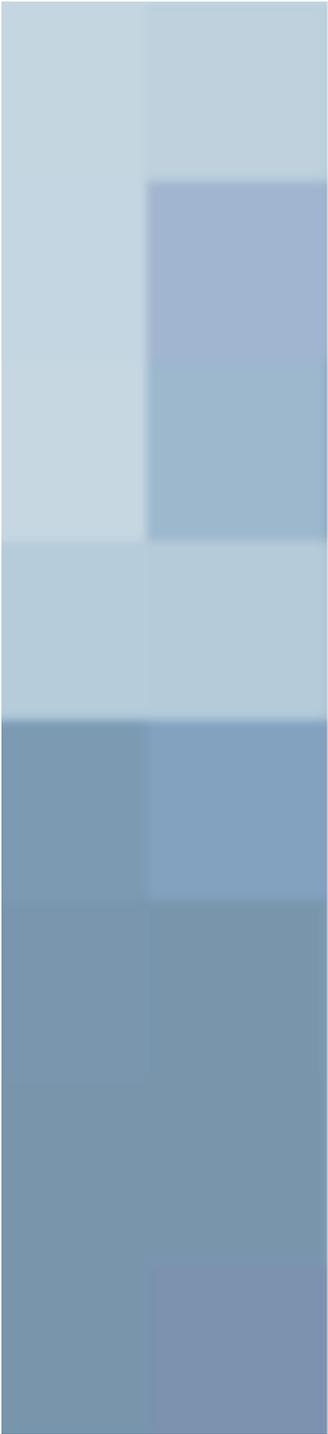


Food Stamp Program

**Fruit and Vegetable Industry
Advisory Committee
June 4, 2007**

**Clarence Carter
Deputy Administrator
Food Stamp Program
Food and Nutrition Service
United States Department of Agriculture**





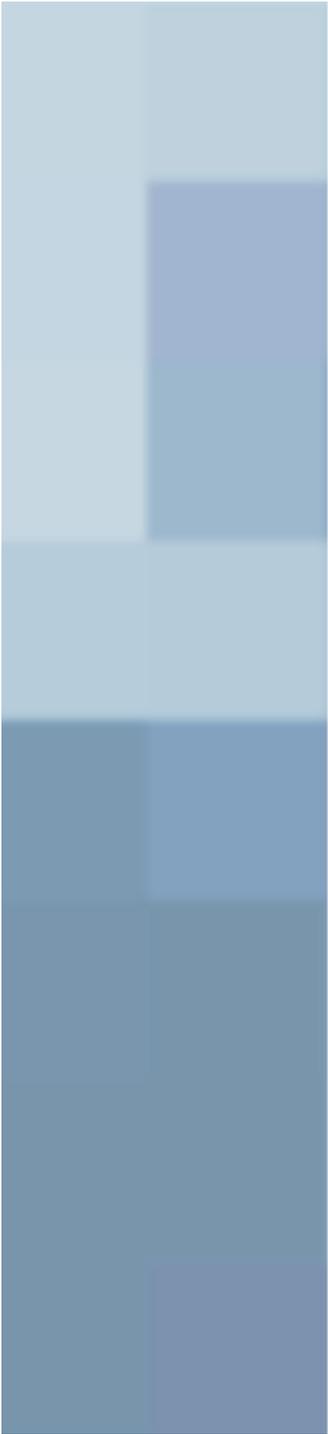
FNS Strategic Goals

- Improve access to healthy food through nutrition assistance programs
- Promote healthier eating habits and lifestyles among those eligible for nutrition assistance

Food Stamps Help Low Income Families

- Stretch food dollars
- Fight obesity through education
- Put food on the table for children
- Keep elderly independent
- Transition to self sufficiency





Food Stamps Support Local Economies

- Every \$5 in new food stamp benefits generates \$9.20 in additional community spending
- Food stamp recipients spend more on food than other low-income households

