

Fresh Bucks 2012 Pilot Program Final Evaluation

Executive Summary

The Fresh Bucks Program granted \$10 of fresh fruit and vegetable vouchers for at least \$10 in EBT redeemed at 7 Farmers Markets in Seattle, WA from August-December, 2012. \$41,112 in Fresh Bucks were distributed, and EBT usage rose 86% during the pilot.

	2012	Percent Change	2011
Total Fresh Bucks Distributed	\$ 41,112		
Total New Shoppers	827		
Total New EBT Users	905		
EBT Before the Program Began (Jan-July)	\$ 35,681	-4%	\$ 37,261
Total EBT Sales Jan-Dec	\$ 103,411	40%	\$ 73,672
EBT August Total (31 Market Days)	\$ 16,964	70%	\$ 9,951
EBT Sept Total (33Market Days)	\$ 20,578	94%	\$ 10,593
EBT Oct Total (18 Market Days)	\$ 13,424	23%	\$ 10,922
EBT Nov Total (12 Market Days)	\$ 8,329	164%	\$ 3,157
EBT Dec Total (14 market Days)	\$ 8,440	372%	\$ 1,788
Market Days = 108	Total \$ 67,735	86%	\$ 36,411

Recommendations for Future Programs

The NFMA had the opportunity to coordinate with concurrent incentive programs during an evaluation and has the following recommendations:

- A limited bonus may have the unintended consequence of impacting shopper behavior. A 100% match or 2 for 5 would provide incentive without changing behavior.
- Incentive programs must fund staff time for outreach, vendor and staff training, and bookkeeping in order to be effective.
- A limited fresh fruit and vegetable incentive may have more impact on positive health outcomes, but doesn't encourage shoppers to purchase plant starts or account for homeless or transient shoppers who may not have cooking facilities to store and process fresh produce.
- The EBT system that gives EBT clients wooden tokens to shop with is antiquated and may be a barrier for some EBT clients (although the NFMA also uses wooden coins for gift certificate shoppers to reduce the stigma). Future programs should include setting farmers up with credit card / EBT systems of their own.
- {more to be added as we agree}

Project Overview

Rationale

The cost of healthy food has been identified as a barrier to consuming recommended amounts of healthy food for low-income communities. Nutrition incentives that provide a bonus for spending Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits (EBT/SNAP Bonus programs) at Farmers Markets change the relative cost of healthy foods, as compared to processed foods, by incentivizing the use of EBT benefits to purchase fresh, local food. At the same time, “Fresh Bucks” increase direct sales of local produce, contributing to the success of the local farm economy. When SNAP customers shop at the farmers market, federal nutrition benefit dollars go directly to farmers in our region, keeping those dollars circulating in the regional community. The USDA estimates that every dollar of SNAP/Food Stamp benefits results in \$1.73 in economic stimulus. When benefits are paid directly to farmers, they use that income to hire workers, buy seeds, tools, and other services that support local businesses. Farmers Markets are also credited with providing an economic multiplier for small business corridors, where they are often located.

Partners and roles

The project implementation was carried out by The Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance (NFMA), a nonprofit 501c3 with a mission to support small farms in WA, increase local food access, and build healthy communities. The NFMA has been on the forefront of initiatives to reach out to low income shoppers in Seattle, and has had on site EBT systems in place at their 7 food and farmer only markets since the inception of the Farmers Market EBT program in the mid-1990. Their market system contains year round markets (University District and West Seattle); 25-36 week markets (Columbia City and Broadway); and peak season, 18 week markets (Magnolia, Lake City, and Phinney).

Project oversight and support was provided by the Seattle Office of Sustainability & Environment (OSE). The City of Seattle advances food policies that increase healthy food for all, encourage local food production, strengthen the local economy, and prevent food waste.

Project funding for planning, implementation, Fresh Bucks distribution, and project evaluation was provided by JP Morgan Chase Foundation and the Seattle Foundation for U District, Lake City, Columbia City, and Broadway Farmers Markets.

Project funding for Fresh Bucks distribution at Phinney, Magnolia, and West Seattle Farmers Markets was provided by Washington State Department of Agriculture Specialty Crop Block Grant Program. Implementation at those markets was funded by the NFMA.

Program structure

The pilot was scheduled to run at all 7 NFMA markets in August and September, with a possible extension through October at those markets that closed in early and mid-October. Funding was extended through October, and eventually the pilot ran at all 7 markets from August – December, though the dates of operation vary by market, and only 2 markets were open by the end of December.

The existent system for accepting EBT is to swipe cards through a central portable POS system at the NFMA main information booth (a minority of Farmers have their own FNS number and POS machines),

and give EBT shoppers wooden coins to shop with. Each EBT shopper was informed of the bonus, and asked to swipe at least \$10 to receive the full bonus. Shoppers who swiped less than \$10 received a \$2, \$4, or \$6 match.

The \$2 Fresh Bucks coupons—paper scrip—were limited to use for fruits and vegetables only, and could be used at any produce farmer’s booth.

