



Domestic Food Assistance: Summary of Programs

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Summary

Over the years, Congress has authorized and the federal government has administered programs to provide food to the hungry and to other vulnerable populations in this country. This report offers a brief overview of hunger and food insecurity along with the related network of programs. The report is structured around three main tables that contain information about each program, including its authorizing language, administering agency, eligibility, services provided, participation data, and funding information. In between the tables, contextual information about this policy area and program administration is provided that may assist Congress in tracking developments in domestic food assistance. This report provides a bird's-eye view of domestic food assistance and can be used both to learn about the details of individual programs as well as compare and contrast features across programs.

This report includes overview information for the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS) programs as well as nutrition programs administered by the Administration on Aging (AOA), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Administration for Community Living (HHS-ACL). USDA-FNS programs include nutrition programs authorized in the 2008 farm bill (the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008; P.L. 110-246). Programs included in the farm bill are the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, and the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. USDA-FNS also administers programs not contained in the farm bill: the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Child Nutrition programs (School Breakfast Program, National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), Special Milk Program, and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)). HHS-ACL programs are the nutrition programs contained in the Older Americans Act (OAA)—Congregate Nutrition Program; Home Delivered Nutrition Program; Grants to Native Americans: Supportive and Nutrition Services; and the Nutrition Service Incentive Program (NSIP).

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Background

This report gives an overview of the federal programs that provide food assistance within the United States and the territories. The report begins by discussing common concepts and themes across the network of domestic food assistance programs. The report is split into two main parts: programs administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS), and programs administered by the Administration on Aging (AOA), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services’ Administration for Community Living (HHS-ACL). Within the USDA-FNS section are two subsections of programs: Farm Bill programs (**Table 1**), and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) and Child Nutrition Programs (**Table 2**). Within the HHS-ACL section, **Table 3** provides an overview of the Older Americans Act nutrition programs.¹ The tables within this report are intended to provide summary information, which can help illustrate the ways in which domestic food assistance programs are both similar and different.

Hunger and Food Insecurity

Congress has long been interested in issues of hunger and allocating federal resources to address hunger in this country. The federal programs discussed in this report pursue the goal of providing food to low-income and needy populations, seeking to prevent hunger. Some of these programs, such as the National School Lunch Program, have deep roots dating to the Depression era.

Evaluating trends in hunger in our nation is crucial to understanding if the efforts to prevent hunger are working and in recognizing if there are particular vulnerable populations that need assistance. Hunger, however, is a challenging concept to measure. For that reason, the terms “food security” and “food insecurity,” as opposed to “hunger,” are the prevailing terms used to describe the ability to access adequate food.

“Food security” and “food insecurity” focus on those economic and other access-related reasons associated with an individual’s ability to purchase or otherwise obtain enough to eat. They are also terms that can be objectively measured. For this reason, a 2006 panel convened by the National Research Council, at the request of USDA, reviewed USDA measurements related to food adequacy. The panel recommended that USDA make a clear distinction between food insecurity and hunger. According to the panel, hunger is an individual-level physiological condition that is not feasible to measure through a household survey.² Furthermore, the panel stated that it is difficult to capture gradations in hunger through individual assessment. Thus, the terms food security and food insecurity do not capture those non-economic or other individual behaviors that may result in the physical condition of being hungry. For example, these terms do

¹ There are additional federal programs that may provide food or meal assistance but these programs fall outside of what is typically considered to be the domestic food assistance programs. For example, while the early childhood education program, Head Start, may provide funds that go, in part, to providing meals, Head Start is not considered a food assistance program and is not included here. Similarly, emergency disaster relief programs administered by the Department of Homeland Security may in part provide sustenance as part of disaster recovery, but those programs are also not included in this overview.

² National Research Council, *Food Insecurity and Hunger in the United States: An Assessment of the Measure*, Washington, DC, 2006, pp. 23-51, http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=11578. As a result of these findings, USDA now measures “low food security” and “very low food security,” not hunger.

not capture instances where an individual may have missed a meal due to illness or because they were otherwise too busy to eat.

Each year, the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service (USDA-ERS) conducts an analysis based on Current Population Survey (CPS) data to measure food security in the United States.³ Data from the USDA-ERS's 2011 study are included in this CRS report. ERS uses terminology that indicates whether a household was able to purchase or otherwise acquire enough to eat in 2011 ("food security") or not able to purchase or acquire enough to eat ("food insecurity"). Since 2006, ERS has distinguished between a spectrum of four levels of food security, listed below from highest to lowest:

High food security—Households had no problems, or anxiety about, consistently accessing adequate food.

Marginal food security—Households had problems at times, or anxiety about, accessing adequate food, but the quality, variety, and quantity of their food intake were not substantially reduced.

Low food security—Households reduced the quality, variety, and desirability of their diets, but the quantity of food intake and normal eating patterns were not substantially disrupted.

