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Farmers' Market EBT News for California Market Managers, Farmers, and Friends **Fall 2013 Edition**

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November, 2013

Greetings!

The Autumn: a time to harvest and reflect (and of course eat!) I've noticed the winter squashes, pomegranates and persimmons become plentiful in the farmers' market and the air turn crisp. I've been taking some time to enjoy and reflect on what's happened through the year: the people I've met and worked with, the things I've learned, and the successes to celebrate! This edition will highlight some of our collective successes as well as the lessons we've "harvested."

I'm excited to bring you the latest on Market Match (the statewide CalFresh incentive program), our updated and improved Simple Guide, and most of all, to introduce Amy Edmonds, the new Farmers' Market EBT Program Assistant!

As always, I'm looking forward to helping you establish or improve your EBT Programs. Thanks for your effort in making farmers' markets more accessible to all!

Sincerely,

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[Nov 1st](#)

Quick Links



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Updated: Simple
Guide for Market
Managers

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HEALTHY FOOD ACCESS INDEX

Total [Certified Farmers' Markets in the United States](#): **8,144**

Total [Certified Farmers' Markets in California](#): **772**

Farmers' Market that accept CalFresh EBT (aka SNAP): **~350**

California's 2012 [national unemployment ranking](#): **50**

[Number of Americans](#) who struggle with hunger: **1 in 6**

Proportion of Americans that [receive SNAP](#): **1 in 7**

[Number of children in the U.S. receiving SNAP](#): **1 in 3**

Cents that the average U.S. farmer makes [per \\$1 food grown](#): **less than 16**

California's [2012 total SNAP](#) benefits: **\$7,090,221,357**

Dollars in [economic activity generated](#) from every \$1 in SNAP: **\$1.79**

Percent [increase](#) in CalFresh EBT benefits redeemed in California between 2007 and 2012: **450**

Percent [increase](#) in fruit and vegetable consumption with as little as 15 cents per person per day incentive: **25**

Total Farmers' Markets in 2013 participating in Market Match: **138**

Dollars of revenue generated by the Market Match program at CA Farmers' Markets: **\$1,037,742.57**

Percent of incentive customers who said incentives were moderately important or very important in their decision to spend their SNAP benefits at the farmers' market instead of elsewhere: **93**

Percent of farmers' market vendors who reported that they sell more produce, make more money and have more customers because of SNAP incentives: **at least 64**

Introducing Amy Edmonds Farmers' Market EBT Program Assistant

Hello!

My name is Amy and I'm thrilled to be helping out with the Ecology Center's Farmers' Market EBT Program. Primarily, I'll be working on the Simple Guide, providing market technical assistance and collecting data for the Farmers' Market Finder. I'm a former farmers' market EBT program volunteer and a student at UC Berkeley focusing on public health, food systems, and public policy. Farmers' markets foster a sense of community, are healthy for people and the planet, and have a very special place in my heart! I'm excited to assist you in setting up or improving your EBT program.



Amy Edmonds, Program Assistant
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Market Match Program: 2014 Updates and Opportunities





The Ecology Center was recently awarded a 2014 California Department of Food & Agriculture (CDFA) Specialty Crop Block Grant (SCBG) to expand the Market Match Program, California's healthy food SNAP incentive program founded by [Roots of Change](#), currently run at over 130 farmers' markets this year.

The purpose of the Market Match program is to encourage and empower new customers to shop at the farmers' market and spend their federal nutrition benefits, like CalFresh EBT and WIC, on healthy food choices. In addition to making fresh, healthy, and nutritious foods more available to low income shoppers, Market Match creates additional income streams for small and medium-sized farms that sell their crops at the farmers' market.

Currently, there are 12 member organizations ([the California Market Match Consortium or CMMC](#)) running Market Match at over 130 farmers' markets, in 17 counties throughout the state. In 2013, those 130+ markets created over \$1 million in additional revenue for their farmers through the Market Match program.

