

## **Women, Infants and Children (WIC) Farmers' Market Coupons: Nourishing Families, Supporting Farmers SB 289**

### **Good for Families**

- WIC clients receive coupons redeemable for fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmer's markets and, potentially, roadside stands.
- The program provides families with an additional source of nutritious food and education on nutrition and selecting and preparing fresh produce.
- 62% of recipients surveyed said they ate more fruits and vegetables than usual, and 49% bought a fresh fruit or vegetable they had never tried before.

### **Good for Farmers**

- It encourages farmers to participate in markets by providing them with additional customers— in 2002, 78% of farmers surveyed reported increased sales from participation in the WIC Farmers' Market Program.
- Of the recipients surveyed, 50% went to a Farmers Market for the first time due to the coupons, 57% spent their own money in addition to their FMNP coupons, and 58% said they would continue to shop Farmers Markets, even without the coupons.



### **Costs**

- The bill would provide \$49,000 in general fund dollars over the next biennium. This is in addition to the current general fund allocation of \$149,000.
- The additional funds would help expand the program to include roadside stands and to increase the amount of the participant vouchers from \$20 to \$30.

### **Benefits**

- The program improves access to fresh produce. Studies have found that children in food insecure households less likely to meet food guide pyramid recommendations and had less variety of fruits and vegetables available in the home.
- Good nutrition early in life also has long term health benefits. Adults who suffered from poor nutrition pre-natally and in infancy are at a higher risk of hypertension, obesity, diabetes, and coronary heart disease.

*This bill is sponsored by Senator Frank Shields (D-Portland) and Senator Bruce Starr (R-Hillsboro). For more information on the WIC Farmers' Market program, contact Patti Whitney-Wise of the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force at (503) 963-2290 or [patti.ww@hcs.state.or.us](mailto:patti.ww@hcs.state.or.us).*