

SNAP: Safeguarding Food Security and Health

**RESULTS Webinar: The United States
of Hunger**

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SNAP: Nation's Largest and Most Effective Anti-Hunger Program

Today:

- How SNAP works
- Research on SNAP's effects
- Current policy context



**Supplemental
Nutrition
Assistance
Program**

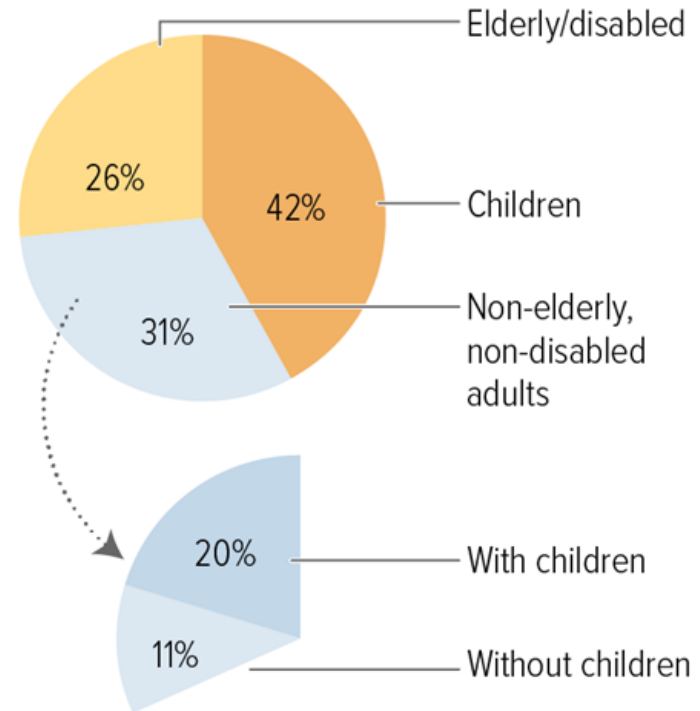
How SNAP Works

- Available for low-income households
- Monthly benefits to buy food issued on debit-like cards
- Benefits supplement income; lower-income households get higher benefits



Over Two-Thirds of People Helped By SNAP Are Children, Older Adults, or Disabled

Over Two-Thirds of SNAP Recipients Are Children, Elderly, or Disabled



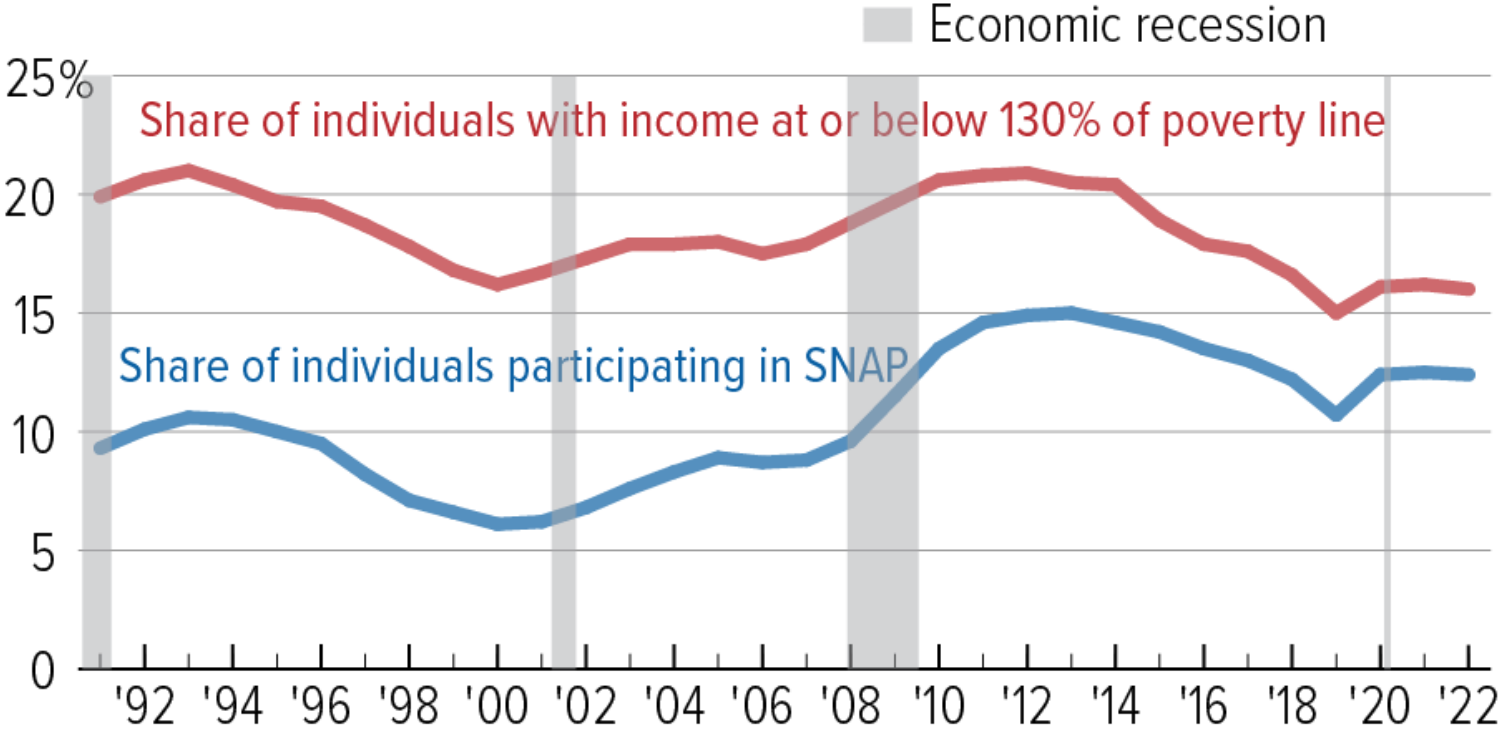
Notes: Shares may not equal 100 due to rounding. 2020 estimates are for the pre-pandemic period of October 2019 to February 2020 only. SNAP Quality Control Household Characteristics data are not nationally representative for the remainder of fiscal year 2020 (March through September 2020) due to limitations in data collection during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Source: CBPP tabulations of USDA 2020 pre-pandemic SNAP household characteristics data

