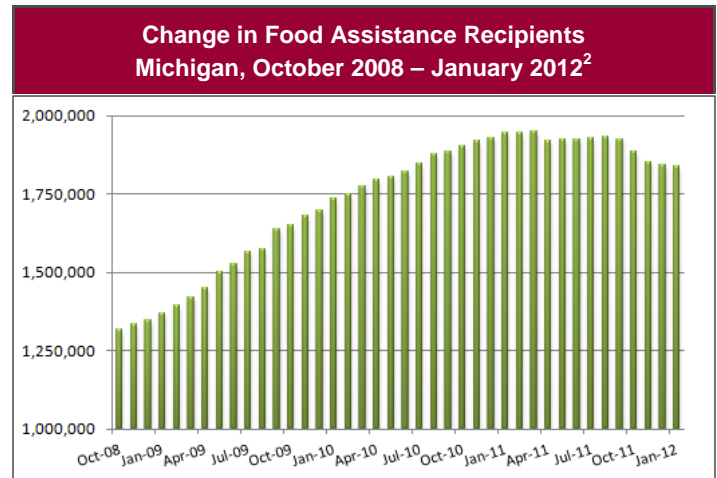


Michigan's Food Assistance Program

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The Michigan Food Assistance Program provides benefits to low-income families to increase their access to food. Funded through the federal Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Michigan food assistance caseloads have experienced a 50 percent increase over the last few years. About 1.9 million Michiganders received FAP monthly during Fiscal Year 2011.¹

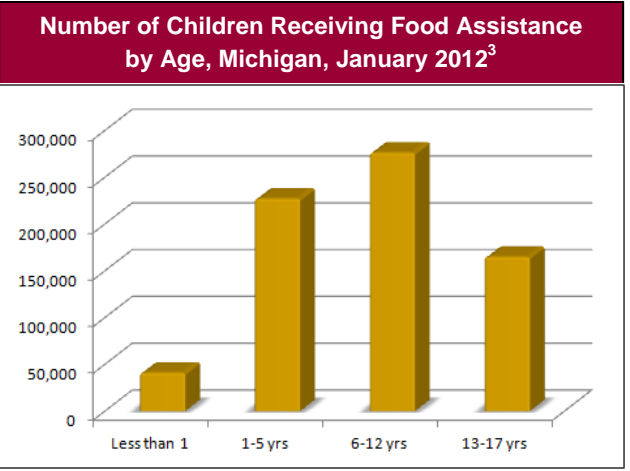


Did You Know?

- Food assistance recipients generally have to be working or participating in employment or training activities to receive assistance.
- Almost 80% of food assistance dollars are redeemed within two weeks and 97% within a month.
- Food assistance helps the economy grow. For every \$1 spent in food assistance, \$1.79 is generated in economic growth.
- Food assistance generates spending in the retail, agricultural and food production industries in Michigan.

There were, on average, more than 800,000 children receiving food assistance in Michigan in FY 11. The average age of a child on food assistance is 8.4 years old.

Food Assistance Program Monthly Income Eligibility and Benefits			
Household Size	Net Income Limit (100% Poverty Level)	Maximum Monthly Benefit	Average Monthly Benefit
1	\$903	\$200	\$135
2	\$1,215	\$367	\$270
3	\$1,526	\$526	\$405
4	\$1,838	\$668	\$540
5	\$2,150	\$793	\$675
6	\$2,461	\$952	\$810



¹ Trend Report of Key Program Statistics, State of Michigan, Department of Human Services.

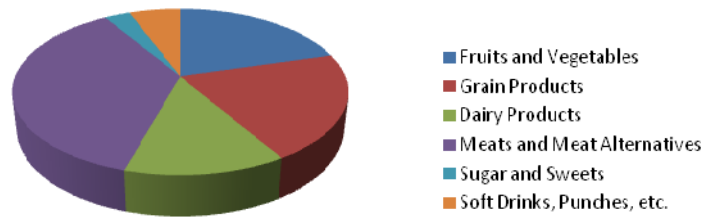
² Note that chart does not start at zero.

³ Green Book Report of Key Program Statistics. State of Michigan, Department of Human Services, January 2012. Calculations by Michigan League for Human Services.

