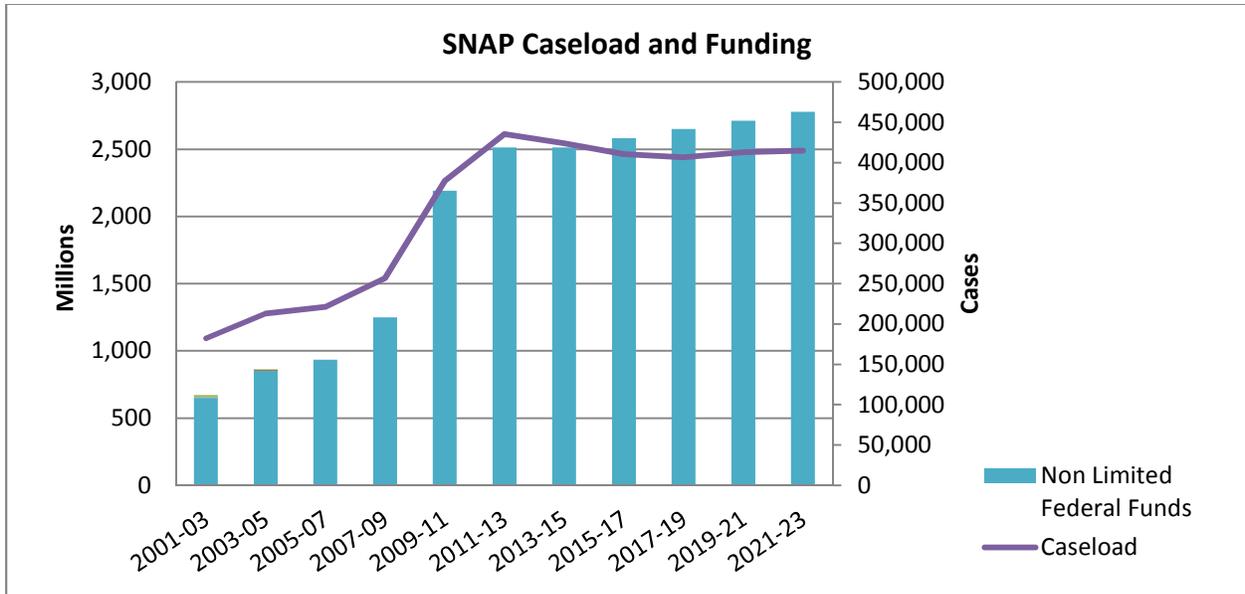


Department of Human Services: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Self-Sufficiency Program

Primary Outcome Area: Healthy People
 Secondary Outcome Area: Economy and Jobs
 Program Contact: Belit Burke, 503-947-5389



Note: Cases represent the number of households receiving Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits. SNAP participation has grown by 60 percent since July 2008. SNAP participation is expected to peak in June 2012 at 811,285 people and then begin a gradual decline. By June 2013, DHS estimates 755,111 people will be receiving SNAP benefits.

Executive Summary

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is a federally funded food benefit program. SNAP provides supplemental food benefit dollars to low-income families, seniors, single adults, persons with disabilities, and children to help purchase food to meet their nutritional needs. Currently, one in five Oregonians receive these benefits. Benefits to clients are 100 percent Federally funded; the administration of the program requires a 50 percent state match. Money from the program spreads quickly through the State economy. The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) calculates that for every \$5 of SNAP benefits, there is \$9.20 of total economic activity. SNAP also has been an important and constantly growing anti-poverty program. Recent research has shown that SNAP benefits reduce the depth and severity of poverty, and have a particularly strong effect on reducing the depth and severity of child poverty.

Program Funding Request

	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program			
	GF	OF	Non-Limited FF	TF
LAB	0	0	2,514,345,331	2,514,345,331
ARB	0	0	2,514,345,331	2,514,345,331
Difference	0	0	0	0
Percent Change			0.0%	0.0%

Significant Proposed Program Changes from 2011-13

This program is federally funded, no general fund dollars are requested.

Program Description

SNAP serves as a crucial safety net and food benefits are intended to be a supplement to what families already provide. However, for households with little or no income, it is the primary means for Oregonians to feed their families.

Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) within the USDA regulates SNAP. Although Federal regulations do allow a few state options, any significant variation from the regulations must be approved by FNS through a formal process.

For the last three years, even during times of high caseload growth, Oregon has been ranked as one of the top three states nationally for program participation. The participation rate is the percentage of potentially SNAP-eligible persons in the state receiving SNAP benefits. Outreach efforts along with policy and procedural changes, have helped significantly increase participation in SNAP in recent years. Non-profit partners such as the Hunger Relief Task Force, the Oregon Food Bank and 211 Info have been invaluable in helping increase Oregon's SNAP participation rates.

