



# Minnesota Farmers' Market Association

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## Responsibilities

MFMA supports all farmers' markets and vendors in MN: between 250-300 markets and 2,750-3,000 vendors. Our primary programs are designed to grow farmers, develop profitable and sustainable vendors and markets, strive for food access for all, build resilient communities

## Initiatives

1. SNAP EBT and Market Bucks
  - a. Markets that accept SNAP EBT can participate in Market Bucks
  - b. Market Bucks is a legislatively funded program that doubles SNAP purchases made at farmers markets, up to \$10 each visit
  - c. 99 Markets participated in 2018
  - d. \$179,563 in EBT sales were matched by \$198,143 in Market Bucks and gift certificates
  - e. \$676,093 in local economic activity was generated
  - f. Accepting EBT establishes the groundwork for Power of Produce, Veggie Rx, and other healthy eating incentives that help low-income families and individuals
  - g. Every dollar in SNAP benefits spent at the market generates \$1.79 in economic activity in the community while supporting local producers, small businesses, and entrepreneurs
2. Farmers' markets as food hubs
  - a. 11 in pilot; just completed Year 1 of the 2-year grant.
    - i. Aitkin
    - ii. Cannon Falls
    - iii. Chisago City
    - iv. Cook
    - v. Elk River
    - vi. Grand Rapids
    - vii. Lake City
    - viii. Richfield
    - ix. Rochester
    - x. Wabasha
    - xi. Willmar
  - b. MDA wholesale food handler license \$57, food safety requirements.
  - c. The market is the legal entity that buys and aggregates food products from farmers and then sells and delivers the aggregated order to institutions (restaurants, schools, grocery stores, etc.).

- d. The theory is that farmers don't always have enough volume to meet a large order from an institution, so the market can group product from several farmers to make the order. Additionally, it makes it easier for an institution to buy 'direct' from their farmers, but efficiently dealing with just one vendor, the market.
  - e. In Year 1, with 2.5 months of operation, 7 of the 11 markets had in NEW sales \$6,223 worth of food products, aggregated from their farmers, sold to institutions.
  - f. Year 2 will look at financial analyses for farmers, markets, buyers.
  - g. End goal: identify where and how this business model best fits for farmers, markets, and institutional buyers.
3. Public Policy
- a. 2014 Safe Food Sampling at Farmers' Markets Law 28A.151
  - b. 2015 Cottage Foods Law 28A.152
  - c. Proposing 2019:
    - i. Amendment to Cottage Foods Law
    - ii. Cottage Pet Treat Exemption
4. Expand Market Metrics project statewide