

Promoting Self-Sufficiency through Food Stamps/SNAP



www.uah.org

October 19, 2011



Creating the Political and Public Will to End Hunger in Utah

Utahns Against Hunger works to reduce and eliminate hunger in the state of Utah.

UAH does this in the following ways:

- ▣ **Public policy advocacy: program expansion and removal of access barriers to services.**
- ▣ **Working with Utah's Congressional delegation on federal legislative and funding issues.**
- ▣ **Providing training and technical assistance**
- ▣ **Working to educate the public about hunger and poverty issues.**
- ▣ **Developing a state legislative agenda.**
- ▣ **Piloting a youth farm project – Real Food Rising**

Purpose

1. Provide you with an overview of food resources
2. Help you understand more of the rules about who is eligible for food stamps
3. Help you encourage more people to apply
4. Learn to pre-screen applicants for Food Stamps

Topics

1. Federal Nutrition Programs
2. Understanding basic Food Stamp policy

But first...

What percentage of Utahns can't afford to buy enough food to meet their basic needs?

A) 2%

B) 13%



1 in 8 Utah households

C) 29%

D) 56%

Of all the “free” food available to struggling families,
how much comes from charity?

A) 85%

B) 50%

C) 4%



D) 1%

For every 10 families who qualify for food stamps in Utah, how many are actually on the program?

A) 9

B) 6

C) 3

D) 1



45% of eligible families don't use food stamps

How much food stamp benefits go unclaimed every year in Utah?





A) \$10 million

B) \$68 million

C) \$124 million

D) \$183 million 

Food stamps cannot be used to buy which of the following?

- A) Beer/cigarettes 
- B) Diapers 
- C) Vitamins 
- D) Hot prepared food 

Federal Nutrition Programs & Other Resources

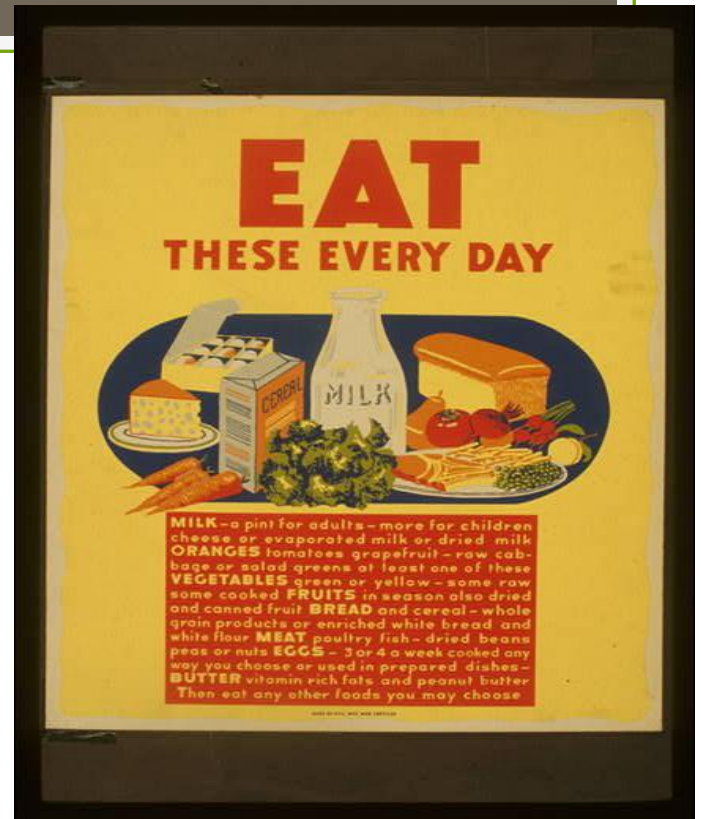
- Federal Nutrition Programs
 - Food Stamps - 48% of working poor families participate
 - WIC
 - National School Lunch Program - 37%
 - School Breakfast Program - 1 in 3
 - Summer Food
- Other Resources
 - Pantries - about 80 primary EF pantries in Utah
 - Farmers Markets - over 30 FMs in Utah
 - Senior Food Help
 - MOW & Senior Congregate Meals & senior food boxes



Eligible Foods

for households on Food Stamps

- Breads and cereals
- Fruits and vegetables
- Meat, fish, and poultry
- Dairy products
- Food producing seeds and plants
- Shelf stable prepackaged foods



Food Stamps cannot be used to purchase:

- hot food or food sold for on-premises consumption
- alcohol,
- tobacco,
- nonfood items, pet food, soap, paper products, vitamins, medicine,

