



PACIFIC COAST  
FARMERS' MARKET  
ASSOCIATION

## DEAR DEB - JULY 2023



**Dear Deb:** I see signs at the market about CalFresh EBT and Market Match, what are they? –Kate R., Antioch

**Answer:** [CalFresh](#) is a California food benefits program that helps families put groceries on their table. EBT stands for Electronic Benefits Transfer and is an electronic system that allows a [Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program \(SNAP\)](#) participant to pay for food using CalFresh benefits. Along with helping those in need of assistance, there is the [Market Match](#) program that stretched CalFresh recipients' food dollars by matching up to \$10 for fruits and vegetables at the farmers' market.

The need for fresh, healthy food has grown tremendously over the last several years. For many years, farmers' markets have been a crucial resource in providing for the needs of our community. Through the CalFresh EBT and Market Match programs offered at farmers' markets, PCFMA has increased access to customers who need food assistance. Over the entire year of 2022, PCFMA farmers' markets served over 15,200 customers using EBT. Over \$1.45 million in CalFresh was distributed as well as \$1.09 million in Market Match. In 2021 \$1.09 in CalFresh was distributed, \$843,000 in Market Match, and served 11,380 customers.

These numbers reflect the necessary participation of all those in need of food assistance - parents, children, grandparents, friends, neighbors, and our communities. They all are benefiting from the increased nutrition of eating fruits and veggies. Not only that, but this money also goes directly to local farms, helping them to stay sustainable and continue farming.

How to use your CalFresh benefits at the farmers' market? Using your EBT benefits card at the farmers' market is simple. Visit the market's information booth and check in with the market manager or volunteer. First, they will ask you how much you would like to withdraw, then they will take your card and swipe it through their EBT point-of-sale machine, and then have you enter your PIN. They will then give you scrip (paper currency) equivalent to that amount for use at the market. Use it just as you would cash. Add Market Match to the equation and you are stretching your food dollars even more! Market Match can only be used for purchasing fresh fruits and vegetables, while CalFresh can be used for almost anything at the farmers' market.

- Fruits and vegetables
- Meat, poultry, fish
- Dairy products
- Bread, cereal
- Other foods such as snack foods and non-alcoholic beverages

You're smart to want to use your card at the farmers' market because that's where you'll find the healthiest and most nutritious foods for you and your family, along with the greatest savings! Your card is easy and convenient to use, and it helps you, your family, and local farmers.

TAGS