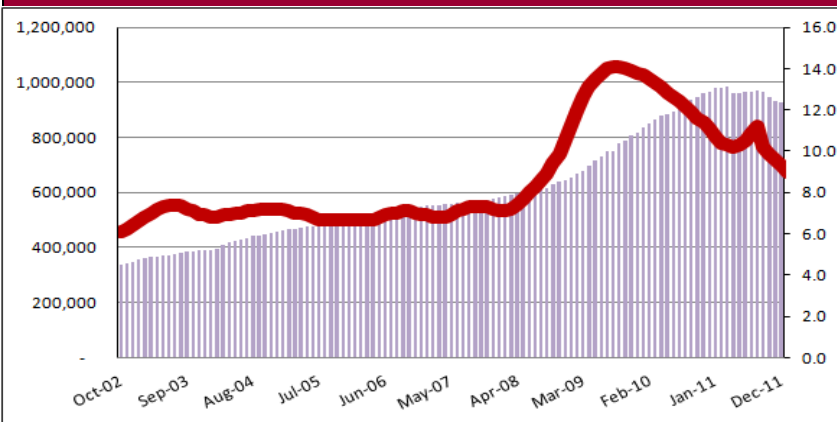
What can be purchased with food assistance benefits?

Food assistance benefits can only be used to purchase nonprepared foods, but they cannot be used to purchase hot foods that are ready to eat, lunch-counter items or foods to be eaten in the store. They cannot be used to purchase nonfood items such as soap, toilet paper, toothpaste, tobacco, pet food or alcoholic beverages.⁴

What Do People Buy with Food Assistance Benefits?⁵



Food Assistance Cases and Unemployment Rate Michigan, October 2002 – January 2012⁷



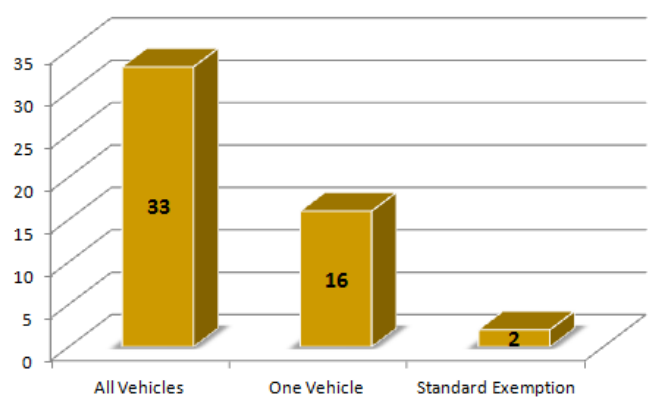
Food Assistance and Unemployment

Food assistance is the only universal safety net. The program is specifically designed to respond to economic downturns and ensure that people continue to have access to food during times of recession. Food assistance caseload increases track increases in a state’s unemployment rate.⁶

Asset Tests

The Department of Human Services implemented an asset test for food assistance effective Oct. 1, 2011. This puts Michigan in a minority of states.⁸ The trend nationally is to eliminate asset tests to help families get back on their feet during the recession.⁹ Michigan also implemented an asset limit on vehicles, making it one of only 18 states that asset test vehicles. Thirty-three states and D.C. do not have an asset test for vehicles at all and an additional 16 exclude completely the value of one vehicle. Beginning Jan. 1, 2012, the Department will exclude the value of one vehicle from the asset limit. Vehicle asset limits are a discouragement to more than one person in the family working and can impact school attendance. Many of those affected by the asset test are the newly unemployed.

Vehicle Exemption Policies, State Comparisons



⁴ *Food Assistance Benefits in Michigan*, State of Michigan, Department of Human Services. DHS Pub-16 (Rev. 7-10).

⁵ *Review of Strategies to Bolster SNAP’s Role in Improving Nutrition as well as Food Security*. Food Research and Action Network. June 2011.

⁶ Zedlewski, Sheila. *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Counters High Unemployment*. Unemployment and Recovery Project, The Urban Institute. Fact Sheet 1, July 2011.

⁷ *Trend Report of Key Program Statistics*, State of Michigan, Department of Human Services, September 2011 and January 2012; U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics. Calculations by Michigan League for Human Services.

⁸ *Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program State Options Report, 9th Ed.*, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service, November 2010.

⁹ *Expanding Access to SNAP/Food Stamps*, Food Research and Action Center, June 15, 2010.