



Farm Bill Primer: SNAP and Nutrition Title Programs

The Nutrition title of the farm bill typically reauthorizes a number of nutrition or domestic food assistance programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP, formerly the Food Stamp program). These programs were last reauthorized by the Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018 (2018 farm bill; P.L. 115-334) through September 30, 2023, and then were subsequently extended to September 30, 2026, via three one-year extensions (P.L. 118-22, P.L. 118-158, P.L. 119-37). The 2025 budget reconciliation bill (H.R. 1, P.L. 119-21) made changes to SNAP’s financing as well as eligibility (work and citizenship specifically) and benefit calculation rules. The 119th Congress has begun work on a 2026 farm bill that would reauthorize farm bill nutrition programs through September 30, 2031 (see H.R. 7567).

The child nutrition programs (e.g., the National School Lunch Program and the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children [WIC]) are typically reauthorized in a child nutrition reauthorization bill—not a farm bill.

Nutrition Programs Typically Reauthorized in a Farm Bill

The major programs, included in several different permanent statutes, reauthorized in the 2018 farm bill were

- SNAP and related grant programs (e.g., SNAP Employment & Training);
- Programs in lieu of SNAP: **Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)**, **Nutrition Assistance Program** grants for several territories;
- **The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)**;
- **Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)**;
- **Community Food Projects**;
- **Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)**; and
- **Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)** grants.

These programs are administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA’s) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), (except for GusNIP, administered by USDA’s National Institute of Food and Agriculture [NIFA]). SNAP is the largest of USDA’s domestic food assistance programs, in both participation and spending. (See **Table 1** for statistics and program summaries.)

Funding

According to the Congressional Budget Office’s (CBO’s) February 2026 estimate of projected costs for farm bill programs for FY2027-FY2036, the Nutrition title makes up approximately 72% of farm bill mandatory spending.

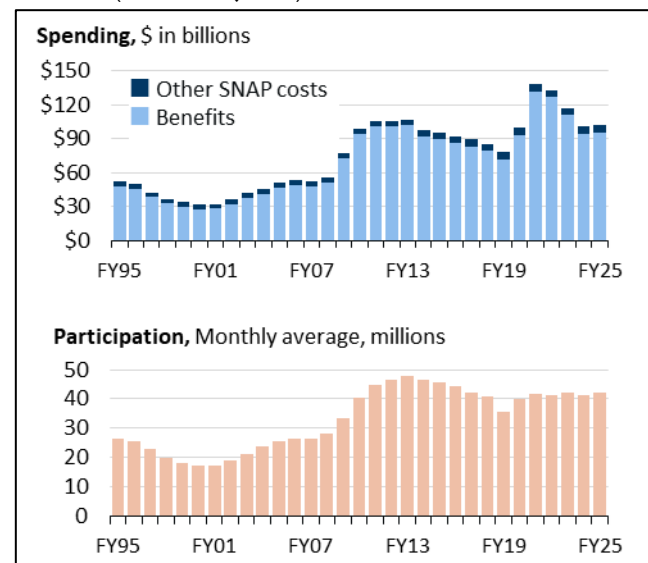
SNAP is authorized as open-ended mandatory spending and is funded through appropriations laws. As such, amending SNAP eligibility, benefits, or other program rules can have

a budgetary impact. At the same time, the availability of appropriated funding also affects SNAP’s operation.

SNAP’s spending is generally driven by program participation, which can fluctuate due to economic conditions and program rules (see **Figure 1**). In recent years, during and after time-limited pandemic-era benefit increases, federal spending declined while participation was steady. In FY2025, 93% of SNAP spending was for the benefits themselves. Administrative costs of eligibility determination and benefit issuance are shared between the state/territory and federal government. Other SNAP spending includes funds for nutrition education and Employment and Training (E&T).

Figure 1. SNAP Participation and Federal Spending, FY1995-FY2025

Constant (inflation-adjusted) FY2025 dollars



Source: CRS, using USDA, FNS administrative data. Spending amounts in FY2025 dollars: “Benefits” adjusted using CPI-U Food at Home index; “Other SNAP costs” adjusted using CPI-U for All Consumers index. Spending includes additional amounts provided in Great Recession and COVID-19 response laws.

The programs in lieu of SNAP (except for a small amount of FDPIR) are also mandatory spending. TEFAP’s “entitlement commodity” funds for food are mandatory spending, while the program’s administrative costs are discretionary. CSFP is discretionary spending. SFMNP and GusNIP receive mandatory funding from sources outside of annual appropriations bills.

