

FRAC's Guide to Food Stamp Outreach Collaborations

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ABOUT FRAC

The Food Research and Action Center is the leading national organization working for more effective public and private policies to eradicate domestic hunger and undernutrition.

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Introduction

This resource guide describes a variety of strategies and collaborative projects for conducting outreach to increase participation by those eligible for the Federal Food Stamp Program (FSP). In FY 2004, only about 60 percent of eligible people received food stamps – the program missed four in ten qualified low-income people. That coverage gap means families missed out on an important support to put food on the table and communities missed out on the economic boost federal food stamps could have provided. Indeed, every dollar in federal food stamp benefits generates nearly twice that in local economic activity.

But the FY 2004 participation rate did mark a promising trend. It was the third year of increasing participation after seven years of decline. Efforts that the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) and national, state and local partners have been making on food stamp outreach and other access initiatives appear to have helped get the participation rate moving in the right direction. Now more needs to be done to sustain and accelerate those gains.

A wide range of groups have a potential interest in increasing food stamp participation and can bring a variety of resources and skills to a food stamp outreach campaign. This guide provides an overview of promising partnerships and coalitions for food stamp outreach. It suggests ways to leverage federal matching funds and other supports to maximize the reach of education campaigns. It describes approaches to engaging different stakeholders on collaborative outreach, from school officials, state legislators and city officials, to food pantry operators, grocers and employers. Together, stakeholders partnering on food stamp outreach can make important contributions to the health and well-being of families and communities.

I. Why Outreach?

In FY 2004 the Food Stamp Program missed about four in ten eligible people. In an average month, it reached 23 million people—and about 15 million low-income people were eligible for and needed food stamps but did not get them.¹ Studies and reports from community groups that serve low-income people and USDA indicate that many do not know they are eligible and/or how to apply for food stamps.² Many lack the time, transportation, knowledge or incentive to complete the interview and application process.

Outreach efforts can help close the coverage gap. According to a 2004 USDA Economic Research Service report, “most nonparticipant households (69 percent) reportedly would apply for food stamps if they knew for certain they were eligible... If policy makers wish to increase the level of participation...increasing these households’ understanding of their likely eligibility may be the only way to achieve a substantial reduction in the overall rate of nonparticipation.”³

Media stories, radio ads, hotlines and one-on-one assistance can help address barriers to food stamp coverage for individual clients. Feedback from outreach projects can help identify systemic barriers in local food stamp office operations or state policies that may be interfering with client sign-up and can provide agencies with ideas for improving food stamp enrollment practices.

Moreover, quality food stamp outreach projects may pay dividends for states aiming for bonus awards for payment accuracy, participation and timeliness of case processing. Trained outreach workers can screen potential clients for eligibility and help them gather the paperwork needed for their applications. The resulting cases presented to the local food stamp offices frequently will be easier for the caseworkers to process accurately and efficiently.

Outreach is a commonly accepted component of getting people benefits which they need. USDA, states and partners use a variety of marketing techniques to educate those eligible to participate in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC).⁴ The Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has devoted personnel and other resources to letting low-income working families know how to access the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).⁵ States have used outreach to get governmental health benefits to low-income children.⁶ Most recently, the federal

¹ “Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2004” www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/FSPPart2004Summary.pdf

² “Food Stamp Program Access Study: Final report,” Susan Bartlett, Nancy Burstein, and William Hamilton, November 2004, www.ers.usda.gov/publications/efan03013/efan03013-3/efan03013-3fm.pdf

³ Ibid.

⁴ See, e.g., materials posted at www.nal.usda.gov/wicworks/Sharing_Center/statedev-outreach.html

⁵ See “Partnering Opportunities & Resources for National and Local Organizations,” IRS, www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=119374,00.html

⁶ See “Medicaid and SCHIP: Comparisons of Outreach, Enrollment Practices and Benefits,” GAO, April 2000, www.gao.gov/new.items/he00086.pdf

government, states, nonprofits and health providers have mounted outreach campaigns around Medicare prescription drug benefits.⁷

Food stamp outreach can get families nutrition benefits that help put food on the table. In addition, it can connect them with opportunities for nutrition education that help them prepare healthy meals for their families. Moreover, food stamp outreach can position households to access other benefits. Having eligible children enrolled in the Food Stamp Program helps ensure that they are certified eligible for free or reduced price school meals, as (on a phased-in basis) all school districts must “directly certify” for school meals those children who receive food stamps.⁸ Other aid that may be triggered by households’ food stamp receipt ranges from energy assistance,⁹ to clothing aid.¹⁰

II. Extent of Unmet Needs

National Participation Rate

On June 30, 2006, USDA reported that the national participation rate among those potentially eligible rose from 56 percent in FY 2003 to 60.5 percent in FY 2004.¹¹ This was the third annual increase after seven years of declines. “I’m very encouraged by the continued increase in Food Stamp Program participation rates,” said USDA Deputy Secretary Chuck Conner. “Ensuring that all who are eligible to participate are able to access this important assistance is a key step toward ensuring our nutrition safety net successfully serves those in need and helps them to achieve self sufficiency.”¹² The flip side of this information, however, is that almost 40 percent of people nationally who are eligible still do not participate, which means that of the 38 million individuals who were eligible for food stamp benefits in an average month of 2004, 15 million individuals did not participate.

⁷ See “New Benefits.CheckUp.org Feature Helps Organizations Enroll People in Medicare Extra Help,” National Council on Aging Press Release, 8/23/06, www.prweb.com/releases/2006/8/prweb427880.htm. See also “Bus tour offers assistance with prescription drugs,” by Justin Boulmay, *Rocky Mount Telegram*, 6/30/06, www.rockymounttelegram.com/news/content/news/stories/2006/06/30/tour.html (Partnership for Prescription Assistance’s “Help is Here Express” bus tour).

⁸ Some school districts use “direct certification” to qualify children for free meals without requiring the family to submit an application. In these districts, schools work with the state or local food stamp, TANF, and Food Distribution on Indian Reservations agencies to identify and certify for school meals (without additional applications) those children in households currently receiving these benefits. Starting in the 2006-07 school year, school districts with enrollments of over 25,000 students will be required to “directly certify.” In the 2007-08 school year, districts with over 10,000 students will fall under this requirement, and starting with the 2008-09 school year, all school districts nationwide will have this requirement. See FRAC’s “National School Lunch Program,” www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/nslp.html

⁹ For example, in Massachusetts, participating in the Food Stamp Program is one of the ways to qualify for a discount from certain utility companies. See LIHEAP Clearinghouse’s State Directors/Program Toolkit information, www.liheap.ncat.org/profiles/Mass.htm

¹⁰ Food stamp receipt is helping to qualify Pico Rivera children for free baseball and softball cleats, under a National Parks and Recreation Association partnership with Nike. See “City offers free cleats to young athletes,” by Debbie Pfeiffer Trunnell, *Whittier Daily News*, 5/18/06, www.whittierdailynews.com/news/ci_3835204

¹¹ The official USDA food stamp participation rates are calculated for the agency by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc., which takes into account the various income, citizenship status and resource rules that affect eligibility. The summary and report for “Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2004” are posted at www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/FSPPart2004-Summary.pdf and www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/FSPPart2004.pdf

¹² “Food Stamp Participation Rate Increases for Third Consecutive Year,” USDA press release, 6/30/06, www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/.s.7.0.A/7.0.IOB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2006/06/0234.xml

Participation Rates for Particular Demographic Groups

Some people are more likely to participate and some are less likely to participate. Research has shown that participation rates are relatively high for individuals in households containing children and households with incomes below the poverty line, as well as for recipients of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) or Supplemental Security Income (SSI), with at least three-quarters of all eligible people from these groups participating.

However, some demographic groups participate at much lower rates than the national average. Mathematica Policy Research Inc.'s report to USDA for FY 2004 shows that fewer than one third of eligible elderly persons participated, fewer than one third of individuals living in low-income households with incomes above poverty participated, fewer than half of eligible noncitizens participated, just over half of U.S. citizen children living with noncitizens participated, and just over half of those in households with earnings participated.

State Participation Rates

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) also reports on state-by-state participation rates.¹³ The most recent data available from USDA on state participation rates are for FY 2003. In 13 states, participation rates were under 50 percent. The 2003 participation data can be found on the USDA Web site and on the FRAC Web site.¹⁴ The data for FY 2004 is expected to be released later in 2006.

Other Ways to Measure Participation Trends and Gaps

1. PAI

Another USDA measure – the Program Access Index (PAI) – provides a snapshot of the percentage of low-income people served with food stamps, whether or not they are eligible under other program criteria.¹⁵ In other words, it estimates participation based on income, not other criteria like resources. The PAI is a national and state-by-state estimate that is less precise but more current than the official Food Stamp Program participation rates. For example, state data for 2004 for this measure are already available. USDA uses the PAI to determine which states will receive bonus awards for the best and most improved participation records.¹⁶ The national PAI average was 66.3 percent in 2004, up nearly five percentage points over 2003.

¹³ www.usda.gov/wps/portal/!ut/p/s.7.0.A/7.0.1OB?contentidonly=true&contentid=2006/06/0234.xml, www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/FSPPart2004-Summary.pdf and www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/FSPPart2004.pdf

¹⁴ USDA data, www.fns.usda.gov/oane/menu/Published/FSP/FILES/Participation/Reaching2003.pdf and Food Research and Action Center, www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/FSP/rates03_bystate.html

¹⁵ See USDA's "Calculating the Food Stamp Participation Access Rate: A Step-By-Step Guide (October 2005), www.fns.usda.gov/oane/MENU/Published/FSP/FILES/Other/PARSteps2004.pdf The PAI formerly was known as the Participant Access Rate.

¹⁶ See "2004 Food Stamp Program Access Index (PAI) State-by-State," Food Research and Action Center, www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/FSP/Participation_Rates_04.html

2. Unofficial Local Participation Estimates

To gauge food stamp participation and estimate federal benefits lost due to non-participation on a county or city level, FRAC has developed the Local Access Indicator (LAI). In addition to enrollment and benefits data from state food stamp agencies, the methodology relies on two external data sources within the U.S. Census. One is the American Community Survey (ACS), which reports data annually, and the other is the 2000 Census Summary File 3(SF-3). The methodology used by FRAC can be replicated for other jurisdictions. A detailed explanation of the methodology and how to replicate it can be found in FRAC’s “Food Stamp Access in Urban America: A City-by-City Snapshot.”¹⁷

Other organizations such as the Children’s Defense Fund New York,¹⁸ Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homeless Issues (ICHHI),¹⁹ Legal Services Advocacy Project (LSAP) in Minnesota, and FoodChange in New York have utilized census data, county participation data and other sources of information to identify participation gaps. LSAP utilized census data and data from the Minnesota Department of Human Services to report on the underutilization of the Food Stamp Program and the resulting economic losses for the state.²⁰ FoodChange, with the assistance of Emerson Congressional Hunger fellows, utilized census data, local immigration statistics, participation data and other information to produce charts and maps that identified areas of non-citizen underutilization of food stamps. It convened key stakeholders from the anti-hunger, immigrant advocacy, community-based and government groups to strategize about ways to improve outreach in those communities.²¹

III. The “Business Case”

USDA has developed materials that make the “Business Case for Increasing Food Stamp Program Participation.”²² According to USDA’s Business Case, while food stamps provide federal nutrition dollars for individual households, those benefits in turn have a positive ripple effect for the local community and the state. USDA reports that:

- Every \$5 in new food stamp benefits generates \$9.20 in total community economic activity.
- Every additional dollar’s worth of food stamp benefits generates 17 to 47 cents of new spending on food.
- On average, \$1 billion of retail food demand by food stamp recipients generates 3,300 farm jobs.

¹⁷ www.frac.org/pdf/cities2005.pdf.

¹⁸ “Giving New York’s Children a Fair Start in Life: Supports for Working Families,” Children’s Defense Fund- New York, www.cdfny.org/RR/reports/workingfamilies.pdf

¹⁹ “Is Indiana Getting Its Fair Share? 2005 Federal Programs Available To Help Working Families,” by ICHHI, June 2005, www.ichhi.org/clientuploads/downloads/reportspublications/final_fair_share_report_2005.pdf

²⁰ www.lsapmn.org/documents/168461Food%20Stamp%20Report.pdf

²¹ www.foodchange.org

²² www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/business-case.htm

- If the national participation rate rose five percentage points, 1.8 million more low-income people would have an additional \$1.2 billion in benefits per year²³ to use to purchase healthy food and \$2.2 billion total in new economic activity would be generated nationwide.²⁴

Information and data about the unmet needs of a community and the economic impact of failing to utilize available programs to meet these needs are important tools for engaging new partners in food stamp outreach. Many of the ideas for creating new outreach opportunities start with convincing those partners – public, private, or nonprofit – that food stamp outreach is both needed and effective.

IV. Funding for Outreach Activities

To support food stamp outreach in their communities, state and local public officials should be encouraged to pursue federal competitive grants as well as invest state and local resources to pull in federal matching outreach funds. [See section on *Partnering with Public Officials for additional actions to support outreach.*] Community foundations and private sector groups also can help fund outreach with cash and/or in-kind contributions. This section describes funding opportunities and the process for obtaining the federal funds.

