



## 2013 Produce Perks EBT Incentive Program Application for Farmers' Markets in Cuyahoga County

The Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition (FPC) is accepting applications from farmers' markets in Cuyahoga County to participate in an incentive program for Ohio Direction Card customers for the 2013 market season (May 1, 2013 - April 31, 2014). The incentives, known as Produce Perks, provide a dollar-for-dollar match (up to \$10) for every dollar spent at the market on EBT eligible items. Produce Perks can be redeemed to purchase fruits, vegetables, seeds and edible plants only. (Edible plants include: potted herbs, seedlings, and vegetable or fruit plants to be used in a home garden).

A farmers' market, as defined by the Ohio Revised Code (Sec.3717.221), is "... a location where producers congregate to offer fruits, vegetables, and other items for sale." FPC would like to extend this definition for the incentive program and set a minimum requirement of TWO produce vendors (vendor-produced fruits and vegetables) per market interested in applying.

Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) is the ability to electronically accept the Ohio Direction Card using a point-of-sale machine. Several markets have developed infrastructure for EBT or purchased machines to accept the Ohio Direction Card at their farmers' market. This program will provide financial incentives to EBT customers at participating markets and a promotional campaign to encourage more EBT customers to spend their food benefits at local farmers' markets. (FPC can provide information for applying to receive a free point-of-sale machine from the Ohio Department of Jobs and Family Services.)

In 2010, FPC worked with community partners to pilot the program at four markets in Cuyahoga County. All of the participating markets saw increases in new customers, EBT sales, and total market sales. Two of the markets went from a few hundred dollars in total EBT sales in 2009 to over \$2,000 in EBT sales in 2010. Based on the success of the pilot program in 2010, several local foundations contributed funds to expand the program in 2011 with additional success. Increased EBT sales totaling over \$20,000 were documented between the 17 participating markets. In 2012, FPC [reported](#) that EBT sales increased between 16 market locations to over \$26,000 in sales between May 2012 and January 2013.



### How the program works:

1. A customer swipes their Ohio Direction Card at the participating farmers' market and purchases a dollar amount in tokens or scrips to spend at the market.
2. The customer using their Ohio Direction card can receive additional incentive dollars (Produce Perks tokens) to spend at the market on fruits, vegetables, seeds, and edible plants only. (Edible plants include: potted herbs, seedlings, and vegetable or fruit plants to be used in a home garden).
3. The customer is eligible to receive Produce Perks incentive tokens each day they visit the market. Incentives given for only one transaction per market per day.
4. The market manager or volunteer records each EBT transaction, amount of Produce Perks distributed and customer survey responses. Markets then submit their transaction logs to FPC (OSU Extension) every month for reimbursement of any Produce Perks incentives redeemed.

### Participating markets in the program will receive the following support from FPC/OSU Extension:

1. Promotion and Marketing

Each new participating market will receive:

- Produce Perks tokens
  - Large vinyl banner for customer service booth/table where EBT transactions take place
  - Buttons for market managers and volunteers
  - Flyers/Postcards
    - Each market will receive 1,000- 2,000 postcards to distribute.
      - Additional "Produce Perks Accepted here" stickers to post on already printed materials are also available.
    - FPC will distribute postcards countywide through a targeted promotional campaign with local community agencies.
  - Program and market promotion through media releases and advertising campaigns to the extent FPC can budget
2. Financial incentives for EBT customers (reimbursement for Produce Perks redeemed).
  3. Limited funds are available for:
    - Wireless point-of-sale machines
    - Tokens for EBT sales
    - Replacement promotional materials for already participating markets (granted on a case by case basis)
    - Other promotional materials as they are developed by FPC

If your market is interested in participating in the 2013 Produce Perks EBT Incentive Program, **please complete the following application and guideline sheet and submit it by March 25, 2013 at 5:00pm.**

Applications can be sent via email, US Mail\*, fax, or delivered in person to:

**OSU Extension-Cuyahoga County  
Attn: Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition  
9127 Miles Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44105  
Fax: 216-429-3146  
Email: meschkat.1@osu.edu**

***\*Please note that OSU Extension Offices will be relocating during the application process, if possible, please submit applications via email OR fax to ensure quick and guaranteed delivery by application deadline.***

Applications will be reviewed by a team of FPC members and notification of participation in the program will be sent out the first week of April. It is anticipated that the program will begin on or about May 1, 2013.

For more information about this program or the application, please contact FPC via email at meschkat.1@osu.edu or by phone at 216.429.8200 ext. 212.

