

**U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
FOOD AND NUTRITION SERVICE**

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)



REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

Reaching Underserved Elderly and Working Poor in SNAP—FY 2009 Pilots

CFDA #: 10.580

Notice To Submit Application Due Date: June 17, 2009

Application Due Date: July 27, 2009

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

**REACHING UNDERSERVED ELDERLY AND
WORKING POOR IN SNAP—FY 2009 PILOTS**

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

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**Critical Dates for Cooperative Agreements to Conduct
*Reaching Underserved Elderly and
Working Poor in SNAP—FY2009 Pilots***

June 17, 2009	Intent to Submit an Application Due to FNS
July 27, 2009	Applications Due to FNS
September 1, 2009	Awards Recommended
September 30, 2009	Cooperative Agreements in Place and Funds Available

SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SNAP)

COOPERATIVE AGREEMENTS TO CONDUCT REACHING UNDERSERVED ELDERLY AND WORKING POOR IN SNAP---FY2009 PILOTS

REQUEST FOR APPLICATIONS

INTRODUCTION

The Omnibus Appropriations Act, 2009 (P.L. No. 111-8) provides funds for the USDA Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) to test a wider range of approaches on a larger scale to identify successful models for expanding access to SNAP¹ among two key underserved populations—eligible households with elderly members (persons who are age 60 years and older) and eligible households with adult members who are working or are looking for work (working poor households). This project will build on the promise of prior research² which demonstrated the feasibility of increasing SNAP participation among the low-income elderly in a few small sites.

FNS is interested in pilots that reduce barriers to participation in SNAP by

- reducing the paperwork involved in the SNAP application and recertification,
- expanding the location and hours for SNAP intake and reducing challenges for home-bound persons and those without transportation,
- providing application assistance in places and by people who are not associated with the stigma of the welfare office,
- building on SNAP modernization to reduce the cost (financial and psychological) of application, reporting and recertification,
- promoting the importance and ease of using SNAP benefits to eligible nonparticipants and their network of supporters,
- increasing linkages with community programs that serve working households and elderly, and
- conveying to potential clients, agency staff, and community members the State agency's commitment to SNAP outreach and program access.

There is approximately \$3.0 million in fiscal year (FY) 2009 funds available for State agencies to conduct pilots that test various models for increasing participation in SNAP by eligible working and elderly persons. The FY 2009 cooperative agreements will be awarded to State agencies responsible for administering SNAP. However, FNS anticipates that interested State SNAP agencies may assemble teams that include other public, non-profit and/or private organizations to plan and implement pilot projects. FNS will award grants to State SNAP Agencies of a maximum of \$500,000 each. The award amount will depend upon the strategy selected, the proposed budget and the quality of the application as determined by a technical panel. Each

¹ The Food, Conservation and Energy Act of 2008 changed the name of the federal Food Stamp Program to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program as of October 1, 2008 and the Food Stamp Act of 1977 to the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008. The new names reflect the changes made to meet the needs of FNS' clients, including a focus on nutrition and an increase in benefit amounts.

² Cody, S. & Ohls, J. *Evaluation of the USDA Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations*.

application must demonstrate the potential of the proposed approach to increase SNAP participation among **one** of the targeted groups on a large scale and over a significant period of time. FNS expects to award the grants for a mix of urban and rural projects. The grants will provide for an implementation phase of up to one year and a minimum of 2 years of operation.

FNS plans to award the grants to selected grantees by September 30, 2009. State agencies will be allowed to use the grant funds for the duration of the project period, not to exceed three years. The pilots must be completed no later than September 30, 2012. Grants for FY 2009 will be awarded as **cooperative agreements**. FNS will require each State agency to submit a quarterly and final Financial Status Reports (Standard form 425/425A, which replaces SF-269/269A). In addition, quarterly progress reports and a final report will be required. The first draft of the final report will be due at the end of the cooperative agreement and upon receipt of FNS comments, a revised final report will be due 90 days later.

FNS will also award and oversee a contract for an independent evaluation of the pilots. State agencies will be required to comply with the evaluation requirements and will be invited to review any key evaluation deliverables.

Copies of this Request for Application may be obtained electronically on the FNS website www.fns.usda.gov/ora and on www.grants.gov. If questions arise about the Request for Applications, FNS will post a list of these questions and Agency responses will be available on this site. Direct other questions regarding this Request for Applications to Gregory Walton, Grants Officer, Grants & Fiscal Policy Division, Food and Nutrition Service, USDA, at greg.walton@fns.usda.gov.

ELIGIBLE APPLICANTS FOR THE GRANTS

Competition for the grants is open to the 51 State agencies³ that administer SNAP. FNS expects State grantees to collaborate with other State and local government agencies, non-profit organizations, faith-based organizations, and/or commercial entities that have prior experience with the target population and/or offer a needed service, **and** are committed to the goals of this endeavor such that they can continue the collaboration and support expansion of the pilot activities to the target population statewide. These expectations are necessary to meet the Congressional interest in projects that are reproducible, sustainable and broad-based. State agencies may also apply on behalf of local SNAP agencies interested in operating a pilot.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF AWARD

This cooperative agreement will be awarded and administered in accordance with the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011-2036) and applicable regulations and OMB grant circulars. A full listing of the applicable documents can be found in Attachment B, Terms and Conditions of Award. **Copies of these documents are available from the OMB website (www.WhiteHouse.gov/OMB/grants) or the Grants Officer upon request.**

³ Includes 50 States and District of Columbia.

Cooperative agreements are assistance mechanisms and subject to the same administrative requirements as grants; however, they are different from either a grant or a contract. Cooperative agreements will allow more involvement and collaboration by FNS in the project compared to a grant, and they provide less direction of project activities than a contract. The roles and responsibilities of both the State agency and FNS will be stated in the cooperative agreement.

LEGISLATIVE AUTHORITY

The authority for these grant projects is provided by section 17(a)(1) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (the Act), 7 U.S.C. 2026(a)(1), which allows the Secretary to award grants to State agencies and others to undertake research that will improve the effectiveness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in delivering nutrition-related benefits. The Secretary is also authorized by section (17)(b)(1), 7 U.S.C. 2026(b)(1), **to waive any requirement of this Act** that is necessary to conduct pilot projects of limited duration in one or more site in order to test Program changes that might increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program.

Pilots operating under demonstration authority are required to operate within an **acceptable level of cost neutrality** for SNAP. Although the pilots will be designed to increase participation in the target population, total SNAP benefits should not cost more than it would cost to add a comparable number of new participants (elderly or working poor) in a similar but non-demonstration site. FNS measures cost neutrality in terms of benefit levels only. Administrative expenses are not considered in determining whether a pilot is cost neutral.

Demonstration restrictions are discussed in the section Unallowable Designs.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), formerly known as the Food Stamp Program (FSP), helps low-income individuals purchase food so that they can obtain a nutritious diet. The program is currently serving an average of 32 million persons in 14 million households each month.

