



Current Perspectives on SNAP Participation

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United States  
Department of  
Agriculture

Food and  
Nutrition  
Service

Office of  
Research and  
Analysis

# **Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2001 to 2008**

## Current Perspectives on SNAP Participation

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3101 Park Center Drive  
Room 1014 Alexandria,  
VA 22302

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## **Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2001 to 2008**

Joshua Leftin

A product of  
Mathematica Policy Research  
600 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Suite 550  
Washington, DC 20024

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Author:	Joshua Leftin
MPR Project Director:	Carole Trippe
MPR Project Number:	06684.302
FNS Project Officer:	Jenny Genser
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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program (FSP), helps low-income individuals purchase food so they can obtain a nutritious diet. One important measure of the program's performance is its ability to reach its target population, as indicated by the proportion of people eligible for benefits who actually participate.

Of the 41 million individuals eligible for SNAP benefits in an average month in 2008, 27 million (67 percent) participated and nearly 14 million did not. While SNAP served 67 percent of all eligible individuals, it provided 84 percent of the SNAP benefits available to all eligible individuals, more than 2 percentage points higher than in 2007 and an increase of 19 percentage points from 2001. The difference in the two rates is because the neediest individuals, who were eligible for higher benefits, participated at higher rates than other eligible individuals.

Nationally, the participation rate among individuals increased by one percentage point between 2007 and 2008, essentially offsetting the one point decrease from 2006 to 2007. However, neither change was statistically significant. The rate in 2008 is 13 points higher than it was in 2001.

Since 2002, States have increased outreach to low-income households, implemented program simplifications, and streamlined application processes to make it easier for eligible persons to apply for and receive SNAP benefits. Most States have also reduced the amount of information that recipients must report during their certification period to maintain their eligibility and benefit levels, making it easier for low-income households to participate.

Most demographic and economic subgroups experienced modest increases in participation rates in 2008. However, most of the increases were not statistically significant. Rates remained relatively high for children, individuals in households with incomes below the poverty line, and recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI). At least 82 percent of all eligible individuals within each of these groups participated in 2008.

The participation rate was less than 41 percent for eligible elderly adults (age 60 and older), nondisabled childless adults subject to work requirements, individuals living in households with incomes above the poverty line, and individuals in households eligible for benefits that are less than half of the program maximum for their household size. Participation rates for individuals in households with earnings were also lower than average, at 55 percent, as were rates for individuals in households with no cash income (54 percent), noncitizens (51 percent), and children living with noncitizen adults (55 percent). While elderly adults had lower than average participation, the rate increased by three points from 2007 to 35 percent. Likewise, the rate for individuals in households with no income increased by nearly five points over this period.



## INTRODUCTION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program (FSP), helps low-income individuals purchase food so they can obtain a nutritious diet. The number of people eligible for SNAP benefits under normal program rules<sup>1</sup> and served in an average month by SNAP increased by seven percent between 2007 to 2008, from 26 million to 27 million.

Most individuals are eligible for SNAP benefits if their financial resources fall below certain income and asset thresholds. However, not all of those who are eligible participate in the program. While some choose not to participate, others are unaware that they are eligible. When eligible individuals do not participate, they lose out on nutrition assistance that could stretch their food dollars at the grocery store, and their communities lose out on the economic benefits provided by new SNAP dollars flowing into local markets.

One important measure of the program's performance is its ability to reach its target population. In 2008, the national participation rate among eligible individuals was 67 percent. The one percentage point increase from 2007 was not statistically significant. The household participation rate was 64 percent in 2008, while the benefit receipt rate was 84 percent.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to presenting the overall 2008 participation rate, we present in this report participation rates for subgroups of the eligible population, describe recent and historical trends in these rates, and explain the estimation methodology. Detailed tables on 2008 subgroup participation rates are included in Appendices A and B. In Appendix C, we show the change in individual SNAP

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<sup>1</sup> The participation totals in this report do not include those who received disaster assistance, nor do they include ineligible households and some categorically eligible households that were income-ineligible. An estimated national monthly average of 157,757 people receiving disaster assistance, 460,955 ineligible participants, reflecting 1.6 percent of all participants, and 339,612 participants (1.2 percent) who were categorically eligible but not income-eligible were removed from our FY 2008 individual participant totals. See Appendix D for more details.

<sup>2</sup> The benefit receipt rate measures the amount of benefits received as a proportion of total benefits that would be paid out if every eligible household were to participate.

participation rates since 1988. In Appendices D and E, we present an in-depth explanation of the methodology and the sampling error of the participation rate estimates. In Appendix F, we list historical economic and policy influences on SNAP and in Appendix G, we list changes in the Current Population Survey (CPS) over time. Appendix H includes SNAP eligibility parameters for previous years. Detailed historical rates for 2001 through 2007 are presented in a separate document, “Detailed Tables of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates: 2001 to 2007.”<sup>3</sup>

The 2008 participation rate estimates in this report are based on calendar year data from the March 2009 CPS and fiscal year (FY) 2008 SNAP administrative data. Previous years’ estimates are based on CPS and administrative data from the appropriate years.

The 2007 and 2008 reports do not present participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads in the SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) data<sup>4</sup> are inconsistent with those for eligible household heads in the CPS data. SNAP applicants are now given the option of choosing more than one race to describe themselves. This expansion in possible race and ethnicity categories was implemented for all new applications and recertifications, effective April 1, 2007, but was not fully implemented until April 1, 2009. Only 11 States in FY 2007 and 28 States in FY 2008 used the expanded categories for all households. Furthermore, race or ethnicity information was not recorded for a large number of participants (30 percent in the FY 2007 SNAP QC data and 25 percent in FY 2008). As a result, data on the race and ethnic distribution of SNAP participants in FY 2007 and FY 2008 are unreliable.

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<sup>3</sup> This document can be found at: <http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/MENU/Published/snap/SNAPPartNational.htm>

<sup>4</sup> In reports for years prior to 2007, we referred to this data as FSP Quality Control (FSPQC) data.

## **SUMMARY OF ESTIMATED PARTICIPATION RATES FOR 2008**

Of the 41 million individuals eligible for SNAP under normal rules in an average month of 2008, 27 million actually participated (Table 1).<sup>5</sup> The individual SNAP participation rate reached 67 percent in 2008, an increase of one percentage point from 2007. Since small households were, on average, less likely to participate, the household participation rate in 2008 (64 percent) was slightly lower than the individual rate. The benefit receipt rate in 2008 was 84 percent. This rate is consistently higher than the individual or household rates because the neediest individuals, who are eligible for higher benefits, tend to participate at higher rates than other eligible individuals.

## **RECENT TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES**

In 2008, the participation rate rose by one percentage point to 67 percent for eligible individuals, after previously having fallen by one point from 2006 to 2007. The rate had increased in four consecutive years through 2006 (Table 2 and Figure 1). After falling to 54 percent in 2001 and 2002, the rate rose by more than two points in 2003, by five points in 2004, by almost four points in 2005, and by more than two points in 2006. From 2001 to 2005, the number of individuals eligible for benefits and the number participating both increased; participation rose faster, however, resulting in the increased participation rates. From 2005 to 2006, the number participating continued to rise but the eligible number dropped slightly, leading to a continued rise in participation rates. From 2006 to 2007, the number participating increased again, but the number who were eligible increased as well. Because the 4 percent increase in the number of individuals who were eligible was higher than the 2 percent increase in the number who participated, participation rates in 2007 fell compared to 2006. Then, due to a worsening economy in 2008, the number of participants rose by 7 percent from 2007, the highest percentage increase since 2004. Meanwhile, the number of eligible

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<sup>5</sup> All tables and figures are presented at the end of the main text, just before the references.

individuals rose by 5 percent, the largest percentage increase since 2003. Because the percentage increase in participants was slightly higher than the percentage increase in eligible individuals, the participation rate increased by one point (Appendix Table C.1).

The household participation rate decreased by nearly 3 percentage points between 2000 and 2002, but increased more than 16 points from 2002 to 2008, up to 64 percent. The benefit receipt rate fell slightly from 83 percent in 2006 to 81 percent in 2007, before increasing to 84 percent in 2008, up 19 points from 2001.

The number of eligible individuals decreased between 1999 and 2000, and then increased between 2000 and 2005. Factors that contributed to the increase include expanded vehicle eligibility rules, restoration of eligibility for many legal immigrants, and an increase in unemployment between 2001 and 2003. The number of eligible individuals then decreased by about one-half million from 2005 to 2006 before increasing by about 1.5 million from 2006 to 2007 and by more than 2 million in 2008. This recent fluctuation in eligible individuals can be attributed to changes in the state of the economy; the number of unemployed people decreased from 7.6 million in 2005 to 7.0 million in 2006, before increasing to 7.1 million in 2007 and 8.9 million in 2008. Although the number of people in poverty did not experience a statistically significant change from 2005 to 2006, the number did increase slightly in 2007, from 36.5 million to 37.3 million, and substantially in 2008, to 39.8 million.

The number of individuals participating increased by nearly 11 million between 2001 and 2008, rising by more than one million each year between 2001 and 2005, by roughly one-half million in 2006 and in 2007, and by nearly 2 million in 2008. The number of eligible individuals who did not participate dropped from about 16 million in 2003 to a low of about 12 million in 2006, before increasing to approximately 13 million in 2007 and 14 million in 2008.

## **PARTICIPATION RATES FOR SUBGROUPS IN 2008**

SNAP participation rates vary by demographic and economic subgroup. Historically, participation rates have been relatively high for children, individuals in households with very low income (between one percent and 50 percent of poverty), and recipients of TANF or SSI. This pattern continued in 2008, with at least 85 percent of all eligible individuals from these groups participating (Tables 3 and 4, Figure 2). The poorest and most needy households (that is, those below the poverty line) participated at a high rate (82 percent) compared to the 29 percent participation rate for those above the poverty line. Among all household sizes, medium-sized households (three or four members) had the highest participation rate, at 77 percent in 2008.

Historically, participation rates have been low for individuals who are elderly, those living in households with incomes above poverty, those eligible for low monthly benefits (benefit levels less than half of the program maximum for their household sizes), noncitizens, U.S. born children living with noncitizens, and nonelderly nondisabled childless adults. This trend continued in 2008 (Tables 4 and 5). Just 35 percent of eligible elderly individuals (age 60 and over) and only 29 percent of individuals in households above the poverty line participated in 2008. Individuals living in households eligible for a benefit between one percent and 50 percent of the maximum benefit for their household size participated at a rate of 40 percent in 2008. The participation rate for noncitizens was 51 percent and the rate for citizen children living with noncitizen adults was 55 percent. Nondisabled childless adults subject to work registration participated at a rate of 40 percent. Participation rates for individuals in eligible households with earnings were also lower than average, at 55 percent, as were rates for individuals in households with no cash income, at 54 percent.

## **TRENDS IN PARTICIPATION RATES FOR SUBGROUPS**

Most subgroups experienced annual participation rate increases from the earlier years covered in this report through the latter years before essentially stabilizing or decreasing slightly in 2007 and

2008 (Table 5). For example, the participation rate for nondisabled childless adults subject to work requirements increased every year beginning in 2003 before experiencing no statistically significant changes in 2007 and 2008. This subgroup had a participation rate of 27 percent in 2002. The rate then increased steadily to more than 40 percent by 2008. Similarly, participation rates for individuals in households with earnings increased steadily from 2002 through 2006, peaking at 57 percent, before decreasing to 55 percent by 2008, though this slight decrease was not statistically significant.

However, participation rates for a few subgroups with low participation rates increased slightly from 2007 to 2008. For example, the rate for elderly individuals increased from 32 percent in 2007 to 35 percent in 2008. While still well below the overall participation rate of 67 percent, this is the highest the elderly participation rate has been during the period of 2001 to 2008. Likewise, the rate for individuals in households with no cash income increased from 50 percent in 2007 to a recent high of 54 percent in 2008. The rate for individuals in households above the poverty line increased slightly from 27 percent in 2007 to 29 percent in 2008.

The rates for citizen children living with noncitizen adults increased steadily each year from 2001 through 2005, before decreasing 6 points between 2005 and 2007 and stabilizing at 55 percent in 2008. Still, the participation rate for this subgroup was up 19 points overall since 2001. Likewise, the participation rate for preschool-age children decreased from 2005 to 2008 but was up 15 points overall since 2001. However, the participation rate for children of all ages essentially has leveled off between 2005 and 2008 at 86 percent, up 16 points from 2001 (Tables 3 and 5).

From 2001 to 2008, the participation rate for individuals in households with benefit levels at the program maximum for their household size increased considerably, from 48 percent to 86 percent. However, the participation rate for individuals in households eligible only for the minimum benefit decreased 8 points from 2001 to 2005 before increasing 6 points from 2005 to 2008. Still, the participation rate for this latter subgroup remained low, at 21 percent.

## **BENEFIT RECEIPT RATES IN 2008**

Individuals eligible for larger benefits tend to participate in SNAP at higher rates than those eligible for smaller benefits, resulting in benefit receipt rates that are typically higher than individual or household participation rates.<sup>6</sup> Households with children and households with income at one percent to 50 percent of poverty had among the highest benefit receipt rates in 2008, receiving more than 96 percent of the benefits to which all eligible households with these characteristics were entitled. Households with elderly members and those with household income above the poverty line had among the lowest benefit receipt rates, receiving approximately 42 to 43 percent of the benefits for which all eligible households with these characteristics were entitled.

Among age groups, children had the highest prorated benefit receipt rates,<sup>7</sup> and elderly individuals had the lowest. Individuals who were not employed received a higher percentage of prorated benefits than employed individuals, and females received a higher percentage than males.

## **FACTORS ASSOCIATED WITH CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION RATES**

As shown in Figure 1, overall participation rates increased substantially in the late 1970s, leveled off in the early and mid 1980s, and then increased again through the early 1990s.<sup>8</sup> After peaking in 1994, individual participation rates began an eight-year decrease. This decrease can be attributed to a combination of changes in the economy and program rules, trends in other public assistance programs, and the participation decisions of eligible people.<sup>9</sup> Specifically, the strong economy increased job opportunities for low-income households, thus reducing eligibility for and

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<sup>6</sup> See Tables A.1 and A.2 in Appendix A for benefit receipt rates by subgroup.

<sup>7</sup> An individual's prorated benefits are calculated by dividing the household benefit by the number of people in the household. Benefit receipt rates by individual-level characteristics are calculated by summing the prorated benefits of individuals with the selected characteristic

<sup>8</sup> See Appendix C (Table C.1) for the change in individual participation rates from 1988 to 2008.

<sup>9</sup> See Appendix F for an annual summary of economic and policy influences on participation rates.

participation in SNAP. In addition, the Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) added a new focus on moving people from welfare to work and reduced eligibility for many noncitizens and nonelderly nondisabled childless adults. The increased emphasis on work and the reduced TANF caseload lowered SNAP participation rates because households not receiving public assistance are also less likely to participate in SNAP.<sup>10</sup>

From 2002 to 2006, factors such as increased outreach and improved access to SNAP contributed to the rise in participation rates. During this period, States increased outreach to low-income households and implemented program simplifications to make it easier for eligible persons to apply for and receive SNAP benefits. Many State SNAP agencies, for example, now provide extended hours of operation, waive the requirement for face-to-face interviews, and have streamlined the overall application process. Most States have also reduced the amount of information that recipients must report during their certification period to maintain their eligibility and benefit levels, making it easier for low-income households to participate. In addition, as of June 2009, 19 States provide transitional SNAP benefits to individuals moving from the TANF program to work.

Eligibility also increased from 2002 to 2006, but at a lower rate than participation. Contributing factors to this increase in eligibility include State expansions in vehicle and categorical eligibility policies and the restoration of eligibility to many noncitizens under the 2002 Farm Bill.

From 2006 to 2008, SNAP participation continued to increase as a result of these outreach and access initiatives. However, economic factors, including a higher national poverty rate, resulted in an increase in eligibility as well. Because the percentage increase in eligibility was relatively close to the

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<sup>10</sup> During much of the period of participation-rate decline in the 1990s, categorical eligibility for SNAP was restricted to units in which all members received cash public assistance. As a result, although most individuals who stopped receiving TANF cash benefits were still eligible for SNAP, some were unaware of their continuing eligibility and others chose not to apply or recertify.

percentage increase in participation, the participation rate essentially stabilized during this time period.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The estimates of 2008 participation rates presented in this report were derived using calendar year data from the March 2009 CPS and SNAP administrative data for FY 2008; estimates for previous years were derived using the March CPS and SNAP administrative data appropriate for those years.<sup>11</sup> The participation rate is calculated as the ratio of the number of individuals participating in SNAP to the number of individuals eligible for SNAP, with the ratio expressed as a percentage. The estimates of participants for FY 2008 are from the FY 2008 SNAP Statistical Summary of Operations (Program Operations) and the FY 2008 SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) data. Similar data files were used for previous years' participant estimates. We use administrative counts of participants because SNAP participation is underreported in the CPS. From the administrative data, we use the average monthly number of participants during the 12 months of the fiscal year. We exclude ineligible participants and participants who receive disaster assistance, such as those receiving disaster benefits in the wake of hurricanes Gustav and Ike or due to floods, tornados, wildfires, and severe storms. We also make adjustments to the participant counts to ensure consistency between the participation rate numerators and denominators.

Using a microsimulation model, we estimate the number of eligible individuals by applying the SNAP eligibility rules in effect in FY 2008 to households in the CPS. These eligibility rules include the SNAP unit formation rules, gross and net income thresholds, and financial and vehicle asset limits. In addition, we impute some missing information needed to determine SNAP eligibility and produce an average monthly estimate of the number of eligible individuals.

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<sup>11</sup> Because the CPS collects household income data for the previous calendar year, we used the March 2009 CPS to derive estimates of eligible individuals in calendar year 2008.

Individual participation rates are calculated by dividing the number of participating individuals based on the adjusted administrative data by the number of eligible individuals based on the CPS-based model of SNAP eligibility. Appendix D describes the methodology in more detail.

**Table 1. Individual and Household Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (000s)	Eligible (000s)	Participation Rate (%) with 90% Confidence Interval
Individuals	27,411	41,055	66.8 +/- 1.2
SNAP Households	12,298	19,309	63.7 +/- 1.0
Benefits (in dollars)	2,759,792	3,301,638	83.6 +/- 1.7
Average SNAP Household Size	2.2		
Average Per Capita Benefit Per Month	\$100.68		

Sources: FY 2008 SNAP Program Operations, FY 2008 SNAP QC, and March 2009 CPS data.

