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Food Stamp Program— Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations

Interim Report on Elderly Participation Patterns

By Scott Cody, Mathematica Policy Research, Inc.

ERS project representative: Elizabeth Dagata, 202-694-5422,
edagata@ers.usda.gov

Abstract

To raise participation in the Food Stamp Program (FSP) by low-income, elderly individuals, USDA implemented the Elderly Nutrition Demonstration in six States (Arizona, Connecticut, Florida, Maine, Michigan, and North Carolina) in 2002. Each of the demonstrations is organized around one of three strategies to increase participation: simplifying the eligibility requirements for elderly individuals that apply for food stamps, directly assisting them with completing the application process, or offering them the option of receiving packages of commodities each month instead of getting benefits through an electronic benefits transfer card. Preliminary analysis indicates that FSP participation by the elderly rose substantially after the demonstrations started. In Arizona, Florida, Maine, and North Carolina, participation grew significantly more in demonstration counties than in nondemonstration counties. In Connecticut and Michigan, the more modest growth rates in the demonstration counties were similar to the rates in the rest of the State. The analysis also provides some evidence that the demonstrations attract elderly individuals eligible for relatively low FSP benefits, particularly in Maine and North Carolina, where a large number of individuals eligible for a \$10 benefit are applying.

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SUMMARY

The six Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations are intended to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program (FSP) among eligible elderly individuals. In this report, we examine whether there is evidence that the demonstrations are successful.

The results show that elderly FSP participation increased substantially after most of the demonstrations started. In four of the demonstration sites, elderly participation grew at double-digit rates, far exceeding the growth rates of the balance of their respective states, and leaving little doubt that the demonstrations have an impact. For each demonstration, we compare the growth in elderly FSP participation observed in each demonstration county with the growth observed in similar comparison counties in the same state. The four states with the largest demonstration-comparison site differences are Maine, North Carolina, Arizona and Florida:

- In **Maine** (application assistance model), elderly FSP participation in the demonstration site increased by 46.4 percent after 21 months of the demonstration. Elderly participation in the most-similar counties in Maine increased by only 13.5 percent, a difference of 32.9 percentage points.
- In **North Carolina** (commodity alternative benefit model), elderly FSP participation in the demonstration site increased by 35.5 percent after 12 months of the demonstration. Elderly participation in the most-similar counties in North Carolina increased by only 10.9 percent, a difference of 24.6 percentage points.
- In **Arizona** (application assistance model), elderly FSP participation in the demonstration sites increased by 47.6 percent after 15 months of the demonstration. Elderly participation in the most-similar counties in Arizona increased by 25.2 percent, a difference of 22.4 percentage points.
- In **Florida** (simplified eligibility model), elderly FSP participation in the demonstration sites increased by 25.9 percent after 21 months of the demonstration. Elderly participation in the most-similar counties in Florida increased by only 7.0 percent, a difference of 18.9 percentage points.

More modest differences were observed in the remaining two sites: Michigan (application assistance model) and Connecticut (commodity alternative benefit model). In Michigan, growth in the demonstration site was 5.8 percentage points higher than in the comparison sites. In Connecticut, growth in the demonstration site was 1.9 percentage points higher than in the comparison sites.

The results also show that many of the demonstrations tend to attract low-benefit households to the FSP. In particular, the two states with the largest apparent participation impact (Maine and North Carolina) are attracting a large number of individuals eligible for a \$10 benefit (although substantial numbers of demonstration participants have benefits well above that figure).

I. INTRODUCTION

Low participation rates in the Food Stamp Program by low-income, elderly individuals have been a persistent concern to policymakers. Nationwide, only one-third of the elderly individuals that are eligible for food stamps actually participate in the program. USDA is testing the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations to identify successful strategies for increasing elderly participation in the FSP. In 2002, six states implemented an Elderly Nutrition Demonstration in part of their state.

Initial patterns of participation among elderly clients in the demonstration sites can provide an early indication of whether the demonstrations are successful. In this report, we examine whether elderly FSP participation has increased more than we would expect without the demonstrations. This analysis is conducted as of November 2003, when all demonstrations had been operating for at least one year, and some for almost two years (Table 1).

The analysis presented in this report is preliminary. It is intended as an initial insight into the potential impacts of these demonstrations. Future work will be conducted to refine and test the validity of these estimates, and to estimate the statistical significance of any estimated impacts. Moreover, in addition to analysis of participation patterns, the evaluation of the Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations includes an assessment of client satisfaction (through surveys and focus groups of demonstration participants), a process analysis examining the organization of each demonstration, and an estimate of the costs of each demonstration. These analyses will be combined in the final report for this project.

The remainder of the report is organized into three sections: (1) an analysis of changes in participation patterns, (2) an analysis of changes in benefits paid, and (3) an analysis of changes in key subgroups of elderly FSP participants.

TABLE 1
MONTHS OF OPERATION
ELDERLY NUTRITION DEMONSTRATIONS

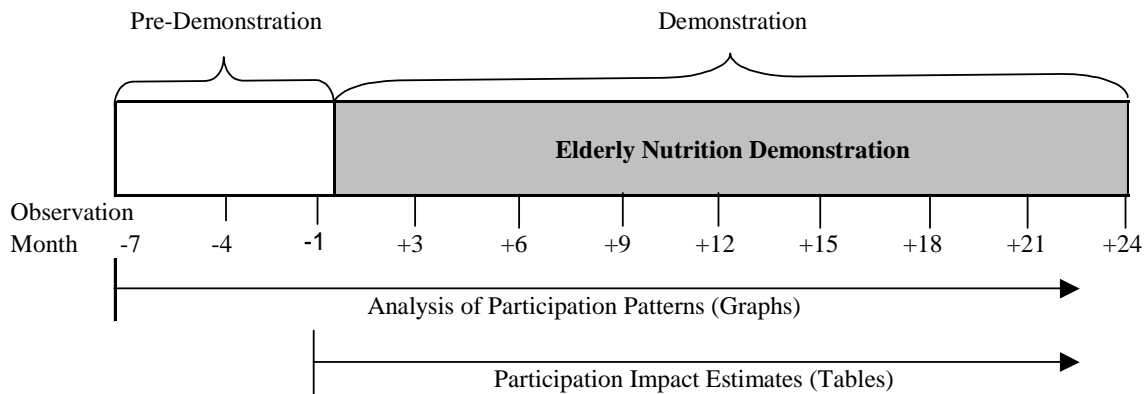
Demonstration State	Start Month	Months of Operation as of November 2003
Simplified Eligibility Model		
Florida	February, 2002	22
Application Assistance Model		
Arizona	September, 2002	15
Maine	February, 2002	22
Michigan	November, 2002	13
Commodity Alternative Model		
Connecticut	November, 2002	13
North Carolina	November, 2002	13

II. CHANGES IN PARTICIPATION PATTERNS

To identify how elderly participation patterns changed after the demonstrations were implemented, we examined administrative FSP caseload data for each state. Caseload data were collected at three-month intervals starting seven months before each demonstration was implemented (Figure 1). This gives us three observation points prior to the demonstration (the seventh month prior, the fourth month prior and the month immediately prior to implementation). Given the varying start dates of the demonstrations, we have between four to seven observation points after the implementation of the demonstration. Using the data from these observation points, we examine how the number of elderly participants in the demonstration counties changes from before to after the demonstrations are implemented.

FIGURE 1

OBSERVATION MONTHS USED IN ANALYSIS



The “impact” of each demonstration, however, cannot be computed by simply computing the pre-to-post change in participation. Some of the changes observed may have happened anyway. Instead, we need to compare the actual changes with an estimate of what those changes would have been in the absence of the demonstration. To do this, we examine elderly participation in similar counties in the same state (the comparison sites). For example, if the participation in the demonstration site increases by 10 percent after the demonstration is implemented, but participation in the comparison sites increases by 5 percent in the same period, we may conclude that half of the observed change (5 percentage points) is due to the demonstration.

The comparison sites used in this analysis were selected as those that were most similar to the demonstration site in terms of factors that affect elderly FSP participation. The key factors

examined include historic FSP participation trends, the size of the elderly population, racial composition, and population density of each comparable site in the state.¹

Table 2 summarizes the results of the initial participation analysis. For each state, we present the rate of growth in elderly FSP participation in the demonstration areas. As an estimate of what the growth would have been without the demonstration, we present the analogously measured rate of growth in the comparison sites. The difference is our initial measure of the impact of the demonstration.

The remainder of this section describes the participation trends in each of the six Elderly Nutrition Demonstration states. For each state, two types of analysis are conducted:

1. ***Analysis of Participation Patterns.*** The analysis of participation patterns (depicted in graphs throughout the report) examines participation trends from before each demonstration starts until the last observation month (see Figure 1).
2. ***Initial Impact Estimates.*** Initial impact estimates (detailed in tables throughout the report) are computed by examining the change in participation from the last month prior to the demonstration to the last observation month (see Figure 1).

The discussion in this section is organized around the three demonstration models designed by USDA: (1) the Simplified Eligibility model, (2) the Application Assistance model, and (3) the Commodity Alternative Benefit model.

A. SIMPLIFIED ELIGIBILITY DEMONSTRATION

The simplified eligibility model is intended to encourage elderly participation by making it easier to apply for food stamps. Under the standard FSP application process, seniors are required to present a substantial amount of documentation to verify FSP eligibility, including medical bills, housing expenses, and proof of income. The simplified eligibility model seeks to reduce the burden of the application process by eliminating some of the documentation requirements. Only one of the six Elderly Nutrition Demonstration states—Florida—adopted the Simplified Eligibility Model.

¹ For additional details on the selection of comparison sites, see Sing, Merrile, et al., “Design a Plan for Evaluating the Food Stamp Program’s Elderly Nutrition Pilot Demonstration.” Washington, DC: Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., January 30, 2002.

