

\$700 in grant funding available for SNAP recipients to double their buying power for fresh produce at the Alton Farmers' & Artisans' Market

October 3 2017 11:12 PM

ALTON - As the Alton Farmers' & Artisans' Market nears the end of its season, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients are encouraged to visit the info booth and swipe their SNAP cards to use their benefits. When doing so, Alton Main Street will double their dollars, giving shoppers twice the buying power for fresh fruits and vegetables. \$8,100 in grant funding has been distributed to date, and \$700 is still available for the program this season. The Market runs through October 14th in the parking lot at the corner of Landmarks Blvd. and Henry Street every Saturday morning from 8:00 a.m. until Noon and on Wednesday evening from 4:00 until 7:00 p.m.



Alton Main Street aims to improve access to healthy food thanks to the Illinois EBT Wireless Project grant funded by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. SNAP benefits (formerly known as LINK and food stamps) are accepted by many vendors. The goal is to boost the sale of Illinois-grown food and provide access to fresh produce to low-income residents by enabling Farmers' Markets to accept federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program benefits.

Shoppers will find a wide selection of locally-grown seasonal fruit and vegetables, including heirloom varieties and organically grown crops. Produce will be available, along with grass-fed beef, pasture-raised poultry, farm fresh eggs, local honey, hot or iced coffee, fresh bread and other baked goods. In addition, fresh cut flowers, potted plants, and a large assortment of hand-crafted artwork such as pottery, stained glass, soap, candles, and woodworking items will be sold.

This year marks the 25th season of the Market, organized by Alton Main Street as part of the organization's efforts to revitalize the Downtown Alton historic district. The events feature a variety of products that are handmade or homegrown within a 50-mile radius.

Live entertainment, artist demonstrations and other special activities have been scheduled every Saturday throughout the season. Remaining activities for the year include live music From The House Band on October 7th and pumpkin painting with Party on Broadway on October 14th.

At the Markets, anything homegrown or handmade by the vendor is welcome to be sold. Anyone interested in becoming a vendor is encouraged to visit the Events page of www.DowntownAlton.com to register. Pre-registration is not required, vendors simply show up one hour prior to start time to be directed to their booth space. You can receive reminders on what produce is in season, plus upcoming entertainment and activities at: facebook.com/AltonFarmersMarket or on the Twitter account @AltonMarket.