

# SNAP at Farmers Markets during the Corona Virus

Meredith Ledlie Johnson  
meredil@vt.edu

# Common Issues, Common Concerns

- Your market is moving online and you are unsure about what to do about SNAP sales
- You are unsure what to do about tokens in your market
- You want to open a pop up market location, but your EBT machine is being used at your main site at that time
- You just feel overwhelmed!

# Some Basic Information

- There is a huge surge in the SNAP caseload at this time, with many of those people who are new to the system.
- At this time SNAP cannot be used to pay online for food in VA. VA is looking for a waiver for this but that may take some time.
  - Markets with can apply for a second DSS terminal to serve new locations if they provide a strong reason for their need.
- Markets have found ways to use credit/holds on their online platforms to accept SNAP sales.
  - Each online platform is a little different

# Some Basic Information

- Some markets are still using tokens, and some are not.
  - Sanitize tokens and don't redistribute the same day
  - Pre-count and bag
  - If you go tokenless, decide what to do about tokens that customers already have. According to USDA, a SNAP customer must be able to ask for a refund.
  - Some markets are using paper vouchers
  - Ensure your staff and vendors all understand and can explain the new system

# Some Basic Information

- Markets participating in Virginia Fresh Match are still applying the discount to eligible foods (fruits and vegetables)
  - Statewide limit on VFM discount has been lifted, but markets may choose to maintain one
- Some markets are creating “grab and go” boxes of aggregated produce for SNAP shoppers to quickly serve those who don’t order online. Box has a fixed price (\$10-\$20) and is eligible for VFM. Try to include culturally appropriate and staple items.

# Resources are available!

Virginia Fresh Match and the Family Nutrition Program have partnered on a how-to guide for accepting SNAP and Virginia Fresh Match during this crisis.

## [How to Provide Virginia Fresh Match and SNAP Benefits during COVID19](#)

- How to accept SNAP using online platforms
- Ideas for running a “tokenless market”
- Links to resources for protecting customers and vendors

# Market Manager Education

Virginia Fresh Match hosts a regular call for Virginia farmers markets who want to learn from each other about how to solve issues around food access, SNAP, VFM and similar topics

Email Katie Struble ([katie@leapforlocalfood.org](mailto:katie@leapforlocalfood.org)) to ask to join the list serve and you will receive the invitations.

Weekly notes are compiled and emailed out.

# Consumer Education

Things to consider as you move forward:

- Educating SNAP shoppers who have shopped at your market in the past about your new SNAP system (tokenless, drive up, etc.)
- Educating people who have never been on SNAP that your market is open, accepts SNAP, and possibly doubles SNAP.
- Educating your vendors/staff/volunteers/community supporters on your new SNAP system
- Educating customers on how to cook and enjoy local produce

# VA Family Nutrition Program

To find the nearest SNAP-Ed agent near you:

<https://eatsmartmovemoreva.org/virginia-family-nutrition-program/contact/>

To find recipes:

[eatsmartmovemoreva.org/recipes](https://eatsmartmovemoreva.org/recipes)

[Facebook](#)

[Youtube](#)

[Instagram](#)



Apple Lime Salad

170 calories per serving  
15 minutes prep and cook time

# VA Family Nutrition Program

Coming Soon:

- Videos on how to shop at a market using SNAP during COVID-19
- Social marketing campaign to educate SNAP shoppers that farmers markets are open
- Marketing templates for markets to use and adapt
- What else do you need? Let me know!

# VA Cooperative Extension Resources

- [COVID-19 FAQ for Farmers Markets: Steps for Markets and Market Managers](#)
- [Covid-19 Preguntas Frecuentes Para Mercados Locales Agrícolas](#)

Lots more available at

[https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/tags.resource.html/pubs\\_ext\\_vt\\_edu:food-safety](https://www.pubs.ext.vt.edu/tags.resource.html/pubs_ext_vt_edu:food-safety)

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Meredith Ledlie Johnson  
Virginia Cooperative Extension  
Family Nutrition Program

[meredil@vt.edu](mailto:meredil@vt.edu)

540-231-1704