

Similarities & Differences

Both nutrition incentives and produce prescriptions programs help close the nutrition gap among low-income families by increasing purchasing power and access to fruit and vegetables. However, the way they function at the grocery store can be quite different. The similarities and differences in partner organizations, target audiences and how transactions are processed at the register are summarized here:

NUTRITION INCENTIVES:

- **Program participants:** SNAP/NAP shoppers who purchase fruit and vegetables with their benefit dollars.
- **Where are these programs?** The Gus Schumacher Nutrition Incentive Program (GusNIP) provides financial incentives to increase fruit and vegetable purchases in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam and Virgin Islands. It also provides incentives to the USDA Nutrition Assistance Program (NAP) in Puerto Rico, American Samoa, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Marianas Islands.
- **Purpose:** incentives encourage *SNAP/ NAP participants* to buy more fruit and vegetables. For example, if they spend \$10 of their SNAP benefits on produce, they earn an additional \$10 to spend on fruit and vegetables. These programs are targeted at all SNAP participants.
- **Who runs the program?** Grantee organizations administer these programs. They are typically mission driven non-profits and government agencies with an interest to reduce hunger and increase healthy food access. These organizations apply for funding each year, and after competitive review, some are selected to administer a program. These organizations decide program parameters, such as which food retail sites they partner with and the portion of incentive provided (e.g., spend \$10, get \$10).
- **How it works:** Shoppers buy fruit and vegetables **at participating grocery stores**, CSAs, co-ops or farmers' markets known as redemption sites, using SNAP/ NAP benefits. The shopper receives extra funds for fruit and vegetables, usually a dollar-for-dollar match (A common brand name for this program is Double Up Food Bucks). The food retail site is paid back for this amount by the grantee organization each month. **Program names you may have heard of:**



PRODUCE PRESCRIPTIONS:

- **Program participants:** Individuals can participate in a Produce Prescription project if they are eligible for the following: (1) benefits under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq); or (2) medical assistance under a State plan or a waiver of such a plan under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.) and enrolled under such plan or waiver; and (3) a member of a low-income household that suffers from, or is at risk of developing, a diet-related health condition. To be eligible to participate in a produce prescription project the individual may either meet items (1) and (3) or items (2) and (3) above.
- **Who runs the program?** Grantee organizations are selected to administer these programs through a competitive grant application process. In addition to a mission driven non-profit and/or government agency being involved, a healthcare organization is involved to prescribe the voucher and measure health impacts.
- **How it works:** Healthcare providers issue "prescriptions" for fresh produce. Program participants shop at farmers' markets or **participating grocery stores** to redeem their prescription. The food retail site is reimbursed by the grantee organization for each redeemed voucher.

Program names you may have heard of:



KEY DIFFERENCES:

These projects differ in three main ways; audience, administration and a requirement for a funding match. The **audience** for nutrition incentive projects are all SNAP/ NAP participants, while produce prescriptions are for specific individuals with a health concerns experiencing food insecurity. The grantee organization decides which health concerns they are focusing on. It may be specific to Type 2 diabetes or other diet-related chronic illness. These individuals may or may not qualify for SNAP/ NAP, and may or may not be shopping with SNAP EBT/ NAP as a form of payment.

The **administration** of these projects differs in that nutrition incentive projects involve a partnership only between the grantee organization and the food retail site, such as grocery stores

Nutrition Incentives vs. Produce Prescription Projects

and farmers markets. Produce prescription projects additionally involve a healthcare provider involved monitoring health status and outcomes.

Finally, there is a **funding match requirement** for nutrition incentive projects that does not exist for produce prescription projects. This means grantee organizations of nutrition incentive projects are required to provide matching contributions on a dollar-for-dollar basis for all federal funds awarded through GusNIP. PPR programs do not require this match. To learn more about common matching sources [review this resource](#).



Nutrition Incentive Projects

Produce Prescription Projects

- SNAP participants

Program Participants

- People with health concerns. May be SNAP or Medicaid participants, or eligible for those programs.

- Grantee, a non-profit organization or government agency
- Grocery store, or other food retail site

Who Runs The Program

- Grantee, a non-profit organization or government agency
- Healthcare provider
- Grocery store or other food retail site

- Various ways these work in the the check out lane
- After making eligible purchase and paying with SNAP EBT, the customer may be given an immediate discount, a coupon for a future visit, or the store's loyalty program is used to hold incentive value

How It Works

- Healthcare provider issues paper or electronic vouchers that are redeemed for eligible produce

- Commonly dollar for dollar match, up to a certain cap.
- The cap can be per month, day, or transaction.

How Much Money Is Given

- Varies but is typically given out on a weekly or monthly basis.
- Grantees may alter the *dose* and *duration*, modifying how much money is prescribed and for how long.

- Each store submits a periodic report to the grantee. The store is reimbursed by the grantee

How Is The Store Reimbursed?

- Each store submits a periodic report to the grantee. The store is reimbursed by the grantee