

**WIC  
FARMERS' MARKET  
NUTRITION PROGRAM  
PROJECT STAFF MANUAL**

Revised April, 2007



## **A. Goals of the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP):**

- To provide fresh, nutritious, unprepared foods, such as fruits and vegetables, from farmers' markets to women, infants and children who are nutritionally at risk. (*P.L. 102-314*)
- To expand the awareness and use of farmers' markets and increase sales at such markets. (*P.L. 102-314*)

## **B. Staff Responsibilities**

Staff will provide overall responsibility for:

1. Designate FMNP contact person
2. Draft issuance
3. FMNP nutrition education
4. Soliciting farmers' markets and creating site location sheet
5. Vendor training
6. Vendor monitoring
7. Disseminate FMNP correspondence from the State WIC FMNP Coordinator to appropriate staff including the WIC FMNP Update
8. Reporting FMNP activities to WIC FMNP Coordinator
9. Distributing participant evaluation
10. Manage FMNP fiscal reporting requirements

## **C. FMNP Food Package**

The FMNP food package consists of a specified number of drafts with specific denominations preprinted on the drafts. The total amount of the FMNP food package may change depending on funding. One food package is issued once per year to each eligible WIC family.

## **D. Eligibility Criteria**

At least one participant within the family must meet one or more of the following criteria:

- a. Pregnant
- b. Breastfeeding
- c. Postpartum (up to six months after delivery)
- d. Child between the age of twelve months and five years
- e. Infant who will turn one within 15 days

## **E. Screening – Prior to Draft Issuance**

FMNP drafts should be issued to families who will spend the drafts.

To help determine if the drafts are likely to be spent, consider the following:

1. Did the participant request the drafts?
  - It is acceptable for the project to make participants aware of the availability of FMNP drafts (i.e. posting signs in the waiting area), and to issue FMNP drafts upon request.
2. Has the participant shopped at a farmers' market before?
  - Encourage the participant to go with a family member or friend. In addition, an explanation of what a farmers' market is will be helpful:

- A farmers' market is a place where a group of farmers gather to sell their products directly to consumers.
  - A farmers' market is typically located outdoors and operates for a limited number of days and hours each week throughout the growing season.
  - Unlike a grocery store, the types and quantities of produce available at the farmers' market changes throughout the summer. The best time to find the greatest quantity and variety of eligible produce is after mid-July.
  - Unlike the grocery store, products are purchased at each individual farmers' market stall, rather than at the time you leave the market.
  - Children like farmers' markets!
3. Is the market close to where the participant lives or works?
    - Be aware of any businesses (i.e. grocery store, library, post office) near the market that participants may find as a convenience.
  4. Is transportation available?
    - Provide bus route information or ask if a family member or a friend could provide transportation.
  5. Do market hours conflict with work schedules?
    - Recommend the proxy shop for the participant.
  6. The current season at time of FMNP draft issuance should be considered before issuing drafts.
    - If the participant is receiving the FMNP drafts in September, and the participant is not interested in late season produce, drafts should not be issued.
  7. The size of the farmer's markets is also to be considered.
    - The smaller the market, the less the variety of produce. Projects are encouraged to become familiar with the varieties and abundance of produce sold by FMNP vendors during different times of the season.
  8. Not interested in receiving the drafts.
    - If the general feeling is non-interest from the participant, do not issue the drafts.

## **F. Draft Issuance**

The same procedures for issuing WIC drafts apply to FMNP drafts. Additional information is as follows:

### **Draft stock**

FMNP drafts will be printed on the same draft stock as the regular WIC drafts.

### **Issuance Period**

The distribution period for FMNP drafts is between June 1 – September 30. However, the project may use discretion to begin issuing drafts after June 1 and/or end issuance before September 30. The State Office may end issuance before September 30 if necessary.

### **ROSIE**

- If a family is eligible to receive FMNP drafts, the “Print FMNP FIs” box at the bottom of the Print FI screen will be enabled.

- Staff have the option to check the check box by clicking the box, and click print to print the drafts.
- If the project is issuing FMNP drafts only, staff will go to the “Food Instruments” tab to load and print FMNP drafts.
- If a family is not eligible to receive FMNP drafts or the family has already received FMNP drafts, the “Print FMNP FIs” box will be disabled or grayed out.

