

MICHIGAN
Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH
SENIOR FARMERS MARKET NUTRITION
PROGRAM



MARKET MASTER'S
GUIDEBOOK

REVISED APRIL 2015

**MICHIGAN OFFICE OF SERVICES TO THE AGING
SENIOR PROJECT FRESH/MARKET FRESH**

**THE SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM
MARKET MASTER'S GUIDEBOOK**

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This Guidebook is intended solely for use by those individuals who have been authorized and have contracted with the Michigan Office of Services to the Aging as a Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Master.

SENIOR FARMERS' MARKET NUTRITION PROGRAM (Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH)

I. WHAT IS PROJECT FRESH?

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH is Michigan's Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. (SFMNP). Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH is administered by the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services, Aging and Adult Services Agency, (referred to as "The Agency"), the USDA Food and Nutrition Service and Michigan Food and Farming Systems. The program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture. (USDA).

Authorized farmers' markets and roadside stands provide eligible participants with locally grown, unprocessed products through this program. The program also expands the awareness and use of farmers' markets and increases sales at such markets.

Specially printed coupons are provided on an annual basis to eligible program clients in participating counties. The coupons are distributed to clients by lead agencies which may be Michigan State University Extension offices, commissions, councils or departments on aging, area agencies on aging or other non-profit agencies and groups. Each applicant to the program receives nutrition education regardless of whether or not they qualify. Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH clients receive at least one booklet of ten (10) coupons, each worth \$2.00, for a total of \$20.00. Lead agencies may purchase additional books.

The Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency authorizes Market Masters throughout the state for the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH program. A Market Master may represent themselves (family farms) exclusively, may represent others, or may represent themselves and others. Authorized Market Masters may accept the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons from clients for eligible products. Eligible products are locally grown, unprocessed produce. A complete listing of eligible products can be found at the end of this guide.

Lead agencies may issue coupons between May 1, and September 30th. Markets may accept coupons from May 1st through October 31st. Coupons must be submitted for reimbursement no later than **November 12th, 2015**.

II. MARKET MASTERS AUTHORIZATION

A. MARKET MASTERS APPLICATIONS

Farmers' Markets and independent farmers in Michigan may seek authorization as Market Master, by completing an Aging and Adult Services Agency Market Master application and returning it to the Agency. A "Market Master" is a fiscally responsible, duly authorized agent of a farmers' market, or a representative of themselves (family farm) who has legal authority to obligate the market, family farm, or roadside stand.

B. MARKET MASTER NUMBER

The Michigan Office of Services to the Aging will assign a Market Master number for each authorized Market Master upon completion of the original registration. The number will be provided to the market master via email or regular mail. The Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH number is a three (3) digit number. This number is NOT the same as the WIC Project FRESH number. The Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH number must be entered on all the coupons that are submitted for reimbursement, as well as on the batch cover sheet that must accompany the coupons submitted for reimbursement.

C. MARKET MASTER RESPONSIBILITIES

Market Masters are authorized pursuant to an agreement with the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency.

The Market Master shall:

1. Enter into an annual written agreement with each eligible farmer within the farmers' market who wants to participate in the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Program. The Agency will provide the Market Master with a sample agreement, upon request, which includes sanctions for program violations similar to the ones outlined in this guidebook. The Market Masters may use the sample agreement form or design and use his/her own agreement form. If the Market Masters uses his/her own agreement, then it must, at a minimum, contain all of the provisions contained in the sample agreement form. Any additional language must be reviewed and signed off by the farmer, prior to execution of the agreement.
2. Provide such information as the Agency shall require for its periodic reports to the United States Department of Agriculture.
3. Complete scheduled training as required.
4. Provide training to farmers and any employees on program procedures.

