

Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Small Grants Program: Executive Summaries of 2003 Research Grants. By Eileen Stommes and Laura Tiehen (editors). Food and Rural Economics Division, Economic Research Service, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Report No. 43.

Abstract

This report summarizes research findings from the Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Small Grants Program. The Economic Research Service created the program in 1998 to stimulate new and innovative research on food assistance and nutrition issues and to broaden the participation of social science scholars in these issues. The report includes summaries of the research projects that were awarded 1-year grants in summer and fall 2002. The results of these research projects were presented at the November 2003 Small Grants Program conference. The projects focus on food assistance and child well-being, food insecurity and hunger, the dynamics of food assistance program participation, obesity, and the role of community factors in dietary intake and food security. Some projects focus on specific populations, such as people living in the rural South and those living on American Indian reservations.

Keywords: Food assistance, nutrition, vulnerable populations, food security, food insecurity, hunger, hungry, food assistance, food spending, well-being, Food Stamp Program, food stamps, National School Lunch Program, WIC, Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Program

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Preface

The Economic Research Service's (ERS) Food Assistance and Nutrition Research Small Grants Program offers grants to social science scholars to stimulate new and innovative research on food and nutrition assistance and to broaden participation in research on these issues. To administer the program, ERS partners with five academic institutions that competitively award grants for 1-year research projects. Most grants are for \$20,000 to \$40,000. The program seeks to give junior scholars an opportunity to gain experience in conducting research on food security and food and nutrition assistance programs and to encourage more senior scholars to apply their skills and knowledge in these areas. The program also seeks to nurture the development of strong networks of scientists who interact and work collaboratively on critical food and nutrition challenges that cross local or State borders.

This report presents summaries of the research findings from the fifth set of small grants, which were awarded in summer and fall 2002. Preliminary findings were presented at a conference at ERS in Washington, DC, in November 2003, and the research projects were completed in December 2003. More information about the Small Grants Program partners and many of the completed research papers can be found on the web sites of the administering institutions, listed below:

Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison

Focus: The Effects of food assistance programs on food security, income security, and other indicators of well-being on low-income individuals and families.

Web address: <http://www.ssc.wisc.edu/irp/smgrants/smhome.htm>

Irving B. Harris School of Public Policy Studies, University of Chicago

Focus: Interactions between food assistance programs and other welfare programs, and the effects of the macroeconomy on the need for food assistance, the level of participation, and costs of food assistance programs.

Web address: <http://harrisschool.uchicago.edu/funding/foodassistance/>

The American Indian Studies Program, University of Arizona

Focus: The relationship between food assistance programs on reservations and family poverty.

Web address: <http://w3.arizona.edu/~aisp/foodassistance/foodassistance1.htm>

The Department of Nutrition at the University of California, Davis

Focus: The impact of food assistance programs on nutritional risk indicators (anthropometric, biochemical, clinical, and dietary), food purchasing practices, and food insecurity.

Web address: <http://nutrition.ucdavis.edu/USDAERS/>

Southern Rural Development Center, Mississippi State University

Focus: Food assistance research issues impacting vulnerable rural people, families, and communities in the South.

Web address: <http://srdc.msstate.edu/focusareas/health/fa/food.htm>