Fundraising Strategies for SNAP Match Programs
at Farmers Markets

Listed here are examples to serve as ideas for other farmers markets to adapt for their SNAP match fundraising efforts. Most of the examples are from Oregon and Washington. Other helpful examples, templates, and information can be found in the WSFMA EBT Incentive Toolkit.

Business Sponsorship

Banner Advertising

Port Angeles Farmers Market, WA
The Port Angeles Farmers Market has found their best fundraiser to be in the form of a sponsor banner. For 3 years now they have sold advertising space on a large banner (13 feet long, 5.5 feet high) that they hang at every one of their year-round markets. Advertising squares are sold at 5 sponsor-levels from $150 to $1500. The first year they were able to raise $5,500 and the second year they raised $6,100. Compared to other types of fundraisers they found this to take less work from the market board and the market manager.

Printing costs were about $450 per banner, though cheaper prices can be found online. The manager did all of the banner design and they used a local design artist to print the banners. They found that compensating the manager for the design time cost the market only half of a design artist's fee.

Percent of Sales from Business Sponsor

Create a Community Giving Day or Week by partnering with a local grocery store or other business for a percent of their sales on a given day or period of time.

Business Sponsorship

Tillamook Farmers Market, OR
The Tillamook Farmers Market offers a variety of advertising benefits to business sponsors.

Sales at Market

The Lemonade Project

Newport Farmers Market, OR
For 5 years, since 2012, the Newport Farmers Market has a booth where volunteers make and sell fresh squeezed lemonade as a fundraiser specifically for their SNAP match program. They chose lemonade because it is simple to make, easy for volunteers to do, there's a high profit margin, the lemons are not highly perishable, and customers like it. On an average market day they sell about 84 cups of lemonade, which makes $168 in profit per week after $42 in expenses (cost is 50 cents per cup; sold for $2.50 per cup). On a hot day in Newport, with temperatures over 80 degrees, sales can jump up to 255 cups in one market, corresponding to a profit of over $500.

The startup costs were about $1,200 for The Lemonade Project at Newport Farmers Market. To run the project they need 1) a point person to serve as volunteer coordinator and provide volunteer training; 2) Two to four volunteers each shift; 3) A certified kitchen to make the simple syrup (or can be purchased); 4) A storage location for the "kit"; 5) A shopper for ice, lemons, cups, etc.; 5) Interface with public health department for local regulations.

Klamath Falls Farmers Market adopted the same model and raised over $1,700 in 2015.

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Logo Wear

The farmers market can put their logo on merchandise for sale at the information booth. Various markets do this on cloth shopping bags, aprons, hats, t-shirts, or mugs. All or a portion of the profits could go to SNAP matching.

Calendar

A calendar of images from the farmers market. Best for year round markets who can sell the calendar at the end/beginning of the calendar year.

Auctions and Raffles

Pie Walk with Pie & Tea Booth

River People Farmers Market, Astoria, OR

The Pie Walk is festive component of the Pie & Tea booth run by the River People Farmers Market as a fundraiser specifically for their SNAP match program. Patterned after a cake walk the Pie Walk is how they auction off 2 pies each market. Tickets for the pie walk are $2 each and they sell up to 25 tickets. Corresponding with the 25 tickets, the numbers from 1 to 25 are drawn in chalk in a circuit through the farmers market. The pie walk runs twice in the 4 hour market. Those who bought tickets stand on the number of the ticket they purchased, then the musician playing at the farmers market is enlisted to play for a bit while the ticket holders circulate the numbered circuit. When the music suddenly stops a number is drawn (from a collection of numbered pingpong balls) and a pie goes to the ticket holder standing on that number.

The pies are made each week by volunteers in the commercial kitchen operated by the nonprofit North Coast Food Web (NCFW) that organizes the River People Farmers Market. NCFW purchases some of the ingredients for the pies and some ingredients are donated. Tea is donated by a local tea shop and made into iced tea for sale. They make 6 pies each week, auction off 2 in the Pie Walk, and sell the rest at $3/slice. They go through about 2 or 3 gallons of tea, sold at $3 per cup.

Quilt Raffle and Other Raffle Items

Umpqua Valley Farmers' Market, Roseburg, OR

The Umpqua Valley Farmers' Market sells raffle tickets at the manager's booth. They advertise with a poster at the market, and on their Facebook page. First they raffled off a quilt that one of their board members made. The second raffle was a 3-night stay at a beach house at the Oregon Coast. "Both were awesome and we raised nearly $500, between the two."

Raffles

Raffle off products from farmers market vendors or other business donation.

Events

Online Fundraising

Montavilla Farmers Market, Portland, OR

In 2015 Montavilla Farmers Market created an online fundraising event that raised over $7,000 from 90 donors. On the fundraising page they included testimonials from SNAP shoppers, a

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video, and equated different donation levels to how many meals they would be providing to SNAP shoppers.

Montavilla Farmers Market has found the strengths of their board and volunteer resources have been in events: both real ones and the online campaign. In order to avoid having their followers get burned out on one online campaign after another they will switch it up with a live event in 2016.

Empty Bowls Dinner

Montavilla Farmers Market, Portland, OR
In 2016 Montavilla Farmers Market will host an Empty Bowls dinner event in collaboration with local chefs preparing the meal and a local brewery hosting the location. A silent auction is also planned.

Partner Non-Profit

Fundraising Assistance, Church Congregations

Tillamook, OR
To support SNAP match in four farmers markets in Tillamook County the non-profit Food Roots coordinated with a local pastor who helped raise funds from several different church congregations he was connected with.

Fiscal Sponsorship

Tillamook Farmers Market, OR
Faced with a midseason SNAP match funding shortfall, the Tillamook Farmers Market called their state senator to describe the success of the program and request the funding shortfall. The Senator was able to donate those funds by working with a local non-profit as a fiscal sponsor.

A fiscal sponsor is a third party nonprofit that acts as a financial pass-through from the funder to the farmers market and can enable the farmers market to pursue funds ordinarily restricted to organizations with 501(c)(3) status. The WSFMA EBT Incentive Toolkit has more information and resources on page 17.

Donations

Donation Jar

At the market information booth. Clearly advertise what the donations will be used for.

Community Members and Organizations

Oregon City Farmers Market
The Oregon City Farmers Market gives presentations to local philanthropic organizations to describe and request support for their SNAP match and Power Of Produce programs. This has worked year after year, especially with the Rotary and Optimists groups.

They also use a "Donate" button on their web site and solicit donations, in particular around the end of the calendar year.

They have also held a once-a-year Craft/Vintage Day and the booth fees collected from the craft/vintage vendors (usually about 12 vendors) were designated for SNAP match.