Goals

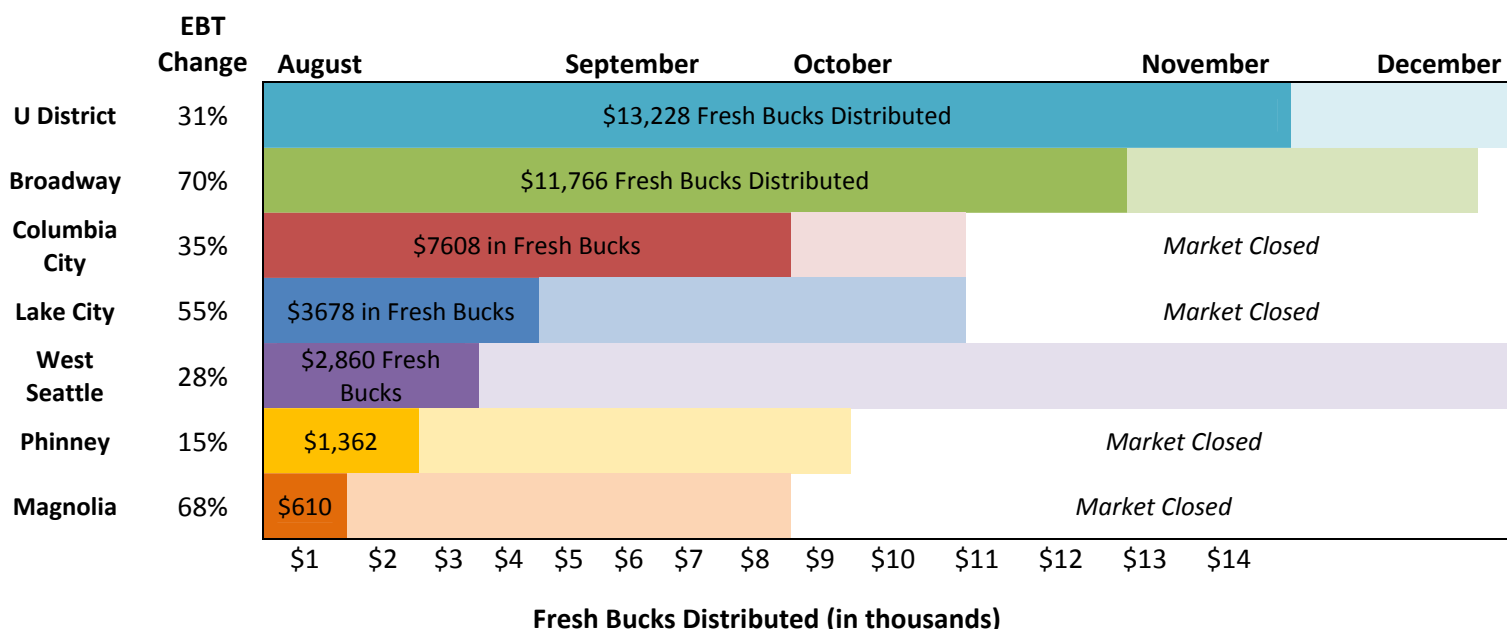
The main goals of this project were to 1) increase the fresh fruit and vegetable purchasing power for low income shoppers and 2) to increase the number of shoppers utilizing EBT at these local farmers markets.

General Outcomes

Fresh Bucks helped provide low income families with access to healthy fresh fruits and vegetables that they would otherwise struggle to afford. **Through Fresh Bucks, low-income families received over \$40,000 in extended purchasing power specifically for healthy food.** Fresh Bucks also directed increased SNAP spending to farmers markets, supporting local farmers and increasing SNAP/EBT benefits spent directly on fruits and vegetables at farmers markets. EBT usage in NFMA Markets grew 40% between 2011 and 2012 overall. During the pilot months, August-December, EBT usage grew by 86%.

The increases in EBT usage at farmers markets was coupled with an improvement in healthy eating by shoppers. **Eighty-five percent of shoppers surveyed responded that they had increased their consumption of fruits and vegetables as a result of Fresh Bucks, and 81% responded that Fresh Bucks made a difference in their families’ diets.** Seventy-six percent reported that they increased the variety of fruits and vegetables that they purchased because of Fresh Bucks.

2012 EBT Change and Fresh Bucks Distributed by Market Season



Shopper Visit Outcomes

Measuring an increase in the actual number of shoppers was a little trickier. Each EBT card holder was asked whether they were new to the market or new to EBT use while their card was being swiped.

According to self-reported results over the duration of the program, there were 827 new shoppers and 905 new EBT users. In analyzing actual usage according to EBT receipts at 3 markets where there was already strong EBT usage, we found that there was an increase in unique shopper visits of 139%, compared to the three months preceding the pilot. The total number of unique users of the program at those 3 markets alone was 1840, which does not include the U District Market, which is the largest market in the system.

The biggest increase was in shoppers who came once or twice a season becoming shoppers who visited once a month or more. 26% of shoppers who had visited the markets before Fresh Bucks increased their frequency of shopping when Fresh Bucks was introduced. 10% went from shopping 1-3 times over the course of the season to shopping twice or more a month. This increase in frequency of visits to the farmers markets means more total EBT spending during the market season.

Additionally, new shoppers who hadn't come to the farmers market before the pilot were more likely to become frequent shoppers. While only 15% of EBT shoppers visited the market three or more times in the months preceding the pilot, 21% of new shoppers (who hadn't previously visited the market in that season) visited the market 3 or more times. This represents a 60% increase in the number of 'new' shoppers visiting the market at least monthly.

