

Peer Review Plan

Preliminary Title: SNAP and Diet Quality: A Treatment Effects Approach

Type of Report (ERR, EIB, EB) ERR

Agency: Economic Research Service [X] Influential Scientific Information
USDA [] Highly Influential Scientific Assessment

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Subject of Review: The Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) has two goals: to reduce food insecurity, and to enable families to consume a nutritious diet. Recently, public health advocates have been interested in the second of these goals. Their concern is motivated by the high cost of chronic diet-related illnesses such as diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and dyslipidemia among low-income persons; the concern has also been highlighted by policymakers' attempts to restrict items that can be purchased with SNAP. Social scientists have been interested in SNAP's possible dietary effects since its inception, and a large extant literature has grown up around it. However, much of the existing research is inconclusive and suffers from methodological limitations: namely, it cannot address the unobserved characteristics that likely affect selection into SNAP and diet quality simultaneously. At the same time, much recent research shows that SNAP is quite effective at reducing food insecurity.

The authors of this report use a unique data set that matches respondents to three waves of the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) to state-level policies that affect SNAP participation. They use the state-level variables to identify the effect of SNAP participation on HEI total and component scores and a treatment effects model that addresses unobserved heterogeneity in estimating effects of program participation.

Purpose of Review: The purpose of the review is to ensure the high-quality of the economic analysis, transparent explanation of methods, objective interpretation of results, and effective communication to the intended audience.

Type of Review: [] Panel Review [X] Individual Reviewers
[] Alternative Process (Briefly Explain):

Timing of Review (Est.): Start: 07/25/12 End: 11/30/12 Completed: 11/30/12

Number of Reviewers: [] 3 or fewer [X] 4 to 10 [] More than 10

Primary Disciplines/Types of Expertise Needed for Review: Economists

Reviewers selected by: [X] Agency [] Designated Outside Organization
Organization's Name:

Opportunities for Public Comment? [] Yes [X] No

If yes, briefly state how and when these opportunities will be provided:

How:

When:

Peer Reviewers Provided with Public Comments? Yes No
Public Nominations Requested for Review Panel? Yes No

