

## **Health Bucks Give Food Stamps Clients a Hand with Fresh Produce**

HRA and the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene will help put more fruits and vegetables on the table for food stamps recipients this summer and fall by giving out Health Bucks. Health Bucks are \$2 coupons that can be used to buy fresh fruit and vegetables at local farmers' markets. For every \$5 food stamps clients spend at participating farmers' markets, they will get one \$2 Health Buck. There are 57 farmers' markets throughout the city participating in the program, which now includes locations in Queens and Staten Island. Health Bucks will also be available from community organizations who work in neighborhoods with high rates of poverty and low rates of fruit and vegetable consumption.

### **How to use health bucks:**

- Use your EBT card to buy fresh produce at a farmers' market participating in the program (see a map of [participating farmers' markets](#)). For every five dollars you spend, you'll get one health buck worth \$2 (while supplies last).
- Use your health bucks on your next visit to the farmers' market to buy more fresh fruits and vegetables.
- You can spend health bucks at any participating farmers' market – not just the one you received them at.
- You can also get health bucks by visiting community organizations in the South Bronx, Central Brooklyn, and East and Central Harlem that are participating in the program. These organizations have a limited supply of health bucks to distribute to food stamps clients while supplies last.
- Health bucks are valid until November 15, 2010.

Health Bucks not only provide more food to food stamps clients, they also promote a healthy diet – fruits and vegetables are often expensive, and lower-income consumers do not usually get enough. Health Bucks also benefit local farmers by encouraging food stamps recipients to shop at farmers' markets. Begun as a pilot program in the Bronx in 2005, the Health Bucks program has expanded each year, helping more and more families eat healthier. The program is a cooperative effort from HRA, the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, and community organizations throughout the city. Health Bucks are available while supplies last during the 2010 farmers' market season: July 1-November 15.