2012
Local Agency Guidebook

D H E C

PROMOTE PROTECT PROSPER

I. OVERVIEW OF FMNP

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) provides participants in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) with checks to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables at local farmers' markets. WIC participants receive these nutrition benefits in addition to the regular WIC food package. Local farmers are reimbursed for the face value of the checks, which enhances their earnings and supports their participation in farmers' markets.

The program began in 1986, when several states began initiatives on their own to use farmers' market to make fresh produce available to low-income, nutritionally at-risk consumers. In 1988, Congress authorized a three-year demonstration project to test the concept in ten states: Connecticut, Iowa, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, New York, Pennsylvania, Texas, Vermont, and Washington. The project's success led Congress to enact the WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Act of 1992 (P.L. 102-314), thereby establishing the FMNP as the 14th Federal food assistance program of the USDA. Any state may apply to receive funds to operate a program, pending the availability of Federal funds.

The South Carolina FMNP provides on a one-time basis printed checks to women and children enrolled on WIC in selected counties. WIC staff provides education on using the checks, and nutrition education on choosing, storing, and preparing fresh produce.

Checks are distributed to participants by local WIC staff at the local health department. From 1995 through 1999, FMNP participants received a total benefit of $10.00, five checks, worth $2.00 each. From FY 2000 – FY 2004, FMNP participants received a total benefit of $20, five checks worth $4 each. In 2005, participants began receiving a total benefit of $25, 5 checks worth $5 each.

FMNP participants take the checks to authorized farmers' markets and use them to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables. Individual farmers deposit the checks in their local bank.

Checks are issued starting in May and ending August 31. Initial check issuance is determined by the market season for each county, however, all issuance concludes on August 31. Checks are valid at all authorized farmers' markets until October 15. No change may be returned to the FMNP participant from the check. If the purchase is less than $5.00 or the face value of multiple checks, farmers make up the difference in produce. Likewise, if the purchase is more than $5.00 or the face value of multiple checks, participants are allowed to make up the difference in cash.

The WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program is sponsored jointly by the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control, Division of WIC Services and the South Carolina State Department of Agriculture.

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), the South Carolina State Department of Agriculture, and the Department of Health and Environmental Control. The South Carolina WIC Program administers the program.

II. PARTICIPANT ELIGIBILITY DETERMINATION

All current WIC participants are eligible to receive FMNP checks, except infants. However, FMNP check issuance should be targeted based on the following prioritized criteria:

1. First priority shall be given to breastfeeding women, up to one year from date of delivery.

2. Second priority shall be given to pregnant women.

3. Third priority shall be given to children; first birthday up to 5 years old. (1-5 years old).

4. Fourth priority shall be given to postpartum women.

Each family will receive a maximum of $50.00 in FMNP checks

Family Size Examples:

1) 1 eligible participant - $25.00

2) 2 eligible participants - $50.00

3) 3 eligible participants - $50.00 (2 participants in the family will be issued $25 each. One participant will not receive checks.)

III. CHECK STOCK PAPER STORAGE

The following steps will be taken to ensure security of farmers' market check stock paper at the distribution site ***(Note: The same check paper is to be used for both FMNP and WIC food instruments):***

1. The Local WIC Director or designee shall be responsible for the security in each site where farmers ' market check stock paper is stored and for appropriate distribution to FMNP issuing staff.

2. Farmers' market check stock paper must be stored in a locked location with access limited ONLY to authorized staff.

3. FMNP farmers' market check issuance is restricted to authorized staff only. The authorized administrative staff will issue checks to WIC recipients (children/women) for which a valid certification exists.

4. During issuance, farmers' market check stock paper should not be left unattended.

5. Farmers' market check stock paper is to be locked up separately each day.

Check stock paper is shipped directly from the contractor to each of the Regions and Primary Care Center. The Local WIC Directors are responsible for transporting the check stock to each of the participating sites within their Region.

IV. AUTHORIZED FOODS

Only South Carolina-grown, fresh fruits and vegetables may be purchased with the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program checks. The list of authorized fruits and vegetables follows.