5. Disseminate program materials to participating farmers.
6. Assure that each participating farmer grows some of the produce he/she sells. Michigan defines “grower” as an individual or group that has a plot of land or garden that is wholly or partially dedicated for growing produce.
7. Assure that each farmer has locally grown unprocessed eligible products available for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH clients. Michigan considers produce to be locally grown if it is grown within the borders of the state of Michigan or in those counties of the states of Ohio, Indiana, and Wisconsin which directly border the state of Michigan. Each Market Master and farmer must be able to prove, upon request, that all produce he/she provides in exchange for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons is eligible, locally grown produce.
8. Assure that each farmer provides locally grown unprocessed eligible products at the current price charged to other market customers.
9. Permit coupons to be redeemed only for locally grown, unprocessed eligible products, as defined by the Agency according to federal guidelines.
10. Assure that each farmer accepts Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons within the date of their validity and submits the coupons for payment by November 12, 2015.
11. Maintain a list of farmers and their addresses and assign each farmer a unique identifying number (not to exceed three (3) digits) and forward the list to the Agency. This number MAY be the same as the WIC farmer number.
12. Assure that each farmer accepting Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons has entered his/her assigned individual farmer number on the coupon in the designated space, prior to submission to the Market Master. If you are representing yourself, fill in the Market Master number and leave the farmer number blank.
13. In accordance with the procedures established by the Agency, number each transacted coupon with the unique Market Master number. Fill out the batch cover sheet and sign it prior to submitting your coupons for reimbursement. A batch cover sheet will be sent to you each year that can be copied. It has the payment information on it, so the one sent needs to be the one you use.
14. Agree to be monitored for compliance with program requirements. A ‘secret shopper’ may visit your market or roadside stand and purchase items with coupons. They will be observing compliance to program standards. If you are in violation of any standards, you will receive a letter detailing the violation. We may do a second visit.

15. Be accountable for actions of employees in the provision of locally grown, unprocessed eligible products to program participants.
16. Report any violations of the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH program rules and regulations to the Agency.
17. Assure that each farmer offers program participants the same courtesies as other market customers.
18. Assure that each farmer clearly posts the display sign identifying the farmer as authorized to accept Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons.
19. Assure that each farmer displays the prices of all authorized products.
20. Comply with the non-discrimination provisions of the USDA regulations.
21. Notify the OSA when/if market ceases operation.
22. Reimburse each farmer for properly redeemed coupons within 30 days from the time you as the Market Master receive your check from the Agency.
23. Understand that the State of Michigan Budget Office ceases payments during certain times of the year, so payment to Market Masters/Payees may be delayed. See detailed sheet at end of this guide.

The Market Master and farmers **MUST NOT**:

1. Collect sales tax on Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupon purchases.
2. Seek restitution from program clients for coupons not reimbursed by the Aging and Adult Services Agency.
3. Issue cash change for purchases that are in an amount less than the value of the coupon(s). If a purchase is less than \$2.00 or the face value of multiple coupons, then the client may make up the difference by paying cash.

No cash change is to be given to Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH clients when a purchase is less than the value of the coupon. Additional approved product may be provided, and/or the client may pay the cost of the product in excess of the value of the coupon(s).

E. TRAINING

Training for new Market Masters will be via a conference call or in person training. Conference calls will be offered at a variety of times and dates. New Market Masters will be expected to participate in one. Dates, times and call-in information will be made available on the website: <http://www.michigan.gov/marketfresh> .

Returning Market Masters may elect to do a conference call, in-person training, or assure that they will read and review the updated Market Master Guidebook.

No reimbursement will be made to a Market Master that has not completed the training.

F. MARKET MASTERS AGREEMENT AND CERTIFICATION

Each year, Market Masters will be asked to update their information as well as certify to the 4 (four) questions required by the USDA. This will be done via US Mail, and/or a web registration. Information on registration will be available no later than March 1 of each year. It is the Market Masters responsibility to read, understand and comply with the terms of the Market Master Guidebook as well as the certification requirements. Neither the Agency nor the Market Master is obligated to update or re-certify for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH services.

III FARMER DISPLAY SIGNS

The Agency will supply the Market Masters with the appropriate number of farmer display signs. The display sign must be posted at each participating farmer's stand. These signs let participants know which farmers accept Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons. The Market Masters can contact the Agency to request signs either by email: kings1@michigan.gov, or through the phone: 517-373-4064. A market may be granted a waiver from this requirement if the market has large all-inclusive signs at all entrances to the market. Please contact the Agency at the above to request the waiver.

