

**Event
Planning
GUIDE**



Lunch
at the Market

Partner, Plan & Promote

**A Resource for SC Farmers
Markets and Senior Centers**





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Overview

Farmers markets are often the only source of fresh, healthy food options in underserved communities. Through thoughtful and collaborative planning processes, *Lunch at the Market* events provide an opportunity for senior center participants and community patrons to visit their local farmers market to shop for farm fresh food, engage in conversation, and meet neighbors for lunch, while enjoying the festive atmosphere.

The concept for *Lunch at the Market* was borne out of the collaborative efforts of the following South Carolina organizations and state agencies: SC Association of Farmers Markets, SC Department on Aging, SC Department of Agriculture, and the SC Department of Social Services.

Lunch at the Market aims to:

- Increase older adult awareness and use of community markets
- Provide low-income seniors access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs
- Equip participants with nutrition education opportunities
- Provide an opportunity for patrons to redeem their Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) vouchers, utilize Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits, and expand their purchasing power with Healthy Bucks tokens

Development of this guide was informed by pilot testing events of various sizes and scope in different regions of South Carolina in the spring and summer of 2024.


Partner, Plan and Promote for event success!

Concept Developers

The logo for the South Carolina Association of Farmers Markets is set against a background of fresh green vegetables like bell peppers and zucchini. The text is in blue and underlined.

South Carolina Association of Farmers Markets

Statewide non-profit organization focused on supporting and promoting sustainable food in South Carolina through the state's farmers markets.

The logo for the South Carolina Department on Aging is set against a background of grey stones. The text is in blue and underlined.

South Carolina Department on Aging

Serves as the federally designated State Unit on Aging for South Carolina. Administers the Senior Nutrition Programs of the Older Americans Act. Works with a network of regional Area Agencies on Aging, local service providers and organizations to develop and manage services that help seniors remain independent in their homes and communities.

The logo for the South Carolina Department of Agriculture is set against a background of brown soil and various vegetables. The text is in blue and underlined.

South Carolina Department of Agriculture

Oversees and promotes agriculture in the Palmetto State. Services include food safety inspections, entrepreneurship development, and the certified South Carolina branding program to help the state's farmers and agribusinesses grow and prosper.

The logo for the South Carolina Department of Social Services is set against a background of green vegetables like cucumbers and bell peppers. The text is in blue and underlined.

South Carolina Department of Social Services

Promotes the safety, permanency, and well-being of children and vulnerable adults, helping individuals achieve stability and strengthening families. Administers SNAP, Healthy Bucks, and SFMNP.

Pilot Projects

See information below for examples of *Lunch at the Market* events.

Barnwell County Lunch at the Market

Date: June 11, 2024

Partners: Barnwell Farmers Market, Axis I Center of Barnwell, Generations Unlimited, Lower Savannah Area Agency on Aging, and Country Cupboard and Country Café.

Watch the event video!

[Click Here](#)



Fairfield County Lunch at the Market

Date: July 31, 2024

Partners: Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market, Fairfield County Council on Aging, Central Midlands Area Agency on Aging, Dept. of Public Health SNAP-Ed, Senior Catering, PotBelly BBQ, and Southern Squeezed Lemonade

Watch the event video!

[Click Here](#)



Steps to Success

The steps below are suggestions for the planning process.

