

Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Chapter 7: Accepting “Multiple Currencies” at Your Farmers Market

February 2016

By Karen Kinney and Colleen Donovan



Children or “**WIC FMNP**”; and the other is the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program or “**Senior FMNP**.”

The purpose of FMNP is to:

- improve the health of participants by providing access to fresh, nutritious, unprepared locally grown fruits and vegetables; and
- raise awareness and increase sales at farmers markets and farm stores.

In Washington State, the **WIC FMNP** started in 1992 and is administered by the Department of Health. It primarily serves pregnant and breastfeeding women and children from age 1 to 5 who are enrolled in the WIC Program. WIC participants meet regularly with WIC staff to improve their nutrition and health. The **Senior FMNP** is part of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS) and serves low-income seniors (over 60). The WIC and Senior FMNP programs have different sources of funding, slightly different rules, and their own set of politics. WIC FMNP is currently funded through the federal “Child Nutrition and WIC

Reauthorization Act” while Senior FMNP is funded through the Farm Bill. Even though FMNP is a federal program, states are required to provide a financial match for WIC FMNP in order to receive federal funding each year.

The rules for FMNP and funding situation may change from one year to the next. Please check the WSFMA website for the latest information or talk to the DOH representative at the WSFMA’s annual conference.

The Washington State Farmers Market Association actively works with the state and partner organizations to monitor program and budget changes and impacts to markets each year.

In both the WIC and Senior FMNP programs, eligible recipients receive checks to spend during the farmers market season. FMNP checks can be used for fruits, vegetables and cut herbs. Senior FMNP checks can also be used to buy honey.

In 2016, seniors will receive one booklet with ten \$4 checks totaling \$40. And WIC clients receive a \$20 booklet per client (a mother and/or child over 12 months old).

2013 WIC FMNP sample

Washington State Department of Health
WIC State WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program
Washington State Department of Health
P.O. Box 47800 Olympia, WA 98504-7800

United Community Bank
Marietta, Georgia

Pay to the order of:
Washington WIC FMNP Authorized Grower \$4.00
FOUR DOLLARS and no/100 Tax Exempt

First Day to Use	Last Day to Use
June 01, 2013	October 31, 2013

To be paid, deposit by November 15, 2013.
Payment is denied without the authorized 8-digit (4 market and 4 grower) FMNP stamp ID below.

Stamp authorized ID here

- Farmers' Market season: June 1, 2013 through October 31, 2013
- Use only for fresh fruits, fresh vegetables, and fresh cut herbs
- Use only at authorized WIC and Sr. FMNP Farm Stores and Farmers Markets
- Call for information: 1-800-841-1410

2013 Senior FMNP sample

Washington State Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program
Department of Social and Health Services
Aging and Long-Term Support Administration

UNITED COMMUNITY BANK
Marietta, Georgia

FIRST DAY OF USE	LAST DAY OF USE
June 01, 2013	October 31, 2013

Pay to the order of: Washington Senior FMNP Authorized Grower \$4.00
FOUR DOLLARS AND NO/100 TAX EXEMPT

Good for only fresh fruits, vegetables, approved honey and herbs.
Not Good at Grocery stores. Valid only at Authorized Farmers Markets and Farm Stands. No change will be given. For information, call 1-800-422-3263.

Authorized Grower - Redeem check by 11/15/13

Sponsored by the Washington State Department of Social & Health Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture

STAMP AUTHORIZED ID NUMBER HERE

Payment will be denied without the Washington Farmers Market Authorized ID Stamp

The WIC FMNP checks and Senior FMNP checks are always different colors to reduce confusion. Typically, FMNP checks are distributed to WIC clients and seniors from June to September and must be used by October 31.

FMNP information online:

<http://www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/WIC/FarmersMarket.aspx> Or Google "FMNP DOH." The DOH's website has a section dedicated to FMNP resources, including state and local contacts, market and grower applications, nutrition information, FAQs and promotional materials in multiple languages. Be sure to ask for a copy of the "FMNP Information Manual."



To help streamline operations, training, contracting and monitoring of growers and markets, the WIC and Senior FMNP programs are jointly administered by the Washington State Department of Health (DOH). For questions about applications, deadlines, rules, or any problems, please contact:

Katherine Flores

Farmers Market Nutrition
Program Lead

(360) 236-3721

(800) 841-1410

katherine.flores@doh.wa.gov

FMNPTeam@doh.wa.gov



Important FMNP Dates

Please check DOH website to confirm deadline.

April 1	Applications due from returning growers
April 1	Update form due from returning markets
May 1	Applications due from new markets
July 1	Applications due from new growers
June 1	FMNP season starts
Oct. 31	Last day to accept FMNP checks
Nov. 15	Last day to deposit FMNP checks

FMNP works with farmers and farmers markets

To be successful, the program depends on a partnership between market managers and the Washington State Department of Health. DOH authorizes growers, farmers markets, and farm stores to accept FMNP checks for a two year period. Note that both the farmers market and the farm vendor need to be approved based on eligibility rules. To participate, farmers markets need at least five produce farmers. Farmers must grow fruits and vegetables. If your market is not currently participating in FMNP and is interested, please contact Katherine Flores or email FMNPTeam@doh.wa.gov.

Managers are asked to stamp farmer checks, answer basic questions from farmers and relay problems to DOH staff. Farmers must deposit their checks in a timely manner to receive their money and have **all checks deposited by November 15**. If any farmers you work with have problems depositing checks, please refer them to Katherine Flores or email FMNPTeam@doh.wa.gov.

FMNP's Impact

The amount of the FMNP checks may seem small. However, the cumulative sales add up. According to the DOH, in 2014, 126 Washington farmers markets participated in FMNP and had combined sales of **\$1,056,472** (WIC and Senior). In addition to increasing market sales and supporting farmers, participating in the FMNP program is a great community connection by promoting health and nutrition among low income mothers, children and seniors.

The "Accepted Here! Food Access Programs at Washington State Farmers Markets" report summarizes FMNP and SNAP trends from 2010 to 2014. The report is available online: <http://smallfarms.wsu.edu/marketing/> In addition, DOH has some of their annual data available by county on the "WIC Annual Summary Data" page: <http://www.doh.wa.gov/DataandStatisticalReports/HealthBehaviors/WIC>



The WIC FMNP is sometimes confused with the larger WIC Nutrition Program, formally known as the "Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children."

WIC Nutrition Program benefits include monthly checks (\$6.00 for kids, \$10.00 for moms) to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at authorized grocery stores; *these checks cannot be used at farmers markets.*

In 2014, more than 307,000 clients were served by WIC programs and 47% of all babies born in Washington receive benefits from the WIC. There are local WIC clinics in every county in the state, as well as 14 tribal WIC clinics.

The Washington WIC Nutrition Program is working to convert from paper checks to an EBT electronic card system (like food stamps are now). The program plans to approve farmers to accept these WIC EBT cards after this new technology is rolled out within the next few years.