



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

August 4, 2023

Contact: Shannon Powers, shpowers@pa.gov, 717.603.2056

Shapiro Administration Visits Fayette County Farm Providing Low-Income Seniors and Families with Fresh, Local Food through Farmers Market Nutrition Program

Harrisburg, PA – Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding and Secretary of Aging Jason Kavulich visited the market at Duda's Farm in Brownsville, Fayette County, a participating partner in Pennsylvania's [Farmers Market Nutrition Program](#). The program provides Pennsylvania's low-income seniors and families with vouchers to purchase fresh, local fruit and vegetables at farmers markets and farm stands statewide.

"In a state as resource-rich as Pennsylvania, no one should go hungry," **Secretary Redding** said. "Our Farmers Market Nutrition Programs are part of the **Shapiro Administration's** commitment to connecting farmers to the nearly two million Pennsylvanians who may not know where their next meal will come from, and ensuring that fresh, locally grown, nutritious food is available to them."

The commonsense, bi-partisan budget Governor Shapiro signed yesterday makes critical investments in the future of agriculture and the physical and economic health and wellbeing of Pennsylvania seniors and families. Today's [historic expansion of the Property Tax or Rent Rebate program](#) further eases the burden of rising costs on Pennsylvania's seniors.

Some of these budget investments that impact agriculture, seniors and families with children include:

- \$2 million in the Fresh Food Financing Initiative that will contribute to better health outcomes by improving access to PA-grown, processed, and produced foods,
- \$2 million to fund the State Food Purchase Program to provide state funds for emergency food assistance for low-income Pennsylvanians, and
- Free breakfast [for every public school student](#).

"For the many older Pennsylvanians living on fixed incomes, eating healthy shouldn't be an unaffordable luxury. With the ending of the extra SNAP benefit payments along with the high costs of food and other necessities, these farmers market vouchers help support older Pennsylvanians by providing them with access to fresh foods, and highlight the important link between local farmers and the communities they feed with the fruits of their labor," said **Secretary of Aging Jason Kavulich**. "I encourage older adults to contact their local Area Agency on Aging to learn their eligibility for the vouchers or for any other assistance they may need to obtain them."

From June through September each year, the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs provide low-income seniors and eligible participants in the [WIC program](#) with vouchers they can redeem through the end of November for Pennsylvania-grown fruit, vegetables, and fresh-cut herbs from approved farm markets and farm stands across the commonwealth. Vouchers are distributed to participants through WIC clinics, and for seniors through Area Agencies on Aging and county aging services partners.

The value of vouchers redeemed through the FMNP program and dollars directly supporting Pennsylvania farmers who participate in the program is more than \$3.5 million annually.

Earlier this year, the Shapiro Administration [announced a performance-based increase in funding for the Farmers Market Nutrition Programs](#), allowing the department to increase the total dollar amount from \$24 to \$50 for vouchers offered to eligible seniors and from \$24 to \$30 for eligible women and children.

Those seeking to redeem vouchers or support farms who accept them can search for participating farm markets on the free PA FMNP Market Locator App, available through android and Apple app stores.

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.

Learn more about Pennsylvania's work to increase food security in Pennsylvania at agriculture.pa.gov/foodsecurity.

For more information on the investments made in Governor Shapiro's commonsense, bipartisan budget, visit shapirobudget.pa.gov. While there are a few bipartisan priorities awaiting further legislative language – representing less than one percent of the overall investment in this budget – the Shapiro Administration fully expects the House and Senate to deliver that language to the Governor, as well as critical funding for Pennsylvania state-related institutions – the University of Pittsburgh, Penn State University, Lincoln University, and Temple University.

Note: Photos and video from today's event will be available at [PAcast.com](https://pcast.com).

#