

GENERAL INFORMATION SYSTEM
Center for Employment & Economic Supports

July 31, 2012
Page: 1

TO: Local District Commissioners; FS Directors; TA Directors

FROM: Phyllis Morris, Acting Deputy Commissioner

SUBJECT: New York State FreshConnect Program for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients

EFFECTIVE DATE: Immediately

CONTACT PERSON: SNAP/Food Stamp Bureau at 1-800-343-8859 x 3-1469

Governor Andrew M. Cuomo recently announced the New York State FreshConnect initiative. The FreshConnect Program, which is administered by the New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, strives to enhance the nutrition and economic health of New York State by increasing access to New York farm products for residents in underserved areas. FreshConnect projects include markets, Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) programs, and food distribution systems.

The FreshConnect Program at participating farmer's markets makes it easier and more rewarding for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients to use their SNAP benefits (effective August 29th, SNAP will be the new name for the Food Stamp Program) to purchase locally grown, farm fresh products. The program benefits local farmers and farmers' markets as well.

To assist the farmers' markets, the State again will be providing FreshConnect checks to participating markets. The checks are a \$2 rebate coupon given for every \$5 in SNAP benefit spent by a customer at a participating farmers' market. The \$2 FreshConnect check can be used at the issuing farmers' market to make additional purchases of SNAP-eligible items. The SNAP recipients only need to go to the EBT table at a participating farmers' market to receive a \$2 coupon for every \$5 of SNAP benefits spent.

FreshConnect checks are now available at participating farmers' markets.

A full list of FreshConnect-supported projects, including operating dates, locations, contacts and more information can be found at <http://freshconnect.ny.gov/>