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 Tennessee, 10.4% 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

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**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

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**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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Metro Areas</th>
<th>Small Towns</th>
<th>Rural Areas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tennessee</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>17%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nationally</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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 metropolitan 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-microstatistical areas.

**Source:** FRAC analysis of American Community Survey data averaged over five years (2012-2016)
SNAP Matters for Seniors
Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

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.

SOURCE: USDA’s FY2015 Trends in SNAP Participation Rates report

See how Your State Compares:

% of eligible seniors benefiting from SNAP in an average month in FY2015
Nationally: 42%
Tennessee: 43%

Average monthly SNAP benefit for senior households in FY2017
Nationally: $125
Tennessee: $99

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