

# CAPITOL FACTS & FIGURES

## ● ● ● HEALTH

### SNAP Benefits: Participation Still Below Poverty Rate

**Following significant enrollment growth in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) from 2008 to 2011 due to the economic fallout of the recession, program growth slowed from 2011 to 2012.**

- Enrollment in SNAP, formerly called food stamps, grew from 28 million in 2008 to 44.5 million in 2011, a 58 percent increase over the three-year period.<sup>1</sup>
- As the economy began to improve, the national growth in the number of people enrolled between 2011 and 2012 was just 4.2 percent.<sup>2</sup>

**All states experienced increases in SNAP enrollment following the 2008 recession. A few states reversed that trend in 2012, however, with enrollment actually decreasing.**

- In four states—Florida, Idaho, Nevada and Utah—SNAP enrollment more than doubled from 2008 to 2011. For Florida, the largest of the triple-digit per capita growth states, enrollment grew 104 percent, rising from 1.45 million to 3.07 million residents receiving assistance with food expenses.
- Four of the five states with the slowest enrollment growth in the 2008-11 period were Southern states—Arkansas, Kentucky, Louisiana and West Virginia—where per capita enrollment in SNAP was already high. The fifth state was North Dakota.

**The increase in SNAP enrollment following the 2008 recession brings per capita enrollment close to national poverty levels.**

- In 2006, the percentage point gap between the percentage of people below poverty—12.3 percent—and the percentage receiving food stamps—9 percent was 3.3, representing about 10 million Americans.
- By 2011, the latest year for official U.S. poverty rates, the gap had almost been closed. Fifteen percent of Americans lived below poverty and 14 percent received SNAP benefits.

**SNAP is a program designed to be countercyclical. As economic conditions worsen, the reach of the program expands as more people depend on SNAP. When the economy recovers, the program contracts.**

- SNAP benefits play a crucial role in boosting families' monthly income. To be eligible for assistance, gross



monthly income generally must be below 130 percent of the federal poverty level. For a family of three in 2013, that would mean an annual income of no more than \$24,828 a year. All sources of income count, including unemployment and Social Security.<sup>3</sup>

- The average monthly benefit for a family of three is \$412 per month.<sup>4</sup>
- More than 75 percent of all SNAP participants are in families with children.
- A recent study published in the *Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine* estimated that 49.2 percent of all American children will live in a household depending on SNAP at some point in their childhood.<sup>5</sup>

**SNAP benefits provide a significant boost to local economies. Federal stimulus legislation increased the monthly SNAP benefit to provide a greater boost to communities, but benefits will fall again in November 2013.**

- The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act increased monthly SNAP benefits by 13.6 percent beginning April 1, 2009, pumping an estimated \$18 billion into state economies between 2009 and 2012. Total increased economic activity in the states will exceed \$34 billion.

- Starting Nov. 1, 2013, all SNAP participants will see a benefit cut. For families of three, the cut will likely be \$20 to \$25 per month, or \$240 to \$300 annually.<sup>6</sup>
- Every \$1 in SNAP benefits generates \$1.79 in total economic activity, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture.<sup>7</sup>
- Mark Zandi of Moody's, a credit rating agency that performs international financial research and analysis, estimates the multiplier to be \$1.72, the highest multiplier of the Recovery Act measures Moody's studied.<sup>8</sup>

**REFERENCES**

<sup>1</sup>Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Annual State Level Data, 2008-2012. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/15SNAPpartPP.htm>

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "A Quick Guide to SNAP Eligibility and Benefits." Updated Jan. 31, 2013. <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/index.cfm?fa=view&id=1269>

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Rank M, Hirschl T. "Estimating the risk of food stamp use and impoverishment during childhood." Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med 2009; 163: 994-99.

<sup>6</sup>Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. "SNAP Benefits Will Be Cut for All Participants in November 2013." February 8, 2013. <http://www.cbpp.org/cms/?fa=view&id=3899>

