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Northeast Regional Administrator
USDA- Food and Nutrition Service

Connecticut General Assembly
Appropriations & Human Services Joint Briefing on the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
Legislative Office Building, 300 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT
February 22nd, 2011
Room 2C, 1:00 p.m.

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USDA Food and Nutrition Service helps 1 in 4 Americans through our 15 nutrition assistance programs, including the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC); National School Lunch Program; Summer Food Service Program; and commodity foods.

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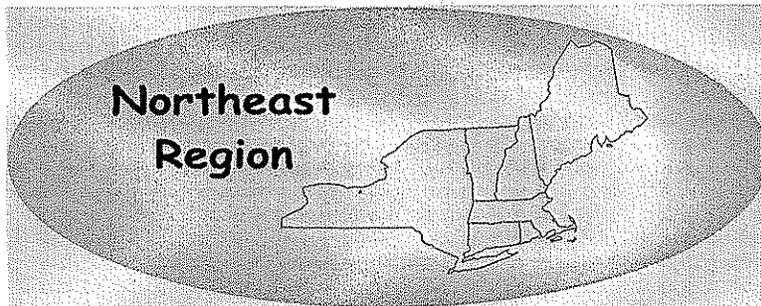


Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

- SNAP serves 1 in 7 Americans - over 43 million low-income people each month.
- Participation has grown by 5.4 million recipients or 14.2% in the past year.
- USDA pays 100% of client benefits and 50% of the State's administrative costs.

Data as of January 31, 2011

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Overview of Northeast Region

In November, 2010, there were a nationwide total of 43.5 Million SNAP participants. 11% (4.7 million) were NERO participants.

NERO population is about 11% of the nation and NERO participation is about 1.5% of the national population.

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USDA research estimates that every \$5 in new SNAP benefits generates \$9.20 in total community spending. Connecticut SNAP participants received \$569,684,382 in benefits in Federal Fiscal Year 2010. This translates into approximately \$1,048,219,262 spent in the local Connecticut economy.

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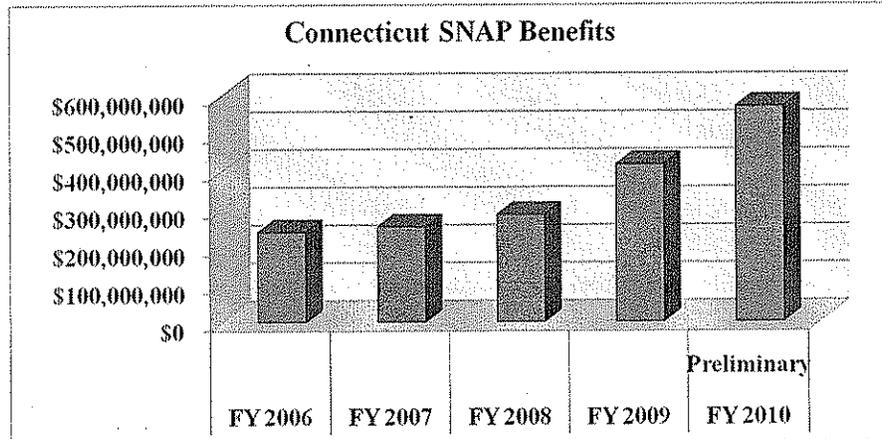
Connecticut Department of Social Services (DSS)

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program
(SNAP)

BENEFITS

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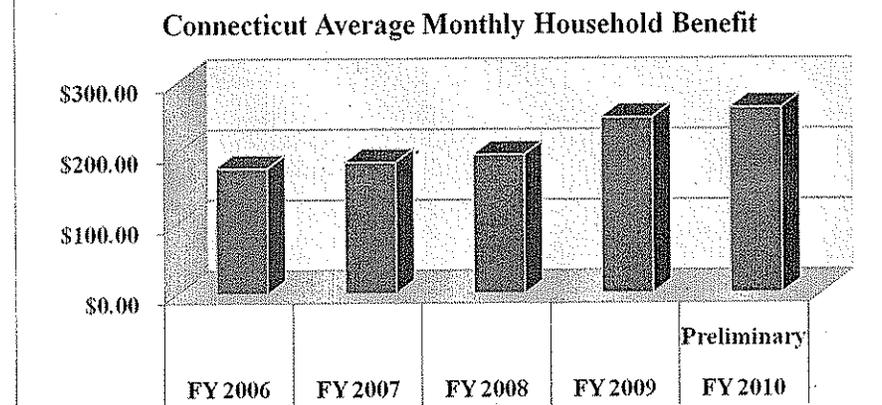
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BENEFITS (Data as of January 31, 2011)					
State/Territory	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
					<i>Preliminary</i>
Connecticut	\$ 239,082,045	\$ 253,062,794	\$ 284,829,257	\$ 417,158,566	\$ 569,684,382