IV ACCEPTING PROJECT FRESH COUPONS

A. IDENTIFYING ELIGIBLE CLIENTS

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH clients must present their signed coupon holder for identification at the time they redeem coupons. Each coupon must be signed by the client or proxy in the designated space on the front of the coupon at time of redemption. The farmer/Market Master must assure that the signatures on the coupon holder and the coupon match. The farmer/Market Masters must assure that the coupon is valid by checking the year, and the expiration date.

B. ELIGIBLE PRODUCTS

The farmer and Market Masters must assure that program clients purchase only eligible products with Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons. Eligible products are defined as: “fresh, nutritious, unprepared, locally grown products for human consumption”.

Dried fruit, dried herbs, dried spices, maple syrup, cider, nuts, seeds, eggs, meat, cheese and seafood are **not eligible**.

Michigan considers produce to be locally grown if it is grown within the borders of the State of Michigan or in those counties of the states of Ohio, Indiana and Wisconsin which directly border the state of Michigan. Under no circumstances can produce grown outside of the United States, or its territories, be considered eligible products.

V. COUPON BATCHING AND PAYMENT PROCESS

A. BATCHING COUPONS

The individual farmer should submit redeemed coupons to the Market Master. Each coupon submitted for payment must have the unique Market Master number on it, and if applicable, the farmer number. Along with each batch of coupons, the Market Master must send a completed batch cover sheet. This indicates the number of coupons submitted, the amount of reimbursement expected, and a signature. Only Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons should be sent to the Aging and Adult Services Agency. Any coupons that are received without the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Master number, without a completed batch cover sheet, or with WIC coupons, will not be processed until corrections are made. The Market Master will be contacted via mail to make the changes.

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons can be sent to:

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH
Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency (formerly OSA)
300 E Michigan Ave 3rd Floor
Lansing MI 48933

A set of labels for sending in coupons will be sent to each Market Master.

Coupons submitted by the Market Master will be subject to a final audit prior to or after the redemption by the Agency.

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons should be treated like cash. The method used to store and mail coupons is at the discretion of the Market Master.

The Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency is not responsible for payment of coupons lost by the Market Master, or for coupons not received by the Agency. The Agency also reserves the right to refuse payment for coupons that are received after the November 12, 2015. Please contact the Agency if there is an extenuating circumstance that the due date cannot be met.

C. BATCH COVER SHEETS-SUBMITTED WITH COUPONS

Each authorized Market Master must complete, and submit a batch cover sheet when submitting coupons for reimbursement. The batch cover sheet must contain the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH number, the number of coupons, the amount of reimbursement expected, and a signature. These forms are used for audit and record keeping purposes, and must be filled out entirely. The batch number is assigned by the Market Master to keep track of the number of coupon batches mailed in.

D. DENIED PAYMENTS

A Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Master may not receive payment for coupons if:

- The project FRESH coupon is redeemed before the starting date, or after the ending date.
- The client's endorsement is missing from the coupon.
- The Market Masters number is missing.
- The coupon is altered in any way.
- The coupon is not turned in for payment by November 12, 2015.
- The coupons are not properly redeemed.

If payment for a Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupon is denied for any reason, the Market Master may submit a written request for payment to the Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency within 60 days following the receipt of the denied payment letter. The following information should be included in the written appeal:

- Market Masters number
- Daytime telephone number
- Batch number(s)
- Date of denied payment letter
- Statement of problem

All written appeals should be mailed to:

Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Program
Michigan Aging and Adult Services Agency
300 E Michigan Ave 3rd Floor
Lansing MI 48933

VI. MONITORING AND REPORTING PROGRAM PERFORMANCE

A Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Master may be monitored at any time during the contract period by a representative of the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH program or the USDA. Periodic on-site visits to Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH markets and roadside stands will be made to monitor compliance with program regulations and to identify problems or deficiencies. The Market Masters will be responsible for maintaining an accurate accounting of all monies and coupons redeemed at his/her market/roadside stand. The Market Master shall also provide information concerning increases in sales, customers or other information as requested by the Agency to meet federal requirements.

VII. SANCTIONS/APPEALS

The Agency will sanction Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Masters for program violations. Sanctions may include, but are not limited to: denial of payment for coupons, warning letters, monetary claims, termination, disqualification, denial of application and/or judicial actions.

In the case of Termination or Termination and Disqualification, Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Masters will be sent a notice at least twenty-one (21) calendar days prior to the effective date of the Termination or Termination and Disqualification. The reason(s) for such action will be included in the notice.

