The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- Basic SNAP facts:
  - SNAP benefits are federally funded, and the federal government splits the administrative costs with the state. The program brings millions of dollars into Maine at a low cost to the state. (For example, in November of 2017, over $19.8 million SNAP benefits were distributed in Maine.)
  - The average SNAP recipient gets just $28 per week, or $4/day.
  - 30% of recipients receive benefits for 1 year or less.

- Food insecurity:
  - A person is considered food insecure if they lack access to enough food to ensure adequate nutrition.
  - Nearly one in four children in Maine are food insecure.
  - 179,000 Mainers receive SNAP/EBT benefits (approx 13.5% of population)
  - Maine is 1st in New England, 7th in the nation for food insecurity and 3rd in the nation for very low food security.

- Who receives SNAP?
  - 14% of Maine seniors experience food insecurity.
  - Nationwide- 75% of participating families have either a child, a senior citizen, or a disabled person in the household.
  - The vast majority of SNAP recipients are either working, looking for work, unable to work (disabled), or not expected to work (children and seniors).

- Positive impact of SNAP:
  - Health benefits:
    - SNAP recipients have better overall health than other low-income Americans.
    - Access to SNAP increases birth weight and reduces neonatal mortality.
  - Youth impact:
    - In low-income families that receive SNAP, children are 16% less likely to be obese in adulthood and 18% more likely to graduate from high school.
    - Test scores increase and disciplinary issues decrease, coinciding with SNAP benefits being loaded onto the EBT card, which happens once per month.
  - Economy:
    - SNAP pumped approximately $255 million into Maine’s economy in 2016.
    - $1 in SNAP generates $1.70 in economic activity.

For more information, see the 2016 book, *SNAP Matters: How Food Stamps Affect Health & Well-Being.*

This information sheet was compiled by the Maine Federation of Farmers’ Markets in winter of 2017.