An important measure of the Program's performance is the participation rate—the proportion of people eligible for benefits who participate. In 2006 (the most recent year for which participation data by subgroup are available), 67 percent of persons eligible for SNAP received benefits. Two subgroups have consistently participated at much lower rates— persons age 60 and older and persons living in households with employed members (working poor). In 2006, only 34 percent of eligible elderly persons and 56 percent of eligible employed persons received SNAP benefits. Together, these two subgroups account for nearly two-thirds of the eligible adult population that did not participate in SNAP. Approximately 40 percent of nonparticipating adults were above the age of 60 years old and 25 percent were employed adults between the ages of 18 and 59 years old. The remainder included adults who were unemployed or out of the labor force, many of whom were able-bodied childless adults subject to restricted periods of eligibility.⁴

⁴ The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 temporarily suspended restricted periods of eligibility for

On a national level, more detailed information is available on the characteristics of these groups and the reasons why they do not participate.⁵

Profile of SNAP-Eligible Elderly Nonparticipants

SNAP is the primary source of food assistance for low-income elderly (age 60 and older) persons. However, the majority of eligible elderly persons do not participate in SNAP despite a higher asset test, a net rather than gross income eligibility limit, an uncapped excess shelter deduction, an excess medical deduction, longer certification periods, hardship waivers for in-person interviews, and special outreach efforts.

In 2006, 4.2 million elderly persons in 3.7 million households elected not to receive SNAP benefits that they were entitled to receive. Most nonparticipating elderly persons lived alone or with another elderly person (68 and 13 percent, respectively, of nonparticipant households with elderly members). Elderly nonparticipants who lived alone were mostly women, non-Hispanic Caucasians, residing in urban areas and receiving Social Security payments. Almost 40 percent were 80 years old and older, 32 percent were in their 70s and less than 30 percent were in their 60s. Across all age groups, participation rates were lowest for the eldest of seniors: one out of five eligible households with seniors age 80 years old and older and one out of three eligible households with seniors of ages 75 to 79 years old participated in SNAP. As a result, these ages account for almost half of eligible nonparticipating households with elderly.

A significant segment of the eligible elderly population forgoes substantial levels of food assistance. Roughly 20 percent of elderly persons living alone, 50 percent of pure elderly households of two, and 70 percent of households with elderly and nonelderly members did not receive benefits of \$50 to over \$200 a month. Without these benefits, the risk of nutritionally inadequate diets increases. This can contribute to or exacerbate chronic and acute diseases, hasten the development of degenerative diseases associated with aging, and delay recovery from illness.

In contrast, however, half of the 3.7 million households with elderly that did not participate were eligible only for the minimum SNAP benefit of \$10. Their rate of participation was only 15 percent. It is unknown whether the increase in the minimum benefit to \$16 that began April 1, 2009 will affect participation by those eligible for low SNAP benefits.

There is currently no simple mechanism for distinguishing households with significant food assistance needs from the majority who are entitled to the minimum benefit. Both populations have similar characteristics. Except for those eligible for the maximum benefit, 88 percent of all nonparticipant households with elderly received social security benefits.

unemployed able-bodied childless adults. The suspension of time limits was effective from April 1, 2009 through September 30, 2010.

⁵ Wolkwitz, K., *Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2000 to 2006*.
McConnell, S. & Michael P. *The Reaching the Working Poor and Poor Elderly Survey: What We Learned and Recommendations for Future Research*

There are several other challenges for reaching needy elderly households. These include:

- 25 percent of them are spread across rural areas, a factor that affects strategies for finding and serving these seniors with limited pilot resources,
- other popular elderly programs such as congregate meals and meals-on-wheels serve seniors with higher incomes and are designed to meet other objectives such as greater social interaction. Seniors eligible for SNAP are a subset of this group and may be reluctant to reveal their circumstances,
- life styles vary across age groups which include employable elderly persons (typically those age 60 to 65 years old), active retirees (typically between age 65 and 80) and less active and homebound elderly (typically those above age 80 years old), and
- about 20 percent of elderly nonparticipant households include nonelderly members and these eligible households participate at the lowest rates. About a third of these include children.

This suggests that one approach will not meet the needs of the varied segments of the SNAP-eligible elderly population. Instead, projects that tailor activities to the challenges of specific subsets of the elderly population are more likely to be effective at increasing SNAP participation among elderly in the pilot sites and more amenable to statewide implementation.

Profile of SNAP-Eligible Working Poor Nonparticipants

Participation rates for eligible working poor have been steadily increasing since the decade began with rates of around 45 percent. In 2006, 57 percent of eligible working poor individuals received SNAP benefits. Progress in reaching more households with earnings can be attributed to a variety of legislative, economic and policy factors. Welfare reform and the economy played a key role in the decline of SNAP households' dependency on Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) and greater reliance on earnings. Many subsequent SNAP policies reduced the burden associated with SNAP application and case maintenance. These include State options to provide transitional SNAP to TANF leavers, simplified income reporting, less burdensome vehicle asset rules, longer certification periods, and expanded hours of operation to accommodate working recipients.

While participation rates have improved, in the majority of States, rates for the working poor in 2006 were significantly lower than rates for all eligible persons. In 8 of these States, the rate for the working poor was more than 10 percentage points lower (other States also had much lower rates for employed persons but the difference in rates was not statistically significant). As a result, the national participation rate for eligible working poor has been about 10 percentage points less than the participation rate for all eligible people.⁶

SNAP participation rates also vary by type of eligible households with earnings. Within this population, less than half of all eligible families with children that were headed by married adults or contained multiple adults received food assistance from SNAP. This contrasts sharply with

⁶ Cunnynggham, K., Castner, L. & Schirm, A. *Reaching Those in Need: State Food Stamp Participation Rates in 2006*.

single-parent households who participated at relatively high rates but who accounted for a smaller proportion of the eligible working poor population.

Of the 17 million nonelderly adults eligible for SNAP benefits, 6 million did not participate in the Program and 42 percent of these were employed. A major difficulty in reaching these low-income adults is that their income and eligibility for SNAP is more dynamic than for elderly, disabled and single parents with children.⁷ Even in economic downturns when individuals rely on SNAP for longer periods, income fluctuates as individuals lose jobs, rely on savings and other financial resources, find alternative employment or work multiple part-time positions. In light of this, strategies to increase SNAP access among eligible working households may require approaches that target persons while they are in spells of unemployment as well as spells of under-employment.

Past Research on Barriers to Participation

A number of studies based on survey data⁸ have identified the major reasons why so many low-income elderly and working poor persons do not participate in SNAP. These include lack of accurate information about Program rules, concerns about the application process, an expectation of low benefits, the stigma of using benefits in stores and going to welfare offices, perceptions that they do not need assistance and other administrative and psychological barriers. Most respondents provide multiple reasons. The weight they give to individual barriers, however, varies across studies. In one study that asked respondents to identify the most important barrier, the most frequent responses were a need to stand apart from persons who receive assistance combined with a conviction that they can manage without government help. This explains, in part, why households do not participate in SNAP even when they know they are eligible.⁹

The belief that they do not need *food assistance* is understandable among elderly individuals. As people age they undergo physiological changes that affect their appetite and thus their interest in eating an appropriate diet. Among poor elderly, unresolved problems with their teeth and other medical ailments not only reduce interest in food but become an obstacle in accepting application assistance for SNAP benefits. This observation prompted the Elderly Nutrition Pilot in Maine (discussed below), which featured one-on-one application assistance, to focus first on their clients' most pressing problems before the SNAP application. They found that receptiveness to SNAP by eligible elderly persons increased as these other problems were addressed.

