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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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May Is Wellness Month at Farmers Markets

ASAP pilots a Farm Fresh Prescription Program at ASAP Farmers Market.

ASHEVILLE, NC (May 13, 2021)—As part of its Farm Fresh for Health initiative, ASAP (Appalachian Sustainable Agriculture Project) will pilot a Farm Fresh Prescription Program at ASAP Farmers Market beginning this month. In tandem, ASAP is promoting May as Wellness Month at area farmers markets. Seven farmers markets, in Buncombe, Haywood, Henderson, and Madison counties, will host health and wellness vendors and offer free activities and resources in events scheduled throughout the month.

Farm Fresh for Health is a farm-centered initiative designed to connect people to environments and activities that support healthy lifestyles and eating choices. Shopping at farmers markets encourages us to eat fresh fruits and vegetables, cook meals at home, and eat together with friends and family.

With the **Farm Fresh Prescription Program**, participating physicians can prescribe a farmers market visit to their patients. Patients redeem their prescription at ASAP Farmers Market and receive \$10 to spend at the market (with seven “refills,” for a total of \$80). The prescription incentive provides healthcare providers with action steps that fit within the healthcare process. Six physicians from two practices in Asheville (**The Family Health Centers** and **Lantern Health**) will participate in the 2021 pilot. An earlier pilot, begun in January of 2020, was interrupted by the pandemic. ASAP plans to expand the program to include additional markets and health practices in the future.

“The idea of prescribing healthy food/eating to patients is gaining momentum and the recognition it deserves as immensely important in optimizing the long-term health of patients,” said Dr. Ben Aiken of Lantern Health. “Being able to do so by connecting them to local food and community is a win-win.”

Wellness Month activities range from kids yoga and community workouts to cooking demos to health screenings and chiropractic evaluations. Find details about vendors and events for specific markets on the follow page or on ASAP’s community events calendar at fromhere.org/events. Participating markets are:

- **ASAP Farmers Market**, May 22, 9 a.m. to noon
- **Enka-Candler Tailgate Market**, May 27, 3 to 6 p.m.
- **Haywood’s Historic Farmers Market**, May 22, 9 a.m. to noon
- **Hendersonville Farmers Market**, May 22, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Mars Hill Farmers and Artisans Market**, May 22, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- **Mills River Farmers Market**, May 8, 15, 22, 29, 8 a.m. to noon
- **Weaverville Farmers Market**, May 19, 2 to 5 p.m.

[High-resolution photos available. Contact Sarah Hart at sarah@asapconnections.org.]

ABOUT ASAP (APPALACHIAN SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE PROJECT)

ASAP’s mission is to help local farms thrive, link farmers to markets and supporters, and build healthy communities through connections to local food. To learn more, visit asapconnections.org.

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Farmers Market Wellness Month Schedule of Events

ASAP Farmers Market, May 22, 9 a.m. to noon

Community workout for all fitness levels with Asheville Fit Tribe at 11 a.m. Bring a yoga mat if you have one. Visit the Asheville Fit Tribe booth at the market and receive a \$5 market coupon!

Enka-Candler Tailgate Market, May 27, 3 to 6 p.m.

Haywood's Historic Farmers Market, May 22, 9 a.m. to noon

Cooking demos, kids activities, live music, and more with vendors Blue Mountain Chiropractic, Haywood County Cooperative Extension, Lost Cove Wellness, Middle Path Nutrition & Wellness, Mountain Projects, Sister of Mother Earth, and Yoga by Karen.

Hendersonville Farmers Market, May 22, 8 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Kids yoga (ages 3 to 10) at 10 and 10:30 a.m., massage therapy sessions, health screenings, and cooking demos with vendors Henderson County Parks and Recreation, Yoga and Massage, One Health Direct Primary Care, and Pathway to Your Health.

Mars Hill Farmers and Artisans Market, May 22, 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Cooking demos, giveaways, chiropractic evaluations, food samples and resources with vendors: Madison County Health Department, Center for Rural Health Innovation, Mars Hill Chiropractic Center, Beacon of Hope, and Fermenti.

Mills River Farmers Market, May 8, 15, 22, 29, 8 a.m. to noon

Each week has a different health focus with specialists sharing information and giveaways. May 8: Cardiac Health; May 15: Physical Activity; May 22: Nutrition; May 29: Mental Health.

Weaverville Farmers Market, May 19, 2 to 5 p.m.

The Woodfin YMCA will set up a booth and offer educational information regarding health and wellness.