



# Montana Double SNAP Dollars

## A Win for Families, Farmers, and Local Economies

**REQUEST:** Appropriation of \$200,000 to support the statewide nutrition incentive program, Double SNAP Dollars, at farmers markets, community supported agriculture sites and grocery stores throughout Montana.

### Overview of Double SNAP Dollars:

- Double SNAP Dollars is a nutrition incentive program that helps food-insecure Montanans afford more local fruits and vegetables, while directly supporting Montana farmers
- Currently offered at 23 farmers markets, 2 Community Supported Agriculture (farm share programs), and 1 retail grocery store across 13 Montana counties
- SNAP customers have spent \$500,000 on local foods through Double SNAP Dollars, since 2015

### WHY MONTANA NEEDS THIS PROGRAM:

**Prior to COVID-19, 1 in 10 Montanans, including more than 36,000 children, struggled to afford all the food they need. Food insecurity in Montana is projected to increase by nearly 30% in 2020 (1)**, with an additional 32,000 Montanans at risk of hunger. Many of these families participate in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP) to keep food on the table, however, affording healthy food can be difficult. Research shows that incentives such as Double SNAP Dollars are effective at increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables, which has lasting positive impacts on health (2,3).

**1 in 3 Montana farmers markets accept SNAP benefits, and that number is growing (4)**. These markets are an important sales outlet for many small farms in Montana. Double SNAP Dollars encourage families to spend their SNAP dollars locally, bringing increased revenue to Montana's farmers while improving access to healthy, Montana-grown produce for low-income families.



### HOW THE PROGRAM WORKS:

For every SNAP dollar spent at participating sites in Montana, SNAP customers receive an extra Double SNAP Dollar (DSD) to spend on fresh produce, up to \$20 per day.

***"The Double SNAP program has been highly successful. During these challenging times it has brought needed revenue to our farmers and affordable food to our community."***

*-Montana Farmers Market Manager*

## PROGRAM IMPACTS: A win-win-win for families, farmers, and the economy



**Farms:** Nearly 50% of farms in Montana are small farms less than 180 acres. Double SNAP Dollars helps these farms reach more customers. Double SNAP Dollars operates at 26 sites across 13 Montana counties, directly benefiting Montana farmers.



**Families:** 6,000 low-income Montanans have benefited from the program since 2015. In a survey of 140 Double SNAP participants, 96% reported consuming a greater amount of fresh fruits and vegetables as a result of the program. *Improved access to nutrition means:* 1) children are better learners, 2) seniors and people with disabilities have better health outcomes, and 3) reduced healthcare spending in Montana.



**The Economy:** SNAP is an effective economic stimulus, with each dollar generating between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in economic activity (5). Since 2015, \$500,000 has been spent on local foods through Double SNAP Dollars, representing an economic impact of up to \$895,000. With the requested investment in state funds, that economic impact could increase by an additional \$358,000.

### Why is State investment needed?

State investment will provide stability for current Double SNAP Dollars sites and allow the program to grow to new communities and retailers, resulting in improved food security and health outcomes for families in need, and increased revenue for Montana farmers.

A collaboration of Montana nonprofits has secured over \$500,000 in USDA GusNIP funds for the next four years. However, this grant must be matched with state or community support in equal value. The investment of state funds will allow Montana to better leverage these federal dollars.



private funds

+



state investment

+



federal match

=

**\$1M TOTAL  
DSD funding**

\*\$200,000 in state funds unlocks \$500,000 in federal grant funds over 4 years

**This project is supported by a state-wide steering committee:** Community Food and Agriculture Coalition, National Center for Appropriate Technology, Farm Hands – Nourish the Flathead, American Heart Association, Montana Food Bank Network, Montana State University Extension – SNAP-ed, Missoula Food Bank and Community Center, Montana Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Montana Food Security Council Advocacy Committee, High Line Kitchen Processing & Garden Center, Rural Dynamics, Inc., Kalispell Regional Healthcare, Rocky Mountain Tribal Leaders Council, Fort Peck Community College Wellness Center, and Open & Local

1 Feeding America. The Impact of Coronavirus on Food Insecurity, <https://www.feedingamericaaction.org/the-impact-of-coronavirus-on-food-insecurity>

2 Fair Food Network. Power of Produce Report. [fairfoodnetwork.org/resources/report-the-power-of-produce/](http://fairfoodnetwork.org/resources/report-the-power-of-produce/)

3 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps. Fruit and Vegetable Incentive Programs. [countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/policies/fruit-vegetable-incentive-programs](http://countyhealthrankings.org/take-action-to-improve-health/what-works-for-health/policies/fruit-vegetable-incentive-programs)

4 Montana Department of Agriculture Farmers Market Portal. <https://agr.mt.gov/Farmers-Markets>

5 The Food Assistance National Input-Output Multiplier (FANIOM) Model and Stimulus Effects of SNAP. <https://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/pub-details/?pubid=44749>