

SNAP in Iowa

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the largest of 15 federal nutrition programs. In Iowa, SNAP is known as Food Assistance and is operated by the Iowa Department of Human Services (DHS).

At the federal level, Iowa policymakers play a key role in SNAP policies: Iowa Senators Joni Ernst and Chuck Grassley are on the Senate Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry Committee, which is responsible for the Farm Bill. Funding and oversight for SNAP is included in the Farm Bill. Representative Cindy Axne (IA-03) is on the House Agriculture Committee, which has similar jurisdiction as the Senate Committee.

SNAP at the state level:

- Food Assistance (SNAP) participation in 2018:
 - [348,376 Iowa residents](#) (1 in 9)¹
 - [More than 70% are families with children](#)
 - Almost 31% are families with older adults or persons with disabilities
 - More than 54% are working families²
- In 2017, [average SNAP benefits were](#):³
 - \$110 per month per household
 - \$1.20 per person per meal
- More than [2,900 authorized retail locations](#) accept SNAP benefits on electronic benefit transfer (EBT) cards in Iowa
 - \$1 in spent SNAP benefits generates \$1.70 in economic activity, according to estimates⁴

Additional Resources: Find more information on food insecurity, SNAP usage rates, nutrition, and health status of Iowans through these resources: [State Options report](#),⁴ Iowa State University [Community Indicators Program](#),⁵ and the Iowa Department of Human Services [Food Assistance portal](#).⁶

Programs and Updates

Healthiest State Initiative: Double Up Food Bucks¹ (DUFB)⁷

When customers buy fresh fruits and vegetables with their EBT card, the amount they spend (up to \$10/day) is matched with DUFB, and customers can use the DUFB they earned to buy more fresh fruits and vegetables.

- DUFB are now available at more than [30 locations statewide](#),⁸ including farmers markets, farm stands, and retail grocery stores.
- In 2018, a total of \$48,138 was spent on healthy food purchased with DUFB; an increase of 22% from 2017.
- With DUFB, 84% of fruits and vegetables purchased were from farmers markets and 16% were sold by grocery stores.

DUFB Funding⁷

- In August 2018, [Healthiest State Initiative](#) was awarded a \$480,000 three-year Food Insecurity Nutrition Incentive Program (FINI) grant from USDA to expand DUFB.
- The 2018 Farm Bill permanently authorized funding for FINI, giving the Iowa Healthiest State Initiative the opportunity to match all private and state dollars 1:1.
 - [FINI](#)¹⁵ is a federal funding program for projects that increase the purchase of fruits and vegetables among SNAP participants by providing financial incentives at the point of purchase.

¹Iowa Department of Human Services, Food Assistance Report Series F-1, April 2018. Available at: <http://publications.iowa.gov/27559/1/FA-F1-2016%202018-04.pdf>

²Center on Budget and Policy Priorities. Iowa Food Assistance Program. "Whom Does SNAP Reach?" CBPP analysis of data from USDA Food and Nutrition Service, FY 2017. Available at: https://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/snap_factsheet_iowa.pdf

³U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, Office of Policy Support, Characteristics of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Households: Fiscal Year 2017, by Kathryn Cronquist and Sarah Lauffer. Project Officer, Jenny Genser. Alexandria, VA, 2019. Available at: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ops/Characteristics2017.pdf>

⁴U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Services, Program Development Division. State Options Report: Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. Fourteenth Edition. October 1, 2017.

⁵Available at: <https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/snap/14-State-Options.pdf>

⁶Iowa State University, Iowa Community Indicators Program, Poverty and Food Needs. Available at: <https://www.icip.iastate.edu/special-reports/poverty>

⁷Iowa Department of Human Services, Food Assistance. Available at: <https://dhs.iowa.gov/food-assistance>

SNAP Nutrition Education

Spend Smart. Eat Smart:⁹ Provides resources on shopping, cooking, and planning for healthy eating.

Fresh Conversations:¹⁰ A nutrition education program designed to support healthy aging and independence. In 2018, 2,800 older adults participated.

Pick a better snack:¹¹ Lessons bring fruits and vegetables into classrooms. The program engaged more than 24,000 children in 2018.

Buy. Eat. Live Healthy:¹² Hosts one-on-one and small group sessions for families to help them develop the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors needed to improve their diets.