<http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/17SNAPfyBENS.htm>

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SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: AVERAGE MONTHLY BENEFIT PER HOUSEHOLD (Data as of January 31, 2011)					
State/Territory	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
					<i>Preliminary</i>
Connecticut	\$ 177.96	\$ 186.32	\$ 196.86	\$ 249.36	\$ 263.07

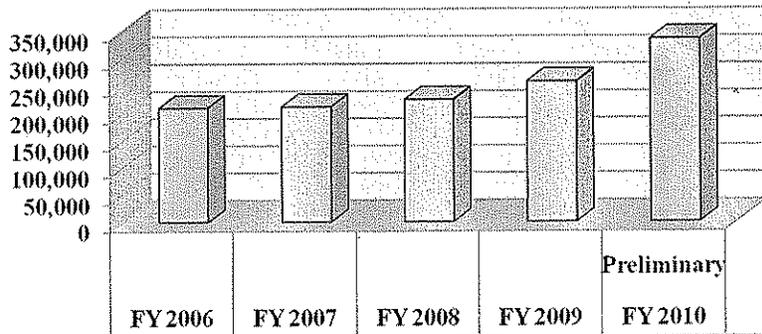


[http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/19SNAPavg\\$HH.htm](http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/19SNAPavg$HH.htm)

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SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM: AVERAGE MONTHLY PARTICIPATION (PERSONS) (Data as of January 31, 2011)					
State/Territory	FY 2006	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010
					<i>Preliminary</i>
Connecticut	210,288	212,562	225,383	258,165	336,064

Connecticut Participants



<http://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/15SNAPpartPP.htm>

SNAP Performance Measures

- Program Access Index
- Payment Error Rate
- Negative Error Rate
- Application Timeliness

The Program Access Index (PAI)

The PAI is a simple index of the average monthly number of SNAP participants over the course of a calendar year to the number of people with income below 125 percent of the official poverty line in each State.

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Connecticut Program Access Index

Program Access Index (PAI)	CT %	(Rank)	NATIONAL
CY 2009	68.1%	23	62.9%
CY 2008	56.9%	31	56.6%
CY 2007	59.5%	16	52.9%
CY 2006	57.0%	17	51.2%
CY 2005	55.7%	20	50.6%
CY 2004	56.9%	31	49.1%

<http://www.fns.usda.gov/ora/menu/Published/SNAP/FILES/Other/pai2009.pdf>

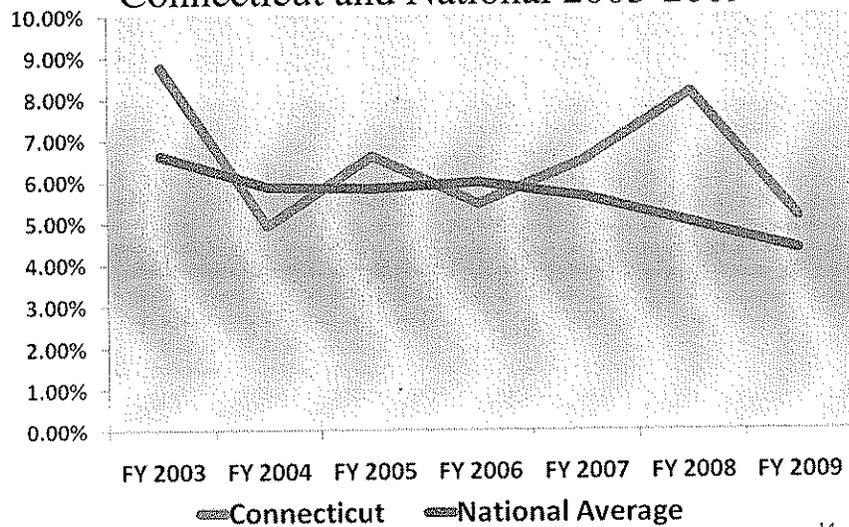
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The Payment Error Rate (PER)

The PER measures the number of dollars either over-issued or under-issued in error compared to the number of dollars issued in the Quality Control sample.

