

Handwashing stations on farm and at market are always a good idea

Food safety is as relevant now as it ever was. One thing we are learning from the Corona Virus is the importance of hand washing, and this vitally important step in preventing illness won't be less important after the Corona Virus is defeated. We all must do our part to ensure our hands and the hands of those who touch our products are clean to prevent the spread of food-borne illness and other sicknesses. With hand washing, as with everything, convenience is king.

To assist customers, workers and yourself in remembering the steps to proper hand washing, contact your local health district for its small posters or postcards with hand washing steps in pictures. They usually give these to restaurants and food workers, but the same steps apply here. If you would like to print your own, you can find one here: <https://www.fdh.org/documents/15416114711.pdf>

Here is a link to instructions from the University of Minnesota on building a simple but very effective portable hand washing station. https://www.cinram.umn.edu/sites/cinram.umn.edu/files/7.3_handwashing_station_instructions.pdf. The materials are easy to find and inexpensive.

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New grants for youth and youth groups

The NDFMGA is proud to announce two new grant opportunities involving youth.

The first is a grant program specifically designed for young entrepreneurs beginning a farmers market venture.

The grant program, open to ages 10 to 18, will grant \$200 for the purchase of items to assist in selling at a NDFMGA member farmers market.

The second new grant program is specifically for organizations and

groups that support youth activities. This can be a church, school, private, or nonprofit group that provides youth activities that involve the growing of edible items. For more information about these grants visit www.ndfarmersmarkets.org.

SNAP benefit barriers identified

To encourage the use of SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) at its farmers market, BisMarket applied for and received a Bush Community Innovation Grant (through the Consensus Council) to develop and implement an outreach plan to increase the use of SNAP at local markets.

Andrew Johnson served as the SNAP Outreach Coordinator for the BisMarket Community Farmers Market.

Since the identity of families receiving SNAP benefits is confidential, individuals and families participating in SNAP in North Dakota cannot be contacted directly with information from the North Dakota Department of Human Services.

That means outreach needs to be completed indirectly.

The first step was gathering information about best practices and efforts for increasing SNAP usage at farmers markets.

The next step was the identification of potential partner organizations to assist with spreading the word.

As an incentive to shop at BisMarket, "Beet Bucks" were offered to customers, which matched their SNAP purchase up to \$15 weekly. A Basin Electric Power Cooperative sponsorship provided this match for fruits, vegetables, and food-producing seeds or plants.

The third step was to conduct outreach including sharing days and times of market with partners like public schools, senior centers, food pantries, soup kitchens, the Great Plains Food Bank, summer meal program sites, shelters, religious

community service groups, native community resource centers and general community development and service organizations.

Finally, once they made a SNAP purchase at the market, customers were asked to complete a survey that would help BisMarket identify barriers to SNAP redemption at the market. Additionally, the BisMarket team hosted an in-person focus group to learn about the barriers that members of the Bismarck-Mandan community face while trying to access fresh, healthy fruits and vegetables.

SNAP outreach was successful, and in 2019 resulted in sales of just over \$900, a **267 percent increase** from the 2018 season. Eighty-two percent of Beet Bucks were redeemed at the

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Contact your North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association with questions and/or comments

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Reminder for market managers and vendors

Be sure your market and vendor information is up to date. If you have changed locations or market hours, please contact Holly or Jamie Good at the NDDA , jgood@nd.gov, to make sure everything is updated before market season starts. The farmers market brochure printed by the North Dakota Department of Agriculture will be finalized at the beginning of May.



Hand washing

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If you plan on having your hand washing station at the farmers market, you may choose to build your own more portable version shown in the photo. The materials are easy to find:

- a simple step ladder with a wide top,
- a milk crate,
- a potable water container (usually used for camping) with a spigot that stays turned on and can be unscrewed and transported inside the unit,
- a bungee cord, a five-gallon pail, and of course,
- a roll of paper towels, a garbage bag and soap.

To transport the station, fold the step ladder, empty the water container and place it inside the milk crate, wipe out the bucket and place the remaining paper towels and soap in the bucket and you're ready to go. Remember to dispose of leftover water from hand washing in an area that is NOT used for producing food – watering trees, flowers and other non-edibles is fine, and of course, dispose of the used paper towels properly.

