

# Poverty; food insecurity; and SNAP participation: making sense of multiple data sources

September 2016

Randy Rosso

Senior Research and Policy Analyst

[rosso@frac.org](mailto:rosso@frac.org)

# Outline

Reasons for webinar:

- In 3 key areas with multiple data sources important to anti-hunger advocates—poverty, food insecurity, and SNAP participation—clarifying:
  - How sources are alike and different
  - Which provide state and local data
  - Where to find them

# Part 1: Assessing Poverty

# Poverty

- After listening to the poverty section of the webinar, you will be able to:
  - Understand how the official poverty measure is calculated
  - Understand how the Supplemental Poverty Measure is calculated
  - Understand how to find local poverty data in the ACS and Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)
  - Understand the differences between the most widely used sources of poverty data
  - Understand what the supplemental poverty data tell us about SNAP
  - Identify where the data sets are located and how to access them
  - Know when different data sets come out

# Understanding the **official** poverty measure

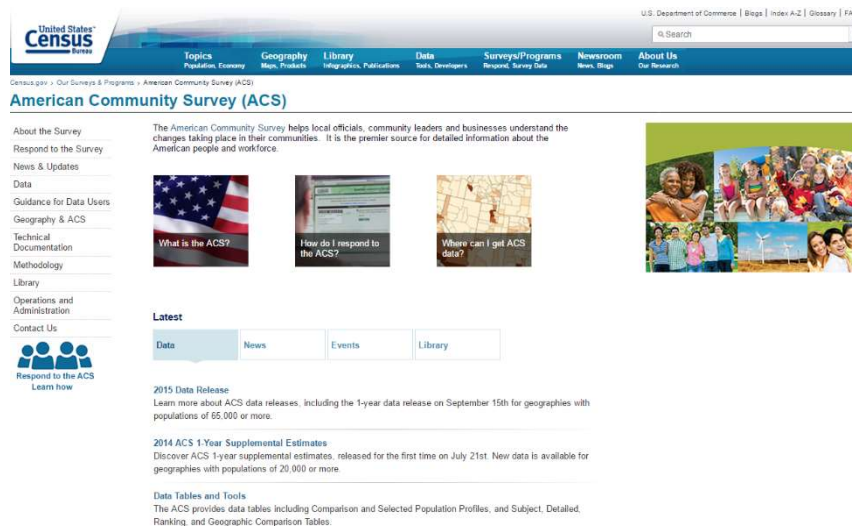
- Issued by Census Bureau based on Current Population Survey (CPS)
- Original poverty line computation: “economy food plan” (now known as the Thrifty Food Plan) from 1963 multiplied by three
- Background:
  - Using data from 1955 → average household spent ~1/3 of budget on food
  - Economy food plan used as basis for food costs
  - This was multiplied by three
- Poverty threshold is increased annually by Consumer Price Index (CPI)

# Official Poverty Measure, cont.

- Annual CPS-based poverty (and health insurance and income) data usually issued in September
- Data include national estimates of poverty:
  - Overall
  - Demographic breakdowns

# American Community Survey

- The American Community Survey (ACS) has poverty data at geographic levels not available in the Census report
  - State, metropolitan area, county, census tract, and congressional district
  - Released yearly (September for 1-year estimates; December for 5-year estimates)



<http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/>

# Poverty Example from ACS

- The ACS does not have an official report like CPS.
- Instead you view or download poverty data through a website interface.
- There are many ways to “break out” the poverty data (e.g., by race, geographic region, age, sex).