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SNAP Payment Error Rate: Connecticut and National 2003-2009



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Federal Fiscal Year	SNAP Payment Error Rate		National Rank
	Connecticut	National	
FY 2009	5.15%	4.36%	41 st
FY 2008	8.16%	5.01%	51 st
FY 2007	6.51%	5.64%	36 th
FY 2006	5.46%	5.99%	22 nd
FY 2005	6.61%	5.84%	40 th
FY 2004	4.94%	5.88%	15 th
FY 2003	8.77%	6.63%	42 nd

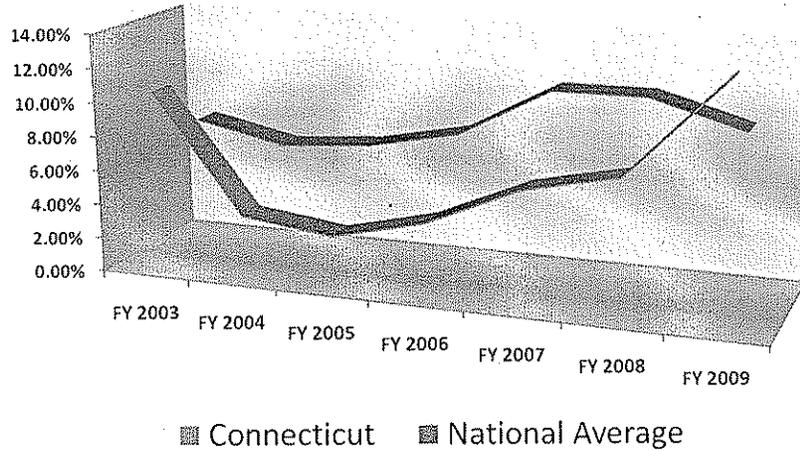
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The Negative Error Rate (NER)

The NER is calculated by dividing the number of cases judged to be wrongly denied or terminated by the total number of subject to review cases in the SNAP Quality Control sample.

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SNAP Negative Errors: CT and National Rates 2003-2009



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Federal Fiscal Year	SNAP Negative Error Rate		National Rank
	Connecticut	National	
FY 2009	13.41%	9.41%	44 th
FY 2008	7.78%	10.96%	33 rd
FY 2007	6.61%	10.94%	29 th
FY 2006	4.26%	8.02%	27 th
FY 2005	2.95%	6.91%	17 th
FY 2004	3.63%	6.52%	22 nd
FY 2003	10.52%	7.64%	45 th

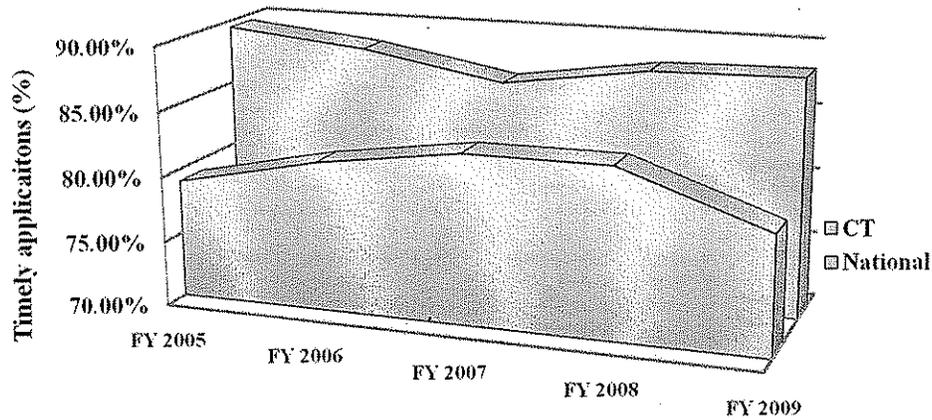
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SNAP Application Timeliness

The Food and Nutrition Act requires the state agencies to process SNAP applications within 30 days or 7 days if the applicant meets certain expedited criteria.

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Timeliness of SNAP Application Processing: CT vs. National Rates



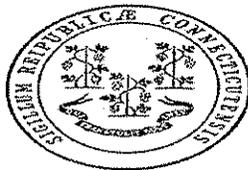
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**SNAP
Connecticut Timeliness History**

Timeliness of Application Processing Rate

YEAR	CT	National
FY 2009	79.11%	88.21%
FY 2008	83.01%	88%
FY 2007	82.99%	86.38%
FY 2006	81.43%	88.36%
FY 2005	79.07%	89.48%

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**Financial Implications for
Continued Poor Performance:
Potential Future Sanction**

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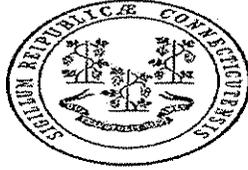
Mary Ferris
Deputy Northeast Regional Administrator
USDA- Food and Nutrition Service

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Advance Notice

- FNS hand-delivered an Advance Notice of Potential Fiscal Sanction due to unresolved systemic findings of non-compliance on 2/17/10.
- FNS approved Connecticut's revised plan and agreed to hold the fiscal sanction in abeyance pending a successful outcome of their CAP.
- Connecticut provides NERO with biweekly updates on the status of corrective actions via conference call.

