

# SNAP Name Change

## Introduction: SNAP: A New Era in Nutrition Assistance

In the summer of 2008, the U.S. Congress passed the Food, Conservation and Energy Act (also known as the Farm Bill) mandating a new national name for the Food Stamp Program (FSP). The Farm Bill renamed the FSP as “Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program” (SNAP), but States were not mandated by Congress to use the new name. Therefore, States retain the right to choose a name other than SNAP. Visit [this chart](#) for a list of current State names.

This chapter describes the reasons for the name change and provides information, strategies and tools each State agency can use to help communicate the new name to those eligible for SNAP benefits. It also discusses challenges and solutions related to rebranding the program from food stamps to SNAP, and how States can augment the national campaign. Finally, the chapter provides guidance on how to use the new branding elements, such as the graphic (logo) and tagline.

### ***What is SNAP?***

SNAP is the new national name for the Federal FSP. Each year, SNAP helps an average of more than 40 million people in 18 million households supplement their grocery budgets.<sup>1</sup> As the cornerstone of the Nation’s nutrition assistance safety net, SNAP is a vital program, particularly for some of our society’s most vulnerable citizens, including children and seniors.

1. National Level Annual Summary for Persons and Households, 2010. Available at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/snapmain/htm>

### ***When Congress renamed the program, did they make any changes to the rules?***

Yes, the 2008 Farm Bill made improvements to SNAP in the following ways:

- **An increase in the [minimum benefit](#)** and standard deduction;
- **The elimination of the cap** on dependent care deduction (child care and care for elderly or disabled household members); and
- **The exclusion of education and retirement accounts** from countable resources.

### ***What are the key reasons for the name change?***

- **The new name focuses on nutrition.** The program helps low-income people eat a more nutritious diet by supplementing their food budget. Households receiving SNAP benefits can use extra food dollars to buy healthy foods such as fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat milk products.
- **The new name reflects a more modern program.** Today, electronic benefit transfer is the sole means of benefit issuance. There are no more stamps or coupons. This has not only helped to reduce program stigma, but it has cut down on fraud and costs associated with printing, storing, and distributing coupons.
- **The new name reduces stigma associated with “food stamps.”** Historically, some participants felt embarrassed to apply for benefits or use their coupons at grocery stores. The new name helps reduce stigma by stressing the importance of nutrition. The EBT card also reduces the appearance that the user is different from any other shopper.

## Why should States use the SNAP name?

The following are several reasons why each State should consider changing its name to SNAP:

- **It promotes healthy eating.** Changing the name is an opportunity to promote messages about healthy eating to those who receive the benefits. The SNAP name focuses on the importance of nutrition.
- **It reflects the program's current format.** The new name reflects a change to the program and its current format for issuing benefits, which is an EBT card, not stamps or coupons.
- **It reduces program stigma.** The new name can reduce the stigma associated with the FSP. The new name can help States promote the nutrition benefits of the program, new policies that make it easier to access, and the use of EBT cards.
- **It helps avoid confusion.** FNS is working hard to transition the name from FSP to SNAP. Keeping the State's program name consistent with the Federal name makes it clear that this is not a different program. Caregivers living in other States and new or transferring applicants will have an easier time locating the local SNAP office. When a State's name is consistent with the national SNAP brand, you are ultimately raising awareness about your program and encouraging more eligible individuals and families to apply.
- **It allows States to take advantage of nationally developed materials and outreach activities.** FNS has developed a range of outreach and nutrition education materials with the SNAP name that partners, States and local offices can use. The change includes a new logo and tagline. By using a different name, States may have to divert limited resources to cover the costs to develop similar materials. FNS also buys paid advertising to promote SNAP in various markets across the country each year. Because the SNAP name is used in these ad spots, FNS can only purchase advertising in States that use the SNAP name.
- **People like the name SNAP.** During consumer focus groups, a majority of participants responded positively to the new name. Respondents said that SNAP explains the purpose of the program and emphasizes how this nutrition benefit helps individuals and families.



