Virginia Fresh Match means more healthy, local fruits and vegetables for Virginia families.

Virginia Fresh Match doubles the value of SNAP (formerly known as food stamps). When customers spend $20, Virginia Fresh Match provides another $20 to spend on fresh fruits and veggies.

The Need:
Virginia is facing a crisis. Today 1 in 10 Virginia residents struggle with hunger, and too many (1 in 6) are children. Rates of chronic diet-related disease are skyrocketing, especially for children in poverty. These are preventable problems. Meanwhile, agriculture is Virginia’s largest industry at $70 billion annually, but small and midsize farmers are struggling to grow their businesses, reach new direct markets, and sell their produce at a living wage.

2017 PROGRAM IMPACTS: A Win-Win-Win

PEOPLE
Nearly 8,100 SNAP customers participated in these programs, purchasing fruits and vegetables at 54 locations.

FARMERS
Over 700 farmers together took in an extra $290,000 in sales at Virginia Fresh Match markets.

ECONOMY
USDA estimates that every $1 in SNAP spending creates $1.80 in economic activity. Dollars spent at local grocers and farm businesses leads to infrastructure investments and more jobs.

SPOTLIGHT
Elise has been coming to Dale City Farmers Market for years, and now shops there with her 12-year-old daughter, April. Elise does all of the cooking for the family and incorporates fruits and vegetables into every meal. Elise started using SNAP after her partner got into an accident and was unable to work. After their other expenses, “there was never enough left over to pay for groceries. Doubling my money here has helped a lot.” She and her daughter shop as partners, checking out quality, quantity and price at their favorite farmer’s booth. “This program is the only reason we have been able to stretch our food budget. Without it, we would be living on ramen. And even ramen with a cucumber on the side is still ramen,” she laughs. “It’s made a big difference.”

References:
Virginia Fresh Match Network members believe that if people can’t afford produce, they don’t buy it. If they can afford it, they do. It’s that simple. So we have to make fruits and vegetables AFFORDABLE. That’s the mission of Virginia Fresh Match.

**Regional Lead Organizations:**
- Local Environment Agriculture Program (LEAP)
- Virginia Community Food Connections
- Appalachian Sustainable Development
- Community Foodworks
- Williamsburg Farmers Market
- Martinsville Henry Co. Chamber of Commerce
- Harrisonburg Farmers Market
- Shalom Farms

**Other Members include:**
- Virginia Cooperative Extension
- Wholesome Wave

“Participating in Virginia Fresh Match as a small, family farm has added tangible support and strength to our role as producers in our local food system... [it] is a leading example of how to build healthier communities.”

—Amy, farmer in Floyd County, VA