Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
SNAP is the cornerstone of the nation’s nutrition and food security safety net, helping to put food on the table for 42 million participants with low incomes each month. When the number of families struggling to make ends meet increases, SNAP responds quickly and effectively to meet that need.

SNAP Action Needed
Congress should again protect SNAP’s structure and funding, and strengthen SNAP by adopting provisions contained in the following bills:

H.R. 3037/S.1336 — Closing the Meal Gap Act
- Base SNAP benefit allotments on the more adequate Low-Cost Food Plan.
- Boost SNAP benefits for families with children forced to choose between food and shelter.
- Boost SNAP benefits for older Americans forced to choose between food and medicine.
- Boost the SNAP minimum monthly benefit, which currently is only $23.
- Improve equitable access by extending SNAP to Puerto Rico.

H.R. 1510 — Improving Access to Nutrition Act
- End SNAP’s arbitrary three-month time limit to ensure that all eligible people have access to nutrition assistance and stay healthy.

Enhance Access to SNAP Act
- Eliminate the barriers that college students face when accessing SNAP

The SNAP Plus Act
- End the prohibition on use of SNAP benefits to purchase hot prepared foods from food retailers.

The Lift the Bar Act
- Eliminate the five-year bar (i.e., waiting period) for legal permanent immigrants to access to SNAP and other federal programs.

Ensuring Equitable Food Access

Indian Country
Improve SNAP access for tribal populations, including by allowing participation in both SNAP and FDPIR.

Puerto Rico and U.S. Territories
Extend pathway for SNAP to Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Northern Mariana Islands.

SNAP Has A Range of Extraordinary Strengths

SNAP DELIVERS ASSISTANCE quickly and effectively to people recovering from natural disasters or economic crises.

SNAP IS EFFICIENT, using electronic benefits technology and regular channels of commerce.

SNAP REACHES KEY VULNERABLE POPULATIONS — the large majority are children, seniors, and people with disabilities.

SNAP SUPPORTS WORK, helping families struggling with low wages.

SNAP REDUCES HUNGER and food insecurity by providing low-income people necessary food money.

SNAP BOLSTERS LOCAL ECONOMIES by increasing money spent for food at local retailers.

SNAP IMPROVES DIETARY INTAKE and health, especially among children and with lasting effects.

SNAP LIFTS MILLIONS OF PEOPLE out of poverty.

May 2023
The Feeding America network is the largest TEFAP participant, with approximately 96 percent of Feeding America's partner food banks receiving and distributing TEFAP foods in fiscal year 2022. Feeding America's food banks receive TEFAP foods through their states and then distribute the food to local organizations, including food pantries, meal programs, and shelters.

TEFAP is a hunger lifeline for rural communities, in particular. In 2020, the Feeding America network food banks distributed TEFAP foods in 96 percent of rural counties, providing over 465 million pounds of food to neighbors facing hunger in rural areas.

States agencies and the Feeding America network place food orders with USDA, which then works with the food industry to fulfill the orders. Each state is required to determine how TEFAP foods are distributed, and they oversee the agencies that distribute the food.

TEFAP offers more than 120 nutritious foods, including fruits, vegetables, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, nuts, milk, cheese, and whole-grain and enriched-grain products, such as rice, cereal, and pasta.

Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

CSFP is a federal nutrition program that leverages government buying power to provide nutritious food boxes to thousands of older adults, ages 60 years and above, with low incomes each month. The program is designed to help older adults access the food they need to maintain good health through monthly food packages filled with fruits and vegetables, meat and cheese, and other nutrition-packed foods, to supplement their diets. All 50 states, Washington D.C., Puerto Rico, and five Indian Tribal Organizations participate in CSFP. CSFP is a discretionary program, meaning Congress determines its funding level each year through the federal appropriations process. The program can only serve as many eligible participants as funding allows, regardless of how many people may qualify. Through the yearly appropriations process, funds are allocated for caseloads in each state. In fiscal year 2020, approximately 692,467 older adults were set to receive CSFP boxes; however, additional funding in the American Rescue Plan allowed for 760,634 to be served in 2020.

CSFP Fast Facts

Between July 2021 and June 2022, the Feeding America food bank network received 1.24 billion pounds of food from TEFAP, providing over 1 billion meals to people facing hunger.