## Did You Know?

- Program participants in States now using the new name SNAP do not need to reapply to continue receiving benefits.
- The new national name, SNAP, highlights USDA FNS' focus on nutrition and putting healthy food within reach for low-income households.
- Nutrition education is available to help SNAP applicants and participants learn to make healthy eating and active lifestyle choices.
- Children automatically qualify for free school breakfast and lunch when they receive SNAP benefits. Some participants may qualify for WIC benefits, as well.
- Program benefits are issued on Electronic Benefit Transfer (EBT) cards, similar to debit cards, and can be used in authorized retail stores and farmers markets nationwide.
- As of June 17, 2009, food stamp coupons are no longer accepted at any grocery, convenience store, or farmers market.
- SNAP is good for communities. Research shows that every \$5 in new SNAP benefits generates up to \$9.20—nearly twice as much—in total community spending.

## The Power of a Strong Brand

Each day, American consumers are bombarded by hundreds of messages and images. The public has an overwhelming number of products, services, and programs to choose from, making it difficult to break through the clutter. Companies and organizations try to differentiate themselves by creating a brand.

### ***What is a brand?***

A brand is two things. First, it is a name or a symbol that is commonly known to identify an organization, product, or service. Second, a brand separates one organization, product, or service from competing organizations, products, or services.

### ***What are the benefits of a brand?***

The benefits of a brand are significant. A brand:

- **Provides recognition:** It helps your audience connect an organization with a product or service, thereby increasing credibility.
- **Promotes loyalty:** When your audiences trust your brand, they are more likely to be loyal to it.
- **Implies solidity and stability:** While there are dynamic, small organizations that have strong brands, a brand often projects an image of an established, large organization which, in turn, attracts more people to it.
- **Suggests quality:** Whether it represents a great product or superb customer service, a brand usually equates to something that is “better” than the unbranded alternative.
- **Connotes experience and reliability:** It projects a sense of longevity and a more trustworthy organization or product.

### ***What has FNS done to establish the SNAP brand?***

FNS has developed and focus group-tested a logo and messages with consumers. It has also developed [guidelines](#) for how to use the brand in outreach materials and advertising. The guidelines tell where to get different versions of the SNAP logo to suit your needs.

## ***What is the SNAP brand?***

The SNAP brand focuses on nutrition. At the heart of the SNAP brand is the idea that eating nutritious foods is important for everyone and that the program is meant to supplement the grocery budget of low-income individuals and families during tough times.

## ***What are some of the national SNAP brand's core elements?***

- **A positioning statement:** This defines vision and values. It establishes a tone, describes what the program means in terms of the emotional and practical needs of the customer, and serves as “umbrella language” from which key messages for target audiences are derived.

### **SNAP POSITIONING STATEMENT**

#### ***Putting healthy food within reach.***

Good nutrition and physical activity are an essential part of a healthy lifestyle. But sometimes, bills and unexpected expenses make it difficult to buy healthy food. When that happens, SNAP can put healthy food within reach and provide information to help choose nutritious food.

SNAP is the new name for the Federal Food Stamp Program. SNAP stands for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program. The new name reflects changes made to meet the needs of our clients. More benefits are accessible to more people. Through nutrition education partners, SNAP helps clients learn to make healthy eating and active lifestyle choices.

With SNAP, healthy food is within reach even when times are tough.

- **A tagline:** A good tagline is a way to quickly and powerfully connect with the public, and it is the first impression of your brand. The national SNAP tagline, which was developed through research and testing, is: *Putting Healthy Food Within Reach*. The Spanish version of this tagline is: *Alimentos Saludables a Su Alcance*.

