



Nutrition

The United States farm bill, as one would expect, addresses agricultural issues such as research, conservation, and crop insurance. Some would be surprised, however, to learn that critical nutrition programs are also included in the farm bill. In fact, the 2014 Farm Bill allocated \$756 billion in spending over 10 years on nutrition programs, claiming the largest fiscal component of the legislation. The bulk of this money is dedicated to one program: the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), once known as food stamps. For more than 50 years, SNAP has served as the nation's primary nutritional safety net, allowing families to meet one of their most basic needs – access to food.

Facts and Statistics about SNAP

~ The average individual SNAP participant receives \$125.99 in benefits monthly, while the average household receives \$254.38. That comes out to about \$1.40 per meal.

~ SNAP participation nationally was highest among households in rural counties, where 16 percent of households participate, compared to 13 percent of households in metro counties.

~ The number of people participating in SNAP has declined by more than 4 million people, or 9 percent, since December 2012, reflecting the program's responsiveness to an improving economy.

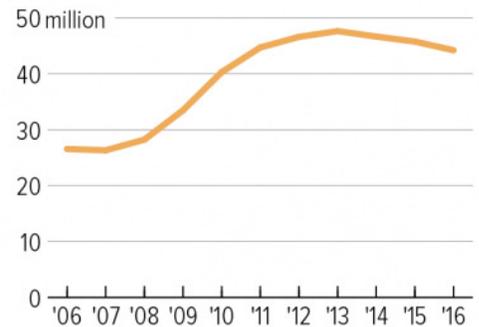
~ Seventy-nine percent of adults receiving SNAP are either working, looking for work, or cannot work due to a disability. Many others are full-time caretakers for children or relatives with disabilities.

~ Able-bodied adults without dependents can only receive SNAP for 3 months in 3 years if they do not meet work requirements.

~ Fraud is extremely uncommon - at just 1.3 percent money lost to underground trafficking, SNAP continues to have one of the lowest fraud rates for federal programs.

SNAP Participation Rose Due to Recession But Now Is Falling

Average monthly SNAP participants, fiscal year



Source: Department of Agriculture

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Nutrition in the Farm Bill

We need strong nutrition programs to provide a safety net against hunger. Congress can do this if they:

- ✓ **Don't cut funding** for critical nutrition programs that help feed hungry Americans.
- ✓ **Maintain a unified farm bill.** Food and farm programs go hand-in-hand, and should continue to be included in the same comprehensive legislation.