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DSS Challenges with Present Eligibility Process

- Limited Access Options
- Manual, High-volume Tasks
- Traditional Caseload Model

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DSS Challenges

- Geographically-bound Staffing and Independent Regional Structure
- DSS State team has become generalists and no longer any SNAP Specialists or staff solely dedicated to SNAP.

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DSS Challenges

Serious IT Shortcomings

- Many of the unresolved issues that forced the advanced notice stemmed from IT being unable to complete certain tasks and requirements.

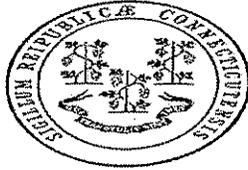
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Keys to Payment Accuracy

- Top Leadership Commitment
- Communication
- Data Analysis
- Case Reviews
- Training
- Business Process Reengineering



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Collaboration between FNS Regional Office and State Partners

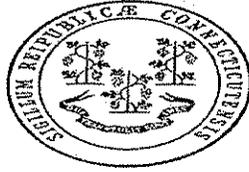
FNS offers technical assistance to all States in the region, including constant communication, meeting opportunities with FNS and other States to exchange ideas, and site visits to States in and outside of the Region to see innovative operations first-hand.

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USDA Waiver Options

FNS has made waivers available to State agencies that are designed to improve both program administration and client access.

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Options for SNAP Success:
How are other States managing?
**BUSINESS RE-ENGINEERING
and MODERNIZATION
EFFORTS**

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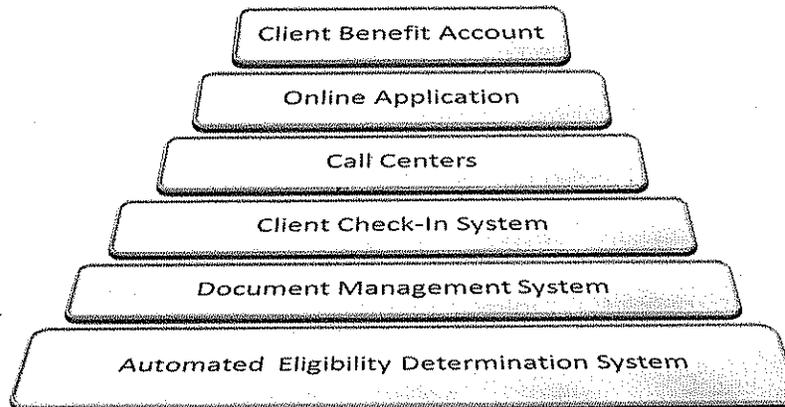
Redesigning the Service Delivery
Model

- Business Process Re-engineering
- Realigning staff
- Policy changes & waivers



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Business Process Reengineering: Technology Building Blocks



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Low Cost Modernization Options

Option	Advantage	Consideration
Policy Changes such as: > Standard Medical Deduction > Standard Self-employment Income Deduction > Minimize Verification Requirements	Streamlines workload for eligibility workers, reduces the amount of time spent processing cases	Some changes require waivers that have an analysis component
Caseload Sharing with eligibility worker specialization (e.g., intake unit, verification unit, change unit, recertification unit)	Task-based system eliminates traditional worker caseload model	Is most successful with document imaging system

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Moderate Cost Modernization Options

Option	Advantage	Consideration
Case Reading System/Error Profiling	Reviews error-prone cases for accuracy – catches errors before they become problematic and time-consuming to correct	Resources required
System Edits to Prevent Negative Errors, e.g., ✓ Was Notice of Missed Interview sent? ✓ Was verification checklist sent? ✓ Did the recipient have at least 10 days to submit verifications?	Automatically prevents eligibility workers from inappropriately denying or closing cases Prevents “revolving door” of denials/closures and reapplications	System modifications required

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High Cost Modernization Options

Option	Advantage	Consideration
Statewide Call Center	Supports workload specialization, reduces phone calls, frees eligibility workers to process cases	Staffing concerns and potential labor/management issues
✓ Statewide Document Imaging Center – paperless systems ✓ Automated Voice Response Systems for inquiries and recertifications ✓ Online Applications (including office kiosks)	Streamlines case management processes, increases program access	New system implementations can cause temporary increase in error rate

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Useful Web Links

- General link to FNS:
www.fns.usda.gov
- Program improvement information on the public web :
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/government/program-improvement.htm>
- FNS Workload Management Matrix:
<http://www.fns.usda.gov/snap/government/pdf/matrix.pdf>
- Oregon LEAN
<http://www.oregon.gov/DHS/transformation/lean.shtml>
- Iowa LEAN
<http://lean.iowa.gov>
- Washington State (including video on Business Process Reengineering)
<http://www.dshs.wa.gov/ServiceReform>