

## Health Bucks Program Self-Guided Farmers' Market Walking Tour

### Why Lead a Walking Tour to a Farmers' Market?

- Farmers' market walking tours are a great way to introduce community members to the many benefits of shopping at their local farmers' markets. They are also an opportunity to show your clients to a nearby farmers' market and explain how they can spend their Health Bucks and use their EBT card (SNAP benefits) to get more free fruits and vegetables.
- Organizations that include a farmers' market walking tours in their Health Bucks distribution plans often have high Health Bucks redemption rates.

### Tips for a Successful Market Tour

#### Before the Tour

- Visit the farmers' market to see where it is, how to get there and what types of products vendors are selling. Introduce yourself to the market manager and let him or her know when you plan to bring your group.
- Make sure you have enough materials for everyone who will be attending the tour including: Health Bucks coupons, fold-up farmers' market maps, seasonal recipes, nutrition handouts and activity sheets.
- Check the farmers' market map to see if the market you are visiting offers nutrition workshops (noted with a carrot or an apple) and if it does, schedule a class for your group by emailing [farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov](mailto:farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov). If the market offers workshops, classes are usually 30-45 minutes long and include free tastings and recipes. All participants receive a \$2 Health Buck.

#### During the Tour

- Be aware of other shoppers and make sure your group does not get in the way while touring the market. It's best to speak with your group away from crowds and then have your group explore the market using an activity such as the Market Fresh Recipe Challenge or Farmers' Market Exploration handout (included in the Health Bucks toolkit).
- If the market manager is available, ask him or her to speak to the group and explain how they can use their EBT card (SNAP benefits) at the market to get more Health Bucks.
- Farmers are working hard to sell their items so wait until they are finished with other customers before speaking with them.

### Important Talking Points

#### Health Bucks Information

- Health Bucks are \$2 coupons that can be used to buy fresh fruit and vegetables at any farmers' market in New York City.

- For every \$5 a customer spends with their EBT card (SNAP benefits) at a farmers' market, they receive a \$2 Health Buck to spend on fruit and vegetables – 40% more for their money!
- All farmers' markets accept Health Bucks and most accept SNAP, WIC, debit and credit. To use EBT, debit or credit at the market, customers should visit the market manager at the information tent. There they'll receive wooden tokens equivalent to the dollar amount they want to spend at the market. At this time, they will also receive an additional \$2 in Health Buck coupons for every \$5 spent in EBT. Health Bucks are redeemable for fruits and vegetables only and expire on December 31<sup>st</sup> while wooden tokens can be used to purchase anything at the market and never expire.

### Farmers' Market Information

- Farmers' markets are different than supermarkets and bodegas because you can talk to the person who grows your food!
- Farmers' markets only sell items grown or produced in our region, usually in upstate New York, New Jersey or Pennsylvania and sometimes as far as Vermont. Since the fruit and vegetables are grown locally, you will never see produce that grows in warmer regions, like oranges, bananas and avocados.
- Fruits and vegetables at the market are fresh from the farm and are picked at their peak of ripeness, which is why you'll see strawberries in June and corn in late August.
- Farmers' markets also offer a variety of specialty products, including bread, honey, jam, dairy and pickles.
- **More than 20 farmers' markets across New York City offer free nutrition workshops for adults and children.** To find a participating market, look for the carrots and tomatoes on the fold-up farmers' market maps. Join a workshop and learn how to prepare a healthy recipe featuring fresh fruits and vegetables and receive free tastings and a \$2 Health Buck coupon.

### Healthy Eating Tips

- Buying fruits and vegetables when they are in season is often less expensive and everything tastes so much better! Enjoy your produce all year long through freezing or canning.
- Snack on grab-and-go fruits and vegetables like apples, peaches, grapes, carrots, celery and cucumbers.
- Plan out your meals for the week before you go to the market. Purchase items that will make more than one meal or that you can freeze and save for later.

For more information, email [farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov](mailto:farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov) or visit [www.nyc.gov](http://www.nyc.gov) and search *farmers markets*.