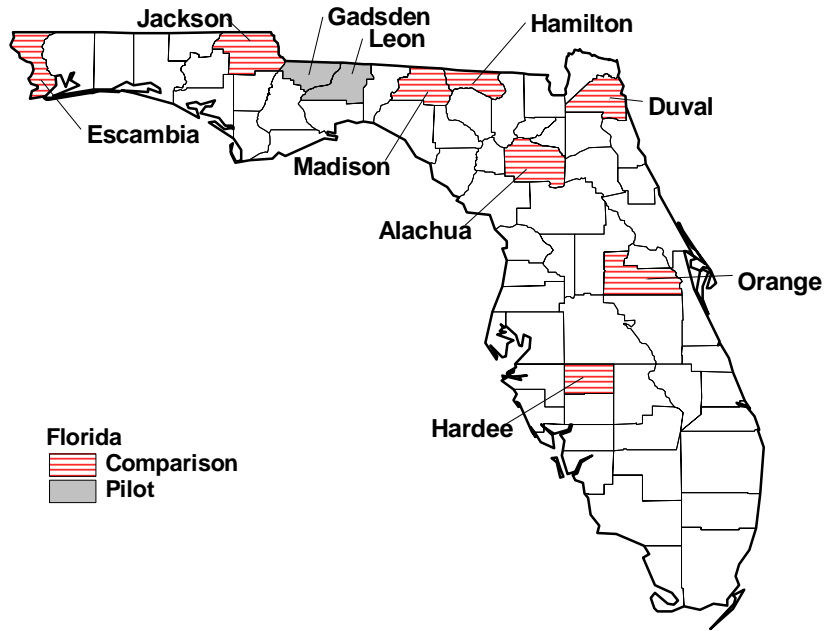
TABLE 2
PERCENT GROWTH IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION IN
DEMONSTRATION AND COMPARISON SITES^a

State	Months After Implementation						
	3	6	9	12	15	18	21
Simplified Application							
Florida							
Demonstration Counties	1.8	4.3	7.9	8.6	11.2	19.9	25.9
Comparison Counties	0.6	1.1	2.7	1.4	2.4	3.7	7.0
Growth Attributed to Demonstration	1.2	3.2	5.2	7.2	8.8	16.2	18.9
Application Assistance							
Arizona							
Demonstration Counties	12.2	21.1	27.8	36.9	47.6		
Comparison Counties	7.6	10.5	14.3	20.3	25.2		
Growth Attributed to Demonstration	4.6	10.5	13.5	16.6	22.4		
Maine							
Demonstration County	3.6	18.5	27.4	32.7	39.7	44.2	46.4
Comparison Counties	-1.5	-0.3	4.6	4.0	5.8	12.2	13.5
Growth Attributed to Demonstration	5.1	18.8	22.8	28.7	33.9	32.0	32.9
Michigan							
Demonstration County	2.9	6.3	9.4	14.5			
Comparison Counties	3.2	4.5	6.3	8.7			
Growth Attributed to Demonstration	-0.2	1.8	3.1	5.8			
Commodity Alternative Benefit							
Connecticut							
Demonstration Towns	0.3	2.1	4.5	6.0			
Comparison Towns	0.6	1.2	3.6	4.1			
Growth Attributed to Demonstration	-0.2	1.0	0.9	1.9			
North Carolina							
Demonstration County	13.1	19.9	23.8	35.5			
Comparison Counties	0.5	7.5	9.5	10.9			
Growth Attributed to Demonstration	12.6	12.4	14.3	24.6			

^aPercent growth is computed relative to elderly FSP participation in the last month before the demonstration is implemented

FIGURE 2

FLORIDA PILOT AND COMPARISON SITES



1. Florida

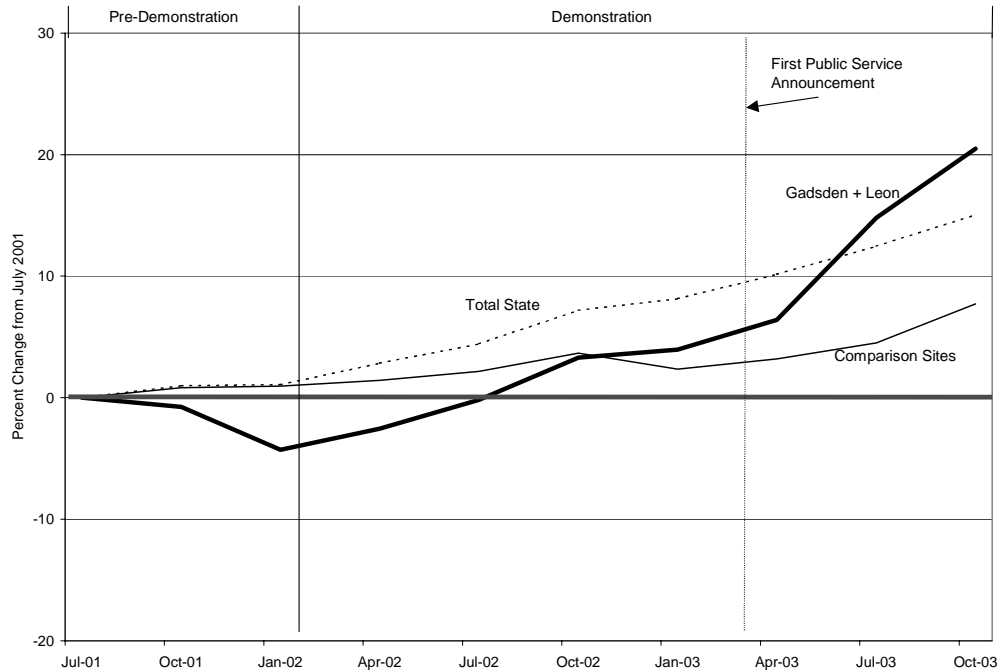
Florida's simplified eligibility demonstration was implemented in February 2002 in Gadsden and Leon counties (Figure 2). Under the demonstration, elderly applicants do not have to provide documentation verifying earnings, SSI or social security income, medical expenses, or asset holdings (the Florida demonstration does require that applicants verify their citizenship status). In addition to the simplified rules, the state also created simplified one-page applications for elderly clients. These applications were used in the two demonstration counties as well as in Alachua and Jackson Counties (both of which are in the comparison group). Also as part of the demonstration, a televised public service announcement promoting the FSP to elderly clients was aired in the pilot counties starting in March 2003.

a. Participation Patterns

The general participation trends show elderly participation increasing after the demonstration was implemented. In July 2001, seven months prior to the start of the demonstration, there were 1,241 elderly households participating in the FSP in Leon and Gadsden counties, combined. This number declined slightly through January 2002 (Figure 3). After the Simplified Eligibility demonstration was implemented, the number of participating households began to increase.

FIGURE 3

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS IN FLORIDA



Prior to July 2003, the growth rate in elderly FSP participation in the demonstration counties was relatively low. However, starting in July, the number of elderly households in the demonstration counties began to increase substantially. This sharp increase was not observed in the comparison sites or in the state as a whole.

When we examine the demonstration counties separately, we see similar trends. Both counties experienced a slight increase in elderly participation in the first year (Figure 4). Starting in July 2003, participation in both counties increases substantially and at rates faster than those of the comparison sites and the state as a whole.

b. Initial Impact Estimates

To compute the initial impact estimate for Florida, we estimate change relative to the last month of the pre-demonstration period. Between January 2002 and October 2003, elderly FSP participation in the demonstration counties increased by 25.9 percent (Table 3). In the comparison counties, elderly FSP participation grew by only 7 percent in the same period. By subtracting the change observed in the comparison sites from the change in the demonstration sites, our initial estimate is that the demonstration increased elderly participation by 18.9 percent.

There is little evidence that the impacts observed in the demonstration counties are driven by the simplified application component of the demonstration. The simplified application, which

FIGURE 4

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS IN GADSDEN AND LEON COUNTIES

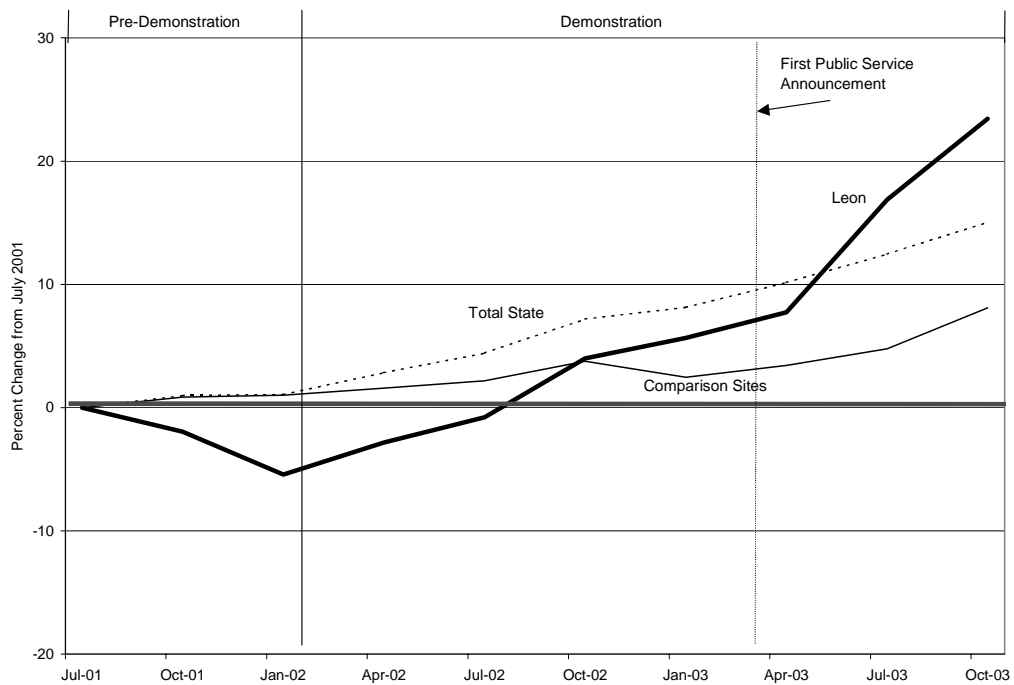
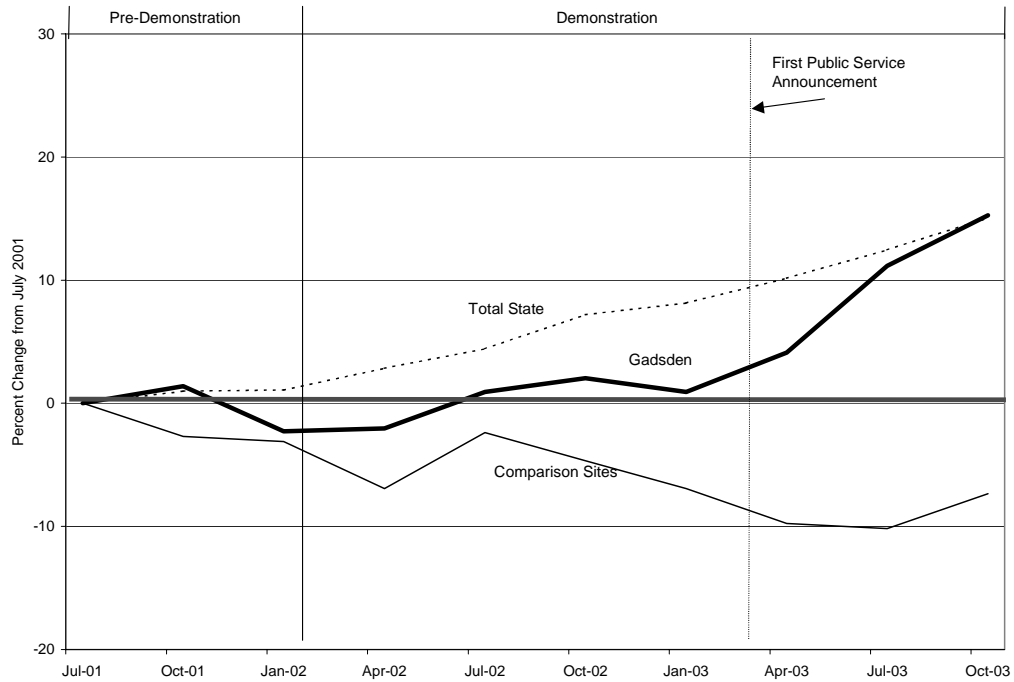


