

# USDA SNAP Online Purchasing Pilot Info

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WASHINGTON, Sept. 15, 2016 –

- The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) is currently seeking retailer volunteers for a two-year, nationwide pilot to enable Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) participants to purchase their groceries online.
- The 2014 Farm Bill mandated a pilot be conducted to test the possibility of allowing retail food stores to accept SNAP benefits through online transactions.
- Up to five retailers in three states will be selected for this pilot and, once selected, the pilot is slated to begin next summer after the EBT processor completes system development work to allow for online transactions.
- According to U.S. Secretary of Agriculture Tom Vilsack, "Online purchasing shows great promise to improve access to healthy food for SNAP participants living in neighborhoods and rural or tribal areas without grocery stores."
- Online purchasing will also help those who are unable to access a grocery store due to a disability or lack of transportation.
- Since the passage of the Farm Bill, USDA has been working to lay the groundwork to put together the complex technical infrastructure required for this pilot.
- For households to make online purchases, the pilot requires retailer volunteers to provide service that is secure, private, and easy to use.
- As with all SNAP purchases, customers participating in the online pilot will only be able to use their SNAP benefits for eligible food purchases – not to cover any related charges, such as delivery or service fees.
- As the nation's first line of defense against hunger, SNAP helps put food on the table for millions of low income families and individuals every month and is critical in the fight against hunger.
- SNAP is a vital supplement to the monthly food budgets of 44 million low-income individuals.
- SNAP plays an important role in reducing both poverty and food insecurity in the United States—especially among children.
- SNAP is an effective and efficient health intervention for low-income families with a positive impact on children beginning before birth and lasting beyond childhood years, improving health, education, and economic outcomes.

USDA's Food and Nutrition Service administers 15 nutrition assistance programs. In addition to [SNAP](#), these programs include the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for [Women, Infants and Children](#), the [National School Lunch Program](#), and the [Summer Food Service Program](#) which together comprise America's nutrition safety net. For more information, visit [www.fns.usda.gov](http://www.fns.usda.gov).

See [the USDA on-line SNAP shopping blog](#) for more details.