Very low food security—At times during the year, eating patterns of one or more household members were disrupted and food intake reduced because the household lacked money and other resources for food.⁴

"Food security" includes high and marginal food security. "Food insecurity" includes low and very low food security. Findings from the USDA-ERS report on 2011 food security⁵ include the following rates of food security and food insecurity among U.S households:

- 14.9% of U.S. households were *food insecure* throughout 2010 (85.1% of U.S. households were *food secure*). This was not a statistically significant difference from 2010 rates, which were 14.5% and 85.5%, respectively.
- 5.7% had *very low food security*; about one-third of all food insecure households have very low food security. This is a statistically significant increase from the 2010 rate of 5.4%. Increases in very low food security were greatest for households of women living alone, black households, and households with annual incomes below 185% of the poverty line.
- 8.4% of households that included an elderly member were *food insecure*. This rate is a statistically significant increase from the 2010 rate of 7.9%.

³ Alisa Coleman-Jensen, Mark Nord, and Margaret Andrews et al., *Household Food Security in the United States in 2011*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, ERR-125, September 2011, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/884525/err141.pdf>.

⁴ USDA-ERS website, "Food Security in the United States: Measuring Food Insecurity," <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Briefing/FoodSecurity/measurement.htm>.

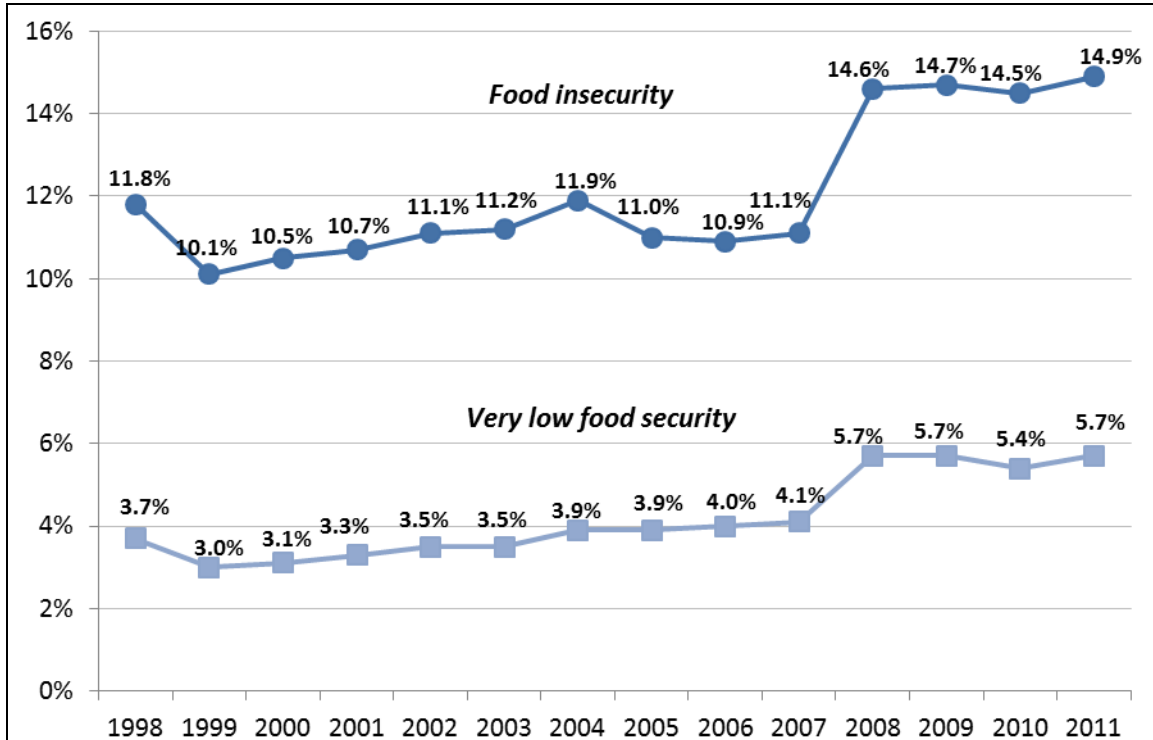
⁵ Alisa Coleman-Jensen, Mark Nord, and Margaret Andrews et al., *Household Food Security in the United States in 2011*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, ERR-141, September 2012, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/media/884525/err141.pdf>.

- 57% of *food insecure* households reported that they had participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP), WIC, or National School Lunch Program in the last month.

The annual rate of food insecurity for households was 11.1% in 2007, rose to 14.6% in 2008, and since then has ranged from 14.5% to 14.9% (**Figure 1**).

Figure 1. Rate of Food Insecure Households, 1998-2011

Using USDA-ERS Analysis of Census CPS Data



Source: CRS adapted figure from *Household Food Security in the United States in 2011*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, ERR-125, September 2011 using USDA data.

Notes: “Very low food security” is a subset of “Food insecurity;” CPS = Current Population Survey.

Program Variation

There are a number of domestic food assistance programs. Although each of the 17 programs discussed in this report provides for food in some way, the ways in which each program accomplishes this goal vary. For example, programs vary with respect to the target population (e.g., pregnant women, children, older individuals), eligibility requirements, and types of assistance provided (e.g., commodity foods versus prepared meals). In an April 2011 report, the Government Accountability Office (GAO) listed 70 programs that pertain to food and nutrition but ultimately narrowed their study to a smaller subset of programs that focus on food assistance or coordination of food assistance activities.⁶

⁶ U.S. Government Accountability Office, *Domestic Food Assistance: Complex System Benefits Millions, but* (continued...)