TABLE 3
TRENDS IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION, FLORIDA

	Jan 2002 House- holds	Percent Change from January 2002						
		2002			2003			
		Apr	Jul	Oct	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Demonstration Counties								
Gadsden County	429	0.2	3.3	4.4	3.3	6.5	13.8	17.9
Leon County	734	2.7	4.9	9.9	11.7	13.9	23.6	30.5
Combined	1,163	1.8	4.3	7.9	8.6	11.2	19.9	25.9
Comparison Counties								
Total	10,634	0.6	1.1	2.7	1.4	2.4	3.7	7.0
Simplified Application Counties								
Alachua County	999	-0.3	-0.7	0.4	1.0	2.5	2.3	3.0
Jackson County	396	-3.3	0.8	-0.8	-3.5	-6.1	-6.8	-1.5
Combined	1,395	-1.1	-0.3	-0.3	-0.3	0.1	-0.3	1.7
Total State	125,715	1.7	3.3	6.1	7.0	9.0	11.3	13.8
Cumulative Impact Estimate (Pilot – Comparison)	n.a.	1.2	3.2	5.2	7.2	8.8	16.2	18.9

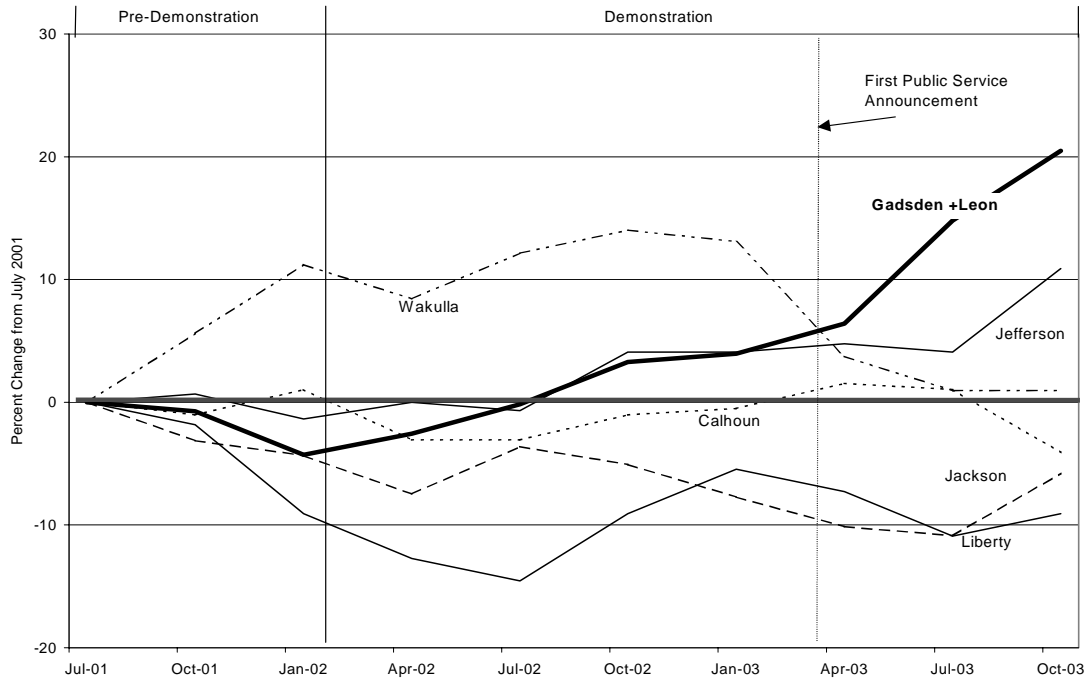
was used in both demonstration counties, was also adopted in Alachua and Jackson Counties. Elderly FSP participation in Alachua and Jackson Counties remained relatively flat, growing at rates lower than the other comparison sites and the rest of the state (Table 3).

On the other hand, the public service announcement developed as part of the demonstration’s outreach initiatives appears to explain much of the growth in participation that started in July 2003. The announcement was aired in Gadsden and Leon counties over three periods: (1) March 24 through May 11, 2003 (2) July 28 through August 26, 2003, and (3) October 20 through October 27, 2003. In the announcement, the Secretary of Florida’s Department of Children and Families explains that seniors may be eligible for food assistance. He does not mention the Food Stamp Program by name, nor does he explain the eligibility requirements, but he does provide contact information for the FSP. When MPR staff visited the Florida demonstration in December 2003, it was clear that the public service announcement had succeeded in reaching its target population. All of the respondents we interviewed believed that the announcement had an impact on participation.

Since the public service announcement is considered outreach as opposed to simplified eligibility, we are interested in whether the apparent impacts are derived from the change in eligibility rules, outreach or both. While it may be that the results after July 2003 reflect the impact of enhanced outreach only, it also is possible that the public service announcement increases participation *because* of the simplified eligibility rules. That is, without the simplified eligibility rules, many seniors who are led to the program by the announcement might abandon the application process if it had the traditional, more-cumbersome eligibility requirements.

FIGURE 5

ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS IN COUNTIES SURROUNDING GADSDEN AND LEON



To explore this, we examined the participation patterns in the counties surrounding Gadsden and Leon. Seniors residing in these counties may have seen the public service announcement aired in the Tallahassee area, and if so, we may observe a spill-over effect with similar increases in participation in those counties.² If we do observe a spill-over effect, then there is evidence that the outreach works without the simplified eligibility rules.

Five counties surround the demonstration sites: Jackson, Calhoun, Liberty, Wakulla and Jefferson. In two of the five counties—Jackson and Jefferson, elderly FSP participation increased after the airing of the public service announcement (Figure 5). In Jackson county, the increase is smaller than the monthly fluctuation observed in earlier months. However, in

²At this point, we are uncertain whether we should expect spillover effects in surrounding counties. MPR has not seen the public service announcement and we do not have complete information on the extent to which the public service announcement reached these other counties. The PSA was produced by Florida Impact, the non-profit subcontractor used by the demonstration to conduct outreach. The announcement directed clients to contact Florida Impact, not the Department of Children and Families, and it is unclear whether Florida Impact staff would still refer clients not residing in the demonstration area to DCF. Once we review the announcement and get specifics on where the announcement could be viewed, we will have a better sense of whether spill-over effects would be expected.

Jefferson county (which is somewhat close to Tallahassee), there is a relatively large increase in participation between July and October.

If Jefferson County is the only county with major exposure to the announcement, then there is evidence that outreach has an impact even without the simplified eligibility rules. If, however, major exposure occurred in the other counties, then there is evidence that the simplified eligibility rules are essentially a necessary condition for successful outreach. Future analysis of the results in Florida will further explore the extent to which the public service announcement was viewed in surrounding counties.

B. APPLICATION ASSISTANCE DEMONSTRATIONS

The application assistance model uses strategies designed to provide seniors with direct assistance in applying for food stamps. Under this demonstration, eligibility rules remain unchanged, but application assistants work with seniors to collect documentation, complete the application form, and work with the local FSP office.

Three states are implementing demonstrations based on the application assistance model: Arizona, Maine and Michigan. In all three states, the model appears to be working. In Arizona and Maine, the two states in which assistants travel to meet with clients in various venues, elderly participation in the demonstration sites grew substantially faster than in the comparison sites. In Michigan, where the assistants are based in senior centers, the estimated impacts are smaller, but this may be the result of the closure of several key senior centers during the demonstration. The remainder of this section summarizes the results for each of the application assistance states.

1. Arizona

Arizona's application assistance program—the Food Assistance and Nutrition to Seniors (FANS) demonstration—uses paid application assistants to work one-on-one with elderly applicants. The demonstration operates in two counties: Pinal and Yavapai (Figure 6). While some demonstration activities began in Yavapai County in July 2002, the demonstration was not fully operational until September 2002. Application assistants provide information about the FSP and nutrition education materials to low-income seniors, prescreen them for food stamp eligibility, and inform them about other community resources. Assistance often takes place in senior centers, although outreach posts also have been established with faith-based organizations, libraries, alternative food assistance sites, and county health departments. A small percentage of FANS clients are served through home visits.

a. Participation Patterns

In February 2002, there was a combined total of 918 elderly clients living in Pinal and Yavapai counties. Elderly FSP participation in both counties grew at a modest pace before the demonstration started in September 2002, a pace similar to that of the rest of the state (Figure 7). After the demonstration started the rate of growth accelerated. Participation growth in the

FIGURE 6

ARIZONA PILOT AND COMPARISON COUNTIES FSP

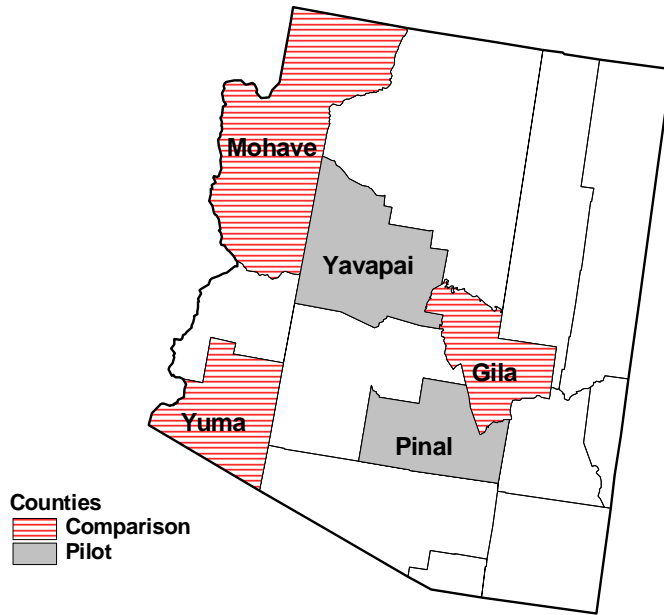
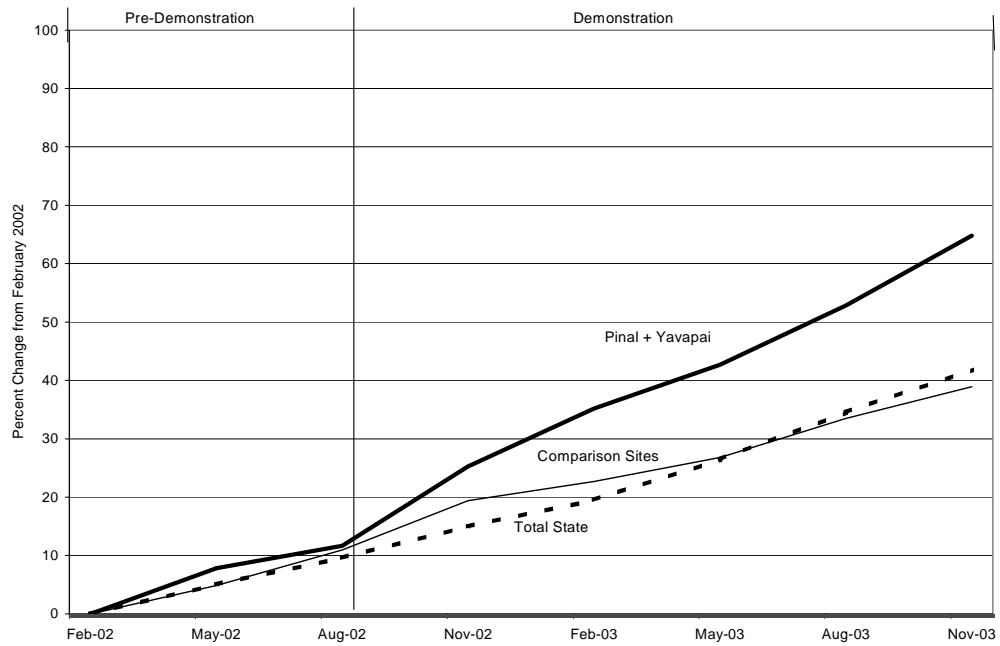


