



## Extending Reach of EBT in Wisconsin Farmers' Markets Project

# Outreach

You want to grow the EBT program at your farmers' market—but how? Here are some quick tips for increasing SNAP/ FoodShare participation at your market.

### QUICK TIP 1:

#### **Word-of-mouth works!**

Our research<sup>1</sup> confirms that word-of-mouth is a highly effective marketing strategy. The best part? It's relatively free. We say relatively, because there is a cost associated with this strategy: your time. Remind users of the value of using EBT at the market each time they come. Be sure to tell those users to spread the word to family, friends, and co-workers that your market accepts EBT. They know your location, date, time, and how to use their benefits, so they will be the best advocates on your behalf.

### QUICK TIP 2:

#### **Incentive programs and free activities for kids increase participation**

If you are able to fund an incentive program, our research showed that it is highly influential in increasing participation at the farmers' market. For more information on how to create a sustainably-funded incentive program, how to run an incentive program, or for other resources, check out [farmersmarketcoalition.org](http://farmersmarketcoalition.org). Our research also found that providing free activities for kids was a big incentive for SNAP/FoodShare users to shop at the farmers' market. Simple activities like market bingo are easy to put together and a fun way to engage families. They are also really concrete

ways of deepening partnerships with other organizations in your community, like the local Boys and Girls Club or YMCA. Remember QUICK TIP 1, though: people need to know that these programs exist so they can use them!

### QUICK TIP 3:

#### **Strong partnerships and consistent messaging are instrumental**

If you can, dedicate a staff person, one of your volunteers who runs the EBT machine, or one of your EBT users (but be sure to compensate them appropriately) to go to other government organizations, nonprofits, community events, faith-based organizations or food pantries that serve low-income families to talk directly with FoodShare/SNAP users about the program. While they're there, they can educate staff/volunteers of those organizations about the program as well, and ask that staff continuously promote the program. People need to hear the message more than once—so keep at it! For more information on sending people out into your community, go to [fyi.uwex.edu/ebtoutreach](http://fyi.uwex.edu/ebtoutreach) and search for Community Connector. There, you'll find information on building partnerships, as well as handy sheets for spreading the word to partners!