One way to examine this variation is to compare the eligible populations for these domestic food assistance programs. For instance, the WIC program is available to children under the age of 5, while the school meals programs (National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program) become available to school-age children. Another way to examine this variation is to examine the benefits that programs provide. Within this constellation of programs, federal resources provide benefits redeemable for uncooked foods, cash assistance to support program operations, USDA-purchased commodity foods (discussed further in the next section), and prepared meals. While some programs provide specific foods (for example, through the federal and state requirements for “food package” in the Commodity Supplemental Food Program and WIC), the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) gives benefits that may be redeemed for a wide variety of foods at authorized retailers. OAA programs provide prepared meals that not only assist those who lack adequate resources to purchase food, but can also assist those who lack the functional capacity to prepare a meal on their own.

The following sections of the report and the accompanying tables provide more details about the services, eligibility, participation, and funding for each program. They help illustrate the similarities and differences between the programs, including the extent to which they provide similar or distinct forms of assistance to similar or distinct populations.

Note on Funding Data Used in This Report

FY2012 is the most recent full-year appropriation for the USDA-FNS and HHS-ACL programs discussed in this report, and with a few exceptions, funding data included is based on FY2012 appropriations.

Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013 (P.L. 112-175) provides funding for these programs in FY2013 for the period of October 1, 2012, through March 27, 2013. For the most part, the annualized level of funding is based on a 0.612% increase of FY2012 funds.

An exception is for programs in the USDA’s Commodity Assistance Program account for which P.L. 112-175 appropriates an annualized total of \$253.9 million; this account includes the Commodity Supplemental Food Program, administrative funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), and the WIC Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program. FY2013 funding for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is the only one for which a definitive FY2013 figure can be given at this time.

Funding data in the tables to follow reflect FY2012 appropriations except for CSFP and several programs that are not dependent on appropriations.

(...continued)

Additional Efforts Could Address Potential Inefficiency and Overlap among Smaller Programs, GAO-10-346, April 2010, pp. 51-53.

USDA-FNS Programs

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) administers domestic food assistance programs authorized in the farm bill (**Table 1**),⁷ as well as WIC and Child Nutrition Programs (**Table 2**). **Table 1** and **Table 2** provide details on the USDA-FNS programs, including services provided, eligibility, participation, and funding.

The USDA-FNS national office works in concert with USDA's regional offices⁸ and state agencies. With respect to SNAP (formerly known as the Food Stamp Program), state agencies and legislatures have a number of options and waivers that can affect SNAP program operations from state to state. USDA-FNS's "SNAP State Options" report illustrates how states are administering the program.⁹ With respect to school meals programs (National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program), state departments of education and school districts play a role in administering these programs. WIC as well as the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) are often co-administered by state and local health departments.

As mentioned above, USDA commodity¹⁰ foods are foods purchased by the USDA for distribution to USDA nutrition programs. The programs in this report that include USDA commodity foods are The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP), Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP), National School Lunch Program (NSLP), Summer Food Service Program (SFSP), and Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP). USDA commodity foods are also provided to the HHS-ACL's Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) (**Table 3**). These programs distribute "entitlement commodities" (an amount of USDA foods to which grantees are entitled by law) as well as "bonus commodities" (USDA food purchases based on requests from the agricultural producer community).¹¹

USDA Food Assistance Resources

- **USDA-FNS Website:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns/>—Program descriptions, press releases, current policy guidance and regulations, and participation and spending data. Information is organized into SNAP, WIC, School Meals, Food Distribution, and other child nutrition programs.
- **USDA-FNS Office of Research and Analysis:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/>—USDA sponsored data, research, and analysis on the participation and effectiveness of USDA-FNS programs.
- **USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) Food and Nutrition Assistance Products:** <http://www.ers.usda.gov/Browse/view.aspx?subject=FoodNutritionAssistance>—ERS provides research on questions of food insecurity as well as program-specific questions.

⁷ The Community Food Projects are administered by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

⁸ See also USDA-FNS website, "USDA Food and Nutrition Service Regional Offices," <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cga/contacts/regioncontacts.htm>.

⁹ USDA-FNS SNAP Program Development Division, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: State Options Report*, Ninth Edition, November 2010, http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Memo/Support/State_Options/9-State_Options.pdf.

¹⁰ "Commodity" or "commodities" in the context of food assistance is broader and distinct from the term used to describe corn, wheat, soybeans, etc. in the context of commodity support programs such as described in CRS Report RL34594, *Farm Commodity Programs in the 2008 Farm Bill*, by Jim Monke.

¹¹ For more on the procurement of USDA foods, see CRS Report RL34081, *Farm and Food Support Under USDA's Section 32 Program*, by Jim Monke. For more information on FNS's distribution of commodities, please see USDA-FNS website, Food Distribution Programs and Services, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/default.htm>.