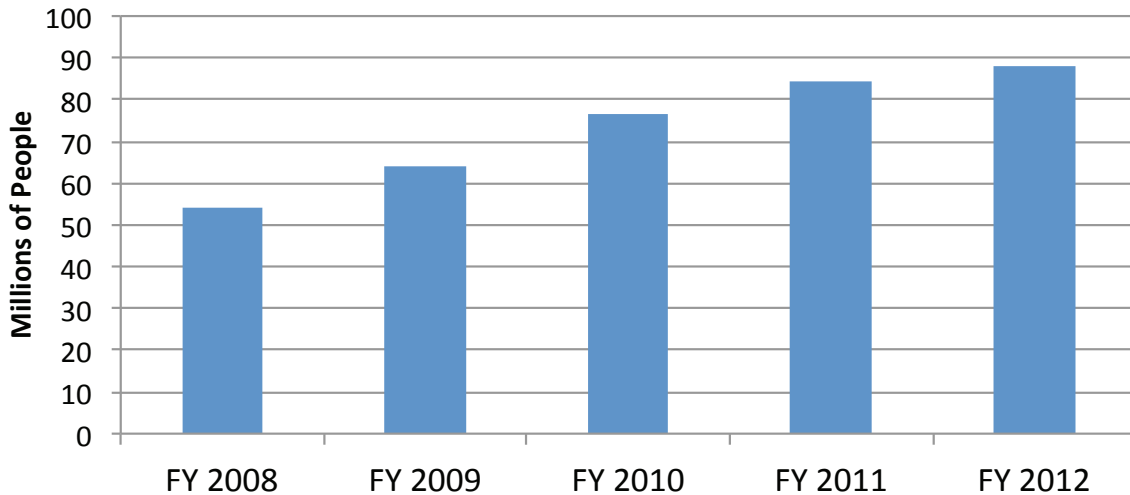
<sup>7</sup>Hansen, Kenneth. "The Food Assistance National Input-Output Multiplier (FANIOM) Model and Stimulus Effects of SNAP." Economic Research Report Number 103. U.S. Department of Agriculture, October 2010.

<sup>8</sup>Zandi, Mark. "Too Soon to Pull Back Fiscal Policy Support." Moody's Analytics. Dec. 6, 2010.

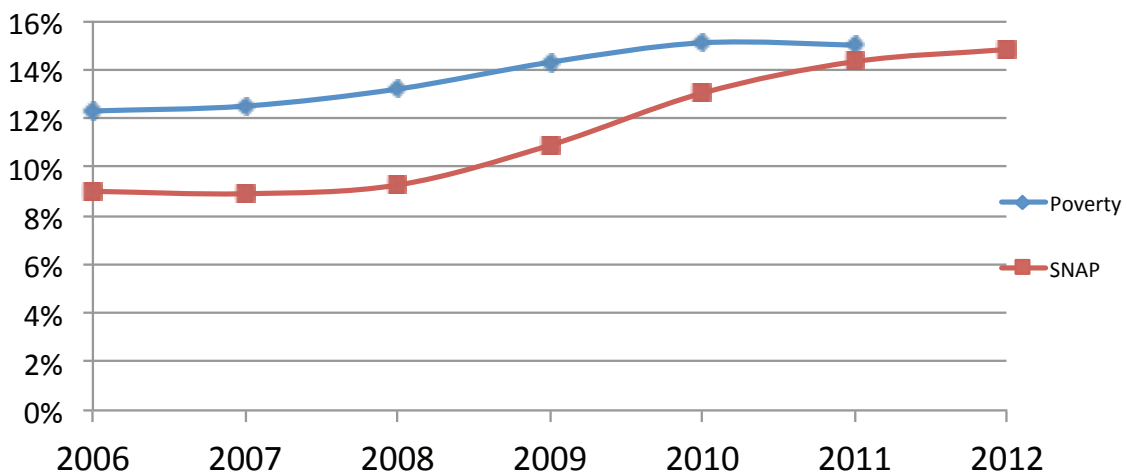


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**Persons Participating in SNAP Program, FY 2008-2012**



