

## **Supplemental Food Programs Offered at Connecticut Farmers' Markets**

Supplemental food programs first became part of Connecticut farmers' markets in the late 1980's. It was at this time that Connecticut was chosen as one of ten pilot states to offer the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. The first year was a success, and the program has continually grown.

Connecticut offers an ideal setting for the supplemental food programs offered. Many large population centers are easily within driving distance for Connecticut farmers, giving them additional markets that may not be available without these programs. These population centers have thousands of Women, Infant, and Children (WIC clients) and low income seniors that receive benefits for use at authorized farmers' markets.

Currently, there are two separate supplemental food programs offered to Connecticut Farmers' Markets.

### **Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP)**

- Originally began in 1989
- This program is administered by the Connecticut Department of Agriculture
- It serves both WIC clients and low income seniors
- More details about this program can be found on 5a-1

### **WIC Fruit and Vegetable Check Program**

- Originally began in 2010
- This program is administered by the Connecticut Department of Public Health WIC Office
- Its serves WIC clients
- More details about this program can be found on 5b-1

Funding for these programs comes from United States Department of Agriculture – Food and Nutrition Program and the state of Connecticut.

Both of these programs are optional for all Connecticut Farmers' Markets. A market has the choice of participating in one, both, or neither.

All farmers/vendors bringing eligible products to an authorized market must go through training. Eligible products are described later in this chapter. Each market must make the decision to offer these programs or not to offer these programs. All eligible farmers/vendors MUST participate if a market chooses to offer one or both of these programs.