FIGURE 7

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS IN ARIZONA



comparison counties also was significant, although much less than that of the demonstration counties. Indeed, there are factors leading to substantial increases in total FSP participation (elderly or otherwise) statewide. Between February 2002 and November 2003, elderly FSP participation increased by 41.8 percent and total FSP participation (not shown) increased by 48.5 percent statewide.

Figure 8 presents the participation trends for the demonstration counties separately. In Pinal County, participation trends are similar to those in comparison sites as well as in the state as a whole. Alternatively, in Yavapai County, the growth rate (80 percent by November 2003) far exceeds that of the comparison group. This suggests that trends in Yavapai County are driving the overall results for the FANS demonstration.

b. Initial Impact Estimates

The initial impact estimate of the FANS project is computed by comparing participation changes after August 2002 in the demonstration sites with those in the comparison sites (Table 4). The number of elderly FSP households increased by 47.6 percent in the demonstration counties during this period, and by 25.2 percent in the comparison counties. This suggests that FANS has led to a 22.4 percent increase in elderly FSP participation.

To get a better sense of the amount of the increase in elderly FSP participation due to the demonstrations, we examined the number of FANS-generated applications submitted for the FSP. The total number of approved applications does not necessarily reflect the impact of the demonstration since some FANS applicants may have applied for food stamps in the absence of FANS. However, the number of applications likely serves as a good upper-bound for the impact of the demonstration.

By June 2003 (the latest month for which we have application data), a combined total of 223 FANS applications were approved for food stamps (Table 5). This implies a maximum net demonstration impact of 21.8 percent. The total increase in elderly participation between August 2002 and August 2003 was 36.9 percent, suggesting that the approved applications can explain a significant portion of the increase in elderly households. Indeed, the proportion explained by the approved applications is *higher* than the impact estimate computed by subtracting comparison site trends from demonstration site trends (16.6 percent). Thus, there is substantial evidence that the higher participation trend in the demonstration counties is explained by the demonstration.

The relatively low number of applications in Pinal County is likely the result of staffing issues in that county. In terms of the approach to application assistance, the demonstration in Pinal and Yavapai Counties are fundamentally the same. However, some of the application assistance positions in Pinal County remained vacant for several months. Moreover, staff in Pinal appear (to MPR) to be less motivated than staff in Yavapai County. While there may be other factors at play, we suspect that differences in staffing explain much of the difference in the number of applications submitted.

FIGURE 8

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS
IN PINAL AND YAVAPAI COUNTIES SEPARATELY

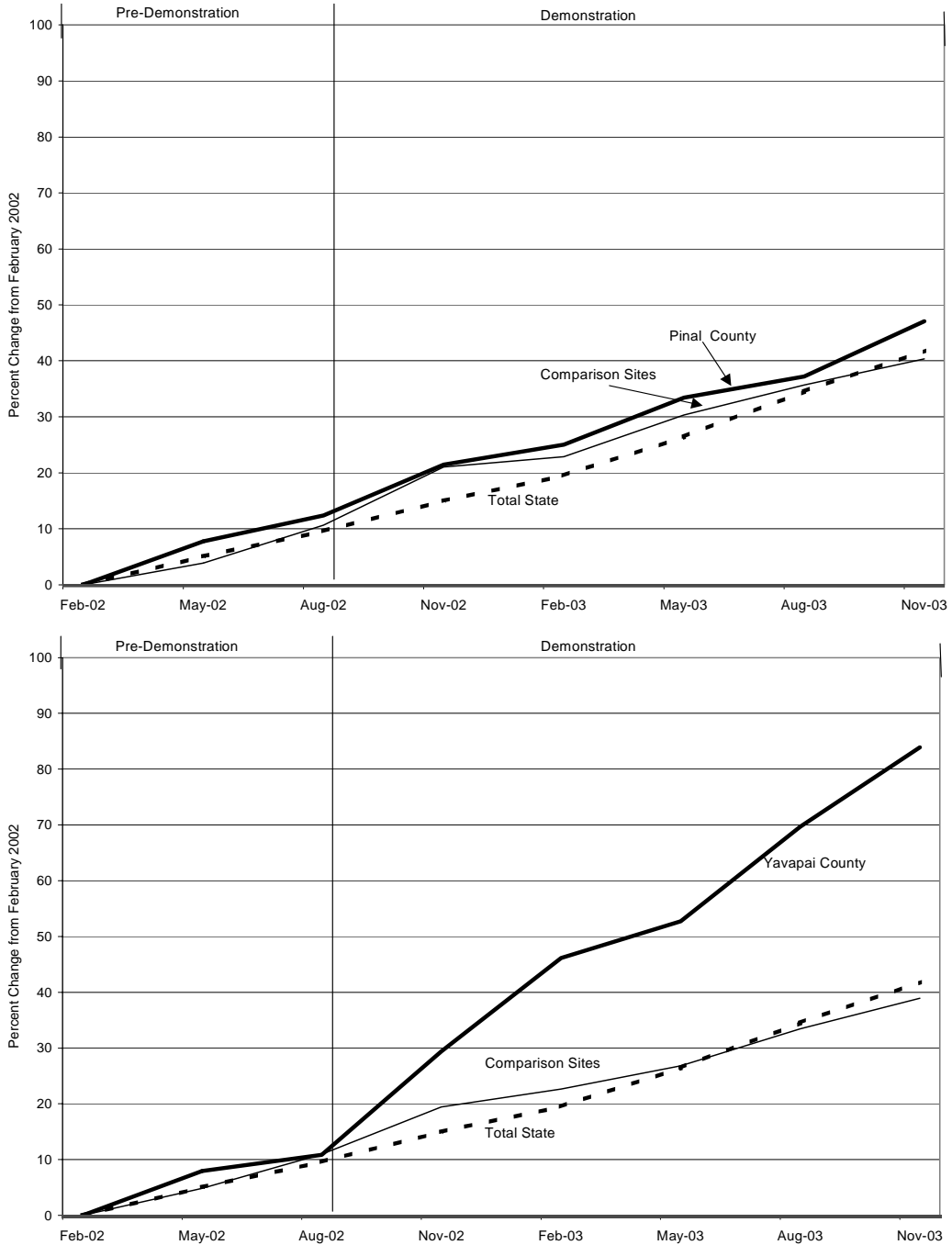


TABLE 4
TRENDS IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION, ARIZONA

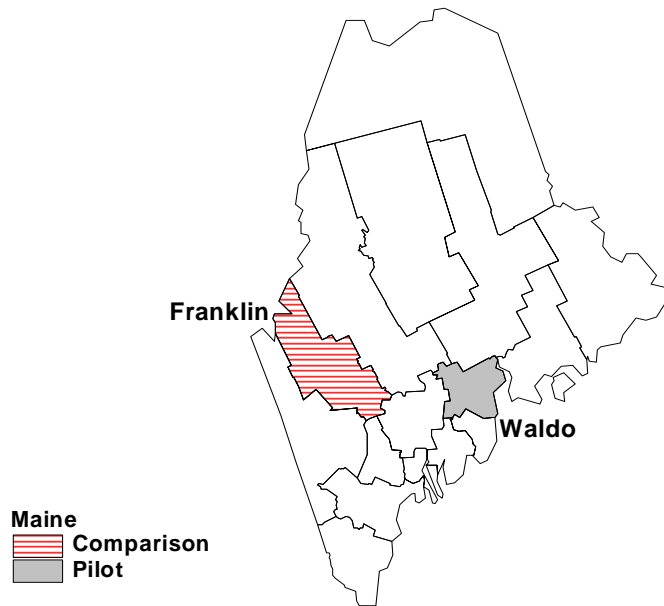
	August 2002 House-holds	Percent Change from August 2002				
		2002	2003			
		Nov	Feb	May	Aug	Nov
Demonstration Counties						
Pinal County	535	8.0	11.2	18.7	22.1	30.8
Yavapai County	490	16.7	31.8	37.8	53.1	65.9
Combined	1,025	12.2	21.1	27.8	36.9	47.6
Comparison Counties						
Comparison Counties	1,366	7.6	10.5	14.3	20.3	25.2
Total State	12,582	4.9	9.1	15.4	22.7	29.4
Cumulative Impact Estimate (Pilot – Comparison)	n.a.	4.6	10.5	13.5	16.6	22.4

TABLE 5
CHANGE IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION EXPLAINED BY
APPROVED FANS APPLICATIONS, ARIZONA

County	August 2002 Households	Percent Change, August 2002 – August 2003	Cumulative Impact Estimate, August 2003	Cumulative FANS Applications, June 2003		Approved Applications as a Percent of August 2002 Households
				Submitted	Approved	
Pinal County	535	22.1	-0.6	74	47	8.8
Yavapai County	490	53.1	35.4	288	176	35.9
Combined	1,025	36.9	16.6	362	223	21.8

