

# FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM GROWER INFORMATION SHEET

## “What You Need To Know”

### FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM (FMNP) GOALS

- Promote good health by providing WIC families and seniors an opportunity to buy fresh, locally grown fruits and vegetables.
- Support local farmers and increase community awareness and use of farmers markets.
- Provide growers an opportunity to sell directly to families and senior clients in a family-friendly setting.

### HOW GROWERS PARTICIPATE

- Grow a portion of fruits, vegetables and cut herbs they sell.
- Read and understand the grower information packet and “Grower Agreement”.
- Sign the “Grower Agreement” and agree to follow program rules each year you participate in FMNP.
- Mail the signed “Grower Agreement” back to the Department of Health WIC Program. *This is very important! We use the information on the Agreement to tell our bank that you are an authorized grower. We cannot honor any checks unless we have a 2009 Grower Agreement on file.*
- If you sign up for the program at the market, the market manager will provide you a “Grower Agreement”. After reading the agreement, if you wish to participate in the program, sign the agreement and give it back to the market manager. The market manager will mail it to the Department of Health WIC Program.
- Resellers who sell produce grown entirely by others may not participate in the program.

### ONCE GROWERS ARE AUTHORIZED

- Approved growers will receive a Grower Identification Number. Use this number on all your checks.
- You will get a 2009 card with your current number when we receive your application.
- Display the FMNP sign “**WIC & Senior Farmers Market Checks Welcome Here**” at your stall on each market day. WIC and senior clients are told to look for these signs.
- Take care of your new sign; you will need to use it each year you participate in FMNP.
- Train all person(s) selling at your stall about the program procedures.

### HOW TO ACCEPT FMNP CHECKS

- Accept FMNP checks only at authorized farmers markets.
- Accept FMNP checks only within the valid program dates of June 1<sup>st</sup> through October 31<sup>st</sup>.
- Sell FMNP customers only locally grown, eligible foods. See the enclosed list of “Eligible Produce”.
- **Eligible Foods** are defined as locally grown, unprocessed (except for washing), fresh fruits, vegetables, and cut herbs.

- **Ineligible foods** include, but are not limited to, non-locally grown fresh fruits and vegetables, processed products such as cider, jams and jellies, dried herbs, nuts, dried beans/peas, honey, eggs or cheese, and breads.
- **Locally Grown** is defined as produce that is Washington grown or grown in an adjacent county to Washington's border.
- Provide WIC families and seniors with the full amount of product for the value of each check.
- Do not give cash back on purchases less than the current price charged to other customers.
- Do not charge sales tax.
- Pay back the WIC or Senior program for any checks cashed incorrectly.
- Do not ask WIC families or seniors to pay the grower for any checks not paid by the program.

### **HOW GROWERS CASH CHECKS**

- **You are responsible to ensure your checks are stamped correctly.** The market manager, where you accepted the checks, may stamp the FMNP checks with the market number, AND your 4-digit grower ID number. You may also stamp your own checks by using these same steps. If you stamp your own checks, you will need to purchase a stamp like the market managers have.
- Make sure the checks are stamped **NOT HANDWRITTEN**. The bank/credit union will return checks with handwritten market and grower ID numbers or checks left blank. (Your bank may charge you for each returned check).
- Deposit or cash the checks at your local bank or credit union. Take your current ID card and FMNP Banking Letter to show tellers you are authorized to participate in FMNP.
- Deposit or cash the checks at **least every two weeks**. Some banks will charge you if you cash too many checks at one time.
- **Deposit or cash all checks by November 15<sup>th</sup> 2009.**

### **HOW WIC FAMILIES & SENIORS PARTICIPATE**

- Local WIC clinics and senior programs give FMNP checks and information on how to cash the checks to eligible clients in June, July, August, and September to buy locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and cut herbs.
- Checks may only be used at authorized farmers markets.
- WIC families and seniors must use FMNP checks by October 31<sup>st</sup>.
- WIC Families and seniors must only buy fresh locally grown fruits, vegetables and cut herbs from growers who have signed and returned the 2009 FMNP "Grower Agreement".

### **MONITORING**

Federal Regulations require the state to monitor farmers markets for compliance with program policies and procedures. Non-compliance with program policy and procedures will be discussed with the grower and market staff. All involved parties must agree to a Corrective Action Plan (please see Sanctions handout for complete information).