

# Update to Feasibility Study on Implementing SNAP in Puerto Rico

Client: U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

## Overview

As provided by Section 776 of the Further Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2020 (P.L. 116–94), the Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) contracted with Insight to update our 2010 report, *Implementing the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program in Puerto Rico: A Feasibility Study*. We will also develop a detailed implementation plan with specific steps and timelines for converting Puerto Rico’s Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP).

In fiscal year 2018, NAP provided assistance to almost 1.3 million individuals with low incomes in Puerto Rico. The federal block grant covers all food benefits and 50 percent of administrative costs; Puerto Rico covers the remaining administrative expenses. While the NAP block grant provides important nutritional benefits, those benefits are extended to fewer people, and benefits are lower than they would be with SNAP. Because NAP is a capped block grant, it

cannot automatically expand when the economy contracts or in the aftermath of a natural disaster.

To both assess the current feasibility of implementing SNAP and to develop an implementation plan, Insight will—

- Conduct key informant interviews with stakeholders in FNS’s National Office, the Mid-Atlantic Regional office, the Caribbean Area Field Office, and Puerto Rico. These interviews will cover the full range of SNAP operations: eligibility determination and certification, benefit issuance, SNAP Employment and Training, SNAP Nutrition Education and Obesity Prevention Program, Disaster SNAP, maintaining program integrity, and the information technology systems needed for administering SNAP.
- Analyze the legislative, regulatory, policy, and program changes that would be needed for Puerto Rico to convert from NAP to SNAP.
- Assess the changes to NAP’s infrastructure and organization that would be needed to operate SNAP.
- Estimate the administrative costs of implementation for both the Federal Government and Puerto Rico through a detailed cost analysis model. Benefit costs will be examined using a microsimulation model using data from the Puerto Rico Community Survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau.



## Products

Final report, implementation plan