AUTHORIZED FRESH FRUITS		
Apples	*Blackberries*	*Blueberries*
Cantaloupes	*Casaba Melons*	*Figs*
Grapes	*Honey Dew Melons*	*Kiwi*
Peaches	*Pears*	*Plums*
Nectarines	*Raspberries*	*Strawberries*
	Watermelons	

AUTHORIZED FRESH VEGETABLES		
Beans	*Beets*	*Broccoli*
Cabbage	*Carrots*	*Chinese Cabbage*
Collard Greens	*Corn*	*Cucumbers*
Eggplant	*Fresh Cooking Herbs*	*Kale*
Kohlrabi	*Lettuce*	*Mustard Greens*
Okra	*Onions*	*Peas*
Peppers	*Potatoes*	*Pumpkins*
Radishes	*Rhubarb*	*Rutabagas*
Spinach	*Squash*	*Swiss Chard*
Tender Greens	*Tomatoes*	*Turnips/Turnip Greens*
	Watercress	

A sign that lists the authorized foods will be provided to each farmer. The sign should be posted in each farmer's stall whenever it is open for business.

V. UNAUTHORIZED FOODS

Prohibited purchases with SCFMNP checks shall include, but are not limited to the following:

Processed fruit or vegetable products, such as jams/jellies, juices/ciders, cane syrup or molasses, **HONEY**, popcorn, baked goods of any kind (including fruit pies and breads).

Other unauthorized items shall include, but are not restricted to, dried beans/peas, flowers, eggs, ornamental corn, miniature pumpkins, gourds, **PEANUTS**, all other nuts and plants.

Fresh fruits, vegetables and/or cooking herbs not grown in South Carolina are not authorized to be purchased with the FMNP checks.

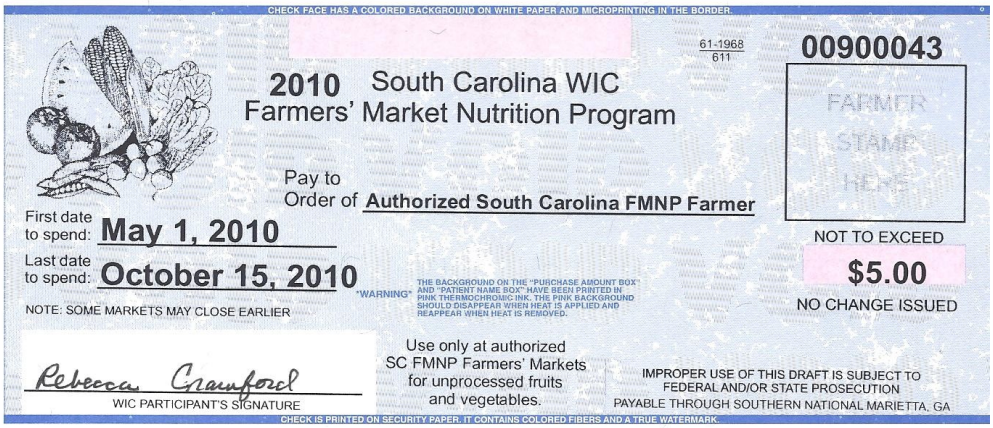
VI. CHECK ISSUANCE

A. FMNP Checks

The Farmers' Market Nutrition Program issues a negotiable check. Farmers' market checks should be treated as cash and guarded from possible loss or theft prior to redemption. Eligible participants receive only one set of five (5), $5.00 checks per year totaling $25.00.
(**FMNP Checks cannot be mailed.)**

Each family will receive a maximum issuance of $50.00.

Sample WIC FMNP Check


CHECK FACE HAS A COLORED BACKGROUND ON WHITE PAPER AND MICROPRINTING IN THE BORDER.

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611

00900043

2010 South Carolina WIC
Farmers' Market Nutrition Program

FARMER STAMP HERE

Pay to
Order of Authorized South Carolina FMNP Farmer

First date to spend: May 1, 2010

Last date to spend: October 15, 2010

NOT TO EXCEED
$5.00
NO CHANGE ISSUED

NOTE: SOME MARKETS MAY CLOSE EARLIER

"WARNING" THE BACKGROUND ON THE "PURCHASE AMOUNT BOX" AND "PATIENT NAME BOX" HAVE BEEN PRINTED IN PINK THERMOCHROMIC INK. THE PINK BACKGROUND SHOULD DISAPPEAR WHEN HEAT IS APPLIED AND REAPPEAR WHEN HEAT IS REMOVED.

