

# Health Bucks

## Farmers Market Tour Tips

### Why Lead a Farmers Market Tour?

Farmers market tours are a great way to introduce community members to the benefits of farmers markets. Tours are also an opportunity to show people how to get more Health Bucks through the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) incentive at farmers markets. Through this program, for every \$5 spent in SNAP on an Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) card, participants get \$2 in Health Bucks. **Remember, spend \$5, get \$2!** Organizations that include farmers market tours in their Health Bucks distribution plans often have high rates of Health Bucks use.

### Tips for a Successful Farmers Market Tour

#### Before the Tour

- Visit the farmers market in advance to see what types of products vendors are selling. Introduce yourself to the market manager and let them know when you plan to bring your group.
- Check with the market manager to see if the market hosts nutrition workshops. You can also check the Farmers Market Map for NYC Health Department-led nutrition workshop locations (noted with a carrot or an apple). Workshop participants learn how to prepare a healthy recipe featuring fresh fruits and vegetables, get free tastings and \$2 in Health Bucks. Workshops are usually 30 minutes long. Email [farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov](mailto:farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov) to schedule a class for your group.
- Make sure you have enough materials for everyone who will be attending the tour. Be sure to include Health Bucks, farmers market maps, recipes, nutrition handouts and farmers market tour activities (included in the Health Bucks toolkit).

#### 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 one of the farmers market tour activities.
- If the market manager is available, ask them to talk to the group and explain how participants can use their EBT card at the farmers market and 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.

## Talking Points

### Health Bucks Information

- Health Bucks are \$2 coupons that can be used to buy fresh fruit and vegetables at all farmers markets in New York City.
- All farmers markets accept cash and Health Bucks, and most accept SNAP/EBT, WIC, debit and credit. To use SNAP/EBT, debit or credit at the market, customers should visit the market manager at the information tent. There they will swipe their SNAP/EBT card and get wooden tokens and Health Bucks to spend at the market.
- Health Bucks expire on December 31, 2019. Wooden tokens never expire.

### Farmers Market Information

- Farmers markets are different than grocery stores and bodegas because you can talk to the person who grows your food.
- Farmers markets only sell items grown or produced in our region, such as upstate New York, New Jersey or Pennsylvania, and sometimes as far as Vermont. Since fruits 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 ripeness, which is why you will 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.

### Healthy Eating Tips

- Buy fruits and vegetables when they are in season to save money and improve their taste. Enjoy your produce all year long by freezing or canning it.
- Snack on grab-and-go fruits and vegetables like apples, peaches, grapes, carrots, celery and cucumbers.
- Before you go to the market, plan your meals for the upcoming week. Buy items that will make more than one meal or that you can freeze and save for later.
- Check out the recipe and nutrition handouts included in the Health Bucks Toolkit for more tips and information.