SNAP Reduces Poverty and Food Insecurity, Frees Up Income for Medicine, Health



SNAP Tracks Changes in Share of Population Near or Below the Poverty Line

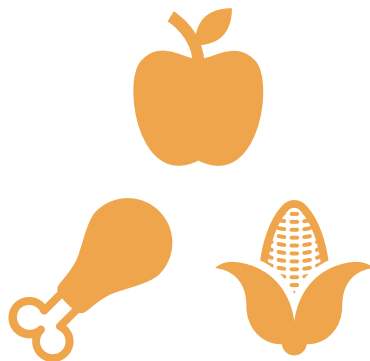


Note: Poverty estimates are annual estimates. SNAP shares of resident population are calendar year averages. Grey bars indicate economic recessions.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, U.S. Department of Agriculture

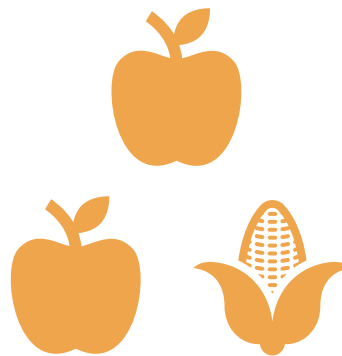
SNAP Helps Families Afford Food

**Food
security**



Adequate access to
nutritious food

**Low food
security**



Reduced food
quality and variety

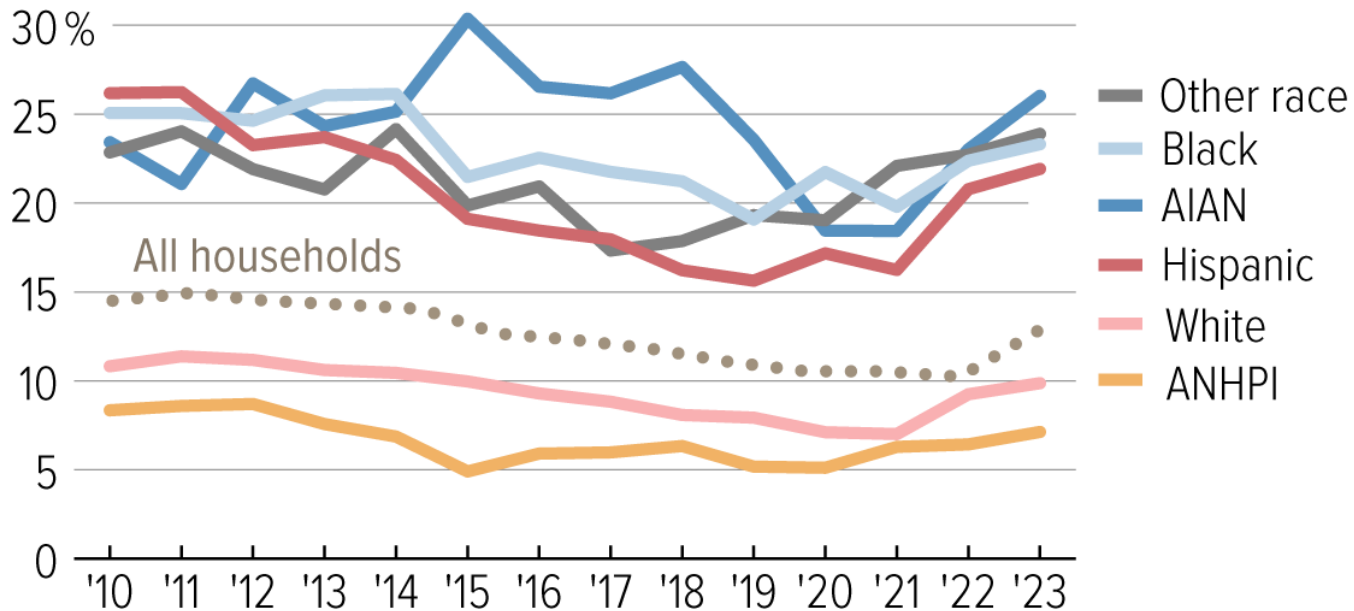
**Very low food
security**



