A report summary from the Economic Research Service
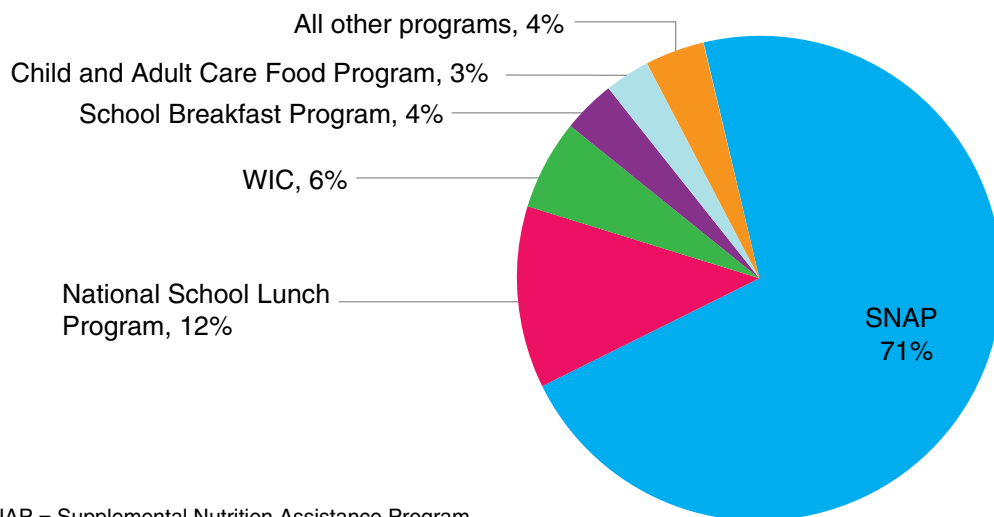
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The Food Assistance Landscape
FY 2014 Annual Report

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About 1 in 4 Americans participates in at least 1 of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) 15 domestic food and nutrition assistance programs at some point during the year. About three-quarters of USDA's annual budget goes to these programs, which vary by size, target population, and type of benefit provided. Together these programs form a nutritional safety net for millions of children and low-income adults. USDA's Economic Research Service (ERS) conducts studies and evaluations of these programs.

This report uses preliminary administrative data from USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS), the agency responsible for managing the food and nutrition assistance programs, to examine trends in these programs through fiscal 2014 (October 1, 2013 to September 30, 2014). The report uses ERS data to examine trends in the prevalence and severity of household food insecurity in the United States through 2013 and summarizes two recent ERS reports that examined cost-containment issues in the WIC program. The report also looks at trends in some of the indicators of economic and social conditions that affect participation in and spending on food and nutrition assistance programs.

Figure 1

Food and nutrition assistance expenditures by program, FY 2014
SNAP accounted for over two-thirds of food and nutrition assistance expenditures

All other programs, 4%
Child and Adult Care Food Program, 3%
School Breakfast Program, 4%
WIC, 6%
National School Lunch Program, 12%
SNAP 71%

SNAP = Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.
WIC = Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children.
Expenditures for all food and nutrition assistance programs totaled $103.6 billion.
Source: USDA, Food and Nutrition Service.