

# CALIFORNIA SNAP Matters for Seniors

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

**FRAC**  
Food Research & Action Center

THE  
RETIREMENT  
RESEARCH  
FOUNDATION

**AARP Foundation**  
For a future without senior poverty.

The number of seniors (60+) across the nation is growing and far too many struggle with hunger and food insecurity.



Nationally, **9.5%** of households with seniors face food insecurity.

In California, **9.4%** of households with seniors face food insecurity.

Due to income constraints, food-insecure households with older adults do not have consistent access to enough food for healthy, active living. The impact of senior hunger extends well beyond an empty stomach and wallet.

**SOURCE:** FRAC analysis of Current Population Survey-Food Security Supplement Data, 2014-2016

## Seniors Struggling With Food Insecurity may Experience a Number of Challenges:



**Food running out**



**Skipping meals**



**Choosing between food and medicine**



**Postponing medical care**



**Poor health outcomes**



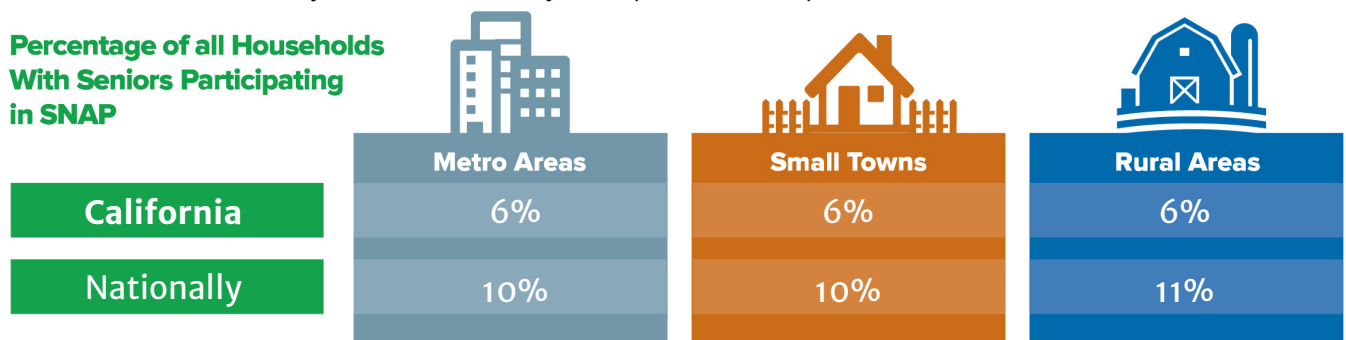
**Higher health care use and costs**

**SOURCE:** FRAC's Hunger and Health series

## Senior SNAP Participation:

SNAP is available in every area of the country to help older adults purchase food.

Percentage of all Households With Seniors Participating in SNAP



For the purpose of this analysis, “**Metro Areas**” are metropolitan statistical areas delineated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), each of which contains at least one Census Bureau-delineated urbanized area of 50,000 or more people, “**Small Towns**” are micropolitan statistical areas as delineated by OMB, each containing at least one Census Bureau-delineated urban cluster of between 10,000 and 50,000 people, and “**Rural Areas**” are non-metropolitan and non-micropolitan areas.

**SOURCE:** FRAC analysis of American Community Survey data averaged over five years (2012-2016)

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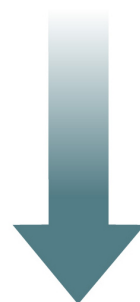
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**SNAP, the nation's first line of defense against hunger, is critically important to seniors.**



- Improved food security
- Better nutrition
- Improved health
- Better medication adherence

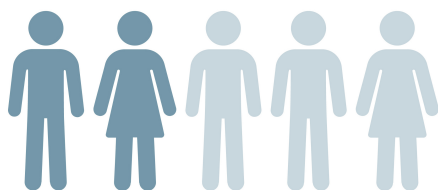


- Fewer difficult choices
- Lower health care costs
- Reduced hospital & nursing home admissions

In addition to improving the food security, health, and well-being of seniors, federal SNAP dollars stimulate local economies through assistance that goes directly to struggling seniors to purchase food.

**SOURCE:** FRAC's Hunger and Health series

## Too Many Seniors Miss out on SNAP



Nationally, only 42% (2 in 5) eligible seniors participate in SNAP.

### See how Your State Compares:

% of eligible seniors benefitting from SNAP in an average month in FY2015

Average monthly SNAP benefit for senior households in FY2017

#### Nationally

42%

\$125

#### California

19%

\$137

**SOURCE:** USDA's FY2015 Trends in SNAP Participation Rates report

**SOURCE:** Data provided by USDA-FNS, and FRAC analysis of FY2017 SNAP Quality Control data.

## To get more seniors participating in SNAP, states and anti-hunger advocates can:

### Educate

policy makers on the importance of SNAP in addressing senior hunger

### Partner

with health care providers, senior centers, faith-based organizations, and retailers to counsel seniors on SNAP benefits and to provide application assistance

### Adopt

state practices and policies to help ease barriers to SNAP enrollment and to ensure seniors receive the maximum amount of SNAP benefits to which they are entitled