

**ST. CROIX**

#1 Estate Lower Love  
Kingshill, V.I. 00850  
Telephone: (340) 778-0997  
Fax: (340) 778-0997

**ST. THOMAS**

#7944 Estate Dorothea  
Dorothea, V.I. 00802  
Telephone: (340) 774-5182  
Fax: (340) 774-1823

**ST. JOHN**

#11 Estate Carolina  
Coral Bay, V.I. 00830  
Telephone: (340) 776-6274  
Fax: (340) 693-5065

## PRESS RELEASE

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Press Contact

Billy Abraham

Director, Marketing Division

Email: Billy.Abraham@doa.vi.gov

Office: (340) 778-0993

### US VIRGIN ISLANDS DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE – 2<sup>ND</sup> ANNUAL FARM TO WIC PREMIER EVENT

US Virgin Islands - The Commissioner of Agriculture, Positive T.A. Nelson wishes to invite everyone to the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Farm to WIC event on Sunday October 27, 2019 at the Bordeaux Farmers' Market located on the St. Thomas District from 9:00am – 7:00pm.

The Farm to WIC event promotes the VI WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP), which provides eligible Women Infants and Children from the WIC program access to fresh locally grown food. The WIC FMNP program is executed jointly between the VI Departments of Agriculture and Health WIC Program. The Department of Agriculture applies for the funding, oversees the operation, certifies farmers and delivers \$63,000 in Coupons to the WIC program for distribution. On the other hand, the Department of Health WIC Program distributes the coupons to eligible WIC recipients and provides health nutrition messages. In practice, each eligible WIC recipient per household receives the amount \$30.00, which must be used by November 30, 2019.

WIC recipients may use the FMNP WIC Coupons to purchase fresh locally grown products from certified farmers/vendors, who then exchange the coupons for checks from the Department of Agriculture -Marketing Division. The Farmers/vendors may redeem checks at their bank of choice.

The purpose of the Farm to WIC Event is to create a Farmers' Market exposition featuring a wide variety of locally grown/made products, while seeking to increase the awareness of Farmers' Markets located in remote areas. For this reason, on Sunday October 27, an array of farmers/vendors will be at the Bordeaux Farmers Market with fresh locally grown produce for sale. WIC recipients may use their FMNP coupon benefits to purchase locally grown products from certified farmers/vendors.

Free transportation will be provided to WIC recipients in possession of FMNP coupons. Pick up areas will be from Pueblo located in Long Bay area and Nisky Center beginning from 11:00 am and will continue every hour until 4:00pm to the Bordeaux Farmers' Market.

The Farm to WIC event is structured for the entire family, so there will be a range of activities to educate and entertain everyone while they shop. Activities will include:

- Taste testing – to introduce new variations of food to the taste pallets of young parents and children.
- Cooking Demonstrations – to teach young parents how to prepare locally grown crops.
  - Live entertainment – local bands/various performers to create a festive ambiance.
  - Face Painting / Bouncy house – to entertain children.
  - Seed planting demonstrations – to train next generation of farmers.

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