### **ENGLISH TAGLINE**

**Putting Healthy Food Within Reach**

### **SPANISH TAGLINE**

**Alimentos Saludables a Su Alcance**

- **A visual:** A logo is a visual. It is a graphic depiction of your organization, product, service, or program. It has the ability to quickly stir emotions or persuade people to find out more about what it represents. The more your audience positively connects a logo with its owner, the more brand equity or value is built. A relationship begins to form between the brand and the customer. Once that relationship is firmly established, all a customer needs to do is see the logo to know what he or she will get from that brand. While consistency in visuals is important, they do change to keep up with the times.

The official SNAP logo was designed based on focus group research with both current participants and eligible nonparticipants. The logo emphasizes the importance of a well-balanced diet by mirroring the colors used for each food group in MyPyramid and focuses on nutrition by showing healthy foods in a grocery bag.

## ENGLISH



## Tips & Tools

For more information, FNS has developed specific [guidelines](#) regarding the use of the SNAP logo.

## SPANISH



# SNAP Logo Usage Guidelines

## Non-Interference and Sizing

Standard practice is to use the logo and wordmark with the tagline.

Non-interference space for the logo is .25 inches surrounding its outer diameter (farthest point of logo, outward), illustrated below.



The minimum size of the logo is 1.5 inches in width, illustrated below. This is the preferred smallest size for readability, and any variations reducing this size for usage should be cleared with USDA Food and Nutrition Service.



When using the color version, use logo file colors as provided ONLY. Occasionally, it may be necessary to use a black and white version of the SNAP mark. Please find below suitable example, in place of the color version.



## SNAP Logo Requests

To request an electronic version of the SNAP logo and tagline, please email [SNAPHQ-web@fns.usda.gov](mailto:SNAPHQ-web@fns.usda.gov) with the subject line SNAP Logo Request. Carefully follow logo guidelines. The logo comes in multiple formats, in color, and in black and white.

In your email request, please specify:

- the logo format you want (e.g., high resolution, low resolution, or .eps file)
- what color logo you want (e.g., black and white or color)
- desired logo language (e.g., English or Spanish)
- how you plan to use the logo

## SNAP Color Palette

Dark Green	Light Green	Cyan	Purple	Red	Orange
C: 98	C: 75	C: 100	C: 70	C: 15	C: 0
M: 0	M: 0	M: 0	M: 80	M: 98	M: 60
Y: 72	Y: 80	Y: 0	Y: 0	Y: 100	Y: 100
K: 61	K: 0	K: 0	K: 0	K: 10	K: 0
R: 0	R: 47	R: 0	R: 105	R: 191	R: 245
G: 88	G: 181	G: 174	G: 80	G: 38	G: 130
B: 61	B: 106	B: 239	B: 161	B: 36	B: 32

### ***What are some of the national SNAP brand's core elements?***

- **SNAP message platform.** A message platform contains several core messages. These messages were developed based on the target audience and designed to create consistent branding of the program. Key and supporting messages are intended to be woven into all SNAP materials, advertising, talking points, speeches, and presentations.

### **The following are the official SNAP key messages:**

- As of October 1, 2008, SNAP became the new name for the Federal Food Stamp Program.
- SNAP stands for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and reflects the changes we've made to meet the needs of our clients, including a focus on nutrition and an increase in benefit amounts.
- Through nutrition education partners, SNAP helps clients learn to make healthy eating and active lifestyle choices.
- Changes have been made to make the program more accessible.
- The program continues to stimulate the local economy. Research shows that every \$5 of new benefits generates up to \$9.20 in total community spending.
- SNAP puts healthy food within reach for low-income Americans.
- SNAP responds quickly to meet sudden need. Benefits are available in as little as 7 days in an emergency.
- Feeding children is a priority for SNAP. Out of every \$4 in benefits, \$3 go to families with children.
- SNAP is the Federal name for the program. State programs may have a different name.