Insights into how working poor households manage without assistance emerged from the ethnographic study of low-income families in three urban centers (the Tri-City Study) who were eligible but did not receive TANF benefits.¹⁰ The numerous and intensive interviews with respondents revealed that these families developed complex sets of resources that helped them "make ends meet." These included housing assistance, cash support from employment, sometime multiple jobs, and help from friends and relatives. Interviews revealed, however, that

⁷ Cody, S., Castner, L., Mabli, J. & Sykes, J. *Dynamics of Food Stamp Program Participation, 2001-2003*.

⁸ See References and Citations

⁹ McConnell, S., Ponza M., & Cohen R. *Report on the Pretest of the Reaching the Working Poor and Poor Elderly Survey, Volume I*.

¹⁰ Burton, L., Benjamin, A., et. al. *An Ethnographic Study of TANF Non-Entrants: Welfare Experiences, Diversions, and Making Ends Meet*.

many caregivers and their families compromised their physical and mental health by working too hard or settling for more precarious arrangements such as living in unsafe areas. Interviews also revealed that the composition of these sets of resources changed frequently requiring new adaptations, and that the families experienced many hardships and struggles along the way

The challenge for improving SNAP access for these eligible working households includes the task of altering their attitudes towards SNAP so that they can include a stable source of food assistance to their set of resources. Program simplification options are already available to address some of the administrative barriers. For example the simplified reporting option eliminates the need to report monthly fluctuations in income as long as the change does not affect the household's eligibility. The pilots offer an opportunity to find solutions to more difficult attitudinal barriers and to collect information on how well they perform.

FNS Efforts to Encourage SNAP Participation

Over the last ten years, FNS has undertaken a number of projects designed to encourage food stamp participation by eligible people. Many of these have focused on the elderly through the use of one or more of the following methods:

- to provide information and raise awareness of the Program and their potential eligibility among low-income elderly;
- to test Program simplifications and provide assistance to make it easier for elderly people to apply for benefits; and
- to test changes in the nature of the benefit that could make the Program more appealing to elderly clients.

Elderly Nutrition Pilots—The most rigorous of the outreach projects were the Elderly Nutrition Pilots conducted between 2002 and 2005 in eight counties in six States.¹¹ These pilots were designed to test three approaches to encouraging food stamp participation among eligible elderly persons:

- *Simpler eligibility determination rules:* In two counties in Florida, applicants did not have to submit documentation of income and expenses. The simplification was also publicized by a prominent official who encouraged low-income elderly in a public service announcement (PSA) to contact a call center for more information.
- *One-on-one application assistance:* In four counties, overall, in Maine, Michigan and Arizona, assistance workers explained the application, helped each applicant assemble required documents, and often completed the forms on their behalf. An on-line application was also used by assistance workers in the Michigan site to complete applications in senior centers.
- *Commodity alternative:* In two counties, overall, in Connecticut and North Carolina recipients were provided a monthly food package with a retail value of \$60 to \$70 instead of food stamp benefits.

¹¹ Cody, S.& Ohls, J. *Evaluation of the USDA Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations, Volume I.*

An independent evaluation the Elderly Nutrition Pilots found participation increases of more than 20 percent in the simplified eligibility pilot. This was also the lowest-cost pilot to implement and operate, with a net cost of \$402 per new food stamp household. Elderly participation in the more successful application assistance and commodity alternative sites rose by over 30 percent. The remaining sites experienced smaller increases or were unable to successfully implement the pilot. Costs for the one-on-one application assistance pilots were, on average, higher than for the simplified eligibility demonstration (\$301 to \$826 per new household). The commodity alternative pilots were the most costly and difficult to implement, with costs per new household ranging from \$1,719 to \$2,825.

Combined Application Projects (CAPS)—In addition to the Elderly Nutrition pilots, FNS has approved demonstration projects designed to make it easier for elderly and disabled Supplemental Security Income (SSI) recipients to receive SNAP benefits by using increased automation, simplified and standardized benefit levels, and eliminating the need for them to visit their local SNAP offices. Standardized CAP benefits may be slightly higher or lower than comparable SNAP benefits depending on the State model and the household’s shelter costs. State CAPs are required to be cost neutral, i.e., new participants should receive on average the same amount under CAP as they would have received participating in SNAP. The first CAP was implemented in South Carolina in 1995; thirteen State agencies now operate statewide CAP demonstrations, and nine additional States have approved plans or proposals under review.

Evaluation results from South Carolina indicate that the CAP simplified the application process for elderly SSI recipients, limited administrative costs, and improved client satisfaction.¹² Approximately two-thirds of South Carolina’s CAP participants were either “somewhat” or “very satisfied” with the ease of completing the application process, the amount of time it took to explain the application process, or the accuracy of information that was provided to them. Nearly 80 percent of new applicants indicated that they thought the application process was easy, or at least neither easy nor hard. While other State projects have not been evaluated as comprehensively, the available data indicate some positive results. In Texas, approximately 60 percent of those contacted through an outreach mailing enrolled in CAP. Overall, SNAP participation among SSI recipients in CAP states is higher than in other States (35 percent vs. 24 percent in 2005), with substantial participation increases occurring following implementation of the CAP.

Other Waiver Demonstrations—More recently, FNS has approved demonstrations that simplify the application process and the calculation of SNAP benefits.

- In the *Standardized Medical Deduction Demonstrations* elderly or disabled members with medical expenses over \$35 a month receive a fixed medical deduction from income, with the option of claiming actual expenses if their expenses exceed the standard by \$35. Because FNS requires cost neutrality for such projects each State agency reduces its Standard Utility Allowance by a set amount across the board to offset project costs. Without such offsetting measures, this approach could significantly increase Federal

¹² Boussy, C., Jackson, R. & Wemmerus, N. *Evaluation of SSI/FSP Joint Processing Alternatives Demonstration Final Report.*

benefit costs. The first standard medical deduction demonstration began in 2002; currently seven State agencies—Iowa, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, South Dakota, Texas, Vermont, and Wyoming—are operating such projects. FNS is working with Illinois to develop a standardized medical demonstration project.

- Several States are running *Elderly/Disabled Simplified Application Demonstrations*. Alabama, Florida, and South Carolina are using a simplified food stamp application to determine the eligibility of target households with no face-to-face or telephone interview. Verification requirements are also minimized. Data reported by the States indicate success in each of these projects in certifying elderly households and keeping them on the Program. Client surveys show high levels of participant satisfaction with the demonstration procedures.

