

# Improving SFMNP Distribution and Redemption

For use by AAA offices, Senior Centers, and Farmers Market Managers

This research delineates suggested strategies for SFMNP voucher distribution and redemption. The 5 counties with the highest redemption rates for SFMNP in Pennsylvania were contacted and successful strategies were recorded. Additional research was conducted on other FMNP participating farmers markets, Area Agencies on Aging, WIC offices, and organizations around the US to gather additional suggestions and strategies.



## Challenge: Number of Vouchers Issued Solutions: Increasing awareness of program and vouchers issued



- *Allocate resources for promotion: build relationships and connections, send emails, hang fliers, etc as much as possible (staffing issues addressed below)*
- **Send fliers and proxy forms with Meals on Wheels for homebound seniors**
  - if they put out a newsletter, ask them to advertise issuing dates in that as well
- **Advertise voucher issuing dates at strategic locations**
  - Pharmacies, doctors offices, senior centers/at senior center classes, supermarkets (bulletin boards), food pantries, libraries, post offices, churches in low-income neighborhoods, subsidized/low-income senior housing: bulletin boards, monthly newsletters
  - You can also hand out vouchers at these locations
- **Hand out vouchers at Farmers markets so seniors can use them on the spot**
  - This a valuable way to address transportation issues and increase redemption
- **Send a media package to borough/county/government offices so they can advertise for you**
- **Do a radio advertisement**
- **Do a promotional video for different offices to play and/or put on Youtube**

# Challenge: Redemption Rates

## Solutions: Increasing redemption to improve program viability and increase senior Healthy & food access

- *Addressing barriers that reduce redemption*
- **Develop flyers/post-cards to hand out to Seniors when they get their checks**
  - include all locations, dates, and times where seniors can use them
  - include seasonal availability and highlight desirable in-season items such as berries, tomatoes, and melons.
  - provide culturally relevant recipes for in-season vegetables and fruits
- **Have senior centers do van trips to Farmer's Markets**
  - Ask select farmers to make pre-made \$5 bags for seniors
- **Have a local farmer set up a "pop-up" stand during distribution at senior centers it so seniors can use them right away and don't have to travel**
  - choose peak season times
- **Develop events with market managers that draw seniors to the market**
  - Bring your grandchild/family to market day
  - Free health screenings at the market
  - Cooking demos
- **Ask market managers to ensure vendors advertise that they accept the vouchers, have all participating vendors in the same location, and/or create a map of participating vendors**
- **Have running Facebook event with market locations and times**
- **Provide seniors with fridge magnets to hang up their vouchers and market times/locations**
- **Work with farmer's markets and food access related organizations to create a stronger farmer's market culture and community to increase seniors' interest and overall improve the market experience**
- **Ensure market managers/market info tent employees are educated about the program and can clearly communicate information to seniors**



# Challenge: Lack of Staff to Conduct Programming

## Solutions: Affordably increasing capacity



- **Coordinate with local non-profits, market managers, and other community organizations to contract additional staff**
  - improve voucher issuing and redemption and save money by contracting these individuals a few strategic times throughout the season
- **Leverage volunteers and/or interns from local colleges and universities**
  - many students are required to complete volunteer hours at their schools and/or to retain scholarships
  - many students are seeking internship opportunities to gain in-field experience and complete major requirements
  - Students are especially valuable for marketing efforts

We want to hear from you! What strategies have been successful or unsuccessful and why? What other needs or barriers could be addressed? What additional solutions have you developed?

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BFBLGLV is a program of the Nurture Nature Center, a 501(c)3 organization. BFBL chapters across the nation are coordinated by the Farmers Market Coalition, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit dedicated to strengthening farmers markets across the United States so that they can serve as community assets while providing real income opportunities for farmers.