USDA Outreach Grants

USDA provides outreach grants to nonprofit organizations and others “to implement and study effective strategies to inform and educate potentially eligible low income people not currently participating in the FSP about the nutrition benefits of the Food Stamp Program, eligibility rules, and how to apply.”²⁵ These 100 percent federally funded grants are awarded through a competitive grant process. In recent years, USDA has awarded approximately \$1,000,000 in outreach grants, usually given to eight to ten organizations in amounts ranging from \$75,000 to \$125,000 for grant periods of up to 24 months. Grant announcements typically are made in the fall, with the grant applications due the following spring.

USDA Participation Grants

USDA also provides “Participation Grants,” mostly to state agencies “to fund projects aimed at simplifying the food stamp application and eligibility systems or improving access to food stamp benefits by eligible households.”²⁶ In recent years, USDA has made up to \$5,000,000 available for competitive participation grants in amounts up to one million dollars for grant periods of a year or

²³ Those potentially eligible but not participating in the Food Stamp Program, as a whole, have somewhat higher incomes than current participants. Accordingly, their allotments would be lower than the average food stamp allotment for current recipients.

²⁴ For state-by-state estimates of the economic impact of a five percentage point increase in the FSP participation rate, go to USDA’s chart posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/bc_table.pdf

²⁵ “About the FY 2006 Food Stamp Outreach Grant Competition,” www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants/2006/default.htm

²⁶ See., e.g., “USDA Announces Availability of \$5 Million in Food Stamp Program Participation Grants,” 3/13/06, posted at www.fns.usda.gov/cga/PressReleases/2006/PR-0085.htm

longer. Participation Grants usually require the participation of the state Food Stamp Program administrative agency, but private nonprofit entities such as community-based organizations, faith-based groups, food banks, and emergency feeding organizations may apply as partners. In addition, recently USDA has used these grants to encourage partnerships to support enrollment in food stamps and the Medicare Part D Prescription Drug Benefit Program. Up to 25 percent of Participation Grants can support food stamp outreach activities. Grant opportunity announcements typically are made in the spring, with grant applications due approximately three months later.

Federal Outreach Matching Funds

State agencies that administer the Food Stamp Program are eligible to receive federal matching funds to conduct outreach. Some of the allowable outreach activities include: conducting media activities to promote the program, developing and distributing written information about food stamps, application assistance; and pre-screening. USDA has clarified that state Food Stamp Outreach plans may include activities directed to access and retention of current recipients as well as outreach and education efforts directed to nonparticipating but potentially eligible persons.²⁷ In order to obtain the federal matching funds, the state agency must submit and receive approval from FNS for the State Plan. Plan information submitted must include specific information on the scope, design and financing of the outreach, including the source of the matching funds. States theoretically have until August 15th to submit annual plans to USDA, but can amend plans during the year.

Many state advocates have partnered with their state agencies to develop the state's plan, including identification of non-federal funds to leverage the match. Private funds as well as regular state budget sources can leverage the federal match. Community foundations, city councils, local businesses, nonprofit groups and others can provide funds for the state's outreach plan, and, by leveraging the federal match, double the investment in and scope of the food stamp outreach projects.

In some cases, nonprofit partners manage the food stamp outreach projects under the State Plan. The Nutrition Consortium of New York State (NCNYS) is the contractor for its state's Nutrition Outreach and Education Program (NOEP). Since the 1980s NOEP has provided annual funding to community-based agencies to educate the general public and low-income populations about the benefits of the Food Stamp Program. In 2005, over 20,000 households received food stamps due to the assistance of the NOEP.

Other Federal Funding

USDA provides states with "High Performance Bonuses" for effective Food Stamp Program operations, including best or most improved performance on payment accuracy, negative error

²⁷ Memorandum regarding Food Stamp Outreach Plan Activities to USDA FNS Regional Food Stamp Directors, from Jessica Shahin, USDA Associate Deputy Administrator for the Food Stamp Program, 6/19/06.

rate, percentage of low-income residents served, and timeliness of case processing.²⁸ These awards have ranged from \$37,000 to \$10,000,000. While USDA does not require that states utilize these awards for food stamp activities, advocates can encourage states to invest some or all of the bonus funds to improve nutrition program operations and/or outreach. In presenting Vermont with a \$531,432 bonus award, USDA Food and Nutrition Services Administrator Roberto Salazar “said the bonus comes to the state with no strings, but he applauded Vermont's plan to invest the money in technology intended to produce an even smoother-running program.”²⁹ In 2000, after advocacy from the Center for Public Policy Priorities, Texas did reinvest a portion of its payment accuracy bonus award into the Summer Food and Food Stamp Programs.³⁰

Other Resources

While it is helpful to leverage governmental funding, outreach campaigns can be conducted without it. Community foundations, city councils, food retailers, and others can be asked to conduct campaigns or to make cash or in-kind donations to food stamp outreach campaigns. Groups can ask local radio and TV outlets to run public service announcements and encourage newspapers to get the word out. Groups can utilize the Food Stamp Outreach section of the USDA Food and Nutrition Service’s Web site to access free brochures and media materials.

Resources

- USDA, Food Stamp Program Outreach Grants, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants.htm
- USDA, Food Stamp Program Participation Grants, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/government/participation-grants.htm
- USDA: Food Stamp Program, State Outreach Plan Guidance,
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/Outreach_Plan_Guidance.pdf
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/stateplan.htm
- USDA Food Stamp Outreach
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/public_advocacy/default.htm
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/default.htm
- Nutrition Consortium of New York State NOEP grants, www.hungernys.org/programs/nutrition/outreachRFP.html
- FRAC, Food Stamp Program, www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/fsp.html

²⁸ FSP: Final FY 2004 High Performance Bonuses, posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/rules/Memo/05/05-bonuses.htm

²⁹ See “Food Stamp Program wins award,” by Nancy Remsen, *Free Press*, 8/10/06, www.burlingtonfreepress.com/apps/pbcs.dll/article?AID=/20060810/NEWS02/608100306/1007

³⁰ “The Policy Page,” Center for Public Policy Priorities, 1/23/01, www.cppp.org/files/3/pp111.pdf

V. Food Stamp Outreach—Media and Other Supports

USDA provides a number of resources to assist community-based organizations, government agencies and others with outreach campaigns. Both the national headquarters and regional FNS offices are useful resources for identifying available and appropriate outreach materials. In early 2006 FNS released its “Food Stamp Outreach Toolkit,” (one version geared for use by state and local food stamp offices; the other for use by community and faith-based groups).³¹ The USDA toolkits include information about the Food Stamp Program and how to maximize outreach efforts through utilization of partnerships and placement of Public Service Announcements (PSAs). The toolkits provide templates and other supports to get community groups started. The toolkits are posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/tool-kits.html.

In addition to the toolkits, FNS makes available on its Web site for download and free bulk ordering, informational items about food stamps, such as, brochures, posters, flyers, application assistance envelopes, and other material. These materials are currently available in a multitude of languages. FNS frequently has a supply (although sometimes limited) of free colorful promotional items, such as magnets, potholders, note pads, and flying disks, that can be obtained in bulk quantities.

FNS has developed Public Service Announcements (PSAs) about food stamps for use on radio and television. The radio PSAs are available both as written scripts and downloadable sound files. There are two versions of the PSAs, one of which is customizable to include specific local contact information. High quality photographs for use in developing customized educational and promotional materials also are available to the public from FNS. Additional information about the PSAs can be found at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/psas.htm or by contacting FNS.

Each year USDA also conducts its own outreach campaign, which includes paid radio announcements in targeted areas and out-of-home media such as bus ads. The advertising schedule, including the dates, cities, and stations where the ads will run, can be found on the FNS Web site at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/radio-buys.htm. The paid radio ads are not currently available for non-FNS use.

There are many ways to seek earned (i.e. unpaid) media to highlight the Food Stamp Program. For example, USDA, FRAC, the American Public Human Services Association, World Hunger Year and others promote the “Hunger Champions” award competition, which acknowledges local food stamp offices for customer service.³² When winners are announced in the fall, USDA posts the information on its Web site. Letting local media and local officials know that an area office has won this recognition is a good “hook” for a press release, site visit, op-ed or other food stamp outreach activity.

³¹ “Food Stamp Outreach Toolkit,” USDA, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/tool-kits.htm

³² 2006 Hunger Champions Announcement, USDA, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/champions.htm

Site visits to agencies that enroll potential Food Stamp Program clients and/or serve low-income people are good settings to educate public officials and others about the need for the Food Stamp Program. Asking a public official to spend a “work day” helping food stamp outreach workers assist clients with applications, inviting officials to tour farmers’ markets that accept EBT cards, requesting radio stations to partner on grocery retailer outreach fairs, and encouraging officials to go to VITA (tax preparation assistance) sites that also prescreen for food stamps are among the kinds of events that can engage opinion leaders and leverage media coverage.

Releases of data about the Food Stamp Program provide other opportunities to highlight the importance of the benefits and outreach. Three times a year USDA reports on participation rates (once on the official national rate, once on the official state rates, and once on the PAI for the nation and states). Twice a year USDA announces state winners of bonus awards for Food Stamp Program operations. Once a year it reports on the “characteristics” of those who participate in the Food Stamp Program. Each of these information releases provides hooks for state and local partners to help educate the media about the program and need for outreach.

Similarly, advocates can work with FRAC to build media awareness around the FSP when FRAC releases its periodic reports and monthly Food Stamp Program caseload trend analyses.³³

Resources

- USDA, Food Stamp Outreach, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/
- FRAC, Food Stamp Program, www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/fsp.html
- USDA National Headquarters, 3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302
 - Kathie Klass, Deputy Director, FNS Office of Communications and Governmental Affairs, kathie.klass@fns.usda.gov
 - Pat Seward, Contracting Officer’s Representative, Food Stamp Program National Media Campaign, pat.seward@fns.usda.gov
 - Laura Griffin, Food Stamp Outreach Coordinator, laura.griffin@fns.usda.gov
 - Dawn Washington, Food Stamp Program Hunger Champions Committee, dawn.washington@fns.usda.gov
 - Susan Sheets, Food Stamp Program Promising Practices Committee, susan.sheets@fns.usda.gov

³³ For a link to FRAC’s publications, go to www.frac.org/html/publications/pubs.html FRAC’s monthly FSP caseload analyses are posted in the “What’s New” section of the FRAC web site (www.frac.org).

VI. Best Practices: Effective Collaborations and Model Partnerships

Effective collaborations for Food Stamp Program outreach can involve a variety of stakeholders and techniques. This section of the guide reviews many of the most promising types, offers lessons learned and provides links to more resources on each strategy. The following types of promising partnership/outreach models will be discussed in detail:

1. School-Based Outreach
2. Retailer-Based Outreach
3. Partnering With Public Officials
4. Faith-Based, Emergency Food Provider, and Other Community-Based Partners
5. EITC Linkages
6. Linking Health Programs and Food Stamps
7. Multi-Benefit Outreach
8. Workplace-Based Outreach
9. Disaster Relief
10. Service Learning
11. Linking Farmers' Markets and Food Stamps
12. Immigrant Outreach
13. Telephone Helplines
14. Utilizing Prescreening and Online Application Tools for Outreach

1. School-Based Outreach

Food Stamp Program outreach projects can connect with many potential food stamp households by partnering with the local school system. As the Illinois Hunger Coalition (IHC) points out, schools are places within the community where families feel safe; schools' nurturing environment makes parents more comfortable in discussing sensitive information; schools may offer an easier fit for recent immigrant families who are unfamiliar with other community resources or systems; and schools offer a non-stigmatizing setting. Moreover, schools have resources and personnel whose help can be tapped. And, children getting subsidized school meals also may be eligible for food stamps.

The Illinois Hunger Coalition, Florida Impact, and the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force (OHRTF) have utilized public schools as platforms for food stamp outreach. Florida Impact has emphasized reaching parents by piggybacking on information provided on the school meals programs. OHRTF has used elementary school home packets. IHC has used school-based staff and multiple opportunities for parent education and information.³⁴

Florida Impact obtained permission from its local school districts to include information on the Food Stamp Program in the summertime mailings to parents of school meals applications. To augment the written information, Florida Impact gave its toll-free helpline number to assist parents individually, a key to the effectiveness of this school meals mailing approach. [See section on *Telephone Helplines for more information.*] School meals applications also can provide food stamp information on their face. For example, in 2002-2003 Escambia County's free and reduced price school meals application advertised the food stamp application assistance. Underneath the space for a household's Food Stamp Case Number (if the family had one), it inserted the line "Need information about Food Stamps? Call their helpline toll-free at 1-800-224-3470." Florida Impact also encouraged school districts to put that same tag line on monthly school meal menu information sent to homes.

IHC employed multi-media outreach activities through the schools, including items such as flyers in children's backpacks, phone calls, and direct mailings in people's native language. IHC reached out to parents by including articles in school newsletters, announcing reminders over school loudspeakers, getting automated phone calls into homes to remind parents of upcoming food stamp outreach events, putting up event posters at community locations, and giving parents information on report card pickup days. While IHC used existing PTA and parent/teacher meetings to educate parents about eligibility, it found its most successful application events were those conducted specifically to educate parents about their FSP rights and eligibility and completing applications on their behalf.

