



FOOD STAMP PARTICIPATION RATES: FISCAL YEAR 2004

Office of Analysis, Nutrition and Evaluation

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About 23 million of the 38 million individuals who were eligible for food stamp benefits in an average month of 2004 participated, a participation rate of 60 percent. The program provided 71 percent of the total benefits that all eligible individuals could receive, one indicator that people who are eligible for higher benefits are more likely to participate than others. The overall participation rate increased by nearly five percentage points between 2003 and 2004, the third annual increase after falling for seven years.

	Number Eligible	Rate (%)
All individuals (thousands)	38,400	60
Children	14,300	81
Adults	17,400	56
Elderly	6,700	28
Non-citizens	2,100	42
Citizen children living with non-citizens	2,900	51
Able-bodied, childless adults	2,900	31
Earnings	17,900	51
Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) ...	3,500	100
Supplemental Security Income (SSI)	5,100	97
Social Security	9,700	40
Income below poverty	27,100	75
Income above poverty	11,300	25
Urban	30,100	59
Rural	8,200	64
Total monthly benefits (dollars in millions)	\$2,800	71

Source: Barrett and Poikolainen (2006). [*Food Stamp Program Participation Rates: 2004*](#). Report prepared for the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

Note: Estimated participation rates that exceed 100 percent because of reporting errors in the survey data are truncated.