SNAP Modernization—Many State agencies have been modifying their certification processes in order to improve client access and service while maintaining or reducing administrative expenses. Although there is great variation in the content and emphasis of the changes among the States, the approaches include changes in three categories: SNAP policy, organization of the work, and use of technology. Examples of the most common policy changes include alternatives to face-to-face interviews for hardship cases and alternatives to telephone interviews in cases where face-to-face interviews have been waived. Organizational changes include consolidating offices and developing specialized service centers; implementing large-scale call centers to handle client applications, change reports and recertification; and alignment of staff responsibilities by function instead of by case. Another dimension of organizational change is partnering with commercial businesses and non-profit community organizations. Partners are providing additional locations for clients to apply for SNAP and performing specific functions normally handled in the local offices (e.g., casefile maintenance). States are also expanding the application of technology to SNAP and other related programs. These changes are expanding on-line application, providing call centers for reporting and retrieval of case information, replacing paper with electronic casefiles, and improving linkages between data bases including the streaming of data from applications to legacy systems and vice versa.

FNS is just beginning to assess the effects of modernization that requires potential clients to use new technologies and alternatives to the standard worker/client relationship. The evaluation of Florida's comprehensive modernization of SNAP provided conflicting information on the effect on elderly participation.¹³ Focus group discussions and anecdotal information suggest that elderly and disabled may have been initially diverted from applying for food assistance. However, analysis of participation trends showed no change in the elderly proportion of total SNAP participants over the first year of operation. Client satisfaction with shorter and less frequent office visits was evident and working adults were able to apply at home and check their case status using the on-line application and call centers.

Outreach Grants—FNS has awarded grants to a wide range of community-based organizations to increase participation among eligible but under-represented subgroups. Low-income elderly and workers were frequently targeted or included in the audience for these outreach initiatives. Most of these projects provided some form of application assistance, from simple referrals to

¹³ Cody, S., Nogales, R. & Sama Martin, E. *Modernization of the Food Stamp Program in Florida*.

actual help in preparing and filing applications. An independent assessment of the grants awarded in 2002 documented some key lessons learned.¹⁴ They found that *local office cooperation was crucial for successful outreach and that successful outreach requires more than basic education and information dissemination*. The study reaffirmed earlier findings that elderly and immigrants tend to distrust the application process and that good translators and outreach workers with similar backgrounds were important for reaching these groups. The study reported that *connecting with low-income working families was challenging because they often did not frequent places where outreach was occurring*. In terms of the outreach activities, the study noted the importance of follow-up assistance with the initial application and the unpredictability of relying on volunteers for application assistance who varied in their abilities to do home visits, pre-screening, and interviews. All of the projects were conducted on a small scale.

FNS Outreach Campaign—Over the last 10 years, FNS has also supported the use of radio advertising to raise awareness about the nutrition benefits of food stamps and to dispel popular misconceptions about eligibility and low benefits. FNS materials for State and local providers include the “Step 1” pre-screening tool; a photo gallery of copyright-free images; educational materials (including *10 Myths and Facts About Food Stamps and Seniors*) in nearly 3 dozen languages; posters, flyers, and brochures; a promising practices collection; television and radio public service announcements; and tool kits with step-by-step guidance on outreach techniques, key messages, media relations and partnership development. FNS has provided training and technical assistance to State agencies, and encouraged the development of State outreach plans which include strategies targeted to seniors.¹⁵

While the impact of these outreach efforts has not been evaluated formally, calls to the food stamp toll-free number peak during national radio advertising, and FNS’ outreach materials are well-received by State and local Program operators.

Key Findings on Effective Strategies for Increasing SNAP Participation

The body of quantitative research on the effectiveness of various approaches to encouraging SNAP participation is somewhat limited and has focused only on elderly persons. FNS research to date suggests several key lessons learned:

- It is possible to increase elderly participation significantly, as demonstrated in the Elderly Nutrition Pilots.
- Policy simplification is quite popular, as suggested by the experience with CAPs and other demonstration waivers.
- Successful strategies for the elderly must include more than simple application assistance; more substantial modification to the application process and/or more hands-on help with the current application process will likely be necessary.

¹⁴ Zedlewski, S, et. al. *Evaluation of Food Stamp Research Grants to Improve Access Through the Use of New Technology and Partnerships*.

¹⁵ See <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/default.htm>.

- The administrative *cost associated with increasing elderly participation through application assistance* may be significant.

SCOPE OF PILOTS

The objective of the pilots is to test the feasibility and effectiveness of a wide range of approaches suitable for implementation on a larger scale to identify successful models for increasing participation in SNAP by two key underserved populations—low-income elderly and working poor individuals. FNS is interested in testing these approaches in a mix of urban and rural areas.

This project will build on the promise of prior research demonstrated in various sites and upon other recent State endeavors with policy simplification, modernization of SNAP operations, and partnerships with other government and non-profit agencies. FNS is looking for strategies that will be effective in the current economy when reliance on SNAP is increasing and in better economic environments when clients rely more intermittently on SNAP.

The pilots will be independently evaluated to determine their effectiveness in changing the participation behavior of elderly and working poor who are eligible but not receiving SNAP benefits. The evaluation will focus on quantitative measures of application outcomes, overall participation changes, benefit costs and administrative costs. The research will also collect some qualitative data to gauge awareness of the pilot within the target population, client and worker satisfaction with pilot operations and outcomes, and whether the pilot can be sustained and operated Statewide.

Target Group— State agencies and their partners will be asked to choose between low-income elderly and working poor. FNS encourages States to develop strategies that will be most effective for specific subgroups of elderly or working poor. Examples include but are not limited to:

- Elderly capable of transporting themselves to areas where assistance can be provided or homebound elderly persons.
- Low-income elderly or workers in urban centers or those spread across large rural areas.
- Working poor or elderly who rely on food pantries.
- Recent lay-offs from a prominent local industry.
- Participants in other programs such as Medicaid, State pharmaceutical assistance programs, Family Caregiver Support Program, rural provider organizations, Food Pantries, local employment search or training programs, Promotores¹⁶, LIEAP and EITC.

Elements of a Project Design—Offerors are expected to develop a package of policy, organizational, and other operational alternatives that address the participation obstacles and challenges faced by the target population. Options include but are not limited to:

¹⁶ *Promotores* and *Promotoras* are community members who promote health in their own communities. By integrating information about health and the health care system into the community's culture, language and value system, they reduce many of the barriers to health services.

Simplified Eligibility and Benefit Determination—There are a number of strategies available to reduce the burden of SNAP application. Alternate sources of information (other programs, earlier applications) can be used to complete an application. Application forms can be redesigned to use less jargon and better print (large for elderly) and tailored for different subgroups. Time in the local agency office can be reduced through on-line applications, alternate locations for applications, and greater use of telephone interviews. Drop boxes for submitting verification and the availability of xeroxing and faxing services can reduce the burden of verification requirements.

Application Assistance—Findings from the Elderly Nutrition Pilots demonstrated that one-on-one application assistance is crucial for changing application behavior of eligible elderly persons. Assistance provided by other seniors (peer-to-peer) and linkages to other services that were needed were successful variations. Instead of volunteers, public service employment slots from the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) were used to provide application assistance in the Maine and Arizona sites.