Food Stamps Create Business

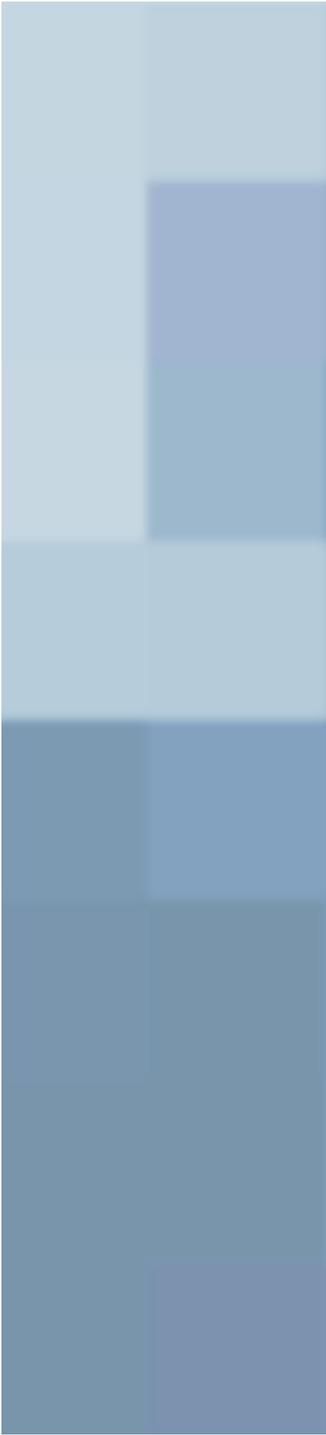
- 86% of benefits (\$26 billion) are redeemed at 35,000 supermarkets
- 14% of benefits (\$4 billion) are redeemed at 127,000 other firms, including farmers markets



Food Stamps Support Farms

- Benefits can be used at farmers markets





National Participation

- National Rate: 60%
 - Seniors: 28%
 - Legal Immigrants: 42%
 - Working Poor: 51%
- 26 million people each month
- \$94 average monthly benefit per person

Participation By State

- Top 5
 - Missouri 84%
 - Tennessee 83%
 - Oregon 83%
 - DC 79%
 - Maine 77%



Participation By State

- Bottom 5
 - California 46%
 - Wyoming 48%
 - Massachusetts 49%
 - New Jersey 50%
 - Rhode Island 52%



Why Don't Eligible People Participate?

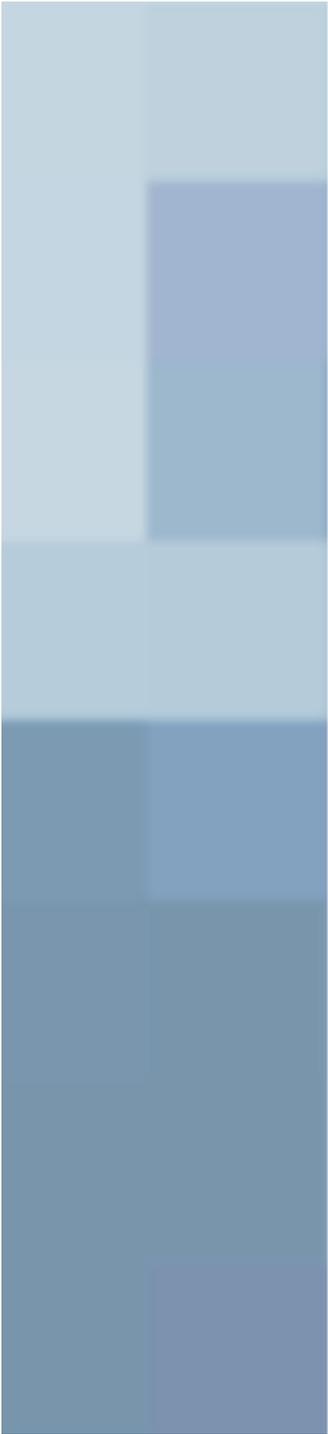
- Unawareness of eligibility
- Myths and misperceptions about benefits and requirements
- Stigma
- Barriers
 - Transportation
 - Language
 - Time



Goals - Outreach

- Increase participation
- Benefits with dignity and respect
- Inform where and how to apply
- Promote nutrition and work support
- Overcome stigma





Outreach Grants

- Raise awareness about the availability of the FSP among eligible low-income people.
- Most Recent Awards:
 - 2006: 15 grants, \$1 million
 - 2007: 14 grants, \$1 million

Participation Grants

- Improve access through simplified application and eligibility systems
 - \$5 million per year from FY2003 through FY2007