EBT Card

- Financial and Child Care benefits are available on the first of every month. Food Stamp benefits are issued based on last name. All benefits are available at 6:00 a.m. on the issuance day

- A-G 5th
- H-O 11th
- P-Z 15th



- Horizon Card Help Desk 1-800-997-4444

Food Stamp Eligibility



Food Stamp Monthly Income Limits & Maximum Benefit Amounts

HH Size	Maximum gross Monthly Income Elderly/Disabled 165% of Poverty	Gross Monthly Income Limits 130% of Poverty	Net Monthly Income Limit 100% of Poverty	Maximum Monthly Allotment
1	\$1,498	\$1,180	\$908	\$200
2	\$2,023	\$1,594	\$1,226	\$367
3	\$2,548	\$2,008	\$1,545	\$526
4	\$3,074	\$2,422	\$1,863	\$668
5	\$3,599	\$2,836	\$2,181	\$793
6	\$4,124	\$3,249	\$2,500	\$952
7	\$4,649	\$3,663	\$2,818	\$1,052
8	\$5,175	\$4,077	\$3,136	\$1,202
9	\$5,701	\$4,491	\$3,455	\$1,352
10	\$6,227	\$4,905	\$3,774	\$1,502
For each additional member add:				
	\$526	\$414	\$319	\$150

Effective: October 1, 2011

Basis for Food Stamp allotments

- **Thrifty Food Plan** is the basis for food stamp allotments.
- The USDA has outlined 4 plans: Thrifty, Low-cost, Moderate, & Liberal Plans

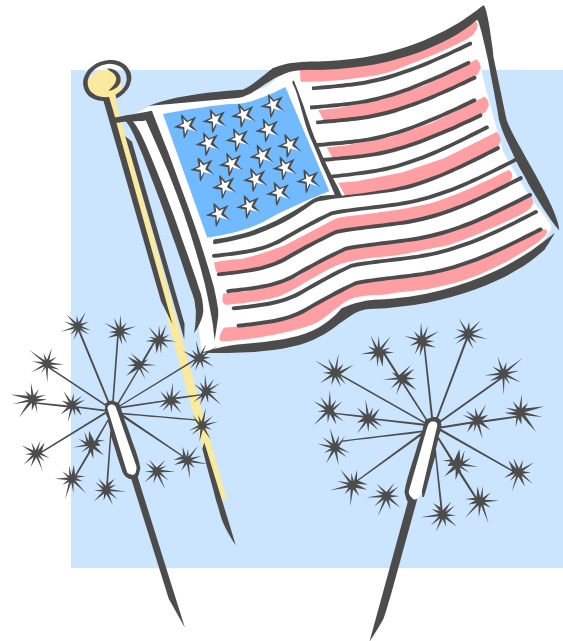
<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/usdafoodplanscostoffood.htm>

<http://www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/FoodPlans/2011/CostofFoodJun2011.pdf>

- The Food Plans represent a nutritious diet at four different cost levels.
- The nutritional bases of the Food Plans are the 1997-2005 Dietary Reference Intakes, 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, and 2005 MyPyramid food intake recommendations.
- In addition to cost, differences among plans are in specific foods and quantities of foods.
- Another basis of the Food Plans is that all meals and snacks are prepared at home.
- For specific foods and quantities of foods in the Food Plans, see *Thrifty Food Plan, 2006* (2007) and *The Low-Cost, Moderate-Cost, and Liberal Food Plans, 2007* (2007).
- All four Food Plans are based on 2001-02 data and updated to current dollars by using the Consumer Price Index for specific food items.

Citizenship – Eligible Household Members

- Born in any of the 50 states
- District of Columbia
- Puerto Rico
- Guam
- Virgin Islands
- Northern Mariana Islands
- American Samoa
- Swain's Island
 - American Samoa <http://maps.google.com/maps?q=swain%27s+island&hl=en&ll=-11.016689,-171.147766&ssp=0.568847,0.902252&vpsrc=0&hnear=Swains+Island&t=h&z=15>



Expedited Food Stamps

Food stamps in hand in 7 days

If....

- You are in a household whose combined monthly gross income and liquid assets are less than the household's monthly utilities and rent/mortgage.
- You are in a household with less than \$150 in monthly gross income and have less than \$100 cash on hand

- No verification is required at time of application.
- Must complete the regular application process for the benefits to continued past that month
- Same day issuance is possible for people who already have an EBT card

Undocumented Immigrants

Categorically ineligible.

BUT...

