

# Fact Sheet



## Food Assistance Program

### FOOD STAMP PROGRAM RECEIVES NEW NAME

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) is the new name for the federal Food Stamp Program. SNAP is regulated by the United States Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Division. States have the option to rename the program. Ohio chose the name "Food Assistance Program."

The Food Assistance Program (FAP) is available as an Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT). All states now use EBT. In Ohio, the EBT card, called the Ohio Direction Card, is similar to a credit card where FAP benefits are loaded each month onto the recipient's card. Most grocery stores accept the EBT cards.



In the U.S., more than 27 million people benefit from SNAP programs, and nearly 50 percent of all recipients are children. Many SNAP recipients work, as nearly one-third of all households receiving SNAP benefits also have an income from a job. The majority of SNAP recipients do not receive cash welfare benefits.

The program requires able-bodied adults between the ages 16 and 60 (with some exceptions) to register for work, take part in employment/training programs, and accept or continue suitable employment.

### FAP benefits for Fiscal Year 2008

	Average monthly benefit per individual	Average monthly benefit per household
Ohio	\$105	\$236
Athens County	\$100	\$216

- The Athens County Farmers Market now accepts EBT card transactions.

- Nearly 1.3 million Ohioans receive food assistance benefits each month. The number of recipients increased by 13 percent from January 2008 to January 2009.

- In December 2008 in Athens County, more than 8,200 recipients benefited from the food program.

- Every \$5 in new SNAP benefits generates nearly twice as much (\$9.20) in total community spending.

Monthly FAP benefits are not intended to provide enough food for a month. The presumption is that households should purchase up to 30 percent of their food with their own resources. However, the average FAP household's income is only about 60 percent of the poverty level and many households turn to food pantries and soup kitchens to supplement their benefits.

The minimum FAP benefit level was increased from \$10 to \$14 on October 1, 2008 and was indexed to inflation. During FY 2007, 7 percent of all FAP households in the United States received only the minimum benefit. Ninety percent of these households contained elderly or disabled members.

*Ohio's Maximum Food Assistance Program Benefits Compared to Poverty Level, as of April 1, 2009*

Family Size	Maximum FAP Monthly Coupon Allotment	100% Federal Poverty Level (Monthly)	FAP benefit Minus Federal Poverty Level	FAP benefit as a % of Poverty
1	\$200	\$903	-703	22%
2	\$367	\$1215	-848	30%
3	\$526	\$1526	-1000	34%
4	\$668	\$1838	-1170	36%
5	\$793	\$2150	-1357	37%
6	\$952	\$2461	-1509	39%

*What can be purchased with FAP benefits?*

FAP benefits can be used to buy most food or food products intended for human consumption. They can also be used to buy plants and seeds to grow food for a household. Sales tax cannot be charged on items purchased with FAP benefits. The benefits may not be sold, traded, used to buy non-food items or used to buy food for someone who is not a member of the household.

**Items which may not be purchased with FAP benefits include:**

- Alcoholic beverages
- Tobacco products
- Pet food
- Hot food and hot food products that are prepared to be eaten immediately
- Over the counter medications and vitamins
- Non-food items such as soap, paper products and grooming items



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