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Media Contact:
Dave Mecham
EPICC Program
(801) 538-6654

News Release

Double Up Food Bucks now available to Utahns *Program improves healthy food access, supports local farmers*

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Utah’s statewide healthy food incentive program, Double Up Food Bucks, is now available at more than 20 farmers markets around the state. A program of the Utah Department of Health (UDOH), Double Up Food Bucks, increases low-income shoppers’ purchasing power for fruits and vegetables while supporting Utah growers.

The benefits are three-fold: low-income families eat more healthy food, local farmers gain new customers and make more money, and more food dollars stay in the local economy. Each has a ripple effect of benefits.

A family using SNAP (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program) benefits at a participating farmers market receives a dollar-for-dollar match, up to \$10 in free Double Up Food Bucks to spend on the locally-grown produce.

"Double Up Food Bucks has been such a positive force in our communities with clear health and economic impacts," says Jess Church, a dietitian with the UDOH. "Families report eating a wider variety of fruits and veggies and farmers report higher sales and even an interest in growing more produce and hiring more employees."

Brian Emerson, of Utahns Against Hunger, explains the primary purpose of the program is to increase access to healthy food for low-income residents. "Double Up Food Bucks stretches SNAP recipients’ food budgets while encouraging the consumption of more fresh fruits and vegetables." Emerson estimates more than 6,000 Utah SNAP recipients benefited from Double Up in 2017. The majority of SNAP recipients in the state are children (52.47 percent), seniors (6.76 percent), or individuals with disabilities (12.63 percent).

Through a competitive USDA grant, Utahns Against Hunger (UAH) brought the program to Utah in 2015 along with other public and private partners. Under new leadership from UDOH and Urban Food Connections of Utah, the partnership has grown into the Utah Produce Incentive Collaborative (UPIC). UPIC’s goal is to increase access to fresh fruits and vegetables among low-income households through healthy food incentives. UPIC has grown to more than 15 organizations providing financial and logistical support.

For a complete list of participating Double Up Food Bucks sites and hours of operation, visit www.doubleuputah.org.

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The mission of the Utah Department of Health is to protect the public's health through preventing avoidable illness, injury, disability and premature death, assuring access to affordable, quality health care, and promoting healthy lifestyles.