### **Foster Children**

If a foster child transfers to a new family, it is possible that the new family will be prevented from receiving FMNP FIs if the transferring foster child received FMNP FIs with the former family.

This is unfortunate if the new family has other FMNP eligible family members who have not received FMNP FIs.

During FMNP season, if a foster child transfers to another family who has other FMNP eligible family members, the project may want to take the following steps:

1. Determine if the new family has FMNP eligible members other than the transferring participant.
2. Do a FI look up using the transferring participant’s participant ID (not family ID) to see if FMNP FIs were issued.
3. If yes, do a FI look up on the new family to see if FMNP FIs have been issued.
4. If the new family has not received FMNP FIs and there are other eligible family members in the new family, issue FMNP FIs to the new family before transferring the participant to the new family.

### **Replacing FMNP Drafts**

Damaged FMNP drafts which are brought to the project may be replaced through the last day to use, October 31.

### **Lost and Stolen Drafts**

Lost or stolen FMNP drafts will not be replaced.

### **FMNP Materials to be Distributed during Draft Issuance**

The following materials should be reviewed with the participant at some point during their visit:

- FMNP Participant Brochure
- Farmers’ Market Location Sheet

## **G. Redeeming FMNP Drafts**

Redeeming FMNP drafts is explained in the FMNP participant brochure and should be carefully reviewed with the participant as follows:

- Locally grown, fresh fruits, vegetables, and herbs can be purchased with FMNP drafts as specifically stated on the drafts. In addition, point out the list of approved produce in the participant brochure.

- The denominations are preprinted on the drafts.
- No change will be given for purchases less than the value of the draft. On the other hand, if a participant would like to purchase more than the value of the draft, they can make up the difference with cash, Quest Card (if the farmer accepts Quest Card purchases), or another FMNP draft.
- FMNP drafts can be used only at approved farmers' markets and approved farmstands listed (show the list); not grocery stores.
- FMNP drafts may be redeemed between June 1 and October 31.
- FMNP drafts require no signature or ID.
- Not all farmers can accept FMNP drafts; look for the yellow sign.
- FMNP farmers are identified by a number written on the yellow sign. Participants should be aware of this number in case there is a problem during the transaction.
- Explain what foods may not be purchased with FMNP drafts (i.e. honey, eggs, etc.).
- If the produce is not locally grown, participants will need to purchase it with cash or their Quest Card, even if the item is listed in the brochure.
- Participants do not have to use all of their FMNP drafts with a single farmer and do not have to use all their drafts at one market or at one visit to the market.
- A certified farmer participating in the FMNP should not refuse to accept properly presented FMNP drafts in exchange for eligible produce.

## **H. Nutrition Education**

As stated in the WIC FMNP Federal Regulations, nutrition education shall emphasize the relationship of proper nutrition to the total concept of good health, including the importance of consuming fresh fruits and vegetables.

The State FMNP Nutrition Coordinator will provide guidance regarding FMNP nutrition education. Nutrition education materials are available from the State Office.

## **I. FMNP Farmers' Market Approval**

The FMNP authorizes farmers markets that meet the following criteria:

1. An established site or sites of operation
2. Established days and hours of operation
3. At least three farmers present during market hours

The State Office will contact all market managers for reapplication.

For new farmers' markets, the project may give market managers a Farmer's Training Manual and Farmers' Market Application. After completion, the application will be returned to the State Office.

The project may choose to complete the market application over the phone. The project should note on the application that the information was taken over the phone and who completed the form on behalf of the manager. The project would then send the application to the State Office.

Once the project receives a copy of the application from the State Office, the project should add the market to their list of authorized farmers' markets to give to participants.

## **J. Authorizing and Training Farmers**

To be eligible for the FMNP, farmers must:

1. sell locally grown fresh fruits, vegetables, and/or fresh cut herbs,
2. sell at a authorized FMNP location, and
3. sell produce the farmer has grown.

The State Office will contact farmers for recertification.

Farmers who did not participate with the FMNP during the previous year will need to be trained before becoming certified to accept FMNP checks.

Project staff will train new farmers as follows:

- Train the farmer using the Farmers' Training Manual
- Collect the completed agreement, training verification sheet, and farmstand application (if applicable) reviewing the forms before the farmer leaves to be sure the forms are complete and signed as necessary.
- Project staff should not sign the agreement; the State will sign the agreement.
- Project staff should not give the farmer a yellow sign. The State will mail the sign to the farmer along with other certification materials.
- Send the agreement, training verification sheet, and farmstand application (if applicable) to the State Office.
- The farmer should not accept checks until the farmer receives approval from the State Office. It may take up to two weeks for the farmer to hear from the State.

