Food Insecurity and Nutrition Security
Nutrition Security

Consistent access, availability, and affordability of foods and beverages that promote well-being and prevent (and if needed, treat) disease, particularly among racial/ethnic minority populations, lower incomes populations, and rural and remote populations including Tribal communities and Insular areas.

Food security

Access by all members at all times to enough food for an active, healthy life.
Health equity

- Everyone has a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible
- Requires removing obstacles to health such as poverty, discrimination, and their consequences, including powerlessness and lack of access to good jobs with fair pay, quality education and housing, safe environments, and health care

Source: https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/research/2017/05/what-is-health-equity-.html
What is structural racism?

The ways in which society fosters discrimination through mutually reinforcing systems that rationalize discriminatory beliefs and justify the distribution of resources (based on those beliefs), which together make it difficult for communities of color to secure quality education, jobs, housing, healthcare, and equal treatment in the criminal justice system.
Structural racism is a common root cause for several issues:

- Coronavirus pandemic and law enforcement killings of black Americans both have their roots in structural racism.
- Black Americans have fewer economic and educational opportunities than their white counterparts.
- Redlining has resulted in poor, overcrowded housing and exposure to more severe levels of air pollution.
- Lack of financial resources confers a host of social risks, including food insecurity, housing instability, and limited access to transportation.

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Underlying structural inequality and COVID

Many historically underserved populations work in essential industries (nursing or home health care, grocery stores, mass transit) where they are more likely to come into close contact with people who are sick.

Jobs in essential industries are often poorly paid, and a large proportion of such workers lack health or life insurance.

Historically underserved populations have high rates of underlying health conditions, including diabetes, hypertension and heart disease, which are known risk factors for severe illness and death from COVID-19.

Historically underserved populations are less likely to have equitable access to healthcare.

Racial inequity is evident in many domains

Unemployment rate, age 16 years and over

Share of people 25 years and over who completed four years of college or more

Median household income

Homeownership rate

Sentenced male prisoners per 100,000 residents of the corresponding group

Life expectancy at birth

Improving dietary intake is critical

6 in 10 adults are living with one or more diet-related chronic diseases.

Maximum Total Score = 100

NOTE: HEI-2015 total scores are out of 100 possible points. A score of 100 indicates that recommendations on average were met or exceeded.
Each year in the United States, almost 600,000 die from cancer, making it the second leading cause of death.

As many as a third of cancer cases could be prevented with diet and nutrition alone.

Healthy eating during cancer treatment can improve a variety of patient outcomes in the long term.

Sources:
An Update on Cancer Deaths in the United States | CDC
Preventable Cancer Burden Associated With Poor Diet in the United States | JNCI Cancer Spectrum | Oxford Academic (oup.com)
Nutrition in Cancer Care (PDQ®)–Patient Version - National Cancer Institute
Cost of an unhealthy diet

$50 billion in US health care costs

20% of US health care costs from heart disease, stroke, and diabetes

**USDA’s Efforts to Respond to Inflation**

**SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS TEMPORARY MAXIMUM**

**MONTHLY ALLOTMENTS OCTOBER 1, 2021 TO SEPTEMBER 30, 2022**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Household Size</th>
<th>48 States and D.C.</th>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>7</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>$1,504</td>
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<tr>
<td>Each additional person</td>
<td>$188</td>
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</table>
How does the Thrifty Translate to SNAP?

- Maximum allotments increased by 21%, relative to what they otherwise would have been
- $43 increase per month for 1 person HH
- $80 increase per month for 2 person HH
- The SNAP minimum benefit increased $3 per month—to $20/month
- On average, most SNAP participants will receive 40 cents more per meal

70+% of SNAP HHs
SNAP Average Monthly Per Person Benefits

FY2019 - FY2022 (Projected)
USDA’s Core Priorities

- Addressing climate change via Climate-Smart Agriculture and Forestry
- Advancing racial justice, equity and opportunity
- Creating more and better market opportunities
- Tackling food and nutrition security
- Making USDA a great place to work for everyone
USDA's mission includes fire, farm, and fork. There are 100,000 employees with offices in every county in the country. There are 29 different mission areas and Staff Offices. 90% of our employees are outside of the National Capital Region.
Over the course of a year, 1 in 4 Americans is served by one of USDA's 15 nutrition assistance programs.