Spring time means NDFMGA dues time

It's time to think spring and prepare for the 2020 market season. Spring is also the time for paying market and individual membership dues to the North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association. Dues and sponsorships are essential to providing education and grants to vendors and marketing to consumers.

Market memberships run from July 1 to June 30. Your market will not receive any grant funds unless dues are paid their dues for the upcoming year.

The number of vendors determines the market dues. All market membership applications must include a list of past or anticipated, vendors including mail and electronic contact information.

Vendors selling at a market in good standing will automatically be considered members. No additional fees or payment is necessary.

If you do not join an established market, you may apply for individual membership in the association.

Farmers Market Members' dues

This option is for all formally organized Farmers Markets actively engaged in direct marketing of locally grown or processed North Dakota products.

Each farmers' market manager is responsible for providing their vendors with NDFMGA member brochures detailing the benefits of the NDFMGA.

The association offers brochures, on request, to the market manager once membership dues are received. Brochures are available for download from www.ndfarmersmarkets.org. Each vendor of a farmers market in

good standing with the NDFMGA who returns their contact information shall receive all benefits of membership.

The Farmers Market membership dues are based on the number of vendors at its market the previous year:

- \$75 - less than five vendors
- \$125 - 6-10 vendors
- \$200 - 11-20 vendors
- \$350 - 20+ vendors

Individuals or business not associated with a market but are producing and marketing locally grown or processed North Dakota products may apply as an individual or business for \$35 annually.

Friends of the Market is a new category at \$50 annually for people who love local food and want to support the farmers that grow for them. Each friend receives the newsletter and a piece of "swag" with the NDFMGA logo on it.

Sponsorships

The NDFMGA also encourages sponsorships available to persons, local or regional groups, or organizations supporting the development of the NDFMGA and its mission.

- \$100 - Bronze
- \$200 - Silver
- \$350 - Gold
- \$500 - Platinum

If you have not submitted your membership information to the NDFMGA or the North Dakota Department of Agriculture, please contact Holly Mawby at 701-681-0252 or hollyrose.mawby@dakotacollege.edu at to be included.



CHANGE SERVICE REQUESTED

DAKOTA COLLEGE AT BOTTINEAU

**ENTREPRENEURIAL CENTER
FOR HORTICULTURE**

**NORTH DAKOTA FARMER MARKET
AND GROWERS ASSOCIATION**

105 Simrall Blvd,
Bottineau, ND 58318

701-681-0252

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Mini-grant applications now open

The North Dakota Farmers Market and Growers Association has announced several grant opportunities for the upcoming season. Applications can be downloaded at www.ndfarmersmarkets.org.

Mini-grants for markets or members' events

The NDFMGA will grant \$500 to a market and/or individual working to increase the visibility of the organization and encouraging sale and consumption of goods produced, grown and sold by its members. Markets and vendors must be 2019 members in good standing to apply.

If a market or individual wishes to purchase promotional items, market or hold an event encouraging the public to try and buy at a market, applications are accepted until the fund is depleted. All sales, advertising and marketing materials must use and promote the tag line "Dakota Grown, It's All Good" to qualify for the grant. Applications can be downloaded at www.ndfarmersmarkets.org.

Are you a new farmer market vendor?

Is this your first or second year as a farmer market vendor? The NDFMGA would like to assist your efforts in selling "Dakota Grown" products by offering a \$300 grant to new market vendors. To qualify you must be a current market member. Applications can be downloaded at www.ndfarmersmarkets.org.

SNAP BENEFITS

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BisMarket, which is approximately 48 hours per season.

Identified solutions to reduce barriers were:

- transportation assistance
- simplified pricing
- making markets more welcoming and comfortable
- using easy-to-understand language
- meeting the needs of people with differing abilities
- pricing produce in ways easy to understand and
- working with vendors to emphasize how positive interactions and attitudes can keep customers returning.

Farmers can find more about SNAP here: <https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/farmer-producer>.