



COMMONWEALTH OF VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT FOR AGING AND REHABILITATIVE SERVICES

KATHRYN A. HAYFIELD
Commissioner

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March 24, 2023

From: Kelly Wright, RDN
DARS S/FMNP Coordinator
1610 Forest Ave.; Suite 100
Henrico, VA 23229

Telephone: 804-662-9319
Email: sfmnp@dars.virginia.gov

Dear Farmer:

Please complete the *Farm Market Fresh* (Virginia's Senior & WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (S/FMNP) **Farmer Application** and **Farmer Agreement**.

Both forms must be completed, signed, and returned to: sfmnp@dars.virginia.gov

The Department for Aging and Rehabilitative Services-Office for Aging Services (DARS-OAS) and DARS-OAS' agricultural partners: Virginia Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, (VDACS); Virginia State University, (VSU), and Virginia Farmers Market Association, (VAFMA); along with Virginia Department of Health (VDH) WIC programs and the local area agencies on aging (AAAs) have teamed up to provide the Senior and WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (S/FMNP), also referred to as *Farm Market Fresh*. This program helps Virginia fruit and vegetable farmers and at the same time provides our participants with fresh, local fruits and vegetables.

The Agricultural Partner's local representative for your area will work with you in this program and will review your application.

Farmers will apply to be authorized to accept S/FMNP checks. If you are approved, you will enter into a Farmer Agreement signed by DARS-OAS. The Agreement authorizes you as a Farmer to accept the S/FMNP checks.

The Handbook for Farmers that provides all the information, vital rules, and procedures about farmer participation in the S/FMNP has been updated. Please carefully read the whole Handbook before completing your application. Especially note the following highlights:

- Page 6-7, the **Farmer Definitions** and make sure that you meet the criteria.
- Page 7 the lists of **Eligible and Ineligible foods**. Not all farm products are considered eligible foods.

- Page 8, the **Self-Grown** requirement. SFMNP authorizes Farmers who grow and sell their own produce.
- Page 14-15, the **Locations** where you may accept the checks.
- Page 16-19, the **Violations and Sanctions** for SFMNP rules and guidelines.

Completed applications and agreements returned to DARS by April 20, 2023, will be processed in time for the June 1, 2023, start date. Applications and agreements received later will be accumulated, reviewed, and processed at the beginning of the next calendar month. No applications will be accepted after July 15, 2023.

Your application will be reviewed and the information you provide will be verified. It is possible that our Agricultural Partners will conduct a farm visit to ensure that the produce you list for sale on your application is in fact being planted and harvested. The on-farm visit is also a good time for training or for you to get questions answered face-to-face. This year, there will also be an opportunity to participate in a virtual training for new farmers.

If this is your first year in the program, DARS and/or our Agricultural Partners will arrange a time for you to be trained. Interactive training on S/FMNP rules and procedures is required for first-year Farmers before they are authorized. Farmers who are continuing from the previous year are responsible for studying and understanding S/FMNP rules and procedures on their own. Please let your agricultural representative or I know if you have any questions or would like updated training.

If authorized, you will be mailed a copy of the fully signed Agreement, your 2023 sign, ID stamp if needed, and ink refill if needed. You are **not** allowed to accept any S/FMNP checks until you receive your authorization Agreement, sign, and the other materials **or** prior to the start-up of the program on June 1, 2023.

If you have any questions for me, please don't hesitate to reach me at 1-800-552-3402, 804-662-9319 (direct), or kelly.wright@dars.virginia.gov

Thank you for your support of *Farm Market Fresh*. We hope to work with you to provide fresh, locally grown produce to Virginia's citizens.

Sincerely,

Kelly Wright
Program Coordinator