

WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF FAMILY SERVICES
2300 Capitol Ave.
Third Floor, Hathaway Building
Cheyenne, WY 82002

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*****FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE*****

Contact: PIO Juliette Rule
Office: (307) 777-3798

TEFAP to See Increased Funding from ARRA

CHEYENNE - More economic stimulus money will come to Wyoming in the form of emergency food assistance funding, Wyoming Department of Family Services announced Wednesday.

The estimated \$137,000 will benefit The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP). The USDA program makes commodity foods available to food banks for distribution to income-eligible individuals and families. The money doesn't come directly to DFS, but that amount is allotted to the agency for buying food from the USDA. DFS places that order and then arranges for its delivery to the Casper-based Food Bank of the Rockies for distribution to food banks in every Wyoming county.

The funding won't be sustained, but instead is geared for immediate and temporary relief. The amount of money received is determined by the number in its low income and unemployed population.

"Certainly this influx of funding increases our buying power with the USDA, and that's an important mission as people face economic issues in every community," said DFS' Economic Assistance Administrator Heather Babbitt.

Annually, Wyoming receives about \$260,000 from the USDA for TEFAP. Legislators then support the program with a contribution of \$146,304 per biennium for program administration in DFS' general fund appropriation. DFS uses that money to contract with the Food Bank of the Rockies for administrative support, and it is then reimbursed by the USDA to Wyoming.

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