ID	Table, File or Document Title	Dataset	About
B17001	<a href="#">POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE</a>	2015 ACS 1-year estimates	
B17001	<a href="#">POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE</a>	2014 ACS 5-year estimates	
B17001	<a href="#">POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE</a>	2014 ACS 1-year estimates	
B17001	<a href="#">POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE</a>	2013 ACS 5-year estimates	
B17001	<a href="#">POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE</a>	2013 ACS 3-year estimates	
B17001	<a href="#">POVERTY STATUS IN THE PAST 12 MONTHS BY SEX BY AGE</a>	2013 ACS 1-year estimates	

3-year discontinued after 2013



# Understanding the **supplemental** poverty measure (SPM)

- Based on CPS, also released in September
- Income definition for supplemental poverty measure different from “official” measure
- Starts with same cash Income (e.g., earnings, Social Security)
- Adds:
  - EITC payments
  - Certain in-kind benefits (SNAP, WIC, School Lunch, LIHEAP, housing subsidies)
- Subtracts: Taxes paid, child care expenses, work expenses, child support paid, and medical out-of-pocket expenses (MOOP)

# Census infographic on differences:

## How do we measure needs?

The **poverty threshold**, or **poverty line**, is the minimum level of resources that are adequate to meet basic needs.

The official measure uses three times the cost of a minimum **food** diet in 1963 in today's prices.



Source: U.S. Census Bureau

The SPM uses information about what people spend today for basic needs— **food**, **clothing**, **shelter**, and **utilities**.



## Are needs the same in New York and Mississippi?

**Poverty thresholds** for both measures are adjusted to reflect the needs of families of different types and sizes. Only the SPM thresholds take account of geographic differences in housing costs.

**Yes**, the official poverty threshold is the same throughout the United States. In 2012, the poverty threshold for a family with two adults and two children was \$23,283\*.

2012 Official Poverty Thresholds  
(Two Adults and Two Children)

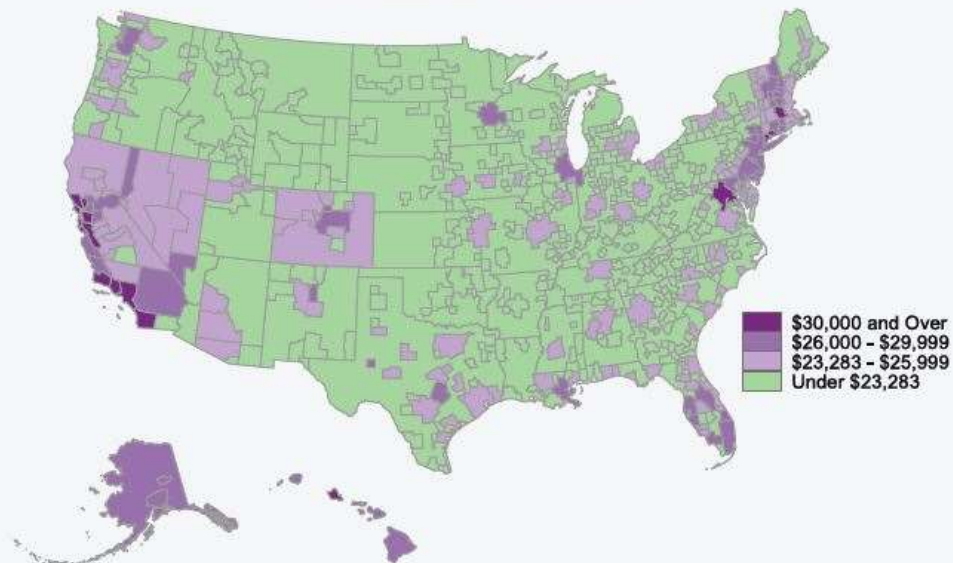


Source: Dellavias-Walt, Carmen, Bernadette D. Proctor, and Jessica C. Smith. Income, Poverty, and Health Insurance Coverage in the United States: 2012. U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Reports, P60-245, U.S. Government Printing Office, Washington DC, September 2013.

\*Revised since first release on Jan. 7, 2014. Original number was \$22,283.

**No**, SPM thresholds vary based on several factors such as place of residence and whether it is a rental unit or purchased property or home with a mortgage. The map below shows the SPM thresholds for renters with two adults and two children in 2012.

