

## USU Extension Collaborates With Utahns Against Hunger To Receive Grant

Those who use the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as food stamps, will benefit from a recent grant awarded to Utahns Against Hunger by USDA's Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive program. The \$247,038 two-year grant will provide additional resources for Utah SNAP recipients to purchase fruits and vegetables.



Carrie Durward, Utah State University Extension nutrition specialist and assistant professor, co-wrote the grant with Utahns Against Hunger, the Utah Department of Workforce Services, the Utah Department of Health and Salt Lake City Corp. Through the grant, the community partners will implement a Utah Double-up Food Bucks program that will provide a match of up to \$10 for SNAP customers to purchase additional produce at farmers markets.

Durward said the benefits will make a huge difference in the lives of SNAP beneficiaries and the funds will make it much more affordable for SNAP participants to purchase local fresh fruits and vegetables.

"We did a pilot study at the Cache County Gardener's Market last season, and I was amazed at the responses we got from our participants," she said. "The farmers market incentives made it possible for them to afford the healthy fruits and vegetables they wanted to feed their families. One participant told us how the incentives made it possible for her to 'treat' her children to whatever they asked for at the farmers market, without worrying about how to fit more expensive items like fresh raspberries into her food budget."

In addition to the benefits the grant provides for SNAP customers, farmers will also benefit from increased business, and food dollars will stay within the local economy, Durward said. The Michigan Double-Up Food Bucks program has reported huge impacts, with increased sales at farmers markets and large economic benefit to the local economies.

Currently 21 Utah farmers markets accept SNAP benefits. The program will provide matching funds at each of these markets as an incentive to attract further SNAP benefit customers and purchases.

Farmers markets must be approved through USDA to accept SNAP benefits, and Utahns Against Hunger has funding available for those markets interested in pursuing a license to accept SNAP. For more information, contact Marti Woolford at 801-328-2561, [woolford@uah.org](mailto:woolford@uah.org).

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