FIGURE 9

MAINE PILOT AND COMPARISON COUNTIES



2. Maine

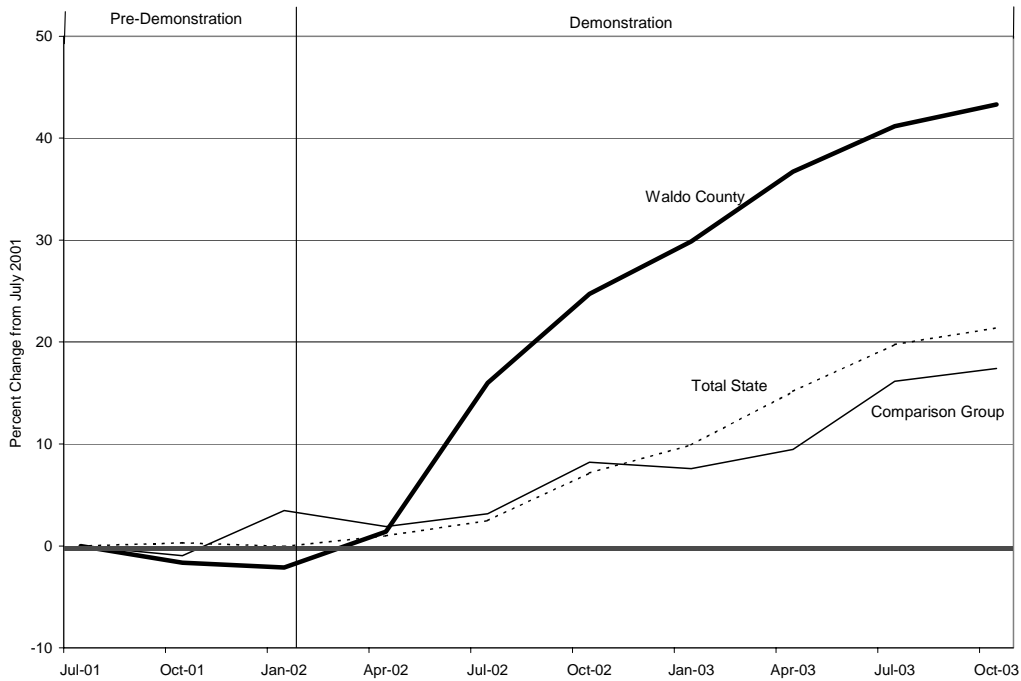
Maine’s application assistance demonstration—Food Assistance Connecting Eligible Seniors (FACES)—was implemented in Waldo County in February 2002. The FACES program employs three part-time application assistants who help low-income seniors complete applications for the FSP. Most often, the assistance is provided in the seniors’ homes, and the application assistant takes responsibility for submitting the FSP completed application and supporting documentation. Figure 9 shows the demonstration and comparison counties in Maine.

a. Participation Patterns

In July 2001, there were 425 elderly households in Waldo County participating in the FSP. This number declined slightly in the months leading up to implementation of the FACES program (Figure 10). After implementation, the number of participating elderly households increased rapidly. In the comparison county and in the rest of the state, elderly FSP participation increased over the same period. While these increases were generally large, they were much smaller than the increase observed in Waldo County.

FIGURE 10

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS IN MAINE



b. Initial Impact Estimates

The initial impact estimate of the FACES program is computed by comparing participation changes after January 2002 in the demonstration county with changes in the comparison county (Table 6). The number of elderly FSP households increased by 46.4 percent in Waldo County during this period, and by 13.5 percent in the comparison county. This suggests that FACES led to a 32.9 percent increase in elderly FSP participation.

The rate of growth in the number of elderly FSP households in Waldo County is leveling off. The graph in Figure 11 reflects an average quarterly growth rate of 7 percent in the first year but only 3 percent in the second year (through October). One possible explanation for this leveling is that it reflects the inherent limit in the total number of eligible households in a rural area like Waldo County. The initial large increase in participation likely reflects the success of the FACES program in reaching the pre-existing group of eligible nonparticipants. If the number of eligible households was static (that is, no new households became eligible over time), then the assistants would have a decreasing pool of eligible households to work with – households which, almost by definition, are hard-to-serve. The number of eligible households is not static, as each month circumstances change and elderly households become newly eligible. Hence, after the initial success of the application assistance program, the remaining pool of non-participants shrinks, and it is composed of the hard-to-serve and the newly-eligible. At some point, we would expect to see the quarterly growth rate level out.

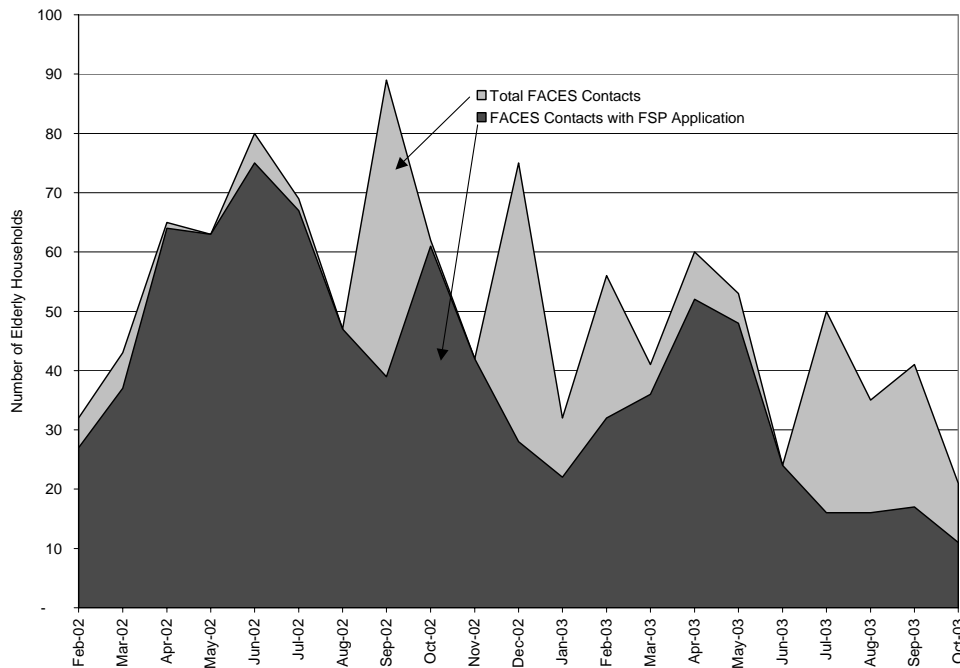
TABLE 6

TRENDS IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION, MAINE

	Jan 2002 House- holds	Percent Change from January 2002						
		2002			2003			
		Apr	Jul	Oct	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Waldo County (Demonstration)	416	3.6	18.5	27.4	32.7	39.7	44.2	46.4
Comparison Counties	327	-1.5	-0.3	4.6	4.0	5.8	12.2	13.5
Total State	12,273	1.0	2.5	7.2	10.0	15.2	19.8	21.4
Cumulative Impact Estimate (Pilot – Comparison)	n.a.	5.1	18.8	22.8	28.7	33.9	32.0	32.9

FIGURE 11

MONTHLY NUMBER OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS SERVED
BY FACES APPLICATION ASSISTANTS



Another possible explanation of the growth rate leveling in Waldo County involves administrative phenomena. During much of the second year of the demonstration, the FACES program was using fewer than three application assistants as one or more of the assistants were either on sick leave or personal leave. Figure 11 reflects the total number of new contacts with elderly households made by FACES application assistants each month. The monthly number declined in the second year of the demonstration, with the low in June 2003 reflecting the peak of the application assistant shortage. That said, the total number of contacts in months with full staff are still lower in the second year than in the first. Moreover, the proportion of elderly households for whom an FSP application was submitted decreased over time.

The recent implementation of electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards in Maine is another potential explanation of the leveling of participation. Because of the technology involved, EBT cards can be intimidating to seniors and may act as a deterrent to the program. Maine's EBT program went operational state-wide in June 2003, around the time we see a tapering of participation in the Waldo County and across the state. However, based on discussions with both Waldo County and state staff, there is little evidence that seniors are opting out of the FSP as a result of EBT cards. Indeed, staff were surprised by how few problems arose.

We suspect that the trends presented in Figures 10 and 11 reflect the combined phenomena of the finite population of elderly households and the staffing shortages. The initial success of FACES is likely due to the large build up of eligible households that needed assistance with the application process. The decline in the growth rate likely reflects the project approaching a steady state and the periodic staffing shortages.

3. Michigan

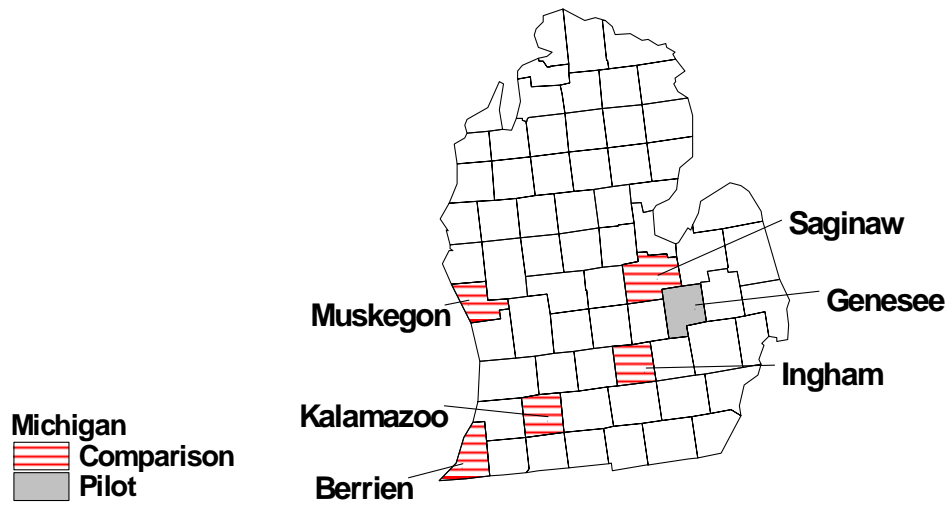
Michigan's application assistance pilot features an on-line application form that can be accessed at all senior centers in the pilot site, Genesee County. Senior center staff assist elderly applicants in understanding FSP eligibility rules and help them complete an FSP application. The on-line application is referred to as Michigan's Coordinated Access to Food for the Elderly (MiCAFE). To make the process easier for the applicant, senior center staff enter the applicant data into the on-line system. This pilot was implemented in November 2002. Figure 12 shows the demonstration and comparison counties in Michigan.

a. Participation Patterns

In April 2002, there were 2,160 elderly FSP households in Genesee County. The number increased slightly before the demonstration was implemented in November. After implementation, steady growth in the number of elderly households continued (Figure 13). The growth observed in Genesee County is somewhat larger than the growth observed in the comparison counties (and even larger compared with the state as a whole).

