



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Friday, June 27, 2025

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Shapiro Administration, PA Food Merchants Highlight How SNAP Funding Cuts Will Hurt Pennsylvania Farms, Food Businesses, and Families

Every month, SNAP provides more than \$365 million in cash benefits that can only be used on food — supporting the entire food supply chain, including more than 10,000 grocers and food retailers and 53,000 farms in Pennsylvania.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service found that for every \$1 billion issued in federal SNAP benefits, our economy grows by \$1.54 billion through job retention and creation and income for farmers and other food producers.

Lemoyne, PA – Today, Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding stood with **Karns Foods CEO Scott Karns, Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association Communications Director John Zimmerman**, and local farmers to call out the critical role **Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)** benefits play in supporting Pennsylvania farms, grocery industry jobs, and families. Speakers echoed concerns about how proposed federal cuts to SNAP funding will hurt their farm and their neighbors if Congress follows through on the current version of H.R. 1.

Governor Josh Shapiro has made it clear that Pennsylvania cannot replace the billions that would be lost if Congress eliminates these funds.

“Radical reductions in SNAP would hurt not only the two million people who receive benefits and may be temporarily struggling, but would also hurt the Pennsylvania farm families, and families of those in 12,000 grocery industry jobs across the state supported by SNAP spending,” **Agriculture Secretary Russell Redding** said. “The Shapiro Administration is doing our part, investing to see that no family goes hungry in Pennsylvania. We are calling on Congress to keep its promises and remember their commitments to Pennsylvania farmers, families, and businesses.”

SNAP is a food assistance program helping nearly **two million Pennsylvanians** — including families with children, seniors, and people with disabilities — buy groceries and put food on the table. In December 2024, SNAP provided **\$366,850,460** in federally

funded food assistance benefits that support grocers, food retailers, and Pennsylvania's agricultural industry.

[Karns](#), a Central Pennsylvania grocery chain with 10 locations, has partnered with the **Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture** to increase their sourcing of fresh food from local farms. Local purchases, whether by a SNAP family or any other family, provide income to farmers, the grocery store, and all of the employees whose jobs are supported by the store.

In December 2024, there were **73,874 SNAP households** in Cumberland, Dauphin, Perry, and York Counties, the counties in which Karns stores are located. Those households spent **\$27,579,073 on food using SNAP** dollars just that month. Those purchases directly support the businesses and the farms where the food is produced.

"When SNAP benefits are cut, we see the impact immediately," said **Karns Foods Board Chairman Scott Karns**. "Families buy less. Not only does this mean fewer nutrients for Pennsylvania families, but it directly slows our local economy."

The **Pennsylvania Food Merchants Association (PFMA)** is a statewide trade association advocating for the views of the food and beverage industries. PFMA represents convenience stores, supermarkets, independent grocers, wholesalers, and distributors.

"When SNAP benefits are cut, it's not just households that feel it," said **PFMA Communications Director John Zimmerman**. "It's stores. It's distributors. It's farmers. When Emergency Allotments ended in 2023, more than a million PA households lost an average of \$181 a month. That was nearly \$190 million gone from our state's food economy every month."

The Shapiro Administration has remained committed to supporting Pennsylvania families who are struggling with food insecurity, while lifting our farmers and the agriculture industry. **Governor Josh Shapiro** [filed suit](#) against the federal government for the termination of **\$13 million** for the Local Food Purchase Assistance 2025 Cooperative Agreement (LFPA25), which provides federal funding to states to purchase local food from regional producers for distribution through food banks to families at risk of hunger.

In his [2025-26 budget proposal](#), **Governor Shapiro** is proposing commonsense investments, supporting low-income families, farmers, and our charitable food system. These investments stimulate business growth and improve access to fresh food in Pennsylvania communities where fresh local food is often scarce.

Governor Shapiro also proposed increases of **\$4 million** to the Pennsylvania Agricultural Surplus System and **\$4 million** to the State Food Purchase Program, both

programs that connect low-income Pennsylvanians with healthy, local food through 14 food banks across the state. These proposed increases would bring the total for these programs to **\$34.7 million**. The Governor is also championing initiatives that reduce food insecurity by tackling its root causes, including raising the minimum wage and cutting costs for Pennsylvanians.

Read more about commonsense investments to keep Pennsylvania agriculture competitive and thriving in **Governor Shapiro's** 2025-26 budget proposal at shapirobudget.pa.gov.

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