Rebecca Crawford
WIC PARTICIPANT'S SIGNATURE

Use only at authorized
SC FMNP Farmers' Markets
for unprocessed fruits
and vegetables.

IMPROPER USE OF THIS DRAFT IS SUBJECT TO
FEDERAL AND/OR STATE PROSECUTION
PAYABLE THROUGH SOUTHERN NATIONAL MARIETTA, GA

CHECK IS PRINTED ON SECURITY PAPER. IT CONTAINS COLORED FIBERS AND A TRUE WATERMARK.

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B. Procedures for Issuing Checks

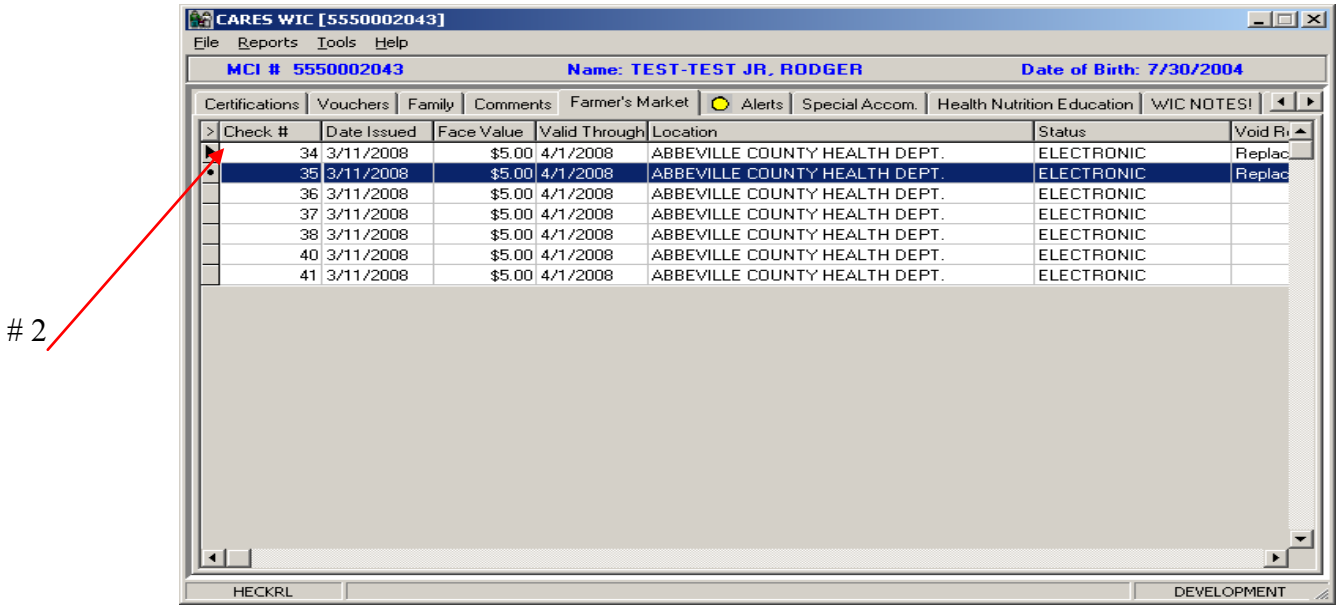
Checks are issued starting in May and ending August 31 of each year. Administrative staff in each participating site should be authorized to issue checks.

WIC Central Office staff is responsible for issuing check numbers to participating sites. Each site is assigned a block of check numbers. Once a site's block of numbers has been issued, the WIC Director/Coordinator may contact Central Office to request additional checks numbers if funds are available.

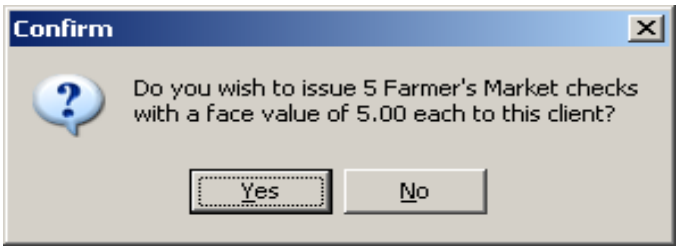
I. Printing Farmers' Market Checks from CARES

Just like WIC checks, all activities related to FMNP issuance occur within the WIC Module.

