

NEWS RELEASE



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For Release: Thursday, September 2, 2010

REMINDER FOR WIC FAMILIES TO REDEEM CHECKS FOR FREE PRODUCE

Farmers Market Checks Expire November 30; Don't Let Them Go to Waste

The Allegheny County Health Department is reminding WIC families to redeem their checks for the Pennsylvania Farmers Market Nutrition Program before they expire November 30.

"We encourage families to take full advantage of the program and use all their checks for free produce and not let any go to waste," said County Health Director Dr. Bruce W. Dixon.

More than 10,000 WIC participants in the County each received \$20 in checks redeemable at participating Farmers Markets for Pennsylvania-grown fresh fruits and vegetables.

WIC families should contact their WIC office or call **412-350-5801** for a list of Farmers Markets where they can redeem their checks. Farmers Market sites also can be obtained by visiting the County Health Department's web site, www.achd.net/wic, or the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture's web site, www.agriculture.state.pa.us, which includes Farmers Markets throughout the state.

Health officials suggest that the produce checks be used before Thanksgiving, since most Farmers Markets close for the season a week before the holiday.

The list of produce available this fall includes apples, beets, broccoli, brussels sprouts, cabbage, carrots, cauliflower, squash, grapes, kale, kohlrabi, leeks, onions, parsnips, pears, plums, potatoes, pumpkins, rutabagas, sweet potatoes, turnips, yams and zucchini.

WIC is a federally funded program for pregnant or breastfeeding women, postpartum mothers and children under the age of five. Eligibility is based on income and nutritional risk.

The income limits are an annual gross income of \$20,036 for a family of one; \$26,955 for 2; \$33,874 for 3; \$40,793 for 4; \$47,712 for 5; \$54,631 for 6; \$61,550 for 7; and \$68,469 for 8. Unborn children are counted when the woman is pregnant.

Besides Farmers Market produce during the summer and fall, WIC provides regular year-round benefits that include infant formula; infant cereal; milk; eggs; cheese; juice; cereal; peanut butter; whole grains, including bread, tortillas, oatmeal and rice; soy milk; tofu; jarred baby foods; dry or canned beans; canned tuna, sardines and pink salmon; and fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables.

For more information about WIC and how to apply for benefits, please call the County Health Department at **412-350-5801**. If this number is a toll call or you live outside Allegheny County, please call the statewide toll-free number, **1-800-WIC-WINS**.

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