Call Centers—Intermediaries that provide SNAP information and eligibility screening during nontraditional hours can address initial resistance to SNAP.

Technology Assistance—As more State agencies provide access on-line, some eligible elderly and working persons may miss the advantages of modernization. Training on how to complete on-line SNAP applications or SNAP application forms for mailing could be added to the agendas of other needed services such as job search, nutrition education, and English-as-a-Second Language classes.

Required Design Elements—The management plan should include explicit (written) buy-in from all partners and clearly identify their roles. The plan must include activities that increase general awareness of the project in the demonstration sites. Promotion campaigns that demonstrate commitment from State officials are desirable because they communicate the importance of the pilot to all stakeholders: clients, their support groups, pilot staff and local office SNAP staff. Core messages are also useful for the development of materials that will be used to promote SNAP benefits. The FNS has developed both research-based core messages and toolkits that can be accessed at <http://www.fns.usda.gov/fsp/outreach/default.htm>. Coordination with FNS on media campaigns is recommended.

Unallowable Project Designs — These include:

- Changes in eligibility and benefit determination rules that expand eligibility or increase benefit levels such that other adjustments in the calculation of benefits would be needed to maintain overall cost-neutrality **will not** be approved. This includes demonstrations that require standardized SNAP benefit amounts.
- No new or expanded SSI/CAP projects will be considered under this grant authority.
- Statewide pilots are not allowable because within-State comparison sites are needed for the evaluation.

- Projects that go beyond current demonstration authority such as alternative forms of SNAP benefits (e.g., cash, commodities, paper vouchers) are not allowable.

Quality Control—Households that participate in SNAP are subject to Quality Control (QC) reviews. Demonstration participants may be exempted from QC when the modified rules are substantially different from the regular SNAP rules. FNS will allow QC exemptions for pilots with substantial rule changes that lessen application burden and reporting, but the State Agency must provide for the collection of sufficient information that would permit an assessment of case and payment errors to determine the effect of the rule changes on SNAP error rates. The additional administrative costs of QC-related data collection are eligible for funding through the grant because these costs are necessary to support the evaluation. For other pilots, FNS will make determinations about the QC designation of elderly or working poor participants in pilot areas after the review of State agencies' requests for waivers is completed.

PILOT REQUIREMENTS

Cooperation with Evaluation

Grantees will be required to support the evaluation effort. State agencies will be expected to assist in identifying other parts of the State that are similar to the pilot site(s) with respect to factors such as the number and characteristics of eligible nonparticipants (elderly or working poor), administrative organization of local SNAP offices, unemployment levels, recent layoffs, population density, use of SNAP waivers and presence of other demonstrations.

State agencies will also be required to provide data for pilot and comparison sites in a baseline period and during the operation of the pilot. Grantees will be expected to provide the following:

- copies of automated administrative case records for designated months that will be used to identify and compare numbers and characteristics of SNAP participants in demonstration sites with those in comparison sites and in the entire State,
- data on the status of applications that are submitted in the pilot sites to assess rates of completion, approval and denial,
- data on the costs of the demonstration for all major stakeholders,
- data on the impact of the demonstration on QC errors, if required,
- assistance in obtaining site visit observations, and
- assistance in the identification of subjects for surveys, if approved for data collection by FNS and OMB.

Grantees will be required to attend a one-day orientation meeting at FNS headquarters in October 2009 to meet FNS and evaluation staff, to review the research design and to discuss preparations for meeting the research objectives. A follow-up meeting will occur at the conclusion of the pilots to present findings and exchange information on lessons learned. Please include this required travel and associated costs within the budget plan.

A list of the research objectives for the evaluation study of the pilots that will be conducted by the FNS' contractor is presented in Attachment D.

Reporting Requirements

Quarterly Reports—Quarterly progress and financial progress reports must be submitted to FNS. As outlined in 7 CFR 3016, Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements, quarterly progress reports must provide a description of the activities conducted during the reporting period, major accomplishments with complete dates and budget, deviations from the proposed plan, difficulties encountered, solutions developed to overcome difficulties, and major planned activities for the next quarter. The State agency grantee is responsible for obtaining the necessary information from the other partners to complete this report. These reports are due 30 days after the end of each calendar quarter. For the quarter ending December 31, the report is due January 31.

Final Report—A final report of up to 10 pages will be due at the conclusion of the cooperative agreement. This report will be composed of a short Executive Summary and the following:

- A project description which includes a concise summary of the major accomplishments, the difficulties encountered and the solutions developed to resolve the difficulties;
- A discussion of the project results and lessons learned;
- Plans for the continuation and the potential transferability of the pilot; and
- Recommendations for future improvements in pilot.

Attached to the final report should be copies of materials used in the operation of the pilot that may be useful in the consideration of the transferability of the pilot. Examples of relevant materials are media or publicity releases and training manuals. Links to materials on websites should also be included.

More detailed specifications for the report will be included in the cooperative agreements.

The final financial status report will be due 90 days after September 30, 2012.

EVALUATION OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

Applications will be initially screened to make sure that they meet the designated focus area. Applications will also be screened for inclusion of memoranda of understanding, statements of commitment from proposed sites and partners, and all required forms. Applications that DO NOT meet these initial requirements **will not be evaluated further and will not be forwarded to the review panel**. After the initial screening of applications, FNS will convene a panel of technical and SNAP staff from FNS and other qualified individuals to review and determine the technical merits of each grant application. The panel will read each grant application according to how well it addresses each application component. The panel will assign each application a score using the evaluation criteria and weights specified below.

Technical Evaluation Criteria and Weights

Project Design and Implementation

40 points

- Proposal describes and provides data on the target population, the subgroups that will be served and its needs.
- Proposal demonstrates an understanding of the barriers to participation and the challenges that must be addressed in order to improve access to SNAP by the target population.
- Proposal identifies meaningful goal(s) and interim objectives and the pilot's design and implementation are clearly linked to these goals and objectives.
- Description of the design and implementation tasks is thorough and explains how challenges will be addressed.
- The proposed sites for the pilot and comparison sites and locations within these sites are compatible with the goals and objectives of the project and the research objectives.
- Pilot will use methods that could be incorporated into ongoing SNAP operations and adopted in other States.
- Proposal shows understanding of the evaluation needs and reporting requirements.
- Proposal includes a promising approach for promoting the pilot over the course of its operation.

Organization Structure and Experience

15 points

- Partners with pivotal roles have the required experience to perform these roles within the time and financial constraints of the cooperative agreement.
- Letters of commitment/memoranda of understanding are included in the application from partner agencies and from local SNAP offices in demonstration sites. Local SNAP offices have been consulted about the pilot and are willing to assist in the evaluation (e.g., provide data).
- Proposal demonstrates creative use of partnerships that promise a more effective and efficient approach for increasing SNAP participation by the target group.

Key Personnel

15 points

- Key personnel have the necessary education, skills, and experience for their proposed roles on the project. Supporting documentation (i.e., resume/vita, and position descriptions for vacant positions) is included for all key personnel.