Iowa Senior Hunger Partnership:¹³ A statewide coalition is working to reduce senior food insecurity in Iowa.

Compre Saludable/Shop Healthy Iowa:¹⁴ A cross-cultural healthy retail program designed for Hispanic tiendas, or stores, that has collaborated with 18 tiendas in 9 communities since 2015.

SNAP-Ed provides free cookbooks and produce information sheets to all DUFB shoppers.

The Iowa Department of Public Health and Iowa State University Extension and Outreach together provide nutrition education and programming in 81 of 99 counties.

SNAP Outreach

The Food Bank of Iowa conducts SNAP outreach, including the **SNAP Hotline**¹⁶ to assist participants.

The **Iowa Food Bank Association**¹⁷ (IFBA) has a Food Assistance Hotline and the SNAP Mobile Access Points program that enables IFBA employees to help participants complete applications at targeted emergency feeding sites.

Iowa State University Extension and Outreach runs **Wellness and Independence through Nutrition**¹⁸ with the goal to promote awareness of how food assistance can improve nutrition and quality of life for adults ages 50+.

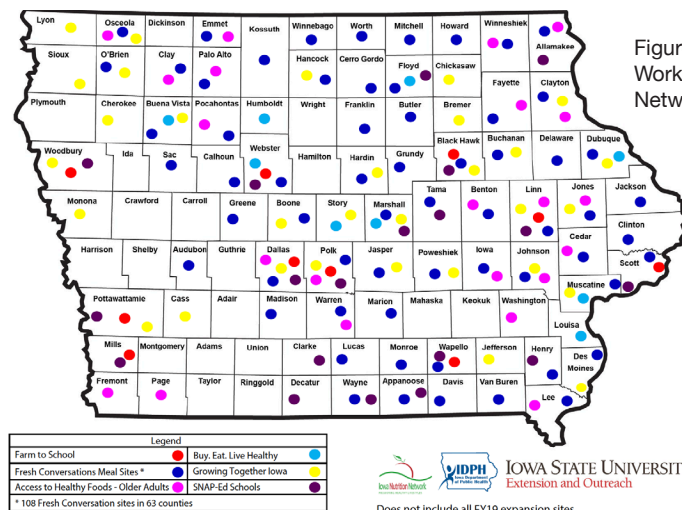


Figure 1: 2018 SNAP-Ed Works.¹⁹ Iowa Nutrition Network. January 2019.

⁷Healthiest State Initiative, Double Up Food Bucks 2018 Annual Report. 2018. Available at: http://www.iowahealthieststate.com/webres/File/Healthy-Hometown/DUFB/2018%20Annual%20Report_FINAL.pdf

⁸Healthiest State Initiative, Double Up Food Bucks Locations. Available at: <http://www.iowahealthieststate.com/resources/communities/double-up-food-bucks/locations/>

⁹Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Spend Smart. Eat Smart. Available at: <https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/>

¹⁰Iowa Department of Public Health, Fresh Conversations. Available at: <https://idph.iowa.gov/inn/fresh-conversations>

¹¹Iowa Department of Public Health, Pick a better snackTM Available at: <https://idph.iowa.gov/inn/pick-a-better-snack>

¹²Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Buy. Eat. Live Healthy. Available at: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/nutrition-education>

¹³Iowa Department of Public Health, Iowa Senior Hunger Partnership. Available at: <https://idph.iowa.gov/inn/Iowa-Senior-Hunger-Partnership>

¹⁴Iowa Department of Public Health, Compre Saludable/Shop Healthy Iowa. Available at: <https://idph.iowa.gov/inn/compre-saludable>

¹⁵U.S. Department of Agriculture, National Institute of Food and Agriculture, Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive program (formerly FINI). Available at: <https://nifa.usda.gov/program/gus-schumacher-nutrition-incentive-grant-program>

¹⁶Food Bank of Iowa, SNAP Outreach. Available at: <https://www.foodbankiowa.org/gethelp/snap>

¹⁷Iowa Food Bank Association, Food Assistance (SNAP) Outreach. Available at: <https://www.iowafba.org/food-assistance-snap-outreach>

¹⁸Iowa State University Extension and Outreach, Wellness and Independence through Nutrition (WIN). Available at: <https://www.extension.iastate.edu/humansciences/food-assistance-outreach>