Partnering with schools to train and educate school staff about the importance of enrolling families in the programs taps existing resources and builds upon parent education. IHC trained school staff (counselors, social workers, nurses, youth outreach staff, homeless coordinators, and

³⁴ "Taking it to the schools: combating hunger and promoting health," Illinois Hunger Coalition (limited quantities of the report are available in hard copy; to inquire call 312-629-9580).

others) to use a multi-benefit Internet tool (RealBenefits) to generate applications for food stamps and other public benefits. [See also section on *Prescreening and Online Application Tools for more information.*] It also collaborated with the school district's Office of After School and Community School Programs, which directs after school programming in Chicago Public Schools as well as the Community Schools Initiative.

Three key factors in the IHC school-based project's success were: 1) having IHC's "Hunger Hotline," to which outreach workers could refer calls for bilingual application assistance, case management and technical support; 2) establishing routine monthly or weekly times for follow-up; and 3) getting "buy-in" from school officials (Board of Education, school systems' CEO, school principals). [See also section on *Telephone Helplines.*]

Key Lessons

- Develop partnerships with the local school districts, educators, and parents to create opportunities for parent outreach through schools.
- Provide food stamp information through existing school mailings for the low-income school meals and summer meals programs.
- Train and educate school-based staff about the importance of the Food Stamp Program.
- Consider outreach opportunities in afterschool programs and other school-based settings.

Resources

- Florida Impact, www.flimpact.org and "Five Year Partnership Improves Food Security," posted at www.flimpact.org/StampOutHungerPresentation.pdf and "Feeding Florida: Responses to Hunger in the Sunshine State," posted at www.flimpact.org/Hunger2005.pdf
- Illinois Hunger Coalition, www.ilhunger.org and "Taking it to the schools: combating hunger and promoting health," Illinois Hunger Coalition (limited quantities of the report are available in hard copy; to inquire call 312-629-9580).
- Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force, www.oregonhunger.org and "Food Stamp Outreach: A How To Guide for Oregon Communities," posted at www.oregonhunger.org/administrator/documents/Howtoguide.pdf and "Food Stamp Materials and Resources," posted at www.oregonhunger.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=42

2. Retailer-Based Outreach

There has been growing interest by food retailers, food distributors, and food retailer associations to work with the anti-hunger community to increase participation in federal nutrition programs. National and regional food retail chains, including Pathmark, Save-A-Lot, Kroger, and Dillons, have partnered with nonprofit and government agencies to conduct outreach to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program. These outreach partnerships and activities have been diverse, including community outreach events at local supermarkets, healthy cooking demonstrations in stores, advertising space for food stamp messages, and information given in employee pay-check envelopes. [See also section on *Employer-Based Outreach*.]

Most successful retailer-based outreach projects have two common ingredients: 1) anti-hunger groups have laid out for the retailer the “business case” on the importance of the Food Stamp Program to food purchasing and the local economy; and 2) groups have appealed to the retailer’s interest in being a good community partner.

On 2004 Hunger Awareness Day, Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius launched a collaboration with the Dillons retail grocery chain and the Wichita Food Bank on a “filling the plate” food stamp outreach campaign. [See also section on *Partnering with Public Officials*.] The partnership “moved outreach efforts beyond linking with traditional helping agencies to involvement by the local community grocery store where persons purchase food.”³⁵

Similarly, in connection with Hunger Awareness commemorations in 2006, the Tennessee Department of Human Services and the Tennessee Nutrition Consumer Education Program “teamed up” to provide food stamp information booths at Knoxville area grocery stores, including Metro Village Market, Kroger, and Food City.³⁶ The Fort Wayne Food Bank and Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force also have hosted FSP information tables at or outside grocery stores.

In the mid-Atlantic region, Pathmark has partnered with FoodChange (in New York City) and the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger on food stamp awareness and prescreening events at its stores and given space in its weekly newspaper circulars for messages about where to get food stamp information. In addition to prescreening events, Save-A-Lot has partnered with community groups on healthy cooking demonstrations in its stores and benefit outreach to its employees, and, at its Hampton, Virginia store, hosted activities for seniors.

Other sectors of the food retail industry can lend resources. For example, in New York City a local food distributor has agreed to deliver food stamp promotional materials to the more than 2,000 small independent grocery stores located throughout the city, and local unions representing grocery workers have joined elected officials at public events to support Food Stamp Program outreach.

³⁵ See “2005-2006 Business Plan,” Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, www.srskansas.org/2005_BusinessPlan/bpissues.htm

³⁶ See “Tennessee Observing Hunger Awareness Week,” by Ben Senger, WBIR, 6/7/06, www.wbir.com/news/local/story.aspx?storyid=35020

Key Lessons

- Utilize local stores as locations for food stamp outreach events.
- Tap space in weekly circular ads and in-store advertising opportunities to promote the Food Stamp Program.
- Make the “business case” for food stamp participation.
- Ask your state’s grocery retailer association to help get the word out.
- Ask your retailers to promote food stamp outreach with the local chamber of commerce.
- Identify funding and in-kind assistance retailers might provide.
- Engage food retailers to publicly support the Food Stamp Program.
- Encourage local unions representing grocery workers to publicly support the FSP.

Resources

- USDA’s 10 Ideas, posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/10-ideas.pdf
- USDA’s Business Case, posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/business-case.htm
- USDA’s Information for Retailers brochure, posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/retailers/pdfs/Info-Retailers.pdf
- Food Marketing Institute, www.fmi.org

3. Partnering with Public Officials

State and local elected officials can help their constituents and their local economies by ensuring that eligible people get the federal benefits to which they are entitled. Elected officials can help both by working with state and local agencies, community-based organizations and constituents to ensure that public policy is effective at enrolling those who are eligible and by taking steps to fund outreach activities to increase participation.

Two ways to get the attention of officials to encourage policy and funding initiatives that are aimed at increasing food stamp participation are: 1) point out estimates about the dollars being left on the table in Washington, D.C.; 2) explain that state and local investments in food stamp outreach may be matched by federal funding.

As noted earlier in the guide, state funding for food stamp outreach can be a critical component of increasing food stamp participation. State and local officials are well-situated to ensure that such investments are made. [See *Section IV Funding for Outreach Activities.*] In addition, however, state and local officials can support food stamp outreach in other ways.

Efforts to engage state and local officials in food stamp outreach are getting boosts from associations that represent them. The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) and National League of Cities (NLC) have toolkits that give their members information about food stamps. The American Public Human Services Association (APHSA) and American Association of Food Stamp Directors are active in USDA's Food Stamp Outreach Coalition and feature outreach issues at their meetings. Each year, the U.S. Conference of Mayors surveys its city officials about the extent of hunger in their communities and often incorporates Food Stamp Program information in briefings for city human services officials.

Leadership from governors, state legislators, mayors, and city council members can elevate food stamp outreach as a priority for local government as well as for other stakeholders and the media. For example, Kansas Governor Kathleen Sebelius took the initiative to engage Dillons grocery retail chain and the Wichita Food Bank on a "Filling the Plate" food stamp outreach campaign. [See also *section on Retailer-Based strategies.*] In New York City, Public Advocate Betsy Gotbaum helped the local United Way and other partners launch an expanded food stamp outreach effort and helped focus media attention on dollars at stake for the community. NYC Council Speaker Christine Quinn has identified food stamp participation as a key goal and is working with Council Member Eric Gioia and others on outreach strategies. [See also *section on Linking Farmers' Markets and Food Stamps.*]

The Hatcher Group has prepared a guide on food stamp outreach for Members of Congress. It suggests events such as "work days" for Members to assist families in applying for food stamp benefits and provides templates for media materials.

Key Lessons

- Ask your state and local officials to invest in food stamp outreach.

- Encourage your state to submit a food stamp outreach plan to USDA.
- Ask your state and local food stamp agency to apply with you for USDA competitive grants.
- Invite local officials to visit food stamp outreach locations.
- Set up a food stamp application assistance “work day” for your public officials.
- Give officials’ staffers tips and/or trainings to help constituents apply for food stamps.
- Provide state and local officials with information, model articles and other items for their newsletters and other mailings to constituents.
- Ask state and local officials to convene a broad range of local stakeholders for food stamp education efforts.
- Work with elected officials to encourage public policy and legislation that encourages increased food stamp program participation.

Resources

- American Association of State Food Stamp Directors, <http://foodstamp.aphsa.org>
- American Public Human Services Association, www.aphsa.org
- National Conference of State Legislatures, posted at www.ncsl.org/statefed/humserv/hungeroverview.htm
- National League of Cities, www.nlc.org/content/Files/HWF%20Action%20Kit.pdf
- U.S. Conference of Mayors, “United States Conference of Mayors–Sodexo Inc. Survey on Hunger and Homelessness,” Dec. 2005, posted at www.usmayors.org/uscm/hungersurvey/2005/HH2005FINAL.pdf
- The Hatcher Group, www.thehatchergroup.com

4. Faith-Based, Emergency Food Provider and Other Community-Based Organization Partners

Faith-based groups, food banks, pantries and other emergency feeding programs, and various community-based organizations (CBO's) are excellent vehicles for FSP education and outreach. These organizations often have large numbers of community locations, staff and volunteers, and telephone helplines, newsletters and Web sites through which to get the word out about the Food Stamp Program. And these community partners often are “trusted messengers”—so that the food stamp information they disseminate is more likely to have an impact with clients.

In New York City, St. John the Divine's Cathedral Community Cares Feed the Solution Campaign aims to increase the awareness and involvement in hunger issues by the Episcopal churches in the three-state region. With assistance from food stamp advocates, Feed the Solution has trained staff and volunteers at faith-based emergency food providers about the importance of the FSP and how to assist their consumers in accessing the program.

Many emergency feeding agencies served by the America's Second Harvest—The Nation's Food Bank Network are operated by faith-based entities and so provide another avenue for engaging the faith community in food stamp outreach. For example, the Tarrant Area Food Bank in Texas reports that, of the agencies it serves, faith-based agencies run 79 percent of pantries, 59 percent of soup kitchens, and 54 percent of emergency shelters.³⁷

Food banks increasingly are helping to connect people with food stamp benefits. The California Association of Food Banks (CAFB) contracts with the state to operate food stamp outreach through emergency feeding and other partner organizations. The total funding, including the federal match, for the statewide program in 22 of California's 58 counties is nearly \$1,000,000. CAFB outreach programs make presentations to potentially eligible populations and human service professionals, place outreach workers at food pantries and soup kitchens to provide information, prescreening and application assistance, distribute promotional materials, work to resolve administrative and systemic barriers to the program, and use media to get the word out about food stamps.

Other food banks also engage emergency food providers on food stamp outreach. For example, the Food Bank of New York City included food stamp information at its 2005 annual meeting for emergency providers and the launch of Borough Hunger Task Forces. Moreover, the food banks in Santa Cruz, CA and Fort Wayne, IN are among those that competed successfully for federal food stamp outreach grants. [*For more on competitive grant funding, see Section IV.*]

Based on its experience, CAFB recommends that emergency food providers target information to those clients likely food stamp eligible, so as not to lead to a frustrating application experience later on for those not qualified. It suggests that providers make clear that food stamps and emergency food assistance are distinct benefits administered by different entities under separate rules. At

³⁷ See “New Hunger Study,” Tarrant Area Food Bank Press Release, 2/23/06, <https://id283.securedata.net/food-bank/HungerinAmerica2006.html>

soup kitchens, CAFB recommends moving clients up in the meal line after they have been prescreened. CAFB reports that clients are more receptive when approached by staff or volunteers with whom they are familiar.

Other community-based organizations have undertaken food stamp outreach campaigns. In the last two years in Tennessee MANNA has worked with 100 local agencies to get food stamp information out to potentially eligible people. Through presentations and material distributions, MANNA reached 90,000 people in a 12-month period alone. Its five target populations groups are the homeless, immigrants, elderly and disabled persons, the working poor, and ex-offenders reentering society. It has several strategic partnerships. MANNA is a member of the Tennessee Consumer Education Program, which provides nutrition education to low income people. Teaming up with the TennCare for Children Outreach Committee, MANNA has gotten food stamp eligibility information out to 95 school systems across the state and encouraged the schools to reach out to families. MANNA also partners with Tennessee Alliance for Legal Services Benefits Task Force on client advocacy strategies.

D.C. Hunger Solutions, a project of the Food Research and Action Center, has trained nonprofit human service organizations on the benefits and rules of the Food Stamp Program and on how to assist families to navigate the application process. Trainees have included representatives from, among others, Mary's Center for Maternal and Child Care, La Clinica De Pueblo, Whitman Walker Clinic, and the Capital Area Food Bank and some of the food bank's 300 member agencies. D.C. Hunger Solutions also has partnered with Bread for the City on weekly workshops for families to learn how to apply for food stamps as well as for Medicaid and TANF benefits. D.C. Hunger Solutions provides ads for food stamp workshops and information on how to apply in D.C. on its Web site.

Similarly, the Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force provides food stamp presentations and outreach training to community providers and consumers. It maintains a community partner list-serve and Web page to post ongoing information, meeting notes from its statewide community steering committee meetings, and other information. Its understanding of consumer perspectives is enhanced by having an outreach coordinator who formerly received food stamps and by holding focus groups with current and potential food stamp applicants at food pantries, Head Start offices, food stamp offices and other partner sites.

In New York, where FoodChange, the United Way, and the NYC Coalition Against Hunger have boosted food stamp outreach work, prescreening and applications assistance are widely available. The Children's Defense Fund of New York has completed a catalogue of available services and will be posting it on the Internet in fall 2006.