FIGURE 12

MICHIGAN PILOT AND COMPARISON COUNTIES



Note: No pilot or comparison counties are in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

FIGURE 13

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS IN MICHIGAN

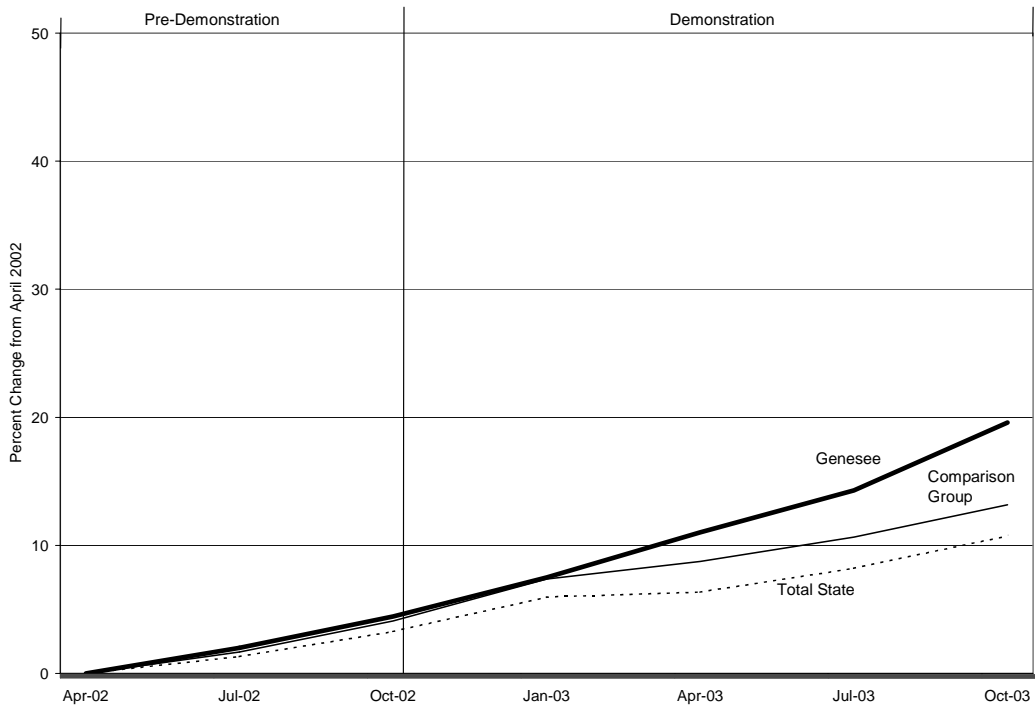


TABLE 7
TRENDS IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION, MICHIGAN

	October 2002 Households	Percent Change from October 2002			
		Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Genesee County (Demonstration)	2,256	2.9	6.3	9.4	14.5
Comparison Counties	5,288	3.2	4.5	6.3	8.7
Total State	49,787	2.6	3.0	4.8	7.2
Cumulative Impact Estimate (Pilot – Comparison)	n.a.	-0.2	1.8	3.1	5.8

b. Initial Participation Impact

The initial impact estimate of the MiCAFE program is computed by comparing participation changes after November 2002 in the demonstration sites with changes in the comparison sites (Table 7). By October 2003, the number of elderly FSP households increased by 14.5 percent in Genesee County, compared with only 8.7 percent in the comparison counties. This yields an initial impact estimate of 5.8 percent.

Given that this impact estimate is computed for Genesee County as a whole, it likely underestimates the effects of the demonstration. Shortly after MiCAFE was implemented in Genesee County, the city of Flint closed its senior centers. This effectively cut off from the demonstration the densest population center in Genesee County. As a result, the most appropriate measure of the impact of the demonstration would be to compute the percent change in participation *only for those areas served by the demonstration*. The data we have currently do not contain sufficient information to examine participation in sub-regions of Genesee County.

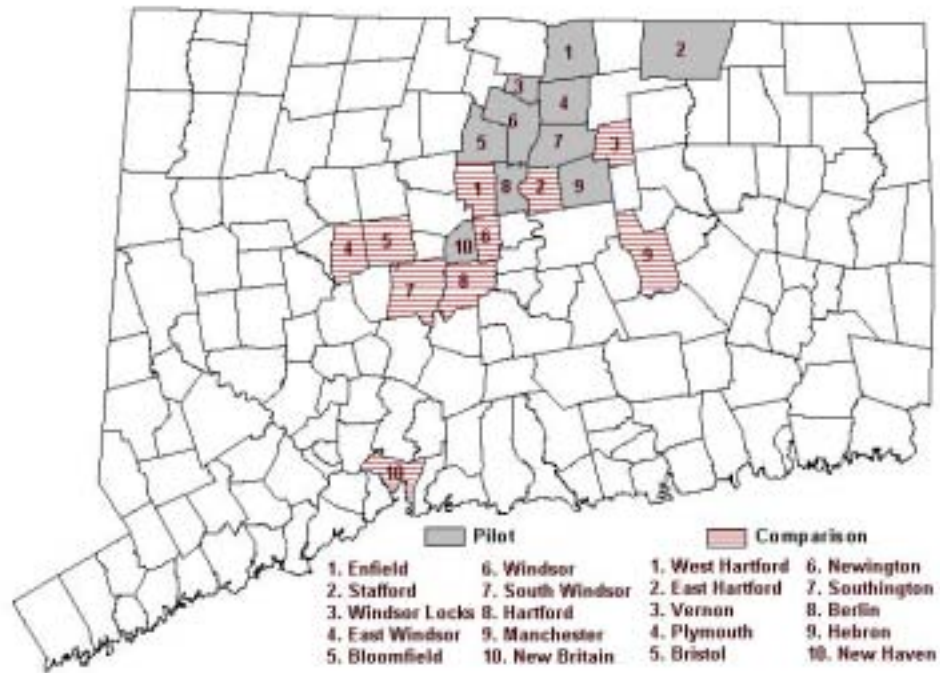
C. COMMODITY ALTERNATIVE BENEFIT

Under the Commodity Alternative Benefit model, elderly FSP households have the option of receiving packages of commodities each month instead of getting benefits through an EBT card. Two states – Connecticut and North Carolina – have implemented commodity alternative benefit demonstrations. Local nonprofit organizations are responsible for ordering, storing, and distributing the commodity packages. Most participants must pick up their commodity packages at a central distribution point, although some home-bound clients can have packages delivered.

The total cost to the demonstration of each commodity package cannot exceed the average per-person benefit paid to elderly clients in the demonstration county. Commodity costs are computed based on USDA bulk prices. Thus, if elderly individuals in a pilot site receive an average FSP benefit of \$40, then the demonstration can distribute packages whose contents cost

FIGURE 14

CONNECTICUT PILOT AND COMPARISON TOWNS



\$40. The cost of the packages will be the same for all participants, regardless of the benefit amounts for which they are eligible.

1. Connecticut

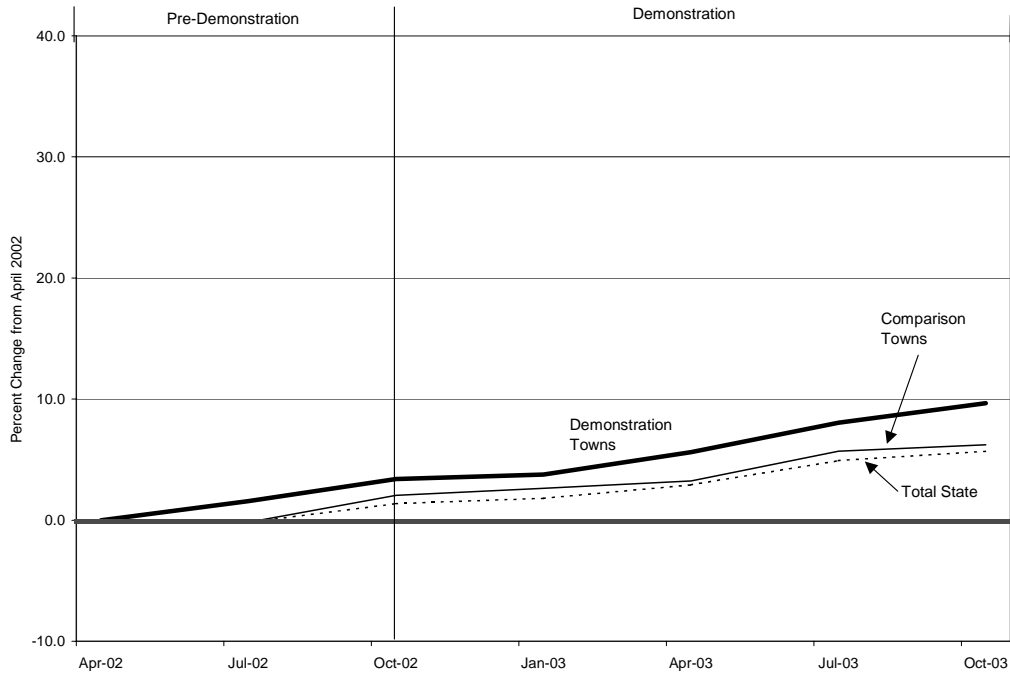
Connecticut’s commodity pilot—the Food Connection—offers commodities packages to elderly households in the Hartford area. The packages are assembled and distributed by the Community Renewal Team (CRT), a local food distribution organization. Clients can pick up their packages at the local congregate meals site; or, if they participate in the Meals on Wheels program, they can have the packages delivered to their homes. To reduce the weight of the commodity packages, CRT distributes packages twice a month, with each package containing half of the monthly contents. The Food Connection began serving clients in 10 pilot towns in November 2002. Figure 14 shows the pilot and comparison towns in Connecticut.

a. Participation Patterns

Elderly FSP participation patterns in the demonstration towns show some growth, but the growth rates are similar to those in the comparison towns. In April 2002, there was a combined total of 3,618 elderly households participating in the FSP in the 10 Hartford-area towns participating in the demonstration. This number increased slightly by October 2002, the month immediately prior to implementation (Figure 15). By October 2003, the number of elderly FSP households was less than 10 percent higher than the April 2002 number.

FIGURE 15

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS IN CONNECTICUT



The total number of households participating in the demonstration is relatively small. In January 2003, three months after implementation, only 184 of the 3,754 elderly FSP households in the demonstration towns were participating in The Food Connection (Table 8). Relatively few of the 184 households were new to the FSP; most were existing FSP households that converted to the demonstration. By October 2003, the number of households participating in The Food Connection was *lower* than the number in January 2003.³

b. Initial Impact Estimates

Our initial impact estimate for The Food Connection is computed by comparing the change in elderly FSP participation after October 2002 in the demonstration towns with the change observed in the comparison towns. Between October 2002 and October 2003, the number of elderly households increased by 6.0 in the demonstration towns, while the number in the comparison towns increased by 4.1 percent (Table 9). Thus, the initial estimate is that The Food Connection increased participation by 1.9 percent. Given this small impact estimate, combined

³ The distribution of demonstration households across the 10 Hartford-area demonstration towns is generally proportional to the distribution of the elderly FSP population in general. The bulk of demonstration households are in the city of Hartford. Trends in participation are similar across demonstration towns.

with the relatively low number of households entering the FSP and selecting the commodity alternative, it appears that the Connecticut demonstration is having little or no impact in increasing the number of elderly FSP clients.

