



United States Department of Agriculture: Nutrition Assistance during the Deepwater Horizon Response

USDA nutrition assistance programs can help to mitigate the food insecurity likely to be faced by families affected by the Gulf oil spillage. Each of these programs offers particular sources of food assistance to children and their families experiencing adverse economic conditions.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP): SNAP helps low-income people and families buy the food they need for good health. Benefits are authorized by a State or local agency and provided on an electronic benefits transfer card that can be used at most grocery stores. Designed to respond to economic conditions, the program has proven over the years to respond quickly to deteriorations in individual and regional circumstances. In February 2010, almost 39.7 million Americans received benefits averaging \$133 per person. In general, benefits are available to citizens and immigrants legally admitted for permanent residence. While persons who hold temporary work visa are not eligible, family members may be eligible. For example, an ineligible parent may apply on behalf of their citizen children.

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/>

Child Nutrition Programs: Low-income children can receive free meals through schools, child care centers, family day care homes, after school programs and summer programs that participate in the FNS Child Nutrition Programs. Also low-income infants, children up to the age of five and pregnant, breastfeeding and postpartum women can participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC) and receive a supplemental food package to help meet their nutritional needs. Eligibility extends to immigrants and temporary workers as well as citizens. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/cnd/>

Food Distribution. The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP) provides USDA foods through food banks and food pantries for families that need food assistance. Eligibility extends to immigrants and temporary workers as well as citizens. <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fdd/programs/tefap/>