



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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More Ohio Farmers' Markets Now Accepting ODJFS Food Assistance Cards

COLUMBUS, OHIO – Fifty-two Ohio farmers' markets are now accepting the Ohio Direction Card, which the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services (ODJFS) uses to disburse Food Assistance benefits. As a result, it's easier than ever for Ohioans receiving Food Assistance to purchase fresh, locally grown food and support Ohio's farmers.

"With farmers' markets throughout the state accepting the Ohio Direction Card, low-income shoppers gain better access to nutritious, locally grown food," said ODJFS Director Michael Colbert. "Also, the markets benefit from increased business and exposure to a diverse customer base within their communities."

The Ohio Direction Card is used to distribute Food Assistance through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program. SNAP provides monthly benefits to more than 1.8 million Ohioans in households with gross monthly incomes of up to 130 percent of the federal poverty guideline.

"This expanded access to fresh, Ohio-grown produce is good for consumers, Ohio's farmers and our economy," said Ohio Department of Agriculture Director James Zerhinger.

ODJFS is sending notification letters explaining the program to SNAP recipients living near farmers' markets that accept the Ohio Direction Card.

When visiting farmers' markets, individuals with the Ohio Direction Card should look for signs that say the market accepts Food Assistance, SNAP, EBT and/or the Ohio Direction Card. Card holders should then visit the market's EBT booth to purchase either scrip, tokens or receipts to use throughout the market. To buy food from a single farm stand, Ohio Direction Card holders can use the cards just as they do at retail stores.

For more information about how to use the Ohio Direction Card at farmers' markets, visit <http://jfs.ohio.gov/ofam/infocustomer.stm>. To find farmers' markets and other retailers that accept the Ohio Direction Card, visit <http://www.snapretailerlocator.com>. For a complete list of Ohio farmers' markets, visit <http://www.ohioproud.org/searchmarkets.php>. For more information about Ohio's Food Assistance Program, go to <http://jfs.ohio.gov/factsheets/foodassistance.pdf>.