

Subject: Benefit Management**Item: Issuance of Benefits on-Site at Farmers' Markets**

PURPOSE:

To establish procedures for issuing benefits at farmers' markets for the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provided by the California Department of Public Health/Women, Infants and Children Division (CDPH/WIC).

POLICY:

- I. Local agencies (LA) may choose to issue FMNP benefits at nearby authorized farmers' markets during the FMNP season by following the W PPM 800-41 FMNP Benefit Security and Integrity and WPPM 800-43 Issuing FMNP Benefits. Issuing FMNP benefits at farmers' markets requires additional staff time, costs, effort and coordination by LA staff and the farmers' market(s). If the LA chooses to distribute FMNP benefit at the market, the following required procedures must be followed.

PROCEDURE(S):

- I. LAs must
 - A. Ensure that LA has adequate FMNP administrative funds to cover staff costs associated with issuing benefits at farmers' markets, especially if the markets are open on days and times outside of WIC normal business hours.
 - B. Ensure FMNP benefit are securely stored at all times and are never left unattended while at the market or while transporting benefits to and from the market (WPPM 800-41). For example, the benefits must be stored in a locked box with the keys accessible only to authorized staff person(s).
 - C. Instruct participants on how to use FMNP benefits (WPPM 800-20).
 - D. Provide nutrition education on the use and nutritional value of fruits and vegetables to all participants before FMNP benefits are offered, either at an earlier appointment within their current certification period or at the farmers' market site.
 - E. Consistently document nutrition education offered to WIC participants in the participant's WIC management information system (WIC MIS) record (WPPM 400-07) or in the *Individual Nutrition Education Plan (INEP)* before FMNP benefits are distributed. Staff may choose to provide nutrition education to participants at the market to be counted as a secondary nutrition education contact.

Subject: Benefit Management**Item: Issuance of Benefits on-Site at Farmers' Markets**

- F. Complete the *FMNP Benefit Issuance Log* and have participants sign at the market for every benefit FMNP benefit received
 - G. Issue FMNP benefit by following the Job Aid on Separation of duties for FMNP (WPPM 950-02).
 - H. Issue only at WIC authorized farmers' markets. Contact the CDPH/WIC Program to verify the market's participation status in the current FMNP season.
 - I. Select market(s) based on consistent, equitable criteria without favoring one market over another.
- II. Once a market is identified, contact the market manager to ask for assistance, and approval for setting up a WIC distribution site at the market for FMNP benefit issuance. The following may be discussed.
- A. Dates of issuance. Keep the market manager informed of any changes to the date(s) you plan to issue FMNP benefits at the market. Many farmers bring extra fruits and vegetables to the market on this day to accommodate the increase in sales.
 - B. Times of issuance.
 - C. Space needed/crowd control.
 - D. Signage at the market to show location of distribution table.
 - E. Electrical outlet for laptop, if applicable.
 - F. WiFi connection, if applicable.
 - G. Announcement flyer at WIC site and market. Be sure to include the beginning and ending dates the FMNP benefit can be used on the flyer.
- III. Ensure that staff issue FMNP benefits using WIC MIS FMNP issuance screen at the market.
- A. A laptop with access to WIC MIS is highly recommended.
 - B. Redeemed FMNP benefits that have not been entered into WIC MIS will appear as errors in a report received by the CDPH/WIC Program.
 - C. In the absence of a laptop with WiFi access to WIC MIS, LA must enter the FMNP benefit into WIC MIS immediately upon return to the office or within 24 hours of issuance at the market.
 - D. If only one staff person from the LA distributed FMNP benefits at the market, another staff person must enter the benefits into WIC MIS upon return to the office.
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- IV. Develop procedures for informing FMNP participants of the location, time and days that you will be at the market(s).
- V. Develop procedures for issuing FMNP benefits at a market. Consider the following:
 - A. Communicating how you will issue the FMNP benefit to participants at the market, including the need for participants to bring their WIC ID folder to the market.
 - B. Developing a plan for providing and documenting fruit and vegetable nutrition education and recording that education in the participant's WIC MIS file.
 - C. Ensuring that participants who receive FMNP benefits at the market have received fruit and vegetable nutrition education during their current certification period.
 - D. Avoiding double issuance when access to the internet or WIC MIS screens is not readily available.
 - E. Providing FMNP instructional materials to distribute at the market.
 - F. Distributing FMNP benefits on a weekend.
- VI. Ensure all potential FMNP recipients:
 - A. Meet the participant eligibility criteria for the FMNP benefit. (WPPM 800-10) FMNP Recipient Eligibility.
 - B. Receive instruction how to use the FMNP benefit and what the FMNP benefit can be used to purchase.

AUTHORITY:

[7 CFR §248](#)

CROSS REFERENCE:

WPPM 800-10 FMNP Recipient Eligibility
WPPM 800-20 Educating Participants on Using FMNP Checks
WPPM 800-41 FMNP Check Security and Integrity
WPPM 800-43 Issuance of FMNP Checks
WPPM 950-02 JOB AID for Separation of Duties