- They may have eligible U.S. born children
- An undocumented immigrant may apply for members of the household who are citizens and declare herself a “non-applicant”
 - Doesn't need ID for herself
 - Doesn't have to disclose citizenship status
 - Will not impact citizenship or alert ICE

Students & Food Stamps

College and university students have more eligibility requirements than the general population. In general, the following students are not eligible for food stamps:

- Age 18-49
- Physically and mentally able to work
- Enrolled at least half time in higher education

However, there are several exceptions. Students may be eligible for food stamps if one or more of the following are true:

- Working an average of 20 hours per week (earning minimum wage)
- Having a physical or mental disability
- Participating in State or Federal Work Study
- Caring for a dependent child under age 6
- Receiving Family Employment Program (FEP) or Workforce Investment Act (WIA) funds
- Responsible for care of a dependent child from age 6 through 11, who does not have adequate child care
- The student is a single parent enrolled full-time who is responsible for the care of a dependent child under age 12

Assets

- \$2,000 for most households
- \$3,250 for households with an elderly or disabled household member
 - Elderly: Age 60+
 - Disabled: have to be receiving one of these kinds of payments (unearned income): Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Social Security disability payments, Veteran's Administration 100% disabled, Federal/State/Local disability retirement pension, railroad retirement disability annuity, receiving disability Medicaid
- Exempt assets include: home, vehicles, tax returns, assets of SSI/FEP recipients



Assets cont.

- The following types of pension or retirement plans are exempt:
 - 401K
 - 457 Plans
 - Federal Employee Thrift Savings Plan
 - Section 403(a) plans
 - Section 403(b) Plans
 - Section 501 (c)(18) Plans
 - Keogh Plans
 - 408 and 408(a)
 - IRA's - Individual retirement accounts- this includes Roth IRA's and Simple IRA's.
 - Simplified Employer Pension Plans (SEP's, which are considered IRA's by banks and the IRS.)
 - Profit Sharing Plans
 - Cash Balance Plans
 - Traditional Defined-Benefit Plan
 - Employee Stock Ownership Plan
 - Money Purchase Pension Plan

The above plans remain exempt if the customer terminates employment, as long as the funds remain in an exempt account or plan.

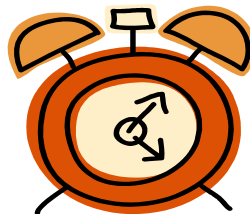
Applications

- On the UAH website after completing the Food Stamp Calculator
www.uah.org
- Online at <https://utahhelps.utah.gov/>
- Paper application at a local employment center:
<http://jobs.utah.gov/regions/ec.html>
Type in zip code to see the local employment center information.



Application Time Frames

- Applications must be dated and signed – online applications are considered received when they are submitted, unless it's on a non-working day then it is the next business day.
- An interview is required at application prior to approval of benefits – All Utah applicants can conduct a phone interview.
- Applications must be processed and notice of approval or denial must be sent within 30 days following the date of application – processing time is about 16 days
- Customers have a second thirty days before a new application is required but benefits will be prorated.



Required Verifications



- Identity
- Social Security Number
- Income
- Disability status
- Expenses
- Alien status
- Utah Residency status

Appeals Process

1. Try to resolve the problem with an eligibility worker, 801-526-0950.
2. Speak with the worker's supervisor
3. Call Constituent Services, 801-526-4390, Press 2
4. All decisions may be appealed via a fair hearing with an Administrative Law Judge
5. Sue in court

Reviews

- All factors of eligibility need to be addressed.
- Most customers will have a 6 month review.
- An interview is required every 12 months.
- Elderly/disabled customers with no earned income will have a 12 month review.

Change Reporting

Only need to report changes if your income goes over 130% of poverty (recipients will be given that info when they receive their approval letter).

Easy Food Stamp Screening Tool – the Food Stamp Calculator



Food Stamp Calculator & Application

www.uah.org

- On the UAH homepage
- In English and Spanish
- Elderly and disabled option.
- 8 questions about income & rent
- Takes less than 1 minute



Federal Nutrition Programs & Other Resources

- Federal Nutrition Programs
 - Food Stamps
 - WIC - <http://www.uah.org/food-assistance/wi/>
 - National School Lunch Program
 - School Breakfast Program
 - Summer Food
- Other Resources
 - Pantries <http://www.uah.org/food-assistance/emergency-food/>
 - Farmers Markets
 - Senior Food Help



Upcoming Events

- Farm Bill Forum
 - Monday Oct 24th, SLC Main Library 7pm
 - Speakers on issues in the farm bill: health, federal nutrition programs, sustainability, local food
- Food Stamp Challenge
 - Nov 7-14th
 - More details on our website: www.uah.org

Questions?