

# CalFresh EBT at Your Farmers' Market

## WHY ADD EBT?

### Customer, Farmer, & Community Win-Win-Win

One in seven Americans rely on SNAP, the USDA's Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, which is known as CalFresh in California. In California, CalFresh serves over four million people every month, and provides \$8 billion in food benefits annually. Providing CalFresh EBT access at your market means that customers enrolled in CalFresh can spend their benefits with the farmers and other local food producers at your market. Why not enable customers to make a healthy choice that also supports California farmers?



### Support Your Farmers

A farmers' market's primary goal is to create a thriving marketplace for small and mid-sized, independent farmers to sell directly to the public. Adding CalFresh EBT access to your market means new customers and more income for farmers and other vendors selling there.

### Inclusion and Equity

Adding CalFresh EBT access to your market sends a powerful message that **all people, of all incomes, are welcome**. With SNAP covering one in seven Americans, people in your community likely receive CalFresh too. Low-income families want access to fresh, locally-grown, fruits and vegetables too. Adding CalFresh EBT access at your market is step one in saying *farmers' markets are for everyone*.



#### Modesto Farmers' Market, San Joaquin Valley

With 38 farmers and 23 other vendors, the Modesto Farmers' Market has proudly served the Modesto community for 35 years. In 2010, the Modesto Market added CalFresh EBT access. "It's astonishing the sales that have been brought into the market in just five years of having CalFresh access. It helps the community and it has increased our farmers' sales significantly. Some farmers have reported hiring more workers as a result—it is a job creator." In just one year, the market brought in an additional \$10,000 in CalFresh dollars for farmers. In 2015, that number had grown to \$24,000—a 240% growth in 5 years.

#### Heart of the City Farmers' Market, San Francisco

Located in San Francisco's Tenderloin district, CalFresh EBT sales are at the heart of the Heart of the City Farmers' Market. Kate Creps, market's Executive Director says, "For many shoppers, CalFresh is the only reason they are able to provide fresh produce to their families." Between 2009 - 2015, CalFresh sales accounted for \$1.37 million in sales at this two-day a week market. Sales continue to climb, Creps explains "EBT sales have quadrupled in the six years since we turned our focus to customer outreach and expanding awareness of this program." Between 2014 and 2015, CalFresh sales at the market grew by more than 20%.

## Local Economic Development and Job Creation

When you add CalFresh EBT access to your farmers' market, it opens up California's \$8 billion in SNAP food dollars to YOUR farmers. Those farmers can then re-invest those CalFresh dollars into their farms, in some of California's most drought-stricken areas—hiring workers, buying equipment, and expanding their business.

### North Coast Growers Association, Humboldt County

NCGA operates five Certified Farmers' Markets in Humboldt county with 100% of the produce sold originating in the county! In 2005 NCGA started to offer CalFresh EBT access and six years later, added a Market Match incentive program. Since that time, CalFresh has added \$205k in additional revenue to their farmer members. Using the USDA economic multiplier, that is \$366k in additional economic activity for Humboldt county. Danielle Newman from Humboldt's Trident Lightning Farms says, "I wholeheartedly believe in what CalFresh access and incentives can do for a market and a farm. There are a lot of customers that come out specifically to spend CalFresh EBT and receive Market Match incentives when they might not otherwise be able to. It has had a positive impact on the income I receive, and I am grateful that the market has chosen to adopt it!"

## How We Can Help

In 2003, when paper food stamps moved to an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system, the Ecology Center worked with federal and state agencies to devise and pilot the "central point of sale and scrip" model, which is now used across the state. Since that time, we have been identifying the barriers to EBT-adoption at California farmers' markets, and helping overcome them. By providing one-on-one training, technical assistance, tools, templates, and materials, we have assisted hundreds of market in becoming CalFresh EBT accessible. We can help you too, and it's free!

We can assist with:

- » FNS application
- » obtaining a FREE wireless Point of Sale (POS) device
- » ordering and purchasing scrip
- » bookkeeping and accounting tools
- » market staffing and redemption models
- » print-ready outreach materials and press release templates
- » free at-market signage
- » listing on the Farmers' Market Finder (FMFinder.org)
- » incentive programs like Market Match

The process for a farmers' market is easy and costless. **Contact us today!**

**Farmers' Market EBT Program** [ebt@ecologycenter.org](mailto:ebt@ecologycenter.org) 510-548-2220 ext. 236 [www.ecologycenter.org/ebt](http://www.ecologycenter.org/ebt)



**ecology center**

The Ecology Center is a 501c3, non-profit organization based in Berkeley, California. Our mission is to inspire and build a sustainable, healthy, and just future for the East Bay, California, and beyond. Equal access to healthy food is central to our mission.

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