

Food Stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Receipt in the Past 12 Months for Households: 2008 American Community Survey

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Introduction

This report is one of a series produced to highlight results from the 2008 American Community Survey (ACS). The report series is designed to cover a variety of economic topics, such as poverty, occupation, home values, and labor force participation. This series provides information about the changing economic characteristics of the nation and states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. The ACS also provides detailed estimates of demographic, social, economic, and housing characteristics for congressional districts, counties, places, and other localities every year. A description of the ACS is provided in the text box “What Is the American Community Survey?”

This report presents data on the food stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) at the national and state levels based on the 2008 ACS. On October 1, 2008, the federal Food Stamp Program was renamed the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. These data are for households, not individuals. If any person living at the sample address at the time of the interview received food stamps/SNAP, the household is included in the count.

As a result of the 2006 ACS Content Test, the U.S. Census Bureau changed the wording of the 2008 food stamp/SNAP question to include “food stamp benefit card” and removed the dollar amount portion of the question. In the test, the new version of the question resulted in a higher reported reciprocity rate for food stamps/SNAP, in part because of a

decrease in the item nonresponse rate. Therefore, we recommend using caution when comparing data from the 2007 ACS, which used the original question

What Is the American Community Survey?

The American Community Survey (ACS) is a nationwide survey designed to provide communities with reliable and timely demographic, social, economic, and housing data every year. It has an annual sample size of about 3 million addresses across the United States and Puerto Rico and includes both housing units and group quarters. The ACS is conducted in every county throughout the nation and every municipio in Puerto Rico, where it is called the Puerto Rico Community Survey.

Beginning in 2006, ACS data for 2005 were released for geographic areas with populations of 65,000 and greater. In 2008, the first set of multiyear estimates was released for data collected between January 2005 and December 2007. These 3-year estimates were published for geographic areas with populations of 20,000 and greater. The Census Bureau is planning to release the first 5-year estimates in late 2010 for the smallest geographic areas based on data collected between January 2005 and December 2009.

The data contained in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed in 2008. For information on the ACS sample design and other topics, visit www.census.gov/acs/www.

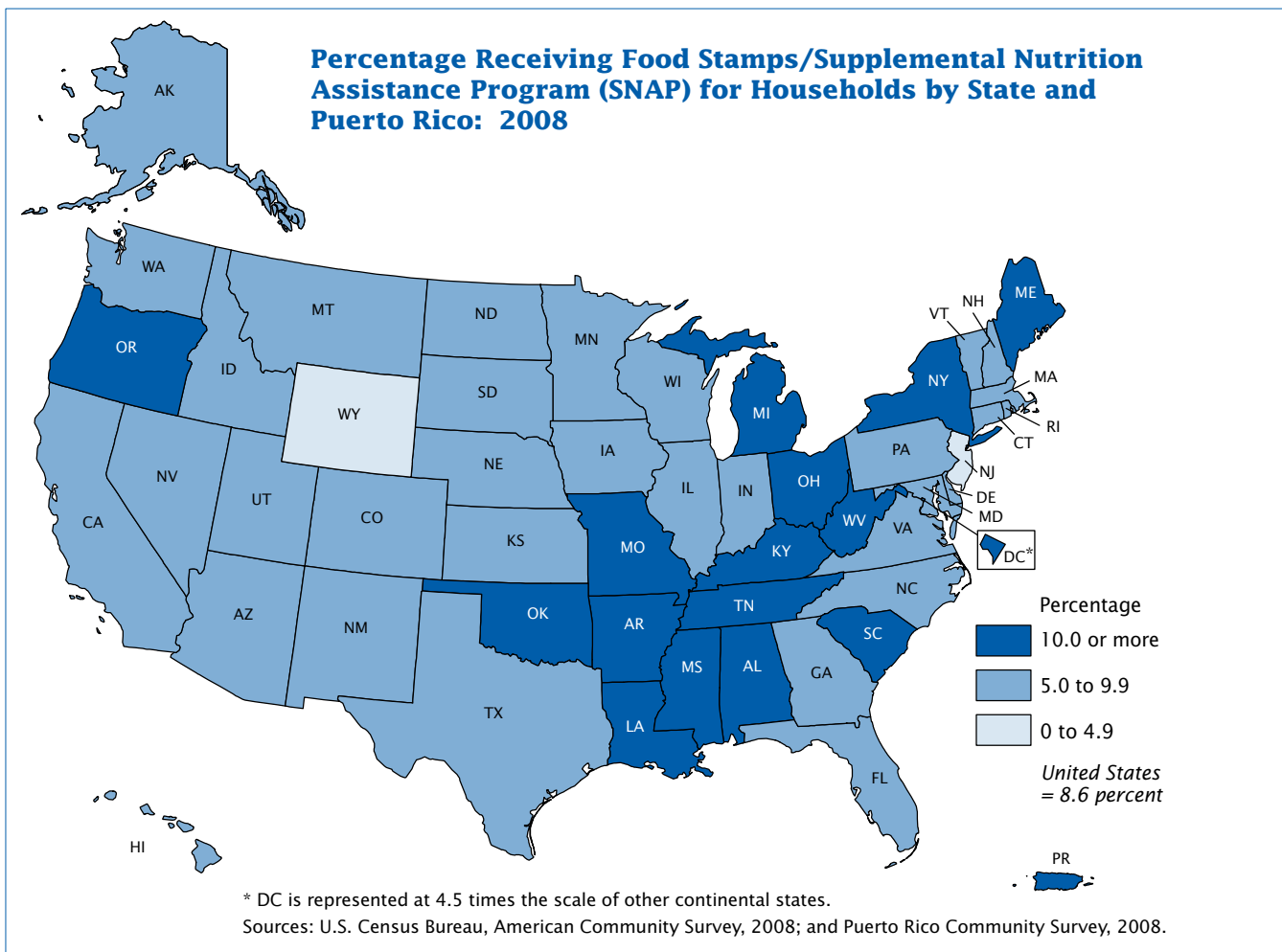
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Percentage Receiving Food Stamps/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) for Households by State and Puerto Rico: 2008



