



## Catawba County Public Health

[www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth)

3070 11th Ave. Dr. SE, Hickory, NC 28602  
Phone (828) 695-5800  
Fax (828) 695-4410

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**Media Contact:** Kelly Schermerhorn, Public Information Officer, (828) 695-5843, [kschermerhorn@catawbacountync.gov](mailto:kschermerhorn@catawbacountync.gov)

### **CATAWBA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH FARMERS MARKET CELEBRATES SUMMER KICK OFF**

HICKORY, NC – Catawba County Public Health celebrated the official summer kick off of its farmers market with a ribbon cutting Thursday, July 11. The kick off coincided with the Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) program's distribution of WIC Farmers Market Nutritional Program vouchers to WIC participants.

Using farmers market vouchers, WIC families can purchase healthy, fresh, locally-grown fruit and produce from WIC-certified farmers at the Public Health Farmers Market, as well as other local WIC-certified farmers markets.

The ribbon cutting and farmers market were supported by community leadership including Catawba County Commissioner Dan Hunsucker, Catawba County Chamber of Commerce VP of Shareholder Relations Sabina Hardy, and Catawba County Public Health Director Doug Urland.

In 2012, Catawba County Public Health's WIC office issued 1,860 farmers market vouchers. Only 51 percent of the vouchers were redeemed. "With the market located at Public Health, we hope to see increased redemption of WIC Farmers Market Nutritional Program vouchers, especially for families who may face transportation challenges in getting to another market," said Julie Byrd, WIC director, Catawba County Public Health. "Our market will also increase convenient access to fresh produce for people living, visiting, and working in this part of the county."

Catawba County Public Health Farmers Market is open Thursdays May to October, from 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Located in Public Health's front parking lot, behind Catawba Valley Medical Center, the market is open to the public. Cash as well as WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program vouchers are accepted.

Based on availability, WIC will issue farmers market vouchers until the end of September, but vouchers received in September may be used through October.

WIC is a federal supplemental nutrition program funded by the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) for pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women and children up to age five. The goal of the program is to help prevent nutrition-related problems in pregnancy, infancy and early childhood. WIC food vouchers are redeemable at participating food stores and farmers' markets for nutritional foods, including fresh fruits and vegetables, whole grains, milk, juice, eggs, cheese and cereal. WIC also provides nutrition and breastfeeding counseling. The Catawba County WIC office serves more than 4,000 participants a month.

In accordance with Federal law and U.S. Department of Agriculture policy, this institution is prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.

Located off Fairgrove Church Road behind Catawba Valley Medical Center in Hickory, N.C., Catawba County Public Health provides health and education services to eligible men, women, and children in the community. For more information, please call (828) 695-5800 or visit [www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth](http://www.catawbacountync.gov/phealth).

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*"Leading the Way to a Healthier Community"*

