



Health Bucks Program: Frequently Asked Questions for Farmers

What are Health Bucks?

Health Bucks are \$2 coupons that can be used to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at all New York City (NYC) farmers markets and farm stands and select Food Box and farm share sites. Health Bucks are given to shoppers at farmers markets as a Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) incentive, to clients by community-based organizations as part of their nutrition programming, and to community members by elected officials and other organizations that purchase Health Bucks. For every \$2 spent at farmers markets using SNAP on an EBT card, New Yorkers can get \$2 in Health Bucks, up to \$10 per day. The Health Bucks program is run by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene.

What items can New Yorkers purchase with Health Bucks?

Health Bucks can be used to purchase locally-grown whole or cut fruits and vegetables, mushrooms, herbs, and fruit and vegetable plants.

Health Bucks **cannot** be used to purchase the following items:

- Honey
- Dairy products
- Potted plants that are not fruits, vegetables or herbs
- Fruit juice or cider
- Baked goods
- Meat or eggs
- Prepared foods

Are there requirements to accepting Health Bucks as payment?

Yes. To accept Health Bucks, farmers must be enrolled in the New York State (NYS) Farmers Market Nutrition Program. For more information about the program, visit bit.ly/nys-farmers-selling.

Do Health Bucks expire?

Yes. Health Bucks are valid for one calendar year and expire on December 31 of every year (the expiration date is near the bottom center). Expired Health Bucks should not be accepted as payment.

Can damaged Health Bucks be accepted as payment?

Yes, you can accept damaged Health Bucks as payment. Send damaged Health Bucks to the Farmers Market Federation of New York (FMFNY) for redemption. Assess damaged Health Bucks the same way you would assess damaged cash. Health Bucks with minor tears, water damage, stains or obscured serial numbers are acceptable. Do not accept Health Bucks that are ripped in two.

Can change be given for Health Bucks?

No. Each Health Buck is worth \$2 and change may not be given. The difference between coupon value and the purchase amount may be made up with additional produce or cash.

If New Yorkers have questions about Health Bucks, who should they contact?

New Yorkers can visit the market manager's tent at farmers markets for help or email the Health Bucks team at farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov or visit nyc.gov/healthbucks for more information.

How do I redeem Health Bucks that I accepted as payment?

To redeem Health Bucks you accepted as payment, follow these steps:

1. Stack Health Bucks so they face the same direction and bundle them in uniform quantities, such as packs of 50. Do not staple Health Bucks together, as it makes it difficult to scan them.
2. Stamp the first and last Health Buck in every bundle with your NYS Farmers Market Nutrition Program stamp.
3. Complete the Coupon Redemption Form (available at bit.ly/coupon-redemption-form) and keep a copy for your records.
4. Mail Health Bucks and the completed Coupon Redemption Form to: Farmers Market Federation of New York, 109 Twin Oaks Drive, Syracuse, NY 13206.
5. Track the package to make sure it is delivered. Keep a copy of the tracking information and Coupon Redemption Form. If your Health Bucks get lost in the mail, you may have to submit a copy of the tracking information and Coupon Redemption Form.

Can I redeem Health Bucks at a bank?

No. Health Bucks cannot be redeemed at a bank.

Who can I contact if I have questions about how to submit my Health Bucks for reimbursement?

Contact the FMFNY at 315-400-1447 or the Health Bucks team at farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov.

What happens after Health Bucks are mailed to the FMFNY?

Upon receipt of Health Bucks, the FMFNY will confirm your participation in the NYS Farmers Market Nutrition Program, verify the number of Health Bucks you sent for redemption and send you a check for the full value of the redeemed Health Bucks.

Is there a deadline to mail Health Bucks to the FMFNY?

Yes. All 2024 Health Bucks must be mailed and postmarked to the FMFNY no later than February 28, 2025.

How often should Health Bucks be mailed to the FMFNY?

We recommend mailing Health Bucks monthly, which can expedite the reimbursement process.

How long does reimbursement take?

Reimbursement takes about eight weeks from when farmers mail Health Bucks to the FMFNY to when they receive payment. We are looking for ways to shorten this timeline, beginning in summer 2024.

How can I find out about the status of my Health Bucks reimbursement?

To check on the status of your Health Bucks reimbursement, email farmersmarkets@health.nyc.gov with the information below. We will contact the FMFNY to check on the status of your reimbursement and respond within three business days.

- Your name and the name of your farm
- Your NYS Farmers Market Nutrition Program number
- The date you mailed the Health Bucks to the FMFNY
- The number of Health Bucks redeemed