



DOUBLE UP FOOD BUCKS

Frequently Asked Questions: Farmers Markets

Q: What is Double Up Food Bucks?

A: Double Up Food Bucks (DUFBS) is a program that “matches” SNAP EBT Card benefits spent at farmers markets. Whatever you spend on your SNAP Card, you’ll get a dollar for dollar match of up to \$10 in DUFBS that you can spend on fresh locally grown fruits and vegetables. So, if you spend \$10 on your SNAP EBT Card, you’ll get an extra \$10 – FREE – that you can use to buy more, fresh locally-grown produce.

Q: How do I use my EBT Card at a farmer’s market?

Most markets have a central location where a staff person can swipe your EBT Card. You’ll tell the staff person how much you want to spend on your EBT Card, and you’ll get that amount of market currency that you spend like cash with the vendors that sell SNAP eligible food items. Each farmers market issues its own unique EBT Card currency - these are usually tokens, and are worth \$1 each, and are only good at the market where you received them.

Money is deducted from your SNAP EBT Card account the day you get the tokens, whether or not you spend the market currency that day. If you don’t spend all your market currency, you have two options: you can have the funds put back on your SNAP EBT Card on the same day, OR you can save the market currency and use it later. SNAP EBT Card currency can be spent any time during the entire market season. Vendors are not allowed to give you change for SNAP EBT Card currency.

Q: How do I get Double Up Food Bucks?

When you use your EBT Card at a participating market, you’ll automatically get an equal value of DUFBS, up to \$10.

Q: What can I buy with my DUFB and my SNAP EBT Card benefits?

A: You can spend your DUFB on fresh fruit and vegetables that were locally grown. Look for vendors with a “Double Up” sign. You can also use DUFB to buy plants to grow food in your own garden. You can spend your SNAP EBT Card benefits on almost anything edible at the market, except ready-to-eat prepared foods.

Q: Why can I only buy locally grown fruit and vegetables with my DUFB?

DUFB is a program with two goals: to help low-income families access fresher, healthy foods AND to support local farmers. By spending your DUFB on locally grown products, you’re helping local farmers boost their incomes, and that is great for the Iowa economy. You can still use your SNAP EBT Card benefits for other food items, like meats, cheeses, and fresh breads from the other market vendors.

Q: Do I have to sign up for something?

A: No, just come to the market and use your EBT Card. Go to the market central information booth to swipe your EBT Card. A staff member will help you and they will record the last few digits of your EBT Card account number – this is only so that we can track how many new customers are coming because of DUFB and how many times people come back.

Q: What if I don’t want to spend all my DUFB today?

A: Keep them and use them next week! DUFB are not refundable because they’re free. Some people like to save up their DUFB for when their favorite fruit and vegetables are in season, and then buy large quantities to can or freeze. ***The last day to use your DUFB tokens is December 31, 2018 or the closing day of the market, whichever comes first.***

Q: Why can I only get \$10 per market day?

A: DUFB has a limited budget. We want as many people as possible to get the benefit of doubling their fruit and vegetable purchasing power, and the best way to do that is to limit the number of DUFB one person can get per market visit. You can come back every week to this market and you’ll get up to \$10 matched at each and every visit from now through the end of the market season.

Q: Can I use DUFB anywhere else?

A: Yes. DUFB can be redeemed at any of the DUFB markets and several grocery stores in Iowa.

For more information, visit www.iowahealthieststate.com/double-up-food-bucks

Q: Is it really free? Where does the money come from?

A: Yes, it's really free. DUFB is a project of Iowa Healthiest State Initiative and your local farmers market. The goal is to get healthier food to Iowa families while supporting Iowa farmers. Funding comes from the USDA and different private community foundations and corporations throughout Iowa and beyond.

Q: What is a EBT Card and how can I get one?

A: An EBT Card is the common name for the electronic benefits transfer (EBT) card used by recipients of federal food assistance benefits in Iowa. It has a picture of the Iowa horizon on it. SNAP, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the new name for the federal food assistance program formerly called Food Stamps.

In order to qualify for a EBT Card, you must meet certain requirements for income and expenses determined by the State of Iowa. To see if you qualify and apply for benefits, go to <https://dhsservices.iowa.gov/apspssp/spp.portal> or call 1-855-889-7985. You can also contact your local food bank for information on where to go in your community to apply for benefits, or call the United Way's 2-1-1 service (dial 2-1-1 on any phone).

Additional Questions?

Don't hesitate to reach out to the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative with questions, comments, concerns or praise! Here is our contact information:

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