2012 SPM Poverty Thresholds for Renters  
(Two Adults and Two Children)



Sources: Geographic adjustments based on housing costs from the American Community Survey 2007-2011. Base thresholds are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics <[www.bls.gov/pir/spm/spm\\_thresholds\\_2012.htm](http://www.bls.gov/pir/spm/spm_thresholds_2012.htm)>.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

## What resources do people have to meet their needs?

What we count as available resources differs between the two poverty measures.

The official measure uses cash income, such as wages and salaries, Social Security benefits, interest, dividends, pension or other retirement income.



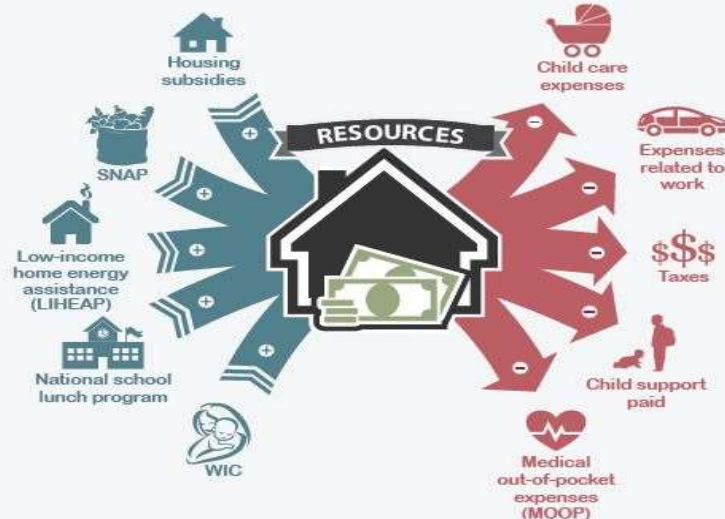
The SPM starts with cash income, then...

### ADDING BENEFITS

The SPM adds benefits from the government that are not cash but help families meet their basic needs.

### SUBTRACTING EXPENSES

The SPM subtracts necessary expenses like taxes, health care, commuting costs for all workers, and child care expenses while parents work.



Unlike the official, the supplemental poverty measure accounts for noncash government benefits and living expenses in determining who is poor.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Poverty Data	Current Population Survey (CPS)	American Community Survey (ACS)
Geographic level	Nation, regions, and limited use for states	Nation, regions, states, counties, cities, congressional districts, census tracts
Sample size	About 100,000 per year	About 3 million per year
Topics of interest	Poverty, food security, SNAP	Poverty, SNAP

# SPM measures anti-poverty power of public benefits

- What would poverty rate be if X benefit was not included as income to recipients in the CPS survey?
- How many more people would have fallen below poverty?
- Example from Tables (slide 12, from 2015 SPM report):
  - 2015 SPM rate = 14.32%, or 45,651,000 people
  - Rate without SNAP =  $14.32\% + 1.44\% = 15.76\%$   
= 50,246,000 people in poverty
  - SNAP lifted an estimated 4.595 million people out of poverty according to SPM:  
(50.25m – 45.65m)
  - School lunch lifted 1.262 million out of poverty



Table 5b.

**Effect of Individual Elements on the Number of Individuals in Poverty: 2015**

(Numbers and margin of error in thousands. For information on confidentiality protection, sampling error, nonsampling error, and definitions, see [www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar16.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps/techdocs/cpsmar16.pdf))