This includes more than 30 million children each school day and nearly half of all infants in the US, at about 99,000 schools and 250,000 retailers.
FY22 budget of $163 billion, traditionally over 70% of the budget
USDA is uniquely positioned to impact nutrition security

- Nutrition assistance programs
- Nutrition education and promotion
- Dietary guidelines & MyPlate
- Other USDA Mission Areas
Four Pillars

1. **Meaningful Support**: Providing nutrition support throughout all stages of life
2. **Healthy Food**: Connecting all Americans with healthy, safe, affordable food sources
3. **Collaborative Action**: Developing, translating, and enacting nutrition science through partnership
4. **Equitable Systems**: Prioritizing equity every step of the way
Meaningful Support: Providing nutrition support throughout all stages of life.

- Updating child nutrition program nutrition standards to reflect the latest nutrition science.
- Ensuring benefits are adequate to support healthy eating patterns.
- Providing high quality nutrition education.
- Providing breastfeeding promotion and support.
Healthy Food: Connecting all Americans with healthy, safe, affordable food sources

- Promoting and supporting fruit and vegetable consumption
- Using incentive programs to promote access to healthy eating
- Providing USDA Foods directly to people in need
Collaborative Action

Developing, translating, and enacting nutrition science through partnership

- Updating and building the evidence base for dietary guidance
- Equipping child nutrition program operators
- Translating the latest DGAs into information consumers can use
- Working with industry to help tailor products to our programs
- Making nutrition messages matter
- Training school food operators
- Helping with meal planning for individuals and community-based groups operating Federal nutrition assistance programs
- Working with industry to help tailor products to our programs
- Using the USDA Foods Platform to amplify science-based food and nutrition messaging
DGA Dietary Guidelines for Americans

2020 - 2025

Make Every Bite Count With the Dietary Guidelines

DietaryGuidelines.gov
About the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*

- The *Dietary Guidelines* serves as the cornerstone of federal nutrition programs and policies.
- Provides science-based advice on what to eat and drink to promote health, help reduce risk of chronic disease, and meet nutrient needs.
- Mandated to reflect the preponderance of scientific evidence and be published jointly by USDA and HHS every five years.
- Ninth edition was published in December 2020.
Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025-2030

• Updating the Dietary Guidelines is a multi-year, multi-step process

• The Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025-2030 development process is under way

• HHS and USDA are committed to transparency and providing opportunities for public participation, leading up to the release of the Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2025-2030
Critical recent changes to SNAP-Ed

- Creating a new Nutrition Education Branch in SNAP to support SNAP-Ed
- Improving data collection
- Establishing a National license for the Program Evaluation and Reporting Systems or PEARS for short
- Encouraging maximum flexibility in the use of policy, systems, and environmental change approaches
SNAP-Ed Works
Evidence shows positive impact of SNAP-Ed

The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s (USDA) Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed) plays a critical role in helping people eligible for SNAP lead healthier lives on a limited budget. SNAP-Ed teaches people how to make their SNAP dollars stretch, shop for and cook healthy meals, and stay physically active. Initiatives include direct nutrition education in communities across the country and social marketing campaigns. Since the passage of the Healthy Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010, the program also supports policy, systems, and environmental change strategies that promote healthy eating to advance food and nutrition security, reduce diet-related chronic disease, and promote equity.

SNAP-Ed Is Evidenced-Based

According to the Fiscal Year 2019 Impacts Survey, 56 land-grant universities across the country implement SNAP-Ed. Results show that:

- 40% of participants ate more fruits and vegetables and drank fewer sugar-sweetened beverages
- 35% of participants moved more and sat less

“"The nutrition classes have been an eye opener for me. They encourage me to eat better."

HealthMPowers Nutrition Class Participant

Empowering Healthy Choices

SNAP-Ed partner HealthMPowers implements evidence-based programs for assessing and
Equitable Systems: Prioritizing equity every step of the way

- Strengthening support to Native American/Tribal School food programs
- Offering online shopping options to SNAP and WIC participants
- Making nutrition resources available to non-English Speakers
- Expanding the diversity of foods and recipes via MyPlate
- Reaching underserved populations
- Building coalitions in communities to foster resiliency in local food systems
- Using incentive programs to promote access to healthy eating

EQUITY
Phase 1: Elevate FNS nutrition security activities and strengthen external communication

Phase 2: Think strategically about future investments
Significant efforts underway

- Updating the Thrifty Food Plan
- Launching tribally-led nutrition initiatives
- Expand access and updating the WIC food package
- Initiating the next edition of the *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*
- Updating the school meals standard
- Restructuring SNAP-Ed
Key takeaways

Food insecurity and diet-related diseases are high, rising, and disproportionately impact historically underserved populations.

This framework is meant to mobilize the Department's assets to provide all Americans access to safe, nutritious, and affordable food.

Beyond leveraging USDA equities, we will need to effectively engage and collaborate with external partners.