

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest nutrition assistance program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture. It serves as the first line of defense against hunger. In fact, without SNAP, hunger in this country would be far, far worse. Here are the reasons why we need to urge policymakers to protect and strengthen this effective program:

1. SNAP reduces hunger and food insecurity by providing very low-income people desperately needed, targeted assistance to purchase food at grocery stores, farmers' markets, and other regular commercial food outlets, through an effective and efficient Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) system.
2. Because SNAP benefits are so urgently needed by families, they are spent quickly — 90 percent of benefits are spent after only three weeks — thereby bolstering local economies.
3. According to recent studies, it is estimated that each dollar in federally funded SNAP benefits during a recession generates between \$1.50 and \$1.80 in economic activity. SNAP is targeted to go to the lowest-income people in our country. This includes millions of working poor families.
4. SNAP reaches key vulnerable populations: 80.5 percent of SNAP households include a child, an elderly person, or a person with disabilities; 85.3 percent of all SNAP benefits go to such households. While losing a job is the most common event causing a household to seek SNAP, 54.3 percent of SNAP households with children in fiscal year 2018 worked and had earnings; only 10.5 percent of SNAP households with children received TANF.
5. Research has found that receipt of SNAP in early childhood improved high school graduation rates, adult earnings, and adult health.
6. When the national, regional, state, or local area economy is in trouble, SNAP is among the most effective government responses. SNAP reacts quickly and robustly to economic problems. This has been seen most clearly



- and dramatically at the start of the recession in 2008, when millions of people became newly unemployed or underemployed. Disaster SNAP (D-SNAP) has been deemed effective and responsive in quickly providing nutrition assistance to people recovering from hurricanes, tornadoes, and other disasters, as recently seen in the aftermath of Hurricanes Dorian, Florence, and Michael.
7. SNAP lifted 3.2 million Americans out of poverty in 2018, according to the Census Bureau's Supplemental Poverty Measure.
  8. SNAP is nearly as effective as the Earned Income Tax Credit in lifting families above the poverty line, and far more effective than any other program in lifting families out of deep poverty.
  9. SNAP relieves pressure on overwhelmed food banks, pantries, religious congregations, and other emergency food providers across the country. They recognize the comprehensive approach needed to end hunger and see SNAP as the cornerstone of national, state, and local anti-hunger efforts, and are the first to note their inability to meet added demand that would come from weakening SNAP.