

## Williamstown Farmers Market Summer 2023 Update

The 2023 season of the Williamstown Farmers Market (WFM) is going strong and right now is peak produce season. With the late summer have come even more reasons to be excited about the many ways it's bringing people together.

In 2023, WFM continues to be a destination for more than just purchasing food or artisanal goods. With a dedicated kids section containing toys, educational books, and drawing materials, the market can be fun for people of all ages. Local musicians supported by the Williamstown Cultural District and Williamstown Chamber of Commerce create a homey atmosphere with a combination of original songs and fan-favorite covers. With its lively and welcoming community spirit the Williamstown Farmers Market creates a meeting ground for people of all walks of life.

Since its founding in 1981, addressing food insecurity has been one of the Williamstown Farmers Market's goals. In recent years, however, the Board has prioritized food insecurity issues through the expansion of the market's various programs. In addition to matching SNAP/EBT dollars, up to \$30 per week, WFM has recently added the ability to double the expanded value of Senior/WIC coupons. These two matching programs, which are possible due to a grant from Berkshire Agricultural Ventures and Farm Credit East, allow the market to make fresh, local produce more accessible and affordable.

The extra funds given to SNAP/EBT and senior coupon patrons also help provide our local farmers with much-needed support through their purchases. The Community Essentials Initiative, the other side of WFM's commitment to fighting food insecurity, is going strong this summer. At the end of every market, excess produce is bought through a combination of grants and donations; this produce is then donated to local food pantries in Williamstown and North Adams. By simultaneously supporting our local farmers through more purchases and providing fresh produce to local food pantries, WFM is holding true to its mission to "Grow Community" in Northern Berkshire County.

If you'd like to help support these efforts you may donate through the WFM website ([williamstownfarmersmarket.org](http://williamstownfarmersmarket.org)) or at the market booth on Saturdays from 9AM – 1PM. The WFM will be held through October 21, 2023.