Note: These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table 2. Number of Eligible and Participating Individuals, Households, and Benefits, and Participation Rates, 1976 to 2008**

	Eligible (000s)			Participating (000s) <sup>a</sup>			Participation Rates (%)		
	Individuals	Households	Benefits	Individuals	Households	Benefits	Individuals	Households	Benefits
September 1976 <sup>b</sup>	50,061	16,282	\$1,075,819	15,880	5,308	\$375,461	31.1	32.6	34.9
February 1978	40,175	13,984	934,427	15,387	5,286	398,066	38.3	37.8	42.6
August 1980	36,567	14,042	1,108,330	20,185	7,372	689,381	55.2	52.5	62.2
August 1982	39,364	14,538	1,352,251	20,548	7,487	785,658	52.2	51.5	58.1
August 1984	38,591	14,194	1,386,231	19,990	7,324	841,442	51.8	51.6	60.7
August 1986	40,061	15,273	1,544,833	19,069	7,102	860,472	47.6	46.5	55.7
August 1988	38,166	14,896	1,646,310	18,358	7,016	907,117	48.1	47.1	55.1
August 1990	37,631	14,523	1,905,141	20,396	7,973	1,188,808	54.2	54.9	62.4
August 1991	40,989	15,574	2,229,403	23,364	9,204	1,471,406	57.0	59.1	66.0
August 1992	43,474	16,627	2,491,671	25,759	10,238	1,749,058	59.3	61.6	70.2
August 1993	45,241	17,031	2,515,761	27,260	10,900	1,839,469	60.3	64.0	73.1
August 1994	44,327	17,040	2,473,299	27,207	11,005	1,873,953	61.4	64.6	75.8
September 1994	35,053	15,305	2,028,290	26,229	10,659	1,747,990	74.8	69.6	86.2
September 1995	34,665	14,994	2,017,983	25,213	10,374	1,751,560	72.7	69.2	86.8
September 1996	34,478	15,264	2,060,242	23,874	9,934	1,706,230	69.2	65.1	82.8
September 1997	31,818	14,692	1,913,367	20,365	8,446	1,407,148	64.0	57.5	73.5
September 1998	30,350	14,024	1,836,184	18,152	7,606	1,253,632	59.8	54.2	68.3
September 1999	29,502	13,723	1,779,829	17,081	7,280	1,199,679	57.9	53.0	67.4
FY 1999 <sup>c</sup>	30,857	14,508	1,812,128	17,705	7,481	1,256,625	57.4	51.6	69.3
FY 2000	29,458	14,235	1,741,177	16,701	7,146	1,193,970	56.7	50.2	68.6
FY 2001	31,223	15,107	1,912,260	16,834	7,250	1,240,961	53.9	48.0	64.9
FY 2002	34,388	16,693	2,230,454	18,500	7,951	1,451,229	53.8	47.6	65.1
FY 2003	36,707	17,784	2,510,933	20,591	8,890	1,710,801	56.1	50.0	68.1
FY 2004	37,921	18,079	2,666,371	23,153	9,990	1,980,166	61.1	55.3	74.3
FY 2005	37,951	18,219	2,826,237	24,571	10,730	2,253,885	64.7	58.9	79.7
FY 2006	37,418	17,779	2,822,736	25,166	11,155	2,337,212	67.3	62.7	82.8
FY 2007	38,922	18,499	2,999,114	25,611	11,429	2,437,577	65.8	61.8	81.3
FY 2008	41,055	19,309	3,301,638	27,411	12,298	2,759,792	66.8	63.7	83.6

Sources: SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and March CPS data for the years shown.

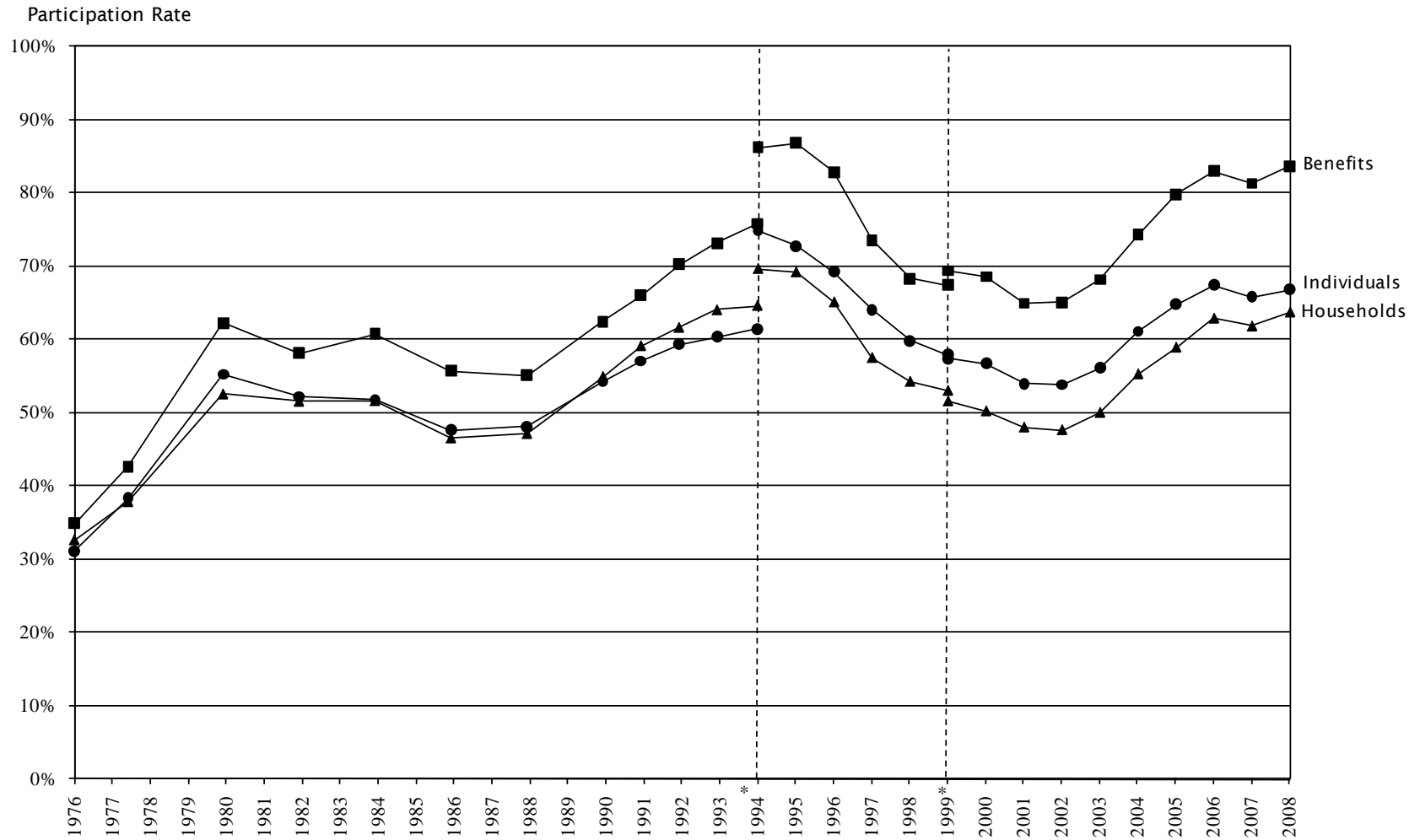
Note: There are two estimates for both 1994 and 1999 due to revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility and the number of participants. The September 1976 to August 1994 estimates are methodologically consistent, as are the September 1994 to September 1999 estimates and the FY 1999 to FY 2008 estimates. Please see Appendix D for details.

<sup>a</sup> The estimates of participants in this report exclude certain participants and thus differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>b</sup> The benefit rates for 1976 and 1978 are based on the net benefit (maximum benefits-purchase requirement). Hence, the benefit rates are consistent over all years.

<sup>c</sup> All fiscal year numbers are average monthly values.

Figure 1. Trends in SNAP Participation Rates, 1976 to 2008



Sources: SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and March CPS data for the years shown.

\*There are breaks in the time series in 1994 and 1999 due to revisions in the methodology for determining eligibility.

**Table 3. SNAP Individual Participation Rates by Demographic Characteristics, FY 2007 and FY 2008**

	Participating <sup>a</sup> Individuals (000s)		Eligible Individuals (000s)		Participation Rate (%)		Difference With 90% Confidence Interval
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2007	FY 2008	
Individuals in All Households	25,611	27,411	38,922	41,055	65.8	66.8	1.0 +/- 1.5
Individuals by Household Size							
Small (1 to 2 members)	9,600	10,418	17,473	17,903	54.9	58.2	3.2 +/- 1.6
Medium (3 to 4 members)	10,384	10,761	12,449	13,987	83.4	76.9	-6.5 +/- 4.5
Large (5 or more members)	5,627	6,233	9,000	9,165	62.5	68.0	5.5 +/- 5.8
Age of Individual							
Children	12,576	13,321	14,754	15,534	85.2	85.8	0.5 +/- 3.0
Preschool Age (0 to 4 years)	4,294	4,587	4,916	5,269	87.4	87.1	-0.3 +/- 4.9
School Age (5 to 17 years)	8,281	8,734	9,839	10,265	84.2	85.1	0.9 +/- 3.3
Nonelderly Adults (18 to 59 years)	10,793	11,606	17,172	18,431	62.8	63.0	0.1 +/- 1.7
Elderly Individuals	2,242	2,484	6,995	7,090	32.1	35.0	3.0 +/- 1.7
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration <sup>b</sup>	998	1,048	2,543	2,600	39.3	40.3	1.1 +/- 3.1
Noncitizens <sup>c</sup>	943	952	1,969	1,865	47.9	51.0	3.1 +/- 6.0
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults <sup>d</sup>	1,860	2,042	3,398	3,701	54.7	55.2	0.4 +/- 5.4
Individuals in Households without Any Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration or Noncitizens	22,354	24,175	31,737	33,921	70.4	71.3	0.8 +/- 1.8
Individuals by Household Composition							
Households with Children	19,347	20,602	24,299	25,706	79.6	80.1	0.5 +/- 2.6
One Adult	11,274	11,665	9,847	10,033	114.5	116.3	1.8 +/- 6.8
Married Household Head	4,410	4,636	8,142	8,961	54.2	51.7	-2.4 +/- 4.2
Other Multiple Adults	2,299	2,767	4,801	5,106	47.9	54.2	6.3 +/- 5.5
Children Only	1,364	1,534	1,509	1,606	90.4	95.5	5.1 +/- 11.7
Households without Children	6,263	6,809	14,623	15,349	42.8	44.4	1.5 +/- 1.4

Sources: FY 2007 and 2008 SNAP Program Operations and SNAP QC data, and March 2008 and 2009 CPS data.

Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> The estimates of participants in this report exclude certain participants and thus differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>b</sup> Referred to as ABAWDs in previous reports, these individuals are age 18 to 49, not disabled, not living with children under age 18, and are subject to work registration. With some exceptions, these individuals must meet work requirements or face time limits on benefit receipt.

<sup>c</sup> Noncitizens who are eligible and/or participating. This row does not include noncitizens who are outside the SNAP unit but reside in the same household.

<sup>d</sup> Citizen children living in a household with a noncitizen adult, regardless of SNAP participation or eligibility status of the adult.

**Table 4. SNAP Individual Participation Rates by Economic Characteristics of Households, FY 2007 and FY 2008**

	Participating <sup>a</sup> Individuals (000s)		Eligible Individuals (000s)		Participation Rate (%)		
	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2007	FY 2008	Difference with 90% Confidence Interval
Individuals in All Households	25,611	27,411	38,922	41,055	65.8	66.8	1.0 +/- 1.5
Individuals by Household Income Source <sup>b</sup>							
Earnings	10,400	10,842	18,671	19,685	55.7	55.1	-0.6 +/- 2.2
TANF	4,281	4,098	2,696	2,881	158.8	142.3	-16.5 +/- 18.3
SSI <sup>c</sup>	5,704	5,865	4,774	5,260	119.5	111.5	-8.0 +/- 8.4
Elderly SSI	1,388	1,469	1,241	1,232	111.8	119.3	7.5 +/- 16.0
Nonelderly SSI	4,374	4,473	3,666	4,110	119.3	108.8	-10.5 +/- 10.3
Social Security	4,561	4,801	9,705	10,074	47.0	47.7	0.7 +/- 2.5
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level							
Total Below Poverty Line	22,526	23,935	27,319	29,012	82.5	82.5	0.0 +/- 2.4
No Income	3,051	3,570	6,149	6,553	49.6	54.5	4.9 +/- 3.9
1 to 50%	7,691	8,468	7,078	7,301	108.7	116.0	7.3 +/- 7.2
51 to 100%	11,785	11,897	14,092	15,158	83.6	78.5	-5.1 +/- 3.9
Total Above Poverty Line	3,084	3,476	11,603	12,043	26.6	28.9	2.3 +/- 1.7
101 to 130%	2,891	3,269	9,362	9,709	30.9	33.7	2.8 +/- 2.0
131% or more	193	207	2,241	2,334	8.6	8.9	0.3 +/- 1.7
Individuals by Household Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit							
Minimum benefit (\$10 or less)	794	847	4,154	4,103	19.1	20.6	1.5 +/- 1.5
1 to 25%	2,704	2,847	8,762	9,078	30.9	31.4	0.5 +/- 2.0
26 to 50%	4,285	4,435	8,485	9,105	50.5	48.7	-1.8 +/- 3.1
51 to 75%	5,728	5,869	7,569	8,070	75.7	72.7	-3.0 +/- 5.8
76 to 99%	5,887	6,334	5,503	5,643	107.0	112.2	5.2 +/- 8.1
100%	7,007	7,927	8,603	9,159	81.4	86.5	5.1 +/- 4.7

Sources: FY 2007 and 2008 SNAP Program Operations and SNAP QC data, and March 2008 and 2009 CPS data.

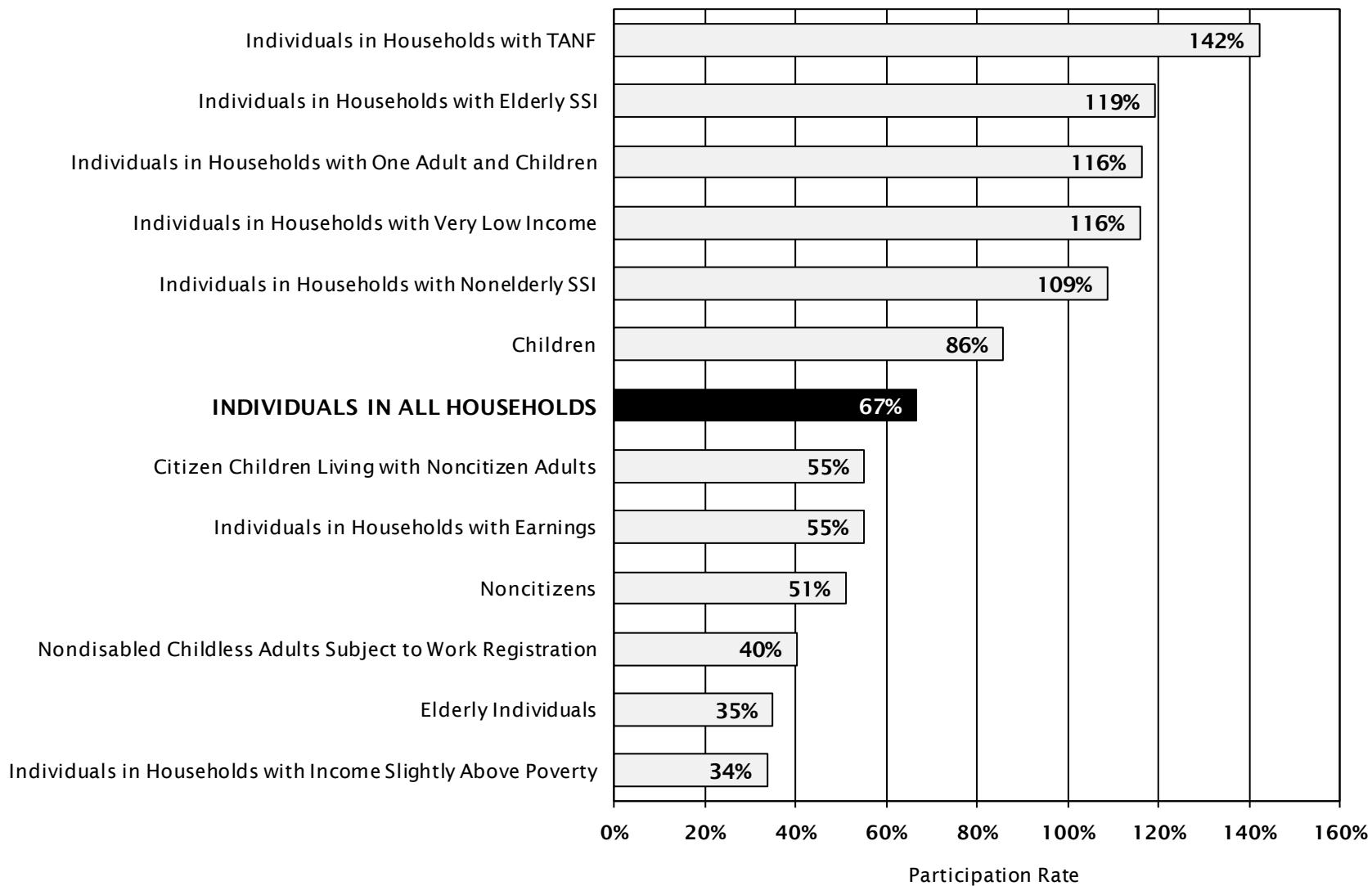
Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> The estimates of participants in this report exclude certain participants and thus differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>b</sup> These income sources are not mutually exclusive.

<sup>c</sup> Households receiving nonelderly SSI income or elderly SSI income are not mutually exclusive.

**Figure 2. Individual Participation Rates by Subgroup, FY 2008**



Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. See Appendix D for more information.

**Table 5. SNAP Participation Rates by Selected Characteristics FY 2001 to FY 2008**

	Participation Rates (%)							
	FY 2001	FY 2002	FY 2003	FY 2004	FY 2005	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008
Individuals in All Households	53.9	53.8	56.1	61.1	64.7	67.3	65.8	66.8
Households by Size								
Small (1 to 2 members)	42.3	42.3	43.9	49.1	52.1	55.9	54.9	58.2
Medium (3 to 4 members)	63.3	65.0	68.7	72.5	79.7	80.7	83.4	76.9
Large (5 or more members)	64.0	60.5	62.2	67.3	68.4	70.0	62.5	68.0
Age of Individual								
Children	70.2	71.0	74.4	81.5	86.9	86.9	85.2	85.8
Preschool Age (0 to 4 years)	72.0	72.8	77.1	85.2	91.8	88.3	87.4	87.1
School Age (5 to 17 years)	69.4	70.2	73.2	79.8	84.5	86.2	84.2	85.1
Nonelderly Adults (18 to 59 years)	49.8	49.7	51.6	56.0	59.7	63.1	62.8	63.0
Elderly Individuals	28.4	26.6	27.4	29.4	30.6	34.5	32.1	35.0
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	28.5	27.4	28.9	30.5	33.6	38.9	39.3	40.3
Noncitizens	68.9	54.4	49.1	43.8	50.4	53.8	47.9	51.0
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	36.6	43.3	47.0	51.2	61.0	58.7	54.7	55.2
Individuals by Household Composition								
Households with Children	66.2	66.2	69.6	76.1	80.9	80.8	79.6	80.1
One Adult	95.0	96.4	94.1	106.9	111.3	113.5	114.5	116.3
Married Household Head	46.0	44.9	49.0	52.7	56.8	54.9	54.2	51.7
Other Multiple Adults	42.5	40.0	48.0	50.5	50.8	52.6	47.9	54.2
Children Only	45.7	60.7	71.6	79.6	96.1	85.7	90.4	95.5
Households without Children	32.9	32.5	33.2	36.2	38.7	44.0	42.8	44.4
Individuals by Household Income Source								
Earnings	45.1	45.0	48.1	52.0	56.3	57.0	55.7	55.1
TANF	170.0	171.2	129.3	145.5	140.2	154.6	158.8	142.3
Elderly SSI	83.0	90.3	94.4	99.3	100.6	117.8	111.8	119.3
Nonelderly SSI	91.4	99.9	98.4	100.9	105.3	114.7	119.5	108.8
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level								
No Income	27.5	29.5	33.5	39.1	45.8	47.5	49.6	54.5
1 to 50%	85.8	91.6	92.7	103.6	108.5	112.9	108.7	116.0
51 to 100%	71.1	69.1	71.8	75.6	81.5	84.2	83.6	78.5
101 to 130%	24.1	24.8	25.8	29.9	29.0	32.7	30.9	33.7
131%+	8.2	6.6	5.8	6.8	7.2	9.6	8.6	8.9
Individuals by Household Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit								
Minimum Benefit (\$10 or less)	22.6	23.0	19.5	16.2	14.8	18.9	19.1	20.6
1 to 50%	39.7	38.4	38.8	38.6	38.8	40.9	40.5	40.0
51 to 99%	81.9	81.4	82.5	86.4	92.4	91.7	88.9	89.0
100%	47.5	50.9	56.3	70.3	75.3	85.1	81.4	86.5

Sources: SNAP Program Operations, SNAP QC, and CPS data for the years shown.

Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. See Appendix D for details about why certain rates may exceed 100 percent.

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**APPENDIX A**

**SELECTED INDIVIDUAL AND HOUSEHOLD PARTICIPATION RATES AND  
BENEFIT RECEIPT RATES IN FY 2008**



**Table A.1 Individual Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates by Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Individual Participation Rate (%)	Prorated Benefit Receipt Rate (%)
Age of Individual		
Children Under Age 18	85.76	100.33
Preschool	87.06	104.23
School-age	85.09	98.21
Adults Age 18 to 59	62.97	74.08
Elderly Age 60 and Over	35.03	48.03
Living Alone	48.78	73.21
Living with Others	19.29	23.00
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	40.31	44.41
Noncitizens	51.04	60.98
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	55.17	69.19
Employment Status of Nonelderly Adults		
Employed	51.90	68.50
Not Employed	68.46	75.96
Gender of Individual		
Male	62.48	75.44
Female	70.17	86.58

Notes: Participation rates and benefit receipt rates (%) over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details. We do not present 2008 participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads are inconsistent with those for eligible household heads. See page 2 for more details.

**Table A.2 Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates by Household-Level Demographic and Economic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Household Participation Rate (%)	Benefit Receipt Rate (%)
All Households	63.69	83.59
Households with Children	85.53	96.13
Households with Elderly	36.39	43.47
Households with Disabled Nonelderly Adults	66.24	60.99
Households by Composition		
Households with Children	85.53	96.13
One Adult and Children	114.72	128.30
Married Household Head and Children	51.68	60.64
Other Multiple Adults and Children	57.12	67.75
Children Only	90.20	119.23
Households with No Children	50.42	59.91
Households by Income Sources		
Earnings	51.76	71.91
TANF	139.40	170.73
SSI	118.60	156.84
Households by Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level		
No Income	55.62	56.26
1 to 50%	109.41	120.76
51 to 100%	84.35	90.75
101 to 130%	24.37	41.78

Notes: Participation rates and benefit receipt rates (%) over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**APPENDIX B**

**DETAILED PARTICIPATION RATES IN FY 2008**



**Table B.1. Individual and Household Participation Rates and Benefit Receipt Rates, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals	27,411,361	41,055,094	66.77
SNAP Households	12,298,418	19,308,771	63.69
Benefits	2,759,791,831	3,301,638,423	83.59
Average SNAP Household Size	2.23		
Average Per Capita Benefit	100.68		

Note: These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.2. Individual Participation Rates by Household Size, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals by Household Size			
1 Person	5,617,562	10,285,725	54.62
2 People	4,800,710	7,617,648	63.02
3 People	5,763,524	7,306,559	78.88
4 People	4,997,007	6,680,298	74.80
5 People	3,381,112	4,720,497	71.63
6 or More People	2,851,445	4,444,366	64.16
Individuals in All Households	27,411,361	41,055,094	66.77

Note: These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.3. Individual Participation Rates by Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in All Households	27,411,361	41,055,094	66.77
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	13,321,357	15,533,900	85.76
Preschool	4,587,134	5,268,817	87.06
School-age	8,734,223	10,265,083	85.09
Adults Age 18 to 59	11,606,366	18,431,469	62.97
Elderly Age 60 and Over	2,483,637	7,089,724	35.03
Living Alone	1,846,197	3,784,513	48.78
Living with Others	637,440	3,305,211	19.29
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	1,047,974	2,599,985	40.31
Noncitizens	951,880	1,864,942	51.04
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	2,042,065	3,701,309	55.17
Employment Status of Nonelderly Adults			
Employed	3,170,666	6,109,249	51.90
Not Employed	8,435,700	12,322,220	68.46
Individuals by Household Composition			
Households with Children	20,602,215	25,705,747	80.15
One Adult	11,665,310	10,033,352	116.27
Married Household Head	4,635,501	8,960,906	51.73
Other Multiple Adults	2,767,310	5,105,541	54.20
Children Only	1,534,094	1,605,947	95.53
Households without Children	6,809,145	15,349,347	44.36
Gender of Individual			
Male	11,362,983	18,185,608	62.48
Female	16,048,378	22,869,486	70.17
Metropolitan Status			
Urban	21,473,062	33,189,160	64.70
Rural	5,938,298	7,865,934	75.49

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details. We do not present 2008 participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads are inconsistent with those for eligible household heads. See page 2 for more details.

**Table B.4. Individual Participation Rates by Economic Characteristics of Households, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in All Households	27,411,361	41,055,094	66.77
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Earnings	16,569,356	21,369,706	77.54
Earnings	10,842,004	19,685,388	55.08
No TANF	9,898,441	18,665,589	53.03
TANF	943,563	1,019,799	92.52
TANF	4,097,703	2,880,568	142.25
Unemployment Compensation	762,371	714,215	106.74
Nonelderly or Elderly SSI Benefits <sup>a</sup>	5,865,225	5,259,962	111.51
Nonelderly SSI Benefits	4,472,668	4,110,393	108.81
Elderly SSI Benefits	1,469,480	1,231,756	119.30
Social Security	4,801,078	10,074,280	47.66
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	23,935,016	29,012,344	82.50
No Income	3,569,992	6,553,024	54.48
1 to 50%	8,468,265	7,301,479	115.98
51 to 100%	11,896,759	15,157,841	78.49
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	3,476,344	12,042,750	28.87
101% to 130%	3,268,848	9,708,904	33.67
131% or more	207,496	2,333,846	8.89
Individuals by Monthly Household Benefit			
\$10 or less	847,237	4,103,191	20.65
\$11 to \$25	311,453	883,352	35.26
\$26 to \$50	727,106	1,621,566	44.84
\$51 to \$75	893,111	1,622,841	55.03
\$76 to \$100	925,589	1,743,230	53.10
\$101 to \$150	1,995,253	3,768,129	52.95
\$151 to \$200	4,020,598	6,405,313	62.77
\$201 or more	17,691,014	20,907,472	84.62
Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit			
Low Benefits (1 - 50%)	7,281,933	18,183,044	40.05
1 to 25%	2,847,154	9,077,934	31.36
26 to 50%	4,434,779	9,105,111	48.71
High Benefits (51 - 99%)	12,202,657	13,713,007	88.99
51 to 75%	5,868,954	8,069,984	72.73
76 to 99%	6,333,703	5,643,023	112.24
100%	7,926,770	9,159,043	86.55

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

<sup>a</sup> Households receiving nonelderly SSI income or elderly SSI income are not mutually exclusive.

**Table B.5A. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2008—Households with Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with Children	20,602,215	25,705,747	80.15
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	13,321,575	15,533,900	85.76
Adults Age 18 to 59	7,148,844	9,732,207	73.46
Elderly Age 60 and Over	131,797	439,639	29.98
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	2,301,529	3,637,842	63.27
No Earnings	10,556,638	9,599,647	109.97
Earnings	10,045,577	16,106,100	62.37
TANF	4,056,833	2,684,043	151.15
Earnings	938,948	962,338	97.57
No Earnings	3,117,885	1,721,704	181.09
No TANF	16,545,382	23,021,704	71.87
Earnings	9,106,629	15,143,762	60.13
No Earnings	7,438,753	7,877,942	94.43
Social Security	2,050,499	2,954,658	69.40
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	18,016,238	19,244,698	93.62
No Income	2,301,529	3,637,842	63.27
1 to 50%	7,574,959	5,746,249	131.82
51 to 100%	8,139,750	9,860,608	82.55
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	2,585,977	6,461,048	40.02
101% to 130%	2,523,071	5,982,027	42.18
131% or more	62,907	479,021	13.13
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	19,028,758	20,914,595	90.98
No Earnings	10,583,939	9,599,647	110.25
1 to 50%	3,519,792	3,427,688	102.69
51 to 100%	4,925,027	7,887,261	62.44
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	1,573,457	4,791,152	32.84
101% to 130%	1,555,028	4,616,750	33.68
131% or more	18,429	174,402	10.57

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.5B. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2008—Households with One Adult and Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with One Adult and Children	11,665,310	10,033,352	116.27
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	7,852,287	6,663,551	117.84
Adults Age 18 to 59	3,753,518	3,272,323	114.70
Elderly Age 60 and Over	58,150	97,478	59.65
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	1,587,537	2,068,316	76.76
No Earnings	6,929,001	5,311,359	130.46
Earnings	4,736,310	4,721,992	100.30
TANF	2,553,442	1,784,855	143.06
Earnings	456,619	512,742	89.05
No Earnings	2,096,823	1,272,113	164.83
No TANF	9,111,868	8,248,497	110.47
Earnings	4,279,690	4,209,251	101.67
No Earnings	4,832,178	4,039,247	119.63
Social Security	1,005,954	975,926	103.08
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	10,446,824	8,177,561	127.75
No Income	1,587,537	2,068,316	76.76
1 to 50%	4,613,728	2,740,210	168.37
51 to 100%	4,245,559	3,369,035	126.02
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	1,218,486	1,855,790	65.66
101% to 130%	1,180,557	1,680,620	70.25
131% or more	37,929	175,171	21.65
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	11,010,480	8,829,561	124.70
No Earnings	6,936,386	5,311,359	130.60
1 to 50%	1,685,466	1,075,496	156.72
51 to 100%	2,388,628	2,442,705	97.79
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	654,831	1,203,791	54.40
101% to 130%	644,686	1,129,143	57.10
131% or more	10,145	74,648	13.59

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.5C. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2008—Households with Married Household Head and Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with Married Household Head and Children	4,635,501	8,960,906	51.73
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	2,574,644	4,946,886	52.05
Adults Age 18 to 59	2,017,278	3,823,819	52.76
Elderly Age 60 and Over	43,579	190,201	22.91
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	361,888	824,906	43.87
No Earnings	1,583,486	2,079,852	76.13
Earnings	3,052,015	6,881,055	44.35
TANF	517,844	453,482	114.19
Earnings	174,570	230,627	75.69
No Earnings	343,274	222,856	154.03
No TANF	4,117,658	8,507,424	48.40
Earnings	2,877,445	6,650,428	43.27
No Earnings	1,240,212	1,856,996	66.79
Social Security	531,620	929,876	57.17
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	3,715,423	5,997,046	61.95
No Income	361,888	824,906	43.87
1 to 50%	1,249,330	1,453,282	85.97
51 to 100%	2,104,205	3,718,858	56.58
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	920,079	2,963,861	31.04
101% to 130%	904,527	2,790,467	32.41
131% or more	15,552	173,393	8.97
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	3,987,412	6,515,802	61.20
No Earnings	1,592,985	2,079,852	76.59
1 to 50%	883,922	1,220,458	72.43
51 to 100%	1,510,505	3,215,492	46.98
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	648,089	2,445,105	26.51
101% to 130%	641,849	2,371,226	27.07
131% or more	6,240	73,879	8.45

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.5D. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2008—Households with Other Multiple Adults and Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with Other Multiple Adults and Children	2,767,310	5,105,541	54.20
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	1,359,673	2,317,516	58.67
Adults Age 18 to 59	1,377,578	2,636,065	52.26
Elderly Age 60 and Over	30,059	151,959	19.78
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
No Income	212,514	500,977	42.42
No Earnings	1,379,632	1,830,956	75.35
Earnings	1,387,677	3,274,585	42.38
TANF	538,902	445,706	120.91
Earnings	152,159	218,970	69.49
No Earnings	386,742	226,736	170.57
No TANF	2,228,408	4,659,835	47.82
Earnings	1,235,518	3,055,615	40.43
No Earnings	992,890	1,604,220	61.89
Social Security	480,429	1,044,864	45.98
Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	2,410,264	3,710,507	64.96
No Income	212,514	500,977	42.42
1 to 50%	1,004,870	1,190,341	84.42
51 to 100%	1,192,880	2,019,188	59.08
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	357,046	1,395,035	25.59
101% to 130%	354,817	1,266,566	28.01
131% or more	2,228	128,468	1.73
Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	2,559,583	4,183,376	61.18
No Earnings	1,381,456	1,830,956	75.45
1 to 50%	532,618	839,030	63.48
51 to 100%	645,509	1,513,390	42.65
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	207,726	922,165	22.53
101% to 130%	207,726	897,833	23.14
131% or more	0	24,332	0.00

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.5E. Individual Participation Rates by Household Composition, Fiscal Year 2008—Households with No Children**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households with No Children	6,809,145	15,349,347	44.36
<b>Age of Individual</b>			
Children Under Age 18	0	0	0.00
Adults Age 18 to 59	4,457,419	8,699,262	51.24
Elderly Age 60 and Over	2,351,727	6,650,085	35.36
<b>Individuals by Household Income Sources</b>			
No Income	1,268,463	2,915,182	43.51
No Earnings	6,012,719	11,770,059	51.08
Earnings	796,427	3,579,288	22.25
TANF	40,870	196,525	20.80
Earnings	4,615	57,461	8.03
No Earnings	36,255	139,064	26.07
No TANF	6,768,276	15,152,822	44.67
Earnings	791,812	3,521,827	22.48
No Earnings	5,976,464	11,630,995	51.38
Social Security	2,750,580	7,119,622	38.63
<b>Individuals by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level</b>			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	5,918,778	9,767,646	60.60
No Income	1,268,463	2,915,182	43.51
1 to 50%	893,306	1,555,230	57.44
51 to 100%	3,757,010	5,297,233	70.92
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	890,367	5,581,702	15.95
101% to 130%	745,777	3,726,877	20.01
131% or more	144,590	1,854,824	7.80
<b>Individuals by Household Earnings as a Percentage of Poverty Level</b>			
Total 100% of Poverty or Less	6,694,207	13,967,318	47.93
No Earnings	6,015,624	11,770,059	51.11
1 to 50%	383,326	663,492	57.77
51 to 100%	295,257	1,533,766	19.25
Total Greater Than 100% of Poverty	114,939	1,382,030	8.32
101% to 130%	100,412	1,044,058	9.62
131% or more	14,526	337,972	4.30

Notes: These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.6. Participation Rates for Individuals in Households Without any Noncitizens or Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Individuals in Households without Any Noncitizens or Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	24,175,110	33,920,810	71.27
Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	12,244,756	13,402,851	91.36
Adults Age 18 to 59	9,760,846	13,849,378	70.48
Elderly Age 60 and Over	2,169,507	6,668,580	32.53
Individuals by Household Composition			
One Adult and Children	11,103,521	9,323,881	119.09
Married Household Head and Children	3,797,659	6,972,680	54.46
No Children	5,383,302	11,553,246	46.60
Individuals by Household Income Sources			
Earnings	9,479,647	15,626,109	60.67
No Earnings	14,695,463	18,294,700	80.33
TANF	3,756,187	2,553,014	147.13
Individuals by Household Benefit as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit			
1 to 50%	6,650,911	15,683,956	42.41
51 to 99%	10,825,136	11,378,217	95.14

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.7. Household Participation Rates, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Participating (QC)	Eligible (CPS)	Participation Rate (Percent)
Households with Children	6,244,357	7,300,449	85.53
Households with Elderly	2,282,860	6,274,110	36.39
Households with Disabled Nonelderly Adults	2,798,690	4,225,106	66.24
<b>Households by Composition</b>			
Households with Children	6,244,357	7,300,449	85.53
One Adult and Children	3,811,667	3,322,596	114.72
Married Household Head and Children	1,038,161	2,008,708	51.68
Other Multiple Adults and Children	659,067	1,153,737	57.12
Children Only	735,460	815,408	90.20
Households with No Children	6,054,062	12,008,322	50.42
<b>Households by Income Source</b>			
Earnings	3,537,725	6,834,495	51.76
TANF	1,318,904	946,136	139.40
SSI	3,268,478	2,755,953	118.60
Households with Noncitizens	681,906	1,319,706	51.67
Households with Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	969,988	2,106,394	46.05
<b>Households by Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level</b>			
No Income	1,984,776	3,568,752	55.62
1 to 50%	3,085,577	2,820,295	109.41
51 to 100%	5,737,095	6,801,583	84.35
101% or more	1,490,971	6,118,141	24.37

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.8. Benefit Receipt Rates by Household-Level Demographic and Economic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Benefits Received by Participating Households (QC)	Potential Benefits to Eligible Households (CPS)	Benefit Receipt Rate (Percent)
Benefits for All Households	2,759,791,831	3,301,638,423	83.59
Benefits for Households with Children	2,074,994,068	2,158,568,264	96.13
Benefits for Households with Elderly	217,720,065	500,812,060	43.47
Benefits for Households with Disabled Nonelderly Adults	448,702,011	735,670,407	60.99
<b>Benefits by Household Composition</b>			
Households with Children	2,074,994,068	2,158,568,264	96.13
One Adult	1,230,886,555	959,359,804	128.30
Married Household Head	401,381,306	661,862,769	60.64
Other Multiple Adults	260,483,839	384,499,745	67.75
Children Only	182,242,368	152,845,946	119.23
Households without Children	684,797,763	1,143,070,159	59.91
<b>Benefits by Household Income Sources</b>			
No Earnings	1,805,517,903	1,974,584,109	91.44
Earnings	954,273,928	1,327,054,314	71.91
TANF	424,278,363	248,502,187	170.73
Unemployment Compensation	63,194,206	31,923,506	197.96
SSI	471,069,359	300,347,878	156.84
Social Security	347,587,102	555,461,637	62.58
<b>Benefits by Household Income as a Percentage of Poverty Level</b>			
No Income	526,198,643	935,322,727	56.26
1 to 50%	1,085,289,339	898,751,370	120.76
51 to 100%	1,000,907,664	1,102,909,813	90.75
101% to 130%	140,120,733	335,371,510	41.78
131% or more	7,275,453	29,283,003	24.85
<b>Benefits by Monthly Household Benefit</b>			
\$10 or less	7,424,104	35,121,386	21.14
\$11 to \$25	4,656,138	12,145,000	38.34
\$26 to \$50	23,070,540	42,125,039	54.77
\$51 to \$75	42,825,165	68,033,868	62.95
\$76 to \$100	54,747,562	92,472,844	59.20
\$101 to \$150	157,443,691	240,632,213	65.43
\$151 to \$200	490,123,038	697,920,130	70.23
\$201 or more	1,979,501,594	2,113,187,942	93.67
<b>Household Benefits as a Percentage of Maximum Benefit</b>			
1 to 25%	56,710,410	147,583,424	38.43
26 to 50%	245,748,548	474,966,925	51.74
51 to 75%	523,354,860	694,066,856	75.40
76 to 99%	773,409,468	675,188,160	114.55
100%	1,160,568,545	1,309,833,059	88.60

Notes: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details.

**Table B.9. Benefit Receipt Rates by Individual-Level Demographic Characteristics, Fiscal Year 2008**

	Prorated Benefits Received by Participating Individuals (QC)	Prorated Potential Benefits to Eligible Individuals (CPS)	Benefit Receipt Rate (Percent)
Benefits for All Individuals	2,759,791,831	3,384,206,497	81.55
Benefits by Age of Individual			
Children Under Age 18	1,351,301,498	1,346,894,207	100.33
Preschool	493,036,395	473,007,730	104.23
School-age	858,265,102	873,886,477	98.21
Adults Age 18 to 59	1,222,807,649	1,650,686,792	74.08
Elderly Age 60 and Over	185,682,684	386,625,498	48.03
Living Alone	141,083,695	192,705,234	73.21
Living with Others	44,598,989	193,920,264	23.00
Benefits for Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	144,625,343	325,628,457	44.41
Benefits for Noncitizens	98,023,957	160,755,343	60.98
Benefits for Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	223,867,067	323,545,660	69.19
Benefits by Gender of Individual			
Male	1,152,721,691	1,527,983,528	75.44
Female	1,607,070,140	1,856,222,968	86.58
Benefits by Employment Status of Nonelderly Adults			
Employed	285,502,867	416,779,469	68.50
Not Employed	937,304,782	1,233,907,323	75.96

Notes: An individual's prorated benefits are calculated by dividing the household benefit by the number of people in the household. Benefit receipt rates by individual-level characteristics are calculated by summing the prorated benefits of individuals with the selected characteristic. Receipt rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. These estimates of participants differ from official participant counts. See Appendix D for details. We do not present 2008 participation rates for racial and ethnic subgroups because data on race and ethnicity for participating household heads are inconsistent with those for eligible household heads. See page 2 for more details.