- The time commitment of key personnel appears to be appropriate for their role on the project. Supporting documentation (i.e., letters of support from supervisors) is included for all key personnel.
- The roles and duties of all key personnel, including key vacant positions, are thoroughly and clearly explained. Proposal identifies person designated for working with evaluators.

Management Plan

20 points

- The management plan provides oversight necessary to ensure high quality products, services, or outcomes and to keep the project on time and within budget, including a clearly defined chain of command, adequate contingency plans for key personnel, and appropriate plans for managing outside personnel. (15)
- Proposal has clearly specified timelines and milestones. Implementation schedule is reasonable and compatible with the overall deadline. (5)

Budget Plan

10 points

- The proposed budget request is adequate to support the project and detailed calculations and budget details for both Federal and non-Federal resources are provided.
- Appropriate budget narrative is provided, including descriptions of how costs within the budget categories were derived and links between expenditures and specific activities/tasks.

The award will be made to Applicants whose proposals, when all criteria are considered, represent the best value to the Government.

The selection official will consider each panel’s recommendations; however he or she may consider other USDA or FNS priorities such as geographic, demographic or socioeconomic diversity, and agency priorities in addition to the scores assigned by the technical review panels.

The selection official may also determine that, based on their scores, few of the applications are of technical merit. In such a case, FNS may make fewer awards or smaller awards than expected or make no awards. In addition, FNS reserves the option to select one or more lower rated applications in order to achieve a diversity of projects and regional representation.

TIME COMMITMENT AND RESPONSIBILITIES

A minimum time commitment of 50 percent is required for the designated Project Director. No more than 2 staff positions can be combined to reach the 50 percent.

The State agency is responsible for oversight of grant activities and fiscal matters. The agency will exercise effective internal control of funds that are provided to sub-grantees.

USE OF GRANT FUNDS

All costs must be considered as allowable, allocable, necessary and reasonable in accordance with OMB Circular A-87; and A-21, and A-122 where appropriate. Allowable use of funds includes, but is not limited to, personnel costs; training; translation of forms; other supplies; printing, duplication, and dissemination of materials; development of Public Service Announcements; and technology (both hardware and software) necessary for operating the pilot and/or participating in the evaluation of the pilot.

LETTER OF INTENT

Any State agency planning to submit an application to conduct *Reaching Underserved Elderly and Working Poor in SNAP—FY 2009 Pilots* should complete and submit the Intent to Submit an Application Form (Attachment A) by May 21, 2009. This Intent form does not obligate the State agency in any way, but will provide useful information to FNS in preparing for the application review and selection.

Forms may be submitted by mail or electronically. (See Attachment A.)

APPLICATION DUE DATE

The complete application package **must be received** by FNS at the address listed below on or before 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time (EDT) on Monday, July 13, 2009. Applications received after the deadline date and/or time will be deemed ineligible and will not be reviewed or considered. Late and/or incomplete applications will not be considered in this competition. We **WILL NOT** consider any additions or revisions to applications once they are received.

SUBMISSION OF APPLICATION

Applications may be submitted by hand delivery or mail, or electronically to www.grants.gov.

1. If choosing to submit the application by hand delivery or by mail, applications should be directed to the following address:

Gregory Walton, Grants Officer
Grants & Fiscal Policy Division
Food and Nutrition Services, USDA
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738
Alexandria, VA 22302
Greg.Walton@fns.usda.gov

We advise that you meet the deadline by hand delivering the application or by mailing it sufficiently in advance of the deadline to ensure its timely receipt. If you opt to mail your

application we strongly suggest using a mail delivery service that guarantees delivery and allows you to track delivery to FNS. **FNS will not accept faxed or e-mailed applications.**

For mailed or delivered applications, one original and two copies must be submitted. The original copy must be ready for copying (i.e. single-sided, unstapled, unbound and on 8 ½ x 11 paper).

2. The government-wide website www.grants.gov is designed for electronic submission of applications. If submitting the application electronically, we advise that you allow ample time to familiarize yourself with the system's requirements. You will need both a Data Universal Number (DUNS) and a Contract Registry Number (CCR) to access the system. You can contact Dun and Bradstreet at 1-800-234-3867 to obtain a DUNS number if you do not have one already.

All applicants that opt to submit their application via www.grants.gov must send an email to Gregory Walton at Greg.Walton@fns.usda.gov that the application was submitted through the grants.gov portal. This e-mail must be received no later than 5:00 p.m. Eastern Daylight Time on the application due date. Please be aware that the grants.gov system provides several confirmation notices; you need to be sure that you have confirmation that the application was *accepted*.

APPLICATION FORMAT AND REQUIREMENTS

Application Format—It is strongly suggested that applicants adhere to the following application format. Use of this format will make it easier for grant reviewers to locate the requested information and to evaluate your application.

Cover Sheet:

Name: State agency name and mailing address.

Single Point of Contact: Provide name of contact person, job title, mailing address, phone number, fax number, and email address.

Time period for planning and operating the proposed pilot: (Must operate for minimum of 2 years, not to exceed September 30, 2012).

Level of grant support requested: (up to \$500,000).

Table of Contents: Include a one-page table of contents.

Proposal Summary: Provide a one-page summary that describes the proposed activities and intended outcomes.

Technical Proposal: Provide information on the following:

Project Design and Implementation:

- Need for Research Project—Describe target population and proposed sites.
- Task Descriptions—Describe work that will be undertaken in the design, implementation and operation of the pilot.
- Roles of Partners—Identify partners and their contribution to the pilot

- Waiver Requests—Identify likely waivers and when they will be submitted to FNS.

Implementation Schedule: Present an overview of the schedule and key milestones.

Transferability and Sustainability: Discuss why this approach could be incorporated into SNAP operations within the State and in other States.

Key Personnel: Identify all persons who bear a substantive responsibility for managing, developing, and administering all significant components of the pilot, including the person who will be key contact for the evaluation and person(s) who will assist in the provision of case record data. Provide the following for key personnel:

- Current position and what their title on the project will be.
- Time commitment for each project-year.
- Specific role and duties in the project.
- Relevant experiences and how they relate to specific project duties.
- **In the appendix, attach** current Resume or Vita for key personnel. For key personnel positions that are currently **vacant** provide a position description and anticipated date of hire.

Experience of Proposed Partners: Provide information on the qualifications and prior experience of the organization(s) that will participate in the pilot. Include a short summary of each organization's structure and any other relevant information on office space, facilities and equipment that will be used in the pilot.

- Include **in the appendix** letters of endorsement and other references for the proposed subgrantee(s).

Management Plan: Provide information on the following:

- **Chain of Command and Responsibilities:** Provide a flowchart that shows all key personnel, the management relationships and whom has authority over whom. Include a written description of the flowchart. Identify who will prepare required quarterly performance reports and final report.
- **Contingency Plans:** Discuss contingency plans for ensuring that the project is not unduly disrupted by any unforeseen changes in key personnel.

Budget: Use the SF-424 and SF-424A forms (see Attachment C) to prepare a complete budget for the project. Provide amounts for all major budget categories. Please see Budget Checklist (Attachment D) for additional guidance.

