

## SNAP ADVOCACY WITH SECOND HARVEST HEARTLAND

SNAP is the nation's largest hunger-relief program, serving about 44 million Americans each year, including nearly half a million Minnesotans and 800,000 residents of Wisconsin each month. SNAP provides our hungry neighbors with the means to purchase nutritious food. It enables low-income families to support their health as well as their ability to learn and work.

### Who does SNAP help?

- **SNAP helps people get back on their feet.** SNAP provides timely, targeted and temporary benefits that help families and individuals dealing with a short-term crisis such as a job loss or health incident. The average length of time for people to receive SNAP benefits is 7-9 months.
- **SNAP helps address nutritional needs of low-income families.** SNAP offers the means to help our neighbors buy nutritious foods.
- **SNAP helps children, the disabled and the elderly.** Nearly two-thirds of those who receive SNAP benefits are children (44%), seniors (11%) and disabled adults (10%).
- **SNAP helps working adults.** The majority of people receiving SNAP benefits are working adults. There are income requirements and asset tests built into the SNAP eligibility process. As income increases, SNAP benefits gradually go down.



### How is SNAP administered?

- **SNAP benefits can only be spent on food items.** Those who qualify for SNAP benefits receive pre-loaded, Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards with timely, targeted and temporary benefits. The average SNAP recipient spends about \$1.40 per meal, or around \$126 per person per month.
- **SNAP usage is vigorously monitored by the federal government.** Over 99 percent of SNAP benefits are issued to individuals and families who meet all the programs' eligibility requirements.
- **SNAP benefits can only be spent on certain items.** SNAP benefits can be used to purchase food for the household to eat (not prepared foods). SNAP benefits may not be used to purchase tobacco products, alcohol, vitamins, medicines or non-food items such as household supplies.

## What is the impact of SNAP on the community?

SNAP provides economic benefit to the local community. Every dollar spent in SNAP benefits, generates and additional \$1.79 in local economic activity, helping to generate revenue for local food retailers and farms that goes especially far in rural Minnesota and Wisconsin.

## What happens if SNAP gets cut?

- **Eligible families, individuals and children will lose access to meals.** SNAP feeds more families in Minnesota than all other food programs combined, bringing nearly \$627 million of food assistance benefits to the state.
- **Hunger relief organizations will not be able to meet an increase in demand for food assistance.** Food banks and food shelves, together with our nonprofit hunger relief partners are already struggling to secure, store and distribute additional meals to meet the current demand for food assistance. Reducing SNAP funding will have a direct and dire impact on Minnesota's hunger relief system and its hungry neighbors.
- **Loss of SNAP revenue in local economies.** The ripple effect of low-income families losing the buying power that SNAP adds in our local communities could have long reaching negative impact in local economies. This would be the loss of an economic driver in an entire community.

## You can help

### Tell your state and federal representatives to keep SNAP strong!

Now, more than ever, it is critical that we tell policymakers why it is necessary to fully support SNAP and maintain funding. It is a resource that many in our community cannot afford to lose. Please contact your elected officials to encourage them to keep SNAP strong and ensure friends, families and neighbors can afford the healthy food they need.