These domestic food assistance programs have a historical, and in most respects, ongoing relationship with farming and agriculture. For example, the first Food Stamp Program, a pilot program in the 1940's, sold orange and blue "food stamps" to program participants.¹² While \$1 would provide a program participant with \$1 in value of "orange stamps" that could be spent on any food, the program participant would also receive an additional 50 cents worth of "blue stamps," which could only be used to purchase agricultural products that were in surplus. Commodity donation programs that supported the post-Depression farm economy were precursors to the National School Lunch Program.¹³ TEFAP and several of the child nutrition programs still benefit from USDA commodity foods as well as USDA's donation of bonus commodities, which USDA purchases based on agricultural producers' identification of surplus goods or need for price support. As a contemporary example, the 2008 farm bill (P.L. 110-246), USDA initiatives, and current legislative proposals include efforts to promote "farm-to-school" endeavors, seeking, for example, to facilitate school cafeterias' purchasing from local and regional farms.¹⁴

Farm Bill

Table 1 lists those programs that were most recently reauthorized in the 2008 farm bill. The "farm bill" is an omnibus reauthorization and extension of dozens of farm, food, and nutrition laws. Most recently, Congress passed the Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), which is referred to as the 2008 farm bill. The 2008 farm bill included 15 titles on topics ranging from conservation, rural development, and research to horticulture.¹⁵ The nutrition title, Title IV, included all of the programs listed in **Table 1**.

Farm bill nutrition programs have their authorizing language in the

- Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (originally P.L. 95-113, most recently amended by P.L. 111-296),
- Emergency Food Assistance Act of 1983 (originally P.L. 98-8, most recently amended by P.L. 110-246), and
- Agriculture Consumer and Protection Act of 1973 (originally P.L. 93-86, most recently amended by P.L. 110-246).

The primary food assistance program in the farm bill is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) found that close to 75% of the 2008 farm bill spending was in the nutrition title, Title IV. This is primarily due to the mandatory money associated with SNAP. Formerly referred to as the Food Stamp Program, the federal program name change to SNAP was included in the 2008 farm bill.

¹² USDA-FNS website, "A Short History of SNAP," <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Legislation/about.htm>.

¹³ Gordon W. Gunderson, USDA-FNS Website, "The National School Lunch Program: Background and Development," http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/AboutLunch/ProgramHistory_4.htm.

¹⁴ USDA-FNS's Farm-to-School Initiative is described on the agency website: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/f2s/>. Further discussion of related policies can be found in CRS Report R42155, *The Role of Local Food Systems in U.S. Farm Policy*, by Renée Johnson, Randy Alison Aussenberg, and Tadlock Cowan.

¹⁵ For more information on the Omnibus Farm Bill, please consult CRS Report RS22131, *What Is the Farm Bill?*, by Renée Johnson and Jim Monke.

Farm bill nutrition programs have generally been under the jurisdiction of the House Agriculture Committee and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.¹⁶ The 2008 farm bill expired at the end of FY2012, and then was extended through the end of FY2013 in the American Taxpayer Relief Act of 2012 (H.R. 8, enacted on January 3, 2013). During the period of expiration, many of the farm bill nutrition programs continued to operate due to appropriations actions.¹⁷

WIC and Child Nutrition Programs

Table 2 lists the programs authorized by the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (P.L. 79-396) and the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (P.L. 108-269). Broadly, the programs contained in these laws are the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) as well as the “child nutrition programs.” “Child nutrition programs” is a category used to describe the USDA-FNS programs that help to provide food for children in school or institutional settings. The National School Lunch and School Breakfast programs provide a per-meal subsidy for each meal that is served for free, for a reduced-price, or for a full-price (called a “paid” meal). The Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) will, under certain circumstances, provide free meals or snacks to all the children at a site, because it is the site (not the child) that is subject to eligibility criteria. The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP), or snack program (see **Table 1**), is sometimes referred to as a child nutrition program. In this report, it is included in farm bill programs because FFVP was included in the 2008 farm bill.

Generally, the WIC and Child Nutrition Programs are reauthorized for a five-year period. The most recent reauthorization, the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-296), was signed into law in December 2010. It reauthorized these programs through FY2015. Policymakers may play an oversight as USDA promulgates rules, releases guidance, and otherwise implements the legislation.

Resources for Tracking the Implementation of the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 (P.L. 111-296)

CRS Report R41354, *Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization: P.L. 111-296*, by Randy Alison

Aussenberg: This report summarizes the most recent reauthorization section-by-section. Although the Senate version of the legislation became law, the report also includes differences from the House bill.

USDA Resources:

- USDA-FNS keeps a clearinghouse of Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010 resources and implementation updates on the web: http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/CNR_2010.htm.
- USDA-FNS’s anticipated timeline for implementation can be found here: http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/Governance/Legislation/implementation_actions.pdf.

Federal Register—<https://www.federalregister.gov/topics/nutrition>—The *Federal Register* allows you to browse by topic. The nutrition listing, while not exclusively child nutrition or P.L. 111-296 news, gives a glimpse of related notices.

¹⁶ The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, described in the table, was passed and financed by the 2008 farm bill. It amended the Russell National School Lunch Act—a statute typically reauthorized elsewhere and in the jurisdiction of the House Education and the Workforce committee.