Element	All people		Under 18 years		18 to 64 years		65 years and over	
	Estimate	Margin of error <sup>†</sup> (±)	Estimate	Margin of error <sup>†</sup> (±)	Estimate	Margin of error <sup>†</sup> (±)	Estimate	Margin of error <sup>†</sup> (±)
<b>All people</b> .....	<b>45,651</b>	<b>901</b>	<b>11,929</b>	<b>375</b>	<b>27,222</b>	<b>588</b>	<b>6,500</b>	<b>236</b>
<b>ADDITIONS</b>								
Social Security .....	-26,585	600	-1,571	130	-7,878	315	-17,137	376
Refundable tax credits .....	-9,172	428	-4,829	249	-4,254	203	-89	23
SNAP .....	-4,595	296	-2,001	153	-2,228	164	-366	54
SSI .....	-3,313	248	-587	86	-2,107	169	-619	78
Housing subsidies .....	-2,537	197	-861	104	-1,203	111	-473	67
Child support received .....	-1,383	162	-790	100	-577	76	-16	10
School lunch .....	-1,262	167	-714	106	-534	68	-13	11
TANF/general assistance .....	-664	124	-351	77	-304	62	-9	9
Unemployment insurance .....	-649	109	-191	48	-446	73	-12	7
LIHEAP .....	-242	61	-71	33	-124	35	-46	21
Workers' compensation .....	-376	105	-114	52	-249	68	-14	11
WIC .....	-371	113	-215	69	-156	48	Z	Z
<b>SUBTRACTIONS</b>								
Child support paid .....	254	66	49	22	194	49	10	10
Federal income tax .....	1,389	148	276	51	1,061	111	53	24
FICA .....	4,843	310	1,537	139	3,109	195	197	42
Work expenses .....	5,587	316	1,808	161	3,557	188	222	43
MOOP .....	11,226	460	2,522	160	6,016	315	2,687	143

<sup>†</sup> The margin of error (MOE) is a measure of an estimate's variability. The larger the MOE in relation to the size of the estimate, the less reliable the estimate. The MOE is the estimated 90 percent confidence interval. The MOEs shown in this table are based on standard errors calculated using replicate weights. For more information, see "Standard Errors and Their Use" at [www2.census.gov/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256sa.pdf](http://www2.census.gov/library/publications/2016/demo/p60-256sa.pdf).

Z Represents or rounds to zero.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, 2016 Annual Social and Economic Supplement.

# Census Bureau SPM estimates understate SNAP poverty effect

- People under-report SNAP receipt in Census Bureau and other surveys
- Researchers have estimated adjustments of SPM with “administrative” data—estimates of actual SNAP receipt
  - Center on Budget and Policy Priorities estimated SNAP lifted 10.3 million people out of poverty in 2012  
<http://www.cbpp.org/research/poverty-and-inequality/safety-net-more-effective-against-poverty-than-previously-thought>
- 8 million lifted out of poverty by SNAP  
Laura Tiehen, Dean Jolliffe, Timothy M. Smeeding, “The Effect of SNAP on Poverty” in SNAP Matters (2016)



# Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)

- Census Bureau estimates income, poverty levels/rates, and SNAP participation for states, counties, and school districts
- Census Bureau applies statistical models to data from the American Community Survey, administrative records, postcensal population estimates, and the decennial census.
- Estimates are used “for the administration of federal programs and the allocation of federal funds to local jurisdictions”
- Latest estimates (2014) released December 2015
- Census Bureau says “these model-based single-year estimates are more reflective of current conditions than multi-year survey estimates.”

# SAIPE, continued

- School district-level 2014 poverty estimates:
  - Estimated total population
  - Estimated population of children age 5-17
  - “Estimated number of relevant children 5 to 17 years old in poverty who are related to the householder”
- Download data for all school districts or for all in a particular state:

<http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/downloads/sd14/index.html>

- Download state/county poverty data:

<http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/data/model/tables.html>

# Part 2:

# Assessing food insecurity/food hardship

Multiple measures of hunger

( 19 )

# Measures of household food insecurity

- After listening to this section of the webinar, you will be able to:
  - Understand food insecurity and how USDA's Economic Research Service measures it, using CPS survey results
  - Understand the key differences between food insecurity and FRAC's measure of food hardship from Gallup survey
  - Know main data sources for estimates of household food insecurity and food hardship
  - Know which data sources provide estimates of local rates

