

2008 Farm Bill Nutrition Title:

Promoting Health and Fighting Hunger in the United States

- **Addresses rising food prices by investing an additional \$10.361 billion in nutrition programs**
- **The 2008 Farm Bill supports programs that address the needs of food banks to combat food insecurity**
 - Increases funding for The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) by \$1.26 billion. This program provides commodities and other resources to states to help stock food banks
 - Includes \$50 million for 2008 to immediately address shortages at food pantries
- **Reforms benefit rules to adequately cover food expenses and sustain participants in the Food Stamp Program for the entire month**
 - Raises and indexes the minimum standard deduction
 - Increases the minimum benefit for food stamp recipients, which is especially important for senior citizens in need
 - Indexes asset limits and excludes retirement and education accounts as assets
 - Lifts dependent care cap, allowing participants to deduct the full cost of dependent care
 - Excludes special combat pay as income
- **Ends benefit erosion to ensure that the food dollar remains strong**
- **Updates the Food Stamp Program to reflect technological advances and decrease abuse**
 - Renames the Food Stamp Program the “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program”
 - Expands USDA’s ability to eliminate fraud in the program
 - Ends the use of Food Stamp Coupons and requires the use of Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT)
 - Expands the use of EBT cards at Senior Farmers Markets
- **Ensures that Senior Citizens have ample access to food that is healthy and fresh**
 - Extends the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) which helps many low-income elderly individuals in need of additional assistance or who are reluctant to apply for food stamps
 - Expands the authority of the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program which provides senior citizens with vouchers to buy fresh produce at markets and roadside stands and provides \$20 million in new funding over 10 years

Farm Bill Nutrition Program Facts:

- A 2006 study by USDA’s Economic Research Service (ERS) found that 11% of U.S. households were food insecure in 2005.
- The average food stamp recipient is a single working mother with two children and an average weekly benefit of \$37.
- 50% of all food stamp participants are under 18, and about half of all households include one child.
- USDA oversees nearly 20 nutrition assistance programs which are mostly administered by states, schools and local grantees operating under federal regulations.
- Eligibility for food stamps is primarily based on a household’s economic status, taking into account income, cost of living and other financial factors.

- **Promotes the health and well-being of children and low-income families**
 - Increases funding by \$1.02 billion for the USDA Snack Program, which helps schools provide healthy snacks to students during after-school activities and expands the program to all 50 states
 - Creates a demonstration project that will evaluate strategies to address obesity among low-income communities
 - Provides \$5 million per year for Community Food Projects for grants to innovative community projects
 - Reasserts the importance of USDA nutrition monitoring, which works with the USDA dietary guidelines and provides the most accurate picture of American dietary habits

- **Improves assistance through the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations**
 - Studies the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations to determine if the food packages meet changing dietary guidelines and needs
 - Authorizes \$5 million per year for a fund to purchase native and locally grown food

- **Increases cooperation between farmers and organizations in urban areas**
 - Establishes the Healthy Urban Food Enterprise Development Center and provides \$3 million to help bring fresh foods into urban food deserts

- **Works to improve national health and fight obesity**
 - Increases attention to nutrition education through the U.S. Department of Agriculture
 - Creates a pilot program to encourage the purchase of more fresh fruits and vegetables in food stamp households