



THE SECRETARY OF AGRICULTURE
WASHINGTON, D. C.
20250-0100

February 13, 2025

Dear State, Tribal, Territory, and Local Government Partners,

First, thank you for your tireless work serving our most vulnerable families and communities. The scale and scope of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA, Department) 16 nutrition programs is vast, and their mission, critical. However, each of these programs is funded by the generosity of the American taxpayer; men and women who expect programs across every federal agency to be executed with integrity and accountability.

I write you today to share my guiding principles regarding nutrition programs, and to encourage States to partner with us as innovative collaborators and policy incubators. Gone are the days of the status quo; today starts a new chapter for the Department, States, territories, tribal communities, and each who render or receive nutrition programs.

Therefore, you have my commitment to:

- Prioritize timely and satisfactory customer service.
- Support State innovation through approvals of waivers and pilot projects.
- Clarify statutory, regulatory, and administrative requirements.
- Take swift action to minimize instances of fraud, waste, and program abuse.
- Develop and implement modernized systems.
- Associate access to SNAP benefits with clear expectations that those who can work, do.
- Create new opportunities to connect America's farmers to nutrition assistance programs.
- Encourage States to choose policy options that protect both participants and the taxpayer.
- Strengthen strategies to encourage healthy choices, healthy outcomes, and healthy families.
- Improve federal dietary policy to align with science, not politics.
- Infuse each nutrition program with new energy and vision.

Each of these principles are catalysts for change and will allow us to better serve families across the country.

We have a historic opportunity to improve nutrition programs to better serve individuals who need additional support. Our shared goal should be to lift millions of Americans out of dependency and into hopeful futures and unimagined possibilities. It will require tireless energy and new and innovative approaches to long-ignored problems. But you have always been the greatest "laboratories of democracy," and I am confident that the best ideas will come from you. I strongly encourage you to pilot creative solutions that could become the model for other states, and indeed for the nation.



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The Department stands ready to serve you through technical assistance and dialogue. Together, we will find the bold and sustainable solutions that deliver effective programs to our most vulnerable families. I sincerely look forward to working closely with you and your teams, collaborating with you as we take a comprehensive look at these programs, visiting your communities, and putting American on a path to growth, opportunity, and innovation to dramatically improve the lives of our citizens.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Brooke L. Rollins", is positioned below the word "Sincerely,".

Brooke L. Rollins

Secretary

U.S. Department of Agriculture