# Definition of food insecurity, USDA measure

- USDA: Food insecurity exists when there are disruptions in the quality and/or quantity of the household food supply due to a lack of financial or other resources.
- More specific:
  - **Low food secure** – household reduced the quality, variety, and desirability of their diets, but the quantity of food intake and normal eating patterns were not substantially disrupted
  - **Very low food secure** – household reduced the quality, variety, and desirability of their diets, AND the quantity of food intake and normal eating patterns were substantially disrupted
- Similar definitions among children (e.g., low or very low food security among children).

## Questions Used To Assess the Food Security of Households in the CPS Food Security Survey

1. “We worried whether our food would run out before we got money to buy more.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
2. “The food that we bought just didn’t last and we didn’t have money to get more.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
3. “We couldn’t afford to eat balanced meals.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
4. In the last 12 months, did you or other adults in the household ever cut the size of your meals or skip meals because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
5. (If yes to question 4) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
6. In the last 12 months, did you ever eat less than you felt you should because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
7. In the last 12 months, were you ever hungry, but didn’t eat, because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
8. In the last 12 months, did you lose weight because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
9. In the last 12 months did you or other adults in your household ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
10. (If yes to question 9) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?



*(Questions 11-18 were asked only if the household included children age 0-17)*

11. “We relied on only a few kinds of low-cost food to feed our children because we were running out of money to buy food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
12. “We couldn’t feed our children a balanced meal, because we couldn’t afford that.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
13. “The children were not eating enough because we just couldn’t afford enough food.” Was that often, sometimes, or never true for you in the last 12 months?
14. In the last 12 months, did you ever cut the size of any of the children’s meals because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
15. In the last 12 months, were the children ever hungry but you just couldn’t afford more food? (Yes/No)
16. In the last 12 months, did any of the children ever skip a meal because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)
17. (If yes to question 16) How often did this happen—almost every month, some months but not every month, or in only 1 or 2 months?
18. In the last 12 months did any of the children ever not eat for a whole day because there wasn’t enough money for food? (Yes/No)

# Data source for household food insecurity

- Source: CPS survey of ~40,000 households in December
- USDA releases a report annually in September with national data for previous calendar year and 3-year averages for state



United States Department of Agriculture

Economic  
Research  
Service

Economic  
Research  
Report  
Number 215

September 2016

## Household Food Security in the United States in 2015

Alisha Coleman-Jensen  
Matthew P. Rabbitt  
Christian A. Gregory  
Anita Singh

<http://ers.usda.gov/media/2137663/err215.pdf>



# Data from FRAC

- FRAC's food hardship reports using Gallup survey
- Gallup interviews about 176,000 households per year

"Have there been times in the past twelve months when you did not have enough money to buy food that you or your family needed?"

2014-2015 data for the nation, states, and large MSAs



## HOW HUNGRY IS AMERICA?

FRAC's National, State, and Local Index of Food Hardship  
June 2016

"Have there been times in the past 12 months when you did not have enough money to buy food that you or your family needed?" That question was part of a survey conducted by

