

# Feeding America Analysis of the Fiscal Year 2024 House Agriculture Subcommittee Appropriations Bill

FY 2024 Agriculture, Rural Development, Food and Drug Administration, and Related Agencies Bill

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## More Information

- [Bill Text](#)
- [Bill Summary](#) via House Appropriations Committee Republican Majority
- [Bill Report](#)

## Appropriations Process Basics

The House and Senate Appropriations Committees, through their 12 subcommittees each, hold hearings to examine the budget requests and spending needs of federal programs. The House and Senate then produce appropriations bills to fund the federal government. Funding levels for federal nutrition programs and agriculture programs are determined by the agriculture appropriations subcommittees.

## Types of Funding

Appropriations are broken down into mandatory and discretionary funding.

- Mandatory programs are authorized by Congress and their funding is mandated by law.
- Discretionary programs are also authorized, but their funding is not guaranteed. Congress can make annual changes to the amount of funding these programs receive through the appropriations process.

## Funding Analysis and Overview

On June 14, the full House Appropriations Committee met to consider and vote on certain fiscal year 2024 subcommittee allocations. The agriculture bill was approved by the committee and could be voted on by the full House in July. The committee also released an accompanying report explaining details of proposals included in the bill; the report language also includes recommendations separate from the bill itself that, while not binding like the bill text, encourage or direct federal agencies like USDA to take action related to certain additional priority areas.



Mandatory programs were funded across the board at their legally required levels. Most discretionary programs were funded at lower levels than requested or enacted previously. The decrease in funding for federal nutrition programs, like the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), will create hardship for those facing food insecurity and increase the demand for emergency food assistance. This summary breaks down the elements of the bill most relevant to people experiencing food insecurity and the Feeding America network.

## Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

The committee would fully fund SNAP at the mandatory level of \$121.996 billion. This is \$137 million (.1%) less than what was requested by the Biden administration, and \$31.9 million (20.7%) less than the program's FY 2023 enacted funding level. The committee provided a \$3 billion SNAP contingency reserve.

The bill all proposes some harmful changes to SNAP.

- It would double down on the recent harmful changes subjecting more individuals to the time limits on SNAP benefits, proposing to make permanent the expansion to older adults up to age 56 without dependents who are unable to document sufficient work hours. The bill also reiterates recent changes that limit states' use of exemptions to keep vulnerable people subject to this time limit requirement temporarily connected to benefits, eliminating carryover of unused exemptions to no more than one additional year. The Congressional Budget Office has estimated that an average of 275,000 people would be cut from SNAP each month.
- The bill would mandate \$2 million to establish a maximum of five pilot programs that limit use of SNAP benefits to purchase only nutrient-dense foods and beverages, as defined in the [2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans](#). One or more of these projects must be carried out before Dec. 21, 2024. This provision cannot be used to increase household benefit allotments. This would undermine dignity of participants, increase stigma, and cause confusion and complication for shoppers, retailers, and program administrators.

## Military Hunger

The report language encourages the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to provide a report on the impact of including the Basic Allowance for Housing as income when determining an individual or family's eligibility for SNAP.

## Data Transparency

The report language directs FNS to collect a statistically significant sample of retail food store SNAP transaction data, including the costs and description of items purchased with SNAP.



## **National Accuracy Clearinghouse (NAC)**

The report language expresses support for the full implementation of the NAC, which some states have been using since 2013 and which was expanded nationally in the bipartisan 2018 Farm Bill to continue to improve the strong integrity of the program. This tool helps determine the correct state to issue an individual's SNAP benefits, for example when someone moves from one state to another, by providing information on intrastate and interstate matches of participants.

## **Restaurant Meals Program (RMP) Report**

The report language directs FNS to provide a report with Restaurant Meals Program best practices and challenges for state participation and inclusion of locally owned small businesses within 90 days of enactment.

## **Card Skimming**

The report language expresses continued concern with the prevalence of SNAP benefit theft through practices like card skimming. It directs FNS to engage with state and local agencies and stakeholders to develop a more secure EBT card that contains the necessary technologies to protect against benefit theft.

## **SNAP Ed**

The report language encourages FNS to prioritize evidence-based interventions. It suggests programs such as cooking classes paired with community-based nutrition education to help households maximize their food budget and prepare healthier meals.