**SNAP Participation, per capita, and Poverty Rate, 2006-2012**



## People Receiving SNAP Benefits, per capita, FY 2008-2012

	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011	FY 2012	Increase 2008-2011	Increase 2011 - 2012
Alabama	12.2%	14.4%	16.8%	19.2%	18.9%	56.8%	-1.1%
Alaska	8.3%	9.2%	10.8%	11.9%	12.5%	43.8%	6.1%
Arizona	9.7%	12.3%	15.9%	16.5%	17.2%	70.5%	5.3%
Arkansas	13.2%	14.2%	16.0%	16.6%	17.0%	25.7%	3.2%
California	6.1%	7.2%	8.7%	9.7%	10.4%	60.6%	7.9%
Colorado	5.1%	6.4%	8.0%	8.9%	9.5%	72.8%	8.5%
Connecticut	6.4%	7.3%	9.4%	10.6%	11.2%	64.4%	6.5%
Delaware	8.5%	10.3%	12.5%	14.9%	16.2%	75.1%	9.9%
District of Columbia	15.4%	17.4%	19.6%	21.8%	22.3%	41.3%	4.7%
Florida	7.9%	10.5%	13.8%	16.1%	17.4%	104.3%	9.1%
Georgia	10.5%	13.1%	16.4%	18.1%	19.3%	72.2%	7.5%
Hawaii	7.5%	8.8%	10.2%	11.6%	12.7%	54.8%	10.8%
Idaho	6.6%	8.8%	12.4%	14.4%	14.6%	119.9%	1.9%
Illinois	10.1%	11.3%	12.8%	13.9%	14.5%	37.8%	4.2%
Indiana	9.8%	11.0%	12.5%	13.5%	13.9%	38.0%	3.5%
Iowa	8.6%	9.8%	11.2%	12.2%	13.3%	41.6%	9.1%
Kansas	6.7%	7.8%	9.5%	10.4%	10.6%	55.1%	2.0%
Kentucky	14.8%	16.3%	17.9%	18.8%	19.4%	27.6%	3.1%
Louisiana	17.8%	16.1%	18.2%	19.3%	20.6%	8.8%	7.3%
Maine	13.1%	15.3%	17.3%	18.7%	19.0%	42.4%	2.0%
Maryland	6.4%	8.0%	9.7%	11.5%	12.2%	80.1%	7.3%
Massachusetts	7.7%	9.5%	11.4%	12.4%	13.0%	59.8%	5.9%
Michigan	12.6%	14.5%	18.0%	19.5%	18.5%	55.5%	-5.2%
Minnesota	5.6%	6.6%	8.1%	9.5%	10.0%	68.4%	6.5%
Mississippi	15.2%	17.1%	19.4%	20.9%	22.1%	37.4%	6.0%
Missouri	11.8%	13.4%	15.1%	15.7%	15.7%	33.3%	0.5%
Montana	8.3%	9.5%	11.5%	12.4%	12.5%	49.8%	1.3%
Nebraska	6.8%	7.4%	8.9%	9.5%	9.5%	39.4%	1.1%
Nevada	5.5%	7.6%	10.3%	12.2%	12.9%	121.3%	6.6%
New Hampshire	4.8%	6.0%	7.9%	8.6%	8.9%	78.9%	3.1%
New Jersey	5.1%	5.7%	7.1%	8.6%	9.3%	70.3%	8.8%
New Mexico	12.1%	14.5%	17.3%	19.9%	21.0%	64.7%	5.8%
New York	10.0%	11.9%	14.2%	15.4%	15.7%	53.6%	2.6%
North Carolina	10.2%	12.1%	14.1%	16.5%	17.1%	60.8%	4.9%
North Dakota	7.5%	8.2%	8.9%	8.9%	8.4%	18.0%	-3.5%
Ohio	10.0%	11.8%	13.9%	15.4%	15.7%	54.4%	1.6%
Oklahoma	11.5%	12.8%	15.5%	16.2%	16.1%	41.0%	0.0%
Oregon	12.4%	15.2%	18.4%	20.0%	20.9%	60.9%	5.5%
Pennsylvania	9.5%	10.6%	12.4%	13.5%	14.1%	42.6%	4.7%
Rhode Island	8.1%	9.7%	13.2%	15.2%	16.5%	89.2%	7.9%
South Carolina	13.1%	15.1%	17.2%	18.0%	18.4%	37.8%	3.0%
South Dakota	7.8%	9.1%	11.7%	12.4%	12.5%	57.9%	2.0%
Tennessee	14.6%	17.0%	19.3%	19.9%	20.4%	36.4%	3.2%
Texas	10.4%	12.1%	14.1%	15.5%	15.5%	48.7%	1.5%
Utah	4.9%	6.7%	9.0%	10.1%	9.7%	104.9%	-2.5%
Vermont	9.0%	11.6%	13.7%	14.7%	15.4%	63.4%	4.9%
Virginia	7.0%	8.3%	9.8%	10.6%	11.2%	51.7%	6.4%
Washington	8.8%	11.4%	14.2%	15.4%	16.1%	74.5%	5.1%
West Virginia	15.3%	16.8%	18.4%	18.6%	18.7%	22.3%	0.3%
Wisconsin	7.5%	9.7%	12.6%	14.0%	14.6%	86.7%	4.3%
Wyoming	4.2%	4.9%	6.2%	6.3%	6.0%	49.5%	-4.7%
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9.3%</b>	<b>10.9%</b>	<b>13.0%</b>	<b>14.3%</b>	<b>14.8%</b>	<b>54.7%</b>	<b>4.2%</b>

Sources: Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Annual State Level Data, 2008-2012. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/1SSNAPpartPP.htm>; Food and Nutrition Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Level Annual Survey, 1969-2012, <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/SNAPsummary.htm>. Per capita calculations made by CSG using U.S. Census Bureau data, <http://www.census.gov/popest/index.html>.