Key Lessons

- Encourage the local food bank to support and participate in designing and implementing food stamp outreach campaigns.
- Use the distribution network of local and statewide food banks to disseminate food stamp information to emergency food providers.

- Target information to those likely eligible for food stamps rather than general leafleting at emergency food sites; be clear that the two forms of aid are distinct and operated under different rules and by different entities.
- Approach your local faith-based organizations to educate them about the importance of the Food Stamp Program and other nutrition programs.
- Build upon any existing networks of religious organizations for outreach about food stamp benefits for the community.
- Provide information and training on the Food Stamp Program for the staff and volunteers at faith-based and other emergency feeding programs.
- Utilize faith-based and other community group events, newsletters, helplines and Web sites to conduct food stamp outreach.
- Tap community partner sites for client focus groups that can bring deeper consumer perspective to the Food Stamp Program outreach campaign.

Resources

- St John the Divine, Cathedral Community Cares, http://stjohndivine.org/social_ccc.html
- California Association of Food Banks (CAFB), www.cafoodbanks.org
 - “Reaching the Other Eligible Californians: California Association of Food Banks’ (CAFB) Food Stamp Outreach Project,” www.cafoodbanks.org/CaseStudyReport.pdf
 - “California Food Banks and Food Stamps,” www.cafoodbanks.org/FoodStamps.pdf
 - “Food Stamp Outreach Tools,” www.cafoodbanks.org/outreach.htm
 - Tulare County’s “Instructions for Organizations and Volunteers Assisting with the Food Stamp Application,” www.cafoodbanks.org/VOLUNTEER%20INSTRUCTIONS%20TULARE.doc
- MANNA, www.mannanashville.org/activities.html
- D.C. Hunger Solutions, www.dchunger.org/new_more.html#110404
 - www.dchunger.org/Programs/Federal/Food_Stamps/Apply.html
- Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force, www.oregonhunger.org
 - www.oregonhunger.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=42
- MAZON - A Jewish Response to Hunger, www.mazon.org
 - “Why Advocacy?,” www.mazon.org/What_You_Should_Know/Why_Advocacy@/
- Food Bank for New York City, www.foodbanknyc.org/index.cfm?objectid=1421D627-FC71-CF58-62DA93E2C55A1FF8
- Children’s Defense Fund New York, www.cdfny.org and soon to be posted ““The Food Stamp Program: A Directory of Free Services in Your Neighborhood”
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties, www.thefoodbank.org
- Community Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Indiana, www.communityharvest.org
- America’s Second Harvest—The Nation’s Food Bank Network, www.secondharvest.org and “Why Food Stamps Matter,” (issued with FRAC and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities), posted at www.secondharvest.org/learn_about_hunger/public_policy/food_stamp.html

5. EITC Linkages

Because many families that are eligible to receive the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), the Child Tax Credit and other low-income work supports also may be eligible for food stamps, there has been a growing effort to link outreach campaigns for different benefits.

These combined food stamp and EITC outreach efforts and other “multi-benefit” activities can be framed as part of “Prosperity Campaigns” (as promoted by Miami city officials and partners) or “Family Economic Success” (the theme for an Annie E. Casey Foundation campaign to help low-income families access work supports and build assets). The Internal Revenue Service (IRS), through its Stakeholder, Partnership, Education and Communication (SPEC) organization, also has been involved in EITC outreach efforts that combine with food stamp and other benefit program outreach. Similarly, food stamp information increasingly is provided at free tax preparation sites (i.e. Volunteer Income Tax Assistance or VITA sites).

A good way to jumpstart collaborations between anti-hunger and EITC promoting groups is by hosting meetings or trainings. FRAC participated in such trainings sponsored by the National League of Cities and the Ohio Association of Second Harvest Food Banks (May 2003) and by the Connecticut Association of Human Services (CAHS) (January 2004). In the 2005-2006 tax season CAHS undertook food stamp outreach, conducted food stamp prescreenings and/or distributed nutrition program information at VITA sites in Bridgeport, Danbury and Stamford; CAHS also provided food stamp information in connection with EITC outreach elsewhere in the state.

Similarly, the “Give Paychecks a Boost” campaign at the anti-hunger group Just Harvest in Pittsburgh includes outreach, free tax preparation assistance and advocacy to reduce barriers to filing. In 2006 it provided food stamp information to those taxpayers who appeared eligible and filed tax returns for over 1,500 low-income workers for total refunds of \$2.5 million.

Key Lessons

- Develop partnerships with the IRS, VITA sites, and other tax preparers that serve low-income families located in your community.
- Conduct food stamp prescreenings and provide food stamp information at VITA sites.
- Work with other organizations distributing information about the EITC program to include information about nutrition assistance programs in their literature.
- Engage elected officials conducting public promotions of the EITC program to include nutrition assistance program information as part of the overall work support emphasis.
- Host strategy meetings and trainings for anti-hunger and EITC groups on collaborative approaches.

Resources

- National League of Cities, www.nlc.org/content/Files/HWF%20Action%20Kit.pdf;
www.nlc.org/Newsroom/nation_s_cities_weekly/weekly_ncw/2004/03/08/2921.cfm

- “Ohio Cities Take Action to Bring Federal Dollars to Families,” NLC’s *Cities Weekly*, 5/12/04, www.nlc.org/Newsroom/Nations_Cities_Weekly/Weekly_NCW/2003/05/12/4846.cfm
- IRS, www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=119374,00.html
- National EITC Outreach Partnership, www.cbpp.org/eitc-partnership/
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes
- Prosperity Campaign (Miami-Dade), www.prosperitycampaign.com/
- Just Harvest, www.justharvest.org/projects.shtml
- Connecticut Association of Human Services, www.cahs.org

6. Linking Health Programs and Food Stamps

Linking food stamp benefits to health programs and messages can highlight the Food Stamp Program's role as a nutrition support and increase its reach. The eligibility criteria for public health insurance programs and the Food Stamp Program are very similar, and many individuals and families are eligible for both programs. More localities could align their food stamp and health insurance program enrollment procedures to maximize outreach to potential recipients. Many localities also could leverage food stamp outreach assistance from those who facilitate enrollment in public health insurance programs.

Partners such as health insurance outreach campaigns, local hospitals, community-based health clinics, managed care entities, doctors, and university health programs can highlight the importance of the Food Stamp Program and educate their low-income clients about its availability. "Doc for Tots" has materials on food stamps and other programs that can help patient families and gives doctors outreach tips. The Docs for Tots Web site also provides information about individual health professionals, such as Dr. Deborah Frank, who advocate on food stamps and other benefit programs and issues.

Hospitals and legal services programs increasingly are teaming up to help patients obtain food stamps and other supports. Modeled after an effort launched at Boston Medical Center in 1993, Cleveland's MetroHealth Medical Center's partnership with Legal Aid reportedly brings to more than 20 the number of states with such collaborations.³⁸ "Dr. Robert Cohn, a pediatrician, said 'teaming up with Legal Aid attorneys will help us resolve economic, environmental and social problems that can have a negative impact on health.'"³⁹

In Reno, Nevada, students from the Orvis School of Nursing spend a semester on "Knock and Talk" teams that reach out to senior citizens and help them apply for social services. The students, who also team up with nutrition and social work students, go through the experience of applying for food stamps and other services to gain a deeper understanding of clients' situations. [See also *section on Service Learning.*]

New Orleans-based Kingsley House has implemented a nationally recognized model for health benefits outreach: its Neighborhood Health Messenger Program, also called "Walkers and Talkers." Trained and certified Medicaid/SCHIP facilitated enrollment specialists go door to door to provide neighborhood residents with information and assistance in completing applications for health benefits. President Bush applauded this outreach model at an event in February 2005.⁴⁰

³⁸ See "With friends' help, MetroHealth expands Legal Aid program," by Donna J. Miller, *Cleveland Plain Dealer*, 8/11/06, www.cleveland.com/news/plaindealer/index.ssf/?base/cuyahoga/1155285867120170.xml&coll=2

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ As President Bush said at the event with Tammi Fleming of Kingsley House, 1/25/05: "The point is, is that we have programs aimed at helping people who need help, basically is what you're saying. And one such program is S-CHIP - that's the Children's Health Care Insurance Program. And it's not fully subscribed. In other words, we had the money available and states did not access the money to help children with good health care....The reason we've asked Tammi to come is because it's very important for states to develop effective outreach programs. At the federal level, we're willing to help fund outreach programs. We think it's important for people who qualify for the S-CHIP program to know that that program is available, without stigma. And it is an effective way to provide our children with the insurance we want our children to have. And so what Tammi is saying is she's pointing up the fact

More recently, Kingsley House has worked with Louisiana state government to add a food stamp outreach component to its health outreach work. The state provided food stamp training to the Walkers and Talkers in spring 2006 and the project launched its FSP application assistance in June 2006.

In Philadelphia, through its MOMobile program, Maternity Care Coalition community health workers travel in minivans and help families with young children access food stamp and WIC benefits. This is part of its program to promote health practices and is supported in part by a grant from MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger.

The Children's Defense Fund in New York (CDF-NY) has begun work on "Coordinating Public Health Insurance and Food Stamps in New York." It has convened key stakeholders, including advocates and government agencies, from the health insurance and food stamp advocacy communities to brainstorm and network.

Key Lessons

- Partner with low-income health insurers.
- Partner with local health care providers at clinics, hospitals and other locations.
- Collaborate with health insurers and providers to create multi-program outreach to educate individuals and families about low-income health insurance and food stamp benefits.
- Work with state and local elected officials to encourage state agencies to increase coordination/enrollment for public health insurance, food stamp benefits and other programs.
- Utilize health insurers' and providers' newsletters and mailings to inform readers about food stamps.
- Ask local medical, nursing and other university health programs to incorporate a social services outreach project in the curriculum

Resources

- Docs for Tots, www.docsfortots.org
 - <http://65.36.225.239/resources/talkingPoints/docs/safetynet.pdf>
 - www.docsfortots.org/resources/action/Dr.Franksbio.asp
- Children's Sentinel Nutrition Assessment Program, <http://dcc2.bumc.bu.edu/csnappublic/home.html>
- The Children's Defense Fund NY, www.cdfny.org
- Kingsley House, www.kingsleyhouse.org
 - www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050126-5.html
- MOMobile Program, www.mazon.org/Who_We_Are/Newsletter-eNewsletter/MAZONNewsSpring06.pdf
- Orvis School of Nursing Knock and Talk project, www.unr.edu/nevadanews/detail.aspx?id=1662 ("Students help senior citizens in crisis poverty," by [Heather Shallenberger](#), *Nevada News*, 5/17/06)

that we need a grassroots effort across the country to enable people to know what is available for the Children's Health Care Program....Well, I appreciate what you're doing. Walkers and talkers. That's good; good job." See "President Participates in Conversation on Health Care," 1/25/05, www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050126-5.html

7. Multi-Benefit Outreach

Many low-income households are eligible for a multitude of nutrition, health, cash and other state and federal benefits. Frequently households must apply for programs at different locations and complete multiple applications. A number of communities have addressed this issue by implementing programs that provide multiple benefit program information to households in one place. Partnering with other organizations and agencies to combine outreach and education about multiple benefits is a cost-effective approach to outreach.

In 2004, the National League of Cities Institute for Youth, Education, and Families (YEF Institute) provided technical assistance to several cities on ways to promote several means-tested benefits at once. Memphis City Council Chairman Joe Brown explained his city's interest: "We see this initiative as a vital strategy to connect people with existing work supports to ensure our eligible residents are receiving the maximum benefits available to them."⁴¹

SEEDCO has taken a multi-benefit approach through its "EarnBenefits" project. SEEDCO's *EarnBenefits* Guide and Web site provide comprehensive, user-friendly information on eligibility guidelines and the application process for a wide range of benefits. SEEDCO utilizes community-based organizations to assist clients in the use of the *EarnBenefits* product and serve as a single point of contact for information about benefits, eligibility screening, application assistance, and follow-up through its "One-Stop" Centers. SEEDCO also utilizes *EarnBenefits* and Mobile Outreach Teams to reach low-wage workers through local employers.

Another example of multi-benefit outreach is the "RealBenefits" program, currently in use in Illinois, Massachusetts and Maine.⁴² RealBenefits is a project of Community Catalyst, a national nonprofit organization that builds consumer and community participation in the U.S. health care system to secure quality, affordable health care for all. Its RealBenefits Web-based application performs accurate eligibility screening for state and national benefit programs such as food stamps, Medicaid, SCHIP and other health programs, energy assistance programs, and the EITC. RealBenefits asks user-friendly interview questions and generates approved application forms with data collected in the interview and ready to be printed and signed.

The National Council of Churches (NCC) has promoted "The Benefit Bank (TBB)."⁴³ The tool was developed as a "counselor-assisted" program, so that a volunteer or other staffer can ask clients a series of questions. As data is entered, TBB saves the information for use with another program or benefit. In addition to food stamps, clients can be screened for federal and state tax credits, SCHIP and medical benefits, Low-Income Home Energy Assistance (LIHEAP), and child care subsidy.

