



**NEWS RELEASE – Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.**

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## **Senior Farmers' Market Program Expands**

### **\$50 in Coupons Available for Eligible Seniors**

During the Summer of 2019, the Ohio Department of Aging announced that part of the State budget for 2020-2021 would include funding to support an increase in access to healthy, locally grown, fresh fruits and vegetables for older Ohioans. Historically, this type of access has been offered through the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, which provides eligible older adults with \$50 in coupons each growing season to use at participating farmers' markets and roadside stands to purchase produce.

The Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a federally funded program administered by the United States Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Services Agency and in Ohio, by the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA). ODA provides additional state funds to support SFMNP operation within Ohio.

To be eligible for the \$50 in coupons for this year, individuals must live in the ten counties included in the AAA7's district which include Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. Individuals must be age 60 or over at the time of application and households must be at 185% of the poverty level. In a household, both the husband and wife can be eligible separately for the coupons. Individuals can only receive the \$50 in coupons (ten \$5 coupons) one time per year and items must be purchased from authorized farmers only. Please note that there will be a delay in the mailing of the coupons until the stay at home order in the State of Ohio has been lifted. At this time, the earliest the coupons will be mailed is late June to begin use in July and continue through October. AAA7 will continue to accept applications in the meantime and answer any questions concerning the program.

Applications can be found on the AAA7's website at [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org), under the "Happening Now" section on the Home Page, or you can call 1-800-343-8112 to request an application or to ask any questions. The Agency can also be reached via e-mail for applications or questions at [FarmersMarket@aaa7.org](mailto:FarmersMarket@aaa7.org).

Prior to the expansion of funding in Ohio, the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program was available in 45 of Ohio's 88 counties. In the Area Agency on Aging District 7's (AAA7) ten-county district, Ross County was the lone county that was designated to participate in the program. Now, thanks to the increased funding in the State budget, the AAA7 is able to expand

the SFMNP to the other counties in the district including Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Scioto and Vinton.

“We at Area Agency on Aging District 7 are committed to rolling out this exceptional program throughout our region,” stated Nina R. Keller, Executive Director of the AAA7. “For many years, we have requested expansion money so eligible individuals in all of our ten county region would have the opportunity to improve their nutrition through increasing their consumption of fresh fruits and vegetables. This is a win for the individual senior and for the farmer who can receive reimbursement for their locally grown produce. We encourage individuals who might be interested and possibly eligible to contact us today!”

Your local Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc. provides services on a non-discriminatory basis in ten counties in Southern Ohio including Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton. These services are available to help older adults and those with disabilities live safely and independently in their own homes through services paid for by Medicare, Medicaid, other federal and state resources, as well as private pay. The AAA7’s Resource Center is also available to anyone in the community looking for information or assistance with long-term care options. Available Monday through Friday from 8:00 am until 4:30 pm, the Resource Center is a valuable contact for learning more about options and what programs and services are available for assistance.

Those interested in learning more can call toll-free at 1-800-582-7277 (TTY: 711). Here, individuals can speak directly with a specially-trained Agency staff member who will assist them with information surrounding the programs and services that are available to best serve their needs. The Agency also offers an in-home assessment at no cost for those who are interested in learning more. Information is also available on [www.aaa7.org](http://www.aaa7.org), or the Agency can be contacted through e-mail at [info@aaa7.org](mailto:info@aaa7.org). The Agency also has a Facebook page located at [www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7](https://www.facebook.com/AreaAgencyOnAgingDistrict7).

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