1. After ensuring that the WIC participant is within a current, active certification, select the "Farmer's Market" tab. (The example shows the screen AFTER checks have been issued. The first time you open this window for a client who has never received FMNP checks; there will be no entries.)



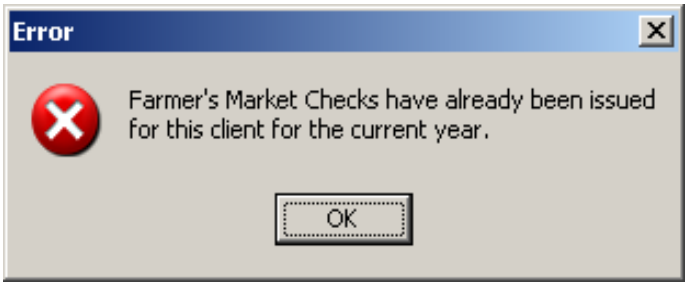
2. Select the "Check #" box and this window will open:



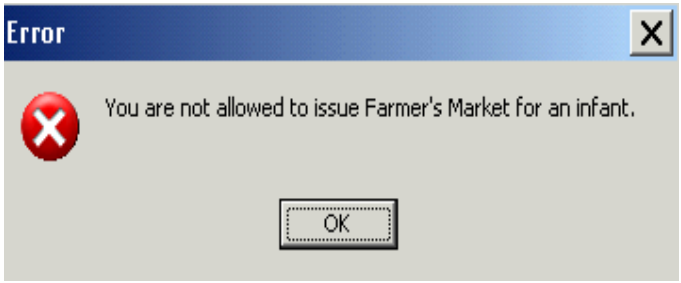
3. Select "Yes" if checks are to be issued to the participant. If a successful issuance/printing results, the "Status" field will read "E" or "Electronic" (as shown above).

4. If CARES determines that there is a reason for not issuing to a participant, an error message will appear.

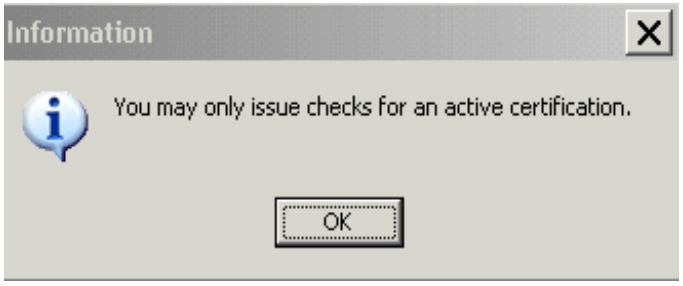
a) A participant can only receive one issuance per year.



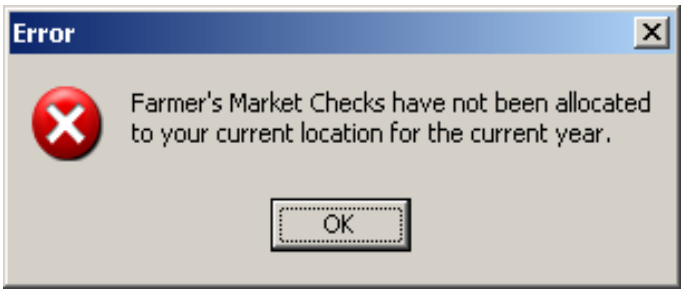
b) Infants may **not** receive FMNP checks, only women and children.



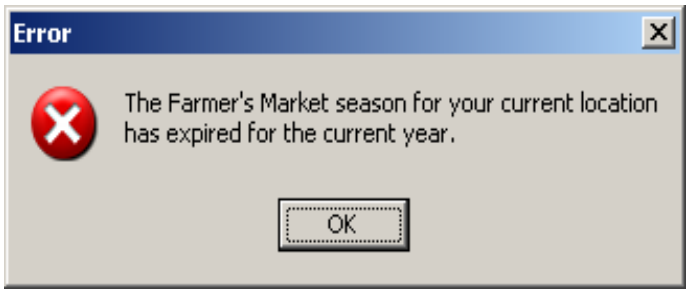
c) Only participants with an active certification may receive FMNP checks.



