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News Release

Technology Links Food Stamp Recipients and Farmers Markets: NY Markets Now Accepting Electronic EBT/Food Stamp/SNAP Transactions; New Informational Website Launches Today

8/13/09 Syracuse, NY – Two technological advances are giving low-income individuals improved access to fresh, wholesome farmers market food. Wireless technology allows hundreds of New York farmers markets to accept EBT/Food Stamp/SNAP cards. To educate cardholders on using their benefits at market, a new Web site – www.snaptomarket.com – has just launched.

Each participating farmers market utilizes wireless, card-reading terminals set up at the market manager's booth to accept EBT/Food Stamp/Snap cards. At the terminal, cardholders exchange their benefits for wooden tokens that can be used as cash throughout the market.

The token program and process is outlined in detail at www.snaptomarket.com where benefit recipients can also acquire information for making the most of their market visit. The site features recipes, seasonality charts, produce storage and cleaning tips, and a virtual market locator tool allows cardholders to find the market closest to them.

"Now that wireless terminals are available at so many markets, we need to ensure cardholders are encouraged to experience the farmers market. To do this, many are in need of additional instructions and resources. That's why we created www.snaptomarket.com," said Diane Eggert, Executive Director of the Farmers Market Federation of NY.

Both cardholders and vendors are responding well to the token system. The NY Farmers Market Federation counts 132 involved markets, a 53% increase over the number of participating markets in 2008.

"The wireless terminal technology has allowed us to create a 'mini-economy' inside the market that benefits both vendors and cardholders. The tokens are easy on vendors, who do not need their own terminals. And cardholders appreciate access to the fresh food as well the friendly farmers and vendors ready to share recipes and advice," said Diane Eggert.

Both the wireless transaction program and the informative Web site are proof that technology is a powerful tool for connecting low-income individuals to healthful food and the community experience you can only get at an New York farmers market.

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The Farmers Market Federation of NY is a grassroots organization comprised of market managers, farmers, sponsors and supporters who are dedicated to promoting local farmers markets throughout New York State. Through innovative partnerships, services and programs – such as the one described above – the Federation aims to benefit the farmers, consumers and local communities each farmers market serves. For further information, please contact Lindsay Ott at Designworks Advertising at 315.431.0808