Overall the average number of **new, unique** shoppers *per market day* increased 108% (from 10 to 22).

Unique Shoppers (Tracked at Only 3 Markets)

	Number of market days	Unique shoppers	Avg. New EBT shoppers/day
Broadway FM			
Pre- Bonus (April-July)	15.0	110	7.3
Post	21.0	335	16.0
Percent change pre/post		205%	118%
Columbia City FM			
Pre- Bonus (May-July)	13.0	174	13.4
Post	12	355	36.2
Percent change pre/post		104%	170%
Lake City FM			
Pre- Bonus (June-July)	7.0	60	8.6
Post	11	133.0	13.9
Percent change pre/post		122%	62%
All three markets			
Pre	35.0	344.0	9.8
Post	44.0	823.0	22.0
Percent change pre/post		139%	108%

This change in behavior is also consistent with a shift to incorporating more fresh fruits and vegetables into the diet, as the perishable nature of fruits and vegetables means they have to be purchased more frequently. More frequent shopping also broadens the opportunities shoppers have to what's available seasonally, bulk discounts, special educational events, kids' activities, and a variety of vendors.

Transaction Outcomes

Average Transaction

Another statistic that points to the change in shopper behavior towards more frequent shopping is average transaction. In 2011, the NFMA ran 3,293 EBT transactions for a total of \$73,583 in EBT sales, and an average \$22.35 per transaction. EBT transactions in 2012 rose to 6151 transactions, \$103,416 in sales, and an average sale of \$16.81. The decrease in average EBT transaction of 25% shows clearly that more shopper visits account for the increase in EBT sales. Based on our data, this increase includes both new customers and an increase in frequency of visits. That is, shoppers came more often to take advantage of the \$10 bonus, and redeemed less EBT in a given transaction. (Market staff reported that the emphasis on \$10 in the signage advertising the program led new shoppers to swipe that amount. A larger match may have affected the average sale less.)

Shopper Visits

Without an analysis of unique shopper visits, it might seem that the pool of existent EBT shoppers changed their behavior; instead, we can see that old and new EBT shoppers used the program to come to the markets more often. More frequent interactions with the markets and vendors can only be advantageous for all, as long as spending increased.

The number of (non-unique) shopper visits increased significantly as well, which is especially meaningful at those markets with already heavy usage. At Broadway, the average number of transactions per market day went from 21 to 61, and shopper visits at Columbia City Farmers market more than tripled during the program. Most transactions represent actual shoppers, though there were 2-5 re-visits per market day during the pilot, as people took out smaller average amounts of EBT and ended up returning for more tokens.

	Average # of Transactions per market day Pre- Bonus	Average # of Transactions per market day During Bonus	Change
BFM	21	61	190%
CCFM	21	70	233%
LCFM	16	36	125%
MFM	1	7	600%
PFM	2	14	600%
UDFM	28	67	139%
WSFM	5	15	200%

Vendor and Community Outcomes

One of the benefits of the Fresh Bucks program as a means toward improving access to healthy food is that it also provides a broader economic impact. The Fresh Bucks represented over \$40,000 in additional sales to farmers in 2012, and the increase in EBT usage added another \$30,000. (The increase is not 1:1 because existent EBT users will have continued normal usage or added visits, while new users increased total EBT use.) Farmers in the NFMA system saw an increase of \$70,000 in sales, plus an additional 800+ new customers. Many of these customers visited a farmers market for the first time during the pilot, and represent potential new return customers for vendor farmers. Since Farmers Markets and spending money locally has an economic multiplying effect, we can extrapolate that a program such as this benefits low income shoppers, farm vendors, businesses that farmers utilize, and businesses adjacent to the markets themselves.

When SNAP customers shop at the farmers market, federal nutrition benefit dollars go directly to farmers in our region, keeping those dollars circulating in the regional community. The USDA estimates that every dollar of SNAP/Food Stamp benefits results in \$1.73 in economic stimulus. When benefits are paid directly to farmers, they use that income to hire workers, buy seeds, tools, and other services that support local businesses.

Outreach

Outreach Strategy and Results

One of the major benefits of this program was having funds set aside to conduct outreach. Outreach consisted of targeted outreach to social service providers to encourage them to tell their clients about the program, and to media outlets to share the successes of the program. A survey of social service agencies also helped us to better understand their perception of the barriers that EBT shoppers experience when shopping at a farmers market, and their perception of the Fresh Bucks program.

Outreach to Social Service Agencies

Outreach to the social service agencies in the Seattle area and surrounding neighborhoods was critical for success. We heard from many Fresh Bucks customers (18% of survey respondents) that they learned of the promotion from food banks and other area resources that they frequent. Prior to the promotion, we created marketing materials that outlined the details of the program that outlined dates, locations and logistics. We then distributed these posters and flyers to the likes of WIC branch offices, food banks, grocery outlets, community centers, several branch offices of the Department of Social and Health Services. Many contacts at these various agencies were willing to post and/or distribute the posters and flyers.

We also created and administered an online survey to social service providers in advance of (as well as during) the Fresh Bucks pilot program. The survey consisted of both open-ended questions and multiple choice questions. Our intent was to learn more, from their perspective, about the barriers that EBT shoppers experience when shopping at a farmers market, and we also wanted to learn about their perception of the Fresh Bucks program. Key questions included:

- Are you aware that EBT recipients can use their benefits at the NFMA markets year round?
- Do you encourage your clients to shop at farmers markets?

