



## Farmers Market EBT Program



### How to set up EBT in your Farmers Market

Want to set-up your farmers market to accept EBT? The following ten steps will show you how.

**1. Assess your market and community.** Increasing access to fresh, local, and healthy foods for our island families in need is a worthy project, but not every farmers market is ready.

- Make sure you have enough vendors that sell allowable items.
- Does your current clientele include families that use EBT? If not, do you think you can attract EBT users to your market?

**2. Discuss the idea and plan with your market manager, farmer-vendors, farmers market board members, customers, and local community leaders.** If all of your stakeholders are on board with start-up and sustainability of the program, proceed. See the SNAP/EBT at Your Farmers Market: [Seven Steps for Success](#) publication. If you need funding, try [Kaiser Permanente](#), [Wholesome Wave](#), or [USDA-FMPP](#). Farmers markets across the state have received assistance from these.

**3. Create an EBT Systems Plan.** Read through this [USDA handbook](#). Assign staff or volunteers to be responsible for set-up, cashiering, accounting and project management. Decide if you will use a scrip, token, or receipt system. Create a sequenced plan. Make sure your vendors, market manager, and board agree.

**4. Apply for a FNS license.** Go online to [USDA-FNS application](#). Figure out what information you'll need and collect it. In order to get your license, you will need one person to give their name, address and SSN number, and take financial and logistical responsibility for the EBT program. For eligibility requirements [click here](#). If you have questions, contact the USDA, Food and Nutrition Service, Honolulu Office main number: 808 541 2857.

**5. Obtain a EBT POS machine.** If you have access to electricity and a landline, you can get a free machine with all transaction fees paid from the state. The State of Hawai'i also has a limited number of free wireless machines that do not require electricity or a land line and which cover transaction fees. Contact Ginet U'ilani Hayes, Hawai'i EBT Manager, Department of Human Services on 808 586-5739 or e-mail [ghayes@dhs.hawaii.gov](mailto:ghayes@dhs.hawaii.gov). If you plan to purchase a POS machine, budget \$1,000 and monthly transaction fees per purchase.

**6. Order your scrip, tokens, or receipt books.** You can look at the scrip that Hilo Farmers Market, Kino'ole Farmers Market, Volcano Farmers Market and Hawi Farmers Market have designed. The primary considerations when designing scrip are durability and difficulty reproducing. The receipt system has been successful at small size markets. Wooden tokens are used in Kauai and Maui, and are affordable.

**7. Develop your signage.** You will need signs for each participating Farmer-Vendor booth. You will also want banner(s) at the entrance to your market and at the EBT cashier. To promote the launch of the program, you will probably want to create posters or flyers to distribute in the community. If you would like to join our marketing group, we can add your market to the Hawai'i Island EBT at Farmers Market poster and promotions.

**8. Train your Farmer-Vendors.** A mandatory training for vendors is necessary before the program is launched. Having the training at the end of a regular market day is the most convenient for most vendors. Agenda items should include explaining the program, going over the system, having vendors sign an agreement, and handing out booth signs and flyers. The Market Manager will need to train new vendors who come into the program later. It is imperative that vendors are properly trained, as they will be key educators of customers.

**9. Marketing.** Join our marketing group and get more for your advertising dollar. Before advertising in your community, soft launch your program in order to work out the system. Distribute flyers and posters in key locations—the local SNAP office, schools, social service agencies and community bulletin boards.

**10. Ongoing Sustainability.** You may have ongoing costs—an EBT cashier, accountant, transaction fees, signage and scrip replacement. Some of the human cost can be covered by volunteers or farmers market staff. For hard costs, an increase in booth fees for vendors who experience success with the program is a good way to cover costs. Alternately, community partners might also be able to provide you with funding or personnel time.

If you would like to be matched with a farmers market manager that can mentor you through the process, please e-mail [Melanie Bondera](mailto:Melanie.Bondera).

If you would like to be listed on this Web site on the [Farmers Market](#) page, please e-mail the [webmaster](#) and request this.