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# Domestic Food Assistance: Summary of Programs

**Randy Alison Aussenberg**

Specialist in Nutrition Assistance Policy

**Kirsten J. Colello**

Specialist in Health and Aging Policy

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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 most recently reauthorized by the 2014 farm bill (the Agricultural Act of 2014; P.L. 113-79). 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 Services 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 (OAA) nutrition programs.<sup>1</sup> 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.<sup>2</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> 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 in this discussion. 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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](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.<sup>3</sup> Data from the USDA-ERS's 2013 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 2013 ("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.<sup>4</sup>

"Food security" includes high and marginal food security. "Food insecurity" includes low and very low food security. Findings from the USDA-ERS report on 2013 food security include the following rates of food security and food insecurity among U.S households:<sup>5</sup>

- 14.3% of U.S. households were *food insecure* throughout 2013 (85.7% of U.S. households were *food secure*). This was not a statistically significant difference from 2012 rates, which were 14.5% and 85.7%, respectively.
- 5.6% had *very low food security*; about one-third of all food insecure households have very low food security. This is not a statistically significant difference from the 2012 rate of 5.7%.
- 8.7% of households that included an elderly member were *food insecure*. This is not a statistically significant decrease from 8.8% in 2012.
- 19.5% of households that included children were *food insecure*.<sup>6</sup> This rate is not a statistically significant decrease from 20.0% in 2012.

<sup>3</sup> Alisa Coleman-Jensen, Christian Gregory, and Anita Singh, *Household Food Security in the United States in 2013*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, ERR-173, September 2014, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err173.aspx>. Refer to this USDA-ERS report for additional measures of food security (e.g., regions, states, or populations of interest).

<sup>4</sup> USDA-ERS website, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-us/measurement.aspx>.

<sup>5</sup> Alisa Coleman-Jensen, Christian Gregory, and Anita Singh, *Household Food Security in the United States in 2013*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, ERR-173, September 2014, <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err-economic-research-report/err173.aspx>.

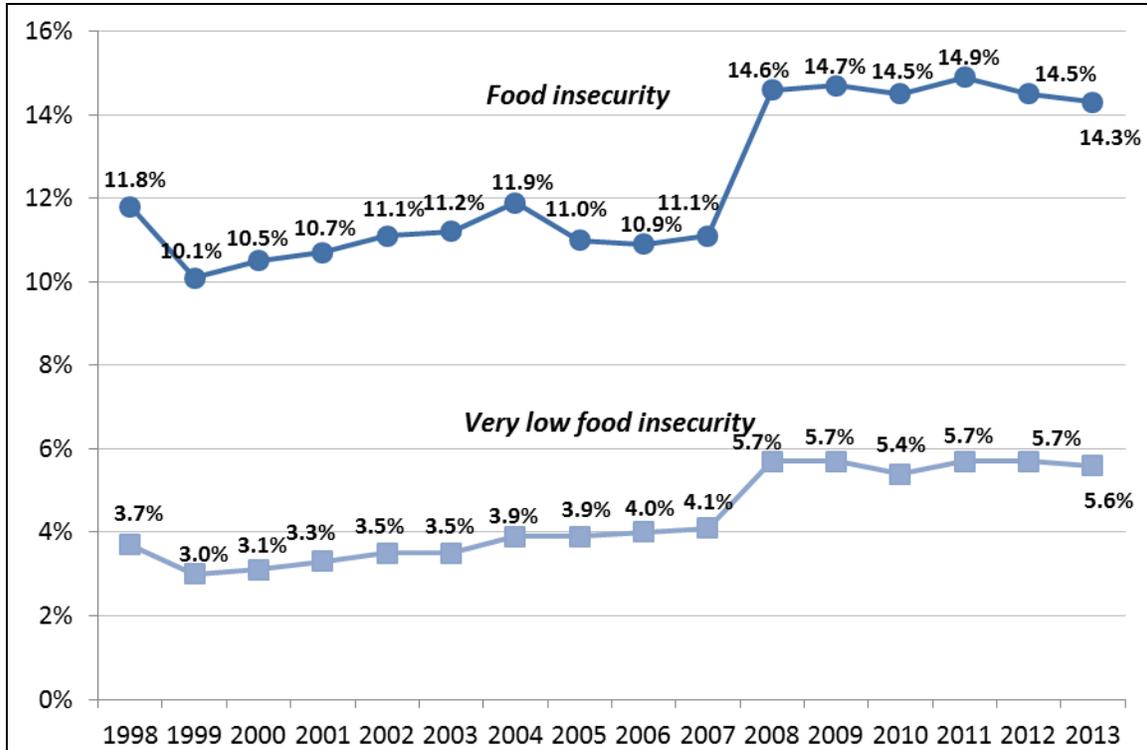
<sup>6</sup> These households may include food insecure adults, children, or both.