Reduced food
intake

Food Insecurity by Race and Ethnicity Reveals Stark Inequities

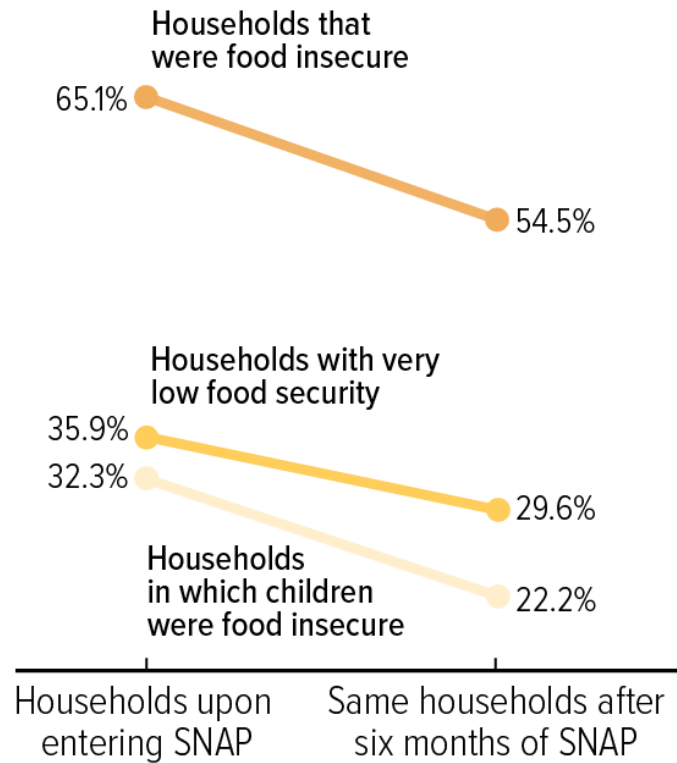
Households that lacked access to adequate food at some point in the calendar year



Note: Other race = people who are more than one race. AIAN = people who are American Indian or Alaska Native. ANHPI = people who are Asian, Native Hawaiian, or Pacific Islander. Hispanic households may be of any race. Race and ethnicity for the household are based on that of the household reference person (in whose name the housing unit is owned or rented).

Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Current Population Survey Food Security Supplement 2010-2023

