

THE IMPACT OF STATE-LEVEL MODERNIZATION EFFORTS ON PARTICIPATION IN THE  
SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Julia Druhan, B.A.

Thesis Advisor: Priscilla Carver, PhD.

**Abstract**

This paper examines the effect of modernization efforts available to the States on participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP). The 2002 and 2008 Farm Bills outlined and enacted several measures States could take to change the way SNAP is administratively implemented. Some of these measures may reduce barriers to participation and increase the number of eligible individuals participating in the program. This research, using data from the Survey of Income and Program Participation in 2010 looks at the impact of state implementation of these measures on SNAP participation during the recent recession. While a great deal of research has looked the impact of administrative changes and economic situations on SNAP participation, little research has been done since most States put recent modernization efforts into place. This research finds that six-month recertification rates and call centers that are used to conduct interviews have a negative impact on SNAP participation. Further, the analysis finds that electronic applications and reporting requirements of \$100 of earned or unearned income have a positive impact on SNAP participation. Twelve-month recertification rates, call centers that can process changes for clients and application systems that are integrated with other social service programs were not found to have an effect on SNAP participation. Perhaps the most

notable effect found in this analysis is that of the use of electronic applications, as it is a relatively new policy that could continue to impact rural and urban Americans alike as it is implemented into more states in the coming years.