

# News...



FROM THE OFFICE OF STATE REPRESENTATIVE LA SHAWN K. FORD

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**For More Information:**

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## **Rep. Ford Announces New Initiative to Expand His Work to Implement SNAP/Link Acceptance at Farmers' Markets**

*Deadline for farmer' markets to apply for federal grants rapidly approaching*

**CHICAGO** – State Rep. La Shawn K. Ford (D-Chicago), who passed a law in 2010 to create a special fund to help farmers' markets afford the equipment necessary to accept Illinois Link and federal SNAP food benefits, announced a new initiative from the lieutenant governor's office to implement his efforts.

The Illinois EBT Wireless Project, an effort to increase the number of farmers' markets participating in the SNAP/Link program, is intended to increase access to healthy foods for low-income families and help farmers expand the markets for their products.

"In many parts of my district, there is no access to healthy foods or even something many take for granted – a grocery store," Ford said. "Feeding families through gas stations and convenience stores is not a healthy option, nor is it an acceptable option. By helping strengthen farmers' markets and getting kids interested in community gardening, we can lay a solid foundation for a healthy future."

To implement the Illinois EBT Wireless Project, the Office of the Lieutenant Governor has formed a working group that includes representatives from the Illinois Department of Agriculture, Illinois Department of Human Services, Experimental Station, Southern Illinois University – Carbondale, and the Illinois Farmers' Market Association.

Federal funds have been made available to Illinois' farmers' markets through the United States Department of Agriculture. The deadline to submit an Application of Intent is 12 noon on July 9. The application is available on the Illinois Department of Agriculture's website at

<http://www.agr.state.il.us/marketing/FMTIP/FMTIPApIntent.pdf>

For more information, contact the Lieutenant Governor's Rural Affairs Team at (217) 558-3727, or contact one of Ford's constituent service offices; call the Oak Park office at (708) 445-3673 or the Chicago office at (773) 378-5902.