

FUNDING FOR ELECTRONIC BENEFITS TRANSFERS AT FARMERS MARKETS

The United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) changed from use of paper food stamps to Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) cards in 1993 and by 2002 all 50 states switched to the plastic payment form for low-income individuals receiving food stamps. In order to convert electronic FoodShare dollars to paper scrip to allow for the purchase of farm fresh fruits and vegetables at a farmers market, the Dane County Farmers Market (DCFM) has a point-of-sale machine to process electronic bank transfers. Patrons swipe their FoodShare card, choose the amount they'd like to spend at the market and receive DCFM's unique scrip, which can be exchanged with DCFM market vendors for food purchases.

The scrip can only be used at the DCFM and does not expire. Unused scrip can be returned with the value credited to the participant's account. Funds from the scrip go directly to DCFM food producers. All DCFM producers participate in the program.

For the 2012 market, DCFM formed a partnership with Community Action Coalition to handle the market's ever-increasing FoodShare redemptions. As a result of this program, last year Dane County Farmers' Market (DCFM) customers spent almost \$50,000, the most federal food assistance dollars of any market in Wisconsin.

To make this program available in 2014, the Community Action Coalition requires \$20,000. This is an expense that was not identified at the time the 2014 budget was adopted. The City of Madison has indicated a willingness to split this expense with Dane County. This is a program that benefits low-income consumers by providing access to healthy local food, and benefits local producers by providing demand for their products, at a cost of \$10,000 to Dane County.

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that \$10,000 is transferred from the General Fund to the following account in the _____ for the purpose of contracting with the Community Action Coalition to facilitate the DCFM FoodShare redemptions.

Submitted by Supervisors Richmond, Dye, Wegleitner, Krause, Kolar, Rusk, Matano, Hendrick, Downing, Stubbs, Bayrd, Erickson and Pan, March 20, 2014.

Referred to PERSONNEL & FINANCE, ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE & NATURAL RESOURCES, FOOD COUNCIL and BOARD OF HEALTH.