

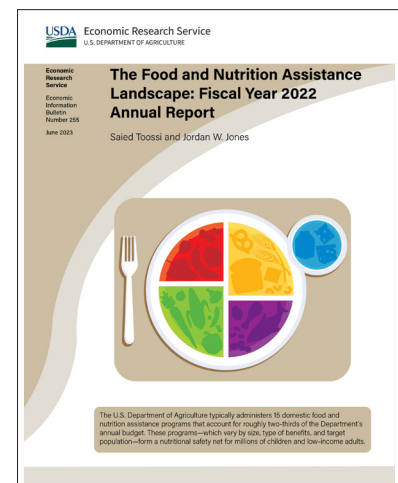


# The Food and Nutrition Assistance Landscape: Fiscal Year 2022 Annual Report

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## What Is the Issue?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) administers 15 domestic food and nutrition assistance programs that affect the lives of millions of people and account for roughly two-thirds of USDA's annual budget. In response to the Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic beginning in fiscal year (FY) 2020 and continuing into FY 2022, USDA implemented additional temporary programs and numerous policy changes that expanded the scope and coverage of existing programs. As a result, participation in and spending on these programs changed substantially. This report examines trends in USDA's largest domestic food and nutrition assistance programs through FY 2022 (October 1, 2021–September 30, 2022). The report also documents policy changes in FY 2022 and trends in economic and social indicators affecting participation in and spending on food and nutrition assistance programs. In addition, it summarizes two recent USDA, Economic Research Service (ERS) reports: one examines the prevalence of household food insecurity in the United States in 2021; and another examines changes in food choices in the USDA Foods in Schools program in response to revised nutrition standards.



## What Did This Study Find?

In FY 2022:

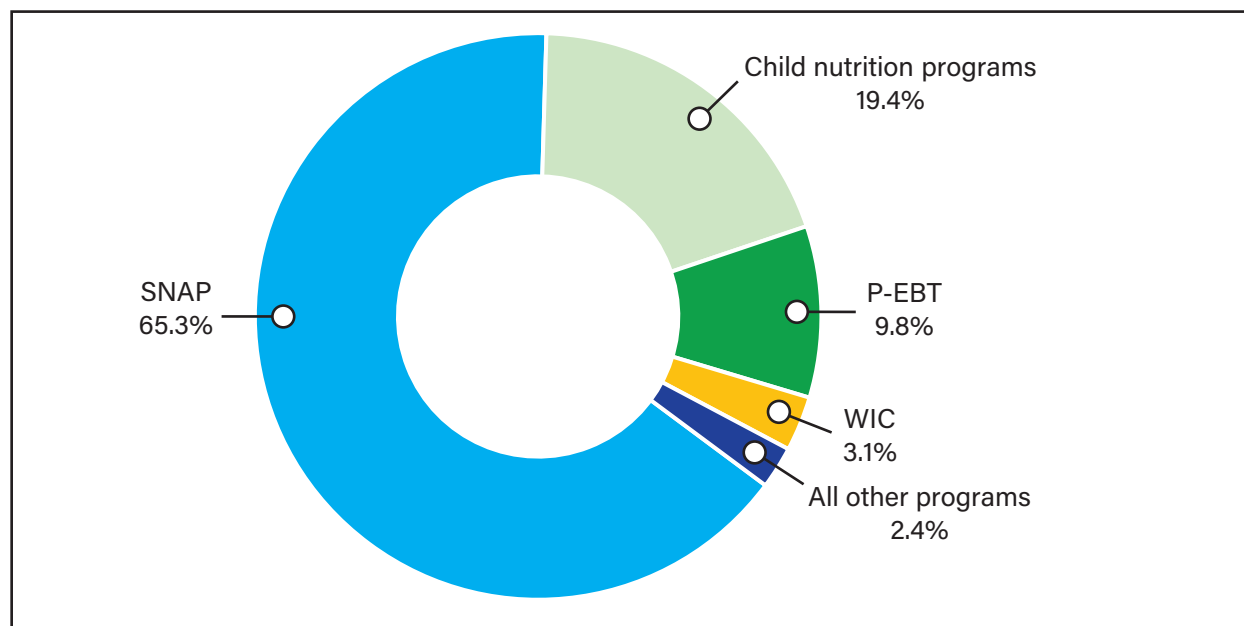
- Total spending on these programs amounted to \$183.0 billion, 6.0 percent lower than the inflation-adjusted high of \$194.7 billion in FY 2021. The decrease was primarily driven by lower spending on the Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer (P-EBT) program.
- On average, 41.2 million people participated in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) each month, 0.8 percent fewer than in FY 2021. Higher benefit levels resulting from the 2021 Thrifty Food Plan reevaluation and the continued issuance of emergency allotments contributed to higher SNAP spending of \$119.5 billion, 5.0 percent more than in FY 2021.

ERS is a primary source of economic research and analysis from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, providing timely information on economic and policy issues related to agriculture, food, the environment, and rural America.

- On average, 6.3 million people participated in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) each month, nearly the same as FY 2021. Total WIC spending was \$5.7 billion, 14.3 percent more than in FY 2021, reflecting an increase in food costs.
- The National School Lunch Program (NSLP), School Breakfast Program (SBP), Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP), and Summer Food Service Program (SFSP) served a combined 9.4 billion meals. Total spending on these programs was \$33.6 billion, 24.9 percent more than in FY 2021.
- USDA continued to operate P-EBT in FY 2022. P-EBT benefits were issued to eligible families at a cost of \$17.9 billion, 36.9 percent less than the amount issued in FY 2021.

## USDA food and nutrition assistance spending by program, FY 2022

SNAP accounted for about two-thirds of spending



FY = fiscal year. SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children. Child Nutrition Programs = National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, Child and Adult Care Food Program, Summer Food Service Program, related State administrative expenses, and other related child nutrition costs. P-EBT = Pandemic Electronic Benefit Transfer. All other programs = nutrition family assistance grants to Puerto Rico, the Northern Marianas, and American Samoa; Commodity Supplemental Food Program; the Food Distribution Program on Indian Reservations; the Nutrition Services Incentive Program; the Special Milk Program; Disaster Feeding; The Emergency Food Assistance Program; and nutrition programs administration.

Note: Figure based on preliminary data from the October 2022 *Program Information Report (Keydata)* released by USDA, Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) in January 2023 supplemented by additional information on Seamless Summer Option earnings and other child nutrition costs provided by USDA, FNS as of January 2023.

Source: USDA, Economic Research Service using USDA, FNS data.

## How Was the Study Conducted?

This report uses preliminary data from USDA, Food and Nutrition Service to examine program trends through FY 2022, adjusting for inflation where appropriate to make historical comparisons. Data for FY 2021 and 2022 come from the September 2022 *Program Information Report (Keydata)* released in December 2022 and October 2022 *Keydata* released in January 2023, respectively. These data are supplemented by information on FY 2021 and 2022 Seamless Summer Option expenditures and other child nutrition costs provided by USDA, FNS in January 2023. This report also uses supplementary data to examine economic and social indicators.