⁴¹ See "NLC Awards Technical Assistance to Six Cities," National League of Cities, *Cities Weekly*, 3/8/04, www.nlc.org/Newsroom/nation_s_cities_weekly/weekly_ncw/2004/03/08/2921.cfm

⁴² http://communitycatalyst.org/index.php?doc_id=12

⁴³ See NCC Press Release, 1/27/05, www.ncccusa.org/news/050131thebenefitbank.html

The National Council on Aging (NCOA) helps elderly people and groups that serve them screen individuals for food stamps and an array of other benefits. NCOA recently has added a feature to its “BenefitsCheckUp” tool that enables community organizations and state agencies to help low-income elderly apply for the Extra Help through Medicare's Prescription Drug Coverage (also known as Part D). Electronically through [BenefitsCheckUp](#), groups can submit applications for the Extra Help to the Social Security Administration (SSA) and receive immediate confirmation that the application was received ⁴⁴

Through the support of the Robin Hood Foundation, the “Single Stop” project offers low-income families free, one-on-one confidential counseling about public benefits, financial decisions, legal problems and family services.⁴⁵ The project helps individuals enroll for federal, state and city public benefits, solve budget and debt problems, apply for tax refunds. It also provides counselors to help families solve chronic problems, including substance abuse and domestic violence. The Single Stop project engages multiple community-based organizations and corporations, such as Citibank, to host sites and supply staff and services pro bono.⁴⁶

“Family Resource Centers” also provide opportunities for connecting people with information about an array of services. For example, the North Liberty Resource Center connects Iowa families with resources and helps them complete applications for services, including for food stamps.

Multi-benefit work can include messaging. City officials can use “Prosperity Campaigns” or “Family Economic Success” messages to get the word out about several benefits at one time. [See *EITC Linked Outreach* section]. In New York City the Mayor’s Office for Health Insurance Access has partnered with anti-hunger organizations and the City’s food stamp agency to share information and access to health benefit outreach events to increase food stamp outreach.

Key Lessons

- Utilize existing multi-benefit pre-screening tools to engage other social service providers in food stamp outreach.
- Work on outreach strategies with “one-stops” and “Family Resource Centers”
- Craft messages for public officials and others to get the word out about food stamps and other supports for families. Examples include “Prosperity Campaign” and “Family Economic Success.”
- Work with local government agencies to increase coordination of multiple outreach events among agencies and local social service providers.

Resources

- SEEDCO, <http://seedco.org/earnbenefits/>
- Community Catalyst: RealBenefits Project, http://communitycatalyst.org/index.php?doc_id=12
- Single Stop, www.singlestop.org/

⁴⁴ See “New Benefits.CheckUp.org Feature Helps Organizations Enroll People in Medicare Extra Help,” National Council on Aging Press Release, 8/23/06, www.prweb.com/releases/2006/8/prweb427880.htm

⁴⁵ www.singlestop.org/

⁴⁶ www.singlestop.org/partners.html

- National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education, “Early Childhood Digest: Family Resource Centers: Where School Readiness Happens,” October 1998, www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ECI/digests/98october.html
- North Liberty Resource Center, www.iccsd.k12.ia.us/Schools/vanallen/family_resource.htm
- National League of Cities, “Helping Working Families Action Kit,” www.nlc.org/content/Files/HWF%20Action%20Kit.pdf
 - www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF%20Screening%20Tools.pdf
- National Council of Churches Press Release, 1/27/05, www.ncccusa.org/news/050131thebenefitbank.html
- The Benefit Bank, www.thebenefitbank.com/
- National Council on Aging’s BenefitsCheckUp, www.benefitscheckup.org/
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/
- Prosperity Campaign (Miami-Dade), www.prosperitycampaign.com/

8. Workplace-Based Outreach

Households with earned income have some of the lowest participation rates in the Food Stamp Program, yet often need the benefits to make ends meet. Outreach conducted through the workplace has several positive features. It is a logical way for state and local agencies and community-based groups to reach low-income workers; it can help employers retain employees; it can buttress workers' resources when a plant closes or mass layoffs occur; and it can enhance private sector support for the Food Stamp Program.

In the wake of the 1996 welfare law, a number of companies that hired and trained people transitioning from welfare participated in roundtables and conferences convened by the Welfare to Work Partnership.⁴⁷ The U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Center on Workforce Development (CWD) also led discussions that provided information about helping entry-level workers secure supports while they are attempting to move up the career ladder.⁴⁸

In 2002, a CWD Internet Chambercast and subsequent CWD publication offered insights on what employers need to learn about workers' situations and what community-based organizations need to remember when approaching employers to partner on outreach and other social services efforts.⁴⁹ Steve Wing of CVS Corporation reported, "We have good managers that know how to run our stores...but they don't know how to provide employment supports. They're not sure how to work with transportation issues. They may not know all about child care. Local agencies do know, and they can help."⁵⁰ Similarly, Fred Kramer of Marriott International, Inc. explained, "Our successful retention rates are due in large part to our partnerships with community-based organizations that provide the support services that an individual needs."⁵¹ CWP concluded, "Research demonstrates that families with access to transitional employment services—such as child care, health insurance, and help with expenses—are less likely to return to the welfare rolls. Community-based organizations provide support services that can help workers transitioning off of welfare solve problems concerning child care and transportation and help them access rent subsidies and food stamps, supports that can stretch entry-level salaries and keep employees self-sufficient."⁵²

CWD panelists offered pointers on how to broker partnerships between local chambers of commerce and community-based groups. Either the chamber head, a local group that knows chamber leaders, or an intermediary such as a mayor can initiate the collaboration just by

⁴⁷ The Welfare to Work Partnership has been succeeded by Business Interface, Inc., a nonprofit placement and consulting firm that works on job opportunities for welfare recipients. Its Web site is www.businessinterfaceinc.com

⁴⁸ See also information on USDA FNS presentations on food stamps as a work support at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Annual Workforce Development Leadership Course in "Food Stamp Program: Steps Have Been Taken to Increase Participation of Working Families, But Better Tracking of Efforts Is Needed, GAO Report 04-346, fn 28 (March 2004), www.gao.gov/new.items/d04346.pdf

⁴⁹ See "Welfare to Work: An Economic Boost," U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP), html version posted at <http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:lCJD5DG-eYgJ:www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/e542i5otwk3hztgefs4yth7dki2ntvwykvrpvczn5dven5coxo57mnzly4g4jo3gnoe6rgvdg7dbpp7ruoepk2e/welfare150dpi.pdf+welfare+to+work+economic+boost+orlando&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=1>; and Internet Chambercast hosted by CWP, 4/17/02, www.uschamber.com/cwp/tools/chambercast/2002.htm#4.17.02

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid.

⁵² Ibid.

“picking up the phone or jotting an invitation” to suggest a small group chat informally.⁵³ Marriott’s Kramer underscored, however, the community-based organization must be a “viable business partner” and able to explain “what it is bringing to the table that will interest an employer in its services.”⁵⁴

More recently, Corporate Voices for Working Families has produced materials to help engage and guide organizations interested in building bridges between outreach campaigns and the corporate sector. A “2006 Employer Guide to Promoting Tax Credits and Federal Benefits” is available on its Web site. The Center on Law and Social Policy (CLASP)’s new report on employer-based work support campaigns suggests that employers who are already engaged on EITC benefit outreach may be receptive to requests that they add information about food stamps and other benefits.⁵⁵ Food retailers have partnered on outreach not only to their local customers, but to their employees. Pathmark, for example, has collaborated with anti-hunger advocates to provide food stamp information to employees through paychecks. [See section on *Retailer-Based outreach*.]

Similarly, local unions also can get information to low-wage workers. In New York City local unions such as DC37 and 1199 partner with community-based organizations to provide EITC tax preparation and food stamp information to low-wage union members.

Efforts to involve employers in food stamp outreach were featured in two of the 2004 outreach grants USDA awarded. In one, the Alamo Area Development Corporation (AADC) in Texas distributed information about food stamps through partnerships with employers, offered prescreening to potential applicants, and educated employers’ human resource staff. In the other, Jewish Vocational Services (JVS) in Massachusetts targeted one-on-one assistance to new employees at existing workplace partners, while at the same time, used customized approaches to cultivate new employer partners. To help sustain outreach beyond the grant period, JVS developed a food stamp education module to train human resources staffers and to use in workplace education classes.

In addition to support those with jobs, food stamp outreach can help buttress the economic loss for those displaced by plant closings or other mass layoff situations. Some food stamp offices provide “rapid response teams” to get laid off workers connected with benefits.

In short, the ways that employers can assist outreach efforts are varied. Employers can insert information about food stamps into employee pay envelopes and on employee pay stubs. Human

⁵³ See suggestion for Orlando Chamber of Commerce’s Jacob Stuart that chamber officials call community groups in “Welfare to Work: An Economic Boost,” U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP), html version posted at <http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:ICJD5DG-eYgJ:www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/e542i5otwk3hztgefs4yth7dki2ntvvykvhrpvzcn5dven5coxo57mzly4g4jo3gnoe6rgvdg7dbpp7ruoepk2e/welfare150dpi.pdf+welfare+to+work+economic+boost+orlando&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=1>

⁵⁴ See “Welfare to Work: An Economic Boost,” U.S. Chamber of Commerce Center for Workforce Preparation (CWP), html version posted at <http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:ICJD5DG-eYgJ:www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/e542i5otwk3hztgefs4yth7dki2ntvvykvhrpvzcn5dven5coxo57mzly4g4jo3gnoe6rgvdg7dbpp7ruoepk2e/welfare150dpi.pdf+welfare+to+work+economic+boost+orlando&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=1>

⁵⁵ “Getting Connected: Employer Engagement in Work Supports,” by Abbey Frank, Mark Greenberg, and Robert Zdenek, Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), May 2006, www.clasp.org/publications/employerworksupports.pdf

resources departments can offer new hires information about and/or applications for food stamps, EITC, health, and other benefits. Employers can host local food stamp agency or community-based group staff to take applications and process or prescreen applications for its workers. In some cases, employers, such as retailers, can play food stamp PSAs over their audio systems before stores open to customers but while employees are at work. When an employer closes a plant, food stamp agency “rapid response teams” and outreach can help connect job losers to benefits. Employers can help fund food stamp outreach efforts, including by putting up funds for the state to draw down a federal match and support food stamp information campaigns through radio and newspaper ads. Individual employers can seek wider business community involve through the local chamber of commerce. Conversely, where the local chamber takes the lead, it can host seminars to interest its members in participating in food stamp outreach.

Key Lessons

- Reach out and build new partnerships with local and regional employers of low-wage workers.
- Make “the business case” for food stamp outreach, including by explaining the boost the benefits give the local economy and the positive impact on employee retention rates.
- Continue to work with current collaborating employers to reach new employees on an ongoing basis.
- Encourage employers to provide food stamp information on employee pay stubs/envelopes.
- Educate the staff of private sector and public sector human resources departments about the benefits of the Food Stamp Program and how to assist employees who may be eligible for food stamp benefits.
- Reach out to local unions to work with them to provide food stamp information to their low-wage members.
- Reach out to employers and unions in the event of plant closings or other mass layoff situations and partner with local food stamp agency “rapid response teams.”
- Urge employers and business leaders to speak out about the importance of the Food Stamp Program and contribute resources to efforts to remove stigma about it.

Resources

- Corporate Voices for Working Families, <http://cvworkingfamilies.org/issues/issues.shtml>
- Center for Workplace Development, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, “Welfare to Work: An Economic Boost,” <http://64.233.187.104/search?q=cache:lCJD5DG-eYgJ:www.uschamber.com/NR/rdonlyres/e542i5otwk3hztgefs4yth7dki2ntvwwykvhrpvzcn5dven5coxo57mnzly4g4jo3gnoe6rgvdg7dbpp7ruoepk2e/welfare150dpi.pdf+welfare+to+work+economic+boost+orlando&hl=en&gl=us&ct=clnk&cd=1>; and Internet Chambercast, April 17, 2002, www.uschamber.com/cwp/tools/chambercast/2002.htm#4.17.02
- GAO, “Food Stamp Program: Steps Have Been Taken to Increase Participation of Working Families, But Better Tracking of Efforts Is Needed, GAO Report 04-346 (March 2004), www.gao.gov/new.items/d04346.pdf
- FNS 2004 Food Stamp Outreach Grantees, posted at www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants/2004/summary.htm
- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), “Getting Connected: Employer Engagement in Work Supports,” by Abbey Frank, Mark Greenberg, and Robert Zdenek, May 2006, posted at www.clasp.org/publications/employerworksupports.pdf

9. Disaster Relief

The Food Stamp Program is designed to meet need, whether need for nutrition assistance among low-income people is due to economic factors or disaster situations. In the wake of a disaster, states have many opportunities to leverage food stamp assistance for those who lost food or resources.

Existing clients hit by disaster can get replacement food stamp benefits. Regular food stamp rules give clients ten days to prove their loss. A better, more comprehensive and seamless way to aid food stamp clients who are hurt by disaster is for the state to seek a waiver from USDA to put replacement benefits onto the Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards of all clients residing in hard-hit geographic areas (often designated by zip code).

Many disaster victims not qualified for the regular Food Stamp Program and therefore not already receiving benefits may get food stamps if their state seeks permission to operate a Disaster Food Stamp Program. The state's Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) contractor plays an important role in effective delivery of disaster food stamp benefits and replacement benefits.

In any of the above circumstances, outreach is important to help affected people apply for and/or use their benefits in a timely manner. States often set up helplines, issue press releases, and post information on their Web sites. Advocates should encourage such approaches and should monitor helplines to gauge whether sufficient telephone lines and staffers are in place to meet the demand for disaster relief information. States and advocates should assess what modifications in any outreach for the regular Food Stamp Program might be warranted in the wake of disaster. At least one Gulf Coast state reportedly has asked USDA to refrain from airing its regular Food Stamp Program radio commercials during hurricane season, so as not to exacerbate any confusion about the difference in procedures for regular and disaster food stamps.

