



Guidelines and Procedures for Rhode Island SFMNP Farmers

Farmer & Vendor Handbook
Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture
Rhode Island Department of Elderly Affairs

How a Farmer Becomes Eligible to Participate in the Rhode Island SFMNP

Bona Fide SFMNP eligible farmers are:

- Farmers who are members of a farmer’s market organization that has been authorized as an SFMNP sponsor.
- Bona fide Rhode Island farmers, who individually sell SFMNP eligible fresh fruit, vegetables and fresh cooking herbs at the farmers market or roadside stand.
- If market rules permit a farmer to purchase locally grown produce for resale to supplement what he/she grows or intends to grow, such a farmer will be considered a bona fide farmer and eligible for SFMNP authorization only if he/she grows or intends to grow at least 10% (by volume) of the produce offered for sale at any time.

Rules and Procedures of the Program

Once authorized as an RI SFMNP Farmer, the farmer must abide by the following requirements:

1. Accept SFMNP checks ONLY for the purchase of **locally grown fresh fruits, farm fresh vegetables** (including non-painted pumpkins), and **fresh cooking herbs**.
 - a. “Locally grown” means fresh fruits and vegetables, grown on RI farms. Fresh fruits and vegetables from adjacent states (if in accordance with the bylaws of the market) may be considered” locally grown” if sold by a farmer who farms in Rhode Island in addition to the nearby State.
 - b. List of Allowed Fruits and Vegetables

Allowed Fresh Vegetables		Allowed Fresh Fruit
Asparagus	Lettuce	Apples
Beans	Mushrooms	Blueberries
Beets	Okra	Blackberries
Broccoli	Onions	Cantaloupes
Brussels Sprouts	Parsnips	Cherries
Cabbage	Peas	Cranshaw Melon
Carrots	Peppers	Elderberries
Cauliflower	Potatoes	Gooseberries
Celery	Pumpkins	Grapes
Collard Greens	Radishes	Honeydew Melon
Corn	Rhubarb	Mulberries
Cucumbers	Rutabaga	Peaches
Endive	Scallions	Pears
Eggplant	Spinach	Plums
Garlic	Squash	Raspberries
Green Beans	Swiss Chard	Strawberries
Greens	Tomatoes	Watermelon
Fresh Herbs	Turnips	
Kale	Yams	
Leeks	Zucchini	HONEY

c. List of Foods **Not Allowed**

- i. Citrus and tropical fruits cannot be purchased with the Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program checks. These fruits are not grown in Rhode Island and other adjacent states.

Citrus & Tropical Fruits Not Allowed	Other Foods Not Allowed
Banana Grapefruit Lemons Limes Mangos Oranges Pineapples Tangerines	Baked goods Cheese Cider Dried herbs Eggs Flowers Gourds Jams Nuts Painted pumpkins

- d. If you have grown produce that does not appear on either list, or if you have a question as to the eligibility of an item, please call the Department of Agriculture at (401) 222-2781.
2. Visibly Post “We Accept SFMNP Farmers Market Checks” signs provided by the Department (or reproductions) at all times during market operations.
- a. The purpose of this sign is to ensure that check recipients can easily locate SFMNP participating farmers and use their SFMNP checks.
3. Accept SFMNP checks only at authorized farmers markets or roadside stands at which the Farmer has a signed Farmer Participation Agreement.
- a. Farmers must not discriminate against check recipients in price, quality, or service.
- b. Farmers must sell eligible products to check recipients at no more than the current price charged to other customers and offer check recipients the same courtesies as other customers.
- i. The Farmer may, however, charge a lower price.
- c. Farmers must not charge sales tax to check recipients in check transactions.
4. **DO NOT** issue cash change to check recipients for purchases made exclusively with checks.
- a. If the amount of a purchase made with checks is less than \$5.00 or a multiple of \$5.00, farmers must add additional eligible products of the customer’s choice to make up the difference.
- i. If the purchase is less than \$5.00, for example \$4.50, add extra fruit or vegetable to make the purchase an even \$5.00
5. Accept SFMNP checks from check recipients between June 1 and October 31.
- a. Check recipients will present their checks to SFMNP Farmers after they select their produce.
- b. Check recipients must sign their checks upon presenting to Farmer as payment.