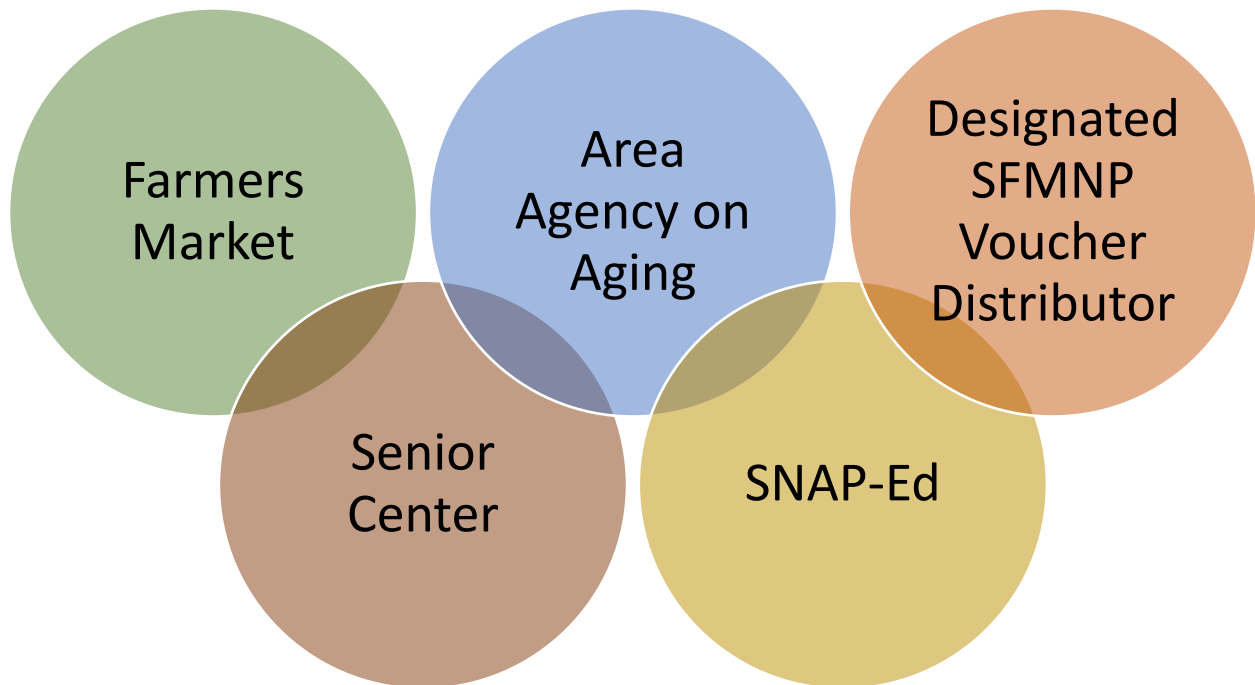
1	<p>Encourage farmers to become a SNAP retailer For a Farmers Market to be able to accept SNAP they will need to be approved by the United States Department of Agriculture Food and Nutrition Service (FNS). Details found here: https://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/apply-to-accept</p> <p>Once you receive a confirmation email containing your FNS number, contact your South Carolina Healthy Bucks Program Coordinator, Norvell Gibson, SC Department of Social Services, 803-898-7626, Norvell.Gibson@dss.sc.gov</p>
2	<p>December– Market Managers attend training to become a certified Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vendor</p> <p>Contact Information: Anne Nidiffer, SC Department of Agriculture, anidiffer@scda.sc.gov, and Willie Nixon, Department of Social Services, willie.j.nixon@dss.sc.gov</p>
3	<p>Jan-April – Farmers attend training to become a certified Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vendor. Schedules will vary by county. Training may be provided by a Certified Market Manager or through scheduled trainings conducted by SCDA and DSS.</p>
4	<p>March – SFMNP voucher distributors attend the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program training</p> <p>Contact Information: Willie Nixon, Department of Social Services, willie.j.nixon@dss.sc.gov</p>
5	<p>April – Identified key partners make connections and start planning process: Farmers Market Managers, Area Agency on Aging/senior center, SFMNP voucher distribution entity, etc.</p> <p>If you need assistance with identifying and making connections with the entities noted above, please reach out to Rowan Goodrich, SC Department on Aging, RGoodrich@aging.sc.gov</p>
6	<p>One month before event - Market and advertise your <i>Lunch at the Market</i> event. Inform and invite local media outlets. Submit your event to GetCareSC.</p>
7	<p>Day of event - Take photos and gather "stats" (number of senior attendees, voucher redemption numbers, and other pertinent information). Share information and event successes with media outlets and SC Department on Aging. Contact Information: Rowan Goodrich, SC Department on Aging, RGoodrich@aging.sc.gov</p>



Partner

- For a successful *Lunch at the Market* event, involving various partners in the planning process is key. Align event goals with partner objectives.
- Each entity plays a valuable role in increasing older adult access to farm fresh fruits, vegetables, honey, and herbs.
- Not sure how to contact the entities below? No problem! Rowan Goodrich, SC Department on Aging can help make connections: RGoodrich@aging.sc.gov