- 62% of *food insecure* households reported that they had participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance (SNAP), WIC, or National School Lunch programs in the last month. (57% reported participation in 2011.)

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 14.3% to 14.9% (**Figure 1**).

**Figure 1. Rate of Food Insecure Households, 1998-2013**

Using USDA-ERS Analysis of Census CPS Data



**Source:** CRS adapted figure from *Household Food Security in the United States in 2013*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Economic Research Service, ERR-173, September 2014 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 2010 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.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>7</sup> 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**

For the most part, the tables to follow display full-year FY2015 appropriations (provided by P.L. 113-235, enacted December 16, 2014).

For the USDA-FNS programs that are open-ended mandatory programs (e.g., SNAP and the Child Nutrition Programs), the tables include FY2014 obligated spending, since that measure better reflects program funding. USDA programs that are funded through transfers and not appropriations (e.g., the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program, Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program) are noted accordingly. Appropriations for the USDA-FNS open-ended mandatory programs are listed in CRS Report R43669, *Agriculture and Related Agencies: FY2015 Appropriations*, coordinated by Jim Monke.

Section 7 of P.L. 113-235 gives the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) authority to adjust funding within certain bounds, in the event that discretionary spending limits are exceeded due to “estimating differences.” ***This report’s FY2015 appropriations amounts do not reflect any such adjustments that may be made by OMB.***

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(...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**),<sup>8</sup> 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 offices<sup>9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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 commodity<sup>11</sup> 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).<sup>12</sup>

### USDA Food Assistance Resources

- **USDA-FNS Website:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/> — 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 Policy Support, Research and Analysis:** <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ops/research-and-analysis>—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/topics/food-nutrition-assistance.aspx#.Uz25-oW2qZQ>—ERS provides research on questions of food insecurity as well as program-specific questions.

<sup>8</sup> The Community Food Projects are administered by the National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

<sup>9</sup> See also USDA-FNS website, "FNS Regional Offices," <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fns-regional-offices>.

<sup>10</sup> USDA-FNS SNAP Program Development Division, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: State Options Report*, Tenth Edition, August 2012, [http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/10-State\\_Options.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/10-State_Options.pdf).

<sup>11</sup> "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 R43448, *Farm Commodity Provisions in the 2014 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79)*, by Dennis A. Shields.

<sup>12</sup> For more on the procurement of USDA foods, see CRS Report RL34081, *Farm and Food Support Under USDA's Section 32 Program*, by Dennis A. Shields. 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/food-distribution-programs>.

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.<sup>13</sup> 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.<sup>14</sup> 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 2014 farm bill (P.L. 113-79), most recent child nutrition reauthorization (P.L. 111-296), and USDA initiatives include efforts to promote "farm-to-school" endeavors, seeking, for example, to facilitate school cafeterias' purchasing from local and regional farms.<sup>15</sup>

## Farm Bill

**Table 1** lists those programs that were most recently reauthorized by the 2014 farm bill. The "farm bill" is an omnibus reauthorization and extension of dozens of farm, food, and nutrition laws. Most recently, Congress passed the Agricultural Act of 2014 (P.L. 113-79), which is referred to as the 2014 farm bill. The 2014 farm bill included 12 titles on topics ranging from conservation, rural development, and research to horticulture.<sup>16</sup> 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 79% of the 2014 farm bill spending was in the nutrition title, Title IV.<sup>17</sup> This is primarily due to the mandatory

<sup>13</sup> USDA-FNS website, "A Short History of SNAP," <http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/rules/Legislation/about.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> 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](http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/lunch/AboutLunch/ProgramHistory_4.htm).