Nutrition in Recent Farm Bills

Congressional consideration of the 2018 (Agriculture Improvement Act of 2018; P.L. 115-334) and 2014 farm bills (Agricultural Act of 2014; P.L. 113-79) included debate centered on SNAP’s work requirements and other eligibility rules. The enacted 2018 farm bill reconciled

significant differences between the House- and Senate-passed SNAP provisions, ultimately making few eligibility changes. Among other policies, the 2018 law required periodic re-evaluations of the Thrifty Food Plan (the basis of the maximum SNAP benefit). The Biden Administration's 2021 implementation of this provision (increasing SNAP benefit amounts by approximately 21%) has been a recent point of contention. Aside from SNAP policies, recent farm bills increased federal resources for emergency feeding organizations (through TEFAP) and low-income households' purchase of fruits and vegetables (through GusNIP).

Related CRS Reports:

CRS Report R48552, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) and Related Nutrition Programs in P.L. 119-21: An Overview*

CRS Report R42505, *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): A Primer on Eligibility and Benefits*

CRS Report R45408, *The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP): Background and Funding*

Table I. Major Nutrition Programs in the 2018 Farm Bill

Program	Authorizing Statute	Program Summary	FY2026 Funding	FY2025 Participation
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) (formerly, Food Stamp program)	Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (§§1 et seq.)	Provides to low-income households electronic benefits redeemable for SNAP-eligible foods at SNAP-eligible retailers. Benefit amounts vary by household size and benefit calculation rules. Non-benefit SNAP funding for matching states' administrative costs, Employment & Training, nutrition education, and other SNAP-related costs. Operates in 50 states, District of Columbia, Guam, and U.S. Virgin Islands.	\$103.955 billion	42.38 million in an average month
Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) Block Grants	Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (§28)	Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) receive capped funding to administer respective nutrition programs under terms negotiated with Memoranda of Understanding with USDA.	\$3.035 billion	1.25 million
The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)	Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (§27); Emergency Food Assistance Act (§204(a))	Provides USDA-purchased food commodities (and cash support for storage and distribution costs) through states to local emergency feeding organizations (e.g., food banks).	\$552 million ^a	Not available
Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)	Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (§4(a))	Provides supplemental monthly food packages to low-income seniors.	\$460 million	700,700 in an average month
Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR)	Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (§4(b)); Agriculture and Consumer Protection Act of 1973 (§4(a))	Provides, in lieu of SNAP benefits, food commodities to low-income households on Indian reservations and to Native American families residing in Oklahoma or in designated areas near Oklahoma.	\$239 million	58,000 in an average month
Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP)	Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (§4002)	Provides vouchers/coupons to low-income seniors to purchase fresh produce at farmers' markets and other direct-to-consumer venues.	\$21 million ^b	758,000 (FY2022)
Community Food Projects (CFP)	Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (§25)	Competitive grants to nonprofit organizations for programs that improve access to locally produced food for low-income households.	\$5 million	Not available
Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP)	Food Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 (§4405)	Competitive grants for projects that increase low-income consumers' purchase of fruits and vegetables by providing incentives at SNAP points of purchase and (added by 2018 farm bill) providing produce prescriptions to SNAP/Medicaid participants.	\$56 million ^c	Not available

Source: Funding for SNAP, FDPIR, TEFAP, CFP, and CSFP are FY2026 appropriations from P.L. 119-37 and the accompanying explanatory statement. SNAP and FDPIR funding amounts are largely based on the demand for the programs' benefits and services, so appropriations figures usually overestimate those programs' annual cost. Funding for GusNIP, FFVP, and SFMNP are based on the mandatory funds authorized by the programs' authorizing laws. Participation data are from USDA, FNS, "September 2025 Keydata Report," December 23, 2025, <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/overview/keydata-sept2025>, unless otherwise noted. NAP data are from the FNS FY2027 congressional budget justification and a CRS request to FNS (<https://www.usda.gov/sites/default/files/documents/FY-2027-Chapter-34-FNS.pdf>). Data are preliminary for FY2025 and may be revised in future releases as reporting agencies finalize data. SFMNP participation data are from the FNS program website (2022 data are the most recent available).

- TEFAP appropriation is for entitlement foods and administrative funds; does not include the value of bonus foods distributed through TEFAP, which has ranged from \$1 billion to \$2 billion since FY2019.
- SFMNP funding is provided by a transfer from the Commodity Credit Corporation; the transfer is authorized by the program's authorizing language. Amount shown is the authorized transfer for FY2026.
- GusNIP's mandatory funding is provided by a transfer from the Commodity Credit Corporation; the transfer is authorized by the program's authorizing language. Amount shown is the authorized transfer for FY2026.

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