### **5 Guidelines for Building Strong Brands**

1. **Brand identity.** Have an identity for your brand. How would you like people to perceive your program? What image do you want it to convey?
2. **Value proposition.** Know what value your brand brings to people's lives and convey that through visuals and written words.
3. **Brand position.** Understand how your program's brand fits into the larger national brand.
4. **Execution.** Execute the communication program so that your State brand will be durable enough to convey your program over time.
5. **Consistency.** Having a consistent identity over an extended time is essential to a strong brand. Once you decide on your brand, maintain the symbols, imagery, and metaphors that work. This will increase awareness of your State's program.

## Co-Branding: Highlighting Your Unique Brand While Adopting SNAP

SNAP outreach, whether it is on the State or local level, is part of the larger national effort. To that end, States may want to consider co-branding with SNAP.

### ***What is co-branding?***

Co-branding is the practice of using more than one brand name together to represent a single product, service, or program. When done effectively, co-branding provides a way for agencies, divisions or organizations that fall under one name to join forces so that their outreach efforts work in harmony. However, State agency identifiers or program brands should not compete with each other. For example, only one tagline should be used—never more than that—otherwise you begin to clutter your own message. It is best to make co-branding decisions on a case-by-case basis.

### ***What can co-branding include?***

Co-branding might include using the SNAP logo along with another logo or incorporating SNAP messaging in a brochure your organization is developing. For example, MyPyramid and SNAP nutrition education (SNAP-Ed) have co-branded with SNAP. Please refer to the [logo guidelines](#) for more guidance.



### Did You Know?

FNS encourages States to conduct local outreach efforts. State agencies can receive reimbursement for approximately 50 percent of their administrative costs for outreach efforts. In addition, community and faith-based organizations may serve as contractors under [State outreach plans](#). FNS also offers a number of resources to help people on a tight budget eat healthy, such as [recipes](#) that use low-cost but healthy ingredients and nutrition education courses or [materials](#).

## Creative Ways To Promote SNAP

1. Drop ready-to-use content (known as matte copy) into an e-newsletter or email.
2. Pitch the matte article to your local community newspaper or local blogger.
3. Use standard content to develop fliers and place them at grocery stores, food banks, health clinics, libraries, community centers, churches, and other places that serve low-income populations.
4. Use the SNAP logo as a Web button on your organization's Web site.
5. Pitch the [PSAs](#) and [radionovelas](#) to appropriate media outlets.

## Communication Tools

FNS has created free materials that are available to States.

- **Visual with tagline.** To request an electronic version of the SNAP logo and tagline, please email [SNAPHQ-web@fns.usda.gov](mailto:SNAPHQ-web@fns.usda.gov) with the subject line SNAP Logo Request. Carefully follow logo guidelines. The logo comes in multiple formats, in color, and in black and white. In your email request, please specify:
  - the logo format you want (e.g., high resolution, low resolution, or .eps file)
  - what color logo you want (e.g., black and white or color)
  - desired logo language (e.g., English or Spanish)
  - how you plan to use the logo.
- **Core message platform.** You may want to use one or more of the official SNAP messages. By using the same messaging language as FNS, you are helping to build a consistent, well-recognized brand across the country.
- **Avery labels.** FNS provides a template for standard Avery 5163 labels or equivalent with a notice about the change to SNAP. Print these [labels](#) and add them to your existing materials. An informational notice about the new name is also provided with all orders for outreach materials.
- **Newsletter article and paragraph.** FNS has developed a [newsletter article](#). You may choose to use some or all of the content from this article and add it to your own in-house newsletters. Similarly, this [standard paragraph](#) can be useful content for products such as fliers, letters, and reports you may develop in order to raise awareness about SNAP.
- **Public service announcements (PSAs).** FNS has updated the [television](#) and [radio public service announcements](#) in English and Spanish to include the new SNAP name and tagline. For detailed guidance on how to pitch PSAs to television and radio outlets, refer to the [PSA chapter](#) of the Community Outreach Toolkit.
- **Spanish Radionovelas.** For low-income, eligible Spanish-speaking audiences, FNS developed a [radionovela series](#) that includes ten 2-minute episodes that promote the nutrition benefits of SNAP and provide information about who are eligible and how they can apply.