<sup>15</sup> 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.

<sup>16</sup> For more information on the Omnibus Farm Bill, please consult CRS Report RS22131, *What Is the Farm Bill?*, by Renée Johnson and Jim Monke. For a summary of all titles of the 2014 farm bill, see CRS Report R43076, *The 2014 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79): Summary and Side-by-Side*, coordinated by Ralph M. Chite.

<sup>17</sup> Table 3 of CBO estimate of H.R. 2642, Agricultural Act of 2014, <http://cbo.gov/publication/45049> (January 28, 2014). See also CRS Report R42484, *Budget Issues That Shaped the 2014 Farm Bill*, by Jim Monke.

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 (P.L. 110-246).

Farm bill nutrition programs have generally been under the jurisdiction of the House Agriculture Committee and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry.<sup>18</sup> 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 (P.L. 112-240, enacted on January 3, 2013), but that extension expired at the end of FY2013. The 112<sup>th</sup> and 113<sup>th</sup> Congresses worked to formulate and pass a new farm bill; ultimately, Congress passed the 2014 farm bill, which was enacted on February 7, 2014.<sup>19</sup> During periods of expiration, many of the farm bill nutrition programs continued to operate due to appropriations actions.<sup>20</sup>

## 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 role as USDA promulgates rules, releases guidance, and otherwise implements the legislation. Many of the provisions from that law will expire at the end of this fiscal year (i.e., after September 30, 2015), so the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress may formulate a new reauthorization. WIC and the child nutrition programs have generally been under the jurisdiction of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the Senate Committee on Agriculture and Forestry. See CRS Report R43783, *School Meals Programs and Other USDA Child Nutrition Programs: A Primer*, by Randy Alison Aussenberg for further data and operational details on the child nutrition programs.

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<sup>18</sup> 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.

<sup>19</sup> See CRS Report R43076, *The 2014 Farm Bill (P.L. 113-79): Summary and Side-by-Side*, coordinated by Ralph M. Chite for a summary of these legislative developments.

<sup>20</sup> See CRS Report R42442, *Expiration and Extension of the 2008 Farm Bill*, by Jim Monke, Randy Alison Aussenberg, and Megan Stubbs.

**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/school-meals/healthy-hunger-free-kids-act>.

**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.

**Table I. Overview of Farm Bill Programs**

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 (or FY2014, as noted) Funding (in millions)
<b>Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp Program)</b>		
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><b>Description:</b> 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 \$125 per person per month in FY2014. In lieu of SNAP benefits, (1) Puerto Rico operates a nutrition assistance block grant program using rules very similar to SNAP; (2) Indian Tribal Organizations and some state agencies administer a food distribution program on Indian reservations and in other Native American communities (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><b>Eligibility:</b> 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), (for FY2015) liquid assets under \$2,250 (assets under \$3,250 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.<sup>a</sup></p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, SNAP had an average monthly participation of approximately 46.5 million individuals in 22.7 million households. In FY2013, average monthly participation was 47.6 million individuals in 23.1 million households. Although this information is not yet available for FY2014, for FY2013, approximately 44% of participants were under age 18, and 9% were age 60 or older.</p>	\$73,756 <sup>b</sup>
<b>The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)</b>		
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><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> States designate local emergency feeding organization recipients and establish income standards for individual eligibility.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> Information on the number of recipients or the average value of benefits under TEFAP is not available.</p>	\$376 <sup>c</sup>

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 (or FY2014, as noted) Funding (in millions)
<b>Community Food Projects</b>		
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.	\$9
<b>Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)</b>		
Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973, Section 4(a) (7 U.S.C. 612c note) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> 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 through two Indian Tribal Organizations (ITOs).</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> 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.L. 113-79 reauthorized the program as seniors-only; women, infants, and children may continue to participate only if they had been participating prior to implementation of this change.)</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, average monthly CSFP participation was almost 574,000 individuals. Approximately 564,000, or 98%, of the participants were over the age of 60.</p>	\$212
<b>Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP)</b>		
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><b>Description:</b> Provides grants to schools to purchase fresh fruit and vegetable snacks to be provided during the school day.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> 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><b>Data:</b> Information on the number of FFVP recipients is not available.</p>	\$160 <sup>d</sup>
<b>Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program</b>		
Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-246), Sec. 4231 (7 U.S.C. 3007) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> Income eligibility criteria are established by states.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2013, nearly 836,000 individuals in 43 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and seven Indian Tribal Organizations received annual SFMNP vouchers/coupons worth an average of \$31.</p>	\$21 <sup>e</sup>