¹⁷ Please see CRS Report R42442, *Expiration and Possible Extension of the 2008 Farm Bill*, by Jim Monke, Megan Stubbs, and Randy Alison Aussenberg for a further discussion of issues of farm bill expiration, extension, and appropriations.

Table I. Overview of Farm Bill Programs

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program)		
Food and Nutrition Act (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) / Administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (USDA-FNS)	<p>Description: Provides benefits (through the use of electronic benefit transfer cards) that supplement low-income recipients' food purchasing power. Benefits vary by household size, income, and expenses (like shelter and medical costs) and averaged \$133 per person per month in FY2012. In lieu of SNAP benefits, (1) Puerto Rico operates a nutrition assistance block grant program using rules very similar to SNAP; (2) approximately 276 tribes (through 100 Indian Tribal Organizations and five state agencies) receive benefits through a food distribution program (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)) with eligibility rules close to SNAP; and (3) American Samoa and the Northern Marianas receive nutrition assistance block grants for programs serving their low-income populations.</p> <p>Eligibility: In general, eligible households must meet a gross income test (monthly cash income below 130% of the federal poverty guidelines), net income (monthly cash income subtracting SNAP deductible expenses at or below 100% of the federal poverty guidelines), liquid assets under \$2,000 (assets under \$3,000 if elderly or disabled household members). However, households with elderly or disabled members do not have to meet the gross income test. Recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) cash assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), or state-funded General Assistance are categorically eligible for SNAP. The state option of broad-based categorical eligibility also allows for the modification of some SNAP eligibility rules and has resulted in the vast majority of states not utilizing an asset test.</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, SNAP had an average monthly participation of approximately 46.6 million individuals in 22.3 million households. In FY2011, average monthly participation was 44.7 million individuals in 21.1 million households. Although this information is not yet available for FY2012, for FY2011, nearly half (45%) of participants were under age 18, almost 9% were age 60 or older.</p>	\$78,300, not including \$1,856 for Puerto Rico, Indian reservations, American Samoa, and the Northern Marianas, and not including TEFAP commodities.
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)		
The Food and Nutrition Act, Section 27 and The Emergency Food Assistance Act, Section 204(a) (7 U.S.C. 2036 & 7508(a)) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides food commodities (and cash support for distribution costs) through states to local emergency feeding organizations (e.g., food banks/pantries, soup kitchens) serving the low-income population.</p> <p>Eligibility: States designate local emergency feeding organization recipients and establish income standards for individual eligibility.</p> <p>Data: Information on the number of recipients or the average value of benefits under TEFAP is not available.</p>	\$308
Community Food Projects		
Food and Nutrition Act, Section 25 (7 U.S.C. 2034) / Administered by USDA-National Institute of Food and Agriculture	Competitive grants to nonprofit organizations for programs that improve access to locally produced food for low-income households. Eligibility for grants will vary according to request for applications.	\$5

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)		
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973, Section 4(a) (7 U.S.C. 612c note) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides supplemental monthly food packages (valued at approximately \$25 a month) to low-income elderly persons in projects located in 39 states, the District of Columbia, and several Indian reservations.</p> <p>Eligibility: Elderly persons (age 60+) who have access to a local CSFP project and household income below 130% of the federal poverty guidelines as well as women, infants, and children with income below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines. (States are prohibited from allowing dual participation in both WIC and CSFP.)</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, average monthly CSFP participation was 594,000 individuals. Approximately 577,000, or 97%, of the participants were over the age of 60.</p>	\$177
Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)		
Russell National School Lunch Act, Section 19 (42 U.S.C. 1769a) (expanded in Section 4304 of the Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides grants to schools to purchase fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to be provided during the school day.</p> <p>Eligibility: Program is nationwide in select schools. States are required to select elementary schools in which 50% or more of the students are eligible for free or reduced price meals. Priority is placed on schools where the highest proportion of children are eligible for free and reduced-price meals.</p> <p>Data: Information on the number of FFVP recipients is not available.</p>	\$137 ^a
Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program		
Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), Sec. 4231 (7 U.S.C. 3007) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides grants to participating states to offer vouchers/coupons to low-income seniors that may be used in farmers' markets, roadside stands, and other approved venues to purchase fresh produce.</p> <p>Eligibility: Income eligibility criteria are established by states.</p> <p>Data: In FY2011, approximately 863,000 individuals in 42 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and seven Indian Tribal Organizations received annual SFMNP vouchers/coupons worth an average of \$31.</p>	\$21

Source: Prepared by CRS using USDA and P.L. 112-55 and P.L. 112-175 appropriations data.

Notes: FY2012 (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012; P.L. 112-55) is, for the most part, the most recent full-year appropriation for the USDA-FNS programs. Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013 (P.L. 112-175) provides funding for FY2013 for the period of October 1, 2012, through March 27, 2013. For more information regarding FY2012 appropriations, including FY2012 funding as compared to FY2011, please see CRS Report R41964, *Agriculture and Related Agencies: FY2012 Appropriations*, coordinated by Jim Monke. FY2013 appropriations are tracked in CRS Report R42596, *Agriculture and Related Agencies: FY2013 Appropriations*, by Jim Monke.