SNAP Helps Families Afford Adequate Food

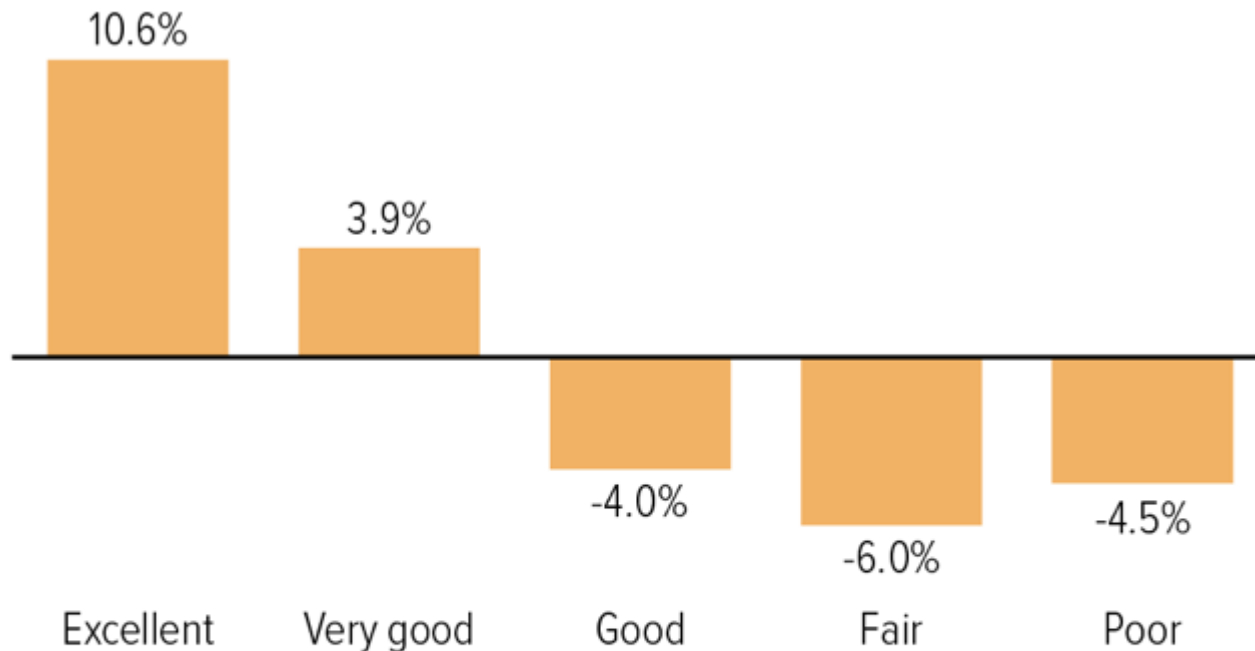


Note: "Food insecure" = household lacks consistent access to nutritious food at some point during the year because of limited resources. "Very low food security" = one or more household members have to skip meals or otherwise eat less at some point during the year because they lack money.

Source: Agriculture Department, "Measuring the Effect of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation on Food Security," August 2013

SNAP Participants Report Better Health Than Eligible Non-Participants

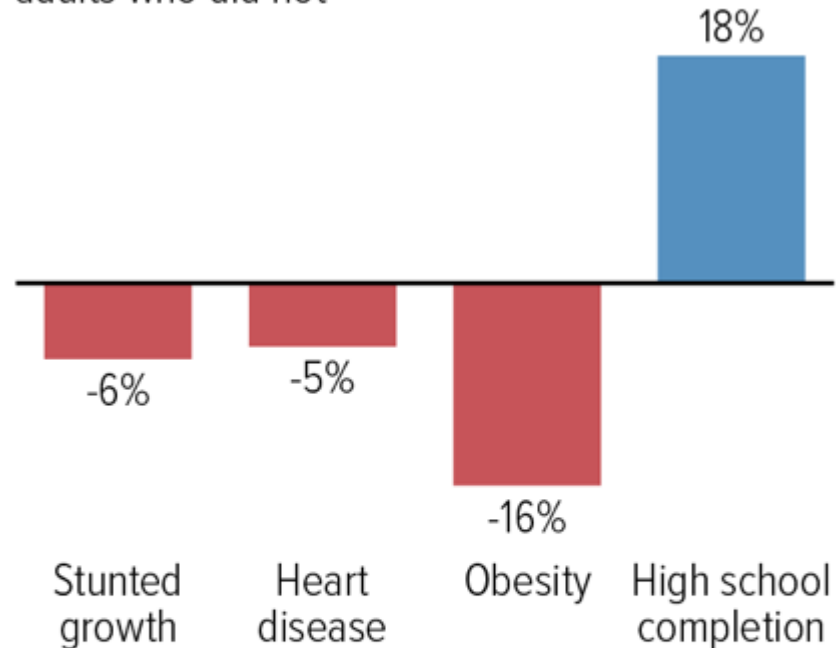
Percent more or less likely to describe health as:



Source: Christian A. Gregory and Partha Deb, "Does SNAP Improve Your Health?" Food Policy, 2015. Adjusted for differences in demographic, socioeconomic and other characteristics. Sample includes adults aged 20 to 64 in households with income at or below 130% of the federal poverty level.

