



# SNAP Retailer Application – Quick Guide

## Completing the SNAP Retailer Application:

In order to accept SNAP/EBT payments using MarketLink equipment, you must be approved by the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA). Once approved, you will be a “SNAP Authorized Retailer”. You can complete the FNS SNAP Retailer Application on your own, or one of MarketLink’s representatives can complete it on your behalf. If you are not already approved to accept SNAP, when you complete the MarketLink Eligibility Assessment you will receive an email with an option to schedule an appointment for “SNAP Application Assistance”.

## Before You Apply:

**Please prepare the following items before you start the USDA application or have your appointment with the MarketLink representative:**

1. Gather the following information and documents before you start:
  - a. Date the business opened under the current ownership or intended opening date if it is a new farm or market.
  - b. Your business’ official name (the name you use on legal documents, such as leases, contracts, incorporation documents, etc.), mailing address, and address where the market is conducted (if different from the mailing address).
  - c. Actual sales data from your business’ most recent IRS business tax return, if it has been open under current ownership longer than one year. If not, an estimate of the market's annual sales.
  - d. A general estimate of the amount of different products you sell to the public.
  - e. Your business’ operating schedule (i.e., months of the year it is open, days of the week it is open, and hours of day it is open).
2. Identify a Responsible Official(s) and have their name, home address, social security number, and date of birth handy. This person/people will need to provide their social security number and identification cards. Responsible officials may be an owner, corporate officer, board member, market manager, or person operating in a position of authority that can sign legal documents on behalf of the farm or market. You may have more than one Responsible Official; if there is more than one listed these documents are required for every person listed.
  - a. **Note:** Farmers’ Markets applying as a government agency, 501c3 nonprofit organization, or a publicly owned corporation are exempt from providing their social security number.
3. Collect all the following documents for each responsible officer(s) and scan them or take a photo of them so that you have electronic versions:
  - a. Color copy of Valid Photo ID (such as a License or Passport) for all person(s) listed on the application (front and back if license is used)

- b. Copy of Social Security Number Card for all person(s) listed on the application. (see exemptions above).
- c. If you are applying as a nonprofit, a copy of the 501c3 determination letter from the IRS.
- d. IF you have any Business Licenses to do business at that location you MUST also submit a copy(ies) - if you do not have these then this does not apply to you.

**Note:** If you would like a MarketLink Representative to complete the application on your behalf please email [info@marketlink.org](mailto:info@marketlink.org) or schedule an appointment here: <https://marketlink.youcanbook.me>. If you'd like to do the application on your own, continue with the steps below.

## Overview of the Application Process:

**Step 1:** Create a USDA Account. You must set this up first before filling out the application for approval to FNS.

Note: Check your email for confirmation that your account has been set up (which will occur within 1-2 hours after submission).

[Link to set up USDA Account](#)

**Step 2:** After receiving confirmation that your account has been set up, use your UserID and Password that you set up in Step 1 to complete the application here:

[Link to application sign-in page](#)

**Step 3:** Upload your documents in the application portal: driver's license, social security card, 501c3 determination letter (if applicable), business license (if applicable) and the certificate and sign page you receive once the application is submitted.

### Useful tips:

- We hope these instructions are helpful, but if you get stuck or have questions at any point, you can contact a MarketLink Regional Representative by emailing [info@marketlink.org](mailto:info@marketlink.org) or calling 443-212-8084.
- The application you submit will depend on how your business is defined:
  - Direct Marketing Farmer: an individual producer of agriculture products that sell directly to the public. Select the "Store Application"
  - Farmers Market: two or more agriculture-producers who sell their products directly to the public at a fixed location. Select the "Farmers' Market Application"
  - If you do not meet either of these definitions, email [info@marketlink.org](mailto:info@marketlink.org) for guidance on how apply.
- Please apply with an email address you check regularly. This is how FNS will contact you.
- To fast track your application:
  - Enter "NAFMNP" where you see "Chain Store Number" (store application) or "Market Number" (farmers market application)
  - Under "EBT Equipment Provider" type "Novo Dia Group"
- If you have questions about a submitted or pending SNAP/FNS Retailer Application, please contact the [SNAP Retailer Service Center](#) at 877-823-4369. The RSC will ask for your FNS number, name, last four digits of SSN and Date of Birth to authenticate you as the caller before providing information.