5. The FMNP is not available statewide. Only approved sites will receive checks. For those sites who are approved to participate on the program will receive check numbers and may begin issuing in May. The last date that checks can be issued is August 31st. Additional error messages will appear if a problem with a site's ability to issue checks arises.



Only specific sites are allocated checks.



The last date for issuance is August 31.

Sites are allocated a limited number of check numbers.
Contact WIC Central Office for additional checks.

II. Issuing the Checks to Participants

a. Signing the Checks and Receipt

Once checks are printed, staff must ensure that the participant must sign each check prior to leaving the health department or primary care center. The farmer will not accept the checks without a signature.

The participant must also sign the receipt acknowledging that they have received checks.

b. Instructions on the Proper Use of Check

Staff must instruct participants on the proper use of the checks at the time the folder containing the checks is issued. The issuing staff member orally explains the nature and purpose of the checks and the guidelines for their use individually at the point of issuance or on a group basis prior to or immediately following issuance.

c. Issuing the Folder

Each participant will be provided with a folder stating the guidelines for proper check use and tips for shopping at farmers' markets. Staff should review with the participant the Farmers' Market Tips listed in the inside cover of the folder. The following items should be inserted in the folder:

- FMNP Checks
- Locations of local markets/farmers
- Nutrition education materials

C. Filing Receipts

After all 5 checks have been printed, a receipt page will then be printed that includes the numbers of the FMNP checks that were printed. Each issuance should have a signed receipt on file.

At the end of each week, all farmers' market check receipts should be merged, sorted, and filed numerically by a designated staff person.

D. Invalidating Checks

There will be occasions when staff will have to void FMNP checks. There are currently two reasons for voiding a check: "Lost/Stolen" or "Damaged". Lost or stolen checks may not be replaced. Damaged checks will be replaced individually (i.e. if one check is damaged, one check will be replaced). If a participant returns less than all five checks issued, only reissue the number of checks returned.

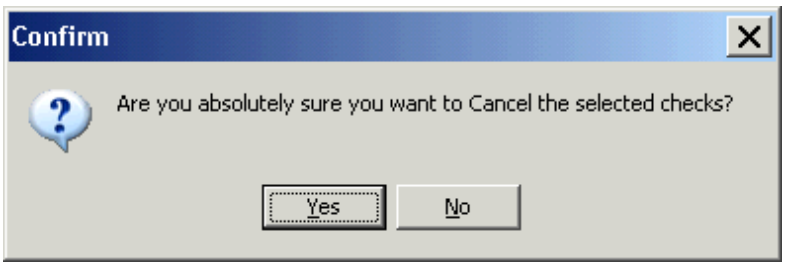
To void a check, the following steps should be taken:

1. Select the "Farmer's Market" tab in the WIC Module window

2. Select the check number to be voided and "right click" (to select multiple checks, press and hold the "shift" key)

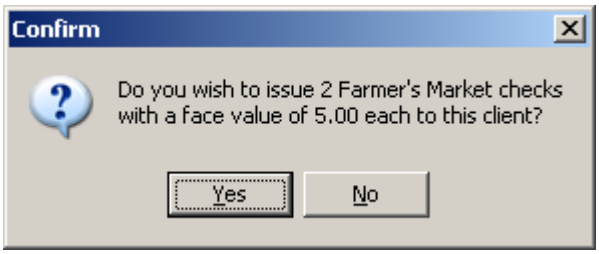
3. Choose one of the reasons for voiding the check (lost/stolen is the default)

If Lost/Stolen is selected, the void action "Cancel" will be displayed.

