

SEVEN THINGS YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT THE COMMODITY SUPPLEMENTAL FOOD PROGRAM

2 CSFP food packages are designed to meet the specific nutritional needs of these vulnerable people and include fruits and vegetables, juices, meats, fish, peanut butter, cereals and grain products, cheese and other dairy products. The foods provided are designed to provide protein, calcium, iron and Vitamins A and C. CSFP helps assist in providing proper nutrition for seniors and promotes health, treats chronic diseases, decreases length of hospital stays and saves health care dollars. Hunger increases their risk of stroke, exacerbates pre-existing ill health conditions, limits the efficacy of many prescription drugs and may affect brain chemistry increasing the incidence of depression and isolation (The National Council on Aging, 2005).

3 The Commodity Supplemental Food Program (CSFP) is our nation's first food assistance effort with monthly food packages designed to provide protein, calcium, iron and vitamins A and C. The USDA food package average cost is \$15 each. The retail value of each package is approximately \$50.

4 CSFP was created by Congress to address hunger in specific population groups in a way that mutually promotes agriculture policy and alleviates hunger through the use of food commodities acquired under government farm supports. CSFP is an important outlet for the food commodities supported under various farm programs.

1 CSFP is a unique federal/state and public/private effort. The USDA purchases specific nutrient-rich foods at wholesale prices for distribution. State agencies such as Department of health, agriculture or education providing administration and oversight; contracting with community and faith based organizations to warehouse and distribute food, certify eligibility and educate participants. This unique collaboration reaches even homebound seniors with vital nutrition.

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CSFP seniors

responded to a national survey conducted by the National CSFP Association to determine whether seniors make food choices based on personal preference, nutrition knowledge or on economic conditions. The most notable data was [1] only one in four seniors on CSFP are simultaneously accessing food stamps; [2] over 60% of seniors use money for medical bills not food; [3] over 50% of seniors said they ran out of food during the month; and [4] households of one who responded, more than half reported an income of less than \$750 a month, of those in a household of two, more than half reported an income of less than \$2,000 a month.

Please visit the NCSFPA website to learn more!

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CSFP provides federal commodity

food, nutrition education, and related services to pregnant and post-partum women, children under 6 (exclusive of WIC recipients) and seniors 60 and over each month who are at nutritional risk due to low income and poor diet. 90% of participants are seniors. The program is currently in 32 States, 2 Indian Tribal Organizations, and the District of Columbia. Five states have USDA approved plans and are waiting the necessary funding to begin, they are Arkansas, Delaware, Oklahoma, New Jersey and Utah. In addition to federal resources, CSFP is supported at the community level by three million volunteer hours, hundreds of nonprofit and faith based organizations, and locally raised resources.

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The Commodity Supplemental Food Program reaches seniors in their homes and gathering places; with dignity and uncomplicated paperwork and with specific food designed to supplement their diet.

NCSFPA @ www.csfpcentral.org

