

OREGON

FARM DIRECT

NUTRITION

PROGRAM

**A Guide for Farmers and
Farmers Markets**

Oregon Farm Direct Nutrition Program (FDNP)



A Guide for Farmers and Farmers Markets

About the Farm Direct Nutrition Program	3
About Oregon FDNP shoppers.....	4
Farmer qualifications and authorization.....	5
Farmer market participation.....	6
Eligible fruit and vegetables.....	7
How farmers get paid for FDNP checks.....	8
Farmer banking tips for FDNP deposits.....	9
Other banking notes.....	10
Frequently asked FDNP shopper questions.....	11-13
Farmer and market signage.....	14
Contact the FDNP team.....	16

About the Farm Direct Nutrition Program

The Oregon Farm Direct Nutrition Program (FDNP) is a state-administered USDA nutrition program that brings more than 1.5 million dollars to Oregon farmers each year. FDNP checks are issued to families enrolled in the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) program and eligible low-income seniors to spend with authorized farmers selling directly to consumers.

The green \$4 checks are specifically for locally grown fresh, unprocessed fruits, vegetables and cut edible herbs and are valid from June 1 through November 30 each year.

The program connects new customers with local farmers and farmers markets and helps increase access to nutritious, locally grown food.



A list of participating farmers markets and farm stands can be found at myoregonfarm.org.

About Oregon FDNP Shoppers

How do WIC Families receive their checks?

Participants receive \$28 worth of Farm Direct checks at their local WIC clinic during a class, an appointment or sometimes at a farmers market. WIC is a public health nutrition program that provides wholesome food, nutrition education, breastfeeding guidance and community support for income-eligible pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women, infants and children up to 5 years old. Participating women and children over 4 months of age are eligible to receive Farm Direct checks.

How do Seniors receive their checks?

Each April eligible seniors receive a yellow letter that will invite them to participate in the program. Interested seniors will receive \$24 in Farm Direct checks by mail. If there is not enough funding to serve all interested seniors, participants are selected randomly from the responses received.

Seniors must be at least 62 years old and receiving Medicaid or SNAP (food stamps) on April 1 to be eligible. Additionally, seniors cannot be living in a facility where meals are provided and must have a monthly income below set income guidelines. Participants may have someone shop on their behalf.

Farmer qualifications and authorization

To qualify, farmers must:

- Own, lease, rent, or sharecrop land to grow, cultivate, or harvest crops on that land in Oregon or a bordering county; and,
- Sell their own produce at a farmers market or farm stand.

Before accepting FDNP checks, farmers must:

- Complete and submit an application at myoregonfarm.org;
- Participate in a brief phone orientation training, if new to FDNP;
- Sign a three-year agreement; and,
- Receive an authorization letter and program materials packet in the mail from the State.

Each year 10% of farmers will be monitored on-site by State staff.

Farmers authorized to accept FDNP checks must comply with regulations outlined in Oregon Administrative Rules 333-052-0020 through 333-052-0130.



Farmer market participation

To qualify, a farmers market must:

- Meet on a consistent basis at defined locations over the course of the season; and,
- Have at least three market vendors over the course of the season who grow, cultivate or harvest fresh fruits, vegetables, or cut culinary herbs in Oregon or a bordering county in another state.

To be listed in the FDNP online directory, farmers markets must:

- Complete and submit an application at myoregonfarm.org;
- Participate in a brief phone orientation training, if newly participating market or new market manager;
- Sign a one-year agreement; and,
- Receive a program materials packet in the mail from the State.

Farmers markets cannot accept or deposit FDNP checks. Please ensure at least one FDNP-authorized farmer is present during all market hours of operation.

Markets must comply with FDNP requirements contained in 7 CFR 248, 7 CFR 249, Oregon Administrative Rules 333-052-0030 through 333-052-0130 as they pertain to markets and FDNP procedures.