- What is your perception of bonus programs at farmers markets?
- Where do you encourage your clients to shop for food?
- Where do you believe the majority of your client base obtains its food?
- What do you believe to be client barriers to shopping at the markets?
- If clients are interested in information regarding farmers markets, what do you tell them? Do you have resources for them or where do you point them to?

Results from Agency Survey

We had 20 key stakeholders from social service agencies complete the online survey. Eighty-five percent of survey takers noted they were aware that EBT recipients can use their benefits at NFMA farmers markets, and 95% of them encourage their clients to shop at farmers markets, but only 15% of them believe that a majority of their client base actually shops at a farmers market (barriers noted include price, location, and the fact that clients are unaware they can use EBT at markets).

Full results and responses from these social service agencies are located in the Appendix, Exhibit B.

Main Themes Included:

- Farmers Markets are a good source of healthy food and a connection to people that can give them advice on how to cook the produce.
- Convenience is important: if the Farmers Market is not nearby, they'd don't encourage clients to seek it out.
- The Fresh Bucks Program is an excellent tool to ensure fresh, local foods are accessible to vulnerable, low-income populations.

Media Outreach

Media outreach efforts included researching and compiling a list of appropriate media contacts, preparing pitch and press materials, conducting outreach via email and phone, and scheduling and hosting subsequent interviews.

Media that we contacted included those familiar with the Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance's mission, vision and values – and, these outlets may have written about NFMA in the past, thus, they were more prone to write about the Fresh Bucks pilot program. Local Seattle neighborhood bloggers and newspapers (i.e. Seattle Times, The Stranger, etc.), were included on our outreach list, as were local television and radio stations. We reached out to outlets with a focus on social justice and/or sustainability as well, such as The Voice and the Seattle Tilth newsletter.

Outreach consisted of sharing several news advisories with contacts during the course of the promotion: one to alert media to the fact that the promotion was underway, one to provide them with a status update regarding the success of the program mid-way through the promotion, and one to alert them to the fact that Mayor McGinn would be holding a press conference at the Columbia City market half-way through the pilot program. News advisories were issued in partnership with the City of Seattle. (Links to media coverage are included at the end of this report, Exhibit C.)

Lessons Learned

During the program, NFMA tracked Fresh Bucks redemption rates at its seven area markets. When redemption rates were low in a neighborhood, as was the case in Columbia City and Lake City at the start of the program, for example, we were then able to tailor our efforts to heightening awareness in those particular neighborhoods via additional, concentrated poster drops at strategic locations to reach our intended audience. For the social service provider survey, we learned that offering an incentive to take the online survey improved the response rate; we conducted several rounds of follow-up among agency contacts to encourage participation.

Results from Shopper Survey

Staff recorded the following information for each market day and transaction:

FRESH BUCKS \$10 EBT BONUS PROGRAM - 2012

On-Site Distribution Tracking

Market: _____

Date: _____

	EBT Transaction Amount	FB Distributed (\$10 or less)	New to the market? (Y/N)	First time using EBT at FM? (Y/N)	How Did You Hear About the Bonus?
1					
2					

When asked during their EBT transaction how they found out about the program, shoppers answered overwhelmingly (67%) that they heard about the program on-site. Because a number of the markets were located on major thoroughfares, that figure does not just represent incentive dollars distributed to existent shoppers, but the ability of market signage to move passersby to shoppers.

Answers to the Question: How Did You Hear About the Bonus?

On-Site	Vendor	At Another Market	NFMA website	Social Media	News Story	Social Service Agency	Housing (Low Income Residence)	Friend	Family	Poster	Mayor	Work
2270	3	133	64	100	108	263	99	181	13	109	15	11
67.4%	0.1%	3.9%	1.9%	3.0%	3.2%	7.8%	2.9%	5.4%	0.4%	3.2%	0.4%	0.3%

Total: 3369

Program participants were also surveyed about their perception of Farmers Markets and the impact of the program. The full results of the survey are listed in Exhibit D. 33% of shoppers were new to the market, and valued Farmers Markets for the same reason most shoppers do: to support local farmers, and because of high quality produce available. Other important responses include:

- 29% of respondents were using EBT for the first time at the market

- 38% were at the market specifically for Fresh Bucks
- The majority of subjects found out about Fresh Bucks right at the market (46%)
- 85% purchased more fruits/vegetables as a result of Fresh Bucks
- 76% purchased a greater variety than they normally would
- Fresh Bucks has made either “some” difference or a “big” difference in 82% of respondents’ diets

Program Implementation

The program was implemented on site at our 7 farmers markets through existing EBT process and technology, as well as a general shopper incentive system that had been created for marketing purposes, Market Bucks. Because of Market Bucks (which were \$2 vouchers distributed through local businesses, special events, prizes, etc.), our vendors and staff were already familiar with taking paper scrip from shoppers at the markets and cashing it in with the market manager at the end of the day. The Fresh Bucks were different in that they were given on site only, to EBT clients only, and they were limited to fresh fruits and vegetables.