One of the best outreach strategies for aiding low-income disaster victims is by conducting outreach for the regular Food Stamp Program year-round before a disaster hits. Regular Food Stamp Program clients hit by disaster can be aided expeditiously by replacement benefits. Partners in regular Food Stamp Program outreach are better prepared to get the word out about disaster food stamps. Public education done throughout the year also lessens the stigma associated with food stamp benefits and may make disaster victims more likely to seek the aid.

Those groups with hot lines may need to seek extra funding and capacity to meet the demand for information about disaster relief. Florida Impact is among groups that have effectively advocated for disaster food stamp clients and, through a helpline, aided them in navigating the application process. Web postings and flyers are all useful ways to get the word out. During the 2005 hurricane relief period, both FRAC (www.frac.org) and the Public Policy Center of Mississippi (www.ppcms.org) posted disaster food stamp policy and application site information on a frequent basis.

Once the disaster program has ended, outreach can help to connect many disaster victims with the regular Food Stamp Program on a longer-term basis. Alabama officials attribute much of the increase in participation in the regular Food Stamp Program to disaster relief in the wake of hurricanes.⁵⁶ Media coverage of the role that disaster stamps played can help improve the frame through which the public views the Food Stamp Program, sometimes reducing the stigma that sometimes undermines program participation.

Key Lessons

- Ask your state to seek authority to put replacement benefits automatically onto the EBT cards of clients residing in areas hard hit by disaster
- Ask your state to seek authority to operate a Disaster Food Stamp Program to get nutrition assistance to those disaster victims not on the regular Food Stamp Program.
- Encourage your state agency and your media to publicize the disaster food stamp aid available.
- Check to see how your state's hot lines are operating and ask for improvements where necessary.
- Work with your state's EBT contractor to get the word out.
- Ask local media to advertise the procedures, dates and locations for food stamp disaster food stamp applications and telephone numbers and internet addresses for any additional details.
- Check FRAC's "Advocate's Guide to the Disaster Food Stamp Program" for examples of outreach materials that have been used in other disasters.
- Follow up after the disaster aid to connect those who may be eligible with regular benefits.
- Let media, officials and stakeholders know how important the disaster food stamp aid was for your community.

Resources

- FRAC, Disaster Food Assistance, www.frac.org/html/disaster/disaster_index.html
 - www.frac.org/Press_Release/07.28.06.html
 - www.frac.org/pdf/dfspguide06.pdf
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/resources/EBT-111705.ppt
- EBT Industry Council, www.efta.org/ma_ebtic.htm
- Nutrition Consortium of New York State, www.hungernys.org/programs/publications/disaster-report.html
- Florida Impact, www.flimpact.org
- Public Policy Center of Mississippi, www.ppcms.org

⁵⁶ See "Since 2001, one-third more get food stamps," by Mike Cason, *Birmingham News*, 8/14/06, www.al.com/news/birminghamnews/index.ssf?/base/news/115554700286160.xml&coll=2, and "Ivan's wake fuels food stamp program," by Mike Linn, *Montgomery Advertiser*, 3/15/06.

10. Service Learning

Engaging students and faculty at local colleges, graduate schools and high schools can link anti-hunger organizations with pools of outreach volunteers (and build new generations of leaders with an understanding of the needs of low-income households). For example, students from the Orvis School of Nursing have participated in a special undergraduate educational experience that includes the research, assessment and case management of health and social services to “crisis poverty” senior citizens in the Reno, Nevada area.⁵⁷ A team of students goes out in a medical van to low-income areas, like trailer parks, motels, and assisted living housing. The students help the seniors with the assistance system and help them obtain the services they need, including food stamps. In addition, to better understand what these seniors face, students are required to themselves navigate the social services system.

In 2003 the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger launched a “Food Stamp Enrollment Campaign,” in a partnership with the Pennsylvania Department of Public Welfare, the University of Pennsylvania’s (UPenn) Robert A. Fox Leadership Program and the Philadelphia Higher Education Network for Neighborhood Development.⁵⁸ Mary Summers, a senior fellow at UPenn's Fox Leadership Program, helped to develop the model while teaching an academically based service seminar entitled “The Politics of Food.” Students from UPenn and 13 other area colleges and universities work to screen clients for food stamps. According to Summers' report, “Making Food Stamps Work: A Report on the Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger's Food Stamp Enrollment Campaign 2003-2006,” students screened 12,000 clients for eligibility for food stamps, giving those eligible an estimate of their potential benefits and helping them apply for assistance. Students and community volunteers with less time participated in other ways, like handing out the Campaign’s hot line number or participating in grocery store fairs. Summers estimates that in its first 18 months the Campaign brought in more than \$3.2 million a year in benefits for low-income Philadelphians and more than \$5.9 million in increased business in the local economy.

Not all service learning has to be organized through an educational entity. The Federal AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps VISTA programs can be another source of staffing for food stamp outreach and education. AmeriCorps offers the opportunity for hands-on direct service, while VISTAs can be used for indirect, capacity-building service, such as recruiting food stamp outreach volunteers. The New York City Coalition Against Hunger (NYCCA), which represents over 1,200 emergency food providers in New York City, places about 14 VISTAs per year in New York City emergency food programs and anti-hunger organizations and assists member organizations interested in conducting benefits outreach and application assistance. In addition, as one of the partner organizations with the New York City Human Resources Administration USDA Partnership Grants, NYCCA is coordinating the pilot phase of testing New York City’s new online application system at selected member emergency food providers.

⁵⁷ “Students help senior citizens in crisis poverty,” by [Heather Shallenberger](#), *Nevada News*, 5/17/2006, www.unr.edu/nevadanews/detail.aspx?id=1662

⁵⁸ “Making Food Stamps Work: Penn Study Examines Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger Campaign,” 6/7/06, www.upenn.edu/pennnews/article.php?id=965

Key Lessons

- Establish partnerships with local educational institutions—including community service programs, nursing schools, social work schools, nutrition schools, and agriculture extension programs – to identify, recruit, and train volunteers to conduct nutrition program outreach.
- Utilize partnerships and funding to become a service learning or work-study site where students can earn money or credits for working to increase participation in the Food Stamp Program.
- Encourage schools to incorporate food stamp education/outreach into the curriculum of relevant programs such as nursing, nutrition, social work, and medicine.
- Apply for funding to be an AmeriCorps or AmeriCorps Vista site or partner with a local AmeriCorps group to be a placement site.

Resources

- Kid's to Senior's Korner Outreach Program, Washoe County, Nevada, www.co.washoe.nv.us/health/cchs/kk.html?PHPSESSID=626498da8a15738e45b5d62f1aa5327b
- Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, www.hungercoalition.org/
 - www.upenn.edu/pennnews/article.php?id=965
- New York City Coalition Against Hunger, www.nyccah.org

11. Linking Farmers' Markets and Food Stamps

Increasingly, farmers' markets are accepting food stamp benefits via Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards. For example, Fondy Farmers' Market, located in one of Milwaukee's poorest neighborhoods, began taking EBT/Quest cards in 2003. According to the Milwaukee Hunger Task Force, hundreds of food stamp recipients use their cards quickly and easily through the use of wireless point-of-sale devices during the growing season.

Promoting farmers' markets' acceptance of food stamps helps encourage food stamp shoppers to purchase locally grown fruits and vegetables. It both highlights the role food stamps play for low-income families struggling with tight budgets and seeking healthy nutrition, and provides a good setting for public officials to see the program in operation. Furthermore, it shows how the program supports agriculture.

Partnering with your state, agriculture industry and local farmers' markets can be a win for all. The Iowa Department of Human Services leveraged federal funding for hand-held wireless devices to make farmers markets in the state capable of processing EBT and credit card transactions.⁵⁹ The Iowa Farm Bureau covered the cost of financial transaction fees. The state and farm bureau promotions, which include "Fresh. Made Easy!" radio spots and billboards, have sparked greater public awareness about farmers' markets and the Food Stamp Program as supports for good nutrition.

Outreach also is being undertaken elsewhere. The New Haven-based City Seeds is reaching out to WIC clinics with display boards about farmers' markets that accept food stamps.⁶⁰ In New York City, City Council Speaker Christine C. Quinn proposed and the City approved allocating \$81,000 for a pilot program to encourage more people to use their food stamps at farmers' markets.⁶¹ The money will equip farmers and organizers at Greenmarkets in Harlem, the South Bronx and central Brooklyn with handheld scanners to read EBT cards. Few farmers have the scanners without support for a program—the scanners cost about \$1,000 each. The program also supports marketing and outreach to food stamp recipients.

Farmers' markets make excellent sites for public officials to tour and discuss food stamps and EBT's role in supporting good nutrition. For example, in spring 2006, California First Lady Maria Shriver and New York City Council President Christine Quinn visited farmers' markets in California and New York, respectively, and carried that message to the media.⁶²

⁵⁹ "More Farm Vendors Will Accept Food Stamps," by Charlotte Eby, *Sioux City Journal*, 5/11/06, www.siouxcityjournal.com/articles/2006/05/11/news/iowa/991c7aaa12aa942c8625716b000e065d.txt

⁶⁰ "Preserving the State's Farms," by Maya Rao, *Hartford Courant*, 7/8/06, www.courant.com/business/hcarmaid0708.artjul08,0,147249.story?coll=hc-headlines-business

⁶¹ "Food Stamps For Greenmarkets," *The New York Times*, by Winnie Hu, May 3, 2006 and NYC Council Press Release, 8/2/06, www.nycouncil.info/pdf_files/newswire/08_02_06_greenmarket.pdf

⁶² "First lady Maria Shriver to make appearance at Watsonville market," by Tom Ragan, *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, 6/23/06, www.santacruzsentinel.com/archive/2006/June/23/local/stories/03local.htm and "Quinn Aims to Increase Food Stamp Usage at Farmers' Markets," *NY Sun*, 8/4/06, www.nysun.com/article/37363

Key Lessons

- Let your state food stamp agency, agriculture department and state farm organizations know you would like to help promote use of food stamps at farmers' markets.
- Check to see which farmers' markets are equipped to accept EBT cards and work with stakeholders to increase the number of such markets.
- Ask your state's EBT vendor to participate in farmers' market outreach.
- Encourage the state, farm groups and the local media to highlight the fact that the markets will accept food stamps.
- Ask if you can put food stamp eligibility information out at farmers' market stands and/or conduct food stamp pre-screenings on site.
- Seek state and/or farm group funding to leverage federal funds for food stamp outreach at farmers' markets.
- Invite public officials to visit farmers' markets and discuss use of food stamps for purchase of local produce.

Resources

- Hunger Task Force, www.hungertaskforce.org
- Iowa Department of Human Services and Iowa Farm Bureau "Fresh. Made Easy!" partnership, www.dhs.state.ia.us/DHS2005/DHS_HOME/PAGE/financial_support/farmers_market/farmersmarket.html
- City Seed, www.cityseed.org
- EBT Industry Council, www.efta.org/ma_ebtic.htm

12. Immigrant Outreach

Eligible legal immigrants and U.S. citizen children who live with immigrants underutilize food stamps. This is understandable because of policy twists and turns, language barriers, and fears that accessing benefits would adversely affect immigration status. Therefore, it is especially important to reach out to immigrants and to do so with accurate information. Creating collaborations with groups that have strong ties to immigrant communities can help bridge this participation gap.

Pursuant to the welfare law enacted in 1996, by August 22, 1997, most legal immigrants lost eligibility for food stamps. Statutory changes in 1998 and 2002 broadened eligibility considerably, including removing a time limit on aid to refugees and asylees, and opening eligibility to legal immigrants residing in the U.S. for five or more years and all legal immigrant children regardless of date of entry in the U.S.

Good examples of some efforts to educate the public and immigrant groups about the restorations are reported in publications from the National Conference of State Legislatures and the Urban Institute.⁶³ The Urban Institute analysis suggests even more outreach would have strengthened early implementation of the 2002 law restorations.

Having information in appropriate languages is a key to serving immigrant populations. Telephone helplines can be staffed with operators who speak languages spoken by local residents. Moreover, helplines can link callers with translators. [See next section on *Telephone Helplines*].

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) provides information about legal immigrant eligibility for food stamps as well as basic Food Stamp Program information in 34 different languages.⁶⁴ Some states and other stakeholders also have produced translated materials.⁶⁵ When the 2002 restorations were rolled out in 2003, the Food Research and Action Center, FoodChange, and Community Legal Services of Philadelphia developed and disseminated leaflets in a variety of languages.⁶⁶

Collaborations among governments and agencies within them can help on the outreach front. FNS has worked with the U.S. State Department and the Mexican government to establish a collaborative partnership with the 45 Mexican consulates in the U.S. Officials from FNS, the Mexican consulates and local community-based organizations have met to discuss opportunities to increase participation in nutrition assistance programs by eligible Mexican-Americans. The Mexican consulates also have working relationships with other consulates that could be useful for expanding to partnerships with other Latin American countries.