Partnerships For Success





Plan

Each *Lunch at the Market* event is unique to the community because resources and needs are different. Here are some things to consider when planning an event:

Selecting an Event Day

- Senior Center participants who receive meals and group dining transportation services attend senior centers on weekdays, therefore, *Lunch at the Market* events for this target audience should take place on weekdays.
- You may want to coincide the *Lunch at the Market* event with a designated SFMNP voucher distribution day or co-locate the activities. *Please note, dates and locations for SFMNP voucher distribution are pre-approved by SC Department on Social Services (DSS) and must be planned well in advance per DSS directives.*

Providing Lunch

- Senior Center participants who receive nutritional services through the Older Americans Act and donated funds receive a noontime meal. With advanced planning, the Area Agency on Aging and/or Senior Center may have the option to reserve deli bag meals or similar “grab and go” options for these participants.
- Farmers Markets may wish to have additional lunchtime options available to the general public. For example, food trucks onsite.

Seating availability & accessibility

- Seniors and other patrons will need a designated area to sit and eat their lunch. Keep in mind that tents, fans, and access to water may be needed in hot weather conditions.

Exhibitors

- If space allows, consider including additional exhibitors to the Farmers Market to help showcase community resources and nutrition education. For example: Area Agency on Aging outreach table, SNAP-Ed informational booth/cooking demo, etc.

Promote

As a team, brainstorm ways to promote your upcoming *Lunch at the Market* event through various channels and platforms to generate awareness, drive attendance and ensure event success.

In FY24, examples of *Lunch at the Market* marketing and promotion techniques included:

- Use of the official SC Department on Aging *Lunch at the Market* logo
- Social media – make sure to tag @AgingSC
- Press Release
- Newspaper article
- Event added to the [GetCareSC website](#) events calendar
- News Story – example: [WIS News 10](#)

Share event details with community-based organizations and senior serving entities like faith-based organizations, recreation centers, the local library, etc. to help spread the word!



SAMPLE: Flyer and social media marketing

Pop-up Farmers Market

Fresh vegetables, all grown locally. Locally raised meats and handmade crafts
Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market



Featuring Food Truck:
PotBelly BBQ
and
Southern Squeezed Lemonade

July 31st
Wednesday
11 am till 2 pm

117 E Washington St,
Winnsboro, SC
and as always we are open
Saturdays 9-12

SAMPLE: Press Release



For Immediate Release

Contact: Michael Christopher, SCDOA Public Information Director
mchristopher@aging.sc.gov; 803-734-9872

Release Date: Tuesday, July 23, 2024

'Lunch at the Market' makes its debut in Fairfield County

Columbia, S.C. — The Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market and Fairfield County Council on Aging is launching its first "Lunch at the Market" event in Winnsboro, South Carolina.

Lunch at the Market is an opportunity for older adults and community patrons to shop for farm fresh food, engage in conversation, meet neighbors for lunch, and enjoy the festive atmosphere with family and friends. The concept was born out of the collaborative efforts of the South Carolina Association of Farmers Markets, South Carolina Department on Aging, South Carolina Department of Agriculture, and the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

The event will take place **July 31, 2024, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market**, located at 117 East Washington Street, Winnsboro, SC 29180. The event is open to all community members.

Purposes of the event include:

- Increase awareness and use of community markets
- Provide low-income seniors with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey and herbs.
- Equip participants with nutrition education opportunities

- Provide an opportunity for patrons to redeem their Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers, SNAP, and Healthy Bucks tokens at participating markets.

Attendees can purchase locally grown fresh vegetables, locally raised meats, and handmade crafts. Features food trucks- PotBelly BBQ and Southern Squeezed Lemonade.

Interested vendors may contact Jamie Vaine, Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market Manager 803-917-7894 or farmersandartisans@yahoo.com

Fairfield County Council on Aging is a non-profit agency that provides a variety of programs and services to support seniors' physical, emotional, and social well-being. To learn more contact fairfieldcoa@gmail.com or by phone at 803-635-3015.