At the end of the market day, each vendor pays what they owe the market in a combination of cash and cash equivalents (wooden EBT tokens, Fresh Bucks, etc.). The bookkeeper then tracks the currency by vendor and market in the vendor deposit reconciliation process, and also tracks Fresh Bucks redeemed by day and market in a separate spreadsheet. The NFMA Operations Manager also collected the “On-Site Distribution Tracking Forms,” and utilized that data to create invoices and track year to year changes in EBT usage by market and by month.

Because of the significant increase in the volume of EBT at the markets, a dedicated staff person was necessary during the market day to explain the program, run EBT cards, fill out the shopper survey, and distribute tokens and scrip. Market Staff estimate that each EBT transaction takes an average of 1.5 minutes and up to 5 minutes when language barriers and other issues arose. At peak times of day, a significant line would form, and EBT clients would wait up to 5 minutes. The wait would have been longer, but at those times an additional staff member would jump in and help out.

Staff time was also necessary for sorting Fresh Bucks ahead of market day, accounting for redeemed Fresh Bucks, tabulating on-site tracking, and measuring the program’s impact. Total staff time budget to implementation was 4-5 hours during the market day (depending on the length of the market), 1 hour of prep, and 1 hour of bookkeeping. That was likely accurate, but additional grant management time was also necessary as the program was adjusted from a 2 month to 3 month to 5 month pilot.

Cost

Between 2011 and 2012, EBT transactions increased by 2858 or 47%. While that represents an increase in sales and market income, because the average EBT transaction amount fell, it also represents increased and less efficient use of staff time. An average EBT transaction takes about 1.5 minutes, so those transactions added 71.45 hours of added on-site staff time. In addition, the data tracking for this pilot was significant. This pilot worked because that additional staff time was budgeted into the program, but this is one of the reasons why small, stand-alone markets struggle with implementing incentive programs.

Data from vendor survey

Vendors were surveyed about the efficacy of the program through a questions added to an existent year end survey. They were asked:

1. This year the NFMA received \$40,000 in “Fresh Bucks” (yellow Market Bucks) for low income shoppers to purchase produce.
 - a. Did you have new EBT customers as a result of “Fresh Bucks”? Yes No N/A
 - b. Did you have more repeat customers as a result of “Fresh Bucks”? Yes No N/A
 - c. Did your sales increase during the “Fresh Bucks” program*? Yes No N/A

*from August through the present (through Dec 31, 2012)

Responses from farmers with fresh crops were overwhelmingly positive, as might have been expected:

81% of Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Farmers noticed an appreciable difference in sales they credit to the Fresh bucks Program.

What was surprising in that 5 vendors who sold non produce items felt that the program was a success for them as well, since shoppers had a combination of Fresh Bucks scrip and EBT tokens, so if the vendor couldn't take their scrip, they could likely take the tokens, and the EBT increase was felt by them as well.

Conclusion

The program met its impact goals: 1) increase the fresh fruit and vegetable purchasing power for low income shoppers and 2) to increase the number of shoppers utilizing EBT at these local farmers markets, while also positively impacting local farm businesses and the local economy. The NFMA has created an excellent, replicable template for other farmers markets that has significant effect on health and local economies, in a unique, community-oriented partnership.

Market by market and month by month full program results are as follows:

	2012	Percent Change	2011
Total Fresh Bucks Distributed	\$ 41,112		
Total New Shoppers	827		
Total New EBT Users	905		
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Total EBT Sales Jan-Dec	\$ 103,411	40%	\$ 73,672
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EBT Dec Total (14 market Days)	\$ 8,440	372%	\$ 1,788
Market Days 108 total	\$ 67,735	86%	\$ 36,411

By Market

	Fresh Bucks Distributed	# of EBT Transac- tions	Average EBT Transaction	2012 EBT Total	Change	2011 EBT Total
BFM	\$ 11,766	1573	\$ 14.73	\$ 23,169	70%	\$ 13,593
CCFM	\$ 7,608	1110	\$ 16.81	\$ 18,655	35%	\$ 13,776
LCFM	\$ 3,678	513	\$ 16.02	\$ 8,216	55%	\$ 5,295
MFM	\$ 610	67	\$ 14.78	\$ 990	68%	\$ 589
PFM	\$ 1,362	155	\$ 14.04	\$ 2,176	15%	\$ 1,900
UDFM	\$ 13,228	2302	\$ 18.48	\$ 42,552	31%	\$ 32,549
WSFM	\$ 2,860	431	\$ 17.76	\$ 7,653	28%	\$ 5,970
	\$ 41,112	6151	\$ 16.09	\$ 103,411	40%	\$ 73,672

Regional context and emerging collaborations

The NFMA is currently working with the City of Seattle Office of Sustainability and the Washington State Farmers Market to coordinate a state-wide effort to bring EBT incentive programs to Farmers Markets. These programs have significant benefit for low income families, community nutrition outcomes, and local economies. There are excellent nation-wide models for state-wide programs with funding sources that include: main street businesses, private foundations, corporate foundations, health-oriented organizations including Health Care companies, and private donors.