- a. This is an approximation of FY2012, since the available amount is based in part on April 30, 2012, Consumer Price Index information. Also, general provisions in appropriations laws, P.L. 112-10 and P.L. 112-55, altered the amount of available FFVP funding.

Table 2. Overview of WIC and Child Nutrition Programs

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 17 (42 U.S.C. 1786) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides supplemental, nutrient-rich foods; nutrition education and counseling; and breastfeeding promotion and support to low-income women, infants, and children. WIC benefits are redeemable for a list of nutrient-rich foods specific to the participant’s eligibility category and medical needs (for example, foods specifically recommended for an anemic pregnant woman). These foods are specified in USDA-FNS regulations, although state agencies may further specify.</p> <p>Eligibility: Pregnant, postpartum and breastfeeding women, infants, and children up to age five with household income at or below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines may be WIC eligible. Applicants must be individually determined to be at “nutritional risk” by a health professional and must meet state residency requirements. Applicants may also be categorically eligible based on receipt of TANF cash assistance, SNAP, or Medicaid. (States are prohibited from allowing dual participation in both WIC and CSFP.)</p> <p>Data: In FY2011, an average monthly total of approximately 9.0 million individuals participated in WIC—4.8 million (53%) were children, 2.1 million (23%) were infants, and 2.1 million (23%) were women.</p>	\$6,620
WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 17(m) (42 U.S.C. 1786(m)) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides grants to participating states to offer vouchers/coupons/EBT to WIC participants that may be used in farmers’ markets, roadside stands, and other approved venues to purchase fresh produce.</p> <p>Eligibility: Women, infants over four months old, and children who are certified to receive WIC Program benefits or who are on a waiting list for WIC certification are eligible to participate in the FMNP.</p> <p>Data: In FY2011, approximately 1.9 million WIC participants in 36 states, District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico, Virgin Islands, and six Indian Tribal Organizations received annual FMNP benefits worth an average of \$21 per year.</p>	\$17

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
School Breakfast Program (SBP)	<p>Description: Provides federal cash assistance for elementary and secondary schools that provide breakfast to school children. Federal subsidies currently range from about 25 cents to \$1.80 per meal (depending on the type of meal/snack and the income of the recipient, with subsidies higher in Alaska and Hawaii). Total amount of assistance is based on the number of free, reduced-price, and paid lunches served.</p> <p>Eligibility: Household income must be at or below 130% of the federal poverty guidelines for children to receive a free meal, above 130% and below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines for children to receive a reduced price meal. Direct certification allows household eligibility based on participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR (Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations).</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, an average of 12.8 million students (up from approximately 12.2 million in FY2011) participated each school day; 9.8 million received a free breakfast, 1.0 million received a breakfast at reduced price, and 2.0 million received a full-price (paid) meal.</p>	\$3,320 ^a
National School Lunch Program (NSLP)	<p>Description: Provides federal assistance, in the form of cash and commodities, to elementary and secondary schools that provide lunch to school children. Federal subsidies currently range from about 25 cents to \$2.80 per meal (depending on the type of meal/snack and the income of the recipient, with subsidies higher in Alaska and Hawaii). Total amount of assistance is based on the number of free, reduced-price, and paid lunches served.</p> <p>Eligibility: Household income must be at or below 130% of the federal poverty guidelines for children to receive a free meal, and above 130% and below 185% of the federal poverty guidelines for children to receive a reduced price meal. Direct certification allows household eligibility based on participation in SNAP, TANF, or FDPIR.</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, an average of 31.6 million students (down from approximately 31.8 million in FY2011) participated each school day, 18.7 million received a free lunch, 2.8 million received a lunch at reduced price, and 10.2 million received a full-price (paid) lunch.</p>	\$10,200 ^a

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)		
Russell National School Lunch Act, Section 13 (42 U.S.C. 1761) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides federal cash assistance and some commodity foods to local public and private nonprofit “service institutions” running summer youth programs, camps, or other recreation sites that serve low-income children during their summer break or during lengthy school-year breaks. Sites may be schools, camps, community centers, and other organizations. Sponsors receive per-meal/snack subsidies as well as assistance with operating costs.</p> <p>Eligibility: At a participating site, free meals/snacks are served to all children under age 18.</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, summer meals were served at over 38,000 sites to approximately 2.3 million children and youth each summer day.</p>	\$402 ^a
Special Milk Program		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 3 (42 U.S.C. 1772) / Administered by the USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides public or nonprofit schools or child care institutions that do not participate in other federal meal programs with a per-half pint reimbursement for part of the cost of milk served to children/students.</p> <p>Eligibility: Any child at a participating school or half-day pre-kindergarten program can receive milk through the Special Milk Program. Children may either buy milk or receive it free, depending on the school’s choice of program options.</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, approximately 60.8 million half-pints of milk were subsidized through the Special Milk Program.</p>	\$13 ^a