## **APPENDIX C**

### **CHANGE IN INDIVIDUAL SNAP PARTICIPATION RATES, 1988 TO 2008**



**Table C.1. Change in Individual SNAP Participation Rates 1988 to 2008**

Time Period	Change in Participation Rate	Change in Participants	Change in Eligible Individuals
1988-1990	6.1 points	11.1%	-1.4%
1990-1991	2.8 points	14.6%	8.9%
1991-1992	2.3 points	10.3%	6.1%
1992-1993	1.0 points	5.8%	4.1%
1993-1994 <sup>a</sup>	1.1 points	-0.2%	-2.0%
1994-1995 <sup>a</sup>	-2.1 points	-3.9%	-1.1%
1995-1996	-3.5 points	-5.3%	-0.5%
1996-1997	-5.2 points	-14.7%	-7.7%
1997-1998	-4.2 points	-10.9%	-4.6%
1998-1999 <sup>b</sup>	-1.9 points	-5.9%	-2.8%
1999-2000 <sup>b</sup>	-0.7 points	-5.7%	-4.5%
2000-2001	-2.8 points	0.8%	6.0%
2001-2002	-0.1 points	9.9%	10.1%
2002-2003	2.3 points	11.3%	6.7%
2003-2004	5.0 points	12.4%	3.3%
2004-2005	3.7 points	6.1%	0.1%
2005-2006	2.5 points	2.4%	-1.4%
2006-2007	-1.5 points	1.8%	4.0%
2007-2008	1.0 points	7.0%	5.5%

Sources: SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and March CPS data for the years shown.

<sup>a</sup>There are two estimates for 1994, due to revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility and the number of participants. The original estimate is used for the change between 1993 and 1994; the revised estimate is used for the change between 1994 and 1995.

<sup>b</sup>There are two estimates for 1999, due to reweighting of the March 2000 – 2003 CPS files to Census 2000 by the Census Bureau and revised methodologies for determining SNAP eligibility. The original estimate is used for the change between 1998 and 1999; the revised estimate is used for the change between 1999 and 2000.



## **APPENDIX D**

### **METHODOLOGY**



## METHODOLOGY

The participation rates reported here are based on estimates of individuals eligible for and participating in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The estimates of eligible individuals are derived from a microsimulation model that uses data from the U.S. Census Bureau's March Current Population Survey (CPS) Annual Social and Economic Supplement (ASEC), which provides income and program participation information for the previous calendar year, as well as detailed information on program rules from the fiscal year to simulate eligibility for SNAP. Therefore, estimates of eligible individuals for FY 2008 are based on data from the 2009 CPS ASEC (covering January – December 2008) and program rules from FY 2008 (covering October 2007 – September 2008). The estimates of participants are based on SNAP Statistical Summary of Operations (Program Operations) data and SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) data<sup>1</sup> for the fiscal year. Thus, for estimates of SNAP participants in FY 2008, the Program Operations and SNAP QC data cover October 2007 – September 2008. The resulting participation rates estimate the percentage of individuals eligible for SNAP that choose to participate in the program.<sup>2</sup> Usually, the time period difference between the data for participants (fiscal year) and eligible individuals (calendar year) does not impact the rates. However, the difference may affect the rates during periods of major economic fluctuations or program changes.

This appendix introduces the methodologies we used to estimate the number of individuals eligible for and participating in SNAP.

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<sup>1</sup> In reports for years prior to 2007, we referred to this data as FSP Quality Control (FSPQC) data.

<sup>2</sup> In an average month in FY 2008, about 90,116 individuals participated in the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations (FDPIR). Many of these individuals were income- and asset-eligible for SNAP, but FDPIR participants are not eligible to also participate in SNAP. However, because the number of individuals who are participating in the FDPIR can be estimated only with substantial sampling and nonsampling error, they are included in the number of SNAP-eligible individuals in this report. Because FDPIR participants are included in estimates of SNAP eligibles, but not in estimates of SNAP participants, participation rates are slightly underestimated.

The participation rates presented in this report for 2001 through 2008 are all consistent methodologically except for one minor change, made for the 2007 and 2008 participation estimates and described in Section B.1 of Appendix D. This adjustment was necessitated by a coding change in the SNAP QC data. Because the effect of this change on the 2006 individual participation rate was only two-tenths of a percentage point, we decided not to implement the change for the years prior to 2007 until additional methodological updates are made.

To prepare the 2008 file, we updated the data to the March 2009 CPS and updated the SNAP eligibility parameters and rules through FY 2008. To summarize, we made the following parameter and eligibility rule changes in the 2008 eligibility file:

- Updated the SNAP gross income screen, net income screen, standard deduction amounts, and maximum benefit amounts to reflect FY 2008 regulations
- Updated the regression equation used to estimate SNAP net income, using the FY 2008 SNAP QC data
- Estimated a new asset equation simulating vehicle rules in place in FY 2008
- Updated the percentage of nondisabled nonelderly childless adults qualified to receive SNAP benefits and the estimated percentage of noncitizens who are refugees

The remainder of this appendix describes the methodology used to calculate the participation rates. Tables D.1 through D.6 show the updated eligibility parameters and other information used to update the participation rates.

## **A. Determining SNAP-Eligible Individuals**

The March CPS provides income and program participation information for the previous calendar year.<sup>3</sup> We estimate the number of SNAP-eligible individuals with a microsimulation model that uses March CPS data to simulate SNAP in an average calendar month. Although the model

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<sup>3</sup> A summary of changes in the March CPS over time is presented in Appendix G.

does not capture data specific to a particular month, it does impute monthly income for 12 individual (random) months.<sup>4</sup> We average the results from all 12 simulations to produce an average monthly estimate.

In the simulation procedure, SNAP eligibility guidelines in effect in FY 2008 are applied to each household in the CPS. The SNAP guidelines include unit formation rules, asset limits, and income limits. Because several types of information needed to determine SNAP eligibility are missing from the CPS data, we impute some information to improve the model estimates of eligible households. This estimation procedure is explained below.

### **1. Simulating the Composition of the SNAP Unit**

Rules regarding the composition of the SNAP unit (individuals who must apply for SNAP together) are based on shared living quarters and purchasing and preparing food together. While the CPS defines the dwelling unit according to shared living quarters, it does not identify who purchases and prepares food together. Therefore, we simulate the formation of SNAP units within each household. For most households, we simulate all household members to be in the same SNAP unit. However, for some households with certain compositions (for example, multiple-family households or households with unrelated individuals), we simulate two or more groups of people to form separate SNAP units. The probability of a household forming multiple units is based on observed rates for similar households from SNAP QC data. We also use the following rules to identify SNAP units:

- We exclude ineligible noncitizens and nondisabled nonelderly childless adults subject to work registration.

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<sup>4</sup> In the CPS-based estimate of eligible individuals, we simulate the number of months (or weeks in the case of earnings) that households typically receive various types of income, but without knowing in which months the income is received.

- We exclude SSI recipients who are not eligible for SNAP because they receive cash instead of SNAP benefits in SSI cashout States (currently only California).<sup>5</sup>
- We exclude all individuals who are living in group quarters, are full-time students, or are living in households headed by a member of the Armed Forces.

## **2. Identifying Eligible Noncitizens and Nondisabled Nonelderly Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration**

The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) made most noncitizens ineligible and required many nondisabled childless adults either to work or face time limits on benefit receipt. However, many noncitizens had eligibility restored by the Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act (AREERA) of 1998 and the Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002 (Farm Security Act), while some nondisabled childless adults remained eligible through waivers, exemptions, or by meeting the work requirements. Because the CPS does not track all of the information needed to identify which noncitizens and nondisabled nonelderly childless adults are categorically ineligible for SNAP, we make assumptions about how many and which of these individuals remain eligible. To retain sample size, we implement our eligibility assumptions for these populations through weighting adjustments.<sup>6</sup>

### **a. Identifying Eligible Noncitizens**

In FY 2008, the following legal resident noncitizens were eligible:

- Noncitizens who had lived legally in the United States for more than five years (effective April 2003)

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<sup>5</sup> Since SSI is underreported in the CPS, if we used reported SSI, we would exclude too few individuals in California, where SSI participants are ineligible for SNAP benefits, thus artificially increasing the number of eligible individuals and lowering the participation rate. In other States, the underreporting may affect benefit levels, but is not as likely to affect the number of eligible individuals. To obtain the most accurate number of eligible individuals possible, we simulate SSI receipt in California and exclude simulated SSI recipients.

<sup>6</sup> The weighting adjustments reflect the probability that a household of a certain composition is eligible for SNAP. For example, if a household has one noncitizen, we duplicate the record for that household. In the first copy of the record, we retain the noncitizen and multiply the household weight by the probability that the noncitizen is eligible for SNAP benefits. In the second copy, we exclude the noncitizen and multiply the household weight by the probability that the noncitizen is ineligible.

- Noncitizens who were receiving disability benefits, regardless of date of entry (effective October 2002)
- Noncitizens legally living in the United States who were under age 18, regardless of date of entry (effective October 2003)
- Noncitizens who were admitted as refugees or granted asylum or a stay of deportation (eligible for seven years after arrival)<sup>7</sup>
- Other groups of noncitizens, such as lawful permanent residents with a military connection

The CPS data distinguish between citizens and noncitizens, but do not include more detailed information, such as whether a noncitizen is lawfully in the United States, was admitted as a refugee, or has permanent resident status. Since undocumented noncitizens are ineligible for SNAP, we randomly assign undocumented immigrant status to noncitizens according to estimates of the number of undocumented immigrants in the March CPS by State in 2006 through 2008 and exclude those individuals from the SNAP unit.<sup>8</sup>

The CPS file includes information on noncitizens' year of arrival in the United States, so we use this information to determine which noncitizens have been in the country for at least five years. We identify as eligible in 2008 qualified noncitizens ages 18 and older who have been in the country for at least five years. We also include as eligible in 2008 qualified noncitizens who are under age 18 or who are receiving disability benefits, regardless of year of entry.

We also use CPS year-of-arrival information and data from the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to estimate the percentage of noncitizens admitted as refugees by year of entry. Using these estimates in our 2008 eligibility determination, we assume that 7 percent of noncitizens who entered the United States in 2002 or 2003, 10 percent who entered in 2004 or 2005,

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<sup>7</sup> Refugees typically change their status to Legal Permanent Resident one year after arrival. After five years of residency, both refugees and those granted asylum are eligible under the five-year residency provision.

<sup>8</sup> Unpublished estimates of the number of unauthorized migrants included in the March CPS supplements for 1995 to 1996 and 1998 to 2008 are from Jeffrey Passel, prepared for the Pew Hispanic Center.

and 9 percent who entered in 2006, 2007, or 2008 were admitted as refugees. We identify refugees who have been in the United States for seven years or less as eligible in 2008. The remaining noncitizens are identified as ineligible.

Changes in immigration laws have made it more difficult to estimate the number of noncitizens who are income- and asset-eligible for food assistance. Sponsors of noncitizens who arrived in the United States after 1997 are required to sign a legally enforceable affidavit of support, pledging to support the noncitizen financially for at least 10 years. If the noncitizen applies for SNAP benefits within that 10-year period, the State can sue a nonindigent sponsor to recoup the cost of benefits issued to the sponsored noncitizen. However, the deeming provision applies only to those with a sponsor living outside of the household, since program rules already deem the income of sponsors—typically spouses or parents of minor children—who live with the sponsored immigrant. The deeming provision also does not apply to immigrants without individual sponsors, including those admitted as refugees or granted asylum, and those sponsored by an institution or an employer.

As a result, some noncitizens who appear to be eligible for SNAP based on income and asset tests are, in fact, subject to deeming of their sponsors' income and assets, and therefore are likely either to not be eligible or to choose to remove themselves from the SNAP unit to avoid negative repercussions to their sponsors. To account for this, we used data from the New Immigrant Survey to estimate the percentage of all documented non-refugee noncitizens in the CPS who have been in the country between 5 and 10 years, are required to have one or more sponsors who sign an affidavit of support, and who live in a household separate from at least one sponsor. The survey showed that 26.4 percent of all non-refugee immigrants fit those criteria. We then randomly assigned 26.4 percent of noncitizens arriving after December 1997 to be subject to deeming from a sponsor and therefore ineligible for SNAP.

We exclude from the SNAP unit noncitizens who are undocumented, categorically ineligible, or subject to deeming and assign a prorated portion of their income to the SNAP unit. We also

consider the excluded members' assets when determining the eligibility of the remaining unit members.

**b. Identifying Nondisabled Nonelderly Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration**

Referred to as ABAWDs in past reports, these individuals are ages 18 to 49, not disabled, not living with children under age 18, and are subject to work registration. With some exceptions, these individuals must meet work requirements to participate in SNAP. If they fail to meet the requirements, they are limited to three months of benefit receipt in any 36-month period. They may be exempt from these requirements if they live in an area with high unemployment or insufficient jobs (waiver area), participate in an employment and training program, or are covered by their State's 15-percent exemption.<sup>9</sup>

We identify nondisabled nonelderly childless adults subject to work registration by looking at basic demographic characteristics in the CPS.<sup>10</sup> Because we cannot determine from the CPS which of these individuals remain eligible for SNAP, we impute this information. We estimate the proportion who have not reached the time limit (based on data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation [SIPP]) and the proportion eligible due to residence in a waiver area, participation in an employment and training program, or receipt of the 15-percent exemption using federal and State administrative data.<sup>11</sup> These proportions, as well as the total percentage of nondisabled nonelderly childless adults subject to work registration who are eligible for SNAP, are presented in Table D.1. Nondisabled nonelderly childless adults who are not eligible are excluded

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<sup>9</sup> The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (PL 111-5) suspends the work requirement until October 2010. However, this provision did not take effect until April 2009, so it does not apply to this report.

<sup>10</sup> The population of nondisabled nonelderly childless adults subject to work registration includes some eligible noncitizens.

<sup>11</sup> We estimate the proportion that has received no more than three months of benefits while not working using separate estimates for current participants and for nonparticipants.

from the SNAP unit and, as with noncitizens, have a prorated portion of their income assigned to the SNAP unit and their assets considered when we determine the unit's eligibility.

### **3. Identifying Categorically Eligible SNAP Units**

Certain SNAP units are categorically eligible for SNAP and therefore not subject to income or asset limits. A unit is categorically eligible if all of its members receive SSI, cash or in-kind TANF benefits, or, in some places, General Assistance (GA). A broader interpretation of categorical eligibility rules implemented on November 21, 2000 requires States to confer categorical eligibility on families receiving benefits or services at least 50 percent funded by TANF or Maintenance of Effort (MOE) funds. States have the option of conferring categorical eligibility on families receiving benefits or services less than 50 percent funded by TANF/MOE. They also may confer categorical eligibility on households for which one member receives the benefit or service, but the State determines that the whole household benefits. To be categorically eligible for SNAP, households that receive services or benefits from a TANF/MOE-funded program whose purpose is to prevent out-of-wedlock pregnancies or foster or strengthen marriage must have gross incomes under 200 percent of poverty.

Using CPS data, we can identify units in which all members receive some type of cash public assistance benefits. These units are automatically eligible for SNAP, and those that qualify for a positive benefit are included in the denominator of the participation rates presented in this report.<sup>12</sup>

There are, however, significant challenges in identifying units that are categorically eligible due to the receipt of noncash public assistance benefits. Some States have very broad programs that provide a simple service—a TANF/MOE-funded brochure on domestic violence, for example—to confer categorical eligibility on a large number of households. Other States have a wide variety of

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<sup>12</sup> Because of the underreporting of program participation in the CPS, we likely have underestimated the number of pure public assistance units.

smaller programs, such as job training or after-school programs, with specific eligibility requirements for each program. While we are able to identify households that likely are eligible for some of these programs, we do not have data on which households actually are participating in the programs. For other programs, we are unable to ascertain which households may be eligible. Because of these challenges, we present participation rates that do not include individuals who are eligible solely through noncash TANF/MOE programs. However, our rates do include individuals who are eligible based on expanded vehicle rules.<sup>13</sup>

#### 4. Determining Income Eligibility

Noncategorically eligible SNAP units must meet income limits in order to be eligible for benefits. SNAP units that do not contain elderly or disabled members must have a gross income below 130 percent of the monthly poverty guidelines. There is no gross income limit for units with elderly or disabled members. In addition, all noncategorically eligible SNAP units must have a net income below 100 percent of the poverty guidelines.

Before determining each household's income eligibility, we estimate monthly income and household net income as follows:

- **Estimating Monthly Income.** The CPS database includes information on annual income, but eligibility for SNAP is determined according to monthly income. Therefore, we distribute annual income to months on the basis of patterns of income receipt shown by SIPP data and number of weeks worked shown in CPS data. We then sum the monthly income allocated to each month for each person in the household to determine each household's gross income for each month. Simply dividing annual income by 12 would underestimate the number of eligible individuals in any given month.
- **Estimating Net Income.** The CPS database does not include information on the expenses deducted from gross income to compute net income. Therefore, we model net income as a function of the household's demographic and economic characteristics for

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<sup>13</sup> SNAP asset rules and our asset-eligibility imputation are described in Section A.5 of this appendix.

each year. This model is based on patterns observed in the SNAP QC data. The estimated relationships (coefficients) are presented in Table D.2.

We use the SNAP gross and net income screens, standard deduction amounts, and maximum benefit amounts to reflect regulations for each fiscal year. We then determine income eligibility for each household based on these regulations. These parameters, along with other SNAP eligibility criteria, are presented in Table D.3.

## **5. Determining Asset Eligibility**

To be eligible for SNAP benefits, a noncategorically eligible SNAP unit must have countable assets under the applicable SNAP asset limit. If the unit contains an elderly or disabled person, the asset limit is \$3,000. For all other households, the asset limit is \$2,000. Since asset balances are not reported in the CPS database, we use equations estimated from our SIPP-based microsimulation model to impute the probability that income-eligible units subject to the asset test are asset-eligible, and therefore fully eligible.

Expansions in SNAP vehicle rules were gradually implemented across States throughout 2001 and 2002. Regulations implemented in January 2001 exclude from the asset test the value of vehicles with equity less than \$1,500 and the value of vehicles used to produce income, used as a home, used to transport a disabled household member, or used to carry fuel or water. In addition, for each adult household member, one vehicle not totally excluded is exempt from the equity test and is instead counted at the fair market value (FMV) in excess of \$4,650. One additional vehicle per minor household member driven by the minor to work, school, or training also is counted at the vehicle's FMV in excess of \$4,650.

Additional vehicle rule expansions began in July 2001, when States were permitted to align their SNAP vehicle rules with rules in place for other programs, such as TANF or child care assistance. In response to this new flexibility, States gradually began changing their vehicle rules. Additional States

used broader categorical eligibility rules to exempt more households from the asset test. By the end of FY 2007, all States had implemented changes in the SNAP vehicle rules.

We simulate vehicle rules implemented through either program alignment or categorical eligibility. We do this to be consistent with our estimates of participating households.<sup>14</sup> As a result, both the numerator and the denominator are restricted to households that are either asset-eligible based on expanded State-level vehicle rules and income-eligible or are pure cash public assistance (PA) households. For September 2008, we simulate 31 States as excluding the value of all vehicles when determining assets, and an additional 12 States as excluding at least one vehicle per household. For the years covered in this report, we have modeled 20 different vehicle rules to fully capture State-level differences.