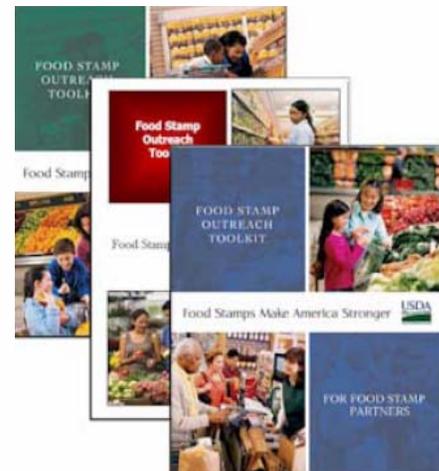
National Media Effort

- Radio ads 4 months per year
- Targeted to areas with low participation/high poverty
- English and Spanish



Tool Kits

- Collections of ideas, templates, and resources.
 - State and local FSP offices
 - Community Partners
 - Retailers



Resources

- Pre-screening Tool
- National FSP Toll Free Number
- Photo Gallery
- Free outreach materials
- PSAs (radio and television)
- Food Stamp Outreach Coalition



State Outreach Plans

- FNS reimburses 50% of reasonable, allowable outreach expenditures
- Optional plan each fiscal year
 - 21 States
 - Most contract



Goal – Nutrition Education

- Improve the chance that eligible people will act consistent with the Dietary Guidelines for Americans and My Pyramid by:
 - Making healthy food choices
 - Choosing physically active lifestyles



State FSNE Plans

- 52 of 53 State agencies
- Approved Federal Funding = ~\$276 million dollars
- FY07 Investment = \$.5 billion



Nutrition Connection

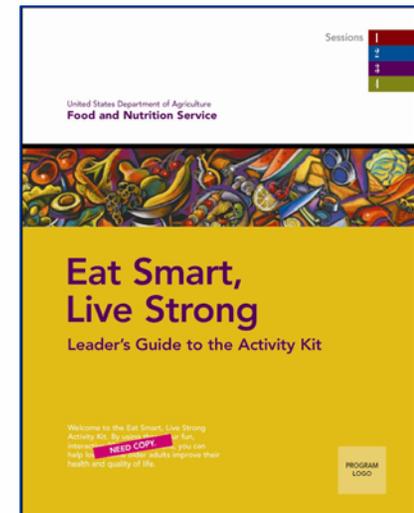
- Resource Finder
- Recipe Finder
- FSNC Talk Listserv



www.foodstamp.nal.usda.gov

New Resources

- Loving Your Family. Feeding Their Future
- Eat Smart. Live Strong.



Selected Farm Bill Proposals

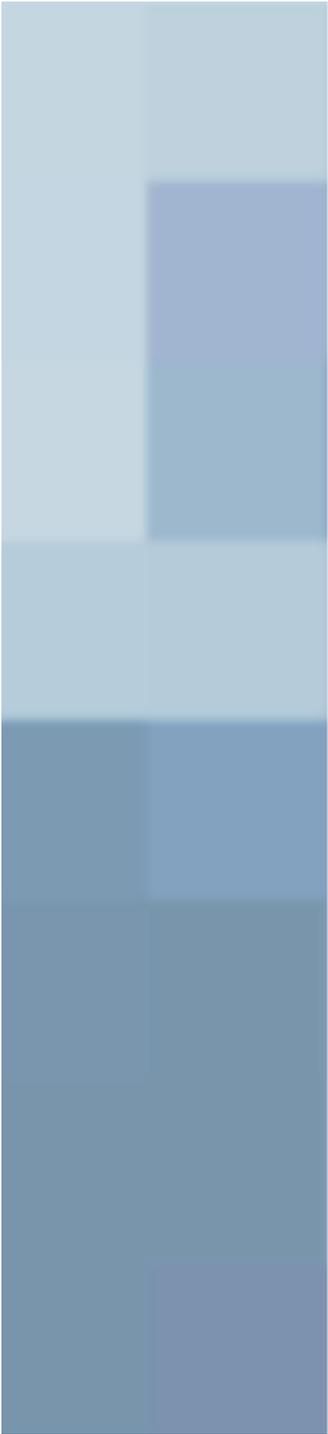
- Establish a 5-year \$20 million per year grant program to develop and test solutions for obesity
- Change the name to *Food and Nutrition Program*



What Can States Do?

- Take Policy Options
 - Outreach plan
 - Simplified reporting
 - Transitional Benefits
 - Vehicle Policy
- Request waivers
 - Telephone interviews





What Can States Do?

- **Demonstrate:**
 - Combined Application Projects
- **Innovate:**
 - Online Applications
 - Call Centers/Customer Service
 - Culturally Appropriate

Questions?

- Visit our web site.

www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/