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)		
Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act, Sec. 17(o) (42 U.S.C. 1766(o)) / Administered by the USDA-FNS	<p>Description: Provides cash subsidies to participating child care centers, family day care homes, after-school programs, and non-residential adult-care centers for the meals and snacks they serve to children, the elderly, and chronically disabled persons. In child care centers and non-residential adult-care settings, per-meal/snack subsidy payments are the same as those for school meals and child care centers. Family day care homes are reimbursed according to a tiered system. Federal subsidies currently range from about 25 cents to \$2.80 (depending on the type of meal/snack and the income of the recipient, with higher subsidies in Alaska and Hawaii).</p> <p>Eligibility: (Adult services) Elderly (age 60+) or chronically disabled persons attending participating non-residential adult-care centers. Both for-profit and nonprofit centers are eligible to participate. Adults are eligible for free or reduced meals based on income guidelines that are the same as in school meals programs. (Child care centers) Children's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals and snacks is the same as for school meals programs. (Day care homes) There is no requirement that meals and snacks be served free or at reduced price. Instead, the homes receive a subsidy for every meal served; the size of the subsidy is based on whether the home is a Tier I or Tier II home. Tiering is based on the low-income status of the child care provider or the community in which the provider is located.</p> <p>Data: In FY2012, the average daily participation of children and adults was approximately 3.4 million. Of the 3.3 million children served, approximately 2.4 million were in child care centers and 825,000 were in family day care homes.</p>	\$2,830 ^a

Source: Prepared by CRS using USDA data and P.L. 112-55 appropriations data.

Notes: FY2012 (Consolidated and Further Continuing Appropriations Act, 2012; P.L. 112-55) is, for the most part, the most recent full-year appropriation for the USDA-FNS programs. Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013 (P.L. 112-175) provides funding for FY2013 for the period of October 1, 2012, through March 27, 2013. For more information regarding FY2012 appropriations, including FY2012 funding as compared to FY2011, please see CRS Report R41964, *Agriculture and Related Agencies: FY2012 Appropriations*, coordinated by Jim Monke. FY2013 appropriations are tracked in CRS Report R42596, *Agriculture and Related Agencies: FY2013 Appropriations*, by Jim Monke.

- a. Approximately \$1.2 billion in FY2012 funding is for commodity procurement (\$900 million), administrative costs, studies, and evaluations across multiple child nutrition programs (school meals, summer food service, CACFP, special milk). This funding is not reflected in the per-program totals on this table.

HHS-ACL Programs

Administration on Aging (AOA) within the Department of Health and Human Service (HHS), Administration for Community Living (ACL)¹⁸ administers domestic food assistance programs authorized under the Older Americans Act (OAA). These programs provide formula grants to states, U.S. territories, and Indian tribal organizations to support congregate and home-delivered meals to older Americans.¹⁹ AOA also administers the Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP), which provides funds to the same entities to purchase food for these programs. While OAA's nutrition programs provide food assistance in the form of a prepared meal to older individuals living in the community, the stated purpose of the program is not only to reduce hunger and food insecurity, but also to promote socialization, as well as the health and well-being of older individuals.²⁰ **Table 3** provides details on the HHS-ACL programs, including eligibility, services provided, and funding.

Older individuals who meet certain income and other requirements may also be eligible for other domestic food assistance programs administered by USDA, such as SNAP, the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program, and the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP). Moreover, other services funded under OAA may provide outreach and education to older individuals about available benefits and programs, such as SNAP and CSFP. While the senior nutrition programs are administered by AOA, there continues to be program coordination between AOA and USDA. At the federal level, states and other entities may choose to receive all or part of their NSIP allotments in the form of USDA commodities.²¹ Obligations for NSIP commodity procurement are funded under an agreement between AOA and USDA.²²

At the state level, states and tribal organizations may collaborate with USDA programs such as CSFP, and can administer the adult component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which provides meals in adult day care settings.²³ In a 2011 survey of State Units on Aging (SUAs) and Disability, who are primarily responsible for administering funding for aging

¹⁸ On April 16, 2012, HHS Secretary Sebelius announced the creation of the Administration for Community Living (ACL) which brings together the Administration on Aging, the Office of Disability, and the Administration on Developmental Disabilities (renamed the Administration on Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities) into one agency, <http://www.hhs.gov/news/press/2012pres/04/20120416a.html>. For more information on the ACL, see <http://www.hhs.gov/acl/>.

¹⁹ The Older Americans Act (OAA) statute defines "older individual" as an individual aged 60 and older. For more information on programs and funding under the OAA, see CRS Report RL33880, *Funding for the Older Americans Act and Other Aging Services Programs*, by Angela Napili and Kirsten J. Colello. For more information on OAA nutrition programs, see CRS Report RS21202, *Older Americans Act: Title III Nutrition Services Program*, by Kirsten J. Colello.

²⁰ 42 U.S.C. 3030e.

²¹ The Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP) was originally established by the OAA in 1974 as the Nutrition Program for the Elderly and administered by USDA. Congress transferred the administration of NSIP from USDA to AOA in 2003. In 2006, pursuant to P.L. 109-365, Congress rescinded states' option to receive commodities. However, in 2007, this option was reinstated through P.L. 110-19 (effective April 23, 2007), which authorized the transfer of NSIP funds from HHS to USDA for the purchase of commodities and related expenses.