wording, and the 2008 ACS, which used the new wording.

The data contained in this report are based on the ACS sample interviewed in the 2008 ACS and are estimates of the actual figures that could have been obtained by interviewing the entire population using the same methodology. All comparisons presented in this report have taken sampling error into account and are significant at the 90 percent confidence level unless noted otherwise. Due to rounding, some details may not sum to totals. For information on sampling and estimation methods, confidentiality protection, and sampling and nonsampling errors,

please see the “2008 ACS Accuracy of the Data” document located at <www.census.gov/acs/www/Downloads/ACS/accuracy2008.pdf>.

Food Stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Receipt

In 2008, almost 9.8 million households received food stamps/SNAP. Among the states with the highest food stamp/SNAP participation were Louisiana (16.2 percent), Maine (13.8 percent), and Kentucky (not statistically different at 13.7 percent). Although not statistically different when compared with some other states, states with the

lowest food stamp/SNAP participation rates included Colorado (5.1 percent), New Jersey (4.7 percent), and Wyoming (4.2 percent).

The food stamp/SNAP participation rate for U.S. households was 8.6 percent in 2008. Twenty states and the District of Columbia had a statistically higher participation rate when compared to the national rate: Louisiana, Maine, Kentucky, Mississippi, West Virginia, Tennessee, Arkansas, Michigan, Oregon, Missouri, Oklahoma, South Carolina, New York, Alabama, Ohio, North Carolina, Texas, Georgia, Indiana, and Pennsylvania.

Food Stamp/Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Receipt in the Past 12 Months for Households by State and Puerto Rico: 2007 and 2008

(For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see www.census.gov/acs/www)