Eligible fruit and vegetables

FDNP checks may be accepted for locally grown:

- Fresh fruit
- Fresh vegetables
- Cut culinary herbs

'Locally Grown' means grown in Oregon or the bordering counties of Washington, California, Nevada and Idaho

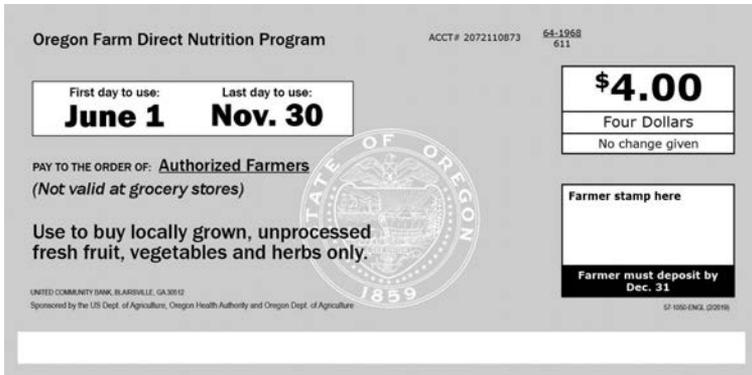


FDNP eligible foods may not be processed or prepared beyond their natural state except for the usual harvesting and cleaning processes.

Products that are not allowed include:

- Imported produce such as bananas, pineapples, and oranges;
- Processed produce such as jam, dried or frozen fruit, salsa, sauerkraut or cider;
- Produce plants such as tomato or basil starts;
- Non-produce foods such as eggs, nuts, meats, honey, baked goods, or cheese;
- Non-food agricultural items such as potted plants, seeds, or cut flowers;
- Non-food items such as crafts, jewelry or shopping bags.

How farmers get paid for FDNP checks



Only authorized farmers may accept and deposit FDNP checks. Farmers markets and unauthorized farmers cannot accept or deposit FDNP checks.

Farmers must:

1. Accept FDNP checks for eligible produce from June 1 through November 30.
2. Provide shoppers with the full amount of product for the value of each check. No change can be given.
3. Cash or deposit all checks by December 31. Farmers are not paid for checks processed after December 31.

Please Note:

- Checks cannot be accepted from or traded with other farmers or vendors.
- Checks from previous years will not be paid.

Farmer banking tips for FDNP deposits

Deposit FDNP checks frequently. Large bundles may contribute to bank errors and possible account fees.

Before taking FDNP checks to the bank:

- Stamp your 4-digit farmer stamp in the box on the front of each check. Make sure the number is clear and dark so it can easily be read by electronic bank-processing equipment.
- Bundle your FDNP checks together and handle them as a separate transaction from other deposits.
- Repair torn checks with clear tape and avoid covering the dollar amount and encoded line at the bottom.

Depositing at your bank:

- When in doubt, deposit checks through an in-person transaction with a bank teller. Check deposit technology on ATMs and cell phone apps may not work properly with FDNP Checks.
- If you are charged transaction fees for your FDNP check deposits, make an appointment with your bank manager and share the cover letter included in your FDNP farmer setup packet.
- Avoid late December deposits to allow time to correct any potential errors.

Other banking notes

- Altered FDNP checks will be returned unpaid to the authorized farmer. (For example, a FDNP check with a “1” written in front of the \$4.)
- Lost FDNP checks cannot be replaced. Store them in a secure location.
- To void or cancel a FDNP check, write or stamp VOID on the face of the check.

Replacing Farmer Stamps:

The most common reason for unpaid, returned FDNP checks is a missing or illegible 4-digit number. Keep the stamp dark by replacing or adding ink when the stamp lightens. The pad may need to be replaced once a year or so, depending on how much use it gets.

Farmers are responsible for stamp and/or ink pad replacements. Replacements may be ordered at an office product supplier of your choice.

The following specifications optimize readability:

- Arial Unicode 24 pt
- Height – ½ inch
- Length – ¾ inch



Frequently asked FDNP shopper questions

Shoppers may refer to FDNP checks as Farm Direct checks, WIC vouchers, senior checks, farmers market coupons, green checks, or some combination of all of those!

1. How do I use my Farm Direct checks?

FDNP checks are spent directly with authorized farmers to purchase fresh, locally grown produce. They are spent like cash, except no change is given.