Budget Narrative: Provide a detailed explanation for all funds requested on the Budget Form (SF-424A) and describe how those costs relate to the project goals, objectives and proposed activities. Details must be provided for both Federal and non-Federal resources. Non-Federal resources are all other Federal and non-Federal resources, including **in-kind** contributions.

It is suggested that budget amounts and computations be presented in a columnar format: first column, object class categories; second column, Federal resources; next column, non-Federal resources; and last column, total budget.

The budget should include funds for at least one project official to attend a one-day orientation meeting in October 2009 and a similar one-day meeting in September 2012 to discuss the independent evaluation and States' findings. The meetings will be held at FNS headquarters in Alexandria, Virginia.

Indirect Cost: Applicants claiming an indirect cost must attach a copy of the State agency's negotiated and approved rate.

Appendices: Include each of the following as **separate** appendices:

- Resumes and vitas for key personnel,
- Letters of support from supervisors of key personnel,
- Job descriptions for key personnel that must be hired,
- Copies of agreements or memoranda of understanding with other partner agencies and non-profit organizations,
- Subgrantee references,
- All supporting documentation.

Attachments: Assurances and Disclosure: (see Attachment C):

- Assurance – Non-Construction Programs, SF 424B; and
- Disclosure of Lobbying Activities, SF LLL.

Application Size Restrictions

1. Application content should typed on 8 ½" by 11" white paper, be single-spaced text, have at least 1" margins on top, bottom, and 12-point font size. **All pages should be numbered.**
2. The following page limits are required.
 - Technical Proposal: 15 pages
 - Resumes: 2 pages per resume
 - Budget Narrative: 3 pages

ATTACHMENT A – Letter of Intent

If you intend to submit an application for a cooperative agreement for a *Reaching Underserved Elderly and Working Poor in SNAP—FY 2009 Pilot*, please complete the section below and return this form by **May 21, 2009**. This intent does not obligate a State agency in any way, but will provide useful information to us as we prepare for the review and selection process. The intent can also be emailed. Thank you for your assistance. Please submit your Letter of Intent to:

Gregory Walton, Grants Officer
Grants & Fiscal Policy Division
USDA Food and Nutrition Service
3101 Park Center Drive, Room 738
Alexandria, VA 22302
Greg.Walton@fns.usda.gov

Reaching Underserved Elderly and Working Poor in SNAP- FY2009 Pilots

Intent to Submit an Application

State Agency Name and Address:

Project Director or Contact Person: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

State SNAP Director: _____

Telephone: _____ **Email:** _____

ATTACHMENT B – Terms and Conditions of Award

This cooperative agreement will be awarded and administered in accordance with 7 CFR Parts 3015, 3016, 3017, 3018, and 3019, and the applicable regulations and OMB grant circulars, as described below. **Copies of these documents are available from the OMB website (www.WhiteHouse.gov/OMB/grants) and from the Grants Officer, upon request.**

7 CFR Part 3015: “Uniform Federal Assistance Regulations” for Entitlement Programs (Reference OMB Circular A-110 Common Rule)

7 CFR Part 3016: “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Cooperative Agreements to State and Local Governments” other than Entitlement Programs (Reference OMB Circular A-102 Common Rule)

7 CFR Part 3017: Subparts A-E “Government-wide Debarment and Suspension (Non-procurement)”

7 CFR Part 3017: Subparts F “Government-wide Requirements for Drug-free Workplace (Grants)”

7 CFR Part 3018: “New Restrictions on Lobbying”

7 CFR Part 3019: “Uniform Administrative Requirements for Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals and Other Non-Profit Organizations”

OMB Circular A-21: Cost Principles for Educational Institutions

OMB Circular A-87: Cost Principles for State and Local Governments

OMB Circular A-122: Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations

41 CFR 1-15.2 (FAR Part 31): Cost Principles for For-Profit Organizations

OMB Circular A-133: Audits of State, Local Governments and Nonprofit Organizations

ATTACHMENT C – Application for Federal Assistance Package

Complete and sign the following forms: Application and instructions for federal assistance (SF-424)

- Budget information and instruction (SF-424A)
- Assurances – Non-construction programs (SF-424B)
- Disclosure of lobbying activities (SF LLL)

These federal forms are in an electronic version at www.grants.gov.

ATTACHMENT D – BUDGET CHECKLIST

This checklist will assist you in completing the budget narrative portion of the application. Please review the checklist to ensure the items below are addressed in the budget narrative.

	YES	NO
Personnel		
Did you include all key employees paid for by this grant under this heading?		
Are employees of the applicant's organization identified by name and position title?		
Did you reflect the current yearly salary as a percentage of time to be devoted to the project?		
Fringe Benefits		
Did you include your organization's fringe benefit amount along with the basis for the computation?		
Did you list the type of fringe benefits to be covered with Federal funds?		
Travel		
Are travel expenses itemized? For example origination/destination points, number and purpose of trips, number of staff traveling, mode of transportation and cost of each trip.		
Are the Attendee Objectives and travel justifications included in the narrative?		
Is the basis for the lodging estimates identified in the budget? For example include excerpt from travel regulations.		
Equipment		
Is the need for the equipment justified in the narrative?		
Are the types of equipment, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased listed in the budget?		
Is the basis for the cost per item or other basis of computation stated in the budget?		
Supplies		
Are the types of supplies, unit costs, and the number of items to be purchased reflected in the budget?		
Is the basis for the costs per item or other basis of computation stated?		
Contractual		
Are the products to be acquired or the professional services to be funded described in the budget?		
Has the justification for the need to contract or subgrant been included in the budget?		
For professional services, are the hours to be devoted to the project and the amounts to be charged to the project clearly stated?		
Is the methodology on how the applicant determined the contractual costs included in the budget?		
Are there sole-source contracts listed under this heading? If so, has sufficient information been provided in order to approve the use of a single source?		

Other		
Consultant Svcs. – Are all instances in which consultant services would be required listed in the budget?		
Consultant Svcs. – Is the need for consultant services justified in the budget?		
For all other line items listed under the “Other” heading, list all items to be covered under this heading along with the methodology on how the applicant derived the costs to be charged to the program.		
Indirect Costs		
Is the amount requested based upon a rate approved by a Federal Agency? If yes, is a copy of the negotiated rate agreement must be provided along with the application?		
If no negotiated agreement exists, the basis and the details of the indirect costs to be requested should also be reflected in the budget?		

ATTACHMENT E – Research Objectives of Evaluation Study of Pilots to be Conducted by Independent Contractor

The evaluation study of the *Reaching Underserved Elderly and Working Poor in SNAP—FY 2009 Pilots* will be conducted by an independent evaluator contracted by FNS. The evaluation will focus on eight study objectives and related research questions:

Objective 1: Provide a detailed description of each pilot.

- Describe the target audience(s) and the participation barriers identified for the target audience(s)? How were the barriers identified, that is, what were the indicators?
- Describe the changes to SNAP policies and procedures that were made in support of the project. What, if any, eligibility and reporting policy options or waivers were required?
- Describe any application assistance provided to potential SNAP clients and to those who submit SNAP applications.
- Describe how technology was used to support outreach activities and project management, including coordination between partners.
- Describe the roles of State and local SNAP staff and project partners working at different levels.
- Describe how the above features were intended to reduce the effect of individual barriers to participation among the target population.