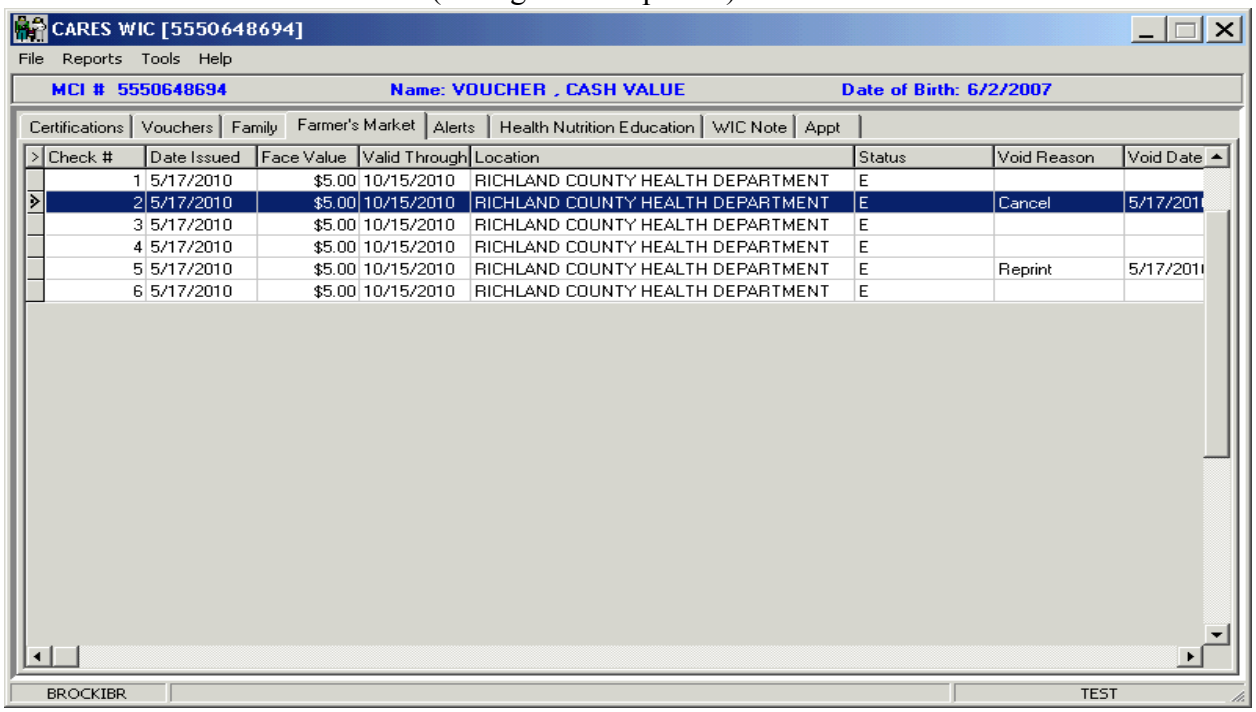


If Damaged is selected, the void action "Reprint" will be displayed.

The appropriate number of checks will reprint once "Yes" is selected.



The screen shot below shows a completed farmers' market issuance, including 1 "Cancel" (lost/stolen) and 1 "Reprint" (damaged and replaced).



Check #	Date Issued	Face Value	Valid Through	Location	Status	Void Reason	Void Date
1	5/17/2010	$5.00	10/15/2010	RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	E		
2	5/17/2010	$5.00	10/15/2010	RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	E	Cancel	5/17/201
3	5/17/2010	$5.00	10/15/2010	RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	E		
4	5/17/2010	$5.00	10/15/2010	RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	E		
5	5/17/2010	$5.00	10/15/2010	RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	E	Reprint	5/17/201
6	5/17/2010	$5.00	10/15/2010	RICHLAND COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT	E		

I. Completing the Invalidated Check Report

All voided checks and check numbers must be accounted for and documented on the ***Invalidated Check Report (Attached).*** This form accounts for all lost, stolen, damaged, or voided checks and must be updated each time a check is reported lost, stolen, damaged, or voided. It is also to be used when the staff notices that a gap or missing numbers in the series of numbers assigned or printed has occurred. Each administrative staff person who issues checks must maintain their own report. All voided checks must be stamped "Void" and filed with the *Invalidated Check Report*.

Checks reported by participants as Lost or Stolen cannot be replaced.

Information that must be documented on the *Invalidated Check Report* includes:

a. The check number that is invalidated
b. The name of the participant who was issued the check. (If a check was voided, but not issued to a participant, record "not issued" in the participant name space.)
c. The participant's 10 digit Identification Number
d. The date the check was originally issued to the participant, if issued to a participant.
e. The status of the invalidated check, Lost, Stolen, Damaged, Void, Pending or Missing Numbers.
f. The date the invalidation was reported or the void occurs.
g. An explanation or reason for the invalidation

The original Invalidated Check Report must be filed by month and maintained on site for three years. All invalidated checks should remain with the report.