**Source:** Prepared by CRS based on FY2015 appropriations information provided by P.L. 113-235 and the Appropriations Committees' accompanying joint explanatory statement; exceptions and further details are provided in the notes below. FY2014 obligations and other program data are from USDA-FNS data sources found through <http://www.fns.usda.gov/data-and-statistics> (as of January 9, 2015) or the FY2015 USDA-FNS Budget Explanatory Notes (<http://www.obpa.usda.gov/32fns2015notes.pdf>).

- a. For a summary of the non-financial eligibility rules, see CRS Report R42505, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): A Primer on Eligibility and Benefits*, by Randy Alison Aussenberg.
- b. FY2014 obligations data for SNAP are included here. As an open-ended appropriated mandatory program, SNAP's funding is largely based on the demand for program's benefits and services.
- c. Total includes FY2015 appropriated funding for entitlement commodities (\$327 million) and administrative costs (\$49.4 million); total does not include USDA's bonus commodity donations.
- d. FFPV funding is permanently authorized to receive an annual transfer of \$150 million (plus an annual adjustment for inflation) from the Section 32 account. However, since FY2009, appropriations laws have delayed the transfer, which impacts the amount of funding actually available for the program in a given fiscal year. Amount shown in the table is based on USDA-FNS's 2014-2015 school year funding information for this program (<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/FFVPFactSheet.pdf>).
- e. Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) funding is provided by a transfer from the Commodity Credit Corporation; the transfer is authorized by the program's authorizing language. SFMNP is not funded by appropriations. Amount shown is authorized transfer amount for FY2015.

**Table 2. Overview of WIC and Child Nutrition Programs**

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 (or FY2014, as noted) Funding (in millions)
<b>Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC)</b>		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 17 (42 U.S.C. 1786) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> 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><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, an average monthly total of approximately 8.3 million individuals (down from 8.7 million in FY2013) participated in WIC. This includes an average monthly total of 4.3 million (52%) children, 2.0 million (24%) infants, and 2.0 million (24%) women.</p>	\$6,623

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 (or FY2014, as noted) Funding (in millions)
<b>WIC Farmers Market Nutrition Program</b>		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 17(m) (42 U.S.C. 1786(m)) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> 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><b>Data:</b> In FY2013, approximately 1.6 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>	\$16.5
<b>School Breakfast Program (SBP)</b>		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 4 (42 U.S.C. 1773) / Administered by USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> Provides federal cash assistance for elementary and secondary schools that provide breakfast to school children. Federal subsidies currently range from about 30 cents to \$2.00 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><b>Eligibility:</b> Children are eligible to receive free school breakfasts if their family income is below 130% of federal poverty guidelines, or if they receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits or services, or if they are in foster care, migrant, runaway, or homeless. Children are eligible to receive reduced-price school breakfasts if their family income is between 130% and 185% of federal poverty guidelines. Schools with 40% or more of students identified as categorically eligible for free meals may serve free meals to all students at the school.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, an average of 13.5 million students (up from approximately 13.1 million in FY2013) participated each school day; 10.4 million received a free breakfast, 1.0 million received a breakfast at reduced price, and 2.1 million received a full-price (paid) meal.</p>	\$3,656 <sup>a</sup>