For years prior to 2005 and for 2007, we modeled mid-year vehicle rule changes by estimating asset imputation equations at two points in time. For instance, for FY 2007, the first set of equations simulates SNAP vehicle rules in place in April 2007 and is used to simulate the first half of the fiscal year. The second set of equations simulates vehicle rules in place in September 2007 and is used to simulate the second half of the fiscal year. For FY 2005, FY 2006, and FY 2008, since vehicle rules did not change significantly during the fiscal year, we modeled one set of equations to capture the vehicle rules.

The unweighted counts of households in the March CPS for 1976 through 2008 are listed in Table D.4. Unweighted counts of households by their probability of being eligible in 2008 are listed in Table D.5.

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<sup>14</sup> Because many households flagged as categorically eligible in the FY 2008 SNAP QC data file have no recorded countable assets, we are unable to identify which of them would fail the asset test if they were not categorically eligible (Section B.1).

## **6. Identifying SNAP-Eligible Units with TANF**

Although we simulate SNAP-eligible units as described above, we use the reported information in the CPS to identify those SNAP-eligible units receiving TANF. Because participation in TANF is underreported in the CPS, the number of SNAP-eligible units with TANF is underestimated. Typically, the number of households reporting TANF receipt in the March CPS is about 75 percent of the administrative totals. This leads to participation rates exceeding 100 percent for SNAP-eligible households receiving TANF.<sup>15</sup>

Rates for subgroups that include a large proportion of TANF recipients, such as households with single adults and children, also exceed 100 percent. Difficulties in correctly identifying which household members purchase and prepare food separately, and therefore form their own SNAP unit, may add to the problem of rates exceeding 100 percent. Rates for other subgroups, such as SNAP-eligible households with SSI, also exceed 100 percent due to underreporting and possible unit definition issues.

## **B. Determining the Number of SNAP Participants**

The number of participants used in the calculation of the participation rate comes from the SNAP Program Operations data and the SNAP QC data file. We use these databases because SNAP participation is underreported in the CPS data. The Program Operations data provides counts of individuals and households that were issued benefits and the total dollar value of these benefits in each month of the fiscal year. The SNAP QC data file is an edited version of the raw data file generated by the SNAP Quality Control System and contains data on the demographic and

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<sup>15</sup> While the CPS-based number of eligible SNAP households with TANF (the denominator in the participation rate calculation) is underestimated, the administrative number of participating SNAP households with TANF (the numerator) is not underestimated. The resulting participation rate exceeds 100 percent.

economic characteristics of a sample of participating households. Sample sizes are found in Appendix Table D.6.

The FY 2008 SNAP QC data file is weighted to match Program Operations counts for households, individuals, and benefits, adjusting those totals to exclude benefits issued in response to a disaster and benefits issued to individuals found to be ineligible. We determine benefits issued under disaster-related rules by using data from USDA on the number of households and individuals who received disaster benefits, the amount of benefits issued to those households, and the amount of additional disaster-related benefits issued to existing SNAP participants. We reduced the Program Operations counts of households, individuals, and benefits by the disaster-related counts in the months and States in which the disaster relief occurred.<sup>16</sup> To adjust the Program Operations counts for benefits issued in error, we first use the unweighted SNAP QC data file to calculate disqualification rates for households, individuals, and benefits, and then reduce the Program Operations counts by those percentages.

The household disqualification rate is the percentage of all participating households that are either ineligible or are eligible but do not qualify for a positive benefit. The individual disqualification rate is the percentage of all participating individuals in households that are not eligible for a positive benefit.<sup>17</sup> The benefit disqualification rate is slightly more complex—it takes into account over- and under-issuances to eligible households as well as benefits issued to disqualified households.

SNAP QC files for years prior to 2005 are not weighted on the individual or benefit level, so for those years we ratio-adjust estimates of eligible participating individuals and benefits to match disaster- and ineligible-adjusted Program Operations counts of participating individuals and issued benefits. To be consistent with the estimated eligible population, we also remove households in

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<sup>16</sup> In FY 2008, individuals in 13 States received disaster assistance. Most assistance occurred in September in response to hurricanes Ike and Gustav.

<sup>17</sup> The individual disqualification rate in FY 2008 was 1.6 percent (460,955 ineligible participants).

Guam and the U.S. Virgin Islands and households that are categorically eligible and not income-eligible.

For the participation rate numerators, we use the average monthly number of participants over the 12 months in the fiscal year. The sample sizes of participating households in the SNAP QC data files are listed in Table D.6.

### **1. Identifying Categorically Eligible Participating SNAP Units**

Because the FY 2008 SNAP QC file does not contain the individual-level information on TANF receipt needed to identify pure cash PA households, we use an algorithm for determining program coverage.<sup>18</sup> First, we assign coverage flags for individual programs. SSI and GA cover only the person coded with the income, whereas TANF can cover additional family members, as follows:

- TANF received by the head of the unit or the head's spouse covers the unit head, spouse, and children (as identified by the relationship codes and ages).
- TANF received by a child of the head of the unit covers that child and other relatives (presumably the grandchildren of the unit head).
- In child-only units, TANF receipt anywhere in the household covers all the children.

After assigning coverage flags, we identify a unit as pure cash PA if everyone in the unit is covered by TANF, SSI, or GA, or if the unit has TANF income and all adults are covered by TANF, SSI, or GA. Pure cash PA units are categorically eligible for SNAP and therefore exempt from the income and asset tests. These units still must qualify for a positive benefit.

For FY 2007 and FY 2008, we implemented a minor correction to the algorithm to adjust for the fact that TANF receipt is no longer reported for participants in the Minnesota Family Investment Program (MFIP). As a result of the missing data, in FY 2005 and FY 2006 some MFIP

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<sup>18</sup> The FY 2003 through FY 2007 SNAP QC data files also did not contain person-level information on TANF receipt. The FY 2002 and earlier SNAP QC data files included additional person-level information on program participation.

households were not identified as pure PA and were incorrectly dropped from the participation rate numerator. For 2007 and 2008, we correctly included these MFIP households.

We can also identify units that are categorically eligible through noncash PA programs through a variable in the SNAP QC data that flags these units. By applying the applicable income tests, we can determine which of these units are not income-eligible and remove them from the participation rate numerator so as to be consistent with our estimates of eligible individuals.<sup>19</sup> However, because the assets of categorically eligible units usually are not recorded on the file, we are unable to identify which of these households would fail the asset test if they were not categorically eligible. As a result, we do not remove any households from the numerator based on their assets; also, we restrict the denominator to households that are asset-eligible based on expanded State-level asset rules and are either income-eligible or pure cash PA households.

### **C. Calculating SNAP Participation Rates**

We estimate participation rates by dividing the number of participants recorded in the adjusted Program Operations data by the number of eligible individuals simulated on the basis of CPS data. The numbers of participants and eligible individuals used to calculate the 2008 participation rates are presented in Appendix B.

### **D. Comparison with SIPP-Based Rates**

In addition to the CPS-based estimates presented in this report, the SIPP can also be used to measure participation rates. SIPP data contain more of the information needed to estimate eligibility for SNAP, and the methodology used to estimate eligibility with SIPP data more closely replicates the actual SNAP eligibility determination process. However, the SIPP data cover a shorter period

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<sup>19</sup> We removed 339,612 participants (1.2 percent) who were categorically eligible but not income eligible from our FY 2008 participant total.

than the CPS, and certain types of SIPP data needed to estimate eligible individuals are available for only a limited number of years.

Historically, the trends identified through the CPS-based data have been consistent with those identified through SIPP-based data (Figure D.1). The change in methodology implemented with the 1995 estimates shifted the CPS-based rates up and, as a result, both the trend and the level of the CPS-based rates are more in line with SIPP-based rates.<sup>20</sup>

## **E. Future Methodological Improvements**

We are assessing several improvements to the SNAP eligibility simulation. Some or all of these methodological enhancements, described below, will likely be incorporated into future participation rate estimates. All changes that we make in the future will also be implemented retroactively to prior years so that we can continue to compare trends in the participation rates over time.

***Improved Unit Formation Methodology.*** The formation of SNAP units—people who purchase and prepare food together and, therefore, are required to apply for SNAP together—is an important component of the eligibility simulation (Section A.1). We are in the process of incorporating enhancements to the unit formation methodology originally developed for our SIPP-based microsimulation model into the CPS-based eligibility simulation used to derive the estimates in this report. While we have not yet completed this work, we anticipate that the improved unit formation methodology will result in higher estimates of the number of individuals eligible for SNAP and, therefore, lower participation rate estimates.

***TANF and SSI Simulations.*** The current methodology relies upon reported receipt of TANF and SSI to simulate SNAP eligibility and estimate the number of eligible individuals with those types of income. Because both are underreported in the CPS, estimates of the number of SNAP-eligible

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<sup>20</sup> See Cody and Trippe (1997) for more information.

individuals receiving TANF and SSI are too low, resulting in subgroup participation rates that are artificially high and often exceed 100 percent (Section A.6).<sup>21</sup> We have developed simulations of TANF and SSI eligibility and receipt for all States and find that using simulated TANF and SSI has a minimal effect on the estimated overall individual participation rate, but substantially improves estimates of subgroup participation rates, particularly those for individuals in households receiving TANF or SSI.

***Enhanced Asset Eligibility Imputation.*** The current methodology employs a set of 20 equations, estimated on a microsimulation model based on SIPP data for 1999, to impute the probability that income-eligible households subject to the asset test are asset-eligible (Section A.5). The current equations simulate expanded State vehicle rules but not other asset eligibility expansions implemented by States. We have developed a set of 27 new asset equations that simulate all State asset eligibility expansions, including the elimination of the asset test for certain households in some States. In addition, the new equations are estimated on our most recent SIPP-based microsimulation model, based on data for 2005. We find that implementing the new asset equations estimated on more recent data has only a small effect on the estimated individual participation rate, although a somewhat larger effect on certain subgroups, such as those with gross income over 130 percent of poverty.

***Enhanced Net Income Imputation.*** In the current methodology, an Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) model estimated on SNAP QC data is used to impute net income on the basis of a variety of economic and demographic characteristics (Section A.4). We are currently assessing the use of a Tobit model to predict net income rather than the current OLS model. A Tobit model is a regression model designed for censored data, or data with a lower or upper bound, such as net

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<sup>21</sup> The one exception is for SSI in California, where simulated SSI is used to insure that the correct number of SSI recipients is excluded from SNAP eligibility (Section A.1).

income. We are also assessing the effect of estimating the net income equation (either an OLS or Tobit model) on our SIPP-based microsimulation model rather than SNAP QC data. The SIPP-based model may be the better data source to use to impute the net income of potentially eligible low-income households because it includes data on households simulated to be eligible for SNAP. On the other hand, the SNAP QC data files may be preferable because they are updated annually, while the SIPP-based model is updated less frequently. Although we have not yet completed our assessment, it appears that changes to the net income imputation will have only a small effect on the estimated individual participation rate, but larger effects on the income distribution of estimated SNAP-eligible individuals.

***Fiscal Year Eligibility File.*** Although the SNAP eligibility simulation uses program rules for a given fiscal year, the underlying CPS ASEC data is for the calendar year (introduction to Appendix D). For example, the FY 2008 eligibility estimates are based on program rules for October 2007 through September 2008 and data for January 2008 through December 2008. We are currently assessing the feasibility of combining data from two calendar years of CPS ASEC data to form a fiscal year data file, which would be consistent with the data file used to estimate participants. We expect this change to have a minimal effect on estimated participation rates in most years. However, using a fiscal year eligibility file will result in more accurate estimates of participation rates in years with major economic changes in the first quarter of the fiscal year or last quarter of the calendar year.

In addition to developing and assessing enhancements to the eligibility simulation, we are also investigating two known errors in the QC SNAP data. First, the number of individuals participating in SNAP has been over-reported for several years in Missouri. (Reported numbers of SNAP households are correct.) We hope to receive corrected data for Missouri and revise participant totals for all affected years in next year's report. Second, California has been over-reporting the number of SNAP households that receive TANF. As we do not anticipate receiving corrected data, we are

working on an algorithm to re-categorize TANF income in certain households (for instance, those without children) as general assistance or other government assistance.



**Table D.1. Percent of Nondisabled Nonelderly Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration Who Are Eligible for SNAP by Reason for Eligibility, 2008**

	Percent Eligible by Reason for Eligibility				Total Percent Eligible for SNAP <sup>a</sup>
	Living in Waiver Area	Have Not Exceeded Time Limits <sup>a</sup>	In E & T Program	Received Exemption	
Alabama	10	62 / 72	0	0	66 / 75
Alaska	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Arizona	32	62 / 72	0	0	74 / 81
Arkansas	60	62 / 72	0	0	85 / 89
California	23	62 / 72	0	0	71 / 79
Colorado	2	62 / 72	100	0	100
Connecticut	32	62 / 72	0	0	74 / 81
Delaware	0	62 / 72	100	0	100
District of Columbia	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Florida	1	62 / 72	1	1	63 / 73
Georgia	29	62 / 72	0	0	73 / 80
Hawaii	1	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
Idaho	16	62 / 72	100	0	100
Illinois	66	62 / 72	1	0	87 / 91
Indiana	44	62 / 72	0	1	79 / 84
Iowa	0	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
Kansas	37	62 / 72	0	0	76 / 82
Kentucky	61	62 / 72	0	0	85 / 89
Louisiana	91	62 / 72	0	0	97 / 98
Maine	56	62 / 72	29	0	88 / 91
Maryland	2	62 / 72	0	0	63 / 73
Massachusetts	54	62 / 72	100	1	100
Michigan	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Minnesota	16	62 / 72	0	0	68 / 76
Mississippi	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
Missouri	18	62 / 72	0	0	69 / 77
Montana	20	62 / 72	1	0	70 / 78
Nebraska	0	62 / 72	100	1	100
Nevada	1	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
New Hampshire	0	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
New Jersey	52	62 / 72	100	0	100
New Mexico	62	62 / 72	0	1	86 / 89
New York	63	62 / 72	100	1	100
North Carolina	55	62 / 72	0	1	83 / 88
North Dakota	15	62 / 72	0	0	67 / 76
Ohio	67	62 / 72	100	0	100
Oklahoma	13	62 / 72	0	0	67 / 76
Oregon	100	62 / 72	5	0	100
Pennsylvania	62	62 / 72	0	0	86 / 90
Rhode Island	45	62 / 72	0	0	79 / 84
South Carolina	100	62 / 72	0	0	100
South Dakota	16	62 / 72	100	0	100
Tennessee	82	62 / 72	0	0	93 / 95
Texas	1	62 / 72	100	0	100
Utah	13	62 / 72	100	0	100
Vermont	0	62 / 72	0	0	62 / 72
Virginia	16	62 / 72	0	0	68 / 76
Washington	70	62 / 72	0	0	89 / 92
West Virginia	44	62 / 72	0	0	79 / 84
Wisconsin	44	62 / 72	1	0	79 / 84
Wyoming	7	62 / 72	0	0	64 / 74

<sup>a</sup> The first number is for individuals in households reporting receipt of SNAP benefits in the SIPP. The second number is for individuals in households not reporting receipt of SNAP benefits in the SIPP.

**Table D.2. Results for the SNAP Net Income Regression Equations**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Constant	- 112.6822 *	- 125.4106 *	- 182.9571 *	- 228.79176 *
	(4.38793)	(4.56782)	(4.71062)	(4.95113)
Gross Income Minus Standard and Earned Income Deductions	1.05739 *	1.06358 *	1.08187 *	0.96967 *
	(0.00584)	(0.00575)	(0.00599)	(0.00575)
Flag for No Housing Expenses	69.38112 *	71.78718 *	88.10331 *	92.69704 *
	(1.51534)	(1.55999)	(1.64417)	(1.77867)
Deduction	- 0.02505 *	- 0.03376 *	- 0.02864 *	- 0.02156 *
	(0.00396)	(0.00412)	(0.00419)	(0.00442)
Maximum Allowable Dependent Care	- 0.00729	- 0.00637	- 0.01036	- 0.02570 *
	(0.00544)	(0.0056)	(0.00583)	(0.00622)
Unit Size	- 6.25171 *	- 6.76042 *	- 6.48828 *	6.72508 *
	(0.85948)	(0.86919)	(0.9028)	(0.90144)
Flag for Household that Contains a Disabled Member	- 8.67301 *	0.16096	- 7.93387 *	- 14.27762 *
	(1.75215)	(1.82341)	(1.92109)	(2.05375)
SSI Income	0.05498 *	0.06049 *	0.06932 *	0.07597 *
	(0.00331)	(0.00341)	(0.00345)	(0.00368)
TANF Income	0.02121 *	0.02046 *	0.01315 *	0.04034 *
	(0.00416)	(0.00446)	(0.00477)	(0.00519)
Flag for Gross Income of \$100 or Less	93.07207 *	100.10238 *	118.88798 *	145.21487 *
	(3.4812)	(3.62107)	(3.72712)	(3.91504)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$101 and	93.9834 *	100.65511 *	121.60384 *	136.73779 *
	(3.83583)	(3.98906)	(4.10418)	(4.37301)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$201 and	48.29603 *	61.03039 *	79.63212 *	85.52055 *
	(3.15632)	(3.30995)	(3.42055)	(3.65884)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$301 and	20.58321 *	28.73629 *	39.48056 *	45.51629 *
	(2.79878)	(2.92568)	(3.10402)	(3.30786)
Gross Income as a Percentage of Poverty	- 0.28379 *	- 0.40238 *	- 0.56133 *	0.40761 *
	(0.06271)	(0.06552)	(0.0695)	(0.06957)
Gross Income as a Percentage of Poverty if White Head of Household	- 0.11945 *	- 0.09646 *	- 0.21509 *	- 0.26058 *
	(0.01839)	(0.01938)	(0.02079)	(0.02251)
Gross Income as a Percentage of Poverty if Hispanic Head of Household	- 0.17943 *	- 0.07442 *	- 0.07368 *	- 0.21237 *
	(0.02877)	(0.03025)	(0.03188)	(0.03411)
Flag for Households Residing in Alaska	- 3.75758	21.52043 *	46.4004 *	41.54208 *
	(7.39527)	(7.14045)	(7.78751)	(8.37939)

**Table D.2 (continued)**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2001	2002	2003	2004
Flag for Households Residing in Hawaii	9.16738 (4.74176)	28.80363 * (4.81748)	79.66978 * (5.22521)	88.90215 * (5.55783)
Flag for Households Residing in California	24.69593 * (4.68272)	29.18724 * (4.91341)	63.80688 * (4.89846)	12.77084 * (5.47591)
Flag for Households Residing in New York	- 88.56049 * (4.3795)	- 122.2255 * (4.65071)	55.34711 * (4.72065)	- 80.90515 * (5.4125)
Flag for Households Residing in the	- 32.87453 * (2.67895)	- 14.87896 * (2.79359)	9.13402 * (2.92204)	- 20.85525 * (3.16983)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mid-Atlantic	- 9.29002 * (2.41658)	- 0.47923 (2.48302)	30.34131 * (2.58427)	14.60675 * (2.82093)
Flag for Households Residing in the	3.79357 (2.29971)	14.8601 * (2.39514)	35.82232 * (2.50708)	28.18480 * (2.70949)
Flag for Households Residing in the Midwest	- 14.4667 * (2.39445)	- 5.70294 * (2.49169)	6.4728 * (2.68803)	- 4.30432 (2.94188)
Flag for Households Residing in the	1.9032 (2.43158)	12.86077 * (2.49545)	42.29309 * (2.62936)	36.53885 * (2.86207)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mountain Plains	- 1.89416 (2.34561)	2.31958 (2.4043)	31.31009 * (2.48722)	16.40894 * (2.71689)
Flag for Households Participating in MFIP	NA	NA	- 145.3415 * (6.76489)	210.56995 * (7.42351)
Flag for Households Participating in SSI CAP in MS, NC, NY, SC, or TX	NA	NA	NA	292.87668 * (6.41763)
Flag for Households Participating in SSI CAP in FL, MA, or WA	NA	NA	NA	- 71.90365 * (9.45977)
Sample Size	46,412	47,452	47,954	47,855
R <sup>2</sup>	0.8741	0.8704	0.862	0.8445
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.8741	0.8704	0.862	0.8444

