



How to...

Do Outreach at Senior Centers

Senior Centers distribute FMNP checks to their members every summer and many seniors are EBT recipients as well. Doing a cooking demonstration or simply giving a short presentation is a great way to reach a large number of potential market customers. In addition, your visit will brighten many seniors' day, and you can go home feeling good about your job!



Equipment:

Your market's half-page flyers

Your market's EBT poster

An example of a Health Buck (if your market has Health Bucks)

Spend \$5 with EBT get \$2 Health Bucks poster (if your market has Health Bucks)

Any other handouts you like—for example, "Reasons to Buy Local Food"

Market photos (if you have them)

Greenmarket stickers

Tape

For cooking demonstration:

Butane burner

Frying pan, spatula

Food for cooking (pre-washed and chopped), oil, salt, etc.

Sampling cups

napkins

Partner:

No partner necessary, but it is important to communicate with the Senior Center's director and make him/her your ally. He/she should introduce you to everyone and encourage the audience's attention and

participation.

What to do:

Office-

1. Contact the Senior Centers near your market in early June. You want to get in touch with the directors of these centers.
2. Explain that you're from the nearest farmers market and want to encourage seniors to use their FMNP checks. You also want to spread the word about EBT (and Health Bucks, if you have them) at the market. Tell them you'd like to stop by at a time when the Senior Center will be full (usually a meal time) and that you could bring healthy food and do a cooking demonstration.
3. Set up a time and date. Inform them you'll need a table to use. Say thank you!

Event Day (Senior Center)-

1. Wear your Greenmarket shirt. Ask for the director upon arrival, and request a table. Set this table up in the front of the room. Don't be afraid to be as close to people as possible.
2. Tape a market EBT poster and a Health Bucks poster (if applicable) to your table. Place Greenmarket maps and your market's flyers on the table. Set up your cooking demonstration materials.
3. Ask the director to introduce you to the crowd and explain why you're there.
4. Start talking! Present about your market, where it is, and how great it is. Emphasize that people can use their FMNP checks and EBT cards at the market. Tell them about Health Bucks. Tell them about your vegetable and fruit farmers. Ask them if they've received their FMNP checks yet and if so, have they used them? Ask them what types of fruits and vegetables they particularly like to buy with the checks. Be interactive!
5. After you've presented and interacted with people, start cooking. Talk while you cook, and smile. Pretend you're on Food Network. Make sure you cook something quick and easy (bring your food pre-washed and chopped).
6. Place the cooked food in sample cups and walk around to each participant to give them a sample (if there are many more seniors than there are samples, put the cups on your table and invite people to come sample).
Note: Seniors at Senior Centers are typically more gregarious and forthcoming than participants at WIC centers. Humor them; you are young and they like you. Also, most seniors live in the neighborhood surrounding the center, so no need to bring Greenmarket maps with you to help them find a market.
7. When you're finished, leave market flyers for people to take home. Ask the director to post a market poster on the wall.
8. Thank the director.

Post Event –

1. Send the director a thank you email and mention a second visit for later in the season. A few weeks later, call to set up this date.
2. Note your experience and any tips for future market managers under the “Comments” section next to the listed senior center in your Market Contacts spreadsheet on the Grouch.

Note: If a cooking demo seems too daunting, a simple presentation about the market will suffice. Bring your market's poster and show it everyone. If you have market photos, print them in 8x11 color and show them as well (visuals are key). Remember to be confident and project your voice; there will be many seniors who may have decreased hearing abilities.