2. What can I buy with my Farm Direct checks?

FDNP checks are good for fresh, locally grown fruits, vegetables and cut herbs only. This does include mushrooms and garlic. See page 7 for more details.

3. Can I get change if I don't spend all \$4?

Change cannot be given for Farm Direct checks. Separate checks may be used with different farmers, but one check cannot be split. If the desired purchase is less than \$4, shoppers can work with the farmer to bring the product total to \$4. Currencies can also be combined for a purchase. For example, if the total for eligible produce is \$5, you can use one \$4 Farm Direct check and \$1 cash as payment.

Frequently asked FDNP shopper questions

4. Do I need to show my eWIC card or Oregon Trail EBT card, or sign the checks to redeem them?

No. No identification is needed to spend the checks. Participants may have someone shop on their behalf.

5. Which farmers take these checks?

Participating farmers markets and farm stands can be found at www.myoregonfarm.org. At a farmers market, look for the “Welcome Here” sign at produce farmers’ booths. The sign may not be posted, so asking a vendor is encouraged. See sign on page 14.

6. Do Farm Direct checks expire?

Yes. Refer the customer to the expiration date printed on the front of the check.

7. What happens if I don’t spend them all?

Checks that are not spent in one visit can be brought back and redeemed on another day before the expiration. Shoppers are not permitted to give away unused checks.

Frequently asked FDNP shopper questions

8. How do I sign up to get Farm Direct checks?

The checks are for eligible WIC participants and low-income seniors. If the shopper thinks they may be eligible, refer them to their WIC office or 211 (toll-free) to learn more.

9. What if I have a complaint or a problem with a FDNP shopper?

FDNP and WIC shoppers must be treated the same as other shoppers. If a participant behaves disruptively, follow your customer service policy and, if possible, report it to the State WIC Office. Farmers and farmers markets may call with any questions, comments, updates or complaints regarding program participation



Farmer and market signage

Authorized farmers must post a “Checks Welcome Here” sign in a visible location whenever selling eligible produce June-November and may request additional signs from the program as needed.



Markets are encouraged to display the provided poster at the information booth to assist FDNP shoppers and answer common questions.

Need help using your Farm Direct Checks?



ALLOWED ITEMS	NOT ALLOWED ITEMS
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fresh fruits <i>Locally Grown!</i>• Fresh vegetables• Fresh cut herbs <p> Organic products are allowed</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Processed foods (including jam, honey, dried fruit, dairy products, or nuts)• Live plants• Meat, fish or eggs• Non-food items

Look for this sign and spend directly with participating farmers



WIC PARTICIPANTS: Call your local WIC clinic or dial 211, toll-free
SENIORS: Call the Senior Farm Direct toll-free line at 1-866-299-3562

In accordance with Federal civil rights law and U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) civil rights regulations and policies, the USDA, its Agencies, offices, and employees, and institutions participating in or administering USDA programs are prohibited from discriminating based on race, color, national origin, sex, disability, age, or reprisal or retaliation for prior civil rights activity in any program or activity conducted or funded by USDA.

Persons with disabilities who require alternative means of communication for program information (e.g. Braille, large print, audiotope, American Sign Language, etc.), should contact the Agency (State or local) where they applied for benefits. Individuals who are deaf, hard of hearing or have speech disabilities may contact USDA through the Federal Relay Service at (800) 877-8339. Additionally, program information may be made available in languages other than English.

To file a program complaint of discrimination, complete the USDA Program Discrimination Complaint Form, (AD-3027) found online at: http://www.ascr.usda.gov/complaint_filing_cust.html, and at any USDA office, or write a letter addressed to USDA and provide in the letter all of the information requested in the form. To request a copy of the complaint form, call (866) 632-9992. Submit your completed form or letter to USDA by:

- (1) Mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) Fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) Email: program.intake@usda.gov.

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

Contact the FDNP team

Oregon Health Authority
State WIC Office – FDNP Team:

Oregon.FDNP@state.or.us

Phone: 877-807-0889, option 2 (toll-free)

PO Box 14450

Portland, OR 97293-0450

www.myoregonfarm.org