## After your Application is Submitted:

You will receive an email after your application is submitted that has your 7 digit FNS number. Please keep that number for reference. USDA typically makes approval decisions within 4-6 weeks of submitting your application.

**Note:** applications are not considered complete until all the supporting documentation is submitted, including the certificate and signed page.

## Review Process and Tips on following your application

1. After your application is officially submitted, it gets sent to the FNS's work center where they will review your application and documents to make sure everything looks good. We recommend giving them about a week after you upload your documents, and then calling the **SNAP Retailer Service Center at 877-823-4369** to make sure everything is all good. They will be able to either tell you if more information is needed, anything needs to be adjusted, or if your documents were accepted and your application "moved on to the next step". This means they are conducting a background check and your application is waiting to be assigned to an agent.
2. If your documents were accepted, and it has moved on, be sure to make a note of that date so you can track of how much time has passed. From here, we generally recommend logging back into your account at least once a week to check on the status by clicking "Check Status Of Previously Submitted Application" and then clicking on your FNS number. During this process we also recommend keeping an eye on your email, spam folder, and physical mail for any correspondence from FNS.
3. If 4 weeks pass from the date your application moved on to the next step, and there are no updates on the website, we recommend calling the SNAP Retailer Center at 877-823-4369 for a status update. They will either be able to give you an update, or if not, they'll put in a request to have the agent assigned to your application give you a call, and a time frame of when you should hear back from them. If you don't hear from them during that time, repeat this step each week until they get back to you. Note: if 6 weeks passes, is appropriate to call the SNAP Retail Center and request they "escalate" your application
4. **Requests for Additional Information:** occasionally your field agent will send you a request for additional information. This can include: more information about your farm/business, verification of ownership, food handling license, etc.
  - a. Requests for additional info will often come with a time frame you'll need to reply by, which is why it's important to check your email/application status. If you do not respond to an additional info request in time, they will pull your application as incomplete.
  - b. If they request additional documentation, your agent will sometimes give you the option to email the documents back to them, but you can also upload them to your application using the upload feature as you did with your supporting documents. Occasionally they will say to mail your documents in, but again we do not recommend doing this, it can delay your application. Always use email or the upload feature when available.

## When you Receive USDA Approval:

When your application is done being reviewed, and they decide everything looks good, FNS will send you information about your approval through email and regular mail. You will receive a permit authorizing you to accept SNAP/EBT transactions. Be sure to save an electronic version of your permit, as you will need this to set up your merchant account with Novo Dia Group.

If you are interested in utilizing the MarketLink grant for free EBT processing equipment, email us directly when you receive your FNS Authorization Permit at [info@marketlink.org](mailto:info@marketlink.org). We will then send you the next steps to receive equipment, and get set up to begin processing transactions.

## Tips on Maintaining your SNAP Authorization

- No documentation of your SNAP transactions are required, unless you are participating in specific incentive programs that require you to do so.
- Process SNAP transactions at least once/year. FNS may deactivate SNAP authorizations with no activity.
- If your contact information or address changes, notify FNS by calling the Farmers' Market Hotline at 1-312-353-6609 to request an information change a new permit.

- Save copies of your SNAP Permit and your SNAP Application somewhere safe.
- If your business changes ownership or Responsible Officials, you will need to reapply.

**Reauthorization:** The permit you just received is good for 5 years. After that point, you will receive an email and likely a letter stating you need to reauthorize your permit. The email will include a link to do this - you do not need to go through the full application. However, you only have 30 days upon receipt of this email to reauthorize, so we recommend setting a calendar or email reminder for yourself to look for reauthorization request from USDA/FNS.



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