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OFFICE OF FAMILY STABILITY LETTER #73
June 24, 2008

TO: Directors, County Departments of Job and Family Services

FROM: Jeanne Carroll, Deputy Director
Office of Family Stability

SUBJECT: Ohio EBT Farmers' Market Demonstration Project

The purpose of this letter is to provide you with information about an exciting initiative that is happening in certain parts of the state and how you can promote access to healthy food for food stamp recipients and support farmers in your community.

The Ohio Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) Farmers' Market Demonstration Project was launched in July 2006 to provide farmers that are part of a Farmers' Market an alternate redemption system for food stamp benefits. When the Food Stamp Program changed from paper coupons to electronic debit cards, many farmers were no longer able to accept food stamp benefit transactions. This demonstration project equips Farmers' Markets with a mechanism to accept food stamp benefits and provides food stamp recipients with access to locally grown, nutritious, fresh fruits and vegetables.

Food stamp customers "purchase" tokens/scrip at one centralized Point of Sale terminal for purchasing eligible food stamp items from individual farmers throughout the Farmers' Market. Farmers then redeem their tokens/scrip through the Farmers' Market for payment.

There are several farmers' markets currently participating in the project and others that have applied to participate. The following is a list of active Farmers' Markets that can accept EBT food stamp benefits:

Athens Farmers' Market

University Mall Parking Lot
East State Street
Athens, Ohio 45701

<http://www.athensfarmersmarket.org>

An Equal Opportunity Employer
Printed in house

Augsburg Lutheran Church Community Farmers' Market

1342 Sylvania Avenue

Toledo, Ohio 43612

<http://www.augsburg-toledo.org/home.htm>

Findlay Farmers' Market (Cincinnati, Ohio)

1801 Race Street

Cincinnati, OH 45202

<http://www.findlaymarket.org>

Guernsey Farmers' Market

Courthouse Square

801 East Wheeling Ave

Cambridge, Ohio 43725

<http://guernseycountyfarmersmarket.com>

SouthPointe Farmers' Market

3459 South High Street

Columbus, Ohio 43207

<http://www.shopsouthpointe.com>

Toledo Farmers' Market

Superior Street

Toledo, Ohio 43604

<http://www.toledofarmersmarket.org>

The Ohio EBT Farmers' Market Demonstration Project is monitored by the Ohio Department of Job and Family Services, EBT Section. The United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services (USDA/FNS) field offices authorize qualified retailers to accept food stamp benefits, provide information to retailers, and enforce the Program rules to prevent errors and abuse.

The Office of Family Stability is committed to working to improve Ohio's Food Stamp Program and the benefits it provides to recipients. We encourage you to pass this information along to your local partners and community advocates to help make fresh, nutritious, locally grown food available to recipients. An enrollment packet and additional information is attached to this letter. Additional questions can be directed to Christina Thomas via e-mail at christina.thomas@jfs.ohio.gov or call 614-466-4815.

Attachment

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