

National Association of State Departments of Agriculture



Subject of Policy Amendment 2:

Nutrition and Food Assistance

Section Number or Title to be Added:

5. Nutrition and Food Assistance

Submitted by:

Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, Connecticut

Text of Policy Amendment:

Section: 5.1 Introduction

(Updated February 2020)

As state officials and agriculture advocates, NASDA members stand in the nexus between agriculture, hunger, and nutrition. As the status of food and nutrition policy is constantly changing, NASDA members are currently focused on connecting consumers to products from farmers and ranchers and more local foods, Dietary Guidelines, food waste, labeling, and supporting programs that reduce food insecurity and increase nutritional value in measurable ways.

Federal policy related to nutrition or dietary guidelines should deliver measurable benefits to consumers health. They should be informed by the best available peer-reviewed science specific to human health and nutrition and, should not prejudice particular agricultural commodities, food products or farming practices.

Section: 5.2 national feeding and nutrition assistance programs

NASDA supports the National School Lunch and Breakfast Programs, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Programs (SNAP), WIC and Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Programs, and the Emergency Food Assistance Program (TEFAP).

Farm to School

NASDA supports the USDA Farm to School Grant Program as it increases use and improves access to local foods in schools while also fostering experiential food education for our nation's children. Participating schools should be given more opportunities and financial flexibility to

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increase direct purchases of local products outside of the school food service contracts. This will drastically increase direct purchasing power, funneling dollars into the local economy, and remove a major hurdle to Farm to School implementation.

National School Lunch/Breakfast Programs

NASDA supports dietary guidelines through the National School Lunch and Breakfast program that take into consideration individual needs, especially those of physically active and growing students. Dietary guidelines should ensure that students consume of sufficient calories and protein for healthy growth and mental alertness.

NASDA supports a comprehensive approach to the school breakfast and lunch programs by: reducing redundant administrative burdens, reducing food waste, providing flexibility to integrate local products, including dietary education and increased promoting increased physical activity.

States should not be required to submit waiver request for the state department of agriculture to operate and manage the National School Lunch and School Breakfast Programs. State departments of agriculture have close ties to the safety, production and marketing of food and have a proven track of managing grants.

Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)

GusNIP

NASDA encourages the continued investments in the Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) to increase the number of farmers markets and other authorized retailers who accept SNAP benefits as a means of encouraging participants to consume a greater volume and variety of fruits and vegetables while also supporting the farmers closest to their community. Every effort should be made to assist farmers with becoming qualified SNAP retailers, including full support of grant funding for wireless point-of-sale equipment. The effectiveness in providing a healthy diet under SNAP depends upon improvements in providing food to those who need it the most. The elimination of provisions allowing for the cash-out of food stamps is important to protecting the program from increased fraud and abuse.

SNAP-Ed

NASDA supports funding for the SNAP-Ed program through NIFA and state land grant universities, which teaches recipients how to make their SNAP dollars go further and healthier.

WIC and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Programs

The WIC Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (FMNP) and Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) are outstanding investments for agriculture and the nation and should be continuously funded.

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The list of eligible products should be regularly reviewed to be expanded to include other healthy farm products; potentially including eggs and meat.

NASDA supports an increase in funding to allow for the expansion of the WIC FMNP and SFMNP to additional states, counties and farmers' markets.

Food Donations

NASDA supports policy that reduces regulatory burdens surrounding food donations. NASDA encourages FSIS and other associated agencies to pursue policies that streamline food donation processes while maintaining food safety standards.

Adopted:

February 26, 2020