

How does Market Bucks work now?

Market Bucks is a farmers market nutrition incentive program designed to help SNAP customers increase their purchasing power at farmers markets and mobile markets across Minnesota.

SNAP customers can use their EBT card at the market and receive a dollar-for-dollar match on all SNAP spending at the market, up to \$10 per market visit. Customers can also receive an extra Produce Market Bucks match for fruits and vegetables at the market, up to an additional \$10 per market visit.

The program leverages both state funds through the Health Eating Here at Home program and federal funds through the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program.

Why is an expansion to Fresh Bucks needed?

SNAP customers want to be able to purchase healthy foods like fresh fruits and vegetables year-round, but often struggle to afford those purchases. By offering a 50% discount to SNAP customers at grocery stores and other food retail settings, we can improve access to healthy foods for low-income Minnesotans.

Expanding the Market Bucks nutrition incentive model to more food retailers is a win-win-win:

- Customers win by being able to stretch their buying power, making healthy food more affordable for low income residents.
- Food retailers win by bringing in more customers able to afford produce purchases.
- Communities win with increased local economic activity, a stronger sense of community, and healthier people.



Piloting Fresh Bucks:

We are seeking \$1 million from the Minnesota legislature in 2024 to launch a pilot, expanding the nutrition incentive model to a variety of retail settings with the following parameters:

- Customers using SNAP at participating stores will receive 50% off their produce purchases.
- Retailers will be reimbursed for the cost of providing this discount on a monthly basis.
- Interested retailers may apply for a grant of \$10,000 - \$100,000 to conduct a 1-year pilot.
- This initiative will support 5-10 retailers interested in participating in this project across urban, suburban and rural areas and a variety of retail models including traditional grocery stores, ethnic markets and corner stores.
- Communities with low food access or high SNAP participation will be prioritized.
- Participating retailers will receive support including community outreach to SNAP customers in their service area and marketing materials to promote the pilot program.

To learn more, contact Leah Gardner at Hunger Solutions Minnesota at lgardner@hungersolutions.org or call 651-789-9850.

Partners include: Advocates for Better Health, Blue Cross Blue Shield of Minnesota, Hunger Solutions Minnesota (advocacy branch of The Food Group), Legal Services Advocacy Project, MN350, Minnesota Grocers Association, Pillsbury United Communities, Second Harvest Heartland