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 (or FY2014, as noted) Funding (in millions)
<b>National School Lunch Program (NSLP)</b>	<p><b>Description:</b> 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 30 cents to \$3.00 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><b>Eligibility:</b> Children are eligible to receive free school lunches if their household income is below 130% of federal poverty guidelines, or if they receive Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits or services, or if they are in foster care, migrant, runaway, or homeless. Children are eligible to receive reduced-price school lunches if their household income is between 130% and 185% of federal poverty guidelines. Schools with 40% or more of students identified as categorically eligible for free meals may serve free meals to all students at the school.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, an average of 30.3 million students (down from approximately 30.6 million in FY2013) participated each school day, 19.1 million received a free lunch, 2.5 million received a lunch at reduced price, and 8.7 million received a full-price (paid) lunch.</p>	\$12,584 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Summer Food Service Program (SFSP)</b>	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> Children age 18 or younger and certain individuals with disabilities over the age of 18, who live in low-income areas where at least half the children are from families with incomes below 185% of federal poverty guidelines (open sites), or who are enrolled in an activity program where half the children are from families with incomes below 185% of federal poverty guidelines (enrolled sites), and children from families with incomes below 185% of federal poverty guidelines at participating camps. Automatically eligible are homeless or runaway children and children in Head Start, Early Head Start, Even Start, or state-funded pre-kindergarten programs that have received authorized waivers.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, summer meals were served at nearly 45,000 sites to over 2.6 million children and youth each summer day.</p>	\$461 <sup>a</sup>

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 (or FY2014, as noted) Funding (in millions)
<b>Special Milk Program</b>		
Child Nutrition Act, Section 3 (42 U.S.C. 1772) / Administered by the USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> 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><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, approximately 49.8 million half-pints of milk were subsidized through the Special Milk Program.</p>	\$11 <sup>a</sup>
<b>Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)</b>		
Russell National School Lunch Act, Section 17 (42 U.S.C. 1766)) / Administered by the USDA-FNS	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility: (Child care centers)</b> Children's eligibility for free and reduced-price meals and snacks is the same as for school meals programs. <b>(Day care homes)</b> 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. <b>(Adult services)</b> 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.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2014, the average daily participation of children and adults was approximately 3.8 million. Of the 3.7 million children served, approximately 2.9 million were in child care centers and 776,000 were in family day care homes.</p>	\$3,112 <sup>a</sup>

**Source:** Prepared by CRS based on FY2015 appropriations information provided by P.L. 113-235 and the Appropriations Committees' accompanying joint explanatory statement; exceptions and further details are provided in the notes below. FY2014 obligations and other program data are from USDA-FNS data sources found through <http://www.fns.usda.gov/data-and-statistics> (as of January 9, 2015) or the FY2015 USDA-FNS Budget Explanatory Notes (<http://www.obpa.usda.gov/32fns2015notes.pdf>).

- a. FY2014 obligations data for each of the child nutrition programs are included here. These are open-ended appropriated mandatory programs and their funding is largely based on the demand for program's benefits and services. Obligation data includes USDA commodity foods costs and other support costs where appropriate.

## HHS-ACL Programs

Administration on Aging (AOA) within the Department of Health and Human Service (HHS), Administration for Community Living (ACL)<sup>21</sup> 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.<sup>22</sup> 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.<sup>23</sup> **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.<sup>24</sup> Obligations for NSIP commodity procurement are funded under an agreement between AOA and USDA.<sup>25</sup>

States and tribal organizations may also collaborate with USDA programs such as CSFP, and states can administer the adult component of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), which provides meals in adult day care settings.<sup>26</sup> In a 2014 survey of State Aging and Disability Agencies, who are primarily responsible for administering funding for aging and disability

<sup>21</sup> 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/>.

<sup>22</sup> 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 R43414, *Older Americans Act (OAA): In Brief*, by Kirsten J. Colello and Angela Napili. For more information on OAA nutrition programs, see CRS Report RS21202, *Older Americans Act: Title III Nutrition Services Program*, by Kirsten J. Colello.

<sup>23</sup> 42 U.S.C. 3030e.

<sup>24</sup> 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.

<sup>25</sup> Most entities choose to receive their share of funds in cash, rather than commodities. In FY2014, eight states chose to receive a portion of their share of the nutrition services incentive funds in commodities: Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, and Oklahoma. The FY2014 value for these commodities was \$1.9 million (USDA, FNS, 2016 Explanatory Notes, p. 32-150).

