



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 8, 2021

Wolf Administration: Farmers Market Nutrition Program Connects Hungry Seniors, Families with Pennsylvania Farmers

Harrisburg, PA – At the Open-Air Farmers Market at the Farm Show Complex in Harrisburg today, Wolf Administration officials reminded Pennsylvania's low-income seniors and WIC recipients to obtain and use their vouchers from the Pennsylvania Farmers Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) to purchase fresh, local fruits, vegetables, and herbs from FMNP-approved farmers at farmers markets and farm stands across the commonwealth.

"The Farmers Market Nutrition Program has two co-equal goals: to provide equal access to fresh, local fruits and vegetables for those in need and to provide farmers an outlet for their product and a connection to their community," said Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding. "In a state as agriculturally rich as Pennsylvania, no one should go hungry. I encourage everyone with vouchers to use them – pick up some local comfort food and know that you're supporting a local farm family by redeeming your vouchers."

From June through September, the WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs provide low-income seniors and eligible participants in the WIC program with vouchers to purchase Pennsylvania-grown fruits, vegetables, and fresh-cut herbs from approved farm markets and farm stands across the commonwealth. In an effort to protect vulnerable Pennsylvanians, vouchers are distributed to participants via mail from WIC clinics and Area Agencies on Aging.

The value of vouchers redeemed through the FMNP program and dollars directly supporting Pennsylvania farmers who participate in the program are more than \$3 million annually.

"The annual Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program is a win-win: It helps Pennsylvania farmers, and it benefits older adults by providing fresh fruits, vegetables and herbs for their diets. Seniors who are food insecure experience inadequate diets, a higher risk of depression and poor health outcomes. We want to support seniors with adequate food that helps to enable good health and a positive quality of life," said Secretary of Aging Robert Torres. "If any eligible older Pennsylvanian has yet to receive their free vouchers, I urge them to contact their local Area Agency on Aging for any assistance they may require to obtain them."

To be eligible, seniors must be 60 years old by December 31, 2021 and have incomes that do not exceed 185 percent of the federal poverty level, which is currently \$23,828 per year for a single person or \$32,227 for a household of two. Eligible seniors can contact their local [Senior FMNP Agency](#) for additional information regarding how to apply for vouchers. Women and children ages 6 months-4 who are participating in WIC are eligible to receive vouchers under the WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program. These vouchers are being distributed to eligible recipients either through the mail or via a drop box at their local WIC agency. Each eligible recipient receives four \$6.00 checks to spend throughout the season. Participants may redeem vouchers from June 1 through November 30, 2021.

“We all need to eat the right foods to provide us the best nutrients to grow to our full potential and be the best version of ourselves,” Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam said. “Through the work of local farmers and available resources, we can provide access to healthy food to help young children as they grow, students as they learn and adults as they age.”

The Department of Agriculture has a free FMNP Market Locator app for iOS and Android devices. The app is available for download in both the [Apple App Store](#) and the [Google Play Store](#). Once loaded on a mobile device, users can either enable their location services on the phone or manually enter a location (city, town, zip code) to find participating markets or farm stands nearby. The app will show the market location, address, directions, phone number, and hours.

Pennsylvania farmers interested in participating in the Farmers Market Nutrition Program and being part of the solution to food insecurity in the community are encouraged to [apply](#). Currently, there are more than 1,000 approved farmers across the state.

For more information on the [Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#) or other Food Security resources in Pennsylvania, visit agriculture.pa.gov/foodsecurity.

Note: Photos and video from this event will be available at PAcast.com.

MEDIA CONTACT: Shannon Powers – shpowers@pa.gov

###