

Logan Square Chamber of Commerce
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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An Illinois First: Food Stamps at a Farmers Market
Logan Square Market Expands Access to Locally-Grown Food

Participants in the Illinois LINK card food stamp program are now able to purchase locally-grown fruits, vegetables and meats this summer at the Logan Square Farmers Market. This is the first farmers market in Illinois to make this technology available. Using a wireless, battery-powered terminal, the LINK card as well as standard credit cards can be accepted for payment. "This innovative program increases people's access to fresh, locally-grown food," notes Paul Levin, executive director of the Logan Square Chamber of Commerce, which manages the market. "We have a successful farmers market in Logan Square and we want everyone to feel welcome to come and shop."

The Illinois Department of Human Services administers the LINK card program, which provides federal subsidies to help low-income households buy the food they need for a nutritionally adequate diet. Although electronic payment was not previously available at farmers markets, some low income mothers and seniors have received special paper coupons to redeem at farmers markets for fresh fruits and vegetables. By making it possible to accept the well-known LINK card, this new electronic system streamlines the process for both participants and farmers, who will receive faster payment.

The Logan Square program came about through a seed grant from the Local Initiative Support Corporation's New Communities Program and sponsorship by the local Citibank branch which is covering the cost of the machine and initial year's fees. The City of Chicago Mayor's Office of Special Events is studying a similar program for its system of markets.

2007 marks the third season for the Logan Square Farmers Market which is open every Sunday from 10am to 3pm through October. Twelve vendors sell their products including spring salad greens and pasture raised chicken from Cedar Valley Sustainable Farm in Ottawa, IL and strawberries and peaches from Noffke's Family Farm in Coloma, MI.

More information about the market, including a complete vendor list is available at:

www.logansquarefarmersmarket.org

Logan Square Farmers Market

Southeast corner of Logan Blvd. & Milwaukee Ave. (3107 W. Logan Blvd.)

Sunday June 24th and continuing every Sunday through October, 10 am – 3pm

The market is managed by the Logan Square Chamber of Commerce, an association of local businesses advancing the civic and commercial interests of the Logan Square community through events, promotions, advocacy and research.

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