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Appendix

Exhibit A: The Fresh Bucks





The voucher is yellow with a central purple rectangle. The text 'IN FARMERS WE TRUST' is arched at the top. The central purple rectangle contains the text 'NEIGHBORHOOD FARMERS MARKET' and 'ALLIANCE' with a farm illustration. The text 'FRESH PRODUCE ONLY: Fruits Vegetables Herbs' is on the left, and 'REDEEMABLE AT: Broadway Columbia City Lake City Magnolia Phinney University District West Seattle' is on the right. Four red apples with '\$2' are at the corners. The words 'FRESH BUCKS' are on the left and right sides.





NEIGHBORHOOD
FARMERS
MARKET

ALLIANCE

Fresh Bucks can be used to purchase fresh produce only at any of the seven markets operated by the Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance:

Broadway
Columbia City
Lake City
Magnolia
Phinney
University District
West Seattle

All vendors will accept Fresh Bucks as full or partial payment; no change is given for purchases under \$2.

Must be redeemed by Dec. 31, 2012

The Fresh Bucks Program is a partnership between the NFMA and the City of Seattle, with funding from JP Morgan Chase, The Seattle Foundation and the Washington State Department of Agriculture.



City of Seattle



CHASE



The Seattle Foundation



WSDA
Specialty Crop Block Grant Program
DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

www.seattlefarmersmarkets.org

Exhibit B: Social Service Agencies – Survey Responses

Respondents (n = 20)

Respondents that provided contact information (n = 18)

- Janice Moorhead, Resident Service Coordinator The Four Freedoms House and Henry M. Jackson Apts.
- Marlee Fischer Patient Navigator Sea Mar Community Health Centers
- Eunice, Patient Navigator, International Community Health Services
- Samantha Novak, Bilingual Community Outreach Specialist, WithinReach
- Troy Smith Harvard Court Resident Council (President)
- Lindsey Marr, Information and Referral Specialist for Within Reach
- Jenna Stark, Patient Navigator, Sea Mar CHC White Center
- Emily Gordon, Cooking Matters Program Coordinator
- Raquel DeHoyos, Cooking Matters Program Supervisor, Cooking Matters/Solid Ground
- Andes Kong, Lead Worker Chinese Information and Service Center
- Eileen Chikamura, RD CD Columbia Heath Center WIC Program.
- Sue Kershaw, Family Service Provider Seattle Public Schools
- Tom Doggett, Children's Advocate, New Beginnings
- Audrey Baedke, Wraparound Facilitator, Catholic Community Services
- Nancy Sherman, President, Resident Action Council of SHA
- Laura Ng, intern, ADS
- Muslim Mansoor Senior Nutrition Program Coordinator Refugee Women's Alliance
- Anna Goren, Emergency Services Specialist, Jewish Family Services

Are you aware that SNAP / EBT / Food Stamps recipients can use their benefits at Seattle farmers markets year round?

- Yes = 17 (85%)
- No = 3 (15%)

Do you encourage your clients to shop at farmers markets?

- Yes = 19 (95%)
- No = 1 (5%)

Why do you (or why do you not) encourage your clients to shop at farmers markets?

- They can get fresh produce at an affordable price if they have EBT. They lack access to healthy foods in their community so farmers markets are a good alternative.
- Fresh produce, great for the community, great for local farmers
- Fresh food, connected to people that can give them advice on how to cook the produce.
- I encourage them to shop where they can get to the easiest.
- It is a great connection to local food!
- Fresh, healthy food available with EBT!

- I encourage in the spring/summer time. I do not know it was a year round program. I encourage my clients to shop where they can get the best value for their money and so they are seeing they can eat a healthier meal then just something out of a can. It also allows the children to see a different way to buy food.
- If people bring it up or seem interested I am happy to share my experiences of how easy it is to use food stamps at the farmer's markets. If I know there is a farmer's market close by then I will also encourage it, but that is not always the case.
- They can learn to eat and cook with local, seasonal foods and help support and build relationships with local farmers.
- It's good to let them know more any update in their neighborhood!
- Our staff encourage our clients to shop at the Farmers Market especially since the Columbia City FM is located just a few blocks from our clinic and provides wonderful fresh produce. Our WIC program issues the WIC Farmers Market coupon to our eligible WIC clients at the Columbia City Farmers Market each year.
- I encourage them to eat fresh and get the extra dollars that are available from time to time. Also they can learn about new foods from the farmers and it's a great/fun activity for the kids.
- Our families have nutritional concerns, and I like to encourage them to eat a balanced diet.
- Fresh produce!
- Fresh produce at same or sometimes lower prices as markets, many organic, often has items not easily available or at higher prices; interactive, fun!
- It's healthy and fresh!
- healthy produces, fruits/vegetables. too expensive sometimes
- Case by case basis, if I have a good enough sense of the client's situation. YES: Convenience, health, taste, cooking NO: cost, convenience (if far from market, not accessible)
- I think they are snooty.

What is your perception of bonus/incentive programs for SNAP / EBT / Food Stamps customers at farmers markets?

- I think it's fantastic and so have the residents here at both buildings I serve.
- It makes healthy, fresh, local foods accessible to vulnerable, low-income populations, who are often the demographic who could most benefit from eating farmers market food. I think bonus programs are a great idea and encourage our clients to use farmers markets more than they would otherwise.
- As a food stamps recipient myself, I have a very positive perception of the bonus program. I think it definitely provides incentives for many people to check out the farmers market who otherwise wouldn't.
- A very cool program that has awesome benefits....a lot of people are not close enough to make it feasible to shop at farmers markets
- The prices are too high.
- Just that, this encourages people to explore options that connect them closer to their community that to mass-distributed and preservative loaded food!
- It makes me so happy to see people using their EBT to buy good produce and support local farmers! Way better than buying junk food at the grocery store.
- I think it is great. It gives people an opportunity to expand to limited funds and be exposed to a great experience.
- It is awesome!

