



# What is the SNAP Challenge?

Why should we try the SNAP Challenge?

Can your family *live and thrive* on SNAP?

What can we learn about how low wages affect our neighbors?

The SNAP Challenge is a way to stand in solidarity with our low-income brothers and sisters and learn more about feeding a family on a limited budget. Many families in the low wage Central FL economy have challenges accessing and paying for other needs and experience intermittent or frequent food insecurity. We can gain insight into some of the problems and challenges low income families face.

## What is SNAP?

SNAP is the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in partnership with each state. Eligibility criteria are complicated, income-based and provide benefits based on family size. About 80% of SNAP recipients are employed. Families are expected to spend 30% of their own income on food. Very few families receive the maximum benefit. Benefit amounts are based on a meal plan called the Thrifty Food Plan which estimates the cost of a nutritious, cost-effective diet prepared at home for a family of 2 adults and children. SNAP pays only for fresh or packaged food (like canned, boxed or frozen foods), but doesn't cover precooked, hot deli food. It does not cover many essential items like toilet paper or cleaning products.

## Forced Choices or Tradeoffs when Costs Exceed Income

- Nutritious food vs. calorie dense food
- Food vs. medical care or prescriptions
- Food vs. rent (or homelessness)
- Skipping meals

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## How Do We Do The SNAP Challenge?

For one week an individual or household eats meals prepared at home which cost the average SNAP benefit of \$5.83 for one person per day. Participants plan a week's worth of (healthy) meals, shop for the needed items and serve meals based on an extremely modest budget. For simplicity we will use the average SNAP benefit amount for each person.

1. Determine your food budget.
2. Plan meals before shopping.
3. Keep a running total when you fill your shopping cart.

**What is the average SNAP benefit amount?**      \$175/month for one person

- $\$175/30$  (days) = **\$5.83 per day**
- $\$5.83 / 3$  meals = **\$1.94 per meal**

**What will your budget be?** Decide how many people will participate. Someone with special dietary needs may not be a good candidate.

**Your budget: *Number of participants* x 7 (days) x \$5.83**

Find more information about SNAP and how to apply: <https://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/access/>