In 2014, the Ecology Center aims to not only increase the total revenue generated by the program, but also to increase the total number of regions and markets offering the Market Match program. Funding is now available for new partner markets for the 2014 farmers' market season. Markets or organizations must demonstrate a current and successful EBT program and have capacity to both

administer the program and fundraise for the Market Match incentives. Participating in the Market Match program means your markets can utilize the Market Match brand, print-ready promotional materials, centralized promotion or outreach, the Ecology Center's technical assistance program and the CMMC learning community.

Before the end of the year the Ecology Center will begin the application and selection process for new funded and unfunded Market Match partners. New partner selection will be based primarily on need, capacity, region and as funding allows, first come-first served. Please look out for our next newsletter containing application details.

Have questions? Contact [Carle](#), Program Manager.

Improved *Simple Guide for Market Managers*

Our updated, new and improved, [Simple Guide for Market Managers](#) will take you through each step of establishing and maintaining a successful EBT program at your farmers' market. Please direct any questions about the Simple Guide to Amy Edmonds at amy.edmonds@ecologycenter.org.



Market Spotlight: El Cajon Farmers' Market, San Diego

The El Cajon Farmers' Market opened for business in March of this year, serving a culturally, ethnically, and economically diverse community. Managed by the International Rescue Committee in San Diego (IRC), the market creates healthy food access and new opportunities for the surrounding immigrant population through small food business incubation at the farmers' market.

The IRC has run the Fresh Fund program (similar to Market Match) at the City Heights Market since 2008. Fresh Fund is seen as one of the nation's flagship Farmers' Market SNAP Healthy Food Incentive Programs. In El Cajon, the IRC launched the market in order to utilize market revenue to promote and support Fresh Fund.

Since the market's opening in March, El Cajon has brought in \$5,000 in CalFresh sales and has distributed \$5,000 in Fresh Fund. The success of the EBT and Fresh Fund program illustrate the enormous health benefits a farmers' market can offer. According to Troy McKinney, market manager, "the community relies on EBT to buy groceries for themselves and families - and now they can purchase the highest quality produce that can be provided."



Photo: Jessica Wawrzyniak/IRC

El Cajon has already started to experience Fresh Fund's impact. Troy says, "After trying the farmers' market fruits and vegetables a few weeks, we see a very high return of Fresh Fund members that become regular shoppers, even after their financial incentive has ended."

The market's biggest challenge has been the lack of food systems education. "Many residents see the higher prices of our products and don't understand why it is that way. It is not clear to them that the lower costs often come from exploitative practices, unsustainable

growing techniques, environmental degradation, and a host of other negative effects," says McKinney. In response, IRC's El Cajon market fosters community education through its cooking demonstrations, film screenings, nutrition education classes, and distributing educational literature. In addition, the market offers music and fun events like a Halloween Harvest!

Learn more about the El Cajon Farmers' Market and Fresh Fund by visiting their website, ElCajonFarmersMarket.org

El Cajon Farmers' Market
Thursdays, 3pm - 7pm
201 East Main Street
Year-round, Rain or Shine

UPDATE: Farmers' Market Finder



Remember the interactive Los Angeles [Farmers' Market Finder](#) that we told you about in our [Summer Edition Newsletter](#)? Well, so far it's been a great success with over half of the total flyers mailed to LA CalFresh clients there is around a 1.2% response rate so far.

We are working to expand the FM Finder to more counties based on available data and funding. In the meantime, we've posted our most up-to-date list of markets by county, including those that accept EBT, WIC and offer Market Match on our website [here](#).

Ensure your market and county are included and report any updates to [Amy Edmonds](#), Program Assistant.

CalFresh Cuts November 1st

Beginning November 1st, CalFresh (SNAP) benefits will be reduced for all recipients nationwide. The cuts are a result of the end of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which in response to the recession, authorized additional funding for SNAP benefits for struggling Americans.

The reduction is about 5.5 percent of the maximum allotment, so the amount of the decrease will depend on how many individuals are in each household. For families of three for instance, the cut will be \$29 a month.

With the second highest unemployment rate in the country, this will of course have significant impacts for Californians already struggling to make ends meet.

For more information on these cuts, including tips/resources for impacted families visit the [Food Research and Action Center \(FRAC\)](#) and [the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities](#).

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