National Food Hardship Rates, 2008-2015	
Year	Food Hardship Rate

<http://frac.org/pdf/food-hardship-2016.pdf>

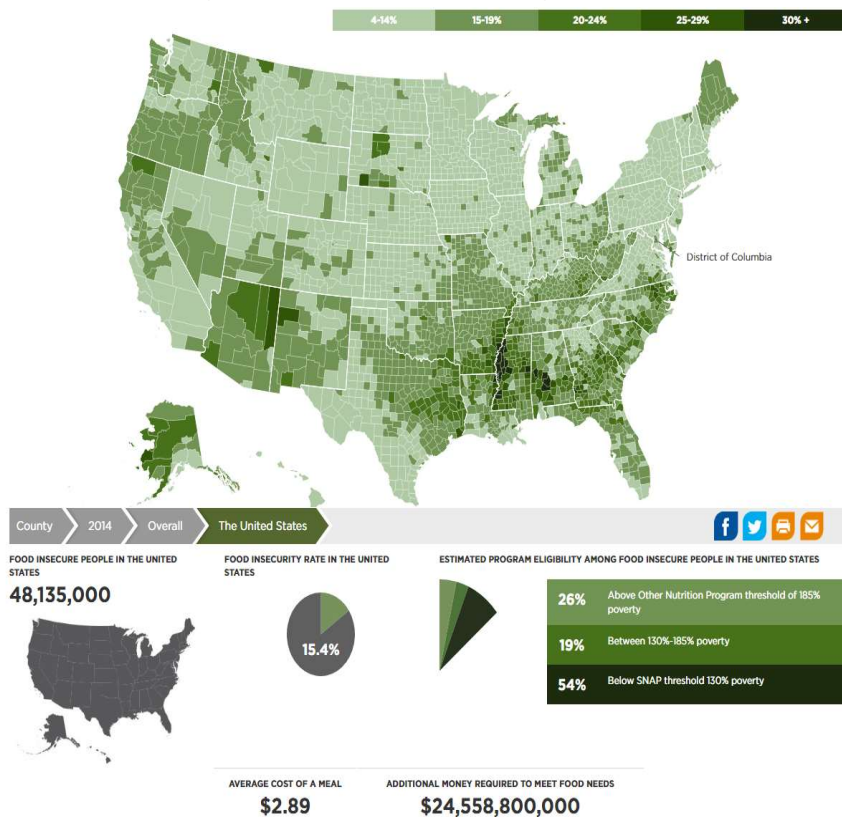


# Food Hardship and Food Insecurity

- USDA food insecurity:
  - 18-question module in CPS Food Security Supplement (CPS-FSS)
  - 3-year averages for states
  - No local data
  - Time lag—report published September of following year
- Gallup/FRAC food hardship:
  - 1 question in Gallup daily tracking poll
  - Much larger sample—allows 2-year state estimates; allows MSA estimates; some subgroup analysis
  - More timely—published 2015 rates in June
  - Leading indicator of food insecurity
- USDA and FRAC/Gallup measures track well (FRAC/Gallup slightly higher)

# Data from Feeding America

- Map the Meal Gap



Uses CPS and ACS data; USDA measure

Estimates county level and congressional district data using statistical models.

Released yearly in August

<http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2014/overall>

# Part 3:

# Measuring SNAP

# Participation

( 28 )

# Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) Participation Data

- After listening to the SNAP portion of the webinar, you will be able to:
  - Understand data on SNAP participation levels and rates
  - Understand the different sources of SNAP data and the information they provide, including where local data are available
  - Know when each data source becomes available and how current the data are
  - Know the pros and cons to each SNAP data source

# Subtle but important difference

- SNAP participation is simply the total number of people who are participating in SNAP
- SNAP participation rate: the total number of people participating divided by the estimated total number of people eligible to participate

# Monthly SNAP participation

- USDA publishes monthly SNAP participation
- Typically released first Friday of the month, covering 3 months earlier (i.e., June 2016 data released September 2016)
- Estimates available for the nation and states
- Estimates usually undergo some later revisions
- Using the data, FRAC provides 1-month, 1-year, and 5-year percentage change
  - Also share of total state population receiving SNAP

<http://frac.org/reports-and-resources/snapfood-stamp-monthly-participation-data/>

# SNAP “Characteristics” report

- USDA’s analysis of the SNAP Quality Control data based on administrative records (~48,000 households)
- Much deeper analysis of sub-populations
- Accurate estimates of counts and demographics of households and persons who participate in SNAP
- State and national estimates
- 1-2 years behind (release schedule varies)



United States Department of Agriculture

*Characteristics of Supplemental  
Nutrition Assistance Program  
Households: Fiscal Year 2014*

