



Farmers Market Nutrition Programs support local farms and feed hungry kids, moms and seniors

Background: The Farmers Market Nutrition Programs (FMNP) were established by Congress in 1992 to offer fresh, nutritious, locally grown fruits and vegetables sold at farmers markets to low-income participants. FMNP vouchers are given to eligible low-income WIC families and seniors to purchase healthy food from local growers at farmers markets across Washington. The program is administered through a federal/state partnership in which USDA provides cash grants to state agencies for program administration and food benefits. Washington's Dept. of Health provides the primary administrative and monitoring requirements for the programs, and works directly with local WIC agencies to serve WIC families. DSHS partners with DOH for program administration efficiencies, and works directly with local Area Agencies on Aging to serve seniors.

The state must provide a local cash match to help cover administration of the program. The Dept. of Health requires \$100,000 to administer the program on behalf of both DOH and DSHS. These state funds enable Washington to receive more than \$894,000 in federal dollars for fresh, local produce for low-income families. Combined, these programs help our farmers, our needy families, and our local economy.

PROTECT \$100,000 IN DEPT. OF HEALTH FOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAMS

- ▶ FMNP federal funds are limited and highly competitive: if Washington eliminates FMNP, we lose the federal funds to another state and are unlikely to get them back
- ▶ FMNP is good for our economy: for every \$100 spent at a farmers market, \$62 is reinvested locally and \$99 stays in the state.¹
- ▶ FMNP is good for our farmers: 885 Washington farmers from 38 of 39 counties across Washington participated in FMNP.
- ▶ FMNP served more than 76,000 low-income moms, kids and seniors across Washington.
- ▶ FMNP is good for local communities: 130 farmers markets across Washington participate in FMNP.
- ▶ Low income families and seniors spent about \$1.3 million in this program in 2010.
- ▶ FMNP strengthens families, farmers, farmers markets and communities. It helps make choosing healthy food an easy thing to do.
- ▶ With a small investment by the state, FMNP creates stronger farms, more jobs, healthier families, more tax revenue, stronger rural communities and keeps precious farmland in production.

For more information, contact:

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¹ Findings from Sustainable Seattle's Local Food Economy Study, 2006