**Table D.2 (continued)**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Constant	- 236.6652 *	- 228.2656 *	- 242.9995 *	- 234.4226 *
	(5.04374)	(5.27265)	(5.38396)	(5.17684)
Gross Income Minus Standard and Earned Income Deductions	0.97247 *	0.96482 *	0.93917 *	0.97192 *
	(0.00593)	(0.00615)	(0.00598)	(0.00584)
Flag for No Housing Expenses	96.94207 *	102.7976 *	104.02513 *	107.66849 *
	(1.88591)	(2.00290)	(2.07145)	(2.05883)
Deduction	- 0.02857 *	- 0.04498 *	- 0.03487 *	- 0.05641 *
	(0.00451)	(0.00464)	(0.00469)	(0.00450)
Maximum Allowable Dependent Care	- 0.02642 *	- 0.04052 *	- 0.03972 *	- 0.02631 *
	(0.00661)	(0.00720)	(0.00734)	(0.00742)
Unit Size	7.52245 *	7.70777 *	9.70312 *	5.88496 *
	(0.93625)	(1.01042)	(1.01137)	(1.01145)
Flag for Household that Contains a Disabled Member	- 12.19146 *	- 14.1958 *	- 20.04894 *	- 16.48193 *
	(2.14437)	(2.27566)	(2.32146)	(2.34974)
SSI Income	0.08601 *	0.07896 *	0.07938 *	0.07301 *
	(0.00378)	(0.00391)	(0.00388)	(0.00376)
TANF Income	0.04491 *	0.03344 *	0.03190 *	0.04291 *
	(0.00553)	(0.00628)	(0.00681)	(0.00692)
Flag for Gross Income of \$100 or Less	149.9315 *	145.72049 *	158.07385 *	163.9635 *
	(4.05408)	(4.22194)	(4.34275)	(4.18610)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$101 and	141.92914 *	148.57149 *	158.26291 *	164.31469 *
	(4.62120)	(4.94720)	(5.17242)	(5.19595)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$201 and	95.26772 *	105.2159 *	115.44586 *	126.22869 *
	(3.92684)	(4.30116)	(4.48934)	(4.56197)
Flag for Gross Income Between \$301 and	46.91855 *	56.56091 *	67.10417 *	74.07597 *
	(3.55714)	(4.00322)	(4.27634)	(4.41640)
Gross Income as a Percentage of Poverty	0.38613 *	0.3198 *	0.32350 *	0.03474
	(0.07299)	(0.07694)	(0.07530)	(0.07500)
Gross Income as a Percentage of Poverty if White Head of Household	- 0.30474 *	- 0.2638 *	- 0.03400	- 0.05571 *
	(0.02369)	(0.02471)	(0.02354)	(0.02372)
Gross Income as a Percentage of Poverty if Hispanic Head of Household	- 0.22876 *	- 0.15963 *	- 0.11602 *	- 0.14997 *
	(0.03659)	(0.03794)	(0.04535)	(0.04573)
Flag for Households Residing in Alaska	37.73781 *	42.47873 *	17.39157 *	49.17399 *
	(7.94323)	(8.47712)	(8.81238)	(8.87883)

**Table D.2 (continued)**

Explanatory Variable	Coefficients Estimated Using Administrative Data For:			
	2005	2006	2007	2008
Flag for Households Residing in Hawaii	84.4869 *	92.84833 *	108.66472 *	97.09372 *
	(5.73912)	(6.14183)	(6.41940)	(6.29717)
Flag for Households Residing in California	13.84785 *	4.16605	- 20.72347 *	- 3.65965
	(5.66192)	(5.98781)	(6.15184)	(6.03839)
Flag for Households Residing in New York	- 43.51807 *	- 91.96236 *	- 67.77581 *	- 97.11782 *
	(5.8815)	(6.19668)	(6.35245)	(6.29351)
Flag for Households Residing in the	- 18.19682 *	- 42.48817 *	- 63.32280 *	- 76.09924 *
	(3.17959)	(3.37835)	(3.53153)	(3.50966)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mid-Atlantic	18.26132 *	16.86089 *	12.74883 *	9.81183 *
	(2.90475)	(3.09487)	(3.30377)	( 3.27103)
Flag for Households Residing in the	26.63604 *	29.21819 *	24.58465 *	30.64826 *
	(2.7659)	(2.92469)	(3.10871)	( 3.09603)
Flag for Households Residing in the Midwest	- 1.73601	- 19.2531 *	- 12.69228 *	- 9.75414 *
	(2.99986)	(3.19838)	(3.15832)	(3.14931)
Flag for Households Residing in the	41.33699 *	41.3745 *	41.14932 *	44.57528 *
	(3.02181)	(3.20762)	(3.33315)	(3.35590)
Flag for Households Residing in the Mountain Plains	17.22411 *	9.10594 *	2.15176 *	3.96897
	(2.75405)	(2.96399)	(3.14795)	(3.13521)
Flag for Households Participating in MFIP	205.75661 *	104.63726 *	77.26954 *	83.27565 *
	(7.68924)	(7.95268)	(8.42031)	(8.56816)
Flag for Households Participating in SSI CAP in KY, LA, MS, NC, NY, PA, SC, TX, or VA	282.19337 *	266.95631 *	319.14339 *	285.75518 *
	(7.15411)	(7.29981)	(6.23622)	( 5.96420)
Flag for Households Participating in SSI CAP in FL, MA, or WA	- 36.1241 *	- 22.64272 *	- 25.44997 *	- 23.59374 *
	(5.70086)	(5.67541)	(5.92446)	(6.20568)
Sample Size	45,606	44,704	46,424	49,077
R <sup>2</sup>	0.8437	0.8334	0.8221	0.8272
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.8436	0.8333	0.8220	0.8271

\*Indicates significance at the .05 level using a two-tailed t-test. Coefficients identified as significant at the .05 level are those with t-values greater than 1.96.

NA indicates that the variable is not applicable for the specified year.

**Table D.3. Fiscal Year 2008 SNAP Eligibility Parameters**

Countable Assets Screen	\$2,000 for households without elderly or disabled members \$3,000 for households with elderly or disabled members			
Gross Income Screen	130 percent of the Monthly Poverty Guidelines			
Net Income Screen	100 percent of the Monthly Poverty Guidelines			
Monthly Poverty Guidelines	Unit Size	Continental US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1	\$ 851	\$1,065	\$ 980
	2	1,141	1,427	1,313
	3	1,431	1,790	1,646
	4	1,721	2,152	1,980
	5	2,011	2,515	2,313
	6	2,301	2,877	2,646
	7	2,591	3,240	2,980
	8	2,881	3,602	3,313
Each Additional	+ 290	+ 363	+ 334	
Standard Deduction	Unit Size	Continental US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1 - 3	\$134	\$229	\$189
	4	143	229	189
	5	167	229	192
	6+	191	239	220
Maximum Dependent Care Deduction	\$200 for dependents under age 2, \$175 for dependents age 2 and over			
Excess Shelter Deduction		Continental US	Alaska	Hawaii
		\$431	\$689	\$581
Benefit Calculation	Benefit = Maximum benefit - 30 percent of Net Income			
Maximum Monthly Benefit	Unit Size	Continental US	Alaska	Hawaii
	1	\$162	\$ 194	\$ 258
	2	298	356	473
	3	426	510	678
	4	542	648	861
	5	643	770	1,022
	6	772	924	1,227
	7	853	1,021	1,356
	8	975	1,167	1,549
Each Additional	+ 122	+ 146	+ 194	
Minimum Monthly Benefit	Unit Size	Continental US		
	1 - 2	\$10		
	3+	0		
Categorically Eligible	Receipt of cash or in-kind TANF benefits, SSI, or GA			
SSI Cashout States	California only			

Note: Eligibility parameters are for the 50 States and the District of Columbia.

**Table D.4. Unweighted Sample Sizes for the CPS, 1976 to 2008**

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Analysis Year	All Households
1976	68,294
1978	68,455
1980	81,451
1982	73,195
1984	74,568
1986	73,843
1988	70,454
1990	75,076
1991	74,236
1992	73,878
1993	73,126
1994	72,152
1995	63,339
1996	64,046
1997	64,659
1998	65,377
1999	51,016
2000	78,054
2001	78,265
2002	78,310
2003	77,149
2004	76,447
2005	75,939
2006	75,477
2007	75,872
2008	76,185

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**Table D.5. Unweighted Counts of Households by the Probability of Being Eligible, 2008**

	Unweighted Counts
All Households <sup>a</sup>	74,619
Households With a Probability of Being Eligible Greater Than Zero	
Total	15,575
Probability of Being Eligible	
>0.0 to 0.25	1,046
>0.25 to 0.50	786
>0.50 to 0.75	3,082
>0.75 to <1.00	8,845
1.00	1,816

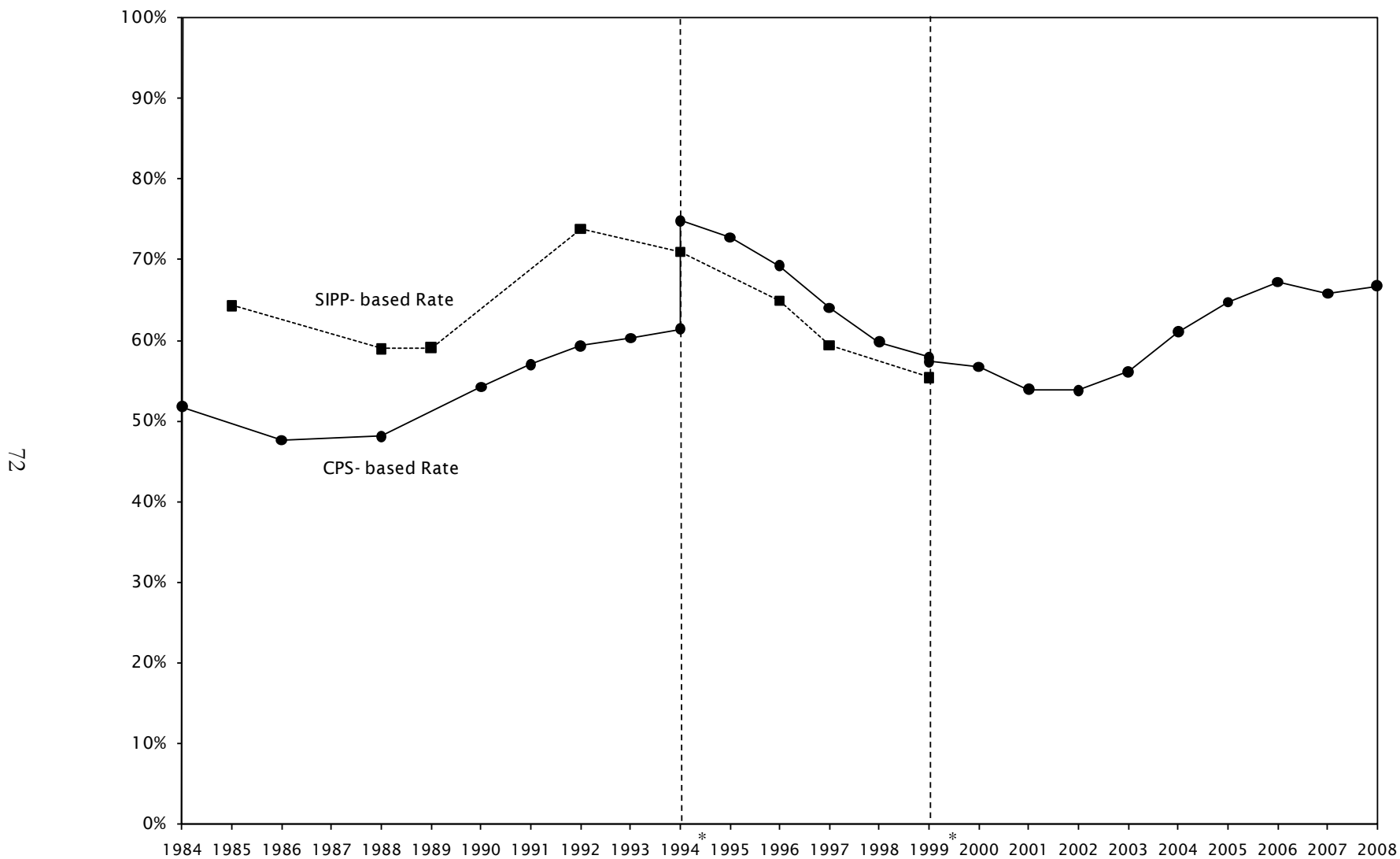
Note: Estimates in this table reflect median monthly numbers of CPS households. We calculate a unit's probability of being eligible for SNAP benefits by determining whether it passes the appropriate income tests and then estimating the probability of it passing the asset test. In households with multiple SNAP units, the probabilities of each unit are combined into one household probability. We multiply the final probability of being eligible by the weight to determine the unit's contribution to the total (weighted) number of eligible units.

<sup>a</sup> This count of unweighted households is lower than that presented in Table D.4 because it only includes households that form potentially eligible SNAP units. Those that do not form units, and are thus excluded from the table, contain only categorically-ineligible individuals. These individuals are either undocumented noncitizens, California SSI recipients, full-time students, living in group quarters, or living in households headed by a member of the Armed Forces.

**Table D.6. Unweighted Sample Sizes for the SNAP QC Case Records**

Month/Year	SNAP QC Case Records
September 1976	11,038
February 1978	14,211
August 1980	4,140
August 1982	7,224
August 1984	6,918
July/August 1986	11,010
July/August 1988	10,695
July/August 1990	10,639
July/August 1991	10,602
July/August 1992	9,586
July/August 1993	9,389
August/September 1994	8,933
August/September 1995	8,313
August/September 1996	8,304
August/September 1997	7,907
August/September 1998	7,336
August/September 1999	7,558
Fiscal Year 1999	46,935
Fiscal Year 2000	46,336
Fiscal Year 2001	46,412
Fiscal Year 2002	47,602
Fiscal Year 2003	48,896
Fiscal Year 2004	48,806
Fiscal Year 2005	46,673
Fiscal Year 2006	45,734
Fiscal Year 2007	47,469
Fiscal Year 2008	50,214

Figure D.1. Trends in Individual Participation Rates by Data Source, 1984 to 2008



Source: SNAP Program Operations, SNAP QC, SIPP, and March CPS data for the years shown.

\* There are breaks in the time series in 1994 and 1999 due to revisions in the methodology for determining eligibility.

## **APPENDIX E**

### **SAMPLING ERROR OF PARTICIPATION RATE ESTIMATES**



## SAMPLING ERROR OF PARTICIPATION RATE ESTIMATES

The participation rates contained in this report represent the ratio of SNAP participants to SNAP-eligible individuals. Participant counts are based on SNAP Program Operations data and SNAP Quality Control (SNAP QC) data. Eligible counts are based on March CPS data. Since both counts are derived from samples, both are subject to statistical sampling error, as are the resulting participation rate estimates.

### Standard Errors of Participation Rates

One indicator of the magnitude of the sampling error associated with a given estimate is its standard error. Standard errors measure the variation in estimated values that would be observed if multiple replications of the sample were drawn. The magnitude of the standard errors depends on three factors: (1) the degree of variation in the variable within the population from which the sample is drawn; (2) the design of the sample, including such issues as stratification and sampling probabilities; and (3) the size of the sample on which the estimate is based.

Generally, the standard error of a nonlinear variable, such as a participation rate, cannot be estimated directly. Rather, one must estimate the standard error of a linear approximation of the nonlinear variable. To estimate the standard error of participation rates contained in this report, we use a Taylor series expansion to produce a linear approximation of the participation rate. The variance of the participation rate,  $\text{var}(r)$ , can be expressed as a function of the number of participants ( $p$ ), the number of eligible individuals ( $e$ ), and their respective variances:

$$(1) \quad \text{var}(r) = \text{var}(p/e) = (p/e)^2 [\text{var}(p)/p^2 + \text{var}(e)/e^2]$$

The standard error of the participation rate is simply the square root of the variance.

Because the SNAP QC sample design is relatively simple, we directly calculated the variance of the number of participants. The CPS, however, has a complex sample design. Therefore, we estimated the variance of the number of eligible individuals using a “jackknife” estimator. The

jackknife method involves calculating alternative estimates of the number of eligible individuals based on subsamples of the CPS, then obtaining a variance by measuring the variability in the estimates.

## **Confidence Intervals**

Standard errors can be used to compute confidence intervals for the estimated participation rates. A confidence interval is a range of values that will contain the true value of an estimated participation rate with a known probability. For instance, a 90-percent confidence interval extends 1.645 standard errors above and below the estimated rate, and indicates that there is a 90-percent chance that the confidence interval will contain the true value. Table E.1 presents standard errors and confidence intervals for selected participation rates.

**Table E.1 Sampling Error Associated with Selected Participation Rates, Fiscal Year 2008**

Variable	Participation Rate with 90% Confidence Interval	Eligibles		Participants	
		Number	Standard Error	Number	Standard Error
Individuals	66.8 +/- 1.2	41,055,094	439,241	27,411,361	21,278
Households	63.7 +/- 1.0	19,308,771	180,847	12,298,418	8,615
Benefits	83.6 +/- 1.7	3,301,638,423	40,584,610	2,759,791,831	539,756
Children <sup>a</sup>	85.8 +/- 2.4	15,533,900	259,835	13,320,698	37,994
Nonelderly Adults <sup>a</sup>	63.0 +/- 1.4	18,431,469	244,459	11,605,792	43,620
Elderly Individuals <sup>a</sup>	35.0 +/- 1.4	7,089,724	153,066	2,483,515	31,763
Nondisabled Childless Adults Subject to Work Registration	40.3 +/- 2.3	2,599,985	72,011	1,047,974	22,128
Noncitizens	51.0 +/- 4.2	1,864,942	68,251	951,880	31,866
Citizen Children Living with Noncitizen Adults	55.2 +/- 3.7	3,701,309	118,699	2,042,065	52,645
Individuals in Households with Children and One Adult	116.3 +/- 5.2	10,033,352	248,953	11,665,310	131,912
Individuals In Households					
With Earnings	55.1 +/- 1.7	19,685,388	329,336	10,842,004	100,002
With TANF	142.3 +/- 13.2	2,880,568	152,597	4,097,703	76,866
With Nonelderly SSI	108.8 +/- 7.1	4,110,393	149,115	4,472,668	72,083
With Elderly SSI	119.3 +/- 11.7	1,231,756	68,132	1,469,480	32,099
Individuals In Households with Very Low Income	116.0 +/- 5.5	7,301,479	194,123	8,468,265	89,221
Individuals In Households with Income Slightly Above Poverty	33.7 +/- 1.5	9,708,904	183,206	3,268,848	62,573

Sources: SNAP Program Operations, SNAP QC, and March CPS data.

Note: Participation rates over 100 percent are due to reporting errors in the CPS that affect identification of certain subgroups. See Appendix D for more information.

<sup>a</sup> The participant totals for children, nonelderly adults, and elderly individuals presented in this table do not match the participants totals in Tables 3, B.3, and B.5A. The totals in the earlier tables include individuals with missing data on age for whom we impute an age category. The totals in this table include only individuals with reported age, the population for which standard errors were calculated.



