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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 30, 2022

Farmers' market purchases easier this summer with new payment system for WIC participants and seniors

SANTA FE – The 2022 season for the New Mexico Department of Health, Women, Infants and Children's (WIC) and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program begins July 1st, making New Mexico the first in the nation to use statewide a new one-of-a-kind payment system for shoppers and farmers.

The new system allows both WIC and senior participants and program-approved farmers to use a mobile app to directly make and receive payments electronically. Both apps for farmers and participants are available from either the Google Play or Apple store. This system is free to all WIC approved farmers.

Anyone without a smartphone is provided with a Shopper Card, much like a debit card, but identifiable by a 16-digit card number and a QR code that allows farmers to easily scan for payment.

The new system will make it easier for both low-income families and elderly in the state to have access to locally grown nutritious foods and eliminate the use of paper checks entirely.

"Online banking, and the use of debit and credit cards is how most of us make purchases today, and paper checks are becoming increasingly obsolete," said Acting Department of Health Secretary, David R. Scrase, M.D. "I am proud of New Mexico WIC's forward thinking that's led to the development of a payment system that will be the national standard for years to come."

New Mexico WIC Operates the fifth largest WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition in the nation.

The mobile phone and shopper card payment process was tested last fall at the Santa Fe Railyard Farmers' Market with great success, clearing the way for use statewide this July.

According to New Mexico WIC's [2021 annual report](#), test participants commented the new technology was “discrete and easy to use”. Farmers commented they “liked the idea of not having to handle checks and possibly have to deal with returned check fees for an incorrect stamp, lack of signature or depositing late.”

“We are thrilled to have found a modern solution and lead the nation in this much needed effort for other states to follow as we were all in the same situation with the current banking model of getting out of the check business,” said Sarah Flores-Sievers, WIC and Farmers Market Director.

The new system will be used at the 73 WIC-approved [farmers’ markets, roadside stands and mobile markets](#) throughout New Mexico.

The mobile apps for shoppers are available for download at these [Apple App](#) and [Google Play](#) links, and the mobile app links for farmers are found on the following [Google Play](#) and [Apple App](#) store links.

For more information on the WIC and Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program, visit [NMWIC.org](#) and click on the Farmers’ Market tab near the top of the page.

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The Department of Health works to promote health and wellness, improve health outcomes, and deliver services to all New Mexicans. As New Mexico’s largest state agency, DOH offers public health services in all 33 counties and collaborates with 23 Native American tribes, Pueblos and nations.