State and city governments can make food stamp outreach part of comprehensive service to immigrants. For example, Illinois created an Office of New Americans Policy and Advocacy to work with state agencies and immigration specialists to ensure that services that help immigrants

⁶³ See "Assessing Implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill's Legal Immigrant Food Stamp Restorations—Final Report to USDA," Randy Capps, et al, Urban Institute, Nov. 2004, www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411138_LegalImmigrantRestorations.pdf

⁶⁴ See www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/translations.htm

⁶⁵ See, e.g., www.otda.state.ny.us/otda/fs/fs_outreach.htm

⁶⁶ See "Low Income Legal Immigrant Children Regain Eligibility for Food Stamp Program Benefits October 1st," Food Research and Action Center, October 2003, www.frac.org/html/news/100103immigrants.htm

are offered wherever immigrant are, such as at the Aurora Community Health Partnership. A task force of representatives from the Department of Public Health, Department of Aging, and others reports to the Office of New Americans, which consults with two privately-funded advisory boards composed of national and state immigration experts and community leaders.

Food banks, community-based organizations, and retailers can help reach out to immigrants. Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties Food Bank developed and distributed to health and social service agencies a five-minute video in English and Spanish answering questions about Food Stamp Program benefits. Also, according to the USDA Food Stamp Coalition Web site section, in New York City the Korean Grocers Association publishes Food Stamp Program information in Korean, and in California the Cardenas Market has had Spanish speaking volunteers at Food Stamp Program eligibility pre-screening events in stores in underserved areas.

Community-based groups can educate the community – including caseworkers – about barriers that immigrant populations face. The South Carolina Appleseed Legal Justice Center has a slide presentation on barriers. In the District of Columbia, D.C. Hunger Solutions, a project of the Food Research and Action Center, partnered with the food stamp agency to offer caseworkers training that would better prepare them to handle immigrant household cases.

Research can help local groups target outreach to immigrant households. In New York City, FoodChange, with the assistance of the Emerson Congressional Hunger Center Fellows Program, has mapped gaps in food stamp participation among New York City’s immigrants and will be publishing “Immigrant’s Access to Food Stamps in New York City,” with information on barriers to program participation for immigrants and strategies for improving access. Similarly, Hunger Action of New York State sought to target outreach to immigrants in Westchester County.⁶⁷

Ethnic media and stylized formats can help get out food stamp eligibility information. FoodChange targeted much of its food stamp advertising to ethnic radio. Many localities have radio and print publications that serve particular non-English speaking populations.

An outreach effort in California uses a “fotonovella” to engage Mexican-Americans. The “fotonovella” booklet in Spanish and English uses a soap opera type format to explain how to apply for food stamps. “It tells the story of a fictional couple named Margarita and Alfonso needing more food for their children and learning about the food stamp program. The booklet features Valley residents, and some scenes were photographed at the flea market, where shoppers can use food stamps to buy fruits and vegetables.”⁶⁸

Key Lessons

- Partner with local immigrant rights groups to identify and address the special needs of these communities.

⁶⁷ See “Food Stamp Outreach within Immigrant Populations—Westchester County, NY,” www.maxwell.syr.edu/geo/community_geography/docs/jenperrone.pdf (mapping location of eligible immigrants and recommending placement of bilingual volunteers at emergency feeding sites to help with applications).

⁶⁸ “New booklet illustrates food-aid program,” Doug Hoagland, *Fresno Bee*, 8/29/05, www.fresnobee.com/local/v-printerfriendly/story/11151064p-11904601c.html

- Identify trusted messengers, such as immigrant serving nonprofits, immigration attorneys, clergy, health professionals, and home country consulates.
- Check to see what translation services and materials are available in food stamp offices and helplines.
- Create linkages with government agencies and nonprofit organizations that can provide translation services to enable you to reach non-English speaking populations.
- Help your food stamp office hold cultural sensitivity training for caseworkers as well as provide training on the technical rules regarding immigrant eligibility.
- Collaborate with government entities that serve the needs of immigrants in your community.
- Work with USDA to build on its relationship with the Mexican consulates.
- Reach out to ethnic retailers and their associations.
- Ask ethnic media to carry stories and PSAs about food stamps.

Resources

- FNS Policy on Mexican Matricular Consular Identification, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/rules/Memo/05/041905.pdf
- FNS immigrant eligibility, brochures in 34 languages, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/translations.htm
- New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, “Food Stamps for Immigrants” brochures, www.otda.state.ny.us/otda/fs/fs_outreach.htm
- Illinois Governor Orders the Creation of New Americans Immigrant Policy Council, www.visalaw.com/05dec1/14dec105.html
- FoodChange, www.FoodChange.org
- National Immigration Law Center, www.nilc.org
 - www.nilc.org/immspbs/index.htm#immelig
- National Council of La Raza, www.nclr.org
 - www.nclr.org/content/news/detail/2333/
- National Conference of State Legislatures Immigrant Policy Project, www.ncsl.org/programs/immig/immigpolicyoverview.htm
 - “Food Stamp Access for Immigrants: How States Have Implemented the 2002 Farm Bill Restoration,” Katherine Gigliotti, Bill Emerson National Hunger Fellow, Aug. 2004, www.ncsl.org/programs/immig/immigrantandfoodstamps1004.htm
- Urban Institute, “Assessing Implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill’s Legal Immigrant Food Stamp Restorations—Final Report to USDA,” Randy Capps, et al, Nov. 2004, www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411138_LegalImmigrantRestorations.pdf
- S.C. Appleseed Legal Justice Center, “Food Stamps for Immigrants: Overcoming Barriers to Participation,” www.scjustice.org/pdfs/FoodStampsPresentation.pdf
- Food Research and Action Center, “Low Income Legal Immigrant Children Regain Eligibility for Food Stamp Program Benefits October 1st,” Oct. 2003, www.frac.org/html/news/100103immigrants.htm
- D.C. Hunger Solutions, A Project of the Food Research and Action Center, www.dchunger.org
- USDA Food Stamp Outreach Coalition, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/about.htm
 - “Promising Practices By State,” www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/promising/state.htm

13. Telephone Helplines

Community-based outreach can be enhanced through the use of telephone helplines. [See, e.g., section on *School-based Outreach*, where successful strategies often rely heavily on a toll-free helpline]. USDA's national hotline (1-800-221-5689) connects callers with a live operator who mails out information packets on the Food Stamp Program. Many organizations have implemented helplines statewide and/or locally.

As part of USDA's Food Stamp Media Outreach campaign [see also section on *available Food Stamp Media*] USDA advertises toll-free numbers in its message. In some states like California, advocates have partnered with USDA and the state food stamp agency to direct calls to a toll-free number where callers could get assistance from local organizations. Similarly, in Michigan, the Center for Civil Justice was instrumental in establishing a state helpline.

Project Bread fields 35,000 calls a year on its statewide toll-free FoodSource Hotline, the only information and referral service in Massachusetts for people facing hunger. The FoodSource Hotline counselors refer callers to local emergency food resources as well as to information about food stamps and other nutrition programs. By utilizing a special service that links callers with a translator, it provides information in 140 languages - from Arabic to Cambodian, and Russian to Vietnamese.

In October 2000, Florida Impact implemented its Helpline, through which it now pre-screens almost 1,400 people per month for food stamps. Bilingual helpline staffers send callers a completed application and a checklist of supporting documents needed for the interview at the conclusion of the pre-screening. Florida Impact advertises the toll-free number through posters and messages on school meals applications [see also section on *School-Based outreach*].

Toll-free helplines also can be important in getting food stamp information out to disaster victims. Florida Impact's Helpline was a crucial support for victims of hurricanes in the falls of 2004 and 2005. [See also Section on *Disaster Relief*].

A relatively lower cost option for making food stamp information accessible via the telephone is an automated 24-hour recorded information line. Automated systems range from the simplest of systems - one that provides one recording for all callers - to the much more complex. Advanced automated systems can identify and produce reports on callers by the area code and provide client-selected menu choices for multiple informational choices. Angel.com hosts a Web site that describes interactive voice response (IVR) and other telephone systems.⁶⁹

Key Lessons

- Advertise the USDA national toll-free hotline (1-800-221-5689).
- Establish a helpline for your community, or utilize existing social service telephone assistance programs to provide expanded information about nutrition assistance programs

⁶⁹ FRAC does not intend mention of the company to imply an endorsement or promotion of its products or services.

- Partner with the food stamp administering agency for your community to create linkages between your telephone assistance program and the local food stamp offices.
- Collaborate with multi-lingual service providers to provide telephone assistance to non-English speaking households.
- In the wake of a disaster, identify state and nonprofit helplines that can connect victims with information about food stamp relief.
- Monitor any disaster helplines in your state and urge your state to devote sufficient resources to disaster relief helplines to meet the volume of customer calls.

Resources

- Project Bread, www.projectbread.org/site/PageServer?pagename=end_foodsourcehotline
- Florida Impact, <http://flimpact.org/>
- Michigan Food Stamp Partnership, www.foodstamphelp.org/
- Web based company that provides interactive voice response (IVR) information, www.Angel.com
- USDA, 1-800-221-5689

14. Utilizing Prescreening and Online Application Tools for Outreach

To increase the effectiveness of outreach many organizations and government agencies utilize prescreening and online application tools. A prescreening tool allows the user, either an advocate or a potential applicant, to answer a set of questions to determine if a person is likely eligible for benefits. As noted earlier in this Guide, finding out that the amount of benefits that one is likely to receive increases the chances that the person will follow through in applying for the benefit. [See Section I. *Why Outreach*]. An online application tool allows the user not only to find out about potential eligibility, but also to submit an application for benefits electronically.

Prescreening and online application tools offer opportunities for broad partnerships, as many of these tools help families identify several benefits to which they may be entitled, such as other nutrition programs, EITC and health benefits. Depending on the tool and the number of questions asked, the benefit prescreening/application submission can take from just a few minutes to more than half an hour. The USDA has a national prescreening tool that can be used by anybody with access to a computer and the Internet.⁷⁰ The National League of Cities has an excellent guide entitled “Screening Tools to Help Families Access Public Benefits.”⁷¹ [See Section on *Multi-Benefit Outreach for information on three prescreening tools: EarnBenefits, RealBenefits, The Benefit Bank, and BenefitsCheckUp*].

In June 2003, United Way of New York City joined with nonprofit, private and government partners to launch the Food Card Access Project, which it characterizes as a “Grassroots Approach with a Hi-Tech Edge.” The project built on a model pioneered by FoodChange. Outreach workers from seven participating community-based organizations set up information tables at community sites (such as grocery stores, soup kitchens and senior centers) and, using a specially developed software tool loaded on their laptop computers, estimate potential eligibility for individuals on the spot. The software provides outreach workers with timely reminders about follow-up to ensure that families get to their food stamp office appointment, overcome any barriers, and receive the benefits to which they are entitled. As of March 2006, over 52,000 people (representing over 22,000 households) had received food stamps as a result of United Way's Food Card Access Project, bringing over \$99 million into the local economy.⁷² Children's Defense Fund of New York has compiled a list of prescreening and application assistance resources in NYC and will be posting its report, “The Food Stamp Program: A Directory of Free Services in Your Neighborhood,” on its Web site in fall 2006.

A growing number of states and localities have developed online application systems.⁷³ The Commonwealth of Pennsylvania Access to Social Services (“COMPASS”) allows individuals and community-based organizations access to screen for, apply for, and renew a broad range of social programs. COMPASS is an access point for application and renewal of multiple types of health

⁷⁰ USDA Prescreening tool, <http://209.48.219.47/fns/>

⁷¹ www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF%20Screening%20Tools.pdf

⁷² See www.unitedwaynyc.org/?id=17&pg=fcap

⁷³ For information on which states had implemented online applications as of August 2005, see the “Electronic Application Filing” section of USDA's “Food Stamp Program State Options Report 5th edition (December 2005), www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/rules/Memo/Support/State_Options/fifth/options.pdf

care coverage, food stamps, cash assistance, long-term care, home and community-based services, and Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program. COMPASS also provides screening for these programs and for the school lunch and breakfast program. Pennsylvania also offers community organizations the opportunity to register to use the program and provides additional case-management features for those users.

West Virginia developed “inROADS,” a site where individuals can self-screen for possible eligibility and find out for which benefits members of the household may be eligible. The system allows users to apply online for multiple benefits offered by the West Virginia Department of Health and Human Resources (WVDHHR), including Medicaid for Children and Pregnant Women, the West Virginia Children's Health Insurance Program (WVCHIP), Food Stamps (a face-to-face interview is required), Medicare Premium Assistance Programs, School Clothing Allowance, and/or Low Income Energy Assistance Program.

Key Lessons

- Encourage your state and local elected officials and social service agencies to implement an online application for food stamps and other benefits.
- Utilize existing prescreening tools to provide low-income households information about their potential eligibility for benefit programs.
- Encourage your state agency to apply for a USDA Participation Grant to assist with financing an online application system.
- Utilize multi-benefit prescreening tools to expand outreach partnerships with other service providers.

