

Starting Thursday, May 3rd, the Imlay City Farmers' Market, located at the corner of Third Street and Main Street, will open and be equipped to handle Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT), also known as the Bridge Card or food stamps and Debit Cards.

This EBT initiative gives recipients of public assistance greater access to fresh, locally grown foods. Shoppers will swipe their card and enter their PIN number at the point of sale device to be located at the Market Master's booth. Recipients of EBT will be able to select how much they would like to spend in \$1 increments and receive tokens equal to the amount. Upon approval, tokens will be issued that can be redeemed at separate vendors for eligible items only. Vendors will not be allowed to give change however, since the tokens are in \$1 increments, shoppers can use a combination of cash and tokens for any uneven amounts spent. Tokens not used can be spent at future Farmers' Markets in Imlay City. There is no fee to EBT customers for this service.

Eligible items that can be purchased at the Farmers' Market using the EBT card include: Breads, fruits, vegetables, meats, fish, poultry, dairy products, honey, syrup and seeds and plants which produce food for the household to eat.

Nonfood items such as pet foods, soaps, paper products, household supplies, crafts, cut flowers and decorative plants will not be eligible for EBT purchase. Also, hot foods and food that will be eaten in the market are not eligible.

We will also offer Double Up Bucks. This program is sponsored by the Four County Community Foundation and will match Bridge Card purchases dollar for dollar up to \$20 per market day for anyone using their Bridge Card for purchases. That means for every dollar spent on your Bridge Card you will receive an additional dollar to spend at the market free of charge! Double Up Bucks are available for Michigan produced fruits and vegetables only.

Customers wanting to use a debit card can decide how much they want to spend in \$5 increments and then swipe their debit card at the Market Master's booth. There is a \$1.00 handling fee per transaction. Customers will receive \$5 wooden tokens to use at the vendors' stands. Customers can return tokens to the market staff on the day of purchase and will receive credit to their account, or can save tokens to be spent at a later date at the Imlay City Farmer's Market. Vendors can give change for debit wooden token purchases.