Several agencies will be on hand to assist and celebrate the event.

###

For more information on the South Carolina Department on Aging, visit <https://aging.sc.gov/> and <https://www.getcaresc.com/>

Make sure to follow us on social media:

Twitter — @AgingSC

Facebook — <https://www.facebook.com/SCDOA>

LinkedIn — <https://www.linkedin.com/company/89754785/>

YouTube — <https://rb.gy/sh3sr>

SAMPLE: Newspaper article




The Voice of Blythewood & Fairfield County



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'Lunch at the Market' debuts in Fairfield on July 31

 July 25, 2024 By Contributed | SC Dept on Aging

FAIRFIELD COUNTY — The Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market and Fairfield County Council on Aging are launching their first "Lunch at the Market" event in Winnsboro on Wednesday, July 31.

Lunch at the Market is an opportunity for older adults and community patrons to shop for farm fresh food, engage in conversation, meet neighbors for lunch, and enjoy the festive atmosphere with family and friends.

The goals of the event are to:

- Increase awareness and use of community markets
- Provide low-income seniors with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey and herbs.
- Equip participants with nutrition education opportunities
- Provide an opportunity for patrons to redeem their Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers, SNAP, and Healthy Bucks tokens at participating markets.

Attendees can purchase locally grown fresh vegetables, locally raised meats, and handmade crafts. Features food trucks- PotBelly BBQ and Southern Squeezed Lemonade.

The event will take place July 31 from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market, located at 117 East Washington Street, Winnsboro, SC 29180. The event is open to all community members.

Interested vendors may contact Jamie Vaine, Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market Manager 803-917-7894 or farmersandartisans@yahoo.com

Fairfield County Council on Aging is a non-profit agency that provides a variety of programs and services to support seniors' physical, emotional, and social well-being. To learn more contact fairfieldcoa@gmail.com or by phone at 803-635-3015.

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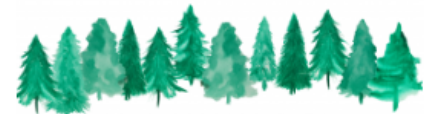
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CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE FIELDS

December 24 at 5:30pm

Outdoor Worship, Bonfires,
Homemade Cookies, Hot Chocolate



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SAMPLE: Newspaper article – Post Event



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Seniors enjoy Lunch at the Market

August 8, 2024 By Staff



Seniors attending the Lunch at the Market event last week played vegetable bingo after shopping and eating lunch. | Photos: Contributed

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CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE FIELDS

December 24 at 5:30pm

Outdoor Worship, Bontires,
Homemade Cookies, Hot Chocolate



BLYTHEWOOD

PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

441 FIMBER POND ROAD

WINNSBORO – A special farmers market event last week, 'Lunch at the Market,' gave older adults and their friends in the community an opportunity to shop for farm fresh food, engage in conversation, meet neighbors for lunch, and enjoy the festive atmosphere with family and friends.

Held on Wednesday, July 31, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. at the Fairfield Farmers and Artisans Market, 117 East Washington Street, the concept was born out of the collaborative efforts of the South Carolina Association of Farmers Markets, South Carolina Department on Aging, South Carolina Department of Agriculture, and the South Carolina Department of Social Services.

The event was open to all community members

Fairfield County Council on Aging brought its older adults to the event and played vegetable bingo. They also had the opportunity for patrons to redeem their Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program Vouchers, SNAP, and Healthy Bucks tokens at participating markets. Fairfield's Farmers and Artisans Market Manager Jamie Vaine said 27 senior vouchers were redeemed.

The purpose behind the 'Lunch at the Market' event, according to state and county officials who organized it, was to increase awareness of and participate in the community market. The Farmer and Artisans Market always provides low-income seniors with access to locally grown fruits, vegetables, honey and herbs, and the 'Lunch at the Market,' provides participants with nutrition education opportunities.

To make comments or ask questions about the 'Lunch at the Market' event, contact South Carolina Department on Aging (SCDOA) Public Information Director Michael Christopher — 803-734-9872 or mchristopher@aging.sc.gov.



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There was something for everyone at the event: lunch, shopping and visiting.