The Market Master has the right to appeal the denial of an application to participate, a Termination or Termination and Disqualification, monetary claims, or an SFMNP sanction action by the State Agency. Market Masters may appeal the denial of payment for coupons to the Statewide Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coordinators. Warning letters are not subject to appeal.

A farmer has the right to appeal a denial of authorization to participate or a disqualification action, to the State Agency.

The Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Master may appeal Termination or Termination and Disqualification using the following procedures:

1. The Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH or farmer's request for appeal must be made in writing to the Agency at the address indicated in the Termination or Termination and Disqualification Notice. The request for appeal must be received by the Agency within 21 calendar days of the mailing date of the Denial, Termination or Termination and Disqualification Notice by the Agency.

2. Following timely receipt of the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Market Master's written appeal, the Agency will provide the Market Master with an opportunity for a hearing.

MARKET MASTER AGREEMENT

The Market Master Agreement becomes null and void if the market goes out of business or changes ownership. Information changes, such as address, phone, email, must be reported to the Agency via email, fax, or US Mail. Changes also must be reported to the State Budget Office by calling:

(517) 373-4111 (Lansing) (888) 734-9749 (All Others)	Monday - Friday 8 A.M. - 5 P.M.
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Or you may go on line at: <http://www.michigan.gov/budget> Click on "Contract and Payment Express" at the bottom of the page. (the selections change, so you may not see it right away). On the contract and payment page, click on "[Contract and Payment Express \(C&PE\) Pre-Registration Overview](#)" and follow the instructions to make changes to your account.

VIII. SANCTIONS FOR PROGRAM VIOLATIONS AND ABUSE

- A. Market Masters/farmers who commit the violations outlined below are subject to termination of their Market Master Agreement and a three year period of disqualification.
 1. Charging Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH clients more than the current price charged to other customers.
 2. Allowing Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons to be redeemed for non-food items.
 3. Collecting sales tax on Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH purchases.
 4. Failure to allow and/or in any manner, hinder or impede authorized local, state or federal officials to monitor or investigate the market for compliance with Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH requirements.
 5. Providing cash or credit in exchange for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons.
 6. Refusal to allow a Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH client to purchase eligible items for the full dollar amount specified on the coupon.

7. Redeeming Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons from unauthorized sources.
 8. Charging the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH program for food not received by clients.
 9. Failure by the Market Master to account for and/or to reimburse farmers for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons turned over by farmers to the Market Master for submission to the Agency.
 10. Allowing the return of products purchased with Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons in exchange for cash or for non-food items.
- B. Market Masters/farmers who commit the following violations will receive a warning letter for the first complaint of a violation. After receipt of the warning letter, a pattern of two (2) violations will result in the termination of the Agreement and a two-year period of disqualification.
1. Providing ineligible products or processed food in exchange for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons.
 2. Giving cash change to Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH clients for purchases that are in an amount less than the value of the coupon.
 3. Allowing a farmer who does not grow some of the produce he/she sells to accept Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons.
 4. Not growing some of the produce he/she sells.
- C. Market Masters/farmers who commit the following violations will receive a warning letter for the first complaint of a violation. After receipt of the warning letter, a pattern of two (2) violations will result in the termination of the Agreement and a one-year period of disqualification.
1. Failure to have a written agreement with a farmer who accepts Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupons.
 2. Failure to have the client sign the coupon and/or failure to verify that the client's signature on the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH coupon matches the signature appearing on the coupon holder.
 3. Not displaying a sign stating "Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH Coupons Welcome Here".

4. Failure to display the prices of all eligible products.
 5. Failure to notify the Agency of a farmer who violates program requirements.
 6. Failure to complete training as required by the Agency.
 7. Failure by the Market Master to maintain records as required by the Agency.
- D. Market Masters/farmers will be subject to denial of their application and/or termination of the contract for the following violations.
1. Providing false information on any application for Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH.
 2. Failure to comply with the rules, regulations and contract terms of the Senior Project FRESH/Market FRESH program.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights, 1400 Independence Ave. SW., Washington, D.C. 20250-9410 or call (800) 795-3272 (voice) or (202) 720-6382 (TTY). USDA is an equal opportunity provider and employer.