TABLE 8
ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS PARTICIPATING IN COMMODITIES
DEMONSTRATION, CONNECTICUT

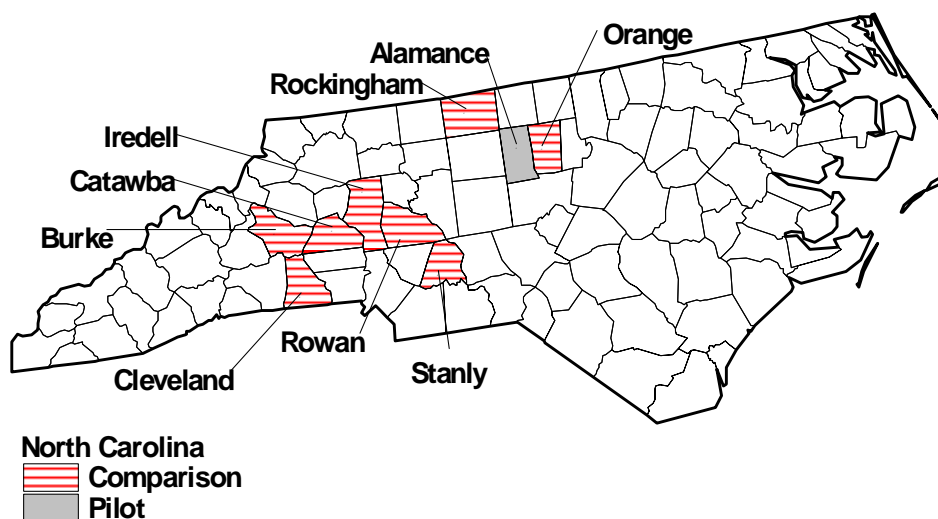
	2002		2003		
	Oct	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Total Elderly FSP Households in Demonstration Towns	3,741	3,754	3,821	3,909	3,967
Elderly Households Participating in Regular FSP	3,741	3,570	3,631	3,716	3,793
Elderly FSP Households in The Food Connection	0	184	190	193	174
Percent of All Elderly FSP Households in The Food Connection	0.0	4.9	5.0	4.9	4.4

TABLE 9
TRENDS IN TOTAL ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION
AFTER IMPLEMENTATION, CONNECTICUT

	October 2002 FSP House-holds	Percent Change from October 2002			
		Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Demonstration Towns	3,741	0.3	2.1	4.5	6.0
Comparison Towns	2,870	0.6	1.2	3.6	4.1
Total State	15,358	0.4	1.5	3.5	4.3
Cumulative Impact Estimate (Pilot – Comparison)	n.a.	-0.2	1.0	0.9	1.9

FIGURE 16

NORTH CAROLINA PILOT AND COMPARISON COUNTIES



2. North Carolina

North Carolina’s commodity demonstration, called the Commodity Alternative Benefit (CAB) Program, was implemented in Alamance County in November 2003. Most participating seniors pick up their packages (which are distributed once a month) from Vocational Trades of Alamance (VTA), the centrally located distribution warehouse. A small number of clients have the packages delivered to their homes. Figure 16 shows the pilot and comparison counties in North Carolina.

a. Participation Patterns

In April 2002, seven months prior to the demonstration, there were 426 elderly households participating in the FSP in Alamance County. This number increased by 3.8 percent by October 2002—the month immediately prior to implementation (Figure 17). Once the demonstration started, the number of elderly FSP households in Alamance County increased at an even faster rate. By October 2003, the number of elderly households was 40.6 percent higher than the number in April 2002.

A relatively large percentage of the elderly FSP households in Alamance County participate in CAB program (Table 10). In January 2003, 210 of the 500 elderly households (42.0 percent) in Alamance County participated in the demonstration. Many of these CAB households were ongoing clients who were participating in the FSP prior to the demonstration. In the first month of the demonstration, 130 of the 442 ongoing clients signed on to participate in the CAB program.

FIGURE 17

FSP PARTICIPATION PATTERNS OF ELDERLY HOUSEHOLDS IN CONNECTICUT

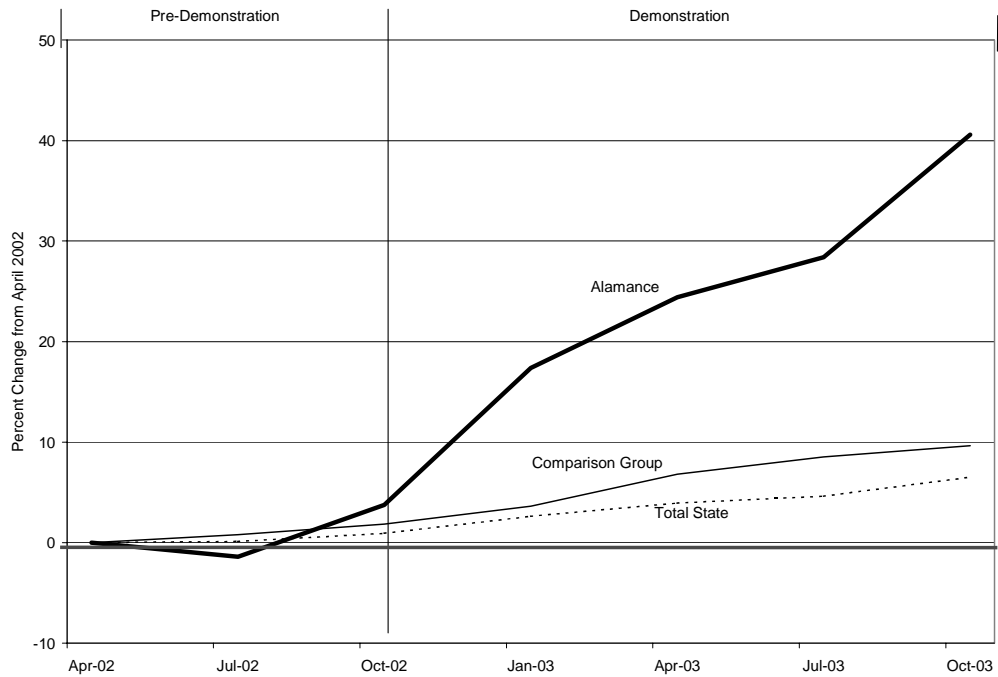


TABLE 10

ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS PARTICIPATING IN COMMODITIES DEMONSTRATION, NORTH CAROLINA

	2002	2003			
	Oct	Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Total Elderly FSP Households in Alamance County	442	500	530	547	599
Elderly Households Participating in Regular FSP	442	290	285	292	318
Elderly FSP Households Participating in CAB	0	210	245	255	281
Percent of All Elderly FSP Households in CAB	0.0	42.0	46.2	46.6	46.9

TABLE 11

TRENDS IN ELDERLY FSP PARTICIPATION AFTER
IMPLEMENTATION, NORTH CAROLINA

	October 2002 FSP Households	Percent Change from October 2002			
		Jan	Apr	Jul	Oct
Alamance County (Demonstration)	442	13.1	19.9	23.8	35.5
Comparison Group	3,322	0.5	7.5	9.5	10.9
Total State	43,962	1.7	3.0	3.7	5.5
Cumulative Impact Estimate (Pilot – Comparison)	n.a.	12.6	12.4	14.3	24.6

b. Initial Impact Estimates

The initial impact estimate for the CAB program is computed by comparing the change in elderly FSP participation after October 2002 in the demonstration towns with the change observed in the comparison towns. Between October 2002 and October 2003, the number of elderly households increased by 35.5 percent in the demonstration towns, while the number in the comparison towns increased by 10.9 percent (Table 11). Thus, the initial estimate is that CAB increased participation by 24.6 percent.

III. TRENDS IN BENEFITS PAID

Trends in FSP benefits paid in the demonstration sites can provide another measure of the impact of the demonstration. In particular, if the demonstration attracts individuals who are eligible for a benefit that is higher or lower than the typical benefit, this will be reflected by trends in the average benefit paid to clients. Because other factors may be affecting the average benefit at the same time, we compare the trends in the average benefit in the demonstration sites with the trends in the average benefit in the comparison sites. This allows us to determine whether the demonstration site benefit changes are different than we would otherwise expect.

Table 12 presents the average benefits paid to elderly FSP households in the demonstration and comparison counties. For each state, we examine the difference between the average FSP benefit to all elderly FSP households in the demonstration counties with the average to all elderly FSP households in the comparison counties. For some states, we also are able to compute the average benefit paid to households participating in the demonstration.⁴ The table shows for each state the trends in the average benefits paid. The final column presents the net change from the first observation month to the last observation month. Differences in the net change for the demonstration and comparison sites may reflect the effects of the demonstration.

The results show that in the two states with the most detailed benefit data collected so far (Maine and North Carolina), the demonstrations are attracting clients eligible for a lower-than-average benefit. There is evidence that this is happening in some of the other states as well. The results for each state are summarized below:

- **Florida.** While there has been some fluctuation, the average benefit paid to households in the demonstration counties has remained about \$10 lower than that of the comparison counties. In both sets of counties, the average benefit has been growing over time. Due to an increase in comparison site benefits in the final month, the net change in average benefits is \$5 less in the demonstration sites than in the comparison sites.
- **Arizona.** The average benefit paid in the demonstration counties increased at a slower rate than that of the comparison counties. By the final observation month, average benefits in the demonstration sites had increased by \$7 less than in the comparison sites. This could indicate that the demonstration households tend to receive a lower-than-average benefit.⁵

⁴ So that estimates are consistent across sites, we show only the differences computed using average benefits to all demonstration clients in Table 13.

⁵ Currently, the administrative data from Arizona do not allow us to distinguish demonstration participants from non-demonstration participants. Once we obtain the necessary information to make that distinction, we will be able to examine directly whether the demonstration households receive a lower-than-average benefit.

TABLE 12

AVERAGE BENEFITS PAID TO EDLERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS

State	Months Before Implementation			Months After Implementation							Net Change
	-7	-4	-1	+3	+6	+9	+12	+15	+18	+21	
Simplified Application											
Florida											
Demonstration Counties	\$38	\$42	\$38	\$38	\$40	\$43	\$44	\$43	\$44	\$45	+\$7
Comparison Counties	48	52	48	49	49	53	51	52	54	60	+12
Difference	-10	-10	-10	-11	-9	-10	-7	-9	-10	-15	-5
Application Assistance											
Arizona											
Demonstration Counties	64	64	62	66	63	63	64	68			+4
Comparison Counties	66	66	64	71	70	71	71	77			+11
Difference	-2	-2	-2	-5	-7	-8	-7	-9			-7
Maine											
Demonstration County	68	76	71	71	69	73	74	72	72	71	+3
Demonstration HHs Only	--	--	--	66	44	49	56	50	51	53	
Comparison Counties	66	68	63	62	64	70	70	67	69	71	+5
Difference	+2	+8	+8	+9	+5	+3	+4	+5	+3	0	-2
Michigan											
Demonstration County	71	71	76	74	74	76	78				+7
Comparison Counties	64	64	67	67	67	68	71				+7
Difference	+7	+7	+9	+7	+7	+8	+7				0
Commodity Alternative Benefit											
Connecticut											
Demonstration Towns ^a	40	41	44	45	46	50	61				+21
Computed Benefit, Demonstration HHs	--	--	--	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.				
Comparison Towns	35	35	35	35	35	39	56				+21
Difference	+5	+6	+9	+10	+11	+11	+5				0
North Carolina											
Demonstration County ^b	36	37	39	34	33	34	36				+0
Computed Benefit, Demonstration HHs	--	--	--	18	18	18	19				
Comparison Counties	45	46	50	48	50	50	53				+8
Difference	-9	-9	-11	-14	-17	-16	-17				-8

^aCommodity cost (i.e., demonstration site average benefits) is assigned to demonstration participants for purposes of computing average benefit (computed benefit amounts are currently unavailable).