V. WIC CASH VALUE VOUCHER

The WIC Cash Value Voucher issued monthly to eligible participants in denominations of six dollars ($6.00), ten dollars ($10.00), and fifteen dollars ($15.00) may also be used at an authorized farmers market or farm stand.

Only South Carolina grown fresh fruits and vegetables may be purchased with the WIC Cash Value Vouchers at authorized farmers markets. Participants may not purchase white potatoes or herbs using a cash value voucher.

VI. NUTRITION EDUCATION

A. Providing Nutrition Education to Participants

All WIC participants must be provided the opportunity for nutrition education. FMNP check recipients also must be provided a nutrition education contact. The coupling of the distribution of FMNP checks with nutrition education provided at a WIC appointment can meet these requirements. The WIC/FMNP nutrition education may be provided in a sharing session or as part of the education provided at a participant's individual appointment. Nutrition education for the WIC/FMNP contact should include the selection, storage, preparation and nutritional value of

fresh fruits and vegetables available at the farmers' markets. The class instructor may give additional information about the farmers market such as the locations and times of the markets and instruct participants to look for the farmers market stall sign that each authorized farmer must post.

For group sharing sessions, local WIC sites participating in the Farmers' Market Program must utilize sharing session tips on Attachment B of the WIC State Plan. Four key messages should be incorporated into the sharing session**: 1) Selection, 2) Storage, 3) Preparation, and 4) Nutritional Value.** Group nutrition education contacts should be documented according to the procedures in the *WIC State Plan.*

The WIC/FMNP nutrition education provided at certification, or care plans should be documented in the participant's record. This education will often be needed in response to assessed dietary needs, as most individuals and families do not regularly consume the recommended number of daily servings of fruit and vegetables for good nutritional status.

VII. COST ACCOUNTABILITY

A. Documenting PCAS

Staff should use the Farmers' Market Nutrition Program's ***PCAS Program Code (066)*** when performing duties related to the program. This code will primarily be used by the local WIC site's front line staff when performing the following functions:

1. All duties related to issuing FMNP checks to participants.
2. Instructing participants on the proper use of the checks.
3. Completing week-end data reports for the program.
4. Any other administrative duties related to FMNP.

***THIS PCAS CODE IS TO BE USED BY ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF ONLY. NUTRITION STAFF SHOULD NOT PCAS TO FARMERS' MARKET, UNLESS PERFORMING AN ADMINISTRATIVE FUNCTION.**
Primary Care Center staff should keep separate time accounting reports to document time spent on the FMNP. Primary Care Center staff will report the amount of time devoted to the program.

VII. MANAGEMENT EVALUATIONS

A. Management Evaluation Schedule

All Regions and Primary Care Centers participating in the FMNP must be reviewed through the management evaluation process once every two years. Reviews will be conducted during the months of June, July and August. **See attached copy of the *Management Evaluation Review Tool.***

B. Areas Reviewed

All areas of the program are reviewed to include the following:

1) Storage of Check Stock Paper
2) Participant eligibility
3) Check Receipts- participant signature, voids
4) Invalidated Check Reports
5) PCAS
6) Participant Surveys
7) Nutrition Education
8) Certifications

C. Observations during Reviews

WIC Central Office staff will observe FMNP check issuance during the scheduled management evaluation to determine if proper procedures are followed. If participating sites have issued all of their checks prior to their management evaluation, Central Office must be contacted to issue the site additional check numbers in order that issuance can be observed.

Nutrition Education classes are also observed to determine if the local WIC sites are incorporating a farmers market message into the sharing session.

VIII. PARTICIPANT SURVEY

A. Issuing Surveys to Participant

FMNP participants should complete the surveys in order to obtain their input regarding the program. Surveys can be distributed by administrative or nutrition staff during group classes or other appropriate setting. A copy of the participant survey in English and Spanish is attached.

The completed forms should be mailed to WIC Central Office upon request for analysis of the impact of the program. At least five percent (5%) of participants who received and used FMNP checks should be surveyed in order to gain a fair assessment of the program.