²² Most entities choose to receive their share of funds in cash, rather than commodities. In FY2011, six states chose to receive a portion of their share of the nutrition services incentive funds in commodities: Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Montana, and Nevada. The FY2011 value for these commodities was just under \$2.8 million (USDA, FNS, *2013 Explanatory Notes*, p. 30-140.)

²³ U.S. Congress, Senate Special Committee on Aging, *Seniors Going Hungry in America: A Call to Action and Warning for the Future*, 110th Cong., 2nd sess., March 5, 2008, S.Hrg. 110-597 (Washington: GPO, 2008), p. 8.

and disability services, including OAA nutrition services, 40% reported their agency also receives funding through USDA, among other sources of federal and state funding. A similar share of state agencies reported administering the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Fewer states reported administering other USDA-FNS programs: SNAP (10 states), CACFP (6 states), TEFAP (3 states), CSFP (6 states).²⁴ Whether a state agency has some responsibility for administering HHS and USDA-FNS programs and services can depend on whether the agency functions as an independent administrative agency or part of an umbrella agency that also has responsibility for other health and human services.

Congress has reauthorized and amended the OAA numerous times since it was first enacted in 1965. The last OAA reauthorization occurred in 2006, when Congress enacted the Older Americans Act Amendments of 2006 (P.L. 109-365), which extended the act's authorization of appropriations through FY2011. Thus, the authorization of appropriations for most OAA programs, including the senior nutrition programs, expired in FY2011. However, Congress has continued to appropriate funding for FY2012 and FY2013 activities. The 113th Congress may consider reauthorization of the OAA. In doing so, the committees of jurisdiction are the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee and the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

²⁴ National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, *State of the States Survey 2011: State Aging and Disability Agencies in Times of Change*, January 2012.

Table 3. Overview of Older Americans Act (OAA) Nutrition Programs

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2012 Funding (in millions)
Congregate Nutrition Program		
Older Americans Act, Title III, Part C, Subpart 1 (42 U.S.C. 3030e) / HHS-ACL	<p>Description: Provides meals to seniors in settings such as senior centers, schools, and adult day care centers. Offers social services such as nutrition education and screening, nutrition assessment, and counseling at meals sites. Provides seniors with opportunities for social engagement and volunteerism.</p> <p>Eligibility: The following groups are eligible: (1) persons age 60 or older and their spouses of any age; (2) persons under age 60 with disabilities who reside in housing occupied by seniors where meals are served; (3) persons with disabilities who reside at home with, and accompany, seniors to meals; and (4) volunteers.</p> <p>Data: In FY2010, 93.2 million congregated meals were served to more than 1.7 million participants.</p>	\$440
Home Delivered Nutrition Program		
Older Americans Act, Title III, Part C, Subpart 2 (42 U.S.C. 3030f) / HHS-ACL	<p>Description: Provides meals to seniors who are homebound. Offers services such as nutrition screening and education, nutrition assessment, and counseling.</p> <p>Eligibility: Persons age 60 or older and homebound and their spouses of any age. May be available to individuals who are under age 60 with disabilities if they reside at home with the homebound senior.</p> <p>Data: In FY2010, 143.4 million home-delivered meals were served to about 856,000 participants.</p>	\$217
Grants to Native Americans: Supportive and Nutrition Services		
Older Americans Act, Title VI, (42 U.S.C. 3057c) / HHS-ACL	<p>Description: Provides for the delivery of supportive and nutrition services comparable to services provided under Title III (i.e., congregated and home-delivered meals) to older Native Americans.</p> <p>Eligibility: Older individuals who are Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians.</p> <p>Data: In FY2010, 2.0 million congregated meals were served to 50,000 participants and 2.4 million home-delivered meals were served to 20,000 participants.</p>	\$28
Nutrition Service Incentive Program (NSIP)		
Older Americans Act, Title III, Part A, Sec. 311 (42 U.S.C. 3030a) / HHS-ACL	<p>Description: Provides funds to states, territories, and Indian Tribal Organizations to purchase food or to cover the costs of food commodities provided by USDA for the congregated and home-delivered nutrition programs. Funds are allotted to states and other entities based on each state's share of total meals served during the prior year. Most states choose to receive their share of funds in cash, rather than commodities.^a</p>	\$161

Source: Prepared by CRS based on appropriations legislation and committee reports; program data from the Administration on Aging, AGing Integrated Database (AGID) at <http://www.agidnet.org/>.

Notes: FY2012 is the most recent year in which full-year appropriations were made, and the table reflects these appropriations levels. The Continuing Appropriations Resolution, 2013 (CR, P.L. 112-175) provides funding for FY2013 for the period of October 1, 2012 through March 27, 2013. For more information on programs and funding under the OAA, see CRS Report RL33880, *Funding for the Older Americans Act and Other Aging Services Programs*, by Angela Napili and Kirsten J. Colello; for more information on OAA nutrition programs, see CRS Report RS21202, *Older Americans Act: Title III Nutrition Services Program*, by Kirsten J. Colello.

- a. In FY2011, six states chose to receive a portion of their share of the nutrition services incentive funds in commodities: Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Montana, and Nevada. The FY2011 value for these commodities was just under \$2.8 million (USDA, FNS, 2013 Explanatory Notes, p. 30-140).

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