Children With Access to SNAP Fare Better Years Later

Percentage-point change in outcomes for adults who received SNAP as children, compared to adults who did not

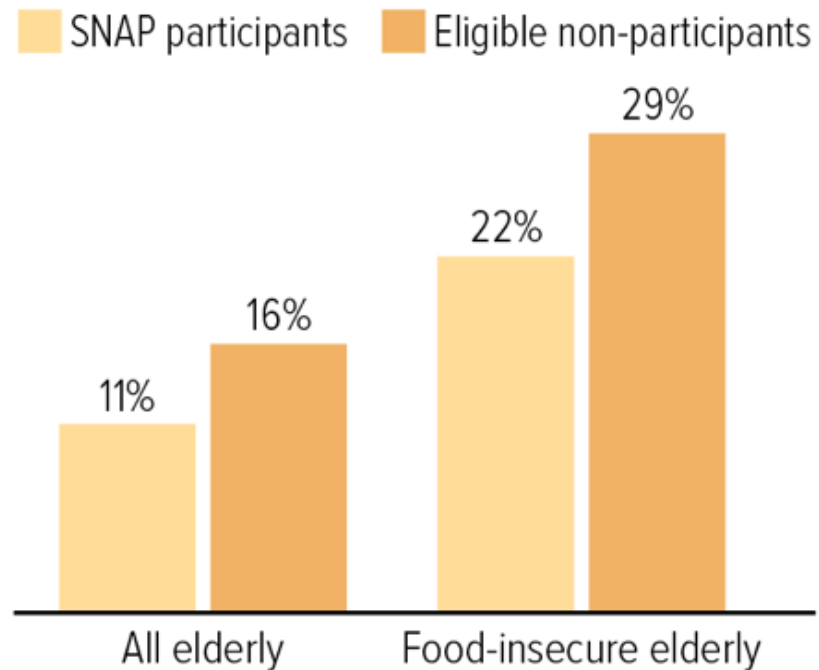


Note: The study compared individuals who had access to SNAP (then food stamps) in early childhood after its introduction in the 1960s and early 1970s to similar children who did not (because they were born before its introduction) in each county.

Source: Hoynes, Schanzenbach, and Almond, "Long-Run Impacts of Childhood Access to the Safety Net," *American Economic Review*, April 2016.

Older SNAP Participants Less Likely to Skip Needed Medications

Percent who skip or stop medications, take smaller doses, or delay a prescription due to cost



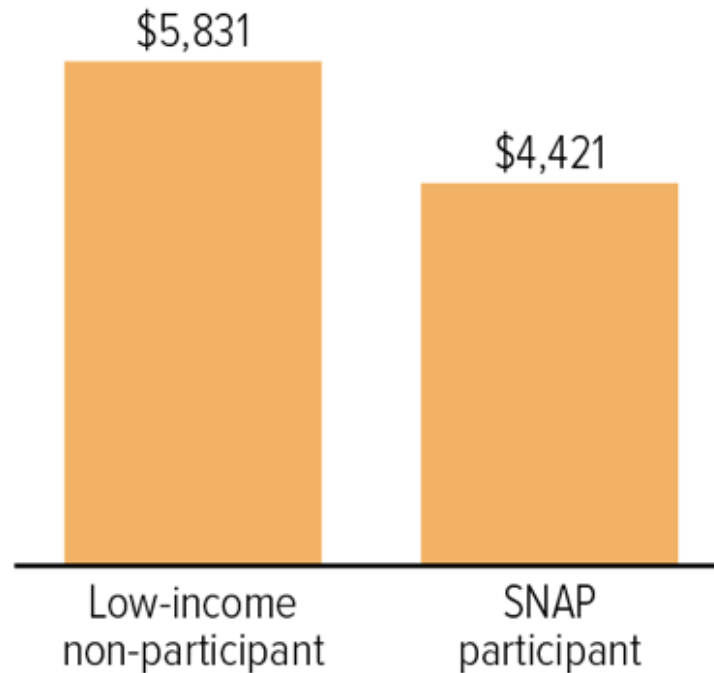
Note: "Food insecure" = lacking consistent access to nutritious food during the year due to limited resources. Adjusted for differences in demographic, socioeconomic, health, and other characteristics.

