

## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



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### **Riverside Arts Market is now participating in Fresh Access Bucks *Program increases access to healthy food for SNAP recipients***

(JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – January 25, 2016) – Riverside Arts Market (RAM) in Jacksonville is now participating in Fresh Access Bucks, a program that increases access to healthy, local, fresh produce for Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) recipients.

A program of Florida Organic Growers (FOG), Fresh Access Bucks (FAB) is a statewide incentive designed to encourage SNAP recipients to redeem their benefits at farmers markets to purchase fresh, healthy foods directly from Florida farmers.

At participating markets, FOG matches what a SNAP cardholder spends with FREE Fresh Access Bucks - up to \$20, every market day. Customers can use them right away or later on to buy Florida grown fruits and vegetables.

For example, a SNAP shopper who spends \$10 of their SNAP benefits at a participating market receives an additional \$10 to purchase fresh, local produce. Currently there are 28 farmers markets and two CSAs participating in Fresh Access Bucks throughout the state. In addition to increasing the affordability and accessibility of healthy foods, nutrition education efforts at FAB markets is integral to increasing the purchase and consumption of fresh, local produce.

“Implementing the SNAP program has been a goal since I joined the Riverside Arts Market team and I’m thrilled that we’re now able to better serve our incredibly diverse neighborhood in this way, “ said RAM’s Director, Krysten Bennett.

Organized by Riverside Avondale Preservation (RAP), a neighborhood non-profit, RAM offers a dependable and affordable marketplace for farmers, artists and artisans to sell their products in a vibrant environment that serves as an inexpensive weekend storefront for their creative efforts.

In addition to artist vendors, the weekly market features live musical entertainment, street performers, food vendors and a fresh produce market. The market site includes space for 162 of its more than 250 small business vendors each week, a performance stage with seating for 300 and ample free parking and restrooms, all under the canopy of the Fuller Warren Bridge, which carries Interstate 95 over the St. Johns River in downtown Jacksonville. Admission is always free. The Riverside Arts Market is a private/public partnership with the City of Jacksonville.

RAM recently converted its Farmers Row to a producer-only market, meaning that all of the market farmers are required to grow what they sell with very limited resell exceptions. RAM is proud of its commitment to support truly local farmers (all from within 100 miles of Jacksonville city limits) while educating consumers about the benefits of eating locally and seasonally.

Located at 715 Riverside Avenue under the canopy of the Fuller Warren Bridge, RAM is open every Saturday, March through December from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. in January and February.

FOG is a nonprofit that supports and promotes organic and sustainable agriculture by educating consumers, farmers, future farmers, businesses, policy makers and the general public.

For more information on Riverside Arts Market, please visit their [website](#). For more information on FAB and the other participating markets around the state, please visit the [FAB website](#).

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**About Florida Organic Growers**

Florida Organic Growers (FOG) is a non-profit organization founded in 1987. FOG promotes organic agriculture and healthy and just food systems by informing producers, consumers, media, institutions and governments about the benefits of organic and sustainable agriculture. For more information, please visit [www.foginfo.org](http://www.foginfo.org).