## **Territories**

The report language recognizes the difference in assistance between Nutrition Assistance Program block grant funding for the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Puerto Rico and American Samoa, and SNAP. It encourages FNS to continue engaging with the appropriate stakeholders and provide updates to Congress on plans to transition U.S. territories to SNAP.

## **Child Nutrition Programs**

### **Mandatory Child Nutrition Program Spending**

The committee provided an appropriation of \$31.996 billion for child nutrition programs—a \$3.451 billion (12.1%) increase over FY 2023. This is \$35 million (.1%) less than the amount requested by the Biden administration.

The committee provided \$16.42 billion for the National School Lunch Program, \$6 billion for the School Breakfast Program, and \$846 million for the Summer Food Service Program, funding the programs at mandatory levels.



Additionally, the committee provided appropriations of:

- \$4.1 billion for the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP);
- \$6.6 million for the Special Milk Program; and
- \$3 million for Farm to School Grants, which is \$14 million (82.4%) below the Biden administration's request, and \$11 million (64.7%) below the FY 2023 enacted level.

### **\*New\* Mandatory Spending through Summer EBT**

The bill appropriates \$1.7 billion for Summer EBT, a new entitlement program secured in December 2022 legislation. This funding amount meets the Biden administration's request. Previously, Summer EBT was funded as a discretionary pilot project at significantly lower levels.

### **Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC)**

The Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) is funded through discretionary funding. The committee provided \$6 billion for WIC, the same amount as provided in FY 2023. The appropriation for WIC falls \$800 million below (12.7%) the Biden administration's FY 2024 request, which included additional funding to account for projected participation increases. This proposal would gut the increase in fruit and vegetable benefits recommended by the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, impacting 5 million pregnant women, new moms, and children.

The bill also rescinds \$500 million in unobligated funds from WIC, unless designated as an emergency requirement. (In FY 2023, Congress rescinded \$315 million from the program.)

The committee included \$90 million for breastfeeding peer counselors and \$14 million for WIC infrastructure, which matches what was requested in the federal budget and enacted in FY 2023.

### **Additional Discretionary Child Nutrition Program Spending**

The committee appropriated:

- \$20 million for school meal equipment grants (\$10 million (33.3%) less than the Biden administration's request and the FY 2023 enacted level); and
- \$18 million for Team Nutrition.



## Commodity Assistance Programs

### Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP)

The committee appropriated \$472.5 million for the Commodity Assistance Program, including \$373.4 million for the Commodity Supplemental Food Program. This is \$17 million (4.2%) less than the Biden administration's request and \$35 million (10.3%) more than the FY 2023 enacted level.

### The Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP)

The committee provided an appropriation of \$468.75 million for mandatory TEFAP food purchases as required by the farm bill. The bill proposes \$80 million in discretionary funding for TEFAP administration, which is \$12 million less than FY 2023 enacted levels.

Additionally, the bill maintains language permitting state agencies, in consultation with emergency feeding organizations, to use up to 20% of the funds provided for purchasing TEFAP commodities to help with the costs of storing, transporting, and distributing those foods.

The committee also urges FNS to ensure state agencies are aware that TEFAP administrative funds as well as Farm to Food Bank Project funds can be used for the repackaging and processing of donated wild game.

### Kosher and Halal Foods in TEFAP

The report language directs FNS to brief the committee on a plan required by the 2014 Farm Bill to increase the number of Kosher and Halal certified products available through TEFAP from food manufacturers with a Kosher or Halal certification.

### Farmers Market Nutrition Program

The committee appropriated \$18 million for the Farmers Market Nutrition Program. This is \$3 million (14.2%) less than the Biden administration's federal budget request.

## Additional Provisions

### Community Project Funding (aka Earmarks)

The committee provided \$483 million in community project funding for 395 projects requested by 165 members of Congress.

### Rescissions

- The bill rescinds \$500 million in American Rescue Plan Act funding for the USDA.



- The bill rescinds \$505 million of unobligated Section 32 Funds. Section 32 refers to that section of the Agricultural Adjustment Act of 1935. It authorizes USDA to support prices of commodities in surplus by purchasing them in the marketplace and distribute them domestically through food banks and other emergency feeding organizations. This reduction would result in significantly less funding available for bonus commodity purchases.

