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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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“CalFresh Accepted at Local Farms ”

With help from the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF), a growing number of farmers now accept CalFresh (formerly known as food stamps) directly at their farms.

CalFresh recipients can now use Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards to purchase Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) shares and/or shop for produce at farms stands at the following locations. Contact the farmer directly to learn more:

- DeepSeeded Community Farm, Arcata (CSA)
 - (707) 825-8033, www.arcatacsa.com
- Organic Matters Ranch, Eureka (CSA and Farm Stand)
 - (707) 407-3276 www.organicmattersranch.com
- Redwood Roots Farm in Bayside (CSA and Farm Stand)
 - (707) 826-0261, www.redwoodrootsfarm.com
- Shakefork Community Farm in Carlotta (CSA)
 - (707) 498-3546, www.shakeforkcommunityfarm.com
- Ocean Air Farms in Fort Dick Del Norte County (CSA and Farm Stand)
 - (707) 616-1632, <http://www.oceanairfarms.shutterfly.com/>

For many years, EBT has been welcomed at most of Humboldt County’s farmers markets but now is also a payment option at some local CSA farms and/or farm stands. CAFF expects to assist a few more farms with the application process this year and looks forward to expanding EBT access points to farms in eastern and southern Humboldt.

In a typical CSA arrangement, customers make a commitment to a farm for a whole growing season and pay in advance of receiving any food. The farmer then provides each member with a weekly distribution of fresh produce. CalFresh recipients may use their benefits to participate in a CSA but federal regulations state that they can only pay for up to two weeks of food in advance. This means that CSA farms must be willing to be flexible with payment systems if they are going to accept EBT. So far this has not been a concern.

Melanie Cunningham, owner and farmer at Shakefork Community Farm in Carlotta recently stated that “farming allows for an authentic connection to people and place that becomes richer with each passing season.” She and her husband Kevin are looking forward to welcoming more CalFresh recipients to their CSA. They currently have openings for full and half shares with delivery to convenient locations from Garberville to Eureka June through October. Visit <http://www.shakeforkcommunityfarm.com> to learn more.

By becoming EBT accessible, these farms and others like them, are increasing low-income access to fresh fruits and vegetables in Humboldt County while also growing their customer base. Food for People, the Food Bank for Humboldt County, estimates that up to \$2.5 million in CalFresh benefits come into the county on a monthly basis. If you need assistance enrolling in CalFresh call the Department of Health and Human Services' (DHHS) friendly help line Monday through Friday 7:30am to 5:30 pm at 1-877-410-8809.

In addition to DHHS, Food for People's CalFresh outreach staff members connect individuals and families to the nutritional benefits of CalFresh and help people learn new ways to stretch their food budget and prepare healthy meals. "Our outreach team is so excited to share these new opportunities to get farm fresh produce with CalFresh. Everyone loves being able to eat local and support our farmers." Say Heidi McHugh Community Education & Outreach Coordinator at Food for People.

Food for People's website, www.FoodforPeople.org, has information about CalFresh, recipes, and instructions about how to apply for CalFresh, including a map of over 30 places to apply in Humboldt County.

For more information about EBT access at local farms, please contact Michelle Wyler at (707) 826-0233 x 601 or michelle@caff.org.

Founded in 1978, the Community Alliance with Family Farmers (CAFF) is a California-based nonprofit that builds sustainable food and farming systems through local and statewide policy advocacy and on-the-ground programs in an effort to initiate institutionalized change. CAFF's programs address current problems and challenges in food and farming systems, creating more resilient family farms, communities and ecosystems. CAFF works to support family farmers and serves community members within the state, including consumers, food service directors, schoolchildren and low-income populations. For more information, please visit: <http://www.caff.org/>.

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