## **APPENDIX F**

### **ECONOMIC AND POLICY INFLUENCES ON SNAP**



**Table F.1. Summary of Major Influences on SNAP Participation Rates, 1976-2008**

Period of Change	Major Influences	Effect on Number of Participants and Eligible Individuals	Participation Rate Change
1978 to 1980	Food Stamp Act of 1977	Substantial increase in participants. Decrease in eligible individuals.	Up 17 points
1980 to 1982	Recession	Almost no change in participants. Substantial increase in eligible individuals.	Down 3 points
1982 to 1984	Economic recovery	Slight decrease in both participants and eligible individuals.	No change
1984 to 1986	1985 Food Security Act	Almost no change in participants. Substantial increase in eligible individuals.	Down 4 points
1986 to 1988	Growth in economy	Small decrease in participants and eligible individuals.	No change
1988 to 1990	Medicaid expansion, Homeless Assistance Act, IRCA, worsening economy	Increase in participants. Small decrease in eligible individuals.	Up 6 points
1990 to 1992	Continued Medicaid expansion, recession	Increase in participants. Smaller percent increase in eligible individuals.	Up 5 points
1992 to 1993	Improving economy	Increase in participants. Smaller percent increase in eligible individuals.	Up 1 point
1993 to 1994	Improving economy	No change in participants. Small drop in eligible individuals.	Up 1 point
1994 to 1995	Improving economy	Decrease in eligible individuals. Relatively larger decrease in participants.	Down 2 points
1995 to 1996	Improving economy	No change in eligible individuals. Decrease in participants.	Down 3 points
1996 to 1997	Welfare reform, improving economy	Large decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down 5 points
1997 to 1998	Welfare reform, improving economy	Large decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down 4 points
1998 to 1999	Welfare reform, improving economy	Decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down 2 points
1999 to 2000	Welfare reform, improving economy	Decrease in participants and eligible individuals. Larger decrease in participants.	Down less than 1 point
2000 to 2001	Increased asset eligibility, worsening economy	Slight increase in participants. Large increase in eligible individuals.	Down 3 points
2001 to 2002	Increased asset eligibility, increased poverty	Large increase in participants and eligible individuals. Larger increase in eligible individuals.	Down less than 1 point
2002 to 2003	Increased outreach, increased eligibility for noncitizens, increased poverty	Increase in both participants and eligible individuals.	Up 2 points

Table F.1 (continued)

Period of Change	Major Influences	Effect on Number of Participants and Eligible Individuals	Participation Rate Change
2003 to 2004	Increased outreach, increased poverty	Increase in both participants and eligible individuals. Larger increase in participants.	Up 5 points
2004 to 2005	Increased outreach	Increase in both participants and eligible individuals.	Up 4 points
2005 to 2006	Increased outreach, decreased poverty	Increase in participants. Decrease in eligible individuals.	Up 3 points
2006 to 2007	Increased outreach, increased poverty	Increase in participants. Larger increase in eligible individuals.	Down 1 point
2007 to 2008	Increased outreach, worsening economy	Large increases in both participants and eligible individuals.	Up 1 point

Note: The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (PL 110-246) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (PL 111-5) were enacted after the period that this report covers.

**Table F.2. Major Economic Indicators, Calendar Years 1976-2008**

Year	Real GDP Increase <sup>a</sup>	Productivity Increase <sup>b</sup>	Unemployment Rate <sup>c</sup>	Inflation Rate <sup>d</sup>	Poverty Rate	Individuals in Poverty (000s)
1976	5.3	3.1	7.7	5.8	11.8	24,975
1977	4.6	1.7	7.1	6.4	11.6	24,720
1978	5.6	1.1	6.1	7.0	11.4	24,497
1979	3.2	0.0	5.8	8.3	11.7	26,072
1980	-0.2	-0.2	7.1	9.1	13.0	29,272
1981	2.5	2.1	7.6	9.4	14.0	31,822
1982	-1.9	-0.8	9.7	6.1	15.0	34,398
1983	4.5	3.6	9.6	4.0	15.2	35,303
1984	7.2	2.7	7.5	3.8	14.4	33,700
1985	4.1	2.2	7.2	3.0	14.0	33,064
1986	3.5	2.9	7.0	2.2	13.6	32,370
1987	3.4	0.5	6.2	2.7	13.4	32,221
1988	4.1	1.5	5.5	3.4	13.0	31,745
1989	3.5	1.0	5.3	3.8	12.8	31,528
1990	1.9	2.1	5.6	3.9	13.5	33,585
1991	-0.2	1.6	6.8	3.5	14.2	35,708
1992	3.3	4.3	7.5	2.3	14.8	38,014
1993	2.7	0.4	6.9	2.3	15.1	39,265
1994	4.0	1.0	6.1	2.1	14.5	38,059
1995	2.5	0.1	5.6	2.0	13.8	36,425
1996	3.7	3.0	5.4	1.9	13.7	36,529
1997	4.5	1.9	4.9	1.7	13.3	35,574
1998	4.2	2.8	4.5	1.1	12.7	34,476
1999	4.5	3.1	4.2	1.4	11.8	32,258
2000	3.7	2.9	4.0	2.2	11.3	31,581
2001	0.8	2.5	4.7	2.4	11.7	32,907
2002	1.6	4.1	5.8	1.7	12.1	34,570
2003	2.5	3.8	6.0	2.1	12.5	35,861
2004	3.6	2.9	5.5	2.9	12.7	37,040
2005	2.9	1.8	5.1	3.3	12.6	36,950
2006	2.8	0.9	4.6	3.2	12.3	36,460
2007	2.0	1.6	4.6	2.7	12.5	37,276
2008	1.1	2.7	5.8	2.2	13.2	39,829

Sources (by column of data):

First: Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Income and Product Accounts.

Second: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. "Major Sector Productivity and Costs Index."

Third: Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Fourth: Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis, National Income and Product Accounts.

Fifth and sixth: U.S. Census Bureau, *Poverty in the United States*.

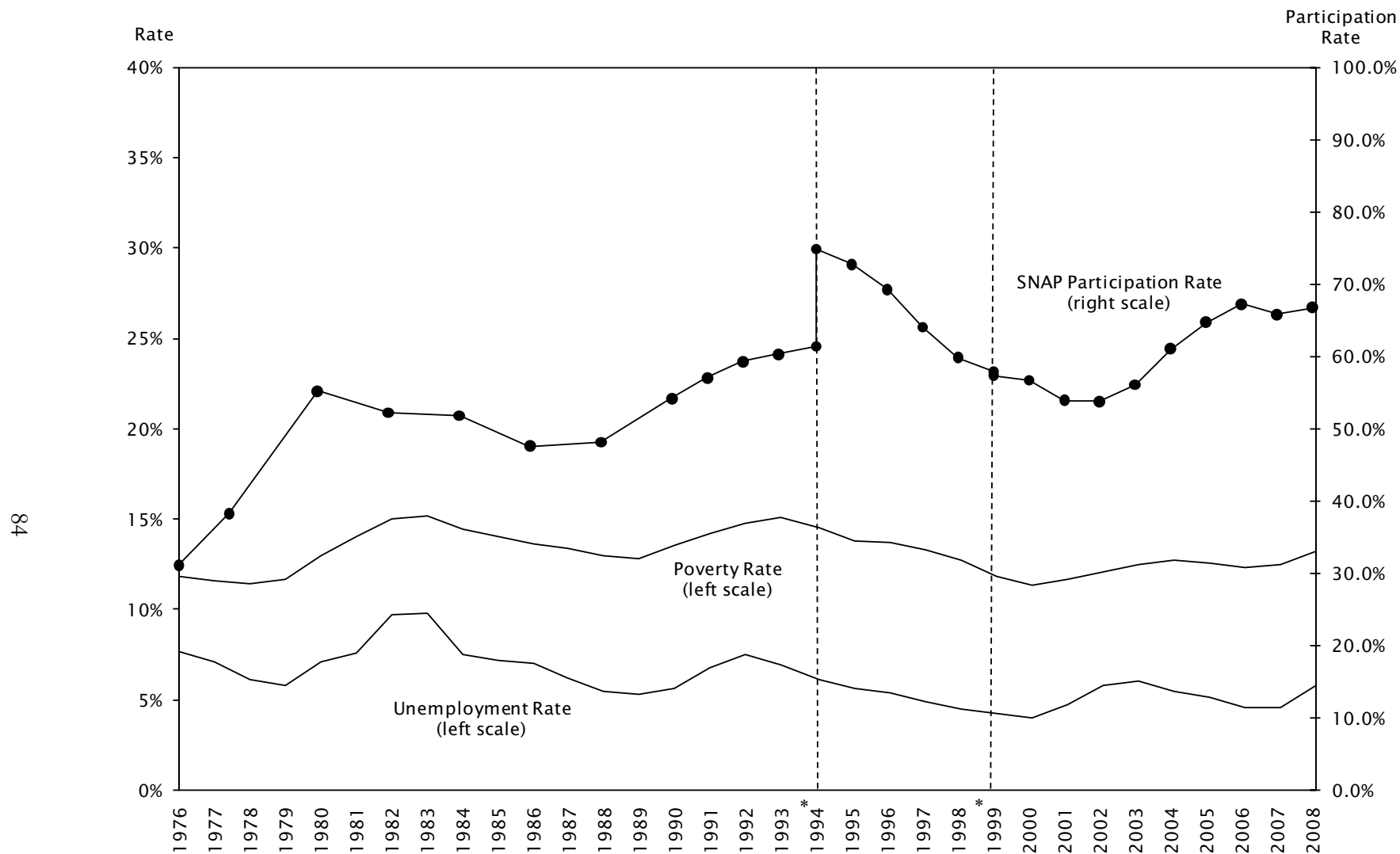
<sup>a</sup> Percentage change from preceding year.

<sup>b</sup> Percentage change from preceding year in output per hour, business sector.

<sup>c</sup> All civilian workers.

<sup>d</sup> Percentage change from preceding year in the implicit price deflator for Gross Domestic Product.

**Figure F.1. Trends in SNAP Participation Rates, Poverty Rates, and Unemployment Rates, 1976-2008**



Sources: Participation rates from SNAP Program Operations data, SNAP QC data, and March CPS data for the years shown. Poverty rates from U.S. Bureau of the Census, Poverty in the United States. Unemployment rates from Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics.

\* There are breaks in the time series in 1994 and 1999 due to revisions in the methodology for determining eligibility.

**Table F.3A. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Income Limits**

Legislation	Income Limits
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Net income had to be less than or equal to the maximum SNAP net income, which was tied to the maximum coupon allotment
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Net income had to be less than or equal to the poverty line
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	Excluded energy assistance as income. Included income of ineligible aliens less prorated share
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Gross income had to be less than or equal to 130% of the poverty line, except for elderly and disabled, who kept previous net income limit
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Nonelderly and nondisabled subjected to both net and gross income limits
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	Minor changes in treatment of income
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	Moved annual adjustment in income eligibility guidelines from July 1 to October 1 of each year
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No change
Farm, Agriculture, Conservation and Trade Act of 1990 and 1991 (FACTA) (PL 102-237)	Certain types of educational assistance not counted as income
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	Earnings of students excluded from income through age 21. Excluded as income 100% of vendor payments made to transitional housing facilities on behalf of homeless households and GA vendor payments for utility-cost assistance
The Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996 (PRWORA) (PL 104-193)	Earnings of students excluded from income through age 17
The Balanced Budget Act of 1997 (BBA) (PL 105-33)	No change
Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998 (AREERA) (PL 105-185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	State options to exclude certain types of income not counted under the State's TANF cash assistance or Medicaid programs and to treat legally obligated child support payments to a nonhousehold member as an income exclusion rather than a deduction

Note: The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (PL 110-246) and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (PL 111-5) were enacted after the period that this report covers. Therefore, a discussion of the features of SNAP under these legislation is not included in Tables F.3A - F.3H.

**Table F.3B. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Asset Limits**

Legislation	Asset Limits
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly household of at least 2 persons. Excluded vehicles used for employment or handicapped transportation
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	\$1,750; \$3,000 for elderly household of at least 2 persons; excluded first \$4,500 of the Fair Market Value for vehicles
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly household of at least 2 persons; excluded vehicles used for handicapped.
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	No change
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	State option to waive asset test for pure AFDC households passing gross income test. IRA KEOGH accounts counted as assets
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	\$2,000; \$3,000 for households with elderly member(s) (including one-person households); Changed definition of countable resources
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No change
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No change
FACTA (PL 102-237)	Nonliquid resources and those exempted by AFDC and SSI are not counted.
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	Same limits. Asset holding of AFDC and SSI recipients not counted.
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	Raised the vehicle Fair Market Value asset limit to \$4,550 on 9/1/94, to \$4,600 on 10/1/95, and \$5,000 on 10/1/96, with annual cost-of-living adjustments thereafter; excluded vehicles necessary to carry food or water
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Vehicle Fair Market Value asset limit raised to \$4,650, with no planned future cost-of-living adjustments
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	Allowed States to use the vehicle limit they use in a TANF assistance program, if it would result in a lower attribution of resources for the household
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Increased the resource limit for households with a disabled member from \$2,000 to \$3,000

**Table F.3C. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Benefits**

Legislation	Maximum Benefit	Minimum Benefit	Benefit Reduction Rate
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Thrifty Food Plan. Indexed since 1971; indexed semiannually from 1973-1979 based on BLS food price index	Minimum benefit varied by household size	Basis of issuance tables (average 30% above lowest levels)
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Indexed semiannually based on Thrifty Food Plan components	\$10 for one- and two-person households only	30%
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	Indexed annually in January based on September cost-of-plan components	No change	No change
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Indexing frozen until 7/1/83; next adjustment 10/1/84 based on June cost-of-plan components	No change	No change
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Indexed to 99% of Thrifty Food Plan cost; changed back to 100% by PL 98-473; last step in benefit calculation rounded down	No change	No change
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	No change	No change	No change
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No change	No change	No change
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	Incremental indexing to 103% of Thrifty Food Plan by FY 1991 and thereafter	No change	No change
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change	Required annual adjustments to the \$10 minimum benefit	No change
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change*	No change	No change
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	No change	No change	No change
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Reduced to 100% of Thrifty Food Plan for Continental U.S. and District of Columbia; Alaska and Hawaii remained at 1996 levels	Removed requirement for indexing of minimum benefit	No change
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change	No change	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change	No change	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change	No change	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	No change	No change	No change

**Table F.3D. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past legislation—Deductions**

Legislation	Deductions
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Payroll; 10% of earnings up to \$30; child care; education; medical over \$10; alimony or child support; casualty losses; shelter in excess of 30% of net income
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Standard \$60; indexed semi-annually to CPI nonfood components; 20% of earnings; child care up to \$75; shelter in excess of 50% of net, not to exceed \$80 in combination with child care; limit indexed annually in July based on shelter-fuel-utilities component of the CPI
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	1980 Act: standard deduction and shelter/child care cap indexed annually in Jan. based on Sept./Sept. change; 1979 Act: elderly and disabled not subjected to the shelter deduction maximum and allowed medical expenses over \$35*
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL97-98) Effective 10/1/98	18% of earnings; shelter/child care cap set at \$115 with next inflation adjustment on 7/1/83, then on 10/1/84, and each October thereafter
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Standard deduction raised to \$89; next inflation adjustment delayed until 10/1/83; limited use of standard utility expense allowances
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	20% of earnings; separate cap of \$147 on shelter deduction with indexed increases; separate cap of \$160 on dependent care not indexed
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	Increased cap on shelter deduction for all households certified after 10/1/87
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	Dependent care deduction increased to \$160 per month per dependent, rather than per household
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	Increased cap on shelter deductions for all households to \$231 after 7/1/94 and to \$247 after 10/1/95; raised the dependent care deduction cap to \$200 a month for each child under the age of 2 and \$175 a month for all other dependents
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Standard deduction frozen at current levels; raised excess shelter deduction to \$250 on 1/1/97, to \$275 on 10/1/98, to \$300 on 10/1/00
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	Increased the excess shelter cap to \$340 in fiscal year 2001 and then indexed the cap to changes in the Consumer Price Index for all consumers each year, beginning in fiscal year 2002
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Changed standard deduction to vary according to household size and be adjusted annually for cost-of-living increases; allowed States to simplify the SUA if they elect to use it rather than actual utility costs for all households; also allowed States to use a standard deduction of \$143 per month for homeless households with some shelter expenses

\* A provision to reduce the medical deduction from \$35 to \$25 was repealed in OBRA and never implemented.

**Table F.3E. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Accounting Period, Categorical Eligibility**

Legislation	Accounting Period	Categorical Eligibility
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Prospective month	Public assistance households automatically eligible
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Prospective month	Public assistance households not automatically eligible
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	State option to use either prospective or retrospective with monthly report	No change
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Retrospective becomes mandatory 10/1/83 for some households, prospective for others	No change
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Migrant workers, elderly and disabled households with no earnings exempt from monthly reporting	No change
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	Retrospective budgeting and monthly reporting required for households with earnings or work history except migrant farmers and elderly or disabled	Categorical eligibility for pure AFDC or SSI households
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	Exempted seasonal farm workers and households in which all members are homeless from monthly reporting requirements	No change
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No change	No change
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No change	Expanded categorical eligibility to recipients of certain State and local general assistance payments
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No change	No change
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	No change	No change
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	No change	No change
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	No change	No change

**Table F.3F Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Work Registration Requirements and Time Limits**

Legislation	Work Registration Requirements and Time Limits
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Required work registration and employment as a condition of eligibility for able-bodied adults between 18 and 65 years, except for individuals with responsibility for care of a dependent child or incapacitated adult; students; or persons employed 30 hours/week
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Lowered age for individuals required to work from 65 to 60 years; added job search as a work requirement; lowered age for caretaker exemption from 18 to 12 years
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	No requirement
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	Applied disqualification for voluntarily quitting a job to participants as well as applicants; lowered age for caretaker exemption to 6 years old
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	No requirement
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	Disqualified only violating member rather than entire household unless that member was also head of household; required all States to implement an E&T program by April 1, 1987
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No requirement
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No requirement
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No requirement
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No requirement
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	No requirement
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Able-bodied adults without dependents required to work at least 20 hours per week in a job or qualified training program; if individual is subject to, but not complying with, the requirement, he or she is limited to 3 months of benefits in any 36-month period; minimum disqualification periods for individuals who fail to comply with work requirements range from 1 month to permanently, depending on the number of violations
BBA (PL 105-33)	Increased funds for SNAP Employment and Training programs but restricted the use of the funds (requiring them to earmark 80% for ABAWDs); made the funds available until expended; allowed States to grant discretionary exemptions from the time limits for up to 15% of the State's unwaived able-bodied caseload
AREERA (PL 105-185)	No change
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Authorized additional funding for States that pledge to offer work slots to all unemployed childless adults subject to the 3-month time limit and eliminated the requirement that 80% of unmatched funds be used for nondisabled childless adults

**Table F.3G. Selected Features of SNAP Under Past Legislation—Treatment of Noncitizens**

Legislation	Treatment of Noncitizens
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	No disqualifications
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	No disqualifications
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	No disqualifications
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/98	The 1980 amendments required certification workers to report an ineligible alien to INS; income and assets of aliens' sponsors were deemed to alien for 3 years after entry into the country
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	No disqualifications
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	No disqualifications
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	No disqualifications
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	No disqualifications
FACTA (PL 102-237)	No disqualifications
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	No disqualifications
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	No disqualifications
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Permanent resident aliens disqualified unless they have 40 quarters of qualified work history in the United States or are currently or were formerly members of the U.S. Armed Forces; members of their family also exempt; Refugees, asylees, and deportees eligible for 5 years after entering the U.S.
BBA (PL 105-33)	No change
AREERA (PL 105-185)	Restored eligibility to permanent resident aliens lawfully in the United States on August 22, 1996 and disabled, blind, or under age 18, or were 65 or older on August 22, 1996; extended eligibility for refugees, asylees, and deportees from 5 to 7 years after entering the U.S.
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	No change
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Restored eligibility to qualified noncitizens otherwise eligible for SNAP and who: are receiving disability benefits regardless of date of entry (effective FY 2003); are under 18 regardless of date of entry (effective FY 2004); or have lived in the U.S. for 5 years as a qualified noncitizen (effective April 2003)