Source: Mithuna Srinivasan and Jennifer A. Pooler, "Cost-Related Medication Nonadherence for Older Adults Participating in SNAP, 2013–2015." *American Journal of Public Health*, December 2017

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SNAP Participants Incurred \$1,400 Less for Health Care

Estimated annual per-person health care spending



Note: Health care spending includes out-of-pocket expenses and costs paid by private and public insurance, including Medicare and Medicaid.

Source: Seth Berkowitz, Hilary K., Seligman, and Sanjay Basu, "Impact of Food Insecurity and SNAP Participation on Healthcare Utilization and Expenditures," University of Kentucky Center for Poverty Research, 2017.

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Improving Benefit Adequacy

THE THRIFTY FOOD PLAN



-  Aligns with dietary guidance
-  Represents a limited food budget
-  Reflects what Americans buy and eat
-  Supports a healthy, active lifestyle

What is the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP)?

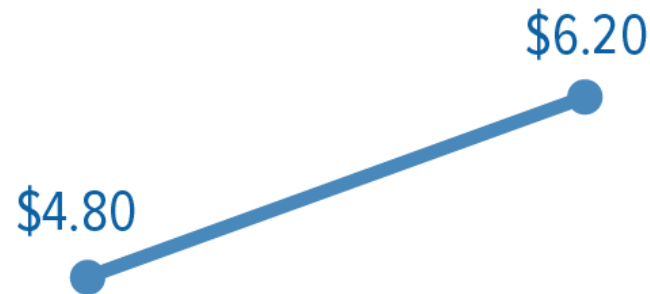
- A USDA determined set of foods designed to meet dietary guidelines at a very low cost
- Assumes people stretch their budget and buy healthy food at low prices
- Lowest cost of 4 USDA food plans
 - Low-Cost, Moderate Cost, Liberal Food Plans



TFP =

Basis for SNAP benefits

2021 Thrifty Food Plan Revision Meaningfully Increased Average SNAP Benefits Per Person Per Day



Without TFP Revision With TFP Revision

Note: TFP = Thrifty Food Plan

Source: CBPP analysis of 2020 pre-pandemic SNAP household characteristics data for fiscal year 2024

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[Report: SNAP Is Linked With Improved Health
Outcomes and Lower Health Care Costs](#)

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Data-Driven Updates to Thrifty Food Plan (TFP) Are Necessary for SNAP to Keep Up With Cost of a Healthy, Realistic Diet

Under the House Agriculture Committee bill limiting future TFP updates, SNAP benefits would return to past policy, again falling increasingly behind the cost of a healthy, realistic diet over time.

Past Policy, 1975-2021

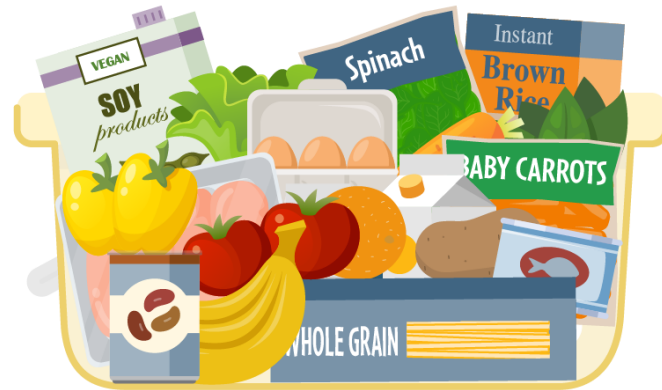
TFP cost rose only with inflation. Outsized emphasis on certain foods and almost all cooking assumed to be from scratch.



Average SNAP benefits = \$4.80/person/day

Updated Policy, 2021 and Beyond

TFP reevaluations put healthy, realistic diet in reach. Plan incorporates greater variety of healthy and convenient foods.



Average SNAP benefits = \$6.20/person/day

Note: Benefit amounts in fiscal year 2024 dollars. The TFP is the basis of SNAP benefits, but SNAP does not require participating households to purchase particular foods. It illustrates the types and amounts of food that households could purchase at the cost of the TFP. Images are stylized and illustrative and not meant to accurately represent all the types and amounts of foods in the TFP.

Source: Katie Bergh, Joseph Llobrera, and Dottie Rosenbaum, "House Committee Farm Bill's \$30 Billion SNAP Cut, Other Harmful Proposals Outweigh Improvements," CBPP, August 8, 2024.

Other SNAP Policy Issues

- Access barriers and administrative hurdles
- Limited eligibility for some groups
 - 3-month time limit
 - Non-citizens
 - Post-secondary students
- Nutrition assistance in Puerto Rico and other US territories

