



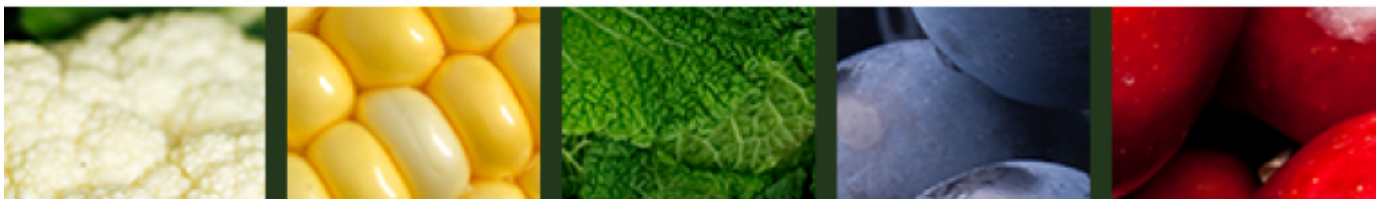
NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Andrew J. Lanza

Free Produce at Local Farmers Markets Now Available for Eligible Nyc Seniors

ANDREW J LANZA June 12, 2015

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Promoting Better Health and Boosting Local Farmers Are Goals of Expanded Program

Senator Andrew Lanza today announced that funding he included in this year's state budget will provide free farm-fresh fruits and vegetables from area Farmers Markets to eligible seniors from New York City, as a way to boost nutrition and healthy eating, while at the same time helping to strengthen the bottom lines of New York farmers.

As part of the "Grown in New York" initiative, Senator Lanza sought the new funding to expand the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, which gives \$20 coupons to low-income seniors that can be

redeemed at Farmers Markets across the state. The new funding in this year's budget allows 110,000 low-income seniors to access the Senior Farmers Market Nutritional Program statewide. Eligible seniors can earn up to \$1,800 a month, or \$2,426 for a couple. There are 42,427 vouchers available in New York City this summer.

"Good nutrition is important for a longer and healthier lifestyle, however, studies show that only one in three seniors are regularly buying and eating fresh, quality produce, like that which is grown by local farmers and available right now at area Farmers Markets," Senator Lanza said. "That's why I worked this year to expand the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program so that more seniors, living on fixed budgets, won't have to choose between healthy eating and balancing their checkbooks. Federal policy requires that more than half of the food purchased must be locally sourced from area farms, so seniors can know that they are also helping to support local farmers and the economy."

Senator Lanza has published a full schedule of New York's markets on his website—

www.lanza.nysenate.gov in his effort to connect consumers and local farmers, and support New York's agriculture economy.

Coupon booklets will be made available over the next few weeks through the New York City Department for the Aging.

NYC Metro Area

Department for the Aging:

- General Assistance: 311
- Online www.nyc.gov/html/dfta/html/home/home.shtml

WIC Participants

WIC participants interested in participating in the NY Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) should contact their local WIC clinic to find out more information at the beginning of the program season, which is June 1st.

The Senate's "Grown in New York" program is a sweeping initiative that aims to connect consumers and local farmers. In addition to the SFMNP expansion, it also included initiatives to bring more local foods into area schools, and funding to help farmers more easily access big city consumer markets downstate.

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