**Table F.3H. Selected Features of SNAP under Past Legislation—Other Changes**

Legislation	Other Changes
Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended (PL 88-525)	Nationwide program
Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 95-113) Effective 1/1/79	Eliminated purchase requirement
Food Stamp Amendments of 1979 and 1980 (PL 96-58 and PL 96-249)	Increased State incentives for reducing error; SSNs required; limits on eligible students; residents of shelters for battered women and disabled in small groups may participate; established quality control system
OBRA of 1981 (PL 86-35) and Food Stamp Amendments and Reauthorization Act of 1981 (PL 97-98) Effective 10/1/81	Tightened definition of household, no extra benefits for strikers, prorated first month benefits; for Puerto Rico, replaced the FSP with a block grant Nutrition Assistance Program
Food Stamp Amendments of 1982 (PL 97-253) Effective 10/82 and Continuing Resolution of 1984 (PL 84-473)	Replaced three-tiered incentive system with increased administrative funding for States with error rates below 5%, limited student eligibility, benefits rounded down, job search requirements, Puerto Rico cashout prohibited; household unit definition altered; no initial-month benefits less than \$10. SSU and SS COLA adjustments disregarded up to 3 months; new definition of disabled
1985 Food Security Act (PL 99-198) Effective 5/86	New definition of disabled; Puerto Rico block grant funds; students in JTPA exempt from categorical restriction; residents of publicly operated mental health centers may participate
1987 Homeless Assistance Act (PL 100-77)	Outreach efforts for homeless persons and other hard-to-serve groups; simplified application process for these groups; expanded eligibility for expedited source
Hunger Prevention Act of 1988 (PL 100-435)	Expanded the definition of disabled; excluded advanced EITC payments as income
FACTA (PL 102-237)	Rules for student eligibility modified
Amendments to FACTA of 1991	All Title IV payments and Bureau of Indian Affairs educational assistance excluded from the Program's countable income [Higher Education Amendments of 1992 (PL 102-325)]
The Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993 (PL 103-66)	Simplified the household definition by allowing persons who live together but do not purchase and prepare food together to be in separate Program units; spouses still must be in the same household. Effective 9/1/94
PRWORA (PL 104-193)	Children under age 22 living with parents must apply as part of the parents' household even if the child is married or has children of his/her own
BBA (PL 105-33)	None
AREERA (PL 105-185)	None
Agriculture Appropriations Act of 2001 (PL 106-387)	None
Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002	Allowed States to offer transitional SNAP benefits for up to 5 months after households lose TANF cash assistance and allowed States to extend semiannual reporting of changes to all households not exempt from periodic reporting

## **APPENDIX G**

### **CHANGES IN THE MARCH CPS OVER TIME**



**Table G.1. Changes in the March CPS Over Time**

March Year	Data Year	Changes in Design or Weighting from Previous Year
79	78	Changes in metro/nonmetro definitions; new, more detailed income questions were introduced for 2 rotation groups
80	79	Definition of adult changed from age 14 to age 15; new concept of families and headship status; new income questions were introduced for all rotation groups
81	80	New weighting procedure based on 1980 Census was introduced which increased the overall population by 2.3% and had a disproportionate impact on Hispanics
82	81	Top coding of income variables was increased from \$50,000 to \$75,000
83	82	New industry and occupation coding; new definition of group quarters; the poverty index was modified slightly (deleting the farm/nonfarm dimension)
84	83	The March 1984 file was issued twice; in the second (unofficial) version, the Bureau of the Census introduced the revised weighting procedure developed for the March 1985 CPS
85	84	Revised weighting procedures—specifically, the control on Hispanics was changed, causing a slight increase in poverty with disproportionate impacts on the Hispanic population, male unrelated individuals, and persons in related subfamilies; changes in the designation of metro/nonmetro, farm/nonfarm, central city/noncentral city status
86	85	More metro/nonmetro changes
87	86	None
88	87	None
89	88	Revised processing procedures increased income overall and reduced poverty; poverty rate changed more severely for blacks and persons in selected age ranges
90	89	None
91	90	None
92	91	None
93	92(r)	New population controls based on 1990 census and adjustments for the census undercount increased the poverty population; largest increases in poverty rates were for Hispanic families, families with single female householders, white children, and persons in unrelated subfamilies
94	93	Survey was redesigned to improve the measurement of labor force concepts and wording of questions, and to implement a computerized questionnaire
95	94	None
96	95	Sample reduction; revised earnings topcoding—instead of topcoding earnings variables at 99,999, topcoded records were assigned the mean earnings for topcoded individuals with similar characteristics; revised race edit and allocation; (caution is urged when comparing 1995 and 1996 data on race groups)
97	96	None
98	97	None
99	98	None
00	99	Reweight based on Census 2000
01	00	Reweight based on Census 2000, expanded sample size
02	01	Weights based on Census 2000
03	02	Expanded racial categories
04	03	None
05	04	None
06	05	None
07	06	None
08	07	None
09	08	None



## **APPENDIX H**

### **SNAP ELIGIBILITY PARAMETERS**



**Table H.1. Selected SNAP Eligibility Parameters, 1976 to 2008**

Analysis Year		September 1976 Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended			February 1978 Food Stamp Act of 1964 as Amended			August 1980 Food Stamp Act of 1977 as Amended; Effective Late 1978 / Early 1979			August 1982 OBRA 1981 as Amended in 1981; Effective 10/81		
Gross Income Eligibility		No test									<= 1.3 * Poverty Line		
Net Income Eligibility		<= Maximum SNAP Income						<= Poverty Line					
Asset Eligibility		\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly households with at least 2 members											
Minimum Benefit		Varies by household size						\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others					
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		No Automatic Eligibility			Automatically Eligible			No Automatic Eligibility					
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size)						Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income					
SSI Cashout States		California, Wisconsin, Massachusetts											
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	245	307	273	262	328	286	316	397	365	390	490	450
	2	322	413	407	344	447	427	418	524	481	519	650	597
	3	433	593	580	460	633	607	520	650	598	647	810	745
	4	553	753	740	580	807	773	621	777	715	775	970	892
	5	660	893	880	687	960	920	723	904	831	904	1,130	1,040
	6	787	1,073	1,053	827	1,147	1,100	825	1,030	948	1,032	1,290	1,187
	7	873	1,187	1,167	913	1,273	1,220	926	1,157	1,065	1,180	1,450	1,335
	8	993	1,353	1,333	1,047	1,453	1,393	1,028	1,284	1,181	1,289	1,610	1,482
additional	+ 127	+ 167	+ 166	+ 133	+ 180	+ 173	+ 102	+ 127	+ 117	+ 129	+ 160	+ 142	
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	50	68	66	52	72	70	63	98	84	70	108	95
	2	92	124	122	96	134	128	115	180	158	128	197	175
	3	130	178	174	138	190	182	165	258	226	183	293	250
	4	166	226	222	174	242	232	209	327	287	233	359	318
	5	198	268	264	206	288	276	248	388	341	277	426	378
	6	236	322	316	248	344	330	298	466	409	332	512	453
	7	262	356	350	274	382	366	329	515	452	367	565	501
	8	298	406	400	314	436	418	376	589	517	419	646	572
additional	+ 38	+ 50	+ 50	+ 40	+ 54	+ 52	+ 47	+ 74	+ 65	+ 53	+ 81	+ 72	

Table H.1 (continued)

Analysis Year		August 1984 OBRA As Amended in 1982; Effective 10/82	August 1986 Food Security Act of 1985; Effective 5/86	August 1988 1987 Homeless Assistance Act; Effective 7/87	August 1990 Leland Hunger Prevention Act of 1988								
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line											
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line											
Asset Eligibility		\$1,500; \$3,000 for elderly households with 2 or more members	\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households										
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others											
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		No Automatic Eligibility	Automatically Eligible										
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income											
SSI Cashout States		CA, WI, MA			California, Wisconsin								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	415	520	478	447	559	515	459	572	526	499	624	573
	2	560	701	645	604	755	695	617	770	709	699	836	769
	3	705	882	811	760	950	875	775	969	891	839	1,049	965
	4	850	1,063	978	917	1,146	1,055	934	1,167	1,074	1,009	1,261	1,160
	5	995	1,244	1,145	1,074	1,342	1,235	1,092	1,365	1,256	1,179	1,474	1,356
	6	1,140	1,425	1,311	1,230	1,538	1,415	1,250	1,564	1,439	1,349	1,686	1,552
	7	1,285	1,605	1,478	1,387	1,732	1,595	1,409	1,762	1,621	1,519	1,899	1,748
	8	1,430	1,786	1,645	1,544	1,930	1,775	1,567	1,960	1,804	1,689	2,111	1,944
additional	+ 145	+ 181	+ 167	+ 157	+ 196	+ 180	+ 158	+ 198	+ 183	+ 170	+ 213	+ 196	
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	76	109	108	80	111	124	87	113	133	99	123	151
	2	139	200	198	147	204	228	159	207	244	182	227	276
	3	199	286	283	211	293	327	228	297	350	260	325	396
	4	253	364	360	268	372	415	290	378	444	331	413	503
	5	301	432	427	318	442	493	344	448	527	393	490	598
	6	361	518	513	382	530	592	413	538	633	472	588	717
	7	399	473	567	422	586	654	457	595	700	521	650	793
	8	457	655	648	483	670	748	522	680	800	596	743	906
additional	+ 57	+ 82	+ 81	+ 60	+ 84	+ 94	+ 65	+ 85	+ 100	+ 75	+ 93	+ 113	

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		August 1991 FACTA of 1991			August 1992 FACTA of 1991 and Amendments			August 1993 <sup>a</sup> FACTA of 1991 and Amendments		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (AFDC or SSI)			Automatically Eligible (AFDC, SSI, or GA)					
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income								
SSI Cashout States		California, Wisconsin			California only					
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	524	654	603	552	691	635	568	709	653
	2	702	877	808	740	926	851	766	957	881
	3	880	1,100	1,013	929	1,161	1,068	965	1,205	1,110
	4	1,059	1,324	1,218	1,117	1,396	1,285	1,163	1,454	1,338
	5	1,237	1,547	1,428	1,305	1,631	1,501	1,361	1,702	1,566
	6	1,415	1,770	1,628	1,494	1,866	1,718	1,560	1,950	1,795
	7	1,594	1,994	1,833	1,682	2,101	1,935	1,758	2,199	2,023
	8	1,772	2,217	2,038	1,870	2,336	2,151	1,956	2,447	2,251
	additional	+ 179	224	+ 205	+ 189	+ 235	+ 217	+ 199	+ 249	+ 229
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	105	137	172	111	142	181	111	143	182
	2	193	252	316	203	261	333	203	262	335
	3	277	361	452	292	374	477	292	376	480
	4	352	459	574	370	475	606	370	477	609
	5	418	545	682	440	564	720	440	567	724
	6	502	655	819	528	677	864	528	680	868
	7	555	723	905	584	748	955	584	752	960
	8	634	827	1,034	667	855	1,091	667	859	1,097
	additional	+ 79	+ 103	+ 129	+ 83	+ 107	+ 136	+ 83	+ 107	+ 137

Table H.1 (continued)

Analysis Year		September 1994			September 1995 <sup>b</sup> Mickey Leland Childhood Hunger Relief Act of 1993			September 1996 Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (AFDC/TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit minus 30% of net income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	581	725	670	614	767	706	623	779	718
	2	786	982	905	820	1,025	944	836	1,045	963
	3	991	1,239	1,140	1,027	1,284	1,181	1,050	1,312	1,208
	4	1,196	1,495	1,375	1,234	1,542	1,419	1,263	1,579	1,453
	5	1,401	1,752	1,610	1,440	1,800	1,656	1,476	1,845	1,698
	6	1,606	2,009	1,845	1,647	2,059	1,894	1,690	2,112	1,943
	7	1,811	2,265	2,080	1,854	2,317	2,131	1,903	2,379	2,188
	8	2,016	2,522	2,315	2,060	2,575	2,369	2,116	2,645	2,433
	additional	+ 205	+ 257	+ 235	+ 207	+ 259	+ 238	+ 214	+ 267	+ 245
Monthly Maximum SNAP Allotment	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	112	147	187	115	147	193	119	153	198
	2	206	271	343	212	271	354	218	280	364
	3	295	388	492	304	388	508	313	401	522
	4	375	492	625	386	492	645	397	510	663
	5	446	585	742	459	585	766	472	605	787
	6	535	702	890	550	702	919	566	726	945
	7	591	776	984	608	776	1,016	626	803	1,044
	8	676	887	1,125	695	887	1,161	716	918	1,193
	additional	+ 85	+ 111	+ 141	+ 87	+ 111	+ 145	+90	+ 115	+ 149

Table H.1 (continued)

Analysis Year		September 1997			September 1998			September 1999 Agricultural Research, Extension and Education Reform Act of 1998; Effective November 1, 1998		
Gross Income Eligibility		<= 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		<= Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	645	805	743	658	823	756	671	840	772
	2	864	1,079	994	885	1,106	1,017	905	1,131	1,040
	3	1,082	1,352	1,245	1,111	1,390	1,278	1,138	1,423	1,309
	4	1,300	1,625	1,495	1,338	1,673	1,539	1,371	1,715	1,577
	5	1,519	1,899	1,746	1,565	1,956	1,800	1,605	2,006	1,845
	6	1,737	2,172	1,997	1,791	2,240	2,060	1,838	2,298	2,114
	7	1,955	2,445	2,248	2,018	2,523	2,321	2,071	2,590	2,382
	8	2,174	2,719	2,499	2,245	2,806	2,582	2,305	2,881	2,650
	additional	+ 219	+ 274	+251	+ 227	+ 284	+ 261	+ 234	+ 292	+ 269
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	120	153	198	122	154	197	125	157	197
	2	220	280	364	224	283	361	230	287	362
	3	315	401	522	321	405	517	329	412	518
	4	400	510	663	408	514	657	419	523	658
	5	475	605	787	485	611	780	497	621	781
	6	570	726	945	582	733	936	597	746	938
	7	630	803	1,044	643	810	1,035	659	824	1,036
	8	720	918	1,193	735	926	1,183	754	942	1,185
	additional	+ 90	+ 115	+ 149	+92	+ 116	+ 148	+ 94	+ 118	+ 148

Table H.1 (continued)

Analysis Year		September 2000			FY 2001			FY 2002		
Gross Income Eligibility		≤ 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		≤ Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	687	860	791	696	870	800	716	895	825
	2	922	1,154	1,061	938	1,172	1,078	968	1,210	1,114
	3	1,157	1,447	1,331	1,180	1,475	1,356	1,220	1,525	1,403
	4	1,392	1,740	1,601	1,421	1,770	1,635	1,471	1,840	1,692
	5	1,627	2,034	1,871	1,663	2,080	1,913	1,723	2,155	1,981
	6	1,862	2,327	2,141	1,905	2,382	2,191	1,975	2,470	2,270
	7	2,097	2,620	2,411	2,146	2,685	2,470	2,226	2,785	2,560
	8	2,332	2,914	2,681	2,388	2,987	2,748	2,478	3,100	2,849
	additional	+ 235	+ 270	+270	+ 242	+ 303	+ 279	+ 252	+ 315	+ 290
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	127	158	199	130	160	199	135	167	204
	2	234	290	365	238	294	366	248	307	374
	3	335	415	523	341	421	524	356	440	536
	4	426	528	664	434	535	665	452	559	680
	5	506	627	789	515	635	790	537	663	808
	6	607	752	947	618	762	948	644	796	970
	7	671	831	1,047	683	842	1,048	712	880	1,072
	8	767	950	1,196	781	963	1,198	814	1,006	1,225
	additional	+ 96	+ 119	+ 150	+98	+ 120	+ 150	+ 102	+ 126	+ 153

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		FY 2003			FY 2004			FY 2005		
Gross Income Eligibility		≤ 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		≤ Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	739	924	850	749	935	861	776	970	892
	2	995	1,245	1,145	1,010	1,262	1,162	1,041	1,301	1,197
	3	1,252	1,565	1,440	1,272	1,590	1,463	1,306	1,633	1,502
	4	1,507	1,886	1,735	1,534	1,917	1,764	1,571	1,965	1,807
	5	1,765	2,207	2,030	1,795	2,245	2,065	1,836	2,296	2,112
	6	2,022	2,528	2,325	2,057	2,572	2,365	2,101	2,628	2,417
	7	2,279	2,849	2,620	2,319	2,900	2,666	2,366	2,960	2,722
	8	2,535	3,170	2,915	2,580	3,227	2,967	2,631	3,291	3,027
	additional	+ 257	+ 321	+295	+ 262	+ 328	+ 301	+ 265	+ 332	+ 305
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	139	169	212	141	167	210	149	177	222
	2	256	309	389	259	307	386	274	324	408
	3	366	443	557	371	439	553	393	465	585
	4	465	563	707	471	558	702	499	590	742
	5	553	669	840	560	663	834	592	701	882
	6	664	803	1,008	672	795	1,001	711	841	1,058
	7	733	887	1,114	743	879	1,106	786	930	1,170
	8	838	1,014	1,273	849	1,005	1,264	898	1,063	1,337
	additional	+ 105	+ 127	+ 159	+106	+ 126	+ 158	+ 112	+ 133	+ 167

**Table H.1 (continued)**

Analysis Year		FY 2006			FY 2007			FY 2008		
Gross Income Eligibility		≤ 1.3 * Poverty Line								
Net Income Eligibility		≤ Poverty Line								
Asset Eligibility		\$2,000; \$3,000 for elderly households								
Minimum Benefit		\$10 for 1- and 2-person households; \$0 for all others								
Eligibility of Pure PA Households		Automatically Eligible (TANF, SSI, or GA)								
Benefit Calculation		Benefit = maximum benefit (household size) - .3 x SNAP Net Income								
SSI Cashout States		California only								
Monthly SNAP Net Income Screen	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	798	996	918	817	1,021	940	851	1,065	980
	2	1,070	1,336	1,230	1,100	1,375	1,265	1,141	1,427	1,313
	3	1,341	1,676	1,543	1,384	1,730	1,591	1,431	1,790	1,646
	4	1,613	2,016	1,855	1,667	2,084	1,917	1,721	2,152	1,980
	5	1,885	2,356	2,168	1,950	2,438	2,243	2,011	2,515	2,313
	6	2,156	2,696	2,480	2,234	2,792	2,569	2,301	2,877	2,646
	7	2,428	3,036	2,793	2,517	3,146	2,895	2,591	3,240	2,980
	8	2,700	3,376	3,105	2,800	3,500	3,220	2,881	3,602	3,313
additional	+ 272	+ 340	+313	+ 284	+ 355	+ 326	+ 290	+ 363	+ 334	
Monthly Maximum SNAP Benefits	Unit Size	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI	US	AK	HI
	1	152	181	229	155	183	240	162	194	258
	2	278	333	421	284	336	440	298	356	473
	3	399	477	602	408	482	630	426	510	678
	4	506	606	765	518	612	800	542	648	861
	5	601	720	909	615	726	950	643	770	1,022
	6	722	864	1,090	738	872	1,140	772	924	1,227
	7	798	955	1,205	816	964	1,260	853	1,021	1,356
	8	912	1,091	1,378	932	1,101	1,440	975	1,167	1,549
additional	+ 114	+ 136	+ 172	+117	+ 138	+ 180	+ 122	+ 146	+ 194	

Notes: Eligibility parameters are for the 50 States and the District of Columbia. Puerto Rico is excluded from data for 1976 and 1978 in order to be consistent with other years, and Guam and the Virgin Islands are excluded for all years.

<sup>a</sup>A reduction in the maximum benefit between 1992 and 1993 was prevented by an amendment to the Food Stamp Act of 1977 (PL 102-351).

<sup>b</sup>A reduction in the Alaska maximum benefit between 1994 and 1995 was prevented by the Federal Crop Insurance Reform and Department of Agriculture Reorganization Act of 1994 (PL 103-354).

## Current Perspectives on SNAP Participation

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