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ops/Characteristics2014.pdf>



# SNAP Characteristics Examples

**Table A.1. Distribution of participating households, individuals, and benefits by household composition, locality, countable income source, and SNAP benefit amount**

Household characteristic	SNAP households		Participants in households with household characteristic		Monthly SNAP benefits	
	Number (000)	Percent	Number (000)	Percent	Dollars (000)	Percent
<b>Total</b> .....	22,445	100.0	45,874	100.0	5,689,647	100.0
<b>Household composition</b>						
Children .....	9,789	43.6	31,609	68.9	3,817,969	67.1
School-age .....	7,603	33.9	26,214	57.1	3,092,269	54.3
Preschool-age .....	4,869	21.7	16,564	36.1	2,045,818	36.0
No children .....	12,656	56.4	14,265	31.1	1,871,679	32.9
Elderly individuals .....	4,255	19.0	5,359	11.7	548,607	9.6
No elderly individuals .....	18,190	81.0	40,515	88.3	5,141,040	90.4
Non-elderly individuals with disabilities .....	4,579	20.4	8,681	18.9	858,511	15.1
No non-elderly individuals with disabilities .....	17,865	79.6	37,193	81.1	4,831,136	84.9
Adults age 18 to 49 without disabilities in childless households <sup>a</sup> .....	4,333	19.3	5,189	11.3	829,307	14.6
No adults age 18 to 49 without disabilities in childless households .....	18,112	80.7	40,685	88.7	4,860,340	85.4
Noncitizens .....	1,360	6.1	3,331	7.3	407,922	7.2
No noncitizens .....	21,084	93.9	42,543	92.7	5,281,726	92.8

# SNAP Characteristics Examples

**Table B.3. Distribution of participating households by poverty status and by State**

State	Number (000)	Gross countable income as a percentage of the poverty guideline							
		Zero gross income		1% to 50%		51% to 100%		101% or more	
		Number (000)	Row percent	Number (000)	Row percent	Number (000)	Row percent	Number (000)	Row percent
<b>Total<sup>a</sup></b> .....	22,445	4,919	21.9	4,755	21.2	9,088	40.5	3,684	16.4
Alabama .....	415	96	23.2	93	22.3	181	43.6	45	10.9
Alaska .....	37	9	24.1	9	25.7	13	36.0	5	14.2
Arizona .....	440	104	23.7	101	23.1	159	36.1	76	17.2
Arkansas .....	216	47	21.8	46	21.5	100	46.2	23	10.5
California .....	1,990	489	24.6	794	39.9	496	24.9	211	10.6
Colorado .....	230	39	16.8	56	24.4	102	44.3	33	14.5
Connecticut .....	239	43	18.2	45	19.0	90	37.9	59	24.9
Delaware .....	71	14	19.4	18	25.6	23	33.0	16	22.0
District of Columbia .....	79	27	33.8	17	21.0	25	31.1	11	14.2
Florida .....	1,921	575	30.0	298	15.5	771	40.2	276	14.4

# SNAP Administrative (QC) Data

- FNS publishes QC data behind the Characteristics report:

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Quality Control Data

### Public Use Files

---

#### 2015 SNAP Data

[2015 SNAP QC Data \(SAS Format - Zipped\)](#)  
[2015 SNAP QC Data \(SAS Transport Format - Zipped\)](#)  
[2015 SNAP QC Data \(Stata Format - Zipped\)](#)  
[2015 SNAP QC Data \(SPSS - Zipped\)](#)  
[2015 SNAP QC Data \(CSV - Zipped\)](#)  
[2015 SNAP QC Technical Documentation \(PDF format\)](#)