## **K. FMNP Farmstand Authorization**

The FMNP authorizes farmstands that meet the following criteria:

- There must be an established site or sites of operation.
- There must be established days and hours of operation.
- A FMNP trained seller must be present during farmstand hours.

If the farmer is new to the FMNP, the project will follow normal procedures for training the farmer and giving the farmer an agreement. In addition, the farmer will receive a Farmstand Application. The Farmstand Application will be sent to the State Office with the farmer's agreement and Verification of Training Form.

If the farmer is not new to the FMNP, the project will give the farmer a Farmstand Application, and the farmer or the project will send the application to the State Office for approval.

The project may choose to complete the farmstand application over the phone. The project should note on the application that the information was taken over the phone and who

completed the form on behalf of the farmer. The project would then send the application to the State Office.

Once the project receives a copy of the application from the State Office, the project should add the stand to their list of authorized FMNP sites given to participants.

Approving farmstand is advantageous since farmstands are usually open most days of the week all day through early evening. Other considerations about farmstands:

- Farmers who operate a stand that is almost like a "store" setting and sell a wide variety of their produce are often attractive and reliable sources.
- Since farmers who operate on their own do not have to conform to market rules, farmstand farmers tend to purchase non-Wisconsin grown produce – especially in the early season. Discuss our rules (farmers must separate and label non-locally grown produce) and decide what will work for you and the farmer (i.e. direct participants to the farmstand in July when the farmer's own produce is for sale).
- Beware of the possibility that the farmer may not be there when participants come. Since there is only one farmer, if that farmer is not there for whatever reason, there may be frustrated participants. Farmers who sell one product, such as corn, tend to be not as reliable since they can only be there when they have something to sell.

#### **L. Monitoring Farmers**

- Project staff will monitor farmers by visiting one market or one farmstand per project once per year.
- After the monitor visit, the project will complete the FMNP Site Observation Worksheet and send to the State Office.
- The State FMNP Coordinator will coordinate compliance buys with the project as needed.
- The status of a vendor (terminated, sanctioned, etc.) is confidential. The vendors' status may be communicated as "authorized" or "not authorized" with no further details.

#### **M. Participant Evaluation**

The State Office will provide instructions for distributing the Participant Evaluation each year.

#### **N. Local Agency Monitoring**

The project will be monitored via the WIC Monitoring Tool every two years. The State FMNP Coordinator may conduct onsite visits at the project, and will provide adequate notice before the visit.

#### **O. Reporting**

FMNP expenditure reporting is due on March 31, but projects should report their expenditures during the FMNP months (e.g. May through December).

#### **P. Complaint Process**

Complaints from *farmers* may be referred to the State Office or obtain the name, vendor ID, and telephone number of the farmer making the complaint and contact the State Office with

the information. The State Office will contact the farmer making the complaint, obtain and record a description of the complaint, and document investigations and resolutions of the complaint.

Complaints from *participants* must be documented and sent to the State Office for follow-up and to obtain acceptable resolutions. Complaints should be documented on the Complaint Form. Project staff may want to assist participants with completion of the form. Make sure the following relevant information is obtained when completing the form:

- Name, address, and phone number of the person making the complaint.
- Date and approximate time incident occurred
- Name of farmers' market where the incident occurred
- Name or identification number about whom the complaint is being made. If no name or ID is available, a description of the farmer and location of the farmer's stall at the market (i.e., stall number).
- Description of the incident
- Signature of the participant
- Signature and agency name of the agency staff person who received the complaint.

The State Office will record the investigation and resolution of the complaint.

Persons seeking to file discrimination complaints may file them either with the Secretary of Agriculture, or the Director, Office of Civil Rights, USDA, Washington, DC 20250.

## **Q. Questions and Problems**

Senior FMNP *participants* should contact their project with questions or problems regarding the FMNP

*Farmers* can be referred to the State Office  
608-261-8867  
Wisconsin WIC Program  
DHFS  
PO Box 2659  
Madison, WI 53701-2659  
Fax 608 266-3125

The project may contact the State Office at (608) 261-8867 for questions.