



September 7, 2021

Honorable Tom Vilsack
Secretary U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Vilsack:

On behalf of the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA), we would like to thank you for acting quickly on Congress's call to update the Thrifty Food Plan (TFP)—used to calculate benefits under the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)—to reflect the true cost of an affordable, nutritious diet.

NANA advocates for national policies and programs that promote healthy eating and reduce the illnesses, disabilities, premature deaths, and costs caused by diet-related diseases. NANA includes more than 500 organizations across public health, anti-hunger, and health and nutrition professionals that work to improve the food environment and work directly with communities disproportionately affected by nutrition-related chronic disease. We see every day that nutritious food can be financially out of reach—a reality underscored by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA)'s latest finding that more than 60 percent of SNAP participants point to cost as the primary barrier to healthy eating.

We are thrilled that the latest update will lead to an increase in the real value of SNAP benefits, and that the market baskets reflect the latest *Dietary Guidelines for Americans* and do not assume that all foods are prepared from scratch. We look forward to USDA's continued work to operationalize this update, including by providing resources on meals that can be purchased with new SNAP benefit allotments.

As USDA states in the full report, "access to adequate resources to support food spending is by no means the only factor that positively influences diet quality, but it is a necessary prerequisite." Because of this update, more than 40 million people in the United States will have an easier time affording foods that support health.

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For more information about the National Alliance for Nutrition and Activity (NANA), please go to www.NANACOalition.org. NANA Steering Committee members include: Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics; American Academy of Pediatrics; American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network; American Diabetes Association; American Heart Association; American Public Health Association; Association of State Public Health Nutritionists; Center for Science in the Public Interest; National Association of Chronic Disease Directors; National WIC Association; Nemours Children's Health System; SHAPE America – Society of Health and Physical Educators; United Fresh Produce Association.