#### 2014 SNAP Data

[2014 SNAP QC Data \(SAS Format - Zipped\)](#)  
[2014 SNAP QC Data \(SAS Transport Format - Zipped\)](#)  
[2014 SNAP QC Data \(Stata Format - Zipped\)](#)  
[2014 SNAP QC Data \(SPSS - Zipped\)](#)  
[2014 SNAP QC Data \(CSV - Zipped\)](#)  
[2014 SNAP QC Technical Documentation \(PDF format\)](#)

#### 2013 SNAP Data

<https://host76.mathematica-mpr.com/fns/>

# ACS SNAP Data

- 1-year SNAP participation estimates
  - All geographies estimated with >65,000 people (all states, large counties, congressional districts)
  - Data on participation in previous 12 months
  - SNAP is under-reported in ACS
- 2011-2015 5-year ACS data → will be released 12/2016
  - All geographies
- Find data through American FactFinder

<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>

# Small Area SNAP Participation Data

- USDA's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) gives Census Bureau small area SNAP data to use as inputs to SAIPE small area poverty estimation models
  - State data: Number of SNAP recipients by month
    - Adjusted to account for anomalies, such as natural disasters which trigger disaster SNAP benefits
  - County data: Number of SNAP recipients in July of each year
    - Adjusted to add up to state totals
  - Data are not updated to account for subsequent FNS corrections
- State estimates cover 1/1981 to 6/2014
- County July estimates cover 1989 to 2013, with some gaps in early years
- Both last updated 12/2015
  - Download here:  
<http://www.census.gov/did/www/saipe/data/model/tables.html>

# SNAP participation rate

- USDA's report on SNAP participation rates:
  - Most accurate, but biggest time lag
  - National estimates: "Trends in Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Participation Rates"
  - State estimates: *"Reaching Those in Need"*
  - Both use CPS and administrative records
- About 2-3 years behind (release schedule varies)
  - Latest reports: covered 2010-2014 trends (national, released 6-2016) and 2013 (state, release 2-2016)

# USDA Program Access Index (PAI)

- Calculated by comparing estimated SNAP participation in ACS data to broad measure of low-income residents in state—with adjustments to approximate SNAP eligibility
- Less accurate than official participation rates reports, but more timely
- Estimates available for nation and state
- Typically just over a year behind (latest report: 2014 PAI, released 2-2016)
- 2002 Farm Bill directed USDA to use PAI and other performance measures to award state bonus payments
- Step-by-step guide available: how USDA calculates SNAP's PAI

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/PAI2012.pdf>

# Recap of Data Sources

- Poverty data:
  - Current Population Survey (Official and supp. poverty rates)
    - Nation
    - Supplemental poverty report → number lifted out of poverty by SNAP
  - American Community Survey
    - Nation, state, MSA, county, congressional district
  - Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates (SAIPE)
    - County
- Food insecurity data:
  - USDA food security report
    - Nation and state
  - FRAC's food hardship
    - Nation, state, and MSA
  - Feeding America's Map the Meal Gap
    - Nation, state, county, and congressional district
- SNAP data:
  - Monthly data
  - Characteristics reports/administrative data
  - American Community Survey
    - Nation, state, MSA, county, congressional district
  - ERS SNAP Data System
    - County and congressional district
  - Participation rate reports
    - Nation and state
  - USDA PAI and monthly numbers
    - Nation and state



# Tools for using CPS and ACS

- The American Community Survey is easily accessible, and many user friendly-tutorials exist:

[http://www.census.gov/mso/www/training/data\\_tools.html](http://www.census.gov/mso/www/training/data_tools.html)

<http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs/> (ACS main website)

- The Current Population Survey has a table creator:

<Http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>

<http://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/cps.html> (CPS main website)

# Conclusion

- There are numerous tools available to convey poverty, food insecurity, and SNAP data
- Most draw on CPS and ACS data. These surveys are not without some general limitations:
  - Since they are self-reported, there will be bias. For example, we know that people under report SNAP participation
- These data sets, even with their limitations, provide rich detail about poverty, program receipt, and the impact of SNAP

# Questions?