

Sign-Up Begins For Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — Agriculture Secretary Sam Hayes recently announced that the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture is seeking interested farmers for the 2002 Farmers' Market Nutrition Program.

"Through this program, the Department of Agriculture is working to help Pennsylvania farmers who grow the finest produce and those on low budgets who need fresh fruits and vegetables," Hayes said.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides checks to eligible recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from approved growers at one of Pennsylvania's farmers' markets or roadside stands. The program begins June 1 and continues until Nov. 30.

Growers interested in participating in the 2002 program must own or lease farmland in Pennsylvania where they produce and

sell more than \$1,000 of agricultural products. More than 50 percent of the retail value of the produce sold under the program must be grown in Pennsylvania.

Growers that participated in the 2001 program will receive notices from the Department of Agriculture's Bureau of Food Distribution.

Other farmers interested in participating in the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program may contact the Bureau of Food Dis-

tribution at (800) 468-2433 or (717) 787-2940.

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides checks to eligible Women, Infants and Children (WIC) recipients to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables from 525 approved vendors in Pennsylvania. In 2001, about \$2 million in state funds and \$2.2 million in federal funds

were available for the WIC program. WIC mothers and children ages 2 to 5 can receive \$20 in vouchers.

A pilot Seniors Farmers' Market Nutrition Program was launched in 1998 for older Pennsylvanians in several areas of the state, where seniors received \$20 in vouchers. More than 96,000 seniors redeemed \$1.8 million in vouchers in 2001.

Board Announces January Class I Price

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Milk Marketing Board (MMB) announced the prices to be paid to Pennsylvania dairy farmers for January Class I milk (beverage) as an average of \$16.01 in the western areas of the commonwealth, and an average of \$16.50 in the central and eastern areas.

Farmers whose milk production is pooled under a Federal Order will receive a market-wide blended price based upon the

value of all classes of milk. However, the blend price received will vary as the component composition of a farmer's milk differs from the established benchmarks of 3.5 percent butterfat, 2.99 percent protein, and 5.69 percent other solids.

These prices include the over-order premium of \$1.40 per one hundred pounds of milk and the fuel adjustment premium of \$.25 per one hundred pounds of milk.

Outdoor Farm Market To Open

PALMYRA (Lebanon Co.) — A producer-only outdoor farmers' market, with space for 10-12 growers/producers, will be opening in Palmyra late this spring.

Only growers/producers will be permitted to sell at this market. The market will be open Saturdays from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. and run through the fall. This is a great chance for growers to sell directly to the public and for the public to buy high-quality, flavorful, nutritious food and food products.


The Lebanon County Penn State Cooperative Extension and the Lebanon Valley Food and Farming Association will present a program for growers from 8 a.m. to noon on Saturday, Feb. 16 at the Lebanon County Agriculture Center. The program will review the experiences of other markets, describe the requirements for participating in the Palmyra market, and make application forms available to growers who want to be considered for

this market opportunity. Growers/Producers interested in participating are urged to attend.

Market participation is open to growers throughout the region. There is no fee for the program. However, advanced registration is requested so that sufficient copies of the handout material can be provided.

For a program brochure or more information, call Ed Herrmann at (717) 270-4391.

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