**Produce Perks EBT Incentive Program Application – Unless stated otherwise, each question must be answered.**

Name of Farmers' Market:

Primary Contact (Please remember to notify FPC if this person changes):

Name

Organization (if applicable)

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

Secondary Contact:

Name

Organization (if applicable)

Address

City/State/Zip

Phone

Email

Location of Market:

Address/Intersection

City/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

1. How long has the market been in operation? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Is this farmers' market registered with the Ohio Department of Agriculture?\*  YES  NO  
\*The farmers' market must be registered with the Ohio Department of Agriculture by May 1, 2013 to participate.
3. When is the market in operation (months/day/time): \_\_\_\_\_
4. Does the market currently accept:
  - a. EBT?  YES  NO  
\*If the market does not accept EBT, skip questions 5 and 6.
  - b. Credit Cards?  YES  NO
  - c. Debit Cards?  YES  NO

5. How many years or months has EBT been offered at the market? \_\_\_\_\_
6. Estimated EBT sales in 2012 \$ \_\_\_\_\_
7. Do any of your vendors or farmers accept:
- WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Coupons?  YES  NO
    - How many vendors or farmers will accept in 2013? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Coupons?  YES  NO
    - How many vendors or farmers will accept in 2013? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Number of vendors/farmers at your market: \_\_\_\_\_
9. Number of vendors that sell produce at your market: \_\_\_\_\_
10. Number of vendors that sell seeds or edible plants (edible plants include potted herbs, seedlings, and vegetable/fruit plants to be used in a home garden) at your market: \_\_\_\_\_
11. Number of vendors/farmers that sell EBT eligible products at your market \_\_\_\_\_

\*Households **CAN** use Ohio Direction Card benefits to buy:

Food for the household to eat, such as:

- Breads and cereals
- Fruit and vegetables
- Meats, fish, and poultry
- Dairy products
- Seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat

\*Households **CANNOT** use their Ohio Direction Card benefits to buy:

Any nonfood items such as:

- Beer, wine, liquor, cigarettes, or tobacco
- Pet foods
- Soaps and paper products
- Household supplies
- Cut flowers
- Vitamins and medicines
- Processed/Prepared food that will be eaten at the market
- Hot foods

12. How do you currently promote the EBT program at the market? If you have not had EBT at the market in the past, please describe how you plan to market the EBT program this upcoming market season? \*Please attach a copy of your market's promotional materials.
13. How do you promote or plan to promote EBT within the market to Ohio Direction Card customers?
14. Please list any neighborhood partnerships you have developed in the immediate community to help promote the market to residents.
15. There may be some limited funds available for markets to purchase wireless machines, tokens, banners and other promotional items. The market would be responsible for all monthly service charges for a wireless machine.
- a. Would your market be interested in a wireless machine? YES NO
  - b. Replacement market banner (for already participating markets)? YES NO
  - c. Tokens? YES NO
    - i. Type of token needed: Produce Perks Tokens Individual Market EBT Tokens
  - d. Other items to be considered by FPC \_\_\_\_\_

## Guidelines for Farmers' Markets to Participate in the Produce Perks EBT Incentive Program

In order to properly promote Produce Perks, all participating farmers' markets must commit to the following:

- Prominently display the provided *Customer Service* banner and locate the EBT Point of Service machine near the main entrance to the farmers' market or a highly visible location.
- Add a tagline to all marketing materials, 'We proudly accept EBT/Produce Perks.' All markets will have access to current logos and images to incorporate Produce Perks into their materials.
- Distribute postcards/brochures provided by the program to the immediate community at multiple sites, such as social service organizations, community development corporations, libraries, multi-service centers, ward offices, etc.
- Market managers and volunteers must wear EBT Incentive Program buttons provided by the program during market hours to help EBT customers navigate the EBT Incentive program at the market.
- Promote EBT Incentive Program in neighborhood-based newspaper (i.e. *Inside Tremont, Plain Press, Neighborhood News*) and submit a copy of this promotion by **July 1, 2013**.
- Complete monthly reports using the provided template and submit for reimbursement **by the 5<sup>th</sup> of each month. Any reports submitted after the 5<sup>th</sup> of the month will not be processed for reimbursement until the following month. Please note the prompt submission of market logs by all partners allows FPC to reimburse markets in a timely manner, aggregate data to guide the program throughout the season, and to share results with markets and partners during the season as opposed to the end.**
- Provide training and/or technical assistance to the farmers and market vendors about the EBT and EBT Incentive program as often as necessary. FPC will provide a template that you can edit for your market and share with vendors. Please inform FPC if your market hosts a beginning of the season training and vendor meeting. We can assist with program clarification for vendors.
  - Our first market season meeting with vendors is: \_\_\_\_\_

- Attend minimum of two meetings during the market season to discuss progress of program.
- Attend other meetings throughout the year to share lessons learned, discuss program improvements, etc.

**READ THOROUGHLY: By signing this agreement, participants acknowledge that they have received and read a copy of the Produce Perks EBT Incentive Program guidelines and agree to abide by these guidelines in their entirety. If an organization or market is found to be out of compliance with these guidelines, the market will respect any decision or action of the Cleveland-Cuyahoga County Food Policy Coalition including dismissal from the Produce Perks EBT Incentive Program.**

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_