The major drivers for program growth have been a successful program outreach coupled with the economic downturn. This has resulted in a high demand for our services. Simplifying policies and making it easier for clients to apply and meet eligibility requirements has allowed for timely benefit delivery.

Approximately one in five Oregonians or 21 percent of the population receive SNAP benefits. In March 2012, a total of 805,883 Oregonians received SNAP benefits, which includes 439,352 cases (households). This is a 6.7 percent increase from the same time last year. In March 2012, a total of \$104,896,499 SNAP benefit dollars were paid to Oregonians which are spent in clients' local communities. According to the USDA's Economic Research Service, 8,900 to 17,900 full-time jobs are created per \$1 billion in SNAP benefits.

Program Justification and Link to 10-Year Outcome

SNAP directly addresses the 10-Year Outcome for Healthy People by providing an important economic boost to struggling households and access to nutritious foods. According to the USDA Economic Research Service, receipt of SNAP benefits reduced the national poverty rate by almost 8 percent during the recent recession.¹

¹ <http://www.ers.usda.gov/publications/err132/>

The SNAP program can also provide limited assistance with job search and links to employment resources through the Oregon Food Stamp Employment and Training (OFSET) program.

Program Performance

The goals of the SNAP program are to ensure that benefits are delivered accurately and in a timely manner to those who are eligible for the program. It also aims to ensure those who are eligible for the program have access to program benefits. Oregon's program has enabled the State to maintain a high participation rate along with a high Federal Quality Control (QC) rate. Oregon's SNAP program has continually performed above the national average and not paid a performance penalty in seven years.

Oregon has received three Federal bonuses because of the state's high SNAP participation rate and has also been the recipient of multiple competitive national grants. Oregon also was one of six states recognized for the timeliness of SNAP application processing. The two awards come with performance bonuses totaling \$5 million. This is in addition to a \$1.5 million award received in June 2011 for accurate payment of benefits to SNAP clients. This is the fifth year in a row Oregon has been among the best in the nation. The bonus award funding has been used over the years to support partner agencies, help meet the program's goals and, frequently, to shore up needs in other programs through the State General Fund. Oregon is considered a model state by FNS in terms of timeliness and commitment to customer service. One example of this is Oregon's Lean process which was used to streamline and standardize the eligibility process statewide to ensure that most applicants receive benefits within 48 hours of applying. In April of 2012, program administrators from Minnesota Department of Human Services and FNS representatives from the Midwest Regional office came to Oregon to learn about our Lean process and to gather information on how we maintain such a high participation rate. Oregon is continuing to improve efficiencies and in early spring 2012, another workload initiative is being rolled out statewide to reduce interruptions to ongoing benefits.

The 2010 census data showed that 15.8 percent of Oregonians lived in poverty, which was slightly higher than the national average of 15.3 percent. Through our forecasting we expect SNAP participation to peak in June 2012 with a total of 811,285 persons receiving benefits. However a slow decline in program participation is expected for the 2013-2015 biennium. It is estimated that by June 2015 the number of households receiving SNAP will reduce to 755,111.

From 2007 when Oregon issued \$487,482,626 in benefits, to 2011 when that amount had more than doubled to \$1,211,274,990, SNAP has been an important and constantly growing anti-poverty program. Money from the program spreads quickly through the economy. The USDA calculates that for every \$5 of SNAP benefits, there is \$9.20 of total economic activity.

Calendar Year	SNAP Benefits Issued in Oregon
2007	\$487,482,626
2008	\$579,344,356
2009	\$910,919,825
2010	\$1,098,444,539

2011	\$1,211,274,990
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In 2009, Congress enacted an economic stimulus package known as the American Recovery Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) that increased SNAP benefits nationwide. Effective April 2009, SNAP benefits increased 14 percent. The minimum increase in benefit for a one- or two-person group is \$16 a month.

Benefits are expected to be reduced overall when the ARRA ends in Federal Fiscal Year 2013 and the Thrifty Food Plan Benefit level recalibration (an effort to recalculate benefits across the board) will reset SNAP benefit levels. This is expected to result in a net reduction in benefits for households.

Enabling Legislation/Program Authorization

SNAP is guided by Federal legislation found in the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 authorized by the 2008 Farm Bill. Program policy is reauthorized every five years through the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is due for reauthorization in 2012.

Funding Streams

SNAP benefits are 100 percent Federally funded. Oregon is responsible for 50 percent of the administrative costs. Oregon’s portion of the administrative costs for SNAP comes from the State General Fund. In Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2010, the SNAP program received two bonus awards totaling \$5,123,907. These awards were based on Oregon’s participation rates and application timeliness. In FFY 2011, SNAP received an award for \$1.5 million for SNAP payment accuracy. In FFY 2012, SNAP received \$11,784,787 in Federal funds to administer the Employment and Training Program, Nutrition Education and Outreach. These bonus funds are generally eligible for a match which enables Oregon to stretch these dollars even farther.