Resources

- FNS Pre-screening Tool, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/applicant_recipients/default.htm
- National League of Cities Guide to pre-screening, www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF%20Screening%20Tools.pdf
- West Virginia: inROADS, www.wvinroads.org/inroads/PGM/ASP/SC002.asp
- Pennsylvania’s COMPASS, <https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/COMPASS/PGM/ASP/SC001.asp>
- Madison County New York, Online Application, <https://www.madisoncountyfoodstamps.org>
- USDA State Options Report (August 2005) section on Electronic Application Filing, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/rules/Memo/Support/State_Options/fifth/options.pdf
- Children’s Defense Fund New York, www.cdfny.org and soon to be posted “The Food Stamp Program: A Directory of Free Services in Your Neighborhood”
- SEEDCO, <http://seedco.org/earnbenefits/>
- Community Catalyst: RealBenefits Project, http://communitycatalyst.org/index.php?doc_id=12
- The Benefit Bank, www.thebenefitbank.com/
- BenefitsCheckUp, www.benefitscheckup.org/

Conclusion

The potential for creative and cost-effective outreach collaborations to boost Food Stamp participation is significant. Identifying the size of participation gaps in your state and local area and estimating the dollars being lost to family food budgets and community economies can help you enlist other stakeholders as active partners on outreach. Leveraging federal grants and federal matching funds and tapping the particular expertise, access points and resources that other stakeholders can offer will boost the scope, intensity and impact of FSP outreach and enhance the well-being of families and communities.

Attachment A: USDA's Food and Nutrition Service Regional Offices and Web Sites

Regional Offices

- Mid-Atlantic Regional Office, Mercer Corporate Park, 300 Corporate Blvd., Robbinsville, NJ 08691-1598.
- Midwest Regional Office, 77 West Jackson Blvd, 20th Floor, Chicago, IL 60604-3507.
- Mountain Plains Regional Office, 1244 Speer Blvd., Suite 903, Denver, CO 80204-3581.
- Northeast Regional Office, 10 Causeway Street, Room 501, Boston, MA 02222-1069.
- Southeast Regional Office, 61 Forsyth Street SW, Room 8T36, Atlanta, GA 30303-3415.
- Southwest Regional Office, 1100 Commerce Street, Room 5-C-30, Dallas, TX 75242-9980.
- Western Regional Office, 550 Kearny Street, Room 400, San Francisco, CA 94108-2518.

Web site

- Main: www.fns.usda.gov
- USDA's 10 Ideas, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/10-ideas.pdf
- USDA's Business Case, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/business-case.htm
- USDA's Information for Retailers, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/retailers/partnerships.htm
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/retailers/pdfs/Info-Retailers.pdf
- USDA Food Stamp Outreach Coalition, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/about.htm
 - "Promising Practices By State," www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/promising/state.htm
- USDA, Food Stamp Program Outreach Grants, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants.htm
- USDA, Food Stamp Program Participation Grants, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/government/participation-grants.htm
- USDA, Food Stamp Program, State Outreach Plan Guidance, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/pdfs/Outreach_Plan_Guidance.pdf
 - www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/stateplan.htm
- USDA Food Stamp Outreach, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/public_advocacy/default.htm
www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/default.htm
- USDA State Options Report (August 2005) section on Electronic Application Filing, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/rules/Memo/Support/State_Options/fifth/options.pdf
- FNS 2004 Food Stamp Outreach Grantees, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/grants/2004/summary.html
- FNS Policy on Mexican Matricular Consular Identification, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/rules/Memo/05/041905.pdf
- FNS immigrant eligibility, brochures in 34 languages page, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/translations.htm
- FNS Pre-screening Tool, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/applicant_recipients/default.htm
- FNS Public Service Announcements (PSAs), www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/psas.htm
- FNS PSA Airing Information, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/radio-buys.htm

Attachment B: Resources by State

California

- California Association of Food Banks (CAFB), www.cafoodbanks.org
 - “Reaching the Other Eligible Californians: California Association of Food Banks’ (CAFB) Food Stamp Outreach Project,” www.cafoodbanks.org/CaseStudyReport.pdf
 - “California Food Banks and Food Stamps,” www.cafoodbanks.org/FoodStamps.pdf
 - “Food Stamp Outreach Tools,” www.cafoodbanks.org/outreach.htm
 - Tulare County’s “Instructions for Organizations and Volunteers Assisting with the Food Stamp Application,” www.cafoodbanks.org/VOLUNTEER%20INSTRUCTIONS%20TULARE.doc
- Second Harvest Food Bank of Santa Cruz and San Benito Counties, www.thefoodbank.org

Connecticut

- City Seed, www.cityseed.org
- Connecticut Association of Human Services, www.cahs.org

Florida

- Florida Impact, www.flimpact.org
 - “Hunger in Florida. Five Year Partnership Improves Food Security”, www.flimpact.org/StampOutHungerPresentation.pdf
 - “Feeding Florida: Responses to Hunger in the Sunshine State”, www.flimpact.org/Hunger2005.pdf
- Prosperity Campaign (Miami-Dade), www.prosperitycampaign.com

Kansas

- Kansas Department of Social and Rehabilitation Services, www.srskansas.org/2005_BusinessPlan/bpissues.htm

Illinois

- Illinois Governor Orders the Creation of New Americans Immigrant Policy Council, www.visalaw.com/05dec1/14dec105.html
- Illinois Hunger Coalition, www.ilhunger.org and “Taking it to the schools: combating hunger and promoting health,” (limited quantities of the report are available in hard copy; to inquire call 312-629-9580).

Indiana

- Community Harvest Food Bank of Northeast Indiana, www.communityharvest.org
- Indiana Coalition on Housing and Homelessness Issues, “Is Indiana Getting Its Fair Share? 2005 Federal Programs Available To Help Working Families,” June 2005, www.ichhi.org/clientuploads/downloads/reportpublications/final_fair_share_report_2005.pdf

Iowa

- Iowa Department of Human Services and Iowa Farm Bureau “Fresh. Made Easy!” partnership, www.dhs.state.ia.us/DHS2005/DHS_HOMEPAGE/financial_support/farmers_market/farmers_market.html
- North Liberty Resource Center, www.iccsd.k12.ia.us/Schools/vanallen/family_resource.htm

Louisiana

- Kingsley House, www.kingsleyhouse.org
 - www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2005/01/20050126-5.html

Massachusetts

- Project Bread, www.projectbread.org/site/PageServer?pagename=end_foodsourcehotline

Michigan

- Michigan Food Stamp Partnership, www.foodstamphelp.org

Minnesota

- Legal Services Advocacy Project (LSAP), www.lsapmn.org/documents/168461Food%20Stamp%20Report.pdf

Mississippi

- Public Policy Center of Mississippi, www.ppcms.org

New York

- The Children’s Defense Fund NY, www.cdfny.org
- Food Bank for New York City, www.foodbanknyc.org
- FoodChange, www.FoodChange.org
- Madison County New York, Online Application, <https://www.madisoncountyfoodstamps.org>
- New York City Coalition Against Hunger, www.nyccah.org
- New York State Office of Temporary and Disability Assistance, “Food Stamps for Immigrants” brochures, www.otda.state.ny.us/otda/fs/fs_outreach.htm
- Nutrition Consortium of New York State
 - www.hungernys.org/programs/publications/disaster-report.html
 - www.hungernys.org/programs/nutrition/outreachRFP.html
- St John the Divine, Cathedral Community Cares, http://stjohndivine.org/social_ccc.html
- Single Stop, www.singlestop.org
- United Way of New York City, www.unitedwaynyc.org/?id=17&pg=fcap

Nevada

- Kid’s to Senior’s Korner Outreach Program, Washoe County, Nevada, www.co.washoe.nv.us/health/chs/kk.html?PHPSESSID=626498da8a15738e45b5d62f1aa5327b
- Orvis School of Nursing Knock and Talk project, www.unr.edu/nevadanews/detail.aspx?id=1662 (“Students help in senior citizens in crisis poverty,” by [Heather Shallenberger](#), *Nevada News*, 5/17/06)

Oregon

- Oregon Hunger Relief Task Force, www.oregonhunger.org
 - “Food Stamp Outreach: A “How To” Guide for Oregon Communities”
www.oregonhunger.org/administrator/documents/Howtoguide.pdf
 - “Food Stamp Materials and Resources”, www.oregonhunger.org/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=42

Pennsylvania

- Greater Philadelphia Coalition Against Hunger, www.hungercoalition.org/
 - www.upenn.edu/pennnews/article.php?id=965
- Just Harvest, www.justharvest.org/projects.shtml
- MOMobile Program, www.mazon.org/Who_We_Are/Newsletter-eNewsletter/MAZONNewsSpring06.pdf
- Pennsylvania’s COMPASS, <https://www.humanservices.state.pa.us/COMPASS/PGM/ASP/SC001.asp>

Tennessee

- MANNA, www.mannanashville.org/activities.html

Washington, D.C.

- D.C. Hunger Solutions, www.dchunger.org
 - www.dchunger.org/new_more.html#110404
 - www.dchunger.org/Programs/Federal/Food_Stamps/Apply.html

West Virginia

- West Virginia: inROADS, <https://www.wvinroads.org/inroads/PGM/ASP/SC002.asp>

Wisconsin

- Hunger Task Force, www.hungertaskforce.org

Attachment C: National Web Sources

- American Association of State Food Stamp Directors, <http://foodstamp.aphsa.org>
- American Public Human Services Association, www.aphsa.org
- America's Second Harvest—The Nation's Food Bank Network, www.secondharvest.org
 - “Why Food Stamps Matter,” (issued with FRAC and Center on Budget and Policy Priorities), www.secondharvest.org/learn_about_hunger/public_policy/food_stamp.html
- Web based company that provides IVR information, www.Angel.com
- Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.aecf.org/initiatives/fes/
- Center for Workplace Development, U.S. Chamber of Commerce, “Welfare to Work: An Economic Boost,”
 - Internet Chambercast, April 17, 2002, posted at www.uschamber.com/cwp/tools/chambercast/2002.htm#4.17.02
- Children's Sentinel Assessment Program, <http://dcc2.bumc.bu.edu/csnappublic/home.html>
- Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), “Getting Connected: Employer Engagement in Work Supports,” by Abbey Frank, Mark Greenberg, and Robert Zdenek, May 2006, posted at www.clasp.org/publications/employerworksupports.pdf
- Community Catalyst: RealBenefits Project, http://communitycatalyst.org/index.php?doc_id=12
- Corporate Voices for Working Families, <http://cvworkingfamilies.org/issues/issues.shtml>
- Docs for Tots, www.docsfortots.org
 - <http://65.36.225.239/resources/talkingPoints/docs/safetynet.pdf>
 - www.docsfortots.org/resources/action/Dr.Franksbio.asp
- EBT Industry Council, www.efta.org/ma_ebtic.htm
- Food Marketing Institute, www.fmi.org
- FRAC, www.frac.org
 - Food Stamp Program, www.frac.org/html/federal_food_programs/programs/fsp.html
 - Disaster Food Stamp Program, www.frac.org/html/disaster/disaster_index.html
 - Guide to the Disaster Food Stamp Program, www.frac.org/pdf/dfspguide06.pdf
 - Presentation on Disaster Food Stamps, www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/coalition/resources/EBT-111705.ppt
 - “Low Income Legal Immigrant Children Regain Eligibility for Food Stamp Program Benefits October 1st,” (Oct. 2003) www.frac.org/html/news/100103immigrants.htm
- GAO, “Food Stamp Program: Steps Have Been Taken to Increase Participation of Working Families, But Better Tracking of Efforts Is Needed, GAO Report 04-346 (March 2004), posted at www.gao.gov/new.items/d04346.pdf
- The Hatcher Group, www.thehatchergroup.com
- IRS, www.irs.gov/individuals/article/0,,id=119374,00.html
- MAZON - A Jewish Response to Hunger, www.mazon.org
 - Why Advocacy?” www.mazon.org/What_You_Should_Know/Why_Advocacy@/
- National Conference of State Legislatures, www.ncsl.org/statefed/humserv/hungeroverview.htm
- National Council on Aging, BenefitsCheckUp, www.benefitscheckup.org/
- NCSL Immigrant Policy Project, www.ncsl.org/programs/immig/immigpolicyoverview.htm
- National Council of Churches, www.nccusa.org/news/050131thebenefitbank.html

- National Council of La Raza, www.nclr.org
- National EITC Outreach Partnership, www.cbpp.org/eitc-partnership/
- National Immigration Law Center, www.nilc.org
- National Institute on Early Childhood Development and Education, “Early Childhood Digest: Family Resource Centers: Where School Readiness Happens,” October 1998, www.ed.gov/offices/OERI/ECI/digests/98october.html
- National League of Cities
 - “Helping Working Families Action Kit,” www.nlc.org/content/Files/HWF%20Action%20Kit.pdf and www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF%20Screening%20Tools.pdf
 - Helping Working Families Project, www.nlc.org/Newsroom/nation_s_cities_weekly/weekly_ncw/2004/03/08/2921.cfm
 - “Ohio Cities Take Action to Bring Federal Dollars to Families,” NLC’s Cities Weekly, 5/12/04, archived at www.nlc.org/Newsroom/Nation_s_Cities_Weekly/Weekly_NCW/2003/05/12/4846.cfm
 - Pre-screening Guide, www.nlc.org/content/Files/IYEF%20Screening%20Tools.pdf
- S.C. Applesed Legal Justice Center, “Food Stamps for Immigrants: Overcoming Barriers to Participation,” www.scjustice.org/pdfs/FoodStampsPresentation.pdf
- SEEDCO, <http://seedco.org/earnbenefits/>
- Urban Institute, “Assessing Implementation of the 2002 Farm Bill’s Legal Immigrant Food Stamp Restorations—Final Report to USDA,” (Nov. 2004) www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411138_LegalImmigrantRestorations.pdf
- U.S. Conference of Mayors, www.usmayors.org