<sup>26</sup> U.S. Congress, Senate Special Committee on Aging, *Seniors Going Hungry in America: A Call to Action and Warning for the Future*, 110<sup>th</sup> Cong., 2<sup>nd</sup> sess., March 5, 2008, S.Hrg. 110-597 (Washington: GPO, 2008), p. 8.

services, including OAA nutrition services, one-third reported that the State Aging and/or Disability Agency also received funding through USDA, among other sources of federal and state funding. Twenty-eight State Aging and/or Disability Agencies reported administering the Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program. Fewer states reported administering other USDA-FNS programs: CACFP (6 states), TEFAP (5 states), CSFP (7 states).<sup>27</sup> 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 OAA activities. In the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress, comprehensive OAA reauthorization legislation has been introduced in the Senate. S. 192 would extend the authorizations of appropriations for most OAA programs, including the nutrition programs, for three years through FY2018 and would make various amendments to existing OAA authorities. On January 28, 2015, the Senate HELP Committee ordered S. 192, the Older Americans Act Reauthorization Act of 2015, reported favorably. To date, no legislative action to reauthorize the OAA has occurred in the House of Representatives in the 114<sup>th</sup> Congress.<sup>28</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities, *State of the States in Aging and Disability: 2014 Survey of State Agencies*, 2014.

<sup>28</sup> The committee of jurisdiction is the House Education and the Workforce Committee.

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

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 Funding (in millions)
<b>Congregate Nutrition Program</b>		
Older Americans Act, Title III, Part C, Subpart 1 (42 U.S.C. 3030e) / Administered by HHS-ACL	<p><b>Description:</b> 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><b>Eligibility:</b> 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><b>Data:</b> In FY2012, 86.3 million congregate meals were served to more than 1.6 million participants.</p>	\$438
<b>Home Delivered Nutrition Program</b>		
Older Americans Act, Title III, Part C, Subpart 2 (42 U.S.C. 3030f) / Administered by HHS-ACL	<p><b>Description:</b> Provides meals to seniors who are homebound. Offers services such as nutrition screening and education, nutrition assessment, and counseling.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> 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><b>Data:</b> In FY2012, 137.4 million home-delivered meals were served to about 851,000 participants.</p>	\$216
<b>Grants to Native Americans: Supportive and Nutrition Services</b>		
Older Americans Act, Title VI, (42 U.S.C. 3057c) / Administered by HHS-ACL	<p><b>Description:</b> Provides for the delivery of supportive and nutrition services comparable to services provided under Title III (i.e., congregate and home-delivered meals) to older Native Americans.</p> <p><b>Eligibility:</b> Older individuals who are Indians, Alaskan Natives, and Native Hawaiians.</p> <p><b>Data:</b> In FY2012, 2.4 million congregate meals were served to 49,000 participants and 2.7 million home-delivered meals were served to 22,000 participants.</p>	\$26

Authorizing Legislation / Federal Administrative Entity	Program Information	FY2015 Funding (in millions)
<b>Nutrition Services Incentive Program (NSIP)</b>		
Older Americans Act, Title III, Part A, Sec. 311 (42 U.S.C. 3030a) / Administered by HHS-ACL	<b>Description:</b> 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 congregate 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. <sup>a</sup>	\$160

**Source:** Prepared by CRS based on FY2015 appropriations information provided by P.L. 113-235 and the Appropriations Committees' accompanying joint explanatory statement. Program data are from the Administration on Aging, AGing Integrated Database (AGID), <http://www.agid.acl.gov/>.

**Notes:** For more information on programs and funding under the OAA, see CRS Report R43414, *Older Americans Act (OAA): In Brief*, by Kirsten J. Colello and Angela Napili; 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 FY2014, eight states chose to receive a portion of their share of the nutrition services incentive funds in commodities: Connecticut, Delaware, Idaho, Kansas, Massachusetts, Montana, Nevada, and Oklahoma. The FY2014 value for these commodities was \$1.9 million (USDA, FNS, 2016 Explanatory Notes, p. 32-150).

## Author Contact Information

Randy Alison Aussenberg  
Specialist in Nutrition Assistance Policy  
raussenberg@crs.loc.gov, 7-8641

Kirsten J. Colello  
Specialist in Health and Aging Policy  
kcolello@crs.loc.gov, 7-7839

## Area of Expertise by Author

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<b>Area of Expertise</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
USDA-FNS Programs	Randy Alison Aussenberg	7-8641	raussenberg@crs.loc.gov
HHS-ACL Programs	Kirsten J. Colello	7-7839	kcolello@crs.loc.gov

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