- Think it's a great way to promote healthier eating by making local foods more accessible to all communities.
- It's good idea!
- It is a wonderful opportunity for our clients to stretch their food dollars and buy fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables.
- They are great help put more food on the tables and gets people to go to the farmers market. It also helps people feel like they are more a part of the community because the EBT cards are accepted there.
- I just found out about it and I think it's a great idea.
- Great incentive. Helps balance higher prices than found at grocery stores.
- Anything that promotes low income/EBT customers eating more healthily and learning about fresh produce is a good thing!
- Great!
- great way to encourage SNAP/EBT/Food Stamps customers to buy from farmers markets.
- good start
- Really fun!

Where do you encourage your clients to shop for food? (select all that apply)

- Grocery store = 17 (85%)
- Food bank = 14 (70%)
- Convenience store = 0
- Co-op = 4 (20%)
- Wholesaler (ex. Costco) = 6 (30%)
- Farmers market = 15 (75%)
- I do not encourage my clients to shop at any particular location = 4 (20%)
- Other: _____

Where do you believe the majority of your client base obtains its food? (select all that apply)

- Grocery store = 19 (95%)
- Food bank = 16 (80%)
- Convenience store = 8 (40%)
- Co-op = 0
- Wholesaler (ex. Costco) = 0
- Farmers market = 3 (15%)
- Other: _____

What do you believe to be client barriers to shopping at the markets? (select all that apply)

- Price = 15 (75%)
- Location = 15 (75%)
- Type of foods offered = 4 (20%)
- Clients unaware they can use EBT at markets = 15 (75%)
- Other: _____

Where do you send clients who want more information about farmers markets?

- I print out the list each year of all the markets, days and hours and what buses to take.
- I give them a handout of nearby farmers markets.
- I print out the information for them. Otherwise, I am not sure about who to direct clients to for more information.
- I don't really know too much.
- Farmers Markets
- I talk to them about it directly!
- I often have information in my office to hand out, I also know that there is a website that list locations and hours of markets in Seattle.
- Nowhere. I just wait to see the flyers and then talk to parents about what I know (which is very little).
- Recommend names of closest markets to where they might live. Posters might be helpful, especially some printed in various languages.
- seminar, weekly meeting, flyers, press release, CISC's bi-weekly newsletter
- Our clinic has a bulletin board each summer on the Farmers Market and our staff is able to answer client's questions about the Farmers Market.
- To the farmers market itself. I do not know of any place that really promote the farmers market except maybe WIC
- This has not really come up.
- I encourage them to visit a market directly.
- Websites; I sometimes give printouts or links to info or flyers if I have them.
- www.agingkingcounty.org/highlight_farmers_market_voucher.htm
- Own agency, Senior Services
- don't know

Can I send you some more information about our EBT incentive program, occurring this August-October?

- Yes Name: _____ Address: _____
- No

Exhibit C: Media Coverage of Fresh Bucks

Several outlets covered the program, including Seattle Weekly, KOMONews, KOMONews.com, KMPS FM, West Seattle Herald, Got Green, The Voice and Asian Weekly. Links to a sampling of the coverage follows:

- “Fresh Bucks” program encourages low-income residents to shop at farmers markets
West Seattle Herald
<http://www.westseattleherald.com/2012/08/31/news/%E2%80%9Cfresh-bucks%E2%80%9D-program-encourages-low-income-resid>
- “Fresh Bucks” Program Responds to SE Seattle Women’s’ Call for Local, Healthy Foods
Got Green
<http://gotgreenseattle.org/2012/08/10/fresh-bucks-program-reponds-to-se-seattle-womens-call-for-local-healthy-foods/>
- Beyond the Plate: The Asian lowdown on Seattle’s farmers markets
NW Asian Weekly
<http://www.nwasianweekly.com/2012/08/beyond-the-plate-the-asian-lowdown-on-seattles-farmers-markets/>
- Low-income residents get a healthy boost through Seattle's "Fresh Bucks" program
The Voice
<http://www.komonews.com/news/local/City-program-helping-low-income-families-eat-healthy-167147515.html?m=y&smobile=y&clmob=y&c=n>
- Fresh Bucks' Common Cents
Seattle Weekly
<http://www.seattleweekly.com/2012-08-08/food/fresh-bucks-common-cents/>
- Seattle, the NFMA and EBT
Health Connects
<http://health-connects.org/2012/08/08/seattle-the-nfma-and-ebt-news-release/>
- Fresh idea gives low income residents more power to purchase produce
KOMO News
<http://www.komonews.com/living/food-wine/165141786.html>
- Food stamps now go further at farmers' markets
Crosscut.com
<http://crosscut.com/2012/09/18/food/110569/food-stamps-now-go-further-washington-farmers-mark/>
- Good in Your Neighborhood: Neighborhood Farmers Market Alliance’s Chris Curtis
KMPS FM
<http://kmps.cbslocal.com/2012/12/07/good-in-your-neighborhood-neighborhood-farmers-market-alliances-chris-curtis/seattle-farmers-market-mentions-christmas/>

Exhibit D: Survey to EBT Users On-Site

NFMA Fresh Bucks 2012 – Survey Instruments

n = 78 (although not all 78 completed entire survey)

U District (n = 25), Columbia City (n = 20), Broadway (n = 21), Lake City (n = 12)

Survey to customers during program (to be administered after August 1)

Are you a new visitor to this market?

