

Federal Nutrition Program in Utah

House District 1

Representative Rob Bishop

According to the Food Research and Action Center’s report: “*How Hungry is America*,” food hardship is an issue for Utah families. The question is part of a survey conducted by Gallup as part of the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index, in which 177,281 households participated; answering yes to the question: *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?* indicates a household is experiencing food hardship.

Food Hardship	All Households
Ogden	15.6%
Utah	12.9%

Federal nutrition programs help these vulnerable families make ends meet, and while there are more Utahns than ever accessing these programs, many eligible Utah families do not participate in them.

Child Nutrition

The box below lists the school districts located within District 1 and the percentage of students who are eligible for free and reduced price school meals during the 2015-2016 school year.

School District	% FR Total
Box Elder	36.74%
Logan	58.51%
Cache	27.84%
Weber	35.52%
Ogden	73.89%
Rich	40.23%
Morgan	12.36%
North Summit	31.49%
Park City	19.12%
Daggett	20-25%
Duchesne	39.17%
Uintah	47.51%
South Summit	18.00%
Statewide	35.00%

- Research shows that when a child’s nutritional needs are met, the child is more attentive in class, has better attendance, and fewer disciplinary problems. The National School Lunch Program meets the nutritional needs of children by providing a nutritionally balanced meal that contains one third or more of the nutrients they need each day. *(FRAC, Child Nutrition Fact Sheet, Spring 2009)*
 - Compared to children who do not eat breakfast or eat breakfast at home, children who eat school breakfast:
 - are less likely to be overweight,
 - have improved nutrition,
 - eat more fruits,
 - drink more milk,
 - consume a wider variety of foods
- *(FRAC, Breakfast for Health, Spring 2014)*

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program

Congressional District 1 has the 2nd highest number of households accessing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program, in the state.

While there is some crossover with zip codes in other districts, District 1 has approximately 19,217 households currently receiving SNAP benefits, representing about 48,042 individuals.

Utah SNAP Demographics – August, 2015		
<i>Run Date: 11/27/2015</i>		
Individuals	Count	% of Total
Children 17 or Younger	123,647	53.87%
With Disability	26,516	11.55%
60 and Older	12,611	5.49%
Total	229,518	
Income		
Count	% of Total	
Earned Income Only	24,371	27.33%
Unearned Income Only	33,007	37.01%
Earned & Unearned	9,850	11.04%
No Income	21,961	24.62%
Total	89,189	
Households		
Count	% of Total	
Single Parent	31,623	35.46%
With Children	53,188	59.64%
With Disability	25,061	28.10%
With Elderly	11,603	13.01%

SNAP is our nation’s strongest and most responsive program to address hunger and food hardship. The Council of Economic Advisers report, *Long Term Benefits of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program*, found that:

- SNAP benefits lifted at least 4.7 million people out of poverty in 2014—including 2.1 million children. SNAP also lifted more than 1.3 million children out of deep poverty.
- Children in low income households with access to Food Stamps during their childhood had a decreased likeliness to need the program as an adult.
- SNAP benefits are often insufficient to make it through the month, which results in decreased calorie intake and increased health issues at the end of the month.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities:

- SNAP kept 53,000 people out of poverty in Utah, including 29,000 children, per year between 2009 and 2012, on average.

Wendy, Salt Lake City

Wendy has a college degree and has owned several of her own businesses, until she suddenly contracted West Nile Virus, leaving her unable to work. Although Wendy receives SNAP and disability payments, and lives in subsidized housing, she is still barely able to get by. “Once I became disabled, I was in and out of the hospital and at the doctor’s many times a month, so I didn’t have any other way to get money, except to be on disability and get food stamps.”

She doesn’t have enough money to buy nutritious foods, and the problem only worsened when food stamps were cut in 2013 even though the price of food continues to increase. She has also had to give up her low-carb diet, which had dramatically improved her health. Without food stamps, she wouldn’t be able to eat at all.

“Things happen in life, and it can happen to anybody. When you become disabled and poor it’s really hard to get out of it, especially if you can’t work. *I’ve been poor a long time and I’m tired, real tired.*”