it is easy to know that your market accepts SNAP! Have a banner visible to potential customers passing by your market and signs on each vendor's booth (especially if individual vendors can opt not to accept SNAP). A photo of your state's EBT card on signage is helpful for shoppers who may not know the name of SNAP.

2. **Make your EBT machine visible**

Have the EBT machine in a clearly marked central location. Having a visual landmark such as a brightly colored umbrella or shirt for the person running the machine allows you to tell people where to go when advertising your program.

3. **Consistency is key**

Make sure vendors are there on time and stay for your listed hours so customers are sure the food they want will be there.

4. **Educate your vendors**

To start your program, vendors need to know the benefits of accepting SNAP. Markets with full vendor participation are easiest for shoppers. Vendors also need to be able to help their customers navigate the program, so give them quick talking points about how to shop with SNAP.

5. **SNAP shoppers need to plan ahead**

Inform customers ahead of time what will be available at the market so they can plan their meals and make their budget last all month. Let customers know what is available through an electronic newsletter, social media message or even a sign in front of the market.

6. **Variety is important**

Having every food group available at your market helps customers as they know they can purchase ingredients for a full meal if this is the only place they have time to shop.

7. **Set up an incentive program**

Double match or incentive programs that subsidize the cost of food for SNAP shoppers are a win-win for SNAP shoppers and your vendors. Common sponsors include: community organizations, religious groups, non-profit health organizations (such as a hospital), or local banks or credit unions.

8. **Partner up to get the word out**

Partner with organizations to advertise your market and your program. Your local Department of Social Services, Department of Health, Area Agency on Aging, and economic development corporations may be willing to distribute flyers or brochures for you. Ask customers to spread the word.

9. **Take a seat!**

Create a space for customers to feel comfortable and socialize. Have tables for customers to sit down and enjoy the market. This also creates a space for local organizations to bring groups such as mothers groups or seniors clubs.

10. **Put out your welcome mat**

Have market tours and/or a market greeter at the beginning of the month to introduce new customers to your market and explain the EBT system. Partnering with SNAP-Ed and Extension for cooking demos, education or tours is a great way to make your market a fun and inviting place to shop.