- Yes = 26 (33% were new to the market)
 - No = 52 (67% were not new to the market)
-

Is this your first time using EBT at the farmers market?

- Yes = 23 (29% were using EBT for the first time at the market)
 - No = 55 (71% were not using EBT for the first time at the market)
-

Is this your first time using Fresh Bucks?

- Yes = 35 (45% were using Fresh Bucks for the first time)
 - No = 43 (55% were not using Fresh Bucks for the first time)
-

How could we improve the experience of using your EBT at the market?

Double the amount to \$20

More vendors who directly accept EBT, tokens valid across all farmers markets (even vendors who go to diff farmers markets w/ other EBT currency won't accept EBT tokens)

Lower line

It's great

It's lovely thus far

Have EBT available to individual stands

I like as is

More Fresh Bucks

A larger sign at info booth, also, website says fruits/vegs only - confusing

This is a very creative way to make buyers purchase produce

25 cent tokens

It's excellent as is

Phinney machine was broken

\$1 coins to get change from vendors

Maybe a machine at both ends

Reach out to case manager in mental health so they can tell their clients

Nothing - it's awesome, that said, we probably aren't your target audience if you're going for underserved communities

It's great!

To know how to use, have to get only at info desk. I thought I could use at any vendor.

I think it's great

\$10 minimum, language of program made me think it was a match program

Seems fine

I like it!

I really enjoy it

It's perfect

Fresh Bucks is great!

You guys are already amazing

No suggestions

More \$1 increments

It's great already

Keep the bonus all year!

Having it all the time

It's pretty darn good as is!

Ok as it is

It's pretty good as it stands; info about fruits and veggies

Not really, makes produce half price otherwise not cost effective

Not really

It's already great!

It seems to work great, no complaints

Nothing. You guys are the best!

n/a - the fresh bucks program has been an amazing addition to my experience of using ebt at the market

It works fine

Fine the way it is

How important are each of the following in your decision to visit the farmers market on a scale of 0-5 (*0 being not at all important and 5 being very important*)?

- Supporting local farmers and businesses: average = **4.69**
- Quality of produce at market: average = 4.64
- Variety of produce at market: average = 4.15
- Taking part in the community: average = 4.25
- Accepts SNAP/FMNP/EBT: average = 4.18
- Market events: average = 2.92
- Fresh Bucks: average = 4.46
- Other: easily accessible location, localizing, live music (3), fun, fun, location, close to home, gluten-free (5), quality and organic (5), local food is the best medicine, buying local to support sustainability (5)

Supporting local farmers and businesses was most important to survey-takers; market events were least important.

Are you at this farmers market specifically for Fresh Bucks?

- Yes = 30 (38% were at the market specifically for Fresh Bucks)
- No = 48 (62% were not at the market specifically for Fresh Bucks)

n = 78

How did you hear about the Fresh Bucks program?

- At market: 36 (46%)
- Friend: 16 (21%)
- Agency: 14 (18%)
- Print: 11 (14%)
- Other: 1 (1%)
- Family: 0

The majority of subjects found out about Fresh Bucks right at the market.

n = 78

(For those that have used Fresh Bucks) Have you purchased more fruits and vegetables as a result of the Fresh Bucks Program?

- More = 57 (85%)
- Same = 10 (15%)
- Less = 0

n = 67

(For those that have used Fresh Bucks) Have you purchased different types of vegetables than you normally would as a result of Fresh Bucks?

- Yes = 44 (76%)
- No = 14 (24%)

n = 58

(For those that have used Fresh Bucks) Has the produce you've bought with Fresh Bucks made a difference in your family's diet?

- Big difference = 23 (41%)
- Some difference = 23 (41%)
- No difference = 10 (18%)

Fresh Bucks has made either "some" difference or a "big" difference in 82% of respondents' diets.

n = 56

How far away do you live from this market?

- Less than 1 mile = 33 (48%)
- 1.1 to 5 miles = 25 (36%)
- 5.1 to 10 miles = 7 (10%)
- More than 10 miles = 4 (6%)

The majority of survey takers live less than 5 miles away from the market they visited.

n = 69

How did you get to this farmers market?

- Walk = 35 (51%)
- Car = 20 (29%)
- Bus = 10 (15%)
- Bike = 3 (4%)
- Other = 1 (1%)

The majority of those that responded walked to the market.

n = 69

What is your race or ethnicity?

- White = 51 (78%)
- Black = 5 (8%)
- Asian = 3 (5%)
- Puerto Rican = 1 (~2%)
- Black/white = 1 (~2%)
- Vietnamese = 1 (~2%)
- Native American = 1 (~2%)
- Hispanic = 1 (~2%)
- Other = 1 (~2%)

n = 65

How many people live in your household, including yourself?

Average = 2.35

How many of these are children?

Average = 0.30