- c. Checks without signatures will be returned to the Farmer from the bank.
6. Treat SFMNP checks like cash and safeguard them from possible loss or theft prior to redemption. All SFMNP checks have a face value of \$5.00 and are worth \$5.00 for the purchase of locally grown fresh fruits, farm fresh vegetables, fresh cooking herbs, and honey (see List of Allowed Fruits and Vegetables Table 1.b).
 7. Cancel each check on the front right side with the assigned numbered SFMNP Cancellation Stamp.
 - a. Use your SFMP stamp containing your Identifier vendor number.
 - i. Only one market stamp will be ordered for each vendor. Stamps may not be duplicated.
 - b. Stamp in the right hand box on the check.
 - i. Farmers must stamp each check in the designated area on the check with **black ink only**.
 - c. Farmers must use their unique stamp at all Farmers Markets where SFMNP checks are accepted.
 8. All checks must be deposited **by Date on Back of Check** or they will be rejected by the bank.
 9. Be advised of all important dates:
 - a. SFMNP checks may be accepted, deposited or cashed beginning June 1.
 - b. The last day farmers may accept checks from check recipients is October 31.
 - c. Deposit or cash SFMNP checks by the date on the back of the SFMNP check. Any deposits after this date will not be paid.
 10. SFMNP Farmers must comply with all required trainings provided by the Department.

Program Monitoring, Violations and Sanctions

1. Participating Farmers will be monitored by the market and by the State, for compliance with the program Rules and Procedures. Monitoring may include undercover compliance buys conducted by State staff.
2. Acceptance of checks for ineligible products, returning change to or cashing checks for recipients, redemption of checks on behalf of unauthorized vendors or non-farmer vendors (i.e. trafficking), or discriminating against check recipients in price, quality, or service are grounds for suspension or termination of participation in the SFMNP and the market, and could subject the violator to prosecution under applicable federal, state, or local laws.
3. If improper check acceptance is observed or suspected, report it immediately to the Department of Environmental Management Division of Agriculture at (401) 222-2781, and assist the Department in any investigation.

Complaint Procedures for Civil Rights Violations

Farmers/Vendors that receive complaints from SFMNP check recipients alleging civil rights violations must refer check recipients to the USDA nondiscrimination statement as follows:

“In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the [USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form](#), (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

(1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;

(2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or

(3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.”

Assurances

The State Agency hereby agrees that it will comply with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), Age Discrimination Act of 1975 (42 U.S.C. 610 et seq.); all provisions required by the implementing regulations of the Department of Agriculture; Department of Justice Enforcement Guidelines; and FNS directives and guidelines to the effect that no person shall, on the ground of race, color, national origin, age, sex, or handicap, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or otherwise be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity for which the Agency receives Federal financial assistance from FNS; and hereby gives assurance that it will immediately take measures necessary to effectuate this agreement.

By providing this assurance, the State Agency agrees to compile data, maintain records and submit reports as required to permit effective enforcement of the nondiscrimination laws, and to permit Department personnel during normal working hours to review such records, books and accounts as needed to ascertain compliance with the non-discrimination laws. If there are any violations of this assurance, the Department of Agriculture

shall have the right to seek judicial enforcement of this assurance.

This assurance is given in consideration of and for the purpose of obtaining any and all Federal financial assistance, grants and loans of Federal funds, reimbursable expenditures, grant or donation of Federal property and interest in property, the detail of Federal personnel, reimbursable expenditures, grant or donation of Federal property and interest in such property or the furnishing of services without consideration or at a nominal consideration, or at a consideration which is reduced for the purpose of assisting the recipient, or in recognition of the public interest to be served by such sale, lease, or furnishing of services to the recipient, or any improvements made with Federal financial assistance extended to the State Agency by the Department. This includes any Federal agreement, arrangement, or other contract which has as one of its purposes the provision of assistance such as food, cash assistance extended in reliance on the representations and agreements made in this assurance.

This assurance is binding on the State Agency, its successors, transferees, and assignees as long as it receives assistance or retains possession of any assistance from the Department. The person or persons whose signatures appear below are authorized to sign this assurance on the behalf of the State Agency.

For Problems, Questions or Suggestions

Any problems, questions or suggestions that you may have regarding the market should be directed to the Department of Agriculture at (401) 222-2781.

Any questions regarding the **Senior Farmer's Market Nutrition Program** should be directed to the SFMNP Manager at **(401) 222-2781**.

Help us keep track of money spent by depositing your checks as soon as possible.