

Farmers Market Nutrition Programs



*2012 Farm Bill goals and
plan*

Purpose

The FMNP was established by Congress in 1992, to provide fresh, unprepared, locally grown fruits and vegetables to WIC participants, and to expand the awareness, the use of and increase sales at farmers markets.

Overall Objective

To move the FMNP's into a consistent, uniform authorization and funding position and secure a deliberate funding increase over time.

To allow States to expand the scope of the programs to increase the use of all nutrition programs at farmers markets.

Key Factors affecting our programs



- The poor economy has put more demand on our programs
- The environment has changed the way the WFMNP programs operate. The WIC food package now allows the purchase of fruits and vegetables.
 - Therefore we need to find an easy way for small producers to operate in the general WIC program.
- We must leverage the success of the FMNPs to benefit small producers by finding a method to migrate the current FMNP farmers to work within the new WIC CVV structure.

Key Factors affecting our programs cont'd

- States need more flexibility in administering the programs to accomplish these goals.
- There needs to be better coordination within USDA to ensure a successful, sustainable effort for nutrition programs in farmers markets.
- State budget constraints have jeopardized matching requirements for the WFMNP programs. Flexibility should be allowed for those states that cannot raise the match dollars.

Overall Proposal

Authorize both WIC FMNP and Senior FMNP programs in the 2012 Farm Bill with similar authorizing language and increase funding to \$100 million annually by the end of this Farm Bill.

Expand the scope of FMNP to allow for other nutrition program activities.



Advantages

- Secures funding over a period of time.
- Reduces strain on discretionary budget.
- Provides flexibility for the Secretary to move funds where there is more demand.
- Eliminates match requirements for WIC FMNP.
- Allows states more flexibility in administering the programs.
- Moves authorization to the Agriculture Committee, therefore it is more germane to their expertise.

Disadvantages

- Merges funding sources
- Growth over time will be dictated
- Must identify offset in the farm bill negotiations

Recommended Language

Farmers Market Nutrition Programs

- (a) Unified Program for Farmers Markets--- The Secretary of Agriculture shall carry out, expand, and provide a unified and streamlined program of assistance for the purpose of providing fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs from farmers markets, roadside stands, and community supported agricultural programs to---
 - (1) low-income seniors; and
 - (2) pregnant, postpartum, and breastfeeding women, infants and children from low-income families who are participating in the WIC Special Supplemental Nutrition Program.



Language Cont

- (b) Eligibility Standards--- The Secretary shall establish income and other eligibility standards to be used in conjunction with the nutritional risk criteria in determining eligibility of individuals for participation in the program.

Language Cont

- (c) State Grants and Other Assistance--- The Secretary shall administer the Farmers Markets Nutrition Program through grants and other assistance as provided in agreements with States, including a State agency or local agency . Agreements shall provide for ---
 - (1) the issuance of coupons or vouchers to eligible seniors and women, infants, and children;
 - (2) an appropriate annual percentage limitation on the use of funds for administration; and
 - (3) such other terms and conditions as the Secretary deems appropriate and necessary including but not limited to, the expanded participation of small scale farmers in other nutrition programs.

Language Cont

- (d) The term “local agency” and “State agency” shall have the same meaning as provided in Section 17(b)(6) and (13), respectively, of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, as amended.
- (e) Matching Funds--- The Secretary shall not require a State contribution or match to remain eligible for participation in the program.
- (f) Taxation and Exclusion of Benefits--- States receiving funds under the program shall ensure that no State or local taxes are collected within the State on purchases of food with coupons or vouchers distributed under the program. The value of any benefit provided to any recipient under the program shall not be considered to be income or resources for any purpose under any Federal, State, or local law.

Language Cont.

- (g) Regulations--- The Secretary shall promulgate such regulations as the Secretary considers necessary to carry out the farmers market nutrition program under this section.
- (h) Funding--- Of the funds of the Commodity Credit Corporation, the Secretary of Agriculture shall use to carry out and expand the unified farmers market nutrition program \$100,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2013 through 2018.
- (i) Repeals--- Section 17(m) of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966, and section 4402 of the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act are repealed.

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