State	Food stamp/SNAP receipt in 2007				Food stamp/SNAP receipt in 2008 ¹			
	Estimate	Margin of error ² (±)	Percent	Margin of error ² (±)	Estimate	Margin of error ² (±)	Percent	Margin of error ² (±)
United States	8,676,234	44,475	7.7	0.1	9,769,112	47,178	8.6	0.1
Alabama	177,891	5,673	9.8	0.3	186,429	6,759	10.3	0.4
Alaska	17,462	1,903	7.4	0.8	18,421	1,766	7.8	0.7
Arizona	155,043	6,571	6.9	0.3	187,331	7,751	8.2	0.3
Arkansas	131,688	5,916	11.9	0.5	140,207	5,439	12.6	0.5
California	525,622	12,422	4.3	0.1	623,373	13,486	5.1	0.1
Colorado	91,624	5,510	4.9	0.3	96,048	5,194	5.1	0.3
Connecticut	74,637	4,907	5.7	0.4	87,443	4,217	6.6	0.3
Delaware	23,266	2,821	7.1	0.8	24,064	2,241	7.3	0.7
District of Columbia	23,092	2,442	9.2	1.0	26,958	2,242	10.8	0.9
Florida	412,606	9,989	5.8	0.1	507,031	12,686	7.2	0.2
Georgia	271,505	8,163	7.9	0.2	320,926	8,811	9.2	0.3
Hawaii	26,917	2,534	6.1	0.6	31,359	2,619	7.2	0.6
Idaho	34,588	2,959	6.2	0.5	43,209	3,669	7.6	0.6
Illinois	382,846	9,761	8.0	0.2	414,320	9,545	8.7	0.2
Indiana	204,735	5,946	8.3	0.2	227,061	7,822	9.2	0.3
Iowa	98,407	4,115	8.1	0.3	108,318	4,782	8.9	0.4
Kansas	68,388	4,236	6.3	0.4	77,397	3,944	7.0	0.4
Kentucky	205,888	6,526	12.4	0.4	230,255	7,580	13.7	0.4
Louisiana	193,696	6,924	12.1	0.4	263,094	7,402	16.2	0.4
Maine	66,779	2,741	12.3	0.5	74,863	4,066	13.8	0.8
Maryland	101,626	4,383	4.9	0.2	115,167	5,907	5.5	0.3
Massachusetts	161,642	6,262	6.6	0.3	190,354	6,254	7.7	0.3
Michigan	399,598	8,392	10.4	0.2	465,600	8,488	12.2	0.2
Minnesota	104,058	4,976	5.0	0.2	116,066	4,683	5.6	0.2
Mississippi	136,089	4,960	12.6	0.5	143,847	5,337	13.1	0.5
Missouri	233,610	6,472	10.1	0.3	259,041	7,346	11.1	0.3
Montana	26,878	2,621	7.2	0.7	30,821	2,538	8.2	0.7
Nebraska	48,700	3,170	7.0	0.4	47,250	3,175	6.7	0.4
Nevada	37,815	3,191	4.0	0.3	50,005	3,898	5.2	0.4
New Hampshire	22,515	2,410	4.5	0.5	26,480	2,839	5.2	0.6
New Jersey	130,934	6,215	4.2	0.2	149,269	5,642	4.7	0.2
New Mexico	67,436	4,094	9.2	0.6	66,569	3,794	9.0	0.5
New York	675,890	11,232	9.5	0.2	754,827	13,911	10.6	0.2
North Carolina	317,134	9,617	9.0	0.3	344,069	9,103	9.6	0.2
North Dakota	18,522	2,001	6.8	0.7	19,605	2,042	7.1	0.7
Ohio	422,394	8,274	9.4	0.2	449,544	9,224	10.0	0.2
Oklahoma	140,480	5,397	10.0	0.4	154,168	6,170	11.0	0.4
Oregon	153,862	5,975	10.5	0.4	171,867	6,783	11.7	0.5
Pennsylvania	386,575	9,877	7.9	0.2	437,768	9,857	8.9	0.2
Rhode Island	28,232	2,356	7.0	0.6	31,911	2,785	8.0	0.7
South Carolina	161,373	6,545	9.5	0.4	184,139	6,590	10.8	0.4
South Dakota	22,145	2,019	7.1	0.6	26,852	2,383	8.4	0.7
Tennessee	290,188	7,433	12.1	0.3	311,287	8,223	12.8	0.3
Texas	735,491	14,222	8.9	0.2	797,298	13,971	9.5	0.2
Utah	40,935	3,039	4.9	0.4	47,842	3,354	5.6	0.4
Vermont	20,471	1,594	8.1	0.6	21,828	1,884	8.7	0.7
Virginia	174,936	6,795	6.0	0.2	194,701	7,532	6.6	0.3
Washington	193,544	7,314	7.7	0.3	220,716	7,561	8.7	0.3
West Virginia	92,059	3,835	12.5	0.5	95,856	4,562	12.8	0.6
Wisconsin	135,627	4,724	6.1	0.2	147,549	5,105	6.6	0.2
Wyoming	8,795	1,658	4.3	0.8	8,709	1,327	4.2	0.6
Puerto Rico	370,691	6,886	30.8	0.6	392,710	7,659	33.1	0.6

¹ As a result of a questionnaire change for the 2008 ACS, the Census Bureau recommends comparing 2007 and 2008 food stamp/SNAP receipt with caution.

² Data are based on a sample and are subject to sampling variability. A margin of error is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the margin of error in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. When added to and subtracted from the estimate, the margin of error forms the 90 percent confidence interval.

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2007 and 2008; and Puerto Rico Community Survey, 2007 and 2008.