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Marketing & Production

Food Stamp Customers to Receive NY Fresh Checks as Incentive to Shop at Kingston Farmers Market

Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County's Eat Smart, Live Well Program has announced that beginning June 1, food stamp customers will receive an additional \$5 to spend at the Kingston Farmers Market located in Uptown Kingston on Wall Street. When food stamp customers purchase a minimum of \$5 in food stamp tokens to use at the market, they are given an additional \$5 in the form of a NY Fresh Check. The Kingston Farmers Market opens Saturday, May 24.

Part of a statewide effort to attract food stamp customers to farmers markets, the NY Fresh Checks program will run from May 1, 2008 through November 15, 2008. Consumers can visit the farmers market and receive a NY Fresh Check each week with their minimum purchase of \$5 in food stamp tokens. (Limited to one NY Fresh Check for market day.)

The ultimate goal of the NY Fresh Checks program is to bring food stamp customers into their local farmers market. There they can see for themselves that farmers market food is reasonably priced, extremely fresh and an excellent alternative or supplement to the grocery or convenience store, says Diane Eggert, Executive Director of the Farmers Market Federation of New York.

In addition to benefiting food stamp customers, the NY Fresh Checks program is advantageous for market farmers. Market farmers will be able to redeem the NY Fresh Checks for 100% of their value through funds from the Humpty Dumpty Institute and the Farmers Market Federation of NY. And farmers will also benefit from increased customer traffic that the NY Fresh Checks program will draw.

For more information contact Eileen Polk, Nutrition Educator at Cornell Cooperative Extension of Ulster County at 845-340-3990.

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