



February 27, 2023

Dear Committee Members, in regards to S.F. 1927:

The Grand Rapids Farmers Market became a SNAP retailer in 2012. We adopted the HEHAH matching dollars program offered through Hunger Solutions as soon as it became available. Currently we offer Market Bucks and Produce Market Bucks at both our regular biweekly May-October markets and our monthly November-April winter markets.

This program has grown in Grand Rapids over the years. In 2022, our market saw redemptions of more than \$15,000 in EBT tokens, more than \$14,000 in Market Bucks, and more than \$13,500 in Produce Market Bucks. This program is helping low-income folks in our community participate in the farmers' market and obtain healthy, local food. The program is also helping our farmers. Market Bucks and Produce Market Bucks together resulted in more than \$27,500 spent by SNAP recipients at the market. This is pass-through money that goes directly back to our farmers, and represents sales that would likely not have happened without the support of HEHAH.

The administrative funds for markets through HEHAH are also critical to enable these programs to continue. There is significant paperwork necessary to correctly track the issuance, redemption, payout to farmers, and reporting back to Hunger Solutions on these forms of scrip. The Grand Rapids market employs a staff person at \$13.50/hr to run the market booth on market days. We pay the market treasurer at \$30/market to oversee booth operations and to complete the "homework" of tracking, verifying, and payments to vendors. Administrative funds help us pay those people for their necessary time to make this program work.

Yours truly,

Jane Grimsbo Jewett
Grants & Compliance Manager
At-Large Board Member
Grand Rapids Farmers' Market