

SNAP is good for Iowans and the state economy

Quick facts on SNAP

366,000

Iowans participated in SNAP at some point in FY 17

71%

were in families with children

53%

were in working families

29%

were in families with members who are elderly or have disabilities

Participants are expected to spend

30%

of their net income on food

A family's SNAP benefit equals the maximum benefit amount—tied to the cost of the Department of Agriculture's Thrifty Food Plan, which provides adequate nutrition at minimal cost—minus its expected contribution.

SNAP may be used to buy food directly from more than

150

Iowa farmers at

102

different farmers markets and

38

roadside stands

8

Iowa community colleges partner on SNAP's Employment and Training Program to offer participants job search skills and training and tuition and transportation assistance, with a focus on short-term certification for in-demand industries.

We all win when our communities are healthy and prosperous. That's why we have a shared responsibility to keep our fellow Iowans from going hungry.

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program is the nation's most effective anti-hunger program—and an important income supplement to help people get back on their feet after tough times. SNAP helps 1 in 9 Iowans put food on the table. It keeps nearly 70,000 Iowans out of poverty.

Proposed changes and cuts to the program in the House Farm Bill would fundamentally alter SNAP's core purpose—to help feed struggling Americans—and reverse many of the advances we've made in addressing hunger in the last 40 years.

The Center urges Congress to adopt a bipartisan Farm Bill that excludes harmful changes to SNAP.

SNAP promotes good health

Research shows adults who received food stamps as young children are more likely to graduate from high school and less likely to suffer long-term health problems like obesity and heart disease. SNAP is also linked with reduced health care costs. On average, low-income adults participating in SNAP have about \$1,400 (nearly 25 percent) less in medical care costs in a year than low-income adults not participating.

SNAP promotes work

The majority of SNAP participants who can work already do so, but often in low-paying jobs that don't offer enough hours or benefits to get by. SNAP, which is often called Food Assistance in Iowa, helps these workers. It smooths out variable income

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Iowa workers who depend on SNAP perform needed roles in our communities

Top occupations in Iowa by percentage of workers who participate in Food Assistance



Personal care aides

27%

3,300 workers



Maids & house-keeping cleaners

27%

3,300 workers



Nursing, psych & home health aides

27%

6,900 workers



Cooks

26%

6,400 workers



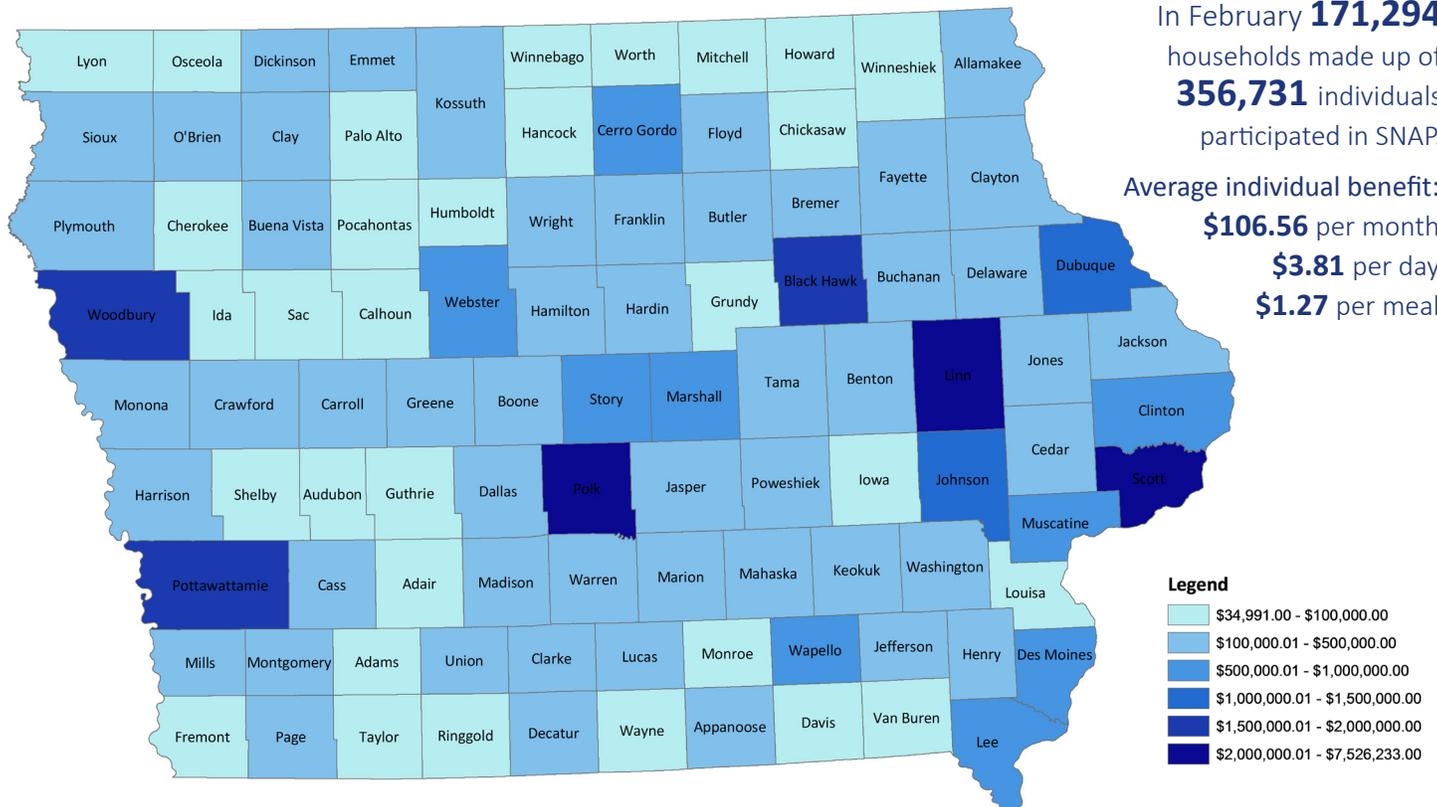
Food preparation workers

25%

2,800 workers

SNAP supports families and local economies across Iowa

Total SNAP allotment by county, February 2018*



Source: Iowa Department of Human Services Food Assistance Report Series F-1.

*Counts are done mid-month following the report month, meaning February counts were completed in mid-March.

2,912
Iowa retailers
participate in SNAP

SNAP is an important public-private partnership. Because most households redeem their monthly SNAP benefits quickly, SNAP is one of the most effective forms of economic stimulus. Nationally, SNAP participants redeem over 80 percent of their benefits at superstores and supermarkets.

SNAP is also efficient. By boosting low-income households' food purchasing power so they can buy food direct from stores, SNAP fights hunger with almost no administrative overhead.

Source: Center on Budget and Policy Priorities SNAP Retailers Database, <https://www.cbpp.org/snap-retailers-database#Iowa>

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for workers whose paychecks rise and fall as their hours change. It helps those without paid sick leave or other benefits, which can cause them to lose income when they have a family crisis.

Proposed changes would be counterproductive

The bill would cut SNAP benefits by more than \$17 billion and divert much of that money to risky and woefully underfunded new work programs that would impose unforgiving penalties on those who don't prove every month that they work enough hours or qualify for an exemption.

We all agree that helping people who can work get

good-paying jobs is an important goal, but enacting punitive policies like these is the wrong way to achieve it.

There's simply no reason to believe punishing people for being un- or underemployed by taking away their food assistance will help them find a better job or find work faster.

SNAP is a sound investment that leads to better health, education and employment outcomes. Instead of cutting SNAP, we should build on SNAP's strengths.