



2018 Farm Bill Conference Report Nutrition Title Topline Summary

Updated December 17, 2018

This summary provides topline information on changes proposed in the Nutrition Title of the 2018 Farm Bill Conference Report, as reported by the House and Senate on December 10, 2018. For bill text [click here](#); for explanatory notes [click here](#); for CBO scores [click here](#). If you have any questions, contact policy@feedingamerica.org.

SNAP

- Maintains eligibility and benefit levels for SNAP recipients. The Conference Report keeps intact broad-based categorical eligibility which provides state flexibility to support working families, reduces the cliff effect when families increase their earnings, and maintains children's direct connection to free school meals. The bill also retains the administrative efficiency gained by connecting SNAP and LIHEAP.
- Requires that States provide a simplified homeless housing deduction of \$143 for homeless households who are not receiving free housing during the month and not claiming an excess shelter expense deduction. (CBO: **\$75 million investment** over 10 years)
- Mandates USDA conduct a study on the impact of the SNAP state option of child support enforcement cooperation. This study will assess the impact of mandatory child support cooperation on food security, including reviewing relevant data about individuals who choose not to participate in SNAP due to mandated child support cooperation. (CBO: **\$5 million investment** over 10 years)
- Requires SNAP benefits be moved to storage after 3 months of inactivity, and expunged after 9 months; requires states to notify the household at least 30 days prior to expungement
- Reduces states' ability to exempt up to 15% of their SNAP population subject to ABAWD work requirements, bringing it to 12% starting in FY2020. Maintains the ability for the state to continue to accrue exemptions and retain any carryover exemptions from previous years, consistent with current law.

The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

- Reauthorizes prior TEFAP mandatory food purchases and provides an additional \$206 million over ten years for TEFAP food purchases: \$12 million in FY2019, \$24 million per year in FY2020 through FY2023, and \$20 million per year in subsequent years, indexed to the Thrifty Food Plan. (CBO: **\$206 million investment** over 10 years)
 - From the \$206 million, provides \$4 million per year for FY2019 through FY2023 for new Farm to Food Bank programs that connect excess agricultural commodities with food banks and communities in need.
- Reauthorizes TEFAP storage and distribution grants at \$100 million per year, subject to annual appropriations.

SNAP Work Requirements

- Maintains current SNAP work requirements, which include the following three provisions: limiting eligibility for individuals aged 18 through 49 who are not taking care of a dependent and are working less than 20 hours per week; requiring all working-aged adults to register for work and accept a job if offered; and requiring states to operate Employment and Training (SNAP E&T) programs to provide training opportunities to adults able to work.
- Extends the SNAP E&T pilot projects established in the 2014 Farm Bill aimed at connecting individuals to employment. The funding would prioritize populations traditionally underserved, including older workers, recently incarcerated individuals, individuals with disabilities, and homeless individuals.
- Amends the reallocation of unused E&T funds to go toward State programs and activities that have demonstrated success in participants finding and retaining employment and reducing reliance on public assistance.
- Encourages workforce partnerships (WFPs) to serve as an option for individuals to fulfill work requirements under SNAP. Provides guidance on the use of non-governmental agencies to supplement the work of State E&T agencies.
- Strengthens the relationship between local employers and SNAP E&T to meet local workforce needs, supporting coordination with private and nonprofit evidence-based job training programs.
(CBO: **\$234 million investment** over 10 years for E&T pilots and other changes)

SNAP Program Integrity and Systems Changes

- Expands nationwide the National Accuracy Clearinghouse, a data matching partnership between states to help identify and prevent duplicative SNAP participation in more than one state. The Conference Report includes important client protections related to timely access to benefits, as well as privacy and data security protections. (CBO: **\$576 million cut** over 10 years)
- Requires certain updates to USDA's quality control process, including updating corresponding USDA regulations within six months to ensure accurate and valid QC results and ensuring USDA has needed access to state eligibility systems for inspection and audit purposes. (CBO: **\$51 million investment** over 10 years)
- Eliminates bonuses to reward states for high or improving performance related to program error rates, payment accuracy, and overall program access. (CBO: **\$480 million cut** over 10 years)
- Modernizes and improves systems and technology such as Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) systems, including: clarification that EBT vendors may not charge SNAP authorized retailers fees for processing EBT transactions, and simplifying use of EBT equipment at farmers' markets. (CBO: **\$74 million investment** over 10 years)
- Requires that when states make major changes to their SNAP eligibility and enrollment systems, for which the federal government provides matching funds, they must test those changes in a live production environment prior to implementation to help prevent errors.
- Requires states to act on certain reliable state or federal data matches related to a SNAP household member's income or other circumstances, such as the Social Security Administration's match of deceased individuals.

SNAP Nutrition Education

- Continues the SNAP Nutrition Education program, requiring the use of an electronic reporting system to measure and evaluate projects, and directing increased coordination with the Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP).

Other Nutrition Incentives

- Reauthorizes and makes permanent the Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive (FINI) program, renames the program the Gus Schumacher FINI Program, adds technical assistance and evaluation capacity, and makes other program changes. Establishes a produce prescription program to be funded within the FINI allocation. (CBO: **\$417 million investment** over 10 years)
- Directs USDA to issue guidance to clarify the process by which retail food stores can provide incentives for the purchase of fruits, vegetables, and milk.

The Commodity Supplemental Food Program

- Reauthorizes CSFP to continue providing monthly commodity boxes to low income seniors in states with an FNS approved plan, subject to funds appropriated to cover caseload expected by the states.
- Establishes a minimum certification period of one year and gives states the option to establish a three-year certification period.

Other Nutrition Programs

- **Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR):** Enhances the minimum federal administrative match requiring USDA to cover no less than 80 percent of administrative costs; authorizes a pilot to allow Indian Tribal Organizations, instead of USDA, to directly purchase commodities; and allows FDPIR funds to be used over two years. (CBO: **\$34 million investment** over 10 years)
- **Seniors Farmers Market Nutrition Program:** Reauthorizes & extends funding through FY2023.
- **Public-Private Partnership Pilot Grants:** Authorizes USDA to support pilots on public private partnerships that provides funds to strengthen nutrition program enrollment through such public/private partnerships; authorizes \$5 million in funds subject to appropriations until the pilot grants are expended.
- **Community Food Projects:** Reauthorizes the grants which provide funds to local organizations to promote local solutions to food security; reduces funding from current \$9 million per year to \$5 million per year. (CBO: **\$40 million cut** over 10 years)
- **Healthy Food Financing Initiative:** Reauthorizes & extends authority for funding subject to appropriations through FY2023, extending eligible projects to include healthy food enterprises.