

UAMS News Bureau

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**UAMS Receives \$350,000 in Grants from Walmart Foundation,
Alice L. Walton Foundation to Support
Double Your Dollars Food Assistance Program**

LITTLE ROCK — The University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences (UAMS) received grants from the Walmart Foundation, \$250,000, and the Alice L. Walton Foundation, \$100,000, to support the Northwest Arkansas (NWA) Farmers' Market Alliance's Double Your Dollars program, an initiative that provides residents access to affordable, healthy foods at farmers markets.

Created in 2012 to address food insecurity of low-income residents in Northwest Arkansas, the Double Your Dollars program provides recipients of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) vouchers with one-to-one dollar matched tokens for purchasing healthy, locally grown food at participating farmers markets. In 2020, the program was expanded to accept Pandemic SNAP assistance.

"Increasing access to healthier food is critical for the well-being of communities," said Rachel Spencer, senior manager of strategic initiatives at Walmart.org. "The Double Your Dollars program helps connect people with the nutritious foods they need to thrive, and we're excited to support this program."

The program was created by the NWA Farmers' Market Alliance and the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture, with the Walmart Foundation supporting the program since its inception. In 2021, the UAMS Office of Community Health & Research assumed administration of the program.

"Food insecurity is a strong predictor of diet-related chronic diseases," said Amy Wenger, MHSA, vice chancellor of the UAMS Northwest Regional Campus. "We are grateful to both the Walmart Foundation and the Alice L. Walton Foundation for their generosity and their commitment to improve access to high-quality nutritious foods for low-income individuals in Benton and Washington counties."

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Participating farmers markets include:

- Bentonville Farmers Market
- Fayetteville Farmers Market
- Goshen Farmers Market
- Gravette Farmers Market
- Downtown Rogers Farmers Market
- Rogers Local Food Market
- Siloam Springs Farmers Market
- Springdale Farmers' Market
- The Food Conservancy of NWA in Springdale

In addition to matching food purchases, the grants will support promotional efforts and nutrition education, including cooking demonstrations at markets. All materials and events also accommodate Spanish and Marshallese speakers.

“Federal nutrition benefits such as SNAP have proven effective in reducing food insecurity by improving access to healthier foods,” said Pearl McElfish, Ph.D., MBA, division director of the UAMS Office of Community Health & Research. “However, low-income Arkansans who utilize these federal benefits still face multiple barriers to accessing healthy foods, including affordability of nutritious foods, linguistically and culturally appropriate materials and resources about utilizing the program, and nutrition education about healthy foods. These generous donations from the Walmart Foundation and the Alice L. Walton Foundation will help close some of those gaps and eliminate the barriers to food security.”

For more information about the Double Your Dollars program, visit marketsnap.uark.edu and facebook.com/ArkansasMarketSnap.

UAMS is the state's only health sciences university, with colleges of Medicine, Nursing, Pharmacy, Health Professions and Public Health; a graduate school; a hospital; a main campus in Little Rock; a Northwest Arkansas regional campus in Fayetteville; a statewide network of regional campuses; and seven institutes: the Winthrop P. Rockefeller Cancer Institute, Jackson T. Stephens Spine & Neurosciences Institute, Harvey & Bernice Jones Eye Institute, Psychiatric Research Institute, Donald W. Reynolds Institute on Aging, Translational Research Institute and Institute for Digital Health & Innovation. UAMS includes UAMS Health, a statewide health system that encompasses all of UAMS' clinical enterprise. UAMS is the only adult Level 1 trauma center in the state. UAMS has 3,047 students, 873 medical residents and fellows, and six dental residents. It is the state's largest public employer with more than 11,000 employees, including 1,200 physicians who provide care to patients at UAMS, its regional campuses, Arkansas Children's, the VA Medical Center and Baptist Health. Visit www.uams.edu or www.uamshealth.com. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#) or [Instagram](#).

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