AgEcon SEARCH
RESEARCH IN AGRICULTURAL & APPLIED ECONOMICS

The World's Largest Open Access Agricultural & Applied Economics Digital Library

This document is discoverable and free to researchers across the globe due to the work of AgEcon Search.

Help ensure our sustainability.

Give to AgEcon Search

AgEcon Search
http://ageconsearch.umn.edu
aesearch@umn.edu

*Papers downloaded from **AgEcon Search** may be used for non-commercial purposes and personal study only. No other use, including posting to another Internet site, is permitted without permission from the copyright owner (not AgEcon Search), or as allowed under the provisions of Fair Use, U.S. Copyright Act, Title 17 U.S.C.*

Domestic Food Assistance...At a Glance

In fiscal 1992, the Federal Government spent $31.6 billion for food assistance benefits, 16.6 percent over the amount spent in fiscal 1991. The $4.5-billion increase was almost entirely due to additions to the Food Stamp Program ($3.5 billion), the National School Lunch Program ($378 million, including commodities), the Special Supplemental Food Program for Women, Infants, and Children (known as WIC, $265 million), and the Child Care Food Program ($163 million).

These are the largest domestic food assistance programs and are most responsive to the needy in times of economic distress. The recent recession, along with the accompanying unemployment, and adjustments for inflation, increased participation and program costs. By providing the needy with more buying power, these programs increase consumer purchasing and provide a stimulus toward economic recovery.

Participation in the Food Stamp Program rose from 22.6 million in fiscal 1991 to 25.4 million a year later. This caused a 20.5-percent increase in benefit costs and raised the total outlays from $18.8 billion in fiscal 1991 to $22.4 billion in fiscal 1992.

Participation in the National School Lunch Program increased from 24.2 million children during 1991 to 24.5 million in 1992. Students receiving free lunches increased from 10.3 million to 11.1 million per day from 1991 to 1992, while participation in paid lunches declined by 450,000.

The WIC program had an 11.5-percent increase in total costs and a 10.6-percent increase in participation in 1992 over that in 1991. Unlike entitlement programs, such as the Food Stamp Program and the National School Lunch Program in which program costs increase as more Americans qualify to receive assistance, the WIC program is limited to annual appropriations.

Smaller programs have also increased. Total costs for the School Breakfast and the Child Care and Summer Food Programs increased by 14 and 16 percent, respectively. Food donation programs, such as the Commodity Supplemental Program and the Charitable Institutions Program, increased by over 10 percent.

—For more information on domestic food assistance, call Masao Matsumoto at (202) 219-0864.

Food Stamps, School Lunches, and WIC Account for Most of the Rise in Food Assistance in Fiscal 1992[1]

Program	1990	1991	FY 1991 quarters* I	II	III	IV	FY 1992 quarters* I	II	III	IV
			Million dollars							
Family food:										
Food stamps	17,339	20,891	4,100	4,309	4,426	4,503	5,086	5,209	5,246	5,349
Puerto Rico[2]	967	1,006	242	242	242	242	251	251	251	251
Food distribution:										
Indian reservations	49	45	12	13	12	12	11	12	11	11
Schools[3]	700	755	220	265	116	99	222	269	118	145
Other[4]	179	205	46	43	45	45	53	52	51	48
TEFAP[5]	207	189	45	43	74	44	37	49	53	50
Cash-in-lieu of commodities[6]	156	173	38	38	40	40	42	43	44	44
Child nutrition:[7]										
School lunch	3,525	3,838	1,065	1,078	876	506	1,166	1,225	922	526
School breakfast	685	783	204	205	172	105	234	243	192	114
Child care and summer food	983	1,146	202	212	251	318	231	252	289	373
Special milk	20	20	5	5	5	4	5	6	5	4
WIC[8]	2,296	2,561	520	560	581	635	596	646	638	680
Total*	27,106	31,611	6,699	7,013	6,840	6,553	7,937	8,257	7,820	7,596

* May not add to annual total due to rounding. [1]Administrative costs are excluded unless noted. [2]Puerto Rico transferred from the Food Stamp Program to a substitute Nutrition Assistance Program on July 1, 1982. Data represent appropriated amounts. [3]National School Lunch, Child Care Food, and Summer Food Service Programs, and schools receiving only commodities. [4]Commodity Supplemental Food Program and Elderly Feeding Pilot Projects, excluding bonus commodities and donations to charitable institutions. [5]The Emergency Food Assistance Program. [6]Child nutrition programs and Nutrition Program for the Elderly. [7]Cash expenditures. [8]Special Supplemental Food Program for mothers, infants, and children—includes administrative costs.
Source: USDA's Food and Nutrition Service, Program Information Division.