Objective 2: Describe the processes involved in implementing each of the pilots.

- What steps were taken to implement each pilot (e.g., promotion of the demonstration to the target group, development of messages to promote SNAP participation, other outreach activities, staff training, and modifications to existing forms and computer systems)?
- What problems, if any, were encountered in implementing the demonstrations, and how were they addressed?
- What problems, if any, were encountered in establishing and maintaining partnerships among local SNAP agencies, community groups and other stakeholders?
- What features changed over time? Describe the context for the changes that were implemented or are anticipated.
- What relevant lessons were learned from the demonstrations?

Objective 3: Assess the effect of each demonstration on SNAP participation by the target population (eligible elderly or working poor households).

- Did SNAP participation by the target group change as a result of the demonstrations? Did SNAP participation among the target audience in each pilot change more or less than in the associated comparison site? What was the net effect on participation?
- What were the characteristics of demonstration participants and did the demographic profile change from a period before the demonstration was implemented? How did the characteristics compare to SNAP participants in comparison sites before and after pilot implementation?

Objective 4: How did each demonstration reduce application barriers? What was the overall effect of the demonstrations on client satisfaction?

- Was there a difference between pilot and comparison sites in the number of applications submitted by and approved for the target audience? What proportion of applications initiated by the target audience was completed and submitted? What proportion of applications submitted was approved, denied for procedural reasons, or denied because of ineligibility?
- If applications were initiated and submitted from different sources (for example, from partner sites or at home over the computer), what proportion came from the different venues?
- Did clients in the pilot sites view the SNAP application process to be more convenient, simpler and less costly than clients in the comparison sites?
- What activity, message, or program change had the most influence on bringing in new participants from the target group, as perceived by clients and workers?

Objective 5: Assess the effect of each pilot on the level of household SNAP benefits.

- Among demonstration participants, what was the average benefit level? How did the average benefit compare to benefits received by elderly or working poor who participated in the comparison sites?

Objective 6: Quantify, to the extent possible, the Federal, State and local administrative costs of the pilots, including those incurred by non-governmental partners.

- What costs were associated with the initial start-up of the pilots?
- What were the major costs associated with the ongoing administration of the pilots?
- If any, what were the in-kind contributions from non-profit organizations and volunteers?
- Overall, what was the net effect of the pilots on Federal SNAP administrative expenditures and on State and local agencies' administrative expenditures? Describe these net additional costs per appropriate unit.

Objective 7: What was the affect of each pilot on SNAP case and payment errors?

- What was the impact on the proportion of cases that were ineligible, received overissuances, or received underissuances?
- What was the impact on the proportion of dollars issued to ineligible households, overissued to eligible households, or underissued to eligible households?

Objective 8: Assess the sustainability of each pilot and the pre-requisites for expansion Statewide.

- What level of interest is there in continuing and/or expanding each pilot among key stakeholders?
- What pro/cons do stakeholders identify with continuing and/or expanding each pilot?
- What steps and resources will be needed to continue each pilot beyond the study period? To expand each pilot statewide? What are the challenges and likely success of obtaining these resources?
- What type of commitment are stakeholders willing to make in order to continue and/or expand each pilot?
- Describe changes that are likely if each pilot is continued and/or expanded? Would these changes affect costs? If so, how?

The evaluation will include impact and process evaluations for each site. A double difference design (compare pre-post trends in pilot sites to comparison sites) will be used to assess the effect of the pilots on SNAP participation. Administrative cost data will be used to assess cost-effectiveness. The comparison site(s) should resemble the demonstration site(s) in terms of urbanization, racial, ethnic and age composition, caseload size, economic factors, local office organization, and presence of other demonstrations.

ATTACHMENT F—References and Citations

Boussy, Carol, Russell H. Jackson, Nancy Wemmerus, et. al. *Evaluation of SSI/FSP Joint Processing Alternatives Demonstration Final Report*. Prepared by Decision Information Resources, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. January 2000.

Cody, Scott & James Ohls. *Evaluation of the USDA Elderly Nutrition Demonstrations, Volume I*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Economic Research Service, USDA. May 2005.

Cody, Scott, Laura A. Castner, James Mabli, & Julie Sykes. *Dynamics of Food Stamp Program Participation, 2001-2003*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. November 2007.

Cody, Scott, Renee Nogales, & Emily Sama Martin. *Modernization of the Food Stamp Program in Florida*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. February 2008.

Cunyngham, Karen E., Laura A. Castner and Allen L. Schirm. *Reaching Those in Need: State Food Stamp Participation Rates in 2006*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. November 2008.

Food Stamp Program Client Enrollment Assistance Demonstration Projects: Final Evaluation Report. Prepared by LTG Associate, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. July 1999.

McConnell, Sheena, Michael Ponza, & Rhoda R. Cohen. *Report on the Pretest of the Reaching the Working Poor and Poor Elderly Survey, Volume I*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. June 1999.

McConnell, Sheena & Michael Ponza. *The Reaching the Working Poor and Poor Elderly Survey: What We Learned and Recommendations for Future Research*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. December 1999.

Office of Research and Analysis. *Elderly Participation and the Minimum Benefit*. Prepared by the Food and Nutrition Service. November 2002.

Office of Research and Analysis. *The Effect of Simplified Reporting on Food Stamp Payment Accuracy*. Prepared by Food and Nutrition Service. October 2005.

Office of Research and Analysis. *An Assessment of the Sustainability of Food Stamp Outreach Projects*. Prepared by Food and Nutrition Service. June 2006

Ponza, Michael, James C. Ohls, Lorenzo Moreno, Amy Zambrowski & Rhoda Cohen. *Customer Service in the Food Stamp Program, Final Report*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. July 1999.

Wolkwitz, Kari, *Trends in Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2000 to 2006*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. June 2008.

Wolkwitz, Kari & Josh Leftin (2008). *Characteristic of Food Stamp Households: Fiscal Year 2007*. Prepared by Mathematica Policy Research, Inc. for the Food and Nutrition Service. September 2008.

Zedlewski, Sheila, David Wittenburg, Carolyn O'Brien, Robin Koralek, Sandra Nelson & and Gretchen Rowe. *Evaluation of Food Stamp Research Grants to Improve Access Through the Use of New Technology and Partnerships*. Prepared by The Urban Institute for the Food and Nutrition Service. October 2005.

The reports listed above are available on-line at www.fns.usda.gov/fns.

Burton, Linda M., Alan F. Benjamin, Tera R. Hurt, Stacy L. Woodruff, and Amy Kolak. An Ethnographic Study of TANF Non-entrants: Welfare Experiences, Diversions, and Making Ends Meet. November 2003. Part B of report, "A Study of TANF Non-Entrants," submitted to the Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Grant #01ASPE375A.

Posted at: http://www.jhu.edu/~welfare/moffitt_final1.pdf