



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Patty Ritchie

Farm Fresh Foods for Seniors

PATTY RITCHIE June 22, 2015

| ISSUE: **AGING, AGRICULTURE, SENIORS**



Senator Ritchie's Weekly Column

From more energy and a sharper mind to maintaining a healthy weight and reducing the risk of disease, the benefits of a healthy, well-balanced diet are endless. While eating nutritious foods is important for everyone, it's especially important for senior citizens. That's why I'm pleased to report that included in the most recent state budget was funding I helped secure that will help New York's aging population get the fresh foods they need to stay healthy.

As part of my "Grown in New York" initiative, this funding will expand the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program, which gives \$20 coupons to low-income seniors that can be redeemed at farmers markets across the state. The total value of the coupons in Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties is

more than \$53,000.

The expansion of this important program will not only provide fresh—and free—fruits and vegetables from local farmers markets to 2,700 seniors throughout Jefferson, Oswego and St. Lawrence Counties and 110,000 statewide, it will also help strengthen the bottom lines of farmers throughout our region.

Coupon booklets will be available through local county Offices for the Aging on the following dates:

Jefferson County: Coupon booklets will be distributed by the Office for the Aging beginning July 1 and are valid at all farmers markets in the county. For information, call (315) 785-3191.

Oswego County: Coupon booklets will be available July 1 and are valid at the New Haven, Oswego, Fulton and Pulaski markets. Additional markets may be added in coming weeks. For information, call (315) 349-3484.

St. Lawrence County: Coupon booklets will be available July 9 at the Star Lake Senior Picnic and on July 10 at the Morristown Senior Picnic. Coupons are accepted at all farmers markets. For more information, please call (315) 386-4730.

Eligible seniors can earn up to \$1,800 a month, or \$2,426 for a couple.

Eating fresh, nutritious foods is key to living a healthy and active lifestyle. If you're a senior looking to boost your intake of fruits and vegetables, I encourage you to take advantage of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. For more information on this important initiative, please contact your local Office for the Aging and, for a list of local farmers markets, I encourage you to [click here](#).