^bComputed benefit is assigned to demonstration participants for purposes of computing average benefits.

- **Maine.** In Maine, the average benefit in Waldo County was \$8 higher than the average benefit in the comparison county prior to the demonstration. Average benefits in the comparison county increased more than in Waldo County, and by October 2003, the average was the same in both counties. When we look at the demonstration households only, we see that those households who enter the FSP through the FACES program receive a lower-than-average benefit (\$53 per month versus \$71 in October 2003).
- **Michigan.** The average benefit in Genesee County has remained about \$7 higher than the average in the comparison counties over the course of the demonstration. As with the analysis of participation impacts, the effects of the demonstration in Genesee County may be obscured by the fact that much of Flint is not served by the demonstration.
- **Connecticut.** The average benefit in Connecticut is computed using the cost of the commodity package to determine the benefit received by demonstration households. Since the cost is determined as the average benefit for the demonstration sites, we would not expect any changes in the average benefit over time. Currently, we do not have sufficient data to determine the amount of traditional FSP benefit that each household is eligible for. As a result, we cannot yet determine whether the demonstration attracts households eligible for a lower-than-average benefit.
- **North Carolina.** Prior to the demonstration, the average benefit to elderly in Alamance County was \$9 to \$11 lower than in the comparison counties. When we measure average benefits using the traditional FSP benefit amount that demonstration households would be eligible for, the average benefit in Alamance County falls after the demonstration begins. At the same time, the average benefit in the comparison counties increases. The average benefit that demonstration households would receive if they did not participate in the demonstration was only \$18-\$19, almost half of value of the overall average for the entire county.

IV. PARTICIPATION BY SUBGROUP

To the extent that the demonstrations are successful, they may be attracting to the FSP elderly households that are different from the typical elderly FSP household. We examined the demonstration impacts by subgroups in two key categories: the age of the oldest member of the household and the benefit received.

Our ability to identify impacts on subgroups is affected by the availability of key data. In Maine, Connecticut and North Carolina, we currently are able to identify demonstration participants in the administrative database. To identify subgroup trends for these states, we compare the characteristics of demonstration participants and non-demonstration participants in the most recent month for which there is data. The results show key differences between demonstration and non-demonstration participants.

Direct comparisons of demonstration participants and non-demonstration participants are not possible yet in the other three states. In Florida, all new entrants are demonstration participants, and in Arizona and Michigan, where we are still awaiting the necessary data to identify which households are demonstration participants. For these states, we examine how the distribution of households in these subgroups changed from the month immediately prior to implementation until the last month of the demonstration. We then compared any changes in the distribution with similarly-measured changes for the comparison sites. If there are major differences between demonstration and non-demonstration participants, they may appear in the demonstration site-comparison site differences. Unfortunately, this methodology proves less illuminating than comparing demonstration participants with non-participants in the same county. Because the demonstration participants make up only a small share of all participants in the demonstration counties, they have only a minor impact on the characteristics of the participants as a whole.

The results of the subgroup analysis for each state are discussed below.

- **Florida.** Changes in the age and benefit distribution in Florida demonstration sites do not differ substantially from changes in the comparison sites (Table 13). In terms of the age distribution, the demonstration and comparison counties shared similar distributions in January 2002. About one-quarter of elderly participants were age 60 to 65, and another fifth age 66-70. Both groups experienced slight changes in the age distribution, with the demonstration sites becoming slightly older and the comparison sites slightly younger. In terms of benefits, prior to the demonstration, elderly clients in the demonstration counties were more likely than elderly clients in the comparison counties to have receive \$10 benefit. However, there were no dramatic shifts in the distribution of benefits after almost two years of the demonstration.

TABLE 13
 DISTRIBUTION OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBGROUP,
 FLORIDA

	Demonstration Sites		Comparison Sites	
	Percent Distribution of January 2002 Households	Percentage Point Change in Distribution in October 2003	Percent Distribution of January 2002 Households	Percentage Point Change in Distribution in October 2003
Age of Oldest Household Member				
60-65	25.8	-1.1	24.7	1.6
66-70	21.3	-0.3	20.8	1.1
71-80	35.0	0.3	36.6	-1.5
80+	17.9	1.1	17.9	-1.2
Benefit Amount				
\$10	41.1	-5.0	30.2	-3.7
\$11 to \$25	12.6	0.2	11.2	-2.1
\$26 to \$50	18.9	-0.2	20.1	-2.3
\$51 to \$100	18.8	0.8	25.0	-0.5
\$101 to \$150	7.7	3.8	12.4	7.1
\$150+	0.9	0.5	1.2	1.6

- **Arizona.** As in Florida, changes in the age and benefit distribution in Arizona demonstration sites do not differ substantially from changes in the comparison sites (Table 14). In terms of the age distribution, over one-third of clients in both the demonstration and comparison counties were in the age 60 to 65 range prior to the demonstration. This group increased slightly by November 2003. In terms of benefits, a relatively small share of elderly clients were receiving a \$10 benefit in August 2002. This group increased slightly in the demonstration counties by November 2003, and decreased slightly in the comparison counties during the same period. This could suggest that the demonstration is attracting some lower-than-average benefit households.

TABLE 14

DISTRIBUTION OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBGROUP, ARIZONA

	Demonstration Sites		Comparison Sites	
	Percent Distribution of August 2002 Households	Percentage Point Change in Distribution in November 2003	Percent Distribution of August 2002 Households	Percentage Point Change in Distribution in November 2003
Age of Oldest Household Member				
60-65	36.8	1.9	37.1	1.9
66-70	21.7	0.2	21.7	-0.5
71-80	30.0	-1.5	31.4	-0.6
80+	11.2	-0.2	9.7	-0.8
Benefit Amount				
\$10	18.0	1.7	16.4	-2.8
\$11 to \$25	8.0	-2.1	9.0	-3.0
\$26 to \$50	20.3	-5.2	21.7	-7.1
\$51 to \$100	30.9	-0.5	27.8	3.4
\$101 to \$150	19.5	6.7	22.1	9.2
\$150+	1.8	-0.1	2.0	0.8

- **Maine.** In Maine, we are able to compare the characteristics of demonstration participants with non-demonstration participants (Table 15). Demonstration participants tend to be older (almost half are in the 71 to 80 years old range) and more likely to receive a \$10 FSP benefit (35.2 percent of demonstration participants compared with only 17.5 percent of non-demonstration participants).

TABLE 15
DISTRIBUTION OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBGROUP,
MAINE

	October 2003	
	Demonstration Households ^a	Non-Demonstration Households
Number of Households	71	469
	<i>Percent Distribution By Subgroup</i>	
Age of Oldest Household Member		
60-65	9.9	23.9
66-70	19.7	24.7
71-80	47.9	36.9
80+	22.5	14.5
Benefit Amount		
\$10	35.2	17.5
\$11 to \$25	5.6	4.3
\$26 to \$50	16.9	10.9
\$51 to \$100	22.5	37.7
\$101 to \$150	19.7	27.5
\$150+	0.0	1.7

^a"Demonstration households" refers to all elderly FSP households participating in the month and that received application assistance at some point in the past.

- Michigan.** In both the demonstration and comparison counties in Michigan, about one-third of clients are in the 60 to 65 age range, and the age distribution does not change substantially after 1 year (Table 16). However, the distribution of benefits paid in the demonstration county does shift slightly to lower benefits, a shift not observed in the comparison county. The percentage of demonstration county clients with a \$10 benefit increased by 2.9 percentage points—from 16.8 to 19.7—after one year of the demonstration.

TABLE 16
DISTRIBUTION OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBGROUP,
MICHIGAN

	Demonstration Sites		Comparison Sites	
	Percent Distribution of October 2002 Households	Percentage Point Change in Distribution in October 2003	Percent Distribution of October 2002 Households	Percentage Point Change in Distribution in October 2003
Age of Oldest Household Member				
60-65	34.6	0.2	32.7	1.1
66-70	23.4	-1.4	21.3	-0.1
71-80	31.0	-0.1	33.1	-1.5
80+	11.0	1.3	12.9	0.5
Benefit Amount				
\$10	16.8	2.9	25.3	-0.1
\$11 to \$25	6.3	-1.2	6.4	-0.8
\$26 to \$50	11.2	-1.7	9.9	-1.4
\$51 to \$100	33.0	-3.4	31.8	-0.7
\$101 to \$150	31.6	3.3	25.6	2.7
\$150+	1.1	0.1	1.1	0.2

- Connecticut.** In Connecticut, we are able to compare the characteristics of demonstration participants with non-demonstration participants (Table 17). Demonstration participants tend to be younger than non-demonstration participants in the demonstration towns. Over half of the demonstration participants are in the 60 to 70 age range, while 65 percent of non-demonstration participants are over age 70. Because the current administrative databases obtained from Connecticut do not contain eligible benefit amounts for demonstration participants, we do not compare the benefit distributions for Connecticut.

TABLE 17
DISTRIBUTION OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBGROUP,
CONNECTICUT

	October 2003	
	Demonstration Households	Non-Demonstration Households
Number of Households	174	3,793
	<i>Percent Distribution By Subgroup</i>	
Age of Oldest Household Member		
60-65	24.7	14.8
66-70	29.3	19.5
71-80	33.3	45.0
80+	12.6	20.7

- North Carolina.** In North Carolina, we are able to compare the characteristics of demonstration participants with non-demonstration participants (Table 18). Demonstration participants tend to be older than non-demonstration participants. Almost two-thirds of demonstration participants are over age 70, compared with 54.1 percent among non-demonstration participants. Demonstration participants are far more likely to be eligible for a \$10 benefit than non-demonstration participants (60.5 percent of demonstration participants compared with 17.6 percent of non-demonstration participants). Only five percent of demonstration participants are eligible for an FSP benefit over \$50.

TABLE 18
DISTRIBUTION OF ELDERLY FSP HOUSEHOLDS BY SUBGROUP,
NORTH CAROLINA

	October 2003	
	Demonstration Households	Non-Demonstration Households
Number of Households	281	318
	<i>Percent Distribution By Subgroup</i>	
Age of Oldest Household Member		
60-65	17.4	28.3
66-70	19.6	17.6
71-80	43.8	39.0
80+	19.2	15.1
Benefit Amount		
\$10	60.5	17.6
\$11 to \$25	15.7	10.1
\$26 to \$50	18.9	34.3
\$51 to \$100	4.6	24.8
\$101 to \$150	0.4	12.9
\$150+	0.0	0.3